

# Episode 335 - EATAQ 17 - Epicurean Analysis Of Stoic Claims About Notions And Memory

Post by “Cassius” of May 24, 2026 at 2:25 PM

In today's Sunday zoom we spent virtually the entire session addressing the question of how to separate sensations from prolepsis from concepts. I am posting this in the podcast thread because it relates directly to what we are currently discussing in Cicero's "Academic Questions." I am taggin the main participants in today's zoom: [Martin](#), [Raphael Raul](#) [Patrikios Bryan](#) . Of course anyone else is welcome to respond too.

In this podcast episode Joshua and I struggled with this following paragraph (among others). It is critical to understand that this is Lucullus speaking from a Stoic perspective, so the following is not the Epicurean view, but similar issues are being addressed so we need to compare the terminology especially where underlined:

## Quote

But such as those things are which we say are perceived by the senses, such also are those things which are said to be perceived, not by the senses themselves, but by the senses after a fashion; as these things — that is white, this is sweet, that is tuneful, this is fragrant, that is rough. We have these ideas already comprehended by the mind, not by the senses. Again, this is a house, that is a dog. Then the rest of the series follows, connecting the more important links; such as these, which embrace, as it were, the full comprehension of things; — If he is a man, he is a mortal animal partaking of reason: — from which class of arguments the notions of things are impressed upon us, without which nothing can be understood, nor inquired into, nor discussed. But if those notions were false, (for you seemed to me to translate ἔννοιαι notions,) if, I say, they were false, or impressed, or perceptions of such a kind as not to be able to be distinguished from false ones; then I should like to know how we were to use them? and how we were to see what was consistent with each thing and what was inconsistent with it?

It can become very difficult to speak precisely about these things, but here in this paragraph we seem to have (if Yonge translates correctly) every one of these underlined references being referred to as, or close to, "notions."

We need to be clear from an Epicurean perspective the extent to which Epicurus would agree or disagree with this paragraph.

To make the distinction sharper, we can ask the question: Of the underlined illustrations, which if any, are in Epicurean terms:

- 1) sensations
- 2) prolepsis / anticipations / preconcepts
- 3) "notions"
- 4) concepts

Which of the underlined illustrations fit in one or some or all of these categories?