

*Introduction*  
*Approaching Lucretius*  
 Donncha O'Rourke

The period in which this collection of essays came into being has witnessed what it would describe as a 'trending' of Lucretius and Epicureanism (for their destinies are intertwined) in classical studies and beyond. *In primis*, in the category of general nonfiction, Stephen Greenblatt's bestselling *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern* (published in the UK as *The Swerve: How the Renaissance Began*) won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for its vivid narrative of the rediscovery of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* in 1417;<sup>1</sup> on the specialist market, too, a recent monograph could hail 'another renaissance of Lucretius in contemporary scholarship', footnoting an extensive bibliography to prove the point;<sup>2</sup> and in the mass media, *The Guardian* newspaper sustained an eight-part series on Lucretius in 2013.<sup>3</sup> Lucretius is not an author that our times have to rehabilitate.

To lay claim to a particular Epicurean *kairos*, however, would be to downplay the track record of the *DRN* always to find contemporary urgency;<sup>4</sup> the collective achievement of recent scholarship has in fact been to demonstrate the powerful force, both centripetal and centrifugal, exerted by Lucretius (and Epicurus) in different traditions of all the major cultural and historical movements of the European West since the 'rediscovery' of the text in 1417 – and well before.<sup>5</sup> The historically embedded approaches on which these studies in classical reception focus are all the more invested, or reactionary, given the radical worldview that the *DRN* propounds in its evangelical, startling and voluptuous (or, at times,

<sup>1</sup> Greenblatt 2011. See [www.pulitzer.org/winners/stephen-greenblatt](http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/stephen-greenblatt) (last accessed 26 July 2018). *The Swerve* also won the 2011 National Book Award for Nonfiction ([www.nationalbook.org/nba2011\\_nf\\_greenblatt.html#.W10JPC8ZNEI](http://www.nationalbook.org/nba2011_nf_greenblatt.html#.W10JPC8ZNEI); last accessed 26 July 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Passannante 2011: 4 with n. 9. See also Holmes and Shearin 2012: 20 with n. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Woolerton 2013.

<sup>4</sup> On the perennial modernity of Lucretius across different disciplines see the essays collected in Lezra and Blake 2016.

<sup>5</sup> For an overview of ancient and later reception see the essays collected in Gillespie and Hardie 2007.

bludgeoning) Latin. With a relentless flow of scientific argumentation, Lucretius insists that all experience, be it mundane or marvellous, trivial or terrifying, is demonstrably the outcome of two irreducible constituents of reality: atoms and void. This materialism replaces divine providence with a fully rational, anti-creationist and non-teleological account of nature. It maintains that our world is neither privileged nor unique, but rather is decaying and transient. The individual, too, is subject to the same laws: there can be no afterlife of any kind when the atoms of the soul are dispersed upon death; love is a mechanism, not a mystery, and like other passions can and should be avoided; ambition and the pursuit of wealth are similarly deleterious. Holding to this stark view of nature and our place in it, the *DRN* includes searing denunciations of traditional religious belief, scathing critiques of conventional values based on status and power, and biting satire of those who adhere to irrational conceptions of reality. At the same time, it holds out the promise of true happiness based on the pleasure of easily attainable contentment in mind and body.<sup>6</sup>

The *DRN* knows it will be alluring and rebarbative in equal measure, and models its own reception in the addressee's willingness or unwillingness to imbibe its healing message (1.102–3, 1.936–50, 4.11–25).<sup>7</sup> The tradition of interpreting Lucretius begins within the text, then, and has flourished ever since. Such was the sympathy and antipathy that the *DRN* stirred among its readers in the next generations through to late antiquity that, even after the text disappeared from circulation in the late Middle Ages, it continued to exert its influence through secondary reference and citation in the indirect tradition, flying sometimes above and sometimes below the radar of conscious engagement.<sup>8</sup> When the text resurfaced in the direct tradition, Renaissance readers continued this pattern of response to its seductive charms and – as they then were – dangerous heresies, whether openly or in silence, in opposition or assent, albeit assent from behind a veil of feigned disinterest that has been termed 'the dissimulatory code'.<sup>9</sup> Reactions to Epicurean materialism, ethics and social theory continued in this mixed vein through the Early Modern period and beyond: Lucretius

<sup>6</sup> For a concise and lucid introduction to the poem see Gale 2001a.

