

PYRRHONISM AND DISAGREEMENT (HANDOUT)

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1. The Mode from Disagreement

The mode deriving from disagreement (ὁ ἀπὸ τῆς διαφωνίας) is that by means of which we discover that, with regard to the matter proposed, there has arisen, both in ordinary life and among philosophers, an undecidable dispute (ἀνεπίκριτον στάσις) owing to which we end up in suspension of judgment, since we are not able to choose or to reject anything. (*Pyrrhonian Outlines* I 165)

2. Rational Suspension

One is rationally required to suspend judgment when confronted with a disagreement which one is unable to resolve.

3. Ἐποχή as a Πάθος

The skeptical way of thought is called “‘suspensive’ because of the πάθος that comes about in the inquirer after the investigation.” (*Pyrrhonian Outlines* I 7)

4. Equal Weight View

It is rationally required to give equal weight to the opinions of all the parties to a peer dispute when there is no reason for preferring one opinion over the others which is independent of the very disagreement between the parties.

5. Disagreeing about Disagreement Argument

If the proponent of the Equal Weight View (EWV) finds out that an epistemic peer believes that it is false, then he should give this belief the same weight as his own belief in the truth of the EWV, and should therefore suspend judgment about its truth. The EWV is therefore self-defeating or self-undermining because, if one accepts it, then one is required to significantly lower one’s confidence in its truth since one knows there are epistemic peers who reject it, but in order to propose it as the rationally required reaction to peer disagreement, one must be maximally confident that it is true.