opposite sides, something which happens nowhere in Homer but does occur in the *Argonautica*, for Aietes' scene is then followed by Jason's (3.1246–67), though the latter scene is deliberately curtailed.[17] Just as the *BM* outdoes Apollonius in following Zenodotus' items more closely, so here its poet attempts to go one better again, not simply by repeating part of the same scene as the *Argonautica* does, but constructing a 'hyper-Homerism' and repeating it all.[18] Finally, and most tellingly, the *BM* must be reflecting Apollonius' scenes in (twice) deploying his (twice used) shield > spear sequence. Otherwise, given the *BM*'s refusal to innovate on the respective positions of the shield and the helmet, we would have to wonder why its poet did not simply revert to the standard Homeric sequence of shield > helmet > spear.

Taken together, these observations indicate that the *BM* is engaging not only with Zenodotus' edition or critical work on the *Iliad*, but also its fate in subsequent scholarship *and* poetry. Whatever else is going on here, and however playful the *BM* is intended to be, this is a sophisticated engagement with the *Iliad* and its ancient receptions.

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[17] Cf. Knight (n. 6), 102–4.

[18] A strategy evident in the Homeric papyrus Π Hibeh 19 (third century B.C.E.), which adds several verses to Menelaus' somewhat terse arming scene (3.339) in response to Paris', giving the arrangement shield > helmet > spears (339a) > greaves (339b) > sword (339c). The papyrus preserves the Homeric order (whilst omitting the breastplate), in taking the opening greaves > sword sequence and placing it after the shield > helmet > spears sequence, creating thereby a rather pleasing ring composition. It is surely inauthentic; cf. West (n. 7), 54–6.

A NOTE ON LUCRETIUS, *DE RERUM NATURA* 3.361*

> Dicere porro oculos nullam rem cernere posse,
> sed per eos animum ut foribus spectare reclusis, 360
> difficilest, contra cum sensus ducat eorum;
> sensus enim trahit atque acies detrudit ad ipsas,
> fulgida praesertim cum cernere saepe nequimus,
> lumina luminibus quia nobis praepediuntur. (Lucr. 3.359–64)

Moreover, to say that the eyes can discern nothing, but that the mind looks out through them as through open portals, is difficult, when their own feeling leads us to the opposite conclusion; for it is their feeling that draws us and pushes us on to the very eyeballs; especially since we are often unable to perceive glaring objects because our bright eyes are hindered by the brightness …[1]

* I should like to thank Gavin Kelly sincerely for his suggestions and for his time when first writing up this note. David Butterfield was kind enough to discuss several points with me, and I am fortunate to have benefited from his expertise. For his interest and his advice in the earlier stages of thinking about this textual issue, I owe thanks to Dominic Berry; for reading a later version of the note, to Stephen Harrison. Not least, I gratefully acknowledge the comments of the editor, and of the anonymous reader, whose learned suggestions (particularly on the more 'poetic' and polemical Lucretius) helped me to make a stronger case for resurrecting Lambinus' conjecture.

[1] Unless stated otherwise, all translations are W.H.D. Rouse's, from M.F. Smith, *Lucretius. De Rerum Natura. With an English Translation by W.H.D. Rouse* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1992[2]).

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A conjecture made by Lambinus in 1565 proposes replacement of *difficilest* (present in the three authoritative manuscripts O, Q and V) at 3.361 with *desiperest*.[2] Although commonly printed until the end of the nineteenth century (including in Lachmann's famous edition and Heinze's edition of Book 3, but excluding Wakefield's and Munro's), in the twentieth century the conjecture fell out of favour, both in editions of the entire *De rerum natura* (*DRN*) and of Book 3; the manuscript reading of *difficilest* has been kept by editors since 1900: Duff, Bailey, Martin, Kenney, Müller, Smith and Brown.[3] But with this consensus there are problems, and there are several reasons for preferring Lambinus' conjecture.[4]