<sup>7</sup> For a reading of Lucretius' 'honeyed cup' as programmatic for a wider strategy of alluring 'provisional argumentation' see Nethercut 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Lucretius' ancient reception (on which see, e.g., Gale 2000; Hardie 2009; Dykes 2011; Earnshaw 2013) and with it his transmission through the indirect tradition (on which see Passannante 2011; Butterfield 2013: 46–135), though recognized by Greenblatt 2011: 23–4, 51–3, is one of the grounds on which a strong narrative of 'rediscovery' has been challenged: for this and other critiques see Pugh et al. 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Prosperi 2007. See also Haskell 2007: 185–95, 201; Brown 2010; Palmer 2014.

found unlikely translators among puritans and libertines alike;<sup>10</sup> corpuscular theory and theology both collided and, to a point, were reconciled during the Scientific Revolution;<sup>11</sup> by extension Lucretius and Epicureanism became a battleground also in Enlightenment political theory.<sup>12</sup> To one strand of Romanticism Lucretius' uncompromising rationalism was anathema, but for another his celebration of nature and evocation of the sublime made him a kindred spirit.<sup>13</sup> To be witnessed throughout the history of the *DRN*'s reception, then, are the declinations or swerves of 'misprision', those wilful rewritings that Harold Bloom has aptly theorized from Lucretius' account of the atomic *clinamen*.<sup>14</sup>

Many of the debates behind these swerves and collisions continue to be current, even if they no longer relate to Lucretius in quite the same way. In his foreword to Hermann Diels' 1924 translation of the *DRN*, Albert Einstein admired Lucretius' confidence in the 'kausalen Zusammenhang' of the world, though not without a certain distance and, perhaps, wry irony ('For anyone who does not quite dwell in the spirit of our time, but occasionally feels like a spectator of his environment and, especially, of the mental attitude of his contemporaries, the work of Lucretius will exercise its magic . . . Where is the modern nation that holds and expresses such noble sentiments towards a contemporary?').<sup>15</sup> Atomic physics has moved on, but the philosophy of science, especially in the French tradition, has found continuing relevance in Lucretius' account of nature.<sup>16</sup> Gilles Deleuze revisited the *DRN* throughout his career in theorizing his pluralist and de-Platonizing intervention in materialist philosophy;<sup>17</sup> this line of thinking is taken up by Michel Serres in his 1977 book *La naissance de la physique dans le texte de Lucrèce: fleuves et turbulences*,<sup>18</sup> which reasserts the place of the swerve in contemporary physics as a kind of 'chaos theory'

<sup>10</sup> Johnson 2000: 79–102; Barbour 2007: 158–61; Hopkins 2007; Goldberg 2009.

<sup>11</sup> Johnson and Wilson 2007; Haskell 2007: 195–201; Baker 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Barbour 2007; Wilson 2008.

<sup>13</sup> See conveniently Priestman 2007. See also Timpanaro 1988; Bloom 2011: 133–71.

<sup>14</sup> First at Bloom 1973: 14, 19–45 (esp. 42–5); see now Bloom 2011: 133–71.

<sup>15</sup> The first and last sentences of Einstein's foreword (1924: via-b): 'Auf jeden, der nicht ganz im Geiste unserer Zeit aufgeht, sondern seiner Mitwelt und speziell der geistigen Einstellung der Zeitgenossen gegenüber sich gelegentlich als Zuschauer fühlt, wird das Werk von Lukrez seinen Zauber ausüben . . . Wo ist die moderne Nation, die solch noble Gesinnung gegenüber einer Zeitgenossin hegt und ausspricht?'

<sup>16</sup> For an overview of engagement with Lucretian materialism in twentieth-century thought see Goldberg 2009: 31–62. For literary perspectives see also Gillespie and Mackenzie 2007. See also Johnson 2000, esp. 127–55.

<sup>17</sup> See Johnson 2017. See also Holmes 2012; Montag 2016.

<sup>18</sup> Translated into English in Serres 2000. For discussion see Holmes 2016.

