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THE MEDICINE OF SALVATION

Epicurean Education as Therapy

Michael McOsker

Vain is that philosopher's argument by which no human suffering is cured. For just as there is no benefit from medicine which does not expel the illnesses of bodies, so not even from philosophy, unless it expels the suffering of the soul.

*Epicurus fr. 221 Us.*¹

Epicurus, as the epigraph shows, subordinated the work of philosophy to its goal of helping people live better—calmer and more pleasant—lives. The parallel between medicine's concern for the body and philosophy's concern for the soul already had a long history by Epicurus' day, but he and his successors developed it in some striking ways.²

The basic idea underlying the comparison is that nature is not simply “the way things are without corrupting human interference,” but that this state is somehow correct and ought to be (re)obtained. On this view, “[n]ature’ is a normative concept, what is normal and good for humans. The natural state is the state of good health” (Jouanna 1999, 334–7), and so illnesses and wounds are deviations from that correct standard. For Epicurus, the case is similar: the life “in accordance with nature” [*kata phusin*] is good; the one contrary to nature [*para phusin*] is bad; and the goal of philosophy is to restore people to their natural, normal and good states of physical and psychological health. Peace of mind [*ataraxia*] is famously the main goal of the Epicurean life, and to reach it, he developed a number of techniques which philosopher-therapists used for the treatment [*therapeia*] of their student-patients. If, Torquatus asks (Cic. *De Fin.* I.59), physical discomforts impede the good life, how much worse are mental pains? Most of this chapter will be a discussion of these techniques, but before that, I will lay out a summary of the presuppositions that underlie the conception of philosophy as a therapeutic practice. This is not the only possible way to understand Epicureanism philosophy—e.g. it is not a useful guideline for understanding Epicureanism as practiced by children brought up in the school, who were never taught the false beliefs that infected others, and consequently have no need of therapeutic intervention.³ A religious model is also possible. But the therapeutic model is useful for adults who come to the school with certain wrong beliefs already inculcated and negatively affecting their lives.

Martha Nussbaum described ten aspects of the medical-model of philosophy.⁴ The general presuppositions that therapeutic arguments have are:

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- i Practical causal efficacy: most important is that the argument actually bring the student closer to health (cf. *Ep. Men.* 122 and 135, *Ep. Pyth.* 84, and *Ep. Hdt.* 83, as well as Lucretius I.931–50 and Diogenes of Oenoanda fr. III Smith).
- ii Value-relativity: therapeutic arguments must respond to the beliefs and desires that the patient already has. They may have the goal of radically reshaping those beliefs and desires, but they must be responsive to the patient's initial condition (see below).
- iii Responsiveness to the particular case: humans are philosophically ill in similar ways, but the differences are important as well. Some classes of people, like women, the elderly, or those with a predominance of fire atoms in their souls, will act similarly, but this does not obscure their individuality (see below).

Additionally, the arguments...

- i Are directed at the health of the individual, rather than a community or the individual *qua* part of a community.
- ii Use practical reason solely as an instrument.
- iii Have no respect for consistency, validity, clarity in definition, but consider them instrumentally useful, as aids to communication or effective argumentation.
- iv Produce an asymmetry of roles: the doctor is authoritative and the patient is subordinate.⁵
- v Have no interest in other philosophical views.
- vi ix–x) The arguments are self-praising for their efficacy and necessity, and serve, in part, to encourage the student.

Some of these statements need qualification; our knowledge of Epicureanism has advanced a great deal since Nussbaum wrote. For instance, there apparently was study of other philosophers in the Epicurean school and Epicurus had a well-reasoned motivation for discarding the use of definitions.⁶ His demand for clarity (fr. 54 Us.) in exposition was well-known in antiquity (though he was mocked for violating it). Epicurus was evidently willing to accept his students' arguments and be put on their level (cf. Metrodorus in *De Nat.* 28 with Sedley 1973 and Leonteus *apud* Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1108E-F). Practical reason [*phronēsis*] may be just an instrument, but it is by far the most important one, second only to philosophy (cf. *Ep. Men.* 132 with Heßler *ad loc.* and De Sanctis 2010). One suspects that ix) and x), already collapsed into one by Nussbaum, are purely stylistic. Other nuances will be mentioned below.

