

**CONTROVERSIAL ELEMENTS
IN LUCRETIUS: A
THESIS FOR THE DOCTORATE
IN PHILOSOPHY**

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Controversial Elements in Lucretius: A Thesis for the Doctorate in Philosophy by George P. Eckman

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GEORGE P. ECKMAN

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Controversial Elements in Lucretius

A THESIS

FOR THE

Doctorate in Philosophy

—BY—

GEORGE P. ECKMAN

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Εἰ μὴδὲν ἡμᾶς αἱ τῶν μετεώρων ὑποψίαι ἠνόχλου
καὶ αἱ περὶ θανάτου, μὴ ποτε πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἢ τι, εἴ τι τὸ
μὴ κατανοεῖν τοὺς ὄρους τῶν ἀλληθόνων καὶ τῶν ἐπιθυ-
μιῶν, οὐκ ἂν προσεδεόμεθα φυσιολογίας.

Ἐπικούρου Κέρια Δόξαι, XI. *Diogenes Laertius*. X. 142.

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New York.

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CORRIGENDA.

- P. 8, note 2, read *plurimis* instead of *plurimus*; *consulere* not *considere*.
- P. 9, line 4, read *Catius Insuper*.
- P. 26, line 26, read *καίτοι* instead of *καίτοι*.
- P. 29, line 13, read Ἐμπεδοκλεί; ἀναγκαῖον for ἀναγκαῖον.
- P. 30, line 3, read *queunt* instead of *quent*.
- P. 31, line 9, read *στείροις* instead of *στείροις*.
- line 22, read *γυμνοί* instead of *γυμνοί*.
- line 23, read *πεινητέοντα* instead of *πεινητεοντα*.
- P. 32, line 22, read *φησι* instead of *φησι*.
- P. 38, line 27, read τὸ ὁμοιομερές instead of τὸ ὁμοιομερεια.
- P. 46, line 27, read *depruare* instead of *depruare*.
- P. 68, line 10, read *βιβλοῖς* instead of *βιβλοῖς*.
- P. 75, line 7, read *πρῶτον* instead of *πρῶτων*.
- P. 81, line 1, read *nunquam* instead of *nemquam*; remove period after *Chrysiptam*.
- line 2, read *vocabat* instead of *vocebat*.
- P. 82, note 2, read *Praefatio* instead of *Prefatio*.
- P. 90, line 18, read *τούτων* instead of *τούων*.
- P. 103, line 11, read *πρόληψις* instead of *πρόληψις*.

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IN

LUCRETIUS.

INTRODUCTION.

CONTEMPORARY INTEREST IN EPICUREANISM.

It cannot be denied that the poem of Lucretius failed to awaken any marked interest until long after its publication. The almost unbroken silence of his contemporaries regarding him is significant of the comparative indifference with which his production was received. The reasons for this neglect are various and not far to seek. In the first place the moment was inopportune for the appearance of such a work. "It was composed in that hapless time when the rule of the oligarchy had been overthrown and that of Caesar had not yet been established, in the sultry years during which the outbreak of the civil war was awaited with long and painful suspense."¹ The poet betrays his solicitude for the welfare of his country at this crisis in the introduction of his work, in which he invokes the aid of Venus in persuading Mars to command peace—

*Effice ut interea fera moenera militiæ
Per maria ac terras omnis sopita quiescant*²—

and acknowledges that his attention is diverted from literary labors by the exigencies of the state :

*Nam neque nos agere hoc patriæ tempore iniquo
Possumus æquo animo nec Memmi clara propago
Talibus in rebus communi desse saluti.*³

Munro believes these lines were written toward the close of 695, when Caesar as consul had formed his coalition with Pompey and when there was almost a reign of terror.⁴ The reflection of a state of

¹ Mommsen, *Hist. Rome*, IV, p. 698 (Eng. Tr.).

² l. 29, 30.

³ l. 41-43.

⁴ Munro, *Lucretius*, II, p. 30.