Sailing to Lampsacus:
Diogenes of Oenoanda, New Fragment 7

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Of the eighteen new fragments of Diogenes which Martin Ferguson Smith has discovered in Oenoanda, the most difficult and perhaps the most interesting is New Fragment 7. Two of its three columns are very nearly complete (see Plate 1) but its argument is hard to make out. Smith first thought that the subject of the stone was cosmogony and the role of chance in the formation of a world. He was brought to this interpretation by the word τύμπανον in col. ii line 12 and two letters of col. iii line 7, which he restored as ἔλῃκας 'whirls'. Both the δίνη and the descriptive term τυμπανοειδῆς (or δικτοειδῆς) played a rôle in the cosmogony and cosmology of early atomism, and τὸ αὐτόματον and τῆς, the subjects of the end of the new fragment, figure as the critical terms of Aristotle's discussion of the cosmogony of Democritus. But what makes this story unclear is, as Smith saw, the lack of a discoverable masculine singular subject for the verbs from col. ii line 1 to col. iii line 8. (The text of the new fragment is reproduced below with some important revisions.) The identification of the αὐτῶν of col. ii line 2 must have been clear from col. i, but only the edge of this column has been preserved to a depth of six letters at most.

The discovery of the precise subject that underwent the violent and seemingly painful events narrated in columns ii and iii is essential to an understanding of the new fragment, and Smith is quite fair in admitting that without it the whole fragment remains obscure. What is it that is being gulped down and belched up again, lacerated, skinned and nearly completely flayed?

1 AJA 75 (1971) 365-69. The new text presented in this essay differs in important respects from the text published in 1971. This study owes a great deal to Mr Smith; indeed, my text and commentary are the result of our collaboration, and I have recorded a number of his suggestions in the commentary to our new text. I also owe thanks to Mr Smith for his generous help and encouragement and for the photograph reproduced as Plate 1.

2 The essential passage from Aristotle's discussion of τῆς and τὸ αὐτόματον as physical causes in his Physics is presented, with additional details from Simplicius' commentary, in Diels-Kranz Vorsokr. 68 A 67-69.

3 Smith, op.cit. (supra n.1) 367.
The translation I offer here reveals sufficiently the character of the events described in New fr.7 (cols. ii and iii) and, with the help of Plutarch, makes possible the identification of the subject of the inscription. Indeed, the masculine singular subject of the bulk of the new narrative is identical with the victim who suffered the violent events so forcefully described, and the identification of this victim explains one of the oddest features of the language of the inscription—the exuberant and poetical style, which led Smith to suspect that Diogenes was closely following not Epicurus but Democritus.

**Translation**

“... of the rocks, from which it did not yet wash him in (to dry land), but the sea gulped him down and belched him back up again. It was then that he was lacerated, as you would expect, and he swallowed down a great mouthful (of salt water); he was badly skinned when he crashed upon the sea-eaten rocks. But gradually he succeeded in swimming through to open water, and just then he was borne along on the waves to the festival drum (?) and, flayed almost to an inch, he barely escaped with his life. Now he spent the next day in this state upon a high promontory and the following night and the next day until nightfall, exhausted by hunger and his injuries.

“We now understand that events which lay beyond our control are benefits despite appearances—the very doctrine he commends to you as reasonable. For your herald who brought you to safety has died; for afterwards chance...”

There are a fair number of accounts in Greek of the experience of being shipwrecked. None I know is so dramatically told and so circumstantial as that of the new fragment from Oenoanda except one: Odysseus’ account of being washed up on the island of Scherie (Od. 5.367-463). Indeed, the victim of this shipwreck seems to have

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4 Another interpretation of this obscure passage is given in the commentary to these lines.

6 Most of the literary descriptions are listed in *RE* 2 (1923) 412 s.v. “Schifbruch.”
suffered what Odysseus would have suffered were it not for Athena (426–27):

ενθα κ’ ἄπο μίνους δρυφθη, εὖν δ’ ὀστε’ ἄραχθη,
εἰ μῆ . . .

And it is Odysseus’ description of Charybdis which is recalled in the language of New fr.7, which has the sea sucking its victim in and belching him up again (Od. 12.235–38): ἀναροφήσας ἡ θάλασσα καὶ ῥήξαι πάλιν.

If Epicurus’ moral doctrines had not struck Plutarch as so stridently in conflict with the events of his life, the masculine singular subject of the narrative in Diogenes would remain unknown—one of the many anonymous victims of a shipwreck. But thanks to a device familiar from Epicurus, Colotes, and Plutarch’s anti-Epicurean dialogues, we learn the events of Epicurus’ life which Plutarch saw as contradicting his moral doctrines. For the purposes of solving the riddle posed by New fr.7 Epicurus’ πάθη are more important than the doctrines they are made to refute, but these doctrines too are critical for a full understanding of the new inscription.

