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978-0-521-88681-9 - Diogenes Laertius: Lives of Eminent Philosophers

Edited with Introduction by Tiziano Dorandi

Excerpt

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INTRODUCTION

I MANUSCRIPTS

The *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius (third century AD)¹ are transmitted (entirely, partially, or in the form of excerpts) by a hundred or so manuscripts.² The oldest witnesses of this tradition are three continuous manuscripts (**B**, **P** and **F**), datable between the end of the eleventh century and the thirteenth century, and three collections of excerpts, two (**Φ**/**Φh**) copied in a Vatican MS of the twelfth century (and in its descendants) and the third in a MS in Vienna (**Vi**) written and dated 28 July 925. All other manuscripts date from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, though some manuscripts with excerpts are as late as the eighteenth.³

¹ For the known facts about Diogenes Laertius I refer readers to M.-O. Goulet-Cazé's clear and well-informed 'Introduction générale', in *Diogène Laërce* 9–27, as well as to D. T. Runia, 'Diogenes Laertios', *DNP* 3 (1997) 601–3 and to J. Warren, 'Diogenes Laertius, biographer of philosophy', in J. König and T. Whitmarsh, *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge 2007) 133–49. New data on Diogenes' chronology are discussed by J. Jouanna, 'Médecine et philosophie: sur la date de Sextus Empiricus et de Diogène Laërce à la lumière du *Corpus galénique*', *REG* 122 (2009) 359–90.

² I have published a description of all the manuscripts known to me in *Laertiana* 1–37. They should be distinguished as follows: manuscripts entirely or partially transmitting the *Lives* (30 MSS); those with the two (or one of the two) series of the *excerpta Vaticana* (11 MSS, two of which are limited to short passages); the one MS of the *excerptum Vindobonense*; those transmitting only the third book (*Life of Plato*: eight MSS, one of them with short excerpts, two more with a paraphrase and rewriting); finally, 48 MSS with more or less extended excerpts of the *Lives*. A further 26 manuscripts, in spite of what we read in catalogues, do not transmit the Greek text of the *Lives* (see *Laertiana* 32–5). In the pages that follow, I have divided the codices into three sections, in chronological order: continuous manuscripts; the *excerpta Vaticana* and the *excerptum Vindobonense*; the manuscripts of the *Life of Plato*. A concordance of the sigla is available in *Laertiana* 35–7.

³ I briefly summarize the results obtained in my preliminary studies and re-elaborated in *Laertiana*. For addenda and corrigenda to that volume, see below, 876–8.

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(i) Continuous manuscripts

- P** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 1759. 11th/12th cent. Oriental paper. 210×150 mm. ff. I+251 (ff. 174r end, 174v–176r blanks). Written at Constantinople by two contemporary anonymous hands (A: 1r–95r; B: 95v–251v). There is evidence of six correctors (**P**^{2–7}), the most important of whom is indicated with the siglum **P**¹. In f. Ar, a later hand (15th–16th cent.) copied an epitaph on Emperor Basil II the Bulgar-slayer ‘Bulgaroktonos’ (958–1025), followed by two further epitaphs, one on Julian the Apostate and one on a certain Bessarion. In f. Av there is the abbreviated index of the *Lives*; the hand is identifiable as that of Nicholas Sophianos; in f. 1rv, the *index locupletior* (also reproduced by **P**’s descendants **E**, **H**, **I** and **Y**) preceded by the *inscriptio* λαερτ(ίου) διογέν(ους) βίοι καὶ γνῶ(μαι) τῶν ἐν φιλο(σοφία) εὐδοκιμησάντων καὶ τῶν ἐκάστη αἰρέσει ἀρεσκόντων ἐν ἐπιτομ(ῇ). συναγωγή· διήρηται τὸ σύγγρα(μμα) εἰς βιβλ(ους) δέκα: ἐκάστου βιβλίου τὰ πρόσωπα. *Inscriptio* (f. 2r) λαερτίου διογένους βίοι καὶ γνῶμαι (βίων καὶ γνωμῶν s.l. γρ **P**¹) τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφία εὐδοκιμησάντων καὶ τῶν ἐκάστη αἰρέσει ἀρεσκόντων (ἀρεσάντων s.l. γρ **P**¹) (τῶν εἰς δέκα τὸ πρῶτον add. **P**¹). *Subscriptio* (f. 251v) λαερτίου διογένους φιλοσόφων βίων (γνωμῶν **P**¹) καὶ δογμάτων συναγωγῆς, τῶν εἰς δέκα. ἐπίκουρος. ἐπίκουρος
- B** Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, III.B.29. 12th cent. Parchment. 255×180 mm. ff. VI+247+V (f. 1 is lost). It contains Diogenes Laertius (ff. 2r–246r); Lamprias’ Catalogue of the works of Plutarch follows (ff. 246r–247v), written by a later hand (14th cent.). There are some corrections in a contemporary hand (**B**²). The MS was written in southern Italy (in Sicily, maybe Palermo). *Subscriptio* (f. 246r) λαερτίου διογένους φιλοσόφων βίων καὶ δογμάτων συναγωγῆς τῶν εἰς ἑπτά ἐπίκουρος. *Subscriptions* also at the end of books 8 (f. 190v) λαερτίου διογένους φιλοσόφων βίων καὶ

