

Democritus' Περὶ Εὐθυμίας: Work Toward a Partial Reconstruction

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This paper is work-in-progress toward a partial reconstruction of Democritus' Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. I say "partial" rather than "total" since a total reconstruction is obviously out of the question. The partial reconstruction will consist of identifying as many fragments of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας as possible, translating these, and commenting on them. I assume the final product will also include one or more essays discussing prior scholarly work on the subject, the historical context and philosophical contribution of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας.

The present discussion consists of three sections. It begins with some preliminary considerations concerning the assembly of fragments of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. It then turns to interpretive remarks on the *incipit* of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. I label this "fragment 1." I argue that several features of fragment 1 encourage its interpretation in medical terms. The discussion concludes with a proposal about the meaning of "εὐθυμία." Until then, I leave the term "εὐθυμία" untranslated.

1. Considerations on Assembling Fragments of Democritus' Περὶ Εὐθυμίας

The principal challenge of the project is to assemble fragments of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. This section discusses several considerations that presently inform how I am doing this.

First, we can be very confident that DK 68 B3 is a fragment of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας and, moreover, that it constitutes the *incipit* of this work. In the chapter on Democritus in his *Lives and Opinions*, Diogenes Laertius includes a catalogue of Democritus' writings.¹ This catalogue derives from Thrasyllus who organized Democritus' works, as he did Plato's, into tetralogies.² The first and second tetralogies contain what are said to be Democritus' ethical (ἠθικὰ) works, and these are presented as follows:

TETRALOGY ONE: *Pythagoras, Concerning the Disposition of the Wise Man, Concerning Things (or Those) in Hades, Tritogeneia*

TETRALOGY TWO: *On Manly Valor or On Goodness, Amalthea's Horn, Peri Euthumiēs, Ethical Reminders.*³

¹ DL 9.46-49.

² On the catalogue, cp. W. Leszl, "Democritus' Works: From Their Titles to Their Contents," in *Democritus: Sciences, The Arts, and the Care of the Soul*, A. Brancacci and P.-M. Morel, eds., Brill, 2006, 11-76.

³ DL 9.46.

There is little doubt that Περὶ Εὐθυμίας is a genuine work by Democritus,⁴ and there is little doubt that Περὶ Εὐθυμίας is an ethical work.⁵ Diels and Kranz's B3 almost certainly constitutes the opening lines. Here is the text with my translation:

FRAGMENT 1 (= Stob. 4.39.25 = 907.17-908.3 Wachsmuth = DK 68 B3)

τὸν εὐθυμεῖσθαι μέλλοντα χρὴ μὴ πολλὰ πράσσειν, μήτε ἰδίῃ μήτε ξυνῆι,	1
μηδὲ ἄσσο' ἂν πράσσει, ὑπὲρ τε δύνάμιν αἰρεῖσθαι τὴν ἑωυτοῦ καὶ φύσιν·	2
ἀλλὰ τοσαύτην ἔχειν φυλακὴν ὥστε καὶ τῆς τυχῆς ἐπιβαλλούσης καὶ	3
ἐς τὸ πλεον ὑπηγεομένης τῷ δοκεῖν, κατατίθεσθαι καὶ μὴ πλέω προσάπτεσθαι	4
τῶν δυνατῶν. ἢ γὰρ εὐογκίη ἀσφαλέστερον τῆς μεγαλογκίης.	5

He who aims at *euthumiē* [or: to be *euthumos*] must not do many things, neither in private nor in public; and whatever he does, he must not choose what is beyond his power and nature. Rather, he must keep guard to such an extent that if fortune takes hold of him and leads him toward more in his thought, he sets it down and does not attempt more than what he is capable of. For a good portion is a more secure thing than a great portion.

The reason for taking these to be the opening lines of one of Democritus' works derives from the following passage of Seneca's *de tranquillitate animi*:

*Hoc secutum puto Democritum ita coepisse: qui tranquille volet vivere, nec privatim agat multa nec publice – ad supervacua scilicet referentem ... Nam qui multa agit, saepe fortunae potestatem sui facit quam tutissimum est raro experiri ...*⁶

I think that Democritus agreed with this when he began as follows: If a man wants to live tranquilly, he should not pursue many things, neither in private nor in public – referring of course to useless things ... For if a man pursues many things, he often puts himself in the power of fortune, while the safest thing is rarely to tempt her ...

⁴ In antiquity, Περὶ Εὐθυμίας was known according to at least one other title: Clement refers to it – clearly anachronistically – as Περὶ Τέλους. (*Strom.* 2.21.130.4-5 = DK B4) Evidently, that title is not listed among Thrasyllus' tetralogies.

⁵ More precisely, the question whether any of the titles in Thrasyllus' catalogue names an ethical work may be taken in at least two ways. It may be questioned whether a given work was actually, say, a physical or cosmological rather than an ethical work. For example, it has been suggested that the work entitled *On Things* (or *Those*) *in Hades* may have actually been a physical work, misplaced by Thrasyllus to preserve his tetralogical scheme. (Cp. Jason W. Carter, *Aristotle on Earlier Greek Psychology*, Cambridge University Press, 2019, 93.) Alternatively, it may be questioned whether a work that the Greek philosophers (of the Hellenistic Period and later) would generally have classified as "ἠθικόν" is reasonably classified by us as "ethical." When I say that there is little doubt that Περὶ Εὐθυμίας is an ethical work, I mean that there is little doubt that the Greeks would have classified the work as "ἠθικόν." I also think that Περὶ Εὐθυμίας is reasonably classifiable by us as an ethical work.

