

Navigating Cognitive Success (and Failure): Cicero, *Lucullus* 66*

Tobias Reinhardt

Abstract

The Ciceronian corpus of philosophical works features on a number of occasions first-person speakers who explain how they live their Academic scepticism, whose hallmark was the rejection of certain knowledge. *Lucullus* 66 is an interesting instance of this: the Academic way of life is contrasted with that of the dogmatist with reference to an extended allegory relating to navigation at sea by night. The article aims to elucidate this passage, by considering how navigation by the stars worked in antiquity, to what extent the scholarly and poetic tradition of the night sky reflected these realities, and ultimately what the allegory does and does not illustrate. The Academic's way of navigating life, while being avowedly imperfect and fallible, emerges as entirely serviceable.

Keywords: Academic scepticism; Stoic theory of knowledge; Aratea; Eudoxus of Cnidus; Hipparchus; Great/Little Bear; navigation

Academic sceptics contested the Stoic claim that there is certain knowledge in the domain of perception and beyond. However, according to them, the unavailability of certain knowledge would not leave them unable to conduct a normal life. In this study I propose to analyse a text written by a professed Academic which contrasts the Academic and the Stoic manner of using a privileged type of thought (an 'impression') for navigating life and illustrates both approaches with an allegory from seafaring. Fallibility, as understood

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here, is either a property of impressions, their being capable of being false when they appear true, or a property of perceiving human subjects, their occasional tendency to endorse impressions as true which may be false.¹

The Ciceronian corpus is our most important source for (late) Academic scepticism and for the Hellenistic Academy's construction of its own history. What is more, Cicero writes and has 'himself' as well as another Academic, Cotta in the *De natura deorum*, speak as an Academic, laying out the Academic approach to philosophy, to other schools, and to life on the character's own terms. Contrast other important sources: Sextus Empiricus uses Academic texts (which have not come down to us directly) and arguably follows them in places quite closely, but he has an agenda, viz. to cast Pyrrhonism as the sole sceptical school in antiquity and the Academics as dogmatists of some description, whether or not their dogmatism was transparent to them. Plutarch is a more conventional Platonist, who integrates the sceptical phase of the Academy into his own outlook by co-opting its arguments against the possibility of knowledge arising from perception. Numenius, another Platonist, does not even attempt co-optation and furnishes a caricature of Academic thought which splices reports of *prima facie* credible evidence with outlandish metaphor, anecdote, and satire. Finally, Augustine's *Contra Academicos* engages closely with Cicero's *Academici libri*, including with parts of that work which have not come down to us, but does so in a highly original way which prevents the simple isolation of fragments.

In part because he chose to create dialogues, Cicero, too, has a particular way of writing which often requires a combination of literary and philosophical interpretation. As is also the case with Plato, this is especially true of passages which are part of frames or stand near other internal text boundaries (like the beginning or end of speeches).² In using the Ciceronian corpus as evidence for Academic scepticism, it will be helpful to distinguish between the following figures: (a) the historical individual bearing the name 'Cicero', whose 'actual' convictions and beliefs are irretrievable for us and may or may not be partially accessible through his documented actions and extant

- 1 The view that no empirical belief can be conclusively justified is not at issue in this paper, on the grounds that in the passage I shall be discussing and in its wider context a conception of knowledge as true belief with a justification does not feature. And while we will see that an entitlement to claiming knowledge and, e.g., to using first-person verbs of knowing is implicitly asserted by someone who assumes that he is fallible, this will not be an avowed claim to fallible knowledge according to the historical terms of the debate I am concerned with (which has Stoic *κατάληψις* as its reference point), but to knowledge in everyday parlance.
- 2 Compare Burnyeat 1997 on how the prefaces of Platonic dialogues often anticipate and foreshadow the themes of these dialogues.

writings, (b) the implied author of his works, whose outlook may be more stable, more reasoned, or less prone to cognitive dissonance than that of the historical individual, (c) the first-person speakers of that name who appear in the frames of Ciceronian dialogues, notably of those where the dramatic action takes place at a time which is different from the date of composition (as in the *Lucullus*), and (d) the Cicero character properly speaking, who appears in conversation with other characters at the fictional date of the conversation. A case can be made that Cicero was fully alive to these distinctions and that he deliberately created certain effects by playing with them.³

The passage I want to talk about comes from the beginning of the Cicero character's speech in the *Lucullus* (henceforward *Luc.*). This dialogue formed a triptych with two others which have not come down to us, the *Hortensius* (*Hort.*) and the *Catulus* (*Catul.*). All three dialogues featured the same cast of speakers. There is reason to assume that the dramatic date of *Hort.* was a few days before that of the *Catul.*, while the conversations of *Catul.* and *Luc.* took place on successive days, so that the connection between *Catul.* and *Luc.* is closer than that of *Hort.* with the other two.⁴ Out of *Catul.* and *Luc.* Cicero soon fashioned the *Academici libri* in four books, of which we have the first part of the first book and a number of fragments. One can, up to a point, reconstruct the overall shape of both editions by combining the evidence from the backward references to *Catul.* in *Luc.* and from the fragments.

The frame of the *Luc.* features a passage (§§ 7b–9a) in which Cicero, not yet in character and speaking at the time of composition, rebuts objections to his philosophical writing. One point of criticism is that he has chosen to expound the objectionable or at least unpromising Academic approach to philosophy. Cicero acknowledges that an Academic must accept criticism since he argues against everyone. However, he provides a rationale for this practice, viz. the desire to find the truth. Argument on either side of a question is supposed to make the truth or something that resembles the truth emerge. In saying this Cicero claims a credible metaphilosophical motivation for Academic argument, as opposed to inferior motivations suggested by opponents, like just wanting to prevail. The difference between the dogmatist and him, Cicero suggests, is that the dogmatist has no doubts about his views and regards them as true, while Cicero takes many positions to be *probabile* while being unable to affirm them as true, on the grounds that they may be

3 See Reinhardt, *Academic Scepticism*, 2022.

4 In *Fin.* 1.2 Cicero's continued philosophical writing is presented as at least in part a response to the positive reception *Hort.* had received. Work on *Catul.* and *Luc.* (and on the *Academici libri*) overlapped with that on *Fin.* chronologically.

false. This, one might think, understates the difference between dogmatist and Academic, in that adopting a sceptical stance will usually involve more than, and something structurally quite different from, adopting what could materially be a dogmatist position and merely hedging on one's endorsements. And indeed, when Cicero proceeds to saying that the Academic is free to be guided by his *iudicandi potestas* and not committed to upholding views just because they arise from his dogmatist commitments, it is clear that mediating between a dogmatic and a sceptical position as Cicero construes it is more complicated, whether or not Cicero primarily speaks as a writer of philosophical texts here.

