ABSTRACT

In recent decades Cynicism has enjoyed a rebirth of scholarly attention. This dissertation pursues ongoing research on early Cynicism with a conscious focus on its literary nature. This research helps identifying directions and establishing guidelines for future research on the creation of the early Cynic tradition.

The dissertation examines characteristic features of the literary tradition mainly through the study of biographical elements taken from the life of Diogenes the Cynic, the pragmatic philosopher known as the founding figure of the Cynic movement in 4th-c. Greece. Armed with Diogenes Laertius’ account of the Cynic’s life this study aims at uncovering the historical factors for the emergence of the κυνικὸς τρόπος and investigating the philosophical indebtedness of Diogenes’ philosophy to the previous generations of the 5th-c. sophists, as well as the influence of earlier cultural and literary models in the understanding of the Cynic character. By underlining important parallels with the tradition of (Plato’s) Socrates the dissertation generally attempts to rehabilitate the tradition of the early Cynics and show that the suspicions regarding the historicity of Diogenes’ words and deeds need to be tempered.

The first part of the dissertation investigates the actual tradition and begins with the ancient Succession (διαδοχή) that links Socrates, Antisthenes, and his supposed pupil Diogenes. The study then moves to an analysis of Diogenes Laertius, a most significant source on Cynicism, and his use of earlier (lost) accounts of Diogenes’ philosophy: one particular aspect of early accounts is the crucial tradition of anecdotes (χρείαι and
ἀποφθέγματα). The next chapter finally surveys the historical truth behind the life and death of the man from Sinope and looks into how and when he became known as ‘the Dog’ in Classical Athens.

The second part of the dissertation focuses on Diogenes the Cynic’s indebtedness to previous thinkers in creating his own philosophical “character” at play in the intended tradition. This part then carefully analyzes sophistic ideas that inhabit Diogenes’ world and looks into cultural and literary models that help understand and shape the character of Diogenes in his own literary tradition.
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ABBREVIATIONS

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<td>Rose</td>
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And finally, to Annie and Stéphane, whose patience and endurance have been exemplary, please be assured of my deepest and most sincere love and appreciation.
In the more recent history of Greek philosophy Cynicism was long neglected for being an oddity and an eccentric lifestyle that brought little to the philosophical ideal promoted by the earliest philosophers, the naturalists \(i.e.\) physiologists, all the way to later philosophy \(\text{conveniently labeled \textquoteleft\textquoteleft Socratic\textquoteright\textquoteright\ and basically synonymous with ethical philosophy). Of all the different schools that opened starting in the 4th century, Cynicism plays a strange role by both standing within the tradition of Socratic philosophy yet, contrary to the more famous schools of thought, lacking formal organization that characterizes such leanings as Stoic, Academic, Peripatetic, neo-Platonic, and so on.

Having lapsed into academic disdain and neglect, we had to wait until 1937 for Cynicism to start receiving a proper investigation of its tenets and especially a thorough study of its founding father, Diogenes of Sinope, a supposed student of Socrates’ close friend and pupil Antisthenes of Athens. This renewed interest in early Cynicism began with Donald R. Dudley’s publication of \textit{A History of Cynicism} but was soon met with disagreement, most represented by Farrand Sayre’s \textit{Diogenes of Sinope: A Study of Greek Cynicism}, which mainly opposes Dudley in the interpretation of Diogenes’ importance in the history of philosophy: for Sayre Diogenes was but an eccentric figure, a fool and “a psychopathic character posing as a philosopher” unworthy of the title, and tradition had made him bigger than he actually had been in the Athenian intellectual landscape.

Due to the lasting influence of Cynicism in ancient times, Diogenes’ project was by no means insignificant and it certainly deserves great attention and should be kept
away from Christian and puritan interpretations that may conceive of philosophy as a clean and stainless window where only elevated intellectual discourse deserves a place in the tradition. Cynicism was extremely popular in Antiquity and I contend that Diogenes the Cynic was not only very well-known and popular in Athens but also that his followers greatly succeeded in granting their master an important place in the history of philosophy itself.

It was in the 1990s that Cynic studies really took off and since then most of the work done on early Cynicism and Diogenes of Sinope has followed Dudley’s positive take: Cynicism is now featured extensively in philosophical and ethical research and is the subject of important conferences with important articles, monographs, and two major proceedings stemming out of international meetings: *Le cynisme ancien et ses prolongements. Actes du colloque international du CNRS, Paris, 22-25 juillet, 1991*, edited by M.-O. Goulet-Cazé and R. Goulet, and *The Cynics: The Cynic Movement in Antiquity and its Legacy*, edited by R. Bracht Branham and M.-O. Goulet-Cazé.

This dissertation takes as its premise that Diogenes was at once the originator and the main actor of his own literary tradition, a tradition that was certainly worked out and expanded by his own followers and later Cynic disciples, and that Diogenes deliberately turned himself into a Cynic “character” that was to be staged by the early Cynics themselves. As such, Diogenes was well aware of Plato’s work in creating the Socratic identity, and I take it for granted that Plato too was aware of the differences a philosophical and literary tradition could make on the historical portrayal of his master Socrates. Diogenes’ philosophy (ethical in practice and paradigmatic in aim) and its
subsequent followers aimed early on at setting the very kind of tradition that would freeze the Sinopean’s personality into a type of character, an authentic Cynic ἔθος.

The old anti-intellectual approach to Cynicism forgot that its tradition has always been closely knit with the broader philosophical tradition. Scholars who would still follow Sayre’s footsteps would neglect the input brought by the entire intellectual movement that trailed the debates between thinkers—the sophists—and philosophers of the Socratic tradition: Cynicism was truly a biological offspring of the cultural traditions that questioned the world as it was experienced, from early cosmology to more recent social, practical, and ethical questioning. Beyond the concepts that lay at the basis of Cynicism there are cultural precedents that display a reconfiguration of evolving ideas: whether theoretical, practical, or literary (or strictly poetic) the Greeks have left traces, rules, norms, patterns that were all observable or questionable “from the outside”. While Sayre generally saw Diogenes and the early Cynics as “freaks” and diminished their importance, the tradition itself and the early transmission of Cynicism clearly reflects, or creates, a true Cynic character. Diogenes of Sinope as we know him nowadays cannot be entirely made up.

I contend that the early Cynic tradition was borne by Diogenes out of an awareness of the Socratic tradition and its working, and out of a consciousness to offer an alternative to, perhaps mostly, the Academy which was the most prominent center of higher education in 4th-c. Athens. I argue that Diogenes played a deliberate and active role in initiating the very tradition that would perpetuate Cynicism; second, that his successors continued in their effort to further seal the tradition by renewing and even originating anecdotal material, the so-called Chreia tradition. The “creation” of a new
literary subgenre should not make us doubt excessively the historicity of the proto-Cynic character of Diogenes. The Socratic question that has escaped any modern consensus is still recognized as being somewhat accurate, to a considerable extent, as far as the comparison between Xenophon and Plato’s accounts show workable junctions. And with all the opposing and rival “Socratic” movements, Diogenes was assimilated, probably not wrongly by the Stoics, to a progeny of Socratic teachings through Antisthenes. But as we will see it seems clear from the evidence that Diogenes only moved to Athens well after Antisthenes’ death. Therefore, Diogenes must be seen as an independent pragmatic actor, a knowledgeable thinker, who got affiliated through his reusing of elements for which Antisthenes, a Socratic follower, was himself known. Yet Diogenes’ original idea was to bring such means to their radical ends.

Even if we must be careful in evaluating the Cynic tradition as it has come down to us; even if we realize that not without second-generation Cynics (Crates, Metrocles, etc.) do we really see Diogenes and Cynicism bursting onto the literary stage (apophthegms, aphorisms, satirists, etc.); even if we rely on early “doxography” which we know very poorly in its details; and even if we accept that we might never have a fully clear picture of Diogenes the philosopher... Well, what we do have is already instructive about the tradition of early Cynicism itself, if only that to begin with. The tradition informs us about Hellenistic collections and historiographical compilations of authentic ideas and it materializes their philosophical representatives. With Cynicism specifically, we witness the literary shaping of a movement at work, alongside the shaping of its founding “character”. The term “character” is used here first of all with all the ambiguity the English word possesses, even though one meaning of the English word (hinted at by
Euripides at the earliest), remains congruous with the use of the Greek word “χαρακτήρ” in 4th-c. prose. And second, the word χαρακτήρ is intricately linked to the Cynic mission epitomized by their slogan: defacing (παραχαράττειν) the currency.

**Part I** (“Cynic Tradition”) studies the early evidence of Cynicism especially in relation to the two major figures associated with the movement: Socrates and Antisthenes. **Chapter 1** (“Διαδοχή in the Socratic Tradition”) looks at the origins of the movement in terms of its Socratic affiliation stressed by ancient authors. Why and how is Antisthenes, one of Socrates’ followers, so often called the actual founder of the Cynic movement, and what does the tradition have to say about the relationship between Antisthenes and Diogenes? It will become evident that their close relationship is mainly a fiction even while it still upholds a philosophical transition from Socrates to Diogenes. Indeed the ancient Cynic tradition is full of anecdotes that bring together Antisthenes and Diogenes but this chapter argues that there should be but one original Dog: Diogenes of Sinope. Although much of the tradition remains elusive and difficult to fully ascertain, this section draws parallels between the literary tradition of Cynicism and the tradition surrounding the historical Socrates: once we put Diogenes’ own biography in relation to Socrates’ own (as far as their individual traditions are concerned) we will conclude that the pitfalls that we face with Socrates are quite similar to those surrounding early Cynicism. While scholars tend to view the Cynic tradition with extreme suspicion, this chapter attempts to show that the tradition is of the same type as the Socratic one and, therefore, in the shaping of the Cynic tradition we face what I have dubbed a “Diogenic Problem”.

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Chapter 2 (“Sources”) investigates our most important source for the life of Diogenes, namely, Diogenes Laertius’ *Lives of the Philosophers*, in which the author has collected from his sources biographical elements about Diogenes’ life. Especially when it comes to the early Cynics, Diogenes Laertius’ work greatly relies on the tradition of anecdotes and apophthegms (*i.e.* the Chreia tradition) which can be crudely summarized as a series of jumbled quotations and witty replies that are meant to reflect the philosophers’ thought and ideas. Neither a complete work of biography nor a full doxographical account of Cynicism, Diogenes Laertius’ Book 6 on the Cynics is a fundamental and intrinsically useful source for the early Cynics, due in part to the fact that many of the sources used by Diogenes Laertius represent our earliest extant attestations of these anecdotes. As we will see, the historicity of these anecdotes can hardly be proven but in itself Diogenes Laertius’ compilation and collocation of the Hellenistic authors reveals that the content of these anecdotes was certainly more important to the Greeks than their actual historicity: in all of these anecdotes, the Cynic philosopher comes out as a character who exhibits not only his ideas through witticism and humorous speech but also through his immediate actions, that is, “Cynic” reactions to contingent situations. Despite attempts by modern scholars to see covert Cynic references lurking behind some Platonic texts, our interpretation suggests that Plato, in fact, was acquainted with the man from Sinope only late in his life and he had little to bother about both Antisthenes and Diogenes, the latter whom he famously called “a Socrates gone mad”.

The Cynic tradition as we have it now (literary, *de facto*) includes recent subgenres (*Γνώμαι, Ἀποφθέγματα*, etc.) and other experimentations (*Lives, Successions*)
in the representation of philosophers. This kind of literature is, for better or worse, forever the foundation of the historiography of Cynicism and, further, the philosophical movement initiated by Diogenes is closely associated with its own literary origins (Metrocles, for example, and Zeno who is reputed to have been a Cynic himself). Simply put, for Cynicism, we basically witness tradition doing what it does best, right there! And what does tradition do? First it reflects effectively (intentionally or not) the personality of the philosopher: his ideas, his ethics (indeed a big focus of the historical period), his attitudes, and his sayings which, when all combined, paint a structured mind and depict a moral and intellectual attitude towards the world. Seen through the lens of its testimonia, Cynicism thus provides a philosophical outlook that favors pragmatic action over long discussions – as proof, the Cynics ferociously condemned contemplative speculation and even rhetorical practice. Yet the Cynics are known for their witticism and this element has always been underlining the whole Socratic tradition: therefore, we cannot exclude the word-plays and puns as mere literary inventions. Second, tradition creates (with many exaggerations and hyperboles) a true Dog, an idealistic philosopher, the “representation” of a beggar, a barking dog angry at the world: these elements represent the conscious portrait of a pragmatic and philosophical “character” at play.

Chapter 3 (“Biographical Facts”) goes through the biographical elements of Diogenes’ life and secures the few pieces of information that seem certain about him: born in Sinope on the Black Sea, Diogenes ended up in Athens because of an exile. In the 4th century he was a well-known figure in downtown Athens where he took residence in the agora, becoming a visible character. He also traveled to Corinth, where he ultimately died and was buried, and in whose honor the Corinthians even erected a
commemorative pillar. Next to the undisputed facts concerning his life, this chapter also looks into some other elements that bear the stigmas of literary fabrication and draws parallels with other episodes from his biography to show that Diogenes’ life is as much the result of literary practice as it is of biographical investigation. In this way, between historiography and literature, the philosopher has become what he remains for us today: a fully-grown character who exists mainly on his own philosophical and literary stage.

**Part II** (“Cynic Creation”) attempts to uncover the philosophical origins of some Cynic claims that pervade later Cynicism. **Chapter 4** (“Νόμος/Φύσις: the Sophistic Input”) investigates important ideas defended by Diogenes in the anecdotes by situating and analyzing the importance of the debate over the binary opposition Νόμος/Φύσις, a clear legacy of the first sophistic movement in 5th-c. Athens. Diogenes upheld that life should be lived “according to nature” and this crucial tenet of Cynicism finds its roots in the sophists’ discourse and polemics from a century prior to Diogenes’ stay in Athens. Although Cynicism was marked out as something quite different than ‘philosophy-as-usual’, it was not born in a vacuum of ideas: it relies on deep-rooted ideas that had been circulating for a while in the philosophical and literary circles of Classical Athens. Despite some modern attacks on Cynicism for being “anti-intellectual”, this chapter shows that Diogenes was engaged in philosophical debates which he tried to bring outside and outdoors, with a pragmatic take on life that shocked many of his contemporaries. Diogenes’ antinomic views on citizenship and freedom of speech, both fundamental to his neologism of “cosmopolitanism”, can hardly be interpreted without the study of their development and ramifications.
**Chapter 5** ("Cynic Character") addresses another famous saying by Diogenes the Cynic. From the earliest days, the Cynics have fronted their pragmatic and philosophical mission with the explicit aim of “scratching the conventions”. This chapter focuses on the compound verb “scratching” (παραχαράττειν) and provides a study of the very formation and slippage in meaning between its basic positive meaning (χαράττειν: “to scratch, to mark”) and the modern use of the word “character”, variously understood as a fictionalized individual (on a historical level), as a set of moral traits that defines one’s personality (on a psychological level), and as the behavioral display in contingent real-life situations on the so-called social stage (on a performative level). From this study we will then be able to witness the emergence of the serio-comic personality which characterizes Diogenes the Cynic in the early Cynic literature and which becomes the hallmark of the literature most associated with 3rd-c. Cynicism and beyond, i.e. the Cynic diatribe.

**Chapter 6** ("Cynic Models"), finally, takes as its basis the study of two literary characters that are helpful in understanding the Cynic figure and ἔθος. Literary and cultural heroes often play an important part in an oral society and as such, figures such as the Homeric Thersites and the Sage Anacharsis can be analyzed in terms of their prefiguring Cynic ideals. If the former represents the typical voice of dissent from Homer onwards (and was interpreted as the symbol of democratic evil by Plato and others), this marginal character helps us understand the place Diogenes’ παρρησία occupies in his pragmatic philosophy. In turn this very notion of social and political criticism also helps us make sense of other literary genres that are associated with verbal attacks, such as iambic poetry, Old Comedy, and later satire, all of which relate to some
degree to Cynic invective, especially in the later serio-comic diatribe, a genre that conveys serious matters under comic tones (known especially from Bion of Borysthenes onwards). We conclude our chapter by investigating another character which was later made into a Cynic figure, that is, the Scythian prince Anacharsis, who was elevated in Classical times to the rank of one of the Seven Sages. We will see that the dichotomy between insider-outsider is both shared by the Scythian and our philosopher, and this paradigm serves Cynic philosophy very well, turning Diogenes into both an “insider”, a resident of continental Greece, while keeping him at the same time a perpetual “outsider”, a constant foreigner to the usual normative conventions of his contemporary society.

At the crossroad of historiography of philosophy, intellectual history, and literary history, this dissertation offers a new take on the formative years of ancient Cynicism. As part of the cultural legacy of Greek philosophy, Diogenes of Sinope emerges as the founder of an original, provocative, and highly conscious character who deliberately conceived of his own “character” in order to secure a place for himself within a tradition which was to be further elaborated by his followers and later disciples. Adopting and adapting previous discourse and using earlier literary and historical paradigms, Diogenes ended up becoming even greater than himself: the tradition surrounding him is paradoxically both authentic and fictional, all the while it remains true to the actual spirit of early Cynicism. At the end of the day, Diogenes’ anger and disillusion at the world, with all the seriousness it contains, finally makes us smile at his shockingly funny character.
PART I – CYNIC TRADITION
Chapter 1. Διαδοχή in the Socratic Tradition

The historical development of philosophy is haunted by the figure of Socrates, whose enterprise mainly focused on ethical issues and whose innovative views locate him at a crucial milestone in the development of ethics in the philosophical domain. Even if we must wait for Aristotle to find ethics on the road to scholastic investigation, it is mostly with Socrates – who turned his back on the physical sciences of the naturalistic philosophers and the linguistic tour-de-force of the sophists – that a keen interest in individual behavior translated into more theoretical, and (perhaps especially) practical, inquiries.¹

1.1 Socrates: Departure and Legacy

In his tripartite division into natural, ethical, and dialectical parts,² Diogenes Laertius (abbreviated to DL from now on)³ notes that philosophy has been of the ethical

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¹ Previous inquiries were certainly not devoid of interest in behavior nor did literary practice (oral or written, since a text was mostly a “script” grossly until the 4th c.) have nothing to do with ethical concerns, but the Presocratics’ overall neglect of ethics seems evidence enough that up until Socrates ethics mainly belonged to the literary and poetic sphere. The judiciary aspect of ethics, e.g. the compositional practice of ἠθοποιία, was mainly the subject of rhetoric and logography starting in the late 5th c.: in this respect the sophists were a group of teachers who professed to teach all at once, yet for them, linguistic representation was the key to accomplishing this, while logographers relied on literary and performative representation. Democritus and Plato already imagined moral behavior as a determinant to happiness, the τέλος, but Aristotle’s ethical work was the first major straightforward investigation of individual behavior within its social setting and of the moral evaluation made from such behaviors.

² Zeno the Stoic already held a tripartite division, albeit slightly different: physics, ethics, and logic (DL 7.39).

³ DL is used to refer to Diogenes Laertius, both the author and his work “Lives of Philosophers”, while the full name Diogenes is restricted to the philosopher from Sinope, traditionally known as Diogenes the Cynic or Diogenes the Dog. The main text used is the OCT edition by H. S. Long 1964 (used by Giannantoni 1990 SSR and Hicks 2000 Loeb). Since Diogenes Laertius’ Lives is the most important secondary source for the life of the early Cynics, a word must be said about the two main editions. The text
type since Socrates (1.18.1-8). From this “type of philosophy” (ἡθικὸν εἴδος) concerned with “life and that which concerns us” (περὶ βίου καὶ τῶν πρὸς ἡμᾶς)⁴ ten schools arose, all of which were primarily concerned with ethics: the Socratic schools. In the course of the 4th century BCE, most schools and movements that emerged looked back — historically as well as traditionally— to Socrates as some kind of predecessor who “brought philosophy down from the heavens to the agora”.⁵ Such was the effect of Socrates’ sting on the philosophically-minded Athenians who associated with him or who saw in him a mentor whose worth was exemplary enough to be followed, literally or philosophically; such was also the effect of his “tragic” death at the hands of the δῆμος⁶ which initiated various appropriations and interpretations of the master’s views, blending moral and ethical features with the philosophical and literary reconstructions of his unrecorded teachings.

used for DL Book 6 (on the Cynics) is the more recent Teubner edition of Marcovich 1999. I often give the references to Giannantoni 1990 (SSR), who uses Long’s edition: this allows for a better comparison of the two main editions of DL (Long and Marcovich). While Giannantoni is a very useful collection, any discussion of the app. crit. or the variant manuscript readings in DL rests on Marcovich who, in the case of the Life of Diogenes (the Cynic), uses Long’s text through Giannantoni and, thus, reproduces or corrects some of the variants and conjectures presented in Long’s edition. For Jonathan Barnes (review of Marcovich, in CR 52.1, 2002.8-11) they are both complementary, although unsatisfactory, editions. For the difficult evidence of the anecdotal tradition (the χρεῖαι), the parallels or disagreements between Long and Marcovich may be meaningful. For all the other Socratics, unless specified, I use Giannantoni and refer the reader to the editions he has used (see SSR vol.3 - indices).

⁴ Sext. Emp. gives a narrower definition of ethics in his discussion of the Stoics (Pyrrh. Hyp. 3.168 Bekker): ethics is concerned with “discerning things good, bad, and indifferent” (περὶ τὴν διάκρισιν τῶν τε καλῶν καὶ κακῶν καὶ ἀδιαφόρων). His definition is clearly more oriented towards morality.

⁵ Ford 2006.22; cf. Cic. Tusc. 5.10-11: “Socrates autem primus philosophiam devocavit e caelo et in urbibus collocavit et in domus etiam introductit et coegit de vita et moribus rebusque bonis et malis quaerere.”

⁶ I briefly address this issue later, but any lengthy discussion about the political, legal, sociocultural, or rhetorical reasons for the condemnation does not belong here. I only mean to stress that Socratic writings necessarily owe much to Socrates, and his poisoning might indeed have provided a strong philosophical impetus that pushed and drove the following generations, increasingly concerned with ethics and direct questions raised by Socrates’s life and fate.
We know of many Socratic disciples but this number necessarily excludes those followers who were enthralled by the man’s character yet did not end up initiating a philosophical movement or school. Of the so-called Socratic schools, Cynicism was certainly not a proper school (αἵρεσις) but it was a visible movement in the 4th c., and in spite of its marginal stance and numerous eccentricities, it became quite popular as to remain alive (and biting) well after most schools had faded into obscurity – and this, even as it went through adaptations and changes over the centuries.

Many of Socrates’ disciples went on to divergent opinions to the point of opening up new perspectives on human nature and social behavior: most prominently with Plato, who would have opened his school in the Academos, perhaps while he was “still fairly young”, “at some time in the early 380s, after his return from his first visit to Italy and Sicily” or, according to Long, in the early 360s. Even with its peculiarities and its display of unorthodox behavior –which I characterize as ‘Socratic hyperboles’– the tradition of early Cynicism and Diogenes the Dog is no exception: “behind Diogenes’ exhibitionism and deliberate affront to convention lay a profound concern with moral values which looks back to Socrates”.

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8 The actual popularity of the early movement is hard to assess. The movement declined in the 2nd-1st c. BCE but was revived in Roman Imperial times until its disappearance with Classical Antiquity (Goulet-Cazé 1996a.5-18): “Cynicism seems to have been relatively insignificant during the second and first centuries B.C., but the literature of the early Roman empire indicates a strong revival” (Long 1986.234). Goulet-Cazé 1996b.389-413 identifies over 80 known ancient Cynics.

9 Social in the widest sense possible: any behavior which implies a direct or indirect interaction between individuals. Ethics thus becomes concerned with the “proper” behavior (τὸ πρέπον).

10 Hall 1981.2 and Dillon 2003.2 respectively; Long 1986. For a discussion of the physical nature of the Academy, see pp. 2-16.

11 Long 1986.4.
Since Diogenes of Sinope’s Cynicism bears indeed some resemblance to Socrates’ traditional character, there was a natural inclination and a strong historical-traditional pull made by ancient writers (historians, biographers and ‘doxographers’) to align Socrates’ disciples and later philosophical movements with the master himself and his teachings. The term Socratic is therefore only the beginning: all philosophers, the ancients surmised, fastened their philosophical boat to the figure of Socrates. While the philosopher is primarily known from the tradition that started after his death (with Plato’s Apology, considered to have been composed within a decade after the execution of Socrates), the traditional pull of Diogenes and early Cynicism was made through the intermediary figure of Antisthenes, another Socratic pupil (DL 6.2: συμμαθητής).

It is important to mention at this point that the very characterization of Socrates – the core of the ‘Socratic problem’ – relies mainly on the accounts of Plato and Xenophon, or rather, on the portrayals of Socrates as displayed in the literary Σωκρατικοὶ λόγοι. We obviously know that Xenophon had personal contacts with Socrates and that he spent time in his company on occasion. The question whether, or to what degree, Xenophon used Antisthenes as a source for his portrayal was more popular a century ago than in current scholarship (K. Joel 1893, H. Gomperz 1924, Navia 2001 is a recent follower) but the idea that Xenophon’s portrayal of Socrates was influenced by Antisthenes’

12 The publication of Apology is usually set within the period 394-388 BCE, between Polycrates’ Accusation of Socrates (ca.393) and Plato’s first trip to Sicily (ca.387). Cf. Guthrie 1975.70-72.
13 Ford 2006.4: “the alleged effort to capture Socrates’ distinctive style in writing produced some rather different Socrates’s in Plato and Xenophon. But we have good evidence from contemporary comedy that Socrates was an unusual and striking figure, mocked in particular for his “prattling” (Ar. Frogs 1492: λαλεῖν).” For a history of the Socratic problem and a synthesis of the debate over the dating of Apology, see Nails 1995.8-31.
14 Navia 2001.67: “Xenophon, who, possibly lacking the philosophical acumen of other Socrates, may have limited himself to compiling information gathered from others, supposedly mostly from Antisthenes.”
literary production remains no more than a reasonable possibility.\textsuperscript{15} If it were true, the important sources on Socrates would doubly explain the differing interpretations of the Socratic figure by his former disciples all the while accounting for their common grounds. In this scenario we would know Socrates \textit{generally} through the eyes of Plato and Antisthenes, or simply through the publications of their Socratic λόγοι. The Socratic tradition is therefore already flawed from the start, based as it is on two major, different, and rival appropriations of their common teacher. In all of the representations of the Socratic \textit{character}, we must admit that each tradition inevitably adjusts the model it transmits by emphasizing specific Socratic traits that mould Plato’s and Xenophon-Antisthenes’ philosophical paradigm.

While the association between Socrates and Antisthenes is historically reliable it is quite the opposite with regards to Antisthenes and Diogenes. In the strictest sense, the early Cynic lineage which springs from Socrates and follows through Diogenes has been exaggerated and the Cynic tradition should be regarded with suspicion. The Cynic “succession myth” (Socrates – Antisthenes – Diogenes) is, first, exaggerated from the fact that neither Antisthenes nor Diogenes ever opened a formal school: it seems almost certain that Antisthenes taught in Athens and had followers – perhaps many, but the tradition only mentions “a few” anonymous students (DL 6.2, 6.4: ὄλιγους μαθητάς) – but the organization was clearly different and less formal than the later Academy.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{15} Long 1996a.32 considers it “highly probable that Xenophon was principally influenced by Antisthenes” especially in his treatment of Socrates’ ἐγκράτεια.

\textsuperscript{16} The tradition of apophthegms used by DL is the result of reported answers to specific questioning (“when being asked… he replied”): this type of tradition suggests, or seems to reflect, either a teacher-student relationship or an “in-group” dynamics, within the setting of what seems to be a certain kind of lectures (semi-private or public) or group discussions as those that we witness at symposia (elements that are typical of both Socratic and sympotic literature). Also, DL 6.21 portrays Antisthenes as \textit{reluctantly} accepting adepts: it was only after wearing Antisthenes out because he never welcomed students that Diogenes ultimately became his \textit{pupil} (διήκουσεν).
More significantly for our case, modern consensus is that Diogenes and Antisthenes were never really “associates”: in fact the association between Antisthenes and Diogenes is an improbable relationship but which nonetheless represents a typical “passing down” of philosophical teachings from master to pupil, as the emergence of later doxographical διαδοχαί will stress.17 The “diadochial” pull is definitely quite strong when we observe parallel elements in Antisthenes’ and Diogenes’ biographies as far as their pragmatic lifestyle is concerned, but to infer, as the ancients did, that pupils of Antisthenes became natural associates of Diogenes would be quite a stretch. At best, we may accept the possibility that Diogenes visited Athens from Sinope prior to his exile, where he may indeed have heard and met Antisthenes,18 but this need not warrant a strict apostolic succession.

Hippobotus, one of DL’s sources,19 counts only nine formal schools (αἱρέσεις καὶ ἀγωγάς) and excludes the Cynics, the Eleatics, and the Dialectics from his definition (DL 1.19.8-20.1). As Mejer tells us, the word αἵρεσις and its derivatives “seem uniquely appropriate in the field of ethics, which after all is the predominating concern of all philosophical schools after Socrates, Plato and Aristotle”,20 but the term does not apply to

17 The διαδοχαί belong to a type of (biographical and doxographical) literature that flourished in the 2nd-1st centuries BCE, and is generally assumed to take as its model the successors (διάδοχοι) of Alexander (Mejer 1978.63-64); the term already shows up in Epicurus’ will in DL 10.17.
18 Long 1996a.45. Perhaps δήκουσαν refers to such a meeting rather than to a formal association, despite DL’s use of “from that time onwards” (τούντεῦθεν).
19 Ca.200 BCE, author of an Ἀναγραφὴ τῶν φιλοσόφων and a Περὶ αἱρέσεων (Mejer 1978.69).
20 See Mejer 1978.77 for a discussion of the use of αἵρεσις “only in connection with the ethical part of philosophy” (i.e., the Post-Bocatic schools), and Goulet-Cazé 1996a.21-22. A αἵρεσις differs from an ἀγωγή in its use of principles (λόγοι) and doctrines (δόγματα), which are lacking in ἀγωγαί (see DL 1.20 for the broad definition of a αἵρεσις). The connotation of the Greek word clearly also suggests that “ethical behavior” (a philosophical composite of appropriate actions or deeds (πράξεις), not necessarily dogmas) is perceived as a “choice” (αἵρεσις) of lifestyle (a τρόπος), rather than a simple mode of intellectually grasping the world, which must have constituted, at least from Socrates onwards, the limits of the naturalizing hypotheses of the Presocratics.
the Cynics who seem to consider their philosophy a “lifestyle”.\textsuperscript{21} Hippobotus is not unique in the exclusion of the Cynics, but most writers have followed the successions that prevailed since the Alexandrian διαδοχαί. DL does call Cynicism a φιλοσοφία,\textsuperscript{22} contrary to the opinion of others (φασί τινες) who consider it only a way of life (DL 6.87, 6.103: \textit{ἐνστασιν βίου}), but it certainly lacked the formal organization of true schools. Cynicism was thus a philosophical “movement” which shared principles and observed “rules of conduct”\textsuperscript{24} without any strict dogma; hence the usual ancient emphasis on Cynicism as a \textit{lifestyle}. For DL, formal organization and sets of doctrines define a φιλοσοφία and his negation of formal organization for the Cynics is betrayed by his references to Diogenes’ associates, who are most frequently called “friends” or “acquaintances” (γνώριμοι)\textsuperscript{25} rather than pupils.

Through a “typical” succession story of the sort we find in the history of philosophy, the ghost of Socrates hovers high over the ethical schools and over Diogenes’ pragmatic philosophy. What remains today of these lineages, with the relative dearth of early evidence, shows that the Socratic movements did result in various interpretations not only of Socrates’ teachings but also of his own character (personality),

\textsuperscript{21} Based on the dogmatic definition above DL 6.104 wrongly calls Cynicism a αἵρεσις.

\textsuperscript{22} Long 1996a.29 understands Cynicism as a philosophy with its own philosophical purpose, in contrast to Hegel’s own hostile view in his 1805-06 \textit{Lectures on the History of Philosophy}: “There is nothing particular to say of the Cynics, for they possess but little philosophy, and they did not bring what they had into a scientific system” (trans. E.S. Haldane and F.H. Simson, London, 1983, vol.1, p.479). The Cynic innovation is located precisely at the pragmatic level, without effectuating dogmatic and long-winded theoretical λόγοι.

\textsuperscript{23} Such is the view expressed by the Emperor Julian (SSR V B 8). DL also refers to the Cynic “ἀγωγή” in 4.51.11 when he discusses Crates, but only to mention his adoption of the Cynic cloak and wallet, \textit{i.e.} the Cynic “costume”.

\textsuperscript{24} Hicks 2000.10n.a.

\textsuperscript{25} SSR V B 97 = DL 6.77-78; SSR V B 128 = DL 6.73 and 80: Philiscus of Aegina, Diogenes’ friend (γνώριμος); SSR V B 70.10 = DL 6.75. Other “friends” of philosophers (preceding DL’s Book 6) include DL 1.118.6: the “friends” of Pythagoras, DL 2.11.7: Metrodorus of Lampscus, “friend” of Anaxagoras, and more (DL 2.37.4, 2.63.10, 2.72.7, 2.110.10, 2.113.3, 2.114.9, 4.44.9, 5.35.6, 5.35.10, 5.39.11, 5.70.4, 5.70.9, 6.5.2).
as many of his successors had the opportunity to invest the historical Socrates with their own understanding of the man and his ideas, and as each philosopher strove to present a ‘representation’ (a μίμησις/μίμημα) of Socrates, his thoughts, his ideas, and his pragmatic attitude. These representations could have been part of esoteric lectures for students, but they could also be published for a wider audience (such as with the Σωκρατικοί λόγοι).

I believe it is safe to assume that most of the schools considered that they relied on an accurate interpretation of Socrates’ message and that they represented their philosophy as a reaffirmation or a rehabilitation of Socrates; or, the Socratic pupils simply used their former mentor as a skin in which they could dress themselves up, and adjust to their specific views, as the figurehead at the prow of their ethical enterprise. As Nehamas put it: “Even [Socrates’] contemporaries... were radically, passionately divided about the nature of his views, the substance of his actions, and the structure of his motives.”26 In that regard, we need to remind ourselves that from the time the Academy opened, perhaps in the early 360s,27 many of Plato’s young students would have been born well after Socrates’ execution and therefore would have had no living memory of the event: Plato (and others) thus had the opportunity to (re)construct a Socrates whom his younger clientele had never actually met, let alone seen. Indeed, no ancient text ever criticizes or points to Socrates’ shortcomings (we obviously exclude his prosecution, composed by Polycrates, the very sophist attacked by Isocrates in his Busiris)28 but they rather unanimously underline his noble and virtuous moral actions.29 Socrates was a

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26 Nehamas 1992.175.
27 Perhaps as early as 369 BCE (Long 1986.4).
28 Isocrates, whose text (391-388 BCE) attacks Polycrates’ pamphlet (published after 394) which endorsed the condemnation of Socrates, was a contemporary of both Antisthenes and the young Diogenes.
29 His physical attributes and purported satyr-like features, described by Alcibiades in Pl. Symp. 215 and by Xen. Symp. 5.7, only contrast with his manifest charisma and magnetic appeal.
positive model for philosophers, a malleable παράδειγμα at everyone’s reach: on the
pragmatic side, Socrates provided an example of life for those who partook in, or had
much regards for, his way of life (e.g. Plato, Xenophon, Antisthenes); ³⁰ and on the
traditional side, Socrates became a historical and literary model for philosophers and
littérateurs (Plato and Xenophon as obvious examples).

Much has been said about the actual precedents established by (or traditionally
attributed to) Socrates and a similar observation can be made about the Cynic way of life.
Beside the figure of Antisthenes an important building block in the traditional connection
between Socrates and Diogenes is found in an anecdote implicating Plato himself: when
asked his impressions of Diogenes, Plato called the Cynic a “Socrates gone mad” (DL
6.54: Σωκράτης μαινόμενος).³¹ Authentic or not the anecdote points to a certain affinity
between Socrates and Diogenes: Diogenes is constructed as a distorted mirror-image of
Socrates’ own lifestyle, even from Plato’s perspective. There are certainly other aspects
in which Diogenes is more directly linked to Socrates, but this anecdote summarizes the
power of Socrates’ legacy over most later philosophical figures and all subsequent
schools: “with the exception of the Epicureans, every philosophical school in antiquity,
whatever its orientation, saw in him either its actual founder or the type of person to

³⁰ Navia 2001.69: “Socrates’ impact was felt more through the example of his life than through his
teachings. To see him in action, to observe his behavior at the marketplace and in the company of others,
to become acquainted with his style of life, to look at him as he spoke, to catch a glimpse of his facial
expressions, especially his eyes (Phd. 86d), and to fix one’s eyes on his satyrlike face… was to learn from
him.”
³¹ The absence of a definite article (τὸν), justified by the syntactical construction of the name
Socrates in predicate position, renders the statement ambiguous nonetheless: is Diogenes “like that one
Socrates” or is Diogenes “some Socrates”? In the former translation the apophthegm would welcome a
comparative statement such as would be introduced by ὡς or ὡσπερ; the latter translation would already
point to one representation of Socrates as channeled through Diogenes’ self-depiction or self-enactment:
Diogenes plays a Socrates, gone mad. In Pl. Ap. 18b, Socrates refers to the critics of old as those who
persuaded people that there was a certain Socrates (τις Σωκράτης). Although the suggestion can hardly be
debated since ἱστό χρείαι often remain deliberately ambiguous, it is still the mention.
whom its adherents were to aspire.”32 For the Cynic tradition too Socrates provided an *exemplum*, a historical *model* among others, and a *παράδειγμα* to emulate or imitate. It is no surprise then that this kind of traditional model-appropriation easily generates a teacher-pupil association from the earliest Socratics onwards. The *exemplum* was used for some philosophers’ pragmatism which embodied (or actualized) ethical principles and which often manifested itself in the adherence to a simpler life with principles of asceticism and self-sufficiency.33

1.2 Antisthenes: Master-Pupil Relationship

After a brief overview of the history of philosophy as a forward projection onto the subsequent ethical schools, we may turn the table around and look at the history as a backward interpretation (as it always is!) that retrejcts the Cynics onto the Socratic screen. This hermeneutical move shapes our understanding of early Cynicism while slightly distorting the figure of Socrates that lies in the background.

Next and implicit to the issue of Plato’s relationship to Socrates’ own doctrines and the question of the mentor-paradigm appropriated by a pupil is the relationship of the early Cynic tradition itself as a whole to Socrates. The history of philosophy is clear evidence of the important role of the Socratic legacy in the Cynic tradition, but this traditional lineage should not always be taken literally and might very well be a later

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33 Contrary to Socrates, Antisthenes (DL 6.12) and Plato, ἀρετή was not a major concern for Diogenes (DL 6.54: “Be courageous, he said, such is the color of virtue”), if only to show that virtue came with the effort of bodily exercise, as part of an ἀσκήσης (DL 6.70-71), an idea which might have been at the heart of his own work Περὶ ἀρετῆς (DL 6.80).
As philosophy took a sharp ethical turn after Socrates’ impact, philosophy simultaneously shifted its main concerns from natural and ontological to ethical principles. It is indeed quite clear that the Cynics exploited some elements that predominantly characterize Socrates as he appears in both Plato and Xenophon, and that many Socratic followers did end up offering or promoting divergent forms of Socratic teachings.

Like Plato and Xenophon, Antisthenes too is known for the quantity of works he published and the wide range of their subjects. The ten preserved volumes known to DL’s sources (6.15-18) included logical and ethical treatises, apologies and speeches, lectures and polemical prose, commentaries and literary dialogues. Even if we have the right to question the role of the actual Socrates in his writings, we know that Antisthenes’ literary production did comprise Socratic literature: “Of all the Socratic λόγοι, Panaetius [2nd c. BCE] considers authentic (ἀληθεῖς) those of Plato, Xenophon, Antisthenes, and Aeschines” (DL 2.64), although “quite possibly Socrates was not <Antisthenes’> main literary character, as he was for Plato”. But, this might be a sign of tradition itself in the making.

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34 Not much later than the Stoics for Dudley 1937. Mejer credits this philosophical succession to Aristotle’s “attempt to line up earlier philosophers according to their views on the ontological principles though doxographical groups and philosophical successions are already hinted at in Plato.” (Mejer 1978.67). One of these “hints” is discussed by Rappe 2000.284 who suggests that when Socrates is called “fatherless” (Pl. Euthd. 298b: ἀπάτωρ), it is a reference to the apostolic precedent that distinguishes Socrates’ unique interest in a new kind of philosophy. In this case, fatherhood “can be understood as a metaphor denoting philosophical succession, discipleship, or lineage, as in fact the later Neoplatonists used it”. My opinion is that the teacher-pupil relationship suits better the successions than a father-son metaphor, but one interpretation does not exclude the other. The master-pupil association also agrees with pederastic practice, a common topos in the dialogues where the ἐραστής is seen as a teacher-figure (a pedagogical relationship) more than a father-figure (a biological relationship).

35 Prince 2006.84-85 (contra Dudley 1937.14-15): “the Socrates of <Antisthenes’> dialogues was undoubtedly the ascetic, the ‘Man with a mission’, an aspect of the Master which tended to be obscured in the later Platonic dialogues... To the Stoics and to the Alexandrian writers of Successions, Antisthenes would be most familiar as the author of Socratic discourses, in which the tradition of Socrates the ascetic was predominant.”
The philosophical tradition that reached DL linked Diogenes of Sinope to Socrates’ good friend Antisthenes (their lifetimes allowing it), yet the direct affiliation between the two is nowadays generally rejected by scholars. But in this tradition, somewhere between the traditional and the historical poles, the figure of Antisthenes does play a clear role within the Cynic tradition and its history.  Although Antisthenes’ role in the actual founding of the movement is far from self-evident, the succession Antisthenes-Diogenes makes sense when paralleled to the apostolic relationship between Socrates and Antisthenes. In DL, the apostolic connection between these two philosophers is further stressed with the report that Antisthenes took from Socrates his hardihood (DL 6.2: τὸ καρτερικὸν λαβών) and that by emulating Socrates’ disregard of feeling (τὸ ἀπαθὲς ζηλώσας) Antisthenes was the first to begin the cynic way of life” (κατῆρξε πρῶτος τοῦ κυνισμοῦ). The use of πρῶτος does not simply mean that Antisthenes is considered by DL to be the founder of Cynicism: in DL’s own words, ἀπάθεια appears as but one element that defines early Cynicism altogether or, rather, that characterizes the Cynic τρόπος. While Cynicism was not a philosophical ἀἵρεσις, DL still places Antisthenes at the head of the movement by stating that he was the “first”

36 DL 6.1-19. For a discussion of the structure of Book 6 in particular, see Goulet-Cazé 1992; for a broader discussion (esp. of Book 1: structural manipulations, patterns in the biographical themes, injection of older epigrams), see Goulet 2001:85-96: “Il semble notamment que les socratiques qui, dans un premier temps, étaient regroupés comme disciples de Socrate, aient été ultérieurement rapprochés de l'école qu'ils avaient fondée. Ainsi explique-t-on la présence d'une formule d'introduction à l'école cynique à la fin de la vie d'Antisthènes et non au début, et quelques autres détails qui ont embarassé les commentateurs du texte” (88).

37 DL 6.2, perhaps taken from Hermippus’ Life. The use of the noun κυνισμός with its suffix denoting the “name of actions and abstract substantives” (Smyth #840a.5) emphasizes the practical nature of Antisthenes’ philosophy, but we should remember that Antisthenes was considered by DL the founder of Cynicism. The formation of the noun presupposes a verb like κυνίζω (found in Suda 2723, s.v. Antisthenes = SSR V A 23: ἐκύνισε), to act like a dog, which refers to the activity of “living according to Cynic ways”. The verb would be most appropriate for Diogenes, rather than for Antisthenes to whom, for instance, tradition grants a small property (Xen. Symp. 3.8: γῆν) and a residence in the Piraeus (DL 6.2). In Xenophon, Antisthenes speaks of his soul’s “wealth” as opposed to his (lack of) material wealth (Symp. 4.34-35; cf. Pl. Tht. 172d). Furthermore, the symbolic barking and biting all come from the Sinopean’s life and are not associated with Antisthenes.
(προέστη) and that he was the one who “inaugurated the Cynic <lifestyle>” (DL 6.2: κατῆρξε πρῶτος τοῦ κυνισμοῦ). 38

In 6.13, Antisthenes is further associated with Cynic lifestyle – here only referred to as τὴν κυνικήν, where we are meant to supply a feminine noun like σχολή or φιλοσοφία. According to the passage, Antisthenes was also the first to introduce what were to become hallmarks of τὴν κυνικήν: he was the first (πρῶτος) to “double” his cloak and be content with that one garment39 (on the authority of Neanthes of Cyzicus, 4th/3rd c. BCE, and Diocles, 1st c. BCE) and to “take up” (ἀνέλαβε) the staff40 and the wallet (on the authority of Diocles, 1st c. BCE). 41 Interestingly DL in this section only mentions external and visual details (i.e., the Cynic “costume”) and little moral or philosophical doctrines. But, even as DL admits, Sosicrates (2nd c. BCE) rather claims that all of these characteristics were first taken up by Diodorus of Aspendus, a Pythagorean philosopher

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38 The Suda is of no help on this question. Antisthenes “inaugurated Cynic philosophy” (τῆς Κυνικῆς κατῆρξε πρῶτος φιλοσοφίας) and was a “teacher” (καθηγητής) of Diogenes: Suda 2723, s.v. Antisthenes; Antisthenes “introduced the Cynic school” (ὅς τὴν Κυνικήν εἰσήγαγεν άφροσιν): Suda 829, s.v. Socrates. But the Suda clearly understands personal contacts between Antisthenes and Diogenes (καὶ Ἀντισθένει παραβαλὼν τῷ Κυνικῷ ἡράσθη): Suda 1143, s.v. Diogenes.

39 The “doubling” of the cloak (διπλοῦν) means to “fold it” so as to sleep under it. The originality of the gesture was already disputed in Antiquity (DL 6.22): “Diogenes was the first, according to some, to double (διπλώσας) his cloak because of the necessity to sleep in it as well”. We are also told (DL 6.23) that Diogenes took up the staff (βακτηρία) only later when his age required it (ἀσθενήσας).

40 For a discussion of the symbolism of Herakles’ war club (ῥόπαλον) among the Cynics (their βάκτρον), see Voss 1967.

41 Cf. Clay 1996.371: the cloak (τρίβων), which Socrates already wore (Pl. Symp. 219b, Prot. 335d), was folded at night for bedding; the wallet (πήρα) was used to carry their few possessions; the walking stick (βάκτρον) “proclaimed the Cynic as a traveler and a stranger, in any city, yet at home in the world – these were the significant emblems of the Cynic’s autarky, autonomy, and contempt for convention”. The τρίβων and the πήρα were symbols of the Cynic’s autonomy and cosmopolitanism while the βάκτρον was an emblem “of the life of the traveler who belongs to no city at all” (Clay 1996.371n.15). In ps.-Luc. Cyn. 1 the Cynic philosopher has long hair and beard, bare torso, and bare feet, all signs of his “inhuman life” (ἀπάνθρωπος βίος). Cf. Plut. Mor. 499c-d: “...the τρίβων, the πήρα, and begging for your daily food, this is the beginning (ἀρχαί) of happiness for Diogenes.”
contemporary of Diogenes in the 4th c. who also let his beard grow. Following this, we may doubt the validity of the evidence. Antisthenes was an older contemporary of Plato and a long and close associate of Socrates (e.g. Pl. Phd. 59b, Xen. Symp. 1.3) – this is one of the few undisputed facts – and was, later, one of Plato’s main opponents, but the biographical tradition surrounding him is victim to the same pitfalls as the lives of Socrates and Diogenes. Our closest source, Xenophon, mentions Antisthenes quite a few times, but otherwise, the life composed by DL suffers from the same troubles as with Diogenes the Cynic’s life.

Indeed the tradition surrounding Antisthenes in DL comes to us from the same kind of

42 Indeed Dudley 1937.6 shows that the insignia attributed to Antisthenes are unreliable and stresses that the double cloak, the staff and the wallet only appear in Diocles in the 1st c. BCE.
43 Grube 1950.16n.1; Navia 2001.7. Born ca.444, he was in his early 20s at the time he is portrayed in Xenophon’s Symposium (whose dramatic date is 421). In DL 6.1, Socrates and Antisthenes are together at the battle of Tanagra in 426 BCE. Plut. Lyc. 30.6 gives a remark of Antisthenes made after the battle of Leuktra (371 BCE) and Diod. Sic. 15.76.4 shows him alive ca.366 BCE (cf. Dudley 1937.3n.1).
44 Xen. Mem. 2.5.1-3: Socrates discusses the value of friendship with Antisthenes, yet, it is unclear whose φίλου Antisthenes actually is, either Socrates’ or τινα τῶν συνόντων ἄμελοῦντα; in 3.4.1-4, the rich general Antisthenes is certainly not the pre-Cynic, while DL 6.19 does not mention this politician in the men of the same name. Antisthenes teases Socrates (and his wife) in Xen. Symp. 2.10; in 2.12-13, Socrates uses a hula hoop dancer to poke fun at Antisthenes, with a pun on his logical thesis: “I believe none of the spectators here will ever again contradict (ἀντιλέξειν) that courage can be taught” to which Antisthenes replies with even more wit: why not have the acrobatic dancing-girl teaching courage then to the citizens? In Symp. 3.4, Antisthenes is in a discussion with Callias, Socrates, and Niceratus, in which he prides himself (3.8, 4.34) in his soul’s wealth and his modest property (on his poverty, cf. Symp. 4.34-44, 5.9). In Symp. 4.62-63, Socrates recalls that Antisthenes introduced Callias to the sophists Prodicus and Hippias, and others to Socrates. Symp. 8.4-6 shows a profession of Antisthenes’ endearment to Socrates (parallel to Alcibiades’ in Pl. Phd. 59). In Symp. 4.61-62, Antisthenes jokingly designates himself as Socrates’ follower (ὑκόλουθον). The apophthegm in DL 6.8 shows Socrates poking fun at Antisthenes’ torn cloak. Finally, Antisthenes was also mentioned, at least, by Theopompus (DL 6.14) and Timon (6.18). For Antisthenes in Plato, see later section “Cynic sightings”. Cf. Grube 1950.16n.1 (on Xen. Symp.): “When Callias says that he makes men better by giving them money, Antisthenes challenges him and agrees that καλοκἀγαθία and δικαιοσύνη are the same (3.4), and that justice is in the soul, not in the purse (4.2). He also reminds Niceratus that even rhapsodes, that silly tribe, know their Homer by heart, and Socrates says presumably the rhapsodes do not know the allegories (3.6). Antisthenes also challenges Niceratus’ claim that knowledge of all things can be got from Homer (4.6-7). The most important passages for our purpose are 4.34-44, where Antisthenes declares on wealth in the soul, and 4.61-4, where Socrates says Antisthenes is a μαστρόπός in the sense that he can bring together people who need each other as, for example, he introduced Callias to Prodicus and Hippias. Finally, in 8.4 Antisthenes protests his love for Socrates.”
biographical evidence which is, in turn, made up of many sayings (ἀποφθέγματα) and anecdotes (χρεῖαι) taken from authors whose works are too poorly known to us: Hecaton’s Χρεῖαι (DL 6.4), Phanius’ Περὶ τῶν Σωκρατικῶν (6.8), Hermippus of Smyrna’s Βίοι (6.2), Diocles’ Βίοι τῶν φιλοσοφῶν (6.12-13), ⁴⁵ Neanthes’ Βίοι (6.13), and Sosicrates’ Διαδοχαὶ τῶν φιλοσοφῶν (6.13). In DL’s Life of Antisthenes (DL 6.1-19) many chapters (6.3-9) rely almost exclusively on ἀποφθέγματα taken from earlier biographies; other chapters summarize his deeds, thoughts, and views. While the Life of Antisthenes relies on similar sources as those concerning Diogenes the Cynic, Xenophon’s account of Antisthenes also reminds us of the biographical dangers inherent to Plato’s writings regarding the historical Socrates.

Relying on the evidence provided mainly by Xenophon, Prince concludes that Antisthenes was himself “probably closer personally to Socrates than was Plato” and “probably quicker to “publish” after Socrates’ execution and sooner to die”.⁴⁶ This would put his literary production at around 400, if not earlier. We also find a Socratic flavor in many of his favorite themes: definitions (6.3), morality (6.5), virtue, happiness, and wisdom (6.10-12).⁴⁷ One of his significant contributions to philosophy belongs to the world of logic and is alluded to by Socrates himself in Xenophon (Symp. 2.12): his thesis that “it is impossible to contradict” (οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντιλέγειν) was criticized by

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⁴⁵ Cf. Mejer 1978.42-45. For Mejer this Diocles, the presumed dedicatee of the Cynic poet Meleager’s Garland, was not a direct source for DL’s work. Dudley 1937.11 refers to 6.12-13 as the “doxographical section” of DL’s Life of Antisthenes whose source was indeed Diocles’ Βίοι τῶν φιλοσοφῶν. Yet I believe sections 12-13 still fall under the category of ἀποφθέγματα, typical of the Alexandrian biographical tradition. Diocles’ other major work Survey of Philosophers (Ἐπιδρομὴ τῶν φιλοσοφῶν) was probably a source for DL’s discussion of Stoic dialectic (DL 7.49–82).

⁴⁶ Prince 2006.76.

⁴⁷ The most significant contributions devoted to Antisthenes include: Kesters 1935 (dialectics); Decleva Caizzi 1966 and SSR (fragments); Patzer 1970; Rankin 1970, 1974, 1979, 1981 (logic and the impossibility of contradiction), 1986; Brancacci 1985 (theology), 1993 (polemics), 2005 [1990] (language); Susan H. Prince’s ongoing work on Antisthenes includes her 1997 PhD dissertation from U of Michigan, Prince 2006 (a great succinct publication and a good overall source for Antisthenian themes), and a forthcoming book.
Aristotle who dismissed it as being silly or foolish (Met. 1024b32: εὐήθως). While recent scholars have attempted to reconstruct Antisthenes’ logical position, it is clear that it had little bearing on the later Cynic way of life since we know that Cynicism dealt in no way with Logic. Prince 2006 provides a good summary of the logical theses held by Antisthenes, which do reflect Socratic interests:

“It is impossible to contradict” (Metaphysics 1024b; Topics 104b = V A 152, 153), but also “It is impossible to define the essence” (Metaphysics 1043b = V A 150); and his most prominent legacy to later antiquity was his counterintuitive enunciation about the nature of virtue, which was sufficient for happiness, together with its relation to pleasure: “I would rather go mad than have pleasure” (Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers 6.3; twice in Sextus, and elsewhere = SSR V A 122). Antisthenes’ famous paradoxes are clearly extreme responses to Socratic questions, the pursuit of definition on the one hand and the claims about true happiness on the other.” (Prince 2006.77)

Otherwise Antisthenes remains a relatively obscure figure. Yet, among the many Socratics who published λόγοι and treatises, we may be sure that some offered conflicting accounts of Socrates’ legacy based, as they were, on idiosyncratic interpretations of their master’s teachings. In fact the philosophical rivalry between Antisthenes and Plato rests on dissimilar views, ideas, and ideals, and on the fact, we should add, that Antisthenes was one of a few Socratic followers, it seems, to have taught

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48 Cf. Navia 2001.60-63 for Aristotle’s judgment; Cf. Rappe 2000.287 on Pl. Euthd. 285e2. Rankin 1974.316 presents as evident that Antisthenes’ οὐκ ἐστιν ἀντιλέγειν is a “logical” attack on Plato’s ideas (εἴδη) and he also suggests that Antisthenes’ sceptical and Gorgianic position on the metaphysical relationship between λόγος and the object which the λόγος signifies was “further hardened by the influence upon him of Socrates’ extremely radical questioning of meanings of words accompanied by frequent professions of ignorance” (316-317); for Brancacci 2005, Antisthenes’ thesis on the “impossibility of contradiction” was not an autonomous thesis but a consequence of his οἰκεῖος λόγος theory (29), the formulation of which is found in Arist. Met. D 29 1024b31-36 (= SSR V A 152); for Long 1996a.36 Antisthenes’ thesis rests on the ground that “only one account, the proper λόγος, could strictly be applied to any one thing.”

49 Most prominently Brancacci 2005, on the οἰκεῖος λόγος, offers the most recent and comprehensive reconstruction of Antisthenes’ (re-)interpretation of Socrates’ teachings through his own logical, dialectical, and pedagogical positions, teachings which sometimes contrast with Plato’s own Socrates. Antisthenes’ position on religion is discussed by Brancacci 1985 and Goulet-Cazé 1996c (esp. 68-69)—an anecdote (6.4) even shows Antisthenes being initiated into the Orphic Mysteries.

50 Guthrie 1971a.21 describes Antisthenes as appearing as “a somewhat ill-mannered, disputatious and tactless person, and at the same time quick to take offence at any suspected aspersions on himself.”
philosophy in Athens.\textsuperscript{51} It is no surprise then that the entire Cynic tradition constantly opposes Plato on the one side, and both Antisthenes and Diogenes on the other. The anecdotal tradition of the χρεῖαι about this antagonism – often represented in seriocomic terms – keeps track of various polemics against Plato, polemics which \textit{must} reflect in part some authentic philosophical discordance. In other words, polemics were common among rivals and Antisthenes and Diogenes were naturally (or logically) sided together against Plato,\textsuperscript{52} even though the antagonistic tradition that came down to us is counter-balanced by the quasi total absence of Antisthenes from Plato’s dialogues. If Antisthenes were a recurring character in Plato’s dialogues, our picture might otherwise be clearer. Indeed, Plato seems not interested in naming Antisthenes and he rarely attacks him personally: either the rivalry was a one-way road or Plato deliberately avoided even publishing his name.\textsuperscript{53}

As a Socratic disciple, and through a retrojected interpretation of his philosophy, Antisthenes the Athenian was quickly seen as a forerunner to the entire Cynic lifestyle, and it seems obvious why both he and Diogenes have greater affinities to one another than either has with Plato, whom tradition usually presents as a “rival” to both, especially

\textsuperscript{51} Popper 1966.277n.47 forgets Euclides, founder of the Megarian school who certainly taught in Athens (DL 6.24: σχολὴ; 6.89), and Eudoxus (DL 8.87). Aeschines apparently took fees but did not lecture due to Plato’s great popularity (DL 2.7). The speech by Antisthenes (Xen. Symp. 4.34-44, cf. Long 1996a.32) on his material poverty and his sufficient needs marks him as Socratic in theme and in tone, but it strongly contrasts him with the representation of Plato clad in his shiny robes (Antiphanes, fr. 33 CAF) and his rather aristocratic ancestry.

\textsuperscript{52} Among Plato’s other rivals, we must mention Isocrates who criticizes the Eristics, among whom he would count Plato, although he is never named; and perhaps Eudoxus, if we trust that Eudoxus, a former student of Plato’s according to Sotion (DL 8.86), returned to Athens with many pupils, simply to annoy Plato according to DL (8.87: λυπῆσαι). \textit{Cf.} Hicks 2000.402n.a.

\textsuperscript{53} Popper sees personal attacks directed at Antisthenes in \textit{Resp.} 495d-e, \textit{Resp.} 535e-f, and \textit{Soph.} 251b-e. The case to prove that Plato scratches Antisthenes is credible, although we must emphasize that the evidence in Plato is hopeful or wishful at best, and it claims authority only if every Platonic passage \textit{does} refer to Antisthenes; individually, the interpretations are simply speculations, but taken together, they are quite compelling (\textit{cf.} later section ‘Cynic sightings’).
At the very least, the persistence of the anecdotes “points to some dosage of truth” (Navia 2001.6). We cannot claim that the anti-Platonic strand of both Antisthenes (pre-Cynic) and Diogenes (Cynic) was wholly “invented” by the Chreia tradition so as to support the Cynic lineage: more probably both Antisthenes and Diogenes truly stood apart from Plato, either around his personal views, his formal “Socratic” teachings, or the organization of the Academy itself, since Antisthenes and Diogenes did not have an official school and did not openly accept any paying student. Therefore, Antisthenes and Diogenes had little-to-no-recruitment to do. We may infer the ideological gap between Plato and Antisthenes through their individual positions and through the divergent paths they took in their respective versions or appropriations of Socrates’ teachings, if we do accept Xenophon’s depiction of Antisthenes as a closer representation of the “historical” man, perhaps “more true” to Plato’s (late) Socrates.

54 Antisthenes and Plato: DL 6.7-8; Diogenes and Plato: DL 6.25-26, 40-41, 53-54, 58. The level of seriousness or the gravity of their rivalry is even harder to evaluate (unlike, for example, Isocrates’ polemics and open attacks), since most of the anecdotes show Plato, Antisthenes, and Diogenes mainly “taunting” each other (σκώπτειν in DL 6.7; κακῶς λέγειν in DL 6.4; in Xen. Mem. 4.4.6 Hippias “banter with” Socrates, ἐπισκώπειν, and accuses him of “mocking” his interlocutors, καταγελᾶν) – otherwise they are simply speaking (φήμι), responding, or replying to each other: we hear the characters dashing their sarcasm, and these brief encounters are set within an atemporal dialogue of the anecdote-type: the language usually carries humor, wit, and verbal twists, sarcasm, punches, and bittersweet attacks. But this is part of the game: in Xen. Symp. 8.4-5, Socrates similarly taunts (ἐπισκώπειν) Antisthenes. The famous ending of Gorgias’ Hel. “ἐβουλήθη γράψαι τὸν Ἑλένης μὲν ἐγκώμιον, ἐμὸν δὲ παίγνιον” comes to mind.

55 Navia 2001.61: The gap “between speculative philosophers like Plato and Aristotle on the one hand and, on the other, the Cynics [...] involves differences in epistemology and metaphysics, ethics and politics, and logic and the theory of language.”

56 We may also wonder if there is a philosophical distinction to be made between Plato’s Heraclitean bent toward continual change (to which his Theory of immobile and non-sensible Ideas correlates) and Antisthenes’ “natural”, hence trans-species, continuity, a more Cratylean take on definitions. If Allan 1954 is right, Cratylus was not one of Plato’s earlier teachers but only an acquaintance (based on Allan’s reading of συνήθης in Aristotle’s Metaphysics) not much older than Plato: hence, Cratylus would have been about the same age as Antisthenes. But Antisthenes’s views on language (cf. Navia 2001.53-64; Rappe 2000.298-301; his thesis that “contradiction is impossible” in Arist. Met. 1024b32 and Top. 104b21 discussed in Navia 2001.7 and Rappe 2000.287) might be alluded to in Pl. Euthd. 285e2, if Rappe is right.
Born around 444 BCE, Antisthenes was perhaps the illegitimate son (a νόθος) of an Athenian father and a Thracian mother – he would have been a μητροξένος, “a person with a non-Athenian mother” (Nails 2002.373) – and, therefore, was not eligible for Athenian citizenship. This is one early element that may also explain Cynicism’s satirical stance in regards to their criticism of political and social instances: the absence of citizenship gives the Cynics an external, peripheral, and marginal position in their attacks on conventional institutions and normative behavior. This outside perspective that claims παρρησία (a satirical topos in sociopolitical analysis) as its critical engine is an important feature that authorizes Diogenes’ biting criticism.

How Antisthenes came to be one of Socrates’ followers shows some parallels with Plato’s own philosophical development. Following DL 6.1-2 Navia argues for a three-stage development in Antisthenes’ philosophical life: first, a sophistic-rhetorical or Gorgianic phase; second, a Socratic phase; and third, a Cynic phase during which

57 DL 6.1, 6.4. In 451/0 BCE, Pericles had limited Athenian citizenship to those whose both parents were Athenian (Ath. Pol. 26.4, Plut. Per. 37; Blok 2009 offers a recent perspective; Nails 2002.349-351 discusses the status of νόθοι and Pericles’ law), and only in the Hellenistic world do we witness a relaxing of the law. A νόθος was a “(a) child of a citizen male outside a legal marriage, and (b) at least after 451/0, child of a citizen male with a non-Athenian woman regardless of marriage status” (Nails 2002.373); Nails believes that Antisthenes’ mother was, in fact, Athenian with Thracian ascendants (2002.36). On bastardy in general, cf. Ogden 1996; on the status of νόθοι in Athens, cf. Patterson 2005.280-283. The Cynosarges, where Antisthenes supposedly lectured, was reserved to νόθοι (Goulet-Cazé 1996a.4n.5).

58 The marginal position is also important for Aesop (Kurke 2001.203): within the “broader sphere of popular conceptualizations of σοφία, Aesop plays at the margins, a vehicle or focalizer for parodic commentary and critique.” Aesop is at once a critique of power, cultural systems, oracular authority, and sacrificial practices, among others: the tradition presents “a form of political disguise” and “an indirect or disguised message to the powerful”, the combination of which “endows the Life and other Aesopic traditions with a trademark duality: parodic and ambiguous, verbally aggressive and flattering to the powerful.” Aesop, much like Diogenes, is conceived as “a kind of culture hero of the oppressed” (Kurke 2011.11-12). For analyses of the Aesopic tradition (the Life and fables) within the context of Cynicism: S. Jedrkiwicz, Il convitato sullo sgabello: Plutarco, Esopo, ed i Sette Savi (Rome, 1997) on the tradition of σπουδογέλοις; F.R. Adrados, History of the Graeco-Latin Fable. Vol 1: Introduction and From the Origins to the Hellenistic Age (Leiden, 1999) on the Life of Aesop and the fables as the products of Cynic philosophy.

59 As with Socrates, Brancacci 2005.177-185 analyses Antisthenes’ detachment from the linguistic views of Gorgias. This means a re-interpretation rather than a tabula rasa or a complete renouncement of
Antisthenes eventually adopted a ‘Cynic’ lifestyle. In this last phase, Navia continues, the trial, condemnation, and execution of Socrates so significantly marked Antisthenes’ personal beliefs that the event catalyzed his philosophy and drove him to Cynicism.60 If the profound impact that the execution of Socrates had on Plato led to a major distrust of Athenian polity (cf. Epist. 7.325d-326a),61 it seems to have led Antisthenes to consider the human world “truly beyond repair”.62 As one of the few Socratics who apparently stayed in Athens after Socrates’ execution, it is said that it was Antisthenes himself who secured the indictment and punishment of Socrates’ accusers: Anytus was banished and Meletus executed (DL 6.10).63

However romantic or dramatic the view that the State-sanctioned poisoning of Socrates triggered the “Cynic” phase might appear to be at first glance, it is in no way antithetical to Plato’s own account of Socrates’ death. Plato’s dialogues unanimously ennoble Socrates, criticize rival doctrines and thoughts (reflecting 4th century polemics),64 and blame the Athenian demagogic players of the like of Anytus. Acknowledging that Socrates was a crucial determinant in Plato’s philosophy is no understatement and gives a reasonable comparandum, it seems, for Antisthenes’ own take on his former teacher and friend. Later Cynic ethics probably owes much to Antisthenes’

former teachings, and that is usually what we see to a large degree in philosophical successions: theories are tweaked, attuned, and reformulated through one philosopher’s adjustments. In his rhetorical style Antisthenes was part of the ancient canon of pure Attic style (Dion. Halic.): Dudley 1937.14.

