

Original citation:

Ansell-Pearson, Keith. (2016) Naturalism as a joyful science : Nietzsche, Deleuze, and the art of life. *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 47 (1). pp. 119-141.

Permanent WRAP URL:

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/75664>

Copyright and reuse:

The Warwick Research Archive Portal (WRAP) makes this work by researchers of the University of Warwick available open access under the following conditions. Copyright © and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable the material made available in WRAP has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge. Provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

Publisher's statement:

© Penn State University Press. *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*
<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/610576>

A note on versions:

The version presented here may differ from the published version or, version of record, if you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the 'permanent WRAP URL' above for details on accessing the published version and note that access may require a subscription.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: wrap@warwick.ac.uk

Naturalism as a Joyful Science:
Nietzsche, Deleuze, and the Art of Life

Keith Ansell-Pearson

ABSTRACT

In this essay I explore naturalism as a joyful science by focusing on how Nietzsche and Deleuze appropriate an Epicurean legacy. In the first section I introduce some salient features of Epicurean naturalism and highlight how the study of nature is to guide ethical reflection on the art of living. In the next section I focus on Nietzsche and show the nature and extent of his Epicurean commitments in his middle period writings. In the third and final main section my attention shifts to Deleuze and to showing how he fruitfully demonstrates the intersection of physics and ethics in the Epicurean method of thinking. I am interested in Epicureanism since, as both Nietzsche and Deleuze show, it holds ethics to be central to philosophical inquiry and activity: we don't simply study nature as end in itself but as a way of better understanding how we can promote a flourishing life. Our being in the world is not to be guided by myths and illusions, especially of a supernatural kind, but rather by the affirmation of the positive power of an immanent and multiple nature and by the joy that results from recognising the diversity of its elements.

Natural history, as the history of the wars and victories of moral-spiritual force in opposition to fear, imagination, indolence, superstition, folly, should be narrated in such a way that everyone who hears it would be irresistibly impelled to strive for spiritual-physical health and maturity, to feel gladness at being the heir and continuer of humanity, to sense his need for ever nobler undertakings (Nietzsche, MOM 184).¹

This citation is a significant one since it brings into relief in a highly instructive manner Nietzsche's two main concerns once his thought has started to mature circa 1878-80 and take on its enlightened shape, namely, on the one hand, his commitment to naturalism – to be pursued through the study of natural history – and, on the other hand, the concern with philosophical therapeutics. It is interesting to reflect on the fact that Nietzsche

conceives natural history ‘as the history of the wars and victories of moral-spiritual force’, and he is clearly stating his naturalist-minded agenda when he refers to the need to combat ‘fear, imagination, indolence, superstition, and folly’. In this essay I want to highlight some of the key features of Nietzsche’s attachment to naturalism and his conception of its ends. Gilles Deleuze argues that as a project naturalism has both a speculative or theoretical dimension and a practical one, in which the goal of the project is the production of pleasure and the defeat of sadness, and where sadness equals the diminution of our power of action. In what follows I shall clarify the sense of this pleasure and the nature of the defeat, and also show the extent to which Nietzsche conforms to this conception of philosophy. He does so in the context of adapting ancient naturalism to specifically modern conditions of existence. This is what he is developing in his middle period writings as the project of ‘the joyful science’.

It is arguable that Democritean and Epicurean naturalism are the first philosophies to radically de-deify nature, which serves as an inspiration for Nietzsche from his earliest writings: he calls Democritus the freest human being (KSA 7, 23 [17]). More than this de-deification of nature Nietzsche **is** inspired in his middle period by the Epicurean garden practice of philosophy. We know he had plans to create his own garden in the style of Epicurus and it deeply influences his conception of philosophical practice.² In what follows I first explicate some key aspects of Epicurean teaching. I then examine the reception of Epicurus we encounter in Nietzsche and centred on his middle period writings. In the third and final section my attention moves to Deleuze’s reading of Epicurean naturalism, which is focused on Lucretius.

Epicurean Teaching and the Epicurean Attachment to Life

The teaching of Epicurus is centred on the study of nature, and this is its first and most fundamental principle. But Epicurus does not restrict himself to being a philosopher-scientist simply producing a doctrine of physics. Rather, he wishes to be a teacher, and to this end he produced a summary of his system so as ‘to facilitate the firm memorization of the most general doctrines, in order that at each and every opportunity they may be able to help themselves on the most important issues, to the degree that they retain their grasp on the study of nature’.³ As Foucault shows, Epicurus has an ‘ethopoetic’ appreciation of knowledge, which is a mode of knowledge that provides *ethos*. In the Epicurean texts knowledge of nature is called *phusiologia*, which is a ‘modality of knowledge (*savoir*) of nature insofar as it is philosophically relevant for the practice of the self’ (see Epicurus, *Vatican Sayings* 45).⁴ Epicurus opposes knowledge as *paideia*, which is a cultural learning that aims at glory and is little more than a kind of boastful knowledge. Foucault notes that Epicurus rejects this mode of knowledge as a culture of boasters, one mainly developed by concocters of words that seek admiration from the masses. The knowledge Epicurus promotes is one that prepares the self for the events of a life. Foucault explains:

...what does *phusiologia* do instead of producing people who are only pompous and inconsistent boasters? It *paraskeuei*, that is to say it prepares...*Paraskeue* is the equipping, the preparation of the subject and the soul so that they will be properly, necessarily, and sufficiently armed for whatever circumstance of life may arise...it is the exact opposite of *paideia*.⁵

The knowledge that is *phusiologia* serves to provide the individual with boldness and courage, what Foucault calls a kind of intrepidity, a preparedness that enables the individual to stand firm not only against the (many) beliefs that others seek to impose on him, but also against the hazards of life and the authority of those who wish to lay down the law: ‘Absence of fear, a sort of recalcitrance and spiritedness if you like: this is what *phusiologia* gives to the individuals who learn it’.⁶ This means that, strictly speaking, *phusiologia* is not a branch of knowledge (*savoir*), but rather a knowledge (*connaissance*) of nature, of *phusis*, to the extent that this knowledge serves as a principle of human conduct and as the criterion for setting individuals free.⁷ The aim of this knowledge of nature is to transform the subject, one that is originally filled with fear and terror before nature to one that is a free subject able to find within itself, ‘the possibility and means of his permanent and perfectly tranquil delight’.⁸

For Epicurus, then, the mind has a tendency to live in fear of nature, and is easily led astray by religious teaching that tempt the person to embrace metaphysical-moral doctrines, that is, doctrines, that fail to appreciate that there is a natural causal order and that we, as human beings, are fully implicated in it. On Epicurean teaching the natural world is an order of things devoid of design, agency, intention, and revelatory signs. For Epicurus, what is needed for the popularization of philosophy are ‘simple principles and maxims’, ones that can aid the mind to readily assimilate, when occasions necessitate, the core doctrines derived from the study of nature: ‘...it is not possible’, he writes, ‘to know the concentrated result of our continuous overview of the universe unless one can have in oneself a comprehensive grasp by means of brief maxims of all that might also be worked out in detail with precision’.⁹ Epicurus states clearly the aim of the exercise: it is to bring

calm to one's life, in which one has a mind that is all too quickly agitated by our being in the world and the things that afflict us. We need, then, to observe things in accordance with our sense perceptions and in accordance with our actual feelings, and 'so that we can have some sign by which we make inferences both about what awaits confirmation and about the non-evident'.¹⁰

