

The Chisel and the Muse

Diogenes of Oenoanda and Lucretius

The night before I read this paper at the colloquium in the Trippenhuis I had a dream. I dreamed that Lucretius and Diogenes of Oenoanda were visiting the building, and I was able to watch them as they went in and moved from room to room. Diogenes concentrated his gaze mainly on the walls. His face registered disappointment as he observed that all the walls, interior and exterior, are uninscribed and reflected on the waste of a golden opportunity to improve the moral condition of Amsterdam's citizens and visitors. Lucretius on the other hand, not surprisingly for a poet who begins his exposition of Epicureanism by invoking Venus and entreating her to persuade Mars to grant peace, was fascinated to observe the combination of images of war and peace in the paintings and sculptures of the building, and he spent a long time in the reception-hall of Hendrik Trip's house, contemplating the ceiling-paintings, which, celebrating the Peace of Münster of 1648, depict the goddess Peace in the centre panel, a chained Mars in one of the neighbouring panels, and the four elements — the four elements of Empedocles, by whom he was so deeply influenced — in the four corner-panels.¹

Although my dream cannot be regarded by us Epicureans as veridical, it is accurate in the way it emphasises the very different methods whereby Lucretius and Diogenes put across their philosophy to the public. Lucretius employed the Muses' charm and transmuted Epicurean physics into one of the world's most remarkable poems, while Diogenes employed the chisel, or rather employed others to employ the chisel, and presented Epicureanism in one of the world's most remarkable inscriptions. Both their methods, in their different ways, were bold and unorthodox, but successful, enabling them to reach a public which would not otherwise have received the Epicurean message and also ensuring the survival of their writings to the present day.

In an article published in 1986 I compared and contrasted Lucretius and Diogenes.² Since I gave particular attention to areas where I believe Diogenes can assist our understanding of Lucretius, I placed more emphasis on the similarities than on the differences between the two Epicureans. In the present paper I shall certainly mention similarities, but I shall place more emphasis on the differences. This change of emphasis does not reflect any change of opinion on my part, but is due to the following two

¹ I am grateful to Mrs. Karin Jongbloed for giving me information, in advance of the colloquium (and in advance of my dream!), about the paintings.

² Smith (1986).

considerations: one is that I wanted in any case to view Lucretius and Diogenes from a different angle; the other is that highlighting the differences between them is relevant to two questions which ten years ago did not seem to require serious consideration, but which do require it now, in the light of a debate recently initiated. The questions, to consideration of which the rest of this paper is devoted, are these. Did the two Epicureans know one another? And, whether they knew one another or not, was either of them influenced by the other?

The first question is naturally tied up with the problem of the dating of Diogenes' work. Until 1972 the inscription was dated to the second half of the second century AD or to the beginning of the third century. In 1972 I saw for the first time another important Oenoandan inscription, which was then unpublished,³ — the inscription dealing with a musical festival established by C. Iulius Demosthenes — and concluded that the remarkable similarity between its style of lettering and that of Diogenes' inscription pointed to a similar date for both. The Demostheneia inscription is Hadrianic — the festival was instituted in AD 125 —, and, whilst the philosophical inscription cannot be proved to be Hadrianic also,⁴ it does fit comfortably into the reign of an emperor who, at the request of Trajan's widow Plotina, herself an Epicurean, showed favour to the Epicurean school in Athens by freeing it from the restriction that the scholarch must be a Roman citizen.⁵ Anyhow, whether Diogenes' work belongs to the first half of the second century or is of a later date, its author clearly cannot have met Lucretius: Diogenes was old when he decided to advertise the benefits of philosophy to Oenoanda's citizens and visitors, but not that old!⁶ However, recently it has been argued that Diogenes was a contemporary of Lucretius and knew him personally.

The scholar who holds this view is Luciano Canfora.⁷ Why does he hold it? He holds it, because he believes that Lucretius is mentioned by Diogenes. In fr. 122,⁸ the closing passage of a letter to a man called Menneas, Diogenes says that his recovery from illness during a stay in Rhodes was assisted because a woman was recommended to him by Menneas himself (whom he addresses as 'dearest', φίλτατε) and by two others — 'the wonderful Carus' (τοῦ ... θαυμασίου Κάρου) and 'my (or 'our') Dionysius' (Διονυσίου τοῦ ἡμετέρου). It is of course 'the wonderful Carus' whom Canfora identifies with Lucretius. He is not the first to have thought that the reference is to Lucretius — the discoverers of fr. 122, Rudolf Heberdey and Ernst Kalinka, thought the same —,⁹ but he is the first both to identify Carus with Lucretius

³ The inscription was brilliantly edited by Wörrle (1988). For new readings and for photographs, see Smith (1994).

⁴ It is very unlikely to be post-Hadrianic by more than a few years, because the stoa in which it was carved was almost certainly on the so-called Esplanade, now known to be Oenoanda's earlier agora, and work on a new agora began either at the end of Hadrian's reign or more probably under Antoninus Pius, perhaps after the earthquake of AD 140-141. For a detailed study of the later agora, see Coulton (1986).
⁵ IG II² 1099; Dittenberger, SIG 834; Dessau, ILS 7784.

