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

Edited with Introduction by Tiziano Dorandi

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# DIOGENES LAERTIUS

## LIVES OF EMINENT PHILOSOPHERS

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BY

TIZIANO DORANDI

*Directeur de recherche CNRS Paris*



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*dis manibus*  
*v. d. Petri Von der Muehll*  
*de studiis Laertianis optime merentis*  
*s.*

αἱ δὲ τεαὶ ζώουσιν ἀηδόνες, ἧσιν ὁ πάντων  
άρπακτῆς Ἀΐδης οὐκ ἐπὶ χεῖρα βαλεῖ

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## PREFACE

*‘Si possem, haec [...] volumina retinerem et retractarem potius quam ederem.’* As I prepared to publish the results of nearly two decades of research dedicated to the history of the text and to the editing of the *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius, more than once this phrase came to mind. But, like Siegfried Sudhaus, I did not give in to the temptation: *‘sed multa me commovent, ut quae habeam tandem edam. nam [...] infiniti laboris aliquis tandem finis faciendus videbatur, et complurium contentione et iudicio philologorum plus effici quam unius opera expertus scio’* (*Philodemi Volumina Rhetorica* ed. S. Sudhaus, Leipzig 1892, v).

No edition of an ancient text can be considered definitive. My hope is to have taken a step forward in the understanding of the text of Diogenes’ *Lives*, and to have laid down foundations on which others will build.

This project would never have been realized if I had not had the enviable privilege of belonging to a team of the French ‘Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique’ (CNRS), the ‘Centre Jean Pépin (UPR 76)’. Being free of didactic and administrative commitments, and hence enjoying complete *otium*, I have been able to dedicate myself full time to the study of Diogenes Laertius.

Many other cultural institutions have come forward with useful and concrete offers of help.

The librarians to whom I have turned in order to consult manuscripts, or for reproductions, have responded to my requests with promptness and great helpfulness. To them and to the members of the Greek section of the ‘Institut de Recherche et d’Histoire des Textes’ (IRHT) in Paris I express my gratitude.

Ivan Boserup (keeper at the Manuscript Department of the Kongelige Bibliotek of Copenhagen) put at my disposal a micro-film of J. J. Reiske’s ‘Ad Diogenem Laertium animadversiones

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secundum editionem Meibomianam' (Ny Kongelige Samling 98 8vo & Ny Kongelige Samling 194 4to), partially published by H. Diels in 1889.

Colleagues and friends have always answered my questions with readiness and close attention and have been generous with advice and suggestions. I should like to express my sincere gratitude, first and foremost, to Professor Rudolf Kassel: he not only read all ten books of my edition, accompanying me through the meanderings of Laertian textual criticism, but also elucidated various obscure passages, suggested new conjectures, and corrected many errors and inconsistencies. I should also like to thank all the other members of the Institut für Altertumskunde of the University of Cologne who, under his leadership, took the time to discuss difficult passages and to provide suggestions that were always convincing. Walter Lapini kindly sent me some as yet unpublished conjectures and has put his forthcoming book on Epicurus' *Letter to Herodotus* at my disposal. I have benefited from comments and clarifications on some aspects of the *Lives*' transmission by Michael Reeve. Daniele Bianconi, Antonio Carlini, Guglielmo Cavallo, Christian Förstel, Santo Lucà, Marwan Rashed and Nigel G. Wilson helped me on palaeographical and codicological matters. Finally, I have been able to discuss individual textual and exegetical problems to great advantage with Michele Bandini, Antonio Carlini, Luca Casantini, Riccardo Chiaradonna, Michele Corradi, Pierre-Paul Corsetti, Niels Christian Dührsen, Pedro Pablo Fuentes Gonzáles, Angelo Giavatto, Richard Goulet, Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé, Augusto Guida, Jürgen Hammerstaedt, Vinko Hinz, Neil Hopkinson, Jaap Mansfeld, David Sedley, Emidio Spinelli, Gregor Staab, Markus Stein, Mauro Tulli and Francesco Verde.

Thanks to the generosity of colleagues from the University of Basel (Henriette Harich-Schwarzbauer and Anton Bierl), I had the privilege of studying and making use of the *Nachlaß* of Peter Von der Mühl, for the first time in its entirety. The *Nachlaß* contains collations of manuscripts, notes and

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bibliographical details, in part arranged in apparatus form, which I have been able to check and compare profitably with material that I had previously gathered. In my apparatus and in the edition itself I have also taken into account unpublished conjectures by Von der Mühl. I would hope that the great teacher of Basel – the city that saw the publication of the *editio princeps* of Diogenes' *Lives* (1533) – would not have refused the dedication of my edition of one of his favourite authors. I have felt duty bound to pay him this homage. I only hope that my work is not too unworthy of his name and does not injure his revered memory.

*Chartres*

20.12.2012