# FOUR LUCRETIAN EMENDATIONS[1]

3.912–18:

hoc etiam faciunt ubi discubuere tenentque
pocula saepe homines et inumbrant ora coronis,
ex animo ut dicant: 'breuis hic est fructus homullis;
iam fuerit neque post umquam reuocare licebit.'
tamquam in morte mali cum primis hoc sit eorum,
quod sitis exurat miseros atque arida †torrat†,
aut aliae quoius desiderium insideat rei.

917 *torrat* O[1]Q : *torret* O[a.c.] : *terra* FC : *torreat* Gifanius : *torres* Lachmann : *tortet* Romanes : *torqueat* Wakefield : *torrant* Bockemüller *aridus torror* Housman

The sole difficulty of this passages lies at the close of 917. If *atque* introduces a second (necessarily subjunctive) verb,[2] *torrat* of the paradosis would be an unparalleled third-conjugation form and is therefore highly improbable; the ungrammatical *torret* in O pre-correction can be readily dismissed. I find little attraction in Lachmann's and Housman's introduction of nominal forms,[3] particularly since 918 implies that the reference in 917 is to a single torment (i.e. *sitis*). Romanes (1934) 25 conjectured *tortet*,[4] which is supported neither by Lucretian usage nor the corpus of extant Latin.[5] By

[1] I am most grateful to Prof. E. J. Kenney, Dr M. Deufert and the anonymous readers for *CCJ* for their helpful remarks throughout.

[2] There is no difficulty, *pace* Lachmann (1850), in taking *arida* proleptically with a second verb; it can hardly be neut. pl., as Bockemüller (1873–4) seems to wish.

[3] Lachmann's *torres* (presumably intended to mean 'dryness')—a '*felice correzione*' for Giussani (1896–8)—is of dubious Latinity and is first found only in the '*Glossarium Cyrilli*' (*CGL* 2.237 ἀπόκαυμα, *ustilatio, torres*) of the seventh (?) century. Yet, as Hoppe (1893) and Heinze (1897) have shown, *torres* (= masc. *torris*) could only plausibly mean 'torch'/'firebrand', which, though in keeping with the imagery of *exurat*, would be modified by *arida* with difficulty and could hardly stand. Housman's *torror* is little better, only found before the fifth-century medical writer Caelius Aurelianus (*Chron.* 3.89, 5.76, where it means 'scorching' *uel sim.*) if read in Ennius (*Ann.* 558 *per ci.*), where it would be barely intelligible as a plural; further, the resultant sigmatic ecthlipsis of a second declension masc. nom. sg. adjective only finds one formal parallel (2.830); cf. Butterfield (2008).

[4] With this suggestion he therefore long preceded West (1961), who independently conjectured the same.

[5] Lucretius only uses *tortare* as an intransitive deponent at 3.661 (describing the writhing movements of a snake), although Q, perhaps owing to the verb's unfamiliarity, here wrote *ortari*. In its only other occurrence in Latin (Pompon. *Dec. full.* 34 F. *et ubi insilui in coleatum eculeum, ibi tolutim tortor*), its sense is most uncertain, perhaps having a sexual force; Adams (1982) 206 is, however, duly cautious about interpretation.



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contrast, *torreat* ('parch')[6] stands as the ideal verb in the expected form[7] but can only close the hexameter with synizesis of its latter syllable. Lucretius does avail himself of this metrical device, albeit sparingly, but nowhere does he employ it within a verbal termination.[8] As Kenney (1971) has noted, the first true parallel for such synizesis is not found until one century later, with Persius' trisyllabic *ebulliat* (2.10), where -i- more easily adopts a consonantal character. It is therefore rather rash to impose disyllabic *torreat* upon the poet, particularly since the form without synizesis is perfectly tractable in dactylic verse.

Perhaps an easier solution than the above is to posit the accidental transposition of adjacent words (and natural tweaking of the result).[9] K. Müller (1975) has preceded me in taking this approach, conjecturing (without argument) *ac torreat arda*. I cannot, however, believe in *arda*, a vulgar, contracted form of *arida*. It is most scantily attested in Plautus[10] and Lucilius[11] but no later, and such use of a colloquial form finds no true parallel in Lucretius. I prefer to read *ac torreat arens*. Once *torreat* and *arens* were mistakenly transposed, *arida* would have most easily arisen from *arens* and *atque* from its byform *ac*; *torreat*, which (as Lachmann first suggested) was perhaps preserved as *torret* with suprascript *a* in the archetype, explains the divergence of OQ (and presumably Oψ[12]). Parallels are not hard to find for the expression, with Tibullus

[6] For similar usage, cf. *torret* (of the sun) at 5.215 and *torrere* (of a flame) at 5.902; cf. also *torrescere* (of men in the afterlife), a ἅπαξ at 3.890, and *torrida* (of earth after a lightning strike) at 5.1220.

