

EPICUREAN PHILOSOPHY IN OPEN ACCESS: THE INTENDED READER AND THE AUTHORIAL APPROACH OF DIOGENES OF OENOANDA

1. Happy few or happy all?

It is one of the more remarkable caprioles of unpredictable τύχη that the history of ancient Epicureanism is concluded by a monumental ‘poster’ on which this philosophy advertises itself *urbi et orbi* as the only secure way to true happiness. The author of this epigraphic ‘poster’, the Epicurean Diogenes of Oenoanda, indeed wants to provide his fellow citizens and all passers-by with the philosophical medicines that cure their current erroneous convictions and yield them simple pleasures. *Lector intende: laetaberis*. Thus, the philosophy that always preached to “live unnoticed”¹ and recommended to enjoy the purest pleasures of security that come from withdrawal from public life (RS 14), here, at the end of an age-old evolution, confidently addresses its message to everybody who wants to hear it.

Nevertheless, this fundamental openness to everyone is perfectly in line with the spirit of Epicurean philosophy. It is well-known that the founder himself opened the doors of his Garden for women and slaves, and he underlined that both young and old should philosophise (*Epist. Men.* 122)². After so many centuries, Diogenes saw no reason to disagree. In one of his fragments, we even find a cosmopolitan attitude. He indeed points out that

while the various segments of the earth give different people a different country, the whole compass of this world gives all people a single country, the entire earth, and a single home, the world³.

This point of view has reasonably been connected with the Roman empire in Diogenes’ day⁴, which obviously stimulated such a global perspective⁵, but even so, it does not really depart from Epicurus’ philosophy that enthusiastically sings the praise of friendship that dances round the world and proclaims all of us to awake to a μακαρισμός (SV 52). In one of the most striking fragments from Diogenes’ inscription, a golden age is evoked when “the life of the gods will pass to men” and everybody will adopt the Epicurean way of life (fr. 56.I.4–12). Although there is no parallel for such a dream in the earlier Epicurean tradition, it is in my view not incompatible

1 For the Epicurean ideal of λάθε βιώσας, see Roskam 2007a, where further literature can be found.

2 Cf. Frischer 1982.

3 Fr. 30.II.3–11. All translations of the fragments from Diogenes of Oenoanda are borrowed from Smith (and, for the recently discovered fragments, from Hammerstaedt and Smith. A useful collection of their ground-breaking articles is now available in Hammerstaedt–Smith 2014); for other authors, I have used those of the *Loeb Classical Library*.

4 For the date of Diogenes’ inscription, see Smith 1993a, 37–48 (where the inscription is dated in the A.D. 120s); Hammerstaedt 2011, 227–229 (“zwischen ungefähr 120 und 160 n. Chr.”); Hammerstaedt 2014, 738 (“in die erste Hälfte des zweiten nachchristlichen Jahrhunderts”). Canfora 1992 and 1993 challenged this date and proposed an earlier one (first century B.C.). His view is refuted in Smith 1993b and 1997, 68–71; Hammerstaedt 2014, 738–740.

5 Gordon 1996, 29–33; cf. Smith 1996, 963.

with an orthodox Epicurean perspective⁶, but however that may be, this fragment anyhow concerns an unrealistic hypothesis. The great multitude does not follow Epicurus' lead and there is little chance that it will ever do so. As it is, a pleasant life remains the privilege of a small Epicurean minority.

And thus, we touch upon an interesting tension in Epicurean philosophy. On the one hand, it is in principle open for everybody. According to Seneca, Epicurus spoke his words for everyone (*omnibus dixit; epist.* 14,18), and Plutarch underlined that Epicurus sent his books to every man and every woman (πᾶσι καὶ πάσαις; *De lat. viv.* 1129A). On the other hand, Epicurus was not interested in pursuing the favour of the multitude (fr. 187, 209 and 489 Us.) but preferred personal face to face contacts (Seneca, *epist.* 7,11 = fr. 208 Us.). Precisely this same tension between a universalising philosophical message and a particularising preference can be found in one of the most famous fragments from Diogenes of Oenoanda:

Now, if only one person or two or three or four or five or six or any larger number you choose, sir (ἄνθρωπε), provided that it is not very large, were in a bad predicament, I should address them individually and do all in my power to give them the best advice. But, as I have said before, the majority of people suffer from a common disease, as in a plague, with their false notions about things, and their number is increasing (for in mutual emulation they catch the disease from one another, like sheep); moreover, [it is] right to help [also] generations to come (for they too belong to us, though they are still unborn); and, besides, love of humanity prompts us to aid also the foreigners who come here. Now, since the remedies of the inscription reach a larger number of people, I wished to use this stoa to advertise publicly the [medicines] that bring salvation (fr. 3.III.5–VI.2).

We shall repeatedly come back to this important fragment in the remainder of this article, for it contains much relevant information about Diogenes' target readers, which is the focus of this contribution. More precisely, I want to contend that a better insight in these target readers is of paramount importance for a correct understanding of the whole inscription. In what follows, I shall first examine what kind of reader Diogenes addresses (section 2), and then discuss the way in which Diogenes' target reader influences his authorial choices and strategies on several levels (section 3).

2. The target reader of Diogenes

2.1. Fortunately enough, it seems – prima facie at least – quite obvious who Diogenes' target readers are. At several places, Diogenes makes it perfectly clear that he addresses everybody. His philosophical message is relevant for everyone, since freedom from disturbance is identical for one and all (ἐνὶ καὶ πᾶσι; fr. 3.I.11–13), and thus, he shouts out “loudly to all Greeks and non-Greeks (πᾶσιν Ἑλλήσι καὶ βαρβάροις), that pleasure is the end of the best mode of life” (fr. 32.II.9–III.1). In fragment 3 quoted above, the scope is gradually broadened, starting with Diogenes' fellow citizens (who are also directly addressed in fr. 29.III + NF 207.I.7–8: ὧ πολεῖται) and then including both future generations and foreigners. The latter are also mentioned in fr. 30.I.14–II.2 and fr. 119.III.2–3.

6 Cf. Roskam 2007a, 134–135.

That Diogenes indeed addresses everybody is further illustrated by several apostrophes. The general term ἄνθρωπε in fr. 3.III.9 is relevant in this context⁷, as are the apostrophes ὦ ὑμεῖς in fr. 19.II.12 and ὦ ἄνδρες in fr. 32.I.6. Of particular interest is the address ὦ φίλοι in fr. 21.III.14–IV.1⁸: φίλοι is obviously no neutral term in an Epicurean context, which makes it unlikely that this is merely an insignificant *variatio*. Diogenes' use of this word may reflect the fact that his reader has meanwhile followed Diogenes' argument for several dozens of columns. He has become, as it were, a benevolent companion who can henceforth be addressed as friend. We may detect a subtle strategy here: Diogenes suggests that he and his reader are already joined in the friendly relations of the Epicurean community⁹.

One of the most recently discovered fragments further confirms the universal relevance of Diogenes' message:

And we do not consider that it (the inscription) will be useful to certain people and not useful to certain people, but (that it will be useful) to all. To explain: those of you who are young, still at the beginning of your lives and as it were standing at a crossroads, being apprehensive about what kind of road they will travel, in case it is one that is rough and hard to traverse, we will put on the highway; while both those who are not yet old, but not indeed young either, we will make lay aside the error of the opinions wrongly held by them before, and live correctly for the rest of their lives, and as for those who are already old (we will make) them also live well, so long as ever they will still live (fr. 29.III + NF 207.I.13 – NF 207.III.13).

The apostrophe ὦ πολεῖται just before the passage quoted here suggests a *polis*-related context: for once, foreigners or later generations are not concerned, yet here too, the same stress on a universal focus can be found. Quite emphatically, Diogenes states that he addresses not some people but all (πᾶσιν), and goes on by distinguishing three different groups (the young, an intermediate group and the old)¹⁰. All of these passages thus leave little room for doubt: with his inscription, Diogenes addresses all people. The only restriction follows from the idiosyncratic character of his project itself: people should be able to read¹¹ and they should be willing to spend their time on reading, but these presuppositions are nowhere mentioned by Diogenes (except, perhaps, in fr. 30.III.5–14; see below), unsurprisingly so, since they are self-evident indeed. The provisional conclusion, then, is that Diogenes' target reader is, quite simply, πᾶς τις.

2.2. Yet the issue is less clear than suggested so far. There are two passages where the emphatic πᾶς has to yield to a much more confined public of readers, and moreover, both these passages are key passages that are found at prominent, even programmatic places of the inscription.

7 Cf. Smith 2003a, 65 and De Sanctis 2011, 220–221.

8 See also ὦ φίλοι and ὦ φίλτατοι in fr. 119.I.2 and 6 (rather than lines 3 and 7, as it is printed in Smith 1993a, 305; see for the correct line count Hammerstaedt–Smith in this volume).