⁶ Passages stating or implying that Diogenes is old are fr. 3.II.7-12; 63.II.3-4; 138.

⁷ Canfora (1992); (1993a) (1993b) 67-68; (1994); (1996).

⁸ The numbers of Diogenes fragments are those of Smith (1993b).

⁹ Heberdey & Kalinka (1897) 443. Theodor Gomperz considered, but rejected, the identification of Diogenes' Carus with Lucretius: see Smith (1993a) 480.

and to regard Diogenes as the author of the letter; Heberdey and Kalinka, who accepted the traditional dating of the inscription, believed that Diogenes is quoting a letter written by another Epicurean, who was a contemporary of Lucretius — a view which, for reasons which I have given elsewhere,¹⁰ is certainly to be rejected.

If Canfora is right in identifying Diogenes' Carus with Lucretius, we have proof that Lucretius spent some time on Rhodes and during his stay there was in close contact with the local Epicurean community, which evidently held him in affection and esteem. Since we have no other reliable evidence that Lucretius either travelled outside Italy¹¹ or had personal contacts with other Epicureans,¹² the information provided by Diogenes fr. 122 would be of considerable significance. But is Canfora right? The writer of the recent article on Carus in *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques*,¹³ though she does not commit herself one way or the other, thinks that he may be right. I am quite sure that he is wrong, and I shall explain why.

Canfora attaches great importance to the description of Diogenes' Carus as θαυμάσιος, which, as he shows, was often used of philosophers and others of intellectual distinction. However, as he allows, it was not used only of great authors and thinkers; and if Epicurus, in expressing gratitude to friends who have provided him with food, can call their action godlike and heavenly, as he does,¹⁴ surely Diogenes could have used θαυμάσιος of a philosophical friend to whose advice he felt he owed his recovery from illness, even if that friend was not intellectually remarkable. Canfora¹⁵ contrasts the description of Carus as θαυμάσιος with that of Dionysius as merely ἡμέτερος, but if ἡμέτερος is affectionate, as it almost certainly is, and if θαυμάσιος is taken to be somewhat hyperbolic, the difference between the two is not as great as Canfora would have us believe.¹⁶

¹⁰ Smith (1993a) 481-482.

¹¹ Canfora ((1992) 54-55; (1993b) 66-68; (1996) 969-975) thinks that three passages of *De rerum natura* VI indicate that Lucretius had visited Greece. In the first (VI.749-755) Lucretius mentions a spot on the Athenian acropolis which crows never approach, but other writers mention it too (see Ernout & Robin (1925-1928) III 312-313) and Lucretius does not say that he has seen it; in the second (VI.808-810) he mentions the noxious exhalations encountered in the gold- and silver-mines at Scaptensula (Skapte Hyle), but the mines were famous in the ancient world (they are mentioned by Herodotus VI.46) and, again, Lucretius does not say that he has seen them; in the third (VI.1044-1046) he does say that he has seen Samothracian iron moving under the influence of the magnet, but this does not prove that he visited Samothrace any more than my seeing of South African diamonds proves that I have visited South Africa or my eating of Parmesan cheese proves that I have visited Parma. Romano (1995), too, assumes that Lucretius visited Athens, Scaptensula, and Samothrace, and also thinks that he went with Memmius and Catullus to Bithynia, but produces no convincing evidence in support of his opinion. In view of the proximity of both Skapte Hyle and Samothrace to Abdera, it would not be surprising if the examples given by Lucretius originated with Democritus.

¹² According to the *Vita Borgiana*, Lucretius lived on intimate terms (*coniunctissime vixit*) with Atticus and C. Cassius, as well as with Cicero and M. Brutus, but no trust can be placed in this source. If Kleve (1989) is right in identifying some small papyrus fragments from Herculaneum as belonging to *De rerum natura*, Lucretius' work may well have been known to Philodemus and his circle, but there is no proof that Lucretius had any personal contact with them.

¹³ Bernadette Puesch, in: Goulet (1994) 230-231. It is to be noted that she was unable to take account of my reply to Canfora (Smith (1993a)).

¹⁴ Plut. *Mor.* 1097c-d (fr. 183 Us.; fr. 99Arr.). Canfora (1993a) 496 states that the passage does not constitute a parallel, but gives no reason for his view.

¹⁵ (1992) 53; (1993a) 496.

¹⁶ Canfora (1993a) 496 goes so far as to say that θαυμάσιος 'richiama alla mente il *sublimis Lucretius* di Ovidio' (*Am.* I.15.23).

