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Epicurus' Conception of the Psyche

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Unless otherwise specified, page references in parentheses are to the following works:

- Bailey, Cyril. The Greek Atomists and Epicurus
 Diogenes Laertius. The Lives and Opinions of Famous Philosophers
 Epicurus. Letter to Herodotus
 Furley, David. Two Studies in the Greek Atomists
 Guthrie, W.K.C. A History of Greek Philosophy, Vol. II
 Lucretius. De Rerum Natura

I.

That it is difficult to reconstruct an accurate picture of the composition and functioning of the Epicurean psyche from the extant original fragments has long been recognized by scholars. When we speak of "Epicurean" psychology, we must be careful to distinguish between what theories Epicurus himself held, and what views were elaborated by later members of the school, as it is probable that his later followers assimilated either consciously or inadvertently teachings from other philosophical schools and traditions into their own thinking. Of course, there is the persistent claim which the later Epicureans never tired of making, viz. that what they wrote was authentic doctrine or at most an accurate extension of the master's philosophy. Comparing this contention to that of another tradition, we have the strong insistence of Plotinus that at no point does he deviate from the teaching of Plato, a claim which we now know to be inaccurate. The Pythagoreans likewise disclaimed any deviation from the thought of Pythagoras. It was, after all, characteristic of many ancient writers to pass off their ideas as the exegesis and further development, if not the literal duplication, of the works of older masters.

In the light of such well-known claims, it is difficult to understand why so many Epicurean scholars have accepted without question the pronouncements of later members of the Epicurean tradition as being faithful to the thought of Epicurus. Both of the scholars whose interpretations are discussed in this paper make this assumption. David Furley accepts without demur the ideas of Lucretius as being "Epicurean," and Cyril Bailey states the point explicitly. In discussing whether Lucretius' conception of the psyche is faithful to Epicurus, Bailey says: "It is highly improbable that Lucretius, who in all parts of the poem is so scrupulous in following his master's lead in every detail, has here gratuitously amplified him" (p. 388-89). Earlier in the same work he says that "it is fine testimony to the permanence of the Epicurean tradition that Lucretius, even though his explicit references to the Canonice are but few and casual, yet observes it in practice as scrupulously as his Master" (p. 236). It is difficult to understand how he knows this, especially as he has just told us that the Canonice is lost.

The intrusion of non-Epicurean elements into the doctrines of later Epicureans is indeed a vast topic and should be of concern to the historians of philosophy. However, it is not the purpose of this paper to trace the story of later addenda to the original philosophy of the founder of the Epicurean tradition, nor is it to identify the sequence of phases by which doctrinal changes were made through the absorption of elements which seem to be supportive of or akin to the views which made up the Epicurean theory of the soul. Rather, my purpose is to examine the interpretations advanced by these two scholars who seem convinced that there is no substantive difference between Epicurus' doctrine of the psyche and that held by Lucretius, and test Lucretius' theory against the extant fragments of Epicurus. I think it can be shown that 1) there are certain features of Lucretius' account of the psyche which were neither parts of Epicurus' doctrine nor necessary to account for the original atomic theory of the soul; 2) Epicurus' theory is more complete than has previously been believed to be the case; and 3) whatever the case with Epicurus and Lucretius, the positions of the two scholars in question are not clear or consistent.

II.

Lucretius states that the psyche is composed of particles of heat, breath, air, and a fourth unnamed constituent (3. 128-9; 214-15; 232-49). Epicurus' only explicit discussion of the composition of the psyche, however, in the Letter to Herodotus 63, strongly suggests that the psyche somehow resembles pneuma and heat, not that it is made up of different kinds of atoms.