*avant la lettre*; Lucretius' perspective on natural process relativizes humans as part of this fluid environment in a way that encourages more enlightened ecological thinking.<sup>19</sup> Lucretius' representation of nature in the *DRN* thus continues to remind its readers that prevailing accounts of reality entail unscrutinized assumptions that might be reconstructed in alternative scientific approaches that, though they may be no closer to 'reality', may be more benign.<sup>20</sup>

Lucretius has always been enjoying his *kairos*, then, and has engaged different readers in different ways at different times. As the citations accompanying the foregoing survey indicate, instances of this engagement have become a principal focus of Lucretian studies in recent years.<sup>21</sup> It hardly needs to be emphasized that the dynamics of reception structure every approach to Lucretius as well as being in themselves the focus of an approach. As the present collection of essays turns its attention 'back' to the *DRN* itself, then, it does so with a heightened awareness of how every interpretation is mediated by, and a product of, its tradition. In some chapters that awareness comes more directly to the fore (e.g., in discussing the approaches to Lucretius adopted by Jerome, Saussure and Marx, or the approaches adopted by Lucretius to the Homeric Hymns, Plato and Cicero), but it is present throughout (e.g., in drawing attention to the ideologies that guided earlier interventions in textual criticism, in breaking free from the constraints of Cartesian dualism, or in comparing and contrasting the approaches taken by philosophical and literary source-hunters). The thirteen chapters are grouped in five categories of critical approach covering textual criticism, author and reader (a kind of cognitive narratology), 'atomology' (pursuing Lucretius' analogy of atoms and letters), allusion and intertextuality, and politics broadly defined. While taking stock of these established traditions of Lucretian scholarship, the collection as a whole aims to show that there is scope also for innovation and fresh insight, both in the extension of established methodologies and in their intersection with new developments.<sup>22</sup>

The sole chapter in Part I on 'The Text' ('Critical Responses to the Most Difficult Textual Problem in Lucretius') stands as a reminder at the head of this volume that all encounters with Lucretius are mediated at

<sup>19</sup> See Bennett 2010, esp. x–xi, 17–19, 118–19.

<sup>20</sup> Kennedy 2002 shines a Lucretian spotlight on 'realist' and 'constructivist' approaches to nature.

<sup>21</sup> For earlier studies in this vein see Hadzsits 1963; Alfonsi 1978. See also Gordon 1962: 13–24, introducing a history of editions and translations to 1961.

<sup>22</sup> Gale 2007a: 1–17 presents a comprehensive Lucretian 'Kritikgeschichte'. See also Campbell 2011; Kennedy 2015.

the level of the text itself by the hazards of transmission and the particulars of editorial decision. It is a sobering fact that all surviving manuscripts of the *DRN* descend from a single lost archetype that was copied about 800 years after Lucretius' death. The role of textual criticism is to reconstruct scientifically the stemma of the tradition back to the archetype and from there to conjecture how the text stood when it left the author's hands and first went into circulation. In the evolution of this philological science Lucretius has played a prominent role: in his edition of 1850, Lachmann used stemmatic criticism to brilliant effect, as Richard Tarrant has put it, 'to conjure up, as if by magic, not just the existence but also the physical appearance of the archetype, a manuscript that had been lost for more than a thousand years'.<sup>23</sup>

In this important first chapter, David Butterfield alights on a six-line passage in the proem to Book 1 (44–9, repeated at 2.646–51) that, for its logical and syntactical incongruity with the surrounding text, has attracted a host of responses in the traditions of both textual and literary criticism. In cases such as this the stakes are high, since the passage under analysis would amount *in situ* to nothing less than a philosophical volte-face, declaring as it does that, contrary to the opening invocation of Venus as bringer of peace, the gods are in fact sublimely detached from our world like model Epicureans (its introductory *enim* therefore makes little sense connectively, and no preparation is made for the switch of addressee to Memmius from line 50). In the heated debate as to whether Lucretius thought the gods exist really or only symbolically,<sup>24</sup> this textual crux has considerable import. In this chapter the merits and demerits of earlier responses to this problem are tested in a way that asks literary and philosophical scholars to consider the extent to which their readings may be bound up in decisions (or assumptions) about the constitution of the text. While the inverse may also be true, close scrutiny of the text and its transmission may in some instances shift the burden of proof: for example, if the indirect tradition proves beyond reasonable doubt that there can have been no vocative to Memmius in line 50, then the absence of same before that point requires the conclusion that some lines have been lost. Butterfield deduces that the six lines were copied from their original and correct location in Book 2 as a marginal cross-reference that later infiltrated the text proper. In the absence of a more convincing explanation to the

<sup>23</sup> Tarrant 2016: 17. On Lachmann's method see Timpanaro 2005: 102–14.

