

one can always tell whether an impression is *true or false*; but one can always tell whether an impression is *of the cognitive kind* or not. And when it is, it is guaranteed to be true. Having a belief based on such an impression is all that (ordinary) knowledge requires. So, surprising as it may be to us, Stoics were committed to the claim that there are some impressions one gets when one perceives that cannot be like the ones one gets in dreams, and that there are some impressions one gets from seeing a certain man that could not be had by seeing his twin (see LS 40I, LS 40C and Frede, 1987, 162–3).

Not only Stoics thought that there was a discernible class of true impressions, but their debate with Academic sceptics was premised on the claim that *without it, there could not be any knowledge*:

Zeno defined [a cognitive impression] 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. 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 to the present [Cicero's times]. (LS 40D, emphasis mine)

Thus Sceptics granted—if only for the sake of argument—that knowledge required discernible marks of truth. But they denied there were any. They used the now familiar tools of the sceptical trade: fakes (a wax pomegranate, LS 40F), duplicates (two eggs or twins, LS 40H), dreams (LS 40H) and madness (LS 40H). More generally, they argued that for any particular property that was supposed to set cognitive impressions apart, a false impression could have it: Carneades claimed that a false impression could be as “striking” and “self-evident” as any true one (LS 40H).

It is worth contrasting the New Story's account with others. On one reading, sometimes called “internalist”, Stoics require that one can antecedently know *that cognitive impressions are true*.<sup>33</sup> That makes it puzzling why Academic Sceptics did not raise a regress issue (Frede, 1987, 167; Frede, 1999, 314).

<sup>33</sup>See Frede (1987, 160, 167), who presents (and rejects) a traditional account on which “Stoic impressions [are] pictures or images of the world which can be looked at introspectively, with the mind's eye, as it were, to see whether they have this feature that guarantees their truth.” The state-