ἡ ψυχὴ σῶμά ἐστι λεπτομέρες, παρ' ὅλον τὸ ἄθροισμα παρεσπαρμένον, προσεμ-
φερέστατον δὲ πνεύματι, θερμοῦ τινα κρᾶσιν ἔχοντι καὶ πῆ δὲ τούτῳ ἔστι
δὲ τὸ μέρος πολλὴν παραλλαγὴν εἰληφὸς τῇ λεπτομερείᾳ καὶ αἰτῶν τούτων,
συμπαθὲς δὲ τοῦτο μᾶλλον καὶ τῷ λοιπῷ ἄθροισματι.

My own reading of this passage yields the following:

1. The psyche is a soma leptomeres, i.e. a body whose parts are fine.
2. The psyche as soma, being of fine parts, is distributed over the entire aggregate (ἄθροισμα), that is, over the [total] composite organism.
3. This soma resembles mostly that of pneuma having an admixture (κρᾶσιν) of heat.
4. Psyche resembles somewhat pneuma and somewhat heat.
5. There is also that part of the psyche which has more fineness than either pneuma or heat, and as such this part is more sympathes with the rest of the [total] aggregate.

As G. B. Kerferd has correctly pointed out in a recent article, the language of the first sentence is very unitary in character and does not at all suggest that the psyche contains different kinds of atoms, but that the atoms of the psyche bear in some way a resemblance to breath and hot wind:

The soul is a soma leptomeres and this suggests that it is a single body. While the term leptomeres no doubt does imply constituent particles it does not imply or suggest different kinds of particles (although of course it does not exclude such a possibility either). In the second half of the sentence the unitary flavor is even stronger. We are not told that some soul particles are like heat and others like breath, but that the soul itself is like a blend of the two and that in some respects it is like the one and in other respects it is like the other. This comparison does not naturally suggest either different parts of the soul like one or the other element or different constituent elements of the soul, one like breath and the other like heat. What it does suggest is that the soul as a whole has some resemblance to heat.¹

The last sentence of the passage is not inconsistent with such an interpretation, as one may say that some psyche-atoms are finer than others while maintaining that there is only one such kind of atom. Epicurus does not insist that all of the atoms which go to make up a particular compound body are identical. Nor is there any suggestion that these finer atoms are particularly responsible for sensation, or located in the center of the breast, as later doxographers maintain. Epicurus' wording suggests the contrary. He mentions the finer part of the psyche immediately after the other two, as if it were part of the general structure of the psyche, which is distributed over the whole body.

Although this is Epicurus' only explicit statement on the composition of the psyche, the following properties of compounds are relevant to our discussion.

1. A compound is more than a mere aggregate ἄθροισμα of atoms. It is a new entity. A compound consisting of integrated parts is a system σύστημα. The word systema is used in Letter to Herodotus 66 in the sense of configuration. Lucretius' term is concilium. Any organism is a systema.
2. Motion is linear in space; it is vibratory in compounds.
3. Every compound has the properties of atoms; therefore, each compound has size, shape, and weight.
4. Compounds acquire new properties. Every compound has symbebēkota συμβεβηκότα, i.e. constant accompanying properties. For instance, the compound fire must have heat, though heat is not a property of atoms as such. Comparably, the compound water must have wetness, though wetness is not one of the atomic traits (Letter to Herodotus, 68-9)

5. Compounds also have symptomata συμπτώματα , occasional properties (Letter to Herodotus, 70). These properties are particular instances of variations in the symbebekota or constant accompanying properties. For instance, this rather than that shade of color, though both shades may be had at different times. Another example would be that from acquired states, like being rich now and poor at another time, free now but a slave later, asleep now but awake later, at war now but at peace later. Another example yet may be had with reference to diverse qualities: hardness, softness, and so on.
6. Epicurus argues against hypostatizing, i.e. making ontically ultimate, any of the symbebekota (68). Here he is close to Aristotle.
7. The soul is corporeal and consists of atoms. But what kind of atoms compose the psyche? If Diogenes Laertius is to be trusted, Epicurus believed the psyche to be composed of fine, smooth, spherical atoms, which have remarkable mobility. The body, he says, is a vessel for the soul and is needed for sensation. (D.L.10.66).
8. Diogenes also says that body and soul come into existence simultaneously. Though the body does not possess all the capacities of the soul, like memory, intelligence, and reason, it shares in the five senses and can share passively in the feelings of the soul through sympatheia. The soul is dispersed over the whole organism (D.L.10.63; 10.64-end).