I would also add a different point of emphasis: Epicurus' philosophy did not treat physics and ethics separately. Rather, he explicitly derived ethical positions from the conclusions of physics (cf. *KD* 12). For instance, the mortality of the soul is based in his atomism, and this connection grounds some of his arguments against fearing death and the gods—the two most damaging fears in Epicurus' diagnosis (cf. *Ep. Hdt.* 81 and Warren 2009). Since no part of you will survive your death, you cannot be tortured or rewarded in the hereafter by fickle tyrants that demand superstitious worship and costly sacrifices for trivial sins.

Any impression that Epicurus would deploy any argument so long as it convinced the patient is mistaken; he had very well-defined views on almost every question in ethics and physics, and made physics itself a therapeutic tool. False beliefs are like a plague which spread from person to person, and it is the Epicurean's duty to come to the aid of humanity and to be their ally (*epikourein*, a delightful pun, cf. Diogenes of Oenoanda fr. 3.IV.3-V.8 Smith); Epicurean philosophy is “the drugs of salvation” (my title, V.14-VI.2) because it teaches *correct* beliefs, from which healing flows. The totality and coherence of the system was reciprocally

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reinforcing and helped guarantee each facet. Both physics and ethics, guided by canonic, contribute to the ultimate goal of *ataraxia*. The single goal, which is the life according to nature (understood normatively, not descriptively), means that all of Epicurus' arguments tend in the same direction. The whole of Epicurus' *On Nature*—in fact, everything he wrote—can be read therapeutically, and, as Michael Erler noted (1993: 294), the study of physics has the same goal as the study of ethics: achieving *ataraxia*. This is parallel to Hippocrates' position that knowledge of the whole of nature is required to treat any given illness adequately (reported by Plato, *Phaedrus* 270c-d). Without suitable and sufficient background knowledge, the individual case cannot be diagnosed and treated correctly.⁷

The whole system is complicated and this alone would justify the use of various abridgements, summaries, and collections of dicta, but there is a second reason for their use. Just as Epicurus recognized the unconscious, he also realized that some behaviors and beliefs might be invulnerable to cognitive therapy *via* philosophical argument, as Nussbaum (1994: 154) noted. Philodemus, in his *On the Gods* I, col. 24.20–34, calls some fears “latent and unarticulated” (ὕπουλοι καὶ ἀδιαρθρωτότεροι, literally “festering and quite unanalyzed”—note the medical term) and Diogenes of Oenoanda (fr. 35.II.4 Smith) talks about an “obscure” [ἄτρα[νής or ἄτρα[νος] fear, which occurs when the mind is occupied with something else and insinuates itself into our nature and lurks there.⁸ The idea seems to be that these fears are not visible from the surface, as it were, but malignantly lurk out of sight, causing damage unnoticed. But, *pace* Nussbaum, this is not “disappointing;” rather, it shows deep insight into how humans actually behave and change habits—these are rarely as rational and reasons-responsive as we would like. The most important text is *SV* 18: “erotic suffering is ended by the removal of sight and conversation and meeting,” i. e. “out of sight, out of mind,” just as Lucretius suggests at 4.1063–67.⁹ Philodemus suggests the technique of “relabeling”—calling an attractive thing by an unattractive name, e.g. dying gloriously in battle becomes “getting slaughtered like cattle”—in his *On Death*, at 28.37–29.2 and 33.21–2; this is the reverse of Lucretius' procedure at 4.1157–70.¹⁰ The philosopher-therapist, like the doctor, is licensed to arouse reasonable fear by setting the bad consequences of a course of action before the eyes of his students. This technique is common enough to have a technical term: “setting before the eyes.”¹¹ By providing an alternative course of action—guided by Epicurus' teaching—he can help his students escape their fates.