From these basic philosophical principles Epicurus builds up a sophisticated system of nature, indeed a philosophy of nature that is highly novel and far-reaching, anticipating much modern scientific thought. For example, he wants us to appreciate the following key insights and then to adopt them as part of a practice of wisdom: (a) first, nothing comes into being from what is not for if it did 'everything would come into being from everything, with no need of seeds'; (b) second, when something disappears it is not destroyed into nothing since if it was all things would have been destroyed, 'since that into which they were dissolved does not exist'; (c) third, the totality of what exists has always been just like it is now at present and like it will always be simply because there is nothing else than what there is, that is, nothing for it to change into: '...there exists nothing in addition to the totality, which could enter into it and produce the change'.¹¹

The totality of which he speaks is made up of bodies and void. Our sense perception, he argues, testifies to the former, and it is through sense perception that we infer by reasoning what is not evident, namely, the void: if this did not exist (space and intangible nature) then bodies would be devoid of a place to be in and to move through, and it is obvious that they do move. The principles of bodies are atomic in nature, and here we refer to the composition of bodies, in which some exist as compounds and some as things from which the compounds are made. The elements out of which things are made are

‘atomic and unchangeable’ in that they are not destroyed into non-being but remain ‘firmly during the dissolution of compounds, being full by nature and not being subject to dissolution in any way or fashion’.¹²

For Epicurus philosophical thinking on the nature of things proves vital to the health of one’s soul, and one is never too young or too old for its activity. Even when he is outlining the details of his physics, as in the letters to Herodotus and Pythocles, Epicurus never tires of drawing attention to the blessedness that comes from knowledge, by which he means knowledge of nature, including meteorological phenomena. The task is to strip the workings of the natural world of the activity of the gods and to free it of agency and teleology. This is an aspect of the teaching that impresses itself upon Nietzsche as when he calls for the de-deification of nature and the naturalization of humanity (GS 109), as well as, on a more practical and mundane level, the need to avoid the danger of ‘spiritual unfreedom’ in the face of the ‘beautiful chaos of existence’: this takes place when we allow in through the back door, and in our interpretation of the things that happen to us in a life, providential design and goodness. In interpreting the fortunes that strike one in life, and bestowing a significance on them, the danger is that we will allow back into our lives the intentions or designs of the gods, be it some kind of petty deity who has our best interests at heart or even, says Nietzsche, the gods of Epicurus (the ones that are most indifferent to our existence). The solution Nietzsche proposes to our predicament is in accordance with the teaching of Epicurus: to leave the gods in peace and ‘rest content with the supposition that our own practical and theoretical skill in interpreting and arranging events has now reached a high point’ (GS 277). In addition, we can acknowledge that good old chance sometimes plays with us: ‘now and

then chance guides our hand, and the wisest providence could not think up a more beautiful music than that which our foolish hand produces then' (ibid.).

In the Epicurean teaching natural phenomena admit of a plurality of explanations, but in spite of this plurality – say with respect to explaining lightning, thunder, the formation of clouds, the waning and waxing of the moon, the variations of the length of nights and days, and so on – the task is to ascertain natural causes and in this respect knowledge of celestial phenomena has no other end 'than peace of mind and firm conviction' (see letter to Pythocles). Epicurus states clearly and emphatically:

For in the study of nature we must not conform to empty assumptions and arbitrary laws, but follow the promptings of the facts; for our life has no need now of unreason and false opinion; our one need is untroubled existence.¹³

The enjoyment of life assumes a distinctive character in Epicurus. In the letter to Menoeceus, Epicurus seeks to identify what the study of philosophy can do for the health of the soul and on the premise that, "pleasure is the starting-point and goal of living blessedly."¹⁴ Epicurus stresses that he does not mean the pleasures of the profligate or of consumption; rather, the task, is to become accustomed to simple, non-extravagant ways of living. Although Epicurus regards *voluptas* as the highest good, in which we can take delight in all that nature has provided to stimulate pleasure, it is an error to suppose that for him happiness is to be found "simply in eating, drinking, gambling, wenching, and other such pastimes."¹⁵ Nietzsche seems to have fully appreciated this point: 'A tiny garden, figs, a bit of cheese, and three or four friends besides – this was luxuriance for Epicurus' (WS 192).

At the centre of Epicurean teaching is a distinction between kinetic pleasure and katestematic pleasure and that works as follows: ‘kinetic’ pleasure is basic instinctive pleasure produced by action to satisfy a need, such as the ingestion of food. This is an unstable kind of pleasure since it is temporary and involves pain – the pleasure of eating will soon be followed by the pain of hunger, etc.; ‘katastematic’ pleasure is stable in that it endures and involves no pain: it is the pleasure of serenity, involving the absence of need and desire, and psychic equilibrium. It is superior to the animal pursuits of food and sex and for the Epicureans is to be elevated into the highest goal of life, attaining the state of ataraxia. As Gisela Striker puts it, Epicurus was perhaps the first philosopher who sought to bring this mental state into the framework of a eudaemonist theory and by arguing that it is a special sort of pleasure.¹⁶ It is to be reached by true insight and reasoning. James Porter argues that pleasure is not simply bound up with moral hedonism but also with an epistemology: ‘as a criterion of truth, as one of the *pathê* by which we feel our way through the world’.¹⁷ In contrast to pain, which causes us to shrink back from the world, pleasure draws us to it: it is both congenital and congenial.¹⁸ The Epicurean state of mind (ataraxy) is best described as one of stable (*katastematic*) pleasure, and, furthermore, as the basal experience of pleasure on account of it being the criterion of all pleasure. In this sense, then, it is more than a condition of simple or mere happiness: ‘it seems to operate as life’s internal formal principle, as that which gives moral sense and shape to a life that is lived...’¹⁹

The key goal for Epicurus is to liberate the body from pain and remove disturbances from the soul. Central to his counsel is the thought that we need to accustom ourselves to believing that death is nothing to us; our longing for immortality needs to be

removed: "...there is nothing fearful in life for one who has grasped that there is nothing fearful in the absence of life."²⁰ What appears to be the most frightening of bad things should be nothing to us, "since when we exist, death is not yet present, and when death is present, then we do not exist."²¹ The wise human being "neither rejects life nor fears death. For living does not offend him, nor does he believe not living to be something bad."²² If, as Epicurus supposes, everything good and bad consists in sense-experience, then death is simply the privation of sense-experience. The goal of philosophical training, then, is freedom from disturbance and anxiety in which we reach a state of psychic tranquillity (*ataraxia*): the body is free from pain and the soul is liberated from distress.