All of the above information (with the exception of the last two items) is from the Letter to Herodotus. Restricting ourselves to this information, what conclusions can we draw about the Epicurean psyche? It is, I think, helpful to look at the problem from a common-sense perspective. Here before us we have a living human body. What makes it animate? The two most obvious characteristics of a living body are that it is warm and breathing, whereas a dead body is cold and does not breathe. So, in the Letter to Herodotus, which is after all a summary of Epicurean philosophy, Epicurus says that the psyche is similar in some respects to breath and heat. (It is significant that he does not mention air, which is probably a later addition.) Why is the animate body breathing and warm? Because it has spread throughout it a certain number of psyche-atoms. The same body without these atoms would be cold and unbreathing.

The psyche, then, seems to be some kind of compound, as it (or it in conjunction with a human body), has certain properties which do not belong to atoms in isolation, such as heat and breath. On further reflection, we realize that an animate human being also has sensation, memory, the ability to reason, etc. These are also, like heat and breath, either symbebekota or symptomata of the psyche. (Although it would seem that sensation would be a symbebekos of the psyche, at 64 Epicurus says that it is a symptoma of both the psyche and the body.) If heat, breath, sensation, memory, and reason are indeed either symbebekota or symptomata of the psyche, as common sense suggests, this means that (a) they cannot exist alone, i.e. they are not themselves kinds of atoms or compounds, and (b) that they are properties of compound entities and not of atoms themselves (which, we are told, have only size, shape, and weight).

What kind of compound is the psyche? Is it an aggregate ἄθροισμα or a system σύστημα? This is difficult to determine. On the one hand, Epicurus says that the psyche atoms are "sown" throughout the body, which suggests that there is a loose connection between them. On the other hand, if Diogenes is correct, there are some functions which are common to the whole animated body, such as sensation, but others which can be attributed to the psyche alone, such as reason and memory, which would suggest that the psyche is a system with its own special properties. However, this point is not too important, as Epicurus uses the words aggregate and system rather loosely. For example, in the passage on the composition of the psyche he refers to the human body as a whole as both a system or organism and an aggregate.

With this understanding of the constitution of the psyche, we can now proceed to examine and evaluate the views of two scholars who see no significant differences in the psychologies of Epicurus and Lucretius.

III.

David Furley translates the crucial passage from Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus as follows:

The psyche is corporeal, of fine texture, distributed over the whole frame, most similar to pneuma with an admixture of heat, being like the former in one way and the latter in another; in addition there is the part greatly exceeding even these in fineness of texture and by virtue of this being the more closely associated in feeling with the rest of the frame (p.196).

From this Furley concludes:

This carefully qualified summary mentions only three constituents -- something like pneuma, heat, and something finer than these. Later doxographers and Epicurus' own disciple Lucretius, raise the number to four (p.196).

Now it seems that Furley's translation is not so very different from my own, since he says of psyche and its resemblance to heat and pneuma that it is "like the former in one way and the latter in another;" i.e. bears some resemblance to both. However, in his commentary on the passage he draws the conclusion that there are three different constituents of the psyche: (1) something like pneuma; (2) another something like heat, and (3) something finer than these. He then goes on to accept the testimony of Lucretius, supported by Aetius and Plutarch, that the "Epicurean" psyche is composed of four constituents: vapor (something hot), aura (pneuma) air, and a fourth unnamed kind.²

Furley then proceeds to say: "The proportions of at least three of the four kinds may vary from one psyche to another; we have the authority of Lucretius for this." (p.197). He then quotes a long passage from Lucretius (3.294-397), which suggests in rather poetic terms that differences in temperament among human beings can be accounted for on the basis of the varying proportions of the four elements in the psyche. For example, passionate men have more of the "hot element" in their psyches.

