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The Mountain Nature of Things, Book One: A Smoky Mountain Version Based on Lucretius' On the Nature of Things (Volume 1)

Bruce W Spangler

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“On the Nature of Things” is the only known surviving book of Lucretius, the Roman philosopher poet or poet philosopher of the first century. This surviving didactic philosophical treatise, influenced by the philosophy of Epicurus, is an artistic work of poetry containing approximately 7,400 lines. From the fragments of the works of Epicurus and the school of Epicureanism, Lucretius espouses a life of peace and freedom from self-induced fear and how to live on less while surrounded by an abundance of friends. Epicureanism is often reduced to “eat, drink, and be merry.” That is not a bad way to live but for both Epicurus and Lucretius such an approach towards life requires both a stare into the cold reality of a life that exists either without or the disappearance of the supernatural. The life style proposed by both is an embrace of the existential paradox of living in the midst of strife, love, peace, war and that the material world is all that one has to rely upon. A strictly materialist worldview calls for a backbone of flexible resistance, a cunning and uncanny wit, and a good drink surrounded by supportive friends who are doing the same. Though southern Appalachia is part of the Bible Belt, it includes a populous of mountain folk who recognize both Lucretius and Epicurus as kinfolk in world views and life lived. To those of the mountains who push the envelope of life lived, this work is dedicated.

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