

a major lyric poet on papyrus from Egypt (Bacchylides, 1898; a scrap of Sappho containing fr. 3, was published in 1880). The Herculaneum library (of which Wordsworth did know) produced mainly prose, philosophical works. Although several centre on the philosophical criticism of poetry and contain a large number of quotations of the Greek poets, the treatises of Philodemus, Demetrius the Laconian, and Chrysippus, to name a few of the philosophical authors of the Herculaneum library, will not have fulfilled Wordsworth's wishes. But in 1989 the Norwegian classical scholar Knut Kleve, working in the *Officina dei Papiri* of the *Biblioteca Nazionale* in Naples, came across fragments of a roll broken open in the late eighteenth century, covered with a large Rustic capital script of a generation earlier than the poem on the battle of Actium copied in the early Augustan period (probably not long after 31 BC, the date of the battle), which is also preserved from Herculaneum.¹ Subsequent investigation seemed to reveal that the fragments came from several books of the *DRN*. In all, the tiny fragments contain remnants of sixteen hexameters from four or, more likely, two or three books of the *DRN*, from two or three different papyrus rolls.

More recently Mario Capasso (2003) has questioned Kleve's identification, casting substantial doubt on the identification of the exiguous fragments assigned to Book 2. But the identification of the others, if not entirely certain, may now be said to be compatible with the traces isolated by the new multi-spectral imaging techniques applied to the papyri by a team from Brigham Young University in 2002. A search for these strings of letters, separated into words by an inter-punct by the scribe for the aid of the reader, even discounting those uncertainly read, in the corpus of Latin texts on the Packard Humanities Institute disk (currently the main computer-searchable CD of ancient Latin texts) produces matches only with the passages of Lucretius adduced by Kleve.²

The showpieces for the defence's case are as follows (see fig. 2.1):

Fr. A (P.Herc. 1829, pezzo 1a):

]tum-esc[
]cor[

= *DRN* 5.1301-2

[et-quam-falciferos-arma]tum-esc[endere-currus]
[inde-boves-lucas-turrito-]cor[pore-taetras]

¹ Kleve 1989.

² The identification is accepted by M. F. Smith 1992 and by Flores 2002: 19-20 and on *DRN* 1.874, 873; Kleve 1997 expands his explication of the papyrus fragments. See also Kleve; however, autopsy has confirmed no overlap of P.Herc. 395 with our text of the *DRN*, although it is certain from fr. 17C that this papyrus contains Latin verses. See also Suerbaum 1994 and Nünlist 1997. See also the response to Capasso 2003 by Delattre 2003.