There is more of the hot element in those whose bitter heart and wrathful mind easily explodes in anger. In this class above all is the forceful, violent lion, who bursts his breast with noise when he roars and can't contain the waves of anger in his breast. The chilly mind of deer is more full of breath and wafts cool breezes through their bodies, which impart a trembling movement to their limbs. The species of cattle lives more on air, which is placid; anger's firebrand is never much charged to stir them smokily, filling them with the darkness of blind fog, nor do they cower transfixed by the chilly arrows of fear; they are betwixt and between the deer and the fierce lions. So it is with the race of men.³

Furley comments on this passage from Lucretius as follows:

It will be seen at once that this is a perilous doctrine for an Epicurean to hold. For it seems to entail that a man's character and his reactions to the world will be determined at his birth by the proportions of pneuma, heat, and air in his soul. If this is the case, there is no hope of success in the ultimate aim of the Epicurean philosophy -- to teach men tranquillity. We are tranquil, if it is our nature to be; if not, not. (p.198)

I find the following difficulties in Furley's position.

1. Furley speaks of "the proportions of pneuma, heat, and air in his soul." He has switched from saying on p.196 that the constituents of the soul are something like air, something like heat, etc., to saying that the constituents of the soul are in fact air, heat, etc. In other words, he has switched from resemblance to identity.
2. How can "heat" itself be a constituent of the soul? I see no evidence that Epicurus considered heat or breath to be either a compound or a kind of atom. Heat is an epiphenomenon, one of the symbebekota which are not really in the atom.
3. Diogenes Laertius does not suggest that there are four different constituents in the psyche, and it seems to me that his testimony is usually more reliable than that of either Aetius or Plutarch. Plutarch is frequently unfair and inaccurate in discus-

sing thinkers with whom he disagrees, and he takes a decidedly polemical stance against Epicurus (*Κωλύτη δὲ γελοῖον δοκεῖ...*).

Just the same, Furley, Bailey, and others⁴ make special efforts to accommodate these ancient testimonies, probably because they are closer to Lucretius' addenda.

4. He infers from the Lucretius passage that according to "Epicurean" psychology there are different proportions of the four kinds in different people. Does "Epicurean" mean "Lucretian" (as it should, since the theory is based solely on a passage from Lucretius), or is it also intended to include Epicurus? In a later summary of "Epicurean" psychology it becomes evident that he means to include this as genuinely Epicurean: "Each person is born with a psyche of a particular character, determined by the proportions of atoms of the four different kinds which constitute a psyche" (p.233).
5. One of the problems with which Furley is concerned throughout the second part of his book, "Aristotle and Epicurus on Voluntary Action", is the difficulty which he states in his commentary on the passage from Lucretius, viz. how to hold a person responsible for his character if this is determined at birth by "the proportions of pneuma, heat and air in his soul." After a discussion of this problem, he concludes that: "The character of the person is to some extent still determined by the initial constitution of his psyche, because the proportions of atoms of different types in it remain the same. But to a much greater extent his character is adaptable, because the motions of the atoms are not determined and can be changed by learning" (234). It seems to me that much of the difficulty Furley has in attempting to reconcile voluntary action and the formation of character with the pre-determination caused by the proportions of pneuma, heat and air in the soul is simply eliminated, for Epicurus at least, if this theory is seen to be Lucretian and not Epicurean. The central point which Furley attempts to establish in his second study is that Epicurus' theory of voluntary action was developed in response to Aristotle. But in his formulation of Epicurus' theory, he consistently brings in Lucretius.
6. Finally, Furley sometimes says that the psyche is composed of four different kinds of atoms, as when he says of the psyche that "the proportions of atoms of different types in it remain the same" (p.234). However, he sometimes says, or at least seems to suggest, that the constituents of the psyche are not different kinds of atoms, but the compounds pneuma, heat, and air. He says that according to Lucretius and Epicurus one of the constituents of the psyche is "vapor (which seems to mean something hot)" (p.196). If one of the constituents of the psyche is "something hot", this constituent cannot be a kind of atom, as atoms have only size, shape, and weight. Only a compound can have the characteristic of being hot. He also says that to a certain extent one's character is determined at birth "by the proportions of pneuma, heat and air in his soul" (p.198). This suggests a kind of complex entity, not a kind of atom. Whatever position Furley means to take on this issue, it seems to me that Lucretius considered the ultimate constituents of the psyche to be more complex entities than atoms. Let us look briefly at the evidence.

