

Metaphorically Picturing Epicurean Philosophy

Post by "Cassius" of January 10, 2023 at 9:48 AM

Yep. I hope this will end up being a long thread and an ongoing process for lots of people to use in the future. That's a very good list of symbols for inclusion, and I suspect the real trick is prioritizing and selecting the issues to be included so any particular image focuses on whatever main points it is trying to convey. There's no necessity to reduce everything down into a single graphic.

As I look at your numbered list, those are good "positive" symbols with which to identify as a goal. I suppose what Plato was doing was taking a more aggressive or argumentative topic indicative of human suffering and dramatizing his proposed solution (escape to a "true world" outside the cave). We need those kind of confrontational graphics too in addition to the pleasure aspect.

Michele's friend's "breaking the chains" graphic is almost a mirrored response to the Platonic cave metaphor. It could be varied thousands of ways, among them going beyond the implicit attribution of the situation to the glowering of the gods above, to somehow conveying (as did Lucretius) that the breaking free comes from exploring the universe with strength and courage of mind with presumably some nod toward the senses.

As we talk about this I have to wonder whether the Platonic cave analogy was in Lucretius' mind when he came up with that passage in Book One.