

CARNEADES' ARGUMENT IN CICERO'S *DE FATO* 23b-25

1. Text and translation

(I) *Acutius Carneades, qui docebat posse Epicureos suam causam sine hac commenticia declinatione defendere. nam cum doceret esse posse quendam animi motum voluntarium, id fuit defendi melius quam introducere declinationem, cuius praesertim causam reperire non possent; quo defenso facile Chrysippo possent resistere, cum enim concessissent motum nullum esse sine causa, non concederent omnia, quae fierent, fieri causis antecedentibus; voluntatis enim nostrae non esse causas externas et antecedentis.*

(II) **24** *communi igitur consuetudine sermonis abutimur, cum ita dicimus, velle aliquid quempiam aut nolle sine causa; ita enim dicimus 'sine causa', ut dicamus: sine externa et antecedente causa, non sine aliqua; ut, cum vas inane dicimus, non ita loquimur, ut physici, quibus inane esse nihil placet, sed ita, ut verbi causa sine aqua, sine vino, sine oleo vas esse dicamus, sic, cum sine causa animum dicimus moveri, sine antecedente et externa causa moveri, non omnino sine causa dicimus.*

(III) *de ipsa atomo dici potest, cum per inane moveatur gravitate et pondere, sine causa moveri, quia nulla causa accedat extrinsecus. 25 rursus autem, ne omnes physici inrideamur si dicamus quicquam fieri sine causa, distinguendum est et ita dicendum, ipsius individui hanc esse naturam, ut pondere et gravitate moveatur, eamque ipsam esse causam, cur ita feratur. Similiter ad animorum motus voluntarios non est requirenda externa causa; motus enim voluntarius eam naturam in se ipse continet, ut sit in nostra potestate nobisque pareat, nec id sine causa; eius rei enim causa ipsa natura est.*

(I) "(1) A more effective line was taken by Carneades, whose theory was that the Epicureans could defend their cause without this fictitious swerve. (1.1) For, since he (= Epicurus) taught that there was the possibility of a certain voluntary motion in the mind, it would have been better to defend that doctrine, than to introduce the swerve, especially as they could not discover its cause. (2) By defending it they could easily have withstood Chrysippus, (2.1) for in admitting that no motion is uncaused they would not have been conceding that all events are the result of antecedent causes, because there are no external antecedent causes of our volition.

(II) (24) Hence we are perverting the common usage when we say that someone wants or does not want something without a cause, we mean this 'without a cause' as 'without an exterior and antecedent cause', not 'without any kind of cause'; in the same way, when we say that a vessel is 'empty' we do not use the expression

‘empty’ as natural philosophers do, when they do not admit that there is absolute emptiness, but in the way we use the term to indicate that in the jar there is no water, wine or oil. So too, when we say that the mind moves ‘without a cause’ we mean ‘without an antecedent cause’ and not ‘without any cause at all’.

(III) Of the atom itself it can be said, when it is moved through the void by its heaviness and weight, that it is moved without a cause, because there is no influence of an external cause. (25) And again, if we do not want to be laughed at when speaking as natural philosophers and saying that something happens without a cause, we must distinguish and we must say that it is the nature of the atom itself to be moved by weight and heaviness, and that this is the cause why the atom is moving in that way. Similarly, we don’t need an external cause for the voluntary movements of our mind. For voluntary movement has in itself its own nature, i.e. to be in our power and to obey to us. Nor it is without a cause, since the cause is the thing’s own nature”.

2. Division of the text

The text offers a single argument, attributed by Cicero to Carneades, with illustrations and supplements that can be attributed to Cicero himself¹. We can distinguish three parts:

I) From *Acutius Carneades...* to *causas externas et antecedentis*, §23b. Here we have Cicero’s summary of Carneades’ argument with possibly some ideas by Cicero himself.

II) From *communi igitur consuetudine...* to *non omnino sine causa dicimus*, § 24a. Here we have an illustration by Cicero of a linguistic point.

III) From *de ipsa atomo dici potest...* to *causa ipsa natura est*, §§ 24b - 25. This is the philosophically most important part of the text. Here we have an analogy between the movements of the atoms and the voluntary movements of a human being. Cicero says that in both cases we have a cause, but not an external cause, since in both cases the movement derives from the nature of the thing.

Section (II) and (III) are clearly meant to support (I). (II) is about language and (III) is about reality. (II) is almost certainly by Cicero; so can be (III), but some ideas derive from the original Carneadean argument.

