

A Video Lecture Series on Lucretius By Monte Johnson

Post by “Cassius” of June 18, 2023 at 12:27 PM

In a recent Zoom session [TauPhi](#) mentioned that he had seen and appreciated this lecture series on Lucretius. I haven't had a chance to review it myself but wanted to post the link so in the future we can refer to it and discuss it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMpFnAeFKn4>

Post by “Kalosyni” of December 19, 2023 at 7:24 PM

I've been listening to these lectures (one per book - a total of 6 separate videos) and he mentions in part 2 (on book 2) that there appears to be a missing section of the text, because it skips suddenly to speaking about the gods. It's possible that this is most observable in the Latin text - have not located the section yet (not able to read Latin, and tried finding it in the English translation at the Perseus-Tufts site).

I think these are very good lectures, as I've only skimmed parts of Lucretius, and so this helps flesh it out.

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.