Epicurus comes armed with a complete philosophical system which is ultimately in the service of healing his students. They must learn facts about reality, and that from these facts flow certain conclusions which release them from their superstitious fears—in fact, knowledge of physics is pointless *per se*, it is only useful as a tool for ethics (cf. *Ep. Hdt.* 78–9, *Ep. Pyth* 85–7).¹² Meanwhile, they undergo cognitive therapy—philosophical argumentation—and behavioral therapy, both aim at removing false beliefs and empty desires and at inculcating correct beliefs and natural desires. Ultimately, the student makes progress towards a real, durable happiness which is like that of the gods.

An emblem of the relationship between medicine and philosophy is the Epicureans' use of an abridgment of the first four sayings in the *Kyriai Doxai*: this already brief summary was shortened further into the *Tetrapharmakos*, the “Four-Ingredient Drug,” recorded by Philodemus in *PHerc.* 1005, col. 5 Angeli: “god is no reason to fear, death is no reason to worry, and pleasure is easy to get, while pain is easy to endure.”¹³ The name was borrowed from remedies for inflammation.

Details

Now we will turn to examine several Epicurean tactics in detail. Because of the textual situation, evidence from several different Epicureans—Epicurus himself, but also his

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followers Philodemus and Lucretius—will be grouped together thematically. The first section will treat, by way of example, topics drawn from the world of physics that have ethical ramifications, as well as Lucretius' account of psychic dispositions and Philodemus' diatribic therapy. The point is to see the close connection, which flows in both directions, between physics and ethics. The second section will treat diagnosis and treatment of individual cases. The Epicureans had a wide variety of tools available, which they could use subtly. The final section will be a description of Philodemus' *On Frank Speech*, a sort of teacher's manual for Epicureans which discusses a number of therapeutic techniques.

Physics: Fears and Dispositions

Epicurus' *Letter to Pythocles*, which discusses meteorology, is one of the main documents to discuss fears caused by natural phenomena. In it, we see a major Epicurean therapeutic technique: adequate physical explanations of natural phenomena remove them from the realm of the divine. For instance, Epicurus (*Ep. Pyth.* 94) offers three possible explanations of the phases of the moon, and Lucretius (5.705–50) gives several more—but none allows Selene to be a goddess. Contemporary research science could not pronounce conclusively on many of these topics, which left room for uncertainty and the terrors of mythology. Consequently, Epicurus developed a technique of multiple explanation to provide a defensive battery against these fears.¹⁴ When people believe that the gods express their anger through thunderstorms, it can be immensely calming to learn otherwise, that thunder and lightning are simply phenomena that occur under certain natural conditions. Consider Theophrastus' superstitious man—how much better off he'd be with correct beliefs about nature!¹⁵

Beliefs and the fears consequent on them are one thing, but more fundamental are our dispositions, which for Epicureans are atomic structures in our souls. Our major account of the relationship between souls and personalities is in *De Rerum Natura* 3.288–206, where Lucretius discusses rather schematically the results of several atomic imbalances: an excess of fire atoms causes irascibility, cold wild causes timidity and flightiness, and air causes placidity. The corresponding defects also cause problems: a lack of fire atoms makes people unable to get angry when appropriate. Lucretius' account is indebted to discussions in Epicurus' *On Nature*, probably around book 25, three copies of which are partly extant in the Herculaneum papyri. That book treats the development of moral responsibility on the atomic level. We are born with a certain atomic constitution, but this changes over time under a variety of influences—our upbringings and educations are chief among them—and eventually we become responsible for our own actions.¹⁶ Lucretius (3.307–22, the continuation of the passage just discussed) says that philosophical education [*ratio, doctrina*] can have a major influence on our atomic make-ups, though it cannot completely eradicate our natal constitutions.

