

LUCIUS SAUFEIUS AND HIS LOST PREHISTORY OF ROME:  
INTELLECTUAL CULTURE IN THE LATE REPUBLIC  
(SERVIUS AD *AEN.* 1.6)

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THE SCATTERED EVIDENCE FOR the life and activities of Lucius Saufeius allows us to catch glimpses of a colorful, opinionated, and well-connected Roman knight who chose to abstain from political office and instead devoted himself to the cultivation of literary interests and the study of Epicurean philosophy. Saufeius is precisely the sort of individual who is usually invisible to the modern historian, and for that reason he offers a valuable, concrete illustration of what the life of a well-off Roman outside the political limelight might have looked like. Moreover, the survival of a possible fragment of a lost Latin treatise by Saufeius can shed light on his small but unique contribution to the development of Latin literature and its relationship with Greek philosophy and historiography.

This fragment—the focus of this article—is preserved in Servius’ *Commentary* on the *Aeneid* (1.6).<sup>1</sup> There Servius glosses Vergil’s use of the word “Latium” (*inferretque deos Latio; genus unde Latinum*) with a report of a work by a certain Saufeius that linked Latium with the verb *latere* (“to hide”), an etymological flourish further explicated by an image of early humans fighting for survival in a hostile world (Servius [Auctus] ad *Aen.* 1.6 = frag. 1 Peter = A34 Cornell):

Saufeius Latium dictum ait, quod ibi latuerant incolae, qui, quoniam in cavis montium vel occultis caventes sibi a feris beluis vel a valentioribus vel a tempestatibus habitaverint, Cascei vocati sunt, quos posterī Aborigines cognominarunt, quoniam †aliis<sup>2</sup> ortos esse recognoscabant. ex quibus Latinos etiam dictos.

Saufeius says that it is called “Latium” because the inhabitants “hid” there. These inhabitants, since they lived in the hollows of the mountains or in [other] hiding places and took care to avoid wild beasts or stronger [men] or storms, were called “Cascei,” whom later generations

All translations are my own unless otherwise noted, and all dates are BCE unless otherwise noted. My thanks to Elaine Fantham, Matthias Haake, and Jim Zetzel for comments and criticism.

1. It is difficult to know the exact nature of Servius’ report, which I will refer to loosely as an extract, paraphrase, or fragment. Brunt (1980, 477) suggests a better term for this sort of passage would be the more neutral “*reliquiae*.”

2. The clause is corrupt: Thilo and Hagen (1961) report various conjectures (e.g., *ab illis se ortos; ab iis ortos*); the Harvard Servius (Rand et al. 1946) prints “<nullis> aliis ortos.” The exact etymology is not critical to my argument.

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named “Aborigines,” since they recognized that they had been born from others (?). For these reasons they were also called “Latins.”

It is perhaps inevitable that scholars have not paid much attention to either L. Saufeius or the brief report in Servius.<sup>3</sup> The only substantial discussion—a short but vigorous article by Friedrich Münzer, with which I will be engaging extensively in this article—is now over a hundred years old.<sup>4</sup> Münzer argued that L. Saufeius, the friend of Cicero, is the same individual as the “Saufeius” cited in Servius. Münzer then underlined the literary and Epicurean interests of the Republican Saufeius and adduced parallels between the report in Servius and the prehistory of Lucretius’ *De rerum natura* Book 5. He concluded that Lucius Saufeius is the Servian Saufeius, and that the passage from his lost treatise was no stray bit of antiquarianism, but an authentic fragment of an Epicurean philosophical work inspired by Lucretius and written in Latin in order to popularize the school in Italy.<sup>5</sup> This bold conclusion has been widely accepted, most recently in T. J. Cornell’s *Fragments of the Roman Historians*, and commentators have referred to Saufeius’ lost treatise variously as a possible “philosophical treatise” or an “Epicurean pamphlet.”<sup>6</sup> Doubt about Münzer’s claims has been limited to passing and—or so I shall argue—unsupported skepticism about the identification of the two Saufei,<sup>7</sup> while the Epicurean content of the Servian extract has largely gone unchallenged—again wrongly, in my opinion.<sup>8</sup>

In this article, I will reexamine Münzer’s hypothesis that the Republican Lucius Saufeius authored a popularizing Epicurean treatise in Latin, evaluating it in light of the significant work that has been done on Servius and on Hellenistic philosophy over the last hundred years. This article falls into two parts. I first reaffirm against skeptical detractors Münzer’s claim that the two Saufei are the same individual and then argue that the Servian extract preserves reliable information about a lost Latin work by the Republican Lucius Saufeius. The sec-

3. That said, a few scholars have made good instrumental use of Saufeius for various purposes—e.g., Raubitschek 1949, 100–101 and Haake 2007, 162–64 on Saufeius’ Epicurean teacher Phaedrus; Castner 1988, 64–67 and Benferhat 2005, 169–70 on Roman Epicureanism; M. Haake has shared with me an important paper on Saufeius’ social background, which has since been published (Haake 2017)—but there has been no modern analysis of his lost Latin treatise.

4. Münzer 1914 (= Münzer 2012, 91–95). Earlier scholars had mentioned Saufeius and his lost Latin treatise, but only briefly: e.g., Peter 1906, 2: xxviii; Funaioli 1907, 1: 438; Schanz, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur*, I 2<sup>3</sup>.339 (I know of the latter only through Münzer; later editions of Schanz-Hosius accept Münzer’s conclusions).

5. Cf. Münzer’s (1921) *RE* article, which established his conclusions as orthodoxy: “[L. Saufeius] schrieb ein Werk . . . das nicht sowohl historischen, als philosophischen Inhalts war . . . zur Verbreitung der Epikureischen Lehren.”

6. Cornell 2014, 1: 647 (“Saufeius . . . offers a unique rationalizing explanation that dispenses with divine myth . . . [in a way] that strongly recalls Lucretius’ account of primitive man in *DRN* 5.953ff.”); Benferhat 2005, 170 (“*traités de philosophie*”); Haake 2007, 163 (“*epikureischen Werbeschrift*”). Cf. Bardon 1952, 1: 207–8; Erler 1994, 365; Canfora 2003, 44; and the implicit acceptance of Taylor 1968, 473, with 472 n. 5 and Horsfall 1989, 98, with p. 85.

7. Castner 1988, 67; Momigliano 1941, 152 (“I much doubt whether this man was absorbed in the *intermundia* . . .”).

8. Rawson 1985, 9 n. 28 is a notable (if brief) exception: though she is sympathetic to the fragment’s resonance with Epicurean ideas, she prudently leaves open the possibility of a non-philosophical antiquarian or historical work (Cornell [2014, 1: 647] also entertains the possibility of a historical work but is firm on the fragment’s Epicurean themes). Shackleton Bailey (1965, 1: 287) and Raubitschek (1949, 101) offer no judgment on the philosophical content.

ond part of the paper tackles the more complicated question of how to interpret the historical and philosophical content of this lost work. Here I will argue against the popularizing Epicurean readings of Münzer and others. More specifically, I claim that Servius' paraphrase or quotation fails—and I suggest that this is likely due to Servius' scholarly interests and goals—to preserve sufficient information to determine its philosophical source, Epicurean or otherwise. Furthermore, an analysis of other ancient accounts of early human history reveals that Saufei's analysis was a part of a much broader Greek tradition of speculative anthropology. All of this is not to say that Saufei's treatise was definitely not inspired by Epicurean ideas. The problem is that this speculative assumption has become a fact, and the stronger conclusion that Saufei wrote a popularizing philosophical treatise is even more tenuous.

I suggest that a more fruitful approach to interpreting Saufei's prehistory is to compare it with the antiquarian efforts of his learned Republican contemporaries, in particular Varro, to explore Rome's origins and cultural history within a Greek intellectual framework. I claim that Saufei's prehistory reflects a new phase in the Roman elite's engagement with Greek intellectual culture: Saufei and his antiquarian contemporaries used Greek historical and philosophical resources to revisit with a new perspective an old topic—their prehistory—which had been a part of Roman historical discourse even before Cato's *Origines*. In other words, I suggest that Saufei and Varro's prehistories represent an intensification of the use of Greek models and ideas to explain Roman history and culture to Late Republican readers. L. Saufei and his lost book thereby contribute to our understanding of a critical period in the development of Latin literature, provide valuable *comparanda* for surviving Republican literary sources, and offer a case study of the intellectual horizons of one of Cicero's less famous contemporaries. Finally, I hope that my analysis of Servius' use of Saufei's treatise may be of some methodological interest as an example of how an ancient scholar used earlier Latin literature for his own cultural and linguistic agenda.

