

References to Epicurus' Attitude Toward The "Place of the Sciences And Liberal Arts"

Post by "Elayne" of July 19, 2020 at 9:47 PM

I should have been more specific, [Cassius](#), about where I disagree with Lucretius' procedures. I was thinking about the section we covered last week, with the smooth, rough, or hooked atoms.

I am not so much concerned that his conclusions turned out to be incorrect as I am about how he arrived at them, through reason and analogy. Rather than this being a case of experimental error or a mistake in understanding an observation, it was a method problem. It's a great example of how reason is fraught with error.

I wouldn't have minded if he said it might be that way. But that's not how it was presented. And even in that time, I would have distrusted someone who used imagination to arrive at part of their case about the nature of things. It wouldn't have allayed my fears, because it wasn't arrived at with sound methodology, and you don't have to be a physicist to know the difference between observations and imagination/ reasoning by analogy.

I think it's important to confront problems like this, because it could make the philosophy less credible to someone who notices how Lucretius arrived at his assertions. And then to say this does no damage at all to the solid structure of the philosophy, because we can remove all the pieces arrived at by imagination/analogy and still reach the same conclusions.