60 Navia 2001.65-88, although Sayre 1945 insisted that Antisthenes was strictly Socratic.

61 Chambry 1967.160: “On sent aux allusions répétées qu’il <Platon> fait à la mort de Socrate qu’il n’attend rien de bon d’une démocratie assez injuste et aveugle pour mettre à mort le citoyen le plus vertueux et le plus dévoué aux véritables intérêts du peuple.”


63 Even though DL’s unique reference to this might suggest that it belongs to the Chreia tradition, with its historicity needing to be taken carefully (Navia 2001.65, 85).

64 Kahn 1996.2 (quoted in Rappe 2000.282): “The intellectual world to which Plato’s own work belongs is defined not by the characters in his dialogues but by the thought and writing of his contemporaries and rivals such as the rhetorician Isocrates and the various followers of Socrates.” Cf. Isocr. Adv. Soph. 3-6 (= SSR V A 170)
in many respects, and whether we accept or not Navia’s conclusions concerning the impact of Socrates’ “democratic” death upon Antisthenes, the thesis is quite attractive and suggestive, even though at this point, a clearer picture of the parallels between Antisthenes and Socrates could be provided only by the writings of the former were they not entirely gone except for two fictional speeches of Ajax and Odysseus. Surely a comparative analysis of his work with Plato’s and Xenophon’s depictions of Socrates would enrich our portrait.

We need not go as far as Dudley, for whom Antisthenes represents a “typical minor figure of that time of intellectual ferment, the age of Socrates and the Sophists” and whose philosophy was structured on “flimsy foundations” and unworthy of the title: this is a bit harsh. However minor he was, DL 6.14-15 tells us that of all the Socratics Theopompus praised Antisthenes alone for his skill (δεινός) and for his elegant conversations which Xenophon calls “the most agreeable” (ἥδιστος) and with which he swayed anyone; “in all other things,” Xenophon continues, Antisthenes was “the most

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65 Dudley 1937.13.
66 Dudley 1937.11-12 points out some similarities between Socrates’ and Antisthenes’ ethical doctrines (ἀρετή, σοφός), while the titles of some of Antisthenes’ works “are those of ‘virtues’ which we know to have been investigated by Socrates.” Among the sixty-two titles given by DL we find: On Justice and Courage, On Freedom and Slavery, On Belief, On Life and Death, On Polity, On Goodness and Justice, On Pleasure, On Talk, etc.
67 SSR V A 53-54. Beside the fragments found in later authors, there are a few paraphrases from Antisthenes’ Homeric studies preserved in the Homeric scholia (bT). Navia makes too little of Antisthenes’ literary production and we are misled to assume that Antisthenes stopped writing in his ‘Cynic’ phase since he had little faith in language.
68 Dudley 1937.14-15 offers the compounded elements among Antisthenes’ philosophical system: “His logical position was that of the ‘neo-Eleatics’: the influence of Socrates is paramount in his ethics: his political views are a synthesis compounded of the Socratic ideal of the σοφός, the ‘Sophistic’ opposition between νόμος and φύσις and the reactions of a ‘Socratic man’ to the events of contemporary history. In his interest in ‘names’ one may suspect the influence of Prodicus: that of Gorgias is undoubted on his style and his rhetorical studies: in Homeric ‘interpretation’ he followed the already popular method of allegory.” (14).
temperate man” (ἐγκρατέστατος δὲ περὶ τὰλλα), 69 second to Socrates presumably. These
do not seem to be the attributes of a flimsy philosopher. 70

In Navia’s interpretation, Antisthenes’ pre-Cynicism served as an active defense
and a pragmatic interpretation of the Socratic figure, perhaps even as an intellectual child
whom Socrates brought to the philosophical life. 71 In that respect, Antisthenes has a
great part (quite blurred to us today) in the Socratic tradition, the extent of which we
should be cautious not to deny. As already mentioned, we know that Antisthenes wrote
many Σωκρατικοὶ λόγοι, 72 among other works and treatises, but it is unclear when. If the
execution of Socrates ignited his ‘Cynic’ phase, Antisthenes’ newfound socio-political
pessimism was directed at the broken world. In a parallel to Plato, it is probable that
Socrates’ execution did catalyze pre-Cynic elements, or operated a final “shift” by
Antisthenes toward Cynicizing views, from an uncritical resignation to society’s rules to
the difficult task of ‘making it right’ or ‘setting the world aright’. Not only was this the
direct result of his association with Socrates but as a philosopher himself, his ideas
naturally grew: “we know that Antisthenes, like Plato, continued to develop in his

70 Cf. Dorion 2006 on the importance of ἐγκράτεια (self-mastery) for Xenophon’s Socrates.
Diogenes the Cynic could never claim this ἐγκράτεια for himself, at least from a Socratic perspective since
his Cynicism was anything but temperate and relied on a pragmatic shock-therapy.
71 Cf. Socrates’ image of the midwife (contrasted with the sophists’ method) in Thl. 148e-151d.
Navia 2001.67: Socrates’ orientation “was directed, not so much at implanting firm principles, but at
stimulating thought” and as a midwife “he would assist them in their [i.e. his disciples] process of giving
birth to ideas. His confession of ignorance, understood as an ironic suspension of judgment, was intended
as a pedagogical device to let others reach clarity.” The image is rather old if it is already mocked in Ar.
Clouds 137 (ἐξήμβλωκας), contra Dover 1971 who considers it a mere coincidence.
72 U. Wilamowitz was skeptical that he ever wrote dialogues, but Prince 2006.75 attributes such
dialogues to most Socratics: “we find named no fewer than 12 pupils of Socrates who wrote dialogues
about him, often in rivalry with each other: Xenophon, Aeschines, Aristippus of Cyrene, Theodorus,
Phaedo of Elis, Euclides and Stilpo of Megara, Crito, Simon, Glaucion, Simmias, and Cebes. In addition
to these, Plato and Antisthenes…”
thought after the death of Socrates, so that we cannot simply attribute any views of Antisthenes to the historical Socrates.\textsuperscript{73}

Still Antisthenes’ post-Socratic stage (Navia’s ‘Cynic’ phase) puts him far enough from Plato’s own appropriation and adaptation of Socratic teachings.\textsuperscript{74} We may surmise that Antisthenes might not have been much more sane than Diogenes in Plato’s eyes, had he too lived in a jar, but what mainly distinguishes Antisthenes from the “Socrates gone mad”\textsuperscript{75} (DL 6.54) is the radical change Diogenes operated with his lifestyle and criticism. To borrow Long’s words, Diogenes’ philosophy can be summarized as a deliberate and “consistent attempt” at playing the role of a Socrates gone mad, and at constructing “a life that would breed just the kind of anecdotal tradition DL records”.\textsuperscript{76}

Finally, we must also concede that there is a major break between, on the one hand, Antisthenes and his association with Socrates and, on the other hand, between Antisthenes and Diogenes the Cynic. The first association is historical; the second is mainly traditional.

### 1.3 The ‘Diogenic’ Problem: the First Dog

While the Chreia tradition never portrays Diogenes even mentioning Socrates, the impact of Socrates’ message left its indelible traces on all later philosophy. Within the Cynic tradition there is even an occasional confusion concerning the $\alpha\pi\omicron\varphi\theta\acute{e}\gamma\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ themselves: for instance, Diocles records of Diogenes what some assert about Socrates

\textsuperscript{73} Prince 2006.76.
\textsuperscript{74} We need to note that, being about 20 years older than Plato, Antisthenes was around 45 years old in 399 BCE, Plato in his late 20s.
\textsuperscript{75} See Wieland 1984b.
\textsuperscript{76} Long 1996a.33 and 31, respectively.
Almost twenty-five centuries later, the perennial difficulties surrounding the historical Socrates and his literary persona remain unresolved and constitute the perpetually frustrating Socratic problem. In modern times interpretations of Socrates’ ‘historical’ character have been explained in various ways, according to whose work we give more credibility.

Our best historical evidence about Socrates is found in the works of Plato and Xenophon who have been identified in turn, by different scholars, as the more reliable authority on the ‘true’ Socrates. In fact, it seemingly was one of the functions of the Socratic dialogue (as a literary genre) to give a portrait of Socrates: “proclaiming one had captured the “real” Socrates was one of the earmarks” of these dialogues. We may suppose that the debate over the “Socratic question” is not to be settled once and for all anytime soon, but as Dorion points out, the unsolvable problem might even be only a pseudo-problem; the criticism formulated towards Xenophon (for not being a philosopher himself and because his Socrates hardly seems a philosopher) relies on an old prejudice,

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77 This is not exclusive to Diogenes and Socrates, nor to Diocles. Favorinus, for example, attributes one anecdote to Aristippus instead of Plato (DL 6.25), and Diocles attributes an anecdote to Menedemus instead of Crates (DL 6.91).

78 Guthrie 1971a.5-57 discusses in details all the Socratic evidence (Plato, Xenophon, Aristophanes, and Aristotle). Generally, Hegel, Field 1930, and Leo Strauss 1964 rather trusted or privileged Xenophon (especially Mem. and Ap.) to various degrees of historiographical intention. Chroust 1957 is wholly hostile to Xenophon, both the man and his work. Vlastos 1971 favored Plato (he trusts especially his early period while he scorns Xenophon’s account) and stressed the absence of the famous irony in Xenophon. Others do find some irony in the works of Xenophon (e.g. Guthrie 1971a.17), although somewhat different than the one Plato foregrounds. But Socrates’ avowal of ignorance is certainly wholly absent from Xenophon’s work. Guthrie 1971a equally champions all the Socratic sources, while Dorion 2006 rehabilitates Xenophon’s depiction of Socrates. From the debate over Xenophon and Plato, the Socratic problem has largely shifted to a “Platonic problem” and to the question over Socrates’ own philosophy in contrast with Plato’s personal program in his dialogues. For this debate, see e.g., Guthrie 1971a.29-35; more recently Klagge et als 1992 and Nails 1995; for the (literary) contextualistic approach to the philosophy of Socrates, see Hyland 2004; for the (analytic) developmentalistic approach to the philosophy of Plato, see Vlastos 1971 and 1991. Very recently, two Companions to Socrates have been published: Ahbel-Rappe & Kamtekar 2006 (Oxford) and Morrison 2011 (Cambridge).

79 But, as Nails 1995.11 remarks, “for what it is worth, Aeschines’ depiction of Socrates was widely admired in antiquity for its fidelity to the actual Socrates.”

80 Ford 2006.14. Yet this goal is not antithetical to experimentationes in formal literary terms.
which goes back to Schleiermacher’s influential study (1818) about the anachronistic conception of philosophy as “an essentially critical and speculative activity”;\(^{81}\) while in fact, philosophy in ancient times was mainly understood as a \textit{way of life} – indeed as far as Socratic philosophy is concerned, it quite often deals with ethical questions. The fact that Cynicism never saw its status as a “philosophy” being questioned until recent times should make this point sufficiently clear. Once philosophy had turned away from cosmological and naturalistic considerations, human happiness (εὐδαιμονία) became the main goal of philosophy\(^{82}\) and it was possible to access it mainly through a life of wisdom, knowledge, virtue, self-control, endurance, asceticism, and so on, and these elements were often configured into philosophical systems, expressed within dogmas or ethical principles.\(^{83}\)

\(^{81}\) Dorion 2006 makes a great case for the cohesion of Socrates’ \textit{character} in Xenophon’s Socratic λόγοι. While Plato’s Socrates revolves around σοφία (knowledge and wisdom), Xenophon’s Socrates is consistently centered around, and wholly characterised by: his ἐγκράτεια, the complementary notion of καρτέρια (physical endurance), and the ultimate aim of αὐτάρκεια (self-sufficiency). Dorion goes on to show that differences between Plato and Xenophon are mostly due to their individual representation of Socrates, and neither need be historically wrong; the Socratic themes shared by both authors are differently used for their personal praise of their master’s personality. This is precisely my point in allowing various conflicting and rival interpretations of both men’s unique master.

\(^{82}\) E.g. Julian \textit{Orat.} 6.201c (= SSR V B 264): the main goal (τέλος) for Diogenes and Crates was to seek how they might themselves live happily (εὐδαιμονήσωσιν), and they occupied themselves with other men insofar as man is by nature a social and political animal (φύσει κοινωνικὸν καὶ πολιτικὸν ζῷον τὸν ἄνθρωπον εἶναι).

\(^{83}\) The tension between discourse and action (the ancient dichotomy words/deeds) became the central issue of the happy life through the influence of the first sophistic movement. From discourse to practice, philosophy necessarily needed to transcend its own verbal elaboration to the pragmatic realm of individual, social, and political behavior, in moral or ethical terms. Socrates’ life and death were thus the beacons towards which philosophy turned as a whole to expound the benefits and the virtue of a philosophical training. When Dudley 1937.1 claims (quoting DL 6.28) that Diogenes “despised rhetoricians who made a great fuss about justice in their speeches but never practised it”, he seems to overread DL’s claim that Diogenes was merely “surprised” (ἐθαύμαζε) by these people. Diogenes seems to complain more about the discrepancy between discourse (written or oral) and action, and the misapplication of theorizing and preaching. The contrast appears in Dio Chr. \textit{Orat.} 8.2 (SSR V B 584) where Diogenes compares Antisthenes to a trumpet, loud-sounding yet unable to hear itself. Oppositely Diogenes always tried to match action with word, or preferably word with action. As Julian continues (\textit{Orat.} 6.201c), the Cynics “aided their fellow-citizens, not only by their (pragmatic) example (οὐ τοῖς παραδείγματι μόνον) but by their \textit{words} (καὶ τοῖς λόγοις) as well.”
As far as our evidence for Socrates goes, Xenophon’s Socratic λόγοι combine his personal memory with other Socratic accounts:84 his Oeconomicus (partly a conversation between Socrates and a farmer), the Apology (relying on Hermogenes’ and second-hand testimonies, even Plato’s Apology, it represents Xenophon’s idiosyncratic report of Socrates and has little independent value), the Symposium (a fictional gathering, dramatically set in 422, which nonetheless offers traits that may be “justifiably regarded as genuinely Socratic”),85 and the Memorabilia (composed from personal memory and notes, and purporting to show “the beneficial effect of <Socrates’> companionship”).86 All of these pieces put Socrates on the literary stage. Otherwise we have Plato’s exoteric production to establish some historical truth about the figure of Socrates.87 The obstacles remain serious but Plato’s λόγοι are of primal importance to glance at Socrates the philosopher, just as are invaluable the accounts given by Aristotle, if mainly for his presence at the Academy under Plato’s headship.88

The attempts to separate and distinguish Socratic from Platonic elements in Plato’s dialogues is subject to much questioning and criticism. The memory that Plato

84 Guthrie 1971a discusses the works individually: Oec. (15-18); Ap. (18-20); Symp. (20-24); Mem. (25-28).
86 According to DL 2.48.9-10, Xenophon was the first to “take notes” and “publish memoirs” (καὶ πρῶτος υποσημειωσάμενος τὰ λεγόμενα εἰς ἅνθρώπους ἠγαγεν, ἀπομνημονεύματα ἐπιγράψας, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἱστορίαν φιλοσόφων πρῶτος ἔγραφε), but the practice of taking notes is mentioned in Plato (Thet. 142d, Symp. 172c-173b); the actual composition of Xenophon’s Socratic λόγοι might belong to the period 387-371 BCE (cf. Guthrie 1971a.23-24). Following Guthrie, the claims by Xenophon that he was present at the conversations (as with Symp.) should be taken mainly as a simple authorial device to sustain credibility. 87 As Blondell points out, we may not expect to find a single coherent Socrates in Plato, but rather different avatars that shape the character in the dialogue, which in turn is treated in Plato’s dialogues “with considerable flexibility.” A comparable example from mythology is the figure of Odysseus who, while retaining salient features (verbal dexterity or cleverness) is interpreted and re-interpreted with “a varied moral coloring” (e.g. Soph. Aj. and Phil.), or the various Helens in Euripides’ oeuvre: “we cannot posit a single Platonic Sokrates any more than a single Oidipous, Odysseus or Kreon in Sophocles’ various plays — unless we find that the texts do in fact present us with a single cohesive figure.” (Blondell 2002.8-9).
88 See Guthrie 1971a.29-39. We often brush aside Aristotle despite his residency at the Academy which grants him much authority over Plato’s portrayal of Socrates. He should not be neglected as an important witness in his own right, even distanced as he was from the problem of Socrates’ personal philosophy inherent to Plato’s dialogues and lectures.
wished to honor is bound to be mixed with his personal philosophical project.\textsuperscript{89} Between Socrates’ oral conversations and Plato’s dramatic texts lay the distorting and innovative efforts of a personal enterprise that itself evolves over time. As Platonic studies show the development and evolution of Plato’s own philosophy across the dialogues, so the figure of Socrates becomes inversely a-historical.

So where do we find the historical Socrates? The method used to exhume his character has generally been to compare and isolate the differences between the testimonies of Xenophon and Plato. On the one hand we possess much of Plato’s literary testimony; on the other Xenophon’s accounts, which are mixed with personal memory and, furthermore, may very well be taken in part from Antisthenes’ work.\textsuperscript{90} The influence of Antisthenes and his writings on Xenophon is an exciting topic that is, of course, more riddled with questions than it is paved with answers.\textsuperscript{91} If Antisthenean elements should be at the basis of Xenophon’s representation of Socrates, it would strongly underline once more the antagonism between Plato and Antisthenes.

But in all objectivity, we should be cautious not to over-read passages that make perfect sense in their own rights.\textsuperscript{92} What remains relevant to our study about Diogenes the Cynic is the fact that Xenophon offers us a Socrates with a less esoteric character and he depicts his teacher in highly ethical terms, whereas the character of Plato’s works

\textsuperscript{89} Guthrie 1971a.30: “<Plato’s> love and admiration for his master did not lead him to suppose that he could best honour his memory by merely writing, as nearly as possible verbatim, what he recollected of his conversations, with no attempt to develop their implications.”

\textsuperscript{90} The hypothesis was put forward by Joël (1893) and followed by Gomperz (1924): cf. Dudley 1937.10.

\textsuperscript{91} Navia 2001.67, who follows Chroust 1957 (esp.101-163). Guthrie is very suspicous of Antisthenean elements in Xenophon, which he calls a modern “Antisthenes-cult” (1971a.27).

\textsuperscript{92} This, even though the case for Cynic sightings in Platonic dialogues remains quite enticing, especially in view of Antisthenes’ conspicuous absence in Plato. For a detailed list of the differences between Plato’s and Xenophon’s Socrates (in 17 points), followed by a discussion of 4 Socratic themes treated differently by both authors (Delphic oracle, βασιλική τέχνη, friendship, ἀκρασία), see Dorion 2006.95-104.
often turns out to be a mere spokesman for his student and his inquiries, metaphysical, cosmological, political, etc. Whether Antisthenes influenced Xenophon or not, the ethical Socrates who is depicted by Xenophon closely resembles (or sums up) what will be features of Cynic philosophers: a personality and character that enjoys discussion, neglects cosmological and metaphysical questions, and centers on ideals of self-restraint, frugality, endurance, and autarchy.\footnote{Xen. \textit{Mem.} 2.1: Socrates wished to stimulate in his followers “the practice of self-mastery (ἐγκράτεια) in matters of eating, drinking, lust, sleeping, cold, heat, and pain.”} What is clearly \textit{un}-Cynic about Socrates is his obsession with defining concepts and consenting on general assessments of human universals.

If we were to discredit the works of Plato in their depiction of the real Socrates on the basis of his personal (educational) program and edification of his teacher –and that would mean brushing aside an amazing quantity of writing– then, what would be the value we grant the fractional and bitsy anecdotal tradition regarding Diogenes of Sinope? In other words, if scholars exclude Plato’s representation as a distorted or idealized version of Socrates, what is left of the impact of Xenophon’s (or Antisthenes’?) account of Socrates’ character in comparison to a series of mere oral and scripted anecdotes that portray Diogenes in ethical terms? Concerning Socrates, “there is no need… to opt for a hypercritical attitude and reject \textit{all} the testimonies or to enthrone one source as the sole repository of the truth.”\footnote{Navia 2001.14-15.} The same necessarily holds true for the Cynic tradition concerning Diogenes, especially in view of the Chreia tradition.

There is, however, consensus regarding Socrates about the distortion his character suffers in Aristophanes’ \textit{Clouds}, and this is precisely what should concern scholars: of what type is the distortion? It is generally agreed that Socrates is wrongly and falsely
portrayed by the comic poet as a typical sophist and most scholars do invalidate Aristophanes’ account to a large degree. To which degree and in which directions does humor pull its victims? While someone might claim that Aristophanes’ account of Socrates is primarily false (as Plato’s Socrates claims himself in *Apol. 18a-d*), most people would still agree that there is at least some information that helps estimate grossly some features. Lastly, it is also arguable that we learn more in Aristophanes about the society of, and comedic depiction in, the last quarter of the 5th c. than about the victim itself.

We tend to accept the depiction of Socrates as authentic whenever the accounts of Plato and Xenophon agree: *e.g.*, his dialectic, his endurance, his search for definitions, etc. Unfortunately, Socrates left no writing and his literary inactivity further contrasts with the fact that many of his followers did expound their ideals and used the written word to promote their own philosophical ideas (often marked as Socratic): in this respect, one of their major goals was clearly to heal the memory of Socrates and to show his beneficial nature to the *πόλις*. Through this process, all Socratic followers, not only Plato, had the opportunity “to strengthen a trait in this or that direction, to produce a line

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95 *E.g.* Dover 1971. A marked exception is Havelock 1979. Socrates “was mentioned to our knowledge by four other writers of the Old Comedy, Callias, Ameipsias, Eupolis, and Telecleides, of whom Ameipsias at least brought him on to the stage in person” (Guthrie 1971a), and from brief quotations it seems that “Socrates was not always treated negatively” (Nails 1995.12).

96 In *Xen. Oec.* 11.3 Socrates jokingly refers to the comic representation of himself as a chatterer (*ἀδολεσχεῖν*), a measurer of the air (*ἀερομετρεῖν*), and poor (*πένης*): cf. Guthrie 1971a.16.

97 The same is true of Socrates in Aristophanes’ *Clouds*: mainly the sophistic and naturalistic characterization of Socrates is generally perceived as comedic distortion, while the similarities in Plato’s and Xenophon’s accounts simply reinforce the historicity of Socrates’ character. Navia 1984 sees both *Apologies* as complementary testimonies about Socrates’ trial.

98 Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.2.12) dissociates Socrates from his own “unpatriotic” behavior when he sided with Sparta, and Plato similarly contrasts Socrates’ with Alcibiades’ notorious conduct (*Symp.*); cf. Guthrie 1971a.28.
already drawn” by Socrates himself. Endowed with their literary freedom, the
Socratics could sketch out their ideas, dress them up as Socratic, and get their message
across. Antisthenes, Plato, Xenophon—and most ‘minor Socratics’ for that matter—
were crafty writers in their own rights and they were attempting to offer to their audience
(basically the same society that had condemned Socrates) *a bit of Socrates*: this looks
like a rehabilitation program, full of individual variations, fronted by the condemned
master’s immediate associates, among whom we find an ambitious philosophically-
minded student (Plato), a devoted and respectful follower (Xenophon), and a
disenchanted embittered old friend (Antisthenes).

The ancient sources concerning Cynicism paint a tradition in which Diogenes is
made a direct follower of Antisthenes, whatever it *means* to be in this relation when the
mention is mainly tied to the anecdotal tradition. In addition, the connection between the
two appears only in later authors such as Epictetus, Dio Chrysostom, Aelian, Stobaeus,
DL and the Suda, a tradition which “seems to have arisen some time between Onesicratus
and Epictetus”, between the 4th c. BCE and 2nd c. CE. These sources lead us to believe
in a similar kind of master-pupil relationship between Diogenes and Antisthenes as that
which defines the relation between Antisthenes and Socrates. Truly enough, the Cynic

99 Stenzel in *RE*, s.v. Socrates, in reference to the introduction of Plato’s own ideas in his
dialogues (quoted by Guthrie 1971a.34).
100 DL calls Plato, Antisthenes, and Xenophon, the “most important” (κορυφαίοτατοί) among the
Socratics. He goes on to refer to the “usual ten” Socrates (2.47), but Goulet 2001.73 entertains the
possibility that these κορυφαίοτατοί do not figure among the “usual ten”, from whom DL only names
Aeschines, Phaedon, Euclides, and Aristippus but to which we might add other writers of Socratic
dialogues such as Criton, Simon, Glaucon, Simmias, and Cebe, all of whose dialogues had been collected
in one volume (Goulet 2001.96).
101 Without reducing Socrates to one specific characterization, we can still generally agree that
Xenophon’s Socrates is more ethical, Plato’s is more epistemological; while Plato himself could be labeled
as metaphysical.
102 Dudley 1937.3.
apostolic succession is typical of the later philosophical tradition and is anchored in the figure of Socrates himself. The concept of succession is not only illustrated by the \( \pi \alpha \rho \alpha \delta \varepsilon \varepsilon \gamma \mu \alpha \) phenomenon that solicits emulation from a direct master but it is also embedded in the Socratic legacy. For example, in *Phaedo* (77e-78a), Socrates urges his disciples to seek out another charmer (\( \varepsilon \pi \omega \delta \omicron \zeta \)) to replace him, “indicating that such a person may be found in their own midst”.\(^{103}\) This is presented as the wish of the condemned master. Of course, Plato would naturally consider himself the most worthy successor, Socrates’ heir *par excellence*, just as an Antisthenes, a Phaedo, or a Euclides also would (see DL 2.47 for the main Socratics).

As a pivotal figure of philosophy, ethics, and pragmatism, Socrates offered a sharp and new direction in philosophical interest, and the succession stories cannot be rejected *in toto*. Yet a direct succession between Antisthenes and Diogenes is probably an “ancient biographical fabrication”\(^{104}\) for the sake of doxographical explanation. We must entertain the possibility that both men never even met, or perhaps, that Diogenes “visited Greece and Antisthenes before the currency episode, and then returned to Sinope”\(^{105}\), only to move to Athens at a later date, *after* Antisthenes’ death.

The master-pupil relationship that connects Diogenes to Antisthenes thus seems to rest on the parallel apostolic succession between Antisthenes and Socrates. As discussed above, the philosophical association between Diogenes and Socrates was made not only through the intermediary figure of Antisthenes, but also through the figure of Plato in whose words the Chreia tradition calls Diogenes a “Socrates gone mad.” It is an

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\(^{103}\) Blondell 2002.86 (quotation) and 110.  
\(^{104}\) Long 1996a.32. Höistad (1948) still accepted the master-pupil relationship (cf. Long1996a.32n.14) and more recently Navia 1998, who must accommodate Diogenes’ arrival in Athens to as early as the 370s, a few years before Antisthenes’ death (ca.365).  
ideological contrast that most likely relies on the traditional rivalry between Antisthenes and Plato themselves, but this further feeds into an apostolic succession Antisthenes-Diogenes by translating the antagonism between Socrates’ disciples into philosophical (and pragmatic) terms and ideals. Dudley, who absolutely refuses to consider Antisthenes a true ‘Cynic’, still calls Diogenes’ Cynicism “a rudimentary and debased version of the ethics of Socrates, which *exaggerates* his austerity to a fanatic asceticism, hardens his irony to sardonic laughter at the follies of mankind, and affords no parallel to his genuine love of knowledge” and “indeed Cynicism did preserve a recognizable version of the Socratic ethics in action”.  

But if Socrates serves as a backdrop, it is Antisthenes who was considered in ancient times the strict founder of Cynicism, and the point is made explicit by the very structure of DL’s apostolic succession which places him at the head of the movement and of its history at the very opening of his Book 6. Yet the *inauguration* of a Cynic way of life as discussed in DL is different than claiming the actual founding of a movement: in 6.19 for instance, DL extracts later philosophical movements from Antisthenes, from whom “we may pull out (ἐλκύσωμεν) the Cynics and the Stoics”. The question concerning Cynicism is rather what made it so special in Diogenes’ project and fundamental to its later developments. The Cynic features that we do find in Antisthenes are only the beginning.

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107 Still Cicero, *De Orat.* 3.17.62 identifies the three main Socratic “schools”: “Ac primo ab ipso Platone, deinde ab Antisthene, qui patientiam et duritiam in Socratico sermone maxime adamarat, Cynici primum, deinde Stoici, tum ab Aristippo... Cyrenaica philosophia manavit...” Cicero here claims the patience and resignation Socrates and Antisthenes have in common as specific characteristics of later Cynicism (Latin *duritiam* seems to translate Greek καρτερία, as in DL 6.2).
108 On the general structure of DL’s work and the philosophical successions inherent to his organic lineage, see Goulet 2001.67-149 for whom DL’s Life of Antisthenes was relocated at the beginning of Book 6 to fit his opinion about the Antisthenean affiliation with Cynicism (2001.75).
According to DL 6.15 Antisthenes “led the way” (ἡγήσατο) for Diogenes’ ἀπαθεία. This reminds us of the transfer of τὸ ἀπαθές from Socrates to Antisthenes (DL 6.2) by means of emulation (ζηλώσας), but here again, emulation certainly differs from forerunning a specific idea. Another example in that same passage (6.15) places Crates’ ἐγκρατεία (a follower of Diogenes) and Zeno’s καρτερία in a similar direct lineage with Antisthenes, who “inaugurated” (see above 6.2: κατηρξε) the Cynic way of life. As Dorion has shown, these three characteristics dealing with cognates of *πάθος (or lack thereof) and *κράτος are predominantly associated with Socrates himself, especially as he is portrayed by Xenophon: the passage (6.15) thus only enumerates specific characteristics of Antisthenes’ philosophical life as a forerunner of ἀπαθεία, ἐγκρατεία, and καρτερία, the three of which generally characterize the figure of Socrates. To “inaugurate” (ἡγεῖσθαι) and to “give the impulse” (κατάρχειν) certainly emphasize precedents, but we must be cautious lest we suggest a similar (and clearly impossible) personal contact between Antisthenes and Crates (or Zeno). Like Crates and Zeno, Diogenes the Cynic could simply have been familiar with Antisthenes’ life and work, without having ever met the man. No argument for personal meetings between Antisthenes and Diogenes can be made from this.

When DL claims that Antisthenes “led the way” to Diogenes’ ἀπαθεία, we are not to believe either that Diogenes necessarily learned it first-hand from his predecessor. More likely Diogenes’ ἀπαθεία is parallel to Antisthenes’ idea (either theoretical or practical): Antisthenes endorsed ἀπαθεία as a philosophical ideal and Diogenes could have taken this πρᾶξις either from Antisthenes’ writings, from the Athenians’ memory of the philosopher, or it could have simply made sense for Diogenes’ lifestyle.

independently of direct contacts with Antisthenes. It is probably right to think that Diogenes saw himself as an originator, a pioneer in pragmatics, without promoting or traditionally acknowledging his predecessor, all the while a clear affiliation between Diogenes’ pragmatism and Antisthenes’ own views probably escaped the notice of very few people.

One thing that is clear from the Cynic tradition is that Diogenes did not address logic: a characteristic of all Cynics from the Sinopean onwards. Navia’s conclusion that Antisthenes was no logician,110 because he belittled the usefulness of language, is a bit extreme, and despite some suspicion (pace Grube), it seems evident from Antisthenes’ theses that he was indeed a logician.111 But it would have been Diogenes’ own interests that led him away from, and eventually made him abandon, any position in logic, if he ever had any, and perhaps to conceive that a “live performance” was just as instructive as a ‘logoistic’ discourse. Diogenes, indeed, performed his philosophy and he needed little theorizing about language. Yet he used language in a humorous and satirical way for his own philosophical benefits, so that, for instance, Diogenes can hardly be included among the Eristics, a group that had been attacked so vehemently by Isocrates in Adv. Soph. 1-8 (=SSR V A 170) and in which Antisthenes would seemingly have been included by the rhetorician alongside Plato.112 What Antisthenes had set up in his written work, Diogenes turned into a “mode de vie” and he thus created a true and radical Cynicism.

All the evidence points to the fact that Antisthenes somehow prepared the way for the movement: that he idiosyncratically disseminated Socratic themes, but that Diogenes

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110 Following, e.g., Grube 1950 (Antisthenes was not a logician) and Rankin 1970 (a near-logician).
111 See Brancacci 2005 and Prince (forthcoming).
112 See above, n.52. It is worth noting that Brancacci 2005.33 does not consider the title (Δόξαι ἢ Ἐριστικός) to be the original title of an individual treatise by Antisthenes dealing with eristics.
was the first ‘Dog’ – however strictly we wish to read this denomination.\footnote{Antisthenes is also spoken of as a Dog by Athenaeus (5.216b), Clement of Alexandria (Strom. 1.14.63), and Stobaeus (2.31.34), to name a few, but these later references reflect the general opinion of DL’s own time and beyond. We follow Menagius’ correction in Suda 1144, s.v. Diogenes (= SSR V B 3): “Diogenes... who was the first called a Dog” (κύων instead of Κλέων). Goulet-Cazé 1996b.414-15 questions the attribution of the nickname to Diogenes by making a parallel between the collocation of Cephisodotus and Antisthenes in Arist. Rhet. 1407a10 and the quotation of a metaphor used by Cephisodotus (“he used to call triremes colored windmills”) next to one used by “the Dog” (“he called taverns Attic mess halls”). Although the parallel might be striking, it remains that by the time of the publication of Aristotle’s Rhetoric, Antisthenes had been dead for a few decades, while Diogenes was still alive and presumably well-known in Athenian circles. Her argument that Antisthenes’ work On Physiognomy, which mentions female tavern-keepers (καπηλίδες, quoted in Athenaeus’ Deipn. 14.656), recalls the metaphor used by “the Dog” in Rhet. is insufficient evidence to attribute the nickname to Antisthenes: taverns were a social reality in Classical Athens just as familiar as symposia were.} There is no need for a single founder, or better, no need for an actual founder, since even the ancient evidence as we have it does not discuss the original ‘Dog’ any more than what will be addressed in the next section. Mainly later thinkers cared to identify a “founder” to start with (this, knowing how much the Greeks enjoyed founding-myths), but for us, the tough question remains secondary to Diogenes’ more drastic and flamboyant Cynicism.

The anecdote that shows Diogenes visiting his supposed master on his death bed (DL 6.18) is of the very sort to secure a succession story with the many risks of being ill-founded or inaccurate. We may trust that such succession stories, which create a parentage by bringing together common philosophical elements, were all designed for the purpose of acknowledging organic precedents and “genetic” successions.\footnote{E.g. Brancacci 2005.101: “caractéristique d’Antisthène, <la théorie du sage (σοφός)> s’est transmise à partir de lui au cynisme, quoique avec des variations significatives et des déplacements d’accent, pour émerger de nouveau, de façon plus nette, dans le Portique [Stoa].... L’attribut constamment reconnu au σοφός —dont le modèle dominant ne fut pas, Socrate, mais Ulysse— est celui du savoir (εἰδέναι).” Cf. DL 6.11 = SSR V A 58: “only the wise man (τὸν σοφὸν) knows (εἰδέναι) who deserves to be loved.”} It is certainly easy, after the fact, to look back at Antisthenes as the original Cynic, but just as Socrates had no idea about his own legacy, Antisthenes –unlike Diogenes!– had no clear goal of shifting his Socratic philosophy towards a doggish lifestyle.
Let us borrow here a parallel used by Guthrie to stress my own point about Cynicism. As Thomas Kuhn has discussed, the Copernican revolution now represents an epoch-making hypothesis, but his hypothesis “is a revolution-making rather than a revolutionary text... A revolution-making work is at once the culmination of a past tradition and the source of a novel future tradition”.\textsuperscript{115} This is quite similarly the case with Antisthenes’ pre-Cynicism: his philosophy was not “Cynic” in itself but it paved the philosophical road for Diogenes. To duplicate Kuhn’s phrasing, Antisthenes was a Cynicism-making philosopher rather than a Cynic philosopher himself.

Denying that an actual or quasi eventful ‘founding’ of Cynicism was made by Antisthenes does not mean that he is wholly absent from the Cynic tradition. Ever since Dudley’s 1937 fundamental study Antisthenes’ contribution has been widely reoriented to reflect more accurately his place in the philosophical lineage: most scholars do agree that Antisthenes plays an important role in the establishment or the early promotion of Cynic principles.\textsuperscript{116} He was certainly a major influence, a precursor, and he seems to have championed ideas that became popular within the nascent movement. When we look at the early stages of Cynicism the tradition of an Antisthenean founding boils down to a mere biographical detail, that is, personal contacts in Athens between Antisthenes and Diogenes. Did they ever meet (DL 6.21) or is it a mere fiction from later historians?

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{115} Guthrie 1971a.32 (on T.S. Kuhn, \textit{The Copernican Revolution}, Cambridge, 1957). Italics are mine. Kuhn continues (1957.134): “As a whole the \textit{De revolutionibus} stands almost entirely within an ancient astronomical and cosmological tradition; yet within its generally classical framework are to be found a few novelties which shifted the direction of scientific thought in ways unforeseen by its author”.

\textsuperscript{116} Moles 1996.108n.17 (= 1983.104n.8): “The tradition that Diogenes was Antisthenes’ pupil was effectively refuted by Dudley... but Antistheneic influence upon Diogenes has been widely accepted, and is patent (cf. esp. Xen. \textit{Symp.} iv 34ff.)”; cf. also Giannantoni 1990.223-233.}
who delighted in apostolic successions and relied on the numerous Διαδοχαί? Was Diogenes ever a student of Antisthenes or their association wholly fabricated? Was Diogenes truly present at Antisthenes’ deathbed as mentioned in DL 6.18? The answers to all of these questions should be negative, yet we should expect that Diogenes knew of Antisthenes and that he was probably familiar with his writings.

The anecdotes referring to Diogenes’ personal interactions with Antisthenes (DL 6.7, 6.18, 6.21) are not impossible in absolute terms – the argument against it is mostly chronological – but a major tear in the fabric of the tradition associating the pre-Cynic philosopher and the Dog mainly comes from the difficult point made by DL of an initial refusal on Antisthenes’ part to having disciples (τὸ μηδένα προσίεσθαι), a refusal which yielded to Diogenes’ insistence (DL 6.21). But again here the anecdote may be a doxographical reconstruction (Sotion is a major contender for this reconstruction) which is based on the perception of both men’s traditional characters: we know from DL that Antisthenes did in fact have students (DL 6.2: συμμαθητάς), and Diogenes could likely have been one of them. But the case for a strict association or personal contact between the two men has pretty much been settled since the publications of Dudley and Sayre,

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117 Dudley 1937 argues that “the traditional view of Cynicism as a minor Socratic school, founded by Antisthenes, must be abandoned. Antisthenes had no direct contact with the Cynics, who never formed a school of philosophy at all, being intolerant of organization and impatient of theory” and that this traditional view “has been established by two interested parties — Alexandrian writers of Successions of Philosophers and the Stoics” (p. xi and 15). On the Alexandrian writers, see Hicks 2000.xxv.

118 Diogenes seeking Antisthenes’ mentoring (6.21); concerning the double cloak (6.7); Diogenes at Antisthenes’ deathbed (6.18). Not only might the deathbed scene echo Socrates’ death scene in Phaedo, but the interactions are clearly humorous: Diogenes inquires to the suffering Antisthenes 6.18: “is there not a use for a friend?” (μήτι χρεία φίλου), where the main word χρεία seems to be a pun on the very tradition of Diogenes’ life (the χρεῖα): “is this not an anecdote for a friend?” (see below for a discussion of the word χρεῖα); and the dagger which Diogenes brought in is obviously a malicious joke to exploit further Cynic biting sarcasm and witty humor.

119 In Xen. Symp. 8.4 Socrates even calls Antisthenes a misanthrope (οὐδένος ἥρως) which may be used to explain his refusal.
who both refer to the discovery by C. T. Seltman\(^{120}\) of a series of defaced currency from Sinope that has been dated to ca.350 BC \textit{at the earliest}. The defaced Sinopean coins that were found, if dated correctly, are sufficient evidence to discredit the tradition that the two men were contemporaries in Athens. The alternative would be that Diogenes had traveled to Athens prior to the defacement of the coins, but it is nowhere explicitly mentioned in the evidence. The anecdotes that show Diogenes visiting Antisthenes on at least three separate occasions could still have occurred during visits from Sinope. They present the two men as being well-acquainted, but they are made of elements that seem characteristically traditional and doxographical in nature, and “chreiatc” in form.

Therefore it is very likely that both men never met and the tradition that they were close associates is now generally rejected as being shaky and most unlikely.\(^{121}\) If we accept DL’s biographical account that Diogenes came to Athens as a consequence of the defacement of Sinopean currency (DL 6.20: through banishment or exile), then personal contacts with Antisthenes become quite impossible since the Socratic friend had died (at 80 years of age) over a decade earlier (ca.366). Beside the Sinopean coins, the arguments usually rely on evidence from Aristotle (his reference to \textit{Ἀντισθένειοι}) and the “manifest

\(^{120}\) Dudley 1937.21, Sayre 1938.59, Navia 1998.12-13. The publication is hard to find but an abstract of Seltman’s paper delivered at Oxford appears in \textit{AIA} (Seltman 1930) and is summarized in Dudley 1937.54n.3.

\(^{121}\) Dudley 1937.1-16: “it is extremely unlikely that there was any personal contact between Antisthenes and Diogenes.” (p.8). \textit{Contra} Suda 1143, s.\textit{v.} Diogenes (cf: above n.38). Navia 1998 still holds on to the historicity of the meeting, thus affecting his chronological sketch of Diogenes’ life. See also Long 1996a, Goulet-Cazé 1996.414-15, SSR Vol.4.223-234, and Navia 2001. Dudley 1937.2-3 further proposes that the direct connection between the two philosophers arose sometime between Onesicratus (or Onesicritus, Alex great’s steerman and pupil of Diogenes) and Epictetus. The Stoics could have created this ethical tradition Socrates – Antisthenes – Diogenes – Crates – Zeno, while this succession from Socrates to the Stoics via the Cynics “seems to have been established by Sotion of Alexandria (ca.200-170 BC)” in his \textit{Succession of Philosophers} (p.4). An anecdote finds Zeno of Citium in the book market, asking to meet people like Socrates, and being pointed to Crates the Cynic with the imperative “Follow that man!” (DL 7.2-3). \textit{Cf:} also Malherbe 1977: the Cynic epistles, most of which are Augustan or later, already suggest the apostolic succession (for Malherbe they are basically practice pieces and have little literary value), \textit{contra} Reuters 1963 who dates them to 300-250 (cf: Long 1996.40n.29).
ignorance of Antisthenes” by two contemporaries of the Dog, Crates and Onesicratus, along with his complete absence from the comic fragments of the 4th c. As Rappe summarizes, “it is only in the accounts of authors who are very late, such as Epictetus, Dio Chrysostom, and Aelian <and Stobaeus, DL, and the Suda, we should add>, that one finds a connection between Antisthenes and Diogenes.”

A meeting between the two men is also unnecessary for the transformation of Diogenes into a dog. Diogenes was the one to exploit the symbolic dog when he would start “barking” at his contemporaries and “scratching” society’s conventions. Yet, in terms of ideas, Antisthenes opened the door to a different way of life, in line with some of Socrates’ views yet distant from Plato’s contemplative life, and this was supported by his own convictions and his personal interpretation of Socrates’ life and teachings. It is in this respect that the succession is fundamental but not in the passing down of the Cynic staff and cloak from master to pupil. It would be a clear defect in the proverbial Cynic self-sufficiency to depend on strict lines of apostolic education. The tradition is, we may conclude, somehow true albeit in an anachronistic way. There is “à coup sûr” an influence of Antisthenes on Cynicism and the similarities between both philosophers’ ethics was “sufficiently close to make the tradition of such connexion a plausible fiction”, but it remains a fiction, a fabrication. We need not see Antisthenes, as Sayre does, as only “marginal” to the origins of Cynicism, as he was clearly a forerunner. Most

122 Rappe 2000.284n.12
123 Goulet-Cazé 1986.150; Dudley 1937.8; Sayre 1938.59-60. Also Long 1996a.32: “The master-pupil relation between them and the treatment of Antisthenes as a founder of Cynicism are almost certainly an ancient biographical fabrication.”
124 Navia 1998.41n.58: “Sayre’s main assumption about Classical Cynicism is that the Cynics were worthless philosophers whose contributions are either minimal or detrimental”. Beside his sheer hostility to everything Cynic (he called Diogenes a “psychopathic character posing as a philosopher”: 1938.97), Sayre 1945 refuses to consider Antisthenes, Cercidas, and Dio Chrysostom Cynics. Navia prefers to consider Antisthenes and Diogenes as “twin influences” on Cynicism.
scholars have preferred Dudley’s interpretation, while Navia offers an intermediate position. The delicate positions of modern scholars remind us of how fragile and ambiguous the evidence remains and how frail the arguments for or against a strict apostolic succession really are. With the suspicions regarding the Cynic apostolic succession, once we balance the similarities and differences between Antisthenes and his supposed pupil Diogenes, we find that the balance tips towards the differences.

The question of who was the first true Cynic pivots on another problem in the early Cynic tradition itself, that is, the origins of the nickname formed on the word for “dog” (κύων, κυνός). Who was the first philosopher to use the theriomorphic symbol, and how does the dog terminology help us in establishing strict Cynic lines? We must turn to the slim evidence in the sources available to us. Our oldest literary reference to Diogenes “the Dog” appears in Aristotle’s Rhetoric (3.10 = 1411a24: ὁ κύων “called taverns the mess halls of Attica”) where it must refer to Diogenes even though his

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125 Dudley 1937.3-4 credits the Stoics for the invention of this apostolic tradition (Antisthenes-Diogenes-Crates-Zeno) since “they probably regarded Cynicism as representing in its purest form the ethical tradition of Socrates” and the succession “seems to have been established by Sotion of Alexandria (ca.200-170 B.C.), the most influential of these writers [of “Successions”]… [who was] probably followed in this by Heracleides of Lembos, and Antisthenes and Sosicrates of Rhodes.” Brancacci 2005.145n.39: “L’image de Socrate que recueillirent ensuite les stoïciens découle en definitive d’Antisthène et du filtre cynique, et de Xénophon de façon générale.”

126 The similarities include: asceticism, opposition πόνος/ἡδονή, Herakles as an example of πόνος, “but the resemblance hardly goes further” (Dudley 1937.1); for Dudley the differences (1-2) include: views on logic, Homeric interpretations, rhetoric, housing (Antisthenes owned property, cf. Xen. Symp. 38), and lectures. Gomperz (1924) accepts the succession, but regards Diogenes as ‘the founder of a practical Cynicism’ (Dudley 1937.2, italics mine) to which should then be opposed an absent ‘theoretical’, ‘logoistic’ philosophy (contra Antisthenes).

127 Long 1996a.31, but see discussions about Cynic “sightings” (such as Rappe 2000) below. Prince 2006.77 succinctly exposes the problem: “The name “Cynic” itself, which is probably an adjective from the Greek word for “dog,” was probably first applied to Diogenes (first attested in Arist. Rhet. 1411a24–5), although it is not impossible that “dog” was already a nickname for Antisthenes.”

128 Arist. Rhet. 1411a24–5 = SSR V B 184: ὁ Κύων δὲ τὰ καπηλεῖα τὰ Ἀττικὰ φιδίτια (ed. Ross 1959). The meaning seems obvious: the Spartan messes are contrasted to the taverns where the Athenians “gourmandized and got drunk together” (cf. Long 1996a.32n.12). But there is a world of difference between Long’s translation (“the taverns of Attica are [Spartan] messes”) and mine (“the taverns are the mess halls of Attica”): my translation insists on the parallel between the function of these institutions (communal eating among men) rather than simply equating them.
name is omitted. This is supported by the fact that Aristotle somewhere else calls the followers of Antisthenes the Ἀντισθένειοι and includes no reference to “Cynic” or “dog” (Κυνικοῖ) in relation to these Ἀντισθένειοι (Met. 1043b24).\(^{129}\) By omitting the very name Diogenes, Aristotle suggests that the Sinopean was well and easily identified as “the Dog” and we conclude from this that Aristotle considered that there was but only one Dog.\(^{130}\) We can only guess the reasons why Aristotle did not refer to Diogenes by name, but it clearly points to the fact that the identification between Diogenes and the Dog were of common usage by this time.

It is rather late for a first clear identification of the nickname with a Cynic philosopher, since the composition of Rhetoric belongs to Aristotle’s works of maturity and is dated to the 330s,\(^{131}\) i.e. when Diogenes was already a γέρων. But an important

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\(^{130}\) The references to Cephisodotus and Diogenes in this section, with the imperfect ἐκάλει, may suggest that both men were already dead: these examples were possibly added at a late date and may not even Aristotle’s doing.

\(^{131}\) Dufour 1932.14-16 arbitrarily places it between 329-323 BCE, presumably by following Dion. Halic. 1\(^{st}\) Letter to Ammaeus who (unconvincingly) argues that Rhetoric was composed after 330 due to a perceived reference to Demosthenes’ On the Crown; cf. Kennedy 1991.302. Unreliable evidence (cf. Kennedy 1991.304n.4) indicates that Aristotle would have offered a course on rhetoric open to the public while at the Academy in the 350s to counteract the influence of Isocrates’ teachings (Kennedy 1991.5). Scholars have disagreed over the development of the literary work: some insist that the various parts, composed at different times from the 350s onwards, were revised (albeit incompletely) and harmonized at a late date, while others point out to irreparable inconsistencies between parts (Kennedy 1991.299). But “the evidence supports the view that he worked on the treatise between 340 and 335 in anticipation of his return to Athens and the opening of a school there” (Kennedy 1991.301). For a full discussion of the development of Rhetoric, see Kennedy 1991.299-305 where he concludes: “It may well be that <Aristotle> arrived [in Athens] with the two works [Poetics and Rhetoric] completed and that he inaugurated his school there with lectures on these two subjects... The text of the Rhetoric suggests that some revision was made hastily, perhaps in preparation for his return” (305). Indeed the latest historical events referred to in Rhetoric belong to that period, yet these few events are all found in the last chapters of Book 2 (chapters 23-24), a section considered as some kind of supplement (Kennedy 1991 302-303). For Kennedy, the work
point to make here is that the first author to have compiled and written down anecdotes concerning Diogenes the Cynic, Metrocles (ca.325), the originator of the Chreia tradition, published his *Anecdotes* (*Ἀποφθέγματα*) roughly at the same time as Aristotle produced his *Rhetoric*. The nickname was most certainly in common use by the 320s in reference to Diogenes and it might have stuck to the philosopher only in the latest part of his life. On the other hand it is impossible that Diogenes could be included among the Ἀντισθένειοι which Aristotle mentions (*Met.* 1043b23-28, or the οὐτως ἀπαίδευτοι) since, as discussed above, the evidence about their personal association is very doubtful.

Diogenes of Sinope, I believe, was the first philosopher to deliberately work with the nickname, to establish a radical Cynic way of life, and to develop a set of values (especially ethical ‘principles’) surrounding this symbolic image of the dog: “the original κύων was undoubtedly Diogenes himself”, writes Dudley, even though κύων was “undoubtedly first applied to Diogenes in a hostile sense, owing to his ἀναίδεια, or habit of ‘doing everything in public’”. Surely it was originally meant as an insult but Diogenes probably did not formalize himself: he uses the term derogatorily in replying to bystanders who watch him breakfast, but there is no evidence that the early Cynics ever distanced themselves from the denomination. They seem to have rather embraced it.

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133 Dudley 1937.5. Xenophon (in *Mem.* and *Symp.*) never once associates doggish terminology to Antisthenes and the historian died well over a decade after the philosopher. A scholium to *Rhet.* 1411a24 lists the 4 reasons why the Cynics are so called: the indifference (ἀδιαφορία) of their way of life; 2) their shamelessness (ἀναίδεια); 3) the guardianship of their philosophy; 4) their capacity at discriminating between friends and foes (Dudley 1937.5).
134 DL 6.61; Navia 1998.50.
Outside of the evidence provided by Aristotle, the earliest attestation of the adjective “Cynic” (κυνικός) is found in Menander’s *Didymai* where it explicitly refers to Crates (117-8 CAF: ὡσπερ Κράτητι τῷ κυνικῷ), a traditional pupil of Diogenes who was himself at least in his late forties by the time he is mentioned by Menander.\(^\text{135}\) If Diogenes was the κύων *par excellence*, Crates could then be called “doggish” (κυνικός), as a follower of the first Dog. Both of these references (the *Dog* and the *Cynic*) which should be dated to the 330s at the earliest suggest that Diogenes lies alone behind the symbolic nickname. If it is not impossible “that “dog” was already a nickname for Antisthenes” (DL 6.13),\(^\text{136}\) the evidence is slim enough to doubt such a claim.

Beside the simple nomenclature, no one denies Antisthenes some traits that anticipated and were to become characteristics of later Cynics, beginning with Diogenes who used, caricatured and *hyperbolized* some of these features, and who further developed his thoughts to the point of permanently sealing in himself the infamous ‘doggish’ traits. The Dog and the doggish characterization became the most conspicuous symbol of later Cynicism: we should consider Diogenes of Sinope as the one to cash in on the Cynic way of life and establish a whole set of principles surrounding this symbolic image. Beside possible Cynic “sightings” in Plato’s dialogues, which imply references to Antisthenes alone, the “doggish” angle was not played up by Antisthenes, even though

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\(^{135}\) Navia 1996.94-95; Crates’ dates: ca.368/4 – ca.280s? (DL 6.85; DL 6.98: Crates died ἀνεφηκαί). Webster 1974.6: Crates “was apparently forty in 328 and was associated with Zeno in 314 and Demetrios of Phaleron in 307”. The dating of *Didymai* is difficult but it was not before 320, the early years of Menander’s career.

\(^{136}\) Prince 2006.77.
DL tells us that he was supposedly nicknamed a hound: the “Simple Hound” (DL 6.13: αὐτός τ´ ἐπεκαλεῖτο Ἀπλοκύων), a “pure dog”, or a “natural dog”.

Another connection of the Dog with Antisthenes comes from DL’s claim that the word Cynic relates to Antisthenes’ place of predilection: Cynicism took its name from the gymnasium of Cynosarges where Antisthenes was used to converse (DL 6.13) but, here again, the derivation of the Cynic movement from the Cynosarges is probably an invention of the writers of Διαδοχαί since “there is no evidence that Diogenes and Crates made use of the Cynosarges”. We seem to witness here a retrojection of the doggish terminology onto Antisthenes, while the dog-imagery constantly orbits around Diogenes and either refers to his frugal lifestyle or to his biting critique of society’s norms. The deliberate use of the dog terminology in Diogenes’ project has a lot to do with the way he wished to portray (characterize) himself as a satiric voice within the social fabric, while the other meaningful significance of the same imagery concerns his actual lifestyle, his κυνικὸς τρόπος.

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137 A translation preferable to ‘Absolute Dog’, as Navia 2001 who does not explain this use of ἁπλο- as “Absolute”. Plato, in Tht. 146d, opposes the adjective ἁπλοῦς (single, simple-minded, frank) to ποικίλος (varying, changeful).


139 Cf. Suda 2723 (s.v. Antisthenes) = SSR V A 23. For a collection of the evidence and scholarship on the Cynosarges, see Billot 1993 who concludes with the “plausibility” of Antisthenes’ activity at Cynosarges while Navia 1998.20 accepts that the gymnasium is where Antisthenes and Diogenes met. Yet, it should be stated that there was, in the Cynosarges, a cult of Herakles, whose main members were, like their patron deity, νόθοι (Rappe 2000.290, Copleston 1993.118; cf. Ar. Birds 1646-1670 for their rights of property) and through his Thracian mother, Antisthenes was a νόθος. One can hardly use the evidence concerning the Cynosarges to claim as genuine Antisthenes’ own association with “doggishness” or his actual “founding” of Cynicism. But as far as Cynic themes and ideas are concerned, the park does carry characteristics of Cynicism, i.e. a civic dissociation from the πόλις from being non-citizens. On the connection between the νόθοι and the Cynosarges, see Humphreys 1974.

140 Dudley 1937.6.
Chapter 2. Sources

The discussion of the Socratic problem is important when we look at figures such as Antisthenes and Diogenes since there is a great parallel between the *distortion* – contemporary (Aristophanes), ideological or literary ones (Plato and Xenophon) – and the *construction* of a traditional figure that becomes the figurehead of the very tradition that makes him and keeps him alive (e.g. within the philosophical Successions). Therefore we must expect here some comments about Diogenes Laertius, our main source for the lives of Antisthenes and Diogenes. But while the similarities between the tradition of Socrates and Diogenes remain obvious, the evidence about the first Cynic is still of a different kind than the one about Socrates: instead of a philosophical tradition in dialogical or narrative form (the Socratic literature), Diogenes is known mostly from DL’s *Lives*, a compilation of earlier testimonies of various types.

The detailed literary evidence about early Cynicism is rather late in relation to the philosopher’s life. Among the many sources which include, among others, Dio Chrysostom, Favorinus, Epictetus, Lucian, Julian, and Themistius, DL is one of our earliest extent and most significant sources about the early Cynics, for he has used many Hellenistic sources (directly or indirectly), many of which were composed not much later after the death of Diogenes of Sinope. DL is a crucial source even though he remains

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141 Hope 1930.96 talks about DL’s work in terms of an “inadequate and distorted conception of the philosophers”. An example of the *construction* is seen at work in Plato’s dialogues where Socrates becomes the mere mouthpiece for Plato’s own philosophy, such as his theory of Forms or his philosopher-kings, which are a somewhat natural or logical expansion of Socrates’ views but clearly idiosyncratic to the development of Plato’s own cosmological, metaphysical, and logical systems (cf. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1096a11).

142 In the 4th c. CE, the Emperor Julian (the “Apostate”) already signals the dearth of serious surviving Cynic treatises (*Orat.* 6.186b: cf. Dudley 1937.8). For that reason, Julian’s testimony must be
as a whole a difficult case of source material: not only for the five centuries that separate him from Diogenes, but also for his difficult use (from our modern perspective) of previous, often already secondary, sources.

2.1 Laertius: Biography and Doxography

The familiar opinion about DL’s work is epitomized by Navia for whom the *Lives of the philosophers* consist of “a series of compilations of numerous earlier testimonies related to the lives and ideas of Greek philosophers, compilations that are often poorly joined together and are filled with repetitions and apparently uncritical insertions”.\(^{143}\) Indeed scholarly evaluation of DL’s work has ranged from critical neutrality to sheer hostility. The cautiousness that surrounds Laertian scholarship has often generated a distrust by many who reduce his work either to “a mere patchwork of all earlier learning” or, at best, to an “original” combination of selected material.\(^{144}\) The work of Mejer, a specialist of the Laertian question, offers a more sympathetic view of DL’s work (which considered with greater suspicion, unless he has used the same sources as DL (a fact that is unknown). We might postulate that by the 4th c. CE Cynicism had undergone further modifications from its status in DL’s times. Misattribution of the *Chreia* tradition to other figures is also a constant possibility, at any period of time, prior or later than DL: for example, the mistake in Suda 362 s.v. Philiskos, where the commemorative epigram (DL 78 = SSR V B 108) is associated with Philiscus’ death, not Diogenes’. We should rely more on DL, who made extensive use of the original Hellenistic sources. Other sources of information about Diogenes include: Aristotle, Cercidas of Megalopolis (3rd c.), Teles of Megara (3rd c.), Cicero, Seneca (1st c. CE), Dio Chrysostom (40-115 CE), Epictetus (55-135 CE), Plutarch (50-120 CE), Favorinus (ca.80-150 CE), Juvenal (ca.60-140 CE), Fronto (ca.100-166 CE), Maximus of Tyre (ca.120-180), Aulus Gellius (ca.130-180), Lucian (ca.120-190), Clement of Alexandria (ca.150-215), Tertullian (ca.155-222), Sextus Empiricus (3rd c. CE), Athenaeus of Naucratis (3rd c. CE), Aelian (ca.170-235), Eusebius of Caesarea (ca.260-340), Julian (332-363), Themistius (317-390), Jerome (340-420), Augustine (354-430), Stobaeus (5th c. CE): this list is taken from Navia 1998.7-8. Diogenes also appears in *Anthologia Palatina* and in the *Gnomologium Vaticanum*.

\(^{143}\) Navia 1998.7.

\(^{144}\) Mejer 1978.7: the views are respectively those of J. Burnet (*Early Greek Philosophy*, 1930\(^4\).38) and H.S. Long (*Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol.2, 1967, s.v. Diogenes Laertius). For the scholarly despair, cf. Mejer 1978.7-16: he easily disposes of the two extreme positions concerning DL’s use of his sources: a) the 19th-c. view that DL copied one source with a few additions (9), and b) although it is highly improbable, DL might have had more direct knowledge of all the sources he refers to (10).
contains, he writes, the “stamp of the man’s personality”) by giving it more room within the earlier tradition of ancient biography. In this respect Mejer stands up against the usual pessimism. For him, DL has read some direct sources; the Lives have been wrongly taken to be typical of the Hellenistic tradition of History of philosophy; and we should consider DL’s text as a personal work that is interesting and valuable, albeit unsatisfactory and poorly written:

“The only way left, I believe, for Laertian source criticism is to accept Diogenes’ book as being his book and then try to understand how it came to be what it is. Why it contains so many mistakes, confusing accounts, repetitions, inexact pieces of information, but also a number of interesting and valuable statements and quotations on biographical as well as philosophical points”. (Mejer 1978.13)

So while he resists the presumption that DL’s work is a typical example of the earlier sources he has used, Mejer cannot reject the laisser-faire in DL’s method and he rather puts the blame on the intellectual abilities of our author: DL “did have some kind of personality, not a great mind but enough to know what he was doing even if he didn’t do it very well.” Beyond his personality, DL’s working methodology and use of sources (i.e., quotations and references) remain a blurry puzzle: a who-said-what of orationes rectae and orationes obliquae for scholars to discern. I believe it is worthwhile to quote Mejer at length, who thus summarizes DL’s method:

“He has read the more recent literature on the subject, the lives and opinions of the philosophers, made his excerpts, looked through a number of older books and excerpted them so as to supplement and verify various points. He has copied his sources freely, ad verbum or in paraphrase, and he has quoted them directly or indirectly according to his interests and opportunities. We should not, if only because of the practical problems involved, imagine him switching source every other moment in the sense that he goes from one book (roll) to another. He may have followed main sources according to which school or philosopher he was writing

145 Mejer 1978.29.
146 Mejer 1978.61: The vague term History of Philosophy, “a mixture of biography, historical exposition and doxography”, includes different subgenres: biography (Βίος), survey of the succession of philosophers (Διαδοχαί), account of the philosophical doctrines of a school (Περὶ αἱρέσεων) or doxographical survey (ἀρέσκοντα, δόγματα). But we must remember that our own preconceptions about the nature of such works are mere assumptions since we have so little information about DL’s Hellenistic sources. It is therefore impossible to set a clear comparandum by which to evaluate DL’s work.
147 Mejer 1978.10; 50.
about, but his main material was a large number of excerpts of which, obviously, he was not in full command. This is not to say that Diogenes had direct knowledge of all or most of his sources nor to save him from severe criticism. Diogenes did not understand all he read, he had little sense of philosophy and history, his mistakes are there for every one to observe.” (Mejer 1978.28)

As evidenced by its author’s abilities and its labyrinthic maze of references, DL’s Lives are riddled with mistakes, confusing accounts, etc. To bypass these troubling difficulties Mejer presents a realistic hypothesis that also dissolves all previous theories about DL’s use of sources: whatever faults modern scholarship often imputes to DL’s method or organization may have belonged, he hypothesizes, to any of the earlier writers DL consulted, whether a direct or indirect source.148 In front of DL’s Lives we face a sad reminder of all that we do not know about Hellenistic and Imperial authors: authors whose doxographical works are now conveyed all smashed up in semi-arranged and jumbled quotations, excerpts, references, and paraphrases.

Further burdening Laertian scholarship is the hard fact that DL’s literary references, quotes, and summaries (either endorsing or rejecting his original sources) all vary in frequency, detail, and consistency.149 Goulet rightly emphasizes that ancient compilers such as Diogenes Laertius considered their references (the authors cited) not as bookish sources which they consulted but rather as authoritative witnesses, whose names and works alone granted sufficient authority to their claims. Thus the compiler needs not have read the remote author’s work, but only an intermediate one (the immediate source), while still quoting the remote source;150 such is the case, for example, of the use of Heraclides, who wrote epitomes of both Sotion’s Διαδοχή and Satyrus’ Βίοι: DL would

148 Mejer 1978.13. DL would have known most of his sources only indirectly (29).
have also had direct access to Sotion, but he would have used Satyrus’ work only through the intermediacy of Heraclides, his immediate source, while still quoting Satyrus.151

There is a need to further stress that in ancient biographies, sources and evidence had a different significance for authors and their use clearly shows a different rapport with their compiler: for Goulet, this issue with ancient referencing and quotation is thus a question of literary psychology. Through his research Goulet remains somehow pessimistic and skeptical of a future consensus regarding DL due in great part to the many ways in which DL uses or acknowledges his sources.152 While we moderns are more demanding of the ancient compilers, it seems pretty clear that these authors sought different ends to their work and that they had a different understanding not only of their citations and references,153 but also of the earnestness of biographical accuracy. In the Greek fashion, understanding what a historical figure means for his own tradition is as important (if not more) as who (or where) the figure was in the annalistic events: the two often overlap with little critical distinctions.154

With these considerations in mind, we simply must accept the fact that chronology is a modern obsession over which the Greeks would seemingly lose little sleep. The chronology of Plato’s dialogues, for instance, is a modern issue which the

151 Mejer 1978.40-42.
153 Goulet 2001.86-96 considers three types of insertions in the textual composition: 1) direct composition, 2) at a first revision, 3) after transcribing from a text which already included additions. Goulet insists that we should not underestimate Diogenes’ use of his own personal notes, written down as he was going through his readings. But Mejer 1978.18 reminds us that the classification system and the methodological usage of the “note-rolls” (cf. Pliny the Elder’s pugillares) are quite unknown. In citing ancient references, Goulet hypothesizes, DL would more often quote the earlier author instead of the more recent work that he consulted in which the original author appeared.
154 Hope 1930.96: “The total impression gained of DL by a close examination of his references to his sources is one of great industry, but also of a lack of discrimination, coordination and trustworthiness.”
Greeks rarely debated as far as we know. Some “traditional” elements in Diogenes the Cynic’ life might not have been his, but when some of these elements appear as early as the philosopher’s own lifetime or soon thereafter, we are back to the Socratic problem: the contemporariness of the source-witness elucidates or solves very little. Unless we discover incontrovertible evidence that sheds a new light on some aspects of the historical Socrates, we will still rely on Plato and Xenophon to gain access to elements of Socrates’ true personality and character. As with Socrates, we thus face a similar problem with Diogenes and there lies the real “Cynic problem”. Instead of having two contrasting (and comparatively abundant) accounts as with Socrates, we have so little to begin with concerning the early Cynics. Different problems, similar outcome. The biographical information regarding Diogenes offers dubitable elements that shape the Cynic’s character, and as with Socrates, our evidence for Diogenes is already, and always, secondary.

