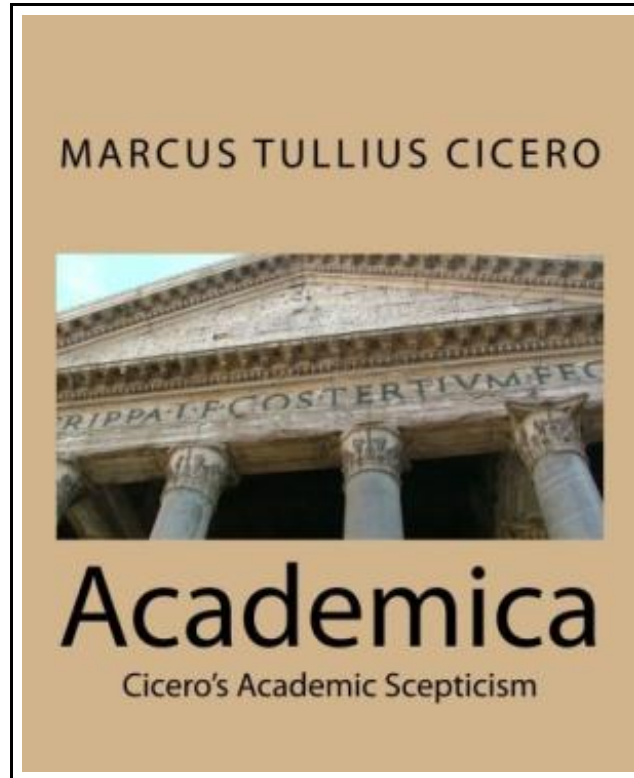


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Reviews

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ACADEMICA: CICERO S ACADEMIC SCEPTICISM



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Createspace, United States, 2012. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 252 x 190 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Cicero 106-43 adopted the philosophical view of the Academic skeptics as a young man. In 89, Philo of Larissa, the head of Plato s Academy, fled from Athens to Rome for political reasons. While at Rome, Cicero attended Philo s public lectures and began to study philosophy with him. Cicero also studied with the most prominent representatives of other Hellenistic philosophical schools: Posidonius (a Stoic), Zeno of Citium and Phaedrus (Epicureans), and Cratippus. Although the Academy probably ceased to exist as an institution after Philo s death in 84, Cicero continued to champion its methodology in his philosophical dialogues. The Academic position appealed to Cicero for a variety of reasons (Section 1). The Academics argued on both sides of every issue in order to undermine the dogmatic confidence of their interlocutors. Cicero s teacher Philo also applied this method in order to determine which position enjoyed the most rational support. Given his rhetorical and forensic skills, Cicero likely found this method attractive. It was also ideal for his project of inducing the ruling class Romans to take up the practice of philosophy. Rather than present his personal views, Cicero laid out in dialogue form the strongest arguments he could mine from other philosophical texts. The idea was to encourage the reader to come to his own conclusion, but even more importantly, to adopt the Academic method of inquiry. Perhaps the most attractive feature of Academic philosophy for Cicero was the intellectual freedom guaranteed by the method. The Academic is bound to no particular doctrine as an Academic. He is only bound to accept the verdict of his best rational assessment of the arguments pro and con.



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