Another point which Canfora makes in support of his identification is that there is, he claims, no sure case of a non-Roman having the name Karos/Carus.¹⁷ The first thing to say in reply to this is that, even if the claim were correct, so that Diogenes' Carus could be assumed to be Roman, it would not follow that he was Lucretius, the name being by no means uncommon.¹⁸ The second thing to say is that Canfora's claim is incorrect. A Hellenistic inscription from Ephesus, first published in 1991, gives Karos as the father of a man who was certainly not a Roman;¹⁹ a second-century AD inscription from Athens²⁰ mentions a Κᾶρος Εἰρηναίου, who, though not an Athenian (the name appears in a list of ἐπέγγραφοι, i.e. non-Athenian candidates for the *ephebia*), was almost certainly Greek, in view of his Greek patronym;²¹ and a Karos named on a second-century AD amulet in the National Archaeological Museum in Sofia may well have been a non-Roman.²² Thirdly, it is to be noted (though I do not wish to make too much of the point) that in Latin literary sources Lucretius is never referred to by his *cognomen*, let alone by his *cognomen* alone; indeed his *cognomen* is attested only in some of the manuscripts of *De rerum natura*²³ and in the *Vita Borgiana*.

So Canfora's arguments that the 'wonderful Carus' can only be Lucretius are unsound. But what more than anything else condemns his theory is the redating of Diogenes' inscription which it necessarily involves. My detailed discussion of Canfora's dating has been published in *Rivista di Filologia*.²⁴ The brief discussion which follows combines summary of one or two of my earlier points with presentation of one or two new ones. One point is that an inscription of the scale and character of Diogenes' work is much more likely to have been the product of the second century AD, when the cities of Lycia enjoyed political stability and great prosperity, than of the first century BC, when conditions were much less favourable. In an article written in response to my criticisms, Canfora suggests that Diogenes may have set up his inscription as late as the early years of the first century AD,²⁵ that is to say, over fifty-five years after Lucretius' death (c. 55 BC) — a suggestion which seems highly implausible: one would have to assume both that Lucretius was with an Epicurean circle in Rhodes at the very end of his life and that Diogenes was a very young man when he met him and wrote the letter to Menneas. We shall see shortly that the second assumption at any rate is unlikely to be correct. Another argument against

¹⁷ Canfora (1992) 50-52; (1993a) 495-496.

¹⁸ For example, it was the name of two other poets — (1) a friend of Ovid and author of an *Heracleid* (*Ov. Pont.* IV.13; IV.16.7-8), and (2) the poet who won Domitian's Alban contest and is addressed by Martial (IX.23, 24).

¹⁹ See Büyükkolancı & Engelmann (1991) 140-142 no. 7 = *SEG* 41 (1991) 963. The inscription contains a list of mercenaries. In line 4 we have Δαρσης (a Thracian name) Κάρου.

²⁰ CIA III 1128 = IG II² 2086.

²¹ That this Karos was Greek is assumed by Körte (1898) 164. Canfora (1992) 51 does not agree, but Prof. Olivier Masson, to whom I am much indebted for information and advice about Karos/Carus, takes the same view as Körte.

²² Dimitrova-Milčeva (1980) 97 no. 272 = *SEG* 31 (1981) 663.

²³ In the subscriptions to each book in O, to Book II in V, and to Book VI (Bailey (1947) 6 n. 11 incorrectly says Book V) in U (which reads ARI).

²⁴ Smith (1993a).

²⁵ Canfora (1993a) 494.

Canfora's dating, and the one to which I attach most importance, is that Diogenes' inscription cannot have been carved over a century earlier than the Demostheneia inscription which it so strikingly resembles in its style of lettering.²⁶ Canfora allows that *some* parts of Diogenes' inscription are similar to the Demostheneia inscription, while he alleges that other parts are not, and he believes that the parts which are similar are parts which were recarved when the philosophical inscription was restored in the late first or early second century AD. But, as I have shown in my *Rivista di Filologia* article,²⁷ his discussion, which is not based on autopsy of either inscription, as well as involving major improbabilities (for example, there is no sign whatsoever that Diogenes' inscription ever underwent any restoration), is characterised by serious misunderstandings and mistakes to do with the physical and epigraphical features of the Diogenes fragments.

The best hope of settling the argument about the date of Diogenes and the identity of Carus lies in the recovery of more of the inscription, including more of the *Letter to Menneas* and/or of another letter of Diogenes, one of whose addressees was Dionysius, who must surely be identified with the Dionysius mentioned alongside Carus in the *Letter to Menneas*. The *Letter to Dionysius* seems to have been addressed also to another person, and I have argued that the co-addressee is likely to have been Carus,²⁸ the basis for my argument being not only that the person mentioned alongside Dionysius in the *Letter to Menneas* is an obvious candidate, but also that, if a second addressee was named, as I believe he was, in fr. 68.3 after the words Διονύσιε καὶ at the end of the previous line, the name must have been a short one, and Κᾶρε would be suitable. If I turn out to be right about this, it will be bad news for Canfora, for in the *Letter to Dionysius* Diogenes seems to be addressing persons who are junior to himself,²⁹ whereas Canfora believes that the Carus, i.e. Lucretius, of the *Letter to Menneas* was much senior to Diogenes.³⁰ The internal evidence of the *Letter to Menneas*, too, suggests to me that its author was not young. Although Diogenes could have visited Rhodes and been ill there in his youth, the only other passage which mentions a visit to Rhodes is fr. 62, part of the *Letter to Antipater*, and this mentions that he is old; and it is natural to suppose that the illness from which the Rhodian woman helped him to recover may have been connected with the 'stomach complaint' or 'heart complaint', which, according to a passage in which he gives directions to his family and friends,³¹ was afflicting him and threatening his life, apparently at the time he was setting up the inscription, i.e. in old age.

