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Carneades says that he will concede the rest of it to the Stoics, but not the clause 'of such a kind as could not arise from what is not'. For impressio arise from what is not as well as from what is. (2) The fact that they are found to be equally self-evident and striking is an indication of the indiscernibility, and an indication of their being equally self-evident as striking is the fact that the consequential actions are linked to [both kind of impression]. Just as in waking states a thirsty man gets pleasure from drinking, and someone who flees from a wild beast or any other terror shouts and screams, so too in dreams people satisfy their thirst and this they are drinking from a spring, and it is just the same with the fear those who have nightmares... Just as in normal states too we believe at assent to very clear appearances, behaving towards Dion, for instance, Dion and towards Theon as Theon, so too in madness some people have the similar experience. When Hercules was deranged, he got impression from his own children as though they were those Eurytheus, and he attached the consequential action to this impression which was to kill his enemy's children, as he did. (3) If then impression are cognitive in so far as they induce us to assent and to attach to them a consequential action, since false impressions are plainly of this kind it we must say that incognitve ones are indiscernible from the cognitive (4) The Academics are no less effective in proving indiscernibility in respect to impression and impression. They confound the Stoic appearances. In the case of things which are similar in shape but differ objectively it is impossible to distinguish the cognitive impression from that which is false and incognitive. E.g. if I give the Stoic first one then another of two exactly similar eggs to discriminate, will the man, by focusing on them, be able to say infallibly that the one egg being shown is this one rather than that one? The same argument applies in the case of twins. For the virtuous man will get a false impression albeit one from what is and imprinted and stamped exactly in accordance with what is, if the impression he gets from Castor he is one of Polydeuce.

[Speaker: Cicero on behalf of the New Academy] (1) We may take him [Arcesilaus] to have asked Zeno what would happen if the wise man could not know anything and it was the mark of the wise man not to assume. (2) Zeno, I imagine, replied that the wise man would not assume since there was something cognitive. (3) What then was this? Zeno, I suppose, said an impression. (4) What kind of impression? Zeno then defined it as an impression stamped and reproduced from something which is, exactly as it is. [Arcesilaus] next asked whether this was still valid if a true impression was just like a false one. [At this point Zeno was sharp enough to see that if an impression from what is were such that an impression from what is not could be just like it, there was no cognitive impression. [Arcesilaus] agreed that it was right to add this to the definition, since neither a false impression nor a true one would be cognitive if the latter were just such as even a false one could be. (6) But he applied all his force to this point of the argument, in order to show that no impression arising from something true is such that an impression arising from something false could not also be just like it. [This is the one controversial issue which has lasted up to the present. (continued at 69H)]

Cicero, Academica II 77-8

A presentation (or mental impression) is an impression on the soul: the name having been appropriately borrowed from the imprint made by the stamp upon the wax. There are two species of presents, the one apprehending a real object, the other not. The former, which they take to be the test of reality, is defined as that which proceeds from a real object, agrees with that object itself, and has been imprinted real-fashion and stamped upon the mind; while the latter, or non-apprehending presentations, are indications that which do not proceed from any real object, or, if it does, is to agree with the reality itself, not being clear.

And of the apparently true kind of presentations, one sort is obscure—the sort, for instance, that found in the case of those who have a perception of color and not of the object viewed or owing to the extent of it interval or even owing to the weakness of the senses—while the other sort, in addition to being apparently true, possesses this appearance of true to an intense degree. And of these, again, the presentation which is obscure and vague will not be a criterion; for because of its not indicating either itself or that which causes it, it is not of such nature as to persuade us or to induce us to assert:

Hence the apprehensive presentation is not the criterion of truth unconditionally, but only when it has no obstacle. For in this latter case it being plainly evident and striking, lays hold of us almost by the very hair, as they say, and drags us off to assent, needing nothing else to help it to be thus impressive or to suggest its superiority over all others. For this reason, too, every man, when he is anxious to apprehend any object exactly, appears of himself to pursue after a presentation of this kind—as for instance, in the case of visible things, when he receives a dim presentation of the real object. For he intensifies his gaze and draws close to the object of sight as not to go wholly astray, and rubs his eyes and in general uses every means until he can receive a clear and striking presentation of the thing under inspection, as though he considered that the credibility of the apprehension depended upon that.