In his dialogue against Epicurus’ conception of the pleasant life (Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum), Plutarch seizes on Epicurus’ assertion of the possibility of a confident and steadfast expectation in life (ἐπισεμα πιστῶν καὶ βέβαιων, 1090α). This Plutarch saw as refuted by the unforeseen events of Epicurus’ own life. One of these was the experience at sea which nearly cost Epicurus his life. Unfortunately Plutarch’s mss have garbled the term which described more precisely the nature of this mishap, and for the moment a part of the text is left between daggers (1090β):

ὀχλων δὲ θυμοῦ καὶ λῃστῶν ὁμότητας καὶ κληρονόμων ἀδικίας, ἕτι δὲ λοιμοῦς ἀέρων καὶ ἡθάλασσαν εὐβράγκην υφ’ αἰτ’ Ἡπίκουρος ὀλίγον ἐδέησε καταποθῆναι πλέων εἰς Λάμψικον, ὡς γράφει, τί ἄν λέγοι τις;

Until May of 1970 and Smith’s visit to the site of ancient Oenoanda,

* Epicurus’ formulation of this principle is: οὐκ ἔσονται οἱ τοῖς λόγοις αἱ πράξεις ἀκόλουθοι, KD xxv. He puts it to effective use against those who refer the cause of all events to ‘necessity’ in the Περὶ Φύσεως: Epicurus, ed. G. Arrighetti (Torino 1960) 31.28.6–17; Sententia Vaticana (SV) 40. Phillip De Lacy’s discussion of the importance of πάθη in Epicurean polemic, “Colotes’ First Criticism of Democritus,” in Isonomia: Studien zur Gleichheitsvorstellung im griechischen Denken (Berlin 1964) 67–69, points up the inadequacy of Bignone’s characterization of Plutarch’s argument as ad hominem (cf. RivFC 44 [1916] 281).
this was the only report of the shipwreck Epicurus barely survived on one of his trips to Lampsacus. Oddly it receives little notice in modern accounts of Epicurus' life and Wanderjahre. Epicurus' travels did not come to an end with his establishment in Athens in the summer of 306. Despite the turmoil created throughout the Aegean by the struggles of the διάδοξαι, Epicurus managed to make some trips to Asia to visit his friends (Diog.Laert. 10.10). It is his solicitude for the communities of friends established in Asia, Egypt and on the Hellespont that invites comparison with the voyages of St Paul. Indeed, Epicurus had such deep roots in Lampsacus that Strabo could call him τρόπον τινὰ Λαμψακηνόν (13.1.19). But Plutarch gives only one sure detail of the disaster which befell Epicurus as he was sailing to Lampsacus: he was sucked down by the sea. Plutarch's word is καταποθήκη, which clearly corresponds to ἀναροφήκαυ in Diogenes (col. ii line 3).

Beyond this, the text of Plutarch's mss is corrupt, and the real story of what happened is disguised by the unintelligible θάλασσαν εὐβραγχήν of Χ and the equally impossible εὐβραγχήν of α. In the Loeb text of the dialogue De Lacy and Einarson have emended the text to read θαλάσσαις ἄμπωτοι ψῆ ἰς, which is attractive in its sense; but it is difficult to imagine how ἄμπωτοι could have been corrupted into εὐβραγχήν.8 More compelling is the second of two emendations suggested by Bignone;9 his θαλάσσαιν ἐπιβραχύν is attractive since it comes closer to the mss readings than ἄμπωτοι and can find support where he did not

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7 E. Bignone is the only scholar to give Epicurus' shipwreck on his way to Lampsacus a place in the account of Epicurus' life. In his long and operatic recreation of the formation of Epicurus' moral thought (L'Aristotele perduto e la formazione filosofica di Epicuro II [Florence 1936] 143–48), he rightly saw, as had Usener, that the notice in Plutarch must derive from one of Epicurus' letters, but he insists that all the details of Plutarch 1090a figure in Epicurus' bitter letter to the philosophers in Mytilene (frs.111–14 Us.). In his attempt to assemble the fragmentary details into a coherent portrait of Epicurus' early life, Bignone identifies the γραφή mentioned by Philodemus in his Περὶ Ἐπικούρου, fr.6 col. ii, with this long letter (p.117). According to Bignone, Epicurus wrote to the philosophers in Mytilene to inveigh against his rivals for having forced him to undertake this "disastrosa navigazione." The occasion of Epicurus' wreck at sea would then be his move from Mytilene to Lampsacus. But there is not the slightest hint of the context imagined by Bignone to be discovered in New fr.7.