### 1. "NOSTER LUCIUS"

This section will examine our evidence for L. Saufei's literary activities and Epicurean commitments—two issues that form the core of Münzer's case for the attribution of an Epicurean treatise to our Lucius. It may be helpful, however, to begin with a brief sketch of what we know about his social background and his life (which I hope may also be of more general interest to those interested in Late Republican society). His family descended from the Saufei of Praeneste, and some of his ancestors held office, but only minor magistracies.<sup>9</sup> M. Saufei, one of Milo's henchmen who was prosecuted in 52 after the murder of Clodius, is probably the most famous member of the *gens*.<sup>10</sup> As for the immediate family

9. Wikander's (1989) analysis of the *gens Saufei* supersedes for the Republican period the entries in Münzer's *RE* article, Broughton's (1952) *MRR*, and Syme 1979, 600. Notable Saufei include a tribune of the plebs in 91 involved in agrarian legislation (Wikander no. 3; *RE* 1; *MRR* ii.22), and the ill-fated quaestor of 99, C. Saufei, who perished alongside the tribune Saturninus (Wikander no. 12; *RE* 3; *MRR* ii.2; cf. Cicero *Rab.* 20 and Appian *BC* 1.4.32).

10. See Wikander no. 2; *RE* 6; and Gruen 1995, 343–44; cf. Asconius *Mil.* 32 and 55. Cicero secured a narrow acquittal.

of our Lucius Saufeius, he had a brother, Appius. Like Lucius, Appius seems to have lived a life of equestrian ease, and, if Raubitschek's restoration of an Athenian inscription is correct, he studied philosophy with the Epicurean Phaedrus alongside Cicero, and Atticus, and his brother.<sup>11</sup> He was in any case dead before 50 BCE, leaving Lucius as his heir (*Att.* 6.1.10 = SB 115).

To return to our Republican Lucius, the testimony of Cicero's letters, two inscriptions, and comments in Cornelius Nepos' *Life of Atticus* allow us to reconstruct a general outline of his life and activities. Nepos tells us that Lucius was not only a lifelong friend of Atticus but his *aequalis* (12), which suggests a birth in the last decade of the second century.<sup>12</sup> The date of his death is uncertain. Antonius ordered Saufeius' proscription, but he was saved by the timely intercession of Atticus, who had previously cultivated a friendship with the triumvir.<sup>13</sup> How long he survived after this is unknown; Atticus died in 32, when he was almost eighty (21–22), so Saufeius was probably dead by then.

Our Lucius was clearly well-off. Nepos tells us that he held large estates in Italy and studied philosophy in Athens at length (*qui complures annos studio ductus philosophiae Athenis habitabat*, 12). Two inscriptions, erected by citizens of Athens and Tusculum in his honor, support this account and identify him as an important local patron.<sup>14</sup> The Athenian inscription is particularly relevant to my argument. It was originally the base of a larger monument of three statues with a marble base and was erected in the Acropolis around 79. The *demos* dedicated the first two statues to Lucius and his brother Appius; the third was privately erected by Lucius for his teacher Phaedrus, then the head of the Athenian Garden.<sup>15</sup> Cicero's correspondence confirms and fleshes out this evidence. In the letters we see Lucius shuttling back and forth between southern Italy and Athens, managing his own business interests and those of his friends, and carrying letters for Cicero and Atticus.<sup>16</sup> Whether or not these men knew each other before their studies abroad in Athens is unclear, but the three developed a close and intimate friendship that spanned several decades.<sup>17</sup> One gets

11. Raubitschek 1949, 101 (p. 104 has a photograph of the monument); cf. Haake 2007, 164. Unfortunately Appius' name is extremely conjectural: [Ἀππίος Σωφίῃος Ἀπ]πίου[ν]. He was in any case in Athens around the same time as his brother (*IG* 2.3897, lines 4–6; his name again requires restoration, but here it is very plausible).

12. Cf. Benferhat 2005, 69. On Nepos' biography of Atticus more generally, see Horsfall 1989.

13. *Atticus* 12: "Lucius Saufeius, a Roman knight and contemporary of Atticus, lived many years in Athens, drawn by his zeal for philosophy, and owned many valuable possessions in Italy. When the triumvirs had sold his property . . . it happened by the effort and industry of Atticus that Saufeius learned by the same messenger that he had lost and recovered his property" (*nam cum L. Saufeii, equitis Romani, aequalis sui, qui complures annos studio ductus philosophiae Athenis habitabat habebatque in Italia pretiosas possessiones, triumviri bona vendidissent . . . Attici labore atque industria factum est, ut eodem nuntio Saufeius fieret certior se patrimonium amisisse et recuperasse*).

14. Respectively *IG* 2.3897 (lines 1–3, erected by the Athenian *demos*) and *CIL* 14.2624 (erected by a *Caelia P.f.*); see Raubitschek 1949, 99–101 and Haake 2007, 162–63. The Athenians similarly erected a statue to his friend Atticus in gratitude for financial assistance to the city (*Nepos Atticus* 2–3).

15. *IG* 2.3897, lines 7–9: "Ἀ[ε]λύκτιος Σωφίῃος Ἀπ[πίου] υἱὸς Φαῖδρον [Λυ]σιτά[δ]ου Βε[ρενεκίδην] τὸν ἐαυτ[οῦ] κα[ὶ] θήνη[τιν] ἀνέθηκεν." On Phaedrus, see Raubitschek 1949; Haake 2007, 159–66.

16. Business: *Att.* 16.3.2 = SB 413 (possibly also 14.18.4 = SB 373); letter-carrying: 7.1 = SB 124. Help with Cicero's family affairs: 6.1 = SB 115. Rawson (1985, 13) speculates on Saufeius' business interests in the provinces.

17. Their intimacy is underlined by Cicero's consistent use of expressions of familiarity such as *noster Lucius* or *Saufeium nostrum* (see *Att.* 6.1.10 = 115, 6.9.4 = SB 123, 7.2.4 = SB 123; cf. Shackleton Bailey 1965–70, 3: 286 and, more generally, White 2010, 67–76).

the sense that Cicero enjoyed recalling his youthful days of study in Athens,<sup>18</sup> and Saufeius was a part of that.

So much for background on Lucius. I will now analyze two aspects of his life that lend plausibility to Münzer's claim that this Republican Saufeius is the Servian Saufeius. First, there is circumstantial evidence that Lucius was a writer. In a letter from 59 (*Att.* 2.8 = SB 28) Cicero characteristically tells Atticus that he is fed up with politics and is trying to get some writing done. To do so he compares his efforts to the literary productivity of their old friend: "I'm giving myself over to writing history. You can think that I'm a Saufeius, although there is nothing more sluggish than me" (*ego me do historiae. quamquam, licet me Saufeium putes esse, nihil me est inertius*). Cicero is contrasting his limited productivity with the efforts of Saufeius; this contrast presumes that Saufeius did in fact write. It is therefore hard to make sense of this passage if Lucius was not involved in some sort of literary activity. A letter from 67 (*Att.* 1.3 = SB 8) is also relevant. Cicero tells Atticus, whose grandmother had recently died, that "... I expect that L. Saufeius will be sending a *consolatio* to you ..." (*eius rei consolationem ad te L. Saufeium missurum esse arbitror*). This comment is probably ironic. There is no need to believe that Atticus actually received a consolation. But the passage once again presupposes some form of vigorous, perhaps too vigorous, literary activity.<sup>19</sup> Cicero's comments are allusive, but the implication is clear: Saufeius liked to write.<sup>20</sup> No doubt other Saufei dabbled in literary matters, but Lucius is the only individual for whom we have any evidence, a fact that certainly does not hurt his candidacy for the authorship of the Latin prehistory cited by Servius.<sup>21</sup>

Second, Lucius' Epicurean interests and convictions also bear on the plausibility of his authorship of an Epicurean treatise. It may be worth a moment, however, to clarify what I mean by "Epicurean interests and convictions." It is admittedly difficult to speak concretely about philosophical allegiance in the ancient world or pin down what such convictions might entail,<sup>22</sup> but I think we can set aside such weighty methodological issues in light of this paper's more limited goal of reexamining Münzer's thesis about Saufeius' Epicurean treatise. Lucius' study and lasting association with prominent Greek and Roman Epicureans and Cicero's consistent characterization of him as an intelligent member of that school are sufficient to

18. E.g., *Fin.* 1.16 and the opening of Book 5.

19. That Saufeius was the type of person to write a *consolatio* need not imply that he wrote formal treatises, but it does suggest a high level of education and supports the more substantive reference to literary activity in *Att.* 2.8.

20. Cf. Shackleton Bailey 1965–70, 1: 287 and Cornell 2014, 1: 647 (though the latter goes too far with the reference to Saufeius' "ready production of philosophical tracts").