Lucretius' contention that the soul is composed of particles of heat, breath, air and a fourth unnamed constituent, could mean one of two things, one of which is not suggested by Epicurus and the other of which is incompatible with Epicurus' philosophy. Lucretius could mean that there are four kinds of atoms in the psyche, and that these are atoms which, if combined in sufficient numbers, would produce heat, breath, and air. This is not suggested by the Letter to Herodotus passage, which says that the soul is like a blend of heat and breath and that it in some way resembles heat and it in some way resembles breath. I do not think that Epicurus regarded heat and breath as either kinds of atoms or as compound entities of any kind, but as properties of compounds, and he does not mention "air" in his summary at all. On the other hand, Lucretius could mean that the air, breath, and heat which go into the psyche are entities more complex than atoms, and already possess some properties which are not possessed by atoms, such as being hot. This clearly seems to be implied in his position that passionate people have more of the hot element in their psyches. If this is his position, it revises substantially Epicurus' theory of ultimate atoms, making the soul a compound composed

of other compounds. Lucretius consistently seems to ascribe to the components of the soul the properties of compounds. In discussing the composition of the psyche, he says that

breath, mingled with heat, forsakes the bodies of dying men; and this heat draws the air along with it, for there can be no heat without air intermixed, and heat being in its nature rare, must have some seeds of air united with it (iii.234-237).⁵

He concludes from this that the components of the soul are heat, breath, and air (not atoms which, if combined in sufficient quantities, would produce these), and goes on to name a fourth even finer constituent which accounts for sensation and thought.

The word which Lucretius uses most frequently to refer to the constituents of the psyche is "seeds" (semina). Although he sometimes refers to atoms as semina, as in 2.730-841 where he argues that the atoms themselves are colorless, he usually seems to have in mind by this word something more complex than an atom. He often uses it to refer to living organisms, as at the end of Book IV (4.1036-1277). He also refers to "seeds of fire" (6.160, 200, 213, 217), "seeds of heat" (6.271, 275, 883), and "seeds of water" (6.497, 517, 520), apparently meaning by such phrases a compound of some sort rather than an atom.

Perhaps one could say that the original or ultimate constituents of the psyche are atoms of four kinds. These combine to produce compounds which are hot, etc., and these compounds are in turn parts of the psyche. I cannot see that allowing for such intermediate stages in the formation of the psyche helps the situation. The psyche is still a compound composed of other compounds; the problem has simply been removed by one or more stages.

The only way in which it might be acceptable to say that the psyche is composed of four kinds of atoms would be to say that when these atoms hook together to form a psyche, they produce a different kind of compound than they would have produced had they made air, heat, and breath. Kerferd makes a suggestion similar to this when he interprets Epicurus' psyche as a κρᾶμα. According to Alexander of Aphrodisias De Mixtione 214.28-215.8 Bruns= fr. 290 Us, Epicurus supposed "that in κρᾶσις the separate substances were first broken up into their constituent atoms which were then re-combined. So it was not so much a combination of two or more substances as a new combination of substance-forming atoms."⁶ Kerferd then interprets Lucretius' concept of the psyche to be "not a mixture of four substances by juxtaposition, but a true Epicurean κρᾶμα."⁷ This, he believes, explains the reference to semina in III. 127-8. I am not sure that we can accept this solution. It is, after all, an interpretation, based on nothing in either Epicurus or Lucretius. Lucretius does not suggest that the soul is a κρᾶμα (or any Latin equivalent), and he clearly seems to attribute to the constituents of the psyche the properties of different kinds of compounds. Nowhere does he suggest that the compounds composing the psyche are broken down and re-combined as something different.