8 Another consideration that speaks against the emendation is that it would seem from the context of New fr.7 that Epicurus was caught in the backwash of a wave that had broken against the rocks and not an ἄμπωτοι, which usually describes a more gradual recession of the sea (cf. Hdt. 2.11, 7.198, 8.129).

9 In op.cit. (supra n.7) 145 n.1, which is superior to his earlier emendation θάλασσαν αὖ βραχύν ψῆ ἰς in op.cit. (supra n.6) 281.
think to look for it, in the poetic description (Od. 5.411–12) of another wreck at sea which Epicurus seems to have taken as his model:

\[ \text{εκτοσθεν μὲν γὰρ τάγοι ὅξεες, ἀμφὶ δὲ κῦμα} \\
\text{βεβρυχεῖν ρόδιον . . .} \]

Plutarch might have recognized this model, since he quotes Odyssey 5.410 precisely when he returns to the theme of shipwrecks in 1103ε.

Clearly Epicurus survived to describe his shipwreck, but it is not clear from Plutarch what form this description took. He says no more than \( ως γράφει. \) But later on in this tract Plutarch’s spokesman Aristodemus lets drop that he had recently in hand a collection of Epicurus’ letters (\( \varepsilonναγχυς γὰρ κατὰ τύχην τὰς ἐπιστολὰς διήλθον αὐτῷ, 1101β. \)) The possibility that Plutarch knew of Epicurus’ near scrape with death from one of his letters seems good.\(^{10}\) He seems to return to this letter at the close of an essay dominated by language taken from the sea. Near the end of the essay Aristodemus turns Epicurus’ conception of death as a dissolution (\( τὸ διαλυθὲν ἀνακτητεί, \ KΔ \)) against him and evokes in vivid terms the dissolution or ‘shipwreck’ that awaits every good Epicurean at death. His Greek is worth reproducing (1103ε) for the light it throws on the new fragment of Diogenes: \( καὶ τοι νεὼς μὲν ἐκτεσῶν ἐπιβάτης διαλυθεῖσας ἐν’ ἑλπίδος ὃχεῖται τινος ώς γῆ προσέξων τὸ κῦμα καὶ διανυσίμους, τῆς δὲ τοῦτων φιλοσοφίας—and here he quotes a line from Odysseus’ account of his own shipwreck (Od. 5.410)—\[ \varepsilonβασις ὦν \ ην \ φαίνεθοι \ ἄλος πολιοῦ θύραζε. \]

What would seem to secure this as a reference to Epicurus’ account of his own shipwreck is Plutarch’s method of refutation. In Aristodemus’ imagined dialogue with his Epicurean puppet, the Epicurean conception of death and pain is reduced to the merest recitation of the main articles of Epicurus’ catechism. Following the recitation of Epicurus’ \( Κύριαι Δόξαι \) \( \iota \) and \( \nu \) comes the doctrine the Epicurean expresses in the following language (1103ε):\(^{11}\) “I tell you to eat and be merry—\( δὴ \ νη \ Δίᾳ χειμαζομένῳ τὸ ναῦγον ἐγγὺς ἐστιν’ \ ο̂ γὰρ πόνος ο̂ ύπερβάλλων εὐνάψει θανάτω."” This seems another version of \( KΔ \) \( \iota \nu \): \( ο̂ ν \ χρονίζει το̂ ἀλγόν ψυκῆς ἐν τῇ σακρῇ, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ἄκρον τὸν ἐλάχιστον χρόνον πάρεστι. \) The point of this entire polemic goes deeper into the

\(^{10}\) Usener recognized this in presenting Plutarch’s account of Epicurus’ shipwreck in his collection of the fragments from the letters, fr.189.

\(^{11}\) Other versions of this doctrine are given in Arrighetti’s note to SV 4. In Plut. 1103c–d the adverbs \( ο̂ δέπτω \) and \( παχύ \) reveal a partial recognition of what is involved in the doctrine; cf. Bignone, op.cit. (supra n.6) 266; and Diog.Oen. fr.42 (Chilton).
flesh of Epicurean doctrine than might seem. Aristodemus makes his case against three of four moral doctrines known to Epicureans as Epicurus’ τετραφάρμακος, not only by showing that they fail to satisfy the belief of the pious in divine providence and personal immortality, but by suggesting that they are contradicted by the life of the master himself.