²⁶ In connection with my repeated assertions that the two inscriptions are remarkably similar in their style of lettering, Canfora (1993a) has charged me with 'l'impressionismo epigrafico', but, seeing that I have always justified my assertions not only by describing my immediate reaction when I first saw the Demostheneia inscription and seemed to be looking at the lettering of Diogenes' inscription in miniature, but also by detailing the points of similarity, the accusation is unjust.

²⁷ Smith (1993a) 486-492.

²⁸ See Smith (1978) 53-54; (1993b) 514. I have assigned frs. 68-74 (and possibly 75) to the *Letter to Dionysius*. More than one person was certainly addressed if fr. 70 and/or fr. 72 belong(s) to the letter: see fr. 70 *passim* and fr. 72.III.12.

²⁹ See fr. 70, where the writer sounds very much like a master addressing pupils.

³⁰ Canfora (1992) 55.

³¹ Fr. 117. It was apparently to combat the καρδιακὸν πάθος that Diogenes took curdled milk (fr. 121.II).

Now let us consider the second question. Was either writer influenced by the other's work? Actually, whether one accepts my dating of Diogenes' inscription or follows Canfora in believing that Diogenes was a young man when he met Lucretius on Rhodes, the question is: 'was Diogenes influenced by Lucretius?' No one has yet suggested that Lucretius was influenced by Diogenes. If the youthful Diogenes met and admired Lucretius, as Canfora supposes, signs of Lucretian influence on Diogenes' work might well be expected: even if Diogenes had not read the unfinished *De rerum natura* while Lucretius was on Rhodes, surely he would have obtained a copy of it after Lucretius died and the poem was published.³² But are there any indications that Lucretius influenced Diogenes? In my 1986 article I include an appendix listing numerous parallelisms between the works of the two Epicureans,³³ but make the following comment: 'all the parallels between Lucretius and Diogenes — and there are many — can be accounted for by their loyal adherence to Epicurus' doctrines and by their use of common sources, above all the master's own writings.'³⁴ Canfora, however, though he does not discuss a question which is surely highly relevant to his argument, makes a comment which implies that he considers the parallelisms which I have collected indicative of Lucretian influence on Diogenes,³⁵ and my view has been explicitly challenged by Enrico Flores,³⁶ who thinks that Diogenes, at any rate in his *Physics*, has followed Lucretius.

That both Lucretius and Diogenes are loyal adherents of Epicurus and had first-hand knowledge of his writings, which they used as sources, cannot be questioned. As their own words show, they are united in their devotion to their master, in their conviction that he is the spiritual saviour of mankind, and in their wholehearted enthusiasm for expounding his philosophy for the benefit of others. For Lucretius Epicurus is the man who has rescued humanity from spiritual darkness, storm, and sickness and given it light, calm, and health by ridding it of unnecessary fears and desires and by showing it how to confront pain and natural misfortune,³⁷ and who, because his achievements are apparently superhuman and enable others, including Lucretius, to experience godlike pleasure,³⁸ deserves to be called a god.³⁹ Proudly proclaiming that he is following in his master's footsteps,⁴⁰ and asserting that, like a bee, he feeds on all Epicurus' golden sayings (*omnia ... aurea dicta*),⁴¹ Lucretius makes clear that his purpose is to administer to Memmius and his other readers the medicine of Epicureanism in the most palatable form.⁴² With the loss of most of what

³² I am making the assumption that Diogenes knew Latin: probably he did, though one could be more confident of this if he lived when I believe he lived than if he was a contemporary of Lucretius.

³³ Smith (1986) 204-207.

³⁴ Smith (1986) 195.

³⁵ Canfora (1992) 66, concluding his attempt to prove that Diogenes mentions and knew Lucretius, writes: 'Guardando così le cose [i.e. if one shares Canfora's views], appare istruttiva la nutrita lista dei "Principal parallelisms in Lucretius and Diogenes of Oenoanda" fornita da M.F. Smith.'

³⁶ Flores (1987-1988) 17.

³⁷ I.62-79; II.1-61; III.1-30; V.1-54; VI.1-42.

³⁸ Lucr. III.28, 322.

³⁹ Lucr. V.8, 19, 51; cf. III.15; VI.7.

⁴⁰ III.3-4; V.55-56.

⁴¹ III.10-12.

⁴² I.921-950; IV.1-25.