Several commentators note that the Greek word *hedone* could just as well be translated as delight or joy, denoting the sweetness of life and not simple-minded sensualist gratification.²³ But is Epicureanism a philosophy of life-affirmation, or does it simply depict a universe of atoms and the void that is indifferent to life? As James Porter notes, life has no intrinsic value for Epicurus, but does this mean that life is an indifferent for him?²⁴ When viewed from a third-person point of view, that is, the cosmological one (of atoms and the void), then life has no claim on us; rather, it discloses to us that, "we are nothing more than physical entities, mere fortuitous combinations of matter which reduce to their elements upon disbanding."²⁵ From the viewpoint of nature, then, life is an indifferent. The matter changes, however, when we view things from a first-person perspective on life, that is, the world of sensations, desires, and needs, or of nature in its human aspect. Here we find that life by definition is not indifferent but a meaningful source of value. As Porter puts it, the issue facing the Epicurean philosopher "is to decide

just what this value is and where it lies.”²⁶ The argument is that life is a source of human pleasure and thus of moral happiness, involving a strong attachment. Porter argues that once we connect pleasure to life it is possible to show that Epicurus has a philosophy of life in addition to a philosophy of death and that, in fact, it is this emphasis on life and not death that dominates his writings.

Nietzsche and Epicurean Naturalism

If, as Pierre Hadot has suggested, philosophical therapeutics is centred on a concern with the healing of our own lives so as to return us to the joy of existing,²⁷ then in the texts of his middle period Nietzsche can be seen to be an heir to this ancient tradition. If there is one crucial component to Nietzsche’s philosophical therapeutics in the texts of his middle period that he keeps returning to again and again it is the need for spiritual joyfulness and the task of cultivating in ourselves, after centuries of training by morality and religion, the joy in existing. In the final aphorism of *The Wanderer and his Shadow* he writes, for example:

Only the *ennobled human being may be given freedom of spirit*; to him alone does *alleviation of life* draw near and salve his wounds; only he may say that he lives for the sake of joy (*Freudigkeit*) and for the sake of no further goal... (WS 350)

Epicurus famously writes that the arguments of a philosopher that do not touch on the therapeutic treatment of human suffering are empty. The analogy is made with the art of medicine: just as the use of this art is to cast out sicknesses of the body, so the use of

philosophy is to throw out suffering from the soul. It is in the texts of his middle period that Nietzsche's writing comes closest to being an exercise in philosophical therapeutics. It endeavours to revitalise for a modern age ancient philosophical concerns, notably a teaching for mortal souls who wish to be liberated from the fear and anguish of existence, as well as from God, the 'metaphysical need',²⁸ and are able to affirm their mortal conditions of existence. As a general point of inspiration one might adopt Hadot's insight into the therapeutic ambitions of ancient philosophy that was, he claims, 'intended to cure mankind's anguish' (for example, anguish over our mortality) (Hadot 1995: 265-6). This is evident in the teaching of Epicurus which sought to demonstrate the mortality of the soul and whose aim was, 'to free humans from "the fears of the mind"' (Wilson 2008: 7).²⁹ Similarly, Nietzsche's teaching in *Dawn* is for mortal souls (D 501). The ultimate aim of this conception of philosophy is to promote joy in living and in one's own self (WS 86). In the middle period, then, Epicurus is an attractive figure for Nietzsche because of the emphasis on a modest lifestyle, the attention given to the care of self, and also because he conceives philosophy not as a theoretical discourse but one that, first and foremost, is a kind of practical activity aimed at the attainment of eudemonia or the flourishing life.³⁰ Nietzsche wants free spirits to take pleasure in existence, involving taking pleasure in themselves and in friendship. The difference from Epicurus is that he is developing a therapy for the sicknesses of the soul under modern conditions of social control and discipline. *Dawn* 174 makes this clear when, in response to what he sees as the tyrannical encroachments of sympathetic morality within commercial society, Nietzsche writes of cultivating a self that others can behold with pleasure within a self-enclosed garden and that also provides a gate of hospitality (D 174). As Michael Ure has

helpfully shown, in opposition to the desert of undifferentiated atoms offered by modern commercial culture Nietzsche provides the image of an oasis and one that depicts neither the past glories of Homeric agonism nor the resplendent isolation of the noble individual.³¹ The image Nietzsche comes up with of a self-enclosed garden clearly draws on ideas of paradise in the Western tradition (our word paradise etymologically derives from the Persian for walled garden, *paradeiza*), and he provocatively counters the Christian idea of a locked gate or *porta clausa* with that of a hospitable one: ‘To cultivate oneself...is to create oneself as a paradise garden for the other’.³²

Catherine Wilson neatly lays out the central tenets of the Epicurean system in her recent study, *Epicureanism at the Origins of Modernity*. They include: the denial of supernatural agency engaged in the design and maintenance of the world; the view that self-moving, subvisible particles acting blindly bring about all growth, change, and decline; and the insistence that the goal of ethical self-discipline, which involves asceticism, is the minimization of mental and physical suffering.³³ There is much here that accords with what Nietzsche found appealing in Epicurus. However, it is also the case that Nietzsche’s reception of Epicurus has quite specific features. For example, he shows little interest in the ontological status of atomism and the problems of the theory of knowledge and much more interest in Epicurean cosmology, such as its distinction between world and universe. As one commentator has noted, this focus on the world and distrust of the idea of *the* universe, including the idea of the sum of all possible worlds, “allowed Nietzsche to collect the themes of Epicurean divinity, blessedness, friendship and philosophical regimen around the focus of the ancient science of this world of ‘meteorology’.”³⁴ As Liba Taub has put it, the Epicurean aim “was to demonstrate that

the universe and various distant phenomena can be explained without reference to anything outside nature, or extraordinary.”³⁵ Informing Epicurean views on cosmology and meteorology was the desire to eliminate fear and anxiety, especially about the intervention of the gods in the world. Epicurus thus developed a strict materialist philosophy that was designed to provide natural explanations of phenomena that were often seen as due to the activities of supernatural powers.³⁶ Although acknowledging the existence of an infinite number of worlds (*cosmoi*), Epicurus sought to account for the *meteōra*, such as the phenomenon of the sky and earthquakes, in terms of the natural workings of our local cosmos. Thus, the fundamental Epicurean aims, such as the alleviation of anxiety, are at the heart of their cosmological and meteorological explanations. In the middle period Nietzsche is inspired by Epicurus’s focus on the world, his redemption of nature from human projection and teleology, and his conception of philosophy as the art of living in which one lives the philosophical life and does not engage merely in theoretical discourses.

It is not, then, Epicurus the atomist that Nietzsche focuses his attention on, but Epicurus the ethicist, that is, the philosopher who teaches a new way of life by remaining true to the earth, embracing the fact of human mortality and denying any cosmic exceptionalism on the part of the human. Nietzsche is also greatly inspired by the practical dimension of Epicurus’s philosophy. It is the strength of the Epicurean attachment to the world that Nietzsche will capture in his conception of ‘heroic-idyllic philosophizing’ in *The Wanderer and His Shadow*, and it is also encapsulated well by the young Marx when he writes that ‘Epicurus is *satisfied and blissful in philosophy*’;³⁷ that ‘embodied in him are the serenity of thought satisfied in itself’.³⁸ For Nietzsche,

Epicurus is to be revered as a thinker in whom wisdom assumes bodily form: there is a need to hear the voice of reason and philosophy and to actually *see* embodied (*leibhaft*) wisdom (MOM 224).