[7] Lucretius employs *torrere* unequivocally as a second conjugation verb at 2.415, 3.1019 (unless N. Heinsius' *torquet* is to be preferred), 5.215 and 5.902.

[8] We find monosyllabic *suo* (1.1022, 5.420) alongside its iambic counterparts and spondaic *deorsum/seorsum* (1.362, 2.190, 205, 221, 473, 3.286, 334, 564, 4.489, 495, 628, 853, 5.140, 6.335) alongside the bacchiac forms; *quoad* is monosyllabic in both its occurrences (5.1213, 1433). Other examples include spondaic *eādem* (1.480, 4.744, 786, 959), *eodem* (2.663, 6.961, 1040), *eaedem* (1.306), *antehac* (1.541, 3.969 *per ci.*. 5.338). Synizesis is also employed in the prepositional compounds of verbs: *anteactam* (3.672, 935), *deerrarunt* (3.860), *eicit* (3.877, 4.1272), *cooperuisse* (5.342) and *coolescere* (6.1068) (I ignore examples like spondaic *prohibet* (3.863 *per ci.*) which may simply be orthographic back-formations from *probet*). Critics have therefore rightly rejected monstrosities such as Isaac Voss' pyrrhic *ruere* at 5.312. Synizesis within inflectional syllables is significantly rarer: *aranei* (3.383 *per ci.*), *rei* (3.918, 4.885) and, possibly, *ingratiis* (3.1069, 6.216). I follow Avancius in transposing *principium quoius hinc* to *quoius principium hinc* at 1.149, thereby removing the sole instance of monosyllabic *quoius*.

[9] For the transposition of adjacent words cf. 1.117 (QG), 2.640 (Q), 3.249, 332, 564, 999 ($OQ^{a.c.}$), 4.342 (Q), 6.710; for the movement of a word over a larger distance within a verse, cf. 2.203, 3.374 (*per ci.*), 6.281 and 1078. For the common transposition of (prodelided) *est*, see Lachmann (1850) *ad* 2.275.

[10] Pl. Aul. 297 (*ardus*), Per. 266 (*ardos*); neither is entirely secure.

[11] 733 M. (*ardum*), cited for this particular anomaly by Nonius (74.19–20 M.), who makes no mention of Plautus. The sole inscriptional instance (*arda*, *CIL* I² 698 2,21) is dated to 105 BC.

[12] ψ denotes the parent of QGVU.



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perhaps providing the closest echo: *et Canis arenti torreat arua siti* (1.4.42).[13] That *arens* is not found in Lucretius (although cf. *facit are* at 6.962 and *arescit* (s.v.l.) at 6.841) is an objection of little force when the five primary Augustan poets used it without scruple.[14]

4.542–6:

> nec simili penetrant aures primordia forma,
> quom tuba depresso grauiter sub murmure mugit
> et reboat raucum retro cita barbara bombum,
> et †ualidis necti tortis† ex Heliconis
> quom liquidam tollunt lugubri uoce querellam.

In 543–4 Lucretius treats the low-pitched sound produced by a *tuba*, apparently contrasted with a smoother and higher-pitched note in 545–6,[15] thereby elucidating the varied nature and effect of sounds.[16] The presence of *sub* in 543 presents a little-discussed difficulty, since there is nothing to commend its governing *murmure*[17] (the certain Italic emendation for *murmura* OQ)[18] and, if it is in tmesis with *mugit*, this would be the sole occurrence of *submugire*:[19] further, such a verb would here possess dubious

[13] One could compare *sitis arens* at Ov. *Her.* 4.174 and Sen. *Thy.* 4–5; *arenti ore* occurs alongside *sitis* at Prop. 2.17.6 and Ov. *Met.* 14.277. For the collocation of verbal *areo* with *sitis* one can look as far back as Pl. *Per.* 42 (*in aquam a pumici nunc postulas, qui ipsius siti aret*). That we find *sitis arida* at 6.1175 (of a symptom of the Athenian plague) is no serious objection to my suggestion; on the contrary, the pairing may have served as a catalyst for corruption here.