Epicurus wrote, one cannot always be sure of Lucretius' precise source on every occasion, but there can be no reasonable doubt that his chief philosophical sources are Epicurus' own writings, including *On Nature*. Explaining his mission, Diogenes declares that he has set up the inscription to make what he calls 'the medicines that bring salvation' (τὰ τῆς σωτηρίας ... [φάρμα]κα)⁴³ available to those who are morally sick — medicines which, he says, have been tried and tested for their efficacy in dispelling groundless fears and pains and in minimising the damaging effect of natural pain.⁴⁴ He calls Epicureanism 'the means of salvation'⁴⁵ and Epicurus 'your herald who saved you.'⁴⁶ The reference to Epicurus as herald and saviour comes in fr. 72, which, with fr. 71, is part of a discussion of chance (τύχη). In the discussion Diogenes not only refers to Epicurus as the supreme authority on the subject,⁴⁷ but also quotes *Kyria Doxa* 16⁴⁸ and includes an account, which must closely follow Epicurus' own words, of the master's experience of being shipwrecked.⁴⁹ There are other passages in which Diogenes expresses wholehearted approval of Epicurus' discoveries and theories, mentioning him by name — for example, with reference to the atomic swerve —,⁵⁰ and in fr. 73, although Epicurus is not named in the surviving text, there is no doubt that the reference is to him: '[I follow you] when you make [these] statements about death, and you have persuaded me to laugh at it.'⁵¹ Although, as we shall see, Diogenes derived some of his material not from Epicurus, but from other Greek Epicurean sources, it is Epicurus himself whom he follows and imitates above all. It is not just that he reproduces his master's teachings and arguments. His debt to Epicurus is manifested also in his decision to put across Epicureanism in epitomes, letters, and maxims. These writings are clearly modelled on writings of Epicurus: for example, the preface of Diogenes' epitome *Ethics* echoes Epicurus' words at the end of the *Letter to Herodotus* or *Little Epitome* about how he is enabling readers to obtain a view of important matters without oral instruction;⁵² again, the similarities between Diogenes' *Letter to Antipater* on the infinite number of worlds⁵³ and the *Letter to Pythocles*, attributed to Epicurus, if not written by him, are too numerous and close to be purely coincidental,⁵⁴ and what may be the closing lines of Diogenes' *Letter to Dionysius*⁵⁵ contain verbal echoes of the preface to the *Letter to Pythocles*.⁵⁶ Moreover, some of the writings in Diogenes' inscription

⁴³ Fr. 3.V.14-VI.2.

⁴⁴ Fr. 3.VI.

⁴⁵ Fr. 116.6-7.

⁴⁶ Fr. 72.III.12-13.

⁴⁷ Fr. 71.I.5 ff.

⁴⁸ Fr. 71.II.9-13.

⁴⁹ Fr. 72.

⁵⁰ Fr. 54. For other references to Epicurus by name, see fr. 63.IV.13, V.13; 173. In the discussion of chance mentioned above Epicurus is named twice (fr. 71.I.6, II.8).

⁵¹ Fr. 73.I.1-3.

⁵² See Diog. fr. 29.III.7-13 and Epic. *Ep. Hdt.* 83.

⁵³ Fr. 62-67.

⁵⁴ See Smith (1979) 72-73, reproduced in Smith (1993b) 508.

⁵⁵ Fr. 74.10-14.

⁵⁶ Diogenes' διὰ μνημῆς ἔχειν (fr. 74.12) and εὐπερίγραφα (fr. 74.14) are to be compared with διὰ μνημῆς ἔχων (*Ep. Pyth.* 85) and εὐπερίγραφον (*Ep. Pyth.* 84).

are not just modelled on writings of Epicurus: they *are* writings of Epicurus. Writings of Epicurus quoted by Diogenes are maxims, most of them *Kyriai Doxai*, carved in a continuous band beneath the *Ethics*, and letters, supposed to be by Epicurus, if not actually by him, — the *Letter to Mother*,⁵⁷ the *Letter to Dositheus*,⁵⁸ and a letter to a student of rhetoric, perhaps Hermarchus.⁵⁹

Since both Lucretius and Diogenes are faithful followers of Epicurus, and since Diogenes, like Lucretius, had direct knowledge of Epicurus' works and used them as sources, similarities between the two writers' expositions of Epicureanism can most reasonably be attributed not to Lucretius' influence on Diogenes, but to Epicurus' influence on both. The onus is on those who take a different view to produce persuasive evidence that Diogenes' inscription contains material or exhibits structural or stylistic features which could only have been derived from Lucretius. Canfora produces no such evidence; in fact, as I have said, he does not even discuss the matter. Flores attempts to produce such evidence, but his attempt is a failure. He believes that the arrangement of topics in Diogenes' *Physics* is sufficiently close to Lucretius' arrangement to indicate that Diogenes was familiar with *De rerum natura* and was influenced by it.⁶⁰ But the arrangement of Diogenes' *Physics* is highly uncertain — much more uncertain than that of his *Ethics*, where we are helped not only by an important programmatic passage (fr. 34), but also by the aforementioned continuous band of ethical maxims, mainly *Kyriai Doxai*, which runs beneath the columns of the epitome and sometimes indicates the order of fragments and the extent of the gaps between them.⁶¹ Beneath the *Physics* there is no band of maxims, and, whilst we are safe in placing the prefatory fragments at the beginning, the order of most of the rest is not known, and, if their arrangement in the various editions often looks similar to that of Lucretius, that is largely because editors, in provisionally placing them, have been guided by the order in which the various topics are treated not only by Epicurus, in his surviving writings, but also by Lucretius.⁶² Flores' argument therefore has no validity whatsoever.