This means that while reading DL’s Lives of Philosophers, we must keep an open mind, not so much as an excuse but as a willingness to follow claims that we may tentatively infer from the sketchy Cynic tradition, of which DL represents a premium compilation made from older testimonies and personal impressions. Since there is little hope today of ever having a crystal-clear picture of DL’s method, purpose, and the sources of his work, we have no choice but to work with the present state of documentation. The challenges are great, but scholarly research has fortunately refined and hinted at plausible scenarios for DL’s method.

In his entire work DL uses sources which, for us, represent different traditions of different scopes. In DL’s sixth book on the Cynic movement we may distinguish three types of traditions: 1) biographical, 2) doxographical and, more significantly, 3) the Chreia tradition, which “absolutely” dominates in DL’s Life of Diogenes.\(^{156}\) After insisting that DL is an ambiguously albeit fundamentally useful source for the tradition of philosophy, we need to look more closely into the way our author used earlier testimonies that belong to those different types, because when we attempt to rely critically on DL, we face quite a few challenges, especially when it comes to DL’s methodology in acknowledging, crediting, or referencing his sources\(^{157}\) and to the nature of these literary sources.

We know, of course, very little about the actual Hellenistic works with which DL worked, or their individual context, let alone about their authors. We know, for instance, that the tradition of literary Successions (the Διαδοχαί) flourished in the Hellenistic period, and Sotion is the earliest of the seven known authors in DL.\(^{158}\) But beyond general lines, little more can be said about these earlier authors. DL’s own position in the

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\(^{156}\) Kindstrand 1986.219. The Chreia tradition dominates also in the biographies of Anacharsis, Aristippus, and Antisthenes. Anacharsis became a Cynic model and the Socratic Aristippus founded the Cyrenaic school. Mejer 1978.3-4 omits the Chreia tradition by including the apophthegms and the anecdotes in the biographical material, while Kindstrand 1986 presents a richer account of the Chreia tradition, consisting of biographical anecdotes but primarily of the collections of ἀποφθέγματα, γνῶμαι, and χρεῖαι obviously used by DL. So not only does “the biographical sections… take up much more space than the doxographical” in DL in general (Mejer 1978.4), but the Chreia tradition constitutes most of our biographical information.

\(^{157}\) For a discussion of DL’s method (how DL deals with his sources, how he refers to them, when he mention them), see Mejer 1978.7-15; on the working technique of excerpts (in relation to which Hippias the sophist and Socrates are mentioned), see Mejer 1978.16-19. Mejer also notes the ancient scholars’ attitude and ambitions concerning their work: a) a more general audience than today’s scholars, b) the writing material which resulted in a different reading (and writing) experience, as well as in a more difficult task to reference or quote (17).

\(^{158}\) For the nature of these Hellenistic works dealing with the history of philosophy, see Mejer 1978.60-95 (Διαδοχαί 62-74, Περὶ αἱρέσεων 75-81, doxography 81-89, and biographies 90-93). On Sotion, see Mejer 1978.40-42 for whom DL had direct access to the early 2nd-c. Alexandrian’s work and he “checked some of the passages from Sotion”, along using the epitomes made by Hermippus of Sotion’s 13-book Succession. The fragments of the Διαδοχαί τῶν φιλοσόφων are collected in Giannattasio 1989.
literary tradition presupposes that his own sources would have already been part of that same “mixed” tradition that blends biography and philosophical doctrines, and we can hardly figure out which way DL actually swung: is he a poor representative of the biographical tradition? Or is he an original compiler who juggled with two closely-related traditions and their corresponding literary “genres”: biography and doxography, individual lives and philosophical doctrines?

As a whole, it is undeniable that DL “was primarily interested in the biographies and individual lives of philosophers, not in history of philosophy”. In view of the skepticism expressed by Mejer regarding the modern category of doxography (which was not an ancient category or an independent tradition) we may actually conflate the biographical and doxographical traditions into a single one concerning the Cynics. This conflation is certainly possible and even predictable since Cynic philosophy, as a practical set of moral and ethical principles (i.e. a pragmatic mode of life), held no doctrine or dogmas which constitute the usual subjects of doxography. It is no surprise then that in the case of the Cynics there is no clear doxography used by DL (the question generally revolves around which genre we should consider the Successions, either as biographical or as doxographical works). DL’s Book 6 devoted to the Cynic movement necessarily lacks doxographical exposés but rather logically rests on the richer Chreia

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159 Mejer 1978.50: “there are few references to philosophical texts and… usually [they appear] to support a statement about a philosopher’s personality.”

160 Mejer is highly skeptical of Diels’ view that a ‘pure’ Hellenistic doxographical existed outside the biographical tradition (Mejer 1978.81-89). Also Mejer 2006.24-28: “It is, however, wrong to think of doxographical works as constituting a literary genre in classical antiquity. Doxography is a nineteenth-century term, made famous by Hermann Diels’ Doxographi Graeci (Berlin, 1879)...” (24). Therefore, we may understand that little or no actual doxography was done about the Cynics: naturally, we could say, since Cynic pragmatism was no typical subject to sustain the production and distribution of philosophical treatises, which tended to explain a school’s doctrines. For the genre of biography, see Mejer 2006.28-31.
tradition. In fact, as far as the biography of Diogenes of Sinope is concerned, we might just as well simply group the sources under one biographical tradition that includes, or mainly consists of, the anecdotes, ἀποφθέγματα, γνώμαι, and χρεῖαι. Thence, the Cynics’ lives are mostly known through DL’s compilation of biographical information supported by a literary tradition of collected sayings and anecdotes: a biographical tradition which we shall altogether name, with Kindstrand, the Chreia tradition. This domination of the Chreia tradition in the Cynic’s biography reveals the key to ancient pragmatic life: the anecdotes and sayings usually combine expressions of the opinions of the philosopher and are shown to reflect the practical behavior that derives from, or that is implied in, such statements. The Chreia tradition thus often unveils the close affinity between “actions” and “words”, the two complements that exist in a perennial symbiosis, in a pure dialectic in philosophy.

In the world of ideas, Diogenes’ biography may remain obscure, but I don’t believe that the tradition, which came into being very early on, can be discarded in terms of the spirit of Cynicism, and many biographical elements were probably focalized and used by Diogenes himself, the most radical (and comical in some respect!) of all the Cynics.

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161 On Book 6, see Goulet-Cazé 1992. The χρεῖαι are certainly used in biographies, such as in DL’s indirect source, Diocles of Magnesia’s Lives of philosophers, but Mejer makes a clear distinction between biography and doxography.

162 Poets and philosophers could easily go back to the Homeric poems for such an original distinction, through the pairing Achilles-action and Odysseus-word.
2.2 The Chreia Tradition

Let us turn now to the type of tradition from which we gather most of our biographical information about Diogenes. What is the nature of the χρεῖαι? Where does its tradition come from? And why is it our main source for the Cynics? The Chreia tradition provides many details, falsely spontaneous by their nature, by presenting crafted statements that are meant to exemplify the opinion or behavior of important historical figures: it has been specifically important in the biographies of Cynic and Stoic philosophers. When long biographical narratives are missing or absent, the collected sayings greatly contribute to the shaping of these men’s lives and they sometimes constitute our main (or only) hope in acknowledging a philosopher’s views on the world. When the χρεῖαι are complementary to an existing biographical narrative, they are meant to support the opinions and duplicate the philosophical views expounded by these individuals.

Although it appears also in the lives of Socratic philosophers, the Chreia tradition is used extensively for the Cynic tradition: it is the most conspicuous tradition concerning Diogenes’ life. Before the beginnings of historical narratives (such as Herodotus’), the remembrance of individual deeds and philosophical views was often best served by brief and concise sayings that encapsulated a character’s mindset, words, and behavior. Most

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163 On ἀποφθέγματα, γνῶμαι, and χρεῖαι (especially in relation to DL), the work of Kindstrand (1981, 1986) is quite prominent; see Kindstrand 1986.219-220 for a survey of the modern summary of scholarly interest in the Chreia tradition, which has received much attention in its relation to the scriptures (a synchronic approach, especially since the research group formed at the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity at Claremont Graduate University in the late 1970s) and then to rhetorical progymnasmata: e.g. R. F. Hock and E. N. O’Neil, The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises. Writings from the Greco-Roman World, 2 vol., Atlanta, 2002. A recent publication on gnomological literature is M. S. Funghi (ed.), Aspetti di letteratura gnomica nel mondo antico, Firenze. Cf. also the special issue of Semeia 20, 1981: Pronouncement Stories, ed. R. Tannehill.
significantly (and perhaps unsurprisingly) sayings and other pronouncements constitute for ancient biographers a major source of information regarding the earlier Seven Sages.

The word χρεία which gives its name to an entire biographical tradition needs some explanation since its denomination points to its original function, namely, its usefulness (from the Greek verb χρά-ομαι). Its “usefulness” is attributed first of all to its mnemonic quality, its vehicle, and the biographical data it purportedly provides: its brief message. One of their characteristics, as Branham conveniently states, is that “they are as portable and memorable as jokes.” In later rhetorical training under the Empire, the χρεία, whose meaning was limited from its original one, was one of the exercises in the rhetorical handbooks (e.g. in Aphthonius’ Προγυμνάσματα) which required students to compose an anecdote, “a brief reminiscence referring to some person in a pithy form”. But in Hellenistic times, where sayings and actions of outstanding persons (possibly, in some cases, preserved at first by the oral tradition) produced “a work of isolated items, each having a famous person as its main character”, it was less a rhetorical technicality than a source of biographical information.

164 Bibliography of the term in Kindstrand 1986.223n.18.
165 Hermogenes (Progymn. 3.19 = SSR V B 388) distinguishes three types of χρεία: logical, practical (πρακτικά), and mixed, and he uses anecdotes about Diogenes as examples for both practical and mixed χρεία.
166 Branham 1996.86n.17.
167 Kindstrand 1986.224.
168 Kennedy 1994.204.
170 An important use of the term χρεία is found in the exquisite exchange between Aristotle and Diogenes in DL 5.18. When Diogenes offered dried figs, Aristotle understood that Diogenes had a witty remark prepared (χρείας εἶτε μεμελετηκός) should he not take the figs. Upon accepting the gift, Aristotle commented that Diogenes not only lost his figs but his χρεία along (the anecdote reappears with Crates but Stilpo remarks on the loss of his question (ερώτημα) instead of his χρεία: DL 2.118). This is a perfect example of Diogenes’ wit and perhaps even more so of the craftiness of his comical rhetoric. From this it seems clear that Diogenes attempted a full control over his self-image. The anecdotal material about Diogenes’ lifestyle is evidence of his “well calculated construct” and his “consistent attempt to play the role of Socrates gone mad” (Long 1996a.31, 33; cf. Kindstrand 1986.224): Diogenes “know[s] what to say and do” (Goulet-Cazé 1986.150).
When one deals with the Chreia tradition, one quickly faces the plurality of words that surrounds its terminology: words such as γνώμη, ἀπόφθεγμα, ἀπομνημόνευμα often seem analogous and are often interchangeable in ancient rhetorical works which “do not relate the different terms to each other in a consistent and complete manner, which results in a lack of clear distinctions, as the terms constantly seem to overlap”. 171 Χρεῖαι, as seen through the lens of the Cynic tradition, may be defined as “stories or anecdotes that illustrate a character trait or a philosophical conviction associated with a Cynic philosopher”, 172 but more generally a χρεία is “a brief narrative in which the climactic (and often final) element is a pronouncement which is presented as a particular person’s response to something said or observed on a particular occasion of the past”. 173 As with the emergence of the sententiae in the course of the 4th c. BCE, the χρεία is characterized by the conciseness and brevity of its statement, what Tannehill calls the “climactic utterance which summarizes the responder’s response to the situation” given in a pronouncement story. 174 Truly enough, this tradition is highly connected to and significant for the Cynics, and in fact it may well have originated as a literary subgenre within this philosophical movement, 175 with Metrocles as the first collector of such χρεῖαι

171 Kindstrand 1986.221-222. The general distinctions are as follows: γνώμη (short saying = Lat. sententia); ἀπόφθεγμα (a: moral maxim, especially associated with the Seven Sages, synonymous with γνώμη, or b: element of wit attributed to a specific individual = Lat. dictum); ἀπομνημόνευμα (“personal recollections of sayings and actions, belonging to a remarkable individual” = late Lat. commemoratio); while χρεία “seems to be used originally as a collective term for the different types already mentioned, stressing their usefulness” (223).

172 Navia 1998.45.


174 Tannehill 1981a.2. The pronouncement story itself is defined as a setting (a short story) for which an utterance (verbal, sometimes accompanied by a relevant action) appears at or near the end, as a direct response to the situation. Robbins 1981.31: “the term pronouncement story refers to a literary unit that falls within the domain of apophthegm, remembrance, paradigm, or chreia.”

175 Kindstrand 1986.223: “We find the term [χρεία] used for what seems to be a separate work of Antisthenes: χρείαιν Σοφοκλῆδος, mentioned in DL 7.19 but of doubtful interpretation; the work is otherwise unknown...”
In this respect the word χρεία is best regarded as “a suitable collective term for different types of sayings and anecdotes, which in collections, including also those of Diogenes [Laertius], are brought together without any obvious regard for their differences”. We might add that the characteristic of χρεῖαι, other than to “remember” a character or his opinion, is to set up a short story, a concise anecdote, wherein the main actor is put in a situation during which (or by the end of which) an action or an utterance will significantly taint the situation by exposing the view of the character to that specific situation. Therefore the statement is inferred to represent the view and stress a philosophical point in absolute terms.

If this definition rather fulfills the requirement of a literary approach, the anecdotes themselves try to capture the very spirit of an individual by providing the tradition with a paradigmatic statement that reflects the general worldview of its main actor. Whether historical or not the χρεία remains an invaluable source in trying to evaluate the perception a philosopher “gave off”, or the character the makers of that tradition wished to convey. As far as Diogenes the Cynic is concerned, whether all of the anecdotes are true or not (and many are doubtless fake), they must echo the philosopher’s view to some degree. As with the Socratic Apologies, the Chreia tradition is a blend of fictionalized utterances and historical figures that purportedly conveys the philosopher’s spirit or his character.

176 Zeno of Citium’s book of Χρεῖαι (DL 6.91). Cf. Zanker 1995.179: “…the Hellenistic Stoics, who are known to have been the first to collect anecdotes about Diogenes.”
177 Kindstrand 1986.224.
178 Ford 2006.17: “The very multiplicity of Apologies (or for that matter, of Alcibiades’s, or Menexenus’s) made the game about something else. And in the process of writers finding out what that ‘else’ could be, the blend of fictitious speech and historical personage endowed this eponymous figure of the genre with a quasi-real/quasi-mythological status.”
On the Classical (Greek) front we are indebted to Kindstrand for narrowing the tradition of anecdotes and sayings in respect to its use in ancient biographies of philosophers, but generally speaking, the context of the ancient Chreia tradition resembles what is known in Biblical studies as pronouncement stories. Since much typological work has been done in this area of research, it is worthwhile to briefly summarize their conclusions. First of all, it was quickly acknowledged that the very term “pronouncement story” corresponds “rather closely” to ἀπόφθεγμα and “overlaps with χρεία”, as such, their research remains relevant to our subject.

In his typological studies of pronouncement stories, Tannehill offers six different types: Corrections, Commendations, Objections, Quests, Inquiries, and Descriptions. All of these short stories “point forward to this pronouncement, which is being recommended by the story teller for admiration and emulation. The pronouncement itself is often expressed in forceful and memorable language. Since it is usually the end of the

179 Studies of pronouncement stories have been relatively important, as witness the numerous articles and issues devoted to the topic, especially in the journal Semeia, in the early 1980s and in 1990. Of Classical interest in those issues are 2 studies dealing specifically with Plutarch: Beardslee 1980.101-112 (proverbs) and Alsup 1981.15-27 (types of pronouncement stories). Otherwise, Poulos 1981 on DL’s Lives is most helpful.

180 Tannehill 1981a.1; Poulos 1981.53 also equates pronouncement story and apophthegm.

181 Tannehill 1981a, 1981b: 1) Correction stories, 2) Commendations, 3) Objections (Poulos 1981.57-58: “people find fault with the behavior or speech of a philosopher and reproach him for it” and the setting of this type of stories is “characterized either by a Greek word expressing reproach or censure on the part of the objector or by a markedly accusatory or condescending tone), 4) Quests (e.g. Hippachia in DL 6.96-97), 5) Inquiries (quite frequent in dialogues and within apostolic traditions, typically introduced by a formula such as “when asked... he replied”; Tannehill 1981a.10 rightly points to the “lack of dramatic tension” for such stories), and 6) Descriptions (i.e. a descriptive comment of the situation). Correction stories, where the responder corrects someone’s words or action, are the most common type in DL’s Lives (Tannehill 1981a.7); we also find numerous Objection stories, where a situation of conflict “is created by an objection to the behavior or views of the responder or his followers”, e.g. DL 6.63 (Tannehill 1981a.8). For a discussion of the chreia in ancient rhetoric, the reader should refer to H. Lausberg, Handbuch des literarischen Rhetorik, 2 vols, Munich, 1973 [1960]. Greenspoon 1981.74-75 notes that of all 17 pronouncement stories found in the corpus of Philo of Alexandria, Diogenes the Cynics “is the main character in almost half of these stories”, and that the element of “correction” (type 1) is predominant in them. An example of Commendation (type 2) is found in DL 6.32 (= SSR V B 31: “Had I not been Alexander, I would have liked to be Diogenes” = Plut. Mor. 331f), where the element of commendation usually “tends to make the person commended into a model to be imitated by others” (Tannehill 1981a.7).
story, it makes the final impression on the reader or hearer...”182 In the recension of all 493 stories that Poulos discovered in the 10 books of the Lives,183 those in the lives of Diogenes, Aristippus, and Zeno, unsurprisingly outweigh those in the lives of other philosophers. Her study reveals that all six types are found in DL’s work. Either due to the sheer outnumbering of such stories in the life of Diogenes the Cynic or as a symptom of his biographical fabrication, it is quite interesting that all types are found in the life of Diogenes (in fact, even the one and only identified Quest story is in DL 6.36). Of all those types, corrections (corrective judgments) and objections (terse and clever defenses) stories are the most common in the Life of the Cynic, and are perhaps most suited to Diogenes’ witty comments and linguistic tour de force.

While pronouncement stories usually give a wider context (i.e. the setting, which is usually the stimulus of the pronouncement as well)184 for an utterance or a gesture to occur (i.e. the response) –the narrative quickly gears towards and reaches a climax with the utterance, the actual apophthegm–, in the case of Diogenes what has come down to us seems to be a list of mere sayings where very little contextual setting is given.185 In fact, the absence of literary developments or contextual narratives may well point to early

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182 Tannehil 1981a.3 (emphasis mine).
183 Each type in DL is roughly distributed as follows: Corrections 51%; Commendations 2%; Objections 20%; Quests: DL 6.36 is the only example; Inquiries 18% (one-third in Book 1 alone, on the Seven Sages); Descriptions 7.5%.
184 Poulos 1981.53.
185 Tannehill 1981a.4 sees the necessity of understanding pronouncement stories as “acts of communication between writers and readers”; unfortunately the state of our evidence on early Cynicism forces us to abandon this possibility. Kindstrand 1986.243 maintains an entertainment value for the reader and in this respect, I feel we might consider the Cynic χρείαι in terms closer to humoristic compendia, such as ancient jokebooks of the like of Hierocles’ Philogelos, where the anecdotes purport to attract their readers “who would delight in all the witty, well formulated remarks” (cf. Diogenes’ witty comment to Antisthenes on his death-bed in DL 6.18, μήτι χρεία φιλου, with its probable pun on the word χρεία itself: “is there not perchance the need for a friend’s anecdote?”, or if we understand μήτι as a pun itself on μῆτις in the dative case, the joke equally echoes Cynic humor: “a friend’s chreia to ponder?”). This comical rhetoric and satirical tone represent two linguistic features of Cynics sanctioned by their παρρησία, their cosmopolitanism, their doggish traits, and their shamelessness.
compilations of such responses, the verbal utterance or the (cor)responding action, which could have been in turn a direct source for biographical stories rather than literary and narrative biographies.

So, in the anecdotal evidence used by DL in his Life of Diogenes we have the responses but rarely the detailed stories. We do hear of when and where an apophthegm or action occurred, but we rarely get the full and detailed episode. It is clear that for the Chreia tradition of Diogenes, the details of the settings matter very little and that the spoken utterance or the behavioral response outweighs any development of its setting. To go back to the etymological definition of χρεία, there may be no surprise: the core of Diogenes’ view is primarily found in his response and in it we witness his worldviews, while its “usefulness” is found in the brevity, succinctness, and mnemonic qualities of his quirky responses.

Despite what is often a simple listing of anecdotes and their resulting apophthegms which DL might very well have only reproduced rather than synthesized or paraphrased, we may wonder whether the stories were not all so concise: for example, Hermippus’ work on the sale of Diogenes presumably provided a lengthier narrative which featured Diogenes a main character, perhaps in a way similar to Socrates in Plato’s dialogues; yet if it were the case, any long(er) biographical setting was quickly stripped off of its narrative so that ancient biographers kept only the apophthegms that reflected best Diogenes’ quirks. Again, perhaps this was done through the intermediacy of early compilations of anecdotes, but all in all, we can say that the Chreia tradition has probably

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186 Poulos 1981.54: “The response, though usually verbal, sometimes combines both words and action; occasionally there is a significant action which substitutes for the expected words.”  
187 Robbins 1981.49n.10: “Sayings are often attractive enough apart from the setting with which they are associated that they are transmitted in isolation from the setting or applied to another situation.”
removed all dramatic (and literally-crafted) setting if there was ever any, without altering nonetheless the comic character-ization of Diogenes. 188

A χρεία stresses the “usefulness” of the philosophical message of an ethical nature that the anecdote contains: as such the χρεία represents “a useful story that can be memorized and transmitted”. 189 Leaving aside any didactic tone, the χρεία purports to enact the philosopher, in both words and deeds. Underlying these useful quips we find a strong “hortatory” element in pronouncement stories that admonishes, recommends, or suggests ways of behaving, or inversely satirizes and condemns views or behaviors. Whether explicit or implicit, the χρεία is most often useful for its commendation: it briefly presents an emblematic episode that may serve as a paradigmatic situation. For example, Alsup 1981 concludes that in Plutarch’s Moralia the freedom with which the biographer uses the pronouncement stories for compositional purposes “demonstrates Plutarch’s positive valuation of the [pronouncement story] as a vehicle of educational communication”. 190 Yet, as such, whether the agent’s response, whether verbal or behavioral, may be interpreted variously by the reader of the anecdote: it can be perceived as a relatively “positive” or “negative” reaction to the situation, depending on its interpretation. Therefore, in themselves, χρεῖαι display normative or anti-normative responses, namely, how one should or should not react (this is part of their ethical nature); they exhibit, ultimately, paradigms and parameters of social interactions that are meant to be either emulated or avoided, and their “usefulness” in displaying the agent in

188 Tannehill 1981a.4: Indeed “the imaginative impact of these little dramatic scenes, including the rhetorical force of the climactic utterance, can contribute to the value and importance of pronouncement stories.”
action is a matter of social interpretation and moral evaluation on the part of those who analyzes the χρεία or the agent in it.

Interestingly, the “usefulness” of Socrates also marks the progressive structure of Xenophon’s Memorabilia as studied by Dorion: Socrates’ usefulness “from the initial assertion of his main virtues (piety, self-sufficiency, self-mastery), through his own family and various of his friends, to his usefulness to the city as a whole”.191 Thus, the usefulness of Socrates’ teachings is greatly mirrored by the usefulness of Diogenes’ words as presented in the χρεῖα. Knowing the Cynic character, this usefulness is less political or social but remains highly ethical, despite it being often anti-normative. From the initial use of the χρεῖα in earlier times as short memories of philosophical content, it seems evident that their usefulness shifted when it was “‘diluted’ in time as the material was exchanged between biography and collections [of anecdotes].”192

To return to Kindstrand’s study of the various terms that denote anecdotes, we can sum up that the Chreia tradition is a rather late synthesis of a variety of terms that are sometimes synonymous, overlapping, or again discriminating. Kindstrand has shown that DL mainly uses the term ἀποφθέγματα with two slightly different meanings, of which the first (“short, moral maxims”, like γνῶμαι) appears mostly in the first Book in relation to the Seven Sages, while the second meaning (“anecdote”, often qualified by the adjective χρειώδης) appears more often in relation to the Peripatetics (Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Bion): “the term [ἀπόφθεγμα] has therefore been applied to two different types of sayings and two different groups of philosophers, the Seven Sages and

191 Dorion 2006.99.
Peripatetics, among whom we may include Bion [DL 4.47] as he had connections with this school.” According to Kindstrand, the discrepancy probably goes back to DL’s own sources.  

As far as collections of sayings are concerned, the term Χρεία is the most common one. No collection has γνῶμαι or ἀποφθέγματα in their title, but collections of χρεῖαι are more frequent: some were, for example, attributed to Aristotle (cf. Stob. 3.5.42), Machon (cf. Athenaeus 13.577d), Theocritus of Chios (Suda 166, s.v. Theocritus), Demetrius of Phaleron, Persaeus the Stoic, Ariston of Chios, and Cleanthes. Collections that are mentioned by DL in the composition of his Lives are those of Metrocles the Cynic, of Hecaton the Stoic, and of Zeno the Stoic (in DL’s Life of Crates) but they were unlikely consulted directly and we have no information about the intermediate sources. All the different collections to which DL had access will forever remain unknown to us. They were certainly numerous and DL reworked his own collection of sayings (DL 6.24-6.69) from the combination of various other collections, even though these could all have been present in any earlier biography which DL consulted.

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193 Kindstrand 1986.225. Robbins 1981.31: Plutarch refers to the pronouncement stories “as ἀποφθέγματα (apophthegms) or ἀπομνημονεύματα (remembrances or memorabilia), and he frequently uses both terms to refer to the same story, exhibiting a virtually synonymous usage of the two terms. In at least one instance (Antony 4.3-4), Plutarch refers to a pronouncement story as a παράδειγμα (paradigm).”


195 Kindstrand 1986.238. Kindstrand connects the end of 6.23 (συνασκών) with the beginning of 6.70 (ἄσκησιν) as the “originally continuous” biographical description (241). But Goulet-Cazé sees 6.70-71 as an “extract from a work by Diogenes in which the philosopher presents his conception of ἄσκησις (Goulet-Cazé 1996.26n97 and her commentary on those sections, Goulet-Cazé 1986).
2.3 Cynic Sightings: Σωκρατικοί Λόγοι

Although we have rejected the notion that Antisthenes should be considered the first true and authentic Cynic philosopher, the admission that the Athenian philosopher has an important role in the Cynic tradition should be rather obvious by now. Cynic elements that become closely associated with Diogenes the Cynic appear time and again in the life of Antisthenes. Despite the strictly un-historical dimension of Antisthenes’ “Cynicism”, Cynic themes abound in his philosophy, as he is best seen as a mediating figure between Socrates and Diogenes: he should rather be considered a pre-Cynic philosopher.

Since the Chreia tradition is very close to the Cynic tradition, from which it seems to have emerged as a literary subtype, some scholars have read Cynic references that targeted Antisthenes in their efforts to make the philosopher the founder of the movement. A brief discussion of such “Cynic sightings”, especially in the Socratic dialogues, will reap the benefits of underlining some specific themes that were to culminate with Diogenes, and will show how important a source all the Socratic dialogues would have been in establishing the Cynic lineage were they not all lost except for Plato’s.

Our main evidence for Antisthenes has all but disappeared, including most of his own writings, but he was clearly a prolific writer: the satirist Timon of Phlius (3rd c. BCE) calls him a “prolific trifler” (DL 6.18: παντοφυῆ φλέδονα) on many subjects. He was an early experimenter in Socratic dialogues and perhaps started publishing soon after
Socrates’ death, even before Plato did. According to DL 3.48 the first to write dialogues was the 5th-c. philosopher Zeno of Elea or, according to Aristotle in the first book of his *On the Poets*, Alexamenos. In the Socratic circles, we are told that it was Socrates’ pupil, Simon the Cobbler, who first wrote down Socratic conversations in dialogue form (DL 2.123: πρῶτος διελέχθη τούς λόγους τούς Σωκρατικούς), even though Simon may be a fiction himself. In any case, many dialogues have been attributed to Socratic disciples and Antisthenes is credited with such Socratic λόγοι. The catalogue of sixty-three titles given by DL shows that he wrote an especially high number of works ranging from ethics to politics, from logic and dialectic to rhetoric, from theology and eschatology to literary criticism. He would have also written quite a few Σωκρατικοί λόγοι, “dialogues” or “speeches”.

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196 Prince 2006.76.
197 Along the classification of dialogues, DL provides the classical definition: “the dialogue is a discourse carried on by way of question and answer, on some one of the subjects with which philosophy is conversant, or with which statesmanship is concerned, with a becoming attention to the characters of the persons who are introduced as speakers, and with a careful selection of language governed by the same consideration.” On Alexamenos, cf. Athenaeus (11.505c = 11.112.34-36 Kaibel): “Alexamenos of Teos invented the type of writing <i.e. dialogues in mimetic fashion>, as Nicias of Nicaea and Sotion report”.
198 According to Favorinus, Plato was the first to use the dialogue form for interrogations (DL. 3.24: πρῶτος ἐν ἕρωτήσει λόγον παρήνεγκεν).
199 Prince 2006.75.
200 Chroust 1957 credits Antisthenes with the creation of the Socratic λόγος genre. No fewer than 12 pupils wrote dialogues about Socrates: Xenophon, Aeschines, Aristippus of Cyrene, Theodorus, Phaedo of Elis, Eucleides and Stilpo of Megara, Crito, Simon, Glaucion, Simmias, and Cebes (Prince 2006.75). U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (*Platon*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1920, vol. 2: 26-27) is unfairly skeptical that Antisthenes is credited with Socratic dialogues. If we trust Isocrates (*Evag.* 8) when he boasts to be the first author to write a proper prose encomium of a contemporary individual’s ἀρετή, one of the early prerequisites was that the main character be deceased at the time of composition (vs mythical figures such as Helen, Busriris, Herakles, etc.). Xenophon would then have followed suit to Isocrates' novelty with his *Agesilaus*.
201 Brancacci 2005.17.
202 Ford 2006 discusses dialogues in formal terms rather than tying them to “Socrates’ personality or Plato’s genius” (5). Ford argues that the dialogue should rather be understood in the context of rhetorical literature of the 4th century rather than deriving from ancient drama or mime. He rightly points out that λόγοι referred not necessarily to “dialogues” but to Socratic literature in general and thus include apologies, memorabilia, symposia, etc. Still, both views are not mutually exclusive, since Aristotle (*Poet.* 1447b) regrets that there is no single term to describe at once Sophron’s and Xenarchus’ mimes and the Socratic dialogues. But surely enough, “what we call Socratic or Platonic “dialogues” were not called
An important source of information concerning pre-Cynicism would then be found in the Socratic dialogues as a genre, – among which we may be tempted to include some of Diogenes’ own parodies, pastiches, original compositions, Hellenistic diatribes, all evidence which would fall under the same criticism as DL as a whole –, were they not generally lost (except for Plato’s dialogues that seem to have all been transmitted in an ironical contrast to the near obliteration of most of other dialogues). Could it be a very early condemnation as part of a campaign against non-Academic dialogues? Alternatively, could there have been an endorsement and promotion of Platonic doctrines that led ancient scholars to dismiss most other Socratics? In either case, the end result remains the same: gradually the Σωκρατικοὶ λόγοι all fell out of tradition at one point or another, and literary history eventually favored Plato.

Plato sometimes represents former associates of Socrates, next to famous sophists and young followers in his dialogues, that is, in a literary form that is designed as a “translation of the fourth-century intellectual background into a fifth-century frame”. While Plato always places his fellow disciples in a subordinate position to Socrates

\[\text{διάλογοι} \text{ when they were being written and published}, \] and “Plato played a main role (perhaps the main role) in making Socratic λόγος equivalent to dialogue” (Ford 2006.10, 16).

203 Although in their defense, “[a]ncient librarians catalogued the titles of Socratic discourses in their possession supposedly written by others known through the dialogues—Aristippus of Cyrene, Cebe of Thebes, Crito of Alopece (Athens), Glaucon of Collytus (Athens), Phaedo of Elis, and Simmias of Thebes—as well as by the Athenian Simon (a leatherworker whose shop abutted the marketplace of Athens, unearthed by archaeologists in the early 1950s). Still other supposed writers are known only from the librarians’ lists—Bryson, Polyaenus, Polyclitus—but by the time of the cataloguing, many forgeries [and works by Academics attributed to Plato, and Hellenistic works composed under borrowed names of famous philosophers] were circulating as well as many discourses of uncertain authorship, so these should be viewed skeptically” (Nails 2010, in SEP, s.v. “Socrates – notes”). Hope 1930.96 goes too far: “The Alexandrian scholars… failed completely in their knowledge and understanding of the classic philosophers” (quoted in Mejer 1978.1). This is a mere judgment on the part of Hope: we simply do not know.

204 Rappe 2000.282 describes the Euthydemus as such, although the definition may be extended to other dialogues.
Socrates always leads or concludes the aporia in front of the sophists or the students).\footnote{For different views on the use of vocatives in Plato, see the sociolinguistic approach of Dickey 1996 and the literary approach of Halliwell 1995.} Plato never represents himself in his dialogues.\footnote{Blondell 2002.111-112 speaks of his successful “authorial resistance” to become the object of pedagogical \textmu m\texti\textsf{\textsigma}c, by effacing himself behind his representation of Socrates, the unique and only philosophical hero of his dialogues that is to be imitated. Blondell only mentions Isocrates in Plato’s influence on the Socratic afterlife. Yet it is important to recall that Plato was not the inventor of the Socratic dialogue.} In this way, Plato usually appears to neutralize other disciples and typically remains the authoritative voice of Socrates’ message. Meanwhile he is always denying Antisthenes \textit{any} direct voice since he, too, is absent from the dialogues: an argument of silence that could very well be a blatant exercise in obfuscating the pre-Cynic’s importance. We must keep in mind that Plato opened his philosophical school around the time of Antisthenes’ death (early 360s, following Long 1986 for the founding of the Academy), and prior to this, Plato would have published his dialogues under the aegis of no established educational program. Yet it would be inconceivable that Plato had not had the project for at least some time prior to his setting up formal lectures in the Academos, especially since Isocrates had his own school of rhetoric for many years already.

In such a setting of philosophical promotion, there have been periodically modern attempts to find in Plato’s dialogues implicit references to Antisthenes, who is otherwise rarely mentioned by Plato: he says little more than Antisthenes was present during Socrates’ last moments (\textit{Phd. 59b}). We may try to guess Plato’s purpose in doing so by offering a simple explanation: the fact that Plato excludes the most important Socratic followers (and his own rivals) from his dialogues is a rather deliberate attempt at downplaying other Socratic “appropriations”.\footnote{Blondell 2002.109-110; Kahn 1996.5n.9: “[Plato] never mentions Aeschines except as being present there and at the trial (\textit{Ap. 33e2}). He mentions Aristippus only to record his absence in the \textit{Phaeo}}
importance in the Socratic legacy at Athens (as well as the Socratic continuation of
Aeschines, Phaedo, Eucleides and Aristippus: DL 2.47) and refused to even mention his
name—a kind of *damnatio memoriae*—, or the historical Antisthenes was indeed so
marginal and isolated as to have no significant impact on the Athenian philosophical
scene (Sayre’s view) at least from the Academician’s point of view. The first hypothesis
is certainly preferable: Plato’s doctrines and appropriation of the Socratic legacy meant
to downplay any and all potential rivals. To offer free exposure and to formally name
his rivals would have been just too beneficial to Plato’s opponents. Was not Antisthenes
also a lecturer and teacher in Athens? While the sophists suffer much at the hands of
Plato’s writings, Socratic followers had to be dealt with in a different manner. There
must have been a way to downplay the work of a former colleague without smearing in
the process their common teacher: ignoring them served such a purpose.

Modern scholars have suggested that we do have in Plato’s dialogues probable
and significantly illuminating references to Antisthenes, despite his remaining
unnamed. Although it is impossible to fully prove these references, they remain for
the most part quite attractive. The main hypothesis for the sightings of other Socratics in
the dialogues primarily relies on Plato’s reference to others’ views by the general report

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208 I disagree with the suggestion by Rappe 2000.289-290 who easily imputes to Plato a tolerance
for “differing intellectual bents” inside the Socratic circle. Obviously, Plato wished to undermine his
adversaries, either obliquely or openly, through his dialogues: this was deliberate and calculated. Or else,
he just did not take them seriously enough to even worth mentioning them, or give them free publicity.

209 Kahn 1996.6: Antisthenes maintained “something like a regular school, with lectures or
discussions in the Cynosarges gymnasium, where the students were apparently supposed to take notes” (DL
6.3-4, 13); also 1996.6n.11: “reference to writing materials in 6.3 and apparently to school fees [appear] in
6.4 and 6.9. Antisthenes’ own οὐκομήσαμεν mentioned in 6.5 sound like lecture notes.”

210 Rankin 1970.526 is very resistant to Antisthenean sightings: “apart from the vagueness of the
apparent personal references in the Platonic passages, there is no mention of Antisthenes’ name at all in
them, and arguments from its supposed metrical similarity to ὀψιμάθης are not persuasive enough.”
of “some people think”, “some believe”, etc. Clearly the quantifier could point to any group of thinkers or to anyone specifically. If Plato had Antisthenes in mind when we find references that seem to stress Cynic elements, then it strongly reinforces the scenario of the “ideological gap” between Plato and Antisthenes, whether the former deliberately neglects or anonymously diminishes the latter and his followers (the ones Aristotle calls οἱ Ἀντισθένειοι, for example). The personal and philosophical conflict between Plato and Antisthenes—which also characterizes Diogenes’ robust relationship with Plato in the biographical tradition– was certainly extended onto the Succession tradition that also explained the rivalry is apostolic terms. From what remains though, the persistence of the antagonism between Plato and Antisthenes certainly “points to some dosage of truth”, while Socrates and Antisthenes share, in fact, “a mutual distrust of δόζα, χρήματα, and ἐπίδειξις (intellectual exhibitionism)”212. All of which elements resurface in Diogenes’ own pragmatic lifestyle.

Let us first look at a possible sighting in the Republic, where some scholars conclude that the discussion revolving around the “city of Pigs” (Rep. 2.372d-373a) must point to Antisthenes. The “natural” utopian city first constructed by Socrates (Rep. 369b-372e), a city that he calls “true” and “healthy” (372e), is pejoratively described by Glaucon as a “city of pigs” (372d) for the simple life the citizens are envisaged as living by fulfilling their basic needs without the “fever” of luxuries.213 Glaucon rebels against

213 Rowe 2007.43, Ludwig 2007.225-226, and Morrison 2007.250. For Morrison 2007.251 the first city fails in Plato’s dialogue as the primum example (through Glaucon’s objections) for it ignores the inevitable needs for luxurious desires in human beings. The social mechanisms to control these desires are present in Socrates’ second city Callipolis, but absent in the city of pigs (yet, the description of this first city is incomplete, as Socrates is enjoined by Glaucon’s intervention to change his description).
their rustic simplicity primarily on the basis of the citizens’ diet and eating habits, contrasted with his own demand for what is culturally –and aristocratically– “customary” (ἂπερ νομίζεται),214 such as couches and tables (372d-e).215 Plato’s characters finally recognize that luxuriousness is part of human nature and this implies that a city whose citizens would live a radically frugal lifestyle, close to the one Antisthenes expounded, was an even greater unattainable utopia. It may very well be that Plato’s own concerns with frugality (either Socratic or Antisthenean) thus surface here. The introduction of “luxuries” in the Republic’s “second” ideal city, per Glaucon’s request, is also susceptible to render useless possible attacks on Plato’s love of luxuries, as the tradition presents him and as comedy satirizes: the comic Antiphanes depicts Plato with his shiny white robes (fr. 33 CAF). Although ancient thinkers who would prefer a “city of pigs” may include Antisthenes –and it probably would, based on his views– the first city described wholly fits the traditional profile of Socrates who, as far as we know, is said to have had few possessions, followed a frugal diet, and even lacked the need for shoes.216 Plato thus adapted Socrates’ first “true” and “healthy” city by shifting the Socratic ideal in order to better fit it in his personal account of human needs and desires.217 As Farness puts it, the second city has now become “a city of the apes, the behavioristic determinism of which must rigorously exclude the introduction of foreign behaviors its citizens might

214 Glaucos’s aristocratic desires and the wretchedness he attributes to those hard-working, rustic citizens are stressed by Farness 2003.103.
215 The pig is also a figure of ignorance in Resp. 535d-e (Rowe 2007.84-85): the maimed soul, when caught being ignorant, bears its lack of learning easily, wallowing in it like a pig (trans. Cooper 1997).
216 Pl. Symp. 174b, 220b. The same is sometimes said of his most devoted disciples, e.g. Aristodemus (Pl. Symp. 173b).
217 Contra Morrison 2007.252 for whom “the city of pigs is the Republic’s ultimate utopia, its best city. Callipolis, though better than any existing city, ranks second... Under what conditions is the city of pigs possible?... [i]f all the inhabitants are like Socrates.”. But in this respect, the first city is truly a utopia, a fantasy world that can hardly be met when taking human nature into account.
The Antisthenean sighting that scholars find in the city of pigs is no more Cynic per se than Socrates himself was. The city of pigs is in fact very Socratic. Thus there is no case for Antisthenes to be the only intended “pig”. To further diminish the weight of Antisthenes’ authentic “Cynicism”, it is a truism to point out also that Glaucon refers to the first ideal community as a city of pigs, whereas if Antisthenes were the authentic Cynic and if he had already been turned into a symbolic dog, would Plato not have obviously preferred a “city of dogs”? Glaucon’s rejection of the city first drafted by Socrates is better explained in Platonic terms, without any deeper Cynic resonances.

Early in the 20th century, Guggenheim had already interpreted Thrasymachus “as a kind of persona for Antisthenes in the Republic” and another recent attempt at finding Cynic sightings was made by Rappe who examines the question whether or not Dionysodorus and Euthydemus are literary stand-ins for, respectively, Isocrates and Antisthenes (in Euthd. 298d). Rappe sees in Plato’s Socrates a figure already closer to Hellenistic philosophy and she agrees with Long, for instance, who considers the 3rd c. “renegade Stoic (or retro-Cynic)” Ariston of Chios, “a Stoic who thought that the Cynic tradition of Socrates was truer to the spirit of the philosopher than tendencies which Zeno was initiating”, that is, a view which easily explains the apostolic tendencies in the historiography of philosophy. Rappe finds quite an abundance of

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218 Farness 2003.111.
219 As Navia 2001.7 also rightly points out. Gilhus 2006.50-52 (in a discussion of Plutarch’s Gryllus with some Cynic overtones) tells us that the author “uses the pig to illustrate a simple and virtuous life, a life that is set up as a model for humans” (52). The eponymous hero of the work was one of Odysseus’ companion who had been turned into a swine by Circe.
220 In M. Guggenheim, Antisthenes in Platons Politeia, in Philologus 60, 1901, 749-754 (cf. Rankin 1974.317n.8).
221 Rappe 2000.293.
222 Long1996b.23.
allusions to Antisthenes and general proto-Cynic motifs in the *Euthydemus*,

223 certainly the most comic (or serio-comic)224 of Plato’s works which “purports to pit Socratic

wisdom against the various alternatives for higher education in Athens, a very common

feature of Socratic dialogues (e.g., Alc. I, Gorg., Prot., Hip. Maj.).” 225 While I remain

unconvinced by parts of Rappe’s argument –Dionysodorus and Euthydemus were real

persons who shared ideas with the sophists and are referenced elsewhere by Xenophon

and Aristotle– 226, it is true that some passages lend it some credibility, and we may

surmise that Plato does, at times, allude to someone who may have been Antisthenes

himself, on the basis that Antisthenes and Plato held contrasting views.227 The main

point to be made is that, in the long tradition of the 19th century, we must distinguish

between “Antisthenean sightings” in Plato’s dialogues228 which are often between

plausible and probable, and “Cynic imagery” which took its final shape with Diogenes.

More often than not, the line is blurred by the difficult tradition through which most

Antisthenean writings disappeared.

223 Rappe 2000.294n.62: Vlastos 1991 disagrees with the “Cynic” interpretation of the

*Euthydemus* in his “Happiness and Virtue in Socrates’ Moral Theory” (p. 220 and esp. n. 74). Rappe

2000.286-297 finds Antisthenian echoes in: a far-fetched allusion to Antisthenes’ Cynicism in the dog-

father sophism (*Euthd*. 298d); a probable Heraklean model in Antisthenes’ traditional association with the

Cynosarges; a plausible Anacharsis-model (although Rappe uses a weak argument by Martin 1996 to

suggest a correlation between Scythian nomadism and Antisthenes’ self-reliance); and the Antisthenean

ἀλλότριον/οἰκεῖον distinction that she laboriously finds in other Scythian allusions. See Rankin

1974.317n.8: “The image implicit in οἰκεῖος seems likely to be Antisthenes’ own”, although “there is no

need to elaborate this < ἄλλοτριον/οἰκεῖον contrast> into a comprehensive theory of Antisthenes, though it

is consonant enough with [Antisthenes’] αὐτάρκεια.” Rankin reduces Antisthenes’ logical position to

deriving exclusively the tautology, contra Brancacci 2005 (esp. pp.195-223).

224 Rappe 2000.289: “From the outset [of *Euthd.*], Plato suggests that the sight of Socrates, at his

advanced age, taking lessons from the two recently educated brothers will be a comedy, and his first lesson

begins with their giggles as they admit that they really “aren't serious” about legal affairs”.


226 Kerferd 1981.53.

227 I especially reject the dog-father sophism (*Euthd*. 298d) as being a reference to Antisthenes, since I refuse to apply the dog imagery to Antisthenes unless, again, the symbolic association with Antisthenes was already fully wrought in Plato’s dialogues, even before Diogenes moved to Athens from Sinope: an unlikely case.

228 Other sightings include: *Theat*. 156a, 174a, 201d-202c, 210b-c, *Soph*. 251b, 258e.

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It is most likely though that we find references to Antisthenes’ own thesis on the impossibility of contradiction in Plato’s *Euthd*. 286a-b (= SSR V A 154) and *Crat*. 429d, and in Isocrates’ *Helen* 1ff. (= SSR V A 156), all written around the same period, ca.387-384. Antisthenes’ reply to Plato’s attacks was even soon to follow, probably as soon as the late 380s: his Σάθων, a dialogue that criticized Plato’s Theory of Forms and which defended his own thesis, was a counter-attack to Plato’s criticism over his previous work in which he had expounded the impossibility of contradiction. The very title is probably a substitution for Πλάτων with an obscene pun on σάθη, the male organ which can be used “as a term of endearment of young boys... capable of abusive connotations despite its playful tone”. This is yet another reminder of the antagonistic tradition between Plato and Antisthenes which seeps through the tradition, in and out of historical time, from Platonic dialogues in Antiquity to much recent scholarship. As polarized as Plato’s and Antisthenes’ views were in theory (and in general practicality), there is absolutely no need to be skeptical that a major rivalry (Brancacci 2005 prefers “polemic”) ever existed between the two, a literary and doctrinarian feud. There is no

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229 Although Rankin 1970.526n.18 sees the notions discussed as Protagorean.
230 Brancacci 2005.36-38. We read in *Helen* 1 that Antisthenes held an absurd and paradoxical hypothesis. Isocrates had to promote the superiority of his rhetorical school to his philosophical adversaries. Brancacci 2005.87-93 discusses Isocrates’ attack on Antisthenes in *Adv. Soph*. 1-8 (= SSR V A 170), composed at the beginning of Antisthenes’ literary activity (391-390 BCE), which was meant at promoting Isocrates’ recently-opened school and also discrediting his adversaries.
231 Brancacci 2005.37n.34.
232 SSR V A 147-159. DL 6.16: Σάθων <ή> περί τοῦ ἀντιλέγειν. For Brancacci 2005.28-29, they are two different works, by emending the conjunction ή added by Kühn, cf. Marcovich 1999.385. The lectio difficilior of Manuscript F even offers διαλέγειν instead of ἀντιλέγειν. Rankin 1974.319-320: to Antisthenes’ Σάθων “Plato may have struck back much harder in ways which are not recorded: at all events <Plato> had a more bitter tongue than appears in his dialogues or those of the Ἐπίστες which are accepted as genuine.” Gorgias, friend and teacher of Antisthenes, referred to Plato, as we are told by Athenaeus, as νέος Ἀρχίλοχος” (Ath. 505e). In Xen. *Symp*. 2.12 Socrates calls out to Antisthenes that no one will now contradict (ἀντιλέγειν) him by saying that courage cannot be taught (Grube 1950.16n.1).
234 The antagonistic tradition goes further by claiming that Antisthenes felt so mocked in Plato’s *Euthydemus* that he wrote his Σάθων in retaliation (Rappe 2000.287n.28), by using the “already old-
need for Plato to acknowledge his opponents openly and frequently: he diminishes them by singling them and their followers with “some say...”

We must agree that some Platonic passages do indeed attack ideas supported or expounded by Antisthenes, but whatever reference we do observe in Plato, they remain at best “Antisthenean” sightings rather than “Cynic” per se. How much we should expect “Diogenean” sightings (probably none!) depends on whom we seem to read about in the dialogues. But clearly there were more than two thinkers whose views came close enough to Cynicism as we know it now to suggest “Cynic” or “Pre-Cynic” references. The Antisthenean sightings are helpful only to the degree that they show that Antisthenes shared views with others (or vice versa), whom one of Plato’s characters may discredit at some point in the dialogues.

Indeed other sightings that fit the portrayal of Antisthenes actually show that some of these pre-Cynic motifs were in fact rather common. In Mem. 1.1.13-14 Xenophon recalls how Socrates considered that many thinkers behaved “to one another like madmen. As some madmen have no fear of danger and others are afraid where there is nothing to be afraid of, as some will do or say anything in a crowd with no sense of shame while others shrink even from going abroad among men, some respect neither temple nor altar nor any other sacred thing, others worship stocks and stones and beasts, so is it, <Socrates> held, with those who are concerned with “Universal Nature”.” If some characteristics aptly correspond to Antisthenean views, Xenophon’s text makes it fashioned ‘ἀντιλέγειν’ paradox, which was probably the most important motive in his anti-Platonic polemic, his Σάθων.” (Rankin 1974.318). Giannantoni 1990.313 (= SSR Vol. 4) suggests that Euthyd. 297c alludes to Antisthenes’ Heracles treatise. Rankin 1974.318-319 sees in Antisthenes’ paradox “a sharp instrument of satire with which to attack Plato’s answers to the problems of ἐπιστήμη by means of the εἴδη” (319). For Brancacci 2005.151 Antisthenean criticisms of Plato’s thought bore particularly on the Theory of Forms and the concept of definition.
clear that Socrates refers to the sophists rather than to any of his own disciples whom Xenophon otherwise would not have refrained from naming. Since Xenophon might have used Antisthenes as a source for his “recollections” of Socrates (Navia 2001.67), this reference becomes no more a Cynic sighting than the recollection of Socrates’ attacks on the sophists’ teachings. What this passage does confirm though is the importance of the sophists themselves in the history of ideas and the shaping of Cynic principles that were to culminate with Diogenes. The Cynic traces that we find in Xenophon are thus inappropriate to elucidate the connection between Antisthenes and Cynicism, except to underline that even Diogenes’ Cynicism owes much to the philosophical scene of the 5th century, including not only Socrates and Antisthenes but also the sophistic revolution. In fact, Xenophon associates rather than opposes, Socrates and Antisthenes,235 and in many instances both men share characteristics: “Both here [in the Symp.] and in the Memorabilia, Xenophon portrays Socrates and Antisthenes as practitioners of self-reliance, exhibiting the tough, pragmatic, anti-hedonistic bent of Cynic-Socratic ethics”.236

235 E.g. the discussion in Symp. 4.36 (= SSR V A 82) on the soul’s wealth (“it is not in their houses that human beings keep their wealth or their poverty, but in their souls”).
236 Rappe 2000.294.
Chapter 3. Biographical Facts

After our discussion of the nature of the literary tradition through which we know early Cynicism and its debt to and its many parallels with the entire Socratic tradition, we may start investigating the actual and original Cynic figure: the philosopher from Sinope, eventually known as Diogenes the Cynic.

Yet before looking at the character of Diogenes on the daily stage, we need to circumscribe the philosopher within his chronological context since it bears on the establishment of the apostolic tradition that seems to have influenced, in turn, his own biography as presented by the Chreia tradition. The life of Diogenes the Cynic is nothing short of uncertainty: very few facts are verifiable and the most biographical information we have concerning him comes from over 500 years after his death. Despite his famously uncritical collection and integration of earlier Hellenistic works, DL may be considered our earliest secondary source (for he explicitly mentions some of the Hellenistic material he has used). Yet a major problem raised by DL’s Lives is a methodological one—one which should not surprise us when it comes to ancient scholarship. DL had direct access to a limited amount of those Hellenistic works and he used these sources through other intermediate sources which he inserts with no definite methodology of reference. For Mejer 1978, DL had direct knowledge of only a few direct sources, sources which were for the most part already part of the emergent

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237 Goulet 2001 trusts DL’s effort at compiling older works “qui présentaient sans doute déjà les mêmes caractères” (15). Even though objectivity is rarely applied and ancient biographies often morally edify their subjects (14), “Diogène [Laërce] porte sur les diverses écoles [philosophiques] un regard dénué de tout dogmatisme”: he borrows the praises and blames of his predecessors (16). Goulet later further subsumes publicity, apology, and novelistic ends, under the ideological axis of DL’s Lives (23-61).
biographical (perhaps “doxographical”) tradition. Despite the numerous layers of tradition, there exists a small number of facts that we may be sure of in our understanding of the Dog’s lifestyle. But more importantly than whether or not the “traditional” elements surrounding Diogenes were created by himself or within a few years or decades after his death is the fact that, in time, his “character” became more real that his person, and in this he became a true Cynic paradigm: the literary *Life* of a philosopher is more often than not an *illustration* of his ideas and of his way of life. The blurry frontier between philosophical thought and life events becomes rarely clearer than its own literary occurrence.

As far as surety of evidence is concerned, there are few *facts* surrounding Diogenes the Cynic’s life that may be known or, at best, seem fairly certain. I restrict myself to five important ones, cautiously claiming more from the evidence, some of which cannot ultimately overcome the necessity of enclosing them within chronological brackets. For the first true Cynic philosopher, we know for sure:

**(1)** that Diogenes was born in the late 5th c. in Sinope, a Milesian colony on the southern coast of the Black Sea in ancient Paphlagonia (SSR V B 1-16).

**(2)** that Diogenes (according to Eubulides) or his father Hicesias (according to Diocles) who was a local mint magistrate, was involved in the defacement of

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238 Navia 1996 boils down the *facts* to four (Sinope; Athens and Corinth; older contemporary of Alexander; and ‘the Dog’).

239 Eubulides of Miletus (mid-4th c. BCE) was a dialectician associated with the Megarian school. As Marcovich 1999, I follow Menagius’ correction in DL 6.30 who reads Eubulides, author of the *Sale of Diogenes*, instead of the manuscript reading, Eubulus. This correction thus refers to the same author mentioned in 6.20, author of a work ‘on Diogenes’ (*περὶ Διογένους*), certainly a reference to that very same *Sale of Diogenes*.

240 Diocles of Magnesia, mid- to late 1st c. BCE.

241 A *τραπεζίτης* was a ‘banker’ (used by Hicks 2000, without comment) or ‘money-changer’ (SSR V B 16: Diogenes is himself an *ἀργυραμοιβός* in a scholium on Lucian). Diocles says that Diogenes’ father was in charge of the state mint (DL 6.20: ἐποιεῖ τὴν τραπέζην ἔχοντος). Bankers “would set up their tables at the marketplace and at festivals, and would exchange currency, make loans, test the authenticity of coins, and arranged credit transactions among cities. In smaller cities and town, where local currency was minted, bankers were sometimes entrusted with the manufacturing and regulating of coinage,
Sinopean currency, on account of which Diogenes (perhaps with his father) went into exile or was banished (DL 6.20-21).²⁴²

(3) that he traveled to and settled for some time in Athens where he lived for a number of years (e.g., SSR V B 70-71, 73, 75).

(4) that at some point (most likely during his lifetime) he became known as “the Dog” (SSR V B 143-151).

(5) that he was well-known, or even a famous figure, by the time Alexander succeeded to his father Philip II in 336, and that he spent much time in Corinth (maybe in the latter part of his life) where he ultimately died at an advanced age.

3.1 Sinope: Father and Exile

(1) From our evidence we may assert that Diogenes was born in Sinope between 413-404.²⁴³ For Navia, 413 BCE is “the most probable date” for his birth: he relies on DL’s statement concerning Diogenes’ death at an advanced age, nearly (πρός) ninety years old (DL 6.76 = SSR V B 90).²⁴⁴ Navia’s further claim that the “sense that is conveyed” by his departure from Sinope suggests that he was in his prime (i.e. not yet 40 years old) is simply an unsupported information whose aim is to allow for Diogenes’ and this was, we suspect, what Hicesias was entrusted to do in his native Sinope, as is confirmed by Diocles (DL 6.20). The occupation of Diogenes’ father could lead us to conclude that his family enjoyed some prominence in the city and had the necessary means to ensure a sound education for him.” (Navia 1998.10-11).

²⁴² DL 6.20: φυγεῖν (the subject can be Diogenes or both men)… συναλᾶσθαι τῷ πατρί.
²⁴³ The Suda mentions that Diogenes was born in 404/03 during the rule of the Thirty Tyrants (Suda 1142, s.v. Diogenes): cf. Giannantoni 1990, vol.4, Nota 41.421-423. While Navia (1996.85; 1998.19-20) endorses the earlier date (413) to accept that his name was known as early as 396 BC in connection with a currency problem, the currency “problem” is too early here. Are we to understand two different currency problems? Certainly not.
²⁴⁴ Diogenes was a γέρων in the 113th Olympiad (DL 6.79 = SSR V B 92), in 328/325 BCE (contra Navia 1998.8: 324/321 BCE). For general chronology, see Bickerman 1980. DL’s source for this detail is Demetrius of Magnesia, a contemporary of Cicero and a friend of Atticus (Notopoulos 1939.135n.4). According to Demetrius’ work On Men of the Same Name (cf. Mejer 1981) and Plutarch (Mor. 717c), Diogenes died in Corinth on the same day as Alexander the Great (in 323 BCE). Granted that the anecdote is probably too good to be true, without evidence to the contrary, it is reasonable to keep the year 323 for Diogenes’ death (also Navia 1998.8). There is no need to seek a chronological correspondence between the 113th Olympiad (γέρων in 328/325) and the year of his death (323) to make the two coincide. Therefore, the suggestion by Menagius (at SSR V B 92.3) to read the 114th Olympiad (of 324/321 BCE) is unnecessary.

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arrival in Athens before Antisthenes’ death in ca.366, since Navia supports the
Antisthenean affiliation. Following Long’s cautiousness, we should only commit to
stating that Diogenes is probably “some forty years younger than Antisthenes” (whose
life approximately spanned 445-365): Diogenes’ birth thus falls in the later years of
the 5th century.

After its colonization in the 7th c., Sinope received a democratic government in
the 430s after Lamachus removed the local tyrant Timesileos, and Pericles sent 600
Athenian volunteers to settle (συγκατοικεῖν) there. So by the 4th century it is
reasonable to assume that there was a strong positive Sinopean sentiment towards
Athens. After 372 BCE the town lost its democratic government to the Persian satrap
Datames (or to a Pro-Persian faction before Datames took control) to finally regain
its autonomy in the aftermath of Alexander’s victories in Asia Minor (334-333 BCE).
Sinopean foundation myths include the Amazons and their queen Sinova (local story),
and Autolycus (Hellenic story), Herakles’ companion. The city was an affluent

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246 Traditionally Sinope was founded by Miletus but there may have been a previous Corinthian
settlement as early as the 8th century. For the chronological problems about the presence and the
colonization of the region by the Greeks, see Drews 1976.25-30. The ancient city has been investigated by
the Black Sea Trade Project, housed at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and
Anthropology. Doonan’s 2004 book presents his postdoctoral work there: it reveals Bronze Age
settlements. As Doonan suggests, the Black Sea cities formed an economic kernel (presumably also
cultural) with the littoral cities that rarely turned towards their hinterland: as far as cultural history goes, we
cannot claim or guess how far Greek culture (or Mediterranean) had blended with Pontic culture in the
Black Sea colonies. Herodotus 4.12 mentions that the Cimmerians, fleeing the Scythian invasion on the
Northern part of the Black Sea, had “established” (κτίσαντες) themselves in the “Greek city of Sinope”,
depending on how we wish to translate κτίσαντες (‘settled’, or ‘founded’): in any case, there clearly was a
diversity of ethnic elements and Sinope was a multicultural commercial center on the Black Sea. Also
Doonan 2006.
are given by the 2nd c. CE orator Polyaeus, Strag. 7.21, 7.29.1.
250 Arr. Anab. 3.24.4-5: soon after Darius’ death (330 BCE), a Sinopean embassy on its way to the
Persian King was intercepted and dismissed by Alexander on the grounds that they had a legitimate claim
to meeting Darius, for they were “subjects to the Persians” (ὑπὸ Πέρσαις τεταγμένοι).
commercial, cultural, and cosmopolitan town, and later had a famous temple of Serapis.\textsuperscript{251} It is interesting to note that Diogenes, as far as we know, never had the expressed desire or entertained the possibility of ever returning to Sinope and the Chreia tradition portrays only once Diogenes making a reference to his place of birth (DL 6.49).\textsuperscript{252}

(2) Nothing is known about Diogenes’ upbringing in Sinope and he comes to life with the currency affair, recently brought to light, and which requires a few words for its chronological perspective. As the story goes it is due to the defacement of currency (\textit{παραχαράττειν τὸ νόμισμα})\textsuperscript{253} in Sinope that Diogenes was sent into exile: either his father defaced the currency, or Diogenes himself, as the Dog supposedly confessed in his lost \textit{Pordalus} (DL 6.20).\textsuperscript{254} The episode of the defacement of currency, which was to become the emblem of Diogenes’s “philosophical mission”, was for a long time uncorroborated and it had seemed very suspicious on the same grounds as much of Diogenes’ biographical elements, but the event has recently received unexpected support and now rests on recent archeological discoveries.

The importance of a publication by C. T. Seltman in the 1930s\textsuperscript{255} is crucial in the discussion of the defacement episode. In the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century, the discovery of defaced

\textsuperscript{251} Tacit. \textit{Hist}. 4.83-84; Strabo 12.3.11-12.
\textsuperscript{252} The anecdote is repeated by Plutarch’s \textit{De Exilio} 602a (= SSR V B 11) where Diogenes continues with a quotation from Eur. \textit{Iphig. Taur.}: “Diogenes the Cynic replied to one who observed ‘The Sinopeans condemned you to exile’, ‘And I,’ he said, ‘condemned them to stay home on the Pontos, \textit{on the extreme waves of an inhospitable strait}’.”
\textsuperscript{253} Suda 1143, s.v. Diogenes, claims that it was an act of forgery and counterfeit (\textit{παρακόπτειν}): all other evidence use \textit{παραχαράττειν}.
\textsuperscript{254} Two anecdotes show individuals reproaching his “having defaced the currency”, allegedly referring to the real event in Sinope (DL 6.56).
\textsuperscript{255} Seltman’s contribution comes from a conference whose summary is found in \textit{AJA} 34.1, 1930.50 (cf. Navia 1996.89). His detailed contribution appears as Seltman 1938: although hard to find, many scholars assess his contribution (e.g. Dudley 1937.21, 54n.3).
coins from Sinope was analyzed by Seltman and his findings are simply stunning:

“quantities of defaced and counterfeited coins were in circulation in Sinope around the
year 350 BCE... and the name IKESIO appears in many Sinopean coins that can be dated
between 370 and 320 BCE”. According to Seltman the defacement of the coins (a
penal offence) was done to put these out of circulation rather than for criminal reasons,
and Seltman himself dates these coins to a rather late date (350-340).

It is reasonable to trust that Diogenes’ father was indeed a magistrate in Sinope,
but the dating of the defacement might influence the reason for Diogenes’ exile or flight
from Sinope. If the defacement did occur only in the 340s, it would make it hard to
support personal meetings between Diogenes and Plato, who died ca.348 BCE. But
what it does stress even further, if the “exile” happened in the 350s, is the link between
the defacement and his arrival in Athens, and the impossible relationship between
Diogenes and Antisthenes (who had died in ca.366). More significantly the defacement
episode was taken over by the biographical tradition and the παραχαράττειν τὸ νόμισμα
became the general motto of Diogenes’ philosophy, ethics, and pragmatics. It is futile

256 Navia 1998.12. Sayre 1938.72 insists on the fact that Hicesias would have been in charge of
the mint only after 362 BCE (also Branham 1996.90n.30), and this provides a terminus post quem for the
defacement episode and the exile: it is also consistent with our chronology. Seltman (discussed in Dudley
1937.54n.3) separates three different periods in the coins that were discovered: 1) the period up to 370; 2)
from 370-362 where the stamp contains the name ΔΑΤΑΜΑ (Datames) rather than the previous ΣΙΝΩ;
3) 362-310, with a return to the “Sino” stamp, among which nine bear the stamp ΙΚΕΣΙΟ, the name of
Diogenes’ father. From this period, many imitations of the Sinopean coins exist of which many too have
been defaced to be put out of circulation. On Sinopean coins, Harrison 1982.181: “A female head in
profile, identified as the local nymph “Sinope,” graces the obverse, and on the reverse a sea eagle, wings
outspread, grasps a dolphin with his talons. The legend ΣΙΝΩ is inscribed on the reverse of Sinope’s civic
issues and is usually accompanied by an abbreviated personal name in Greek, presumably identifying a
particular local magistrate in office at the time of minting. On the coins minted for Persians, the names of
individual issuers replace the legend ΣΙΝΩ; magistrates’ abbreviated names appear only rarely.”