[14] Cf. Hor. *Epod.* 14.4, Prop. 2.15.51 (and as n.13), Tib. (as above), Verg. *G.* 1.110, 2.377, 3.555, 4.268, *A.* 3.350, 12.522, Ov. *Am.* 3.6.96, *Her.* 4.171, *Ars* 2.118, *Rem.* 617, *Med.* 93, *Met.* 6.355, 7.277, 556, 11.112, 13.691, 14.277. Although the verb *arere* is attested as early as Cato and Plautus, I can find no use of *arens* in prose prior to Liv. 44.38.9. In literature of the first century AD, both poetry and prose, *arens* is frequently found. The comparative rarity of *arens* is, I believe, sufficiently overcome by its close harmony with *sitis*; although one could conjecture *ardens* in its place, the resultant expression would lack emphasis upon the parching dryness of extreme thirst.

[15] The text of 545 remains stubbornly unsolved and will not be discussed here. Nonetheless, 546 provides sufficient indication as to the force of these two lines.

[16] Lambinus transposed 4.551–2 (*asperitas autem uocis fit ab asperitate / principiorum et item leuor leuore creatur*) to before 542 and almost all subsequent editors have adopted the change.

[17] Munro (1886) *ad loc.* cites good examples of *sub* meaning 'at the time of', a sense which can hardly be attractive here. *OLD* s.v. *sub* §11a 'under, to the accompaniment of' provides, *prima facie*, the least inappropriate sense of *sub* for our purposes, but examples there cited refer to circumstances external to the verbal subjects. *depresso. . .sub murmure*, by contrast, modifies *tuba*, which, when *mugit*, necessarily creates the *murmur*: a trumpet does not sound 'to the accompaniment of' its blast.

[18] *murmura* cannot be defended on either reading, for *sub* with the accusative would be without sense and *mugit* could not take an object.

[19] Festus' quotation of *summussi* (384 L.) from Naevius as equivalent to *murmuratores* ('mutterers') can hardly be taken as evidence in its favour. Furthermore, that Ennius before (*Sota* 6 *FLP tibicina maximo labore / mugit*) and Vergil later (*Aen.* 8.526 *Tyrrhenusque tubae mugire per aethera clangor*; cf. also Stat. *Theb.* 6.120) employed similar expressions with the simplex *mugire* supports keeping *mugit* uncompounded in the present passage.



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force[20] and the dissociation of *sub* from the following ablative would be most unnatural.[21] That the verse is needlessly ambiguous in a passage that wishes to make a clear and colourful point should suggest corruption. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that the preposition has rarely been emended.[22]

In order to obviate both difficulties of *sub*, I suggest *suo*. The same form of *suus* is employed as a monosyllable by Lucretius at 1.1022 ( = 5.420), as commonly found in early (especially scenic) poetry and archaising writers (cf. *sis* for *suis* at 3.1025, an Ennian reminiscence).[23] The force of *suo murmure mugit* could be emphatic 'lows with its own (distinct) deep murmur'[24] but need not be. The simple corruption of *suo* to *sub*[25] would have been aided both by the metrical rarity of monosyllabic *suo* and the bare ablative *murmure* that follows; *sumurmura*, the reading of Q, may indicate that *su* rather than *sub* stood in the archetype. 544 can, I believe, be retained as presented by the mss (reading *reboat* ($Q^1$) for *reuorat* $OQ^{a.c.}$).

4.1094–6:

> ex hominis uero facie pulchroque colore
> nil datur in corpus praeter simulacra fruendum
> tenuia, quae uento spes raptat saepe misella.

[20] For *submugire* would most naturally mean '(bel)low a little' or 'gently' rather than 'low in a low pitch'; the closest analogue to the verb, *submurmurare*, attested first in Terentius Maurus (2129) of the second/third century AD, means 'murmur gently' not 'murmur at a low pitch', since his *submurmurat* translates Theoc. 1.1–2 τὸ ψιθύρισμα. . . μελίσδεται. In the writings of Augustine and later Christian Fathers the verb means 'murmur in secret'. *submugit* would therefore not naturally possess the desired force; as it is, the resounding low pitch of the *tuba* is sufficiently covered by *depresso grauiter. . . murmure mugit* and 544.