21. Münzer (1914, 625–26) suggested that a comment in *Att.* 14.18.4 (= SB 373) refers to Saufeius' literary works, but this seems unlikely. The claim depends on understanding the word *librum* in the elliptical phrase "*Saufei legisse vellem*." However, Shackleton Bailey is probably right to understand instead "*litteras*," since the previous sentences mention Cicero's receipt of letters pertaining to his son's education in Athens (cf. *Att.* 14.16.3 = SB 370). Saufeius may have been asked to report on Marcus' progress (like Trebonius in *Fam.* 12.16.1–2 = SB 328), but it is also possible that Cicero has rapidly changed topics to some other personal or business matter.

22. Literature on the social role of philosophy continues to grow. A few examples: Brunt 1975; Castner 1988; Griffin 1989; Benferhat 2005; Haake 2007; Trapp 2007, 211–70. Cf. studies of ancient philosophy "as a way of life": e.g., Sedley 1989; Hadot 1995; Foucault 2005; Cooper 2013.

establish Lucius' credentials as a candidate for the authorship of the Servian extract. As such there is no need to determine the depth or exact nature of his Epicureanism.

Lucius' association with the Athenian Garden can be traced over several decades. As we have seen, *IG* 2.3897 establishes an early link with a leading Epicurean philosopher. It is therefore telling that some three decades later we find Lucius in the company of Phaedrus' successor as head of the school, Patro,<sup>23</sup> again in Athens: Cicero had met the two of them on his way back from Cilicia in late 50 and entrusted Saufeius with a letter for Atticus. The passage is characteristic of the way Cicero handles his friend's philosophical interests (*Att.* 7.2.4 = SB 125, Nov. 25, 50 BCE):

filiola tua te delectari laetor et probari tibi φυσικὴν esse τὴν <στοργὴν τὴν><sup>24</sup> πρὸς τὰ τέκνα. etenim si haec non est, nulla potest homini esse ad hominem naturae adiunctio; qua sublata vitae societas tollitur. 'bene eveniat!' inquit Carneades spurce sed tamen prudentius quam Lucius noster et Patron qui, cum omnia ad se referant, <nec> quicquam alterius causa fieri putent et cum ea re bonum virum oportere esse dicant ne malum habeat non quo<d> id natura rectum sit, non intellegunt se de callido homine loqui, non de bono viro.

I am happy that your little daughter brings you delight and you accept that there is a natural bond of affection towards our children. For if this did not exist, there can be no natural association of man to man; and if this is removed, then all society is abolished. "Let's hope for the best!" says Carneades—fouly—but nevertheless more prudently than our friends Lucius [Saufeius]<sup>25</sup> and Patro, who do not understand that they are speaking of a clever man, not a good man, since they refer all things to themselves, do not think that anything should be done for the sake of another, and say that it is fitting to be a good man only in order to avoid trouble—not because it is right by nature. (Trans. Shackleton Bailey, slightly modified)

Cicero is gently poking at Atticus' Epicurean convictions,<sup>26</sup> but to do so he cites Saufeius and Patro as proponents of Epicurus' egoistic approach to social and political theory.<sup>27</sup> It is striking that Cicero has placed a Roman knight on the same level as the leading Greek Epicurean philosopher—a choice that says much about his opinion of Saufeius' education and intellect. This passage simply does not make sense if Cicero did not believe that his friend was a serious Epicurean, all the more in light of Cicero's previous letter, which explicitly

23. Or Patron. The MSS of *Fam.* 13.1 and *Att.* 7.2 read Patro and Patron, but they are very likely the same individual (so Shackleton Bailey 1965–70, 3: 286). Cicero's celebrated letter to C. Memmius regarding the house of Epicurus (*Fam.* 13.1) was written at the (somewhat belligerent) request of Patro.

24. The sense of this and the other supplements in this passage is secure; love of one's offspring as a paradigmatic case of natural human sociability is endemic in (non-Epicurean) Hellenistic philosophy: see nn. 58–59 below.

25. *Noster Lucius* is almost certainly our L. Saufeius (*pace* D'Arms [1970, 189] and Leonhardt [1999, 199], who see a reference to L. Manlius Torquatus, the Epicurean spokesperson of *De finibus* 1–2). The language of the previous letter (*Att.* 7.1 = SB 124) is decisive (cf. Shackleton Bailey 1965–70, 3: 286): Cicero unambiguously states that he had recently been with Saufeius and entrusted to him a letter for Atticus (i.e., our *Att.* 7.2).

26. This is not the way this letter is usually read: commentators often see Atticus as *literally* agreeing with Cicero that we feel natural affection for our offspring (e.g., Shackleton Bailey 1965–70, 3: 286; cf. Benferhat 2005, 106 n. 74). This and other passages have been adduced to show that Atticus was not a serious Epicurean. I discuss Atticus' Epicureanism and defend its sincerity in Gilbert forthcoming, but his philosophical allegiance is tangential to my argument here.

27. For other parallels in the letters (and philosophical works), see Gilbert 2015, esp. 134–162, 221–43.



called Saufeius a *philosophus*.<sup>28</sup> Other letters reveal similar themes.<sup>29</sup> As Catherine Castner has aptly noted, Cicero uses Lucius as a sort of shorthand for the doctrines of the Garden when writing to Atticus.<sup>30</sup> To sum up, Cicero consistently characterizes Saufeius as a committed, intelligent Epicurean, and our evidence for his long-standing association with the Athenian Garden and its leading philosophers justify treating him as a member of that school. While it would be rash to expect that his literary work would *necessarily* reflect his Epicurean convictions, it is reasonable to conclude that *if* the Servian extract does indeed preserve Epicurean or even more general philosophical content, Saufeius would certainly have had the knowledge, means, and ability to write it.

## 2. THE SERVIUS FRAGMENT: AUTHENTICITY AND IDENTIFICATION

These two factors—L. Saufeius' Epicureanism and his literary activities—form the basis for Münzer's identification of him as the Servian Saufeius. I now turn to the fragment itself in order to assess the likelihood of this identification. I will discuss the purported philosophical content of this passage in the following section; what is at stake now is the authenticity of the report and the plausibility of identifying the two Saufei.

Some comments on Servius as a historical source are therefore in order, all the more because Münzer was unable to take advantage of the dramatic advances in Servian scholarship in the past century.<sup>31</sup> This work can, I think, support the general authenticity of Servius' report as well as strengthen the plausibility of Münzer's identification of the two Saufei. But first we must deal with a preliminary difficulty: in addition to two Saufei, it turns out that we are dealing with multiple Servii. More specifically, most manuscripts of Servius present a short, concise commentary (originally written in the late fourth/early fifth century CE), which is suitable for a school curriculum. Another, smaller group of manuscripts offers greatly expanded notes as well as generous citations of poetic and historical material.<sup>32</sup> Vergilian scholars, culminating in a famous article by G. P. Goold, have investigated this material at length and have concluded that an anonymous compiler has appended onto Servius' more concise commentary selections from a much larger scholarly edition, which is typically presumed to be that of Aelius Donatus, more widely known as the fourth-century-CE commentator on Terence.<sup>33</sup> This latter, enlarged commentary tradition is referred to as

28. *Att.* 7.1 = SB 124: *ut philosophi ambulat* (with reference to the expected tardiness of Lucius; on the tone of this passage, see Hine 2015, 16–17).

29. E.g., *Att.* 15.4.2–3 = SB 381 and 4.6.1 = SB 83.

30. Castner 1988, 66. See in particular *Att.* 4.6.1: . . . *non ut Saufeius et vestri* (the passage contrasts Cicero's attitude toward death with the Epicurean position). In light of all of this the skepticism of Horsfall (1989, 80) on the sincerity of Saufeius' Epicureanism is difficult to sustain.

31. Fundamental is Goold 1970. See the papers in Casali and Stok 2008 as well as the more topical discussions of Lloyd 1961; Kaster 1988, 356–69; Maltby 2003. Fowler (1997) offers a brief introduction to Servius.

32. Goold (1970, 106, 113–14) provides useful illustrations of these differences.

33. Since Servius is thought to have based his commentary on Donatus, the MSS with expanded commentary represent a reinjection of Donatan material (see Goold 1970, 141), with possible additions by the anonymous compiler. Although this narrative has been widely accepted, doubts about some of its details have been voiced (e.g., Daintree 1990; Baschera 2008; Cadili 2008).

Servius Auctus, and alternatively as Servius Danielis (so-called after its first editor, Pierre Daniel).

