

New (October 1 2019) Catherine Wilson Speech Video on Epicurean Philosophy

Post by "Cassius" of October 11, 2019 at 5:16 PM

Well Hiram I think the point in issue in this part of the discussion is the part of Marx that is devoted to "class warfare" and the historical determinism that everything in human history derives from that conflict. A quick google indicates as:

"the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of **class** struggle." (The first line of communist manifesto (1848) reads.)

I am sure others ([Martin](#)) have a much more recent handle on that than I do.

I gather that what Ben was reading into Wilson's speech is that she reads Lucretius' history lesson as supporting the class warfare theory of history.

I think Ben thinks that's a gross misreading of Lucretius, and I would agree. The whole "economic man" orientation of Marxism, which is what I gather drives a lot of their analysis, is not something that's consistent with Epicurean theory, as it is not the issue of how to deal with money and material goods that drives the philosophy, but the basic orientation that tells us what money and which material goods to pursue in the first place.

Actually this is very close to the issue we are discussing in several threads. If we strip out the underlying physics and epistemology and theory of pleasure, and go right to the "live frugally" part, then we can make Epicurus look like almost a twin of Marx, and that is what a lot of people seem to want to do.

I think that's a terrible mistake and turns the philosophy on its head, and the way to avoid it is to stay with Epicurus and focus on the physics and the epistemology and then the discussion of what pleasure and virtue are all about, and only THEN move to the issue that is involved in Vatican Saying 63 -- because it is in fact as great an error to live too frugally as it is to live to luxuriously.