257 See Galen De Diff. puls. 8, p.584 Kühn (cf. Bywater 1940.11).

and 2001.32) still envisions earlier defaced coins (ca.370) to support the historicity of the Antisthenes-
Diogenes relationship (an early migration to Athens, discipleship, and so on).

259 Although Dudley 1937.23 places Diogenes’ arrival not earlier than 340, it is conceivable than it
occurred earlier, even as early as the late 350s/early 340s.
here to question the motives that pushed Diogenes to go to Athens specifically: the city’s reputation made it a destination of choice, as it portrayed itself as “the education of Greece” in Pericles’ words, a city open to strangers\textsuperscript{260} and accessible to foreigners and curious minds alike (metics and ambassadors). In the 4\textsuperscript{th} c. Athens still exerted a powerful attraction throughout the Hellenized cities.

As far as Diogenes’ confession of the defacement is concerned, we should note that DL probably had no access to the \textit{Pordalus} and he was relying again on his earlier sources. In fact, we may use this as evidence for the historical event: the mention of the defacement in Diogenes’ own \textit{Pordalus} might simply have referred to the \textit{metaphorical} defacement of νομίσματα by Diogenes as part of his philosophical mission. There is no need to take the mention literally as to refer to the monetary event that led to his exile. We should imagine that if Diogenes recalled παραχαράττειν it was meant symbolically as it became one of its pragmatic slogan: Diogenes merely acknowledges his metaphorical defacement, not necessarily confessing to the past historical event.\textsuperscript{261}

Diogenes’ behavioral reform that was developed through his pragmatic philosophy served to criticize the conventionalities of his contemporary society. The νόμισμα, the pecuniary currency, was therefore symbolically standing for the social norms (the πολιτικὸν νόμισμα expressed by the fictitious oracle in DL 6.20) which Diogenes aimed to attack. In words and in deeds, Diogenes was feeding his philosophy into the normative behaviors he witnessed. But the analogy of the defacement to attack social norms, a potent one at that, was not really an invention of his. Aristophanes

\textsuperscript{260} Thuc. 2.39.
\textsuperscript{261} Although I certainly agree with Long 1996.34 who is certain that “the <defacement> story was in circulation during his residence at Athens, and that, so far from denying it, he supported its diffusion.”
(Frogs 718-733) had already compared citizens to Athenian coinage (νόμισμα, χρυσίον): the “fine upstanding citizens” (τοὺς καλούς τε κἀγαθούς), the foreigners, and the bad people (πονηροὺς) are assimilated to those old and finest coins and these debased “crummy coppers” issued during the Peloponnesian War. Although Aristophanes referred to morality and political classes, Diogenes will use the symbolic image of currency with an ethical orientation that is embedded in the philosophical φύσις/νόμος dichotomy.

The meaning of the verb παραχαράττειν was taken from its literal meaning, to “scratch off” coinage in order to put it out of official circulation, and extended to the invalidation of conventional behaviors: “The verb νομίζω conveys, among other things, the sense of ‘recognizing’ or ‘accepting’ customs, laws, and usages. Thus, the phrase παραχαράττειν τὸ νόμισμα simply means ‘Deface the currency’.” Meanwhile the term νόμισμα (currency) was understood to refer to “recognized customs/ways”. To ‘scratch the marks off’ (or to ‘render valueless’) became the symbolic motto of Diogenes’ program: customs, laws, and social usages were all possible targets for the Cynic. The slogan was therefore the ethical validation of his character’s actions. Diogenes only needed consistency, but he could add any view of his onto his “critical” program. As such, Diogenes’ project may be seen as anti-establishment, but certainly not as simple or mere anarchy.

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262 Dover 1993.281-282. Also, in Ar. Clouds 247-248 Socrates objects to Strepsiades’ oath to the gods that “the gods are no currency (νόμισμα)” in the Thinkery.

263 Navia 1998.17-18. Bywater 1940 had analysed the three possible meanings of the verb (and comparing it with other παρά-compounds): 1) to blunder the stamping as to produce a bad impression (χαρακτήρ), 2) to change the χαρακτήρ, and so metaphorically = mutare, 3) to stamp with a counterfeit stamp as a fabricator of base money does. He notes as an equivalent formulation “μεταχαράττειν τὰ νομίζόμενα” (to change the stamp of the customary ways of life).
3.2 Athens: Agora and Public Space

Diogenes arrived in Athens likely between 362 and 348264 (we may settle for the late 350s for convenience), where he became a public figure: part beggar, part philosopher; part human, part animal; but a single ‘all-out’ character whose formulations were, at once, “provocative, paradoxical, and ludic” to express Cynic simplicity.265 The popularity of Diogenes relies in part on the defacement episode, and despite possible visits to Athens before his exile, it is only for this period that we can rather safely claim that Diogenes became a known figure on the Athenian stage. Whether his exile was the work of the (pro-Persian) Sinopean government or of the satrap himself is unanswerable, but with the exile set in the 350s, Diogenes would have been about 50 years old by the time he reached the cultural capital of Greece.

There was probably no figure in late Classical Athens more iconoclastic to social conventions than Diogenes of Sinope. His lifestyle offended many of his contemporaries since his philosophy rested on the notion and presumption of natural needs, αὐτάρκεια, and shamelessness. For all the eccentricities feeding his πραγματικὴ φιλοσοφία the “founder” of pragmatic Cynicism was quite a familiar figure in the Athenian urban landscape. According to tradition he frequented the Stoa of Zeus and the Hall of Processions (the Pompeion) which the Athenians, Diogenes joked, had provided or

264 Simply put: Navia puts Diogenes’ arrival in Athens much too early (ca.370) and Dudley too late (after 340). I believe that it is extremely reasonable to assume the presence of Diogenes in Athens during Plato’s later years at the head of his Academy, and that personal meetings between the two philosophers, of which the Chreia tradition offers many examples, are highly credible (DL 6.24-26, 41, 53-54, 58, 67; Sotion and Favorinus are DL’s main sources). It is quite possible indeed (and consistent with his character) that Diogenes did burst in on Plato’s lectures (cf. DL 6.40). We may, however, doubt that Plato called him a Dog: the nickname should probably be placed at a later date.

265 Moles 1996.105.
constructed (κατασκευακέναι) for his living (ἐνδιαιτᾶσθαι);²⁶⁶ the πίθος he used as a shelter (οἰκίαν) was in or near (ἐν) the Metroön²⁶⁷ in the busy Athenian agora (DL 6.22-23 = SSR V B 174);²⁶⁸ the Athenians loved him (ἠγαπᾶτο) enough to present him with a new πίθος after flogging the boy who had broken the original (DL 6.43 = SSR V B 169). If anything, we can be certain from the ancient tradition that Diogenes the Cynic was quite a unique character and that his sense of humor probably had a lot to do with his getting away with some outrageous actions.²⁶⁹ Despite the required cautiousness about his biography, there should be no doubt that much of the personality attributed to him (his ἦθος) accurately depicts his modus vivendi. In fact, his historical character (personality) becomes completely undifferentiated from his traditional character (social dramatis persona), due in large part to the paradigmatic and practical nature of his philosophy and the central position of ethics in his project.

It would be ludicrous indeed if none of the biographical evidence was representative of the historical Diogenes the Cynic. Leafing through DL’s collection of anecdotes the general picture that emerges is a consistent and coherent construction that

²⁶⁶ The meaning of διαιτῶμαι indicates the maintenance or support of oneself, but more specifically it alludes to a “way of life” that takes into account customs and habits (of which frugality is perhaps one of the most representative philosophical topos in the Socratic-Cynic-Stoic ‘lineage’); another meaning of the word is “to arbitrate, umpire”, an image that may be also symbolic of the task Diogenes perceived his κυνισμός was trying to accomplish.

²⁶⁷ It is symbolically interesting to note that the indictment of Socrates (in Xen. Mem. 1.1.1, and later again in Favorinus, DL’s source) was preserved in the Metroön (DL 2.40): cf. Guthrie 1971b.62. The building was of a recent date (early 4th c.: Sickinger 1999.106).

²⁶⁸ All of the buildings mentioned date to the previous century (late 5th). In Ar. Knights 792, the wine-jar (πιθάκνη), mentioned alongside nests (γυπαρίοις) and turrets (πυργιδίοις), is an abode for Dêmos. Of course we should not take the anecdote literally that Diogenes continuously “lived” in his jar, but Diogenes was certainly “performing” in the agora where there was a fluctuating, ever-changing and constantly renewed audience. When the Suda 1144, s.v. Diogenes (= SSR V B 3) says that Diogenes “spent his time” (διέτριβεν) in his pithos, we are meant to understand that he might even have held discussions (diatribe as a technical term for lectures) around his abode, thus placing him at the heart of the Athenian crowds of the agora.

²⁶⁹ Navia 1998.62: “His outrageous and caustic remarks and acts still make us laugh, as much as they probably did his amused and disbelieving contemporaries, but we would be mistaken, were we to conclude that such behavior was meant only to amuse or to call attention to himself.”
cannot be discarded. Certainly the tradition which DL reflects concentrates on painting an image of philosophers’ *lives* rather than their *thoughts*—or their *character* rather than their *teachings*—, but this is probably by reason of DL’s own motivation for writing *Lives*, rather than a *Succession* (Διαδοχή) or a work of philosophical views (doxography). Also the very nature of what constitutes an anecdote (a short story, succinct and punctual, which often reflect some ethical evaluation) was probably clearer to DL than it is to us.

In the case of the Cynic philosopher, little more could have been done it seems because Diogenes, by making Cynicism into a *modus vivendi*, would hardly write theoretical lectures of the like of Plato’s: pragmatism and ethical performance, action and humorous anecdotes, were all converging to the “Socrates gone mad”. This constellation of characteristically Cynic elements needs not exclude Diogenes’ literary production as contrary to facts: we can assume that Diogenes did write! But Diogenes’ main goal was to provide his audience with a living and visible example (παράδειγμα), for good or bad, and to this effect Diogenes needed the “representationality” and the “performance” of himself, for which the crowded agora was a better venue than, for example, the Cynosarges. The different biographical strata that constitute Diogenes’ life in DL, the χρεία-as-biography tradition, depict certainly quite accurately his eccentric and marginal life.

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270 Mejer 1978.2-3.

271 DL contains a mix of information coming from the doxographical and biographical traditions, both of which side with the Chreia tradition (e.g. sententiae). Goulet 2001.94n.34: “La ligne de demarcation entre les apothegmes (sic) et les sentences est souvent à peine visible chez Diogène [Laërce]. Dans la vie de Thalès, on distingue les éléments suivants: (1) une série de six énigmes, présentées comme des “apophtegmes” (I 35): ce qui est le plus ancien, le plus beau, le plus grand, etc., (2) une collection d’apophtegmes véritables (I 35-36), (3) une série de maximes introduites par des φησι (I 37), à partir de φίλων παρώντων.”

272 Gugliermina 2006.195.
The early Cynic tradition took up quickly to chronicling through anecdotal material and generating a Chreia tradition (while sometimes exaggerating the life of its figurehead and the ethical project of society’s prominent watchdog) but it is also apparent that Diogenes himself authored quite a few books and that his ideas (not all of which were his own inventions) were going around in written forms. From the list of 21 titles attributed to him (DL 6.80 = SSR V B 117: 13 dialogues, 7 tragedies, and a collection of letters), there is little ancient consensus as to whether they were actually written by Diogenes – the judgment on their authenticity appeared early on, yet the most common view nowadays is to accept most or all of them as genuine, especially his Republic (Πολιτεία). The Hellenistic authors Satyrus (3rd c. BCE, author of Βίοι) and Sosicrates (mid-2nd c. BCE, who may only be following Satyrus in his Διαδοχή) both denied the authenticity and say that Diogenes left no writings at all (SSR V B 128). Satyrus adds that the seven ‘little tragedies’ (τραγῳδάρια) attributed to him were actually written by an acquaintance of his (γνωρίμος), Philiscus of Aegina, while Favorinus (2nd c. CE) knew of another possibility, a certain Pasiphon (DL 6.73 = SSR V B 128).

A quote from Julian (Orat. 9.7 = SSR V B 128) probably summarizes the situation best, and suspicions over the genuineness of Diogenes’ writings may be overzealous: “if the tragedies are Diogenes’, there is nothing strange [οὐθὲν ἀτοπόν] to see a wise man playing around [σοφὸν παίζειν], since many philosophers seem to have

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273 Suda 1142, s.v. Diogenes, adds one more tragedy (Semelē) under the name of an Athenian tragedian, named either Diogenes or Oenomaeus.
274 Long 1996a.40: “Some of these <writings> were almost certainly genuine, especially his Republic, a work cited by several Stoic philosophers”. See also Philodemus’ On the Stoics (SSR V B 126). Navia accepts the possibility, while Sayre 1938 rejects their authenticity.
275 Probably the same Philiscus who was sent to Athens by his father Onesicritus after his brother Androstenes had gone and become Diogenes’ pupil (DL 6.75). Suda 359, s.v. Philiscus, says that the author taught Alexander of Macedonia his γράμματα and heard Diogenes (or Hermippus – correction of Hermittos found in SSR V B 137, according to Stilpo). Pasiphon might be the 3rd c. BCE philosopher from Eretria, student of Menedemus.
done it.” The two Hellenistic authors Satyrus and Sosicrates were possibly convinced of
the traditional affiliation of the Cynics with the Socratic figure, and to refuse that
Diogenes authored many pieces could easily be discredited if it is to simply mirror
Socrates’ lack of literary production. Otherwise, Sotion (early 2nd c. BCE) authenticates
only fourteen works, most of which are not in DL’s official list: we find titles of
“dialogues” (On Virtue, On the Good, On Love, Mendicant, Tolmaeus, Pordalus,)
Kasandros, Kephalion, Philiscus, Aristarchus, Sisyphus, Ganymedes, – the last two even
suggest tragedies), Anecdotes (Χρείαι), and Letters.

To be denied access to such a wealth of written evidence cannot stop us from
seriously considering that the Chreia tradition dug extensively in Diogenes’ real life and
literary production in order to build and continue the Cynic representation, its
παράδειγμα. The authenticity of such works is another strong weight to partly trust the
anecdotes in regards to Diogenes’ philosophy: there is no reason again to discredit
entirely the χρείαι, which benefited from the man in person and, as importantly, from his
written works.

276 DL 6.20 and 6.80. The title Pordalus (Πόρδαλος) is a vulgar take on the words πορδή (‘fart’) and
the adjective πορδάλεος (‘stinking’). According to DL this work is the earliest one in which Diogenes
confessed that his mission to “deface the currency” was given him by the oracle at Delphi. Variants of the
title include: Πόρδαλος (a panther or leopard), Πάρδαλις, and Πάρδαλης: see app. crit. in Marcovich 1999
public...”

277 The Cynic epistles attributed to Diogenes that we now have belong to the 2nd-1st c. BCE and
most appear to be Augustan or later: they should not be considered authentic. Navia 1998.5; cf. Malherbe
1977.

278 DL 6.48: Hegesias asks Diogenes to lend him one of his writings. The Cynic replies to the foolish (μάταιος) Hegesias that the “real” thing (i.e. Cynic ἄσκησις) is much better than the written word (τὴν γεγραμμένην) – in other words ἔργον, i.e. πρᾶξις, is preferable to λόγος. This can be related to
Antisthenes’ claim that “virtue is in the realm of actions (τῶν ἔργων) rather than too many words and
learning (λόγων πλείστων, μαθημάτων)” (DL 6.11). Crates of Thebes (360s-280s BCE), Diogenes’
exuberant disciple (fl. 328-324 BCE), pushed this to a personal contempt towards philosophers (DL 6.86,
88, 92), probably conflating the Academy and the rhetorical schools altogether. The contrast λόγος/ἔργον
(word-deed) “was probably known to every educated Greek in Gorgias’ time: although <Gorgias> greatly
exploited it, it was certainly not his invention.” (Kennedy 1985.475). Diogenes’ attacks on λόγοι aimed
without a doubt at the literary production coming out of the philosophical and rhetorical schools.
The matter of Diogenes’ literary production remains tricky (new evidence pending) but Branham is certainly right: “If Diogenes did write books, they would in all likelihood have been parodies and satires directed against the most influential poets and philosophers, not philosophical works like those of Plato, Aristotle, or the Stoics.”

Diogenes’ writings would have probably been a general reflection on customary thoughts and conventions of social norms of the sort that his pragmatic, ascetic lifestyle, called for. In all likelihood he aimed at a social critique embodied in his own persona and character that needed little theorizing beyond its pragmatic application, but which may be played out in written satires and parodies.

To briefly recapitulate, Diogenes’ philosophy was a way of life, better suited to action rather than discourse; in this respect, the tradition presented by DL remains a symptom and an emblem of the Dog’s lifestyle. As Goulet-Cazé reminds us, the rarity of fragments and accounts is perhaps mostly due to the very nature of Cynicism: it was “un mode de vie” and “une morale des actes”. In the face of biographical evidence there are two possible attitudes: the one consisting of a systematic suspicion, since rigorous historical investigation about Diogenes’ cynicism is difficult; the other is to grant the tradition a certain value, since we recognize that there is an ancient Cynic literature where an intellectual attitude marked by Diogenes of Sinope is expressed. The simple insistence on some recurrent themes, not mere “inventions fantaisistes” should allow for such a value: in other words, most of the Cynic themes do bear the indelible trace of an original philosophical experience.

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280 Goulet-Cazé 1986.11. I would add that the pragmatic approach Diogenes favored does not preclude a coherent, systematic, set of values and thoughts. To consider early Cynicism as anti-intellectual, whether in negative terms or pejoratively, is to reduce Cynicism to a freak show that would be devoid of
truly uttered by Diogenes, the tradition itself informs us of their capacity to depict a philosopher whose values are most likely consistent with the very anecdotes that make him alive to us.

To deal further with biographical information, we should say a few words on fictional elements that may be discarded outright, although they still remain helpful in filling in the Cynic character. While we can rarely discern fictional anecdotes from real ones, the χρεῖα all collectively share one trait: their combination serve and help to offer situations and stories that center around Diogenes’ character, putting the Dog at the center of (often banal) events. Two examples taken from Diogenes’ biography should suffice here.

We find some astonishing legendary elements that are probably fabricated in order to mould the Cynic persona onto Diogenes’ philosophical stance and views that emerge from his way of life. Two such stories in Diogenes’ biography are: a) that he engaged in Cynic philosophy after having consulted the Delphic oracle which encouraged Diogenes’ mission to deface the currency, and, b) that he was sold as a slave to a Corinthian man for an undetermined period of time. The first story serves to validate the philosophical mission under a satirical banner, all the while emulating crucial precedents, such as Socrates, with responses (either verbal or social) that delineate Cynic principles. This story is presented merely as a philosophical and religious sanction and moulds itself on Socrates’ precedent. The second story mainly stages the Cynic character in a situation where once more his views take center stage and shapes the Cynic persona. This story is

the impetus and synergy it had in Antiquity. Diogenes may not have been the most intellectualizing philosopher but he had highly intellectual positions. His philosophy is one of contrast and tension, precisely between theory and practice.
an episode of political and social counter-norm, set within a serio-comic mime-like situation by showing the beggar-slave into an ironic position of teaching and humoring (much like the Socratic figure in Plato).

The first story relates Diogenes’ philosophical and pragmatic mission to Apollo’s oracle (DL 6.20-21 = SSR V B 2). As the story goes Diogenes went to Delphi, or consulted the Delian oracle in Sinope, to inquire to Apollo “if he should do (πράξει)” what his workmen were bidding him to do. First of all, there is an obvious pun here: the future form of πράττειν (πράξ-) ‘to do’ or ‘to behave’ and the noun πρᾶξις, ‘action’, ‘behavior’ (but also ‘business’ and even ‘fate’) both belong to the semantics of ἔργον, action or deed. Second, DL’s source for this consultation is unclear: it doesn’t seem to be Diocles, Eubulides, or Diogenes himself in his Pordalus (at the beginning of 6.20, all three are referenced for the defacement episode). DL only tells us that “some” (ἐνιοὶ δ’) connect the defacement with an oracle before his exile (6.20) and that “some” have the episode after his flight from Sinope (6.21). In any case, the divine reply was for Diogenes to “alter the political currency” (κιβδηλεύειν τὸ πολιτικὸν νόμισμα) which he had interpreted, for some, as altering “coinage” (τὸ κέρμα), while for others the oracle granted him a mission to “deface the currency” before he reached Athens. Either way, it should be clear that this story breathes of imitations: the story is in fact “suspiciously reminiscent of similar stories told of Socrates and of Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism,” – Zeno was himself a disciple of the Cynic Stilpo of Megara (DL 6.76: and

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281 In the 4th c. CE this story of Apollo’s oracle was still popular, e.g., Julian Orat. 9.188 (= SSR V B 8) and Orat. 7.211 (= SSR V B 10).
282 Bailly, s.v. πρᾶξις, quotes tragedy for this last use: Aes. Prom. 695; Soph. Trach. 294, Antig. 790, 792 and Hdt. 3.65.
Stilpo himself a disciple of Diogenes and later, master of Crates the Cynic also).

Therefore we should hardly give this story any credence. As Branham puts it, the story of the oracle alone is “of course absurd and clearly incompatible with <Diogenes’> utterances on traditional religion. This story probably originates in a literary context.”

In fact, the oracle story seems mainly an alternative to the Succession myth as elaborated by the Hellenistic biographers and writers of Διαδοχαί. The arrival of Diogenes in Athens and the emergence of the Cynic movement was explained away by two different traditions: a historical tradition interested in affiliating the philophical heads, and a literary tradition interested in shaping a (hi)story of significant and signifying events for the movement. Paradoxically, the Cynic figure at the same time belongs to both traditions, and also meets halfway: the oracle and the Succession myth never fully overlap, insofar as the former strengthens the connection between Socrates and Diogenes albeit without the mediation of Antisthenes. Also, from what we observe, reports of the oracle “begin to emerge only during the second century CE, specifically in a passage of Maximus of Tyre (Diss. 36 = V B 299), where we hear not only about Apollo’s

1998.12 summarizes: “the oracle pronounces a pithy statement about the philosopher that ultimately determines the direction of his life and describes succinctly the character of his mission.”

284 Branham 1996.90n.30. Also Navia 1998.16: “among the Cynics who followed in Diogenes’ footsteps, there seems to have been a persistent reluctance to attach any value to oracles and other forms of divination, and a negative attitude toward traditional religious practices and cults.” See DL 6.45 = SSR V B 4; DL 6.73 = SSR V B 353; Dio Chrys. = SSR V B 586. As with Socrates the Delphic oracle ascribes to Diogenes a spiritual mission, which is, as the Cynic tradition makes clear, wholly contrary to his views on religion: that he would follow blindly an oracle would be rather un-Cynic of him. Without jumping to the conclusion that Diogenes was an atheist, his criticism of traditional religion was aimed at the organization, the practices, and beliefs of religious life, not at the existence of a divine principle, a supreme being in one form or another. David Sedley, at a guest lecture (McGill University, Sept. 19 2011), determined that atheistic theories were probably indeed a real phenomenon, with an “underground” following, but whose adherents would not easily disclose their views publicly, since political and legal implications could be devastating. Sedley points out that the list of atheists disclosed by Epicurus lacks definite credibility: the names were in most probability extrapolated from literary positions and they represent mere guesses (Prodicus, Diogoras “the godless”, and Critias, whose authorship of the Sisyphus fragment cannot be determined; in fact, Sedley seems right in acknowledging that the fragment (also named ps-Euripides) circulated anonymously and was credited to Critias based on his infamous characterization).
injunction, but about how Zeus himself commended Diogenes for the enterprise that he was about to undertake. Earlier sources remain silent about the matter...”

The oracle is finally doubtful on the basis of the Cynics’ condemnation and ridiculing of such stories and of Diogenes’ own utterances on traditional religion: the oracle story is simply a “legendary encrustation… clearly modeled on the oracle Plato’s Socrates claims in the Apology…”

The second story relates to an episode when Diogenes was sold as a slave and became the pedagogue to his master’s children (DL 29-31, 36, 74-75; also Suda 1143-1144 = SSR V B 70-71). DL’s main sources for this are Cleomenes, Hermippus (a manuscript variant of Menippus), and Eubulides. About one generation after the death of Diogenes, Cleomenes (4th-3rd c.), a Cynic student, wrote a Παιδαγωγικός (probably a dialogue) which featured the legend of the sale of Diogenes as a slave to a Corinthian man, Xeniades (DL 6.75). The story was also developed by Hermippus (ι Διογένους Πράσις), maybe as part of his Lives of which DL had direct knowledge, and by

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286 Branham 1996.90n.30.
287 A good essay on Classical political and psychological justifications for slavery is Fischer 2006.327-349.
288 Usually considered Metrocles’ pupil (from DL 6.95) but Goulet-Cazé 1996b.392 makes him a disciple of Crates instead (Metrocles was himself an associate of Crates’ wife, Hipparchia). In fact Goulet-Cazé makes the case that the list of Metrocles’ pupils are actually all Crates’.
289 DL 6.74-75. Many contemporaries of Diogenes would have been alive by the time Cleomenes wrote his Παιδαγωγικός. There may be interesting parallels between this episode and the life of Aesop since episodes featuring Aesop and his master Xanthus could well inform the atmosphere that we are entitled to suppose for Diogenes’ own episode of enslavement: defiance, witty remarks, and boldness (cf. Kurke 2011, e.g. p.139). In fact, in her survey of scholarship on the Life of Aesop, Kurke (2011.27) notes that the traditional Quellenforshung has found that the text is, at its core, “dim reminiscences of the Frist Sacred War (dating from ca. 590 BCE) and aetiological myths linked to scapegoat ritual, overlaid with Socratic influences, Cynic influences”, and so on. We should add that Aesop’s life is associated with Delphi (and the contestation of its authority): another possible nexus between Aesop, Socrates, and Diogenes (cf. Kurke 2011.53-94).
290 Mejer 1978.32. Cf. Hicks 2000.30n.: “Menagius, followed by Hübner, on the authority of Ambrosius, reads “Hermippus”; for among the works of Menippus enumerated by Laertius below [6.101] there is no mention of a “Sale of Diogenes”. Contra Dudley 1937.60 who believed the authenticity of Menippus’ title. It is quite revealing here that Dudley uses the term legend for an event that many modern
Eubulides’ work of the same title (DL 6.29-30). Yet the sale into slavery (SSR V B 70-80) seems made up of elements that do reflect the general nature of Diogenes’ character and we have no proof that the event is historical. In fact, the overall setting generally recalls a mime, a brief sketch that serves the Cynic’s purpose: scratching the conventions through witty humor. In this case, Xeniades the master and his slave Diogenes would provide an excellent comical setting to show off the Cynic’s remarks in a “typical” social situation. Diogenes’ capture by pirates and his sale in Crete to Xeniades also suggest the distant setting of a rather comical nature (DL 6.74). The story, though, underlines in specific terms the special educational purpose ascribed to the social practice of “pragmatic mimesis” and the use of paradigmatic examples –indeed “pragmatic μίμησις” and the social use of paradigmatic μίμησις are also a worthwhile pursuit in order to examine what the early Cynics had to gain by dressing up Diogenes in this “apophthegmatic” tradition that often resembles and parallels the tradition about

disbelieve perhaps as much as many Athenians or Corinthians who would have been alive at the time of the “sale”. Hermippus was already used by DL for the life of Antisthenes (DL 6.2), but Marcovich 1999 ignores Menagius’ correction in this case. Interestingly, we find in some manuscripts (QEYJbh) the correction ἐν τῇ Διογένους φράσει (i.e. in the “words” of Diogenes) instead of πράσσα. Also, the very name Xeniades further suggests the “outsider” aspect of Diogenes’ philosophy (Xeniades, the “son of a stranger”), something we might be aware of in validating the authenticity of the legendary sale.

291 Menagius conjectured Eubulides in 6.30 instead of Eubulus, and he is followed in this by Marcovich 1999 (but ignored by Hicks 2000). This same Eubulides of Miletus, a 4th c. BCE dialectician of the Megarian school, teacher of Demosthenes (Suda 454, s.v. Demosthenes), presumably authored Lives (DL mentions the Sale of Diogenes in DL 6.30 and On Diogenes in DL 6.20: they may be the same work).

292 As with the examples of the mimes of Sophron and Herondas, which typically have two or three characters. See Xanthus the master’s remark to his slave Aesop, after an exchange of words on urination (Life of Aesop 28): “I hadn’t realized I’d bought a master for myself” (Kurke 2011.207): this is a role reversal of the master-slave situation that we also find with Diogenes: when sold as a slave, Diogenes asked the crier to announce him in case someone “wanted to purchase a master for himself” (DL 6.69). Although the borrowing is usually seen to have been made by the Aesopic tradition from the Cynic tradition, Kurke 2011.355n.79 suggests that it might have been the other way around. Interestingly in the Life of Aesop, it is the master “who plays the role of Diogenes, insofar as he, rather than Aesop, rejects ossified convention in favor of the rationality of natural law” (Kurke 2011.207; cf. also DL 6.45 on Diogenes’ response when reproached for masturbating in public).

293 As Dudley 1937.68 points out in relation to Bion: “Fiske notes the use of quotation, of χρείαν, of allegorical personification, of little scenes which appear to be influenced by the Mime, of stock-figures, animal similes, and character-sketches. The latter show the influence of Theophrastus, the parallels with whom are interesting.”
other figures such as the Seven Sages, a tradition that is indebted to an oral tradition. That Diogenes became a παιδαγωγός to his master’s children is probably another fabrication based on Cleomenes, Hermippus, and Eubulides’ books: the fictional anecdotes would serve to reveal Diogenes’ indifference to slavery and his contempt for traditional education. In fact, I further suspect a play on the word “sale” (πρᾶσις) that we find in such titles, with its close association to “acting out” (πρᾶξις), the action and the freedom of Diogenes’ lifestyle: his pragmatism is surely found in the very experience of Cynic behavior, set as it often is, in situations that serve to reflect Cynic ideals. Indeed it has always struck me that the ‘Sale of Diogenes’ (ἡ Διογένους Πρᾶσις) is very close to the ‘Action of Diogenes’ (ἡ Διογένους Πρᾶξις), as Auction/Action would be in English.

I do not wish to suggest here that the traditional sale is the work of a simple wordplay on πρᾶξις, but the pun is certainly noteworthy. In any case, this story too fits very well with the many instances in the Chreia tradition that show Diogenes’ concerns with traditional education or his disparaging for the lack of it (ἀπαιδευσία). If the story is true and he was indeed a slave, it remains hard to make sense of all the freedom

294 Gugliermina 2006.195: “comme ces apophtegmes n’ont qu’une faible valeur historique puisqu’ils ont pour principale fonction de symboliser une personnalité, il est probable qu’on ait affaire ici à une pure fiction destinée à révéler à la fois l’indifférence de Diogène à l’égard de l’esclavage et son mépris pour l’éducation traditionnelle.” Also Navia 1998.41n.56: “The origins of the story about Diogenes’ abduction by pirates [cf. DL 6.74] can be traced back to a nonextant work by [Hermippus: correction mine] entitled The Sale of Diogenes. K. von Fritz had already argued (Quellenuntersuchungen zum Leben und Philosophie des Diogenes von Sinope, [Leipzig 1925] pp.22-25) that it was reasonable to assume that the story was invented by Menippus [or rather, Hermippus].”

295 In another parallel with Diogenes, Aesop, a slave on the island of Samos, eventually recovered his freedom through his wit and interpretative skills, by putting into practice his verbal and cognitive abilities (cf. Kurke 2011).

296 E.g. Stobaeus (SSR V B 377): “Asked what the earth considers very grievous (βαρύτερον), Diogenes said an uneducated man (ἀπαίδευτον)”. For other views on education, cf. SSR V B 377-393. Since in my mind Aristotle did not place Diogenes as one of Antisthenes’ pupils, it would be hard to believe that he would count Diogenes among the uneducated (οἱ οὐδὲν ἄπαιδευτοι) he mentions alongside the Antisthenians (Met. 1043b24).
and leisure time (διατρίβον, σχολή) he displays, in Corinth for example. Such fabrications that entered the Chreia tradition were, it seems obvious by now, encouraged by the early Cynics themselves, and these fictions might have begun as early as the 4th century BCE.

(4) We have already discussed the nickname “Dog” and concluded that Diogenes was the first to deliberately make use of the ἐπίκλησις. According to Metrocles, Diogenes already described himself as a dog (DL 6.33, 6.60-61), and the surname was taken over by the entire Cynic tradition which made extensive use of it as a metaphor for Cynic behavior. Indeed, next to defacing the currency, the symbolic image of the dog carried much weight in Diogenes’ mission. As Navia puts it, Diogenes is a dog that “everybody praises, but that everybody avoids, the implication being that, from a distance and vicariously, the style of life of a Cynic is admired and respected by many, but that few are those who have the courage and clarity of mind necessary to imitate or emulate it.” The anecdotes in DL that show the canine imagery are quite numerous. By the 320s it seems certain that Diogenes was already known as a κύων (on the evidence of Aristotle), at a time when the Chreia tradition began to be sustained as an independent

297 Of the many examples, let us quote only Plutarch (Alex. 14 = SSR V B 32): Alexander the Great wished to meet Diogenes who “was living (διατρίβοντα) in Corinth” and whom he found “enjoying his time” (σχολήν ἔγεν, with a possible ambiguity on the word σχολή, leisure time, and discussing, lecturing) in the Craneion.

298 The slave situation further contrasts the Cynic view on Nature if we compare it with Aristotle’s definition of what made slaves naturally predisposed to their social position: ‘a human being who by nature belongs not to himself, but to another person is a slave by nature, and a human belongs to another who is a piece of property as well as a human, and a piece of property is a tool which is used to assist some activity which has a separate existence from its owner” (Arist. Pol 1254a14–18). This is quite opposite to Diogenes’ claim to freedom, self-sufficiency, and even παρρησία as fundamental human constituents.

299 Navia 1998.45.

300 SSR V B 143-151; most of which are found in DL (6.33, 40, 45, 55, 60-61, metaphor in 6.46) and Stobaeus (2.8.21, 3.13.44). The tradition shows Plato referring to the nickname (6.40), children warning of his biting (6.45), people teasing him (6.55: what kind of hound was Diogenes?), and the philosopher himself behaving like a dog (6.46: urinating).
literary sub-genre, perhaps initiated by Metrocles or even Theophrastus himself. Quite clearly the formulation of Cynic principles fed into, and nourished the traditional nickname with all its symbolism, and the animalistic nickname surely befits the philosophical project in many respects.

Diogenes’ stay in Athens provided him with the means to uphold his way of life, his κυνισμός. Athens was a natural choice for his philosophical staging because it was still the major cultural center of its day. In the realm of ideas, the comedic stage and Diogenes’ project have a lot in common, not merely on the comical aspect of (the collection of) Diogenes’ sayings, apophtegms, maxims, and puns. As Mansfeld wrote, in reviewing Goulet-Cazé’s L’ascèse cynique: “[Diogenes] was an actor, constantly needing a public.” This basic need for the social sphere is certainly crucial to Diogenes’ project: without a public or an audience, the Cynic’s pragmatic lifestyle is doomed to remain but a theoretical and unachieved goal.

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301 Branham 1996.86n.17: “The practice of collecting anecdotes about philosophers can be traced back to Metrocles, a “teacher” of Menippus, or Theophrastus; while this practice was not confined to Cynics, it was one at which they excelled and that served admirably to propagate their philosophy in a culture that remained predominantly oral. The anecdotes lend themselves to the process of retelling and elaboration characteristic of an oral tradition.” Previously there existed anthologies (as collections of excerpted material) that were already supplied by sophists and teachers of the later 5th century (see Pl. Laws 810e-811a). Hippias DK B6: “of these texts I have assembled the greatest and of a similar kind and I have made this new and varied collection (λόγον)”.

3.3 Corinth: Gymnasium and Death

(5) Plutarch tells us that Diogenes spent time in Corinth (διατρίβοντα)\textsuperscript{303} in the 330s. He was likely there in 336, the year of his traditional encounter with Alexander the Great (DL 6.38 = SSR V B 33) who had become the new ἥγεμων of the League of Corinth before setting out on his Asiatic campaigns in 334. We do not know since when or for how long Diogenes was in Corinth: the story of his sale as a slave and his being a παιδαγωγός there thus conveniently explain his absence from Athens, although his free time (διατριβή) in the Craneion makes it harder to conjugate with his supposed pedagogical tasks. In any case he stayed in Corinth at least long or often enough for the Corinthians to consider him part of their landscape too.\textsuperscript{304} Let us take as a witness the commemorative column (at the top of which stood a dog!) erected by the Corinthians as a μνήμα to his person after his death in the Craneion.\textsuperscript{305} The choice of Corinth is easily explained by Sayre who sees in Athens and Corinth two cities “liberal to aliens and vagrants” where the “Greeks of that period seem to have been generous to beggars.”\textsuperscript{306}

\textsuperscript{303} Plut. Alex. 14 (= SSR V B 32), with the double meaning of “lecturing” and “living” or “staying”. At that point in time (4th c.), the word did not yet refer to diatribe as “conventionally used to describe the oral performances of the Cynic street preachers” (Goulet-Cazé 1996.15).

\textsuperscript{304} Dio Chrys., Orat. 6.2 (= SSR V B 583): “He changed his dwelling (μεταλάτειν τὴν οἰκήσιν) according to the seasons of the year” spending his winters in Athens and his summers in Corinth. He could have easily split his time between both cities (Dio Chrys. Orat. 9.1 = SSR V B 586: Diogenes goes back ἐκ Κορίνθου Ἀθήναζε). Maximus of Tyre [2nd c. CE], Philos. 36.5 (= SSR V B 299) calls his moves between Athens and the Isthmus “seasonal migrations” (ὁμοῦ ταῖς ἡμέραις μετανιστάμενος).

\textsuperscript{305} Cf. Pausanias 2.2.4: “at the gate [of Corinth] is buried Diogenes of Sinope, whom the Greeks nickname the Dog”.

\textsuperscript{306} Sayre 1938.97-98. Drews 1976.25-26 makes the interesting case that, prior to the Milesian colonists’ take over of Sinope in their colonization movement of the 7th c., earlier Greek settlers at Sinope were Corinthians who had come over to Sinope from an “initial penetration of the Black Sea” in the 8th century. As far as Sinopean digs go, research is still at a preliminary stage (cf. Doonan 2004), but future research will hopefully provide some answers to such questions. But such a ‘pre-colonial’ link might go further in making a reasonable justification for Diogenes’s presence in Corinth. Perhaps Diogenes felt some ancestral affiliation with Corinth and the ancient Bacchiads; he might also have wanted to visit the Old world of his ancestors.
A few anecdotes show him in Corinth during Philip II’s lifetime (presumably between 338 and 336, the year of his assassination), and the episodes with Alexander the Great also appear in pretty much the same authors as those with Philip. Obviously, the rise of Macedonian power in Greece caused great concerns for Athens and other cities: it therefore gave the opportunity for the tradition to engage the Cynic figurehead with the highest powers of his time. Since the Athenian defeat at Olynthus in 348 against Philip (Olynthus was razed to the ground and its population enslaved), Philip’s interference in the third Sacred War (which resulted in the destruction of Phocis), and finally his victory at Chaeronea (338), the Macedonian power firmly established itself in mainland Greece. The power was deeply felt by the Athenians and the careers of Demosthenes and Aeschines thrived on the Athenian political response to this rise. The creation of a League of Corinth (after Chaeronea) and its seat in the city firmly set the Macedonian foothold in all Greek affairs. In order to make Diogenes a contemporary of the Macedonian League of Corinth we need to make his sojourns in Corinth fall within the period between the 340s and his death (traditionally on the same day as Alexander) in the mid-320s. It is therefore quite reasonable that Diogenes could have spent as much

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307 Plutarch, Lucian Conscr. hist. 3, Epictetus, Chrysostomus, and Philostratus (= SSR V B 25, 27-30). In DL 6.43 Diogenes is brought to Philip (SSR V B 27), while some minor manuscripts add an anecdote to DL 6.69 (provided only by SSR V B 26) that places Diogenes (and his πίθος) in Corinth at the time of an announcement by Philip (ἀγγελλομένου). Even his slavery to Xeniades is put during the Macedonain supremacy by DL 6.32, a reference possibly taken from Eubulides’ Sale of Diogenes. Obviously we cannot give any credence to Maximus of Tyre (Orat. 8.4 = SSR V B 584) who puts Diogenes’ move to Corinth in the aftermath of Antisthenes’ death: “When Antisthenes died, Diogenes moved to Corinth where he lived outdoors in the Cranean.” This puts his move to Corinth in 366, much too early, a date even prior to his exile.

308 His meeting with Alexander: Plutarch, Arrian (An. 7.2.1 = SSR V B 33), Dio Chrys., Epictetus, Julian, and the Romans Varro, Cicero, Juvenal, Valerius Maximus, and Apuleius (= SSR V B 31-49). Alexander appears in DL 6.32, 38, 44, 60, 63. An encounter between Diogenes and Dionysius II (Plut. Tim. 15 = B 54), the overthrown tyrant of Syracuse who took refuge in Corinth, set in 344/43 may be just as fictitious, yet here again the chronology allows for it (Dionysius may be the unnamed tyrant of DL 6.50): cf. Navia 1998.19.
time in Corinth as in Athens. Meanwhile, we may suspect that actual meetings with Alexander are fictitious, although they remain possible.

In Corinth Diogenes was regularly seen at the Craneion (DL 6.77 = SSR V B 97), a cypress grove located in front of the city. Archeological findings give credence to Pausanias’ testimony on this: the grove was in front, within the girdle wall, off the main road leading from the Kenchrean gate to the heart of the town. For Carpenter, it is possible that this is where Diogenes’ tomb actually stood, close to other μνήματα and the three large Byzantine tombs: the cemetery, discovered in 1928, was indeed adjacent to the Craneion inside the Kenchrean gate.

Diogenes died around 323 BCE at an advanced age (nearly ninety years old, DL 6.76 = SSR V B 90). The main anecdote says that he was found “asleep” in the Craneion by his acquaintances (γνώριμοι) and the tradition unsurprisingly disputes the causes (DL 6.76-77). According to a popular tradition he died on the same day as Alexander the Great in 323 BCE. Granted that the anecdote is probably too good to be

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309 Paus. 2.2.4: πρὸ δὲ τῆς πόλεως κυπαρίσσιον ἐστὶν ἄλσος ὀνομαζόμενον Κράνειον. The Craneion was a grove rather than a gymnasium (contra DL 6.77: τῷ Κρανειῳ... τῷ πρὸ τῆς Κορίνθου γυμνασίῳ), while the gymnasium was North of the Theater (Wiseman 1972.Fig. 1). Xen. Hell. 4.4.4 supports this: in 392 BCE, young men (νεώτεροι) remained quiet (ἡσυχίαν ἔσχον) in the Craneion, in an attempt to escape the massacre by Athenians and their allies of many older Corinthians (πρεσβύτεροι) who now desired peace with the Lacedaemonians. A gymnasium sounds like a bad place for young men to hide. Secondly, the very name Κράνειον conjures up the cornel tree (the κράνεια) or a derivation of the verb κραίνω, meaning “to accomplish” or “to bring to pass”. In this instance, the derivation of the word better suggests quietude and calmness than exercises and training-ground maneuvers. Cf. Maximus of Tyre, Philos. 36.5 (= SSR V B 299): “[Diogenes’] kingdom was the temples, the gymasia, and the groves”.

310 Stroud 1972.216; Carpenter 1929.345-346. DL 6.78 (= SSR V B 108) and Pausanias 2.2.4 (“at the gate is buried Diogenes of Sinope, whom the Greeks nickname the Dog”); cf. Strabo 8.6.22.

311 Cf. above n.244. Some representations of Diogenes in art are studied in Amelung 1927. At DL 6.79.9, Marcovich 1999 maintains the reading Διογένη of BPΦ. I follow Long 1964 (in SSR) in preferring Διογένη of F (idem at 5.18.5, 5.19.2, 6.20.5, 6.87.13, and 6.45.9: Καλλισθένη instead of Καλλισθένη).

312 DL 6.79 on the authority of Demetrius of Magnesia’s On Men of the Same Name, 1st c. BCE (see Mejer 1981 on this work) and Plut. Mor. 717c = Quaest. Conv. 8.1 (both in SSR V B 92).
true, without evidence to the contrary, it is reasonable to keep the year 323 for Diogenes’
death.\footnote{\textit{Also Navia 1998.8.} There is no need to seek a chronological correspondence between the 113th
Olympiad (\textit{γήρων} in 328/325) and the year of his death (323) to make the two coincide (he was \textit{already} an
old man in the 113th Olympiad). Therefore, the suggestion by Menagius (at SSR V B 92.3) to read the 114th
Olympiad instead (324/321 BCE) is unnecessary.}

The different causes evoked for his death fall into two main categories: it is either
connected with an episode that involves an octopus, or his death was caused by
asphyxiation, voluntary or not.\footnote{\textit{Discussed in Navia 1998.32-35.} The two main variants that involve an octopus or Diogenes’
asphyxiation all ignore Eubulides’ account (necessarily in his \textit{Sale of Diogenes}) that he ended his life in the
service of Xeniades and was buried by Xeniades’ two sons. Other causes include fever (Saint Jerome \textit{Adv. Jovin).
2.14; Epict. Disc. 3.22.58). Self-killing in Antiquity is attributed to many philosophers (Pythagoras,
Anaxagoras, Empedocles, Diogenes, Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno), \textit{cf.} Van Hooft 1990 (188: the Cynic death;
otherwise, van Hooft is disappointingly quiet on Diogenes).}

Stories involving an octopus (SSR V B 93-94, including two accounts in Plutarch) show Diogenes succumbing to a colic fit after eating
it ‘raw’,\footnote{\textit{Also Athen. Deipn. 8.341\textit{e} (= SSR V B 94). DL 6.34 tells us that “he tried to eat his meat raw
but that he couldn’t digest it.” It is no surprise that later evidence around his death imagined different
causes involving eating, especially overeating (Censorinus) and gluttony (Greg. Naz. and Tatian): \textit{cf.} Navia
1998.33.} whereby the rawness of the animal becomes a recurrent theme in the
explanations. While our earliest evidence for this story is the 3rd-c. poet Sotades
mentioned by Stobaeus (SSR V B 94), the story seems already well-known in Sotades: it
was probably invented earlier within the Cynic tradition, yet it holds little historical
value.\footnote{\textit{Sotades is discussing the deaths of philosophers and parallels Socrates drinking the hemlock
with Diogenes eating the octopus.}} Clearly such stories emphasize the eating habits of animals: we are meant to
think of a dog, which is unbound by the cooking norms of civilized society. This is
evidently stated in the variant story that involves again the octopus but in which Diogenes
now ends up being bitten by dogs while dividing up the octopus. In this case his death
results from the severe wounds that were caused by the dog’s bites (DL 6.77).\footnote{\textit{In a related story, Heraclitus traditionally died eaten by dogs, or as the Greek puts so much
better: “unrecognizable due to his transformation \textit{[i.e., covered in baked cow dung]}, he became \textit{dogfood}’
(DL 9.4.12: \textit{διὰ τὴν μεταβολὴν ἀγνοηθέντα κυνόβρωτον γενέσθαι}).}}
the legendary aspects of the stories, the eating of raw food serves to underline the “natural” ways of nurturing and feeding oneself, especially as it applies to the theriomorphic symbol of the dog.

The main and more plausible account of Diogenes’ death revolves around the discovery by some of his acquaintances of the philosopher inanimate in the Craneion. Quickly the tradition took over yet again and it was interpreted as a deliberate act of self-asphyxiation by holding his breath (τοῦ πνεύματος συγκράτησις). This account can be traced back at least to Cercidas of Megalopolis (3rd c. BCE) in his Meliambs (DL 6.76-77) and reappears in Antisthenes’ Successions of Philosophers. This is surely an extraordinary feat that is as fanciful as impossible: almost similar stories are found concerning Metrocles the Cynic (DL 6.95) and Zeno the Stoic (DL 7.28) who both choked themselves to death (ἀποπνίγειν). Therefore, even the story of Diogenes’ death is in agreement with the diadochal myth that places the Stoics as the legitimate successors of Cynicism, even through the initiators’ deaths. In any case, the more plausible cause of death may be that Diogenes was simply sleeping in the cool air of the Craneion before his friends found him the next day, covered in his cloak. The legend then elevated this banal end to fit the man’s character: partly anecdotal, partly comical, and wholly unconventional. Like a monstrous dog, the legend of his death also had to be fed.

The tradition thus invented causes, and borrowed existing precedents, that were all more comical than a (rather bland, yet more probable) natural cause, such as “positional asphyxiation”. Of course no epiphany, no divine intervention, no afterlife could be attached to Diogenes’ name, and few other conventionalities would have suited better his character than voluntary asphyxiation but it is most certain that Diogenes did

not die from holding his breath. The actual cause remains unknown but we probably need to discard any tragic or accidental death. The exaggeration of a natural cause into a deliberate and cynical act of self-suffocation is precisely what the Cynic tradition feeds on to (re)create Diogenes’ life, his overall personality, and his specific character.
PART II – CYNIC CREATION
Chapter 4. Cynic Ideas

The emergence of the κυνικὸς τρόπος with Diogenes does not mean that the movement is incongruous with, or marks a complete break from, previous philosophy. Cynicism was not spontaneously born out of a discontent or disregard for all philosophy: it has naturally evolved and adapted to the conditions of contemporary thought. The succession myth draws an intellectual lineage that makes the early Cynics part of an organic development that begins with Socrates and continues down to Stoicism and Epicureanism in a way not dissimilar to Socrates who, as a major milestone in the philosophical tradition, cannot mask the fundamental contributions brought about by the Presocratic thinkers and especially by the intellectual revolution that trailed the sophists in the second part of the 5th century. A century after these sophists Diogenes the Cynic might have been critical of discursive theorizing and he may have preferred a philosophy of actions, a pragmatic lifestyle, but he was not unaware of the previous sophistic momentum and the philosophical principles that lay at the basis of political, social, religious, and ethical criticism. Although by the 4th century those early sophists (foreigners and men from abroad for the most part) “were effectively replaced by more systematic, organised schools, often with more or less permanent buildings of their own,”¹ the challenging ideas that they had proposed had opened a jar that could not be sealed again. The sophists’ contribution had a lasting effect on subsequent philosophy at large.

¹ Kerferd 1981.42.
Just as the philosophical and ethical paradigm set by Socrates (who was often put in the same class as the sophists by 5th-c. standards, as famously portrayed in Aristophanes’ *Clouds*), early Cynicism too is tied to that elaborate discourse that grew in 5th-c. Athens and which was still readily available in the 4th century: on the one hand, through various school programs (whether philosophical or rhetorical), and on the other, through the publication of texts circulating freely in Athens. There is no need to emphasize here how much these “new teachers” of Athens had been fond of polemics, eristics, and other general problems, and how they fed into much controversy: as polemists they dealt with the theorizing of ideas, the framing of discursive principles, and a lucid use of grammar complete with rhetorical effects. But what distinguishes Socrates and Diogenes from, let us say, the early sophists and their heirs, is not only that they both adopted animalistic sobriquets – Socrates as a gadfly (Pl. *Ap.* 30e), Diogenes as a hunting dog or scout (DL 6.33, 43) – but especially that they directed many of their attacks at the neglect of practice (ἄσκησις) at the expense of “vacuous theorizing”. In this respect we can hardly imagine Socrates and early Cynicism without the lectures, speeches, polemics, and teachings of those early sophists whose ideas make up the cultural and intellectual milieu from which they worked out many of their own ideas.

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2 Cf. Kennedy 1994.30-32, with a discussion of Pl. *Phdr.* 266d1-267d9. De Romilly 1992.18-23 offers reasons to explain why Athens was so specifically favorable to the intellectual movement in the 5th c.: the city had an immense power under its empire (political), was at the center of maritime trade (prosperous economy), held an “incomparable prestige” acquired at great costs during the Persian wars, and was a hospitable destination for foreigners from around the world (in Ar. *Birds* 37-38, Athens is πᾶσι κοινή, “open to all”). We should also take into account, as Kerferd does, the contribution of Pericles as an important patron who attracted many prominent figures from all scopes of intellectual and artistic crafts: his circle and acquaintances traditionally include Protagoras, Anaxagoras, Herodotus, Phidias, and Sophocles. For Kerferd 1981.15, the “need” for sophists was further created by the political and social conditions to advance careers and defend oneself in the courts of law: the importance of democracy in this is self-evident (cf. de Romilly 1992.24-26).

Generally speaking the rhetorical and philosophical literature of these teachers of virtue and the lively debates they gave rise to generally reflects the desire to expand and refine the categories of questions and investigations that they found in the archaic poets and early philosophers. In the 4th century the sophists’ ideas and innovations still remained fertile grounds upon which their legacy kept growing and enriching the Greek intellectual, philosophical, and pedagogical landscapes. Be that as it may, many people believed that those who called themselves “sophists” in the 4th c. did not really live up to their predecessors’ ideals: indeed, when we do read the bad press given to the sophists in the 4th century, it is significant that the earlier generation of sophists is rarely pointed at directly, nor even attacked: “Curiously enough... neither Plato nor Aristotle nor Isocrates nor Xenophon ever attacks those major Sophists... But all do criticize the ‘Sophists’ in general or the ‘Sophists of the day’.”¹⁴ Philosophers and writers of the 4th c. are not condemning the sophists of the 5th c., as they are clearly, consciously or not, indebted to their revolution. They might disagree on the specifics of their positions but the sophists themselves are never portrayed as undesirable figures nor ever treated as a breed of necessary evil.

In the 4th century the intellectual commitment to the early sophists endured and they were not forgotten: Plato and Diogenes still felt to one degree or another the shadow of Protagoras, Antiphon, Hippias, or Gorgias – as we all know the prominence given to them in the namesake Platonic dialogues (e.g. Prot., Gorg., Hip.). In Plato’s overarching defense of his teacher, the sophists may be victims to Socrates’ elenctic method and they

¹⁴ De Romilly 1992.27-28. In Meno 91c-92c Socrates almost offers a defense of the sophists’ teaching in his discussion with the hostile Anytus who, apparently, has never really met a sophist. In fact “Plato never represented his Socrates as treating the great, early Sophists with disdain” (de Romilly 1992.44).
may suffer specific disapproval, but their relevance to Athenian culture is just never denied or rejected. Next to the seriousness of the topics debated in the dialogues we usually see Plato’s Socrates poking fun at his fellow thinkers if not mocking them outright, and the serio-comic attitude so pervasive in Plato’s dialogues and detected as early as Gorgias,\(^5\) continues down through the Σωκρατικοὶ λόγοι: we should rather expect some frivolity as part of the sophistic “game” or a rhetorical tour de force that seems particularly central to the “expected” tone of many dialogues. Keeping in mind the polemics which Plato’s Socrates entertains with the sophists, it is significant that Plato still addresses similar issues that had shaped the sophistic debates in the last quarter of the 5\(^{th}\) c., so that the early sophists’ input was continuously of great interest in the philosophical circles and their influence was still directly felt by Plato and his many contemporaries.

In many ways Plato’s contribution in the realm of philosophy can be seen as directly grafted onto the sophists’ works. In fact the relationship is often so close that we can hardly consider Plato’s work without considering its precedents, as the former is set within a constellation of sophistic ideas and is rarely completely independent from earlier debates. In 3.37-38, for example, DL repeats the claim by Aristoexenus,\(^6\) a Peripatetic contemporary of Diogenes in the third quarter of the 4\(^{th}\) c., that Plato’s own Republic was

\(^5\) Gorgias, Hel. 21: “I have wanted to compose the λόγος as an encomium of Helen, but also as a little plaything for me (ἐμὸν δὲ παίγνιον).” His claim should not be seen as “undoing the seriousness of his preceding argument”; rather, Gorgias’ “posture of seriousness mixed with levity (σπουδογέλοιον) provides an appropriate conclusion to a wise man’s ἐπίδειξις...” [1]t may also be an apology for the rather earnest activity of producing a “publishable” text” (Ford 2002.185). As Cole 1991.78-79 had already stated, Gorgias’ text itself “being a compendium that packs as much model material together as possible, is “an educational toy” to be “played with”, i.e., “studied” (semantically analogous with σχολή)” (Ford 2002.185n.93). Other examples dealing with a playful tone include Pl. Phdr. 278b-d; Alcidamas, Soph. 35; Polycrates in Dem. Phal. On Style 120, Athenaeus, Deipn. 15, and even Sophocles is known for some playful remarks on the account of Ion of Chios (Athen. Deipn. 13.81 = 603e-604f; on this passage, see Ford 2002.190-192).

\(^6\) The claim was reported by Favorinus, centuries later (DL 3.57).
already “almost entirely” (πᾶσαν σχεδόν) found in Protagoras’ *Antilogies*. The idea of Plato borrowing, or better, reprising and adjusting what early sophists had started, is far from shocking but rather seems manifest and even trivial: was Plato’s *Republic* not itself the model for (or the target of) the different Πολιτεῖαι written by Diogenes, Zeno, and Chrysippus? Not to consider the possibility that Plato directly and consciously reworked ideas developed as early as Protagoras leads us to isolating Plato further from the very “philo-sophistic” heritage to which he belongs. I follow here Kerferd’s reasonable suggestion (1981.139): Plato’s fierce defenders reject allegations and “charges of plagiarism” brought against Plato by scholars (whom some would call “hostile critics” of Plato), yet they cannot ultimately simply sweep Aristoxenus’ claim under the carpet. Porphyry, for instance, still abounds in the same direction many centuries later: “very few books exist <now> from authors who preceded Plato; otherwise we might observe more “plagiarism” (κλόπας) by the philosopher [Plato]” (DK 80 B2). As literary experimentations, many “genres” of the 4th c. (e.g. Socratic dialogues, Constitutions, and later diatribes) still necessarily built on earlier examples.

The whole idea of engaging in polemical thought is also in the spirit of Protagoras’ *Antilogies*, those rhetorical exercises in the style of the Δισσοὶ λόγοι that presented two sides of an argument. Many topics of such argumentative ἄγωνες were

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7 Cf. Decleva Caizzi 1999.317. Yet presumably, it could have been found in Protagoras’ own *Republic*, the title of which is only found (unfortunately) in DL.’s catalogue of Protagoras’ works (DL 9.55). Contra Decleva Caizzi, for whom the claim is “obviously polemical and of dubious historical value”, and despite the singularity of the claim, we need not be overly suspicious about Aristoxenus’ claim.


9 Plato showed a great interest in Protagoras’ ideas which figure prominently in his *Prot.* and (less so) in *Tht.* 166a-168c.

10 From an anonymous author, its origin and date are unknown. It may have been written by one of Protagoras’ Dorian disciples (de Romilly 1992.47).
certainly disseminated or, at least, they reflected the main seeds of philosophical debates and contentions. Unfortunately we just do not know to which extent and in what respect such themes would have been directly borrowed by Plato from Protagoras’s work generally, but borrowings should be expected, if partly on account that Plato “is more respectful to Protagoras than to other sophists”.11

4.1 Νόμος/Φύσις: the Sophistic Input

When Protagoras proposed his human relativism encapsulated by the aphoristic formula “Man is the Measure of all things” (DK 80 B1: πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος),12 sensible perception and practical experience were given as expressing an actual truth about the world around us. Protagoras’ anthropocentric conception of reality13 sparked the principal sophistic controversy, that is, the basic dichotomy between νόμος and φύσις.14 Diogenes’ Cynicism is definitely wholly dependent on this sophistic re-evaluation of the standards by which human beings live qua society, i.e. within a community organised into a political entity where beings act individually cum aliis. The

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12 On the evidence of Sextus Empiricus and Plato (Tht. 151e-152a, 161c). The full opening words of his treatise continue “…of the things that are that they are, and of the things that are not that they are not”. On Protagorean “relativism”, see Kerferd 1981.83-93. Farrar 1988 (ch. 4) offers an interesting reading of Protagoras’ views.
13 Of course Plato interpreted Protagoras’ ἄνθρωπος in its egocentric meaning (the individual man) rather than understanding it from an anthropocentric perspective (the universal, generic man). Tht. 152a, Cra. 385e-386a. The unique experience of each individual still makes part of modern psychological and cognitive theories of personality, as for instance, in the psychologist George Kelly’s theory of “personal construct system” (an offshoot of social constructivist theory) which defines personality as the particular ways “in which each of us lives in a unique world”: see generally Fransella (ed.) 2003, from which Bannister 2003.33: “Our worlds are different, not simply because we have experienced or are experiencing different events but because we interpret differently the events we do experience. What one person thinks is important another thinks is trivial; what one feels is exciting another feels is dull; ugly to one is beautiful to another. This central idea offers its own explanation for the mysterious but everyday fact that people respond to the same situation in very different ways”.
νόμος/φύσις debate polarizes two conceptions of human life, the pairing of which seeps through many philosophical discussions over the course of the 5th and 4th centuries. The antithesis is one of the core, far-reaching, and lasting issues of the sophistics debate and its main concern is to contrast the inherent characteristics of, on the one side, elements that are beyond human intervention (those of φύσις) and, on the other, elements that are rather human conventions (those of νόμος): the modern polarity can be translated variously according to which aspect of the pairing one wishes to investigate: “the inherent v. the acquired, or nature v. custom, or natural v. written law, or even self-interest v. civil justice”, all translate to some degree the main opposition.

Set in motion by the relativism championed by Protagoras’s man-measure theory the νόμος/φύσις issue was debated from both sides: for example, contrary to Protagoras, Antiphon’s work On Truth “seems to reflect the view that νόμος, in the form of morality imposed by law or convention, is an infringement of nature and Hippias apparently thought that φύσις could destroy the barriers between men which νόμος created.” Indeed we find echoes of the dichotomy in discussions surrounding an array of notions,

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15 An early sign of human relativism is found in Xenophanes’ view (DK 15-16) on the gods’ anthropomorphism. On the universality of human experience we may cite Heraclitus (DK 2): even though the Άλογος is common to all (ζυων or κοινόν), “the many live as if they had a private (ιδιάν) understanding of it.” A tragic example of the relative nature of taboos is found in Ar. Frogs 1475 (“what is disgraceful, if it does not seem so to the spectators”) where “spectators” substitutes “those who make use of it” in Eur. Aeolus fr. 19 TGF. 

16 Kennedy 1985.475-476: in the epistemological sense, the contrast is “between the real and the apparent, or being and seeming, or knowing and believing, or proving and persuading”. Cf. Hecuba, in Eur. Hec. 800-805, produced in 425/24 BCE: “For it is by νόμος that we believe in the gods and live our lives, defining injustice and justice. And if νόμος shall be corrupted in your hands [Agamemnon]... then nothing equivalent exists among men.” (cf. Farrar 1988.99-101, Nussbaum 2001.397-421). As far as the Cynics are concerned, the oppositions are manifold (Navia 2001.ix): “wealth with poverty, ambition with resignation, pride with self-abasement, pleasure with suffering, luxury with simplicity, patriotism with cosmopolitanism, religious beliefs with skepticism, social dependency with self-sufficiency, and more with less”.

17 Kennedy 1985.476.
and the contrast was exploited through different lenses: epistemology and justice (Protagoras), law and morality (Hippias, Antiphon) and religion (ps.-Critias), belief and superstition (Anaxagoras), and even language itself (e.g. Prodicus, as portrayed in Plato’s *Cratylus*). For sure, the intellectual revolution brought upon by the sophists and the proper conditions for them in Athens provided new paths of investigation, unconventional to the common takes of previous thinkers, especially those of the poets.

As a later progeny of the sophistic movement early Cynicism is a prime example of an unprecedented radicalism over issues of the sophistic kind, and Diogenes chose his side in the debate, “allowing convention no such authority as he allowed to natural right” (DL 6.71, trans. Hicks 2000). In Diogenes’ opinion – as well as in others’ – νόμοι are a strictly-human business, an anthropocentric care, that needs to be understood as such and that requires us to re-evaluate the foundations of their applicability within the context of a political and civic coming-together (κοινωνία). Happiness is not found in the collectivity, many philosophers claim, but it rather belongs to the individuals to seek the conditions of a happy life, even if it means to uproot those individuals from their political community. Indeed Diogenes’ conception of happiness “led him to challenge the most fundamental ideas and taboos of Greek civilization and to valorize nature as a greater

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18 For a discussion of Protagoras’ justice in Pl. *Prot.* and *Tht.*, see Decleva Caizzi 1999.318-322. She concludes: “first, for Protagoras the community’s decision - or what the community holds valid - coincides with what is just, and injustice therefore is violating the community’s νόμοι. Second, the content of the individual’s perception and thought is generated by the peculiar connection between himself and things, and he is the measure of things because no one else can replace his perception and experience of reality” (320).

19 Hippias: Kerferd 1981.46-49, 148; see also Lycophron the sophist (in Arist. *Pol.* 1280b10: “law is only a convention -συνθήκη-, a surety to another of justice”); Antiphon: Kerferd 1981.49-51, 158 and Kennedy 1985.475: “Fragments of a treatise *On truth* are preserved on papyrus and attributed to an Antiphon who may be identified with the orator and oligarchic statesman, though the work asserts definitively the equality of all men”; see also Thrasymachus “as the spokesman for the extreme view that might makes right” (Kennedy 1985.474); ps.-Critias: Kerferd 1981.52-53, 141.
source of moral insight than custom or the existing philosophical schools.”

To summarize the major ideas behind the Cynic project, Goulet-Cazé boils down these Cynic ideas to the following: 1) Nature provides an ethical norm observable in animals and inferable by cross-cultural comparisons; 2) since society is at odds with nature, its most fundamental values (e.g., in religion, politics, ethics, etc.) are not only false but counterproductive; 3) human beings can realize their nature and, hence, their happiness only by engaging in a rigorous discipline (\(\alpha\sigma\kappa\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma\)) of corporeal training and exemplary acts meant to prepare them for the actual conditions of human life; 4) the goal of Cynic “discipline” (\(\alpha\sigma\kappa\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma\)) is to promote the central attributes of a happy life, freedom and self-sufficiency (\(\alpha\upsilon\tau\alpha\rho\kappa\varepsilon\iota\alpha\)); 5) while Cynic freedom is “negative” in Isaiah Berlin’s sense (“freedom from” rather than “freedom to”) it is also active, as expressed in the metaphor of “defacing” tradition (by means of parody or satire) and in provocative acts of free speech meant to subvert existing authorities (as in the anecdotes involving Plato, Alexander the great, etc.). Since the moral ideal leading to happiness was certainly not what Diogenes saw around him, early Cynicism thus pushed its disciples out of the \(\pi\omicron\alpha\lambda\varsigma\) and sought to attain its goal (\(\epsilon\omicron\delta\delta\alpha\mu\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\alpha\)) outside the rule of normative mores.