¹ Wisniewski 1970, 91, considers only the second part of § 23, from *acutius Carneades* to *externas et antecedentis*, to be an actual fragment of Carneades. I have not been able to see Mette’s edition.

3. Textual problems

The most important problem is at § 23, *docere<n>t*. The hss. give unanimously *doceret*, and the insertion of <n> is due to the German translator J.F. von Meyer². Yon and Wisniewski indicate the insertion in their editions of *De fato* and of Carneades' fragments. On the contrary Giomini, Bayer and others write directly *docerent*.

The change to the plural is intended to co-ordinate *docerent* with *Epicureos*, and with the plurals in the last part of the §: *possent* (A,B; *possunt* V²; *possem* V¹), *concessissent*, *concederent*. But perhaps it is not necessary.

The form *doceret* could be referred to Carneades, and Cicero would be attributing to him the theory that there are some voluntary movement of the mind. Nearly nobody among modern scholars follows this line, with the possible exception of Weische³, because it conflicts with the interpretation of Carneades as a philosopher proceeding in a wholly dialectical way and never taking a position *in proprio nomine*⁴.

Another possibility would be referring *doceret* to *Epicurus* of the first line of § 23, as Sharples and Sedley do⁵. The result is that the main thesis of (a), *esse posse quendam animi motum voluntarium* is attributed to Epicurus and the Epicureans only. I think that this is the best choice, and I will say more later on this point.

There is an oscillation between *possent* or *possunt*, at § 23. Some scholars think that the indicative form seems to be more appropriate⁶.

At § 25, *ne omnes physici inrideamur* is the text of the best hss. It has been accepted by Giomini (on the basis of ND 2.48: *ne hoc quidem physici intelligere potuistis*) and in L&S. But many people think that the meaning of the phrase should be (1) “if we all do not want be laughed at by the natural philosophers” or (2) “if we do not want be laughed at by all the natural philosophers”, and not (3) “if we all natural philosophers do not want to be laughed at”⁷. To arrive at this result they need to correct the received text. One solution for (1) is to write *ne omnes a physicis*

² von Meyer 1807, 236.

³ Weische 1961, 49-50. He thinks that here we have a revival of Plato's theory of the soul as a Self-mover, as can be found in *Phaidros* 245c-246a.

⁴ Ioppolo 1986, 193-97; L&S, II, 110: “Carneades as often was defending a dogmatic position for dialectical purposes”, cf. I, 448; Weische's proposal is judged unlikely also by Görler 1994, 887.

⁵ Sharples 1991, 73; Sedley 2005, 245 n.

⁶ According to Marwede 1984, 174, Carneades wants to introduce “a reason which is, or is assumed to be, an objective fact”.

⁷ Only Antonini 1994 chooses this translation: “Perché noi tutti fisici non siamo irrisi”.

inrideamur (Rackam, Bayer and some hss.⁸); for (2) some more correction is needed, as *ne omnibus a physicis inrideamur* (Anon. reviewer of Bremi, Christ), *ne omnes nos physici inrideant* (Bremi), or *ne omnes physici inrideant nos* (Müller, Klotz, Yon, Sharples). I wonder if the change is necessary: at § 24 Cicero distinguishes the use of the term ‘void’ by *physici* from the use of ‘void’ in common language. In § 25 he could refer to this distinction and say that we could be derided if we say, speaking as natural scientists, that something comes about without a cause.

4. Carneades’ argument

Let us start from the first section. In *De fato* Cicero presents two arguments by Carneades, one against Chrysippus, at § 31, and one against Epicurus, at § 23. The argument against Chrysippus at § 31 is:

(f = there is fate; c = everything takes place by antecedent causes; s = there is a closely knit web of causes; n = everything happens necessarily; x = something is in our power)

If f, then c; if c, then s; if s, then n: if n, then non-x.
But x, then
non-f.

Where the premise (x) “something is in our power (*est enim aliquid in nostra potestate*)” derives from in this argument? Some say that Carneades takes it as evident⁹, other think that he derives it from the universal existence of moral attitudes¹⁰, or that he takes up a Stoic premise in order to argue against the Stoics¹¹.