Later Epicureans had several tools available for this kind of educational treatment, but one of the most notable was the therapeutic diatribe. Several examples are preserved in Lucretius (against love and fear of death) and Philodemus (against empty anger and fear of death), and the latter, in his *On Anger*, gives us part of a theoretical justification for their use: a well-targeted diatribe can stop a person in the midst of their anger and make them reconsider their foolish actions and the consequences that are likely to follow.¹⁷ The technique was evidently borrowed by Basilides and Thespis in the early second century BCE from Chrysippus and Bion of Borysthenes, its pioneers.¹⁸ We cannot now tell why Bion was cited (perhaps he was an innovator in diatribe-form), but Chrysippus' *Therapeutikon* is mentioned specifically, the semi-stand-alone fourth book of his *On Emotions* (*Peri Pathōn*),

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a.k.a. the *Ethikon*. This book, written without obtrusive Stoic technical terms, propounded a method for intervening in fits of strong emotion and heading them off, just as Philodemus believes possible. Philodemus' diatribe is couched explicitly in medical terminology and his example is shot through with medical terminology; this too is an inheritance from Chrysippus, as Tieleman (2003, 142–57) shows: Chrysippus considered the emotions to be the symptoms of an underlying psychological illness, which, just as the soul is physical, was also a physical problem. All of this could have been taken over by the Epicureans with only little modification. Epicurean treatment aims at deep-seated, negative aspects of people's selves and strives to change them physically, on the atomic level. An irascible person, after treatment, has fewer fire atoms in her soul, and consequently her anger is less often empty and more often "natural"—Philodemus' word for anger correctly felt.

A correct understanding of the soul and its dispositions was essential for the psychological treatment that Epicureanism is famous for, just as a thorough knowledge of basic biology is required for modern doctors. This detailed, general account of the soul grounds and allows individual treatment. "Irascibility" is, in one sense, a physical fact which Epicurean therapists treat psychologically, with praise and blame. We do not easily think that a physical defect can be cured with ethical harangues or psycho-therapy, but for the Epicureans, physics and philosophical therapy were very closely connected because the talk has a physical effect on our souls.¹⁹

Individual Diagnosis and Treatment

Much of therapeutic philosophy's work, diagnosing and treating individual cases, is invisible to us, probably because in large part it was conversational and so never preserved in writing. Nonetheless, we have some evidence for how diagnosis and treatment of individual cases were handled. It will emerge that Epicurean practice was quite flexible and respectful of individual cases and situations, as we should expect given their account of the soul and dispositions. Voula Tsouna (2007: 52–73) explores the empirical background of these types of treatments, and suggests parallels with the Empirical school of medicine; indeed, as Philip and Estelle DeLacy (1978: 165–82) show, medicine was the first and paradigmatic form of empirical inquiry and played an important role in later empirical systems, including that of Epicurus, and later members of the school stayed in touch with innovations in medical teaching.²⁰

Some flexibility was built into the system on the level of doctrine. Although Diogenes Laertius (10.119–120) records a lengthy series of prohibitions and commandments, this represents a much-reduced summary of more nuanced doctrines. The usual example is the case of politics. Diogenes reports simply that "the sage will not engage in politics," and Epicurus had a slogan λάθε βίωσας [live unnoticed] to symbolize his doctrine. Unfortunately, several of his immediate followers were active in politics, as later would be Cassius, one of Caesar's assassins, and Caesar himself. The solution, as argued at length by Roskam (2007) and Fish (2011) is that political activity is not wholly banned, just discouraged generally. I call this the "according to life circumstance" [κατὰ περίστασιν βίου] proviso, after Epicurus' statement that "the sage will marry according to life circumstance" (DL 10.119).²¹ This leaves ground for the vagaries of individual cases, like Idomeneus, active in the court of either Antigonos Monophthalmus or Lysimachus, Mithres, finance minister to Lysimachus, and Colotes, who dedicated a book to Ptolemy II Philadelphus, L. Piso Caesoninus, Consul and father-in-law to Julius Caesar, and Cassius the tyrannicide. The slogan and summaries are misleading, and actual school doctrine preserved leeway for individual prescriptions. This proviso should be attached to almost every ethical doctrine, as Roskam

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suggests (2007: 35–6), and it allows a great deal of adaptability in prescription and therapy according to individual needs and circumstances.