⁶ *de tranq. an.* 13.1

Seneca is clearly referring to B3, and his claim that Democritus "began as follows" (*ita coepisse*) strongly encourages the view that B3 is the beginning of one of Democritus' works.

Furthermore, based on the content of B3 and Seneca's Latin rendition, it is most reasonable to attribute the fragment to Democritus' Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. The following passage from earlier in the *de tranquillitate animi* supports this. Seneca is here writing of the Latin word "*tranquillitas*":

*Hanc stabilem animi sedem Graeci euthymiam vocant, de qua Democriti volumen egregium est. Ego tranquillitatem voco.*⁷

This stable state of the soul the Greeks call *euthymia*, on the subject of which there is an excellent book by Democritus. I call it *tranquillitas*.⁸

Consequently, I will maintain that B3 constitutes the opening lines of Democritus' Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. Hereafter, I will refer to this as "fragment 1." There is no reason to preserve Diels' numbering system.

Aside from fragment 1, however, none of the two to three hundred extant Democritean ethical fragments is anywhere explicitly identified as belonging to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. So, how are we to proceed? First, I suggest assembling all of Democritus' ethical fragments in which the word "εὐθυμία" or some cognate with the stem "εὐθυμ-" such as the adjective "εὐθυμος" or the verb "εὐθυμέω" occurs. In addition to fragment 1, there are six such fragments: B174, B189, B191, B258, B279, B286.⁹ Call this set "provisional" fragments. I am not yet claiming that any of the provisional fragments derives from Περὶ Εὐθυμίας.

Since Democritus could have used "εὐθυμ-" words in more than one work,¹⁰ the case for attributing one of the provisional fragments to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας will be strengthened if the content of the given fragment significantly coheres with that of fragment 1. Significant coherence is, of course, a judgment call and a matter of discernment; so, it is debatable and requires justification.

Fortunately, among the provisional fragments, the content of one fragment in particular strongly coheres with fragment 1: B191. So, there is strong reason to believe that B191 is a fragment of Democritus' Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. I don't have a sense yet – and may never have a sense – of where in the original work B191 occurred, save to say that obviously it is not the *incipit*.¹¹ For convenience, I will refer to B191 as "fragment 2." Here is the Greek with my translation:

⁷ *de tranq. an.* 2.3.

⁸ Compare Cicero, *de fin.* 5.23: *Democriti autem securitas quae est animi tranquillitas, quam appellit εὐθυμίαν, eo separanda fuit ab hac disputatione, quia ista animi tranquillitas ea est ipsa beata vita; quaerimus autem non quae sit sed unde sit.* (Furthermore, Democritus' freedom from care, which is tranquility of mind, which he called εὐθυμίαν, has had to be excluded from this discussion, since this tranquility of mind is itself the blessed life; and we are seeking not what it [the blessed life] is, but whence it comes.)

⁹ I am assuming that these fragments are from some work of Democritus. This is generally taken to be unproblematic for those fragments so named by our sources, in contrast to the collection of fragments attributed to "Democrates."

¹⁰ The smaller the number of ethical works that Democritus composed, the stronger the case from content cohesion to unity of textual source.

¹¹ Some of the content of B191 also clearly summarizes some preceding content.

FRAGMENT 2 (= Stob. 3.1.210 = 176.9-177.12 Wachsmuth = DK 68 B191)

ἀνθρώποισι γὰρ εὐθυμῆ γίνεται μετριότητι τέρψιος καὶ βίου συμμετρίῃ·	1
τὰ δ' ἐλλείποντα καὶ ὑπερβάλλοντα μεταπίπτειν τε φιλεῖ καὶ μεγάλας κινήσιας	2
ἐμποιεῖν τῇ ψυχῇ. αἱ δ' ἐκ μεγάλων διαστημάτων κινούμεναι τῶν ψυχῶν	3
οὔτε εὐσταθέες εἰσὶν οὔτε εὐθυμοί.	4
ἐπὶ τοῖς δυνατοῖς οὖν δεῖ ἔχειν τὴν γνώμην καὶ τοῖς παρεούσιν ἀρκέεσθαι,	5
τῶν μὲν ζηλουμένων καὶ θαυματομένων ὀλίγην μνήμην ἔχοντα καὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ	6
μὴ προσεδρεύοντα, τῶν δὲ ταλαιπωρεόντων τοὺς βίους θεωρεῖν, ἐννοούμενον ἅ	7
πάσχουσι κάρτα, ὅκως ἂν τὰ παρεόντα σοὶ καὶ ὑπάρχοντα μεγάλα καὶ ζηλωτὰ	8
φαίνηται, καὶ μηκέτι πλειόνων ἐπιθυμῶν συμβαίνει κακοπαθεῖν τῇ ψυχῇ.	9
ὁ γὰρ θαυμάζων τοὺς ἔχοντας καὶ μακαριζομένους ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων	10
καὶ τῇ μνήμῃ πᾶσαν ὥραν προσεδρεύων ἀεὶ ἐπικαιουργεῖν ἀναγκάζεται καὶ	11
ἐπιβάλλεσθαι δι' ἐπιθυμίην τοῦ τι πρήσσει ἀνήκεστον ὧν νόμοι κωλύουσιν.	12
διόπερ τὰ μὲν μὴ δίξασθαι χρεῶν, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῖς εὐθυμέεσθαι χρεῶν,	13
παραβάλλοντα τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον πρὸς τὸν τῶν φαυλότερον πρησσόντων καὶ	14
μακαρίζειν ἑωυτὸν ἐνθυμῶμενον ἅ πάσχουσιν, ὁκόσω αὐτέων βέλτιον πρήσσει	15
τε καὶ διάγει. ταύτης γὰρ ἐχόμενος τῆς γνώμης εὐθυμότερόν τε διάξεις καὶ οὐκ	16
ὀλίγας κῆρας ἐν τῷ βίῳ διώσσει, φθόνον καὶ ζῆλον καὶ δυσμενίην.	17