The normal usage of *dicere* and Lucretius' own practice lead me to conclude that the expression as transmitted is incorrect. The sentence begins with *dicere* and is completed in sense by *difficilest*.[5] In order for it to make sense, the sentence construction relies upon an understanding of *dicere* as 'argue', 'declare', 'make definite', or similar. But this use of *dicere* is seen rarely, and not at all with an accusative and infinitive construction.[6] Here, it is most likely to convey simply, 'say'. *dicere … difficilest* is awkward here unless the author is referring to a specific instance of a physical difficulty with speech – which he is not.[7] Bailey's translation of *dicere* as 'maintain' might improve

[2] The conjecture is found listed in the emendations at the end of D. Lambinus' 1565 pocket edition of Lucretius: *Titi Lucretii De Rerum Natura Libri Sex* (Paris, 1565[2]). Where *desiperest* is printed, it is invariably accompanied by Lambinus' *dicat* rather than *ducat*. This is attractive, but it is a separate question. The choice is between seeing *dicat* balancing *dicere* at 3.359 or *ducat* anticipating the physical language of *trahit* at 3.362.

[3] K. Lachmann, *Caroli Lachmanni in T. Lucretii Cari De rerum natura libros commentarius* (Berlin, 1850), on 3.361, supports the 1563 conjecture: 'Lambinus optime *desiperest* contra cum *dicat*; cui Wakefieldus et Forbiger cum contra dicunt, desipiunt'; as do T. Creech, *Titi Lucretii Cari de rerum natura libri sex, quibus interpretationem et notas addidit Thomas Creech* (Oxford, 1695), and R. Heinze, *T. Lucretius Carus de rerum natura. Buch III. Erklärt von Richard Heinze* (Leipzig, 1897). For those who do not print Lambinus' conjecture, see: G. Wakefield, *T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex, comm. illustr., et cum animadversionibus R. Bentleii aliorum subinde miscuit G. Wakefield* (London, 1796–7[4]); A. Forbiger, *T. Lucretii Cari de rerum natura libri sex, ed., annotationem adiecit A. Forbiger* (Leipzig, 1828); H.A.J. Munro, *T. Lucreti Cari, De Rerum Natura, Libri Sex* (London, 1886[4]), who, with Duff and Müller, prints *difficilest* with *dicat*; J.D. Duff, *T. Lucreti Cari, De rerum natura. Liber tertius* (Cambridge, 1903); C. Bailey, *Titi Lucreti Cari. De Rerum Natura. Libri Sex* (Oxford, 1947); J. Martin, *T. Lucreti Cari, De Rerum Natura, Libri Sex* (Leipzig, 1969); E.J. Kenney, *Lucretius De Rerum Natura Book III* (Cambridge, 1971); C. Müller, *T. Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex* (Zürich, 1975); Smith (n. 1); and P.M. Brown, *Lucretius De Rerum Natura Book III* (Warminster, 1997).

[4] David Butterfield suggests to me that one could also read *credere* for *dicere*. This is a valid alternative solution to the problems of expression in the transmitted text. It should be noted, however, that Lambinus' solution is easier palaeographically. The visible and sonic similarities of *difficilest* and *desiperest* make it perfectly plausible that an unusual form was replaced by a more common one in copying the text. Another explanation for the route of corruption is that in Lucretius both *difficilest* and *desiperest* occur naturally in line-initial position (except for *difficilest* at 5.1168). For *difficilest* see 3.361, 5.527, 735, 1168 (one might note too Catullus 76.13, 14); for *desiperest* see 3.802, 5.165, 1043.

[5] See Bailey (n. 3), on 3.359–62.

[6] See *TLL* 5.1.984.12–985.61 s.v. *dicere*, iii.c.i. Although *dicere* can mean 'declare' or similar when with a direct object, no example in the accusative and infinitive construction relies solely on this meaning for sense. Cf. *OLD*[2], s.v. *dicere*, 2a.