This adaptability is occasionally visible in the fragments of Epicurus' letters.²² Beyond the three complete letters, a protreptic to Menoeceus, to Herodotus on physics, and to Pythocles on meteorology, we have quite a few fragments from others. Epicurus is explicit about his purpose in composing them: the first sentence of the letter to Herodotus states that it is intended as a study-aide for those who cannot understand or remember the whole of Epicurus' physical system. Pythocles asked for a memorize-able summary of the meteorological doctrines (*Ep. Pyth.* 116, cf. *Ep. Hdt.* 35, etc.; Epicurean memorization of doctrine is parodied at Persius 3.77–87). In other letters, Epicurus reminds students of points of doctrine, e.g. Anaxarchus ([42] Arr.) who forgot that the virtues are only instrumental, or to reassure students, like Apelles ([43] Arr.), Pythocles ([89] Arr.) and probably Menoeceus, that they were capable of mastering their studies. He could show deep concern for his students, like in his consolation to Dositheus ([46] Arr.) and his tireless efforts to free Mithres from Craterus ([49] and [64] Arr.). In these, language that assimilates teachers and students to divinities is not arrogance or flattery, but keeps the ultimate goal—*ataraxia* and a lifestyle like that of the gods—firmly in sight to encourage the students.

To continue with politics, Epicurus advises Idomeneus to get out of politics at a suitable moment. Seneca (*Ep.* 22.5 = fr. 133 Us. = [56] Arr.) mentions the letter:

read Epicurus' letter which he addressed to Idomeneus, whom he asks to escape [*fugiat*, "flee" or "go into exile"] and hurry as much as possible, before some greater force should intervene and remove his ability to withdraw. The same author adds that he must try nothing unless it can be tried in a fitting and timely fashion.

Idomeneus was somehow tangled up in politics, and could not easily extract himself, so Epicurus' advice is to keep an eye out for a good time to escape, because staying involved could be dangerous. Epicurus' statement, preserved in Seneca (*Ep.* 21.5 = 133 Us. = [55] Arr.), that his letters will make Idomeneus more famous than politics, is directed (as Roskam 2007, 48–49, infers) towards Idomeneus' current vain desire for glory; that too can be healed in due time, but Idomeneus must first escape his dangerous situation and undergo philosophical therapy before his false belief can be cured. We can see here Nussbaum's three axioms at work: Epicurus directs his argument at Idomeneus' current situation and beliefs with an eye towards his ultimate happiness. He does not try to get there all at once, but to convince Idomeneus to take the necessary first steps. That the therapy was effective—and the parallel with medical practice was known—can be inferred from the fact that Mithres called Epicurus "Paeon" (the name of a god of healing) in one of his letters (DL 10.4). No surprise then that later Epicureans gathered and published his correspondence as a repository of guidance for later generations.²³

On Frank Speech

All the therapeutic practices discussed above were institutionalized within the school, as we see from Philodemus' *On Frank Speech (Peri Parrhesias)*. This work, preserved in *PHerc.* 1471, was based on the lectures of Zeno of Sidon, head of the Epicurean school in the early first century BCE, though Philodemus was willing to claim authorship, and I follow his lead. Only approximately the last third is preserved, and none of the current editions has the fragments in the correct order or even presents all of the text preserved on the papyrus.²⁴ Despite this, a great deal of information about Epicurean teaching and therapeutic practices

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can be gleaned from it. The surviving part of the work is organized by headings which treat problems in the use of frank speech within the Epicurean school; we do not know anything about its organization as a whole. These discussions indicate wide variation among the students, including women (col. 21b), older people (col. 24a), and those born into noble families (col. IVb), as well as grades of students: “the delicate,” an intermediate class, and “the strong ones” (fr. 7). Epicurus himself had envisaged both young and old (*Men.* 122) and men and women ([98] Arr.) philosophizing. Philodemus and Zeno evidently expected a wide variety of students, of very different backgrounds and aptitudes, in their lecture-halls, each of whom required individualized therapy. Interestingly, the work assumes a community: students interact with each other and with the therapists in the presence of others, and some of the treatise discusses how to handle emotions like jealousy or shame that can result from public praise or correction. It is also interesting that the treatise as we have it does not outline any sort of philosophical curriculum, though it does occasionally refer to more and less advanced students. It is perhaps more parallel to a Community Rule than a curriculum of study.

