

Thomas Nail - Returning to Lucretius

Post by "Patrikios" of January 24, 2026 at 2:18 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I just read the article. I agree with some of Nail's points on ethics (especially his implicit or explicit criticism of too much focus on static / katastematic ideas) but I am not seeing the profound differences between Lucretius and Epicurus that he claims to see as to particles or the resulting nature of the universe.

In fact I don't think his article gives a clear statement of where he is going with his whole argument. He seems to think there are profound implications in Lucretius deviating from Epicurus - but so far as I can tell he is not explaining what significance there is in what he is seeing.

I gather he is focusing on implications of motion but I see no reason why what he talks about as to motion is not already in Epicurus.

The article has lots of energetic argument but at least for me I don't see why he is so worked up.

[Kalosyni](#) ,

Thanks for posting this paper by Nail. I am finding some profound enlightenment from the perspective presented.

[Cassius](#) ,

I may be misinterpreting Nail's views but these are his statements that show a difference in approach to understanding how Lucretius describes the flow & folding.

Quote

Lucretius also prefigured quantum theory's understanding of entanglement and indeterminacy.

...

Instead of talking about discrete particles, Lucretius talks endlessly about flows and folds. These are the core tenets of what I call Lucretius' "kinetic materialism." If matter does not flow it cannot fold; if it folds it must also flow. However, if we interpret

Lucretius' concept of *corpora* as 'discrete particles' or 'atoms' instead of flows, his whole conceptual edifice of folding [*plex*] (*simplex, duplex, complex, amplex*) completely unravels. Atoms simply cannot fold.

...

Since the soul and body come into being with their matters "woven" [*inplexis*] (3.331) together and "roots" [*radicibus*] (3.325) growing together, they are also "unwoven" or "untied" [*dissolu-antur*] (3.330) together as well. Since the soul and body are in constant motion, then it follows that the soul is always weaving.

Modern quantum field theory describes "atomic particles" as emergent from wave functions when observed—which aligns precisely with what Nail's arguing about flows producing folds, not vice versa. Thus, I do see a difference between Epicurus and Lucretius describing the differing approaches of their physics. Sometimes artists, poets can interpret nature and reality in 'flowing' texts, or flowing brush strokes that provides a different perspective from a particle-driven viewpoint.

I also find that this perspective of flows and weaving folds is reflected in how some indigenous cultures describe their connection with Nature (e.g. Mother Nature). They see the flows of nature, even in their own souls. In some indigenous cultures, the women (the creative life bearers) are the only ones allowed to weave, as that is their spiritual way of connecting to Mother Nature.