Now, the premise (x) is very close to the crucial premise of the argument against Epicurus at § 22-3. Here Cicero tells us that, while Epicurus thinks that he can avoid the necessity of the fate by means of the theory of the swerve of atoms (*Sed Epicurus declinatione atomi vitari necessitatem fati putat*, § 22), Carneades, more

⁸ According to Giomini’s critical apparatus the reading *a physicis* appears in M (= Monacensis Lat. 528, X-XI century) and R (= Excerpta Hadoardi, IX century). Cf. Giomini 1975 *ad l.*

⁹ Görler, 887: “offenkundiges phänomenon”.

¹⁰ See Amand 1945, 66-67.

¹¹ Hankinson 1995, 105; this section is reprinted with some changes in Hankinson 1999, 520.

effectively (*acutius*¹²), thought that the Epicureans could have defended their position without mentioning the swerve.

The passage repeats twice the same idea, in a close parallelism¹³: in the first part of each section (1 and 2) we are told that there is in the Epicurean doctrine a better weapon to use to repel criticisms by Chrysippus or his followers. In the following sections (1.1 and 2.1) we are told what that weapon is: the theory of 'a certain voluntary motion in the mind' (*quendam animi motum voluntarium*) or of 'our volition' (*voluntatis ... nostrae*). In the first part of our passage (1) there is a last remainder of the preceding criticism to the doctrine of the swerve, that is lacking in the second part of the passage. In the last section (2.1), however, there is an important explanation why it would have been a better move to invoke the theory of the voluntary motion: volitions have causes, but not external antecedent causes¹⁴. That way, Epicureans could have avoided the charge of admitting an uncaused movement. In the first section the parallelism to § 31 is not complete. It will become more evident in the third section of our passage.

Here we have no real argument, but only a reference to some doctrine admitted by the Epicureans. Cicero/Carneades never says that Epicurus openly admitted that the swerve is an uncaused movement, but attributes this theory to them as an implicit consequence of their position¹⁵. Here he makes a comparison between two movements not subjected to necessity admitted by Epicureans, swerve and volitions, and observes, first, that the Epicureans cannot indicate a cause for the swerve, but they can indicate a cause for the volitions, and, second, that the cause of volitions is not an external antecedent one. Eliminating the swerve, Epicurus could still defend voluntary motion without admitting an uncaused movement.

The conclusion he draws from those point is that the principle

(P) "everything that happens, happens through antecedent causes"¹⁶,

¹² *acutus* in the sense of 'effective' is used by Cicero to qualify an orator, or a speech, cf. *de orat.* 2.93 and 99; *Brut.* 63, *frag. epist ad Corn. Nep.* 3; *nat. deor.* 3.22. This is a judgement by Cicero on Carneades and not an opinion by Carneades himself.

¹³ I put a comma and not a full stop after *resistere*, with Rackham. On the general structure of §§ 19-25 see the paper by Bob Sharples in the present volume.

¹⁴ Sharples 1991, 176, rightly observes that this does not rule out antecedent factors for our voluntary movements, for instance the stimuli deriving from the situation. Same position in Duhot 1989, 198.

¹⁵ Cf. § 22: *quam declinationem sine causa fieri si minus verbis, re cogitur confiteri*. ("he is compelled to confess in practice that this swerve takes place without a cause, even if not in so many words"). But cf. § 47, on which see the comments by Stefano Maso.

¹⁶ *omnia, quae fiunt, causis fiunt antegressis*.

invoked by Chrysippus at § 21, appears to be false. Carneades accepts only a more general principle,

(P') "no event without a cause",

and thinks that Epicurean volitions do not infringe (P'). To be sure, (P) implies (P') and so, in some sense, Chrysippus accepts also (P'). But he does not admit that there are events without antecedent causes.

This is elucidated in the third section of our passage. In (2.1) we find a distinction of causes, antecedent causes versus another kind of causation, not yet explained¹⁷.

Carneades is content here to quote theories attributed to other philosophers, and we cannot analyse his argument from a logical point of view. But there are historical questions to be asked, like the following.

1) From an historical point of view, to say that for Chrysippus all things happen through external and antecedent causes is completely correct? The point is still being discussed among scholars. But see [Plut.] *de fato* 11.574e, a text that implies a positive answer to that question¹⁸.

2) It is historically correct to say that Epicureans admitted a movement not caused by something that could count as an antecedent cause in Stoic philosophical jargon? We do not know for sure, but it seems possible to say that in *Peri physeos*, Book XXV, Epicurus goes a long way in order to show that the movements of the mind in a grown-up person are not dependent from the underlying atomic structure. What the consequences of this doctrine are for the discussion about freedom of the will in Epicurean philosophy is not yet decided. Some scholars think that it implies the capacity of the mind to be an independent moving cause, others prefer a monistic explanation of human action¹⁹.