Marcello Gigante (1975) outlined the *philosophia medicans* embodied in the *On Frank Speech*; in general, he notes that “medicine—in its terminology and its function—contributes to creating and configuring the ethico-educational vision of frank speech coherently.”²⁵ Frank speech is important truth telling, designed to make students aware of their own mistakes or those of others and to correct them. It can also be encouraging: praise of progress or individual correct actions is important because it encourages the students and sets good examples for the others. Discussion of dispositions, praise, and blame (coll. Ia-IIb) shows that Philodemus assumes the Epicurean account of the soul with its atomic dispositions that can be changed by outside interventions, which are frank speech, praise, and blame.

In summary, students must become aware of their own errors, either by themselves or when a teacher or fellow-student notices them (fr. 40, 41, 49, 50, 53, etc.). Teachers sometimes catch students in the act, but often must diagnose stochastically, like a doctor, on the basis of reasonable signs and inferences (fr. 1, 57, 63, etc.). These errors are removed (cf. Hipp. *De Victu* I.15) by philosophical arguments and frank criticism, which is likened to unpleasant but necessary medical interventions, like worm-wood or surgery (col. XVII), and hellebore (Tab. XII extrem. fr.). Frank criticism can be bitter, verging on abuse (fr. 7, 14, 60), but this is not ideal (fr. 6, 11, 14, 20, 26, etc.); some people require gentle intervention, like Pythocles (fr. 6, cf. fr. 20). Frank speaking cleanses (*katharsis*, fr. 46) or purges (*kenōma*, fr. 63) the bloat caused by mental or emotional disturbances (fr. 67). The Epicurean teacher is himself already purged [*kathareuōn*], well-intentioned, and knows how to cure (fr. 44). The philosophers have already been cured of their own illnesses by mastering Epicurus’ philosophy and life-style (fr. 45, 51); they will encourage their students by praising success and discounting failure (fr. 4). Their treatments will vary not just according to the students’ needs, but to their own aptitudes and experiences (col. VIb). Hippocrates, in *On Ancient Medicine* 9, blames many illnesses on over-fullness [*plērōsis*] or emptiness [*kenōsis*]; it is striking that one of the concerns of the *On Frank Speech* is to eliminate mental-over-fullness and that a general Epicurean concern is with eliminating empty beliefs [*kenai doxai*]. Doctrines are assimilated to food: what is disagreeable should be spat out (fr. 18; cf. the concern with dietetics throughout the Hippocratic corpus). Fr. 63–6 are especially full of the medical comparison; different philosophical treatments are compared to different medical ones, inference from symptomatic signs is used as a basis for diagnosis, repeated treatments are sometimes necessary, passions are relieved [*koufizō*]. Unfortunately, just as some cases are terminal, so too some students are incurable (fr. 69 and 84).

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On Frank Speech, as we have it, is more a teacher's guidebook than a set of case-studies, so we cannot see in detail how Philodemus or any other therapist would have deal with a particular case. A partial exception is the discussion of older people near the end of the treatise.²⁶ In col. 24, Philodemus writes

Why are old people rather intolerant (sc. of frank criticism)? Because they believe themselves to be more intelligent because of their age, and think that some folks move from contempt for their physical weakness to frank criticism and absolutely outrageous behavior ... [XXIVb] ... they are mistaken, and because they are revered and honored among the many, they think that being criticized by anyone [πρός τινών] is incredible, and because they see that old age is deemed worthy of certain [sc. indulgences or honors?], they take care not to be seen unworthy of them and so deprived of them. And the saying "The old are children again" gets under their skin and needles them, since they're afraid that ... their characters ...

We can identify several worries that older people have about frank criticism: that their experience and intelligence will be undervalued, that they will fall prey to elder-abuse due to their physical infirmity, that they might lose the high-regard in which they are held, and that a common saying appears to license disrespectful or humiliating treatment. Frank criticism might activate these worries: it might appear that the therapist is acting out of station or condescending to them or treating them poorly, and they may react poorly. Additionally, if an outsider witnesses the frank criticism, he might get the idea that he can get away with actual crimes against the older people.