These issues of transmission are relevant because the citation of Sauveius' prehistory derives from Servius Auctus. The initial question about the authenticity of Servius' report therefore depends upon the reliability of this particular branch of manuscripts and its track record for providing authentic information about earlier Latin writers. Good work on this question provides grounds for optimism. Robert Lloyd has calculated that the enlarged commentary of Servius Auctus—or more precisely: the anonymous compiler who stitched together Servius with additional material—quotes or cites some sixteen Latin historians (mostly Republican), five poets, and offers generous citations of Plautus and Terence.<sup>34</sup> This is no meager haul. In a few cases we can check quotations against other ancient sources (such as Plautus and Terence, or other exegetical sources, such as Macrobius). These comparisons reveal that Servius Auctus is quite precise with verse citations and has generally preserved authentic information about early Latin literature, though it is important to note that prose works are sometimes paraphrased.<sup>35</sup> The report of Sauveius' prehistory may very well be such a paraphrase, and possibly a partial one at that, but as long as we keep in mind that the passage does not necessarily transmit Sauveius' exact words, there is no reason to doubt the general authenticity of what does survive.<sup>36</sup> These conclusions about Servius Auctus' general fidelity and his penchant for paraphrase are not surprising. Grammarians and other scholars in Late Antiquity had their own reasons for quoting earlier authors (in particular their promotion of what they viewed as pure, correct Latin), and these goals necessarily guided their choice and presentation of earlier material.<sup>37</sup> But their ideologies nevertheless demanded serious historical and philological labor, and it would be a mistake to reject their explicit citations of ancient material without a good reason. All things considered, then, the citation of Sauveius most likely transmits authentic information about a lost Latin work, though we need to be aware of the possibility of paraphrase, partial quotation, or redaction in the centuries between Lucius Sauveius, the Donatan material preserved by Servius Auctus, and the efforts of the anonymous compiler. I will return to this worry later.

As for the second question, whether the Servian Sauveius is our Republican Lucius, no definitive answer can be given. However, several factors militate against the blanket skepticism of some scholars (see n. 7) and suggest a more optimistic verdict. First, the *nomen* Sauveius, while not unique, is far from common. It is therefore unlikely that an original reading would have been corrupted

34. Tables and references at Lloyd 1961, 294–95 (early epic poets and dramatists); 299 (historians); 305 (Lucilius); 314–15 (Plautus); 319 (Terence).

35. Lloyd 1961, 300. He concludes (p. 322) that the material preserved by Servius Auctus is “virtually everywhere superior to S[ervius]. . .”

36. This conclusion remains valid even when Servius Auctus fumbles. For example, a quotation of Sallust omits the adverb *repente* from the phrase “*ut tanta repente mutatio non sine deo videretur*” (ad *Aen.* 2.632, on which see Goold 1970, 116). That said, the general sense of the original line is not lost, and Servius Auctus still provides authentic—if imperfect—information. Such passages certainly warrant caution and force us to consider what may have been left out, but it does not follow that we should reject what has been preserved.

37. See in general Kaster 1988. Johnson (2009, 170–74) provides an intriguing example of ancient scholarship in his analysis of a group of papyrus letters from Egypt in Late Antiquity which record the efforts of the educated elite to check their manuscript readings against those of local grammarians and scholars.



to this name during transmission. Second, Servius Auctus shows a definite fondness for Republican historians. Our Republican Lucius is the only Saufei of any period whom we know was literarily inclined. Furthermore, his amply documented philosophical training would have made him more than qualified to write a philosophical or antiquarian prehistory of early Rome.

Lucius' intellectual milieu lends further plausibility to my case for his authorship of the work cited by Servius. His close friend Atticus was a serious historian and antiquarian who wrote genealogies of Roman families and composed his famous *Liber annalis*.<sup>38</sup> An even closer parallel can be found in another contemporary and likely mutual acquaintance, the prolific M. Terentius Varro. His *De gente populi Romani* offered a full-scale prehistory of Rome, and the sprawling *Antiquitates* provided a gold mine of information on early Roman history and religion.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, as Elizabeth Rawson points out, Cicero's description of the *Antiquitates* as containing explanations of *nomina* and *causas*, names and origins, would seem to describe the Saufei fragment quite well. A further parallel can be found in the fragments of one of his *Menippean Satires*, which is cited by the suggestive title of *Aborigines: περὶ ἀνθρώπων φύσεως*.<sup>40</sup> The fragments do not permit a firm reconstruction, but Varro seems to have offered, perhaps with Cynic overtones, a golden-age vision of prehistory contrasted with the excesses of modern life (cf. the somewhat different golden age described in *De re rustica* 2.1, which is explicitly ascribed to the Peripatetic Dicaearchus). It is particularly striking that Varro's title, *Aborigines*, is etymologized by Saufei (though the text in Servius is unfortunately corrupt), while Varro (among others) elsewhere offered his own explanations of Latium in terms of the verb *latere*.<sup>41</sup> Finally, the slightly later historical efforts of Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant.* 1) are also relevant, as is Vergil's *Aeneid* (again with an etymology of Latium at *Aen.* 8.322–23), or Nepos' pairing of Greek and Roman biographies (or Varro's in his lost *Imagines*): first-century Romans and their admirers were very much interested in exploring Rome's past and/or its relationship with Greek history and myth.<sup>42</sup> In other words, Lucius' friends and learned contemporaries were engaged in precisely the sort of historical project described by Servius, and sometimes explained the very same *nomina* and *causas* (e.g., of Latium).

38. *Brut.* 60 and *Orat.* 120; cf. *Nep. Att.* 18.2. On Atticus as a historian, see Sumner 1973, 164–66; Rawson 1985, 103; Feeney 2007, 227 nn. 95–96; Cornell 2014, 1: 344–53. Sumner (p. 176) concludes his prosopography with a remarkable compliment to Atticus' similar historical labors: "The published and unpublished labors of Atticus lead eventually to [Broughton's] *Magistrates of the Roman Republic*."

39. Cf. *Cic. Acad. Post.* 3.9; fragments in Peter 1906, 2: 10–24 (*De gente*) and Cardauns 1976 (*Antiquitates*). In *De gente* Varro apparently worked his way from the period before the Flood through the fall of Troy and finally into historical time (i.e., after the first Olympic Games), and thereafter through Romulus and the first Roman kings (see Rawson 1985, 236, 244–45; Feeney 2007, 81–84). On Varro's antiquarian and historical work, see Cornell 2014, 1: 412–23 and Rawson 1985, 236–49; Blank 2012 on his philosophical interests.

40. *Frag.* 1–5 Astbury. The following brief comments are indebted to Cèbe 1972, 1–35 and Krenkel 2002, 2–12. For a useful introduction to the *Menippean Satires*, see now Zetzel 2016, 59–61.

41. Varro, *ap.* Servius ad *Aen.* 8.322: *Varro . . . Latium dici putat, quod latet Italia inter praecipitia Alpium et Apennini*. See Maltby 1991, 329 for similar explanations in other authors. Roman historians also discussed the origins of *Latium* and the *Latini*, though not always etymologically (see Cornell 2014, 3: 112 on Cato *frag.* 63).

42. E.g., Gruen 1992, 6–51 on the Aeneas legend; Rawson 1985, 233–49 on Republican antiquarianism; Momigliano 1993, 96–99 on paired Greek and Roman lives in biography; Feeney 2007, 20–28 (cf. 47–67, 81–107) on Roman attempts to integrate themselves into Greek history; and Gee 2013 on the many Latin receptions of Aratus. Interest in Roman prehistory was not new, of course, and I will briefly discuss the Elder Cato's *Origines* in my conclusion.

All of this suggests that if we are looking for an antiquarian Republican author named Saufeius, our Lucius is by far the most attractive, qualified, and plausible candidate. Other conclusions are simply more desperate: a further multiplication of Saufei by positing an unknown Republican author of that name; or else silence. To sum up: it is fairly certain that Servius Auctus has preserved authentic information about a lost Latin work. As for the work's author, Lucius Saufeius is, despite the inevitable possibility for skepticism, by far the most plausible candidate.

### 3. A PHILOSOPHICAL PREHISTORY?

#### A. The Lucretius Hypothesis

In contrast to the identification of Lucius as the Servian Saufeius, the purported Epicurean content of the passage has found wide acceptance (see n. 6). This is understandable. As Münzer pointed out long ago, Saufeius' prehistory of Latium does in fact resemble the famous analysis of the rise of civilization at *De rerum natura* 5.925–1457. Lucretius' narrative is of course significantly longer and more detailed than the short account preserved by Servius, but the parallels are still striking. Take, for example, the following passage from Book 5 (5.948–957):

denique nota vagis silvestria templa tenebant . . .  
necdum res igni scibant tractare neque uti  
pellibus et spoliis corpus vestire ferarum,  
sed nemora atque cavos montis silvasque colebant  
et frutices inter condebant squalida membra  
verbera ventorum vitare imbrisque coacti.