For human beings come to have *euthumiē* through measure in delight and proportion in life. And deficiencies and excesses tend to be volatile and to produce large movements in the soul.¹² And souls that are moved over large intervals are neither well-established nor *euthumoi*.

Therefore, one ought to keep one's thought on things in one's power and to be satisfied with what is present, little retaining in one's mind those who are envied and admired and not dwelling on them in one's reflection; but beholding the lives of those who are miserable, thinking of the extreme things they suffer, so that the things that are present to you and that belong to you appear great and enviable, and no longer would you suffer in your soul by desiring more.

For he who admires those who are well off and who are regarded as fortunate by other people and who dwells on them always at every hour in his mind is compelled to contrive novelties and to be driven through desire to do some irreparable action that the laws forbid.

And this is the very reason one must not seek certain things and must be *euthumos* with other things, and compare one's own life with the life of those who fare more wretchedly and regard oneself as blessed, thinking of what they suffer and how much better one fares and lives than they do. For if you preserve this thought, you will live in a more *euthumon* way, and you will drive away not a few defects in your life: jealousy and envy and ill-will.

Fragment 2 is the longest of all of Democritus' ethical fragments. Consequently, among fragments 1 and 2, there is considerable content to work with. In view of the contents of

¹² For approximately contemporaneous instances of intransitive *μεταπίπτειν*, cp. Meliss. B8.12,26; E. *Alc.* 913.

fragments 1 and 2, I suggest attributing three more members of the set of provisional fragments to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας: B174, B189, B286. Here they are, their numbers in no particular order:

FRAGMENT 3 (= Stob. 2.9.3 = 177.12-178.2 Wachsmuth = DK 68 B174)

ὁ μὲν εὐθυμος εἰς ἔργα ἐπιφερόμενος δίκαια καὶ νόμιμα	1
καὶ ὕπαρ καὶ ὄναρ χαίρει τε καὶ ἔρρωται καὶ ἀνακηδῆς ἐστίν·	2
ὃς δ' ἂν καὶ δίκης ἀλογῆι καὶ τὰ χρῆ ἐόντα μὴ ἔρδῃ	3
τούτῳ πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀτερπεῖ, ὅταν τευ ἀναμνησθῆι,	4
καὶ δέδοικε καὶ ἑωυτὸν κακίζει.	5

He who is *euthumos* is drawn to actions that are just and lawful, and he rejoices waking and sleeping and is strengthened and free from care. But he who is not mindful of justice and does not do the things that are necessary, for such a man all such things are joyless; whenever he calls them to mind, he is afraid and reviles himself.

FRAGMENT 4 (= Stob. 3.1.47 = 18.9-11 Wachsmuth = DK 68 B189)

ἄριστον ἀνθρώπῳ τὸν βίον διάγειν ὡς πλεῖστα εὐθυμηθέντι	1
καὶ ἐλάχιστα ἀνηθέντι. τοῦτο δ' ἂν εἴη, εἴ τις μὴ ἐπὶ τοῖς θνητοῖσι	2
τὰς ἡδονὰς ποιοῖτο.	3

The best thing for a man is to live his life as much as possible in state of *euthumiē* and least in a state of suffering. And this would occur if he did not take his pleasures in mortal things.

FRAGMENT 5 (= Stob. 4.39.17 = 906.2-3 Wachsmuth = DK 68 B286)

εὐτυχῆς ὁ ἐπὶ μετρίοισι χρήμασιν εὐθυμεόμενος,	1
δυστυχῆς δὲ ὁ ἐπὶ πολλοῖσι δυσθυμεόμενος.	2

One who is *euthumos* with measured possessions has good fortune; one who is *dysthumos* with many possessions has bad fortune.

Hereafter, I will also refer to fragments that I attribute to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας as "attributed" fragments.

Among the set of provisional fragments, the two that I have not attributed to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας are B258 and B279. I do not see their contents as significantly cohering with the contents of fragments 1-5. However, for reasons I will now provide, I think that B258 should be attributed to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας.

Beyond fragments 1-5, I suggest that the reconstruction of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας can reasonably proceed by seeking out atypical terms and significantly coherent content shared by one or more of these five attributed fragments and any other Democritean ethical fragment. For example, consider that Thrasyllus provides Εὐεστώ as an alternative title of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας.¹³ Likewise,

¹³ B2c.