There follows a speech by the character Lucullus (§§ 11–62), which is an extended defence of the Stoic conception of *κατάληψις* and which attempts to rebut a number of Academic arguments. In the interlude (§§ 63–4) the character Catulus suggests to the Cicero character that the historical Cicero had no difficulty making knowledge claims in public in the context of the Catilinarian conspiracy. When, at the beginning of his speech, the Cicero character then mounts another explanation of how he goes about living, as a philosopher and in general, this represents a reply both to the charge of unwarranted knowledge claims made by the historical Cicero and a continuation of the account in *Luc.* 7b–9a. The combined effect is the assertion of, and claim to continuity between, the historical Cicero and the first-person speakers in his philosophical works; this is *inter alia* a continuity over time, since the Catilinarian conspiracy happened in 63 B.C., the dramatic date of the *Lucullus* is 62 or 61 B.C., and the date of composition is 45 B.C.

Before I finally turn to the passage in question, I will briefly outline what kind of Academic sceptic I take Cicero to be, partly in order to expand on how I read the pronouncements of *Luc.* 7b–9a. The first-person speaker in the philosophical works is sometimes called a radical sceptic and sometimes a mitigated sceptic. This is sometimes due to genuine differences of interpretation, but more often, arguably, to scholars talking at cross-purposes. On my reading, he is a radical sceptic in the sense that throughout the corpus and from the earliest to the last works he is committed to universal suspension of judgement. However, I take his position to exhibit many of the features which others associate with mitigated scepticism, viz. I do not think that he only ever engages in so-called dialectical or *ad hominem* argument (arguing to the contradictory of the opponent's position from premisses the opponent would endorse or, slightly more expansively, ought to endorse). Rather, he is able to formulate and maintain positions under proviso, although he will, in the spirit of Socrates, feel little to no inclination to disclose such positions to others in contexts where, e.g., a general examination of philosophical views in a certain domain is being conducted before an audience or where an interlocutor's views are being examined. Any philosopher, and *a fortiori* an Aca-

demic, can and will of course argue *ad hominem* and from some of the opponent's premisses on occasion; my contention is that this kind of argument does not constitute the essence of Cicero's posture.⁵

Consider now *Luc.* 66, a paragraph and a half into Cicero's speech:⁶

Qui enim possum non cupere uerum inuenire, cum gaudeam si simile ueri quid inuenerim? Sed ut hoc pulcherrimum esse iudico, uera uidere, sic pro ueris probare falsa turpissimum est. Nec tamen ego is sum qui nihil umquam falsi approbem, qui numquam assentiar, qui nihil opiner; sed quaerimus de sapiente. Ego uero ipse et magnus quidam sum opinator – non enim sum sapiens – et meas cogitationes sic dirigo, non ad illam paruulam Cynosuram,

*qua 'fidunt duce nocturna Phoenices in alto',
ut ait Aratus, eoque directius gubernant, quod eam tenent
quae 'cursu interiore, breui conuertitur orbe',
sed Helicen et clarissimos Septemtriones, id est rationes has latiore specie, non ad tenue limatas. Eo fit ut errem et uager latius. Sed non de me, ut dixi, sed de sapiente quaeritur. Visa enim ista cum acriter mentem sensumue pepulerunt, accipio, iisque interdum etiam assentior, nec percipio tamen; nihil enim arbitror posse percipi. Non sum sapiens; itaque uisis cedo nec possum resistere.*

For how can I not desire to find the truth when I am already happy if I find something that is truth-like? But just as I judge it to be the most beautiful thing to see the truth, so to approve as true what is false is the most disgraceful thing. Nonetheless I am not someone who never approves anything false, never assents, never opines; but we are asking about the sage. However, I myself am a great opiner (for I am no sage) and I direct my thoughts not at that tiny Little Bear,

on which “the Phoenicians rely as a guide at sea by night”, as Aratus says, thereby steering a more direct course, because they stick to her,

who “turns on an inner course in a small orbit” – but instead at Helice, the very bright Septemtriones, *id est rationes has latiore specie, non ad tenue limatas* [to be translated below]. So it comes that I err and roam more widely. But as I said, the question is not about me, but about the sage. These (sc. less precise) appearances, when they

5 On the difficulties facing a purely *ad hominem* reading of the main anti-Stoic arguments see Castagnoli 2018; see also Reinhardt, *Commentary*, 2023, on *Luc.* 102–4.

6 The text is from Reinhardt (OCT) 2023, the translation from Reinhardt, *Commentary*, 2023, 51–2.

have struck the mind and the senses sharply, I accept, and I sometimes even assent to them. Nonetheless, I do not perceive: for I hold that nothing can be perceived. I am not a sage; therefore I give in to appearances and cannot resist.

In the section just preceding the extract (§§ 64b–65), the Cicero character spoke, at the dramatic date of the dialogue, about his deep and independent commitment to the Academic view, which, given the lack of qualifications and overall context, presumably encompasses his everyday life as well as his life as an advocate, as a politician, and as a philosopher. He also reasserted what the first-person speaker in the frame (§§ 7b–9a) had stated, viz. that he is motivated by a desire to find the truth. In the frame the primary reference was to the examination of arguments in philosophical dialogues, although the passage seemed to turn into a more general statement gradually. § 66 quoted above continues the theme of search for the truth. The first two sentences hint at the two key components of Cicero's posture which jointly characterise his stance within the matrix of possibilities created by the debate between Academics and dogmatists. He is pleased to find what is *veri simile*, i.e. impressions which are persuasive (*πιθανά*, *probabilia*) and appear true but may be false, and he wishes to avoid assenting to false impressions since doing so is morally reprehensible. This attitude, viz. that false belief was not just undesirable but immoral, is one which Cicero shares with the dogmatist; like the commitment to searching for the truth, it elevates his stance above a stand-offish refusal to make knowledge claims or resistance for the sake of it and instead points to a metaphilosophical rationale for his argumentative practice. He then continues with the theme of assent: as a non-sage, he cannot help but assent in many situations when as per the commitments of his avowed position he should not. The sentence beginning with *ego uero* then, arguably, speaks to both the issue of endorsement and that of the epistemic status of the impressions used: being a non-sage, Cicero is a *magnus opinator* against his better judgement and because he cannot help it. And – this is what *et meas cogitationes ...* refers to, in the form of an allegory – he uses one type of impression rather than another. Citing lines from a translation of Aratus' *Phaenomena* which he created as a young man approximately four decades earlier,⁷ Cicero states that he uses the Great Bear rather than