Furthermore, they inhabited the forest regions known to them from their wanderings . . . For they did not yet know how to work things with fire nor to use skins and to clothe their body in the spoils of fallen beasts, but they inhabited the woods and caves of the mountains and the forests, and they hid their impoverished limbs between bushes, compelled to avoid the lashes of the winds and rain. (Trans. Rouse and Smith)

Both prehistories envision early men struggling to respond to the harsh realities of life before organized human communities. So they hid (L: *condebant squalida membra* ~ S: *ibi latuerant incolae*) in caves and the wilderness (L: *nemora atque cavos montis . . . colebant*; cf. 984: *saxea tecta* ~ S: *in cavis montium vel occultis . . . habitaverint*) in order to avoid dangerous weather (L: *verbera ventorum vitare imbrisque coacti* ~ S: *vel a tempestatibus*). Lucretius later addresses the other issues raised by Saufeius, including the threat of wild beasts (L 982–98, e.g., 982–83: *quod saecla ferarum / infestam miseris faciebant saepe quietem* ~ S: *caventes sibi a feris beluis*) and hostilities with other humans (L 1245–46, 1281–96, and 1141–51, esp. 1145–46: *nam genus humanum, defessum vi colere aevom / ex inimicitis languebat* ~ S: *vel valentioribus*<sup>43</sup>). More generally, both prehistories pessimistically assume,<sup>44</sup> like Hobbes, that in the original state of nature the life of men was “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” (*Leviathan* 13).

43. That Saufeius refers with this phrase to hostile humans is suggested by Cole ([1967] 1990, 65), with additional parallels.

44. Though note that Lucretius' account is more complicated than this entirely negative verdict (see n. 63).

It was on the basis of these linguistic and thematic parallels that Münzer concluded that Saufēius had directly followed Lucretius in his own Epicurean prehistory in Latin. For reasons to be discussed shortly, it is difficult to sustain this strong conclusion. For the sake of charity, however, we should also entertain a more modest claim: Saufēius' prehistory may still reflect Epicurean ideas, if not specifically Lucretius' influence. After all, there is abundant, if fragmentary, evidence for other Epicurean prehistories along the lines of what we see in Lucretius. Epicurus' Hellenistic followers Colotes and Hermarchus, for example, also traced the rise of human societies from an initial bestial state, a development spurred by human weakness and the need for self-preservation.<sup>45</sup> If Saufēius' prehistory was broadly Epicurean in its analysis, this result would still be interesting for our understanding of his Epicureanism, his work's place in the development of Latin literature, and its interaction with Greek literary *topoi*.

Neither conclusion can withstand scrutiny. The problem is that interpreters of Saufēius' treatise have been misled by Lucretius' elaborate and famous prehistory. I suggest that we need to take a step back from Epicurean sources and take a wider view, surveying the varied uses of prehistory narratives in other ancient authors, philosophical or otherwise. The critical question is not whether Saufēius' prehistory is consistent with Epicureanism, but whether it reveals an assumption, argument, or doctrine that is specifically Epicurean and would therefore justify describing his prehistory as such. If the answer to this question is no—if, that is, Saufēius' prehistory turns out to reflect only a broad and variegated tradition of anthropological speculation—then Münzer's strong claim and my hypothetical weaker suggestion of a more general Epicurean provenance are both undermined.

## B. Ancient Prehistories and Their Narrative Elements

Accounts of the lifestyle of the "first men" (cf. Diod. Sic. 1.8.5: τοὺς οὖν πρῶτους τῶν ἀνθρώπων; Sen. *Ep.* 90.4: *primi mortalium*) and the development of civilization proved to be remarkably popular in the ancient world.<sup>46</sup> These imaginative reconstructions of human history served as thought experiments to explore human nature, its interactions with the physical environment and other living creatures, and the reasons for the eventual rise of human communities, usually through some sort of social contract. Many of the basic elements of these stories are entirely predictable: the need for shelter and protection, the discovery of the arts and warfare, the foundation of laws, and so on. These details are the intellectual building blocks of prehistories: ancient thinkers—especially philosophers and historians, though we find similar ideas in other genres—emphasized and manipulated different combinations of these basic narrative ele-

45. Fragments/paraphrases of these prehistories can be found at Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1124D–1125F (Colotes) and Porph. *Abst.* 7–12 (Hermarchus); cf. Epicurus *KD* 7, 13–14, 33, and 40. On Epicurean politics, see Roskam 2007; cf. Fowler 1989 and Armstrong 2011.

46. On ancient prehistories, see Lovejoy and Boas 1935 (with intriguing comparisons to Indian and Asian literature); Spoerri 1959; Cole [1967] 1990; Kahn 1981; Blundell 1986, 165–224; Boys-Stones 2001, 1–59; Campbell 2003. Cf. treatments of the concept of "progress" in antiquity (e.g., Edelstein 1967; Dodds 1973, 1–25). Studies of individual prehistory narratives abound; I cite a selection in the following notes.

ments for their own purposes. These accounts of human history are therefore rarely (if ever) neutral, a point well-emphasized by Gordon Campbell:

Prehistories provide an aetiology for the way things are . . . Modern human society is the starting point, and prehistory is a mirror we hold up to view ourselves . . . So, rather than being a disinterested account of the distant past, any prehistory will be partial, and will focus on those ethical aspects the writer wishes to highlight.<sup>47</sup>

Thus the rustic simplicity of early cave dwellers could be pressed into the service of a moralistic diatribe against the decline from a golden age to the amoral standards of modern life, or into a panegyric of the power of human progress and technological achievement; these narratives could explain the origins of society, and could clarify whether it was the result of pure self-interest or a natural social instinct (or both). This historical-philosophical-anthropological discourse proved remarkably fertile throughout antiquity,<sup>48</sup> and the continuing influence of this tradition can be seen in the popularity of “state of nature” arguments in early modern philosophers such as Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau.<sup>49</sup>

The origins of this tradition of anthropological speculation are unclear. Golden age narratives, which I will not be discussing in any detail, likely reflect old traditional ideas, such as Hesiod’s Myth of Metals in the *Works and Days*.<sup>50</sup> Saufeu’s prehistory, on the other hand, with its grim depiction of the hazards of early human society, reflects a very different strand of prehistory narratives, one that was pragmatic and particularly keen to emphasize the dangers and difficulties of life before organized society. The last century witnessed sustained scholarly effort to identify the ur-source(s) of this “progressivist” branch of ancient prehistories. The apogee of this spate of *Quellenforschung* was the appearance in the middle of the last century of two dense and learned monographs by Walter Spoerri and Thomas Cole. The two authors were battling over an older thesis by Karl Reinhardt, who had argued some forty years earlier that a progressivist prehistory in Diodorus Siculus derived from the Presocratic Democritus of Abdera (through an intermediate source, Hecataeus of Abdera). This thesis found initial acceptance but was attacked vigorously by Spoerri before finding a powerful new champion in Cole, who boldly argued that all ancient narratives of this sort

47. Campbell 2003, 9 (cf. 179–84); Blundell 1986, 103–5.

48. It was so common that Cicero (*Rep.* 1.38) could make Scipio joke that he, contrary to the custom of the professors (*quibus uti docti homines his in rebus solent*), would not begin his account of the origins of government “from the first union of male and female, then the birth of offspring and kinship” (*ut a prima congressione maris et feminae, deinde a progenie et cognatione ordiar*).

49. Some early modern discussions are immediately recognizable as descendants of ancient ideas (e.g., Rousseau’s *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*). Other authors are more allusive. For example, Locke in his *Second Treatise of Government* does not provide an explicit prehistory, but his more abstract discussion of the state of nature includes various building blocks of ancient prehistories (compare the acorn gatherers of 5.27, 30, and 42 to the texts in Campbell 2003, 343). His moralizing is traditional and emphasized by a Latin quotation of a line of Ovid’s prehistory in the *Met.* (1.131): Locke, 8.111: “But though the *golden age* (before vain ambition, and *amor sceleratus habendi*, evil concupiscence, had corrupted men’s minds . . .) had more virtue . . .”. Note also that Native Americans have replaced cave dwellers: e.g., 5.49: “Thus in the beginning all the world was *America* . . . for no such thing as *money* was anywhere known” (his emphasis); cf. Montaigne, “On the Cannibals” (*Essays* 1.31).

