

The End of the De Rerum Natura

Post by “jnamiotka” of August 8, 2018 at 11:02 AM

Hi, folks.

I'd be very interested to hear your thoughts on the rather curious conclusion of Lucretius' didactic epic. Some have gone so far as to assert that the poem must have been unfinished upon the poet's death, given how dark its conclusion is. (For those unfamiliar with the poem, it ends with an extended translation of Thucydides' detailed description of the plague that ravaged Athens during the Peloponnesian War.) Others maintain on the contrary that the conclusion is quite apt, insofar as it serves to underscore Lucretius'/Epicurus' contention that existence is ephemeral and there will be no divine intervention on our behalf. I tend to go back and forth on this question, but, again, I'd be very interested to hear others' thoughts on this.