7 Compare frg. VI and VII Soubiran (*Ex is altera apud Graios Cynosura uocatur, | altera dicitur esse Helice. | Hac fidunt duce nocturna Phoenices in alto; | sed prior illa magis stellis distincta refulget, | et late prima confestim a nocte uidetur. | Haec uero parua est, sed nautis usus in hac est: | nam cursu interiore breui conuertitur orbe*) with Aratus 36–44 (Καὶ τὴν μὲν Κυνόσουραν ἐπίκλησιν καλέουσι, | τὴν δ' ἐτέρην Ἑλικὴν. Ἑλικὴ γε μὲν ἄνδρες Ἀχαιοὶ | εἰν ἄλι τεκμαίρονται ἵνα χρῆ νῆας ἄγινεῖν | τῆ δ' ἄρα Φοίνικες πίσυνοι περὶ ὄωσι θάλασσαν. | Ἀλλ' ἢ μὲν καθαρὴ καὶ ἐπιρράσασθαι ἐτοίμη | πολλὴ φαινομένη Ἑλικὴ πρώτης ἀπὸ νυκτός | πολλή

the Little Bear, which the Phoenicians used. Given the larger context, it is plausible to assume that the Academic and the dogmatist, specifically the Stoic, are characterised here, and that the impressions implicitly referred to are the persuasive and the cataleptic impression respectively. This reading and mapping is supported by the fact that Zeno of Citium, who formulated the definition of the cataleptic impression (*Luc.* 77), was famously of Phoenician descent,⁸ as well as by what Cicero says immediately after talking about the two constellations: having once more emphasised that their discussion overall is about the sage, Cicero elaborates further on his habit of assenting occasionally and on the nature of his impressions as he sees it. His failure to suspend judgement universally is due to the strikingness of the impressions he receives, but he nonetheless never apprehends. This is because it is his view that nothing can be apprehended since every true impression is vulnerable to ἀπαρραξία, i.e. the possibility that there could be an impression just like it which is false. That the speaker twice emphasises that the focus of the debate between him and Lucullus is the sage is manifestly not a self-correction, made in order to return the discussion to what the sage does, but signals that what is being offered in § 66 is a personal statement of sorts by the Cicero character.⁹ While the sage is able to maintain suspension of judgement always and Cicero is not, the impressions which they both use are the same (*probabilia*), as are their second-order attitudes to these impressions (both regard them as *probabilia*).

The suggestion that the Academic navigates life in all respects, metaphorically speaking, by means of a constellation has a context in the *Lucullus*. In

φαινομένη Ἐλική πρώτης ἀπὸ νυκτός· ἢ δ' ἑτέρα ὀλίγη μὲν, ἀτὰρ ναύτησιν ἀρείων· ἢ μειοτέρα γὰρ πᾶσα περιστρέφεται στροφάλιγγι ἢ τῇ καὶ Σιδόνιοι ἰθύντατα ναυτίλλονται). Datings of Cicero's translation of the first part of the Aratus' poem, created when he was *admodum adulescentulus* (*N.D.* 2.104), range from 90 B.C. to 80 B.C.; see the summary discussion in Ciano, *Aratea*, 2019, 20–24. There is reason to assume that Cicero revised the translation between its creation and its use in the 40s B.C.; see *Att.* 2.1.11 (= SB 21) from June 60 B.C., where Cicero announces a copy of his *Prognostica*, i.e. the translation of the second part of the *Phaenomena* on weather signs (l. 733–1154). See the discussion in Soubiran 1972, 8–16.

- 8 See Cic. *Fin.* 4.46: *Postea tuus ille Poenulus – scis enim Citieos, clientes tuos, e Phoenicia profectos –, homo igitur acutus ...*; D.L. 7.1, 7.3. Zeno was of eastern Phoenician descent, and the use of the Little Bear for navigation is in the Aratean tradition associated with 'Sidonians' (e.g., Seneca, *Medea* 697: *maior Pelasgis apta, Sidoniis minor*), but partly because Carthage was a Phoenician foundation, *Poenus* (and its diminutive) can be used to designate Phoenicians in Latin. See the discussion in Prag 2006, and idem 2014. In 7.4 Diogenes Laertius reports that "some people" said in jest that Zeno had written his *Republic* on "the dog's tail" (ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ κυνὸς οὐρᾶς), but the import of the remark and whether it might aid the identification here is not clear; for discussion see Bees 2011, 8–26.
- 9 For the Stoic sage as the reference point of Lucullus' speech see, e.g., *Luc.* 28, 57; § 36 with Neuhausen 1987, 353–90 on the Academic sage.

§ 36 the Antiochian dogmatist speaker Lucullus makes a passing reference to testing procedures (*circumspectio*, *consideratio*) to which Academics subject persuasive impressions.¹⁰ We know from parallel material in Sextus, M. 7.166–89 that Academics, and most likely Clitomachus, gave a very detailed account of such testing procedures and ascribed it to Carneades, who is credited with introducing the conception of the *πιθανόν* into Academic thought. Since it is most unlikely that Sextus' account had no counterpart in *Catul.* or that the author would hand the one reference to the subject to an Antiochian speaker rather than an Academic one, and since we know from the fragment of the first book of the *Academici libri* that it featured a section on Carneades, it is reasonable to try and work out in what form a counterpart to the Sextan evidence might have featured in *Catul.* (and the *Academici libri*).¹¹ The noun *consideratio* can just mean 'scrutiny' or 'accurate consideration', but it can be documented that a particular etymology was placed on it by some ancient users of Latin and arguably Cicero, too, viz. the mental act of gathering together the individual stars (*stellae*) which make up a constellation (*sidus*) and the holding of all the stars in an evaluative gaze.¹² I have suggested elsewhere that Cicero used the image of a constellation to 'translate' a different and, to his readership, less familiar image which he found in his Academic source material and which is preserved in Sextus,¹³ namely the notion of the syndrome in the medical sense, i.e. the simultaneous occurrence of a number of symptoms, which individually might be indicative

10 *Sin ex circumspectione aliqua et accurata consideratione quod uisum sit id se dicent sequi, tamen exitum non habebunt, primum quia iis uisis inter quae nihil interest aequaliter omnibus abrogatur fides; deinde cum dicant posse accidere sapienti ut, cum omnia fecerit diligentissimeque circumspexerit, existat aliquid quod et ueri simile uideatur et absit longissime <a> uero, <ne> si magnam partem quidem, ut solent dicere, ad uerum ipsum aut quam proxime accedant confidere sibi poterunt.* "But if they say they follow what appears to them on the basis of a certain scrutiny and precise consideration, they will nonetheless not have an escape route, first because all those appearances which do not differ are denied credibility in the same way; second, when they say that it can happen to the sage that, after he has done everything and has applied the most careful scrutiny, there may yet arise something which both appears truth-like and is furthest away from the truth, they will not be able to trust themselves even if, as they are fond of saying, they get at the truth itself in most cases or come as close to it as possible."