9 This, however, is not the only possible reading. Given that the fragment belongs to a more extensive attack against the Stoic view of providence, we can also understand ὦ φίλοι as a sarcastic address to the Stoic opponents.

10 Thus developing the common dichotomy between young and old; Hammerstaedt–Smith 2012, 18.

11 This, however, may involve a serious limitation of the reading public; cf. Scholz 2003. His view, however, that “Als ungeeignet wird derjenige von Diogenes zurückgewiesen, der nicht eine formale intellektuelle Ausbildung durchlaufen und somit nicht gelernt hatte, sich im Griechischen in Wort und Schrift stilistisch sauber und gewandt auszudrücken” (p. 214) is much too restrictive.

The first of them belongs to the famous, programmatic introduction to the *Physics*, where Diogenes twice states that he addresses the εὐσύγκριτοι (fr. 2.II.14 and fr. 3.III.4–5). This is a technical term that refers to those persons who have a good atomic constitution. The term should indeed be understood against the background of Epicurean atomism, and recalls Neocles' conviction that his mother got in herself atoms of such a sort as by their conjunction must produce a sage (Plutarch, *Non posse* 1100AB)¹². These are the persons Diogenes wants to help, for they can be expected to have the correct, favourable response. This much more specific focus is reasonable and understandable, to be sure, but also much more restrictive, and it seems diametrically opposed to the emphatic address to πᾶς τις. Moreover, the particular and the universal focus are almost juxtaposed in one and the same fragment 3. How should this tension be understood?

In my view, it is no coincidence that the limitation to the εὐσύγκριτοι can only be found in the introduction of the *Physics*¹³, as it is actually the kind of reader who begins reading this treatise who can be justly qualified as εὐσύγκριτος. This, indeed, is the kind of reader who is not deterred by the great number of columns but who has decided that the text deserves his full attention. This attitude forms a first indication that the reader has the right constitution, in other words, that he is of the atomic stuff of which true Epicureans are made. The term εὐσύγκριτοι thus *does not refer to the target reader of the whole inscription, but only to the target reader of the Physics*.

This has important implications for the scope of this introduction, a matter that has long been controversial in scholarly research. Some scholars regard the introduction as the introduction to both *Physics* and *Ethics*¹⁴, others as an introduction to the whole inscription¹⁵. Smith, finally, considers it to be the introduction to both *Physics* and the whole inscription¹⁶. Although the fragmentary character of the text does not allow definitive conclusions, the combination of the universalising perspective and the specific focus on the εὐσύγκριτοι in one and the same text appears to support Smith's view. The universalising point of view, on the one hand, which includes even strangers and future generations, then reflects the function of the introduction as a general, programmatic introduction to the whole inscription. The focus on the εὐσύγκριτοι, on the other hand, does justice to the peculiar nature of the reader of the *Physics* and also takes into account the particular perspective of this treatise, since it defines the reading public on an atomistic, physical basis. The combination of both perspectives in the same text precisely reflects the double function of the proem as introduction to the *Physics* and to the inscription as a whole¹⁷.

It is striking that the second limitation of the intended reading public can be found in the introduction to the *Ethics*. Although the text is not complete, Diogenes there, quite remarkably, seems to say that he does not address everybody (μὴ πᾶσι τοῖς ἐνταῦθα) but only those who are

12 Cf. Smith 1993a, 436.

13 The term also occurs in fr. 119.III.1, but there, Smith's reading is almost entirely hypothetical: [τοὺς εὐσυνκρί]τους. If the view that I defend here is correct, this reading should be abandoned there.

14 This is the older view, defended by, e.g., Philippon 1931, 156; Chilton 1967, x–xi and 1971, 26–27.

15 Grilli 1950, 369; Casanova 1984, 50; Gordon 1996, 94 n. 1; Hammerstaedt in Hammerstaedt–Smith 2012, 14–15.

16 Smith 1993a, 432; 2000a, 238; Smith in Hammerstaedt–Smith 2012, 15.

17 The reference to the εἴσοδος τοῦ παντὸς λόγου in fr. 29.III + NF 207.I.10–12 should then be understood as a reference to the introduction of the *Physics* in its capacity of introduction to the whole inscription; cf. the stimulating discussion in Hammerstaedt–Smith 2012, 14–15.

στόμα κόσμιοι (fr. 30.I.8–12). This is a strange and somewhat problematic phrase¹⁸, which Smith translates as “those people who are civil-spoken”¹⁹. Such an interpretation is far from pointless indeed. If the text is sound, the phrase may be understood as a reference to those people who are well-ordered in their speaking, in other words, who do not talk vulgar language. Diogenes seems to have in mind respectable people as opposed to ordinary scoundrels. Thus, we here find a moral limitation, at the beginning of the *Ethics*, as a perfect parallel of the physically based limitation to the εὐσύγκριτοι at the outset of the *Physics*. In this case, the limitation casts some light on Diogenes’ social environment. Diogenes appears as a socially distinguished person who recommends a respectable philosophy to equally respectable citizens.

Moreover, in this case too, the clear limitation is combined with a universalising perspective. In the same fragment 30 (quoted at the beginning of this article), Diogenes also addresses foreigners and develops a cosmopolitan point of view. The same tension between universalising and particularising tendencies that we find at the beginning of the *Physics*, thus returns at the outset of the *Ethics*. This suggests the same conclusions. First, the specific focus on the στόμα κόσμιοι reflects the specific reading public of the *Ethics*. This is further confirmed by the remainder of the fragment, where Diogenes formulates a few “reading rules” that the interested reader should follow²⁰: he should not deal with the inscription in the way a random passer-by would do, nor uncritically believe whatever he reads on the wall (fr. 30.II.11–III.14). In other words, Diogenes stimulates a careful and critical reading, and this fits in very well with the kind of reader he has in mind for his *Ethics*. For this reader has already shown that he differs from the random passer-by who confines himself to a few phrases here and there, since he has in fact begun reading a continuous treatise and has meanwhile already read several columns. This is the reader who does not deal with the inscription in a patchy fashion (ποικίλως; 30.III.12). In that sense, Diogenes’ invitation in this fragment is at the same time a corroboration of his reader’s general attitude: *perge quo coepisti*.

Second, the tension, in the proem to the *Ethics*, between an emphatic πᾶς τις (cf. NF 207.II.3) and a much more restrictive public of target readers raises the question as to whether this proem also served a double function, that is, as an introduction to the *Ethics* and to the inscription as a whole. To my mind, a nuanced answer is in place here. On the one hand, there can be no doubt that the principal opening of the inscription was the introduction to the *Physics*. It is there that Diogenes clarifies his own motivations at length, and moreover, there are clear indications that he intended the treatise on physics to be read before that on ethics²¹. On the other hand, it is reasonable to suppose that several readers decided to read only one of the two treatises, and preferred the *Ethics* to the *Physics*. These readers, however, who likewise give evidence of a benevolent and promising attitude, miss the programmatic introduction to the *Physics*. They need some general introductory comments as well, though, and this may explain the tensions in this

18 In fact, the reading is not certain; and cf. Grilli 1997, 233: “non capisco che cosa voglia dire in greco στόμα κόσμιοι, quindi non posso discuterne”.

19 Smith 1993a, 381. Scholz 2003, 14 detects in this phrase traces of the gap between the upper class and the ordinary peasants: “In ihm spiegelt sich möglicherweise die soziale Kluft zwischen der städtischen Oberschicht mit ihrer Gymnasienkultur und der bäuerlichen Bevölkerung auf dem Land, die wahrscheinlich noch Lykisch sprach und das Griechische nur sekundär gebrauchte.”

20 Smith’s text and understanding of this fragment has been significantly improved by Hammerstaedt 2006, 32–34.

21 See esp. fr. 43.I.8–10 (καθὼς καὶ ἐν τῇ πρὸ ταύτης ἐδήλωσα γραφῇ); Grilli 1997, 228–229.

proem. For these readers, who have *de facto* skipped the *Physics*, the introduction to the *Ethics* can serve the same double purpose as the proem to the *Physics*. A cross reference can lead them to the key introduction to the *Physics*²², but if they do not want to interrupt their reading and turn to the *Physics* first, Diogenes takes care that they are nonetheless informed about the double relevance of his inscription (viz. its importance to all and especially to a selected group), in terms that are adapted to an ethical perspective.