3) Carneades agrees with the idea that volitions have a cause which is not external, or he mentions it only in a dialectical way, in order to criticise other aspects of Epicurus' doctrine?

¹⁷ Marwede 1984, 175.

¹⁸ Cf. Bobzien 1998, 74 and 301-13; a more positive view is in Bobzien 1999, 207.

¹⁹ In L&S, I, 109, Epicurus' position is illustrated as asserting "the reality and causal efficacy of the self and its volitions as something over and above the underlying patterns of atomic motions". On this point see also the contribution by F.G. Masi in the present volume and, more in general, Masi 2006.

I will try to give some answers later, after discussing the following sections of the *De fato*.

On the second section (§ 24, first part) there is no need of a long analysis. If we are inaccurate, Cicero says, we use 'empty' not to mean 'physically void' but just to mean 'without a content like wine, water etc.'. In the same way, we can also be inaccurate when we say 'without cause' meaning only: 'without an external cause'. This part has been rather neglected by modern critics. Here we have one of the *exempla* Cicero used to add to the doctrines of the Greeks. Nobody, as far as I know, has attribute this section to Carneades. It is not clear what the strength of the argument is, nor if it is intended to criticise the Epicureans; perhaps it is only a Ciceronian argument in favour of Carneades' position.

Let's pass to the third section (§ 24 end-25). Here we have an interpretation by Carneades/Cicero of some Epicurean doctrines. The passage is based on an analogy between the movement of the atoms and the volitions.

The argument in this passage has been often summarised in a careless way by the critics. The main divide is between the opinion according to which *our will* is the internal cause of our action, and the opinion according to which our will has a further cause, *our nature*. Some affirm that, according to Carneades, our *will* moves our mind and causes our *actions* (Pesce) or that it causes our *voluntary movements* (Turnebus, followed by Brochard, Yon, Amand, Pesce) or even that it causes our *natural movements* (Hamelin). Nonvel Pieri, Duhot and Donini, however, think that Carneades' position is that it is *nature* the cause of the *will* and of our *voluntary movements*, making *nature* and not *will* the internal cause of human action. Also Bobzien says that the cause of our movements according to Carneades is *our nature*. Marwede thinks that Cicero should have said that the cause of the volitions is *the nature of our mind*, and not the nature of *volitions* themselves²⁰.

We need to stay close to the actual wording of the passage in order to see more clearly what the argument is. Carneades does not describe human actions as something that happen outside us, but speaks only about movements of mind (*animorum motus*). He seems to take human action as identical with an event located within the body, and, by implication, to consider the bodily movements as the effects of the

²⁰ Brochard 1887, 51; Yon 1933, XXIII; Amand 1945, 66; Pesce 1970, 61 and 68-69; Donini 1989, 131; Hamelin 1978, 32, Nonvel Pieri 1978, 51; Duhot 1989, 198. Turnebus' commentary for the most part is summarised in Bayer 1963, on this point cf. p. 144; Marwede 1984, 177; Bobzien 1988, 306.

action, as the Stoics do, and not as part of the action itself²¹. The passage we are examining is very short and we cannot be sure of that point. But it is remarkable that Carneades does not refer to bodily movements at all here, whereas in other passages of *De fato* Cicero uses examples of bodily movements to illustrate the point that our actions depend on us: *descendit in Academia Carneades, veniet in Senatum Cato* etc. (§§ 19, 28). What we have here, in conclusion, is only a comparison between the movements of the atom and the movements of the mind, to which actions are identified (*animi motus*)²².

At the beginning of the passage Cicero uses the results of the second section to build the analogy: it is not true to say that the atom does move without a cause, just because there is no external moving cause²³. He is moved by his own nature, and so are the volitions. The analogy is:

(A) nature of the atom : atom = nature of the voluntary movement : volition.

But to refer to nature is not enough. To say that volitions happens by their own nature, or that atoms are carried down by their own nature does not amount to an explanation²⁴. The explanation by the nature of the thing could be acceptable in Aristotelian philosophy, but not here. The causes we are speaking about here are *moving* causes, and not formal causes in Aristotle's sense²⁵. Aristotelian formal causes can be explicative of a thing's way of moving by indicating its essence and nature: a bird flies because flying is its natural way of going from one place to another. But in Hellenistic philosophy we speak mostly about *moving* causes, and moving causes are not explicative in the same way as Aristotelian formal causes.