11 *Se dicent sequi* (and *cum dicant posse accidere* further down) in § 36 is thus not a report from Lucullus' own resources, but of something he has heard the day before, i.e. that was said in *Catul.*

12 See Paul. Fest. p. 33 Müller = p. 37 Lindsay: *considerare a contemplatione siderum uidetur appellari*; Thurneysen 1905, 183: "die zu einem Sternbild (*sidus*) gehörigen Sterne mit dem Blick zusammensuchen und vereinigen"; Walde ³1938, vol. i, 263: "die Gestirne beobachten bzw. mit dem Blick zusammenfassen"; Părvulescu 1980, 159 n. 1.

13 See Reinhardt 2018, 247 n. 74.

of other conditions but jointly add up to a particular medical condition (*M.* 7.176–9):¹⁴

οἷον ὁ ἀνθρώπου σπῶν φαντασίαν ἐξ ἀνάγκης καὶ τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν λαμβάνει φαντασίαν καὶ τῶν ἐκτός, [177] τῶν μὲν περὶ αὐτὸν <ὡς> χροῶς μεγέθους σχήματος κινήσεως λαλιᾶς ἐσθῆτος ὑποδέσεως, τῶν δὲ ἐκτός ὡς ἀέρος φωτὸς ἡμέρας οὐρανοῦ γῆς φίλων, τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων. ὅταν οὖν μηδεμία τούτων τῶν φαντασιῶν περιέληκεν ἡμᾶς τῷ φαίνεσθαι ψευδῆς, ἀλλὰ πᾶσαι συμφώνως φαίνονται ἀληθεῖς, μᾶλλον πιστεύομεν. [178] ὅτι γὰρ οὗτός ἐστι Σωκράτης, πιστεύομεν ἐκ τοῦ πάντα αὐτῷ προσεῖναι τὰ εἰωθότα, χρῶμα μέγεθος σχῆμα διάληψιν τρίβωνα, τὸ ἐνθάδε εἶναι ὅπου οὐθεὶς ἐστὶν αὐτῷ ἀπαράλλακτος. [179] καὶ ὄν τρόπον τινὲς τῶν ἰατρῶν τὸν κατ' ἀλήθειαν πυρέσσοντα οὐκ ἐξ ἐνὸς λαμβάνουσι συμπτώματος, καθάπερ σφυγμοῦ σφοδρότητος ἢ δαψιλοῦς θερμοσίας, ἀλλ' ἐκ συνδρομῆς, οἷον θερμοσίας ἅμα καὶ σφυγμοῦ καὶ ἐλκώδους ἀφῆς καὶ ἐρυθήματος καὶ δίψους καὶ τῶν ἀνάλογον, οὕτω καὶ ὁ Ἀκαδημαϊκὸς τῇ συνδρομῇ τῶν φαντασιῶν ποιεῖται τὴν κρίσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, μηδεμιᾶς τε τῶν ἐν τῇ συνδρομῇ φαντασιῶν περισπώσης αὐτὸν ὡς ψευδοῦς λέγει ἀληθὲς εἶναι τὸ προσπίπτον.

For example, he who derives an impression from a man necessarily conceives an impression of his personal properties as well as of those external to him – (177) of his personal properties, like colour, height, shape, movement, speech, dress and footwear, of his external properties like the air around him, light, day, heaven, earth, friends, and all the rest. When now none of these impressions diverts us by appearing false, but all, in harmony with one another, appear true, we have more confidence. (178) For we feel confident that this is Socrates on the basis of all the familiar properties being present in him, his colour, height, shape, manner of speaking, coat, as well as his being present in a location where there is nobody exactly like him. (179) And just as some doctors do not infer that a particular patient is suffering from a true case of fever from one symptom, like too quick a pulse or a very high temperature, but from a “co-occurrence” (συνδρομή) of such symptoms, such as high temperature and at the same time a quick pulse and tenderness to the touch and redness and thirst and analogous symptoms, so also the Academic makes a judgement of what is true and false on the basis of a concurrence of impressions, and says, when none of the impressions in the syndrome moves him to think that it is false, that the occurrent impression is true.

14 The translation is my own; for that of § 179 see already Reinhardt 2018, 224. Pioneering use of the conception of the syndrome was made by the Persian doctor Avicenna in the eleventh century, but the notion as such goes back to Hellenistic medicine.

In his report on Carneades' views on the criterion, Sextus relays that Carneades used the notion of the syndrome to illustrate that a persuasive impression can be viewed not as a single impression rich in content, which might be deemed to merit endorsement in virtue of the unique detail with which it represents its object, but rather as made up of a "chain" of component impressions (§ 176: ἄλλοις) which jointly account for the object. As a consequence, he has two ways of characterising persuasive impressions, either as a composite, whose phenomenal content could be referenced as "this is Socrates", or, as it were, in an exploded view, where the content is characterised in terms of the individual impressions which jointly make up the chain of impressions ("this is a man, located in the agora, exhibiting Socrates' distinctive features, namely ..." etc.).¹⁵ How exactly conceiving of perceptual thoughts in these terms is supposed to work raises numerous questions.¹⁶ The key point of the Carneadean scheme, as James Allen has put it,¹⁷ is that "an impression's value as evidence is sensitive to the other impressions which somehow bear on its chances of being true or false." This contrasts with the Stoic view, on which an impression's chances of being true or false are completely unrelated to other impressions, although other impressions may have a bearing on a true impression's ability to retain assent.¹⁸

One can see, I hope, why the mapping of two images – medical syndrome and constellation – might have seemed satisfactory to Cicero, but it is inconvenient that the cataleptic impression also seems to be represented by a constellation, albeit a different one which is harder to make out. Ideally, using the imagery, one would expect the Stoic to be guided by a single star, as this would correspond to the idea that in terms of phenomenal content a cataleptic impression contains within itself the unique detail which makes it self-warranting. It would be disappointing if Cicero was so fond of his early Aratus translation that he would mishandle this passage, pivotal for the reasons set out above, by quoting the two lines even though the imagery is not just ill-fitting but actively misleading.