If Diogenes was influenced by Lucretius, it is certainly in the *Physics* that one would expect that influence to be most pronounced. So let us take a look at the epitome, starting with the preface.

Just as Lucretius prefaces his books with passages which describe his mission and emphasise the moral importance of his philosophy,⁶³ so Diogenes prefaces the *Physics* with a passage in which he explains that his purpose is to help those afflicted with false opinions.⁶⁴ Since Epicurus taught that the purpose of studying physics is to gain the moral end,⁶⁵ it would not be remarkable if Lucretius and Diogenes independently

⁵⁷ Frr. 125-126. For discussion of the authenticity of the *Letter to Mother*, see Smith (1993b) 555-558.

⁵⁸ Fr. 128.

⁵⁹ Fr. 127.

⁶⁰ Flores (1987-1988) 17 and n. 38.

⁶¹ See e.g. Smith (1993b) 82.

⁶² See e.g. Casanova (1984) 51; Smith (1993b) 431.

⁶³ I.1-145; II.1-61; III.1-93; IV.1-25; V.1-54; VI.1-42.

⁶⁴ Frr. 2-3.

⁶⁵ See e.g. Epic. *KD* 11-12; *Ep. Pyth.* 85.

decided to preface their treatments of physics in the way that they do, and one will look in vain for evidence that Diogenes' preface has been influenced by Lucretius. Those of its ideas which occur also in Lucretius are traditional in Epicureanism: for example, the idea that the unenlightened are diseased or plague-stricken,⁶⁶ and that the Epicurean philosopher is a moral healer, is found also in Epicurus,⁶⁷ Philodemus,⁶⁸ and Cicero,⁶⁹ and indeed the medical analogy is common in Hellenistic philosophy generally⁷⁰ and is used by philosophers of earlier times, including Democritus;⁷¹ and some of the most striking ideas in Diogenes' preface are not found in Lucretius at all, such as the idea that future generations belong to us, though they are still unborn,⁷² and the philanthropic wish to help foreigners.⁷³ On the other hand, the preface contains elements which are definitely borrowed from Greek sources. I give three examples. In the first place, when Diogenes mentions 'the important and just [accusations]' which the body brings against the soul,⁷⁴ the writer who has influenced him, either directly or indirectly, is Democritus, who imagines the body bringing a legal action against the soul for the distress and damage which the soul has caused it.⁷⁵ Secondly, when Diogenes says that he wishes, before he dies, to compose a fine paean,⁷⁶ he is echoing a saying of Metrodorus.⁷⁷ Thirdly, verbal parallelisms between Diogenes fr. 3.VI and the closing passage of Plutarch's *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum* (1107b-c) suggest that there is a common Greek Epicurean source, which Diogenes is paraphrasing and Plutarch parodying.⁷⁸

When we look at the body of Diogenes' *Physics* (of which, by the way, no more than a third, and perhaps not much more than a quarter, has been recovered so far), we can certainly see that his treatment has much in common with that of Lucretius. But, even if Lucretius had written in Oscan or some other language which Diogenes could not have known, the expositions of the two Epicureans would inevitably have revealed many common topics and arguments. Most of the common elements are found in Epicurus' surviving works and/or other Epicurean sources or are known to go back to Epicurus; and where common elements cannot be paralleled elsewhere, it is not safe, in view of the loss of most of what Epicurus wrote, to assume that they do not go back to the master.

⁶⁶ Fr. 3.IV.3-13. Cf. Lucr. I.936-950 (= IV.11-25); III.1070; VI.1138-1286, the account of the Athenian plague, which he sees as having affected its sufferers morally, as well as physically, and as being symbolic of spiritual unenlightenment (see especially Commager (1957)).

⁶⁷ See e.g. Epic. *Ep. Men.* 122; SV 54; Porph. *Marc.* XXXI.34.10 Pötscher (= fr. 221 Us.; fr. 247 Arr.).

⁶⁸ For references and discussion, see Gigante (1975).

⁶⁹ *Fin.* I.59.

⁷⁰ See especially Nussbaum (1994).

⁷¹ Clem. Al. *Paed.* 1.6 (DK 68 B 31).

⁷² Fr. 3.IV.13-V.4.

⁷³ Fr. 3.V.4-8.

⁷⁴ Fr. 2.I.1-3.

⁷⁵ Plut. *De libid. et aegr.* fr. 2 (DK 68 B 159). Since Epicurus says μηδὲ αἰτιώμεθα τὴν σάρκα ὡς τῶν μεγάλων κακῶν αἰτίαν (Porph. *Marc.* XXIX.32.14 Pötscher (= fr. 445 Us.; fr. 237 Arr.)), it looks as though Democritus' use of legal terminology was imitated by Epicurus and became traditional in the Epicurean school.