Clement says that Democritus referred to the goal of life as εὐεστώ.¹⁴ "Εὐεστώ" is a rare noun. It first occurs in the classical period and there only five times,¹⁵ all limited to the fifth century. In Democritus, the noun "εὐεστώ" occurs once, namely, in B257. In addition, B258 strongly coheres with B257. B258 contains an instance of "εὐθυμία." So, these two considerations encourage the attribution of both fragments to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας.¹⁶ Here they are:

FRAGMENT 6 (= Stob. 4.26.25 = ??? Wachsmuth = DK 68 B257)

κατὰ δὲ ζώων ἔστιν ὧν φόνου καὶ μὴ ὧδε ἔχει·	1
τὰ ἀδικέοντα καὶ θέλοντα ἀδικεῖν ἀθῶιος ὁ κτείνων,	2
καὶ πρὸς εὐεστοῦν τοῦτο ἔρδειν μᾶλλον ἢ μή.	3

In the case of animals, as far as killing and not killing them is concerned, the situation is this: one who kills those that do injustice and those that seek to do injustice not punishable, and to do this contributes to well-being more than not doing it.

FRAGMENT 7 (= Stob. 4.26.25 = ??? Wachsmuth = DK 68 B258)

κτείνειν χρὴ τὰ πημαίνοντα παρὰ δίκην πάντα περὶ παντὸς·	1
καὶ ταῦτα ὁ ποιῶν εὐθυμίας καὶ δίκης καὶ θάρσεος καὶ κτήσεως	2
ἐν παντὶ κόσμῳ μέζω μοῖραν μεθέξει.	3

It is necessary to kill all those (animals)¹⁷ that cause destruction unjustly in every case. And he who does these things will have a greater share of *euthumiē* and justice and confidence and property in every government.

Finally, I want to take the opportunity here to float a working hypothesis regarding part of the structure of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. In the first sentence of fragment 1, Democritus claims that one who aims to achieve εὐθυμία "must not do many things, neither in private nor in public (μήτε ἰδίῃ μήτε ξυνῆι); and whatever he does, he must not choose what is beyond his power and nature." I hypothesize that portions of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας, more precisely, distinct portions, were devoted to thought and conduct in the private sphere that is conducive or antithetical to εὐθυμία and to thought and conduct in the public sphere conducive or antithetical to εὐθυμία.¹⁸ Let me be

¹⁴ B4 (= Clem. *Strom.* 2.130).

¹⁵ A. *Th.* 187; *Ag.* 647, 929; *Hdt.* 1.85.4.

¹⁶ Given the attribution of B257 and B258 to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας, presumably B256 and B259 should be attributed as well. I note this point but will not pursue it here.

¹⁷ Note the neuter plural τὰ πημαίνοντα. I presume the implicit noun is ζώων of fragment 6.1. Cp. the neuter plural τὰ ἀδικέοντα of fragment 6.2.

¹⁸ Compare Seneca in *de ira: Proderit nobis illud Democriti salutare praeceptum quo monstratur tranquillitas si neque privatim neque publice multa aut maiora viribus nostris egerimus. Numquam tam feliciter in multa discurrenti negotia dies transit ut non aut ex homine aut ex re offensa nascatur qua animum in iras paret.* (3.6.3) (We will do well to heed the sound doctrine of Democritus in which he shows that tranquility is possible only if we avoid many of the activities of both private and public life, or at least those that are too great for our strength. The

clear that I am introducing this hypothesis as a tentative interpretive strategy: whatever fragments we, independently, attribute to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας, these either do or do not conform to the hypothesis. If they do, the hypothesis is corroborated. If they don't, it is undermined.

For example, regarding thought and conduct in the private sphere, a set of relatively lengthy fragments (B275-B280) concerns one's thought about children and conduct toward one's children. The last of our unattributed provisional fragments B279 is among these. I hypothesize that these fragments formed at least a part of the material on thought and conduct in the private sphere conducive or antithetical to εὐθυμία. So, I incline to attribute B275-B280 to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας as well. I say "hypothesize" and "incline." I am not here attributing the fragments to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. More reasons for doing so would have to be adduced. And since these fragments will not figure in the following discussion as contents of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας, I will not present them here.¹⁹

So much for my current thoughts about and process of assembling fragments of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας.

2. The Medical Context of Fragment 1

I turn now to some interpretive remarks pertaining to fragment 1, in particular to the medical context of fragment 1. Here, I want to make four points, regarding:

- The general syntax and semantics of the first sentence of fragment 1
- The phrase "φύσις καὶ δύναμις" in the first sentence of fragment 1
- The noun "εὐογκία" in the final sentence of fragment 1
- The distribution of "εὐθυμ-" stem words both in Democritus and around the time of Democritus.

I'll briefly discuss these points in that order.

Consider that the first sentence of fragment 1 has the following general syntax and semantics:

In order for one to achieve such-and-such, it is necessary to do such-and-such.

Introductory statements in several Hippocratic treatises of the same period, that is, the last third of the fifth century, also have this general syntax and content. Consider the following three examples from *Airs Waters Places*, *On Regimen in Health*, and *On Regimen*:

Ἰητρικὴν ὅστις βούλεται ὀρθῶς ζητεῖν, τάδε χρὴ ποιεῖν.²⁰

Whoever wants to inquire into medicine correctly, it is necessary to do these things.

man who engages in many affairs is never so fortunate as to pass a day that does not beget from some person or some circumstance a vexation.) Cp. also Plut. *tranq.* 465c.