At this point it becomes necessary to investigate how exactly the two constellations can be used for navigation, how Cicero assumed they were

15 The section on the Carneadean *πιθανόν* in Sextus includes a number of features which make the Academic sound dogmatic, e.g., that he regards impressions as true or that he assents to them. I believe that this is more likely to be due to Sextus' tendency of painting the Academics as negative dogmatists than to, e.g., Sextus' source reflecting an Academic position which permits assent under proviso (see *Luc.* 148 for this option).

16 I discuss some of them in Reinhardt 2018.

17 Allen 1994, 94.

18 Neither party in this dispute is particularly concerned with epistemic failure *qua* loss of epistemic opportunity, i.e. with the failure to accept or go with impressions which ought to be deemed acceptable.

used for the purposes of our passage, and what learned discussion existed about them at that time. The present-day survivalist would refer to both constellations not directly, but in order to figure out where the North Star is (sc. in the northern hemisphere), i.e. the star which is closest to the celestial pole, the point in the night sky around which the constellations appear to rotate. For the Great Bear, this would involve drawing a line through the two stars marking the rear of the constellation and extending it until one finds the North Star.¹⁹ As to the Little Bear, Polaris or *α ursae minoris* is actually contained within the constellation; it is the star at the tip of the handle.²⁰

This would fit better with how the two constellations ought to illustrate the difference between the Stoic and the Academic construal of certain privileged perceptual thoughts, true ones which cannot be false and ones which appear true but may be false respectively. While the stars which make up the Great Bear would stand for the component impressions of the ‘syndrome’ posited by Carneades’ scheme, the status of the stars in the Little Bear would not be equal to one another: *one* star would stand for the cataleptic impression and as such be privileged, while the others would represent impressions corresponding to antecedently held beliefs. We know from later Stoic texts that whether or not a cataleptic impression gains or retains the assent of the non-sage was construed as depending, in certain circumstances, on its coherence with such antecedently held beliefs.²¹

However, there are two problems with this account or rather its applicability to *Luc.* 66. First, due to axial precession, i.e. the cyclical gravity-induced shift of the earth’s rotational axis over approximately 26,000 years, Polaris was not the star closest to the North Pole during the Hellenistic period. Second, in the lines from Aratus’ *Phaenomena* which Cicero translates and in their wider context in Aratus, there is no reference to any star which is closest to the pole: rather, Aratus speaks of the constellations in their entirety without going into further detail.²²

Attempts to locate the star or stars which are closest to the celestial pole were already successfully made in ancient Egypt, and it has been suggested that a star in the Great Bear (*ζ ursae maioris*; Mizar) and one in the Little Bear (*β ursae minoris*; Kochab), together known as ‘The Indestructibles’ because they never set and rotated around the pole, were used to orient the

19 See Gooley 2010, 111 and 114.

20 Information on latitude would be provided by how high in the sky the pole and the constellations sit. Determining longitude is famously more complex in the absence of landmarks.

21 See Sextus, *M.* 7.253–55 with Reinhardt 2018, 241–2.

22 See above n. 7.

Great Pyramid at Giza around 2480 B.C.²³ Kochab was as a matter of fact the star closest to the pole relatively speaking, but not as close as Polaris is today, in the period of approximately 1800 B.C. to A.D. 300. No views on the subject are attested for pre-Homeric Greek civilisations. The constellation referred to in Hom. *Il.* 18.488 = *Od.* 5.274 is likely to be the Great Bear.²⁴ Thales of Miletus was credited with ‘discovering’ the Little Bear according to Callimachus’ *Iambi*.²⁵ Yet no doubt because there was no bright star in the night sky in the northern hemisphere which was particularly close to the pole, the notion that there was or should be a star near the pole or even actually marking it was slow to emerge and remained but a thin strand in texts on the subject during the Hellenistic period.²⁶ Eudoxus of Cnidus (app. 408–355 B.C.) did in fact posit such a pole star, which is usually assumed to be β *ursae minoris*.²⁷ It was also Eudoxus who wrote the texts which were the main source of Aratus’ *Phaenomena*,²⁸ but as I mentioned, when talking about the Little Bear Aratus does not comment on the individual stars which make up the constellation. Aratus then had a rich reception, both as a poet and as a writer who relayed astronomical information.²⁹ With respect to the latter, the only extant substantial piece of writing that we have of the astronomer Hipparchus (c. 2 B.C.) is a commentary on the *Phaenomena*, in which he criticises Aratus for inaccuracy.³⁰ What is more, Hipparchus had access to the works of Eudoxus which Aratus used as sources, and it is in his commentary that the information that Eudoxus posited a pole star is preserved.³¹

A case can now be made that Cicero was aware of this fact: he knew of Eudoxus’ *Phaenomena*, stated that Aratus’ adaptation was wanting in its astronomical detail,³² apparently echoing Hipparchus (1.1.8) on this point,

23 See Spence 2000, 320–24.

24 See Anghelina 2010, who argues plausibly against the notion that the line must refer to the Little Bear (and is for that reason to be regarded as a later interpolation).

25 Callim. frg. 191.54–5 Pfeiffer = D.L. 1.23.

26 On the issue in general see Hübner 2019, 1129–1153.

27 Frg. 11 in Lasserre 1966: Παρὶ μὲν οὖν τοῦ βορείου πόλου Εὐδοξος ἀγνοεῖ λέγων οὕτως: ‘ἔστι δέ τις ἀστὴρ μένων αἰεὶ κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν τόπον· οὗτος δὲ ὁ ἀστὴρ πόλος ἐστὶ τοῦ κόσμου.’ To the secondary references assembled by Hübner 2019, 1137 n. 59 on the identification of the star with β *ursae minoris* add Le Boeuffle 1977, 92–3 and n. 3. By contrast Kidd 1997, 179 wonders if Eudoxus was “perpetuating a very old tradition dating back to c. 2750 BC, when the bright star α Draconis was close to that position [i.e. the pole].”

