

AETNA AND HERACLITUS

- 537 *quod si quis lapidis miratur fusile robur,
cogitet obscuri uerissima dicta libelli,
Heracrite, tui: nihil insuperabile gigni*
- 540 *omnia quae rerum natura semina iacta.
sed nimum hoc mirum? densissima corpora saepe
et solido uicina tamen compescimus igni.*

537 *lapidis* dett., Ald.: -es CZ 539 *Heracrite tui* C: *Heracrite et ubi est* (est om. A) RA: *eradicet ubi* H 540 *quae* CAR, -*que* H Cors (47 F 21) *natura* CHR: *natur(a)e* A Cors Vat 3255 Vrb 353

The Aldina text (*App. Verg.*, 1517) of 539-40 runs:

*Heracleti, et ubi nihil insuperabile gigni
omnia quae rerum natura semina iacta.*

Scaliger (*App. Verg.*, Lyons, 1572, pp. 409 f.) has suggested instead:

*et discet uero nihū insuperabile ab igni,
omnia quo rerum naturae semina iacta.*

Now, *et discet uero* has been refuted by C, but *ab igni* was adopted, e.g., by Gorallus (Amsterd., 1703), Jacob (1826), Haupt (1854; 1873), Munro (1867). Baehrens (*P. Lat. Min.*, 1880), Ellis (1901), Vessereau (1905; 1923; 1961). As for the line 540, Munro and Vessereau read it in the same way as Scaliger did; *quae* Gorallus, *cui* Jacob, *quoi* Haupt, *quoi rerum* <in> *natura* Baehrens, *quae rer.* <in> *nat s. i. | seminium*¹⁾ Ellis.

But many editors have preferred to keep the textual *gigni*; thus they read 540 as follows:

Munro (alternatively, p. 75)

gigni
<ignibus, et contra prorescere rursus ab igni>
omnia quae

Sudhaus (1898)

gigni | omniaque <e> (later <in>) *rer.*
natura s. i.

¹⁾ *Seminium* instead of *sed nimum* (*sed*: nec Gorallus, seu Housman; *nimum*: *minime* Jacob, Baehrens) all this without necessity. Ellis translated: „of all the seeds sown within the realm of nature, this (fire) is the wondrous nursery“.

Vollmer (<i>P. L. M.</i> , 1910 ² ; = Morel, 1935 ³)	<i>gigni</i> < <i>ui flammae</i> <i>igni</i> > <i>omnia + quae</i>
Lenchantin de Gubernatis (1911 ¹ ; 1926 ²)	<i>gigni omniaque</i> < <i>a</i> > <i>rerum natura s. i.</i>
Stroux and E. Schwartz (<i>Kl.</i> <i>Texte</i> 166, 1933)	<i>gigni omniaque aeternum natura s. i.</i>
Giomini (<i>App. Verg.</i> , <i>Bibl.</i> di studi sup. 26, Florence, 1953)	<i>gigni omnia quae rerum natura s. i.</i> ²)
W. Richter (<i>Texte u. Komm.</i> 1. Berlin, 1936)	<i>gigni omniaque aetheria natura s. i.</i>

I think Scaliger's *ab igni* could be correct.

(i) Richter refers to Aet. I. 28,1 (*Dox.* p. 323 = Diels-Kranz *FV*⁶⁻¹⁰ 22 A 8) *περὶ οὐσίας εἰμαρμένης. Ἡράκλειτος οὐσίαν εἰμαρμένης ἀπεφαίνεται λόγον τὸν διὰ οὐσίας τοῦ παντὸς διήκοντα· αὕτη δ' ἐστὶ τὸ αἰθέριον σῶμα, σπέρμα τῆς τοῦ παντὸς γενέσεως καὶ περιόδου μέτρον τεταγμένης.* This is not the best reference (it speaks rather of the *εἰμαρμένη* bearing some Posidonian flavour, cf. Diels *Dox.* p. 178 and n. 1). A better instance would be Ar. *Didym.* fr. 36 Diels (= *SVF* I, 107=II, 596) *Ζήνωνι καὶ Κλεάνθει καὶ Χρυσίππῳ ἀρέσκει τὴν οὐσίαν μεταβάλλειν οἶον εἰς σπέρμα τὸ πῦρ, καὶ πάλιν ἐκ τούτου τοιαύτην ἀποτελεῖσθαι τὴν διακόσμησιν οἷα πρότερον ἦν;* cf. also Philo *de aetern. mundi* 94 (VI, p. 101 Cohn = II, 618 Arnim). But they can speak in favour of the reading *ab igni* as well. Of course, in all this evidence there is almost nothing from Heraclitus: the Stoic teachings are quite clear.

(ii) Richter's interpretation (p. 75) is not conclusive to me; it runs: „...daß nichts Unüberwindliches entstehe und daß alle Samen, die gesät sind, von Aethernatur sind.“ Now, *two* topics are not probable here (contra *-que*). Besides, *rerum* should be kept: only *semina iacta* is too weak. In favour of the reading

ab igni,
omnia quo rerum Natura semina iacta

I would refer to Lucret. II, 1072 *...natura manet quae semina rerum / concicere in loca ...*; I, 614 *...natura reseruans semina rebus.* (As for *ab igni*, in this position. cf. Lucret. V, 604; VI, 968; Verg. *G.* I, 234; for *-e ab igni*, cf. *Aetna* 370 *luctamine ab imo*; 33; for *quo* cf., e. g., Lucret. I, 374; II, 304 etc.).

²) I don't see how Giomini understands his text, but his translation (p. 269) seems to contradict his own text; it runs: „nulla c'è sulla terra, di tutti gli elementi primordiali che danno vita al mondo, nulla che resista all'urto dal fuoco“.

As for the image: *igni, omnia quo rerum... semina iacta*, either *Aetna* simply borrowed the phraseology from Lucretius (the atoms — *semina rerum*), or the metaphor of *tellus* containing the *semina rerum* (cf. *Lucretius*, VI, 789; V, 916 is implied).

(iii) The most popular teaching of Heraclitus was that on fire (cf. *Lucretius*, I, 635 ff.; 690 ff.; 705 f. and Ellis, p. 209; *ardebat Heraclitus*, says Mart. Capella, II, 213, etc.). The author of *Aetna* had special reasons of interest in this doctrine; hence the probability of the reading *ab igni*.

Consequently, *Aetna* probably alluded to the common doxographic evidence on Heraclitus (Diog. Laert. IX, 7 ἐκ πυρός τὰ πάντα συνεστάναι καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἀναλύεσθαι has been quoted already by Scaliger), and not especially to fr. 66 DK (as Bernays and Bywater have believed) or to fr. 90 DK (as Munro and Ellis have thought).

Thus, as far as I know, the only editor who read these two lines correctly was L. Hermann. *Le Second Lucilius* (Coll. Latomus 34, Brussels 1958).

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