3. Diogenes' authorial decisions and strategies in light of his target readers

The above discussion has shown that Diogenes aims at a double reading public: the whole inscription is emphatically addressed to $\pi\alpha\varsigma\ \tau\iota\varsigma$, whereas the more elaborate treatises on *Physics* and *Ethics* are addressed to the well-constituted and decent careful reader. In my view, this double intended readership is a crucial key to a correct understanding of the inscription. Several scholars have correctly argued that earlier studies of Diogenes of Oenoanda insufficiently took the epigraphic context into account²³. Since this defect has been remedied in more recent scholarship, it is now time for the next step, by drawing Diogenes' target readers into the discussion. For of course, Diogenes' inscription was meant to be read²⁴, and the attitude of the reader significantly determines the reception of the text. Diogenes knew this very well, and a careful text-pragmatic study can reveal how he tuned his general approach to his target reader and how he steered the interaction between this reader and the text on the stones. Such a study may distinguish three different levels.

3.1. Macro level

This is the level of the inscription as a whole. Diogenes opts for a well-considered variation of treatises, maxims and letters. This alternation by itself already contributes to the attractiveness of the inscription, for *varietas placet*. To have an entire wall inscribed with one continuous long text is the best way to be ignored altogether. Variety invites the potential reader to read several sections, but also to make his choice and begin somewhere. But there is more. Diogenes' decision to combine different kinds of works in one monumental inscription cleverly takes into account the variation that exists in the entire group of potential readers. We have already seen that the monolithic $\pi\alpha\varsigma\ \tau\iota\varsigma$ in fact consists of entirely different kinds of readers, from the careless passer-by to the critical and decent $\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\gamma\kappa\tau\iota\omicron\varsigma$. And every reader can find something that suits his own taste. At this point, we can recall the famous proem to Plutarch's *Sayings of kings and commanders*. The author²⁵ there points to the difference between the present collection of famous apophthegms and his *Parallel Lives*:

In the *Lives* the pronouncements of the men have the story of the men's actions adjoined in the same pages, and so must wait for the time when one has the desire to read in a leisurely

²² Fr. 30.III.6–7; that the phrase $\omega\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\upsilon\alpha\nu\chi\omicron\varsigma$ refers to the introduction of the *Physics* is argued by Smith 2000a, 243.

²³ See Clay 1990, 2465; Warren 2000.

²⁴ Hammerstaedt 2014, 744.

²⁵ Whether or not Plutarch himself: the authenticity has been much discussed. Recent arguments in favour of the authenticity of the proem can be found in Beck 2002 (who builds on Flacelière 1976). An additional argument can be found in Roskam 2014, 190–191.

way; but here the remarks, made into a separate collection quite by themselves, serving, so to speak, as samples and primal elements of the men's lives, will not, I think, be any serious tax on your time, and you will get in brief compass an opportunity to pass in review many men who have proved themselves worthy of being remembered (172E).

Both Plutarch's works serve fundamentally the same purpose, as studies of the character and choices of famous statesmen of the past, yet they distinguish between two different kinds of readers on the basis of their available time. Those readers who have plenty of leisure time can turn to the *Lives* where they can find a more detailed and in-depth analysis of the statesmen's characters. Busy readers for their part can benefit from the collection of brief sayings, which can be regarded as a kind of short-cut to an insight in virtue. The juxtaposition of different works in Diogenes' inscription may rest on an analogous distinction between different readers.

a) The image of Plutarch's busy person is the random passer-by, the *παροδευών* mentioned in fr. 30.III.7–8. Just as Plutarch's active politician (even if he is the emperor Trajan himself) can always find the time to taste and ponder over one or two sayings, so the passer-by can quickly read a short maxim before hurrying on to his destination. Here we in all likelihood find the greatest group of Diogenes' readers. They just read one or a few lines before continuing on their way. But even that little can be particularly beneficial for their mental health. Moreover, the therapeutic maxims which they swallow are usually easily digestible. I confine myself to two examples:

Although Plato was right to acknowledge that the world had an origin, even if he was not right to introduce a divine craftsman of it, instead of employing nature as its craftsman, he was wrong to say that it is imperishable (NF 155.1–11).

The extremes of pains cannot last long: either they quickly take away life and are themselves also taken away with it, or their acuteness is diminished (fr. 105.1–9).

The latter maxim expresses one of Epicurus' core doctrines, and one easily recognises the parallel with ΚΔ 4. We thus have a direct echo of the *τετραφάρμακος*. Even if a man only reads this single maxim, he returns home with an extremely valuable insight. Moreover, the same topic also returns in the *Ethics*, where Diogenes discusses the matter in more detail (fr. 47). The parallel with Plutarch's distinction between his collection of *Apophthegms* and his *Parallel Lives* is obvious: in both cases, the two texts ultimately aim at the same goal, while following a different approach based on the different situation and interests of different readers.

The former maxim on Plato has no counterpart in the extant fragments from the *Physics*, but we can recognise basically the same approach as in the maxim on pain. Again, the hasty reader receives a useful insight, now presented as a straightforward evaluation. There is no need of a careful and demanding study of the *Timaeus*: Diogenes provides his reader with ready-made insights into this difficult issue, for free and without requiring much intellectual effort. It is the kind of knowledge that we get when we skim through a volume of *Année philologique* and read the few lines of a summary of a scholarly article. The whole argument of the scholar is omitted and crystallised in three lines about his results, which is easily digested, which should suffice to arouse our curiosity and which ideally stimulates us to read the whole article ourselves.

And thus, we touch upon another, extremely important function of the *Maxims*, that is: they should incite the reader to go on reading and turn his attention to other parts of the inscription. In other words, they have to refashion the general ἄνθρωπος of fr. 3.III.9 into an εὐσύγκριτος. This obviously requires a well-considered selection and ordering of maxims. As for the latter, Smith and Hammerstaedt argue that the physical maxims preceded the ethical ones, in line with the orthodox Epicurean order²⁶. This is possible but not sure, as even the Κύρια δόξαι or the *Vatican Sayings* do not show such a rigorous structure²⁷. Moreover, Diogenes may well have preferred variation here, since an attractive alternation may well have been a greater stimulus to further reading than a more systematised structure²⁸ (although certainty is beyond reach on this point²⁹). However that may be, the whole question of adjacent stone courses is in the focus of the architectural studies which are made at present, and which may change or confirm the view of Hammerstaedt and Smith³⁰. As to the content of the *Maxims*, we do not only find wise lessons and ready-made knowledge, but also physical explanations. I again limit myself to two illustrative examples:

A thunderbolt occurs through a violent eruption from the clouds, when both wind and a close mass of fire have burst out together. – An earthquake occurs through entrapment of winds in the earth, and in other ways too (fr. 98.1–11).

There is no need to be puzzled (οὐ δεῖ διαπορεῖν) how hail is formed in summertime. For snow exists unobserved even then, though in a filmy form, and can produce hail, as also can a wind that is cold but high in the air (fr. 99.1–10).

The presence of such fragments on Diogenes' inscription may be somewhat surprising³¹, although on closer inspection, they do not fundamentally differ from several other ones. Here too, the reader receives easily digestible pieces of knowledge that may be appetizers for more and that can, just like the Κύρια δόξαι and the *Vatican Sayings*, easily be memorised. Furthermore, such maxims contain useful information that helps moulding a person's mind and does away with possible mental disturbances by providing confident answers to puzzling questions³². In that sense, the emphatic οὐ δεῖ διαπορεῖν is no less valid for fragment 98 than for fragment 99. These maxims tellingly illustrate the Epicurean belief in the therapeutic relevance of φυσιολογία and its ability to remove mental troubles and fears.

b) The *Maxims*, then, are addressed to πᾶς τις, including foreigners. The *Letters* occupy an intermediate position, and this is a particularly intelligent choice of Diogenes. In adding several letters, Diogenes obviously imitates Epicurus, who likewise divulged his philosophy through a

26 Hammerstaedt–Smith 2009, 16; 2010, 17; 2011, 101; cf. Smith 2000b, 134.

27 Cf. Casanova 1984, 59.

28 Cf. Pamphila's conviction that absence of arrangement is more enjoyable than a uniform structure; Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 175, 119b32–33.

29 In fact, some epigraphical features also seem to speak against variation; see Smith 1993a, 534–535; cf. also Hammerstaedt–Smith in the next volume.

30 Cf. Hammerstaedt 2014, 751–753.

31 Cf. Smith 1993a, 135 on fr. 99.

32 Cf. Laks 1980.

great many letters³³. Yet this is not imitation for imitation's sake. Diogenes probably added these *Letters* because they can play an interesting and multiple role within the general framework of his inscription. A first function is the captivation of the reader. Diogenes' personal letters whet the curiosity of passers-by, since they may allow a glimpse into the private contacts and life of the philosopher³⁴. The appeal which such texts have on the reader should not be underestimated. In his treatise *On curiosity*, Plutarch proposes to start a training against this vice by stopping to read inscriptions, since they contain nothing useful or pleasant (520DE). For Plutarch, such a decision would be a trifling matter that would require no great difficulty. Perhaps he was right, but the mere fact that he nevertheless pays attention to these texts in his philosophical therapy of curiosity may well suggest that they exerted at least a certain attraction on potential readers. That would *a fortiori* be the case with personal letters, which obviously rouse one's curiosity even more. Moreover, such letters are often quite entertaining, and thus have everything to attract the reader.