Let me now turn to examining the resources Nietzsche finds in the teaching and that he thinks can be reactivated in his own time. An overriding aim he has at this time is to employ science to temper mental and emotional excess. The task, as he sees it, is to help cool down the human mind. He writes in 1878:

...shouldn't we, the *more spiritual* human beings of an age that is visibly catching fire in more and more places, have to grasp all available means for quenching and cooling, so that we will remain at least as steady, harmless, and moderate as we are now, and will thus perhaps become useful at some point in serving this age as mirror and self-regulation? – (HH I: 38)

Epicurean philosophy can play a key role here. Along with science in general, it serves to make us 'colder and more sceptical,' helping to cool down 'the fiery stream of belief in ultimate definitive truths,' a stream that has grown so turbulent through Christianity (HH I: 244). For Lucretius 'there's no good life, no blessedness, without a mind made clear...'³⁹ As Lucretius further writes in *De Rerum Natura*:

Our terrors and our darkneses of mind
Must be dispelled, then, not by sunshine's rays,
Not by those shining arrows of light,
But by insight into nature, and a scheme
Of systematic contemplation.⁴⁰

For Nietzsche, the illnesses and neuroses we encounter in humanity require that "ice-packs" be placed on them (HH I: 38).

In interpreting Epicureanism as a science that tempers emotional and mental excess Nietzsche is, in fact, following a well-established tradition in nineteenth century thought that appreciates this point. As Friedrich Albert Lange notes in his *History of Materialism* (1866), a text that deeply impressed the young Nietzsche: ‘The mere historical knowledge of natural events, without a knowledge of causes, is valueless; for it does not free us from fear nor lift us upon superstition. The more causes of change we have discovered, the more we shall attain the calmness of contemplation; and it cannot be supposed that this inquiry can be without result upon our happiness’.⁴¹ If we can come to regard change in things as necessarily inherent in their existence we free ourselves from our natural terror at this order of change and evolution. If we believe in the old myths we live in fear of the eternal torments to come; if we are too sensible to believe in these torments we may still apprehend the loss of all feeling which comes with death as an evil, as if the soul could continue to feel this deprivation. As every student of philosophy knows the event of death for Epicurus is an affair of indifference precisely because it deprives us of all feeling. As Lange glosses Epicurus: ‘So long as we are, there is as yet no death; but as soon as death comes, then we exist no more’.⁴² If events can be explained in accordance with universal laws, with effects attributable to natural causes, an important goal of philosophy can be attained and secured, chiefly liberation from fear and anxiety.

In *The Wanderer and his Shadow* Nietzsche describes Epicurus as ‘the soul-soother (*Seelen-Beschwichtiger*) of later antiquity’ who had the ‘wonderful insight’ that to quieten our being it is not necessary to have resolved the ultimate and outermost theoretical questions (WS 7). To those who are tormented by the fear of the gods, one

points out that if the gods exist they do not concern themselves with us and that it is unnecessary to engage in ‘fruitless disputation’ over the ultimate question as to whether they exist or not. Furthermore, in response to the consideration of a hypothesis, half belonging to physics and half to ethics, and that may cast gloom over our spirits, it is wise to refrain from refuting the hypothesis and instead offer a rival hypothesis, even a multiplicity of hypotheses. To someone who wishes to offer consolation – for example, to the unfortunate, to ill-doers, to hypochondriacs, and so on – one can call to mind two pacifying formulae of Epicurus that are capable of being applied to many questions: ‘firstly, if that is how things are they do not concern us; secondly, things may be thus but they may also be otherwise’ (WS 7).

In her book *Therapy of Desire* Martha Nussbaum explains well the nature of Epicurus’s intervention in a society ‘that values money and luxury above the health of the soul’, and in which ‘every enterprise is poisoned by the fear of death, a fear that will not let any of its members taste any stable joy, but turns them into the grovelling slaves of corrupt religious teachers’.⁴³ As Lucretius has it:

...fear of death
Induces hate of life and light, and men
Are so depressed that they destroy themselves
Having forgotten that this very fear
Was the first cause and source of all their woe.⁴⁴

In his middle period Nietzsche picks up the Epicurean doctrine on death and puts it to critical effect. For Nietzsche our religions and moralities do not wed us to the earth as a site of dwelling and thinking; rather, we consider ourselves ‘too good and too significant

for the earth', as if we were paying it only a passing visit (D 425). Several aphorisms in *Dawn* consider humanity's misguided dream of an immortal existence. *Dawn* 211 is an especially witty aphorism in which Nietzsche considers the impertinence of the dream. He notes that the actual existence of a single immortal human being would be enough to drive everyone else on earth into a rampage of death and suicide out of being sick and tired of it. He adds:

And you earth inhabitants with your mini-notions of a few thousand mini-minutes of time want to be an eternal nuisance to eternal, universal existence! Is there anything more impertinent! (D 211)

Nietzsche champions Epicurus as a figure who has sought to show mankind how it can conquer its fears of death. Identifying the goal of a good life with the removal of mental and physical pain Epicureans place, 'the eradication of the fears of death at the very heart of their ethical project'.⁴⁵ As a 'therapy of anguish' Epicureanism is a philosophy that aims to procure peace of mind, and an essential task here is to liberate the mind from its irrational fear of death. It seeks to do this by showing that the soul does not survive the body and that death is not and cannot be an event within life. Central to Epicurus's counsel, then, is the thought that we need to accustom ourselves to believing that death is nothing to us; our longing for immortality needs to be removed: '...there is nothing fearful in life for one who has grasped that there is nothing fearful in the absence of life.'⁴⁶ What appears to be the most frightening of bad things should be nothing to us, "since when we exist, death is not yet present, and when death is present, then we do not exist."⁴⁷ The wise human being 'neither rejects life nor fears death. For living does not offend him, nor does he believe not living to be something bad.'⁴⁸ If, as Epicurus

supposes, everything good and bad consists in sense-experience, then death is simply the privation of sense-experience. The goal of philosophical training, then, is freedom from disturbance and anxiety in which we reach a state of *ataraxia* or psychic tranquillity: the body is free from pain and the soul is liberated from distress.