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I MANUSCRIPTS

δογμάτων συναγωγῆς τῶν εἰς ἡ' ἡ' (*lege* ι' {η} ἡ' *vel* ι' ἡ' οἱ)
 πυθαγορικοί and 9 (f. 214v) λαερτίου διογένους
 φιλοσόφων βίων καὶ δογμάτων συναγωγῆς τῶν εἰς ι' θ' ἦ
 (ἦ **B²**: *lege* οἱ) σποράδην καὶ πυρρῶνιοι

F Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, plut. 69.13.
 13th cent. Parchment. 285×222 mm. In two columns.
 Ff. III+164 (ff. 9r–19v, 38rv and ff. 161r–164r have been
 restored). Contains a Τριώδιον (f. 1rv); Diogenes Laertius
 (ff. 2r–137vI) and Cleomedes (ff. 137vI–164r). The 148 ancient
 parchment folios (ff. 1–8, 20–37, 39–160) are palimpsest.
Scriptura inferior: remains of Plutarch's *Moralia* (9–19, 44–7,
 55 and 29). The original Plutarchean manuscript (285×
 222 mm) contained 226 folios, written in a minuscule script
 datable to the tenth or eleventh century. Written in
 Constantinople by two anonymous scribes (the first copy
 only f. 1rv). There are frequent corrections by a later hand,
 13th/14th century (**F²**). The restored folios are written by
 Francesco Zanetti (c. 1565–70), who for the Laertian section
 used MS **G** as model. *Inscriptio* (f. 2r) λαερτίου διογένους
 βίων καὶ γνωμῶν (βίοι καὶ γνωμαὶ **F²**) τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφία
 εὐδοκιμησάντων καὶ τῶν ἐκάστη αἰρέσει ἄρεσάντων
 (ἄρεσκόντων **F²**) τῶν εἰς δέκα τὸ πρῶτον. *Inscriptiones* at
 the beginning of each book too λαερτίου διογένους τῶν εἰς
 ι' τὸ πρῶτον (τὸ δεύτερον κτλ.)

V Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 1302. Oriental
 paper. 326×237 mm. ff. II+218. Written in Constantinople
 in the early 14th cent. by two contemporaneous scribes in
 archaizing script: A (ff. 1–81) and B (ff. 83–237). There are
 some corrections by the same scribe and by at least one
 later hand (**V²**). Miscellaneous manuscript. Diogenes' *Lives*
 (1–6.66 ὀνειδιζόμενος) at ff. 1r–81v. *Inscriptio* (f. 1r) λαερτίου
 διογένους βίων καὶ γνωμῶν τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίαι
 εὐδοκιμησάντων καὶ τῶν ἐν ἐκάστη αἰρέσει ἄρεσάντων
 τῶν εἰς δέκα τὸ πρῶτον

Q Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 1758, ff. 4r–203r.
 Early 14th cent.

