

Tranquility v Pleasure

Post by “Hiram” of February 24, 2020 at 9:45 AM

I don't remember the source but I remember reading that Nausiphanes and Epicurus once encountered Pyrrho, who had traveled to INDIA and met the gymnosophists (yogis) there.

Pyrrho's Buddhist influence has been the subject of books linking this to the Gandara Indo-Buddhist culture.

Either way, in this encounter Epicurus was so affected by Pyrrho's tranquil demeanor that he replaced Democritus' cheerfulness ideal with the ataraxia ideal. If Nausiphanes was with him, we have to assume that

1. Epicurus was young
2. He was still learning atomism from Nausiphanes and forming his own doctrines

However Epicurus rejected the skepticism of Pyrrho. His ataraxia did not come from not having opinions, but from having doctrines that were aligned with nature and abolished superstitious fears.