

The destruction of the ancient world

Post by “Don” of April 29, 2022 at 7:47 AM

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Cc7uVcqj2XF/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY=>

It's amazing ANY ancient artwork, writing, or artifacts survived 😞 given the zeal with which early Christians engaged in this kind of erasure and destruction of pagan culture.

A great book on this is *The Darkening Age*

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Darkening_Age#%3A%7E%3Atext%3D978-0544800885-%2CThe_Darkening_Age%3A_The_Christian_Destruction_of_the_Classical_World%2Cand_caused_the_Dark_Age

Post by “Matt” of April 29, 2022 at 8:05 AM

Only to make the following centuries full of pleasure repressed, shame and guilt filled people wandering around making super bad decisions.

Post by “Pacatus” of May 2, 2022 at 7:50 PM

And among some prominent contemporary Christian groups, it is not just ancient history (if they have their way).

Post by “Eikadistes” of May 3, 2022 at 8:17 AM

I am reading *Nature's GOD: The Heretical Origins of the American Republic* by Matthew Stewart right now who discusses the tensions and influence of the Calvinists and Puritans in Colonial North America versus self-described "Deists" like Thomas Young and Ethan Allen. He goes to great lengths to demonstrate his postulate (similar to *The Swerve*) that the re-discovery and

dissemination of *De Rerum Natura* is the definitive catalyst that lead to the modern age.

He provides a number of interesting anecdotes about Calvinist arguments against Epicurean Philosophy. Needless to say, Epicurus seems to live atop *History's "Most Wanted"* list as a perpetual antagonist to the political and religious authorities who could benefit from incorporating the systems of Epicurus' philosophical opponents:

"In Epicurus [...] there was nothing of that compromising, dialectical spirit that pervaded Aristotle and the others and allowed them to be wrestled to the ground and marked with the sign of the cross" (85).

I think that American rejectors of Christianity have a lot in common with Epicureans in the late Roman Empire. In both time periods, we have political figures who were publicly ridiculed for their devotion to the teachings of Epicurus. In both periods, people regularly misunderstood the principles behind scientific innovations that they, themselves, use. Both periods feature huge groups of reactionaries who actively seek the destruction of modern inventions. In both periods, there is a tension between Superstitious Fear-Based Religion versus Natural Reason, and it usually leads to the fearfully religious with the benefit of legal authority applying punitive measures against the naturally reasonable.

Post by "Cassius" of May 3, 2022 at 8:21 AM

Nate I think this probably should be Thomas PAINE but I didn't change it....

[Quote from Nate](#)

Colonial North America versus self-described "Deists" like Thomas Young and Ethan Allen.

Also notable in the time period was Elihu Palmer, who's book "Principles of Nature" I have read in the distant past and found to be pretty good (but that was in my pre-Epicurean days, so no warranty!). Links to his work are here: [https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lo...hu%2C+1764-1806](https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lookup.titles?author=hu%2C+1764-1806)

Post by "Cassius" of May 3, 2022 at 8:25 AM

I need to and will start a new thread on this somewhere, but Nate's mention of these books reminds me that we discussed Jeremy Bentham a little in our recent AFDIA podcast.

I am convinced if we started a systematic study of the orbit that Bentham and Frances Wright and the Mills father and son combo were traveling in, we'd find some more very good material on Epicurus.

I think that period and the writers from the late 1700's to mid 1800's would be particularly fruitful for good writing on Epicurus.

Something happened after that period, however, that turned attention more away from Epicurus.

That's a subject for the other thread too, but I would suspect the "turning away from Epicurus" has something to do with the rise of nihilism.

OK OK I will set up the thread now! Here it is: [Researching Jeremy Bentham and His Circle As They Relate To Epicurus](#)