

BOOK REVIEW

The Origins of Materialism

BY GEORGE NOVACK

A sequel and supplement to Novack's earlier work, *An Introduction to the Logic of Marxism*. The main objective of the work is not so much a thorough and scholarly account of the origins of materialism, but an attempt to demonstrate that the historical development of materialism inevitably led to dialectical materialism. Marxist materialism is viewed by Novack as the "valid residue" of this development. His claim is that materialism is not a matter of theory but of fact proved by practice. Three broad historical developments are considered: ancient materialism (Thales to Lucretius); bourgeois materialism (from the Italian Renaissance to Feuerbach); and dialectical materialism. The bulk of the book is devoted to ancient materialism. Despite its partisan character, with its outmoded Marxist categories, the book is an honest attempt to retrace the earliest developments of the materialist world outlook. Simple and clearly written. For philosophy majors.