This too is the point of the earlier stage of Plutarch's argument against the Epicureans, who can see only one haven and refuge in adversity—dissolution and the loss of all sensation. Plutarch presents the Epicurean position in terms of the following example. Again the point of the example seems to be discoverable from Epicurus' life, and once again the language of Plutarch and Diogenes seems to reflect some common source. The entire passage (1103d) deserves quotation:

If Plutarch's language seems to reflect and distort the language of Diogenes New fr.7, it is because both derive from a letter (or letters) Epicurus wrote to a friend (or friends) abroad—possibly a letter to those of his friends who were eagerly awaiting his arrival in Lamp­sacus. In so far as it can be pieced together from Plutarch and Diogenes, this letter contained Epicurus’ epic account of his narrow escape from death. The exuberance of its language is reminiscent of the enthu­siasm and exaggeration which often mark his private letters. Bignone’s emendation ἐπιβρύχην seems to recover Epicurus’ epithet for the sea that swallowed him down and belched him back, like Charybdis herself, and would be consistent with the style of the letter and its range of allusion. Epicurus has good reason for his exuberance in his incomparable jubilation in looking back in safety on the great evil he had barely escaped. According to Plutarch this feeling of joy and relief constituted Epicurus' conception of the nature of the good, and he quotes Epicurus’ very words to display the calculation involved: τὸ γὰρ ποιοῦν, φησίν, ἀναπέρβλητον γῆθος τὸ παρ’ αὐτὸ πεφυγ­μένον μέγα κακόν (1091b).

It seems possible that this language too derives from Epicurus’

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18 An enthusiasm which offended Plutarch; 1097c–d (= Epicurus fr.91 Arrighetti). Consider too Epicurus’ language to Pythocles (fr.81 Arr.); to his mother (fr.65.29–40 Arr.); to Themista (fr.44 Arr.); Idomeneus (frs.45, 47 Arr.); Leonteus (fr.64 Arr.).
description of his wreck at sea and his reflections in safety on land on the pleasure that comes from the memory of such sudden and unforeseen events. The paradoxical benefit of one such event was certainly illustrated by τὸ αὐτόματον . . . ἐδὲ γε ποιοῦν of New fr.7, col. iii line 10, but the text breaks off just after the second explanatory particle of line 14. This leaves the development of the reflection begun towards the end of col. iii to be completed in the columns which connect New frs.7 and 8. From Plutarch’s dialogue as well as from other sources it is clear enough that one of the ways chance can be viewed as a hidden blessing in the lives of men is that, if it does not bring death, it brings the benefit of the secure memory of an evil that has been survived. The key to Epicurus’ thought which Aristodemus did not find (or did not care to state) lies in the tense of the verbs which convey the emotional logic of Epicurus’ reflections as these are reproduced by Plutarch (1091b): πεφυγμένον; and ὅτι τούτῳ συμβέβηκεν αὐτῷ γεννᾶθαι. Epicurus’ calculation is that apparent evils can survive as goods, since it is the tension between the past and present that produces joy. It is the contrast between the turmoil and insecurity experienced in the past which suggests to the reflective mind the sentiment of gratitude and calm at having escaped an evil and being now secure. This is the pleasure produced by the contrast (τὸ παρ’ αὐτὸ πεφυγμένον μέγα κακῶν) between past turmoil and present security. In the case of Epicurus, this seems to have been the connection between his life and his moral doctrines. His conception of ἀταραξία has its roots in his life, and these roots were strengthened by the disaster which overwhelmed him as he sailed to Lampsacus—a herald and a savior.

13 Smith supposes that no more than a column or two separates New frs.7 and 8, op.cit. (supra n.1) 369. Since New fr.7 is not cosmogonical it should not be associated with the letter to Antipater as Smith thought, 366.

14 In this sense, Seneca’s quotation of Virgil’s forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit is an appropriate illustration of the Epicurean doctrine, Ep. 78.15; cf. fr.434 Us.; ad Hdt. 82.1; SV 40 for indications of the importance of the perfect tense in Epicurus’ moral calculus. The importance of the quiet of the sea as it has become calm as a model or image of ἀταραξία is well stated by Nietzsche in his portrait of Epicurus and “das Glück eines Auges, vor dem das Meer des Daseins stille geworden ist,” Die fröhliche Wissenschaft 44 (Werke in drei Bänden, ed. K. Schlechta, II [Munich 1966] 68). Diogenes New fr.7 reveals the personal experience that gave Epicurus’ doctrine its roots in his life; cf. GRBS 13 (1972) 59–66, which can now be read as a companion to this article.
### Commentary