<sup>24</sup> See Konstan 2011 (esp. 63–4) and Sedley 2011 for the 'realist' and 'idealist' positions, respectively.

contrary, the crux must itself be seen as in origin a critical response that generated its own critical offshoot. In such ways as these, editorial solutions to textual cruces unwind the interventions and errors that in some cases inaugurated traditions of reader response, and in others were already embedded in those traditions.

Textual criticism instantiates the most direct encounter possible between the author of the *DRN* and its reader insofar as its endeavour, at root, is to restore the text to the condition in which it was bequeathed to posterity by Lucretius (whether he finished the poem or not). As a didactic poem, the *DRN* remodels this encounter in multiple permutations by foregrounding a pedagogical *mise en scène* in which the first-person voice of the poet-teacher endeavours to impart new knowledge to a named but unspeaking (which is not necessarily to say unresponsive) addressee who functions, inter alia, as a comparand for the reader in his or her own engagement with the text. Much profit has been brought to the study of the *DRN* through scrutiny both of this didactic scenario as presented within the text (the 'teacher-student constellation', as it has been called)<sup>25</sup> and of its relation to contexts of reception beyond the text, both as projected by the text in its heavily implied reader or 'reader-addressee' (the 'you'),<sup>26</sup> and in the actual or empirical reader (you) who may or may not identify with the readers named or implied within the text, and who will have a personal conception of the 'ideal reader' that the text hopes to find.<sup>27</sup> This last distinction is not always made, but that oversight, if such it is, is a reminder that another layer of reading might always be added in potentially infinite cumulation outwards from the Lucretius–Memmius nucleus.<sup>28</sup> To take the example of one landmark approach, we might say that Philip Mitsis' analysis of how Lucretius' implied readers will distance themselves from the addressee patronized in the text is a reading that itself separates Mitsis off as the 'ideal reader' according to his view of the *DRN*;<sup>29</sup> Mitsis' reading is in this way enabled by the reader-addressee dynamics of the text, and can be observed as such from a viewpoint at a further remove again. Far from a theory-driven regress into interpretative nihilism, this 'meta-cognitive' approach might itself be seen as an effective learning strategy,<sup>30</sup> and the

<sup>25</sup> See Volk 2002: 73–83.

<sup>26</sup> With differences in the degree of separation between named and implied readers see Townend 1978; Clay 1983: 212–66; Keen 1985; Mitsis 1993; Sharrock 1994: 5–17, esp. 12–13, 15–17.

<sup>27</sup> See Conte 1994: xvii–xxii, 1–34 (on the ideal reader) and xx, 133 (for the distinction between 'ideal' and 'empirical' readers).

<sup>28</sup> See Sharrock 1994: 8; compare the remarks of Lowrie 1995. <sup>29</sup> Mitsis 1993.

<sup>30</sup> See Canevaro 2019 for this idea applied to Hesiod.

sense of detachment to which it gives rise would be especially germane to the Epicurean agenda.

The chapters in Part II ('Lucretius and his Readers') take up these lines of analysis with emphasis on considerations that have received little or no attention to date in the study of the *DRN*. Back from the dead in all three of them is a figure that the critical shift towards the reader so decidedly – and, given the fallacious biographical circularity of previous times, so usefully – eclipsed: the author. The suicidal madman of Jerome's biographical note, and of many later elaborations, is rehabilitated in Nora Goldschmidt's chapter on 'Reading the "Implied Author" in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*' – not, however, as the biological entity that wrote the poem, but as a mode of reception encoded in the text and brought to life on every reading of it. This chapter, then, is an approach to *Lucretius* himself, now understood as the author constructed by the text; indeed, the condition of that text as witnessed in Butterfield's chapter becomes, in Goldschmidt's analysis, not the consequence of Lucretius' psychological state, but the cause of it. Similarly, on this view, the splintering of the author into 'Lucretius' and 'anti-Lucretius' can be seen as an aspect of the text's biofiction. Approaching Lucretius from this perspective takes the biographical fallacy not as a trap but as a creative strategy that accounts for the sensibility of the text (or our sense thereof) and allows us, after all, to read with the author in view – an instinctive way of reading that ancient writing anticipates and accommodates.<sup>31</sup>

