

MICHAEL POPE : **Seminal Verse: Atomic Orality and Auality in *De Rerum Natura*.**

In Lucretius' thoroughgoing materialism, hearing, like sight or taste, is tactile. Atomic material must issue from a source, move through space, and enter a receptacle in order for these sense perceptions to operate. I argue that Lucretius uses sexual language and erotic figures to depict the mechanics of these atomic processes. However, what is perhaps more remarkable is the way in which Lucretius manipulates rather straightforward sexual imagery into a scandalous proposition: Mars, Memmius, and the largely male, Roman audience are turned into effeminized repositories of semen-like verse and philosophy. The source of this verbalized material is Lucretius, while ears and mouths become receptacles.

Mots-clés :

Lucretius – Atoms – Poetics – Gender – Masculinity – Philosophy