IV.

After stating Lucretius' position on the composition of the psyche, Cyril Bailey says: "Two questions suggest themselves: is this a spontaneous addition to Epicurus' theory made by Lucretius on his own authority, and whether this is so or not, what is the significance of the addition?" p.388). In response to the first question, he immediately concludes that he does not think Lucretius has "gratuitously amplified" his master. Like Furley, he appeals to Aetius and Plutarch for additional support for the contention that Epicurus held the soul to be a compound of four constituents, an element like heat, one like air, one like breath or wind, and a fourth nameless element (Commentary on Lucretius' De Rerum Natura, vol. II. p.1026; also Epicurus, p.226). In his commentary on the Letter to Herodotus Bailey is careful to distinguish between Lucretius and Epicurus: "Lucretius says straightforwardly that it [the psyche] is air and wind and heat: Epicurus more guardedly that it is 'most like' breath and heat" (p.388, 390; also Epicurus p.227). However, he does not consistently maintain this difference (See p.387).

Bailey believes that Epicurus' view of the psyche is a refinement of Democritus' identification of the soul with fire. "Democritus inherited from Leucippus the general conception that the soul (psyche) or vital principle was corporeal, that it was of the nature

of fire and was, like fire, composed of spherical atoms, for they were the most mobile. These ideas Democritus retained unmodified." (p.156). But it is not at all clear that Democritus identified the soul with fire; what he says, or seems to suggest, is that the soul, like fire, is composed of spherical particles. In support of Democritus' identification of soul with fire, Bailey quotes Diogenes Laertius ix.44 on Democritus: "The sun and moon are composed of smooth and spherical particles, and likewise the soul." Commenting on this, Bailey says: "The soul that is, is fiery in its nature, therefore it must be composed of the same kind of particles as the fiery heavenly bodies: the presence of the spherical particles give to both their characteristics." (p.156). This, although correct, does not identify soul with fire, but says merely that they are both composed of similar spherical atoms.

Bailey also quotes Aristotle's *de Anima* A.2.405a5, in support of his claim that Democritus identified the soul with fire: "Some have thought the soul is fire: for fire too has finest parts and is the most bodiless *ἀσώματον* of all the elements and more than anything else is moved and moves other things." I have difficulty understanding how Bailey can extract from the *de Anima* passage the inference that Aristotle connects Democritus with those who thought that the soul is fire, as the text doesn't permit this inference. In fact, what Aristotle does in the sentence immediately following A.2.405a5 is to contrast Democritus with those who associated soul with fire, although both he and those who identified the soul with fire addressed themselves to the same problem, viz. how "the soul moves and is a primary cause of movement in other things." Aristotle says that "Democritus has explained with greater precision why each of these two things is so, for he identifies the soul with the mind."

Δημόκριτος...ψυχὴν μὲν γὰρ εἶναι ταῦτ' οὐ καὶ νοῦν...

Hence *de Anima* A.2.405a5 offers no support to the inference that Aristotle classified Democritus among those who taught that the soul is fire.

W. K. C. Guthrie, in discussing whether or not Democritus identified the soul with fire, quotes a much stronger passage from Aristotle: "This [the theory that soul is self-moving and the origin of movement in other things] is what led Democritus to say that soul is a sort of fire or hot substance; his 'forms' or atoms are infinite in number; those which are spherical he calls fire and soul." (*de Anima* 404a1-2.)