[7] This is not how Lucretius conveys difficulty of expression or argument in any case. Where *difficile* occurs, the infinitive which it modifies is never *dicere*, but the following: *inlustrare* (1.137), *credere* (1.487), *vitare* (4.1146–7), *pervincere* (5.99), *ponere* (*certum*) (5.526–7), *docere et vincere* (*verbis*) (5.735), and (*rationem*) *reddere* (*verbis*) (5.1168). Of these seven examples, five refer explicitly to difficulty in the expression of ideas (while 1.487–8 communicates the idea of problems in understanding them), yet not one example uses *dicere* to convey this: when discussing the

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the expression, but it is therefore unlikely.[8] The point of these lines is not that it is difficult to express a particular theory, or even that it is difficult to reason or to assert (were we to accept this unusual interpretation of *dicere*). Rather, Lucretius rejects the very notion that the eyes are mere windows through which the soul sees, stating instead that it is they which allow sight. The assertion here is that the reasoning does not make sense at all.

In addition to reasons of sense and normal Latin usage, the use of *desiperest* is far more in accordance with Lucretius' argumentative strategy. Lucretius finishes his refutation of the 'doorway' theory of ocular vision at 3.359–66 with a *reductio ad absurdum* at 3.367–9: if the eyes are mere doors, why not remove them altogether, by which people might see even more clearly? The escalating verbs *ducat … trahit … detrudit* (3.361–2) are combined with the polyptoton of *lumina luminibus* (3.364) and the use of *acies* (3.362), whose primary sense is 'blade' (when *oculos* would have scanned), to draw the reader towards a vivid realization of the pain felt in the eyes at light which is too bright.[9] Here, Lucretius builds up to his *reductio ad absurdum*, and it can be no coincidence that the solution suggested for adherents to the theory is a painful one, namely, removal of the eyes (*exemptis oculis*, 3.368). On argumentative and rhetorical grounds, *desiperest* is much more suited to the argument at this point in the text, for it acts as a signpost to the idiocy of those who would propose, and adhere to, such a theory.

On examination of Lucretius' use of Latin more generally, one finds that although *dicere* is never seen with *difficile(st)*, *facile(st)* or *non/haud facile(st)* in *DRN*,[10] it is seen with *desiperest*. Each coincidence of *dicere* and *desiperest* occurs

communication of philosophy, Lucretius prefers periphrasis. This is also seen where *difficile* is avoided with *dicere*, at 3.730: *neque … dicere suppeditat*; and 4.174–5: *nemost | qui possit neque eam rationem reddere dictis*. Compare too 1.833, 2.381, 763, 5.1053 for the use of (*per*)*facile* and an infinitive (never *dicere*) to form a phrase generally referring to ease of expression. For comprehension of these ideas and *facile*, see: 2.462, 3.158, 856, 4.633, 749, 5.1282, 6.423, 532. *nil est quod possis dicere* at 1.430 could be problematic, since it seems to imply difficulty with expression similarly to *dicere … difficilest*. But the phrase 'there is nothing which you can call [wholly distinct from body and separate from void]' puts an emphasis on the *nil est*. Lucretius' point is that there is nothing of a third nature, and that there is nothing which can be called separate from body and void: in this case, it is not something which is debatable. Cf. 3.1024 for an example of *posse* with *dicere*. Similarly, *dicere contra* at 4.484 might be considered to mean something like 'argue against', but it equally makes sense as simply 'contradict'. Far from being problematic, these examples strengthen the argument that Lucretius illustrates difficulty of expression without using *dicere … difficilest*.

[8] Bailey (n. 3), on 3.361. Here, Bailey cites three passages in defence of *difficilest*: 5.526, 735 and 1168. He concedes that '*ponere certum*, *docere*, and *rationem reddere* go more easily with *difficilest* than *dicere* here', but insists that 'there is no need to accept *desiperest* from Lambinus, comparing iii.802, v.165, 1043'. Cf. Munro (n. 3), on 3.361, who admits that when the meaning of *dicere* is 'pressed' the construction with *difficilest* is problematic, but keeps *difficilest*. Conversely, see Heinze (n. 3), on 3.361, who argues against Munro and Bailey that *difficilest* cannot make sense with *dicere*, and also cites Lucretius' habit of using *desiperest*.

[9] See *TLL* 1.400.8–45 s.v. *acies*, i.a and i.b. Cf. *OLD*[2], s.v. *acies* for the primary meaning. The observations of Kenney (n. 3), esp. on 3.362, are valuable here. My thanks to the anonymous reader for their instructive suggestions at this point, in particular.