Emblematic examples of such individualism are found in Diogenes’ pupil Crates of Thebes: his utopian city Pera “in the midst of wine-dark mist” (DL 6.85), his declaration that he learned from philosophy “to care for no one” (DL 6.86), and his cynicism at the reconstruction of Thebes (6.93: “another Alexander will destroy it again”).

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21 Crates’ Cynic view on happiness and pleasure is straight-forward when he argues that “a happy life cannot be based on the preponderance of pleasures” (Long 1996b.44), thus opening the door to the Hedonists and the Epicureans’ focus on pleasure-seeking.
By refraining from engaging in the πόλις, precisely what Socrates had done (Ap. 31e-32a: ἰδιωτεύειν ἄλλα μὴ δημοσιεύειν), Diogenes interpreted all signs of vanity and wealth within the conventional ways of living as “unfit”. According to his κυνικὸς τρόπος man is an animal who needs to fulfill but his basic needs to reach happiness,22 and this goal is attained through a life lived in self-sufficiency (αὐτάρκεια), endurance (ἀπάθεια), and discipline (ἄσκησις, itself a derivative of πρᾶξις). In this respect Diogenes may be perceived as anti-Protagorean, and as such, a direct heir to other sophists: his man-qua-animal is subject to the universality of φύσις,23 not simply to an idiosyncratic experience that differs for everyone. Diogenes opposes the main principle “living according to φύσις” to the conventionality of laws and customs, these very coins whose surfaces need to be scratched and taken out of circulation by the Cynic.

Yet it is not that simple. Correctly enough if all sensible (human) perceptions are true (and somewhat arbitrary as Protagoras believed)24 then it is πρᾶξις that marks the real human experience for Diogenes. Action and deeds, both enacted (by him) and perceived (by others), thus solely define a man’s reality: in other words man’s ethics, that is, his (anti-)normative behavior, primarily define his sociological experience. What this means is that out of the political arena, from whose citizenry the Cynic is excluded since the concept itself regulates its very nomic (and “normative”) definition, we now reach the social implications of the Man-measure given by Protagoras who himself rather “stressed

22 See Long 1996a.34: contrary to Callicles in Pl. Grg. 491e-492c who states that natural justice “licenses” a man to indulge in his appetites without any restraint, Diogenes “limits” his needs and desires to what Nature prescribes (sustenance, shelter, sex, company).
23 In Xen. Mem. 4.4.19-20 Hippias agrees to two ‘unwritten’ customs (ἀγράφους νόμους) that apply universally, “all the same in every land” (ἐν πάσῃ... χώρᾳ κατὰ ταὐτά): worship of the gods and honour of parents; he rejects, for example, the universality of the prohibition on parent-child marriages. Those two unwritten laws resonate by contrast with Aristophanes’ Clouds which stage father and son at the Thinkery (Ar. Cl. 1410-1439).
24 The classical formulation in Pl. Tht. 152a: “as each thing appears to me, so it is for me, and as it appears to you, so it is for you” (trans. Cooper 1997).
the possibility of human moral and political progress and inclined toward giving greater weight to νόμος than to φύσις.”  

Favoring φύσις and scratching the νόμοι is not the only message emphasized by Diogenes since, on the whole, his Cynicism cannot simply be reduced to a radical movement spawning from the sophistic elaborations on the contrast Convention/Nature with a privileged endorsement of the latter. For all its promotion of φύσις at the expense of social νόμοι Diogenes’ defacement necessarily relies upon some human conventions, such as language and its effects, lest he become himself a mirror-image of Cratylus, unable to express himself due to the inability of words to grasp their signifiers and reduced to moving but his finger (Arist. Met. 4.5, 1010a10-15). Sure, Diogenes’ philosophy needs exemplary action (i.e. a πρᾶξις) in order to shape his persona as a paradigm, yet language is a prerequisite for communicating with the ‘inside’ world: one cannot reject all conventions for, then, misunderstanding would be the rule. Language is indeed one of the most powerful tools Diogenes uses to support his actions. In other words, acting alone is insufficient without the aid of a coherent discourse and, furthermore, that his rhetoric is imbued with comical effects (that are wholly inherent to his apprehension of the world around him and a great vehicle for his ideas) suggests that he followed in the footsteps of others too, at least within the comic tradition of serious discussions (serio-comic), mixed with a bit of the Socratic tone found throughout Plato’s dialogues.

26 For instance DL 6.72 (discussed below): it is impossible for society to exist without law (νόμος); for without a city no benefit can be derived from that which is civilized. But the city is civilized, and there is no advantage in law without a city; therefore law is something civilized” (trans. Hicks 2000). Moles 1996.118 interestingly notes that the principal divergence of opinion between Diogenes and Zeno the Stoic (former pupil of Crates) was Zeno’s attachment to νόμος. Yet Zeno’s νόμος greatly differs from Diogenes’: the former upholds the “law” or “reason” (νόμος) of nature (φύσις), whereas the latter emphasizes the polar (and sophistic) contrast between νόμος and φύσις.
Diogenes’ conception of the polar opposition further feeds off an idea expressed by Hippias over the natural bonds that bind men together: “Gentlemen, I regard all of you here present as kinsmen, intimates, and fellow citizens (συγγενεῖς τε καὶ οίκείους καὶ πολίτας ἀπαντας) by nature, not by convention (φύσει, οὐ νόμῳ). For like is akin to like by nature, but νόμος, which tyrannizes the human race, often constrains us contrary to nature (πολλὰ παρὰ τὴν φύσιν βιάζεται).”²⁷ As a tyrant of men νόμοι violate φύσις, that very nature which Diogenes sees as the ultimate principle in life to achieve happiness.

The idea also bears on the universal view of human nature expressed in the fragments of Antiphon (fr. 44A2-3): “by nature (φύσις) we are all born in all respects equally capable of being both barbarians and Greeks... For we all breathe the air through our mouth and our nostrils, and we laugh when our minds are happy or weep when we are pained, and we receive sounds with our hearing, and we see by the light with our sight, and we work with our hands and walk with our feet”.

As Gagarin tells us, the meaning of the word φύσις in fr. 44A always deals with the concrete “physiological qualities necessarily present “by nature” in all humans” and the universality of the word refers to “those features common to all mankind”.²⁹ This conception of φύσις became popular in the 4th century BCE. Although it was not the view intended in the fragments of Antiphon,³⁰ this expanded meaning of φύσις gave birth “to ideas of equality, and of cosmopolitanism and the unity of mankind. There were now people... ready to declare that distinctions based on race, noble birth, social status or

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²⁷ Pl. Prot. 337d-e, trans. Cooper 1997. Cf. Xen. Mem. 4.4.13: in a discussion with Hippias where Socrates claims that what is lawful (τὸ νόμου) is just (δίκαιον) and that both terms are synonymous (4.4.12), Hippias proposes his definition that νόμοι are “what the citizens have written up in agreement (συνθέμενοι) as to what is to be done and avoided (ἄ τε δεῖ ποιεῖν καὶ ὅν ἀπέχειθαι).”


³⁰ Cf. Pendrick 2002.351-356 for a critique of the “egalitarian-spirited argument” which older scholars had read into Antiphon’s passage.
wealth, and institutions such as slavery, had no basis in nature but were only by νόμος”.31 It is clear that Diogenes’ world and his conception of cosmopolitanism is indebted to such views on φύσις – just as it would remain significant for Stoicism –32 and the fragments of Antiphon remind us of the polemical nature of this sophistic debate which remained lively in the 4th century.

Like Protagoras, Antiphon also wrote a work On Truth (DK 87 44),33 the only surviving unmediated words of a sophist on the notion of justice, which addresses the sophistic opposition.34 In a section dealing with the notion of justice (δικαιοσύνη), fragment 44 B provides the starting point for a discussion of νόμος and φύσις: “Justice therefore is not violating (παραβαίνειν) the rules (νόμιμα) of the city in which one is

31 Guthrie 1971b.117-118.
32 Cf. Fisch 1937.66: “Now the Stoics did deny that there were “born barbarians” (φύσει βαρβαρικοί) in the ordinary sense, just as they denied that there were “born slaves”; these distinctions as commonly made were not “natural” but “conventional”.”
33 The publication of On Truth is debated but may be roughly dated to “the last three decades of the fifth century” or even the late 430s/early 420s if it is parodied in Aristophanes’ Clouds, dated to 423 BCE (cf. Pendrick 2002.38 and n.66-67). On Antiphon, see Nill 1985.52-74, Decleva Caizzi 1999.323-328; discussion of On Truth in Gagarin 2002.63-92 (full text and translation: pp.183-187; debate νόμως/φύσις: pp.65-73) and detailed commentary in Pendrick 2002.315-377. I follow here Gagarin’s fragment numbers (based on Bastianini & Decleva Caizzi 1989’s in Corpus dei Papiri Filosofici, e.g. DK 44A = 44B CPF) discussed in 63n.1, which take into account the more recent papyrus publications POxy 1364 (1915), POxy 1797 (1922), and POxy 3647 (1984). These recent finds have greatly challenged our knowledge of Antiphon whose views were previously known mainly from Stobaeus (5th c. CE).
34 In recent times, Antiphon the sophist has been identified with Antiphon of Rhamnus, the orator who taught rhetoric, authored oratorical exercises, supported the oligarchs, and was involved in the coup of 411 BCE (Nill 1985.103n.2). The controversy is persistent: Pendrick 2002.1-26 surveys the unitarian and separatist arguments; Gagarin (1997.5-6 and 2002.37-52) rejects the (old) separatist trend and demonstrates the unitarian view that the two Antiphons, “the orator” of Rhamnus and “the sophist”, are one and the same person (along with, among others, Morrison 1961, Avery 1982, cf. Pendrick 2002.2n.8 for others).
Assuming the unitarian position prevails, then the life of Antiphon spanned roughly 480-411 BCE: in Xen. Mem. 1.6, Antiphon and Socrates are contemporaries and the former comes to Socrates with the intention of drawing away (βουλόμενος... παρελέσθαι) the latter’s companions. Plato and Aristotle are of no help on Antiphon: Plato only mentions Antiphon “as a teacher of rhetoric, and Aristotle cites him only in connection with his views on the nature of matter and on squaring the circle” (Gagarin 2002.181.n.21; Nill 1985.52). Although it is an important issue in scholarship, the identification of both Antiphons is immaterial to our context here and bears little significance for our discussion: the point is that the fragments demonstrate that the (sophistic) ideas about νόμοι were already raised in the 5th century (Guthrie 1971b.110; they are also found in Euripides: cf. Eur. Ion 642, Bacc. 895-896, fr. 920 TGF).
An analysis of νόμος and νόμιμον in the fragments has shown that the use of both terms “includes not only written laws but also the entire aggregate of a community’s norms and rules” and that their use “serves to emphasize the antithetical relationship between these concepts”, namely νόμος and φύσις. The ensuing discussion of justice in fragment B reveals “a strong proponent of natural forces (φύσις) against the claims of human law and custom (νόμος)” by contrasting (yet not necessarily opposing!) the behaviors of individuals: “to follow the requirements of φύσις in the absence of witnesses, as Antiphon suggests in B1, may, but does not necessarily, mean violating νόμος”. Whereas violating the νόμοι in the absence of witnesses may escape punishment, violating φύσις is simply impossible, and if one tries, the harm suffered will be the same whether the act has been witnessed or not (fr. 44 B2). The position expressed in the fragment is clear: νόμοι are arbitrary restrictions “imposed” on φύσις and they are simply “agreed upon” by men (44 B1: ἐπιθέτα, ὀμολογηθέντα); they are, as it were, normative and social regulators that ultimately codify (by their contrast) the “requirements of nature” (44 B1: τὰ τῆς φύσεως), those “necessary” constraints. Indeed, νόμοι are basically made (νενομοθέτηται) to regulate what should or should not be seen, heard, said, done, and desired (44 B2-3).

35 Fr. 44 B1, trans. Gagarin 2002.67. Diogenes does not address justice in the apophthegms found in DL, and so, a deep analysis of Antiphon’s view is unnecessary for our purpose here.
36 Decleva Caizzi 1999.323-324. Also Pendrick 2002.319: “The expressions οἱ νόμοι, τὰ νόμιμα and τὰ τῶν νόμων – which are used interchangeably throughout F44(a) – must be taken in a broad sense, as referring to written laws as well as to customs, conventions, and unwritten norms of conduct.”
38 In addition to Pl. Prot. 337c-d (νόμος as a “tyrant of men”), Hippias’ view is also found in Xen. Mem. 4.4.13.4: νόμοι are “what the citizens have drawn up together (συνθέμενοι) as to what needs to be done or avoided”.
39 In DL 6.65, upon seeing a man behaving effeminately, Diogenes said: “Are you not ashamed that you wish for yourself things worse than nature (χείρονα τῆς φύσεως)? For she has made you a man, but you are forcing (βιάζειν) yourself to be a woman.” Diogenes is not opposing νόμος to φύσις here, but he definitely suggests that one should not transgress (βιάζεται) φύσις. The language of violence (βιάζειν) recalls Hippias’ tyranny of νόμος in Pl. Prot. 337d-e, which “forces” (βιάζεται) people to behave “against nature (παρὰ τὴν φύσιν).
As such, this view constitutes not a “radical attack” on νόμοι, but rather “an analysis that treats νόμοι as secondary to φύσις, though nonetheless capable of bringing advantages” whereby, in short, “νόμος imposes rules on matters that φύσις leaves unregulated.” 40 Here, not unlike in Protagoras, νόμος is basically a relative notion, 41 but relevant only insofar as the presence of witnesses is concerned, so that isolation from the community would dictate a life according to nature’s principles where customs would be of little concern (44 B1).

In the same spirit Diogenes felt the urge to pass judgment on his fellow contemporaries’ behavior and their “conventional” character: Diogenes’ attacks on the νόμοι have the ultimate goal of emphasizing a life according (κατὰ) to φύσις, 42 and he too, as with the view in Antiphon’s fragments, stresses the consensual nature of those established norms of behavior. Diogenes’ indebtedness may also be seen in his inappropriate or indecent behavior as he goes against the normative rules of public behavior: urinating (6.56), masturbating in public (6.46, 6.69), doing all the works of Demeter and Aphrodite (DL 6.69), and even eating in the agora (6.58). 43 These types of behavior would seemingly be deemed antinomian by his contemporaries but Diogenes could have defended them as being “natural”, i.e. as following the requirements of nature.

40 Respectively Gagarin 2002.73, 69. Cf. fr. 44 B4 (Gagarin 2002.67): “The advantages laid down by laws are bonds on nature (δεσμοί τῆς φύσεως), but those laid down by nature are free.”
41 Cf. fr.44 B2 (Gagarin 2002.184): “most things that are just according to law (κατὰ νόμον) are hostile to nature (πολεμίως τῇ φύσει).” Also, as Gagarin, I accept Funghi’s addition νόμους at the beginning of the sentence (44 A2), incomplete in the papyrus (cf. Gagarin 2002.71): “<The laws of nearby communities> we know and respect, but those of communities far away we neither know nor respect.”
42 The term φύσις in Antiphon relates specifically to “human” nature rather than to the “natural order of things” in the widest sense, as in the case of the Presocratic philosophers (Pendrick 2002.319; Nill 1985.59).
43 In 6.46, Diogenes is seen again urinating at a banquet, but on that occasion it is a response to him being mocked by individuals.
What is perhaps more striking in the case of Diogenes is that he is well aware that witnesses are found in the agora or in the public spaces in which he is frequently found. The happy life “according to nature” (κατὰ φύσιν) which Diogenes expounds is one that even goes beyond the requirements of nature as they are found in Antiphon: by making a living example of himself, Diogenes pushes the boundaries of proper or acceptable behavior in public, and by accomplishing nature’s ways within the nomic community, in front of all to see, he becomes the “expression” of the conventions he is trying to scratch. Overall, the antithesis between νόμος and φύσις in the fragments of Antiphon (44 B2) is also inherent to Diogenes’ mission when he claims to “oppose (ἀντιτιθέναι) courage to fortune, φύσις to νόμος, and λόγος to πάθος [reason to passion]” (DL 6.38).

Whether the views exposed in the fragments of Antiphon are his own or not – since we lack any context, they may be expressed for mere polemical purposes –, our present discussion shows that the polemic already existed in the 5th century and that, by the 4th century, such ideas were still dans l’air du temps:44 in this respect, Diogenes, too, is a true heir to the sophistic debate. But while Antiphon himself may have upheld an immoralist view (cf. Nill 1985), nowhere in the fragments does he condemn νόμος altogether: “the impositions of νόμος on φύσις are not in themselves harmful or evil... [H]e only criticizes specific instances of νόμος that are harmful”.45 And so, too, Diogenes’ attacks on νόμοι meant to merely scratch and deface the established

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44 Nature’s primacy is defended, for example, by Callicles in Pl. Gorg. (Guthrie 1971b.101-106). His position is thus summarized: “There is such a thing as natural justice, and it consists simply in this, that the strong man should live to the utmost of his powers and give free play to his desires. Might is right, and nature intends him to get all he wants. Existing human νόμοι are utterly unnatural, because they represent the attempt of the weak and worthless many to thwart the purpose of nature that the strong man should prevail” (Guthrie 1971.105-106).

45 Gagarin 2002.70.
currencies, yet the Cynic could not entirely remove these νόμοι from his philosophical thought and discard them all. By acting inappropriately, or “un-conventionally”, he highlighted his own message: conventions may be questioned, they can be transgressed, and ultimately, they may be adapted.

Yet, Diogenes’ attacks still recognize νόμοι precisely as the main constituents of his contemporary society. A.A. Long reminds us that Diogenes did not attack the morality of the νόμοι or their value altogether, as had done the sophists (e.g. justice, moderation, etc.), but mostly their “hypocrisy and inconsistency”. The νόμοι he criticized and countered with his shameless behavior were considered by him “as mere irrational prejudice and as inimical to the satisfaction of natural needs.” The νόμοι of Diogenes are therefore conceived as notions wholly human, debatable, consensual, and ultimately, simply arbitrary; the word νόμος itself and its cognates “are always prescriptive and normative and never merely descriptive –they give some kind of direction or command affecting the behaviour and activities of persons and things.”

The universal principle of φύσις, initiated by the sophists – albeit indebted themselves to the previous natural philosophers – and seemingly defended in Antiphon’ On Truth which clearly asserts the social equality of all men, was taken up again by Diogenes’ view on separating the citizen from his allegiance to a (restricted) political community. With his ties to a larger community, his Cosmopolis, Diogenes breaks the nomic bond that glues but a fraction of all individuals to their (relatively small) πόλεις.

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46 Although, contrary to Antiphon, Diogenes was not interested in human or divine justice: δικαιοσύνη is wholly absent from the χρεῖαι and ἀποφθέγματα. Diogenes’ views on religion (Xen. Mem. 4.4.19.6-7) suggest an agnostic position prefiguring Epicureanism and which is distant from Hippias’ view that laws were made by the gods.

47 Long 1996a.35.

48 Kerferd 1981.112.

49 Kennedy 1985.475; Gagarin 2002.10: “the Sophists were intellectually more egalitarian, and probably politically, too, than outspoken elitists like Plato, Xenophon, and perhaps also Socrates.”
Under the philosophical mission of defacing such nomic currency, Diogenes performed his philosophy to free his behavior from societal constructions by devaluing their significance in his search for happiness. His advocacy is found in a few propositions: happiness is living according to φύσις; it is available through training (ἀσκησις); its essence is self-mastery (equivalent to having a virtuous character); it follows the truly wise and free person, while wealth, fame, and political power are unnecessary and without any value.\(^{50}\) Scratching the currency implied precisely just that: to render worthless what was held in high esteem by his contemporaries and to “try to put bad money out of circulation”.\(^{51}\) The Cynic maintained a “radical critique of the Greek πόλις” even though he did not mean to abandon “all forms of social organization”.\(^{52}\) Despite Diogenes’ promotion of living “according to nature”, νόμοι remain for him the prerequisite of social organization (πόλις) and their benefits are inconceivable without the πόλις (DL 6.72).\(^{53}\) There is no contradiction or paradox here, but rather a fine delineation of the Cynic stance. Diogenes’ efforts always imply that even though humans are animals, their nature has a rational quality that “should be deployed to remove the impediments of irrational convention.”\(^{54}\) Simply put, Diogenes does not, and can not, reject convention in toto.

As seen with Antiphon, νόμοι are established consensually, rules are determined conventionally, and we must assess them for what they truly are: mere arbitrary restraints, prescriptive and normative behaviors, created and agreed upon by individuals

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\(^{50}\) Long 1996a.29-30. In DL 6.72, Diogenes ridicules good birth, glory, and such distinctions, as being “ornaments of vice” (προκοσμήματα κακίας).


\(^{52}\) Long 1996a.40.

\(^{53}\) Moles 1996.107 follows Schofield (1991.134) in believing that the passage should not be taken at face value, contra Höistad 1948 who accepts the authenticity of this syllogism.

\(^{54}\) Long 1996a.39.
to harmonize their common political entity. Diogenes’ position was not to negate this nomic reality but rather to positively push for its opposite by recognizing a universal human φύσις. How can a set of conventions established by groups of individuals guarantee one’s freedom, happiness, and self-sufficiency without obliterating one’s true nature? By living a life “according to φύσις”; by following the intuitive principles that drive animals to sustain their lives; by adopting a frugal lifestyle devoid of the constraints of political struggle, social inequities, and normative behavior. Diogenes’ predecessor Antisthenes had himself built on such views by claiming that “the wise man will be guided in his public acts not by the established laws (οὐ κατὰ τοὺς κειμένους νόμους πολιτεύεσθαι) but by the law of virtue”, virtue which was for the Athenian “an affair of deeds (ἔργων) and does not need a store of words or learning (μήτε λόγων πλείστων... μήτε μαθημάτων)” (DL 6.11, trans. Hicks 2000). Once more Antisthenes’ view clearly anticipates Cynic τρόπος and πρᾶξις.

Beyond the philosophical canvas, the dichotomy νόμος/φύσις crept into most areas of 5th-c. literary production: although it is sometimes summoned in a subtle way by the poets, we nonetheless find interesting resonances in Aristophanes and the tragedians who do not fall short of this awareness. Writers and thinkers of all scopes viewed the city-state as an anthropocentric creation that collates political, judicial, and religious beliefs born out of human thought, meanwhile, armed with the discourse (or discursive

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principles) of the sophists, they acquired much ammunition to attack “heresies” to what they considered the “natural” order of the world beset by guiding principles that lay beyond mortal arbitration. In their detractors, who relied on legal actions under charges of impiety and corruption (esp. Protagoras and Socrates), lay the desire to maintain a status quo which benefitted the old ruling classes (the oligarchic groups of Archaic Athens) who could try to undermine those “dangerous” and revolutionary thinkers.

Just as all disciplines and literary genres in the 5th c. were influenced in some way by the arrival of the sophists, so too ethnography and historiography were influenced by their ideas: Hecataeus of Miletus’ *Journey around the World* and especially Herodotus’ *Historia*, a narrative of various peoples’ νόμοι, point at formulations expounded by the sophistic debate. The description of various cultures and the exposition of cultural differences between Greeks and barbarians sort of fed the debate by stressing the interplay between νόμος and φύσις. Such works bear witness that both notions constitute valid criteria for all kinds of cultural analyses.

To address but one obvious example of the importance of the sophists in literature let us recall Thucydides. As a true heir to the sophists, his account of the Peloponnesian war is inhabited by many of their ideas. His methodology reminds us that History happens κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, “given human nature”, which constitutes a universal constant in his narrative (Thuc. 1.22.4). Thucydides’ indebtedness to the sophists does not stop at his efforts at rhetorical effects or his interest in the scientific work of medical writers. The sophists’ *Zeitgeist* inspires his entire account: his work is a careful investigation and a well-structured, detailed annalistic account even if he distances himself from the sophistic penchant for the relativity of values and for epideictic lectures.
altogether. In fact, contrary to most sophists, Thucydides hardly falls into their “school” and usual polemics. His rare attacks at 1.21-22 are mainly directed at the poets and logographers (among which Herodotus, although unnamed, must be included) and the simple charm granted to their “aural” audience (τὸ προσαγωγότερον τῇ ἀκροάσει; τέρψις).\(^{56}\)

A prime example of the “nomic” debate in Thucydides’ episode of the plague (2.47-55) reinforces the significance of φύσις in the face of social chaos: “the demands and impulses of individual nature surfaced, and thus they exposed the purely conventionalist character of the social norms on which the Athenians, in Pericles’ words, prided themselves.”\(^{57}\) In fact the plague of Athens is probably the kind of story (well known from Thucydides’ analysis of it) that significantly influenced the debate over the instability of individual destiny: as we know from Herodotus and Thucydides, as with individuals, so too with cities and nations. Since no one at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war was spared some loss during the plague (most Athenians knew someone or suffered themselves in the catastrophe, e.g. Pericles, Socrates, and Thucydides himself), the significance of the episode probably marked considerably the Athenian imagination. In my view the consequences of the event provided a strong impulse to, and good grounds for, the discussion of φύσις and of its correlated νόμοι.

\(^{56}\) Thomas 2006 sees the sophistic movement as the major influence on Thucydides, of which influence the exact nature is “harder to define”; in any case sophistic techniques (balance, rhyme), rhetorical argumentation, and antithetical pairings (λόγος/ἔργον, νόμος/φύσις) are witnessed throughout his “experiments with language and style in the period” (88-90). The rest of Thomas’ contribution focuses on the influence of the medical writers on Thucydides and his direct knowledge of Hippocratic medicine.

\(^{57}\) Decleva Caizzi 1999.322. The episode has similarities with the civil war at Corecyra (3.82-83), on which see Connor 1984.99-100. Other episodes show sophistic angles and rhetorical labour, e.g. the episode of the Melian dialogue (5.87-111) with the debate Might vs Right, and Diodotus’ speech in the debate over the fate of Mytilene (3.42-48, 45) about how humans violate laws by nature.
At all events when we read early Cynicism onto the episode of the plague, Diogenes’ position on many issues seems to echo many elements of Thucydides’ account. The plague was so virulent, Thucydides tells us, that no human science or art (ἀνθρωπεία τέχνη οὐδεμία) and no religious pleas (prayers and consultations) were of any help to those seeking answers, and finally everybody basically gave up on such things, “overcome by the ill” (2.47: ὑπὸ τοῦ κακοῦ νικώμενοι). In fact the disease was so violent that a λόγος failed to express it (2.50: κρεῖσσον λόγου τὸ εἴδος τῆς νόσου) and the sufferings that fell upon the people were harsher than what “human nature” typically witnesses (2.50: Thucydides’ anthropoeic view here, κατὰ τὴν ἄνθρωπαιαν φύσιν, recalls his use of ἄνθρωπαν in 1.22). His description of the plague next focuses on identifying the symptoms of the disease (2.49-50) leaving it to others to explain the causes (2.48), and ultimately the historiographer moves to the ensuing state of lawlessness (ἀνομία) in the πόλις, namely, “the breakdown of the customs and restraints of society, its νόμοι.”,58 characterized in the text by the boldness (τόλμη), the instant gratification (ταχείς τὰς ἐπαυρέσεις) and the agreeable (τὸ τερπνόν) sought by the unaffected in their dire pessimism (2.53). At a moment when “neither fear of the gods nor the law of men (νόμος)” held anyone back, society seemed on the brink of nomic annihilation, at a loss with the corruption of its morality. Neither divine νόμοι (religious prescriptions) nor human νόμοι (legal sanctions) deterred society’s members from their individualistic nature.

The very language of the episode resonates in spirit with Diogenes’ Cynicism. His κυνικὸς τρόπος shares similarities with the affected community, as it increasingly

58 Connor 1984.64. E.g. Thuc. 2.52.3-4: “The catastrophe was indeed so violent that men, not knowing what would happen, turned towards contempt for the religious and sacred alike; all the νόμοι by which they used to bury their deads were disturbed...”
resembles a band of animals or a pack of wolves: Diogenes’ provocative nature—his shamelessness, the swift relief of “natural needs” (DL 6.69: καὶ τὰ Δήμητρος καὶ τὰ Ἀφροδίτης), the pleasure of frugality, the lack of concern for religious establishment, the constant attacks on νόμοι, and his continuous exhortation to revert to Nature’s way— all of these take another dimension when seen in relation with the episode of the plague, as it represents the expression, or the validation, of the incapacity of humans to be perennially or fully governed by arbitrary human customs and laws. As opposed to φύσις, νόμοι can fail the πόλις and falter in society.

I believe that a striking event such as the plague was powerful enough to remain in the collective memory. The plague represents a crucial example of human φύσις during one of the most significant events for relativists, and although Thucydides seems concerned with rhetoric and medicine in that section of his work, the early contribution of all the individual sophists did not fall on a barren field. Just as much as the political upheavals of the last years of the war were significant for Athenian democracy itself (leading to the loss of Athenian supremacy under Spartan intervention), certainly the plague was a sore reminder of human fortunes, or rather misfortunes, set onto a backdrop of consensual norms.60

59 Shamelessness may be coupled with some form of recklessness: among the only works that Sotion considers to be by Diogenes (6.80) he names Τολμαῖος (the Reckless). We can only guess as to what the topic was but the parallel with another title (Πτωχός, the Beggar) is suggestive of early Cynic themes.

60 Compare with Soph. Oed. R.: after the plague befalls Thebes, Oedipus ultimately realizes that he is the reason for it, that his pollution (μίασμα) is the real cause (αἴτιον) of the civic troubles on account of which “the House of Cadmus is emptied and Black Hades grows rich in groans and wails” (29-30). Oedipus’ sin is regicide, patricide and an incestuous marriage, and his pollution is unforgiving. Oedipus’ willingness to sacrifice everything, “his family, his pride, his rule, and even his happiness” (Ahrensdo 2009.12) for the sake of the city is a tragic reversal that struck Aristotle still over a century later (in his Poetics). Oedipus’ hybris “is partly an object lesson in uncitizenlike behaviour” (Hesk 2007.77). Perhaps the outcome would have been quite different in the individualistic attitude characteristic of the Hellenistic period but in mythical Thebes, the king “felt” for his community. As Ahrensdo notes, until the coming of the plague, Oedipus’ rule “marks an experiment in political enlightenment or rationalism, during which
4.2 Cosmopolis: Antinomianism and the Universal City

What has been said about the political view of early Cynicism needs some development. First, Antisthenes was not a full citizen since he was the illegitimate son (a νόθος) of an Athenian father and a Thracian mother: therefore, he was not eligible to citizenship. Second, his discipleship with Socrates and his later life anticipate many Cynic topoi: Antisthenes’ birth (a νόθος, an illegitimate son), his views on wealth (he sold most of his property), and his lack of citizenship and legal exclusion from political power (i.e. his incapacity to hold office), all posited Antisthenes as an outsider within his own πόλις. While some of these themes have been briefly addressed, let us now investigate Diogenes’ own position with regards to the political and social organization of the πόλις.

When asked where he was from, Diogenes is said to have simply replied “κοσμοπόλιτης”, “<I am> a citizen of the world” (DL 6.63), and to hold that “the only true political community (μόνην τε ὀρθὴν πολιτείαν) is that of the world (ἐν κόσμῳ)” (DL 139).

religion is separated from politics, and reason rather than revelation is the ruler’s sole star and compass” (Ahrensdorf 2009.17-18). If such rationalism and experiment do not refract somehow the intellectual milieu of 5th-c. Athens, then I wonder what does, and this, even though the sophists’ view radically differs from the plays’ conclusion that “human beings are playthings of chance or indifferent gods and hence that it is impossible for human beings to live nobly or to win the favor and protection of the gods” (Ahrensdorf 2009.42). True enough, Sophocles suggests that during Oedipus’ rule of about 15 years in Thebes he “never consulted oracles or soothsayers but ruled by his own wits alone” and his deference to the god’s help seems born out of resignation once his reason has proven unsuccessful at finding a remedy. Highly significant to the plot, the motive of Apollo’s oracles thus also implies a religious “distance” which Oedipus has to pay for: redemption for himself and his plague-ridden city comes through the expiation of his (legal and moral) crimes – it is payback time! While Antigone (produced in 442 BCE right after the drafting of νόμοι for Thurii in which Protagoras would have played an important role: DL 9.50) clashes the rights of οἶκος vs πόλις, Oed. R. (produced in the early 420s) is, I believe, an early reaction to sophist ideas surfacing in Athens, especially considering that Sophocles was likely influenced by the plague of ca.430 when he seemingly introduced it in Oedipus’ myth. Hesk 2007 argues, e.g., that the ‘socio-political dimension’ of 5th-c. tragedy “amounts to its engagement with the collective ideology and competitive ἥθος of the democratized classical πόλις” (72) light-years from the sophistic debates over individual nature.

61 See above, p.30n.57.
6.72). Those short statements have found a wide audience for discussions around the
Cynic concept of cosmopolitanism, but the widespread interpretation of it has usually
been in negative terms, namely, that the word κοσμοπολίτης underlines the refusal of any
specific political tie, by pushing the limits of the πόλις to the very boundaries of the
known world and thus obliterating all political frontiers.62 In this interpretation Diogenes
insists that his community is not Sinope or Athens but rather the vast κόσμος itself:
Diogenes was not “confined” to a single πόλις (to borrow Aristippus’ formulation) but
his shell was the wide universe.

As an innovative term,63 cosmopolitanism expressed a fresh view of political
belonging and the notion grew into an important concept as a moral ideal for Cynicism
especially in that the interpretation of the Cynic expression is characterized by its radical
attitude. This ideal, the source of which is most likely Diogenes’,64 was reprised by other
Cynics (e.g. Crates, in one of his tragedies)65 and was further taken over by the Stoics66

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62 Exemplarily, Brown 2006.549: “the cosmopolitan denies allegiance to his πόλις and affirms
instead his connection to the entire world.”
63 Diogenes originated the expression “κοσμοπολίτης” (to say that he “coined” it is irresistible!);
its earliest attestation is found in Philo of Alexandria where it appears relatively frequently (e.g. De Opif.
Mundi 3, 142-143). Dudley considered that the importance of the term should not be overrated (indeed it
appears only once in the χρεῖαι): “we should not read too much into this profession” since “[f]or us
‘cosmopolitanism’ as a conception carries an emotional colour which is the legacy of Alexander,
transmitted through the Roman Empire and the Catholic Church” (Dudley 1937.35). In fact, Dudley finds
no trace of Cynic (or even Aristotelian) influence in all of Alexander’s political thought: Plut. De Fort.
Alex. 329b identifies the Macedonian as enacting Zeno’s theory. On Alexander’s relationship to Cynicism
and Stoicism, Dudley generally follows Tarn; see also Fisch 1937 and Moles 1996.117-120 (n.75 for
bibliography).
64 Like Moles 1996.106 (and Moles 1995.132-137) I assume that the saying and thought are
authentic (contra Schofield 1991.141-145, 133, and 64, who rejects 6.72 as a later development based on
the apophthegms): Moles (106n.4, which also gives the testimonia that link cosmopolitanism to Diogenes)
finds the word play on προκοσμήματα and κόσμῳ to be “virtually decisive” evidence. Moles further
believes that analogous formulations attributed to Socrates (in Cic. TD 5.108; Musonius, p.42.1-2 Hense =
Stob. 3.40.9, Epict. 1.9.1, Plut. De Exil. 6.600f-601a) and other philosophers (e.g. Anaxagoras in DL 2.7,
Democritus DK F 247) lack plausibility.
65 DL 6.98 = Crates fr. 1 TGF: “Not a single tower nor a single roof does my country have, but in
every land there is for us one town (πόλεμμα), one house (δόμος) to dwell in (ἐνδιαιτᾶσθαι).” Cf. also
Adesp. fr. 392 TGF, even though it is limited to a Hellenic context: Ἀργείος ἢ Θηβαῖος· οὐ γὰρ ἐνθύμοισαι |
(mainly through Zeno, a pupil of that same Crates), but as with many other ideas the basics actually go back beyond Diogenes’ arrival in Athens. If Diogenes was the first to compress the concept in a single word, he did not invent the concept *e nihilo*: the foundations of his ideal find precedents, here again, in the sophistic debate over νόμος/φύσις and the notion had been well anticipated by previous thinkers.

One such important figure of the 5th and 4th centuries whose discussions come close to actual cosmopolitanism is Aristippus of Cyrene. Along with Antisthenes and Plato, Aristippus was a disciple of Socrates with whom Diogenes shares some elements.67 Aristippus the Socratic already held ideas which, once read in light of early Cynicism, explicitly correlate with Diogenes’ cosmopolitanism, even though such ideas did not constitute the core of Aristippus’ philosophy (nor do they need to).68

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66 Nowicka & Novisco 2009.2. On Moles’ interpretation (1996.119), the Cynic idea influenced Stoic cosmopolitanism “far more than current opinion recognizes”. Unfortunately Held 2005 does not even mention the Cynics, but summarizes well the Stoics’ position: they emphasized that “we inhabit two worlds – one which is local and assigned to us by birth and another which is “truly great and truly common” (Seneca) [...] Allegiance is owed, first and foremost, to the moral realm of all humanity, not to the contingent groupings of nation, ethnicity, and class” (Held 2005.10). Also Couture & Nielsen 2005.183: “We, as the Stoics thought, should give our first allegiance to the moral community made up of the humanity of all human beings [...] At the core of the cosmopolitan ideal is the idea that the life of everyone matters, and matters equally. This, in broad strokes, is the cosmopolitan moral ideal.” On Stoic and Epicurean cosmopolitanism, see also Brown 2006.552-557.

67 DL 2.65-85 for Aristippus’ life; Xen. *Mem. 3.8* (Aristippus in conversation with Socrates). He is the founder of the Cyrenaic school whose main goal was not happiness (eudaimonism) but rather immediate and sensual pleasure (hedonism). On Cynic pleasure and passions: Aune 2008. Long 1996a29-30 articulates Cynic eudaimonism in 7 premises: 1) happiness is living in agreement with nature; 2) happiness is something available to any person willing to engage in sufficient physical and mental training; 3) the essence of happiness is self-mastery, which manifests itself in the ability to live happily under even highly adverse circumstances; 4) self-mastery is equivalent to, or entails, a virtuous character; 5) the happy person, as so conceived, is the only person who is truly wise, kingly and free; 6) things conventionally deemed necessary for happiness such as wealth, fame and political power have no value in nature; 7) prime impediments to happiness are false judgements of value together with the emotional disturbances and weakness of character which arise from these false judgements.

68 The Cyrenaic view on νόμος comes also close to Cynic antinomianism (DL 2.93): the Cyrenaic philosophers hold that “nothing is just, nice, or base by nature (φύσει) but rather by convention and custom (νόμῳ καὶ ἔθει)”. In his understanding, Aristippus believed that Socrates considered happiness “the royal art” (Xen. *Mem. 2.1.17: τὴν βισπλικὴν τέχνην*).
According to tradition the self-proclaimed “sophist” (DL 2.65: οὗτος σοφιστεύσας; Arist. *Met.* 3.996a32) was apparently the first to get a payment from his pupils and the first to offer payment to Socrates who, unsurprisingly, kindly refused (DL 2.72). As with the sophists, quite a few of the evidence or anecdotes surrounding Aristippus deal with the question of education – an expected topic which is the starting point of Aristippus’ conversation with Socrates in Xen. *Mem.* 2.1.1. As a fellow disciple, Aristippus was an acquaintance of Antisthenes whom he mocked for his constant moroseness (*Suda, s.v.* Aristippus = SSR IV A 19: ἐπέσκωπε στρυφνότητα); he too was an enemy of Plato (DL 6.36: φιλέχρως; SSR IV A 15-18); and he was hated by Xenophon (DL 2.65: δυσμενῶν). Mocked by Plato and Timon for being quite the luxurious and effeminate dandy (DL 2.66-69), Aristippus certainly does not bear the mark of frugality that distinguishes Socrates and Diogenes but similarly to the latter, his tradition is mainly “chreiatic” and is characterized by quirky anecdotes that usually gear up towards witty remarks.

Parallel to the Antisthenean strand of tradition, Aristippus too is connected to Diogenes through some anecdotes, and his reply to Diogenes’ mockery (ἔσκωψε) in DL

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69 His conspicuous absence from Plato’s dialogues suggests the same kind of silent treatment that is given to Antisthenes. He is only mentioned once to note his absence at Socrates’ deathbed, because he was on the island of Aegina, just a few miles from Athens (*Phd.* 59c).

70 Still, Aristippus put a limit to pleasure, thus following the major trend of 4th-c. ethics (DL 2.71): “Just as those who eat most and who exercise are not in better health than those who eat just as much as is sufficient (tà δέοντα), so too those who know many things but not what is useful (χρήσιμα) are not excellent men (σπουδαῖοι)”.

71 He seemed to be fond of puns too: “I went to Socrates because I wanted instruction (παιδείας), and I have come to Dionysius because I want diversion (παιδιᾶς)” (DL 2.80).

72 As with Antisthenes, personal contacts between Diogenes and Aristippus are probably entirely fictional and are, actually, even less credible since it is assumed that Aristippus returned to Cyrene where he eventually died in the 350s, just around the time Diogenes made it to Athens (*contra* Moles 1996). I can accept a historical rivalry between the two men only insofar as Diogenes engaged with ideas that were hallmarks of Aristippus’ thoughts: “there is a certain relationship between their philosophical systems and... Diogenes certainly criticized Aristippus” (Moles 1996.109, n.19 on scholarly interest in their relationship). Diogenes would have been acquainted with Aristippus’ views through his writings or even his
2.68 is typical of his wit. When Diogenes, who was found washing vegetables at the
time, said to Aristippus: “If you had learnt to eat these vegetables, you would not have
been a slave in the palace of a tyrant. And you, replied Aristippus, if you had known
how to behave among men (ἀνθρώποις ὁμιλεῖν), would not have been washing
vegetables.” The Chreia tradition also portrays Diogenes calling Aristippus “a royal
dog” (2.66: βασιλικὸν κύνα), where the βασιλεύς referred to is Dionysius I, at whose
court in Syracuse Aristippus got to sojourn for a while. What is clear from this anecdote
is that Diogenes meant the nickname as an insult: the image is one of submission to the
tyrant. Diogenes the Dog, on the other hand, may have perceived himself as a political
dog or a social watchdog rather than a simple domesticated pet. But the context of the
anecdote is significant: Diogenes called him a dog because Aristippus “savored the
pleasure of what was at hand and did not toil at chasing the enjoyment of what was not
present”. As the anecdote shows the tradition thus portrays Diogenes as verbally
mocking Aristippus for precisely the hedonistic thought Aristippus is known to have
upheld: again, that is the precise nature of the Chreia tradition which is condemned to
write the historiography of philosophy with and through biographical anecdotes. Despite
some compatible ideals between the two, Cynicism greatly differs from Hedonism mainly
from the “tameness” with which Diogenes’ radicalism contrasts and which is susceptible

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73 The same anecdote opposing a Cynic and a Cyrenaic reappears one generation later with
Metrocles and Theodorus as the characters (DL 6.102).
74 By contrast, Diogenes is hailed as a “heavenly dog, born of Zeus” (οὐράνιος κύων) in Cercidas’
melemials (DL 6.77), perhaps a deliberate contrast between Aristippus (or hedonistic views) and Diogenes
(or later Cynic views). Diogenes’ own views on pleasure (DL 6.71) may engage those of the Hedonists,
Aristippus’ pupils.
75 DL 2.67: Strato, or Plato for others, said to Aristippus: “You are the only one to whom it is
given to wear both the full cloak and rags (χλανίδα φορεῖν καὶ ῥάκος).”
76 Cf. Simonides 584 PMG: “What mortal life or which tyranny is desirable without pleasure
(ἄδονάς ἀπτεροῖς? Without this, even the life of the gods is enviable [or worth emulation, ζηλωτός].”

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to attack its victims. Case in point, Diogenes’ doggishness is at the opposite of this “royal dog” who has a docile nature and for whom pleasures seem endless; the κυνικὸς τρόπος, whose anti-hedonistic view is epitomized in DL 6.71 – “even the contempt of pleasure itself (αὐτῆς τῆς ἡδονῆς ἤ καταφρόνησις) is most pleasurable (ἡδυτάτη)” – turns his practitioner into a snarling and biting dog, a wild creature angry at the world and mad at his contemporaries.

Regarding politics the relevant passages relating to Aristippus’ ideas are found in Xenophon and DL: first, Aristippus reasoned against patriotism and he used to say that one’s “country (πατρίδα) was the world (κόσμον)” (DL 2.98-99); and when pressed by Socrates during a conversation, he replied: “I do not confine (κατακλείω) myself to one political community (εἰς πολιτείαν), I am a foreigner everywhere (ξένος πανταχοῦ εἰμι)” (Xen. Mem. 2.1.13-14). It is a truism to say that most early sophists had been foreigners in Athens, just as Diogenes the Dog himself was, decades later. And so, orbiting around that group of individuals, Aristippus sees himself wearing the sophist’s clothes, a traveling teacher, an eternal outsider, who discourses (λόγοι) on pleasure and is consequently always distant from direct political power.

But let us compare the formulations of Aristippus and Diogenes’ sayings in order to see how they closely relate to one another. The message of Diogenes’ apophthegm “I am a citizen of the world” (DL 6.63: κοσμοπολίτης) seems simple enough: Diogenes understands political and civic “belonging” in a wider sense than in claiming to be “a Sinopean”, “an Athenian”, etc. But from the anecdote as given in DL, there is a small

77 I here analyze one side of Aristippus’ claim, since the word ξένος is a popular double-entendre: Aristippus paradoxically states that he is at once a “guest” everywhere but also that he is a “host” everywhere. While connecting this apophthegm with Aristippus’ stay in Syracuse, the former meaning “guest” works better although we must not exclude the other: the paradoxical nature of his wit would certainly have been intended by him.
problem with Diogenes’ reply. The full quote in 6.63 runs as follows: ἐρωτηθεὶς πόθεν ἐί, “κοσμοπολίτης,” ἔφη. To the question “where he is from” Diogenes answers “[I am] a citizen of the world”. His neologism is more interesting (or even perplexing) than it might seem at first glance: as if the name was created on the model of places such as Amphipolis and Megalopolis (or names such as metropolis, acropolis, and the like), κοσμοπολίτης simply and literally means “citizen of Cosmopolis”. In his reply Diogenes thus jointly circumvents the actual question “where are you from?”78 and claims citizenship to one political entity in “positive” terms.79 Strictly speaking we can say that Diogenes is asserting that he is the citizen of a state, rather than of the whole world, as Diogenes could have easily formulated his thought as Κόσμου πολίτης (“a citizen of the World”) instead.80 We are closer here to a utopian statement that reconfigures the geopolitical into something bigger: Cosmopolis is truly a κοσμο-πόλις, a Universe-City, it is a “true” community. As such Diogenes’ saying that “the only true constitution (πολιτεία) is the one in the universe” (DL 6.72)81 is perfectly harmonized with his cosmopolitan formulation: the “only true political constitution” is that which embraces

78 The answer begs for the city of Σινώπη, as his place of origin; otherwise the answer Σινώπευς might wrongly suggest to his interlocutor that he ‘inhabits’ the territory of Sinope. The whole idea of Cosmopolis also finds echo in Callipolis, the ideal city painted by Socrates in the Republic (527c).
79 Cf. Arist. Pol. 1275b for the political definition of a citizen: “he who has the power to take part in the deliberative and judicial administration of any πόλις <that is,... > a body of citizens sufficing for the purposes of life (ικανὸν πρὸς αὐτάρκειαν ζωῆς).” (trans. Barnes 1984). Cynicism attempted (with an avowed reluctance) to live up to this αὐτάρκεια, which in turn leads to a “happy life”.
80 Dudley 1937.68 associates three Cynic ideals with individual Cynics who personify them best: αὐτάρκεια with Diogenes, φιλανθρωπία with Crates, and κοσμοπολίτης with Bion who was “the first real embodiment amongst the Cynics” of cosmopolitanism: “Bion, like the Sophists, travelled from city to city, and made prolonged stays at Rhodes and Pella.” The distinction pertains only to the actual practice of these ideals, since both Diogenes and Crates envisioned their cosmopolitanism mainly from Athens. Yet Dudley seems to forget Diogenes’ frequent stays in Corinth, where his ideal would have been as relevant; still he is definitely right in saying that Bion became the prototype of “the vagrant preacher” who became an important figure in the Roman Empire.
81 It may be significant that Diogenes uses πολιτεία rather than πόλις, although Ehrenberg 1960.38 notes that the same word describes at once citizenship, the citizen body, and the constitution (i.e. the whole structure of the state).
mankind and it is as wide as the world, but Diogenes claims for himself a true
membership to a particular πόλις, that is, “Cosmopolis”, a significant difference in my
mind than the usual interpretation of the apophthegm.

This present interpretation complements Moles’ contribution to the issue and
gives further support to his thesis that Diogenes’ cosmopolitanism has been wrongly
perceived as a negative response to citizenship.82 Contrary to current scholarly
opinion,83 Moles successfully goes against the grain and paints, on the whole, a
refreshing picture of Cynic cosmopolitanism by redressing the (modern) fault and
underlining the positive aspects of the Cynic’s place in the world,84 keeping in mind that
“Diogenes’ polity was the most practical, the most universalist, and... the noblest of all

82 Although Cynicism often had negative conceptions, such as with freedom, its enterprise usually ended up constructing positive viewpoints. See Aune 2008.50, 63-64: “The Cynic emphasis on ἔλευθερία, however, is largely negative, as it is construed as freedom from various types of entanglements that are generically described with the umbrella metaphor of “slavery.” Cynicism is essentially a negative reaction to the social and cultural environment, but its proponents’ chief failure was to propose a program that would prove to be a positive counterpart to their criticism. [...] freedom from the slavery of a life governed κατὰ δόξαν (the customs and laws of culture), so as to live an unencumbered life κατὰ φύσιν (the self-evident design of nature), which is by definition ἔλευθερία”. Goulet-Cazé 1996.8 also distinguishes (negative) Cynic “freedom from” and (positive) “freedom to”.


84 Moles establishes that Diogenes’ views (DL 6.63, 72) are formulated in “positive” terms with the following as proofs (1996.109-110): κοσμοπολίτης vs ἀ-πόλις, “a good government” exists vs “there is no good government”; the internationalist ideal is also parallel to other formulations by Heraclitus, Euripides, Antiphon, Hippias, Alcidamas, etc. (cf. 109n.18 for references); there remains an inherent paradox in Diogenes’ formulation as well as in thought: the restrictive meaning of “citizen”, exclusive to a πόλις, is in contrast with the extensive meaning of κόσμος, “the largest organism imaginable” (Moles 1996.110). Brown 2006, who also rejects the negative interpretation of cosmopolitanism, provides 2 reasons for its tradition: “First, a literal interpretation of world-citizenship is intelligible in negative terms, as a rejection of local citizenship, but seems to make no sense in positive terms in the absence of a world-state. Second, the origins of Hellenistic cosmopolitanism have traditionally been explained in a way that places its negative aspect front-and-center: it has been said that in the wake of Alexander the Great’s conquests the traditional πόλις collapsed and could not command the allegiance that it had once received.” At the same time that he shows that the representation of Socrates as himself a “cosmopolitan” (cf. Cic. Tusc. 5.108) is strictly seen in Stoic contexts, Brown 2006 struggles to claim that Diogenes’ original cosmopolitanism is nonetheless Socratic in tendency (550-552). The positive interpretation of Diogenes’ cosmopolitanism comes, for Brown, not in the Cynic’s explicit message (Diogenes famously rejected theory) but rather in his overall role as an educator of men (like Socrates): by providing his self as an exemplum for others to emulate the life according to nature, Diogene’s cosmopolitanism necessarily needs to be perceived as a positive claim that is worth the discipline, if not the provocation.
the philosophical states (πολιτεῖαι) – indeed, of all the political states – of all antiquity. 85

In general, I agree with Moles’ remarkably rich contribution to the matter: despite minor disagreements, 86 most of his conclusions provide an insightful look into cosmopolitanism and my following interpretation sustains his own, albeit in a different manner. Moles’ thorough investigation is finally reversing the negative aspects of the Cynic concept by offering a realistic and appealing assessment, and my present contribution basically gives further support to his results. Then, once a “positive” cosmopolitanism has been recognized, we will need to evaluate the relationship between the Cynics’ strive for “freedom of speech” (παρρησία) and their use of it for the harsh criticism of society’s flaws.

There is, for sure, a philosophical tradition that is less hostile to the πόλις – a tradition which includes Antisthenes, Onesicritus, Bion, Teles, and Cercidas –, 87 but here again, Diogenes pioneered: he and Crates (one of his earliest pupils and a genuine second-generation Cynic) present the most radical views in their overall rejection of the smaller πόλις-unit. In the political arena, both philosophers share some of these more

85 Moles 1996.120.
86 I remain especially unconvinced by the religious part of his interpretation of Cynic cosmopolitanism (esp. 1996.113-114). Surely I trust that the word κόσμος has its full force of “universe” in the 4th c., so that Diogenes’ statement may include the heavens, but I do not readily accept that the gods “provide a paradigm for Cynic self-sufficiency” and that “the Cynic himself is godlike, friend of the gods, their messenger, their agent, and, in being ἄγαθος δαίμων (“tutelary god,” “guardian angel”), he is himself virtually divine.” Although some mythical figures do serve as Cynic paradigm (Odysses, Telephus, even the god Herakles), their importance is justifiable as broad “cultural heroes” or common “literary models” rather than useful in shaping the Cynic into a godlike, divine figure. For example, the point of DL 6.44 (“Diogenes often shouted ἐβόα πολλάκις λέγων- that the gods had given an “easy life” -βίον ῥᾴδιον- to men, but that it had been hidden away by people who seek honey cakes, perfumes, and such stuff -τὰ παραπλήσια-) is not so much that the gods really gave men an easy life, but rather, that human vices such as greed and luxury are an impediment to Nature’s ways. I also have serious doubts about the φιλανθρωπία and the altruistic attitude with which Moles credits Diogenes (Moles 1996.114-117): “As κοσμοπολίτης... he recognizes his potential kinship with others, and he has therefore a certain obligation to help them” (Moles 1996.119). The misanthropic strand in his character, as part of Diogenes’ real “character-construction”, remains the hallmark of Cynicism’s bite marks.

radical views, but “this does not make their cosmopolitanism purely negative”. In fact the rejection of the πόλις is, to borrow Moles’ words, what “facilitates freedom and virtue”. Indeed, Diogenes’ cosmopolitanism goes through the negation of his belonging to any known political community (κοσμοπολίτης in 6.63) and the philosopher generally rejects πόλεις since they are “παρὰ φύσιν” (6.72: “The only good government is that in the κόσμος”), but as DL also shows (6.72: “without νόμος it is impossible to πολιτεύεσθαι”) Diogenes cannot dispose entirely of νόμοι, even in his Cosmopolis.

The philosopher is a “Cynic” only insofar as he is part of a community, a community that recognizes him as such and with which his pragmatic lifestyle clashes: his doggish lifestyle exists only in contrast to the contemporary nomic society, and he is a Dog only because most people are not. Just as Diogenes uses the “conventionality” of language, his philosophy needs a public and requires observers to take its full effect. If Diogenes were a recluse, completely isolated from the human world, Cynicism would lose its fundamental raison d’être: whence the image of the dog as an ambiguous symbol, both domesticated and wild, benevolent and malevolent, friendly to his kind and alienating to his foes, at once a “para-social” individual “outside” (παρά) normal society and a living entity “inside” the community (κατά).

Höistad had understood that Cynic cosmopolitanism was “essentially the same fusion of “nature” (φύσιν) and “custom” or “law” (νόμος) and transcendental “reason”

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88 Moles 1996.109, 111.
89 This is not in sharp contrast with Stoic orthodoxy “that the πόλις had a certain value as an imperfect analogue of the true “cosmic polity” (Moles 1996.119). Cf. also Dem. 25.20 (Ag. Aristog. I): “…since, if once <the laws> were done away with and every man were given licence to do as he liked, not only does the constitution (πολιτεία) vanish, but our life would not differ from that of the beasts of the field.” (trans. Vince 1935.527 [Loeb]).
90 Although we should stress that the Cynics held no particular views on the nature of language, i.e. whether its semiosis is “natural” or “conventional” (cf. Pl. Crat. for such a discussion).
(λόγος) that is found in Stoicism", but this view mainly stresses *Stoic* cosmopolitanism. Cynic cosmopolitanism was antinomian and generally rejected political matters through a positive and satirical invention of a utopian Κοσμο-πόλις: what is more central to Diogenes’ view of the πόλις is that the Cynic πολιτεία “is nothing other than a *moral* “state”:”.

Meanwhile, it should now be clearer how and in what respect Diogenes’ position is diametrically opposed to Aristippus’ own. Diogenes expands the concept of πόλις as to become the wide world; he is the participant in a πολιτεία that reflects the universality of his philosophy and he is breaking down most political and social differences based on race, ethnicity, gender, group, etc. Diogenes’ idea thus invents a city-state (a Cosmopolis) that transcends conventional norms, that is, those human νόμοι. Oppositely, Aristippus constantly remains a foreigner (ξένος) everywhere, a traveling figure at home nowhere, permanently elsewhere and reduced to being a non-citizen who must give himself up to the requirements of each πόλις. Diogenes liberates the restricted public space of the πόλις-unit (DL 6.72: πολιτείαν... τὴν ἐν κόσμῳ), while he is not “confined” or imprisoned (Xen Mem. 2.1: κατακλείω) in a πολιτεία. When thus engaged by the Cynic, Aristippus’ view is now reduced to actually show him imprisoned by the νόμοι that bind Aristippus to his surroundings (in Syracuse or elsewhere). Both

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91 Moles 1996.120 (cf. Höistad 1948.138-142). Schofield 1991.22-56 addresses Zeno’s *Republic* (DL 7.32-33) and opts for H. C. Baldry’s “communistic” reading over the “antinomianist” (M. I. Finley) and “revisionist” (A. Erskine) interpretations.
92 Moles 1996.111.
93 Moles 1996.112-113: Cynic kinship “transcends the conventional barriers” between men and women, as Crates and Hipparchia, and between the races, as Diogenes and the gymnosophists in Onesicritus, cf. Strab. 15.1.64-65.
94 This interpretation sides also with Moles’ discussion of the “kinship of mankind”, the missionary (and pedagogical) element in Cynicism, and Cynic benevolence.
95 As Medea puts it (Eur. Med. 222) “The ξένος must fully comply with the πόλις (χρή δὲ ξένου μὲν κάρτα προσχωρεῖν πόλει).”
opinions express positively a concept of group inclusion, but whereas Aristippus is licensed to do his biddings as a constant outsider (ξένος) standing out of local politics (πόλις), Diogenes’ universalism turns his “outside” character from which he is de facto excluded (πόλις), into the broader “inside” (κόσμος), thus expanding his political sphere of activity and relevance onto its universal applicability.96

Another saying is consistent with all of this: Diogenes “used to say (εἰώθει δὲ λέγειν) that the tragic curses (τὰς τραγικὰς ἀράς) have befallen him”, for indeed he was “without a πόλις, without a home, bereft of [his] country, a beggar, a wanderer, living a life from day to day”.97 DL’s use of the iterative form “used to say” (εἰώθει) implies that it was a recurring favorite of Diogenes and it is imaginable that the tragic lines were recognizable and were popular, or famous, enough that they were readily identifiable with a specific kind of character – perhaps, one may speculate, even a specific character. Characters described as stateless and resourceless beggars are not uncommon in tragic situations,98 but we may wonder whether Diogenes’ quote relates to a specific tragedy or character. In his essay, Moles implies that Diogenes is quoting here lines from one of his

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96 Ford 2002.35-37 provides an insightful look into the connection between the Archaic (and aristocratic) symposium and the well-ordered community. He connects the κόσμος of the symposium (including the orderliness of the feast and the appropriate behavior of participants) with civic harmony: a good party symbolizes civic order! Therefore, the bad participant represents the bad seed in the political community, with his inappropriate or undesired manners. But in the 4th century, Diogenes’ tableside manners do not have the same connotations that would similarly promote “civic disharmony”. True enough his doggish behavior is emphasized in anecdotes, but his positive citizenship of Cosmopolis does not imply that he is seeking disorder or political chaos.


98 The formulation “ἀπολις, ἀοικος” begins Eur. Hipp. 1029 but the character of Hippolytus and the tragic plot (Hippolytus is making his defense to his father Theseus) have little to do in a Cynic context. The figure of Philoctetes also comes to mind as a social outcast, “without friends, alone, without a city, a corpse among the living” (Soph. Phil. 1018: ἄρφοιν, ἐρήμον, ἀπόλιν, ἐν ἴδιν νεκρόν). Finally the overall sentiment recalls Odysseus near the end of his adventures where he remains deprived of his πατρίς, πόλις, and οἶκος, as he represents the ultimate wanderer.
own tragedies (1996.107); yet, even if Diogenes really did write tragedies, it is not necessary that he is quoting his own. We can conjecture just about anything as to the character associated with Diogenes’ quote but a major contender for the alluded character is Telephus, who is precisely the kind of character that can serve as a paradigm for Cynicism, and who was indeed presented in 5\textsuperscript{th} - and 4\textsuperscript{th}-c. tragedy: we are told, for instance, that the character of Telephus struck Crates so much that he turned to “Cynic philosophy” after seeing a tragedy about the figure (DL 6.87).\footnote{If we estimate that Crates saw the play, at least at a reasonably young age (he was 20 years old around 340), then we can also suppose that Diogenes knew the play himself, assuming that it was put on stage between 340-325. For the backstory of Telephus, Euripides’ own \textit{Telephus} may be a witness: Telephus, king of Mysia, wanders through Greece as a beggar (πτωχός), carrying his wallet (πήραν ἔχοντα καὶ προσαιτοῦντα); \textit{cf.} Schol. Ar. \textit{Clouds} 919 and fr. 696-727 TGF (esp. 696-698, 703).} That Diogenes is quoting a tragic line may explain the would-be contradiction of his exclusion from any city (ἄπολις) and his positive citizenship in Cosmopolis. If my interpretation is correct, the tragic quote is not meant to exclude the philosopher entirely from all πόλεις but from specific πόλεις, whether it be Athens or Sinope, and to include him within a “broader” πόλις.

To recapitulate: the formulations of Aristippus and Diogenes present a major contrast in terms of their belonging to a political entity. Aristippus’ proto-cosmopolitanism insists on his status as a wanderer, a sophist-like figure, a traveling pedagogue (especially in light of his extended stay at Dionysius’ court). His idea warrants his journeys abroad: it is a conception that puts the sophist-philosopher constantly “outside” the πόλις. On the other hand, Diogenes’ cosmopolitanism displaces the focal center by pushing the civic community outside geographical and political grasp. As an outsider \textit{de facto}, Diogenes creates his own place inside a greater κόσμος where he is then able to speak “from within”. His philosophy of action is pertinent in every human
πόλις and as such, he gains the freedom of speech which is guaranteed by his actual membership to a wider community, a universal city: “one can live the Cynic life anywhere on earth, and... ‘the whole earth’ is the Cynic’s home”, therefore the Cynic claims “a positive allegiance to the whole earth”.\(^{100}\) From his place of birth (Sinope), to his city of adoption (Athens), and now to the whole universe (κόσμος), Diogenes may now fully exercise his rights, as a citizen of Cosmopolis and as a political voice in the universal community of men.

Since many scholars had seen Cynic cosmopolitanism as a strictly-negative concept, Diogenes’ statement was made equivalent to saying “I am a citizen of no πόλις” or “I am not a citizen of any of your Greek cities”, as W. W. Tarn thought.\(^{101}\) But a major problem with this interpretation is that we come very close to a modern sophism that conclusively equates Diogenes’ lack of citizenship to Aristippus’ denial of it so that in this way Diogenes and Aristippus seem to say the same thing:

Diogenes: “I am a citizen of the world”; I am not a citizen here, thus I am a foreigner.

vs

Aristippus: “I am a stranger everywhere”; I am never a citizen, thus I am a foreigner.

But through a careful reading of their formulations we see that both philosophers finally stress quite opposite views and Diogenes’ claim of cosmopolitanism shows itself to be quite a different notion than Aristippus’. Unlike Aristippus’ ἄξιος (Xen. Mem. 2.1.13-14), “the cosmopolitanism of Diogenes was not the well-traveled man’s interest in alien cultures, like that of Herodotus, but rather a reaction against every kind of coercion imposed by the community on the individual” (Dudley 1937.34-35). Meanwhile

\(^{100}\) Moles 1996.111, and n.27 for other evidence: DL 6.98; Bion F 17.8-9 Kindstrand = Teles ap. Stob. 3.1.98; ps.-Anacharsis Ep. 5.3; Dio Chrys. 4.13; Epict. 3.24.66; Max. of Tyre 36; ps-Luc. Cyn. 15.

\(^{101}\) Cf. Dudley 1937.35.
Diogenes’ cosmopolitanism, his reaction to this coercion, could still involve accepting certain νόμοι traditionally rejected by the Greeks: Diogenes accepted, for instance, anthropophagy on account of a cultural comparison (DL 6.73: ὡς δῆλον ἐκ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων ἐθῶν, “as is clear from the custom of other nations”).

This Cynic view was further extended to his followers. From DL we see, for example, that Crates’ view on political belonging can also be seen in positive terms; the classical translation of 6.93 runs as follows: “<Crates> declared that Dishonour and Poverty was his country (or fatherland: πατρίς), which Fortune could never take captive. He was, he said, a fellow-citizen of Diogenes, who defied all the plots of envy”. As the Greek text informs us Crates claimed that his fatherland was Ἀδοξία and Πενία, and that Crates was a [fellow] citizen of Diogenes. By substitution, we are meant to understand that Crates’ fatherland was an impregnable city that remains beyond mortal invasion. By including Diogenes in the next statement, it would seem that Crates claims that his πόλις is the same as Diogenes’. By claiming that his “fatherland” is Dishonour and Poverty, and that he is a fellow citizen (πολίτης) of Diogenes, Crates therefore states that he too is a citizen of Cosmopolis or a citizen of the world.