Unfortunately, Philodemus' prescription is lost, but we can imagine several tactics: perhaps older people are to be rebuked only in private, or with particular gentleness, or in an indirect way, like in fr. 9, where the therapist "admits" one of his own mistakes as an illustrative example, even though he did not actually commit any error. In general, the therapist will carefully calibrate his rhetoric so as to avoid saying anything that would activate one of these worries, so that the real message gets across.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, I will try to lay out a synoptic summary of what an Epicurean would see and consider in the treatment of some patient. First, the therapist becomes acquainted with the patient, because knowledge of his beliefs, desires, and fears, as well as of his dispositions, is necessary for treatment. He begins with the basics of Epicurean doctrine which are intended to combat the most troubling symptoms of his illness: the fears of death and the gods and wrong opinions about pleasure and pain. The patient learns the basics of Epicurean doctrine: an outline of the physical system and generalized ethical rules. You must stop the bleeding before you can set the bone. As treatment progresses, and the patient's condition improves, the therapist can treat other issues, perhaps the patient's arrogance or irascibility with individually targeted diatribes, topics of study, and other tactics. Little by little, the patient's physical constitution—his soul—will be improved by doses of doctrinal therapy and good living.

In some cases, the patient suffers from an illness requiring special treatment; perhaps Idomeneus was one. His involvement in politics required special handling: first he had to be convinced that his current situation was dangerous, then he had to extract himself from his position. If he suffered from glory-seeking, he had to be shown the troubles consequent on that kind of life and that a quieter life-style would be more pleasant. He had to learn certain

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basics of Epicureanism in order for the arguments about his specific condition to have force: he must believe that a pleasant life is better than a glorious one for him to want to leave politics.

Eventually, the patient is purged and their diet improved, they are freed from fears and false beliefs, and go on to live healthier, more pleasant lives.