¹⁹ I do cite part of B279 in the context of discussing the meaning of "εὐθυμία"; but this use of B279 does not require that it be a fragment of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας.

²⁰ *Aër.* 1.

Τοὺς ιδιώτας ὧδε χρὴ διαιτᾶσθαι.²¹

It is necessary for laymen to constitute their regimen in the following way.

Φημί δὲ δεῖν τὸν μέλλοντα ὀρθῶς συγγράφειν περὶ διαίτης ἀνθρωπίνης πρῶτον μὲν παντὸς φύσιν ἀνθρώπου γινῶναι καὶ διαγινῶναι.²²

I claim that he who aims to treat human regimen correctly must first gain knowledge and understanding of the general nature of man.

There are also similar examples from Hippocratic texts of the early fourth century.²³

Note that there is another ethical text of the late fifth century whose opening line shares the general syntax and semantics of fragment 1 of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας and the Hippocratic texts, namely the *Anonymus Iamblichus*:

Ὅτι ἂν τις ἐθέλῃ ἐξεργάσασθαι εἰς τέλος τὸ βέλτιστον, ἐάν τε σοφίαν ἐάν τε ἀνδρείαν ἐάν τε εὐγλωσσίαν ἐάν τε ἀρετὴν ἢ τὴν σύμπασαν ἢ μέρος τι αὐτῆς, ἐκ τῶνδε οἷόν τε εἶναι κατεργάσασθαι.²⁴

Whatever someone wants to achieve completely and best, whether it be manliness, whether it be eloquence, whether it be wisdom, whether it be goodness, either the whole or some part of it, it is possible to work toward it on the basis of these things.

I assume that the author of the *Anonymus Iamblichus* is here also following the medical model, but presumably indirectly via one or more other ethical texts that follow the medical model. I say this because, among the extant fragments of the *Anonymus Iamblichus*, I do not detect any other correspondences with the medical literature of the time. In contrast, there are at least three additional correspondences between fragment 1 of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας and the Hippocratic literature.

Consider the conjunction "δύναμιν ... καὶ φύσιν" in fragment 1, line 2:

μηδὲ ἄσσο' ἂν πράσσει, ὑπὲρ τε δύναμιν αἰρεῖσθαι τὴν ἑωυτοῦ καὶ φύσιν·

nor must he [who aims at *euthumiē*] choose what he does beyond his own power and nature.

Through the end of the fifth century, the conjunction of "δύναμις" and "φύσις," with the conjuncts in either order, occurs elsewhere only in Hippocratic texts.²⁵ Precisely, there are two instances in *On Ancient Medicine*, one in *On the Nature of Man*, one in *On the Sacred Disease*,

²¹ *Salubr.* 1.

²² *Acut.* 2.1.

²³ Cp. *Aff.* 1; *Morb.* 1.1.

²⁴ *anon. iamb.* 1.1.

²⁵ There is an instance in [Philol.] fr. 11; but this fragment is now regarded as spurious.

and three in *On Regimen*.²⁶ For instance, consider the following examples from *On Ancient Medicine* and *On the Nature of Man*:

ἐκ μὲν οὖν τῶν πυρῶν βρέξαντές σφας καὶ πτίσαντες καὶ καταλέσαντές τε καὶ διασήσαντες καὶ φορύξαντες καὶ ὀπτήσαντες ἀπετέλεσαν ἄρτον, ἐκ δὲ τῶν κριθέων μᾶζαν· ἄλλα τε πολλὰ περὶ ταῦτα πρηγματευσάμενοι ἤψησάν τε καὶ ὀπτήσαν καὶ ἔμιξαν καὶ ἐκέρασαν τὰ ἰσχυρά τε καὶ ἄκρητα τοῖς ἀσθενεστέροις, πλάσσοντες πάντα πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου φύσιν τε καὶ δύναμιν.²⁷

From wheat, by moistening, winnowing, grinding, sifting, kneading, and baking, they made bread; and from barley, they made barley cake. And performing many other operations to prepare this nourishment, they boiled and baked and mixed and blended the strong and unblended parts with the weaker ones, molding everything in relation to the nature and power of man.

πῶς γὰρ ἂν εὐκότα ταῦτα εἶη ἀλλήλοισιν, ὧν οὔτε τὰ χρήματα ὅμοια φαίνεται προσορώμενα, οὔτε τῇ χειρὶ ψαύοντι ὅμοια δοκεῖ εἶναι; ... γνοίης δ' ἂν τοῖσδε ὅτι οὐχ ἓν ταῦτα πάντα ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἔχει δύναμιν τε καὶ φύσιν τὴν ἑωυτοῦ.²⁸

How could they [the four humors: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile] be like one another when their colors do not appear to sight to be similar nor their touch seem to the hand to be similar? ... From the following evidence you may know that these [humors] are not all one, but that each of them has its own power and nature.

In fragment 1, Democritus is referring to the nature and power of a man who aims to achieve εὐθυμία and to become εὐθυμος. By the "δύναμις" and "φύσις" of such a man, I take Democritus to be referring to how such a man is constituted and in virtue of his constitution the power, that is, capacities or capabilities he has. Democritus' claim is that in his pursuit of εὐθυμία the aspirant must recognize and respect these conditions and constraints.

Next, consider the noun "εὐογκίη" in the final sentence of fragment 1:

ἡ γὰρ εὐογκίη ἀσφαλέστερον τῆς μεγαλογκίης.