And the reader who turns to the *Letters* on the inscription indeed gets sufficient information about personal details in order to go on reading. He reads about Diogenes' friends, his relations with other communities abroad, and his corporeal troubles. And while learning about these things, he is smoothly introduced to the world of Epicurean philosophy, where mutual friendship plays a prominent part. We indeed get the impression that the *Letters* are at least partly selected on the basis of the positive picture they paint of Diogenes' philosophical community. A case in point is the *Letter to Menneas*, where Diogenes claims to have recovered better because of Menneas' recommendations, goodwill and solicitude (fr. 122.II.1–7). This is powerful friendship with positive therapeutic effects. Similar feelings of warm friendship are mentioned in the *Letter to Antipater* (fr. 62.I.3–5; 62.I.14–II.8) and the *Letter to the son of Mettius Phantias* (NF 174.1–6). Furthermore, it is well-known that Epicurean friendship demands and guarantees mutual support, and is thus a source of great confidence for the future (VS 34; cf. also VS 39; KD 27, 28 and 40). This is illustrated more than once in Diogenes' correspondence: Antipater gets what he has asked (fr. 63.II.4–6), and unnamed women receive the best things Diogenes can offer (NF 186.I.2–5). Diogenes also quoted Epicurus' *Letter to his mother*, where the master evokes a sunny picture of the first Epicurean community: he is always joyful, lives in plenty and had no financial problems whatsoever, since his friends and his father were constantly sending money (fr. 126.I.5–III.10). Few among the ordinary passers-by who read these words would have been able to say the same, and some of them may well have been attracted by such promising prospects of the Epicurean way of life. Évrard has correctly pointed out that the notion of friendship is much more prominent in Diogenes than in Lucretius³⁵. Of course, this may be explained by the specific focus of Lucretius' *De rerum natura*, yet the emphasis on *φιλία* in Diogenes' inscription, and particularly in the *Letters*, is indeed striking and may be understood as a subtle indirect self-advertisement³⁶.

33 Clay 1990, 2531.

34 His directions to his family and friends (fr. 117–118) are also relevant in this context. It is often assumed that we here read the beginning of Diogenes' will, although this is uncertain. The view is rejected in Smith 1993a, 546.

35 Évrard 1999, 60.

36 At the same time, it also adds to the credibility of Diogenes' philosophy, since he apparently succeeds in practising what he preaches; thus correctly Hammerstaedt 2011, 232.

That does not mean, however, that Diogenes only focuses on friendship and the pleasant life in his own Garden. Clay regards the subjects of Diogenes' letters as rather uninteresting from a philosophical point of view³⁷, but this evaluation can be disputed. In the *Letter of Antipater*, Diogenes tells his addressee that he sends him the arguments concerning an infinite number of worlds, and then recalls how he discussed this topic with Theodoridas of Lindus (fr. 63.II.4–IV.14). Here at least we get an example of a philosophical discussion that is much broader, and Clay himself has correctly pointed to the clear parallels between Diogenes' letter and Epicurus' *Letter to Pythocles*³⁸. Diogenes evokes a stimulating discussion during which mutual disagreements contribute to a deeper understanding. Briefly, he describes the kind of διαλογισμός that Epicurus himself recommended³⁹. Diogenes' community as it appears from the letters is not a narrow company of comrades but an open-minded, friendly group of συμφιλοσοφοῦντες.

A particular case is the *Letter to Dionysius*. Fragment 70 begins with an explicit reference to pleasure and pain as the standard of our actions (κανό[να τῶ]ν πράξεων)⁴⁰. These should determine all our decisions (70.I.5–II.1; cf. KA 25). Diogenes then proceeds:

But if you remember it, what got into you, my good friends, that you embarked on an action such as this, which has given rise to feelings painful to Niceratus and painful to us on account of his misfortunes? For if you claim that you have a firm grasp of the doctrine, but that with regard to the decision of sending the man to us or not sending him – whether [you] had to do it [...] or [...] (70.II.1–III.2).

This seems a note that is out of tune. We do not get the usual sunny picture, but its opposite: for once, we are confronted with the existence of internal troubles in the Epicurean Garden. This is not particularly attractive, to say the least. Why did Diogenes decide to insert this letter in his inscription? His message was not, I presume: join us, for we cause one another grief. I see three possible explanations that complete each other. First, this is not merely a negative story. The poor Niceratus is not abandoned, for Diogenes joins his side. We do not know precisely what happened, but it seems that Diogenes supported Niceratus. Second, the mention of this incident probably entails a philosophical discussion of chance in the remainder of the letter (fr. 71). As such, the *Letter to Diogenes* is an interesting counterpart of the *Letter to Antipater*, a new instance of συμφιλοσοφεῖν. In this context, Diogenes then refers to a letter of Epicurus himself, where the master mentioned his shipwreck (fr. 72.II.1–III.14)⁴¹. All this results in a powerful message: even under such adverse circumstances, a man should not despair, since even extreme bad luck can yield positive results. Finally, this letter focuses on a particular case, and the importance of such attention to concrete matters that are rooted in everyday life should not be underestimated in the context of Epicurean philosophy. Epicurus himself attached paramount importance to a calculus of pleasure and pain, based on the judgement of φρόνησις that had to decide in

37 Clay 1989, 328: "The concerns of these letters to the Epicureans in Rhodes seem personal, provincial, and far removed from the kind of large philosophical concerns that occupied Epicurus in the three major letters reproduced in Diogenes Laertius."

38 Clay 1989, 322 and 1990, 2530–2531; cf. also Smith 1993a, 508 and 1997, 73.

39 De Sanctis 2011, 220.

40 The fragment is discussed in detail in Casanova 1996.

41 That the account of Epicurus' shipwreck may be traced back to one of Epicurus' own letters was first argued by Clay 1973, 54.

every particular case what course should be followed. This is reflected in the many nuances and qualifications that can be found in Epicurus' thinking⁴² and may have been part and parcel of the concrete epistolary advice that he gave to his friends⁴³. Diogenes' *Letters*, then, provide an excellent opportunity to do justice to this important aspect of Epicurean thinking, even more so since it almost completely fades into the background in the other sections of the inscription. In that sense, it is probably no mere coincidence that the emphatic reference to the fundamental *κάνων* occurs precisely here. This letter contains a useful example of how a man should act appropriately in particular circumstances. For that reason too, the *Letter to Dionysius* is a welcome addition to the collection of texts on the inscription.

Before turning to the treatises, I would like to raise one final question concerning the *Letters*. The scholarly *communis opinio* has it that Diogenes did not merely insert a few samples of his own letters, but also included letters of Epicurus and of other early members of the Garden. This is not unthinkable, but far from certain either, and in my view, it is perfectly possible that all letters stem from Diogenes himself. Fragment 127 may here be adduced as a clear warning. On the basis of its content, it has long been understood as a fragment from a letter of Epicurus to Hermarchus⁴⁴, but a recently discovered fragment (NF 174) has shown that the letter was written by Diogenes himself and was addressed to the son of Mettius Phantias⁴⁵. Fragment 128 has been tentatively ascribed to Epicurus' *Letter to Dositheus*, perhaps mentioned in Plutarch, *Non posse* 1101B, but this is no more than an uncertain hypothesis. For even if Smith's text reconstruction ὦ Δωσί[θεε] in 128.II.1 is correct, it is far from certain that this Dositheus should be identified with the Dositheus (or Sositheus⁴⁶) addressed by Epicurus. We can safely presume that there were more Dositheis in Antiquity⁴⁷, and moreover, later Epicureans may have drawn inspiration for their name giving from the earlier generations⁴⁸. However that may be, the evidence for Epicurus' *Letter to Dositheus* on Diogenes' inscription is rather thin. If that is true, there are only two cases that remain. The much discussed letter on Epicurus' shipwreck is not problematic in the present context. Even if it can be traced back to Epicurus himself, there can be little doubt that the letter was quoted in another letter that was written by Diogenes himself (viz. his *Letter to Dionysius*). This appears, for instance, from the reference to "the herald who brought complete salvation" (Epicurus himself) in the third person (fr. 72.III.13). The other case is the famous *Letter to Mother*. The authenticity of this letter is no less discussed, and I prefer to leave the

42 See on this Roskam 2007a, 148 and *passim*; 2007b, 36–41.

43 See, e.g., his advice to Idomeneus (Seneca, *epist.* 22.5–6 = fr. 133 Us.), discussed in Roskam 2007a, 48–49 and 2007b, 31–32. Such epistolary advice may well be another key to Diogenes' *Letters*; see Smith 2011, 242: "He never forgot that 'doctors' must deal with 'patients' on an individual basis or in small groups. And this is why he includes in his inscription letters that are addressed to individuals and make mention of individual pupils and others who are in need of guidance." We should further recall that such personal advice is well in line with Diogenes' preference for a face-to-face contact (fr. 3.III.5–IV.3).