Yet what we have here in DL 6.93 are two separate claims reproduced by DL (or any of his sources) that collocate Crates’ fatherland (πατρίς) and Crates’ citizenship (πόλις). First, Crates’ fatherland is certainly not the Cynic utopian city, but rather his place of origins, his place of birth: his fatherland was indeed Thebes!102 Crates is not claiming that he belongs to another city but rather that Ignominy and Poverty are his hometown: Ignominy and Poverty necessarily refer to the Boeotian town. This is further

102 As studied by Hansen & Nielsen 2004.51-52 the Greek traditional view is that “the πατρίς is the πόλις where you were born and raised... The cosmopolitan view that a man’s πατρίς is where he wants to live is rare prior to the Hellenistic period though not unattested.”
supported by the preceding lines which show Crates in a discussion with Alexander the Great: when Alexander inquired whether Crates wished for his fatherland (πατρίδα) to be rebuilt, Crates replied “Why? Perhaps another Alexander will destroy it again”. Crates clearly refers here to the year 335 when Alexander punished Thebes for her rebellion: as a result of Alexander’s punishment, Thebes surely suffered from dishonour (ἀδοξία) and poverty (πενία). Translators usually imply that both statements relating to Crates’ fatherland and his πόλις are one and the same, but we must stress that both statements are differentiated. His fatherland, destroyed by Alexander, is portrayed as a desolate city which Fortune herself (Τύχη) would not even dare to worry about. Period. This is quite different that the city for which Crates is claiming citizenship.

Second, as far as his positive citizenship is concerned, Crates’ claim makes little sense in itself: Crates states that he is a “citizen of Diogenes”, thus substituting the name of a πόλις with the genitive form of Diogenes (Διογένους). For lack of a better formulation we should take this to mean “I am a fellow citizen of Diogenes” which implies that Crates too is a citizen of the world, or a fellow citizen of Cosmopolis. The formula makes better sense if we accept Casaubon’s view (cf. Marcovich 1999) that the lines are actual poetic verses, either from an unknown comedy or, as Meineke saw it, from Crates himself. Possibly the quote as we have it would suit the metrical pattern required by a verse, for correct prose formulations would prefer Διογένους <πόλεως> πολίτης (citizen of the city of Diogenes), or, more likely, Διογένη <συμ->πολίτης. Still, the classical formulation “a fellow-citizen of Diogenes” can stand.104

103 See the emendations proposed by A. Meineke and F. W. A. Mullach in SSR V H 31 (ἔχειν δὲ πατρίδα αδοξίαν <ἐπαξιῶ or ἐπεύχομαι: cf. Adesp. 1212 CAF>...).

In addition to Diogenes’ positive cosmopolitanism, understood as a utopian ideal, we need to recall our previous discussion of νόμος/φύσις, more specifically in its relation to the πόλις. We know from the evidence that both Diogenes and Crates considered the πόλις to be “against nature” (παρὰ φύσιν). Therefore, for the early Cynics, the human πόλις is mainly an arbitrary and nomic concept from which we should liberate ourselves in order to apply universal principles: of course this is an integral part of the Cynic defacement of τὸ πολιτικὸν νόμισμα, the political currency (DL 6.20). But one difficult piece of evidence is very hard to reconcile, at a quick glance, with this view. Diving headlong into the controversy over a passage from DL 6.72, which relates in any case to Cynic antinomianism, let us quote the passage at length, using the translation of Schofield who divides it into three separate clauses (DL 6.72.4-6):

“With regard to the law, <Diogenes> held that it is impossible for there to be political government without it. For he says:

(1) Without a city there is no profit in refinement; and the city is refined. [ἄνευ πόλεως δρηλός τι <οὐ> εἶναι ἀστεῖον· ἀστεῖον δὲ ἡ πόλις·]
(2) Without law there is no profit in a city. [νόμου δὲ ἄνευ πόλεως οὐδὲν δρηλός·]
(3) So the law is refined. [ἀστεῖον ἀρα ὁ νόμος·]”

two remarks which make up the aphorism”, I do not find any symmetry, especially if we split the two remarks, as I have just done, into separate and independent statements that would have been joined together by DL himself or his Hellenistic sources. An example of perfect symmetry would have been for Crates to claim his citizenship as “Διογενοπολίτης” (symmetrical to Κοσμοπολίτης), unfortunately the evidence does not support this either.  

We find a similar view in Theodorus, a pupil of Aristippus, who spoke against patriotism and claimed that the wise man’s country was the world (πατρίδα τὸν κόσμον) and that it was acceptable to steal, commit adultery, and sacrilege under certain circumstances (ἐν καιρῷ). His view that such crimes were not shameful “by nature” comes close to Antiphon’s position (DL 2.98-99).

Diogenes confined his political views to his Republic. Philodemus, who accepts the work as genuinely Diogenes’, confirms that the Cynics “attach no validity to any of the cities we know, nor to any law” (Phil. On the Stoics, Here Pap. 339 = SSR V B 126, lines 77-78). Cf. Dudley 1937.36 for the translation (although Dudley’s translation of ἡγεῖσθαι with “attaching validity” is admittedly difficult).


See Schofield 1991.132-140 for his incisive look into this passage and his discussion of ἀστεῖον.
Schofield makes the very convincing case that the word ἀστεῖον is rather used sarcastically and that there is a *double entendre* since ἀστεῖον can simply mean “urban” (indeed the ἄστυ is administratively part of the πόλις and the word πόλις can be synonymous with ἄστυ). By reverting the negative statements into positive ones, and attributing a letter to each noun involved, Schofield’s reading can be simplified logically as: (1) The benefit of *refinement* (A) is found in a πόλις (B), and the πόλις is something *refined*; (2) the benefit of a πόλις (B) is found in the νόμος (C); (3) therefore, the νόμος (C) is *refined* (A). Put schematically we have the following reasoning:

1. The benefit of A is in B, and B = A
2. The benefit of B is in C,
3. Therefore, C = A

Schofield offers a reasonable reading with two premises and a conclusion that qualifies the law (C νόμος) as a refinement (A ἀστεῖον) on the following logic: A is in B, B is in C, and so A (ἀστεῖον) is equated with C (νόμος). But as it appears the reasoning is flawed, since the conclusion (3) equates the two notions (A and C) on the separate benefits that (A) and (B) confer on (B) and (C) respectively. There is a problem in terms of the *relationship* involved in the first two premises (*i.e.* the use of the complementary genitive: “the profit of...”) and the one offered in the conclusion (a relationship of predication: “is”).

Not only that: Schofield’s premise (2) is grammatically tricky, if not simply incorrect. The preposition ἄνευ is not usually postpositive to its noun in Attic prose (Smyth #1665a): it is extremely unlikely that it applies here to νόμος (νόμου... ἄνευ), especially when we have the perfectly correct phrasing ἄνευ πόλεως. We need to rectify

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109 The Copenhagen Polis Centre does an extraordinary work on the topic. See Hansen 1997 and, for greater details, Hansen & Nielsen 2004.39-48, who discuss the whole range of the terminology: at times πόλις is synonymous and interchangeable with ἄστυ (or ἀκρόπολις, χώρα, κοινωνία). As such, πόλις and ἄστυ become tautological.
Schofield’s premise (2) and accept the translation “without a city...” (as Hicks 2000 does) rather than “without law...”. In this way we now have a better syllogism that equates (by substitution) two elements presented in perfect symmetry, which can then be reduced to a simple and straightforward sophism of 2 equal clauses:

1. Without a city there is no profit in refinement; and the city is refined.
2. Without a city [ἄνευ πόλεως] there is no profit in law [νόμοι].
3. So the law is something refined. [ἀστεῖον ἀρα ὁ νόμος.]

Or schematically simplified:

1a) The benefit of A applies to B (alone),
and B = A.
2a) The benefit of C applies to B (alone)
2b) Therefore C = A

Indeed the πόλις is “something ἀστεῖον” (1b) since, by its literal definition, what is “urban” (i.e. “relating to the ἅστυ”) is necessarily “political” (i.e. relating to the πόλις) by sheer metonymy of ἅστυ used for πόλις. This is mere wordplay. But the πόλις is also “urbane”, refined, even witty, as it is populated by sophisticated philosophers and intellectuals who sell their knowledge and linguistic niceties to clients and high-bidders.

Ignored by Schofield, this meaning is found in a famous passage of Aristophanes’ Frogs
where the contest between Aeschylus and Euripides requires the poets, in the first round of their ἀγών, to exhibit “urbane” or “witty” language (906: ἀστεῖα), while the second round should display a language both “refined and wise” (1108: λεπτόν τι καὶ σοφὸν λέγειν) – the language of tragedy, perhaps more so with Euripides, would more readily qualify as both “urban” and “urbane”. In Diogenes’ syllogism the ἀστεῖα are necessarily found in the city rather than in the country (since ἀστεῖα are literally “urban”), but they simultaneously recall a social phenomenon, particular to towns, i.e. witty language, puns and linguistic wordplays, since ἀστεῖα are figuratively “urbane”.

If one day our passage (6.72) turned out to be indubitably Diogenes’ own words, it would only be one more proof that the philosopher was capable of playing the same game as the sophists, that he was able to compete on their own turf. Since we are pretty certain that Diogenes and his successors did not deal with logic, we should be very suspicious that DL 6.72 was actually formulated by Diogenes: it has been well established that the passage comes from sections in DL (6.70-73) that betray Stoicism or Stoic glossing. But even if it were proven beyond any doubt that Diogenes himself did not originate the aphorism, the passage remains very Cynic in spirit and perhaps even more so with the conclusions I reach. Therefore we cannot exclude the possibility that Diogenes imitated sophistic syllogisms, if only to poke fun at their techniques, all the while, as usual, using comical effects to make his point.
This Cynic syllogism\textsuperscript{112} mainly confirms that refinement (ἀστεῖα) and law (νόμοι) pertain to the πόλις. It is consistent with Cynic ideals throughout: luxury and wealth (which would fall under ἀστεῖα), and νόμοι are all elements “of the πόλις” (here, as the civil community) that are literally antinomical to φύσις. In Diogenes’ Cosmopolis, mere human laws should not apply. The conclusion of the sophism is therefore self-evident: νόμοι (human laws) are something refined, and this offers yet another Cynic view in witty formulation with the implied and pejorative meaning of ἀστεῖος. Notions such as νόμοι are only “urban” and “refined” niceties which do not represent the wide κόσμος of which Diogenes is a member, even a citizen.

Diogenes was certainly a radical antinomianist and his philosophy favors φύσις over νόμος while, for instance, Zeno will allow for a greater importance to νόμος, but only insofar as νόμος means the “law” (or “reason”) of Nature (also Moles 1996.118), rather than using it to stress the binary opposition “law” or “nature”. Diogenes expresses his rejection of conventional νόμοι by altering them: as seen in 6.72 the Cynic syllogism also supports or proves (by using a satire of it) the equation of νόμος with πόλις, and in this way he can thus reject both at the same time; by displacing his sense of belonging onto a wider political stage, i.e. the universe as a whole, his utopian city of Cosmopolis, Diogenes breaks down political barriers. On the other hand, Aristippus believed in inherent νόμοι by stating: “If all the laws should be abrogated, we should still live in the

\textsuperscript{112} There are similarities with Cleanthes the Stoic’s syllogism found in Arius Didymus and Stobaeus which stands “in some sort of dialectical relation with DL (Schofield 1991.130-135 on Cleanthes; Schofield 1991.141-145 on DL 6.72). Cleanthes’ syllogism is, for Schofield, “a riposte to Diogenes’ argument” (137). Based on my interpretation, I must reject the argument of Goulet-Cazé (in Rh. Mus. 125, 1982: 211-240) that Cic. De Leg. 2.12 is reproducing Diogenes’ reasoning (especially Schofield’s premise (2)).
same manner as we do now” (DL 2.68: ἐὰν πάντες οἱ νόμοι ἀναιρεθῶσιν, ὀμοίως βιώσομεν), but the context of the formulation suggests that Aristippus criticized the very value of philosophers, since Aristippus was asked “what advantages philosophers have [over other men].” (τί πλέον ἔχουσιν οἱ φιλόσοφοι).

4.3 Cynic Freedom: Παρρησία

Cosmopolitanism is a significant notion in regards to Diogenes’ social position in Athens and the critical stance the Cynics take overall; a correlative term of citizenship, παρρησία, also becomes a notion crucial to Cynic speech (λόγος) in society. Indeed, connected to his positive and universal cosmopolitanism we find in Diogenes’ citizenship one of the greatest attributes of Athenian democracy: freedom of speech. Παρρησία was a fundamental aspect of democracy (though not the exact equivalent to the inalienable right of modern times), and in Classical Athenian democracy it was understood as an important device to secure one’s expression of opinions without fear of adverse consequences. As Saxonhouse puts it, the word παρρησία itself captures “the expectation that speech reveals the truth as one sees it, that speech opens and uncovers. It is this revealing speech that the democratic citizen of Athens, engaged equally with other citizens in the deliberative Assembly and the public life of the city, expresses”.113 As with citizenship, παρρησία was transmitted in Athens through the Athenian heritage of both parents (at least since Pericles’ reform of 451/0) and was considered an extraordinary advantage. This political characteristic does not escape the Chreia tradition either. When asked what was the most beautiful thing (κάλλιστον) among men Diogenes

113 Saxonhouse 2006.87.
replied: “παρρησία” (DL 6.69). Now if asked whether he had παρρησία or not, it seems almost certain that Diogenes would have claimed it for himself, but what does παρρησία mean exactly?

As many scholars have pointed out, παρρησία is best translated as “frankness of speech” and as such, Diogenes’ bites certainly do not lack any; as a “citizen of the world”, Diogenes could hold on to this frankness and rely on the principle to get his speech out, however provocative or shocking it may be. Since at least the 5th century, παρρησία was a buzzword for political freedom altogether (mostly in Athens) and it epitomized the broader notion of ἔλευθερία. In politics, the practice of frankness of speech, i.e. “the saying of all by the unbridled tongue”, was a hallmark of the democratic

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115 Powell 2001.84 rightly suggests that according to the Athenians “such freedom was far from universal.”

116 Heath 2005.175. See also Democritus, DK 226 = Stob. Flor. 3.13.47: “παρρησία is proper to freedom (οἰκήµον ἐλευθερίας), but the danger [of παρρησία] is to decide of its appropriate timing (τοῦ καιροῦ).” The semantic field surrounding Cynic ἔλευθερία includes the concepts of αὐτάρκεια, παρρησία, ἀπάθεια, and ἀναίδεια (Aune 2008.50). On Cynic αὐτάρκεια, see A.N.M. Rich, “The Cynic Conception of Autarkeia”, in Mnemosyne 4th Ser. 9, 1956: 23–29. As παρρησία relates to the frankness of speech used by the comic playwrights, it is worthwhile to note that the use of the word is less conspicuous in Old comedy but appears more frequently in the fragments of Middle and New comedy as we have them: Nicolaus (fr. 1.10-16 CAF3); Nicostratus (fr. 29 CAF2): παρρησία is a “weapon of Poverty” (τῆς πενίας ὅπλον) and “life’s shield” (τὴν ἀσπίδα... τοῦ βίου); Alexis (fr. 146 CAF2): life’s παρρησία; Philemon (fr. 119 CAF2): “Tell me, what is παρρησία to you? Do you chitchat (λαλεῖς) among men because you are one (ἀνθρώπος)? In what quality do you walk everywhere and breathe the same air as others?”; Menander Epitr. 1101 Sandbach; Menandri Sententiae: 60 Jäkel, “παρρησία cannot be blamed” (Ἀνουθέτητον ἔστιν ἡ παρρησία); 517 Jäkel, “A bride without a dowry has no παρρησία” (Νύμφη δ’ ἄπροικος οὐκ ἔχει παρρησίαν); 623 Jäkel, “Nothing is sacred as παρρησία” (Οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν σεμνὸν ὡς παρρησία); Adesp. fr. 355-356 CAF3: “παρρησία is the most beneficent counsellor” (εὖνουστάτη σύμβουλος ἢ παρρησία).
regime and the prerogative of citizens\textsuperscript{117} although παρρησία and its profit were not exclusive to “true” citizens since others could claim it.\textsuperscript{118} But the word pairs off with another notion, ἰσηγορία, which specifically pertains to the political and administrative duties of a citizen to his πόλις: ἰσηγορία is the \textit{equal opportunity of all citizens to speak} in democratic institutions – the Assembly, the council, etc. – and the notion walks hand in hand with παρρησία (the opportunity \textit{to speak freely and frankly}), “the democratic citizen’s most important privilege”\textsuperscript{119}. But as it is often observed, ἰσηγορία is free speech in the “public” sphere whereas παρρησία includes free speech in “private”,\textsuperscript{120} like two sides of the democratic voice.\textsuperscript{121}

Yet the distinction is not so definite. As the former (ἰσηγορία) represents the essence of Athenian democracy in the exercise of a formal right to speak in public

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    \item \textsuperscript{117} Saxonhouse 2006.8, 95-97. In one anecdote Simon the modest shoemaker, who was called upon by Pericles to go to him as he would be taken care of, replied that “he would not give up his παρρησία” (DL 2.123).
    \item \textsuperscript{118} Dem. 3\textsuperscript{rd} Phil. (9) 3 blames those who would extend παρρησία to all in the πόλις including the foreigners and slaves. Also, Men. fr. 370 CAP3: “Give a share of παρρησία, it will make him [perhaps here the slave, ὁ δοῦλος] much better.”
    \item \textsuperscript{119} Raaflaub 2006.398. On ἰσηγορία, see Monoson 2000.56-60. Ps.-Xen. [= Old Oligarch] Ath. Pol. 12 bemoans the independence that the metics and slaves now have in their lifestyle and speech, because the same ἰσηγορία as free men and citizens has been granted to them. It seems apparent that the author, certainly exaggerating, has here “insidiously conflated ἰσηγορία and παρρησία, but his (legitimate?) point is that the practice of slavery has slipped from its ideology. Isocrates, perhaps reflecting upon his own city, puts into the mouth of the Spartan Archidamus a more explicit report of this slippage: ‘It is disgraceful that we, who in former times would not allow even free men the right of equal speech (ἰσηγορία), now openly tolerate the frankness (παρρησία) of slaves’ (6.97)” (Heath 2005.203).
    \item \textsuperscript{120} Coleman 2000.23. I see an interesting parallel with an anecdote concerning Crates (DL 2.117): “When Crates asked <Stilpo> if the gods delighted in worship and prayers, he is said to have replied ‘Do not, fool, ask these questions in the open air (ἐν ὠδῇ) but when you are by yourself (μόνον).’”
    \item \textsuperscript{121} Raaflaub suggests (in \textit{The Discovery of Freedom in Ancient Greece}, Chicago, 2004.225) “that παρρησία becomes the watchword for democracy in opposition to ἰσηγορία, which had prior aristocratic connotations. As <Raaflaub> puts it: ‘it was crucial to maintain in political life not only the principle that all citizens were allowed to speak but the farther-reaching principle that they could say whatever they wanted’” (quoted in Barker 2009.274n.31). In his 1983 lectures (published as Foucault 2001), Foucault distinguishes the three practices of παρρησία as: (1) “an aspect of personal relationships” \textit{(i.e. a private setting, which he generally associates with Stoicism)}, (2) “an activity in the framework of small groups of people” \textit{(i.e. semi-private setting, which he associates with the Epicureans)}, and (3) “in the framework of public life”, that is, “a public activity or public demonstration” which was a “significant aspect of Cynicism” (Foucault 2001.108). He goes on to distinguish and analyze three types of Cynic “parrhesiastic” practice (Foucault 2001.119-133): (1) critical preaching, (2) scandalous behavior, and (3) “provocative dialogue”.
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meetings, the latter (παρρησία) was the essence of Athenian freedom in practice, “a practice of opening and revealing one’s true beliefs, not hiding them or abandoning them”,¹²² in all matters: in public settings as well as in private life (ἐλευθερία).

Monoson’s distinction of three types of “frank speech” is quite useful here: personal (friends and associates: see Arist. Nic. Eth. 1165a29), dramatic (especially comedy, although we need to keep pamphlets and dialogues as other loci παρρησίας), and political freedom (deliberative speeches).¹²³ While we must exclude Diogenes’ παρρησία from the last type, he certainly has close connections with personal and comic frankness and license.¹²⁴ Along these lines, it is no surprise that Diogenes did not consider ἵσηγορία (free opportunity to speak) to be the most beautiful thing, which notion he could take for granted as a citizen of his Cosmopolis, but rather παρρησία, unbridled and unaltered “frank” speech (an opportunity to speak freely), in his decrying and defacing of the νόμοι.

Athens often boasted of her παρρησία, one of democracy’s καλὰ καὶ δίκαια (Dem. 60 = Fun. Orat. 26), and nowhere else in the Greek world was it more strongly held, as Plato has Socrates remark: in Athens speech has the greatest license/authority/power (πλείστη ἐστὶν ἐξουσία τοῦ λέγειν).¹²⁵ It was one of the pillars and a prime value of democratic ideology,¹²⁶ and diverse evidence closely links it to democratic Athens.¹²⁷

¹²² Saxonhouse 2006.88.
¹²³ Monoson 2000.52-53.
¹²⁴ Cf. Isoc. On the Peace (8) 14: “I am aware that... although this is a democracy, there is no παρρησία except the one found here [in the Assembly] by those reckless [speakers] who care nothing about your interests, and the one found in the theater by the comic producers (τοῖς κωμῳδοδιδασκάλοις)...”
¹²⁶ Along with equality (ἰσονομία and ἰσηγορία, equality of speech) and inclusiveness (for example, the inclusive meaning by the democrats of δῆμος as the entire citizen body: cf. Thuc. 6.39.1): cf. Raaflaub 2006.398. Although terms denoting equality (ἰσονομία, ἰσηγορία) are attested in the 6th century, they had certainly become democratic values by the last third of the 5th c. The aristocrats challenged such democratic values and countered with their own definitions of ἐλευθερία (ἐλευθεριότης: full freedom) and their exclusive meaning of δῆμος (the lower classes), but freedom of speech “did not fit into the aristocratic canon of political values and thus remained a specifically democratic achievement” (Raaflaub 2006.400). Before his critique of democracy (Pl. Rep. 557c-d: democracy is assimilated to a “supermarket of
First, its relevance to civic matters appears in Euripides’ tragedies: for example, when Jocasta asks her son how it is to be in exile Polyneices replies that one great annoyance is to be denied παρρησία (Eur. Phoen. 391); similarly in Ion, the protagonist hopes that his mother will turn out to be an Athenian so that he may “inherit” (μητρόθεν) παρρησία, “for if some foreigner should come into this pure city, even though he speaks as a local (τοῖς λόγοισιν ἄστος), his tongue is enslaved (στόμα δοῦλον) and he has no frank speech (παρρησίαν)” (Eur. Ion 672-675). Coincidentally the word appears only in Euripidean plays – it also never reappears in any of the later tragic fragments – and only after the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, from the production of Hippolytus (428 BCE) onwards: perhaps a sign of Athenian (or Periclean) democracy at war ideologically against Sparta.

constitutions” and “like a coat embroidered with every kind of ornament (ἀνθεσι), this city, embroidered with every kind of character type (ἦθεσιν) would seem the most beautiful”), Socrates defines the “democratic man” as free, and his city as “full of freedom (ἐλευθερία) and freedom of speech (παρρησία), with the license (ἐξουσία) to do what he wishes” (Pl. Rep. 8.557b). Roochnik 2009.173: “while Socrates is surely serious in his critique of democracy, he nonetheless acknowledges that this regime has a unique virtue. Because of its commitment to equality and freedom, all sorts of human beings are allowed to flourish.”

127 See Saxonhouse 2006, chs 4-6 for discussions.
128 I prefer this translation to Lape 2010.114 (“Even if a citizen in name...”) and Di Piero & Burian 1996.46 (“a foreigner, coming to a pure city, might call himself a citizen”).
129 In 472 BCE, the chorus of Persian elders in Aeschylus’ Persians bemoans the Persian defeat related by the Greek messenger (590-594): for now the people will speak of liberty (ἐλευθερία), their speech (γλῶσσα) no more fettered (ἐν φυλακαίς). The bridled mouths are here clearly associated with political regimes whereby Athens already portrayed the Eastern monarchies as limiting free speech: “Despotism restrains while the free city of Athens releases speech; it is the free city of the unfettered tongue that resists, with forces way outnumbered, the men of the Persian army whose tongues speak neither of truth nor of freedom. The pride of the Athenians in their practice of παρρησία issues boldly from the lips of Aeschylus’ Persian chorus. The glory of Athens lies in this freedom” (Saxonhouse 2006.89). In Eur. Bacc., it is those same Eastern characters, the chorus of Asian maidens in the cult of Dionysus, who warn Pentheus to watch his mouth (386-388): “for unbridled mouths (ἰχαλίνων στομάτων) and impious thoughtlessness, the end rhymes with disaster.” Compare with Andromaque who, as a “good” Trojan wife, held her tongue (Eur. Troa. 654: γλῶσσης σιγή). 130 Eur. Hipp. 421-422: the Athenians are “free men flourishing with παρρησία”. It is not always used in its political sense, e.g. Elec. 1049-1056: Clytemnestra urges Electra to speak “freely”; Bacc. 668: the messenger recounts the Bacchic frenzy “frankly”; Eur. fr. 737 TGF: “True and straightforward παρρησία is a beautiful thing” (καλόν γ’ ἀληθῆς κἀτενὴς παρρησία). We have a parallel tension as in Ion between citizen and non-citizen παρρησία in Orest. 905: the speaker who will propose to stone Orestes and Electra speaks frankly even though he is “an Argive without being one” (904: Ἄργειος οὐκ Ἄργειος).
The distinction between ἰσηγορία and παρρησία is significant when we recall that Diogenes claimed that the noblest thing (κάλλιστον) was παρρησία, not ἰσηγορία.

Παρρησία is not as politically charged as ἰσηγορία since it also bears on private life and individual dealings. But it was still a useful device to speak one’s mind by maintaining that the speech respected the rules of appropriateness and decorum. In oratory, παρρησία often becomes a safeguard against possible sentiments that could potentially sway the audience to the “wrong” side of the speaker. Two speeches (one deliberative, one forensic) exemplify such a usage. In the opening of his Third Philippic (Dem. 9 = 3rd Phil. 3) Demosthenes summons his παρρησία and the truth of his words (ἀλήθεια) in the hope that it will avert the anger of his audience: “I expect that if I should, men of Athens, say the truth with frankness (μετὰ παρρησίας), no anger may come from you on account of this.” A similar plea is found in Isocrates who defends his παρρησία (Isoc. Ant. 43):

“Whether, indeed, it is going to profit me to speak the truth, I do not know; for it is hard to guess what is in your thoughts. Nevertheless I am going to address you with frankness (παρρησιάσομαι).”

In Platon’s Apology, we are entitled to expect Socrates to make a comparable plea to the jurors, yet his opening words rather stress that his defense will be made “extemporaneously”: he rather begs forgiveness for his use of τοῖς ἐπιτυχούσιν ὀνόμασιν, in Ar. Thesmo. 540-541, the kinsman (parading as an ἄστη, a female citizen) relies on Athenian παρρησία to speak frankly. A scholium understands the chorus of Phoenician (foreign) women as assuming the role of a “parrhēsiast” (Schol. Eur. Phoen. 202.28): “The chorus is always positing itself as speaking freely/frankly on what is right” (ἀεὶ γὰρ ὁ χορὸς παρρησιαζόμενος τοῦ δικαίου προΐσταται). Barker 2009 provides great insights into the tragic use of παρρησία.

131 Also Isoc. Ant. 179: “Be patient, therefore, with the manner (τρόπον) of my discourse and with my frankness (παρρησίαν)...” The whole situation shares many parallels with Socrates’ own apology: see Ober 2004 for a discussion on how Isocrates “reconfigures” Socrates and “reperforms” or misperforms Socrates on trial; also Ober 1998.262: “By assimilating himself to the model of Socrates, Isocrates situated himself at the cutting edge of the critical enterprise: the point at which the individual citizen pushed the prototypical Athenian political virtue of frank speech (παρρησία, 10, 43–44, 179) to, and potentially beyond, the limit. Which meant that he knowingly chose to risk death at the hands of the people rather than accept their authority to suppress his critical voice.”
words “as they come by” (Ap. 17c). Socrates’ defense, as is clear from the opening, needs to exonerate him from attacks that portray him as nothing but a clever rhetor, an artful speaker of the sophistic sort (Ap. 17b: δεινὸς λέγειν). Socrates needed not stress the “frankness” of his apology because his παρρησία is inherent to the “free speech” he used in his conversations. Some scholars have noted the deep irony (in the modern sense) of the claim put in the mouth of Socrates (cf. Gorg. 461e), whose prosecution and conviction of moral corruption rest in part on the issue of freedom of speech – or rather on an attempt at curbing it, but as Roberts notes, the irony still relies on the premise “that Socrates and his audience do believe the truth of what he says”. One problem with Socrates’ prosecution is that the public blame may relate in part to the “semi-public” nature of his conversations which attracted an audience of prominent youths, intellectuals and even sophists, and fostered in the populace some displeasure and discontent (which were emphasized by the prosecutors). This explanation thus feeds in the defense Socrates gives for being associated too closely with the sophists.

132 Contra Monoson 2000 who argues that Plato appropriates παρρησία for his practice of philosophy (ch. 6: 154-180), Heath rightly wonders “what παρρησία is there if interlocutors ultimately cannot speak at all?” But the point may be that Plato ‘necessarily’ has παρρησία - he is a free citizen - in whatever he teaches in the Academy or puts into writing; Socrates’ interlocutors in the dialogues do not lack παρρησία: they are certainly welcome to express their views, unhindered by a sense of shame or censorship. Of course, in the dialectical and elenctic debates, “Socrates appears to “win” the competition, silencing other citizens” (Heath 2005.311), but the game is all fair, and Socrates does not deny the interlocutors’ frankness of speech.

133 It is implied by Zuckert 2009.201. See Saxonhouse 2006.100-126 who offers a reading of the trial in “parrhesiastic” terms.

134 Roberts 1994.72.

135 Roberts 1998.201. Euben 1997.103-104: “παρρησία also helps explain the suspicion of Socrates and why he was so often identified with the sophists of whom he was so critical. Though no one accused Socrates of taking bribes, he was accused of corrupting the young, in part because of his manipulative “insincere” speech. Being attentive to the particular character of his interlocutor and general and particular context of conversation meant “adapting” to circumstance in a way that makes him appear (and perhaps be) disingenuous” i.e. the Socratic mask of εἰρωνεία.

136 Aeschines still called him Σωκράτην τὸν σοφιστή (Against Tim. 173.2).
Be that as it may, there were many critics of παρρησία and of the potential dangers of the widespread freedom to speak frankly (e.g. Aristophanes’ Thesmophoriazousae, Euripides, Plato’s Protagoras and Republic 8.). The elitist text of the Constitution of the Athenians (ps.-Xen. = Old Oligarch) reviews Athens’ democracy and in 1.2, the author argues that it is right for the poor and the mob (i.e. the thetes) to have a strong political voice, stronger than the well-born and wealthy, “because it is the ordinary folks (δῆμος) who row the ships and bring power to the city... much more than the hoplites, the high-born, and the good men. And so it seems right (δίκαιον) that they share in magistracies, both allotted and elective, and that any citizen be able to speak if he wants to (λέγειν ἐξεῖναι τῷ βουλομένῳ τῶν πολιτῶν)” (ps.-Xen. Ath. Pol. 1.2). The notion alluded to here is, in rightful terms, ἰσηγορία, not παρρησία. In fact, it is the strict definition of ἰσηγορία which we have applied earlier: the practice of democracy in the context of its institutions. But their claim at παρρησία does not seem to have been lesser: “If no marble edifices glorified rowers and triremes, the thetes could point to still more impressive symbols of their glory: the arsenals and dockyards of Piraeus, and the prows of their triremes, carrying names such as Eleutheria (“Liberty”) and Παρρησία (“Freedom of Speech”)”.

This discussion of παρρησία happens to make Diogenes’ pragmatism resurface onto the political stage. Despite little direct commentary on politics, Diogenes’ lifestyle, known for its shamelessness and doggishness, was dead set on shaking the social and political norms, thus efficiently and provocatively “scratching them off” and rendering them useless. His shamelessness even drove him to do his “private businesses” (DL 6.69: καὶ τὰ Δήμητρος καὶ τὰ Ἀφροδίτης) out in public, and similarly, his ‘natural ἰσηγορία’

137 Lee 2006.503, Saxonhouse 2006.90.
made his παρρησία an inherent principle to his Cosmopolis. For Long “the positive counterpart of Cynic shamelessness is summed up in the catchword ‘freedom of speech’ (παρρησία)” 138. Once society’s νόμοι have been subverted, who is to stop Diogenes from speaking? The catchword is multi-faceted in Cynic thought: it is not simply speaking freely because παρρησία also accounts for public denunciation, even public sycophancy, concepts that may be included in Diogenes’ use of his frankness.

Without claiming that Diogenes “appropriates” παρρησία for his philosophy (as Monoson 2000.154-180 does for Plato) nor that he uses it as legitimacy for his license and intellectual freedom (legally, he could not!), the anecdote that παρρησία is κάλλιστον agrees with Diogenes’ claim to a citizenship of the world: it brushes aside potential censorship from Athenian officials – the fact that Protagoras’ books were burned is a sour reminder of the sophist’s lack of παρρησία, as a foreigner and as an outsider.

Diogenes’ penchant for nature required him to extract the political dimension from most of his vision: the fragments of Philodemus (Herc. Pap. 339 = SSR V B 126) instruct us on Diogenes’ Republic and they draw indeed a picture of “extreme individualism”. Certainly Dudley is right when he says that to call Cynic individualism “a political system at all is doubtless a contradiction, unless we are prepared to admit... the possibility of a benevolent anarchy”. 139 Would we expect anything other than a provocative and satirical piece from Diogenes? 140 As a citizen of no specific πόλις, thus

138 Long 1996.35. For Saxonhouse 2006.89, παρρησία is “the democratic practice of shamelessness.”
139 Dudley 1937.37.
140 Diogenes’ Republic (Πολιτεία) also dealt with women, social “uniformity”, equality in athletic nudity, the community of wives (as Zeno expounded in his own Republic: DL 7.32) and children, etc. (see Philodemus and DL 6.72). The recurrence of Sparta in Diogenes’ χρεῖαι and Zeno’s own Republic come quickly to mind. After two anecdotes concerning religious taboos, DL quickly follows up with some very
without an active political power, Diogenes could still claim an ideal \( \pi\alpha\varrho\rho\varsigma\iota\alpha \) from his utopian Cosmopolis without engaging in \( \iota\sigma\gamma\gamma\omicron\omicron\iota\alpha \): he used to “praise those who thinking to engage in politics do no such thing.” (DL 6.29: \( \varepsilon\pi\acute{\eta}\nu\varepsilon\iota \ldots \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma \mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\zeta \pi\omicron\lambda\iota\tau\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\theta\omicron\alpha \iota \kappa\acute{\iota} \mu\eta \pi\omicron\lambda\iota\tau\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\theta\omicron\alpha \ldots \)). Equipped with its universal frankness of speech, Cynic cosmopolitanism positively relates to Cynic “freedom” (\( \epsilon\lambda\varepsilon\omega\theta\epsilon\omicron\omicron \)) which, as Aristippus’ \( \xi\varepsilon\omicron\omicron\iota \), “was designed to secure his personal freedom”, while the single \( \pi\omicron\alpha\lambda\iota \zeta \) “with all its attendant obligations, is equally an impediment to true Cynic freedom.”\textsuperscript{141}

diogenes’ supposed physical theories: based on our knowledge of early Cynicism it is hard to assert that those truly represent Diogenes’ thoughts, but, significant or not, what DL offers is reminiscent of the physical theories of Anaxagoras (\textit{everything is in everything}) and of Empedocles’ \textit{pores} (\textit{cf}. Moles 1996.112 and n.33). I doubt that these anecdotes belong to Diogenes, \textit{contra} Moles (1996.119: “whether logically or illogically, Diogenes did sometimes invoke physical theories”), but I agree with him that “although the physical theories of Anaxagoras and Empedocles serve to give the [Cynic] model coherence, they are not indispensable to it.” That Empedocles’ theory (or Anaxagoras’ in Schofield 1991.141-142) appears in Diogenes’ tragedy \textit{Thyestes} (DL 6.72) is also problematic since the authorship of the play is already doubted by DL (the play is often attributed to Philiscus of Aegina or Pasiphon). In any case, the tragedy serves as a backdrop for the Cynic acceptance of anthropophagy (\textit{cf}. DL 6.73; Diogenes Sinopensis, \textit{Thyestes} TGF).

\textsuperscript{141} Moles 1996.111.
Chapter 5. Cynic Character

It is impossible to discuss the nature and origins of the early Cynic tradition without addressing the difficult notion of “characterization” because the historical portrayal of Diogenes and the construction of his literary self are at stake. Since English has a wide range of terms, it is imperative to approach the important terminology with care. In order to make sense of the multitude of terms available, we need to distinguish the range of such terms which involve an individual’s characteristics that make him whole, unique... in short, what makes him an individual. Navigating among a plurality of closely-related words, let us first comment on the many forms by which we discuss the individuality of a (historical) person or a (literary) character, and the clear marks that make explicit what we mean by the ambiguous term ‘character’, that is, that which makes him recognizable as a complete and consistent individual. Indeed our modern terminology in discussing character and personality is so rich (and often both terms overlap) that we must confront the ambiguities so as to better grasp the subtlety of the lexical terms. As far as Diogenes the Cynic is concerned, the Chreia tradition paints a picture in which our philosopher most often seems to remain the very same person. But what access does that tradition, in fact, provide us with?

5.1 Greek χαρακτήρ

When it comes to Greek “character” (χαρακτήρ), some comments on its meaning may be helpful here, especially since the word itself is at the center, as we have already
seen, of the Cynic slogan of “de-facing” the νόμοι. The verb χαράττω and its cognate χαρακτήρ referred originally to a physical mark, a visible sign, for instance the external property of sensible objects or the distinctive physical features of individuals such as their facial traits (Aes. Suppl. 282, Hdt. 1.116: τοῦ προσώπου); and the word could also refer to linguistic features (Soph. fr. 178 TGF: ἐν γλώσσῃ, Arist. Probl. 905b25: φωνή) and dialectal differences (Hdt. 1.57, 142). But most specifically, χαρακτήρ is a key word associated with the minting of coins, i.e. their stamp, just as the story of Diogenes’ exile for their defacement (παρα-χαράττω) shows. In fact, from our earliest evidence the word has referred to physical aspects exclusively, namely the empirical effect of alteration (in Aes. Pers. 683 the fields are “marked”). But when did the metaphor start to indicate the “marking” of one’s character, that is, the psychological features that define one’s personality, from which our modern word “character” comes from? How did “marking” come to be used to reflect the general moral trace of an individual’s behavior and attitudes?

Our earliest literary evidence for the use of χαρακτήρ in this psychological sense is found in Euripides’ Medea, produced in 431 BCE. In lines 516-519 Medea bemoans

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142 Anaxag. DK B1, B3 and Emped. DK B21, although the term is used by Simplicius to summarize and paraphrase the philosophers: it might not have been originally used by the philosophers themselves.
143 So too in English (Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. character): “a distinctive significant mark of any kind; a graphic sign or symbol” (I.2) and “a feature, trait, characteristic” (II.8a).
144 The term came to represent the writing style when discussing genres and authors in literary criticism: ps.-Dem. Phal.’s Περὶ ἐρμηνείας (4.223: χαρακτήρ ἐπιστολικός) and Dion. Halic. especially; Crates’ “lofty style” (ὑψηλότατον χαρακτῆρα) in his tragedies (DL 6.98 = Crates fr. 1 TGF).
146 In Pl. Phdr. 263b8 Socrates uses χαρακτήρ as the distinctive features (i.e., characteristics) of situations where the art of rhetoric would apply: it is here almost synonymous with “type” (ἐίδος). Dinarchus (Orat. 42 fr. 1 and Orat. 44 fr. 1 Conomis) mentions similarly the “characteristics” of water (fluid, cold).
that the stamp of evil leaves no “trace” (χαρακτήρ) on the body,¹⁴⁷ unlike counterfeited currency which is usually betrayed by clear signs (τεκμήρια). This is the first time we find an explicit correspondence between pecuniary minting and the psychological coding of an individual, the first time where the image of minting is directly assimilated to the physical body.¹⁴⁸ Further examples in Euripides (and him alone) even show the complete removal of the metaphor and speak in moral terms by simple metonymy: “the stamp (χαρακτήρ) of nobility” (Eur. Hec. 379-381: ἐσθλῶν), “the mark of virtue” (Eur. Her. 659: ἀρετᾶς).¹⁴⁹

Once the image was secured, the equation of the physical “mark” upon objects with the print of one’s persona was fully deployed, as in a fragment of Euripides (fr. 329 TGF) where the speaker (perhaps Danae) moans that a “favorable character” (χαρακτήρ χρηστὸς) is suitable to noble souls (τοῖς γενναίοισιν). Only then can we begin to acknowledge that the word “character” comes close in meaning to our modern use of character “trait”. From our standpoint, therefore, Euripides has something to do with the use of character in a psychological sense. Yet, perhaps strangely enough, this use was never picked up by the orators of the 4th c. and nowhere do we find this meaning in

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¹⁴⁷ Χαρακτήρ is glossed as σημεῖον in Schol. Eur. Med. 517-518. A similar image is used by Hyperides fr. 196 Jensen: χαρακτήρ οὐδεὶς ἐπέστη επὶ τοῦ προσώπου τῆς διανοίας τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. ¹⁴⁸ An analogy between moral worth and metal is widespread in earlier poetry: the imagery is one of “testing” the genuineness of gold and, by analogy, the quality or worth of a person. In such instances the image does not point to the “impression” or the mark that is left on one’s body or morality: the test is rather a proof. The “testing” of gold was made by rubbing it with lead upon a touchstone (παρατρίβειν εἰς βάσανος; βασανίζειν). We find the image, among others, in Theognis 417, 450, 1106: “Many, while untested, seem to be noble. But when you will be rubbed against lead on the touchstone (εἰς βάσανον) you will turn out to be good (καλός), refined gold (χρυσὸς ἀπεφθος) to everyone” (1104b-1106 West). In Pind. Pyth. 10.67-68, the right spirit (νόος ὀρθὸς) is found by testing it upon the touchstone (ἐν βασάνῳ), as with gold; in Soph. Oed. R.. 510, the Sphinx is considered a “test” (βάσανος) successfully passed by Oedipus. ¹⁴⁹ See also Isocrates who notes that the virtue of Herakles and Theseus in their labours gave their achievements a wonderful “stamp of glory” (Ad Dem. 8.4.4: εὐδοξίας).
rhetoric. In fact, even Theophrastus’ famous work, the *Characters*, should rather be titled "Ἡθεα or Περὶ ἠθέων.151

Another example in Euripides is found in his *Electra* (559) when Orestes wonders why a slave stares upon him “like a man who squints at the bright stamp (χαρακτῆρα) of a coin”. The simile is significant: it is the first clear analogy between a coin and a human face, where the marks on the currency are assimilated to human features. Later on, even more explicitly, Orestes is finally recognized by the old man for the scar (χαρακτῆρα) above his eye (572). So, for sure, man’s stamp is a mark, the display of traits that make him recognizable to others. When it comes to value, either monetary or moral, one’s stamp is what can be estimated, evaluated, and judged accordingly. The image is quite powerful. As we have mentioned, the metaphorical “defacement of coinage” which Diogenes pursued was not really a mission to falsify the value of coins, to counterfeit them, but simply to criticize and “retire” ancient habits, old customs that are variously witnessed in contemporary society. Of course Diogenes offered an alternative: he bore upon himself the very marks, the stamp of this new currency, not as shiny as new coins would be but breaking from normative usage. His stamp, his mark, Diogenes exercised and practised it: he lived it up! For Diogenes the Dog, the defacement of currency (παραχαράττειν) meant to strip off, to mark off the consensual

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150 Some instances in Hyperides and Dinarchus show no psychological meaning.
151 The modern title “Characters” appears only in interpolations of a later date that were transmitted with Theophrastus’ original work. Satyrus, the 3rd c. Peripatetic source whom DL uses, wrote a work Περὶ χαρακτήρων – the only fragment is found in Athen. 4.168e = 4.66 Kaibel: πολέμιοι τῆς οὐσίας ὑπάρχοντες, ὡς Σάτυρος ἐν τοῖς Περὶ χαρακτήρων – but its actual content eludes us. By Platonius’ time (9th c. CE) the word “χαρακτήρ” clearly shows its psychological force: he says that Aristophanes drove the “characters” of men (χαρακτῆρα) in-between comic extremes, being neither too bitter (πικρὸς λίαν) as Cratinos, nor complacent (χαρίεις) as Eupolis (Schol. Ar., Proleg. Comoed. 2.19-23).
153 In Arist. *Pol.* 1257a41, the stamp (χαρακτήρ) of a coin is the “symbol of its value” (τοῦ ποσοῦ σημείου).
image; the image he shaped with his life and language all point to characteristics shared by the (still nascent) interest in ethics as an analysis of individual behavior (thus adding psychology into the system). Diogenes’ behavior, after having become “traits” and “marks” of his personality, thus produced a philosophy of actions as he shaped and enacted the very paradigm he wanted to propose.

Diogenes the Cynic certainly implied more than the simple and literal sense of minting currency as his slogan. He obviously made extensive use of the image in his own personal way of life. He understood the υόμοι of society as the conventions of δόξα, but also the conventional ethics that regulate and normalize expected behaviors. Perhaps he did not see it so much in a psychological sense, but his ideological defacement of currency necessarily implies scratching the conventional behaviors, those very behaviors he provoked by displaying unorthodox usages, new marks of practical behavior. Ethics was definitely on the move: that Diogenes’ project was wholly interested in ethics seems a no-brainer.

As a true character, I hypothesize that the figure of Diogenes shares parallels with, on the one hand, the notion of personage inherent to cultural and literary models, and on the other, the notion of performance (both as a social and theatrical paradigm). As such we may wonder if the semantic transfer of the “physical mark” onto the “psychological stamp” was based on the features of dramatic masks, with their fixed expressions and characteristically painted elements.

Outside of this “physical marking”, the English word character is often imbued with moral judgement. Indeed, where personality might influence and direct one’s behavioral response, a person’s character may be better understood as the “evaluation”
of these behavioral responses by external individuals. Someone’s (moral) character will therefore imply the judgment made by others of the agent’s responses to specific situations. Therefore, by character, I mean the predication of someone’s action on moral grounds, which grounds are independent from the objective observation of the acting-agent’s personal responses: in this sense, to say that someone is good, evil, inappropriate, cruel, etc., usually illustrates the evaluation of that individual’s behavior rather than the actual expression of his behavior. As such, I understand personality as the agent’s active response, but his (moral) character as the external “interpretation” made by others of that agent’s behavioral response.

An example taken from tragedy should make the point clearer. When Medea kills the princess Glaucê and her own children to get revenge at her husband’s betrayal, it would be hard not to make Medea a “jealous” literary personage with a vengeful soul (Eur. Med. 1354-57). This is one of Medea’s personality traits: her jealous nature and her vengeful heart play out in her murderous response to the contingency of the situation. As far as her character is concerned, the chorus consequently calls her vile (1265: δειλαία) for the deeds she has accomplished, while Jason, in his painful agony acknowledges the “most impious” deed (1328: δυσσεβέστατον) of that “great evil” of a woman (1331: κακὸν μέγα), that “traitor” (1332: προδότιν), that “lioness with a nature more savage than the Tyrrhenian Scylla” (1342-43) who is “all wickedness” (1369: σοὶ δὲ πάντ’ ἐστὶν κακά). Medea’s own reply to Jason underlines the very subjective nature of such a moral evaluation: “Call me a lioness, if you want, or even Scylla, the Tyrrhenian dweller, for to your own heart, I have responded in appropriate measures” (1358-60). For Medea, the moral (and negative) evaluation of her action made by Jason contrasts with her own
vengeful *personality*: her point of view and her own interpretation of the murderous act polarize the differences between her (natural) predisposition to the possibility of vengeance (her personality, which she would hardly deny) and the moral evaluation of the current situation made by others (her character, as subjective as it may be from her own perspective).

In this respect, one of Diogenes’ main personality traits was certainly his wit and humor. Indeed, Diogenes’ *persona* (here, as a historical-literary figure, as a semi-fictionalized character in his own literary tradition) refracts an image where his attitude in a given situation, and perhaps more specifically his language, exhibits his *personality*, not so much his *character*: should Diogenes be considered “obscene”, this would be a clear statement about his character, not so much his personality. His wit, the use of bitter humor, and his sharp attacks do not conceal his own views on the world and the predisposition he has for the prominence of φύσις over the conventional norms set by custom and habits. The apophthegms, as such, all reveal either his true *personality* or they help in constructing the moral *character* of the paradigmatic Cynic. We may claim that Diogenes’ determination, his humor, and his provocative behavior all safely belong to his *personality*; meanwhile, shamelessness may be his most famous *character* trait: conscious as he was that he infringed the customs of decency, Diogenes probably did not believe his actions to be reprehensible from his philosophical perspective: that he was provocative (*personality*), certainly, but morally bad (*character*), it is questionable.
5.2 Levels of Characterization

Many English words are used to define, however approximately, ethical or psychological apprehensions of an individual: *person, personality, character, individuality, persona*, moral traits, etc. To remove some of the ambiguity befalling these terms, let us make the following distinction, by using convenient pairings. ⁴¹⁵ I have established three pairs, each under one specific perspective: 1) Historicity: person vs personage; 2) Psychology: personality vs character; and 3) Social performance: ‘true’ behavior vs projected *persona*. ⁴¹⁵

1) At the level of historicity, we may distinguish between a historical individual (person) and a literary character (personage). The former refers to the “real” person, one who has lived and existed in human History, while the latter would be rather called a *dramatis persona*, a literary *personage* (the mask or the dramatic πρόσωπον of a (his)story) which does not necessarily imply his actual existence. At this level, both entities still possess a unique identity and each is perceived as an individual *person* in his

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¹⁵⁴ One will quickly notice that such pairs pit actual (or historical) agents against literary (fictionalized or simply ‘textualized’) constructions, since I wish to signal here how the early Cynic tradition played an active role in the ethical experimentations of different men, both in their deeds, and in their conscious play on the very notion of “tradition”, which (literarily) creates or emulates its emblematic figures. Within the constellation of ⁴ᵗʰ-c. polemics and affronts, we find that not only Plato and Isocrates had something to prove but that most philosophers somehow investigated different kinds of ethical, or moral, education.

¹⁵⁵ I am not interested in the concept of soul, as the constituent of one’s ‘person’, nor in the definition of individuality as a concept guided by necessary “self-awareness” or I-centered “subjectivity”, à la Descartes’ *cogito ergo sum* (on the self and the ‘I’, see the brief comments in Gill 2006.331-332). I only mean to establish guiding lines regarding the different terms by which we discuss persons, whether fictive or historical.
own rights. In this respect, “personhood” might be a helpful term since both figures are presumed to have grown and have received a particular upbringing; thus they both display a certain personality and they are conceived, or interpreted, as whole beings. These individuals, in this case, are not only usually characterized by their self-consciousness, but also by their having beliefs and desires, whether implied, suggested, or expressed.

But the *personage* (see Pl. *Ion* 540b, Arist. *Poet.* 1454a19-31) is “made-up” and represents a fictional(-ized) individual whose construction often serves a literary purpose, usually being an agent within the narrative or the plot itself. The validity of this distinction *person/personage* rests on a truth-criterion, *i.e.* whether the individual is historical or fictional. ‘Person’ thus refers to a real figure, such as Aristophanes’ Cleon, Plato’s Socrates, or the Cynic Diogenes, whose historicity was never questioned, while ‘personage’ relates to a fictionalized character (*e.g.*, the epic Achilles, the tragic Medea, comic slaves, and so on).

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156 Gill 1988.169-170: modern interest in ‘personhood’ understands persons as a “class” and is “concerned to define the boundaries of this class by reference to normative criteria of personhood... [T]he conditions of personhood have been stipulated as, for instance, rationality, self-consciousness, and the capacity for assuming legal and moral responsibility for oneself”.

157 See, among others, Smith 1990 for a fuller philosophical discussion. Cf. DL 7.85: in his *On Ends*, Chrysippus wrote that “the first particularity (οἰκεῖον) of every animal is its constitution (σύστασιν) and the conscience of it (συνείδησιν).” Although the ancient Greek tradition (Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics all share the belief in human rationality, despite major differences) and Christian view agree (cf. Engberg-Pedersen 1990.110, whose essay discusses the Stoic conception of the person after clearing the (false) claim that Classical Greeks did not have any concept of the person), the ancient notion of what constitutes an ἄνθρωπος is summed up by Boethius (ca.520 CE) who defines a person (*persona*) as “an individual substance of a rational nature” (*Persona est naturae rationalis individua substantia*, in *Liber de persona et duabus naturis*, ch. 3, in J.-P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologia Latina*, lxiv. 1343C).

158 This is one instance of the definition of “character” (OED, s.v. character, II.17a): “A personality invested with distinctive attributes and qualities, by a novelist or dramatist; also, the personality or ‘part’ assumed by an actor on the stage”.

159 I leave aside discussions of the truth-value granted to myths by the Greeks, but we should include divinities and many, if not most, legendary figures of Greek literature.
In this perspective, the early Cynic tradition is a significant example whereby the literary tradition itself blurs the frontier between the two notions of person and personage. Beside Aristotle’s reference to Diogenes as “the Dog” (*Rhet.* 1411a24), no other direct mention of Diogenes is known from his lifetime, a mention that would belong to a strictly-historical discourse; the first Cynic rather appears in works whose own value often oscillates between modern notions of (objective) historiography and ancient (and less objective) anecdotes from the Chreia tradition: hence the difficulty in assessing the historicity of Diogenes’ true personality. For lack of better evidence, we need to resort to and rely on the tradition (a literary one *de facto*) by which the historical person of Diogenes becomes entirely undifferentiated from his literary personage, for indeed, strictly speaking Diogenes is only a literary figure to us. This further confirms our Diogenic problem and my previous words of caution still hold (despite the necessary circularity to the problem).

Still let us not overburden ourselves. We should, I believe, feel confident that the entire early Cynic tradition cannot be wrong altogether. As with the punctual differences that appear in the various accounts of Socrates, we should trust, from the slim and scattered evidence concerning our Cynic philosopher, that we do get somehow “the gist of Diogenes”, or at least his image is painted in sufficient detail as to offer a general picture of his actual and historical personality. Although his person and personage are forever intertwined, the philosopher most likely exhibited some, if not most, of the traits that are attributed to him by the tradition.\(^{160}\) All in all, the historical Diogenes “quickly

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\(^{160}\) Christopher Gill’s numerous contributions over the years to the distinction between ‘character’ and ‘personality’ have little impact on my use of the terms here. While acknowledging the force of his complex and in-depth studies in the various areas where the distinction exists (epic, tragedy, biography: see 1983, 1986, 1990), the categories by which I treat these terms are mainly used to demonstrate the
became a literary character –probably in his own lost works; certainly in those of others."\(^{161}\) His double nature makes him both grounded in History and in literary tradition.

On the other hand, we need to be aware of possible hyperboles and probable exaggerations meant to underline or emphasize some of his actual traits: these could have been expanded or invented at any time in the long historiographical tradition of early Cynicism (\textit{e.g.}, spanning from the early Stoics themselves all the way to imperial writers such as Lucian and Dio Chrysostom). Some of these hyperboles came out of a desire, again, to align the philosophical history and to secure a succession lineage (Socrates, Antisthenes, Diogenes), with an intent on stressing philosophical connections through imitation or motifs: \textit{e.g.}, the Delphic oracle in the life of Diogenes (DL 6.20) modeled on Socrates’ own storyline. Otherwise, the hyperboles may be entirely fictional episodes where the philosopher is placed as the main character of an exemplary, or paradigmatic, episode: \textit{e.g.}, the sale of Diogenes as a slave (DL 6.74-75), which I believe to be a literary fabrication.

\textbf{2) At the level of psychology, there is, on the one hand the psychological traits that shape an individual’s attitudes and reactions resulting from his own conception of the world, which in turn may have been influenced, to some degree, by his personal}\footnote{difference in the ‘perception’ or ‘connotation’ that the English words hold (personality, character, person, \textit{persona}, etc.). Instead of using Gill’s opposition between character-viewpoint and personality-viewpoint (1990), I wish to stress that the tradition (literary and, surely on occasions, fictional) surrounding Diogenes the Cynic folds back onto his historical, factual biographical self. The distinction between the English words means not that we should see two different Diogenes (the actual person and the literary character), but rather that there is, for us, but one Diogenes, both a historical figure and a fictional character to some degree. In this respect, Halliwell’s contribution (1990, see below) comes closer to my own interpretation of the Cynic tradition than does the subtle distinctions that Gill intelligently brings out. 161 Goulet-Cazé 1996.7.}
upbringing, education, cultural background, and individual life events: this is what we call personality, a notion which is rather intrinsic to one’s person and is reflected in his external behavior. Thus, “personality” represents one of the very qualities that make one distinct from another person, and in this respect, a personality is granted traits: “We call people kind-hearted, generous, fair-minded, witty, flaky, charming, mean-spirited, bitchy, dull, stupid, thoughtless, self-deprecating, bullies, control freaks” (Goldie 2004.1-2). As such, personality traits may be said to be “relatively enduring – it’s a kind of state”, relatively in that they are not completely fixed but may be “subject to change” over time (Goldie 2004.7, 17). According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), personality is defined as “the quality... of being a person, as distinct from an animal, thing, or abstraction; the quality which makes a being human” (A.I.1a) and refers to “a being resembling or having the nature of a person, especially by having self-awareness or consciousness” (3a) or to the “quality or collection of qualities which makes a person a distinctive individual” (4b).

But on the other hand, there is a person’s “moral stamp” (the Greek word χαράκτηρ belongs here) which mainly consists, in my view, of an evaluation made by others, that is, an extrinsic judgement that often rests on moral grounds. As defined by the OED, character is rather “the sum of the moral and mental qualities which distinguish an individual or a race, viewed as a homogeneous whole; the individuality impressed by

162 Other personality traits include (Goldie 2004.2): charisma, charm, professionalism, shallow, hardworking, cunning, ruthless, devious. Many of such traits are revealed in action: ‘courage’, ‘determination’, ‘self-esteem’, ‘self-confidence’, ‘taciturnity’, ‘tactlessness’, ‘foolhardiness’, ‘short temper’, ‘pugnacity’, ‘generosity’, ‘complacency’, ‘vanity’, ‘courtesy’, ‘dignity’. And so on. The Oxford Collocations Dictionary gives the most common English words used in association with personality; they usually present qualities of someone’s own person in his general, or habitual, behavior: bright, bubbly, extrovert, jovial, lively, outgoing, sparkling, vibrant, vivacious, attractive, charismatic, charming, engaging, lovely, magnetic, pleasant, warm, dominant, dynamic, forceful, formidable, powerful, striking, strong, vulnerable, weak, etc. On this basis, if ‘frugality’ is to be seen as a personality trait, then the correlative character trait would probably be something like ‘moderation’ or self-control.
nature and habit on man or nation; mental or moral constitution” (II.11). It is this moral constitution which summarizes a person’s “stamp”, that is, his or her (moral) character. 163 Many ‘personality traits’ can thus be encompassed by a single ‘character trait’: virtue and vice are representative of (good and bad) characters rather than of (positive or negative) personalities. 164

This moral aspect of “character” is found in other definitions provided by OED: character may refer to the “moral qualities strongly developed or strikingly displayed” (OED 12a) or it represents “a description, delineation, or detailed report of a person’s qualities” (14a). In this sense, Goldie’s definition of character as distinct from that of personality is correct: as he writes, a character trait runs “deeper than a personality trait, and the judgement goes deeper too”. Cruel and kind individuals, he continues, reveal something “more profound about them than that they are charming or quick-witted. It reveals something about them that we are rightly inclined to say is concerned with their moral worth as a person. Being cruel is a morally bad thing about someone, and being kind is a morally good thing.”165 Therefore someone’s character is granted a moral

163 Among many definitions of “character” the American Heritage Dictionary gives: 1. The combination of qualities or features that distinguishes one person, group, or thing from another. 2. A distinguishing feature or attribute, as of an individual, a group, or a category. 4. Moral or ethical strength. 5. A description of a person’s attributes, traits, or abilities. 7. Public estimation of someone; reputation. 9. a. A notable or well-known person; a personage. b. A person, especially one who is peculiar or eccentric. – adj. 3. Dedicated to the portrayal of a person with regard to distinguishing psychological or physical features; characterization n. 2. A description of qualities or peculiarities. 3. Representation of a character or characters on the stage or in writing, especially by imitating or describing actions, gestures, or speeches.

164 As Goldie 2004.27-51 sees it too.

165 Goldie 2004.4 (emphasis mine). He gives a clear example of the distinction: “One might say that the doubts many people felt about President Clinton, after various personal scandals beset his presidency, were doubts about his character; no one doubted his personality, his charm, his ability to ‘work’ an audience” (Goldie 2004.5); “being a town person, a foodie and a loving person are personality traits; in other words, they can be part of someone’s personality... Personality traits are dispositions,” (Goldie 2004.8-10). Character as a trait deeper than the ‘superficial’ (I prefer ‘objective’) personality is discussed by Goldie 2004.27-51: he especially surveys ancient and modern philosophical views (e.g. Aristotle, Kant, Byron, Hume).
weight which tends to be subsumed under the *objectivity* (Goldie prefers the term
‘superficiality’) of personality.\textsuperscript{166} While “someone’s *personality* traits are only good
conditionally upon that person also having good *character* traits [...] the converse isn’t
true: the goodness of someone’s *character* traits is not good conditionally on his having
good *personality* traits. Someone is a wise, honest and kind person <i.e. character>; but
he has absolutely no sense of humour <i.e. personality>.” In other words, we can say that
negative *personality* traits (for example, a lack of sense of humor) do not “pollute”
*character* traits (for example: wisdom, honesty, etc.).\textsuperscript{167}

Another distinction is that personality may be said to be *person-specific*, while
character can be said to be *situation-specific*. The former (*personality*) is considered
more consistent, without suggesting that it is entirely permanent and never unchanging;
the latter (*character*) represents the evaluation that derives from social situations,
contingent upon the surrounding circumstances of a behavioral display. *Character*, being
the overall judgment of the sum total of personality traits, describes the moral ‘stamp’ or
the ‘trace’ (Gr. χαρακτήρ) left on a person’s name once the situation has occurred – the
Greek poets called it κλέος, later thinkers, φήμη. Therefore I understand “character” as a
social component of interactions between individuals, beset by external factors: *character*
is some sort of evaluation resulting from moral and “coded” norms. To have a sense of
humor (a clear *personality* trait) is rightly grounded in cultural norms as to what is
considered “funny”, yet the code is of a different nature than what constitutes “goodness”

\textsuperscript{166} Case in point, the English adjectives most collocated with the word ‘character’ (according to
the *Oxford Collocations Dictionary*) do present elements that are more often associated with the moral
evaluation of situations, or a subjective apprehension of someone’s behavior: good, excellent, exemplary,
impeccable, generous, likeable, lovable, popular, colourful; and on the negative side: bad, evil, ruthless,
violet, dubious, shady, suspicious, etc.
\textsuperscript{167} Goldie 2004.32. Emphasis mine.
or “badness” of character. Despite idiosyncratic differences across various cultures, a sense of humor may be comparable throughout most societies – it usually involves laughter and is a universal trait –, whereas an act being judged “good or bad” is expected to fluctuate depending on the moral standards which each culture may define differently: the moral ground for cannibalism is here an obvious example.

Ultimately, this distinction between personality and character rests on the intellectualization or internalization of psychological motives that have the capacity of influencing active responses in specific situations or on the external interpretation of these responses. If someone’s personality is to be defined as one’s “expected” behavior in certain recurring situations (Goldie 2004.13 calls it a “behavioural habit or temperament”), that same person’s character is rather the evaluation others make of his behavior in contingent situations. A person (and to a large extent a personage) is said, in those instances, to be “oneself” and to remain the same person, recognizable through general psychological traits (personality), or, to behave in a manner that supposedly reflects his moral output (character).

Since C. Gill has greatly contributed to the distinction between the words ‘character’ and ‘personality’, a few words are in order. Although his contribution is extremely significant, it is different from the use I am making here, yet his definitions remain helpful and I agree with many of his definitions. In the ancient biographical genre (especially in Plutarch and Tacitus) Gill 1983 associates the ancient approach to characterization with (moral) ‘character’, and the modern approach with (psychological) ‘personality’: in this, he considers the notion of character, liable to moral praise or
blame, as prevailing in ancient times (or at least in the philosophy, biography, and
historiography, of the late Republic and early Empire). Gill’s ‘character-viewpoint’ is
thus concerned with the “moral agent, responsible, under normal circumstances, for his
actions, and having some responsibility too for his dispositions or character-traits”: it is
something relatively fixed but susceptible to development; it is associated with the
evaluation of ethical qualities; while his ‘personality-viewpoint’ is concerned “with the
real ‘personality’, the authentic ‘self’ or ‘identity’”: it is associated with the description
of personality traits (Gill 1983.470-471).

That very same issue over character and personality reappears in Gill 1986 (and
1990.17-29) in relation to tragedy where his distinction is presented in similar terms:
social public display (character) vs private internal qualities (personality). Gill recalls
John Jones (1962) for whom character is meant to address the ‘self-in-action’,
“inseparably connected with the social and family role of the agent and his immediate
situation”, while Gill’s personality is the self “independent of the person’s immediate
situation and social role” (1986.252). Gill 1990 (also Gill 1984) offers a more fruitful
study of the distinction in relation to the ancient correspondence between the terms ἔθος
and πάθος with the Odyssey and the Iliad respectively: here Gill associates character
with the Odyssey (where the figures are presented as ‘agents’ who respond to situations
through conscious choices), that is, with a focus on agency, a framework of general social
norms, an ‘objective’ perspective (1990.9-11). Character is further associated with “the
process of making moral judgements” which involves “a determinate ethical framework”
and treats people as “psychological and moral ‘agents’, that is, as the originators of
intentional actions” that are “indexes of goodness or badness of character” (1990.2).
Meanwhile the term *personality* for Gill is connected with “a response to people that is empathetic rather than moral: that is, with the desire to identify oneself with another person... rather than to appraise her ‘from the outside’”. In this instance of personality, the person is “a unique individual”, rather than “the bearer of character-traits which are assessed by reference to general moral norms”: *character* is associated with “moral appraisal”, *personality* with “unique individuality or identity” (1990.3); Gill later distinguishes (6-7) character as *validating* ethical assumptions within a culture, and personality as *questioning* those ethical assumptions. My own position on the biography of Diogenes puts rather the emphasis on his “personality”, because although DL is a source of a mixed biographical scope, the evidence provided by the χρεῖαι bears little on the (moral) evaluation of Diogenes’ character but rather reflects and exposes his actual personality-traits.

