

Episode Thirty-One - Continuation of Episode Thirty / Polyaenus

Post by "Don" of August 9, 2020 at 11:05 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

By emphasizing that the atoms have no color Epicurus is illustrating that there are in fact no contextless absolutes, either in heaven or inside an object. The statement that "Yellow does not exist apart from things that are yellow" has profound extensions far beyond the purely scientific question of how an atom might look under a microscope to most people most of the time.

In this I see reflections of the Buddhist concepts of dependent arising, no-self, and related ideas. The Buddha is said to have taught:

Quote

When there is this, that is.
With the arising of this, that arises.
When this is not, neither is that.
With the cessation of this, that ceases.

That sounds a lot to me like "When I exist, death does not; When death is, I am not."

There's also the Epicurean doctrine of "The only thing that exists is atoms and void." I would add "... At the most fundamental level." This does NOT negate the everyday existence of planets, rocks, trees, and me! But qualities like color, size, shape, etc., arise from the coming together of various arrangements of atoms in the void. Those characteristics do not exist apart from those atomic arrangements, from the most subtle (consciousness) to the most physical (Mt. Everest).

Now, Buddha and Epicurus put those realizations to work in different ways! But it seems to me both were thinking along parallel paths at least part of the way.