In *Dawn* Epicurus is portrayed as the enemy of the idea of punishments in Hell after death, which was developed by numerous secret cults of in the Roman Empire and was taken up by Christianity. For Nietzsche the triumph of Epicurus's teaching resounds most beautifully in the mouth of the sombre Roman Lucretius but comes too early. Christianity takes the belief in 'subterranean terrors' under its special protection and this foray into heathendom enables it to carry the day over the popularity of the Mithras and Isis cults, winning to its side the rank of the timorous as the most zealous adherents of the new faith (Nietzsche notes that because of the extent of the Jews' attachment to life such an idea fell on barren ground). However, the teaching of Epicurus triumphs anew in the guise of modern science that has rejected 'any other representation of death and any life beyond it' (D 72). Nietzsche, then, is keen to encourage human beings to cultivate an attitude towards existence in which they accept their mortality and attain a new serenity about their dwelling on the earth, to conquer unjustified fears, and to reinstitute the role played by chance and chance events in the world and in human existence.⁴⁹ As Hadot notes, for the Epicurean sage the world is the product of chance, not divine intervention, and this brings with it pleasure and peace of mind, freeing him from an unreasonable fear of the gods and allowing him to consider each moment as an unexpected miracle.⁵⁰

Although Nietzsche himself confessed to having no fear of death, he is keen for his readers to embrace the mortal conditions of their existence. In doing so we give

ourselves back the time that the longing for immortality deprives us of and we become free to experiment with our lives, both individually and socially. In *Dawn* 501, which is entitled “Mortal Souls,” Nietzsche writes that, ‘So far as the promotion of knowledge is concerned, humankind’s most useful achievement is perhaps the abandonment of its belief in an immortal soul’ (D 501). ‘You should read Lucretius,’ Nietzsche advises further in *The Anti-Christian*, ‘to see *what* Epicurus had fought, *not* paganism but Christianity,’ by which he means, he tells us, the corruption of the soul through ideas of guilt, punishment, and immortality. This takes the form of Epicurus’s battle against subterranean cults and latent Christianity. Nietzsche further suggests that Epicurus would have won this battle if Paul had not come on the scene (A 58).

Nietzsche finds in Epicurus, then, a victory over pessimism in which death becomes the last celebration of a life that is constantly embellished.⁵¹ This last of the Greek philosophers teaches the joy of living in the midst of a world in decay and where all moral doctrines preach suffering. As Richard Roos puts it, ‘The example of Epicurus teaches that a life filled with pain and renunciation prepares one to savour the little joys of the everyday better. Relinquishing Dionysian intoxication, Nietzsche becomes a student of this master of moderate pleasures and careful dosages’.⁵² In Epicurus Nietzsche discovers what Roos calls aptly an ‘irresistible power’ and a rare strength of spirit, and quotes Nietzsche from 1880: ‘I found strength in the very places one does not look for it, in simple, gentle and helpful men...powerful natures dominate, that is a necessity, even if those men do not move one finger. And they bury themselves, in their lifetime, in a pavilion in their garden’ (KSA 9, 6 [206]).⁵³

Deleuze and Epicurean Naturalism

Deleuze is an instructive reader of Epicurean naturalism: he shows how the physics and the ethics intersect, and this is what I wish to now focus my attention on. Deleuze weds naturalism to a novel reworking of ethics and centred on the tasks or labours of the art of life. His interpretations of Epicurean and Spinozist naturalisms are propelled by an ethical motivation. Deleuze, as I read him, is primarily a practical philosopher keenly interested in the ethical art of life, where it is a 'manner of living' or a style of life. His naturalism fuses together in an instructive way the philosophy of nature and the philosophy of life, and where 'life' is not simply an idea or a matter of theory but centres on, and concerns, a way of being. If philosophy has a use it is to be found in the doctrine of the Epicureans, as well as in later thinkers such as Spinoza and Nietzsche, namely, the creation of the free human being and an empirical education in the art of life. The object of naturalism, and in terms of both its speculative and practical aspects, is to distinguish in the case of human beings what belongs to nature and what belongs to myth. This is why for Deleuze the first philosopher is a naturalist, simply because he speaks of nature rather than the gods. Deleuze follows Epicureanism and Spinozism in holding ethics to be central to philosophical inquiry and activity: we don't simply study nature as end in itself but as a way of better understanding how we can promote a flourishing life. Our being in the world is not to be guided by myths and illusions, especially of a supernatural kind, but rather by the affirmation of the positive power of an immanent and multiple nature and by the joy that results from recognising the diversity of its elements.

Deleuze is, then, first and foremost, an ethically motivated naturalist: he attaches himself to naturalism because he sees it as a project of demystification and human emancipation. The task is to liberate human beings from the realm of myth: the myth of religion, the myth of a false physics, and the myths of a false philosophy. This naturalism consists in the critique of superstition since it is this that cuts us off from our power of action and diminishes it, and induces in us sadness: naturalism exists, says Deleuze, to defeat this sadness.⁵⁴ The new naturalism Deleuze espouses has its anchor in his readings of Leibniz and Spinoza. However, in order to fully appreciate its ethical import it is equally necessary to understand some key aspects of his reading of Epicurean naturalism, and to this I now turn.

For Deleuze, Lucretius follows Epicurus by effecting a double determination in which naturalism is made the speculative and the practical object of philosophy. Deleuze writes: 'From Lucretius to Nietzsche, the same end is pursued and attained. Naturalism makes of thought and sensibility an affirmation'.⁵⁵ This passage is a clear indication that Deleuze is wedded to naturalism as a theoretical and practical program. In a declaration that seems indicative of his lifelong commitment to pluralism and multiplicity, he argues that nature is not collective but distributive, not attributive but conjunctive: it proceeds not through being (the 'is') but through becoming (the 'and'). In the worlds of nature we observe 'alternations and entwinings, resemblances and differences, attractions and distractions, nuance and abruptness'. Nature, then, whilst not a whole can be conceived as a sum, and we can capture this in the image of the Harlequin's cloak, 'made entirely', Deleuze says, 'of solid patches and empty spaces, she is made of plenitude and void, beings and nonbeings'.⁵⁶

In Lucretius we encounter a novel philosophy of nature, one that resists the seduction and temptations of the false kind of philosophy, namely, the theological form with its desire for fatum (providential meaning or the meaning of the whole and of the goal or end). How is this naturalism, in its essence, to be conceived? For Deleuze, it requires a highly structured principle of causality to account for the production of the diverse since there are only different and non-totalizable composition and combinations of the elements of nature. It is the nature of the atom that needs to be clarified first, and this is what Deleuze focuses his attention on. It is the atom that challenges our sense perception and our consciousness. Deleuze begins with a surprisingly simple proposition: the atom is that which can only be thought and it is to thought what a sensible object is to the senses. Moreover, the atom is what gives food for thought: as we cannot perceive the atom we have to think its nature or character, and to do so rigorously and precisely. The atom is imperceptible not because of some deficiency in our senses but on account of its own character. Deleuze identifies an 'Epicurean method' of epistemology by which we may come to know something of the atom, and this method proceeds by analogy and by passage or transition. First, we draw the analogy between the sensible object, which we endow with (sensible) parts, and the noetic object that is also endowed with parts, and we posit in this act a minimum thought that represents the smallest part of the object just as in the instance of sensibility there is a minimum sensible that represents the smallest part of the object. Second, guided or steered by this analogy between the sensible object and the noetic object, we move from the sensible to thought and in reverse by means of a series of transitions.

