

Albert Einstein, "Foreword to Lucretius"

Post by "Titus" of February 1, 2023 at 12:34 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Presuming you are right about that (and I have no reason to doubt!) then it would be really interesting to read Diels' commentaries on Lucretius in particular or Epicurus in general.

I just decided to do so because I really appreciate Diels colourful and powerful art of writing 😊. I cannot imagine to do so without a positive attitude. My edition doesn't include any commentary by him and there may be none as he passed away before publication. I checked Wikipedia for further information and it seems he exchanged letters with Usener (!) and did a university lecture on Greek philosophy. Both were published some years ago and might be of interest.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I wonder if it would be worth going from German to English to pick up any twists that Diels might have seen in some of the key passages, such as around line 62 in book one.

For detailed discussions it might be of interest listening to another voice. One could use translation software to translate foreign translations into English. On the other hand, there are already many professional English translations available (Bailey, Munro etc.). The translation of a translation (especially by software) also may have some issues. For your passage, Diels sounds this way:

When, before the eyes of men, life was ignominious on earth

Bowed down by the burden of heavy-weighted religion,

That stretched out its head from the lofty heights of heaven

And with a hideous grimace dreadfully afflicts mankind,

Then first a Greek dared to turn the mortal eye

Against the monster, and boldly to oppose it.

Not the fable of the gods, not the lightning and thunder of the sky

Scared him with their threat. No, only the stronger rose

*Higher and higher his courage. So first he dared the locked doors.
the closed gates of Mother Nature in a mighty storm.
And so it happened. His courageous spirit remained victorious, and boldly
He set foot far above the flaming walls of the universe
And he penetrated the infinite universe with an inquiring spirit.
From there he brought back the truth as the spoils of victory:
What can become, what cannot? And how is everyone surrounded
Its working power and the fundamentally resting landmark?
Thus, as if in retaliation, religion lies at our feet
Completely defeated, but us, triumph lifts us to heaven.*

Traducido con DeepL