28 On Eudoxus’ *Phaenomena* as a source for Aratus see Kidd 1997, 14–18.

29 See, e.g., Hübner 2005; Gee 2013; Ciano, *Aratea*, 2019, 9–20.

30 For Hipparchus see Manitius 1895; on the approach taken in his commentary see Bishop 2016.

31 Frg. 11 Lasserre 1966 is Hipp. 1.4.1.

32 *De orat.* 1.69, *Rep.* 1.22.

and his Aratus translation, like that of Germanicus created early in the Christian era, has been shown to reflect not just its source but also the scholia tradition on it, including in the lines which Cicero cites in *Luc.* 66.³³

On a superficial examination the literary reception of the Aratean lines on the two constellations does not speak to the question of whether one star in the Little Bear was closest to the pole, but there is at least one passage which can plausibly be so read,³⁴ and another which reflects Eudoxus' views in garbled form.³⁵

In the lost *Catulus*, in the Carneadean section of which we have the beginning of its later incarnation in *Ac.* 1.46, the allegory of the two constellations and of how their use corresponds to the use of persuasive and cataleptic impressions respectively would not have required a complex introduction. That the Little Bear contains one privileged star which is closest to the pole could have featured as a piece of *recherché* knowledge of the kind the characters in Ciceronian dialogues delight in on occasion. (That the star was hard to make out would have aided Cicero's point.) More generally, astronomy and the understanding and use of celestial phenomena feature elsewhere in

- 33 With Aratus 43 *μειοτέρη γὰρ πᾶσα περιστρέφεται στροφάλιγγι* compare Cicero's translation *quae cursu interiore, breui conuertitur orbe* in the light of *Schol. in Aratum vetera* p. 90.2–3 Martin: *ἐλάττονι στροφῆι χρήται καὶ περιφορᾷ* and p. 91.1–2 M.: *ἐλάττονα κύκλον περιγράφει τῆ στροφῆ καὶ τῷ πόλῳ*; Cicero's *cursu breui* seems to be owed to the scholia (*ἐλάττονι στροφῆι; ἐλάττονα κύκλον*). See Ciano, *Auxiliartext*, 2019, 34; Atzert 1908, 2–11; Gee 2013, 523–7; Čulík-Baird 2018, 652 n. 23. That Cicero's copy of Aratus contained annotation has been suggested by Soubiran 1972, 93, and the same has been suggested for Vitruvius (see Lasserre 1966, 184), but if true this would not preclude direct access to the commentary tradition as well. On the nature of the Aratus scholia more generally see Kidd 1997, 43–8.
- 34 In Lucan 8.172–79 the poet has a helmsman speak of the brightest star (*axis*) within the two bears; the helmsman goes on to talk about the Little Bear in more detail, which is best explained by assuming that it is in this constellation that he locates the *axis*. That *axis* does not mean 'pole' here is clear from its attribute *clarissimus*; thus correctly *OLD*, s. v. *axis* no. 4. Note also that in the preceding text the helmsman's interlocutor Pompey asked which particular star in the Great Bear he was using for navigation to Libya (l. 170 *aut quotus in Plastro Libyam bene derigat ignis*); by talking about the Little Bear, the helmsman tactfully corrects Pompey's mistaken preconception. The preface of Euclid's *Phaenomena* – a text without significant reception in Rome – seems to rely on Eudoxus' view that there is a North Star (*ὁρᾶται δὲ τις ἀστὴρ μεταξύ τῶν ἄρκτων οὐ μεταλλάσων τόπον ἐκ τόπου, ἀλλ' ἐν ἧ ἔστι χώρα, ἐν ταύτῃ στρεφόμενος*) which is close to the pole. I am assuming that this star is as in Lucan presented as a star that features in both constellations viewed together and that *μεταξύ* means 'amongst' (see *LSJ*, s. v. II.1a) not 'spatially between', since Euclid cannot be positing a star which is not part of some constellation, and would have identified it if it was in neither of the two Bears but, e.g., in Draco (for Draco winding itself around the two Bears see, e.g., Seneca, *Medea* 694–7).
- 35 See Vitruvius 9.4.6 (= Eudoxus frg. 15 Lasserre), with Lasserre 1966, 188 and Hübner 2019, 1142. The passage is also an instance for the use of *polus* to refer to an individual star (*stella*); compare *axis* discussed in the previous note, which can also denote the pole.

Cicero's philosophical dialogues, either as an intellectual interest of the interlocutors or in the narrative – which Cicero develops in several works – on how Greek learning, philosophy, and science came to Rome and how they were appropriated and deployed by the Romans. In *Luc.* 66 Cicero could then be referencing this section in the *Catulus*, using his own translation of Aratus.

If this was what Cicero had in mind, it could be entirely adequately conveyed by the two lines quoted from the Aratus translation, since the reader would supply how exactly the Little Bear is to be used from the earlier discussion. However, it is worth looking at the wording of the passage more closely, to see if the notion that the Little Bear affords particular accuracy in navigation because of one particular star in it might not actually be present here. A question to be considered in this context is when the Cicero character is speaking on the level of the *illustrans* and when on the level of the *illustrandum*. In the middle of § 66, having reasserted that the main subject of discussion between Lucullus and him is the sage, the Cicero character professes that he is prone to *opining*, i.e. to giving assent when as per his overall policy he should not, and that he aims his *cogitationes*, and this is where he shifts to the *illustrans*, not at the Little Bear but at the Great Bear. *Cogitationes*, which is not a technical term in *Luc.*, requires some explanation. It is not itself part of the allegory, i.e. it characterises what attitude to impressions Cicero adopts and what Cicero 'does' with impressions in non-metaphorical terms. The mere experiencing of perceptual impressions could hardly be so described (and is very unlikely to be at issue on independent grounds).³⁶ We do know especially from the Sextan evidence that the Academics wish to engender a reflective attitude to one's impressions, which includes careful evaluation, testing, possibly modification of the conditions under which impressions are experienced, and finally the keeping of an open mind about a given impression in perpetuity even after it has gained a permitted form of endorsement. This attitude is to be contrasted with the automatic or quasi-automatic endorsement of cataleptic impressions which the Stoic view envisages. When we get to *sed Helicen*, where *ad* (sc. *sed ad Helicen*) is to be supplied from above, the explanation introduced by *id est* (viz. ... *id est rationes has latiore specie*) can only be intended to elucidate *Septemtriones* by contrasting the constellation with the Little Bear (... *non ad tenue limatas*). It could do this by elaborating on what the two constellations are supposed to represent on the level of the *illustrandum*, or it could do so by specifying the nature and envisaged cognitive treatment of the two constellations, i.e. remain on the level of the *illustrans*. Translations of *rationes has latiore spe-*