Deleuze now advances several key theses on the nature of what is, the nature of the atoms. In the first one he states some key aspects of the atoms and the void, such as that the sum of atoms is infinite and precisely because they do not combine or synthesize to form a totality. This is followed up in points 5-7 on the shapes, sizes, and possible configurations of atoms. However, it is the third point that is clearly the decisive insight for Deleuze, and this concerns the clinamen or swerve. When atoms collide, as they do, they do so not account of their different weights but due to the clinamen and it is this 'differential of matter' that relates atoms to one another.⁵⁷ This is Deleuze's main claim and insight, and it removes him from a prevailing reading of Lucretius: 'The clinamen or swerve has nothing to do with an oblique movement which would come accidentally to modify a vertical fall'.⁵⁸ On Deleuze's reading it is an error to construe the clinamen as something haphazard and capricious. On the contrary, for Deleuze it is not at all accidental but always there, and he likens it to the conatus, speaking of it as a differential of matter.⁵⁹ Thus, for Deleuze, we go astray when we conceive the clinamen as a secondary movement since there is only an originary movement and this movement is characteristic of matter. The causality of the clinamen is, therefore, more 'unassignable' (*incertus*, or uncertain) than it is 'indeterminate', and this is because it takes place at such a velocity that we have to think it in terms of a time smaller than what can be thought in a minimum of continuous time. It is this set of insights that leads to Deleuze to an important conclusion regarding the *lex atomi*, chiefly, that there is an irreducible plurality of causes and in any causal series a whole is not brought together. This means that nature cannot be totalized, and it is on account of this that causes are said to be 'unassignable'. The structured principle of causality Deleuze is after works, as Brooke Holmes helpfully

puts it, ‘*inside* the various compositions and combinations that populate the cosmos. As a result, diversity emerges within a world that is also characterized by pattern and resemblance’.⁶⁰ In point 7 Deleuze arrives at the conclusion that difference is primary, which means that in the philosophy of nature we find ‘the heterogeneity of the diverse with itself, *and also* the resemblance of the diverse with itself’.⁶¹ Worlds and bodies have their similarities in time and space. Deleuze insists, however, that resemblance proceeds from the diverse and is implicated in diversity.

The next move Deleuze makes in his essay is of crucial importance for it centres on how we make the move from physics to ethics, including the motivation for doing so. As every student of Epicurean teaching knows such a move is its most fundamental aspect. The task of physics – to be thought in terms of naturalism – is to determine what is really infinite from what isn’t and to demarcate the difference between the true infinite from its false form or appearance. The true infinite, according to Deleuze, consists in the sum of atoms, the void, the number of atoms of the same shape and size, and the number of combination of atoms and of worlds similar, or different, to ours. What is not infinite are the parts of the atom and the body, the sizes and shapes of atoms, and every worldly or intra-worldly combination. This determination of the nature of the infinite is said to be ‘apodeictic’; and yet the real task is to show why this determination is the necessary means of ethics and practice. Let me turn to this topic.

Epicurean ethical practice suggests to us ways of suppressing or conquering pain. However, as Deleuze correctly notes, our attainment of real pleasure, including a sense of being in the world in a joyful manner, has much more powerful obstacles to confront, such as phantoms, superstitions, terrors of existence, and the fear of death. For Lucretius,

the object of philosophy is the cultivation of health and he speaks of philosophy as a form of treatment that can be administered (*De Rerum Natura* IV: 22); it is a therapeutics, one that has specific illnesses and afflictions to cure, notably the fear of the active gods and the fear of death as well as the whole realm of superstition. Lucretius thinks that his Roman brethren suffer from what he calls the dead weight of superstition and are haunted by the fear of eternal punishments after death. A thoroughgoing and clear-sighted program of naturalism is needed in order to emancipate the mind from subjection to fear and superstition. Several occasions in the book Lucretius provides the following lines as a refrain of learning:

The dread and darkness of the mind cannot be dispelled by the sunbeams, the shining shafts of day, but only by an understanding of the outward forms and inner workings of nature (II: 59-62; see also III: 91-94).

Lucretius offers a naturalist program of philosophy that amounts to a project of demystification and hence liberation. His is a philosophy of immanence: nature is a self-producing positive power, eternally self-creating and self-destroying; the elements postulated at the base of nature work bottom up, in which the diverse products of nature are generated rather than assumed as already given.⁶² The immanence at work is a radical one for it means that no ‘divine power’ has created the universe (II: 181) and there is no ‘divine plan’ (V: 81). With its scientific principles of nothing springing from nothing and nothing ever being destroyed Lucretius’s philosophy of nature rids philosophy of supernatural explanations. Nothing springs from nothing since for anything to be created there is required specific germs, a set of conditions, and time. The teaching has radical aspects: for example, the soul is nothing more than matter and is subject to death since it

is made of subtle atoms scattered throughout the body, and is therefore as material as the body and without which it cannot exist. Death is radical in its finality and Lucretius is uncompromising in his account of this: it denotes the end of our existence and yet is not to be feared for the reasons that Epicurus has provided and that Lucretius rehearses in dramatic fashion in the denouement to book three of the text. Lucretius speaks at the very close of book three of the lust for life as 'deplorable' since it 'holds us trembling in bondages to uncertainties and dangers', with the 'unquenchable thirst for life keeping us always on the gasp' (III: 1084-5).

The humanity that Lucretius depicts in the book is indeed a melancholy one (the melancholy is well captured in Bergson's appreciation of Lucretius from 1884).⁶³ As Deleuze notes, the plague, so graphically depicted in the denouement to *De Rerum Natura*, not only inflicts pain and suffering but equally disturbs the soul. The disturbance of the soul has two main elements: first, the illusion that arises from our spurious idea that the body has an infinite capacity for pleasure; and, second, the illusion that the soul endures forever and that gives rise, once it has taken root in the mind, to the notion of an infinity of possible sufferings and torments after death. We can even see a link between the two illusions since the fear of an infinite suffering and punishment is but the natural price to be paid for having desires without limit. Here the life of the fool becomes a hell on earth, as the poem so instructively depicts. For Lucretius, as for Spinoza after him, the religious person displays a curious complex of avidity and anguish, and of covetousness and culpability. We live in fear of dying when we are not dead and the fear of not actually being dead once in fact we are.

Deleuze will then explain the operations of the mind in terms of how bodies or atomic compounds emit subtle and fluid elements, and they emanate either from the depths of bodies (such as sounds, smells, and tastes) or as detachments from the surface of things, including the simulacra (such as forms and colours). I will not follow Deleuze's instructive treatment of this. What is key is Deleuze's account of a third species of simulacra, which emanates neither from the depths of bodies nor the surface of things, and that he calls 'phantasms'. These are images that enjoy a high degree of independence and assume a life of their own, and they can be theological, oneiric, and erotic. We develop images that take the place of actual objects, from giants to ghosts. This happens for instance when the mind becomes isolated from the external world and when the body lies dormant, as in sleep. In the case of the erotic, although there is an actual love object, it can be neither possessed nor absorbed, and so the mind contemplating such an object is prone to all kinds of fantasies, including ones motivated by jealousy.

