

Preparing A Public Domain Audio And Text Version Lucretius In Modern American English

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If you are aware of particularly problematic sections of Lucretius where some translations seem better than others, please point them out. Here's one example:

At Book 1:449, Bailey renders "eventum" as "accidents," which I think is exactly the wrong implication in modern American English. "Accident" today has more of a meaning of "chaotic" or "truly accidental," and implies that any particular moment anything can happen. The real sense seems to me to be rather that what happens is simply "without intention," but in fact what does happen is not chaotic or "accidental" at all, but in fact a necessary result of the properties of the atoms as they move through the void. Rather than "accidental," most things are in fact closer to be "determined" rather being the result of a universe in which "anything" can happen.

Dunster does better by leaving the main word as "event" rather than introducing "accident." "Event" is a more neutral term in English that just conveys "it happens" rather than implying that things happen chaotically. So in this section I'll make the "modern American version" follow Dunster rather than Bailey:

[Lucretius Side-by-Side](#)