

Studies on Epicurus' Influence on Marx

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My interest (as a once-upon-a-time economist) lies in broadly-defined Marxian economic analysis, rather than Marxist (and, especially, such as Leninist/Maoist) political movements. That distinction was brought to me, as a graduate student, by a professor who described himself as “Marxian, but not Marxist.” Unfortunately, I had little opportunity to study Marxian economics then.

Even the Nobel Laureate economist Vassily Leontief (who developed input-output analysis at Harvard, and eschewed pure theory - e.g., of neoclassical economics - for reality-based analysis) thought that Marx’s *Capital* was a cogent analysis of capitalism, though Leontief himself was not particularly “Marxian.” Following the “great recession” of 2008, even such non-Marxian economists as Nouriel Roubini - who actually did predict the collapse (unlike some “stopped clock” economists) - revealed that they drew upon Marxian analysis, though not solely.

Of course, there are modern interpretations - and intramural critiques - of that analysis, including, I think, of Marx’s embrace, albeit with materialistic modification, of Hegel’s dialectic. One Marxian analysis of *Capital* that I read described Marx’s dialectic process therein as one of incorporating multiple perspectives on a situation - rather than the simpler thesis-antithesis-synthesis often presented - in recognition that no one has a “view from nowhere” so to speak.

I am currently reading a book called *Marxian Economics: An Introduction*, by Notre Dame economist David Ruccio. How far I will get, I don’t know. 🤔 If I find anything relevant to Epicureanism - say, compacts of social justice - I’ll slap it in here.

[I have generally been in the Post-Keynesian-Institutionalist school of thought - which many think is closer to the original Keynes (of the *General Theory*) than later accommodations to neoclassical thought.]