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- W** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 140, ff. 1r–175r. Early 14th cent.
- Co** Constantinople, Library Ahmed III Topkapi Saray, ms. 80 (48 Deismann), ff. 3r–155r. Early 14th cent.
- M** Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, gr. 393 (coll. 896). Early 14th cent.
- H** Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, plut. 69.35, ff. 1r–246v. Written by Demetrio Scarano for Ambrogio Traversari c. 1419/20.
- O** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ott. gr. 355. Contains only 2.74–3.26 (ff. 14r–29v). Written in 14th–15th cent.
- U** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb. gr. 108. Incomplete (ff. 1r–104r: 1–10.53 νομίζειν τόν). Early 15th cent. (c. 1427?)
- Vat.** gr. 2186 Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 2186. Incomplete (ff. 1a–195v: 1–10.53 ἐπαίσθησις). Early 15th cent.
- E** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. gr. 182. 15th cent.
- D** Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, III.B.28. 15th cent.
- G** Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, plut. 69.28. 15th cent.
- S** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. gr. 261. 15th cent.
- A** London, British Library, Arundel. gr. 531. 15th cent.
- Leid** Leiden, BPG 41. 15th cent.
- Mosq** Moscow, Gosudarstvennyy Istoricheskiy Muzey, gr. 463 (Vladimir). Incomplete and in disorder (ff. 196r–251v). 15th cent.
- Ma** Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, 4676 (126). Written in 1462.
- I** Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, gr. 394 (coll. 1030). Late 15th cent.
- T** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb. gr. 109. Late 15th cent.
- Z** Prague, Národní Knihovna, Raudnitzianus Lobkowicensis VI Fc 38. Late 15th cent.

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- K** Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, hist. gr. 59. Written c. 1500
- C** Cambridge, Trinity College, R.9.18–19. Incomplete and in disorder. Written in the late 15th or early 16th cent.
- R** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 1405. Contains only 1.1–2.23 (ff. 14r–29v). 15th–16th cent.
- X** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. gr. 103. Incomplete (ff. 1r–90v: 1–5, 8–10). 15th–16th cent.
- J** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. gr. 21. Written in two different hands in the 16th cent.; the first (**Ja**) copied ff. 1r–88v (1–3.60 ἡγοῦνται), the second, more recent (**Jb**), ff. 89r–284v (3.60 ἱππίαι δύο–10)
- N** Munich, gr. 159. Incomplete and in disorder. Early 16th cent.
- Y** Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, gr. 97 (C.2.1), ff. 11r–151r. 16th cent.

(ii) The ‘excerpta Vaticana’ and the ‘excerptum Vindobonense’

The ‘excerpta Vaticana’

- Φ** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 96.⁴ Oriental paper. 244×175 mm. ff. IV+229. Written in Constantinople in the early 12th cent. Contains ps.-Hesychius (ff. 19r–29v. *Inscriptio* f. 19r ἡσυχίου μιλησίου περὶ τῶν ἐν παιδείᾳ διαλαμψάντων σοφῶν) and *Magnum excerptum* (ff. 29v–88r. *Inscriptio* f. 29v λαερτίου διογένους βίων φιλοσόφων τόμος πρῶτος)
- Ψ** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. gr. 93. Oriental paper. Written in Constantinople before 1152. *Magnum excerptum* (ff. 10v–41v)

⁴ In this edition I make the distinction between the two texts of MS Vat. gr. 96 with the sigla **Φ** (*Magnum excerptum*) and **Φh** (ps.-Hesychius). Marcovich prefers the siglum **φ** for ps.-Hesychius, but this can lead to confusion because in Long’s edition it is used, without distinction and mistakenly, to designate the two items together.

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- Pg** Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Pal. gr. 129. Contains *Magnum excerptum* (ff. 9r, 10v, 64v, 73v–74r) and ps.-Hesychius (ff. 9r, 10v, 72v, 73v). 14th cent.
- Vg** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 1898. Contains *Magnum excerptum* (f. 224r–225v) and ps.-Hesychius (f. 225v). 14th cent.⁵
- Δ** Mount Athos, Μονή Διονυσίου 3624 (Διονυσίου 90). *Magnum excerptum* (ff. 197v–238r). Late 14th cent.⁶
- Π** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, suppl. gr. 134. *Magnum excerptum* (ff. 195v–232r). Late 14th cent.
- Λ** Leiden, BPG 75. *Magnum excerptum* (ff. 1r–36v). Early 15th cent.
- E** Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, II.E.21. ps.-Hesychius (ff. 22v–49r). Early 15th cent.
- B** Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, plut. 59.37. ps.-Hesychius (ff. 68v–84v). Early 15th cent.
- Γ** Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, gr. 3025+3026. ps.-Hesychius (3025, ff. 31r–35v+3026, ff. 31r–32v). Early 15th cent.
- A** Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, plut. 70.14. ps.-Hesychius (ff. 2r–37r). Written c. 1569–72.