44 Longo Auricchio 1988, 106 also lists it among the "frammenti dubbi" in her edition of Hermarchus' fragments.

45 See Hammerstaedt–Smith 2009, 25–29; cf. Smith 2010, 227 and Longo Auricchio 2013, 8–9.

46 Several manuscripts of Plutarch indeed read Σωσίθεον, the rest have Δωσίθεον.

47 Kirchner's *Prosopographia Attica* already contains 9 Dositheis (and 7 Sositheis), and Sundwall (1910) has adduced a few more (the *RE* lists 11 Dositheis and 5 Sositheis). The *LGP*N of Fraser–Matthews (1987–2013) now lists 113 Dositheis and 25 Sositheis; the *Trismegisthos* electronic database lists 152 attestations for Dositheos and 3 for Sositheos.

48 Thus following the path of Metrodorus, who called his son Epicurus; Diogenes Laertius, 10.19.

question open here. But even if the letter is genuine and should be ascribed to Epicurus himself, the parallel case of the letter on Epicurus' shipwreck shows that it may be (a fragment from) an embedded letter, quoted in one of Diogenes' own letters.

Rebus sic stantibus, caution is appropriate. As far as I can see, the character and goal of Diogenes' project perfectly allow including some of Epicurus' own letters. After all, he also combined Epicurus' *Maxims* with maxims composed by himself. But whether such a combination of personal and traditional material could also be found in the collection of *Letters* cannot be demonstrated on the basis of the extant material. Here, we can only wait until we can recover new evidence from the Lycian earth.

c) The two treatises on physics and ethics provide, taken together, a more comprehensive and systematic introduction to Epicurean philosophy. They still stay at an introductory level, focusing on the basics, but nevertheless require much more time and a more attentive and careful reading, as Diogenes says himself at the outset of the *Ethics* (fr. 30.III.5–14, discussed above). If we again recall Plutarch's distinction between *Apophthegms* and *Parallel Lives*, Diogenes' *Physics* and *Ethics* can be compared to the *Parallel Lives*⁴⁹.

We have seen that these two treatises are not addressed to πᾶς τις but to a much more limited public of εὐσύγκριτοι and στόμα κόσμοιοι. These works provide the general philosophical framework and the background against which *Maxims* and *Letters* should be understood. As such, they constitute the theoretical foundation of the whole inscription. The reading of these two works is the *conditio sine qua non* for a correct understanding of Diogenes' Epicurean philosophy. The treatises directly derive their inspiration from Epicurus' basic insights, and their place is perfectly in line with the architectural principles of the wall on which they are carved. For just as in a well-built wall, the greatest stones are placed at the bottom, where they haul the weight of the entire construction, so the sayings of Epicurus lay the secure foundation of the whole inscription, while the *Ethics* and *Physics* are placed immediately above them. The upper part of the wall usually consists of smaller and lighter stones, just as the upper part of the inscription contains the *Maxims* and the *Letters* (and the treatise *On old age*; cf. *infra* sub d)⁵⁰.

And yet, a careful study of the *Physics* and *Ethics* does not make a reading of the rest of the inscription superfluous. Although we in all likelihood possess little more than 20% or 25% of the whole text, it seems safe to presume that several insights that were discussed in the *Maxims* did not return in the treatises. And we have seen that the *Letters* also contained an interesting and even necessary complement to the treatises. The different parts of the inscription thus mutually complement each other.

d) A special case, finally, is Diogenes' treatise *On old age*. It is probably no coincidence that this work was placed at the top of the inscription, as it focuses on a more specific topic. It has often been observed that, as far as we know, Diogenes could for this work not rely on a previous

49 Or, alternatively, in the terms of Philo of Alexandria, they are no longer the milk but the first solid food (*Agr.* 9; *Cong.* 19; *Somn.* 2.10; *Prob.* 160). Yet this imagery is less informative than the parallel with Plutarch's distinction, in that Philo's image presupposes two different stages of progress (absolute beginners versus more mature people), whereas the reader of Diogenes' *Physics* or *Ethics* may be an uninformed but interested layman.

50 It may be pointed out, though, that this general comparison with the architectonic structure of a wall cannot be applied without qualification to the wall on which Diogenes' inscription was carved, since its stone courses apparently did not constantly decrease from bottom to top; cf. Smith 1993a, 88 and 94.

Epicurean tradition⁵¹, and it is reasonable to suppose that his attention to this theme roots in his personal interests and concerns, given that he is at that moment an old man himself, “having reached the sunset of his life” (fr. 3.II.7–8). It is remarkable, however, that Diogenes in this treatise specifically addresses the youth. In two fragments, indeed, he directly addresses young men (fr. 138.I.1 and 155.16). This is quite surprising: for we could expect that older people would be much more interested in this theme, and moreover, they would as a rule have more time to read it. Cicero dedicated his *On old age* to his friend Atticus, who was then circa 65 years old. And Plutarch dedicated his *On old men in politics* to his old friend Euphanes⁵². This seems much more logical, and this is what we could have expected from Diogenes too. Instead, he explicitly addresses young men: how could he expect to find interested readers in their circles⁵³?

Unfortunately, the few remains of the treatise are of little help. The only trace of Diogenes’ possible motives can be found in fragment 138:

Often, young men, by Heracles, I have been really annoyed with those who, though they have not yet grown old, ... (138.I.1–5)

This treatise thus has its origin in feelings of irritation – not particularly a good thing for an Epicurean. We do not know what precisely marred Diogenes’ pleasures. Smith’s reconstruction of the following lines is entirely hypothetical, although he may be correct that Diogenes attacks a series of charges that young people use to bring in against old age. For several other fragments indeed seem to contain attempts at undermining such charges. But even if that is true, Diogenes’ choice is not evident. For even then, Diogenes could equally well address his peers in order to assure them that they could ignore such unjustified charges and remind them to enjoy the pleasures of every day. Why, then, did Diogenes give free rein to his feelings of irritation rather than laughing off the silly charges of these young men? I see two possible reasons.

On the one hand, the fact that Diogenes addresses young men does of course not exclude that older people will read his text with much interest and pleasure. The contrary is true: before the public of his older readers, Diogenes shows himself the advocate of his peers, who will be eager to side with him in his spirited defence. For they can here read a confident self-affirmation of an old man vis-à-vis the youth, and we can easily imagine how many older readers will have nodded their approval. In that sense, this is a clever decision of Diogenes, for in such an indirect way, he probably appeals even more strongly to his actual, older readers than by self-consolation⁵⁴ and pitiful pep talk.

On the other hand, it remains true of course that even younger men or mature adults can benefit from reading this treatise. Those who do, can be helped in overcoming their unjustified anxieties for the future, since Diogenes demonstrates them how their fears for the miseries of old age are unfounded. Himself an old man (*experto crede*), he is well placed to tell them that old

51 Chilton 1971, 114; Évrard 1999, 56; Smith 2003b, 274; Hammerstaedt 2015, 255.

52 *An seni* 783BC; on Euphanes, see Puech 1992, 4849.

53 Cf. the pertinent remark of Clay 1990, 2521: “One wonders how many boys left their other pursuits to crane their necks to read the treatise Diogenes addressed to them.”

54 *Contra* Chilton 1971, xxix: “perhaps Diogenes put this up for his own consolation as well as for the instruction of the people”. On the question as to whether Diogenes also wrote for himself, see section 4 of this article.

age does not interfere with pleasure and tranquillity of mind. In that sense, the topic of *On old age* indeed proves relevant for a broader public of readers, even for πᾶς τις.

3.2. Meso level

Diogenes' concern for his readers can also be felt at the level of individual works. This already appears from Diogenes' choice of *Koiné* (instead of Attic)⁵⁵ and from the size of the letters⁵⁶. Of course, this size is primarily conditioned by the place of the work on the wall. The letters of *On old age* are larger because the treatise is placed on top of the wall. Yet we also observe that the letters of the *Maxims* are larger than those of other works that in all likelihood occupied the same course of the inscription⁵⁷, and this variation may be connected with a difference in target readers. The *Maxims* are addressed to the random passer-by who prefers easily digestible messages, written in large, readable letters. The so-called *Fourteen-line-column-Letters* presuppose more reading efforts, and as such reflect an intermediate position.

