

2022 Epicurus vs Buddhism Compare and Contrast Thread

Post by “Godfrey” of January 27, 2022 at 6:40 PM

Personally I was attracted to Eastern thought because of the emptiness of the Platonic and Aristotlean traditions. I had thought that this was the basis of all Western thinking and so was looking elsewhere for a sensible philosophy. In stumbling across Epicurus I discovered that there actually *is* a sensible Western tradition and that it was no longer necessary to try to 'splain away the parts of Eastern thought that made no sense to me.

I'm mainly familiar with Zen, but I generally disagree with the characterizations of nihilistic and passive. Particularly passivity: Buddhism as I understand it is extremely socially engaged.

Some scholars have documented an historic connection between Buddhism and the Greeks but I believe that their work is not without controversy. This connection is in the person of Pyrrho, who apparently spent several years in India and absorbed many of the Buddhist teachings. Another theory is that Pyrrho and the Buddhists influenced each other.

Epicurus was reputed to admire Pyrrho, however he didn't accept his philosophy. So as I understand it currently, Buddhism and/or Pyrrhonism was just one more line of thinking that Epicurus supplanted in developing his system.

I'll leave to those more well versed than me to give a synopsis of Buddhism.