50. *WD* 106–201. On the traditional background, see West 1978, 172–77; cf. Blundell 1986, 138–44. On golden age theories in general, see Blundell 1986, 135–64; Boys-Stones 2001, 1–59. Studies of specific golden age narratives abound. The prehistory of the Peripatetic Dicaearchus has received recent attention: see, in addition to Boys-Stones, McConnell 2014, 115–60.

derived, directly or indirectly, from Democritus. The fragility of these source-critical hypotheses and their widely divergent results<sup>51</sup> make one broadly sympathetic to Spoerri's position, though surely a less extreme form of Cole's thesis can be sustained, namely that the ideas of several early Greek sophists, especially Protagoras and Prodicus, and a number of Presocratics, including but not limited to Democritus, contributed to the general intellectual tradition of progressivist prehistories whose existence Spoerri has rightly stressed.<sup>52</sup> Whatever one makes of the source question, one result of the debate has been a detailed documentation of the many and varied instances of this type of prehistory narrative in the ancient world.<sup>53</sup>

In light of this tradition, the parallels between Saufei and Lucretius' accounts of the first men take on a rather different light. The alleged correspondences find clusters of ancient parallels, thereby strongly casting doubt on the conclusion that Saufei was following in the footsteps of Lucretius. Take, for example, their descriptions of the use of caves for shelter and protection. We see something very similar in a report of the Stoic polymath Posidonius (frag. 284 Kidd = Sen. *Ep.* 90.7), a friend and teacher of Cicero: "'Philosophy,' says [Posidonius], 'taught scattered men to build houses, protected by caves or by some dug-out cliff or trunk of a hollow tree'" (*illa, inquit, sparsos et aut cavis tectos aut aliqua rupe suffossa aut exesae arboris trunco docuit tecta moliri*). It is revealing that the less erudite Vitruvius also confidently asserted that "some [early humans] began to make roofs from leaves, others to dig caves under the mountains" (*coeperunt . . . alii de fronde facere tecta, alii speluncas fodere sub montibus*, 2.1.1–2). Other examples, from the *Homeric Hymn to Hephaestus* to Diodorus Siculus, are not lacking.<sup>54</sup> The cave-dwelling early man was therefore a *topos*, its presence expected in almost any ancient prehistory.<sup>55</sup> The same is true of both authors' claims about the threat of wild beasts and hostile humans. Once again both of these topics, treated together or in isolation, are absolutely standard features of many ancient prehistories.<sup>56</sup> And so also for the threat of

51. Take the case of Diodorus. Reinhardt (1912) argued that Diodorus' prehistory derived from Democritus through Hecataeus; an intermediate Epicurean source was later posited then rejected (see Vlastos 1946); then Spoerri (1959, 1–33) forcefully argued that the Diodoran material reflected far more general Hellenistic ideas and could not be traced back to Democritus; then came Cole's rehabilitation and radical extension of Reinhardt's thesis, followed shortly by the very different suggestion of Dodds 1973, 10–11 (the Presocratic Archelaus could be the ultimate source of this tradition). Finally, the original impetus for this debate—Reinhardt's claim about the importance of Hecataeus as an intermediate source—has been challenged by Muntz (2011). Such divergent conclusions do not inspire confidence.

52. The evidence for Protagoras includes the speech attributed to him by Plato (*Prt.* 320C8–322D5) and the suggestive book title, "On the state of things in the beginning" (περί τῆς ἐν ἀρχῇ καταστάσεως = DK 80 A1). Prodicus seems to have offered an anthropological account of the development of religion (the texts are collected at DK 84 B5). See also the resourceful speculations of Kahn (1981) on Presocratic interests in human prehistory.

53. Campbell (2003, 331–53) has profitably mined earlier scholarship to provide a series of useful tables of common themes/components of ancient prehistories. Lovejoy and Boas 1935 is still very much worth consulting.

54. *Homeric Hymn to Hephaestus* 1–7; Diod. Sic. 1.8.7. A few more examples: Aesch. *PV* 453; Pl. *Leg.* 3.677B; Cicero *De or.* 1.36; Ovid *Met.* 1.121–22; Juv. *Sat.* 6.1–4. More in Campbell 2003, 340–41.

55. I do not mean to suggest that *topoi* are ever inert or neutral, just that the limited nature of Servius' report does not provide enough context to determine exactly how or to whom Saufei was responding.

56. E.g., Pl. *Prt.* 322B–C; *Plt.* 274B–C; Hermarchus (*ap. Porph. Abst.* 1.7–12); Posidonius (*ap. Sen. Ep.* 90.4–5; cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1251a31–34); Cic. *Sest.* 91; Hor. *Sat.* 1.3.99–104; Colotes (*ap. Plut. Adv. Col.* 1124D); cf. Critias (or Eur.) *Sisyphus* (= DK 88 B25). A good late example is Lactant. *Div. inst.* 6.10.13–14: "[Primitive men] recalled

violent storms and the seasons.<sup>57</sup> These parallels make it difficult to sustain the claim that Saufeius followed Lucretius directly or was even particularly Epicurean at all. Indeed, the presence of shared ideas and language in these authors is not at all surprising. The fact that, among others, Posidonius, Vitruvius, Lucretius, and our Lucius included similar elements in their anthropological reconstructions tells us only that we are dealing with a broad and venerable intellectual tradition. Any link between Lucretius and the Saufeius fragment that is based on similar narrative elements rests therefore on untenably narrow assumptions. This does not, of course, rule out the possibility that Saufeius was writing from an Epicurean perspective, but it does make such a conclusion far more speculative than has been acknowledged.

### C. Philosophical Ideologies in Prehistory Narratives

The details of Saufeius' prehistory, then, are fairly generic. At this point it may help to consider more generally what sorts of assumptions about human nature and the world are implicit in the report of Saufeius' treatise. In other words, what was the moral of his prehistory? And to what extent was this moral Epicurean? This line of reasoning may seem promising, for philosophical prehistories provide particularly clear cases of how the same basic components could be used in different contexts to reach very different conclusions. A Stoic or Peripatetic, for example, would share the Epicurean assumption that early humans came together for security and to obtain basic needs that they could not reliably acquire on their own, but they would also emphasize the existence of a natural social impulse that underlies and encourages the formation of communities and government.<sup>58</sup> An Epicurean, in contrast, would flatly reject natural sociability and frame his or her analysis solely in terms of hedonistic and egoistic motives, as Lucretius and other Epicurean authors do.<sup>59</sup> To further complicate matters, some authors may not have any particular philosophical ax to grind at all. Polybius and Diodorus Siculus provide good examples of a more general, non-Epicurean appeal to se-

that they had been the spoils for beasts and stronger [men]" (*bestiis et fortioribus praedae fuisse commemorant*). More in Campbell 2003, 347.

57. E.g., Polyb. 6.5.4–5; Sen. Ep. 90.41; Vitruv. 2.1.1–2; Diod. Sic. 1.8.6; see also the references in n. 53.

58. In Aristotle's *Politics* (1252a24–1253a39) humans form societies for the satisfaction of needs and because "a human being is a political animal" and thus part of a greater whole, the *polis*; Aristotle's conclusion: "there exists a natural impulse for all humans for such a partnership" (φύσει μὲν οὖν ἡ ὁρμὴ ἐν πᾶσιν ἐπὶ τὴν τοιαύτην κοινωνίαν). For the Stoic view, which reflects their more elaborate doctrine of *oikeiōsis* (on which see Inwood and Donini 1999, 677–82; and Bees 1999), see Cic. *Off.* 1.11–12 (cf. *Resp.* 1.39), and Hierocles *Stoicus Elements of Ethics* 9 and 11, as well as the relevant material preserved by Stobaeus (available at Ramelli 2009, 68–73, 91–93). At times Plato also shares these assumptions: see, e.g., *Resp.* 3.369B–D on the formation of cities to provide for human need (*χρεία*) and *Leg.* 3.380B (cf. 379A) on early humans naturally coming together, like a flock of birds.

59. For the denial of altruistic affection for our children (or any other human being), see, e.g., Epictetus *Diss.* 2.20.6 (cf. 1.23); Plut. *De amore proliis* 495A; M. Aur. *Med.* 6.44. A few scholars have tried to argue that Epicurus did *not* flatly reject intrinsic value to justice, friendship, and virtue (e.g., Annas 1995, 293–302, 339–43), but the prevailing opinion is still that Epicurean ethics is rigorously instrumentalist: relationships with other humans are only valuable insofar as they produce pleasure. Note also that I read Lucretius' prehistory (as well as the rest of his work) as orthodox Epicureanism, though I allow he may have made use of non-traditional Epicurean ideas (see further Campbell 2003, 10–12).



curity or self-interest as the motor of history and society.<sup>60</sup> Both also offer a rationalized, “realistic” prehistory—non-providential readings are not exclusive to Epicureans.<sup>61</sup> And indeed, despite the contentions of some scholars,<sup>62</sup> it is not at all clear that either man was an aficionado of any particular school; yet their pragmatic accounts of the origins of society are nevertheless very similar to the report of Saufeius’ lost book. On one issue the accounts of these historians are arguably closer than Lucretius to the ideas in Saufeius’ prehistory. While both Lucretius and Saufeius emphatically underline the savageness of early human life, Lucretius, motivated no doubt by his disdain for the corrupting influences of his contemporary society, felt fit to praise, at least in part, the rustic simplicity of early humans, however dangerous their lives may have been.<sup>63</sup> There is nothing at all like this in our Saufeius fragment.