To recapitulate: I understand *personality* as the observation of one’s natural dispositions\(^{168}\) which many can testify to or witness (independently of moral appreciation): smart, sharp, well-behaved, patient, and so on, are predicates that tend to illustrate a person’s behavior (his *personality*) in general situations. Our definition therefore comes very close to the meaning we sometimes grant to the Greek word τρόπος. Τρόπος is not only the way or manner in which one lives or usually behaves,\(^ {169}\) but it is also the *personality* that this particular behavior exhibits and which informs us about the person. Odysseus’ πολυ-τροπία (*Od.* 1.1), for instance, his so-called industriousness, shows him as having many personalities through the various ways he *disguises* his true

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\(^{168}\) I include in “natural dispositions” the cultural and educational impact upon an individual.

\(^{169}\) Even though DL 6.71 uses the expression manner of life (χαρακτῆρα τοῦ βίου), τρόπος (lifestyle) better renders the idea: “<Diogenes> said that he lived the same “lifestyle” as Herakles when he preferred liberty over everything.”
self (literally or socially). He is at times a beggar who defers to the suitors and Penelope before the test of the bow; he is later a king who has regained his semi-divine demeanor after the revelation of his “true” identity as the king of Ithaca. This πολυτροπία is precisely, and of itself, one of Odysseus’ personality traits (even while he gets occasional help from his divine patroness Athena) and it bears little on his overall character. Indeed, there is no moral evaluation of Odysseus’ (objective, personality) trait: in themselves, his many guises are neither morally good nor bad; only the result of his πολυτροπία, the result of his many τρόποι, may be interpreted in moral terms: it is either his personal intent or the finality of his actions that can be viewed as displaying a good or evil “character”, not his πολυτροπία strictly speaking.

In that same respect, the κυνικὸς τρόπος that often accompanies Cynicism reveals the behavioral habits for which the early Cynics became known, but little evaluation of the goodness or badness of their behavior (or character) is made. Whether they were perceived as morally good or bad individuals is only possible when we confront their objective behavior with the observer’s own moral evaluation of ethical, anti-normative, provocative, or shocking display of behaviors. There is nothing inherently “bad” in accomplishing καὶ τὰ Δήμιουργος καὶ τὰ Ἀφροδίτης (DL 6.69) in public: that it was provocative and unconventional is obvious but it was part of Diogenes’ τρόπος. This kind of behavior may be judged as bad by those who preferably understand conformity to the public νόμοι as the sign of moral goodness. Therefore that Diogenes “used to” say or behave in such a way (e.g. his actions or deeds) does reflect, to a certain degree, his personality but his character mainly lives in the eye of his beholder. 170

170 Aristotle never uses the Greek word χαρακτήρ in any of his works to describe such moral evaluation. But in Nic. Eth. we find τρόπος on a few occasions, where it ultimately relates to the behavior
Another proof of this is that the meaning “personality” for Greek τρόπος also comes very close to “style” in reference to someone’s language.\textsuperscript{171} For instance, in Menander’s \textit{Hymnis}, fr. 472 CAF:

“By Athena, goodness (χρηστότης) is a blessed thing on all occasions and a wonderful resource for life. I have talked to this guy only for a small part of the day and now I’m devoted to him. ‘Language (λόγος) is a persuasive thing,’ one might say, especially one of those clever people (μάλιστα τῶν σοφῶν). But why then do I detest others who speak well? It is the speaker’s τρόπος (style/personality) that carries persuasion, not his language. For speaking well is awful (δεινόν) if it brings about some harm.”\textsuperscript{172}

The main opposition here is between ‘goodness’ (χρηστότης) and ‘awfulness’ (δεινόν). Although it is evident that χρηστότης and δεινότης refer to the λόγος, both can also denote someone’s τρόπος and not simply the characteristic of his speech. Indeed, χρηστότης, “good intention”, is a \textit{personality} trait rather than the moral evaluation of this person – the moral evaluation would be better rendered by ἄγαθός or κακός. The word χρηστότης is further linked to the “usefulness” of the λόγος rather than to its moral worth,\textsuperscript{173} just as δεινόν refers to the quality of the λόγος, not to its moral value. In this respect, the τρόπος of a λόγος belongs to the sphere of objective assessment of its style displayed by an individual (\textit{e.g.} 1169a30). In his discussion on incontinence (ἀκρασία), Aristotle disputes Socrates’ view which denied the very existence of ἀκρασία (1145b25-26) and blamed the display of it as ignorance (ἀγνοία). Aristotle questions that “if a man does act by ignorance, what is the τρόπος of this ignorance?” (εἰ δὲ ἄγνοιαν, τίς ὁ τρόπος γίνεται τῆς ἀγνοίας;). The τρόπος is not only the “manner” of the ignorance, which would inform us little as to what Aristotle thought, but it preferably refers to the “behavioral display” that is the result of this ignorance: “that the man who behaves incontinently does not consider that he is <being incontinent>, before he gets into this disposition/state, this is evident.” (\textit{Nic. Eth.} 1445b30-31: ὅτι γὰρ οὐκ οἴεταί ὅ ἀκρατεύομενος πρὶν ἐν τῷ πάθει γενέσθαι, φανερὸν).

\textsuperscript{171} In Pl. \textit{Ap.}, the word τρόπος refers to the speech “style” Socrates will use to defend himself (17d5, 18a2), namely, his “usual style” (27b2) of discussion.

\textsuperscript{172} I punctuate differently than Russell 1990.197, who adds “μάλιστα τῶν σοφῶν” to the direct quotation: “λόγος is persuasive, \textit{especially} (the λόγος) of clever people”. I, on the other hand, understand that Menander’s character envisions the proverb to be \textit{especially} fitting in the mouth of a wise or clever man. The text is as follows: νὴ τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν, μακάριόν γ᾿ ἡ χρηστότης | πρὸς πάντα καὶ θαιμαστόν ἐφόδιον βίῳ. | τοῦτον λαλήσας ἡμέρας σμικρὸν μέρος | εὐνοοῦσι ἐγὼ νῦν εἰμι. ‘πειστικὸν λόγος’ | πρὸς τούτ’ ἐν εἵμοι τὶς μάλιστα τῶν σοφῶν. | τί αὖν ἔτερος λαλοῦντας ἐβδελύττομαι; | τρόπος ἔσθ’ ὁ πείθων τοῦ λέγοντος, σὺ λόγος. | τὸ γὰρ λέγειν εὐ δεινὸν ἔστιν εἰ φέροι βλάβην τινά.

\textsuperscript{173} We saw earlier that the etymology of χρεία still contains the idea.
rather than to the moral interpretation of it as being evil, ruthless, or excellent, lovable, etc.; so, too, with an individual’s personality (τρόπος).

3) There is a final level which is significant in our analysis of the personality/character contrast. This one deals with the “performative” display of an individual in social situations. At this level, Diogenes’ actions are considered through an ethical lens which illuminates his social behavior and puts the spotlight on the individual choices in one’s desire to fulfill life’s goal. Diogenes’ philosophical enterprise of attacking the νομίσματα, defacing the currency of (customarily or morally) accepted behaviors, is reflected in his actual deeds, that is, in his ἰθος. Most of his critics observe that Diogenes often exhibited an ab-normal way of life whereby he at least seemed to live according to what he preached. Few perhaps would question even the validity of Diogenes’ outdoor life (yes, perhaps in a jar!), but no one would eradicate all of his actions from history with certainty; yet, whatever Diogenes actually did, it has all been “ascribed” to him, and whatever was exaggerated by the early or later traditions, it all purports to reflect the philosopher’s real views. Whether Diogenes truly (and philosophically) believed in all of his actions or he simply “played the part” as a constructed disguise (through a μίμησις of his own convictions) the intention of the Cynic tradition was to construct his persona as a fully-fledged, original personality.

174 Heraclitus (DK 22 B119): ἰθος ἄνθρωποι δαίμον ("a man’s ἰθος is his δαίμον" or "ἰθος is a δαίμον for Man"). As Wright 1990.221 interprets: "What happens to a man, his destiny, can be attributed to his ἰθος, the individuality resulting from the habit of certain kinds of thoughts and actions which affect the physical composition of the ψυχή."
So the distinction at the level of performance contrasts, on one side, ἤθος as the actual or adequate (πρέπον) individual behavior in a situation, and on the other, the (re)presentation of one’s character as a disguised or a “projected” ἤθος. The former relates to an individual’s actual social behavior, the latter, to the projection of a moral intent, i.e. a constructed persona (such as can be the case with oratorical presentation, under the ominous term of ἤθοσοιωία): this is the interpretation I make of the expression “ἐν ἤθει”. We are told, for instance, that Antisthenes was responsible for the exile of Anytus and the execution of Meletus, Socrates’ accusers (DL 6.10): Anytus was exiled after Antisthenes led some young visitors to Anytus, “saying, in character (ἐν ἤθει), that Anytus was wiser than Socrates.” It is clear from the statement that Antisthenes was speaking in full irony and did not claim to speak his true mind. The phrase ἐν ἤθει implies that Antisthenes is deceiving the youngsters by speaking his words “in character”, that is, as Socrates’ follower who wishes to fool his master’s detractors. Antisthenes’ stance is marked by his deception at speaking behind a social mask, pretending to be honest and frank about his claim. His trick was to make-believe, to set up a false truth. Antisthenes assumed to play the role of an honest flatterer, but his deception only stresses his attachment to his former teacher. His true behavior ( salariéς) is negated by the false pretence of his “projected” ἤθος.

As such we may further distinguish between a “private” ἤθος, stemming from the individual’s idiosyncratic personality, and his “public” persona, his intended projection onto social and interpersonal dealings, that may reflect or not his true personality, that may cover or not his true intents. The deceptive nature of the presentation of the self would fall into the latter category. Two fragments of Menander bear significance here:
“The citizen who has been chosen to be in charge should have a force of speech (λόγου δύναμιν) that is both free from envy and mixed with (συγκεκριμένην) a good character (ήθει χρηστῷ).” (fr. 578 CAF)

This means that a leader must not neglect his oratorical self: his language must reflect some reality and should ‘display’ the benevolent nature of his behavior. Whether the individual is personally good or bad has little incidence: his persona should at the very least be aligned with what he says. The same is true of another fragment: “Evil gatherings destroy good characters” (fr. 218 CAF: φθείρουσιν ἠθή χρῆσθ᾽ ὀμιλίαι κακαί.). The topos here emphasizes that evil crowds tend to blur the lines of individual personalities as public demonstrations may influence individual morals. In such cases the moral character of individuals is not so much permanently damaged as it is temporarily affected by the group dynamics which, in turn, alter reactions based on the contingency of group situations. In this respect, the alteration of character is effective and we witness the “fabrication” of one’s ἦθος. An example of this is further exemplified in Men. Dyss.: when the lover Sostratos asks Gorgias for the betrothal of his half-sister, Gorgias accepts for Sostratos has not come to this business “with a fabricated ἦθος” (764: οὔ πεπλασμένῳ γὰρ ἠθεὶ πρός τὸ πρᾶγμ’ ἐλήλυθας,) but rather “simply” and “praiseworthy of doing everything for the sake of this marriage” (765). As Gorgias continues, Sostratos plainly earned his wedding by working hard, showing himself to be a “man” by making himself equal to another (Dyss. 767-769). Sostratos is therefore congratulated for his honest character, since he has “given sufficient proof of his personality” (770: “proof of his τρόπος”). Gorgias closes with the wish that Sostratos remain authentic to what he has displayed (771: διαμένοις μόνον τοιοῦτος).

175 This comes close to Seneca’s statement centuries later when he discusses public games (Epist. ad Luc. 7).
To recapitulate: no one would doubt the historicity (1) of Diogenes, that he was indeed a real person, but from our evidence, he is always and necessarily a (literary) personage. As such his historical personality will always somehow elude us since he is only known through a literary tradition, yet we need to remain attentive to the convergence of his personality and the moral evaluation that his behavior has received (that is, his character). The ‘Diogenic problem’ previously discussed should not hinder us from evaluating his overall persona, and probably not his actual personality either. From the Cynic tradition the figure of Diogenes shares characteristics with other philosophers and sophists, but the main difference lies in his conviction that human beings are not so much different than animals and that they should revert to nature’s ways to live a life that can ultimately lead to happiness. Diogenes’ personality reflects such a quest by the very mission he espoused: defacing the currency. The moral evaluation of his behavior thus becomes irrelevant to the analysis of his personality insofar as his actions should be best seen in light of a ‘consistent’ personality. The important and central message of his “life according to φύσις” may be different than with other philosophers, but so is Diogenes’ medium to convey his philosophy. Contrary to Socrates’ elenctic refutations and conversational method (dialectics), for example, Diogenes preached by his pragmatic action, by setting himself as a living and breathing example, a true παράδειγμα (or, perhaps better, as a “counter-example”), rather than through theoretical exposés and lectures.176 For us he is a true historical person but he will remain, from our literary standpoint, an effective persona, a semi-fictionalized figure in his own biographical tradition.

176 Foucault 1983, “The Practices of Παρρησία”: “The Cynics thus taught by way of examples and the explanations associated with them. They wanted their own lives to be a blazon of essential truths which would then serve as a guideline, or as an example for others to follow.”
Therefore, for the early Cynic tradition, Diogenes the Man is usually and completely undifferentiated from Diogenes the Dog, and his personality is equated to his traditional portrayal, that is, his persona. If we excuse Thucydides for re-inventing Pericles’ words,\textsuperscript{177} if we ultimately accept that Plato re-configures his master to better use him for his own design, and if we agree that “representation” is inherent even in oratorical works (\textit{i.e.} the importance of ἔθος in deliberative and forensic speeches), then we must accept that Diogenes lives in-between those very same parameters: between an exact past that is unreachable to us and a (re)constructed personality that stages the character onto a convenient political, philosophical, and social scene. In this case, Diogenes’ mental “character” (\textit{personality}) and his literary character (\textit{personnage}) become complete mirror images that both reflect on each characterization, in the evaluation of History and in the shaping of Tradition.

To conclude our discussion of \textit{personality} and \textit{character} it is appropriate to address the work of another important scholar who has studied the traditional Greek conception of character. Using texts that underline Greek concerns for the “individual”,

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\textsuperscript{177} We are usually less critical of literary representations when it comes, for example, to Thucydides’ portrayal (even though he too has many detractors). Granted that Thucydides does a good job at defending his literary license in writing the Funeral Oration (2.34-46), we seem to have bigger issues when the same device is used shamelessly in the case of the early Cynics. It is as if we would have wanted the tradition itself to do its own recusatio, an apology with which only then we would gladly and uncompromisingly accept it for what it is. It is as if the historiography of philosophy altogether (the blending of doxographical and biographical accounts) should have been required to make a self-admission of literary “creation” in order to see it truly as a mixture of philosophical ideas that emblematize a philosophical movement and the fictionalization of situations whereby important characters take the stand and practice what they preached. Tradition necessarily portrays philosophers in action rather than merely “thinking” or promoting values: this much is clear from the Platonic dialogues in regards Socrates; yet at the same time, Socrates remains a literary character in Plato’s dialogues which make use of the master-figure in a more personalized and idiosyncratic way: everyone agrees that in Plato’s own philosophy Socrates increasingly becomes a mere mouthpiece for his own ideas. Plato’s dialogues keep expanding, and necessarily distorting, the real historical man, and for those who never met Socrates, Plato’s characterization becomes indeed the substitute for the historical man, if not becoming the “real Socrates” entirely. So is the power of Tradition.
intentional choices, and the virtuous life, S. Halliwell’s 1990 compelling essay greatly
illuminates the notion of our psychological level (2: “character” or “personality”) even
though it ignores the Cynics and their tradition. Halliwell brings forward a dynamic way
to investigate the correlation between Diogenes’ project of philosophical and ethical
proportions and the making of the early Cynic tradition. Avoiding any discussion on the
fictional or historical reliability of literary “characters” –our historical level (1)–
Halliwell’s reading still addresses the very issues that reflect, to a great degree, concerns
about Diogenes in his doggish, pragmatic enterprise. The fact that similarities exist
between real individuals and fictional ones (as the latter are “staged” by literature) only
shows that those two levels of existence (Historicity vs dramatis persona and true
personality vs fictional characterization) work almost identically, in whatever sphere we
investigate them. Halliwell thus provides an excellent study of the ever-important notion
of ethical display by analyzing figures such as Odysseus in the Homeric poem, Herakles
in Prodicus’ tale (Xenophon), and the real Evagoras in Isocrates’ encomiastic
experimentation; furthermore Halliwell illuminates the emphasis put on ethics in 4th-c.
literature, which is, of course, the very period of Plato and Diogenes.

First of all, Halliwell adequately supplants and quickly disposes of the primitivist
–and primitive– conception of Homeric psychology as expounded by B. Snell’s
*Discovery of the Mind* (1990.36-42). Opposite Snell, whose argument relies on two
major observations – 1) the lack of a single Homeric term to refer to the ‘mind’ and, 2)
the plurality of expression for psychological processes (νοῦς, θυμός, and the like) –,
Halliwell’s study of the character of Odysseus places the hero’s psychological dilemmas
and soliloquies in their rightful perspective, seeing them as the “dramatic demonstration
of... complex psychological process(es)” (1990.39) which put into poetic form the inner workings of conscious and cognitive turmoils. In fact, Halliwell’s analysis of one Odyssean episode (Od. 20.1-40) in which Odysseus struggles with decision-making is precisely “a manifestation of the way in which the mental experience of the character precisely embraces and holds together a complexity of drives and motivations” (Halliwell 1990.41). Another relevant analysis is Halliwell’s discussion of four Iliadic passages (ll. 11.403-407, 17.90-97, 21.552-562, 22.98-122) where the character debates with his inner self: “Why does my θυμός say this to me?” This is noticeably reminiscent of Socrates’ δάιμων which, centuries later, still problematized the same questions regarding human agency. No one would dare to claim, based on this, that Socrates considered human beings as disinterested and disengaged from their individual consciousness. Halliwell thus accurately disproves Snell’s thesis. Even if he does invoke briefly the Greek notion of δάιμων (1990.55-56 in the context of Isocrates’ Evag.) Halliwell simply assimilates it to the religious belief in the gods’ interventions in human lives.

Next we find Herakles: sitting at the ethical crossroad allegorized by the goddesses Virtue and Vice, Herakles’ identity is, we are told, the result of his εὐγένεια (his ‘breeding’), his natural endowments, and his upbringing, that is, the result of Nature itself (φύσις) which plays a role in the discovery of his personality (Xen. Mem. 2.1.27). In this perspective, Nature itself thus brings about a better understanding of Herakles’ true ‘person’: one’s upbringing, education, and usual habits (ἔθος), combined with his natural predispositions (e.g. εὐγένεια) ultimately fulfill one’s true nature (φύσις). In this case, Herakles’ nature is brought up “through careful processes of nurture and education” (Halliwell 1990.32), i.e. conventional norms, in other words νόμοι. The hero’s
personality, through his upbringing, now has the tools and the knowledge to commit to an ἔθος, to determine and choose his line of actions; this is truly what Prodicus’ parable allegorizes. Therefore the story of Herakles relates to “the formation and exercise of character in the growing person’s active experience of the world” (Halliwell 1990.33). In this instance we find that one’s character (or better here, ‘personality’) is “a matter of the shaping of a human life by an ethical motivation and agency ascribed, at its core, to the individual himself, and for which he may be held responsible...” (Halliwell 1990.33).178

What Halliwell suggests, without ever fully assuming it, is that the interest in ethics that is bound to connect personality, action, and agency, breaks the boundary between history and literature. If the distinctions between the ‘historical’ and the ‘traditional’ Diogenes are intertwined and that one necessarily reinforces the other, for us then the frontier between Diogenes (the historical man) and the Cynic personnage (a blown-up persona) dissolves, in the exact same manner as with Socrates: their historical personalities are completely indiscriminate and indistinct from their personae. Again, I believe that we should not be overcautious about Diogenes’ historical personality either:

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178 The notion of agency is crucial: similarly Gill 1986.252-253 understands ‘character’ (or ‘character-viewpoint’) as “a ‘moral agent,’ responsible for his actions and their consequences, and also responsible, at some level, for his feelings, and, at some other level, for the qualities or character-traits expressed in those actions and feelings... a rational being, whose actions derive from his beliefs and desires and reflect his intentions and motives”, a term associated with “morality, agency and responsibility” (1986.254; his study of the Aeschylean character of Agamemnon (263-264) stresses that there are often “external” influences that play on the king’s decision-making; another example is Herakles’ delusional killing of his children). The ‘personality-viewpoint’ is shown in statements “which invite us to share the person’s own point of view (or to try to understand it), and to recognise with some exactness a particular, transient psychological state” (Gill 1986.253) and the word is associated with “unique individuality, and with psychoanalytic and other psychological approaches” (1986.254). Ultimately, for Gill, both viewpoints are at work at different moments in tragedies: for example, the personality-viewpoint often suits best tragedy (this characteristic may be found in the expected audience-response to tragedy so as to “arouse our sympathetic interest”), but the character-viewpoint is especially allowed in episodes with a forensic or judicial quality (265-269). Gill 1986.257-260 also discusses the prominence of the ‘character-viewpoint’ (with some nuances) in: Aristophanes’ Frogs (Aristophanes attributes such a viewpoint to Aeschylus in his evaluative and “morally disapproving” view of Euripides’ characters, e.g. Frogs 1043-44, 1080-81); Plato’s Rep. and Ion; Aristotle’s Poet.
although it is safe to assume that Diogenes’ “traditional persona” (i.e. the one that takes the stage in the early Cynic tradition) was subjected, at times, to some exaggeration and hyperboles of his personality traits and philosophical thoughts, our picture of the man remains generally unified and is, overall, consistent.

Furthermore, with the information that we possess from different areas and genres of literature about the late Classical period, Diogenes’ personage is also consistent with concerns in the 4th century: that is, the interest in ethical behavior and in the ‘representation’ of people’s motives and actions (e.g. Isocrates, Plato, etc.). As Halliwell also shows in his essay, our own modern perception of “personality” (albeit Halliwell usually uses the word “character”), which might seem to some as a flawed retrojection onto the ancient view, is not wholly anachronistic or incongruent at all with ancient Greek culture. There is already in Antiquity “an underlying continuity in assumptions about the workings of the mind” and there are, Halliwell continues, “certain basic constituents in the understanding and evaluation of human behaviour” which cannot be accounted for only through our modern view.179 We recognize the motives of, and ascribe intentions to, fictional figures like Achilles, Creon, and Odysseus, but similarly to historical figures such as Sappho, Euripides, and Socrates, only because we do recognize them as “independent” moral agents; agents which we, sometimes with difficulty, identify with moral “characters” (i.e. dramatis personae) or actual persons we know and have encountered in our social or literary experiences. Otherwise, there is no explanation for the perennity of the Homeric exempla (Achilles, Agamemnon, etc.), literary characters that constitute a good bulk of literary criticism done from Plato180 to our own

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179 Halliwell 1990.42 and 34, respectively.
modern days. This is, I am certain, one major reason why these texts, still to this day, exert their power by providing at once pleasure, amazement, bewilderment, yet also fear, pity, disgust, or even hostility. An ethical paradigm, a literary exemplum, must be sufficiently believable in order to retain its cultural force, and these exempla necessarily possess recognizable (personality) traits that find echo in actual society.

Halliwell further defines 4 basic assumptions as “prerequisite conditions for the existence of notions of <personality>” in ancient Greek or even in modern culture: first, the recognition of the psychological identity of individuals; second, the ascription of some powers of choice and agency; third, criteria of rationality (that serve to motivate actions); and four, some conception of human responsibility (which may lead to evaluative judgments of praise or blame to agents or their actions). It is true that some Homeric characters (e.g. Agamemnon, Achilles, Helen, Odysseus etc.) do possess certain features (albeit ‘literarily’, or rather ‘textually’, limited) that sum up one’s person: agency, rationality, responsibility, psychological integrity of the mind (“a coherent locus of consciousness and motivation within the person”). For sure, as Halliwell notes, psychic integrity and psychic conflict are not exclusive to one another, but rather they both shape one’s psychological imprint through the person’s dilemmas and hesitations.181

As another case in point, Halliwell discusses Isocrates’ portrait of Evagoras in the eponymous encomium. Written in the mid-360s (contemporary with Antisthenes’ death and shortly before Diogenes’ arrival in Athens), the biographical ‘portrait’ exemplifies “a number of conventional attitudes towards human character” (1990.43): in this text Isocrates stresses that better than sculpture or painting, a representation in ‘textual’ form (Evag. 73: ἐν τοῖς λόγοις) made in the rules of art “can express something of a man’s

181 Halliwell 1990.35-36.
particular nature and qualities”, by showing the “unity of an individual’s life” in contrast to the historian’s task of contextualizing the latter within a wider framework (1990.43-44). A reason for Isocrates’ preference for literary over plastic representations (Evag. 74-77) is that: literature better captures the deeds (ἔργα) and wisdom (γνώμη) of the individual; it travels widely across the world; and it serves as models to be followed, either by emulation or imitation.\(^\text{182}\)

Halliwell connects this closely to what is clearly in the 4th century an “ethical culture” (1990.50); more specifically, he connects this to the ethical exercises of praise and blame: literary exercises and epideictic experimentations that are rightly understood by Halliwell as “paradigmatic forms of ethical judgements, as Aristotle emphasized”.\(^\text{183}\) From such exercises a reader needs to assume that individuals do “have some personal, conscious control over the determination of their actions and lives” (1990.45); but this holds true not only of encomiastic literature (or of Socratic literature at large too), but it also holds true for most people in their everyday experiences who would certainly tend to agree with this assumption on a man’s character/personality.

As is clear from Isocrates’ encomium, the notion of character “centres on a man’s actions and on the personal direction which motivates and shapes them: his mind and thought (διάνοια, γνώμη), his choice and will (Evag. 75), his practical intelligence (φρόνησις), and the habits, practices, and way of life (τρόποι, ἐπιτηδεύματα, διατριβαί) which the exercise of thought and choice generates”.\(^\text{184}\) The vocabulary found in the

\(^{182}\text{This polemic is somewhat reminiscent of Simonides on the visual and poetic arts when he called “painting silent poetry and poetry a speaking painting” (Plut. de glor. Ath. 346f Bernardakis). Cf. also Ford 2002.236-240.}\)
\(^{184}\text{Halliwell 1990.45. See 45n.18 for these words in the Evagoras.}\)
Evagoras alone seems proof enough to the effect that Isocrates’ definition of ‘philosophy’ is mainly ideological in the same way Plato’s definition is: both schools of thoughts share similar concerns, albeit treated differently.\textsuperscript{185}

In this respect the early Cynics also share with fellow Athenians the prominence of ethical notions but their pragmatism, contrary to others, was a radical μέθοδος, a deliberate road upon which they did end up effectuate some kind of “ethical portraiture”, through their immediate lives and then through the fabrication of a Tradition. It is quite fortunate that in Halliwell’s interpretation of Isocrates’ goals with the \textit{Evagoras}, our rhetorician exemplifies “the Greek tendency to evaluate character in overtly ethical terms – that is to say, <the tendency> to judge people primarily by reference to their possession or lack of ἀρεταί (excellences or virtue), which are active exemplifications of standards sustained by the currency of wide social approval”\textsuperscript{186}. In the aristocratic \textit{milieux} those standards were indebted to works such as those of Homer, Pindar, Theognis, and social approval was based on notions of currency (custom and habits, ultimately criticized as mere νομίσματα by thinkers, philosophers, and recent poets):\textsuperscript{187} those very same ideas which Diogenes aimed at “defacing”. Simply put, the aristocratic formula is that virtue begins with a good (\textit{i.e.} natural) pedigree, followed by a decent upbringing and a traditional education that should ultimately transpire and adapt natural endowments to a

\textsuperscript{185} Halliwell 1990.49 on \textit{Evag.} lists as Evagoras’ virtues: self-control/σωφροσύνη, courage/ἀνδρία, practical intelligence/σοφία, justice/δικαιοσύνη, piety/εὐσέβεια. I do not intend to consider this at length, one simply needs to look at the depiction of Socrates in the dialogues of Plato and in Xenophon’s memoirs.

\textsuperscript{186} Halliwell 1990.50, emphasis mine.

\textsuperscript{187} A later statement by Halliwell is quite noteworthy here: “The exclusion of the mundane and the commonplace is a broad stylistic feature of most serious forms of Greek literature from Homer onwards; when ‘low’ elements do intrude, it is usually for pointed effect. By contrast, the literary ‘line’ which embraces iambus, parody, and comedy, and which helps to generate Theophrastus’ \textit{Characters}, gives scope for precisely the everyday, even the sordid, detail which higher genres consciously excluded.” Even Euripides gets a taste of ‘low’ affiliation in \textit{Ar. Frogs} 1043-1062, where his “realism” is seen as “destructive of the (ethically and stylistically) elevated tone of tragedy” (Halliwell 1990.57 and n.39).
favorable (social and political) position. Most virtues are objects of glory which can guarantee everlasting fame and which “stamps” a man (a person and a persona alike). This was the glory of old, the glory that shaped an individual as a true persona, as a model for emulation among men (e.g. Achilles in Homer): glory in battle, wisdom in justice at home and abroad, and so on. Halliwell sees this link between one’s character and his φύσις as a probable old aristocratic reflex (cf. Pindar’s epinician odes), yet in democratic Athens, philosophical and sophistic debates still questioned the integrity of one’s character or personality: “By the later fifth century ‘nature’ had become a term applicable to anyone’s character of life, regardless of pedigree” (Halliwell 1990.48), just as Isocrates does in his encomium of Evagoras. Halliwell remarks that an individual’s character though, is usually praised for his “successful complying with the determining forces of his natural place in the world” thus making Nature “the ultimate sanction and justification for the (hierarchical) structuring of human relations” (1990.49). What one’s ‘personality’ turns out to be then, in accordance with Halliwell, is precisely the normative behavior one is seen allowing himself in the political, social, family relations/structures

188 Isocrates notes Evagoras’ own εὐγένεια, his pedigree, as the “matrix” of his φύσις (both a paradigm for Evagoras’ emulation and a natural element inherent to his make-up): “his ‘nature’ belongs to him, but it can be fully appreciated only in the light of his ancestry” (Halliwell 1990.46). But εὐγένεια alone is insufficient for excellence (1990.48): personal actions should paint a full picture of one’s own personality. For Gill 1983.469-470 many factors determine an adult’s character/personality: “Nature’... is one factor considered... alongside other factors, such as upbringing, habit and habituative training, the influence of parents, teachers and society in general”, later to be influenced by his own “reasoned reflection and decision” (see 469n.6 for ancient texts referring to the matter). The Greeks, from this, are seen as treating one’s φύσις as a person’s character “which is most intrinsic and integral to him” (Halliwell 1990.46). There lies the paradox, where the Greek word ἔθος finds its etymology in “dispositions induced by habit, practice, and training: ‘all character (ἔθος) grows through habit (ἔθος).’” Halliwell 1990.46-47 quotes Pl. Laws 792e2; cf. Rep. 395d2, Arist. Nic. Eth. 1103a17 ff., which variously stress one over the other (φύσις and ἔθος). Halliwell 1990.47n.20: for the superiority of the natural, see Thuc. 1.138.3 on Themistocles; Eur. Hipp. 79-80. See also Dover 1974.88-95.

189 Also Halliwell 1990.48n.24: “The 5th-cent. debate over natural versus learnt character is reflected at e.g. Eur. Hec. 592ff.; Suppl. 911-917; Pl. Meno passim; Prot. 318-28; but, as Pl. Meno 95d-96a observes, the issue is older (see Theog. 31-38, 429-38). Arist. Nic. Eth. 1103a17ff., 1114a31-b25, denies altogether that character is a matter of nature (although see e.g. Rh. 1390b16-31 for some allowance); Plato’s position is much more equivocal and complex: see e.g. Rep. 374e ff., 424a, 431c7, and cf. the remarkable physiological explanation of mental diseases at Tim. 86d-87b.”
that make one’s character in proper agreement with his (political, social, interpersonal) status or role.

For Isocrates, Halliwell summarizes, one’s nature and one’s character become synonymous, or at any rate, “in perfect harmony” (Halliwell 1990.49). And what his encomium of Evagoras shows is that the virtues that Isocrates purports to touch upon are ultimately manifested in action by Evagoras: the Evag. (as a literary work) attributes virtuous actions to the object of praise, rather than simply discussing the notion abstractly. What Isocrates underlines is that “character is exhibited by action, and action allows Isocrates to deduce and establish the nature of character” (1990.51). As I take it, this encomium is precisely a matter of ‘applying’ ethical principles onto his evaluation of a historical figure, or rather, reversely, it is a matter of ‘exposing’ those ethical principles from the life of Evagoras. In either case, Evagoras is expected by Isocrates to have been fully made into a role-model, a παράδειγμα for his son to emulate.¹⁹⁰

The major difference between Isocrates’ rhetoric (literary praise) and Diogenes’ philosophy (pragmatic performance) is a matter of mode: while in his Evagoras “Isocrates is working... in a descriptive and narrative mode” (Halliwell 1990.56, 58: represented by much elegy, iambus, epinician lyric, and much history, oratory, and philosophy), Diogenes oppositely worked in a prescriptive or normative (perhaps best termed as anti-prescriptive) and active or pragmatic mode. This mode, as I understand Cynicism, thus replaces Halliwell’s own second mode, what he calls the dramatic mode used by epic, tragedy, and comedy; in fact, if the world was Diogenes’ stage, his ethical performance was imbued with the same dramatic mode (if not stronger) as that which

¹⁹⁰ Gill 1983 claims that Plutarch’s biographies still understand the word ἔθος in the same way as Aristotle: “ἔθος means ‘character’ in an evaluative sense, excellence or defectiveness.”
was used in the fictional dramas of the playwrights. To deny that there is a powerful
dramatic component to the Cynic’s τρόπος would be to underestimate the ancients’
experience of immediacy and proximity. Indeed, as with epic, tragedy, and comedy,
Diogenes’ dramatic mode (with an emphasis on the root δρά-, ‘action’, as Aristotle does
in Poet. 3.1448a28-29) can also claim to have “the means to bring characters close to its
audience” and its strength “lies in its capacity to convey immediacy, vividness, and
intensity of personal life, and to allow us to observe at close range... the processes of
thought, feeling, and motivation” (Halliwell 1990.58).

I hope that this expansive investigation of English terminology has helped us lift
some ambiguities in our understanding of the figure of Diogenes and of what his name
represents for the modern study of early Cynicism. Hopefully our philosopher has been
better located in his own Tradition, by delineating what the Man and his persona mean
for what survived his own life. As in English the semantic net covering the Greek notion
of character in the 4th century is quite telling in itself: ἤθος, τρόπος, διατριβή,
ἐπιτήδευμα, διάτα (Halliwell 1990.51): these all pertain to Cynicism and reflect, once
again, the importance or centrality of the ethical question, and more specifically, they
entail the notion that Diogenes’ person, persona, character, personality, and contingent
behavior serve a greater purpose than the mere annoyance or provocation he would have
intended for “normal” citizens. The Greek terms all relate to “the orientation or
regularity of behaviour” and for the Greeks “the persistent assumption is that actions
express or reflect the ethical and intentional qualities of mind which lie behind and
prompt them”. Whether these actions are historical or partially fictional makes little difference and is immaterial in the Tradition since “the nature of a man is manifest in his deeds and his way of life” (Halliwell 1990.52; 52-54 discusses a Theognidean passage), independently of how they are transmitted, whether through *autopsy* or through a literary tradition.

5.3 *Character*: the Serio-Comic Personality

So far we have seen that the historiography of early Cynicism comes from two major types: a so-called doxographical tradition, that purports to present the opinions (δόξαι) of a philosopher in relation to other philosophical schools, and a biographical tradition that often rests on anecdotes (χρεῖαι) which embody the very philosophy that those thinkers expounded and defended. The former is a Hellenistic innovation arising from the literary culture that parallels the increased interest for collecting and assembling the available data and presents the information in a compact form in order to explain and justify the various philosophical positions of an individual and his successors;\(^\text{192}\) the latter, which has often been deemed less credible and whose own historicity should be seen with greater suspicion, also originates from an increased interest in the actual words and actions of a philosopher and purports to present *verbatim* situations that “capture” the philosopher as *he is philosophizing*. In absolute terms, how should we contrast and view

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\(^{191}\) Halliwell 1990.51.

\(^{192}\) Roots may be found in the Peripatos, as in Aristotle’s habit of revising his own material and lectures. Höffe 2003.8, 11: “In the course of public lectures... he revised earlier drafts of his thoughts and elaborated a mature version of his didactic writings. [...] [T]he majority of Aristotle’s treatises are notebooks or either lecture notes or transcripts of lectures, not intended for publication. Presumably most of them are revised versions of a first draft, often made by Aristotle himself, but partly by Theophrastus and other pupils.”
both types of tradition as far as their reliability is concerned? Were both types of
tradition perceived and conceived in such different ways as to be asymmetrically
accurate? The perceived difference between doxography and biography generally rests
on attributing a greater value to an “objective” retelling and enumeration of a
philosopher’s views in sharp contrast with the propension to reject those “mere
anecdotes” on the basis that they do not represent actual words spoken in a recent past or
actual situations that really occurred: many such anecdotes and apophthegms are seen as
being fabricated, if only to fabricate the *character* that Tradition decides to forefront.

My assumption so far has been simple and rests on a parallel with the Socratic
tradition: since it seems apparent that we will never fully grasp the real nature of the
actual Socrates, the traditional figure as we have it through the literary accounts of, e.g.
Plato and Xenophon, becomes the *only* Socrates available to us. Similarly, we need to
concede that very early on in the 4th century, the efforts at coagulating Cynicism into a
historical and philosophical mould has succeeded in what it attempted to do. Diogenes of
Sinope, the first Cynic philosopher, exists only insofar as our literary tradition presents
him; and he is probably as true to us as he was for those who created his tradition. We
have no reason to completely discredit Socrates’ biography and similarly, we need not be
over-critical of Diogenes’ real life.

The early tradition *must* be generally accurate, or at least plausible for those with
knowledge or memory of Diogenes, as far as his personality is concerned (his character
and behavior); but his “literary” representation completely becomes the actual
philosopher in the end (for good or ill) and the fictionalization of some anecdotes make
him even *more* real than perhaps he even was for many Greeks. His “true” personality,
which we should assume was pretty close to what we witness in the anecdotes, and the
“fabrication” of this personality seal him into the role of a true “character” in the same
respect as characters in literary works, whether historiographical (e.g. Socrates,
Alcibiades, Euripides, etc.) or completely fictional (e.g. Herakles, Odysseus, king
Telephus, etc.).

Christopher Gill has been doing remarkable work in trying to identify the Greek
notion of ἔθος as it pertains to oratory as well as to literature. The exciting research he
leads is providing a better comprehension of such notions. Despite some limitations due
in part to problems raised by the “fictionalization” of characters (as opposed to
“historical” figures), his work helps cast light on the moral and psychological mapping
that defines the moral agent who is the driving force behind idiosyncratic behaviors.

Second, beyond the distinction between personality and character investigated by
Halliwell, a major interest was raised in recent decades about the literary persona authors
tend to assume. The field that most profited from such investigations has been the world
of Roman satire and a few words on the parallels between satire and Cynic philosophy
may illuminate the literary lineage from Cynicism to Roman satire, both of which
emphasize the serio-comic nature of the Cynic “character”.

Most scholars of Roman satire are indebted to W. S. Anderson’s work193 which
began an enduring interest in recent scholarship: the notion of persona, in this instance,
the satiric guise (a generic convention), is a fabricated or illusory personality and
character, the fictionalization of a person, behind whom the satiric writer may hide (or
perhaps even disclose) his own autobiographical person. According to the theory, the

main satiric persona “speaking in most verse satires, shares the name of the author...

[T]he satiric persona (called ‘the satirist’ by both Kernan and Anderson) expressly insists that he is blunt, honest, and clumsy with words, whereas his practice shows him to be an expert manipulator of rhetoric.” This notion has been extended to all Roman satirists and one can hardly discuss Horace, Persius, or Juvenal today without addressing, however summarily, this important issue.

Scholars have also looked into the indebtedness of the satiric genre to the Cynic precedents (specifically the diatribe), among which Bion figures prominently. Horace’s literary persona, as Anderson realized, is not only an integral part of the satiric genre as a convention, but the persona represents an individual older than Horace himself and is, in actuality and quite simply, a Socratic ironist: that is, he represents the variation on a paradigm. Horace’s Satires expressly trace their origins partly to Old Comedy (Hor. Sat. 1.4.1-2: Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae | atque alii quorum comoedia prisca virorum est...) and the portrait of his personage offers us a “composite of comic types – the cowed son, the parasite, the slipshod, bumbling Cynic philosopher” that we find throughout the plays of New Comedy: indeed, the personality is “attuned to the character of the [comic] genre – low key, quotidian, and, on the surface at least, deferential to authority.” Connections between Roman satire and Cynic philosophy at large should already appear obvious at this point. In his brilliant 1993 book, Freudenburg,

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194 Plaza 2006 22-24. Anderson’s ground-breaking work was itself inspired by A. Kernan, The Cankered Muse, New Haven, 1959. With little resistance from scholars (Clay 1998.15n.17 collates the general strands), the persona theory has been successfully applied to and generally accepted in Horace: recently, to name but a few, Freudenburg 1993, Braund 1996, and Plaza 2006. The debate over Horace’s “autobiography” (or rather his persona’s) in the Satires remains quite relevant to Horatian scholarship (Plaza 2006.82).
one of the most acute interpreters of hellenized tropes in Horatian satire, studies the debt of satire’s social and ethical criticism to such Greek forms as comedy, Cynic philosophy, and Hellenistic diatribe. The relation between the satirist and, I contend, Cynic philosophy, not only bears on the language they use, but on their entire comic stance: for Freudenburg, the Roman satirist is generally portrayed as a “moralizing buffoon” and he is, in the satires, “a fictional creation playing a part in a comic play” (Freudenburg 1993.39). This is as close to my view on early Cynicism as it gets: truly enough, the satirist “draws his illustrations from a comic world, a world of extremes only” (Freudenburg 1993.41), and Diogenes himself was offering just that: a radical interpretation of philosophical ideals, dipped in a (serio-)comic dress, activating (pragmatically) his words and exhibiting (verbally) his actions. As Horace’s satire is, in Freudenburg’s work, consistently and continuously engaged in its comic analogy, I believe that the persona that comes out of the early Cynic tradition resembles just that.

Of course, by addressing the issue of the satiric persona, I do not mean to suggest that the Cynic tradition completely ‘created’ for Diogenes a personage that in no way, or only slightly, reproduces Diogenes’ historical personality. I believe, for instance, that many of Horace’s autobiographical elements are likely to be true to history (e.g. in Sat. 1.6.45, Horace was really the son of a freedman; few would question Horace meeting Vergil and Varius in 1.6.55). But the shaping, through selection, collection, and exaggeration of certain elements of Diogenes’ actions and words, have emphasized

198 Freudenburg 1993.3-51 (also Zetzel 1980.70-73 especially). Freudenburg 1993 (4, 12) assimilates Horace’s persona to the old country sage, the ἄγροικος, as he is described in Arist. Rhet. 2.1395a2-5, for whom maxims and storytelling are best suited to older speakers. But contrary to his persona, whose language we would expect to be unrefined or uneducated, the satires overflow with a delicate balance of refined and witty speech. This shares characterizations with Diogenes, whose crude attire is counter-balanced by his virulent and humoristic language. The paradox of the Roman satiric genre thus bears more relations to comedy and Cynic attitude that might seem at a quick glance.
certain features, which ultimately came to ‘sum up’ or ‘capture’ the essence of Diogenes
entirely. As such, Diogenes becomes a screen behind which we find the slightest
evidence of his extended life in mainland Greece. Just as sculpture tends to idealize a
character, so too Tradition exists to create a long-lasting image that seals the person and
the personage’s personality. There is an interesting parallel with what Platonius says
about the use of masks in New Comedy. In Old Comedy, he tells us, the mask seemingly
tried to reproduce (probably by caricature) the actual traits of the victim, but since we all
know that New Comedy stepped away from personal attacks (for whatever reason) even
the masks were made rather for a greater comical effect (πρὸς τὸ γελοιότερον) building
on prejudices (φόβους)199. The “literary mask” painted by the Cynic tradition seems to
offer some of these anecdotes indeed for comical effect.

199 E.g. Some Menandrian masks exaggerated Macedonian eyebrows (Platonius 1.78-91, in
Chapter 6. Cynic Models

Our previous chapters have addressed the issue of the Cynic tradition as the legitimate offshoot of the Socratic tradition in Classical Athens, by showing the place ancient historians of philosophy attempted to create for it. Parallel to its philosophical lineage Cynicism is also the heir of the sophistic revolution that took place in the course of the 5th century and Cynic ideas are tied to the polemic attitude Classical thinkers and rival philosophers embody in their philosophical systems. And through it all, Cynicism is still seen in its synchronic aspects as a relevant take on contemporaneous issues which have been pulled towards the Cynics’ own ideas.

Therefore, Diogenes’ Cynicism was clearly not a spontaneous endeavour that emerged solely from the philosophical realm. With its many connections with sophistic concerns of the previous century and with an open debate with contemporary thought and philosophy, Cynicism is also rooted in a long tradition of social criticism and literary paradigms that shaped Classical Hellenic society over the centuries. As such, our literary tradition of Cynicism is dependent on other traditional aspects and the tradition itself is not blind to the cultural paradigms that pervade Greek society through its own literary history. Rooted in earlier characters and social models, whether historical or literary, Diogenes’ persona takes its fullest meaning when studied in relation to other cultural precedents.
6.1 Thersites: the Voice of Dissent

When reading Diogenes’ life one is quickly reminded of the earliest “parrhesiast” – or perhaps rather the earliest pariah – known from Homer, who dared to speak his mind, confront higher authorities, and attack the conventions of social and military hierarchy. Famously among the Homeric βασιλεῖς Achilles makes an affront to Agamemnon in the famous gathering of chiefs (II. 1), yet there is one man who, in front of all the Greeks assembled at Troy, engages in public invective, effectively (albeit awkwardly) condemning the actions and motives of Agamemnon in front of all to hear: Thersites.²⁰⁰

My intention is not to suggest here that Thersites became a direct model for the early Cynics or Diogenes specifically, that is, a figure meant to be used as a figurehead or whose behavior was to be emulated, but what remains true of the epic portrayal of Thersites is that he spoke freely (although the democratic term παρρησία does not belong to the aristocratic world of the Homeric βασιλεῖς), he expressed his views for the sake of laughter, and he is associated with shamelessness (tà αἰσχρά) in the Iliad. As such Thersites can represent some sort of ideal persona for the Cynic: an individual unburdened by the social rules of his contemporary society. Thersites, just as Diogenes, speaks his mind, criticizes the abuse of authority (the rule of νόμος), and, through the serious question he raises, intends to get a laugh. Despite the overall negative ancient reception of Thersites, we may say that he is himself a serio-comic personage who fits strangely in Homer’s heroic society. Thersites embodies the criticism of the world.

²⁰⁰ In modern critical responses to the character of Thersites, Rose 1988 distinguishes 3 modern approaches: empiricist (social and political readings made especially by historians, most represented by Grote and Kirk); literary (Bowra, Vivante, Whitman, Nagy) – Rose places the Analysts and Neoanalysts (Mazon, Wilamowitz, Kullman, Ebert) halfway between those two approaches; ideological (aristocratic readings by Atchity, De Ste. Croix, Finley, Donlan, to which we should add Thalmann 1988).
around him in a similar way as Diogenes in the 4th century: if Diogenes is society’s dog, the Homeric Thersites is truly the under-dog of the hero’s world.

Throughout the entire Greek tradition Thersites remained a generally crude and negative figure, a character which stands for wickedness and discontent. But what is clear from the episode in *Il.* 2 is that he represents the sole epic example of open criticism against the normativity of heroic (ergo aristocratic) behavior and ἀρετή. In this respect Thersites may be perceived as the first or the most ‘popular’ voice of dissent, that is, an actor aiming at criticizing openly the social and political workings of his contemporary environment. Especially in relation to the aristocratic model presumably depicted by Homer’s poem Thersites generally stands out as the common man who confronts the legitimacy and morality of Agamemnon’s authority. There is no surprise that centuries later Plato still assimilated Thersites to the baseness of the democratic citizen when, in *Gorgias*, Thersites emblematizes democratic evil (πονηρὸς ἰδιώτης); yet it is clear that Thersites’ own status in the poem problematizes the singularity of private impressions and public freedom of speech. Unfortunately for us, in the *Iliad* the “problem” is

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201 Despite 4th-c. Apulian vases which depict him as an attractive youth or an older man (Marks 2005.2-3).
202 Thalmann 1988.2 warns us against such an “easy passage from the applause of the Achaean army to the attitudes of Homer and his listener... <The description of Thersites> does not necessarily reflect the poet’s own class prejudices or his appeal to the bias of his audience.” The evidence for an “aristocratic epic” (cf. De Ste-Croix) is tenuous.
203 Although for Donlan 1979.60 (quoted in Marks 2005.8n.18), Thersites’ speech “is directed against Agamemnon’s abuse of his position... not against [authority] itself.”
204 Pl. *Gorg.* 525e: Θερσίτην δὲ, καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος πονηρὸς ἦν ἰδιώτης. In Soph. *Philoc.* 240-253, Thersites is assimilated to evil (κακόν) and all things criminal and villainous (τὰ μὲν πανοῦργα καὶ παλιντριβῆ), while Aesch. *Ag. Ctes.* 3.231 qualifies him as a “coward” (ἄνανδρος) and a “slanderer” (συκοφάντης).
205 Feldman 1947.220 thus defines Thersites’ social status: “He is a freeman, a warrior, bearing his own arms, sharing in the fruits of fight according to the value of his prowess, which is Homer’s criterion of right (θέμις). Besides the right of armament, he has freedom of speech in the assembly of his fellow warriors. He is not exploited or downtrodden by Agamemnon and his council, the γέροντες βουληφόροι. His oratorical flight is an expression of private grudge, no more a voicing of class grievance than the oratory of Achilles is a reflexion of an *Iliad* middle class [...] The fact of the matter is that Thersites
quickly resolved and stamped out by one hero’s intervention, as Thersites ends up being shut up by the blow of the authorial scepter at the hands of Odysseus.

First of all Homer’s description and characterization of Thersites (Il. 2.212-224) are less than flattering, especially in contrast with such heroic counterparts as Achilles and Odysseus – the “best of the Achaeans” respectively in combat and glory, and in cunning and public speaking. Thersites’ physical appearance differs in every respect from the Hero’s portrait “for whom physical beauty and distinguished ancestry are emblems of heroic identity” (Marks 2005.4). Thersites is the “ugliest” (216: αἴσχιστος) of the Greeks at Troy; he is “bandy-legged” (φολκός – a ἀπαξ λεγόμενον) and “lame in one foot” (χωλὸς δ’ ἐτερον πόδα); his hunched shoulders stoop over his chest; his

belonged to the ἄριστοι rather than oi πολλοί.” For Thersites’ family pedigree, known from later sources, cf. Feldman 1947.220 and Marks 2005.2n.3.

206 According to Zeno’s Anecdotes, Crates was also ugly to look at (DL 6.91: τὴν ὀψιν αἰσχρός). Note in both descriptions the root for shame (αἰσχύνη): Thersite’s shameful appearance further distances him as a non-heroic figure. For Kirk 1985.139 (quoted in Lowry 1991.10) the word “occurs only here [Il. 2.216] of physical ugliness rather than moral turpitude”, while Lowry 1991.11-57 discusses the close relationship between physical “ugliness” and social “shame-causing” through a study of ἁμαρτωλός and its various derivatives; Lowry favors interpreting Thersites’ superlative epithet as a reference to his “reproachful, outrageous words” (1991.19), “not as “ugliest” but as “most shame-causing”” (1991.285), rather than to his physical ugliness. Shame (αἰσχύνη or αἰδώς) in post-Homeric texts (Lowry 1991.79-92) is discussed in Arist. Rhet. 2.6.2: “Let αἰσχύνη be defined as a pain or a trouble regarding such evils as seem to bring dishonor, whether they are present or past or future; and let ἀναισχυντικόν be a contempt or disregard for the same things. So if αἰσχύνη is correctly defined, necessarily one feels shame (αἰσχύνεται) about such evils as seem to be αἰσχρά...” (trans. Lowry 1991.80); Rhet. 2.6.18: “...and [we feel shame] more about things done before the eyes and in the open; whence the expression, ‘shame dwells in the eyes.’ Therefore people are more ashamed by those who will always be present.” (trans. Lowry 1991.80: “Thus αἰσχύνη is created by things αἰσχρά...”); Plato, Laws 646e: “And we often fear reputation, considering that we are reputed to be bad (κακοί) if we do (πράττομεν) or say (λέγομεν) something that is not good. And this fear we, and all men, I suppose, call αἰσχύνη...” (trans. Lowry 1991.81). By looking at Aristotle and Plato, Lowry thus concludes (1991.82): “First, Plato like Aristotle very closely associates αἰδώς and αἰσχύνη and makes no distinction between them. Secondly, persons who are ἀναισχυντοι risk doing deeds which are αἰσχρά. Finally, the noun αἰσχός does not enter into the discussion.” Lowry 1991.83: “Wilamowitz [1895.2/218, Euripides: Herakles, 2 vols.] asserts that αἰσχύνη is a creation of the fifth century which begins to replace αἰσχός, and he draws attention to the different words that Solon and Demosthenes use to describe the affair of Salamis.”

207 Perhaps “dragging one leg” and “lame in the other” (Kirk 1985.139). According to a scholium Pherecydes (= FGrH 3 F 123) explained that Thersites was crippled by Meleagros for his cowardice in the hunt for the Calydonian boar (Erbse B.212b). For a review of early scholarly attention given to φολκός.
pointed head (φοξός)\textsuperscript{208} is bald except for a sparse stubble of hair. He is by no means your typical Achilles!\textsuperscript{209} He is, in fact, sometimes traditionally assimilated to an ape.\textsuperscript{210}

When it comes to speech and public speaking, Thersites fares no better and the poet emphatically condemns the inappropriateness of his language: he is a man “of measureless speech” (ἀμετροεπῆς)\textsuperscript{211}, “devoid of judgment” (2.246: ἀκριτόμυθε), who

and a thorough rehabilitation of its meaning previously understood as “squinting”, cf. Lowry 1991.107-156 who links squinting with shame-causing, reproach, and abuse. Lowry also reminds us that Socrates has some connections with squinting (or ‘looking sideways’) and irregular gait: Ar. Clouds 362-363, Pl. Symp. 221b, Xen. Symp. 5.5.

\textsuperscript{208} According to the evidence, the adjective “clearly describes a characteristic that engenders laughter. For the fool whose business was laughter a pointed head was an asset; but for others who perceive the laughter to be an assault on their standing, the pointed head is a cause for shame.” (Lowry 1991.159). See Lowry 1991.157-183, with a parallel between Thersites and Aristophanes’ Dicaiopolis (Acharn. 173-189), the former who has a natural pointed head, the latter an artificial, since he is wearing a “pointed hat” (the πιλίδιον); Thersites is αἴσχιστος and makes reproaches (ὀνείδεα, Il. 2.222), Dicaiopolis is described as ἀναίσχυντος (491) and is accused of making reproaches (ἐνείδισας, 559): “In sum the two characters are themselves αἰσχροί because of their physical defects and asymmetry and because of their comic-shameful words.” (Lowry 1991.181). In an essay on Thersites’ anatomic defect Simms 2005 interprets the physical appearance of Thersites as a genetic bone condition known as cleidocranial dysplasia, for which missing clavicles, bossing of the skull, and dental abnormalities (usually resulting in supernumerary teeth) are common features: from this diagnosis, Simms then interprets ἀμετροεπής and ἔπεα ἄκοσμά τε πολλά τε (2.212-213) as literary puns on Thersites’ dental abnormality. The problem with the puns in Simms’ interpretation is that it implies that his audience must be familiar with the medical condition to begin with for the puns to be really effective.

\textsuperscript{209} See Barker 2009.56: “As Bruce Lincoln remarks: ‘Before we are permitted to hear what <Thersites> says... the text is at pains to describe him in such a way as to emphasize his anomalous nature, and to shape the attitude we will adopt toward him.’ Lincoln’s choice of vocabulary is significant, since it flags up the manner in which a description of Thersites’ appearance slides into an evaluation of his speech.” I would add that the \textit{shaping} of the audience’s attitude towards Thersites is meant to bear upon his \textit{moral} evaluation too and indeed his “inappropriate” physical appearance is but merely mirrored by the following description of the “inefficacy” of his language.

\textsuperscript{210} According to a Homeric scholium (Erbse B.216a) “ugliness” (or “shame-causing”) is a characteristic of the ape/monkey: in Aristophanes πιθήκος (ape) refers to a trickster and a buffoon (Cf. Acharn. 907, Birds 440, Frogs 708, etc.); in Semonides, the monkey-woman is “most shame-causing in the face” (7.73: αἴσχιστα μὲν πρόσωπα) and “such a woman is through the town a source of laughter (74: γέλως) for all men” (Cf. Lowry 1991.98). In Resp. 620c, the soul of “Thersites the buffoon” (γελωτοποιοῦ Θερσίτου) conveniently wishes to be reborn in the body of an ape (cf. also Rankin 1972.38n.1 for simian pictorial representations of Thersites). Lowry 1991.96-97 connects disfiguration, ugliness, and lameness in Homer with laughter (cf. Hephaistos in Il. 1 and Od. 7, 8; cf. also Thalmann 1988.24), while 1991.102-105 discusses Cic. De Orat. 2.236: “The place and region, as it were, of the laughable... is contained by that which is shameful and somewhat deformed”. Cf. Rankin 1972.58: “Heraclitus says that man is an ape in comparison with the gods [DK 82], and in both Plato [Th. 161c] and Lycochron [Alex. 1242], Thersites is regarded as ape-like” (πιθήκομορφος); in Plut. Mor. 18a, the lizard, the ape, and Thersites represented in paintings are objects of ugliness (τὸ αἰσχρόν); Rankin 1972.58n.102: “we may note that Anacharsis of Scythia is reported by Athenaeus 613d as calling the ape φύσει γελωτοποιοῦ.” On apes in literature, see McDermott 1936.

\textsuperscript{211} A scholium (Erbse B.212d) compares with Il. 13.363: πάντων μὲν κόρος ἐστὶ καὶ ὤπνοι καὶ φιλότητος.
knows “many unadorned words” (ἔπεα... ἀκοσμά τε πολλά); recklessly or in vain (μᾶψ) he brings ‘eris’ (ἐριζέμεναι) to the chiefs “in no orderly fashion” (οὐ κατὰ κόσμον), for the sole purpose of entertaining the soldiers (“...whatever he deemed would be funny – γελοίον– for the Argives”). Thersites is not your typical Odysseus either, famous for his cunning and deceptive words! Ultimately the Homeric poet firmly characterizes Thersites as the very opposite of his super-heroes. Just as Thersites’ physical appearance is “a monstrosity by heroic standards,” so in his behavior he is made the epitome of the anti-hero, summarized by the claim that he was “most hateful to Achilles especially, and to Odysseus, since he used to seek quarrel (νεικείεσκε) with these two” (II. 2.220-221): simply put, “Thersites is everything a hero is not.”

Now the episode in II. 2 rather puts Agamemnon at the center of Thersites’ tirade (2.225-242) and the chief of the kings is the victim of Thersites’ νεῖκος (2.224): in fact his very name symbolizes the rashness, the impudence with which he insults the Achaean leaders, deriving as it is from the Aeolic form of θάρσος (schol. Erbse B.212a). But who

212 See Martin 1989.109-113. On these qualifiers, Lowry 1991.277: “When Odysseus calls him ἀκριτόμυθε (2.246) and when Homer calls him ἄμετροεπής (2.212) and says he speaks οὐ κατὰ κόσμον (214), reference is not being made to Thersites’ unorganized delivery or unpremeditated composition. It refers rather to the effect of the words to cause shame... The “order” and “measure”... has nothing to do with organization or balanced phrases, or even a middle ground. The person who speaks “in order” simply causes no shame and is the opposite of Thersites.” For Lowry the κόσμος attributed to a speaker was “originally not a moral propriety but a rhetorical propriety marked by the absence of shame-causing language... If a speaker abandons propriety in his words, he joins that class of which Thersites is the paradigm” (1991.282). So too Postlethwaite 1988.125: Thersites says things “that are not acceptable to the kings or to his fellow-soldiers either, things which are not in keeping... with established practice.”

213 His fate is no less the result of his quarrelling. In the cyclic Aethiopis and in Quintus Smyrnaeus (1.722) Thersites is killed by Achilles in another insult he brought to the hero over the corpse of the Amazon queen Penthesileia (see Walter Leaf, Commentary on the Iliad, 1900; on intertextual readings between the Iliad and Aethiopis, see Rankin 1972 and Marks 2005.15-23). The tragedian Chaeremon wrote a play referring to the event (Achilles Thersitiktonos, fr. 2-3 TGF) even though in Sophocles (Philoct. 445) Neoptolemus informs Philoctetes that Thersites is still alive. An odd tradition reported in a scholium held that he had been the guardian of Homer and had robbed the poet of his possessions (ἐπίτροπος τοῦ ποιητοῦ αὐτόν σφετερισάμενον τὴν οὐσίαν: Erbse B.212a). The repeated occurrence of Thersites’ νεῖκος with Achilles and Odysseus (perhaps narrated in the Cyclic Aethiopis; see Proclus’ Chrestomathy for a summary of Thersites’ death at the hands of Achilles: Marks 2005.17) is further evidence for Marks that Thersites belongs to the high ranks of the Greeks, supporting his opinion of “elite competition” among the βασιλεῖς.

does Thersites actually represent in the *Iliad*? His social status is never explicit: is he one of the βασιλεῖς or, as most modern scholars make him, one amongst the masses (the πληθύς), a member of the mob? Rather than stressing the usual class-conflict model, Marks 2005.13-28 sees the νεῖκος engaged by Thersites against Achilles and Odysseus in terms of an elite competition, between social equals. One of the arguments for this social tension calls to witness the grudge the Achaeans seem to bear against Thersites, an exclusion that pushes Thersites further away from the group of the Achaeans, as the πληθύς (the common soldiers) naturally sides with the leader Agamemnon and thus rejects Thersites’ tirade as a buffoon’s unsolicited invective.

But contrary to Kirk 1985.140 who holds that the Achaeans bear a grudge against Thersites, who would be referred to with the pronoun τῷ (2.222-223: τῷ δ’ ἄρ’ Ἀχαίοι | ἐκπάγλως κοτέοντο νεμέσσην τ’ ἐνὶ θυμῷ), it seems apparent that the pronoun τῷ here refers rather to Agamemnon himself. A better translation of the passage would be: “now, however, it was to divine Agamemnon that <Thersites> was shouting his sharp

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215 The identification of Thersites with the low class goes as far back as Socrates in Pl. *Gorg.* 525e. See Lowry 1991 and Marks 2005.2n.1 for an overview of modern, often political, interpretations. Thalmann 1988.17 understands Thersites as a “common soldier” yet, who needs not be a typical representative: belonging to the comic realm Thersites “exaggerates” the soldiers’ attitudes and even his own heroic prowess, thus becoming some sort of social scapegoat (fully discussed in 1988.21-26): “Like many comic characters, he is on the margins of society and blurs class distinctions. His detached, ironic perspective also allows a peculiar clarity of vision, bringing into focus tensions and contradictions in society that otherwise would remain half concealed, tolerated by the commoners with inarticulate resentment at most. And it is as a marginal, comic figure that Thersites, through his defiance and the reaction it provokes, involuntarily performs a healing function for his society” (Thalmann 1988.17). By the end of the episode “[t]he Thersites scene has performed the socially integrative function typical of comedy” and “[a]ll the emotion and potential violence that have accumulated in the first two books, and, it would seem, over the ten years of war, are unloaded onto him.” (Thalmann 1988.19, 21).

216 Marks 2005.12-13: “If the Iliadic Thersites is a member of the πληθύς, then, he is unique in being allowed to address class conflict from a non-elite perspective, in public and at length.” Usually actual opinions of the πληθύς expressed in direct speeches “are described in narratological terms as “τίς-speeches,” as observations that reflect the collective opinion of the group as a whole.” (e.g. *Il.* 2.271, 278).

217 Also Leaf 1971.65, Thalmann 1988.18 (“The soldiers’ hopes of return home have been aroused and then frustrated, and they have been herded back in a humiliating way that stresses their subservience”), and Postlethwaite 1988.134-135, even though we need not assume, as Leaf 1971 does, that the mob are “indignant with Agamemnon for his treatment of Achilles”.

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rebukes;\textsuperscript{218} for the Achaeans were resentful and bore a terrible grudge against him [i.e. Agamemnon] in their hearts.” Thersites’ new victim is Agamemnon and the following verse stresses that Thersites is not the only one who bears a grudge; Thersites sharply rebukes Agamemnon and he is not alone in feeling discomfort: Thersites here is a mere spokesperson.\textsuperscript{219} Otherwise, if Thersites is meant as the recipient of the Achaeans’ grudge (τῶ), then the logic is somehow flawed: “now, however, it was to divine Agamemnon that [Thersites] was shouting his sharp rebukes; <for> the Achaeans were resentful and bore a terrible grudge against [Thersites].” Kirk’s statement that “the violence of the language is excessive for what <the soldiers> might have felt for their commanding general, whereas it would have been entirely justified in relation to someone already described as Thersites has been” (Kirk 1985.140) is but a poor argument: resentment and grudge (κοτέοντο νεμέσσηθέν τ’) can well express the disapproval of Agamemnon’s decision by the mass of the army, and the feelings may be restricted to one single decision without implying a complete mistrust or a total loss of confidence in Agamemnon’s overall authority.

Another difficulty in interpreting the grudge as being directed at Thersites resides in the very logic of the narrative itself: once the poet introduces Thersites’ invective (“he was shouting his sharp rebukes”), how can the army already be resentful or hold a grudge against him? Is it not Thersites’ usual habit of seeking laughter among the troops

\textsuperscript{218} The verb κλάζω is also used for dogs barking (cf. Od. 14.30).

\textsuperscript{219} Feldman 1947 vehemently opposes the theory of “Thersites as a lower-class advocate” (1947.220) and a spokesperson of democracy, contra J.P. Mahaffy for whom “[t]he figure of Thersites... seems drawn with special spite and venom, as a satire upon the first critics that rose up among the people, and questioned the divine right of kings to do wrong.” (quoted by Feldman 1947.219). Recently, Marks 2005.2 also considers Thersites “ill suited to the role of vox populi because he is a highly ranked character in non-Homeric epic and myth”. 