The ethical task is, with the aid of naturalism, to dispel the illusions of the mind and that generate fears, torments, and superstitions. It is in this sense for Deleuze, and this sense only, that physics is made subordinate to ethics: the task is not simply to limit knowledge or prevent its development, as is often said of Epicurean teaching, but rather to demonstrate the range of its practical application.⁶⁴ Deleuze writes, then:

The speculative object and the practical object of philosophy as Naturalism, science and pleasure, coincide on this point: it is always a matter of denouncing the illusion, the false infinite, the infinity of religion and all the theological-erotic-oneiric myths in which it is expressed.⁶⁵

If philosophy has a use it is to be found in the doctrine of the Epicureans, as well as in later thinkers such as Spinoza and Nietzsche, namely, the creation of the free human being. This freedom consists, at least as an initial task, in freeing oneself from the realm of illusions produced by the image of the false infinite. The object of naturalism, and in terms of both its speculative and practical aspects, now comes clearly into view: it is to distinguish in the case of human beings what belongs to nature and what belongs to myth. This is why for Deleuze the first philosopher is a naturalist, simply because he speaks of nature rather than the gods. Humanity has suffered from three main forms of myth in its history: the myth of religion (the active gods); the myth of a false physics (that humankind is destined to a particular fate); and the myths of false philosophy under the influence of theology (Being, the One, and the Whole). The critical task here is not to introduce new myths since these would only serve to deprive nature of its positivity. Lucretius carries the ‘enterprise of “demystification”’ to its limit.⁶⁶ In addition, Deleuze thinks there is a ‘constant’ of naturalism and evident in its history from Lucretius to Spinoza and Nietzsche: this constant consists in the denunciation of sadness, in particular denouncing everything that has sadness as the basis of its power, such as the rule of priests and political tyranny. For Lucretius, then, a fundamental reformation of the human mind and its attachment to life is required, and this is the task he reserves for philosophy.

Knowledge serves to show us that we count for practically nothing in the universe since we are but a fortuitous combination of elements that decays just like everything else alive. Having stated this, though, we know that for Lucretius there is a deep joy to be had from this naturalism: this is the elevated joy of the sage who imbued with great truth

calmly awaits a death that will reduce him to nothingness: he possesses supreme knowledge and yet at the same time savours the sweetest joys that a human being is privileged to experience.

Conclusion

Deleuze's reading of Lucretius can complement Nietzsche's appraisal of the Epicurean system by showing how physics and ethics intersect in it. At the same time Nietzsche is able to fill in the gaps in Deleuze's reading of Epicureanism by providing us with a rich set of insights into the kinds of pleasure and joy at work in the Epicurean way of life. I appreciate, however, that when it comes to Epicureanism and its legacy the late Nietzsche presents a more complex case than I have depicted in this essay. In his late writings Epicurus is still celebrated for waging war against the superstitions of religion but is also said to be a decadent – indeed a 'typical' one (AC 30, 58) – along with many other philosophical and artistic figures from Socrates to Schopenhauer, and Wagner. We also get the fundamental contrast between 'Epicurean delight' and 'Dionysian joy' (KSA 11, 25 [95]). However, although the late Nietzsche has legitimate worries over the dangers of the cultivation of beatitude as a way of life, whether this takes an Epicurean or Spinozist form – dangers of dwarfing and of relaxation - his later depiction of Epicurus as a decadent arguably conceals just what he found so productive about the naturalism of Epicureanism in his middle period. This is, in essence, a project of cooling down a human mind that is prone to neurosis and that prevents the enjoyment of mortal pleasures and the delights of the earth.

It is worth stressing, though, that even in his middle period texts Nietzsche has a complex picture of both Epicurus and of the search for happiness or joy. In GS 45, simply entitled 'Epicurus', the Greek sage is depicted as someone whose happiness emerges from continual suffering. The scene Nietzsche depicts in the aphorism is one of Epicurean illumination or enlightenment: Epicurus is not estranged from nature and recognizes his kinship with animals and the elements of nature. Rather than deploying his contemplation of the sea to bolster his own ego (thinking of his own safety or taking pride in fearlessness), Epicurus abandons his sense of self altogether so that he can open himself up to the sea of existence, and perhaps here we find an alternative to Dionysian ecstasy, entailing a more peaceful and less grandiose loss of the self into the Ur-Eine. Unlike Christ, Epicurus does not walk on the water but floats serenely on the sea, buoyed up by it and even cradled by it, happy with the gifts life has to offer, and existing beyond fear and anxiety even though he is opening himself up to troubling realities, such as the approach of death and his personal extinction. For Nietzsche, Epicurus is a figure who has liberated himself from the fear and anxiety of existence, and is capable of spiritual joyfulness that consists, in part, in the serene contemplation of the beauty and sublimity of things and a cultivation of simple, modest pleasures. Epicurus is a figure who was "true to the earth," abandoning all hubristic conceptions of human significance, including exceptionalism, and who taught that one should die as if one had never lived. As Nietzsche astutely noted, never in the history of thought has such a voluptuous appreciation of existence been so modest.

Nietzsche is not in favour of a radical cure in response to our complex affective conditions of existence – for example, the cure of a Stoic extirpation of the passions –

since the result is ‘petrification’ (GS 306). One needs to have passions in life and a passionate engagement with, and attachment to, it, and so Nietzsche favours, contra the ‘hard Stoic hedgehog skin’, the ‘subtle irritability’ of the Epicurean: the Epicurean, we might say, remains, however modestly, alive.

¹ I have used the following editions of Nietzsche’s texts: *The Anti-Christ*, trans. Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); *Dawn: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, trans. Brittain Smith (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011); *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1974); *Human, all too Human*, volume one, trans. Gary Handwerk (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995). *Human, all too Human: volume two* (including *The Wanderer and His Shadow*), trans. Gary Handwerk (Stanford: Stanford University Press 2013); *Friedrich Nietzsche: Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe*, ed. G. Colli and M. Montinari (Berlin and New York/Munich: dtv and Walter de Gruyter, 1967-77 and 1998); *Sämtliche Briefe. Kritische Studienausgabe*, ed. G. Colli and M. Montinari (in 8 volumes) (Berlin and New York/Munich: dtv and Walter de Gruyter, 1975-84); *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Carol Diethe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

² In a letter to Paul Rée of 1879 Nietzsche refers to his project as ‘my Epicurean garden’ (KSB 5, 460), whilst earlier in the same year he writes to his amanuensis Peter Gast, ‘Where are we going to renew the garden of Epicurus?’ (KSB 5, 399)

³ *The Epicurus Reader*, trans. and ed. Brad Inwood & L. P. Gerson (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), p. 5.

⁴ Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject. Lectures at the Collège de France 1981-1982*, trans. Graham Burchell (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 238. Epicurus writes: ‘The study of nature does not make men practice boastful speech or display a learning highly coveted by the rabble; rather, it makes men modest and self-sufficient, taking pride in the good that lies in themselves, not in their estate’, *The Essential Epicurus*, trans. Eugene O’Connor (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1993), p. 81. On the need to avoid public opinion and accolades of the crowd see also *Vatican Sayings* 29 (p. 79).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ For further insight into how Foucault deploys the contrast between *savoir* and *connaissance* see

Michel Foucault, *Lectures on the Will to Know. Lectures at the Collège de France 1970-1971*, trans. Graham Burchell (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), including the opening lecture of 9 December 1970, and the translator's note.

⁸ Ibid., p. 241. See Epicurus, *Vatican Sayings* 27, in the *Essential Epicurus*, trans. with an Introduction by Eugene O' Connor (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1993), p. 79: 'In other occupations, reward comes with difficulty after their completion, but in philosophy delight coincides with knowledge. For enjoyment does not come after learning, but learning and enjoyment come together'.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ *The Epicurus Reader*, trans. and ed. Brad Inwood and L. P. Gerson (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), p. 6. We might think such conceptions make Epicurus a straightforward empiricist who adheres to the doctrine of the infallibility of sensation but this would be an error. On Epicurus and empiricism see the instructive comments by Norman Wentworth de Witt, *Epicurus and His Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954), p. 26, pp. 135-42. For a more recent consideration of the topic see Elizabeth Asmis, 'Epicurean empiricism' in James Warren (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 84-105.