These considerations suggest that our surviving evidence for Saufeius’ prehistory does not provide enough information to identify its moral or ideology; this discourages any attempt to identify a specific philosophical influence. This is not to imply that there was originally no moral, philosophical or otherwise, but rather that Servius Auctus’ report of Saufeius’ pessimistic prehistory treats only a few initial moments of early Latium, with no references to the development of laws and technology or an explanation for the rise of human communities. A theme of straightforward self-preservation is, of course, implicit. But there is no explicit invocation of utility or, alternatively, an assertion of natural social impulses.<sup>64</sup> Once we set aside the unpersuasive parallels between the narrative elements of Lucretius and Saufeius’ prehistories, there is really no ground for the conclusion that Saufeius’ early humans were motivated by an Epicurean understanding of the necessity of establishing the security which would lead to an ataraxic life. The one truly distinguishing feature of Saufeius’ prehistory is his etymologies.<sup>65</sup> But it strains credulity to read into this passage an Epicurean theory of language, with its complex attempt to negotiate a middle position between natural language theorists and thinkers who argued for the pure conventionality of language.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, Saufeius’ etymologizing would seem to be more at home in a Stoic text, given the school’s notoriety in antiquity for its use of etymol-

60. E.g., Polyb. 6.5.7 (συναγελάζεσθαι διὰ τὴν τῆς φύσεως ἀσθένειαν); Diod. Sic. 1.8.7 (ὕπὸ πείρας διδασκομένους) and 1.8.9 (τὴν χρεῖαν διδάσκαλον).

61. A little later Dionysius of Halicarnassus would in Book 1 of his *Ant.* offer a rationalized interpretation of Hercules’ travels in Italy (on this episode see Marincola 1997, 122–23).

62. Walbank (1957, 1: 643–48; cf. Walbank 1972, 130–42) provides a good rebuttal to scholarly attempts to pin down Polybius’ school allegiance or the source for his political theories; for similar issues in Diodorus, see n. 51.

63. See especially 5.925–57. For Lucretius the development of civil society and the arts offered substantial benefits to human beings, but also led to temptations and irrational desires (see 5.999–1010 and 1117–1135). Thus there is no simple answer to Lucretius’ view on human progress; the only advance that was an unqualified good was the advent of Epicurus’ philosophy (duly lauded in the proem to the book). I follow here Furley [1978] 2007, still in my view the best reading of Lucretius’ prehistory (cf. Blundell 1986, 193–94; Campbell 2003, 10–15).

64. Appeals to *utilitas* in Lucretius’ prehistory include 5.860, 1029 (*utilitas expressit nomina rerum*), 870, 873, 1048, and 1452 (*usus*); see n. 60 for Diodorus/Polybius and nn. 58–59 for appeals to natural sociability.

65. On ancient etymologies, see the useful reference work of Maltby (1991), the collection of articles in Nifadopoulos 2003, and, on Servius’ use of etymology, Maltby 2003 and Baudou 2009.

66. Basic texts include Epicurus *Letter to Herodotus* 75–76 and Lucretius 5.1028–90; see further Atherton 2005; Verlinsky 2005; Reinhardt 2008.

ogy,<sup>67</sup> or in the works of his antiquarian contemporary, Varro, who also made extensive use of etymologies and offered, as we have seen, his own explanation for Latium. It is even possible that Saufeius' etymologies were no more than passing stylistic flourishes. Cicero and Seneca could toy with etymologies without fully subscribing to them, and we find etymologies in other prehistories which are not strictly philosophical.<sup>68</sup>

#### D. Horace's Epicurean Prehistory

To illustrate more clearly the limitations of Servius' report of Saufeius' prehistory, I now turn briefly to *Satires* 1.3 to show what a real intertextual link with Lucretius' prehistory looks like.<sup>69</sup> Consider the following passage, not much longer than our report of Saufeius' prehistory (Hor. *Sat.* 1.3.108–14):

atque ipsa utilitas, iusti prope mater et aequi.  
cum proreperunt primis animalia terris,  
mutum et turpe pecus, glandem atque cubilia propter  
unguibus et pugnīs, dein fustibus atque ita porro  
pugnabant armis, quae post fabricaverat usus,  
donec verba, quibus voces sensusque notarent,  
nominaque invenire; dehinc absistere bello,  
oppida coeperunt munire et ponere leges . . .  
iura inventa metu iniusti fateare necesse est . . .  
nec natura potest iusto secernere iniquum,  
dividit ut bona diversis, fugienda petendis . . .

And expediency itself, which is in essence the mother of justice and fairness. When living creatures crawled forth from the newly fashioned earth—a dumb and lawless breed—they fought over acorns and lairs with nails and fists, then with clubs, and so in turn with the arms which experience had subsequently fashioned, until they discovered verbs and nouns with which to articulate their cries and their feelings; from that point, they began to abstain from war, to build towns and to establish laws, so as to stop anyone engaging in theft or brigandage or adultery . . . You must confess that justice was discovered through fear of injustice . . . Nature cannot separate justice from injustice as she marks off good things from bad, what must be shunned from what should be sought after. (Trans. Brown, slightly modified)

Horace has taken care to frame his prehistory with ideological glosses on both ends: he begins with an explicit declaration of the subordination of justice to self-interest (*ipsa utilitas, iusti prope mater et aequi*) and ends with a restatement of the purely conventional nature of justice (*nec natura potest iusto secernere iniquum . . . fugienda petendis*). This prehistory, like so many others, has a moral; in contrast, our evidence for Saufeius completely lacks any such message.

67. E.g., Cic. *Off.* 1.23 and *Nat. D.* 2.62–69 (on which see Dyck 2003); Sen. *Ben.* 1.3.6–10. Allen (2005) provides further examples and an analysis of the role of etymology in the Stoic theory of language.

68. *Off.* 1.23 (in Cicero's own voice): "Therefore, while this will seem difficult to some [*quamquam hoc videbitur fortasse cuiusdam durius*], let us venture to imitate the Stoics, who hunt assiduously for the derivation of words, and let us trust that keeping faith [*fides*] is so called because what has been said is actually done [*fiat*]" (trans. Griffin and Atkins). Seneca also expresses some suspicion about etymology (*Ben.* 1.3.6–10) while simultaneously indulging in it. For non-philosophical etymologies in prehistories, see, e.g., Diod. Sic. 1.11.1–4.

69. Brown (1993) is good on the Epicurean ideas in this poem (see also Gowers 2012). Armstrong (forthcoming) provides a helpful overview of Epicureanism in the *Satires*.

Although Horace's bookend moralizing well describes the Epicurean position,<sup>70</sup> we have seen that authors such as Polybius and Diodorus echo this sentiment, so even these comments are only circumstantial evidence of Epicurean ideas, though the language of choices and avoidances (*fugienda petendis*) certainly suggests a philosophical flavor. As for Horace's prehistory proper, its details, as well as their arrangement, are again entirely standard and do not necessitate a link with *De rerum natura* 5. The actual language of the passage, however, bristles with Lucretian locutions in a way that Saufeuus' prehistory simply does not. Compare Horace's description of the development of language at 1.3.113 (*verba, quibus voces sensusque notarent*) with *DRN* 5.1058 (*pro vario sensu varia res voce notaret*); the discovery of technology at 1.3.102 (*pugnabant armis, quae post fabricaverat usus*) with 5.1452–53 (*usus . . . paulatim docuit pedetemptim progredientis*); or the use of Lucretian phrases such as *fateare necesse est* (cf. *DRN* 1.399, 1.624, 1.974, 2.284, 2.513, 2.1064, 3.543, 4.216, 5.343).<sup>71</sup> All of this together supports reading Horace in dialogue with Lucretius.<sup>72</sup> What we learn from Horace's prehistory is that when ancient authors wanted to allude to philosophical doctrines, they knew how to do so.