Only after his invective speech could the soldiers bear a grudge against Thersites for his rebukes to Agamemnon. The army could as well resent Thersites’ usual attacks towards Achilles and Odysseus, but this is simply not known, and in any case the army would have a natural right to be resentful of Agamemnon’s recent deception since the king had suggested returning home and abandoning the war, thus depriving the soldiers of victory, honors, and spoils. It is far too easy to imply that Thersites is but a negative figure, as if Agamemnon should be safe from real criticism by his army: isn’t Agamemnon part of the whole problem with Achilles anyway? Barker rightly points out that when Scodel (2002.205) writes that “[i]t is far likelier that the army is angry with Thersites”, who would be referred to by τῶ, this is merely prescriptive.220

To further support this reading, the particle ἀρα (222: for) may be important here as it connects the resentment felt by the Achaeans to the previous statement which emphasizes Thersites’ new victim; indeed, ἀρα marks “the immediate connection and succession of events and thoughts”, that is, the consequence “drawn for the connection of thoughts” of the previous statement (Smyth #2787). The particle marks “a natural consequence of something already said or done; gives an explanation of an antecedent statement” (Smyth #2789). It would be an odd claim to say that Thersites now aims at Agamemnon, and indeed, the army begrudges Thersites. Preferably Thersites’ rebuke follows a general sentiment felt by a good portion of the Greek army and he is a representative of that feeling.

To further stress the fact that Thersites is voicing the concern of the multitude of soldiers, the Achaeans’ reaction to the beating of Thersites by Odysseus better suggests that Thersites be considered one of them; the laughter with which they react is seemingly

220 Barker 2009.57.
an uncomfortable one: “although they were pained they laughed sweetly at [Thersites]” 
(II. 2.270: καὶ ἀχνύμενοι περ ἔπ’ αὐτῷ ἡδὺ γέλασσαν). The army men indeed feel sorrow 
“because they have been prevented from returning home, and because Agamemnon’s 
suggestion that they do so has proved to be a deception (II. 2.190-3)... Thersites has in 
fact voiced the disappointment and frustration felt by them all”. 

The sorrow comes from the disappointment of Agamemnon’s deception: “ἀχνύμενοι περ [2.270] hardly 
refers to grief at Thersites being beaten except inasmuch as this puts a stop to any plan 
they have to return home against the wishes of their leaders. The laughter is 
‘displacement’...”. 

And so the laughter generated by Thersites’ beating needs not mean that the 
πληθύς disapproves of his words but it may simply imply that Thersites’ boldness came 
with its lack of foresight. On this I find myself in agreement with Postlethwaite 
(1988.133): “It would of course be perfectly possible for them to approve the beating of 
Thersites, for all his rocking of the boat in the past, whilst at the same time agreeing with 
the sentiments recently expressed by him: in fact there is nothing in the words which they 
are pictured exchanging which necessarily implies criticism of his behaviour on this 
specific occasion.” Another possible and quite tempting interpretation goes further and 
claims that the laughter is not aimed at the victim Thersites but rather at Odysseus, since 
it is claimed, sarcastically, that Odysseus’ hitting had been one of the Ithacan’s greatest 
exploits (II. 2.274). On this interpretation we can assume that the object of the men’s 
sweet laughter (ἐπ αὐτῷ) is indeed Odysseus and not the victim Thersites himself. 

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222 Rankin 1972.43n.25. 
223 Rose 1988.21: Thersites may well be “the manifest butt of their laughter, because of his 
incomprehensibly stupid failure to foresee the consequences of his outburst in a society where he is utterly
What is meant by Odysseus’ public action in his beating of Thersites is that little dissent is or will be tolerated. With Thersites’ interruption coming to a close, the authority of the Achaean leaders (both the ἄναξ and the βασιλεῖς) has been restored (Marks 2005 prefers to talk about the restoration of “group integrity”) whether this power be Agamemnon’s ultimate leadership or Odysseus’ heroic ascendancy.

It is usually pointed out that Thersites is the only Iliadic character who is given neither a patronymic nor a place of origin (Kirk 1985.138, Marks 2005.4). He is often type-casted as representing the unnamed multitude of soldiers, the marginal δῆμος of the common soldiers, in sharp contrast with the aristocratic heroes featured in the Homeric poems. But as Kirk points out Thersites cannot simply be reduced to the “common soldier” (ἰδιώτης) when, speaking in the agora, he claims that he himself captured Trojan prisoners and brought them back for ransoming” (Kirk 1985.138-139): this suggests a high rank more than mere soldiery.224

Furthermore, as he is depicted in the Iliad, Thersites is but an outside shell and he exists exclusively as a poetic character: his literary function remains strictly bound to the Homeric episode. Indeed Thersites has no history (he has no origin) and he has no story (he is never mentioned again). His presence provides only a short hiatus in the assembly while his speech has no real “fun” value either. Although he is the sort of man who

powerless. But Odysseus, who bludgeons him and humiliates him in the interests of Agamemnon’s corrupt authority, emerges, on this reading, as the latent object of their bitter laughter”.

224 Therefore, for Kirk, the whole episode mainly distinguishes “this outrageous person... from his noble and more fortunate peers” (Kirk 1985.139). For Marks 2005.2n.2 this is not a sufficient reason to make Thersites of a high rank “for nowhere else in ancient Greek epic is a character denied the opportunity to engage in these activities because of low ranking.” Marks 2005 gathers all the evidence to prove Thersites’ high rank, in opposition to the common scholarly equation of physical ugliness with low social rank. His argument to make Thersites a high rank elite are: 1) the Iliadic and non-Homeric traditions never stress his lower class status and are rather consistent: in fact, the non-Homeric tradition portrays him as a high ranked member of the elite; 2) the confrontation between Thersites and Odysseus bears all the signs of Homeric elite competition among βασιλεῖς, i.e a “rivalry for relative status within a class of highly ranked, nominal equals” (Marks 2005.4-5).
“goes for a laugh”, his speech lacks any real sense of humor: the invective reigns supreme in his speech as he mainly re-hashes arguments already brought forward by Achilles himself when he had confronted Agamemnon earlier (Il. 1).\textsuperscript{225} The comic relief that might be expected from his speech is never reached and the humorous situation may be perceived only when Odysseus strikes him with the scepter. Thersites’ narrative role is thus to present a critique of aristocratic \textit{mores}, while he is quickly dismissed as being worthy of punishment, repression, and quieting. In brief, his role is to be shut up and beaten by Odysseus, perhaps thus raising a laugh among the Argives (the internal audience) or the Homeric audience (the external spectators), both of which may themselves question the validity of Agamemnon’s behavior. Once Thersites’ invective receives no support whatsoever from the unnamed mass, but simply a good beating from a singular hero (a great public humiliation!), the narrative continues unhindered and the poem is free to resume its vision.\textsuperscript{226}

\textsuperscript{225} Postlethwaite 1988 analyzes the dramatic function of Thersites in the \textit{Iliad} and presents the anti-hero as a close and deliberate parallel to Achilles in Homer’s presentation and in their speeches: indeed both attack Agamemnon and seek \textepsilon \rhoς with kings (cf. Il. 1.176-177); they are “isolated” figures, “who speak against the established order of heroic society” (1988.127). Instead of representing Thersites’ speech as a parody of Achilles’ speech to Agamemnon, Posthethwaite relates all the parallels in both speeches to show that Thersites and Achilles, the worst and the best of the Achaeans, share the same quarrel with the leader of the Greeks. For Thalmann 1988.19 Thersites is simply “Achilles’ comic double”. As Rose emphasizes, the ideological response to Thersites as showing Homer’s own aristocratic bent is certainly wrong: “what does it mean when the “best of the Achaians” and the “worst” agree that the king is greedy, that he is needlessly jeopardizing the safety of his people and that his people are at fault for tolerating him?... <The audience> will search the speech in vain for a univocal aristocratic message” (Rose 1988.19).

\textsuperscript{226} Lowry 1991.265: “The force of the scepter which Odysseus directs against any \textdeltum \αινόρα [Il. 2.199] should not be interpreted politically... Odysseus is not suppressing nascent democratic sentiment, but engaging rather in a technique which marks shame-causing language.” The scepter “seems to be a conventional feature of intense exhortations involving shame-causing language” (1991.267). Yet, Rose 1988.16: “In addition to suggesting the finality of death, the sceptre is a special, cultural artefact, imbued with that authority of that corporate body, the “sons of the Achaians,” to administer the proper social rules (\texttheta \epsilon\muστας) that come from Zeus himself.” It is “both symbol and instrument of the coercion of underlings by those in power” (Thalmann 1988.12-13).
As a “voice of dissent”, Thersites in the *Iliad* can himself be aligned “with two archetypal ‘blame personas’ in ancient Greek poetry, the iambic poets Archilochos and Hipponax” (Marks 2005.6) and thus our anti-hero becomes a thematic equivalent to these poets who traditionally received unheroic portraits themselves. Following Nagy 1979, Marks interprets Thersites’ presence in the *Iliad* as “an incursion of iambic poetics rather than of class-consciousness into the epic narrative of the Iliad” (Marks 2005.8-9) and thus the conflict resonates at the level of poetic genres where iambic poetry (blame) penetrates epic poetry (praise). By comparing Thersites to the major iambic poets Archilochus and Hipponax, it is but a small step to investigate Diogenes the Cynic’s own “blame persona”. As Marks 2005.7 notes: “Archilochos was reputedly the son of a Parian nobleman and a slave, and this “νόθος-stance” corresponds to Thersites’ lack of patronymic. Similarly, Hipponax was said to have been exiled, and this “metanastic stance” is comparable to Thersites’ lack of homeland.” When it comes to the νόθος-stance, we are reminded of Antisthenes while Hipponax’ exile may recall Diogenes’ own. As an outsider, the apopthegms make Diogenes “without a home” and these allow the philosopher to be associated with an outside blame persona and a critical voice of dissent.

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227 See Marks 2005.6-7 for textual comparisons (outrage, laughter) and traditional depictions (Hipponax’ ugliness, Archilochus’ bloatedness – “Though Archilochos’ bloating is metaphorical... the significant fact is that his blame function is assimilated to a negative physical trait”: 2005.7n.15). Marks notes that in the iambic poets “the laughter generated by the blame figure is meant to expose the damage that the object of blame has inflicted on the community; in no case is there any indication that the blame attaches to a class of people or its prerogatives.” (7)

228 Nagy 1979.262: “In the Thersites episode of the *Iliad*, it is Epos that gets the last laugh on the blame poet, rather than the other way around.” Another literary genre associated with Thersites was the lampoon (σίλλος). A scholium (Erbse B.212b) indeed notes that “it is not in Xenophanes, but in Homer first that we witness *lampoons* (σιλλοί)” since Homer mocks (σιλλαίνει) Thersites himself and Thersites mocks the “best” of the Greeks (τοὺς ἄριστους); and Eusthatius’ commentary on the *Iliad* observes that “Homer was the first to begin this form, in which he himself directed *silloi* (σιλλαίνει) at Thersites and Thersites did likewise to kings. *Silloi* are a form of comic poetry and those who pursue it were called *sillographoi* and such jesting (παίζειν) was called σιλλαίνειν...” (Eustat, *Comm. Ad II.*, vol. 1, p.311, ll. 20-27 = Eustath. 204 in Lowry 1991.130). For the ancient evidence on *silloi*, see Lowry 1991.130-137 and Trypanis 1981.321-323.
What Marks 2005 says of Thersites certainly holds true of our Diogenes, namely that some elements characteristics of Thersites (no homeland, revolting appearance, unmeasured speech) “can be accounted for better in terms of his similarities to the traditional figure of the iambic poet, whose blame function he reproduces, than in terms of his social class”, while “the apparent discrepancy between Thersites’ social standing in non-Homeric poetry and his presentation in the *Iliad* reproduces the contrast between the biographical traditions of figures such as Archilochos and Hipponax and their constructed personas as blame poets, as well as the contrast between the valorization of iambic themes in different genres.”229 Indeed, this is also true of Diogenes who shares such elements of marginality. To quote Thalmann: “Thersites puts himself in the way of punishment by his defiance, and as a caricature of the common soldiers he is both like them and different. Neither leaders nor troops have to suffer; Thersites is a “third party” who offers an outlet in pleasant laughter for the divisive tensions in this dangerously polarized situation”.230 The similarities between Thersites and Diogenes seem conspicuous.

And there are also parallels between Socrates and Diogenes, the former being often recalled, in comic terms, “as a barefoot, waddling, squinter.” Indeed, Socrates is often shame-making, as in Alcibiades’ own admission in Pl. *Symp*. 216b-c (cf. Lowry 1991.147-148). Thus with Thersites and Socrates we come close to an assimilation of the Cynic philosopher with a comic buffoon who is meant to raise a laugh through his shame-causing language. In Diogenes’ mouth, the attacks come through sharp and witty remarks. As Lowry notes about Thersites in the *Iliad*, we can also say that Classical

229 Marks 2005.9.
Athens too seems to have shown “tolerance” for “the person who is αἰσχρός in speech and appearance” (1991.270): in fact, the little that we know about Crates’ own physical appearance is precisely of that shameful nature. According to Zeno of Citium’s Χρεῖαι, Crates was ugly to look at (DL 6.91: τὴν ὄψιν αἰσχρός) and he was laughed at when exercising (γυμναζόμενος ἐγελᾶτο). Physical ugliness can be used, as in the case of Thersites, to distance a figure from the main crowd, and indeed, as Thersites is meant to be the ultimate anti-hero, so, too, Crates’s ugliness may serve, as Navia points out, “to emphasize his other side, that is, his inner being, in which he proved to be a man of great spiritual beauty.”

In the later tradition, especially in the hostile tradition represented by Lucian, the assimilation between Thersites and the Cynics was made even more explicit when he shows Demonax the Cynic philosopher “praising Thersites as being some sort of Cynic orator” (Lucian, Vita Demonact. 61: κυνικός τις δημήγορος).

In the historical reality, the shamelessness of Diogenes marks him as someone who may just raise a laugh among his peers once in a while. Criticized for his αἰσχρά, the persona that Diogenes displays is not only expected to bring about disapproval from his contemporary but, as I am convinced, it implies that the absurdities he raised were often meant to be received with some humor and laughter. With this in mind, let us quote

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231 Navia 1996.124, 132-133: “[A]s in the instance of Socrates (Plato, Symp. 215a-222b), who was compared to the Sileni and the Satyrs, so with Crates, too, an unpleasant appearance was paradoxically complemented by a beautiful soul, which can explains why a woman as beautiful as Hipparchia is said to have fallen in love with so ugly, old, and deformed a man. She, too, like Alcibiades in the case of Socrates, recognized the spiritual reality that was hidden beneath an unattractive exterior. [...] She is young and beautiful, and he is old, ugly, and deformed; she is virginal and pure, and he is a dog-like man and surely not a novice in the ways of the world; she is rich and aristocratic, and he is poor and a regular chiffonnier, just like Diogenes”.

232 The Stoic philosopher Ariston (ca.320-250 BCE) compared the wise man “to a good actor, who could play the part [literally ‘to put on a mask’: πρόσωπον ἀναλάβῃ] of a Thersites or of an Agamemmon and impersonate each befittingly” (DL 7.160). This might be a reminiscence of Demades the orator who, when a captive of Philip II, spoke freely (χρήσασθαι παραθείᾳ καὶ λόγον ἀποφθέγξασθαι), saying: “King, when Tyche has given you the mask (πρόσωπον) of an Agamemmon, are you not ashamed to act out (πράττων ἔργα) a Thersites?” (Diod. Sic. 16.87.2). As a true heir to both Zeno and the Cynics, Ariston the philosopher also discarded Physics and Logic: “the only thing that concerns us is ethics”.

224
Lowry on the establishment of what he calls (in part due to his study of Thersites)
“comic-shame”: “A deed or event is shameful because the laughter which it causes
discredits the party or parties associated with it, and if a Homeric hero shames his γένος,
he has done something that brings laughter and discredit on himself and his family. The
deformed, shame-causing person similarly evokes discreditable laughter...”.
Obviously Lowry investigates the shame-causing (αἰσχύνη) that is brought about
involuntarily (despite Thersites’ usual tactic to speak “to raise a laugh”). In the case of
Diogenes, the foolishness of the νόμοι he observed were mirrored by the very actions he
intended by showing the mere arbitrariness of their efficiency.

He, too, like a recent Thersites, was keen on making society question the nomic
reality and occasionally he knew how to raise laughter to some degree. If Thersites’ traits
“mark him as a comic figure” and his “closest literary affinities are with comedy” and if
he “helps us view the world from below” (Thalmann 1988.16-17), Diogenes too
belongs to a certain degree to the comic world. Neither by criticizing immediate
authority nor by simply condemning aristocratic greed, Diogenes wanted to simply reflect
the true absurdity of normative behaviors in democratic Greece. As such, both his
language (his λόγος, the Classical equivalent of Homeric ἔπεα) and his actions (his
πραττόμενα), that is, the entire construction of his (literary and pragmatic) persona aimed
at providing an ethical παράδειγμα through his eccentricities. This double stance is

234 Rankin 1972 evokes parallels between Thersites and (the Homeric) Margites and refers to
Whitman 1964.46 who “suggests that Thersites, ‘who embodies most of what we associate with comedy’
resembles Margites in that he knows a great deal in a disorderly way: πόλλ’ πίστατο ἔργα” (Rankin
1972.55n.84).
precisely and entirely what is suggested by the famous Cynic posture: σπουδογέλοιος,\textsuperscript{235} which was to become Menippus’ nickname (Strab. 16.2.29).

The very staff too with which the Cynic figure is associated is not without recalling both the “lameness” of Thersites (his physical “shame-causing”) and the authorial staff of speech-making (verbal freedom): the staff constitutes a symbol of both defiance to the age-old class of aristocratic rule and of his “parrhēsiastic” stance in democratic Athens. Diogenes’ shamefulness is not only reflected in his αἰσχρὰ ἔπεα, his inappropriate speech (“unmeasured”, one could say), but also in his performing αἰσχρὰ ἔργα (for example, τὰ Δήμητρος καὶ τὰ Ἀφροδίτης) in public, in front of all to see. As with Thersites, Diogenes’ anecdotes regularly portray him in the realm of ὀνείδος and νεῖκος, \textit{i.e.} public affronts, private rebukes, open reproaches and quarrels.\textsuperscript{236} With the wit of a Socrates, Diogenes responds to his detractors, this time un-silenced by an Odysseus. In fact, in his language, he becomes both the voice of dissent (Thersites) and the voice of cunning (Odysseus), often under the guise of comic speech. Diogenes somehow manages to encapsulate both literary figures, and turn himself into a para-social \textit{personage} worthy of both blame poetry and comic theater.

It is not our goal here to claim that Diogenes the Cynic exists in the exact same literary realm of the praise-blame poetic spectrum, but the literary attacks and verbal

\textsuperscript{235} DL 6.27 witnesses to the fact that Diogenes was well aware of his reception and that he might not have taken himself always too seriously: “When he was “discussing seriously” (σπουδαίολογουμένῳ) one day and nobody came he began to whistle. As people were gathering he reproached them that they go with all seriousness to hear nonsense but that they are slow to go to serious matters (τὰ σπουδαῖα).”

\textsuperscript{236} In DL many of the apophthegms that shape the lives of the early Cynics are framed in a context of blame and rebuke: many of the philosophers’ χρεῖαι are seen as responses to (often) anonymous yet specific reproaches (ἐνείδεα): Antisthenes in 6.1, 6.4, 6.6; Diogenes in 6.49, 6.56 (twice), 6.58, 6.63, 6.66 (twice), and 6.67.
invectives of the blame poets share certain characteristics with Diogenes’ attacks on the νομίσματα. Diogenes is himself some sort of Thersites who usually denies himself a place of origin, using his παρρησία that is granted by his city of adoption, Cosmopolis. He is neither aristocratic nor a simple figure of the mass, but his vocal dissent has a universal overtone that transgresses all social barriers. In a replay of the Thersites episode, Diogenes gets his revenge in an anecdote reported by Metrocles in his Χρεῖαι (DL 6.33): “when he went to a symposium of young men with his head half-shaven, Diogenes received some blows (πληγάς), and afterwards he wrote the names of those who had hit him on a tablet and went about until they were recognized for their ὑβρίς and reproached”. As the butt of the joke at the symposium, this new Thersites does not put up with a shameful beating without acknowledging his attackers’ fault. From Thersites’ public beating at the hands of Odysseus, Diogenes reverts the episode by making public his accusations over an event that unfolded in a semi-private setting. And as told by Hecaton (in his first book of Χρεῖαι), when one day Diogenes shouted “Hey, Men!” (ἰὼ ἄνθρωποι), and people gathered, he struck them with his stick and said: “I called for men (ἄνθρωπος), not defilements (καθάρματα)” (DL 6.32). Not a simple victim, Diogenes’ persona turns into a new kind of Thersites, one who bites back and defends himself against the injustices of his society.

6.2 Anacharsis: the Outsider

Diogenes the beggar-philosopher finds another comparison with two minor figures that belong to the history of Northern lands, close to Diogenes’ hometown on the Black Sea. Herodotus tells the story of two characters that also prefigure in some ways
aspects of early Cynic philosophy: the Scythian prince Anacharsis and the later king Scyles (Hdt. 4.76-80). Especially when coupled with Thersites, Anacharsis the Scythian becomes the other side of the Cynic coin: while the former represents a negative character that may be associated with bold speech and comic relief, the latter, through the important tradition of the sages, embodies wisdom and the seriousness of philosophical ideas. Therefore, on the serio-comic spectrum the Cynic philosopher is found as a mixture of both, simultaneously a shameless fool (Thersites) and a vagrant sage (Anacharsis). While the Greek fool needs not be seen as a direct model for Diogenes, the Iliadic episode does find echoes in some characteristics of Cynicism; meanwhile, as a polar opposite to Thersites, Anacharsis the Scythian also provides a literary precedent for Diogenes and his philosophy.

From his native Sinope we may assume with confidence that Diogenes knew of the Scythian characters, Anacharsis and Scyles: that they serve as direct models to him cannot be proven but the parallels do not seem coincidental. At best, we can claim that the Scythian characters, who both suffered a major change of fortune, could have been inspirational to Diogenes or any subsequent Cynic. Since Anacharsis later became a clear paradigm for Cynicism (as is manifest from the Cynic epistles), reason dictates that our philosopher must have been at least familiar with the main tradition.

237 Anacharsis belonged to the royal family but was never king himself. Beside Herodotus, our earliest account of the Scythians as a people (γένος) is found in Hippocrates’ Air, Water, Places (17-21). The Scythians were often known in Classical Athens as archer policemen, which was not as envious or prestigious a position as it would seem as they were a regular object of demeaning ridicule: cf. Arist. Thesm., Lysistr. 451; Aesch., On the False Embassy = Or. 2.173; Andoc., On Peace = Or. 3.5; Lysias 451. Other surviving narratives concerning Anacharsis are relatively late: Plutarch (Banquet of the Seven Sages, Solon), Lucian (Anacharsis, Scytha), and DL’s apophthegms.

238 There are for instance apophthegms on wine which could be read “as outgrowths from Cynic preaching on self-mastery (ἐγκράτεια)” (Martin 1996.146).

If we relate Herodotus’ account of the Scythians to Diogenes’ own philosophical enterprise, we find that the Scythian people offer similarities with Diogenes the Cynic’ own lifestyle. First of all Herodotus’ description (4.46) shows the Scythian people to be quite self-sufficient, in a relationship of αὐτάρκεια that would not have seemed disconnected from Diogenes’ own thought: indeed the Scythians live their lives “without towns or walls” (μήτε ἁστεα μήτε τείχεα); as nomads they live in wagons (φερέοικοι; οἰκήματά τε σφι ἃπρο ζευγέων); their preferred means of subsistence consist of cattle-herding rather than agriculture (ζώοντες μὴ ἀπ’ ἀρότου ἀλλ’ ἀπὸ κτηνέων); as a mobile community, with little geographical attachment to one specific area, the Scythians are a symbol of independence and self-sufficiency. Their nomadic lifestyle makes it so that few wars actually need to be fought in Scythia because they can easily avoid confrontation. In fact, the “one most important question in human affairs” that the Scythians resolved (4.46.7: ἕν μὲν τὸ μέγιστον τῶν ἀνθρωπηίων πρηγμάτων σοφώτατα πάντων) in Herodotus’ eyes is precisely this: the Scythians have found the means either to stop invaders from escaping their grasp or to avoid combat altogether with those invaders. The idea of mobility and un-attachment to a home finds echoes in Diogenes’ own customary “residence” (his πίθος) and his seasonal moves between Athens and Corinth. It is also reflected in Diogenes’ tragic quote about being “without a city, without a home...” (DL 6.38 = Adesp. fr. 284 TGF: ἀπολίς, ἄοικος...).

Anacharsis became a conspicuous character in the Greek tradition, and also for Cynics perhaps as early as Diogenes’ lifetime. In his discussion of the sources on Anacharsis, Martin 1996 speculates on the individual sources and according to him,

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240 He eventually became associated with self-mastery and moderation, an important ideal in 4th-c. philosophy, as is testified by the inscription on his statue: “Master your tongue, your stomach, your genitals” (DL 1.104).
Plutarch’s *Solon* (which narrates a meeting between a cynical Anacharsis and an idealistic Solon) relies on Hermippus (3rd c. BCE, our supposed author of the *Sale of Diogenes*) who would have put characteristically Cynic(al) witty remarks in the mouth of the Scythian.\(^{241}\) Aristotle too knows of an apophthegm of Anacharsis which was probably found in Hermippus’ work as well (Arist. *An. Post.* 78b29-31; Plut. *Banquet of the Seven Sages* 150e). In any case, the presence of Anacharsis is well established in the Cynic literary tradition of Imperial times (to the Emperor Julian and beyond) and the Scythian sage conspicuously gravitates around the Cynic movement in later times.\(^{242}\) It may be quite significant that according to DL Anacharsis was first included in the group of the Seven Sages by Ephorus (ca.400-330 BCE) who was himself a perfect contemporary of Diogenes the Cynic in the 4th c. (cf. DL 1.40-41).\(^{243}\) It is reasonable to say that the Cynic prototype and the Scythian prince do share characteristics that seem to converge in the 4th century. With his famed wisdom Anacharsis could easily represent a model for the Cynics in continental Greece as for many other “wise” men (whether they be king or not): the Athenians of the 5th c. had presumably known the character for some time already if we trust the biography that Anacharsis had traveled to Greece and elsewhere.\(^{244}\) The association between both figures is also sound in view of the fact that

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\(^{241}\) Cf. Solon’s reaction to Anacharsis’ readiness of speech (DL 1.102).


\(^{243}\) Heinze believed that Ephorus used a (now lost) Cynic book on Anacharsis (Heinze 1891.466-67), but there is no need to imagine Ephorus being directly influenced by the first Cynics (cf. Kindstrand 1981.24n.30). It is hazardous to imagine that Anacharsis was already prominent in the early stages of Cynic thought, although there remains the possibility that Anacharsis was featured in one of Diogenes’ own writings.

\(^{244}\) Anacharsis left for Greece “possibly on some kind of embassy” (Hdt. 4.77; Athen. 10.428D-E) and was in Athens in the early years of the 6th c. BCE (acc. to Sosicrates) as a contemporary of Solon. His honorific Athenian citizenship is suspicious, appearing only in a couple of later authors (Luc. *Scytha*; Himerius *Or.* 29); in any case, he traveled through the Greek world, at which time he would have met with Croesus, the king of Lydia where the tradition sets the meeting of the Seven Sages (see Diod. Sic.). See Kindstrand 1981.7n.6 for a discussion of chronology.
many kings and statesmen were attracted to the image of the philosopher-king, from Plato right down to the Stoics: why then, and how, did a barbarian prince become associated with Cynicism, and what features does he share with our earliest Cynic philosopher?

Anacharsis’ affiliation certainly has to do, as R.P. Martin points out, with his “extreme otherness, that of seminomadic races living on the edge of the Greek world”. With this perspective Anacharsis was allowed to be used paradigmatically as “a medium for <the Cynics’> critique of Greek institutions”, while this critique of institutions is exhibited in the very story of Anacharsis through the inherent tension created by the social position of his character and the νόμοι at play in his story.

In Herodotus’ account (4.76-77), while returning to Scythia from his extensive travels abroad Anacharsis witnessed the celebration of a festival of Cybele at Cyzicus and vowed to reproduce such celebrations upon his arrival in Scythia. During the night festivities a Scythian happened to witness Anacharsis’ ceremonial rites and sacrifices to the goddess and reported the event to the king, who soon had Anacharsis shot dead. Herodotus explains the gesture by the Scythians’ distrust of foreign ways (Hdt. 4.76): “the Scythians are dead-set on fleeing the usage of foreign ways (ξεινικοῖσι νομαίοισι), especially Greek ones” and Anacharsis was killed precisely for adopting “foreign

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245 Martin 1996.137. Anacharsis possibly wrote several works himself, among which a poem on “Scythian customs (νόμιμα), the Greek simplicity of life (εὐτέλεια βίου) and military matters” (DL 1.101; Kindstrand 1981.9n.9 discusses the problem of his literary production). By using Sosicrates and Hermippus, DL at least makes evident that the tradition surrounding Anacharsis was investigated by the same Hellenistic biographers who wrote the Lives of Antisthenes, Diogenes, and others: as a terminus ante quem the tradition about Anacharsis must go back at least to the early Hellenistic period (this agrees with the composition of the Cynic letters ascribed to the Scythian). It seems obvious that the creation of Diogenes’ tradition coincides in many aspects with the tradition of the Seven Sages, in terms of biographical elements and, very significantly, the tradition of anecdotes (χρεῖαι) upon which the Cynic tradition seems to align itself, or mirror, in historiographical terms.

246 We can disregard Herodotus’ second story, the one that was told in the Peloponnese regarding Anacharsis being sent by the king “to find out what he could about the Greeks”, as being superfluous and a mere Greek invention (4.77: ὁ λόγος ἄλλως πέπλασται ὑπ’ αὐτὸν Ἑλλήνων).
customs” and associating with Greeks” (Hdt. 4.78: διὰ ξεινικά τε νόμαια καὶ Ἑλληνικάς ὀμιλίας).

The main tension embodied by Anacharsis is certainly a political one: the insideness or outsideness that either allows or restrains the freedom of action and speech in both introducing foreign ideas and criticizing contemporary society. Indeed the construction of an “internal outsider” persona, a figure that is both an insider to the normative social bonds while he is being kept an outsider as an observer of the community is, for Martin, as old as Hesiod, while “it reappears in the parabatic freedom of Old Comedy <and> is standardized in the rhetorical practice of personification (προσωποποιία), and provides the basic pragmatic structure for the genres of diatribe and iambus”. As with Diogenes himself, the tradition surrounding Anacharsis is historically indeterminate: it is what the figure represents that is important, his “imaginary construct” rather than his actual life.247 As a Hellene himself, Diogenes did not need to “adopt” Greek ways in the way Anacharsis and Scyles had done; Diogenes did not have to suffer such consequences as the Scythian king (his beheading). Yet the two Scythians’ own social and political situations were of little help in their political demise. When Diogenes was sent into exile he could have found it just as saddening as the fates of these Scythian princes, but still, he at least abandoned Sinope with his head still on his shoulder.

As far as the legend of Anacharsis is concerned in Greece (and only Greece, since we have no evidence of his popularity in Scythia),248 it results that his tradition focuses on two specific traits conspicuous in the Greek testimonies. First, Anacharsis was a

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248 Hdt. 4.76: “Today if anyone asks about Anacharsis, the Scythians claim that they do not know him – because he traveled to Greece and adopted foreign practices (ξεινικοῖσι ἔθεσι)”. 

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barbarian, the ultimate outsider/Other; second, he was considered very wise. It is readily and easily seen how and why the makers of the Cynic tradition would see obvious parallels with the legendary Scythian. The Chreia tradition of both individuals not only feeds on one another but they actually reflect each other: we are to imagine behind the two traditions the manipulation of the tradition-makers into the convergence of both “philosophers”. Further, of the many men identified as wise among the Greeks, very few are actually foreigners coming to Greece: usually the wise man is himself Greek, and he has cultivated his wisdom or derived it from visiting other countries: as Kindstrand tells us, “we never hear of Egyptians or Babylonians coming to Greece with their wisdom as some sort of missionaries or philosophical teachers”.249

Beyond this convergence of elements between Anacharsis and Diogenes the Cynic, the Cynic recuperation of Anacharsis is based on the generally-accepted notion that the Cynics “idealized barbarians” and saw the Seythians, along others, as positive models to emulate.250 Yet the Cynics did not make Anacharsis, the Seythian Barbarian, into a model of philosophical life in itself but rather used the Seythian prince simply as a case in point to show that conventions, all conventions (whether Greek or Barbarian), have but little value altogether when compared to the natural state (φύσις) of humanness. Anacharsis is better perceived as an example, or an illustration, precisely of this Cynic principle: nature (φύσις) is universal (ἐν κόσμῳ) and all human customs are but artificial and conventional (νόμιμα). We are, here again, pulled right back to the Sophistic foundations of Cynicism.

249 Kindstrand 1981.18.
250 Kindstrand 1981.24-25.
As Herodotus reports, the Scythians shun foreign customs, especially the Greek ones (4.76.1-2: ξεινικοῖσι δὲ νομαίοισι καὶ οὕτωι αἰνῶς χρᾶσθαι φεύγουσι, μήτε τέων ἀλλων, Ἑλληνικοῖσι δὲ καὶ ἥκιστα). This claim represents a distrust of the ‘Other’ by stressing the dominance of one’s cultural means as a safe manner to live a culture’s ‘true’ lifestyle. It is obvious that Diogenes had no such feeling of superiority over the barbarians, as Diogenes claimed that all νόμοι were but of a single nature, that is, neither Hellenic nor Barbarian, neither Athenian nor Spartan, but rather of a unique dimension: the “natural” state of human beings (φύσις), with the universality of actual conventions which needed to be carefully detected or even suppressed for their uselessness. The figures of Anacharsis and Scyles thus become emblems of foreign kings who adopt new ways (both of them moving ‘into’ Greek customs) and adapt their own lives to new conventions (i.e. the adoption of the Greek ‘costume’). Both of these figures share with Diogenes the intrinsic notion of outsider-ness, either by bringing Greek norms from the outside into the country and adopting outside norms (Anacharsis in Scythia) or by transferring to a new city and adapting to their Greek ways (Scyles in Borysthenes). As Hartog 2001 points out Anacharsis and Scyles are both transgressive figures that cross borders that are not merely geographical ones: beside his extensive travels Anacharsis crossed cultural boundaries, and Scyles often traveled to the Borysthenite city of Olbia; this crossing is doubled by the fact that Scyles was bilingual, and perhaps Anacharsis too.251

As Hartog tells us, “Herodotus’ Anacharsis is neither at school in Greece nor a martyr to Hellenism, but then neither does he represent the Cynics, despising city life

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251 Hartog 2001.137-153 (cf. DL 1.101). Although his mother was Greek, Anacharsis could have been acquainted with Greek language through his trip to Greece, even then imperfectly, as stated by later evidence (see Kindstrand 1981.7).
with all its soft ways; he is not held up as a model on which the Greeks should school themselves.” While this remains generally true, we should not assume that the Scythian sage was not considered by the Cynics a historical-literary paradigm that reflected their values. Appropriating and adapting cultural (or anti-cultural) models is what literary fabrication is mostly about: rarely do we witness actual creations e nihilo; one necessarily builds on precedents. As later evidence points out, Anacharsis became a clear model for Cynic thought, especially in the Cynic epistles attributed to him. Whether he appeared explicitly in the works of Antisthenes or Diogenes we have no clue, but as early as 1891, Heinze was claiming that “the legend of Anacharsis was largely developed by the Cynics for their own purposes”. Heinze’s argument is based on Ephorus writing about Croesus’ meeting with the Seven Sages (DL 1.40-41) and on Diodorus Siculus’ account (9.26) of the discussion between Croesus and Anacharsis: to Croesus’ question as to what was the bravest (ἀνδρειότατον), most just (δικαιότατον), and wisest (σοφώτατα) of the living beings, Anacharsis’ response was, for Heinze, entirely Cynic: “the wildest animals, because only they live according to nature, not law” (9.26.4 τὰ ἄγριώτατα τῶν θηρίων· μόνα γὰρ κατὰ φύσιν ζῆν, οὐ κατὰ νόμους). If we believe that Ephorus is the original source, then Cynicism perfectly blends in with the representation of Anacharsis as early as the 4th c. BCE.

As an independent tradition, Anacharsis has received moderate attention in the 20th century. But early on, P. von der Mühll (1914) had argued that the legend of Anacharsis “functioned as an early, pre-Cynic, even pre-Herodotean form of cultural

253 Martin 1996.144. The Persian Cyrus is used by Antisthenes (DL 6.2 and fr. 19-21B Decleva Caizzi) and Persian kingship is mentioned by Diogenes in Dio Chrys. (Or. 6.1).
critique” which “underwent some Cynic influence”.254 Indeed, “it is harder to believe that no Anacharsis picture existed prior to the Cynics”, and Martin sees a two-stage growth in the Anacharsis tale from its original Archaic roots, a sophistic stage and a Cynic one:

> “When it comes to cultural analysis, one and the same intellectual stream, expressed in the sixth century in elegiac poetry [Xenophanes, Tyrtaeus] of an ethical bent, simply forks. It trickles into Herodotus… and, running parallel to this, through the sophistic movement… A third branching-off of the stream manages to bypass intellectual articulation within fifth-century history or philosophy and ends up instead on the street, as it were, in the pronouncements and enactments of Diogenes.”

Martin continues:

> “Both Antisthenes and Diogenes draw from the archaic ethical tradition, but in different ways, the former as an intellectual, the latter as more extreme actor of wisdom, rather than thinker. Paradoxically, the later figure represents himself as a much earlier type than his predecessor, i.e., as a performing sage.”255

And that is particularly part of Diogenes’ pragmatic mission. The performance of his philosophy necessarily goes through the assimilation of paradigmatic behavior.

Now what about Scyles, the Scythian king? Elements of his biography have a lot in common with Anacharsis. In fact, as Kindstrand 1981 points out, the stories of both figures are too similar to refer to two separate events (both are from the royal family, have a Greek mother, are associated with Greek religious rite and are the victims of assassination for these reasons.256 Anacharsis, the famed Seven Sage, would then have had elements from Scyles’ life incorporated into his own biographical tradition. As with Anacharsis, Scyles’ outsideness is exemplified by his knowledge of Greek which his

254 Martin 1996.141. For P. von der Mühll (“Das Alter der Anacharsislegende”, in Ausgewählte Kleine Schriften, Basel, 1975: 473-481), an old Anacharsis tradition developed in the 6th c. and was current in the 5th c.


256 Kindstrand 1981.15-16: “it is probable that the Anacharsis item was copied from the Scyles tale... However, it may well be that we are here dealing with a novelistic motif.”
mother taught him to speak and read (Hdt. 4.78). Once upon the Scythian throne, Scyles became over time displeased with the Scythian lifestyle (διαίτη Σκοθικῆ) and increasingly attracted to the Greek ways (Ἑλληνικά). Whenever he was in Borysthenes with his army, Scyles would hide behind the town gates and, abandoning his Scythian accouterments, dress up in Greek clothes and live as a regular Hellene even for a whole month at a time, sacrificing to the gods of the Greeks according to their νόμοι (ἐχρᾶτο διαίτη Ἑλληνικῆ καὶ θεοῖσι ἐποίει κατὰ νόμους τοὺς ᾿Ελλήνων). In every respect, Scyles behaves and looks like a Greek, disguised in the ostentatious signs of his Greekness acquired through his education.

Scyles even had a house built and married a Greek woman in Borysthenes, but during his initiation into the Dionysiac mysteries – the Scythians reproached the Greeks for these bacchic rites (4.79: ὀνειδίζουσι) – his house was struck by lightning and was burned down: Scyles became, symbolically and literally, homeless (ἄοικος). At this bad omen a Borysthenite slipped out of town and reported Scyles’ initiation to his army outside. When Scyles was back in Scythia, a rebellion led by his brother took place and Scyles fled his country for Thrace; after an exchange of refugees from both sides, Scyles was quickly beheaded by his brother on account of his Hellenism.257 Herodotus’ interpretation of both episodes relating to Anacharsis and Scyles is unambiguous (Hdt. 4.80): the Scythian people protect their own customs (νόμαια) and punish those who uphold “foreign νόμοι” (ξεινικοὶ νόμους).

257 This is a clear motif for Anacharsis’ murder in DL (1.102): “seeming to subvert the institutions (τὰ νόμιμα) of his country and deep in his Hellenism (Ελληνικέ), <Anacharsis> was shot by his brother while they were hunting.” In other accounts, Anacharsis was killed “while performing Greek rites” (DL 1.103: τελετὰς Ελληνικὰς ἐπιτελοῦντα).
The fact that Dionysus was a matter of criticism for the Scythians may be significant in Scyles’ episode, for the Borysthenite who denounced Scyles to his own army reports to the Scythian in this way (Hdt. 4.79): “You make fun of us, Scythians, because we do Bacchic rites (βακχεύομεν) and the god possesses us. Now this very god has taken even your king: he does Bacchic rites (βακχεύει) and he is maddened (μαίνεται) by the god. If you do not believe me, I will show you.” Clearly Dionysus, god of ecstasy and intoxication, was most troubling for the Scythians, for indeed they did not find it right to seek a god “who leads men to madness” (μαίνεσθαι). As such some of the apophthegms associated with Anacharsis deal with this contempt and seemingly the god is mostly rejected on the grounds of his connection with drunkenness; the most common saying of Anacharsis found in later authors actually bears on the absence of vines in Scythia:258 “When asked if there were flutes in Scythia, <Anacharsis> replied ‘no, not even vines’” (DL 1.104). But as Martin 1996.146 notes: “like the Centaurs, in Greek mythopoetic thought the Scythians teach Greeks moderation by exemplifying excess”. On excess drinking (the μαινία of Dionysus) Diogenes made fun of a youth coming back from a party (DL 6.59): “To a handsome man who was going to attend a symposium, he said ‘you will return a worse man (χείρων)’. When the youth returned the next day and said ‘I came back and am not worse (χείρων)’, Diogenes replied ‘Not a Worse-man (Χείρων), but a Eurytion’”. The word play bears on Χείρων, the name of the centaur Chiron, known for his wisdom, and Eurytion, the centaur famed for his attempt to kidnap Pirithoos’ fiancé which resulted in the battle between the Lapiths and the Centaurs. In the Odyssey, the word μαινομένος in relation to intoxication is used precisely in reference

258 See fr. A23-A32 in Kindstrand 1981.113-116, taken from authors such Aristotle, Strabo, Plutarch, DL, Athenaeus, Stobaeus, etc.
to this same episode (Od. 21.291-310, where the suitor Antinoos relates the tale to the beggar-Odysseus).

Going back to Plato’s claim that Diogenes was a “Socrates gone mad” (μαινόμενος), we may even ask how or on what grounds Diogenes the Cynic was made “mad”. Is the philosopher assimilated to a “Socrates gone crazy” or is he rather like a “drunk Socrates”? The latter reading suggests an intoxicated philosopher or one under the effect of Dionysus, his behavior resulting in what would be perceived as inappropriate behavior. Just as Scyles is seen by his army men celebrating the Bacchic rites in Borysthenes, being full of the god (μαίνεται), so too Diogenes’ anti-normative behavior may at times be interpreted by outsiders as the result of intoxication. As early as Od. 21.298 μαινόμενος is collocated and associated with intoxication (μαινόμενος by wine) and some Cynic apophthegms deal precisely with the limits of sobriety or drinking, just as Anacharsis warned his listeners (DL 1.103): “He used to say that the vine bore three kinds of grapes: the first of pleasure (ἡδονῆς), the second of intoxication (μέθης), the third of disgust (ἀηδίας).”259 This warning against excess drinking certainly follows the lines of Diogenes’ purpose of living according to nature, whereby he also praised the “moderation” he saw in Spartan society as the Lacedaemonians were for him a certain model (DL 6.59): “coming back to Athens from Lacedaemon, to one who was asking him ‘from where, to where’, he replied ‘from the men’s apartments to the women’s quarters’.

Plato’s mockery of Diogenes for being a “Socrates gone mad” might therefore be a double play on words: in Plato’s view Diogenes is both a frenzied individual, one who subverts Socrates’ character, but also an individual who can be interpreted as a “drunk”

259 In the list of Antisthenes’ books we find the title “On the use of wine, or On intoxication, or On the Cyclops” (DL 6.18), which may be aligned with Anacharsis’ thought.
Socrates, which is in itself some sort of oxymoron since Socrates is never seen in a state of intoxication in Plato’s dialogues (cf. Pl. Symp. 223c-d: Socrates’ lucid conversations in the early morning of the extended night-symposium).

As far as literary models are concerned, certain (royal) figures gravitate around the Cynic model of excellence. Not only those barbarian princes Anacharsis and Scyles may serve as models for the Cynic philosopher, but other kings help in creating the Cynic literary DNA. An important characteristic of the Cynics is their simplicity of life that is explicitly reflected in their external display, their famous “costume” (as comedy would have it). The ‘king-in-rags’ was an important topos and as such we may summon Telephus and Odysseus as prime examples of this image of the Cynic. As the Stoics were to make use of the kingly paradigm, the Cynics may be approximated to Telephus, the king of Mysia, who was especially known in Athens from the play put on stage by Euripides (famously parodied in Aristophanes’ Acharnians and Thesmophoriazousae). As we have already seen this figure is associated with Crates of Thebes who, the anecdote tells us, turned to Cynicism upon seeing a tragedy about this character. It might be telling indeed that the paradox of the beggar-king succeeds at ennobling an otherwise controversial figure of social and political criticism. The imagery of “disguised wisdom” befits Cynic philosophy in that these philosophers embody the princely wisdom hidden under a vulgar disguise. Such has always been the role imagined by Cynic philosophers. Under the costume of a dirty old fool emerges a critique of society’s flaws and absurdities, and under the conventional guise of resourcelessness lies the power of wisdom. One of the last and lasting images we are left with when we think of the Cynics
is that of Odysseus returning home under the guise of a vagrant beggar. On the threshold of his palace, the real king of Ithaca is recognized by his dog Argus who, neither barking, snarling, or biting those who threaten his world, recognizes this time around his master by wagging his tail, reassured that his true master and friend has found his way home. The dog is finally comforted, perhaps even convinced, that the world will return to its “natural” state. Order is restored, and after the animal has been tired out and disillusioned at the world around him, he may now even imagine that he has played an effective part in the upcoming transformation of his own κόσμος.
For the last few decades, the study of ancient Cynicism has made significant progress and Diogenes the Cynic, the first ‘true’ Cynic philosopher, has received much attention and is now regarded as an important figure in the history of philosophy. While it had been recognized early on in ancient times that Cynicism was an important offshoot within the traditional historiography of philosophy, it had for a long time lapsed into critical disdain and deliberate neglect on the part of scholars who could not fathom (let alone accept!) that a man of the like of Diogenes of Sinope should be the focus of academic interest: a freak, an insignificant character, a provocative mendicant, a crude and vulgar type, Diogenes probably heard it all in his own days as well.

Through the study of the philosophical tradition which was undertaken as early as late Classical and early Hellenistic times, we undertook to show that such a lineage – from which Cynicism becomes a genetic link between Socratic and Stoic philosophies, through some polishing on the part of ancient doxographers and biographers – relies on associations between teacher and pupils that often rest on fictionalized relationships to better suit the historiography. For instance, while a philosophical and personal association between Socrates and Antisthenes is certainly accurate, the tradition may be exaggerating personal contacts between Antisthenes and Diogenes, who would have moved to Athens only after Antisthenes’ death. Yet the traditional account remains true on the basis of both men’s views and critique of the world, an Antisthenean tendency that was pushed to its most radical interpretation in Diogenes’ philosophical thought.
The location of Cynicism in the Socratic lineage is not only logical but is also representative of the Hellenistic and Imperial attempts to consider philosophy as a continuous flow of interacting ideas that often branch out into other systems, dogmatic in many cases, pragmatic in a few. Indeed, as we are often reminded, philosophy has had a clear ethical inclination from Socrates onwards. When we compare the tradition surrounding the origins of the Cynic movement with the biographical account of Socrates’ life and personality, we reach the conclusion that the deep suspicion about Diogenes’ life rests on doubtful accounts that may often be open to criticism just as what we know about Socrates himself; yet as such the very tradition of early Cynicism is by no means more flawed than the entire tradition surrounding Socrates. What we are left with is a tradition that deliberately used the model of Socrates’ life and of his transmitted biographical elements to shape a parallel one with the original founder of Cynicism, Diogenes of Sinope. Diogenes’ close and personal relationship with Antisthenes was magnified to fit the whole movement into an organic-like philosophical succession and despite some ancient (and modern) claims, Antisthenes can now only be designated as a “pre-Cynic” from which Diogenes could have appropriated, adopted, and expanded some key elements to make them specifically what was to become the true Cynic τρόπος.

More than a theoretical discourse indeed, Cynicism was known as a lifestyle, a pragmatic approach to ethics which distinguishes it from the emerging philosophical, ergo dogmatic, schools.

When we rely on Plato and Xenophon to fully account for the real Socrates, we quickly run into the long-standing “Socratic problem”, a trouble which scholarship has tackled over the years by giving greater credit alternately to each of the Socratic
followers. Yet the real Socrates exists for us mainly in literary accounts that necessarily build Socrates’ character, each with specifically emphatic traits and characteristics. With the very tradition of Diogenes we reach a similar problem especially in view of the nature of the tradition on which our knowledge of the man from Sinope relies. Our conclusion that Antisthenes mainly “paved the way” for Cynicism and that Diogenes was the true original Dog generates a divide between the two men, but from their traditional association we clearly understand how the apostolic succession Antisthenes-Diogenes was stressed by retrojecting their similarities onto the Socrates-Antisthenes succession: this move has the benefit of making early Cynicism a real Socratic philosophy and generating a doxographical lineage that remained consistent throughout Antiquity.

An analysis of Diogenes Laertius, our most important source for early Cynicism, brings out the very Cynic tradition in the making. Although the author is a usual victim of modern scholarly criticism, he remains an invaluable (albeit difficult) source for both his use of earlier material and for its subsequent influence on later Cynic accounts. A brief overview of the ten books of Diogenes Laertius’ Lives of Philosophers quickly draws our attention to the distinct nature of the Cynic tradition. Indeed, similar to the biographies of the Seven Sages, the life of Diogenes (and to a certain degree that of Antisthenes) mainly consists of literary anecdotes that reflect and embody in their succinctness and brevity the very Cynic thought that Diogenes exhibited in his daily life: a life of polemics, criticism, arguments, but also full of humor, witticism, quips and quirks. Halfway between historiography and the literary tradition of χρεῖαι, the work of Diogenes Laertius on Diogenes the Cynic remains symptomatic of his own sources, and
since there is no detailed literary account of Diogenes – did he even write all the books attributed to him? – we conclude that the very shape of the information transmitted in ancient times is precisely of the nature which those Cynic authors imagined and encouraged.

As a constituent of the whole philosophical tradition, the χρεῖαι (Latin sententiae) did precisely all of this by presenting concise, falsely spontaneous situations where characters are momentarily put on the daily stage where their remarks are of the sort as those who could be delivered in comic plays. These χρεῖαι, as their etymology makes explicit, not only play a mnemonic part in the tradition but they are also meant to encapsulate and emphasize specifically Cynic takes on the world: a world read within the content of verbal replies to individual questionings, or as the pragmatic result of social behavior within certain situations. It is precisely in the last decades of the 4th century that we truly see the shaping of the literary tradition concerning the Cynics with the publication of Metrocles’ collection of Diogenes’ ἀποφθέγματα: a follower of the original Cynic, Metrocles is to a large extent the main source of the man’s thoughts which he reproduced in the form of χρεῖαι. With other accounts of his life and ideas we reach the very beginning of a conscious literary effort at portraying the philosopher in his own idiosyncratic light: a tradition that continued to be used all the way down to Imperial (and Christian) times.

It has often bothered scholars that outside Xenophon, the pre-Cynic Antisthenes remains an elusive figure in contemporary literature. None of his writings and no Σωκρατικὸς λόγος that features Antisthenes has come down to us, even though he probably appeared as a character in a few. And so our story of pre-Cynicism remains
sketchy as well. For those who considered Antisthenes to be a true Cynic before the word, the issue has been solved by investigating hidden references in dialogues, those of Plato necessarily. While Antisthenes remains a possible candidate for the originator of the literary genre of dialogue, it has been quite frustrating that he remains absent from this kind of literature, as we have it today. Since Plato and Antisthenes were great rivals in the Socratic circle, the reason for the lack of direct references to Antisthenes in Plato’s dialogues may be a personal and ideological move on Plato’s part. When we go through possible sightings of pre-Cynic (or Cynic) ideas in Plato’s work, we conclude that behind these plausible interpretations the matter of the fact is that both men were at polar opposites and Plato would therefore grant Antisthenes but a very small role in his dialogues. It is perhaps but just a small step to have Plato claim soon after that Diogenes himself (an ideological relative of Antisthenes) was a “Socrates gone mad”. The absence of Antisthenes from the evidence that came down to us may be quite telling in that if we can sometimes hint at references to the pre-Cynic philosopher he remains conspicuously absent from Plato’s accounts despite some wished-for allusions.

After our journey in the tradition of anecdotes, it remains possible to go through the evidence regarding Diogenes’ biography and isolate elements that can hardly be disputed. Scarce as they are, there are a few undisputable facts about Diogenes that can be garnered even though some need further analysis and interpretation. The Cynic philosopher is mainly associated with three Greek communities: Sinope, a city on the Southern shore of the Black Sea, Athens, where he resided for extended periods of time, and Corinth, where he ultimately died. Some of the most important facts about his life
attest to his own vagrancy. From the exile from Sinope to his move to Athens and stays in Corinth, Diogenes was most likely a well-known figure in the continental cities. His life was a public one, and he could be found outdoors preaching, begging, or simply loitering. But some of the events associated with his life hardly meet the standard requirements of credibility and may be best explained with other literary or biographical parallels that yet again show that tradition is a literary endeavor that shapes up its main character in the ways the authors intended. It is one of the reasons why Diogenes the Cynic comes to life only upon his arrival to Athens and that the account centers on his Cynic mission to “deface the currency”.

With the help of archeology we can assert with some confidence that his exile from Sinope took place around the mid-4th century. It is through the course of his stay in Athens that he became associated with the symbol of the dog (due in part to his lifestyle), a nickname which he embraced in all likelihood. We can be sure that Diogenes at some point was known as ‘the Dog’ (in Aristotle’s words): Diogenes was the true original Dog and his followers helped in creating the Cynic character. Ancient writers (disciples and historiographers alike) were quickly able to further create life events that reflected a (perceived) discipleship based on the views shared by both Antisthenes and Diogenes. Despite doubts over Diogenes’ own literary production the tradition agrees that he died in Corinth at an advanced age, although the strict interpretations of the cause shares all the elements of literary tradition. Meanwhile the tradition also enhanced episodes of his life that remain, while being plausible, suspicious at best: modeled on Socrates’ own connection with the Delphic oracle it is no surprise that the Cynic tradition has created a similar pattern to explain Diogenes’ philosophical calling; and like a comic character out
of a mime, the episode of him being sold as a slave is as improbable (a likely
development of Hermippus) as it is significant to frame him in the role of his life: a
schoolmaster who teaches his master’s children and a witty character who keeps up his
quirks in the face of enslavement.

The tradition of early Cynicism relies on a historiographical design to affiliate
Socrates and Diogenes the Cynic by forging an organic succession that trickles down to
the Stoic movement. Some of the Cynic prerogatives do in fact rest on Socratic elements
but Cynic “discourse” is not simply dependent on Socrates or his pupil Antisthenes.
Cynicism is truly part of the history of philosophy yet it is also a progeny of 5th-c.
concerns brought about by the arrival of a new breed of thinkers who questioned
traditional education and received ideas. The sophists’ influence on polemical, political,
and philosophical issues provides an important starting point to discuss fundamental
elements of Cynic philosophy. First and foremost the Cynics espoused the notion that
φύσις was more fundamental to human life than νόμος, the conventionality of which was
at the center of the Cynics’ attacks. With its eudaimonistic goal Cynic philosophy
radicalized the notion that life needed to be lived “according to nature” and this question
had been raised and debated a full century earlier by the sophists themselves.

Just as Socrates and Plato can hardly be understood without investigating the
sophists who make up the general characters of Plato’s dialogues, so too Diogenes’
pragmatic philosophy makes better sense when we investigate how the sophists have
influenced everything philosophical. The history of the νόμος/φύσις polarity begins with
Protagoras who championed human relativism, whereby man becomes the true measure
of the experienced world. By studying claims made by other sophists (Hippias, Antiphon), our knowledge of Cynic φύσις becomes generally compatible with the first sophistic movement, albeit Diogenes’ position reaches a climax previously unforeseen. The Cynic’s take on νόμοι is also a radical interpretation of earlier statements from which the Cynic mission to “deface the currency” is but emblematic of the sophists’ strive to criticize the conventional nature of arbitrary consensus. There lies the great Cynic paradox: while promoting φύσις as the ultimate measure of human life and happiness, Cynicism can in no way exclude some conventions (νόμοι), such as language, since a great part of the literary tradition is made up precisely of quips and answers that often suggest the deliberate travesty of language, including double-entendre, puns, and word plays. What Diogenes scratches, in the end, is not so much the value of the νόμοι but rather their inconsistency, and contradictions of the sort are also reflected in Diogenes’ tradition.

The criticism of νόμοι implies a political critique from which Diogenes is not absent. By raising Nature to its fundamentally determinative role in human life, early Cynicism ends up placing itself in a world of margins, on the fringe of society, excluding itself from internal political struggles. One way Diogenes famously circumvented this position was by adopting another view that pertains to his stay in Athens, as a justification for his voice to be heard and felt. It is in Athens that Diogenes created for himself a new kind of citizenship, claiming to be a “citizen of the world” under the neologism “Cosmopolitan”. Defacing or scratching the νόμοι indeed allows Diogenes to break all political barriers and it enables the philosopher to speak his mind unrestrained by political play. As the ultimate antinomian stance Diogenes’ cosmopolitanism turns
the whole κόσμος into a universal πόλις of men in which everyone is a citizen and can enjoy the privileges usually denied to some groups. The fresh view brought about by Diogenes was reproduced to some degree by later Cynics (especially Crates) but it also reverberates in Stoicism which claimed, for example, the equality of races and genders.

When compared with another philosophical strand we realize yet again that Diogenes’ conception is by no means irrelevant to the sophists’ ideas but that it was also problematized by other, even rival, philosophies. An anecdote that features Diogenes and the hedonist Aristippus is significant in collocating the two philosophers which the Chreia tradition labors to contrast on specific points which may easily be perceived as siding together. In an effort to oppose different philosophical systems, the Chreia tradition was able to define (or refine) various philosophical stances in order to draw strict lines between such approaches to life and happiness. Our interpretation of the anecdote leads us to see the contrasting view between the two men whereby Diogenes is made into a citizen everywhere, and thereby able to exercise all of his rights anywhere, while Aristippus turns out to be excluded from all participation and remains the vagrant sophist he claimed to be. In a struggle for political warrant, the Chreia tradition places Diogenes at the center of his own created world-stage.

Diogenes’ conception of cosmopolitanism was not, as it has often been argued, simply the rejection of any citizenship, but in his very formulation, the Cynic creates for himself a positive place and a role in a πόλις of his own creation: the inherent contradiction between his rejection of a strict citizenship and the positive assertion of citizenship to a “greater πόλις” (Cosmopolis) is typical of him. What is more important is that Diogenes is yet again unable to reject all νόμοι and he uses nomic language to
perpetuate his antinomian views. And now armed with a new and positive citizenship from his utopian Cosmopolis, Diogenes is finally able to tackle all issues (political or social) under the one of the ideals of political participation, namely παρρησία, frankness of speech to which all citizens are entitled in their own πόλις. Coupled with ἰσηγορία, παρρησία was one of Diogenes’ great privileges he could claim in order to pursue his vocal and performative attacks on the νόμοι and to express his ideas under the veil of political freedom (Cynic ἠλευθερία).

Our study of the Cynic slogan “to deface the currency” brings us to investigate the wording of this philosophical mission. Defacement (Greek παραχαράτειν) is the compound of a word that gravitates around modern notions of personality, fictionalization, and ultimately the intricate complexities of the literary term “character” itself. Through an analysis of literary instances of the word χαρακτήρ we discover that the meaning of the term starts to shift in the Classical period, originally referring to a mere scratch, or a mark, but eventually starting to encompass the concept of physiological and psychological marks left on an individual. As we discover Euripides is our earliest attestation for this shift in meaning and it pertains to our Cynic philosopher since the tradition surrounding him is dead set on creating such “marks” that ultimately shape him, for us, with a unique personality and a true “character” in his own biographical (and hence, literary) tradition.

From various terms such as person, personage, personality, individual, character, and persona, the Greek word χαρακτήρ nowadays encompasses different realities of what we mean when we talk about “Diogenes the Cynic” in Antiquity. By studying the limits
and frontiers of the modern terminology of character we reach degrees of characterization that, taken together, paint an image of the philosopher on three different levels: Diogenes was a real historical person who lived in late Classical times but through the tradition that reached us he is mainly and foremost a dramatis persona. Therefore Diogenes is a true individual who lives especially in his literary reality, and the personality exhibited and transmitted in the Chreia tradition secures a conflation between the historical man and his literary existence. As far as historical truth or historiographical accuracy is concerned we must remain lucid to the fact that Diogenes generally exists on a literary level which we simply need to accept as historical. On another level, when one reads the biography and the anecdotes of Diogenes we often get a sense of the man through his actions and his words. Indeed, as a personage, the representation of the man from Sinope gives off some character traits that remain consistent throughout the tradition. Historical or not, Diogenes’ character (as a literary personage) presents a probable and plausible individual with a specific set of character traits, a set which maps out his own unique personality. If one’s personality is what defines an individual and the expected behavior one is likely to have in situations, we see that one’s character is more subject to judgmental calls on the part of outsiders who interpret and evaluate one’s behavior. Although the words “personality” and psychological “character” are often used synonymously, our study of both terms tells us that there is a subtle distinction between objective and subjective interpretation of behavioral responses. Finally, if Diogenes is the persona of his own tradition, he can be conceived as a “performer” in a social context: he displays a certain attitude and behavior that fits in the role he gives himself. Whether all he is reported to have said or done was true to his thought we will never fully
know, but the *persona* that he exhibits makes him the serio-comic character that he has become. As the actor of his own life, Diogenes’s character “represents” (he does a μίμησις) or “acts out” the very ideas that he wished to convey. His pragmatic philosophy relies on such “practical” principles that are meant to stir up ethical questions about what is “conventional”, what is “ethical”, and what is “appropriate” in social situations. It remains somewhat insignificant to fully distinguish between Diogenes’ actual ethics and his projected *persona*, since in the end he exists mainly as an actor in his own literary tradition. This notion becomes fully embodied in the very stance the Cynics later took in their innovative diatribes, a genre that combines serious matters and comic tone, thus mingling philosophical discourse with witticism and sarcasm that is more often than not associated with the comic genre. The true personality of the Cynic is found in this creative mode which allies (serious) ethical concerns with comic display: from our investigation we conclude that Diogenes himself was also the instigator of such a coupling. The essence of Cynicism is not only in the provocative ideas but also in the very performance of this criticism, whether it was displayed in public or inscribed in literary practice.

While we understand that there was a conscious effort to attain a literary tradition that stages Diogenes the Cynic as a figure stretching from his philosophical origins and sophistic precedents to his fictionalized character, the figure of the Cynic is also, on a fundamental level, indebted to another strand of tradition that traces itself as far back as Archaic poetry and history. Cynicism is a version of a very old “blaming” voice that criticizes the νόμοι and condemns its contemporary society for its lack of challenges to
established ideas. With a comparison between the Cynic character and earlier models we discover that elements such as critical dissent and marginal position in society are further elements that help understand and make sense of the creation of the Cynic character. Whether these characters be fictional anti-heroes or historical (foreign) princes, the Cynic tradition feeds off cultural models (or anti-models) and enhances our picture of the controversial philosophy.

As early as Homer’s *Iliad* we find an important man who has been type-cast in the role of an antagonistic critic who both raises lucid and valid doubts over the nature of authority (political or military) and provides within the narrative some sense of comic relief. Thersites, the ugliest of the Achaeans featured in Book 2, has always been the epitome of shame in Greek literature. His heated relationship with Agamemnon and Achilles temporarily diverts the reader’s attention from the struggle among supposed social equals and brings into focus the neglected voice of the second-rate citizen. Thersites is a character of dissatisfaction and frustration at the local νόμοι in place and he symbolizes the awkwardness with which shame is dealt in Greek society. In various ways Diogenes the Cynic is a modernized Thersites, but unlike the Homeric anti-hero, he has secured a political voice for himself so that he can never be silenced by another Odysseus. Through an analysis of the Thersites episode in the *Iliad* Thersites becomes an extraordinary paradigm for the limits of frankness of speech and social laughter, and Diogenes likewise plays along these lines that blur social distinctions, natural dispositions, and political validity, all the while he uses his shame-causing behavior to provide a serious message to his fellow Greeks.
In a similar way the Scythian prince Anacharsis, known as a Seven Sage in Classical Greece, also becomes an emblem and cultural model for Diogenes the Cynic. After much travel in Greece, Anacharsis returned home with an objective outlook on his native country but also with a taste for Greek institutions for which he paid the price of his life. His case shows that the Scythian was a victim that served at once as a warning for cultural imports and as the legitimization of a native Scythian life unhindered by outside influences. In many ways Diogenes’ character shares parallels with the Scythian and thus absorbs some of his characteristics: on the fringe of Athenian society he is a permanent outsider within a world whose mores he keeps upsetting and questioning while striving to find a place among the wise men. Yet unlike the Scythian prince Diogenes remains safe within the civic world he has adopted and his role attempts to fill the gap between the mindless following of age-old institutions and the thoughtful interrogation of their validity.

This dissertation brings a new light to the Cynic tradition by bringing together different strands to account for the emergence of the most popular philosophical movement in Antiquity. If we wish to better understand Cynicism we are required to look beyond the mere anecdotes concerning Diogenes the Cynic and situate the movement within a broader picture of intellectual fervor and innovative ideas. Yet tapping into the sources of philosophical and sophistic wells is only the beginning. What emerges from our study is the impression of a conscious literary heritage at play whereby the founder of Cynicism was quickly made into an important element in the history of philosophy all the while he remains dependent on models taken from Greek literary and
historical paradigms. The shaping of the Cynic tradition was made possible by the very disciples and followers that Diogenes had attracted but the master himself played a role in this by understanding the value of this heritage that ultimately crystallized into the storyline that we now know. The Cynic movement has still so many more mysteries to unveil and our work necessarily only hints at other possible avenues of research. As we will keep investigating the early Cynics, we too, like Diogenes, can only raise our lamp in broad daylight and say as we go “I am looking for a man”, in the hope of discovering precisely who this particular one truly was.


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