But at this meso level, especially the *Physics* and *Ethics* repay closer study. It hardly needs repeating that it is far from evident to read such a lengthy and continuous text on stone. The difficulties which we now face are often due to the worn state of the stones, but even when an inscribed stone is well preserved, contemporary competent epigraphists still need considerable concentration to follow the text. The same was presumably true for ancient readers too, and since the power of concentration flags after some time, we may wonder how many people in Diogenes' day read through the whole inscription. Probably, their number was quite small⁵⁸. Even those who only read the *Physics* or the *Ethics* were most likely a small minority. But for these readers, Diogenes has taken special care. In several ways, he tried to facilitate their reading as much as possible.

One of the most conspicuous characteristics of Diogenes' argument in both *Physics* and *Ethics* is its thorough systematisation. Often, Diogenes verges on pedantry. A great many fragments contain announcements of what will come next. In fragment 6, for instance, he tells his reader that he will first refute the opinions of his predecessors about the elements, and then explain his own view (6.I.7–10)⁵⁹. In fragment 32, he already announces his discussion of folly, but adds that he will first deal with virtues and pleasure (32.I.2–6). These are only two examples out of many more⁶⁰, and as far as we can still check, Diogenes always did what he promised. In that respect, fragment 34, which also contains a systematic division of topics, proves particularly interesting:

Let us now [investigate] how life is to be made pleasant for us both in states (ἐν τοῖς καταστάμασι) and in actions (ἐν ταῖς πράξεσιν). Let us first discuss states, keeping an eye on the point that, when the emotions which disturb the soul are removed, those which produce

55 On Diogenes' *Koiné* Greek, see Smith 1993a, 38 and 113–114. See also Hammerstaedt 2015, 247–248.

56 See esp. the interesting discussion of Hammerstaedt 2011, 240–243 who also brings in comparative material from other inscriptions.

57 Smith 1998a, 156.

58 Smith 1993a, 123; Petzl 2005, 106; a more optimistic view can be found in Gordon 1996, 128.

59 This, by the way, is a typical approach that often returns in Diogenes' inscription; see, e.g., fr. 4.II.1–9; fr. 5.I.1–III.12; fr. 10.I.4–V.14; fr. 19.I.1–II.11; fr. 43.I.1–II.14. Cf. Clay 1980, 347–348 and 1990, 2482–2483.

60 Cf., e.g., fr. 13.II.12–III.1; fr. 29.II.4 – fr. 29.III + NF 207.I.4; fr. 31.1–5 (hypothetical text); NF 128.V.2–10; NF 167.II.(= *Theol.* II)1–4; cf. also NF 126.IV.(= *Theol.* VI)8 (τοῦτο γὰρ λοιπόν), and, from the treatise *On old age*, fr. 145.I.5–9.

pleasure enter into it to take their place. Well, what are the disturbing emotions? [They are] fears – of the gods, of death, and of [pains] – and, besides [these], desires that [outrun] the limits fixed by nature (34.VI.2–VII.7).

This is what we may call a “table-of-contents-fragment”, and indeed, on the basis of this fragment, several scholars have tried to reconstruct with a fair amount of plausibility the general structure of the *Ethics*⁶¹. But what matters in our context is the fact that such a stringent and clear structure significantly helps the reader during his reading process. Such a systematic approach is indeed particularly appropriate for a lengthy inscription on a wall. For Diogenes’ readers risk to be distracted by all kinds of events that interrupt their reading. After all, they are not sitting in a private room, bent over a papyrus, but are standing on the Esplanade, perhaps one of the more busy parts of the town. Under such circumstances, even the εὐσύγκριτοι will welcome Diogenes’ systematic approach, as it is of considerable help in following the general thread of his arguments.

Occasionally, Diogenes also adds a directive comment to his announcements. A case in point is fragment 13:

Let us now discuss risings and settings and related matters after making this preliminary point: if one is investigating things that are not directly perceptible, and if one sees that several explanations are possible, it is reckless to make a dogmatic pronouncement concerning any single one; such a procedure is characteristic of a seer rather than a wise man. It is correct, however, to say that, while all explanations are possible, this one is more plausible than that. It is therefore possible etc. (13.II.12–III.14).

Here, Diogenes cleverly kills two birds with one stone. As usual, he takes care to facilitate the reading process by announcing what will come next, and in this case too, he will quickly keep his promise. At the same time, the reader also receives precious methodological advice. Diogenes here teaches him the correct approach towards such issues (ὀρθῶς ἔχει) and immediately adds a first example (τοιγαροῦν).

This systematic approach is further completed by a significant number of cross-references. In his *Physics*, for instance, he refers back to his arguments against Heraclitus (NF 142.9–11) or recalls in a summary conclusion the great outlines of the previous argument (NF 126.V[= *Theol.* VII].11–13). In his *Ethics*, he refers to his discussion of want (fr. 48.II.10–12) and of the soul’s superior powers (fr. 49.II.6–7). Once again, such cross-references help a great deal in keeping the reader’s attention, and moreover, they invite him to have a look at other sections of the inscription too. For indeed, several references do not refer back to passages in the same work but to other works on the wall. In fragment 43, from the *Ethics*, for instance, Diogenes refers to the arguments that are developed “in the writing before this one” (43.I.8–10). In this way, cross-references do not merely contribute to the internal coherence of one work, but also connect the two treatises with one another. And in fragment 119, from the *Ten-line-column-writings*, Diogenes refers back to “the matters concerning both physics and the emotions, which I explained in the places below” (119.III.7–10). This shows that the whole inscription finally can be understood as one coherent whole. Diogenes’ systematic approach at meso level thus also contributes to, and facilitates the reader’s access to the whole inscription at macro level.

61 Philippon 1931, 161–164; Clay 1990, 2500; Smith 1993a, 468–469.

3.3. Micro level

When we turn to Diogenes' arguments, we again detect several ways in which he bears in mind his readers, both with regard to their content and with regard to their presentation and phrasing.

a) Diogenes' concern for his reader first appears from his selection of topics. He indeed attaches much attention to common opinions. Now one might object here that this is not typical of Diogenes alone, since such a focus can in fact be found throughout the Epicurean tradition. From this point of view, Diogenes' project of curing the epidemic of erroneous convictions in Oenoanda has nothing to do with a special concern for his target readers but simply roots in his Epicurean convictions. This is true, no doubt, but, as we often see in Diogenes' case, here too his Epicurean stance is perfectly reconciled with the specific nature, design and goal of his inscription. There can be little doubt indeed that several of the topics that Diogenes discusses are directly relevant for the citizens of Oenoanda. There is no need to labour this point, as several scholars have demonstrated this very well⁶². I here only draw attention to the recent discovery of a pedestal for a statue of the goddess Nemesis, of Roman imperial date, which casts light on the contemporary relevance of fragment 19, where Diogenes rejects common visual representations of the gods and among others precisely mentions the statues of an angry Nemesis (fr. 19.II.3–6)⁶³. It is clear that these are concrete topics that can be directly recognised by Diogenes' readers.

But that is not all. Quite often, Diogenes also gives attention to concrete and seemingly ordinary matters. We already encountered his interest in thunderbolts and hail, and may now add several arguments in *On old age*, about the dimmings of the older men's sight (fr. 145.I.10–12) or the gaps in their teeth (NF 211.14–15). These are not the most sublime philosophical issues, perhaps, but they do concern things that matter for ordinary passers-by. There is a real chance indeed that Oenoanda counted more older men who passed sleepless nights because of dental problems than because they were worried about the precise meaning of Plato's *Timaeus* or Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. And from an Epicurean perspective, such problems also deserve attention, as they directly concern a person's pleasure. This is down-to-earth philosophy, but precisely therefore, it can appeal strongly to the potential reader of the inscription. We may here also return to the introduction of the *Ethics* discussed above. Diogenes there insists that younger men, who are at the point of making a life choice, should opt for the easy road (NF 207.II.4–14). This may come as a surprise, especially for more cultivated readers⁶⁴, as a kind of philosophical ἀπροσδόκητον, but it has a rhetorical power and appeals to common sense. Lucian understood the attractiveness of the Epicurean alternative very well and brilliantly exploited it in his *True story*. When he mentions all the famous heroes that are living on the Elysian Fields, he adds a section on the philosophers: "the followers of Aristippus and Epicurus were in the highest favour among the heroes because they are pleasant and agreeable and jolly good fellows". The Stoics, on the contrary, were all absent: "they were said to be still on the way up the steep hill of virtue" (VH 2.18). There is little doubt about who has chosen the right alternative. Furthermore, Diogenes also adds several redefinitions of traditional concepts such as nobility (fr. 111.7–11 and

62 Special attention has been given to Diogenes' discussions of dreams and oracles; see, e.g., Clay 1989, 325–335; Gordon 1996, 105–124; Warren 2000, 148; Bendlin 2011, 181–185. For Diogenes' position towards the contemporary euergetic system, see Roskam 2007a, 129–144.