For a good portion is a more secure thing than a great portion.

The noun "εὐογκίη" is a *hapax*. However there are rare instances of the adjective "εὐογκόν." Precisely, through the fifth century, this adjective occurs in poetry once, in a fragment of

²⁶ *VM* 3.5 Schiefsky, 13.3 Schiefsky; *Nat. Hom.* 5.14; *Morb. Sacr.* 18.6; *Vict.* 38.1, 38.53, 39.1. Cp. *Aff.* 47.2.

²⁷ *VM* 3.5.

²⁸ *Nat. Hom.* 5.9-19.

Euripides' *Syleus*.²⁹ There, it means bulky and is used to describe the overdeveloped musculature of a slave. In prose through the fifth century, the adjective occurs three or perhaps four times, all in Hippocratic texts.³⁰ In all of these instances, the adjective means of a good amount. As such, its meaning correlates with the meaning of the noun in fragment 1 of Democritus' Περὶ Εὐθυμίας.

Contrast this with the fact that in the fourth century, the adjective "εὐογκόν" occurs five times: twice in Aeneas Tacticus and three times in Aristotle.³¹ In all of these cases, the adjective means compact or, in one case,³² weighty in importance. So, only Democritus and the Hippocratic texts use very rare "εὐογκ-" stem words meaning a good amount or of a good amount.

A fourth correspondence between fragment 1 and Hippocratic literature concerns instances of "εὐθυμ-" stem words. In the late fifth century, such expressions are rare in poetry and in prose. In poetry through in fact the late fourth century, there are twelve instances of "εὐθυμ-" stem words. With the exception of one instance, of the adjective, in Homer,³³ all other instances are confined to the period from the late sixth to about the last third of the fifth century:³⁴ Simonides,³⁵ Aeschylus,³⁶ Bacchylides,³⁷ Pindar,³⁸ Ion of Chios.³⁹ In other words, there are no instances of "εὐθυμ-" stem words in poetry from about 435 through the late fourth century.⁴⁰

In prose through the end of the fifth century, "εὐθυμ-" stem words only occur in two contexts: in Democritus' ethical fragments and in the Hippocratic corpus. In the Hippocratic texts, there are precisely four instances: two in the *Prorrhetic II* and two in the *Epidemics*.⁴¹ (Note that there are three other instances in the Hippocratic corpus, but from the mid fourth century or later.⁴²)

It is also noteworthy that, in the fourth century, with the exception of just one author, instances of "εὐθυμ-" stem words in prose remain rare. There are only three instances in Plato, one of which is a quotation from Aeschylus.⁴³ The other two occur in *Laws*.⁴⁴ Remarkably, there

²⁹ E. fr. 688.3 Collard and Cropp (*Euripides VII Fragments: Oedipus-Chrysisippus Other Fragments*, Harvard University Press, 2008, 179).

³⁰ *Prog.* 11.15, *Art.* 23.3, *Mul.* 1.12.22.

³¹ *Aen. Tact.* 29.6.6, 31.23.3; *Arist. GA* 766b20, *Mete.* 380a5, *Rh.* 1408a12.

³² *Arist. Rh.* 1408a12.

³³ *H. O.* 14.63.

³⁴ The noun first occurs either in *Pi. I* 1, dated to *c.* 458, or in *B. Dith.* 3.125.

³⁵ fr. 79.7 Campbell. The word in question is in fact a conjectural reconstruction: "εὐθ]υμείτω."

³⁶ *A. Pers.* 372, *A.* 1592, *Tetr.* 29 play A fr. 284a.14, *Tetr.* 44 play A fr. 494.2.

³⁷ *B. Dith.* 3.125.

³⁸ *Pi. O.* 2.34, *O* 5.22, *I.* 1.63, *Paian* fr. 52a2.

³⁹ *Ion Chios*, fr. 26.14. Since *Ion's* death is given as 420, this instance may be a bit later.

⁴⁰ In the late fourth century, there is an instance in a fragment of Philemon of Soli, who *Strabo* says began his career in 330. Another occurs in *Theoc.* 15.143.

⁴¹ *Prorrh.* 2.4.22, 38; *Epid.* 2.4.4, 6.5.5.

⁴² *Epid.* 5.1.84, 7.1.89; *Lex* 4.5.

⁴³ *Pl. R.* 383b4.

⁴⁴ *Pl. Lg.* 792b7, 797b2. In these cases, the term is used of children.

is only one instance of a "εὐθυμ-" stem word in Aristotle.⁴⁵ It is noteworthy, however, that "εὐθυμ-" stem words occur several times in works of the Aristotelian corpus not authored by Aristotle. Notably, these instances are confined to two works: *Physiognomics* and *Problems* 30.⁴⁶

Curiously, the single prose author of the fourth century in whom "εὐθυμ-" stem words occur with some frequency, 21 times in total, is Xenophon. Most of these instances are in the *Cyropaedia* (13 times).⁴⁷

Otherwise, there are just two additional instances of "εὐθυμ-" stem words in prose clearly datable to the fourth century. One occurs in the Demosthenic *Against Leochares*;⁴⁸ the other in a fragment of Aristoxenus.⁴⁹

In short, my principal point here is that in prose at the time of Democritus "εὐθυμ-" stem words are very rare, and the only other instances are in the Hippocratic corpus.