[21] The univerbated *submurmure*, as if the ablative of a noun **submurmur*, is printed by Avancius in the first Aldine (Venice, 1500) but is nothing more than a trinket of critical ingenuity. The noun is found only within the entry to *sublinguium* in Placidus' *Glossarum libri* (*CGL* 5.100) of the fifth or sixth century.

[22] As of April 2008 (when submitting these *Lucretiana*), I know of only one published text or emendation that alters *sub*, namely the large-scale alterations made to 543–4 by Bockemüller (1873–4) in his idiosyncratic edition: *cum tuba de pressu grauiter sua "barbara" mugit / et renouat raucum retro cita murmure bombum*. Outside print, I find that in the margin of Romanes' annotated copy of his *Further Notes* (1935), which is in my possession, he altered *sub* to *sua*, which I can only construe as a neuter plural. Yet not only is it hard to believe that *sua* could be taken as 'its songs' (*uel sim.*) but *mugire* is intransitive and *sua* could hardly operate as an internal accusative. As the note *ad loc.* of Lambinus (1583), one of the finest Latinists to have lived since antiquity, demonstrates, *cum murmure* would not be an unnatural expression, although no one to my knowledge has proposed to read it in the present passage (Marcus Deufert informs me, however, that he is attracted to it).

[23] For other Lucretian instances of synizesis, cf. above n. 8. It is not impossible that the line echoes a lost line of a poetic predecessor who employed various forms of *suus* as monosyllables without scruple.

[24] Cf. 5.768 *et tamen ipsa suo si fulget luna nitore* and 1437–8 *sol et luna suo lustrantes lumine circum / perdocuere...*

[25] It is worth noting that $Q^{a.c.}$ wrote *bdorem* for *odorem* at 2.835 but I do not here require the use of palaeographical arguments.



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Lucretius thus summarises how the pitiable lover gains little from the *simulacra* of female beauty, which—so the manuscripts state—'his wretched hope often snatches to the wind'. Yet *uento* can scarcely be construed as datival and no sense could be wrung from an ablative. Accordingly, numerous editors have followed the Italic correction (AB) *rapta est* for *raptat*, which, written *raptast*, differs little from the paradosis: 'and this wretched hope is often snatched (away) by the wind'. Yet, as Bailey (1947) rightly notes, the *spes. . .misella* must surely allude to the *spes* of 1086–7 (*namque in eo spes est, / unde est ardoris origo, / restingui quoque posse ab eodem corpore flammam*). However, reading *raptast*,[26] the *spes* would be of a different nature: whereas the hope at 1086–7 is that the object of a man's love will quench his passion, here it would have to be, in view of *quae*, some hope (perhaps for future enjoyment, cf. *fruendum*) arising from the receipt of *simulacra*. This is unnecessarily contorted.

Rejecting the paradosis and the Italic emendation, Bentley first imposed greater changes, reading *mentem spe lactant* (or *captant*). . .*misellā*, with *simulacra* as subject. Although better in sense, the change is violent and, if the introduction of *mentem* is to be commended, Müller's (1975) more conservative *mentem spe raptant* is neater. Other emendations do not appeal.[27]

It strikes me as easiest to take *quae* as neut. acc. pl.—for it most naturally refers to the *simulacra*. . .*tenuia*—and, retaining *uento* (as dative), to change only two letters and read *iactat*: 'which (*simulacra*) their wretched little hope often hurls/abandons to the wind'.[28] We thereby retain the commonplace of a good prospect's dispersal by the wind (for which see Brown (1987) 235): the lover's vain hope of quenching his insatiable passion means that the potential enjoyment of *tenuia simulacra*—real albeit slight—is necessarily wasted by his misguided hope for more.[29] The passage therefore stands in line with the hapless attempts of the lovers at 1076–83 and 1105–20, whose actions are perverted by their insatiable hopes and desires. With the confusion of *i* and *r* (for which cf., e.g., *iubeant* OQ for *rubeant* 6.210) the subsequent corruption would have been easy.[30]

[26] The tense of the proposal is rarely criticised but I can see no reason why Lucretius, in a passage of generalising presents, would here write *spes raptast* and not *rapitur spes*.