⁷⁶ Fr. 3.II.7-III.2.

⁷⁷ Fr. 49 Körte = SV 47.

⁷⁸ See Hoffman (1976) 169. The similarity between Diogenes' εἰς μεικρὸν κομιδῆ συνεστείλαμεν and Plutarch's εἰς στενόν τι κομιδῆ ... συνέστειλε is particularly close.

Whilst there is no evidence that Diogenes is ever following Lucretius, there is plenty of evidence that he is often not doing so. Although his treatment is on a much smaller scale than that of Lucretius (*De rerum natura* contains about 50,000 words,⁷⁹ whereas Diogenes' *Physics* in its complete state contained perhaps about 8,000-10,000 words),⁸⁰ it includes topics and arguments not found in Lucretius, and, even where the two writers are dealing with the same topics, there are often significant differences in their treatment of them. I shall give some examples.

In fr. 4 Diogenes censures Socrates and his followers for regarding the study of physics as useless. Lucretius does not do this. In fr. 5 Diogenes criticises those whose sceptical views mean that they too are opponents of natural science. Although Lucretius refutes those who hold sceptical views (IV.469-521), he does so in a different context — in the context of a defence of the validity of sensation — and, unlike Diogenes, he does not attribute sceptical views to Aristotle or mention Lacydes of Cyrene. The anti-Aristotelian polemic, which has excited much comment, most of it unfavourable to Diogenes, may have been derived from Colotes or even Epicurus himself,⁸¹ while in his criticism of Lacydes Diogenes must be following a later source; in any case, he is not following Lucretius.

Nor is it to be supposed that he is following Lucretius when in frs. 6-7 he refutes rival views about the elements of things. It is true that Heraclitus, Empedocles, and Anaxagoras, the three physicists named and refuted by Lucretius in book I (635-920), are also named by Diogenes, who, like Lucretius, begins with Heraclitus.⁸² But refutation of rival philosophers, not least rival physicists, was regular Epicurean practice from the beginning,⁸³ and the selection of Heraclitus as the most prominent representative of the monists is hardly surprising in view of his influence on later philosophers, including Plato and the Stoics. Moreover, Diogenes refutes not only the three thinkers named by Lucretius, but also five other philosophers or schools — Thales,⁸⁴ Diogenes of Apollonia and Anaximenes,⁸⁵ the Stoics,⁸⁶ and Democritus⁸⁷ (I follow the order in which they are mentioned by Diogenes), and it is to be noted that, whereas Lucretius' refutation of rival theories comes after his exposition of the Epicurean view, Diogenes tells us that he is going to demolish the theories of his opponents before setting out the Epicurean position.

Fr. 9-10 are concerned with vision, thought, and especially dreams. There are, as one would expect, parallelisms between this passage and passages of Lucretius IV, but one can confidently assert that Diogenes is not following Lucretius. That he is

⁷⁹ 50,264 words, including enclitics, according to Wacht (1991) 845.

⁸⁰ This is a guesstimate, based on the assumption that the *Physics* ran to at least 200 columns (cf. Smith (1993b) 82-83).

⁸¹ For discussion of fr. 5, see Smith (1993b) 128-130.

⁸² Heraclitus is mentioned first in Diogenes' list of rival philosophers (fr. 6.I.10-12) and is also the first with whom he deals in his actual refutation of them (fr. 6.III.7 ff.). Empedocles and Anaxagoras are mentioned in fr. 6.II.2-7.

⁸³ See especially Kleve (1978).

⁸⁴ Fr. 6.I.12-13.

⁸⁵ Fr. 6.I.12-II.2.

⁸⁶ Fr. 6.II.7-9. The refutation of the Stoics ended, almost certainly (see Smith (1993b) 444), in fr. 7.II.2.

⁸⁷ Fr. 6.II.9-III.1; 7.II.2 ff.

drawing on a Greek source or sources is shown by his use of technical terms used by Epicurus and other atomists in their accounts of the same topic;⁸⁸ and there is no parallel in Lucretius for Diogenes' polemics against the Democritean and Stoic theories of dreams — polemics which occupy more than half of the 11-column surviving passage of Diogenes' treatment.⁸⁹