Δημόκριτος μὲν πῦρ τε καὶ θερμόν φησιν αὐτὴν εἶναι· ἀπείρων γὰρ ὄντων σχημάτων καὶ ἀτόμων τὰ σφαιροειδῆ πῦρ καὶ ψυχὴν λέγει...

Even this passage does not suggest a sequence in composition from spherical atoms to fire and from fiery body to soul. All it establishes is that fire and soul resemble each other, and are both composed of spherical atoms. Guthrie goes on to raise the question: "Did Democritus actually identify soul with fire?" (p.431ff.) He believes that "the question is not altogether simple." Guthrie does think that Aristotle inferred the identity of soul and fire, but as I have indicated I am not sure that Aristotle did so unqualifiedly. Guthrie, anyway, does not give a concrete answer to this question. He merely says that "all previous and contemporary thought would influence Democritus towards associating life with heat, and all authorities agree that he did so." (p.432). This latter statement is correct and puts the Democritean view in the right perspective.

To return to Bailey: he states that Epicurus preserves this idea (i.e. Democritus' view that the soul is fire), "but it is not by itself sufficiently subtle for him" (p.387), so he added three other elements. I cannot see that Bailey is on good grounds for attributing to Epicurus a further refinement of Democritus' view, especially since it cannot be conclusively established that Democritus actually identified the soul with fire. But to prove his point, Bailey quotes Epicurus' definition of soul: "a body of fine particles...most resembling breath with a certain admixture of heat and in some parts like to one of these and in some to the other" (387-388).

The most perplexing statement comes directly after the quotation: "Heat is thus retained as a constituent element, but to it is now added the element of breath or wind (*pneuma*)!" The difficulty lies with the introduction of the expression "constituent element." For we do not know how "heat" is an element, or "breath" for that matter. To ascribe to them some technical meaning in Epicurus' ontology would not be too difficult, but to call them "constituent elements" of psyche is to revise substantially the theory of ultimate atoms. Heat and breath are properties of compounds, and air is as much composite as soul. Now, to take properties

of fire or soul compounds such as heat and make these properties constituent elements of soul-compounds, is to derive somehow soul compounds not solely from spherical atoms but from spherical atoms, other compounds such as air, and properties emerging with compounds, such as heat. Soul is then a compound composed of other compounds and properties arising from compounds. What is, then, a case of resemblance is turned into one of derivation. I do not think there is any support for this in Epicurus.

Bailey says repeatedly that the soul is actually composed of heat, breath, and air (p.388,390; also Epicurus, p.227). That he maintained this position is obvious, for example, in his discussion of the difference between air and breath. Following Giussani, Bailey says that according to Epicurus heat, wind, and air are three different substances, each with a different temperature. Heat is hot, wind or breath is cold, and air has a temperature somewhere between that of the other two. Bailey goes on to say that Epicurus accounts for different levels of heat and cold in the psyche by having it composed of three constituent elements, each with a different temperature: "The three elements in the soul then represent, as Giussani thinks, three distinct temperatures, 'air,' the normal temperature of the atmosphere, 'heat' a temperature above normal, and 'wind' below normal" (p.389). It is clear from this that Bailey believes the constituents of the soul to be themselves compounds, as he ascribes to them heat, coldness, and a temperature between the other two. He also uses the word "substances" to apply to the constituents of the psyche. Although he does not tell us exactly how he uses this word, a "substance" is obviously something more complex than an atom.

His position on the composition of the psyche is stated very explicitly when Bailey writes: "The soul is composed of the four elements: of what character will its component atoms be?" (p.395). This makes it clear that when he uses such terms as "substance" and "element" to apply to the constituents of the psyche, he is not using them as synonyms for "atom". What precisely does he mean by referring to the constituents of the psyche as "elements"? If the term "element" (stoicheion) is employed in any technical sense, it should not be used to refer to heat, air, etc.⁸ If "element" means some kind of ultimate constituent, then the "elements" for Epicurus are atoms. It seems to me that too much has been made of this theory of "constituent elements of the soul," and much confusion results from switching back and forth from "constituent elements" to "component atoms" and other similar expressions.