36 See OLD, s. v. *cogitatio* no. 1 (compare 4).

cie non ad tenue limatas tend to opt for a version of the former solution.³⁷ One reason why one may have doubts about these translations is that the characterisation which they give of the Academic approach, whether its wording reflects the Academic point of view or (assuming Cicero speaks half in jest as he does when calling himself a *magnus opinator* above) the Stoic point of view, is at best vague and at worst does not fit: Academics do not usually see themselves as less precise, less rigorous, or less sophisticated thinkers. I suggest that the *id est* clause refers to the use of the two constellations and therefore to what they are supposed to illustrate only indirectly. For this to work, one needs to assume that *ratio* means ‘pattern’, as used of the geometrically organised plants in a formal garden,³⁸ or indeed of the ordered stars of a constellation. These are *specie latiore*, “of wider visual appearance”, because the Great Bear is larger and the individual stars further apart from each other than the Little Bear. *Limare* arguably does not have its primary meaning here, i.e. “to smooth and shape with a file”, but its secondary meaning ‘to explore, scrutinise’,³⁹ used of the visual and mental homing-in on the star closest to the pole. This star is referred to by *tenue*, so

- 37 Thus Reid 1885: “by reasonings which presents a broader aspect, and are not polished to extreme refinement”, Rackham 1951: “by these theories of wider aspect, not fined down and over-subtilized”, Schäublin/Graeser/Bächli 1995: “nach solchen Grundsätzen, die einen weiteren Anblick gewähren und nicht bis ins kleinste ausgefeilt sind”, Brittain 2006: “by more easily accessible principles, not ones refined almost to the vanishing point”, Kany-Turpin/Pellegrin 2010: “des systèmes à l’aspect plus large, que la lime n’a pas amenisés.”
- 38 See *TLL*, s. v. col. 185.24–9; *OLD*, s. v. no. 13a; e.g.. Pliny, *N.H.* 17.63: (*amygdalas*) *ternas simul serendas, triangula ratione*; 17.78: *in disponendis arboribus arbustisque ac uineis quincuncialis ordinum ratio uilgata et necessaria*.
- 39 Not recognised by *OLD*, but see *TLL*, s. v. 1. *limo* col. 1422.71–1423.3. Nonius p. 333.36–7 M.: ‘*limare* exquirere et delenire secundum consuetudinem a lima [aliam: codd.] dictum. Compare also Cic. *Off.* 3.35: *ueritas ipsa limatur in disputatione subtili*, on which Dyck 1996, 415 rightly notes that *ipsa* discourages positing the basic sense of ‘filing, polishing’. That *ueritas* is here the subject of *limatur* resonates with my reading of *Luc.* 66. However, it should be acknowledged that the reading which I am rejecting can be contextualised and supported with better parallels than have hitherto been cited (as far as I can see), namely the manner in which Cicero in the *Aratea*, developing metaphors already found in Aratus (*Phaen.* 371: *μωρφώσας*), presents the night sky as a work of art created by the ultimate artisan, Nature; consider *Aratea* 160–4, esp. 160: *Nam quae sideribus claris natura poliuit | et uario pinxit distinguit lumine formas, | haec ille astrorum custos ratione notauit | signaque dignauit caelestia nomine uero*. See the discussion in Gee 2013, 531–2. Even on this reading, though, the explanation from *id est* would yield better sense if said on the level of the illustrans and if *rationes* meant ‘patterns’. A consideration which tells against this reading is that the Cicero character would be buying into Aratus’ fundamental assumption that the universe is providentially organised, since the logical subject of the action denoted by *limare* would be Nature, not the perceiving human subject. On physics as a field where *quot homines tot sententiae* applies see *Luc.* 116–28.

that the phrase *ad tenue* denotes the point of arrival of the search for the North Star, not the outcome or effect of the mechanical operation of filing.⁴⁰ Thus I translate from *id est*: “i.e. patterns of a wider appearance and not explored to the finest point.” Cicero could have written *rationem hanc latiore specie non ad tenue limatam*, but since what is at issue is his handling of persuasive impressions as an Academic, he has opted for the plural, allowing in this respect the illustrandum to inform his formulation. The concluding *eo fit ut errem et uager latius* is open to two readings: either *errare* and *uagari* form a hendiadys, in which case *errare* is durative in aspect and denotes a state (if not of “aimlessly wandering around” then of “being in the wrong”), or they do not form a hendiadys, in which case *errare* is punctual in aspect and used of going wrong conceived as a one-off, momentary event (albeit one happening routinely or repeatedly). On this second reading *errare* aims at assent, i.e. at Cicero’s opining when he should not, and *uagari* at the consequences of his following the Great Bear, viz. using persuasive impressions rather than cataleptic ones; thus the concluding remark would neatly pick up the two elements of the *et ... et* structure above. Such a separation between the topics of endorsement and the epistemic status of the impressions used by the Academic is also in evidence in what follows (*uisa enim ... assentior; nec percipio tamen*), which I take as further support. Moreover, *error* is *inter alia* a Stoic technical term associated with rash assent,⁴¹ and the entire section draws on Stoic terminology. More generally, Cicero is clearly talking about a second-best way of navigating, not about one which on occasion issues in total failure, as the first reading would have it.

If this is right, then *uagari latius* is said on the level of the illustrating image. The verb means ‘to stray, wander’. How is this term apt to characterise navigation by the Great Bear? The constellation rotates around the celestial pole. Since the pole itself is not visible and since the constellation has a certain extension as noted by Cicero, it is not straightforward to align with the pole. This matters in particular if one wants to travel north or south: references to the Great Bear will sometimes yield a course of true north or south, and will sometimes be off by a number of degrees. Over time, i.e. the course of an entire night or indeed several nights, this will lead to a zig-

40 Both options under consideration feature in Pinkster 2021, 829 as direction and goal adjuncts. Compare also Ausonius, *ecl.* 20.1–3 Green for the combination of a verb of exploration with an adjunct with *ad*: *Vir bonus et sapiens ... iudex ipse sui totum se explorat ad unguem*. For *tenue* almost as a noun compare Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* 7.4.12, where it contrasts with *comprehensibile*.