I take these four points relating to fragment 1 to suggest that in this fragment of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας Democritus' thought and language are informed by medical, precisely Hippocratic thought and language. This encourages a view of Democritus' work, at least in its *incipit*, as proposing an ethical-psychological regimen and doing so by analogy with that of a medical treatise. This in turn suggests that the aim of the ethical-psychological regimen, namely εὐθυμία, is being conceived by analogy with bodily health. In light of this, consider B31, which is a clear example of Democritus analogizing an ethical-psychological regimen with a medical one:

ιατρικὴ μὲν ... σώματος νόσους ἀκέεται, σοφίη δὲ ψυχὴν παθῶν ἀφαιρεῖται.

Medicine ... heals diseases of the body; wisdom removes sufferings from the soul.⁵⁰

(To be clear, I am not proposing here to attribute B31 to Περὶ Εὐθυμίας.)

Assuming that Democritus conceives of εὐθυμία as the psychological analogue of bodily health, my next question is what "εὐθυμία" means and how Democritus uses "εὐθυμ-" stem words in Περὶ Εὐθυμίας. This will be the focus of the remainder of my discussion.

3. The Meaning of "Εὐθυμία"

Evidently, "εὐθυμία" is a nominalization derived from the compound of the adverb "εὐ" and the noun "θυμός." In its earliest occurrences in Homer and Hesiod, the noun "θυμός" is associated with a range of psychological functions, including cognitive, affective, and

⁴⁵ Arist. *Rh.* 1379b18.

⁴⁶ *Phgn.* 805b7, 8, 808a2, 20; *Pr.* 954a25, 954b18, 955a1,16 (*bis*),

⁴⁷ *X. Mem.* 4.8.2.9; *Ap.* 27.9; *Hell.* 4.3.2.4, 7.4.24.5; *An.* 3.1.42.1, 4.5.30.5; *Cyr.* 1.3.12.2, 2.2.28.1, 3.12.2, 3.3.12.7, 4.1.13.3, 18.8, 19.4, 5.7.2, 5.5.21.4, 6.2.6.4, 4.13.4, 7.2.29.2, 8.4.14.2; *Ages.* 8.2.2; *Eq.* 11.12.2. (I wonder whether "εὐθυμ-" terms were more prevalent in the East, and so whether the anomalous quantity in Xenophon, especially in the *Cyropaedia*, owes to the time he spent there. The absence of "εὐθυμ-" terms from Herodotus, however, contradicts this hypothesis.)

⁴⁸ D. 9.1.

⁴⁹ Aristox. *P. Oxy.* 1.9, column 2, line 17.

⁵⁰ Cp. [Hipparch.] *de tranq.* 91.2-16 (= DK68 C7.10-13) apud Stob. 4.44.81.

motivational ones.⁵¹ But by the fifth century, "θυμός" is principally associated with emotional states.⁵² I say "emotional states" rather than "emotions" since "θυμός" is associated with both episodic and dispositional states; and this fact is significant for the interpretation of "εὐθυμ-" stem words. (Note also that by "state" here I do not mean to suggest static conditions. An emotional state may be static or dynamic.⁵³)

The meaning of a compound needn't strictly conform to or be straightforwardly derivable from the meanings of its components. Also, conceivably, Democritus needn't have employed "θυμός" as it was principally employed in his time. However, I will suggest that in the fragments of *Περὶ Εὐθυμίας* the meanings of "εὐθυμ-" stem words do strictly conform to the meanings of the components "εὐ" and "θυμός" and are at least relatively straightforwardly derivable from the meanings of these components. Moreover, Democritus does employ "θυμός" within these compounds as it was principally employed in his time, that is, in terms of emotion.

Semantically, "εὐ-" prefixation can function in at least two ways. "εὐ-" + a nominal stem *N* can mean: (an) *N* that is good. For example, in the instance of "εὐογκία" in fragment 1, "εὐ-" functions in this way. The noun means a mass or portion (ὄγκος) that is good. Likewise, the Democritean term "εὐεστώ" means a state of being that is good. And consider the adjective "εὐσταθέες" in fragment 2, line 4; this means well-established, that is, established or set up in a way that is good. If "εὐ-" functioned in this way in "εὐθυμία," then "εὐθυμία" would mean an emotional state that is good.

Alternatively, and precisely because "θυμός" is a mental state, the "εὐ-" prefix could have the semantic effect of entailing either a positively valenced emotional state or an emotional state consisting of a positive evaluation of some intentional object, that is, a pro-emotional state. The former is in fact how "εὐθυμία" is typically understood, for example, as cheerfulness or tranquility.

Normally, pro-emotional states or positively valenced emotional states are good states to have or be in. But they needn't be. For example, one may mistakenly or inappropriately have a positive attitude toward a negative thing, as in the case of Schadenfreude; or the appropriate response to some negative thing may be a negatively valenced emotion, for example, anger or indignation.

Democritus clearly believes that "εὐθυμία" is a good state for a human being to be in. In fact, in fragment 4, he claims that it is the best condition for human being:

⁵¹ Cp. C. Caswell, *A Study of Thumos in Early Greek Epic*, Brill, 1990, e.g., at 49-50; S. D. Sullivan, *Psychological and Ethical Ideas: What the Greeks Say*, Brill, 1995, 54-58; D. Cairns, "Thymos," *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th ed.

⁵² Sullivan (1995) 67.

