

Guyau - Interesting Summary Essay - The Morality of Epicurus And Its Relationship To Contemporary Doctrines

Post by "Cassius" of May 2, 2019 at 1:21 PM

Thanks to JAWS for this link: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/guyau/1878/epicurus.htm>

Final Paragraph:

"In summary, the Epicurean doctrines exercised an unquestionable influence on the development of human thought. In the natural sciences Democritus' and Epicurus' cosmological system appears to have triumphed in our time. In the moral and social sciences the doctrines derived from Epicureanism are also more powerful than they ever were. At this very moment the English school has brought forth, in the face of the Stoicism restored by Kant, an Epicureanism renewed by the facts of modern science. How many old ideas and rooted customs Epicureanism has contributed to ridding the moral domain of! In the same vein, we have seen that in the religious sphere Epicurus has labored, more than any other philosopher of antiquity, to liberate human thought from belief in the marvelous, the miraculous, and the providential. Well before the arrival of Christianity he had already attacked pagan religion and reduced it to impotence. Still today still it is the spirit of old Epicurus who, combined with new doctrines, works away at and undermines Christianity. Among the free-thinkers of today, how many merit the name of "Epicureans" in which the church and Jews included the free-thinkers of yesterday."

I find it interesting to see how he stresses that the warping of Epicurus into contemporary views happened significantly due to British writers. (Which I don't consider to be a good thing!)