The author as perceived by the reader plays a role also in Barnaby Taylor's chapter ('Common Ground in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*') on the first-person plural pronouns and verbs used by the didactic *praeceptor* to co-opt the addressee in a shared enterprise, and categorized by actual readers as they negotiate their own inclusion in – or exclusion from – the Epicurean Garden over the course of reading and rereading the poem. The counterpart of the assured Epicurean, whose first-person plurals a given reader may already share or later come to share, is the flawed anti-Lucretius whose crises of conviction will then be reassuring or alienating according to the individual reader's commitment to Epicureanism. As Taylor points out, the ambivalence as to who may be included in Lucretius' first-person plurals – which, with Goldschmidt, we can see as implying the poem's author – enables each reader to write the didactic plot of their own experience of the *DRN*.

<sup>31</sup> Compare Peirano 2012 on the strategies of Latin pseudepigrapha. See also Goldschmidt 2019.

A different aspect of the common ground between the author and reader comes into focus in the final chapter of this section by Fabio Tutrone ('Coming to Know Epicurus' Truth: Distributed Cognition in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*'). The 'common ground' shown by Taylor to be a strategy of Lucretius' co-option of his reader is, for Tutrone, established by a process of 'distributed cognition' or 'extended mind'. This phenomenon, already inherent in language and text as instruments of communication, is pertinent to a poetic genre that foregrounds an interactive framework. It is especially pertinent in the case of an Epicurean didactic poem that, as such, holds to a materialist view of cognition according to which ideas are formed and communicated quite literally by the redistribution of atoms to the mind via senses that, though they may be deceived, cannot lie. Tutrone thus strips away Cartesian dualism to reveal a *DRN* that finds the key to cognition in the external world and that accordingly mobilizes itself as a distributed artefact of cognition in that world, equating itself with the nature of things right down to a correspondence between the letters and atoms of which it and the world are composed. Attuned in this way to the embodied mind, the *DRN* aims at nothing less than to reproduce its author in the person of the reader.

The chapters in Part III ('The Word and the World') take up the analogy with which the previous part concludes in extending the text of the *DRN* ontologically into the material world in which the reader is situated. Lucretius' frequent comparison of the letters (*elementa*) of which the *DRN* is composed to the atoms (*elementa*) of which the world is constituted (1.196–8, 823–9, 907–14; 2.688–99, 1013–22) takes up what is, at face value, an analogy that seems to have been posited by the Greek atomists Leucippus and Democritus,<sup>32</sup> and pursues it to suggest a degree of equivalence between letters and atoms that arguably goes some way beyond mere analogy. This line of analysis came to prominence in Paul Friedländer's seminal study of Lucretian 'atomology', which argued that different kinds of wordplay in the *DRN* can be shown to instantiate the natural connection between signifier and signified, as posited in the linguistic theory outlined at 5.1028–90 and, by extension, in the analogy of atomic and lexical *elementa*: thus, for example, *ignis* (fire) and *lignum* (wood) are naturally similar both in their linguistic and atomic composition; by the same principle, *amor* (love) is no less and no more than the

<sup>32</sup> The principal sources are Arist. *Metaph.* 1.4, 985b12–19; *Gen. corr.* 1.2, 315b6–15. For discussion in connection with Lucretius see Snyder 1980: 31–51; Dionigi 1988: 11–38; Armstrong 1995.



*umor* (fluid) that drives it.<sup>33</sup> While Friedländer's (and perhaps any) interpretation of Epicurean linguistic theory is open to challenge,<sup>34</sup> the contention that in his wordplay '[t]he poet was never more serious' proved enormously influential,<sup>35</sup> and has since been developed in explorations of how different aspects of the text reflect the nature of the universe as its *imago mundi*,<sup>36</sup> or even of the instantiation of the universe in the *DRN* itself as its atomic *simulacrum*.<sup>37</sup> Not all scholars are comfortable with the extension of the analogy to the ontological level, but even on the level of structural similitude this line of analysis has been remarkably productive.<sup>38</sup> In a materialist creation, however, all metaphor must be metonymy: the Lucretian wor(l)d urges readers to pursue the synecdochic relation of textual *simulacra* to *simulacra* of the cosmos.