⁵³ Cp. R. Adolphs and D. Anderson, *The Neuroscience of Emotion: A New Synthesis*, Princeton University Press, 2018, 18: "We will speak frequently of 'emotion states,' or, for shorthand, simply 'emotions.' But of course, emotions are anything but static states. We refer to them as 'states' to keep things simple, but with the realization that they are complex processes that vary in time." Cp. N. Shea, *Representation in Cognitive Science*, Oxford University Press, 2020, 5, n.4: "I use ... 'state' loosely, so as to include dynamic states, i.e., events and processes."

ἄριστον ἀνθρώπῳ τὸν βίον διάγειν ὡς πλεῖστα εὐθυμηθέντι ...

The best thing for a human being is to live his life as much as possible in state of *euthumiē* ...

Still, it is clear from the context of two fragments of Περὶ Εὐθυμίας in which "εὐθυμ-" stem words occur that Democritus uses and understands these words as entailing pro-emotional or positively valenced emotional states. For example, the continuation of fragment 4 is:

... καὶ ἐλάχιστα ἀνηθέντι.

... and least in a state of suffering.

And at the end of fragment 2, Democritus concludes:

ταύτης γὰρ ἐχόμενος τῆς γνώμης εὐθυμότερόν τε διάξεις καὶ οὐκ ὀλίγας κῆρας ἐν τῷ βίῳ διώσσαι, φθόνον καὶ ζῆλον καὶ δυσμενίην.

For if you preserve this advice, you will live in a more *euthumos* way and you will save yourself from no small defects in life: jealousy and envy and ill-will.

Consider also fragment B279 – the lone provisional, unattributed fragment – where the verb "εὐθυμέω" is contrasted with the verb "ἀνιάω":

ἐν γὰρ τῷ ζυνῶι τὰ τελεύμενα οὐκ ἀνιάι ὥσπερ ἰδίῃ οὐδ' εὐθυμεῖ τὰ ἐπικτώμενα, ἀλλὰ πολλῶι ἥσσον.

For common expenditure does not make one suffer as much as private, nor common acquisition make one *euthumos*, but far less.

In short, the contrast between the emotional state of εὐθυμική and those of suffering, jealousy, envy, and ill-will, evidenced in these fragments, encourages us to understand "εὐθυμ-" stem words in Democritus' Περὶ Εὐθυμίας as denoting pro-emotional or positively valenced emotional states.

More precisely what such states are is questionable. Above, I mentioned two common translations of "εὐθυμική": "cheerfulness" and "tranquility." One may add "contentment" to the set of plausible candidates. In addition, I suggest that we should consider at least two other options: "good spiritedness" or "(the condition of) being in good spirits" and – one that is curiously absent from standard translations and discussions – "happiness."

Time constraints here make it impossible for me to discuss the semantics of these English terms in comparison with "εὐθυμ-" stem words in Democritus and, for example, the Hippocratic texts and fifth-century poetic instances. In lieu of this, I will briefly mention five questions that adequate treatment of this problem should bear in mind:

- Does the emotional state denoted by the term have an intentional object? Or is it objectless? For example, tranquility is objectless, but "εὐθυμ-" stem words in Democritus sometimes take intentional objects (e.g., in fragment 5).
- Is the emotional state denoted by the term episodic or dispositional? Democritus appears to use "εὐθυμ-" stem words in both ways (e.g., episodically in fragment 4 and dispositionally in fragment 2.4). "Happiness" is also polysemous in this respect.⁵⁴ Contrast "(be) in good spirits," which seems predominately if not necessarily episodic.
- Is the emotional state denoted by the term one of relatively low or high arousal?⁵⁵ For example, contentment and tranquility are states of relatively low arousal, whereas cheerfulness is one of relatively high arousal.
- Is the emotional condition denoted by the term one of relative psychological depth or shallowness? For example, cheerfulness seems to be a relatively shallow emotional state, whereas happiness, at least according to the long-term dispositional sense of the word (e.g., "He lived a long life and was a happy person") seems to be a relatively deep emotional condition.

In light of these considerations, my present inclination is to think that "happiness" is the best rendition of "εὐθυμία," and so that Democritus' *Περὶ Εὐθυμίας* is a work on happiness. So, that is how I suggest rendering its title: *On Happiness*. In that case, recalling the medical context of fragment 1, Democritus conceives of the psychological analogue of bodily health as happiness.

4. Conclusion

Assuming that "εὐθυμία" in Democritus should be rendered as "happiness," I will conclude here with several philosophical questions that I intend to consider as I proceed with the envisioned partial reconstruction of *Περὶ Εὐθυμίας*:

- Why does Democritus think that an emotional state, εὐθυμία, that is, happiness, is the psychological analogue of bodily health?
- Why does Democritus think that happiness is the best psychological state for a human being to live his or her life in?
- How does Democritus view the relation between εὐθυμία, that is, happiness, and pleasure?
- How does Democritus view the relation between εὐθυμία, that is, happiness, and certain cognitive states such as σοφία?

⁵⁴ Cp. D. Haybron, *The Pursuit of Unhappiness*, Oxford University Press, 2008, 29-32.

⁵⁵ On arousal in affect and its relation to valence, cp. P. Kuppens et al., "The Relation Between Valence and Arousal in Subjective Experience," *Psychological Bulletin* 139.4 (2013) 917-40.

- How does Democritus view the relation between εὐθυμία, that is, happiness, and *eudaimonia*?