From what we know of his education and philosophical interests, Lucius Saufeuus would have been perfectly able to encode Epicurean or other philosophical ideas into his prehistory of Latium. And like Horace, he would have been able to make his ideological commitments clear if he had so desired, as in all likelihood he did—it is hard to believe that Saufeuus' prehistory was completely neutral or purely descriptive (if that is even possible). Here is where my earlier comments about partial paraphrases become important. Although the material attributed to Saufeuus is very likely authentic, Servius Auctus has only given us a few snapshots of the prehistory which are relevant to his interests in etymology. Any ideological flavor has likely been redacted or edited out in the long years of transmission. This is not surprising. An ancient grammarian, keen to establish meanings of words and criteria for good Latin usage,<sup>73</sup> would have been understandably interested in Republican etymologies relevant to passages in Vergil, and a good deal less motivated to preserve insights into human nature or Roman prehistory which were tangential to his purposes.

The conclusion that follows from these considerations is one of caution. Servius Auctus has not provided enough information to establish the Epicurean character of his prehistory. The only remaining justification for Münzer's inter-

70. E.g., Epicurus *KD* 33: "Justice does not exist in itself but is a certain compact to neither injure nor suffer injury" (οὐκ ἦν τι καθ' ἑαυτὸ δικαιοσύνη, ἀλλ' . . . συνθήκη τις ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ βλάπτειν ἢ βλάπτεσθαι). See n. 64 for *utilitas* in Lucretius.

71. Cf. Brown (1993, ad loc.), who also notes that Horace's use of particles is also reminiscent of Lucretius (e.g., the *denique* at line 76), as is the *vincet ratio* of line 115.

72. The context of *Satires* 1 lends further plausibility to an Epicurean reading: Horace cites Philodemus (1.2.121), offers an Epicurean analysis of desire (1.2.110–19; cf. 1.2.73–76), and puns (1.2.113) on *inane*, the Epicurean word for void. Of course this context is simply not available in the case of Saufeuus' treatise. It is salutary to consider how differently we might interpret the prehistory in *Sat.* 1.3 if it survived only in the paraphrase of a grammarian's report. For example, the sophisticated Epicurean content would be completely obscured by a report that omitted Horace's Lucretian echoes or his invocation of *utilitas* in order to focus on a racy line I have omitted from my own selective, philosophically inclined quotation: *nam fuit ante Helenam cunus taeterrima belli / causa . . .* (1.3.107–8).

73. See in general Kaster 1997; Maltby (2003) discusses how etymology served these goals.

pretation is Saufēius' known Epicurean interests. But though we might reasonably expect an Epicurean to write an Epicurean prehistory, this expectation simply has no probative value in the absence of any additional support; there is certainly no basis for claiming that this lost treatise was intended to popularize or spread Epicurean ideas in Italy. Finally, it is worth reiterating that despite its overall plausibility, the identification of Lucius as the author of the Servian extract has already demanded a certain amount of faith. To accept this hypothesis and then weld onto it further claims that Saufēius' prehistory was Epicurean, drew upon Lucretius' *De rerum natura*, or formed a part of a larger philosophical treatise amounts to building speculation upon speculation.

#### 4. AN ANTIQUARIAN TREATISE OF AN EPICUREAN AUTHOR

The book of L. Saufēius has emerged as a rather different work than has typically been envisioned. My arguments thus far have been largely negative, but this does not mean that Lucius and his lost book have nothing to tell us. I therefore close with a few observations on how Saufēius' treatise can enrich our understanding of Republican literary culture. First, whatever its philosophical or intellectual provenance, Saufēius wrote a prose work in Latin that featured an early history of Latium. The presence of many of the venerable building blocks of anthropological speculation strongly suggests that his prehistory was informed by Greek historical/philosophical traditions. Saufēius, then, has used a Greek intellectual framework to explore his Roman past in Latin.

It is worth reemphasizing that his prehistory was very much in line with other antiquarian works from the first century. Saufēius' etymologizing account of Latium is strikingly reminiscent of Varro's contemporary efforts to record early Roman history in a number of his works (*De gente, Antiquitates, Aborigines*; cf. *Rust.* 2.1). Both men were intimates of Atticus, himself a serious antiquarian, and Cicero, who was deeply involved in integrating Greek ideas and Roman culture (even if he never wrote a history of early Rome).<sup>74</sup> The more general correspondences between Saufēius' prehistorical project and the interests of various Augustan writers attest to a common interest in exploring Rome's past. These parallels reveal how an otherwise unassuming Roman knight—the sort of person who is typically invisible to history—was very much involved in the broader intellectual currents of his time.

The use of Greek models or chronology was not, of course, entirely foreign to writers before Saufēius' generation. Our earliest Roman historian, Fabius Pictor, for example, wrote in Greek and used Hellenistic chronological research to date the founding of Rome.<sup>75</sup> I would suggest, however, that Saufēius' prehistory offered a very different sort of analysis from traditional Roman historical writing. Since this is not the place for an extended discussion of Roman historiography, I will limit myself to contrasting Saufēius' prehistory with the Elder Cato's second-century efforts to record Italy's past in his *Origines*. This work is also

74. It is interesting that Cicero (*Leg.* 1.5–10) felt the need to explain why he had not written a formal historical work. It is also telling that Quintus suggests (1.8) Cicero should write a history of *Remo et Romulo*—i.e., on Roman origins.

75. See Dillery 2009, 78–83 (cf. Feeney 2007, 95–96).

fragmentary, but substantial evidence permits a fairly secure reconstruction of its general structure and themes.<sup>76</sup> Of present interest are Books 2–3, which contained an account of the various peoples and cities of Italy, and Book 1, which covered the regal period and earlier. The fragments show some continuity with Saufeius' later prehistory. Both authors are interested in similar or even the same topics—including the Aborigines and the history of Latium—and adopt similar explanatory strategies, like etymology.<sup>77</sup> Additionally, it is clear that Cato—whatever his political or personal stance toward things Hellenic<sup>78</sup>—was fully aware of Greek historical traditions and sought to engage with them (if with some hostility).<sup>79</sup>

That said, there is at least one important difference. Our fragments of the *Origines* focus on a fairly limited set of topics: names, places, peoples, and chronological narrative. In contrast, Saufeius' prehistory is rich in detail: it offers a thick description of the merciless quality of prehistoric life and explains how early adaptations to the environment shaped Roman language and culture. Saufeius' friends and contemporaries had, as we have seen, similar interests: Varro openly followed Dicaerchus' prehistory in *De re rustica*, played with a Cynic version in the *Aborigines*, and used the resources of Greek rationalizing theology in the *Antiquitates*; Cicero's partial history of Rome in the *Republic* explicitly engaged with Greek constitutional theories, Atticus with Greek chronology. These Republican authors used different Greek sources and ideas to explain their Roman past; their new methodologies enriched older historical work like the *Origines* by investigating Rome's origins from a very different perspective. What caused this change of orientation? I suggest that the prehistorical interests of Saufeius, Varro, and others reflect the increasing presence and influence of Greek ideas among the Roman elite in the Late Republic—in the case of these individuals, plausibly from their studies with philosophers, often in Athens, and lasting interest in Greek literature.<sup>80</sup>

It is fun to imagine Varro and Saufeius discussing Roman prehistory at one of Atticus' dinner parties. There is no evidence for this, of course, but Saufeius does represent the type of individual who would have been an interlocutor of our more famous, surviving sources. All of this does not mean that his lost prehistory deserves a distinguished place in histories of Latin literature, but its contribution to our knowledge of the period—and its surprising survival deep into Late Antiquity—is all the more valuable when so much else has been lost.

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76. See Cornell 2014 for fragments (Nep. *Cato* 3.1–4 provides clear evidence for the structure of the work). On Cato's historical efforts more generally, see Cornell 2014, 193–218 and the works cited in the following notes.

77. See esp. frag. 63 Cornell: "Those who first occupied Italy were some people called Aborigines. Afterwards on the arrival of Aeneas they were united with the Phrygians, and called by the single name of Latins" (*primo Italiam tenuisse quosdam qui appellabantur Aborigines. hos postea adventu Aeneae Phrygibus iunctos Latinos uno nomine nuncupatos*); cf. frags. 24a–b (etymology) and 10 (on King Latinus); and Gotter 2003, 128–33 (on the importance of the Aborigines in Cato's work).

78. I set aside here the issue of the depth of Cato's knowledge of and stance toward Greek culture (on which see Astin 1978; Gruen 1992, 52–83; Dillery 2009, 90–102; Cornell 2014, 1: 194–95, with n. 9).

79. Take, for example, Cato's comparison of the deeds of an unnamed Roman tribune and Leonidas at Thermopylae (*ap. Gell. NA* 3.7.19, on which see Dillery 2009, 95–99 and Gotter 2009, 111–12).

80. On Roman study abroad, see Daly 1950; cf. Rawson 1985, 6–11.

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