Finally, so far as the *Physics* is concerned, let us consider our two Epicureans' treatment of theology and religion. Again, I can see no evidence that Diogenes has been influenced by Lucretius, and much evidence that he is following other sources. Of the six well-preserved passages of Diogenes' account, four have no parallel in Lucretius — fr. 16, on the atheism of Diagoras and especially Protagoras; fr. 19, which criticises Homer for representing the gods inappropriately and for influencing artists to produce false portrayals of them; fr. 23, on the unreliability of oracles; and fr. 24, on the worthlessness of divination by dreams, with particular reference to the Olympic runner who obtained quite different interpretations when he consulted Antiphon and another expert about a dream. As for the other two passages (fr. 20-21), in which Diogenes argues that the gods did not create the world either for themselves or for human beings, while there are some similarities to Lucretius' argument in V.156-234, there are also significant differences. The surviving part of Diogenes' argument that the gods did not make the world for themselves has no parallel in Lucretius: he ridicules the idea of god needing the world as his city and home and men as his fellow-citizens, and he wants to know where god was living before he made the world: since, according to the Stoics, whose view he is attacking, the world is unique, he must have been without a city and home. When he goes on to argue that the gods cannot have created the world for human beings, he is closer to Lucretius, but even here there are significant differences between the two. Like Lucretius (V.195-234), he points to the imperfections of the world and of human beings themselves. But, whereas Lucretius, in mentioning the imperfections of the world, makes only a brief reference to the sea (V.203), Diogenes strongly emphasises not only its wide expanse, but also its disadvantages and dangers, saying that it makes 'a peninsula of the inhabited world' and complaining that 'to cap all, it has water which is not even drinkable, but briny and bitter, as if it had been purposely made like this by the god to prevent men from drinking.' He goes on to describe the disadvantages of the so-called Dead Sea (by which he means part of the northern ocean, not the Palestinian lake), and there is nothing about this in Lucretius. Moreover, when he moves on to the imperfections of human beings, he takes a different line from Lucretius. Lucretius (V.218-234) concentrates on men's physical imperfections and the imperfections which affect their physical well-being, mentioning the threats from wild beasts, from disease, and from untimely death, the helplessness and elaborate needs of a baby in contrast with the ability of animals to grow up without rattles or baby-talk, and

⁸⁸ E.g. ἀπόρροια in fr. 9.II.4 (cf. Epic. *Ep. Hdt.* 46); ξμπρωσις in fr. 9.III.3, 7 (cf. e.g. D.L. IX.44 (Democritus); Cic. *Att.* II.3.2); τύποι ὁμοιόμορφοι in fr. 43.I.4-5 (cf. Epic. *Ep. Hdt.* 49). (In fr. 43, a passage of the *Ethics*, Diogenes reiterates points made in fr. 9-10.)

⁸⁹ Frs. 9.VI.3-10.VI.14). Diogenes criticises the Stoics for depriving sleep-images of a power which they do have, and Democritus for attributing to them a power which they do not have. As I have pointed out in the previous note, Diogenes again mentions these criticisms in fr. 43.

men's need of clothes to protect their bodies from the elements and of weapons and fortifications to protect their property, whereas animals have no need of these things.⁹⁰ Diogenes on the other hand concentrates, in the preserved text, wholly on the moral condition of humanity. He again attacks the Stoics, pointing out that, if men possessed wisdom and virtue, their life would indeed be bliss, but in fact, according to the Stoics themselves, they do not possess these qualities.

So much for the *Physics*. The rest of Diogenes' work too is, so far as I can see, devoid of Lucretian influence. There is none in the second main section of the inscription, the *Ethics* epitome, mention of which prompts me to point out that, whereas Lucretius devotes most of his work to physics, Diogenes provides a balanced treatment of physics (including epistemology) and ethics;⁹¹ and the subject of Diogenes' third epitome, a defence of old age,⁹² is not discussed by Lucretius at all. As in the *Physics*, so in other sections of the inscription, parallelisms between Diogenes and Lucretius can be explained as being due to their use of common sources. I shall give just one example. Both writers make fun of their own missionary fervour: Lucretius tells Memmius of his readiness to bombard him with so many arguments that he fears that old age will overtake the two of them before he has finished (I.410-417), and Diogenes (fr. 116) tells his readers that it is in order to show them the means of salvation that he has converted so many letters into stone for them, using the verb λιθοποιέω, which occurs elsewhere only in a passage of Lucian,⁹³ who is describing the petrifying effect of the Gorgon's head. If the similarity is not just a coincidence, the natural explanation is not that Diogenes has been influenced by Lucretius, but that both have been influenced by Epicurus. Epicurus closes *On Nature* XXVIII with a humorous confession of his garrulity, twice using the derogatory verb ἀδολεσχέω, 'chatter', in reference to himself,⁹⁴ and he may have made fun of his missionary enthusiasm elsewhere too.

Like Epicurus at the end of *On Nature* XXVIII, I have chattered sufficiently for the time being, and it remains only to restate my main conclusions, which are all negative: Diogenes did not know Lucretius personally, was not a contemporary of his, and was not influenced by him.

⁹⁰ This last example implies a moral point, and *ut aequumst / cui tantum in vita restet transire malorum* (V.226-227) is of course a comment on the moral condition of unenlightened humanity, but my observation that Lucretius concentrates on physical imperfections remains valid.

⁹¹ For details, see Smith (1993b) 134-135.

⁹² *Frr.* 137-179.

⁹³ *Dial. Mar.* XIV.3.

⁹⁴ *Nat.* fr. 13.XIII sup. 1, 9-10 Sedley (*CErc* 3 (1973) 56).