[10] See n. 7 for the uses of *difficile* in *DRN*; see n. 4 for instances of *difficilest*. Looking at equivalences, *haud facile* (*est*) occurs just twice in *DRN* (in the same sentence), with *evellere* (3.327–8) and *extrahere* (3.330), while *non facile* does not occur at all. Likewise, *difficile*'s direct opposite, (*per*) *facile*, is never used with *dicere*. Where it is seen as an adjective (as opposed to an adverb), it is with the following: *exponere* (*verbis*) (1.833), *exsolvere* (2.381), *cognoscere* (4.663, 5.1282, 6.423), *investigare* (4.701–2), *factu* (4.889), *docere* (5.1052–3), (*placidam ac pacatam*) *degere* (*vitam*) (5.1154), *obsistere* (6.331) and *reperire* (6.532). Moreover, when used as an adverb, *facile* is seen with *agnoscas* (2.402), *cognoscere* (2.462, with *possis*), (*rationem*) *reddere* (2.763, with

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in an infinitive construction and in a similar context to the argument found at 3.359–64, where Lucretius disparages or derides a philosophical view which is at variance with Epicurean teachings. At 3.359–69, the refutation of the 'doorway' theory is an illustration of the argument at 3.350–8 that the body has *sensus*; itself part of the broader point that the soul and body are united (3.323–69), and which, in turn, leads to the crux of the matter: the soul will die along with the body (3.434–44).[11] Later, the same construction of *dicere … desiperest* is used three times: first where Lucretius argues against the immortality of the soul by claiming that the immortal soul cannot be part of something mortal (3.800–2); secondly where he dismisses a fear of blasphemy, and even uses the construction *dicere porro … desiperest* (5.156–65); and thirdly where he disputes the notion of a single being who invented the *nomina rerum* (5.1041–3). Bailey uses these examples to strengthen a case against Lambinus' conjecture, where in fact they defend it: the sentence structure and vocabulary of the conjecture is more in keeping with Lucretius' style, and the similar contexts of every other occurrence (especially the example at 5.156–65) increase this possibility.[12] The correspondences in the text are striking, even down to the enjambment occurring alongside *desiperest*, which is seen also at 3.361. The appearance of *dicere* at two other points in *DRN* together with vocabulary pertaining to madness or foolishness strengthens this argument further: *dicere porro … perdelirum esse videtur* (1.690–2), and *aequa videtur enim dementia dicere utrumque* (1.704).[13] These examples form part of a refutation of the belief in fire as the fundamental element (1.690–704), as well as making a broader criticism of those who ignore the evidence provided by their senses. Here, as at 3.359–69, one finds Lucretius building up to an accusation of idiocy at the end of his rational argument. His fondness for using the language of madness where people neglect the evidence of their own senses is clear:

> perdelirum esse videtur.
> nam contra sensus ab sensibus ipse repugnat
> et labefactat eos, unde omnia credita pendent … (1.692–4)

The language here, especially of 1.693, is very close to the language of 3.361–2:

> contra cum sensus ducat eorum
> sensus enim trahit atque acies detrudit ad ipsas … (3.361–2)

Knowledge of Lucretius' rhetorical strategy and of the normal usage of the Latin words in question render Lambinus' *desiperest* more suited to the argument than the

possis), *inditur* (2.1125, 1136), *tolerarit* (*aevom*) (2.1171), *noscere* (3.158, with *possit*), *effervescit* (*in ira*) (3.295), *insequitur* (3.400), (*hoc*) *adcredere* (3.856, with *possis*), *concrescere* (4.133), *penetrare* (4.197, with *queant*), *spoliatur … et repletur* (4.377–8), (*inter se*) *iunguntur* (4.726), *haerescit* (4.742), *commovet* (4.746), *cognoscere* (4.749, with *possis*), *expletur* (4.1093), *insuescat* (4.1282), *penetrare potest* (5.698), *caperetur* (5.929), *fregere* (5.1018), *docere … suadereque* (5.1052–3), *dempsit* (*honorem*) (5.1114), *cedebant* (5.1291–2), *conlaxat* (6.232–3), *dissoluit* (6.352), *fit uti des* (6.801), *insinuatur* (6.802–3) and *ardescunt* (6.898).

