

# □ as the symbol of the philosophy of Epicurus

Post by "Julia" of May 20, 2025 at 12:44 PM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

The atom itself:

This symbol reminds me of the famous three body problem:

[Quote from Wikipedia](#)

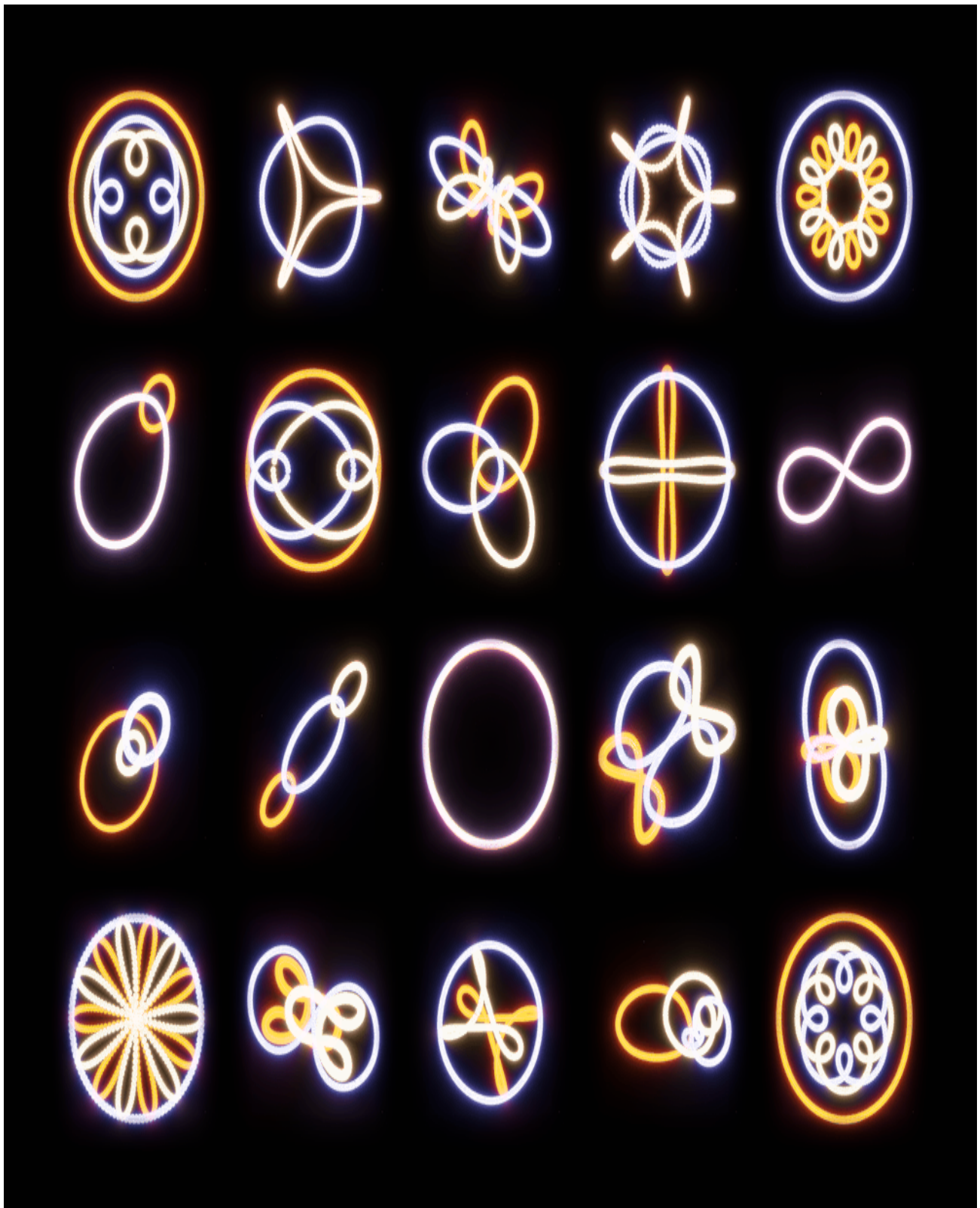
Unlike the two-body problem, the three-body problem has no general closed-form solution, meaning **there is no equation that always solves it**. When three bodies orbit each other, the resulting dynamical system is chaotic for most initial conditions. Because there are no solvable equations for most three-body systems, **the only way to predict the motions of the bodies is to estimate them**

This characteristic might allude to the swerve, the motion of atoms, (after some generalisation) the shibboleth about the size of the sun, the fact that there are no absolute truths, that there is no "ten commandments" list, no universal authority for being "a true Epicurean", that the only way to solve Choice and Avoidance is to estimate the future, to predict in each moment, and so forth.

On the other hand, there are *some* stable three-body systems, many of which draw out simple yet beautiful patterns, thereby linking sciences and art, and some look not unlike the symbol [Kalosyni](#) just used, which is quite universally recognised as "an atom". Those stable systems might also be seen as representing the Epicurean path towards eventually mastering the contradicting aspects of life to find one's way, the duality of kinetic and katastematic pleasure (the bodies move but the system remains stable), and so on. Again, many many different interpretations are possible.

Here are some patterns of stable three-body systems (taken from Wikipedia):

→ [CLICK HERE FOR ANIMATION](#) ←



The one in the top-left corner draws a pattern similar to the four dots we discussed at length so far. The one at the bottom-left might be friends facing each other in a walled garden — but it could also be a nuclear core with a layer of electrons around it.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/1922-as-the-symbol-of-the-philosophy-of-epicurus/?postID=35371#post35371>

Numbered left-to-right, top-to-bottom: top-left is #1, top-right is #5, bottom-left is #16, bottom-right is #20.

All those 3-body systems with a circle could use the moon's circumference to represent said circle -- but they don't have to. I think we should avoid those:

#3: too complex

#10: looks like an infinite sign  $\infty$

#13: just a circle...

#18: too complex

#19: too complex

Which are your favourites? What do y'all think about the idea in general?

[Martin](#), do you have a suggestion? 😊