The ‘excerptum Vindobonense’

- Vi** Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, phil. gr. 314. Contains only excerpts from the ‘Life of Plato’, book 3 (ff. 27r–29v). Written and dated July 28, 925.⁷

(iii) The manuscripts of the ‘Life of Plato’ (Book 3)

- b** Cesena, Biblioteca Malatestiana, D.XXVIII.4, ff. 4r–11v. Early 14th cent.

⁵ **Pg** and **Vg** transmit a few excerpts from the *Magnum excerptum* and ps.-Hesychius written by Nicephoros Gregoras (c. 1294–1359).

⁶ **Δ** and **Π** are twin MSS and transmit the same epitome of the *Magnum excerptum*.

⁷ Dorandi, *Laertiana* 129–34 and *Estratti* 63–7.

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II TESTIMONIA

- z** Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, plut. 59.1, ff. 4r–11v. Early 14th cent.
- c** Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, plut. 85.9, ff. 27r–32v. c. 1330s.
- m** Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, gr. 189 (coll. 704), ff. 2r–9v. 14th cent.
- a** Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 47 sup. (gr. 179), ff. 133v–135r. Written in the 14th cent. Short excerpts from 3.80–109.
- p** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 1417, ff. 186v–188v. Second quarter of the 15th cent.
- ba** Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. gr. 85, ff. 434r–440v. Third quarter of the 15th cent.⁸

II TESTIMONIA

Many passages of Diogenes' *Lives* are quoted by Byzantine authors.

(i) The Greek Anthology and the *Suda*

The *Anthologia Palatina* – by way of Constantine Cephalas' *Anthologia* (c. 900) – includes a large selection of poems composed by Diogenes Laertius himself or by other authors, and inserted by Diogenes in the *Lives*.

The *Anthologia Palatina* is transmitted by the MS

Pal Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Palat. gr. 23+Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, suppl. gr. 384. 10th cent.

Some of these poems were taken up in the *Anthologia Planudea* (**Plan**), compiled by Maximus Planudes (c. 1255–1305) and copied by Planudes himself in the MS

M Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, gr. 481 (coll. 863), copy completed in September 1301.⁹

⁸ **p** and **ba** transmit a reworking of the *Life of Plato* written by Georgios Scholarios. See T. Dorandi, 'Une Vie de Platon de Georges Scholarios?', *Byzantion* 80 (2010) 121–41.

⁹ Dorandi, *Laertiana* 152–74.

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Excerpts from the ‘doxographic’ sections of the *Lives*, quoted anonymously, are included in the *Suda* (c. 975–80) through a lost intermediary witness Σ (of uncertain date). By contrast, the compilers of the *Suda* found the ‘biographical’ entries chiefly in the epitome (made between 829 and 857) of the Ὀνοματολόγος ἡ Πίναξ τῶν ἐν παιδείᾳ ὀνομαστῶν of Hesychius of Miletus (6th cent.). The correspondences that the *Suda*’s ‘biographical’ entries present with the ‘biographical’ sections of the *Lives* may be explained if it is allowed that Diogenes and Hesychius had access to a common source. Nevertheless, there are sporadic cases in which the *Suda* (or its source) interpolates Hesychius’ text with supplementary information from the *Lives*.¹⁰

The *Suda* is transmitted (as regards the Laertian excerpts) in the following MSS.¹¹

A Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 2625 (litterae A–Θ), of the 13th cent. + gr. 2526 (litterae K–Ψ). 12th/13th cent.

B Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 2622. 13th cent.

E Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 11281 (Omont 59). Dated 1476

F Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurentiana, plut. 55.1. Dated 1422

G Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 2623. 15th cent.

H Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 2624. 15th cent.

I Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, gr. 75 (C.2.8). 15th cent.

M Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, gr. 448 (coll. 1047). 13th cent.

S Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1296. Dated 1205

V Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Voss. gr. F 2. 12th cent.

¹⁰ Dorandi, *Laertiana* 136–52.

¹¹ The manuscripts have been described and classified by A. Adler, *Dissertatio de codicibus Sudaë*, in the fifth volume of her edition of the *Suda* (Leipzig 1938) 216–80.

