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978-0-521-60842-8 - The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy: The Complete Fragments and Selected Testimonies of the Major Presocratics

Edited by Daniel W. Graham

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The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy

This sourcebook gives the reader easy access to the language and thought of the Presocratic thinkers, making it possible either to read the texts continuously or to study them one by one along with commentary. It contains the complete fragments and a generous selection of testimonies for twenty major Presocratic thinkers including cosmologists, ontologists, and sophists, setting translations opposite Greek and Latin texts on facing pages to allow easy comparison. The texts are grouped in chapters by author in a mainly chronological order, each preceded by a brief introduction, and followed by a brief commentary and an up-to-date bibliography. Significant variant readings are noted. This edition contains new fragments and testimonies not included in the authoritative but now outdated *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. It is the first and only bilingual edition of the works of the Presocratic philosophers for English-speakers.

DANIEL W. GRAHAM is A. O. Smoot Professor of Philosophy at Brigham Young University. He is the author of *Aristotle's Two Systems* (1987); editor of the collected papers on ancient philosophy of Gregory Vlastos, *Studies in Greek Philosophy* (2 vols, 1995); translator-commentator of *Aristotle: Physics, Book VIII* (1999); co-editor with Victor Caston of a Festschrift for his mentor: *Presocratic Philosophy: Essays in Honour of Alexander Mourelatos* (2002); author of *Explaining the Cosmos: The Ionian Tradition of Scientific Philosophy* (2006); and co-editor with Patricia Curd of *The Oxford Handbook of Presocratic Philosophy* (2008).

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The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy

The Complete Fragments and Selected Testimonies of
the Major Presocratics

PART I

Edited and translated by

DANIEL W. GRAHAM



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To my beloved wife Diana

anno xxxv

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used throughout.

- DG* = Diels, Hermann. *Doxographi Graeci*. Berlin, 1879. Reprint, Berlin, 1965.
- DK* = Diels, Hermann. *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. Edited by Walther Kranz. 6th edn. (3 vols.). Berlin, 1951–52.
- EC* = Graham, Daniel W. *Explaining the Cosmos: The Ionian Tradition of Scientific Philosophy*. Princeton, 2006.
- FGrH* = Jacoby, Felix (1923–) *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, 15 vols., Berlin. Reprint Leiden 1957–63.
- HGP* = Guthrie, W. K. C. *A History of Greek Philosophy* (6 vols.). Cambridge. Vol. 1, *The Earlier Presocratics and the Pythagoreans*, 1962; vol. 2, *The Presocratic Tradition from Parmenides to Democritus*, 1965; vol. 3, *The Sophists and Socrates*, 1969.
- KR* = Kirk, G. S. and J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers*. Cambridge, 1957.
- KRS* = Kirk, G. S., J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers*. 2nd edn. Cambridge, 1983.
- LSJ* = Liddell, Henry George and Robert Scott, eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. Revised by Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie. Oxford, 1968.
- PP* = Barnes, Jonathan. *The Presocratic Philosophers*, revised edn. London, 1982.

Abbreviations for textual notes

Letters for manuscripts are drawn from standard editions (the Index of Sources gives editors for more commonly cited editions).

Ancient authors and works are abbreviated according to usage of *LSJ* (most Greek sources) or *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd edn.) (most Latin sources), except in a few cases where the abbreviations might cause confusion with letters for manuscripts.

Common abbreviations (Latin verbs are used in perfect tense; I render them idiomatically into the English present tense):

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Abbreviations

abbreviation	stands for	English
a.c.	ante correctionem	before correction
add.	addidit	adds
cod(d).	codex (codices)	manuscript(s)
corr.	correxit	corrects
in mg.	in margine	in the margin
lac.	lacuna(m)	lacuna, gap in text
leg.	legit	reads
man.	manus	hand, copyist
om.	omisit	omits
p.c.	post correctionem	after correction
scr.	scripsit	writes, emends
secl.	seclisit	deletes
suppl.	supplevit	supplies, inserts
transp.	transposuit	transposes

[]	text deleted by editor
< >	text supplied by editor
†	corrupt text

For papyri:

[...]	lacuna with approximate number of letters; any text in brackets is supplied by editor
[[]]	text deleted by ancient hand
< >	text supplied by editor
'abc'	text inserted above the line by ancient hand
α	damaged letter

Note: footnotes apply to preceding word only, unless otherwise specified.

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A note on text references

For ease of reference, each philosopher has been assigned a three-letter abbreviation (e.g. Anaximander = Axx), listed in the Table of Contents. Each text has been assigned a consecutive number, while quotations or near-quotations (“fragments”) have also been assigned a fragment number. Thus the first fragment of Anaximander is Axx9[F1], that is: text 9, fragment 1 of the texts assigned to Anaximander. Each text comes from its own ancient source, cited in the heading of the text on the verso page according to a standard edition of that source. (The Greek sources can be found in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu>. The DK material is also included in the database, under the names of individual philosophers.)

The standard numbering system for the Presocratics is that found in DK. Each philosopher is assigned a number by DK; for instance ‘12’ refers to Anaximander. ‘A’ refers to the section of testimonia or ancient reports identified for each philosopher by DK; ‘B’ refers to the section of fragments or quotations accepted as authentic by DK. Thus Anaximander’s first fragment is 12B1, found in testimony 12A9 (in this case Diels’ numbers and mine coincide; usually they do not). I give the DK number in parentheses at the end of each citation. A concordance of DK numbers is found in the back of the book. (I cite the DK author number only where a reference may be ambiguous, which is frequently the case in ch. 13, where ‘67’ refers to Leucippus, ‘68’ to Democritus.)