[11] See also e.g. 3.455–8, 3.526–47 and 3.819–29.

[12] Compare Bailey (n. 3) on 5.321, where a repetition at 5.238 'is decisive' in accepting a conjecture made by J. Bernays, *T. Lucreti Cari De rerum natura libri sex* (Leipzig, 1862).

[13] And at 2.978, *dicere callent* can illustrate wisdom in speaking as opposed to folly.

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unsatisfactory and rather bland *difficilest* of the manuscript tradition. Lambinus' *desiperest* entirely befits the indignant and ironic tone of Lucretius' arguments at this point.

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CICERO, *PRO MURENA* 47 AND 85

47 illa quidem quae mea summa voluntate senatus frequens repudiavit mediocriter adversata tibi esse existimas? confusionem suffragiorum flagitasti, †praerogationum legis Maniliae†, aequationem gratiae, dignitatis, suffragiorum. graviter homines honesti atque in suis vicinitatibus et municipiis gratiosi tulerunt a tali viro esse pugnatum ut omnes et dignitatis et gratiae gradus tollerentur.

Cicero is narrating various proposals advanced by Servius Sulpicius Rufus in an attempt to save his failing consular campaign of 63. In addition to the *lex Tullia de ambitu* discussed in the preceding section,[1] he mentions this proposal that was blocked in the senate. The text printed is that of Clark, who compares [Sall.] 2.8.1, citing a law promulgated by C. Gracchus in his tribunate: *ut ex confusis quinque classibus sorte centuriae vocarentur*. On this basis Clark suspected that the transmitted *praerogationum* conceals a reference to the *praerogativa* (*centuria*), the first to vote in the *comitia centuriata*, traditionally chosen by lot from the centuries of the first class and the twelve classes of *equites*, and thus highly influential.[2] Certainly this is more plausible than Mommsen's *perrogationem* ('the successive asking for opinions': *OLD* s.v. *perrogatio*), which is not attested in any classical author.

Clark also thought that the reference to the Manilian law was interpolated by a scholiast, but this is difficult to credit. Ryan is probably right to see here a reference to the *lex Manilia de libertinorum suffragiis*, which allowed freedmen to vote in all the tribes, a proposal that had once been made by P. Sulpicius Rufus (*tr. pl.* 88), possibly a brother or cousin of Servius Sulpicius' father (Asc. 64C).[3] Ryan's own conjecture, *promulgationem* for *praerogationum*, is, however, unlikely to be right: Clark's *praerogativa* (or some form thereof) is a much more plausible source of the transmitted text; and the *promulgatio* of something designated as a *lex*, rather than a *rogatio*, would seem to call for explanation. The corruption may be deeper than previously assumed.

I propose that the critical sentence should read (supplements in angular brackets):

confusionem suffragiorum flagitasti, praerogati < vae ex quinque classibus sortitionem, renovati > onem legis Maniliae, aequationem gratiae, dignitatis, suffragiorum.

[1] R. Feig Vishnia, *Roman Elections in the Age of Cicero: Society, Government, and Voting* (New York and London, 2012), 136, places the law within the history of such legislation; it provided, however, no definitive solution; cf. A.M. Riggsby, *Crime and Community in Ciceronian Rome* (Austin, 1999), 152. Cicero complains of violations of his law at *Sest.* 133 and *Vat.* 37.

[2] Cf. E.S. Staveley, *Greek and Roman Voting and Elections* (London, 1972), 154–5; C. Meyer, *RE* Suppl. 8, 567.44 (s.v. *Praerogativa centuria*).

[3] F.X. Ryan, 'Cicero, *Mur.* 47: text and meaning', *Gymnasium* 101 (1994), 481–2. For the short-lived Manilian law (invalidated by the senate the day after its enactment), cf. G. Rotondi, *Leges publicae populi Romani* (Milan, 1912), 375. For the possible relation of Servius to the tribune of 88, cf. Münzer, *RE* 4A1, 851.62–4.

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