Hence we need to unpack the notion of 'nature' and to see what it contains, and this, in both the sides of the analogy (A). In the left side of the analogy, the case of the atom, nature is identical to *pondus et gravitas*, two almost equivalent terms²⁶.

²¹ Cf. Annas 1992, 99-100. The Epicureans seem do not share this opinion and to stick at a more usual idea of action, to judge from Lucretius 2.265-283.

²² This has been correctly underlined by the most recent interpreters, as Donini, Bobzien, Maso.

²³ To be precise, impact could be considered as an external moving cause. As before, here Cicero means that the atom is not moved only by external causes.

²⁴ Pace Hankinson 1995, 105. It seems strange to assume, as he does, that *animi motus voluntarios* are not events, and hence they do not require a cause of some kind. If volitions are *motus*, they are events, and actions.

²⁵ Ioppolo 1994, 4524: "Carneade si serv[e] della definizione stoica di causa efficiente per svuotarla di significato".

²⁶ Marwede 1984, 176; he refers to § 25 and 46.

The atom is carried downwards by its own weight. The analogy can be rewritten accordingly:

(A') weight and heaviness : atom = nature of the voluntary movement : volition.

We need a similar analysis of the right side of the analogy as well. We cannot stop at the nature of the voluntary movement, or, even worse, at the 'nature of the will', as some commentators do, but we need to unpack the notion of in the case of voluntary movement.

Carneades says that the nature of the voluntary movement amounts to being 'in our power and obeying to us' (*in nostra potestate nobisque pareat*). This expression has been considered by Turnebus to be equivalent to the Greek expression *ep'hemin* or, to use a more Epicurean expression, *par'hemas*²⁷. I will say something later about the relationship between *ep'hemin* and *par'hemas*. The analogy now becomes:

(A'') weight and heaviness : atom = being in our power and obeying to us: volition.

Now let's return to the argument of § 31; as I already said, the two arguments seem to raise the same point. At § 31 we had:

(P') = "something is in our power (*est autem aliquid in nostra potestate*)"

and here, § 25, we have

(P'') = "volitions are in our power and obey to us (*in nostra potestate nobisque parea[n]t*)".

In both passages the same premise leads to the same consequence. In both passages we have an appeal to the notion of 'power (*potestas*)'. It cannot indicate the mechanical capacity of a link in a causal chain to transmit movement to the following link, but the capacity to *originate* movement. As Aristotle says in *Physics* VIII:

²⁷ Cf. note 19. In Lucretius, 2.286, we have the expression *innata potestas*, that seems to correspond to *par'hemas*. It confirms that here Carneades is using Epicurean materials. On the expression *in nostra potestate* see also Gourinat's contribution in the present volume.

“The stick moves the stone and is moved by the hand, which again is moved by the man; in the man, however, we have reached a mover that is not so in virtue of being moved by something else” (256a 6-8).

The general idea is that in our mind there is a power to originate movements that is a cause, but is different from the other causes. It is not moved from another cause. Because of that, we are not subjected to destiny.

5. *Is this a good argument?*

Before asking if Carneades accepts this theory as true, let us discuss another point. Is this a good argument? Many scholars today would object to that position, and would not accept the interpretation of *par'hemas* as indicating the power to originate actions choosing in one way or in the opposite way. Recently has been maintained that in Hellenistic times the two expressions, *eph'hemin* and *par'hemas* have different meanings: the first one indicates a ‘two sided’ possibility of acting, i.e. of doing something or its contrary, but does not refer to an internal power of the agent; the second one has a more pronounced causative meaning, but indicates only a ‘one sided’ capacity of acting. It clarifies who bears the responsibility for one event and nothing else. If the distinction is taken in such a rigid way, one could derive from it that in the early Hellenistic debate was not present the idea that a man has the power to be cause of opposite actions, nor the idea that the way we operate depends on us as ‘two sided’ causes. Such interpretation of this distinction seems not to be necessary and not consistent with some Epicurean texts²⁸.