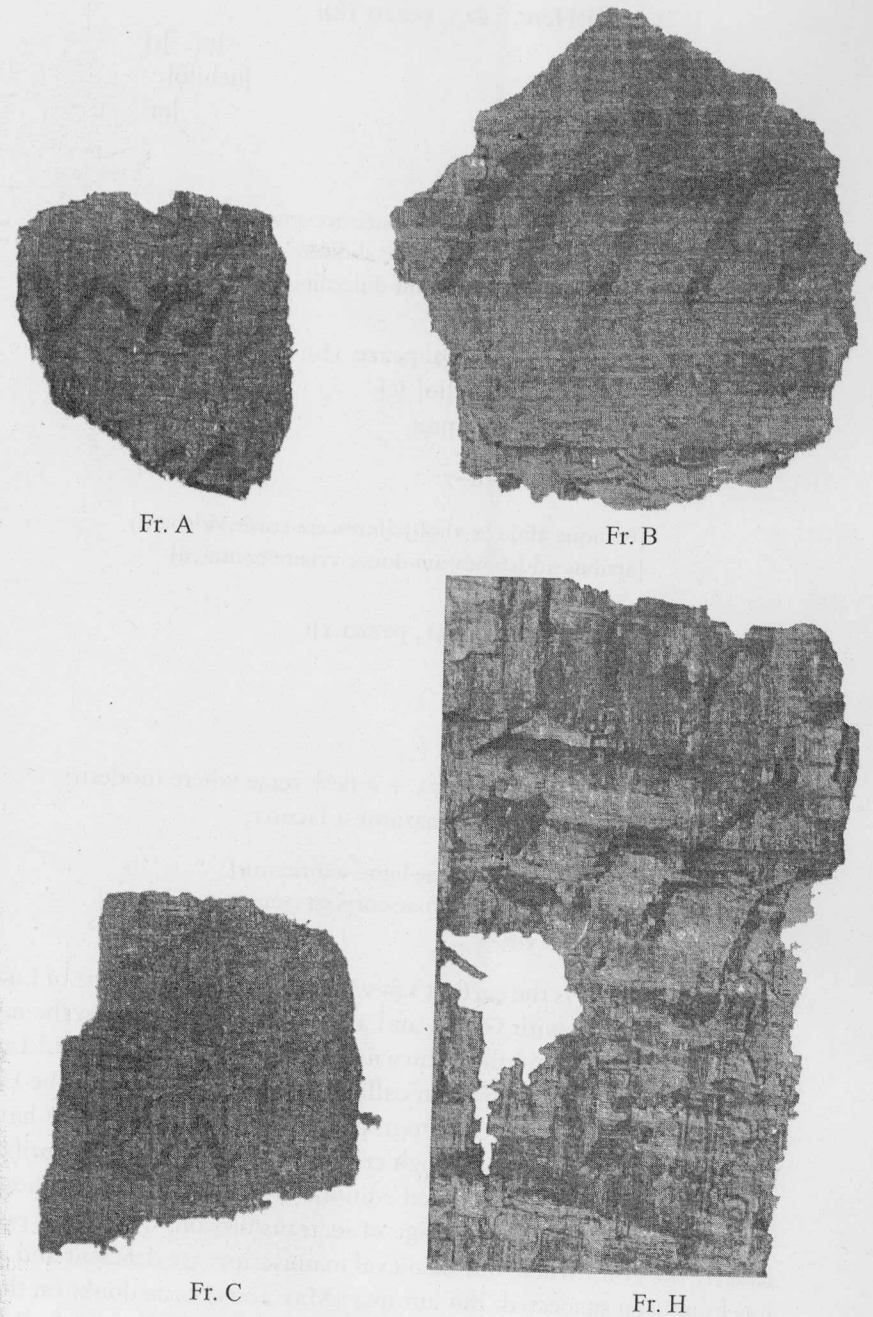


Figure 2.1. Fragments of Lucretius from the Herculaneum Library.

Fr. B (P.Herc. 1829, pezzo 1a):

]n[·]r[
]uehilo[
]m[

= DRN 5.1408-10

[unde-etiam-vigiles-nunc-haec-accepta-tue]n[tu]r
[et-numerum-servare-genus-didicere-neq]uehilo
[maiozem-interea-capiunt-dulcedini-fructu]m

Fr. C (P.Herc. 1829, pezzo 1b):

]x:alio[.]c[
]sum[m]

= DRN 5.1456-7:

[namque-alid-e]x-alio[.]c[larescere-corde-vidabant]
[artibus-ad.]summ[um-donec-venere-cacumen]

Fr. H (P.Herc. 1831, pezzo 1):

]igen[
]ueq[
].-uir[

= DRN 1.874, 873 + a new verse where modern editors normally assume a lacuna:

[ex-alien]igen[is-quaе-lignis-exoriuntur]
[praeterea-tel]lus-q[uae-corpora-cumque-nalit-auget]
]x-vir[

This gives us what is the earliest known manuscript of any part of Lucretius, one contemporary with Cicero and a millennium earlier than the next surviving witnesses, the ninth-century manuscripts O, Q, and GVU.³ Lucretius scholars have been very slow in calling for full publication of the Herculaneum papyrus fragments: photographs of only several of these have been published, while Capasso, though critical of some of Kleve's identifications, does not produce new, corrected editions of them. Fr. H could show a text of Lucretius, at a very early stage of its transmission, with a line present at exactly the point where our medieval manuscripts are deficient and a lacuna has long been suspected. But autopsy (May 2007) casts doubt on this, since line 2 seems to read -ue, not -us· (as Kleve read). However, fr. B shows a

³ See pp. 205-7 below.

rare and identifiably Lucretian word, *nequehilo*, so that frs. A-C place a copy of the most famous Epicurean poet of all time in a late Republican collection of books which included the works of the founder of the school himself, Epicurus, together with those of an older contemporary of Lucretius, Philodemus, who was born in Gadara in Syria about 110 BC and came to Rome in about 75 BC. Cicero's speech *Against Piso* reveals that he enjoyed the patronage of Calpurnius Piso, the father-in-law of Julius Caesar. Like Epicurus, Philodemus wrote philosophical treatises, including a *History of Philosophers* used by Diogenes Laertius a century later. Cicero also tells us that he wrote elegant poetry in the form of epigrams suitable for convivial occasions. Many of these are preserved in the *Greek Anthology*, and appear in a list of poems on a papyrus from as far away as middle Egypt. One of Philodemus' philosophical works, *On Piety*, was translated by Cicero, who by then had read and possibly even edited Lucretius.⁴ The presence of all these books in a late-Republican private library would not in itself be matter of great note, except for one fact: this private library was probably in the palatial home of L. Calpurnius Piso, father-in-law of Julius Caesar and patron of the Epicurean Philodemus, as we know from one of Philodemus' epigrams (29 Sider), which invites Piso to dine at his own home on a simple meal while enjoying a philosophical and literary feast.

The identification of a Herculaneum papyrus as a text of Lucretius and the question of its significance among the books of the Herculaneum library have given rise to much speculation. It has been claimed as evidence for a personal intellectual connection between Lucretius and Philodemus (or Piso), and even for Lucretius' physical presence in the Villa of the Papyri (with or without Philodemus as a co-resident). But it has also been pointed out that the book may not have been part of the Republican-period library and could have been added later by another owner, and that it thus may not have formed part of the collection that contained Philodemus' books. Others have even doubted whether, if Lucretius' poem had formed part of Philodemus' library, he would have been able to appreciate Lucretius' Latin!

The very fragmentary text of the papyrus manuscript cannot give us anything more than a spot-check on the earliest stages of Lucretius' manuscript transmission. It cannot tell us anything certain about Lucretius as a person or his relations with others. Even the identification of the Herculaneum villa as Piso's, and of Philodemus' connection with the villa, rests solely on the slender grounds of the presence of a large number of Philodemus' books there (among over a dozen other authors thus far identified).⁵

⁴ See p. 113 below.

⁵ See Gigante 2002: 115-21, 'The books from Herculaneum'.

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