Notes

- 1 Cf. *SV* 54 and 64. The rhetoric of the epigraph has its own afterlife in Epicurean thought: Philodemus, in his *On Anger*, compares students who cannot endure Epicurean therapy to sores that cannot endure even the most gentle drugs (col. 19.17–21).
- 2 Despite their belief that most people required *therapeia*, Epicureans do not say that most people are insane, only that they have damaging false beliefs. I wonder if they were trying to avoid stigmatizing those who might come to them for help. There are interesting direct comparisons between arrogance and the Sacred Disease (epilepsy) at fr. 224 Us. and false desires and fevers at fr. 471 Us.
- 3 Asmis (2001) covers many of these topics from the perspective of education.
- 4 Nussbaum actually gives two lists: in her 1986 article, she gives a unified list of nine, divided into “A” and “B” groups (the difference is that Aristotle does not agree with the B positions); in her 1999 book (which I have followed), she gives a list of ten.
- 5 iv) and this entry led to two Epicurean practices, unhelpfully called confession and informing. Confession is really just reporting one’s own symptoms to the therapist, as anyone concerned with their own health would do, and informing is reporting someone else’s symptoms to their therapist, as anyone concerned with a friend’s health would do. The Christian connotations of “confession,” and the political overtones of “informing,” are both out of place.
- 6 On study of other philosophers, see e.g. Erler (2011), Clay (2004) on Philodemus’ *Syntaxis*, and Leone (2019) on Empedocles. On definitions, see Asmis (1984: 35–7) and Giovacchini (2003).
- 7 For a discussion of the elementary tools available for learning doctrine, see Angeli (1986).
- 8 See Warren (2009: 236–8) for the Philodemus passage.
- 9 Hankinson 2013: 94–5, suggests a similar therapeutic use for multiple explanations and arguments.
- 10 On relabeling, see Sorabji (2000: 222–3) and Tsouna (2009: 259–60).
- 11 See Tsouna (2003) and (2007: 52–87).
- 12 Cf. Bad Religion’s complaint, in “I Want to Conquer the World” (*No Control*, 1989), “Hey man of science with your perfect rules of measure, / can you improve this place with the data that you gather?”
- 13 The saying is pithier in Greek and has a finely wrought structure: ἄφοβον ὁ θεός, ἀνύποπτον ὁ θάνατος, καὶ τάγαθὸν μὲν εὐκτητόν, τὸ δὲ δεινὸν εὐεκακάρτερον.
- 14 On multiple explanation in general, see Hankinson (2013) and Bakker (2016: 8–75). There is debate about whether Epicurus considered all the explanations adduced in any given case to be merely possible or if he thought they were all true, and if so, in what sense.
- 15 Theophrastus describes the superstitious man at *Characters* 16. The *Characters* is a set of sketches of various types of people, including the ironic man, the gossip, the grumbler, the coward, and the like. The superstitious man is punctilious in his observance of even very minor religious and superstitious practices, like avoiding using roads that have been crossed by weasels and spitting at the sight of epileptics. On the *Characters* as a whole, see Diggle (2005).
- 16 The text is still in very bad shape, and consequently the physical mechanism(s) that Epicurus described are poorly understood. See Laursen (1995) and (1997) for the text, and Sedley (1983), Purinton (1999), O’Keefe (2005), Masi (2006), and Németh (2018) for discussions.
- 17 On the medicinal diatribe, its history, and Philodemus’ diatribe against anger, see Armstrong and McOsler (forthcoming) with bibliography. On Philodemus’ diatribe against fear of death, see Armstrong (2004). On Lucretius’ diatribe against fear of death, see Wallach (1976); on his diatribe against love, see Brown (1987). On fear of death, cf. *Ep. Men.* 124 and *KD* 20.
- 18 For Chrysippus, see Tieleman (2003); for Bion, see Kindstrand (1976).
- 19 The placebo and nocebo effects in medicine may be a parallel: expectations of improvement or deterioration (among other causes) seem to be drivers of improvement or deterioration of physical symptoms, that is, the mind is having an effect on the body. See a recent summary of work on the placebo and nocebo effects, see Dodd, Dean, Vian, and Burk 2017.

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- 20 Demetrius Laco may himself have been a doctor, if he is the one Erotian has in mind at *Hippocraticarum Collectio* 32 (p. 5 Nachmanson) and 86.1 (pp. 47–8 Nachmanson); he apparently argues against Herophilian physicians at *PHerc.* 1012, coll. 42–7 Puglia (see McOsker forthcoming). Philodemus promises a (now lost) discussion of epistemology of the Empirical physicians at *On Signs* col. 60 De Lacy and De Lacy.
- 21 It is translated into Latin by Seneca as *nisi siquid intervenerit*, “unless some circumstance should intervene” (*De Otio* 3.2 = fr. 9 Us).
- 22 The fragments are gathered as [40]-[133] Arr.; Erbi (forthcoming) is reediting them with commentary. In the meanwhile, see Militello (1997), Erbi (2015), Campos Daroca and López-Martínez (2010), and Tepedino Guerra (2010). Note that Lucian (*De Saltu inter Sal.* 6 = [40] Arr.) appears to make a distinction between the serious letters, presumably the doctrinal ones, and those to his dearest friends, which may have been primarily social or hortatory.
- 23 In fact, later Epicureans had access to a great deal of correspondence from the early Garden, not just Epicurus’. See *PHerc.* 176 (ed. Vogliano) with Angeli (1988a) and Philodemus’ *Pragmateiai* (ed. Militello).
- 24 Olivieri (1914) is the only available edition; it is almost completely unreliable. Konstan, Clay, Glad, Thom, and Ware (1998) and Ghisu (2015) largely reproduce Olivieri’s text with translations. Ben Henry is producing a new edition.
- 25 “La medicina—nella terminologia e nella funzione—concorre a creare ed a configurare in modo coerente la visione eticopedagogica della libertà di parola ...”
- 26 See Hammerstaedt (2015) for a discussion of old age in Epicureanism, focused on Diogenes of Oenoanda’s inscription.

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