

# A Video Lecture Series on Lucretius By Monte Johnson

**Post by “Bryan” of December 20, 2023 at 3:05 AM**

Some people point to the non-sequiturs and repetitions in DRN as evidence of it not being fully edited (Let us forget Jerome’s silly statement regarding Cicero’s editing). The repetitions are certainly present, but they are short and cover important points. Happily, more often when there seems to be some lines missing, the text picks up on the same topic. We do not know the state of the manuscript the Carolingians copied from, and the bottom/tops of some of the pages may have been missing or illegible.

Some say that it is unfinished because there is no full section on the gods. It is true that Lucretius does promise to talk at length about the gods (*tibi posterius largo sermone probabo* – I will show to you later in a large discourse, 5.155), but does not do so.

Some even argue that it is unfinished because it ends on the topic of mass death. However, the beginning of the book is about birth and the end is about death, which seems appropriate to me. The books are all about the same length, with the later books being a bit longer.

The ancient DRN probably did not have the gaps we have. Munro says “not that the great mass of his poem is not in a sound and satisfactory state... but owing to the way in which it has been handed down, his text has suffered in some portions irreparable loss.”

PHerc. 365 may be DRN book 2. But there is too little there to even be certain if it is DRN or not. So the earliest manuscript we have is the one from Dungal of Bobbio when he was in Saint-Denis working in a Carolingian scriptorium between 811 and 825.