²⁸ Bobzien 1998, 276-90 and 321. First, it seems to me that her argument on Bobzien 1998a, 293-98, about *par'hemas* in *Moenec.* 133-34, is not very strong. She says that since ‘by necessity’ and ‘by chance’ indicate a ‘one sided’ cause, so must indicate the expression ‘because of us’ (*par'hemas*). But since ‘because of us’ is opposed to the other two possibilities, there is no need of such inference. Besides, it is not clear to me whether ‘by chance’ can be really considered ‘one sided’. Second, on the passage of *peri Phuseos* 25 (34.26 Arr.) *para tes hemeteras doxas* can be considered as ‘one sided’ only on the basis of the very restrictive requirements posed by Bobzien on what counts as freedom of acting of choosing. She seems to place the bar so high that no ancient theory could qualify as indeterministic. In fact she repeatedly says that in order to have an indeterministic freedom of decision, or to do otherwise, the agent must decide what to do, and act, independently from his or hers personal history, memories, desires, beliefs and inclinations (277, 282, 286). She calls it a ‘decision-maker’ model of the mind. But in my opinion she requires that the agent chooses what to do with no motivation at all, and only in that case she admits to be in presence of an indeterministic doctrine. Perhaps Descartes and Sartre would agree with her, but this argument is open to the objection of being unhistorical.

As Epicurus did in *Peri phuseos* XXV, here Carneades tries to distinguish different levels of causality in order to establish a form of causation that can produce opposite results. If *in nostra potestate nobisque pareat* is the Latin for *par'hemas*, there is nothing in the expression that hinders from using it in order to indicate a 'two sided' capacity of acting and choosing. Indeed, in Carneades it must have this meaning, since at § 31 he uses it to indicate the premise (*est autem aliquid in nostra potestate*) from which derives that there is no fate. If we take *in nostra potestate* as indicating a one sided causality, the conclusion *non igitur fato fiunt, quaecumque fiunt* simply does not follow.

One could object that, since Chrysippus himself, as can be judged from §§ 41-43, admitted the opportunity to distinguish different kinds of (moving) causes, in itself the distinction of different kinds of causes is not enough to refute determinism. But all depends on what the distinction is. It is necessary to distinguish various kinds of moving causes, in a way that can counter causal determinism.

Carneades does not explain clearly what he intends here *in nostra potestate* to be. The kind of causality indicated by him resembles to what today is called *agent causation* or *mental causation* by some philosophers. This seems to be the most natural interpretation of Cicero's words. But such a doctrine seems unpalatable to modern taste, especially among scholars influenced by the contemporary scientific naturalism, a tendency that tries to make philosophy as similar to modern science as possible²⁹. This is why, on my opinion, today many interpreters, when studying Hellenistic arguments about destiny and what depends on us, always look for a compatibilist reading of the ancient texts, and go a long way to argue in favour of it, whenever they find no clear indications on contrary. But the modern taste should not be relevant to the historical question, and I am not sure that agent causation or mental causation is such a weak philosophical position, that we must try in every possible way to free our ancient authors from.

If this is true, Carneades' arguments in §§ 31 and 23 become more understandable. He quotes in both cases the fact that there is something *in nostra potestate*, and, when discussing Epicurus, he qualifies that 'something' as a 'volition'. For the volition, to be *in nostra potestate nobisque [parere]* implies being a motivated, two sided capacity of choosing. His reproach to the Epicureans seems to be: "You already have the notion of an event in the mind which depends on us. This gives us the power to do one thing and its contrary. So, why you need also the swerve?".

²⁹ Cf. De Caro 2004; more in general, De Caro - Macarthur 2004.

If this is true, Carneades (1) takes *in nostra potestate* in a ‘two sided’ way, and to refuse the idea that an event could happen without a cause. He also seems to think (2) that every proposition is true or false and that, (3) so to speak, Logical Determinism does not entail Causal Determinism, as other sections of the *De fato* show. Did he believe in the three theses? His disciples were uncertain if some of his theses were accepted by him, or all were ‘put forward in a debate’ rather than accepted (Cic. *Acad.* II 78), and so are we. It seems a little difficult to state that an Epicurean argument is better (*melius*, § 23) than another, as Carneades does, because the first one accepts the principle of causality and the second does not, without holding that principle as true³⁰. And the praise often attributed to Carneades for stating that Logical Determinism does not involve Causal Determinism is somehow lessened if we consider that thesis only as something conceived to be useful in a debate. Because of that, we prefer to suspend our judgement on that point³¹.

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³⁰ Since (P’), accepted by Carneades, is not identical to (P), the version of the principle held by Chrysippus, it cannot be said that Carneades accepts the principle of causality only to refute his adversary.

³¹ J.-B. Gourinat and F.G. Masi gave to me many useful suggestions. I would like to thank them very much.

TEXTS QUOTED

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