63 Staab 2009; Smith 2010, 224.

64 Hammerstaedt–Smith 2012, 17.

NF 158.1–4) and luxury (NF 146.I.1–II.6), making it clear that from an Epicurean point of view, these can be reached by everyone.

Finally, Diogenes pays some attention to anti-Epicurean attacks. He no doubt knew that the Epicureans had, at least in some circles, a bad reputation. Plutarch even mentions official decrees of cities that were directed against Epicureanism (*Non posse* 1100D). In the extant fragments, Diogenes usually keeps silent about all this, yet at two places, he does not hesitate to thematise and refute anti-Epicurean prejudices. The clearest case is NF 167, where he explicitly mentions the slander brought against his school (τὴν ἐπιφερομένην διαβολὴν ἡμεῖν; NF 167.II[= *Theol.* II].3–4). The fragment deals with Epicurean theology and its denial of divine providence. According to some people, such a view of the gods does not benefit our life, but in the following columns, Diogenes refutes their view at length. At the background of this whole passage, the traditional characterisation of Epicurus as an atheist⁶⁵ makes its influence felt. Diogenes feels the need to correct this anti-Epicurean bias, and elsewhere in his inscription too, he points to the ancestral tradition and exhorts his readers to piety (fr. 19.II.12–III.5)⁶⁶. The second case is to be found in the *Ethics*, more precisely in NF 192, where Diogenes quite emphatically insists that the pleasures which he pursues are not those of the masses (NF 192.III.5–8), thus indignantly rejecting the common polemical misrepresentation of Epicureanism as a philosophy that aims at base passions. Diogenes' argument belongs to a philosophical polemic directed against the Stoics, yet in the context of this article, it also raises a difficult question: how is this text understood by an ordinary passer-by who belongs himself to the great multitude of οἱ πολλοί? Has Diogenes forgotten for whom he has written his work? No, he has not, nor should we do. This passage belongs to the *Ethics*, and is thus not directed to πᾶς τις but to those people who have a correct attitude and are στόμα κόσμιοι. Diogenes need not be afraid to offend his reader, even on the contrary, he may presume that the latter will approve this rejection of vulgar pleasures, as he is, after all, a decent person himself.

b) As far as the presentation and phrasing of Diogenes' arguments are concerned, the first thing that strikes the eye is their relative conciseness. This evidently holds true for the *Maxims*, but also for the *Physics* and *Ethics*⁶⁷. Of course our assessment of this aspect of Diogenes' work is hampered by the fragmentary nature of the inscription, so that a note of caution is well in place here. After all, Diogenes seems to have devoted more than 20 columns to a discussion of the final end⁶⁸, which is not really surprising in view of the crucial importance of this issue. Nevertheless, the impression remains that Diogenes as a rule confines himself to a few core ideas that are strategically introduced and briefly commented upon. The position of his philosophical opponents is frequently reduced to its bare essence. Just a few examples out of many more: the Socratics say that pursuing natural science and busying oneself with investigation of [celestial phenomena] is superfluous and unprofitable (fr. 4.II.2–7). Aristotle *cum suis* holds that nothing is scientifically knowable, because things are continually in flux and, on account of the rapidity

65 Obbink 1989.

66 Cf. Clay 2000, 83–84 (who points to a parallel in Philodemus).

67 Cf. Clay 1990, 2540 on Diogenes' "tendency to simplify the more elaborate syntactical patterns of Epicurus".

68 Thus Smith 1998, 148.

of the flux, evade our apprehension (fr. 5.I.13–II.8)⁶⁹. In fragment 6, Diogenes presents a whole doxographic list of previous theories about the elements:

Heraclitus of Ephesus identified fire as elemental, Thales of Miletus water, Diogenes of Apollonia and Anaximenes air, Empedocles of Acragas fire and air and water and earth, Anaxagoras of Clazomenae the homoeomeries of each thing, and the Stoics matter and God (fr. 6.I.10–II.9).

Such views are often countered by the Epicurean alternative, but there too, Diogenes observes the same argumentative economy and conciseness. As a rule, he only focuses on the main points (cf. fr. 54.III.9–10: τὸ δὲ μέγιστον). In short, in the selection and presentation of his arguments, Diogenes aims at a well-considered economy that avoids the concatenation of many arguments, omits elaborate discussions of minor details, and does not indulge in digressions about marginal questions⁷⁰. And once again, this general argumentative economy should be directly connected with the medium of the inscription and its target readers. It is clear indeed that Diogenes' sustained focus on τὰ μέγιστα considerably facilitates the reading process. The reader should not lose himself in extensive discussions of *minutiae* or tedious repetitions of the same point. Diogenes always keeps to the point, avoids that his reader becomes tired and gives up, and guides him with the accuracy of an intelligent and experienced director from one key doctrine to the next.

This argumentative economy, however, does not imply that Diogenes always strives for Laconic brevity. Everyone who has an even superficial knowledge of the inscription knows that the contrary is rather true and that the fragments contain quite a few examples of a certain verbosity. Even this tendency can easily be explained by Diogenes' concern for the reader. As Smith pertinently observes, “a certain amount of chattiness, such as one might display if one were actually talking to a person, is quite appropriate”⁷¹. Diogenes' garrulity, then, shows the disarming and kind *bonhomie* that betrays the unaffected friendliness of the Epicurean *camaraderie*.

Yet there is more to it than this. At this point, we should take the inscription's “performative context” into account. Hammerstaedt here makes a brilliant observation:

“Dieser Satz [sc. NF 126+127.IV.2–12] wird erst dann verständlich, wenn man ihn laut rezitiert. Es wäre zu prüfen, ob weitere Auffälligkeiten, wie auch die andernorts wahrgenommene notorische “Geschwätzigkeit” des Diogenes, ihre Erklärung darin finden, daß sich der Epikureer tachygraphisch angefertigter Mitschriften eigener Vorträge bedient hat.”⁷²

Whether or not tachygraphy had a part to play here, I want to leave open, but Hammerstaedt is absolutely correct in pointing to the oral context and in connecting this with the so-called garrulous passages. The most famous instance can be found in fragment 3:

Now, if only one person or two or three or four or five or six or any larger number you choose, sir, provided that it is not very large, were in a bad predicament, I should address them individually and do all in my power to give them the best advice (3.III.5–IV.3).

⁶⁹ See on this esp. Smith 1993a, 128–130; cf. Philippson 1931, 157–158.

⁷⁰ See, however, fr. 13.II.11–12, where the previous discussion is, for once, called a digression.

⁷¹ Smith 1993a, 113.

⁷² Hammerstaedt 2006, 22.

A similar case is to be found at the end of fragment 12, where Diogenes rejects the hypothesis that language was a deliberate invention. He finds it absurd that any one individual should have assembled vast multitudes and,

having assembled them, should [have taken hold of] a rod (?) and proceeded to teach them like an elementary schoolmaster, touching each object and saying “let this be called ‘stone’, this ‘wood’, this ‘human being’ or ‘dog’ [or] ‘ox’ or [‘ass’] ...” (12.V.4–14).

The full dynamics and effects of such passages can only be understood and appreciated if they are placed in a context in which literature was read aloud. It is quite significant that the most striking parallel I know comes from a rather unexpected angle, viz. the speeches of Maximus of Tyr. There we indeed find the same “garrulous” approach. Often, Maximus elaborates on commonplaces, but he keeps going on, piling concrete examples upon one another, without making real progress in his argument⁷³. From a philosophical point of view, this is hardly interesting, but perhaps such a one-sided interest in philosophical relevance is not the most appropriate approach to an author such as Maximus. A text-pragmatic interpretation may be a more valuable alternative, as it helps us revealing the impressive rhetorical powers of such speeches. Every single example is relevant, opens the door to the following one, and creates a powerful dynamics in which the audience hangs upon the speaker’s lips, in keen expectation of the next move. This, I presume, is the dynamics that lies behind Diogenes’ counting in fragment 3 and behind the list of names in fragment 12. This has nothing to do with garrulity, but reflects Diogenes’ attempt to captivate his reader, just like the virtuoso orator who guides his audience through a whole series of consecutive examples gradually to the point where he, after a culminating fermata, finally introduces a new idea (that *eo ipso* receives full attention). But whereas Maximus fully develops this technique of *amplificatio* by embellishing the different items rhetorically and stylistically through his *copia verborum*, Diogenes, on the contrary, crystallises fundamentally the same technique in one brief phrase, thus brilliantly taking the demands of his medium into account. In this way, he shows his admirable talent of turning not merely letters to stone (fr. 116.10–11), but rhetorical strategies as well⁷⁴.