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II TESTIMONIA

(ii) Arsenius and ps.-Eudocia

Michael Apostolis (c. 1422–post 1474 or 1486) assembled numerous anecdotes and apophthegms from Diogenes' *Lives* in his *Συναγωγή παροιμιῶν καὶ συνθήκη*. This collection was supplemented and partially published under the title *Ἰωνιὰ* (Rome, c. 1519) by his son Aristoboulos Apostolis (1468/9–1535), who from 1506 was bishop of Monemvasia, going by the name of Arsenius. The *Ἰωνιὰ* of Arsenius gives an idea of the preservation and use of many passages of the *Lives* outside their context, and represents an important moment in the diffusion of Diogenes' work among Greek scholars during the Renaissance. However, the contribution of the *Ἰωνιὰ* to the *constitutio textus* of the *Lives* is insignificant, because Arsenius used one or more later manuscripts contaminated both with each other and with extraneous material; furthermore, the text is altered, often arbitrarily.

The mythological, archaeological and biographical compilation also entitled *Ἰωνιὰ* and transmitted by manuscripts under the name of the Empress Eudocia Macrembolitissa (who died after 1078), second wife of the Byzantine emperor Constantine X and after his death (1067) wife of Romanus IV Diogenes, offers no help at all. Indeed, it is nothing but a recent compilation (16th cent.), falsely attributed to Eudocia, made around 1540 by the famous scribe and artful counterfeiter Constantine Paleocappa. For his miscellany Paleocappa had recourse to material that was well known and already printed: the *Suda* (printed in 1514), Diogenes Laertius (1533), the lexicon of the humanist Varinus Phavorinus Camers (1538), Cornutus and Palaephatus (1543).¹²

(iii) Latin translations

The Latin translation attributed to Henricus Aristippus († 1162) was incomplete and is not preserved in its entirety.

¹² Dorandi, *Laertiana* 185–94.

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There are traces of his translation of the first two books and perhaps of the *Life of Aristotle* (5.1–35) in the *Liber de vita et moribus philosophorum* of ps.-Burley (1274/5, mid 14th cent.) and in the *Compendium moralium notabilium* (1285) of Geremia da Montagnone (1255–1321). The editor can do without this witness, because Aristippus took MS **B** as his Greek exemplar.¹³

Ambrogio Traversari (1386–1439) translated the ten books between 1424 and 1433. His contribution to the *constitutio textus* of the *Lives* is minor, because he used some later Greek manuscripts which are still preserved (primarily **H**), and perhaps a lost witness representative of the ‘vulgate’ tradition. The *Versio Ambrosiana* marks an important step, however, in the history of the diffusion of Diogenes’ *Lives* in the western world among Greekless people.¹⁴ It was printed for the first time by Francesco Elio Marchese (Rome, 1472) and then by Benedetto Brugnoli (Venice 1475) sixty years or so before the *editio princeps* (*Frobeniana*) of the Greek text saw the light of day (1533). Unfortunately neither edition is dependable, in that neither of the editors turned to Traversari’s manuscript, and Brugnoli introduces interpolations. Future editors will have Traversari’s autograph (Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Strozzi 64) at their disposal.¹⁵

¹³ Dorandi, *Laertiana* 201–22.

¹⁴ The research project ‘Diogenes Laërtius latinus zwischen ca. 1416 und 1533’ directed by Professor Thomas Ricklin (Munich) is dedicated to this aspect. See T. Ricklin, ‘Marsilio Ficino und Diogenes Laërtius. Von der mitunter beachtlichen Tragweite scheinbar banaler Neuverschriftlichungen’, *WS Beiheft* 33 (2009) 95–119 and ‘Vorsokratiker im lateinischen Mittelalter II: Thales von Milet im lateinischen Diogenes Laërtios von Henricus Aristippus bis zur lateinischen *editio princeps* (1472/1475)’, in O. Primavesi and Katharina Luchner (eds.), *The Presocratics from the Latin Middle Ages to Hermann Diels* (Stuttgart 2011), 111–56.

¹⁵ The official exemplar written for Cosimo de’ Medici is also preserved (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, plut. 65.21). It was copied from Traversari’s autograph by Michele di Giovanni, who signed it on 8 February 1433. See Dorandi, *Laertiana* 222–8.