V.

I do not wish to maintain that the composition of the Epicurean psyche is a simple problem. What kind of compound entity the soul is, and all of the problems resulting from its union with the rest of the human organism, make the question a complex one indeed. However, I do not think that the scholars under consideration have really clarified the issue. Both Furley and Bailey refer indiscriminately to the component parts of the psyche as "constituents," "elements," and "atoms." Bailey also uses the words "particles" and "substances." Perhaps these words could all be used in a non-technical sense to mean loosely "component," or as synonymous with "atom." However, this is clearly not the case for Bailey, who as we have seen distinguishes the "elements" of the psyche from its "atoms." I cannot make any sense of this in an Epicurean context.

Both Bailey and Furley say alternately that:

1. Soul is like pneuma, etc. (Furley, p.196; Bailey, 388, 390; Epicurus, p. 227).
2. Soul has as its ultimate components air-atoms, pneuma-atoms, etc. (Furley, p. 196,234; Bailey, p. 395, 581).
3. Soul has as its ultimate components heat-compound, air-compound, etc., which makes the soul a compound composed of other compounds and substantially revises the Epicurean theory of ultimate atoms. (Furley, p. 197; Bailey, p. 388).

Neither explains what kind of entity the psyche is. Are we to think of it as four separate substances, which are somehow collectively called a psyche? Are these four substances somehow united to produce a single entity, a psyche? If so, how?

In conclusion, I have tried in this paper to establish the following differences between the Epicurean and Lucretian psyches:

1. For Lucretius, the psyche is composed of particles of air, breath, heat, and a fourth unnamed constituent. Epicurus suggests that the psyche is composed of a single kind of atom, and that it in some way resembles heat and in some way resembles breath.
2. I think that for Epicurus breath and heat are properties of compounds, not kinds of atoms or kinds of compound entities themselves. Lucretius apparently takes the opposite position.
3. For Lucretius, the components of the psyche seem to be entities larger than mere atoms.

NOTES

1. G. B. Kerferd, "Epicurus' Doctrine of the Soul," Phronesis. Vol. XVI, No. 2 (1971) 81-82.
2. Aetius iv.3.11; Us. 315. Plutarch Adversus Coloten 1118; Us. 314.
3. sed calidi plus est illis quibus acria corda/iracundaque mens facile effervescit in ira. quo genere in primis vis est violenta leonum, pectora qui fremitu rumpunt plerumque gementes/nec capere irarum fluctus in pectore possunt./ at ventosa magis cervorum frigida mens est/et gelidas citius per viscera concitat auras/ quae tremulum faciunt membris exsistere motum. at natura boum placido magis aere vivit, nec nimis irai fax umquam subdita percit/fumida, suffundens caecae caliginis umbra./ nec gelidis torpet telis perfixa pavoris:/ interutrasque sitast, cervos saevosque leones. sic hominum genus est. (3.294-307).
4. Giussani, Studi Lucreziani, 210; Diano, Giorn. Crit. della Filos. It. (1939), 105ff; and Arrighetti, Epicuro Opere, 470.
5. Tenuis enim quaedam moribundos deferit Aura
Mista Vapore, Vapor porro trahit Aera fecum;
Nec Calor est quisquam, cui non sit mistus and Aer. et
Rara quod ejus enim constat natura necesse 'st
Aeris inter eum primordia multa cieri. (3.233-237).
6. Kerferd, p. 90.
7. Idem.
8. See Aetius i.7.34; Plut. Plac. i.7.15; Stob. Ecl. ii.29; Gomperz, Herc. Stud., p. 110; cited by Bailey, p. 453, notes 2 and 3.