[27] *uanos spe raptant* Brieger : *uentus spes raptat* Lambinus : *uentus spe raptat* Merrill : *uecors spe captat* Polle : *mentem spes captat* Lachmann. Wakefield (1813), who accepts *raptast*, laments *ad loc.* 'In quantum hic versiculus doctos viros torserit, et quot intempestivas conjecturas progenuerit, piget recensere: mera ludibria ingeniorum male feriatorum et frustatorum'. Indeed, the less said of Romanes' 'wretched prostitute' (*scrapta. . .misella*) the better, but I still cannot believe in *raptast*.

[28] The verb may recall 4.1054 *seu mulier toto iactans e corpore amorem*.

[29] *saepe* therefore underlines that this miserable event happens often in society; it does not imply that the *spes misella* is sometimes not so deleterious.

[30] Lambinus' (1583) deletion of the verse, after some discussion, is hardly profitable and has not found a following: it is perhaps only from weariness of the subject matter that the pious Creech (1695) politely advises his reader at the end of his note to reject the verse.



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5.366–72:

nec tamen est ut inane, neque autem corpora desunt,
ex infinito quae possint forte coorta[31]
corruere hanc rerum uiolento turbine summam
aut aliam quamuis cladem importare pericli,
nec porro natura loci spatiumque profundi
deficit, exspargi quo possint moenia mundi,
aut alia quauis possunt ui pulsa perire.

Lucretius here emphasises the immensity of the universe and the continual danger that some body external to the world could 'overwhelm this totality of matter in a violent storm or bring about some other disaster of danger'. The last part of this expression, awkward in English, is much more difficult in Latin, for the genitive *pericli* dependent upon *cladem* is an unattested construction, which Housman (1972) 520 declared he could not translate:[32] it cannot be a genitive of description, since it lacks an adjective, nor can it be a genitive of sphere, since *peric(u)la* are not a subdivision of *clades*.[33] 369 has therefore often been emended, though rarely happily.[34] In this journal Watt (2003) 159 offered forth *causam* in lieu of *cladem*, which certainly deserves serious consideration; nonetheless, *causa. . .pericli* is a little bathetic after the force of 368 and the corruption *causam* > *cladem* is not particularly easy (whether via *cs̄am* or not).[35]

Would it not be more natural to emend *pericli* to *pericla*[36] and to read ablatival *alia quauis clade*? Such plural indefinite *pericla*, which provide a more direct and striking

[31] Marullus' certain correction for *coperta* OQ.

[32] He there dismisses it as an unlucretian verse 'from the author of the absurd interpolation 372' (a verse that had already been rejected by Bruno (1872), Bockemüller (1873–4), Giussani (1896–8) and Brieger (1899); Müller (1975) and Deufert (1996, 1999) have since followed suit). The passages cited tentatively by Munro (1886) and Bailey (1947) *ad loc.* to support this 'bold expression' (Merrill (1907)) do not pass muster as parallels; it is nonsense to suggest, as have earlier commentators, that *periculi* amounts to *periculosam* (Ernout and Robin (1962) *ad loc.* 'le génitif remplace ici un adjectif tel que *periculosam*, au sens de *quae facit perire*').

[33] For a characteristically decisive discussion of this and similar constructions in Latin, cf. Housman (1972) 519–22.

[34] Bruno's (1872) otiose *per ictus* for *pericli* is lamentably weak. I also find in the marginalia of Housman's copy of the third edition of Munro (1873, preserved at St John's College, Oxford) his early, independent suggestion *per ictum*, evidently rejected in later years.

[35] Further, Watt here supposes an instance of the transcriptional error of which he is now the eponymous hero (the *error Wattianus*; cf. Watt (2004)), whereby *cladem magnasque ruinas* of 5.347 was recalled but *causa* (opening 347) was instead imported (as *causam*). Elegant and inventive as this is, it hardly seems probable in this particular instance.

[36] i and *a* are often confused in the ninth-century mss of Lucretius.



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expression, are often invoked by Lucretius.[37] With either *pericla* corrupted to *pericli* (perhaps under the influence of *profundi* and *mundi* closing the two subsequent lines) or the ablatival phrase transcribed preemptively as accusative, the other change would have naturally followed. The last line of the passage quoted above, which I am not yet convinced is unlucretian, provides an apt parallel for the expression.[38]

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[37] 1.47, 2.15, 649, 3.55, 775 (*at non sunt immortali ulla pericla*), 5.44.
[38] Cf. esp. 6.641–2 *neque enim mediocri clade coorta / flammea tempestas* (of the eruption of Etna).



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