¹¹ *Epicurus Reader* p. 6.

¹² Ibid. p. 7.

¹³ Epicurus, 'Letter to Pythocles' cited in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. R. D. Hicks (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), X: 87, p. 615

¹⁴ *The Epicurus Reader*, 30.

¹⁵ Howard Jones, *The Epicurean Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 152.

¹⁶ G. Striker, 'Ataraxia: Happiness as Tranquillity', in *Essays on Hellenistic Epistemology and Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 183-196, 185.

¹⁷ James I. Porter, "Epicurean Attachments: Life, Pleasure, Beauty, Friendship, and Piety," *Cronache Ercolanesi*, 33, 2003, 205-227, p. 214.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 214 and p. 218.

²⁰ *The Epicurus Reader*, p. 29.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ See, for example, Peter Saint-Andre, *Letters on Happiness: An Epicurean Dialogue* (Colorado: Monadnock Valley Press, 2013), p. 38. See also Benjamin Farrington, *The Faith of*

Epicurus (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967), p. 132. According to one commentator, the point of departure for Epicurus was not hedonism at all. See Malte Hossenfelder, 'Epicurus – hedonist malgré lui', in Malcolm Schofield and Gisela Striker (eds.), *The Norms of Nature: Studies in Hellenistic Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 245-65, p. 245.

²⁴ James I. Porter, "Epicurean Attachments", 206.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 207.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, trans. Michael Chase (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1995), 87.

²⁸ In a note from the autumn of 1880 Nietzsche maintains that the metaphysical need is not the source of religion, as might be supposed, but rather the after effect of its decline: the 'need' is a result and not an origin. Nietzsche, *KSA* 9, 6 [290]. See also *GS* 151 where Nietzsche makes it clear that he is arguing contra Schopenhauer on this point. For Schopenhauer on the 'metaphysical need' see 1966, volume two: chapter 17.

²⁹ See also Epicurus in *The Epicurus Reader*, 29: 'For there is nothing fearful in life for one who has grasped that there is nothing fearful in the absence of life...the wise man neither rejects life nor fears death'. As Porter notes: '...in Epicureanism *love of life is love of a mortal life* and not a love of life as abstracted from death, much less of immortal life' (2003: 212).

³⁰ For further insight see Julian Young, *Nietzsche. A Philosophical Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 279-81.

³¹ Michael Ure, 'The Irony of Pity: Nietzsche contra Schopenhauer and Rousseau', *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 32, 2006, pp. 68-92, 2006, p. 84.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 85.

³³ Catherine Wilson, *Epicureanism at the Origins of Modernity* (Oxford: New York, Oxford University Press, 2008), 37.

³⁴ Howard Caygill, "Under the Epicurean Skies," *Angelaki*, II: 3, 2006, 107-115, 107.

³⁵ Liba Taub, "Cosmology and meteorology," in James Warren (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 105-24, 124.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 105.

³⁷ Karl Marx, 'Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature' in K. Marx & F. Engels, *Collected Works: Volume One 183-43* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1975), 41.

³⁸ Marx, 'Difference', 45.

-
- ³⁹ Lucretius, *The Way Things Are*, trans. Rolfe Humphries (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), 158.
- ⁴⁰ Lucretius, *The Way Things Are*, 53.
- ⁴¹ Friedrich Albert Lange, *The History of Materialism* (London: Kegan Paul, 1925), First Book, 102.
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ Martha Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 103.
- ⁴⁴ Lucretius, *The Way Things Are*, 88.
- ⁴⁵ James Warren, *Facing Death: Epicurus and His Critics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 6.
- ⁴⁶ *The Epicurus Reader*, 29.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁹ See Nietzsche, *Dawn*, sections 13, 33, 36. On Epicurus on fear and chance see Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 87, 223, and 252.
- ⁵⁰ Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, p. 252.
- ⁵¹ Roos, “Nietzsche et Épicure”, p. 299.
- ⁵² Ibid. p. 309.
- ⁵³ Ibid. p. 300.
- ⁵⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1992), p. 270.
- ⁵⁵ Gilles Deleuze, ‘Lucretius and the Simulacrum’, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), p. 279.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 267.
- ⁵⁷ Michael Serres also construes the clinamen in terms of a differential, and a flow, in his *The Birth of Physics*, trans. Jack Hawkes (Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2000), p. 174. For insight see also Walter G. Englert, *Epicurus and the Swerve and Voluntary Action* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987). Serres refers to Bergson’s reception of Lucretius on more than one occasion in his book (see p. 37 & p. 174).
- ⁵⁸ Deleuze, ‘Lucretius’, p. 269.

⁵⁹ For further insight see Warren Montag, 'From Clinamen to Conatus: Deleuze, Lucretius, Spinoza', forthcoming.

⁶⁰ Brooke Holmes, 'Deleuze, Lucretius, and the Simulacrum of Naturalism', in Brooke Holmes and W. H. Shearin (eds.), *Dynamic Readings: Studies in the Reception of Epicureanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 316-43, p. 323.

⁶¹ Deleuze, 'Lucretius', p. 271.

⁶² See R. J. Johnson, 'Another Use of the Concept of the Simulacrum: Deleuze, Lucretius and the Practical Critique of Demystification', *Deleuze Studies*, 8: 1, 2014, pp. 70-94, p. 73.

⁶³ Bergson, H. (1884), *Extraits de Lucrèce avec un commentaire, des notes et une étude sur la poésie, la physique, le texte et la langue de Lucrèce* (Paris); (1959), *The Philosophy of Poetry. The Genius of Lucretius*. Trans. W. Baskin (New York).

⁶⁴ On this point Tim O Keefe argues that Epicurean arguments in physics are intended to establish 'that their conclusions are true, not merely that believing them helps us feel good. The pragmatic justification comes in, instead, to answer the question of why we should bother to engage in the activity of trying to understand the workings of the world in the first place'. See O' Keefe, *Epicureanism* (Durham: Acumen Press, 2010), p. 135.

⁶⁵ Deleuze, 'Lucretius', p. 278.

⁶⁶ The classic study of myth in Lucretius is by Monica R. Gale, *Myth and Poetry in Lucretius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). She understands myth to be a body of traditional stories distinct from other fictions, and maintains that Lucretius makes use of myth in support of Epicurean demythologization: 'The mythological passages in the DRN thus act a powerful polemical and didactic tool: at one and the same time, Lucretius is able to dispose of rival theories of myth satisfactorily by substituting his own account of its origins and nature; and to use myth didactically to illustrate his own argumentation' (p. 230). From this we can say that Deleuze's appreciation is misleading if the suggestion is that Lucretius dispenses with 'myth altogether. As Gale ably shows the poet rejects myth but, at the same time, he appropriates mythological imagery so as to invest his argument, including his presentation of the god-like figure of Epicurus, with attractive and impressive qualities.