DK often groups several texts conveying similar information together under a single testimony number; I assign a different text number to each source. DK collects fragments separately; I intersperse them with testimonies, sometimes leaving them in their literary context, sometimes setting them apart from this but locating them in the context of relevant testimonies. I put fragments in boldface for emphasis.

One ancient source requires a brief explanation. Aëtius in his *Placita* made a summary of earlier doxographical sources (see Introduction). In *DG* Diels reconstructed his work from two main sources, pseudo-Plutarch’s *Placita* and Stobaeus’ *Anthology* (plus some other witnesses – see Mansfeld and Runia 1997). Diels’ numbering system follows and further articulates that of ps.Plutarch (with some interpolations). When referring to Aëtius I cite both major sources where possible, designating the former ‘P’ followed by Diels’ number and the latter ‘S’ followed by the numbering of Wachsmuth’s text. When a passage is not found in S but not P, I give the ps.Plutarch number in brackets, e.g. ‘[P 2.13.10],’

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since it contains Diels' (reconstructed) Aëtius reference; when the passage is not found in S, I simply omit the 'S' number. When both numbers are present and I append '(S)' or '(P),' I am indicating which of the sources I follow most closely in my rendering, in cases where there is a significant difference in their reports.

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Preface

Everyone who has done serious work in the Presocratics knows that the field has suffered for lack of a decent sourcebook. Well, almost everyone. When I floated the idea for this work some years ago to an editor who thought the project would be met with enthusiasm, he heard back from his referees that scholars in the field did not need such a work because they already had Diels-Kranz. No doubt Hermann Diels' *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, edited in its latest editions by Walther Kranz, is one of the great collections of classical studies. Yet the reply seemed curious to me. In the first place, Diels-Kranz was written in German rather than English. In the second place, its last edition was published more than a half century ago, in 1951–52, and a few things have happened in the scholarly world since then. In the third place Diels and Kranz did not translate testimonies, but only fragments, and not all of them. In the fourth place, they included among their list of ninety Presocratics a large number of figures who are mere names, some who are not generally considered philosophers, some who are precursors, and some who were writing as late as the late fourth century, whereas Socrates died in the first year of that century; thus the collection seems a bit promiscuous, including both pre-Presocratics and post-Socratics, as well as non-philosophers. Finally, what was wanted was, in any case, not so much an exhaustive collection as a bridge between the introductory textbook and the exhaustive collection, a kind of portable and up-to-date assemblage of the texts everyone should have access to for the figures everyone studies.

Unchastened by the rejection, I continued to work away at this project. In truth, I was driven to work on it by frustration with the lack of a usable alternative. I will readily admit to being merely a philosopher with classical training rather than a card-carrying classicist of the type who should be editing texts and doing variorum editions and translations from exotic sources. Nevertheless, those with better credentials were busy doing other projects which were no doubt more respectable in the world of classical letters. In any case, when the editors of Cambridge University Press came to Brad Inwood in search of someone to do a collection of the Presocratics, he was kind enough to point them in my direction. I have gone through a number of referees and some protracted negotiations about format and content. But I am grateful to Michael Sharp, classics editor, the Syndics of Cambridge University Press, and a set of patient and very helpful readers for guiding me through this project. The final product does not precisely represent the vision of any one of my advisers, but it has benefited from their suggestions at every stage.

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Preface

This book consists of nineteen chapters dealing with eighteen figures and two anonymous treatises, plus one further figure in an appendix. I have restricted my set of Presocratics to those with a strong tradition of testimonies and (in most cases) an appreciable number of fragments. In each case there is a brief introduction to each figure, a set of texts in Greek and Latin, a translation, a brief commentary and a select bibliography. I added the commentary at the request of the Press, who rightly judged that the texts were not sufficiently self-explanatory to stand on their own. Full citation of the classical source is given with the original text. I have for the most part given modern English names and translated titles for the sources, to make them more accessible to a broader audience, since many of the Latin titles are not well known even to classicists. I have appended a general bibliography to the general introduction, and supplied a concordance for my numbers and the Diels-Kranz references, an index of sources, an index of other passages, and a general index.

The text is supplied with textual notes (rather than a full apparatus), which identify more substantive textual variants. I have used the best critical texts available to me to determine the textual readings, but I have not made any original collations of manuscripts. In most cases there are adequate critical texts (though there is one major deficiency, in Diogenes Laertius; an improved text is in preparation, but not in print). I have been reluctant to make my own interventions in the text, but on a few occasions I have felt compelled to do so by the impossibility or implausibility of the available readings.

I have benefited from the advice of scholars too numerous to mention. But my special thanks go to Patricia Curd, who used my manuscript as a text for her classes and gave me valuable comments. I acknowledge generous financial support from Brigham Young University. I have been aided by several talented student assistants: Joshua Gillon, Steven Stakland, Tyler Stoehr, and Mark Bailey. I am indebted to Bernard Dod for careful copy-editing and insightful suggestions. I thank Mark Bailey for producing the indexes.

After years of labor, I send this book into the world with trepidation, knowing that it contains many more errors than those I have been able to identify and correct. I take some comfort in the fact that I have found errors even in the venerable Diels-Kranz with its many editions and printings, and in the distinguished Kirk-Raven-Schofield. Truly it is, as Simonides warned, vain to seek “a man all blameless, among us who wrest our harvest from the broad-based earth.”