41 See *Ac.* 1.42: *Errorum autem et temeritatem et ignorantiam et opinionem et suspicionem et uno nomine omnia quae essent aliena firmatae et constantis assensionis a uirtute sapientiae remouebat*.

zagging movement, and the references to the constellation which lead to a course that is slightly off will be offset by those which issue in an exactly northern or southern course. Travelling from east to west or from west to east is more straightforward since all one has to do is keep the Great Bear to one's starboard or port side; it will not matter that one does not sit close to or on the pole. Overall, one will get it more often right than not, but it will not be transparent when exactly one does not get it right. This, I submit, is what *uagari* means.

The next question is what this means on the level of the thing to be illustrated. Assuming that a *probabile* which does not deliver true north is a false *probabile*, a true *probabile* will often correct the effect of such a false one. This is undoubtedly true in many cases in all the domains in which we might experience *probabilia* (perception, thought; everyday experience; the various areas of philosophy) but optimistic overall, in particular because the effect of following a false impression may be catastrophic: if, to modify one of Sextus' examples, the thing coiled up in the corner of the room is actually a snake, not a rope, then this may have serious consequences which are not easily reversed. Does this cast doubt on the overall reading offered here? Perhaps not, given that the entire allegory seeks to illustrate successful navigation and best-case scenarios: the Phoenicians get to go where they want to as well, and more directly.

Still, the reader cannot but reflect on the way in which each approach fails. The Academic, as I said, may follow or even assent to a persuasive impression that leads them seriously astray. The Stoic may, to use the allegory, fail to make out the Little Bear and the North Star in particular. What then? Using the Great Bear instead is not an option at least for the Stoic sage, while it represents not just an epistemic but a moral failing for the Stoic προκόπτων.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the passage is a more fundamental one, though. It is the manner in which Cicero aligns the way in which an Academic lives with that of the Stoic.⁴² Assuming that the sea voyage stands for life in general, from navigating the physical world over decision-making to seeking happiness, one might have thought that dogmatist and Academic are not comparable in this way. While philosophical schools were individuated with reference to the highest good in the Hellenistic period, the Academy

42 While it is plain that Cicero deploys extracts from the Aratus translation for different purposes in different works, it is to be noted that in *N.D.*, composed later in the same year as *Luc.*, extracts from the *Aratea*, and the lines featuring in *Luc.* 66 in particular, are used to illustrate the Stoic view that the universe is providentially organised (see 2.98; 2.105–6). There, however, the speaker Balbus represents Stoicism, unlike the Cicero character in *Luc.* For citations of the *Aratea* see also *Leg.* 2.7, *Or.* 152, *Div.* 1.13–5 (Quintus speaking).

between Arcesilaus and Philo of Larissa is usually taken to be the odd one out. Nor did the Academics accept that they held at least one tenet dogmatically, viz. that nothing can be known. So is Cicero's Academic scepticism fundamentally different from a posture that is crucially characterised by an argument practice, viz. the *ad hominem* rebuttal of dogmatic views, or is he minimising the difference between his and the dogmatist's approach in an illegitimate way?⁴³

Relatedly, what is Cicero's response to the charge that his use of knowledge talk during the events of the Catilinarian conspiracy, i.e. that he had "learnt" (the verb used is *comperire*) certain facts about Catiline's machinations, was at variance with his avowed outlook? We are entitled, even encouraged, to ask this question since Cicero said in § 65 that he would be speaking *de fama mea*. One can also note that the navigation allegory has a political dimension in that in Cicero the notion of the state as a ship is never far away.⁴⁴ The implication seems to be that he is entitled to speaking in this way and that his knowledge claims must be understood as being predicated on getting things right most of the time. This would sit better with the reading of *eo fit ut errem et uager latius* which I defended above than with the one I rejected. It also suggests that Cicero has carefully considered going quite far in aligning a life guided by *probabilia* with the dogmatist's *modus operandi*.⁴⁵

43 I discuss some of these larger questions elsewhere and opt for the former option; see Reinhardt, *Academic Scepticism*, 2022.

44 In the Catilinarian speeches (1.12, 2.7) he calls the conspirator's followers *sentina*, the "bilgewater" which collects at the bottom of a ship.

45 I confine to a footnote a brief survey of earlier overall readings of *Luc.* 66, none of which is very detailed. The basic suggestion which characterises my interpretation, viz. that the larger context distinguishes between the epistemic status of impressions and their endorsement and that these two issues should feature in the sentence which embeds the quotations from the Aratus translation, has not so far been made. Rather, existing interpretations differ from my reading with respect to who is being contrasted or what is being contrasted. Schäublin/Graeser/Bächli 1995, 244 n. 195 argue that Academics and Stoics (and Zeno *qua* 'Phoenician' in particular) are being contrasted, and that the Little Bear stands for clear and settled distinctions ("Unterscheidungen") whereas the Academic has no such distinctions to rely on. Görler 1997, 56 and idem 2016, 248 assumes that the Academic approach is associated with navigation by the Great Bear on the high seas, while navigation by the Little Bear stands for unambitious seafaring close to land (and no particular school or philosopher, but generic *minuti philosophi*); on the level of the illustrandum, the Great Bear is assumed to stand for "erhabene, weitreichende Gedanken". Straume-Zimmermann/Broemser/Gigon 1997, 410 posit a contrast between the sage who uses the Little Bear and the layman who uses the Great Bear and assumes that the Little Bear is a small star "im Sternbild des Wagen". Thorsrud 2012, 141 sees a contrast between Cicero and the Stoic sage, and between different types of "principles"; these are characterised by their properties, of being evident but imprecise or being precise but hard to make out.

§ 66 is not free of rhetorical calculation, which is to be taken into account when its status as a fundamental statement on how the Academic approach contrasts with the Stoic one is assessed. The tone is self-deprecating and conciliatory, as it often is around the beginnings of speeches in the dialogues. Cicero allows for the notional possibility that the Stoic sage is guided by cataleptic impressions. As an Academic he can of course not accept that they exist. Elsewhere he says something different about impressions: that Stoics and Academics seek to characterise the same real-world phenomenon, an assessment with which Galen concurred.⁴⁶ On this view, unless one has the strength of the Academic sage, occasional *error* and *uagari* characterise the human condition in general.

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⁴⁶ See *Luc.* 105: *Non enim lucem eripimus, sed ea quae uos percipi comprehendique, eadem nos si modo probabilia sint uideri dicimus*, and Galen, *Plac. Hipp.* 9.7.3 (p. 778 Kühn = p. 586 De Lacy) and 9.9.37 (p. 802 Kühn = p. 606 De Lacy): the ‘New Academics’ equate the περιωδευμένη φαντασία, said to be like πιθανή φαντασία and the ἀπερίσπαστος φαντασία, with the cataleptic impression.

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