If this is true, it again raises the complex question of the relation between Diogenes and the so-called ‘Second Sophistic’. The two have indeed been connected in scholarly research⁷⁵, in spite of the fundamental differences that exist between both⁷⁶. No doubt, most of the parallels that are adduced to connect the two (e.g. the imitation of the classical model or the use of ‘philosophical’ genres) can equally well be understood against the background of the Epicurean tradition. It is Epicurus whom Diogenes wishes to imitate⁷⁷, and this imitation does not aim at epideictic self-display but roots in sincere philosophical convictions. In that sense, the reference

⁷³ See, e.g., *orat.* 32.7–9 or 8.5 (with the emphatic repetition of καὶ ἐπ’ ἄλλου). Cf. likewise Apuleius, *DDS* 4.126–127; *Apol.* 38.9 (*possum etiam pergere; sed non est operae in istis diem terere, ut sit mihi tempus aggredi ad cetera*) and 54.8 (*dies me deficiet si omnia velim persequi*).

⁷⁴ Cf. Trapp 2007, 21, who characterises Diogenes’ inscription as ‘a kind of half-way stage between private reading-text and public performance’, and Hammerstaedt 2015, 258–261, who discusses the rhetorical character of Diogenes’ philosophical argumentation and concludes by characterizing Diogenes as a *philosophus orator*.

⁷⁵ See esp. Gordon 1996.

⁷⁶ Smith 1998b and Hammerstaedt 2012.

⁷⁷ Clay 1989, 319–325; 1990, 2458 and 2526–2532.

to the 'Second Sophistic' is unnecessary as an explanatory model. Yet it remains true that the instances of rhetorical *amplificatio* mentioned above are a striking parallel between Diogenes' inscription and the world of the 'Second Sophistic'. And although Diogenes is neither a *prima donna* nor interested in virtuoso self-display⁷⁸, there can in my view be no real doubt that he got perfect mastery over traditional rhetorical techniques and was able to use them strategically for his own authorial purposes.

In Diogenes' case, then, we should perhaps not choose between Epicureanism and 'Second Sophistic'. He in fact succeeded in reconciling the two, however irreconcilable they may seem. Just as he reconciled through his inscription the world of πᾶς τις with that of the εὐσύγκριτοι and the Epicurean philosophy of the unnoticed life with the current practices of the euergetic system, he reconciled, in his own brilliant way, the world of Epicureanism with that of the 'Second Sophistic'. Diogenes was not a man who vacillated between either and or. Usually, he succeeded in both having his cake and eating it, and, of course, in enjoying both at the same time. I have not the slightest doubt that his master Epicurus would have warmly recommended him for that.

4. Conclusion

In this article, I have tried to show that Diogenes has carefully taken into account the specific needs of his target readers at several levels of his inscription. At the macro level, the variation between maxims, letters and treatises reflects the variation within the group of possible readers: Diogenes' inscription suits all tastes. At the meso level, the clear structure of the works (esp. the treatises) is intended to facilitate the reading process. At the micro level, finally, the selection and presentation of the material appeals to the readers' interests and stimulates their response.

We have seen that Diogenes addresses in his *Physics* and *Ethics* primarily a limited audience of εὐσύγκριτοι, but that he directs the inscription as a whole to everyone. One question, however, has not yet been answered: does this emphatic πᾶς τις also include Diogenes himself? We know that Seneca advises Lucilius to write in a way so as to read himself while writing (*epist.* 89,23: *scribe ut dum scribis legas*). Plutarch says that he began the writing of his *Parallel Lives* for the sake of others, but then continued the work for his own sake as well (*Aem.* 1.1). Cicero consoled himself (*Att.* 12.14.3: *ut ipse me per litteras consolaretur*) and Agrippinus composed a eulogy on every misery he suffered (Epictetus, fr. 21 = Stobaeus, 3.7.16). Plutarch even advises a garrulous person to write, in order to turn his passion to a harmless domain (*De gar.* 514CD). Is this the key to Diogenes' inscription too? We have already seen that his supposed garrulity can be extremely efficient and functional, and as such does not need any therapy at all. But did he, perhaps, in some other way address himself and is he as such involved in his own target audience? He addresses his readers as ὑμεῖς (fr. 19.II.12) and when he uses the first person plural, he usually speaks as an author, not as a reader⁷⁹. Moreover, the goal of the inscription is to provide a remedy against the widespread disease of erroneous convictions, and Diogenes makes it clear, from the very beginning of his work, that he does no longer need this remedy: he has put the medicines to the

⁷⁸ Pace Gordon 1996, 41.

⁷⁹ An interesting ambivalent case is fragment 112, where the first person plural μεταδίδωμεν (112.9) at least suggests that Diogenes needs some therapy too. It may, however, also be understood as an example of a well-known therapeutic technique that consists in involving oneself in one's admonition; cf. Plutarch, *De ad. et am.* 72A; *Quaest. Plat.* 1, 999EF (on Socrates).

test and they have shown their value (fr. 3.VI.2–14). And in one of the last discovered fragments, Diogenes even explicitly says that

we have set down this inscription not for our own sake, but for your sake, citizens, as a means of salvation for you (fr. 29.III – NF 207.I.4–10).

Here is a doctor speaking who has first cured himself. He no longer needs to read his inscription and does in that sense not belong to its intended readers. Yet nothing excludes that he nonetheless read his own inscription, on the wall. If he indeed did, then for the sake of his own pleasure. I am sure he enjoyed it.⁸⁰

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Özet

Bu makalede Oinoandalı Diogenes'in Epikürcü felsefesine ilişkin anıtsal yazıt ele alınmakta olup, makale iki ana bölümden oluşmaktadır: birinci bölümde, Diogenes'in muhatap aldığı okuyucu kitlesine ilişkin bildiklerimiz sistemli bir biçimde incelenmekte ve Diogenes'in evrensel olup bir bütün'e (πᾶς τις), yani herkese, hitap etme eğilimi ile, sınırlı sayıdaki seçilmiş ve seçkin okuyucuya (εὐσώγκριτοι) hitap etme eğilimi analiz edilmektedir. İddia edilir ki, Diogenes'in daha eğitilmiş kimselerden oluşan okuyuculara karşı olan eğilimi, özel içerikleri olan *Fizik* ve *Ahlak* üzerine yazdığı eserlerinde görülür. Bir başka deyişle, her ne kadar Diogenes yazıtında ilke olarak "herkese" hitap etmekte ise de, onun bu kapsamlı iki eseri yalnızca, dikkatlerini Epikürcü doktrinler üzerindeki daha sistematik ve daha derin çalışmalara verecek kadar eğitilmiş ve çok daha dar bir okuyucu kitlesine seslenmektedir. Makalenin ikinci bölümünde ise, Diogenes'in muhatap aldığı kitleyi kendi düşünceleri doğrultusunda nasıl etkilediği konusu incelenmektedir. Yazıt'ın bütünündeki seviye ele alındığında, Diogenes okuyucularına dozu çok iyi ayarlanmış bir çeşitlilik (*varietas*) sunmaktadır, ki bu çeşitlilik hem onun εὐσώγκριτοι dediğimiz okuyucu kitlesinde ve hem de sokaktaki sıradan okuyucularında zaten bulunmaktaydı. Çoğu okuyucu olasılıkla birkaç cümleyle bile tatmin oluyor ve bunların arasında aradıkları özlü sözleri (*maxim*) bulabiliyorlardı.

Öte yandan, onun *Mektuplar*'ı ortalama bir düzeydedir ve bunlar Epikürcü yaşamın daha somut ve çekici yönlerini yansıtır. Ama onun fizik ve ahlak üzerine yazdığı eserlerinde Epikürcü felsefeye daha detaylı ve sistemli bir giriş yer alır. Orta düzeydeki farklı denemelerinde Diogenes'in okuyucularına ilişkin tercihleri, dilinde, harf boyutlarında, eserinin bütününe ilişkin kurguda ve birçok çapraz gönderilerde kendini hissettirir. Nihayet, özel kanıtların sunumu ve bunların ifade edilmesinde Diogenes toplumdaki ortak düşüncelere ve günlük konulara çok önem verir ve kendisini yalnızca birkaç ana teori ile sınırlar. Mamafih onun tartışmacı yönü kimi zaman dikkate değer bir laf kalabalığı gösterir, ki bu da bize ikinci Sophistik diye adlandırdığımız felsefe akımının retorik tekniklerini hatırlatır.