The limits of 'atomology' are, in a very particular way, the focus of the first chapter in this section ('Infinity, Enclosure and False Closure in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*'). Here Donncha O'Rourke explores how Lucretius' poem seeks to represent an infinite *rerum natura* within the bounds of a text that of necessity must come to an end, limited as it is by the material confines of its book-roll. An infinite universe of unlimited atoms and void is an essential plank of Epicurean philosophy, but also one that is notoriously difficult to comprehend intellectually. Failure of Lucretius' universal text to embrace infinity would see the whole Epicurean system come crashing down: since that endeavour seems doomed to failure in the finite space of text, Lucretius' success in enacting infinity through strategies of false closure, serial repetition and evocation of the sublime is nothing short of a triumph.

The coordination of the literary text with the material universe of which it is a part is an operating principle also in the intertextual composition of the poem, as Jason Nethercut shows in Chapter 6 ('Lucretian Echoes: Sound as Metaphor for Literary Allusion in *De Rerum Natura* 4.549–94'). In this case Lucretius' explanation of the phenomenon of echo is self-reflexively backed up in the reconfiguration of source texts into the literary echoes of the *DRN*: the literary reconstitution – which is also to say in the atomic 'metathesis' – of this pre-Epicurean source material (for poems are material) produces a new Epicurean text with a worldview that is, likewise, radically reconfigured. In this way, as Nethercut argues, the *DRN*

<sup>33</sup> Friedländer 1941 (quoted in the next sentence at 17, n. 3).      <sup>34</sup> West 1982; Dalzell 1987.

<sup>35</sup> Snyder 1980; Dionigi 1988 [2005].

<sup>36</sup> Armstrong 1995; D. Fowler 1995; P. Fowler 1997; Kennedy 2000; Gale 2004.

<sup>37</sup> Thury 1987; Schiesaro 1994.      <sup>38</sup> See the overview in Volk 2002: 100–5.

contributes to a later Epicurean 'poetics', witnessed chiefly in Philodemus, that upholds the orthodoxy of the coordination of form and content.

A later reconfiguration of Lucretian atomology is the subject of Wilson Shearin's chapter ('Saussure's *cabiers* and Lucretius' *elementa*: A Reconsideration of the Letters–Atoms Analogy'). At the conclusion of this part of the volume, Shearin's discussion amply demonstrates the rightful role of Swiss linguist and semiotician Ferdinand de Saussure as precursor of atomological Lucretiana in the scholarship of the later twentieth century and beyond. Saussure's co-called 'anagrams' of Lucretius' text may be hair-raising, but Shearin argues that their emphasis on non-auditory configuration and on potentiality attends to aspects of Lucretian atomology that have received less attention than is their due. If Saussure here controversially abandons his adherence to structuralism, one might say he effects a 'swerve' from the usual trajectory of his linguistic system: just as Epicurus introduced the swerve to accommodate Democritean atomism to the spontaneity of nature, so Saussure introduces a declination to relax his own linguistic determinism. Epicurus' attraction for Saussure, then, lies precisely in the paradox of his commitment to a system that yet is free of aprioristic teleology.

The chapters in Part IV of the volume ('Literary and Philosophical Sources') focus on one of the principal questions brought to bear on the *DRN* – that of other texts against which it may be compared and which mediate its interpretation. This subfield has witnessed a considerable evolution and proliferation of approaches, from the *Quellenforschung* that seeks to identify the Epicurean or other philosophical texts on which the *DRN* may have been modelled,<sup>39</sup> to the study of allusion and intertextuality, which pursue author-centred and reader-driven perspectives, respectively, on the diverse literary texts that the *DRN* in one way or another brings to mind, reworks and potentially disrupts.<sup>40</sup> While in the study of Latin literature scholarly practice at large has shifted decidedly away from *Quellenforschung*, which is chiefly associated with the scholarly interests of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to intertextuality, which since the 1980s has come to be one of the dominant methodologies practised by Latinists,<sup>41</sup> Lucretius has to some extent bucked the trend

<sup>39</sup> For some recent approaches in this vein see Sedley 1998; Piazzini 2005; Warren 2007; Montaresi 2012.

<sup>40</sup> Brown 1982; Gale 2007b; Garani 2007; Nethercut 2014. Lucretius' appropriation of Thucydides' account of the Athenian plague (Thuc. 2.47–54) at 6.1138–286 is a key case-study: see Commager 1957; Bright 1971; Foster 2009, 2011.

<sup>41</sup> For an overview see O'Rourke and Peltari forthcoming.