Col. i. Very little can be recovered from the right edge of this column. πέτρων, ἄφ' ἃς οὐκέ- in line 3 is significant, and Smith suggests that at this point Epicurus’ ship might be described as going on the rocks. He also suggests that ἐπικάτων ἐπέμπτετο εἰς in line 6 might refer to the other passengers, and that τὰ μεικρόν εἰς ὀδόρ. in line 9 might be a part of either ἐκώμε or ἐκώμετο.
Smith compared Aesop's description of Charybdis as Aristotle reports it in Mete. 356b10–16. The comparison is just, since the verbs ἀναροφήσας and βῆξαν appear to be Epicurus' version of the epic description of the rhythmic swallowing and eruptions of Charybdis, Od. 12.235–38:

ετέρωθι δὲ δίὰ Χάρυβδις
δεινὸν ἀνεπροῖθης θαλάσσης ἀλμυρὸν ὕδωρ,
ἡ τοι ἐκ' ἐξεμέεει. . . .

βῆξαν has the sense of ἕξεμεν in Hipp. Epid. 4.24. Plutarch's version of ἀναροφήσας is καταποθήναι; 1090α, 1103δ.

4–6. εὐνετρίβη: a verb commonly used in ancient descriptions of shipwrecks (Thuc. 4.77, Dem. 18.194, Diod. 13.16) and easily applicable to their passengers. For the painful details of being dashed onto rocks (ἀλβρῶσι περιπετεώς λίθοις) cf. Od. 5.426–27; AP 5.223 (which illustrates the sense of the verb ξαίνω); Musaeus, Hero and Leander 339; and Acts 27.41 for the sense of περιπετεώντες δὲ εἰς τόπον διβάλασσον.


8. Smith first printed διένηψε. He has since reexamined his photographs and squeeze of the inscription and writes: "I am sure that the letter, though it could not be Ε, could well be Χ, although it is imperfectly preserved and must have its sublinear dot. Moreover, is not the imperfect tense more appropriate here, describing the swimmer's gradual progress (κατὰ μεικρόν)?" The voice of the compound διένηψε of the new fragment is attested elsewhere only in Hephaistion (19.3 Consbruch) as a variant of Callim. fr.399 (Pfeiffer). The possibility of the active is well illustrated by νῆχε παρέξ in Od. 5.439 as against παρανήσσομαι in 5.417. Plutarch's διανηψόμενος (1103β) here again appears to be a reflection of Epicurus' original language.

10–13. The most obscure part of the new inscription. At line 10 Smith suggests either ε[πὸ τῶν] or ε[κ τῶν] as a restoration and would translate "cast [from] the waves onto the festival drum." [τὸ τ]ῷμπανον ἐφέρταξ[ον] is puzzling. One possibility that suggests itself is that 'Festival Drum' is the name given some promontory on the Hellespont. Another is consistent with Smith's first suggestion that the word τῷμπανον refers to the earth (AJA 75 [1971] 368). He now writes: "As I
SAILING TO LAMPSACUS

see it, the reference to the earth as the τύμπανον ἑορταίον is doubly appropriate in the present passage, because (a) the description is poetical (and so in harmony with the style of the rest of the passage); (b) the comparison of the earth to a tambourine had been made by at least one earlier atomist. (No doubt Diogenes has taken τύμπανον, and probably ἑορταίον as well, from Epicurus.) And would we not expect a clear reference to Epicurus' being cast ashore? cf. Plutarch's ἐν ἑλπίδος ἰχθυταί τινος ὡς γη προσεξεῖν τὸ σῶμα (1103E)."


6–8. Three new readings clear up the sense of these lines: (1) line 8. Smith corrects Λ ... ἵκων by δαπαράμενος, CQ 22 (1972) 162; (2) on a reexamination of his squeeze Smith reports that "there is no doubt that instead of MINOY the reading is ΛΕΙΜΟΥ"; (3) for ἐλ[ίκων] in line 7, read ἐλ[κών].

8. v. The vacant space in the line indicates the break from Diogenes' indirect report of Epicurus' wreck at sea as he sailed to Lampsacus to a reflection on the lesson to be drawn from such instances of τὸ αὐτόματον and τῷ θε. It would seem that this reflection was based on Epicurus' letter: δὲπρ ἐνλογεί[ταί]. The last γάρ (line 14) explains the nexus of thought, but the column ends and even Smith's suggestion 'Ε[πίκου]ρος is unsure, if attractive. Diogenes' reference to 'you' and 'your' (lines 11–13) is probably original with Epicurus' letter, but, like a good Epicurean, Diogenes has applied Epicurus' reflections to the case of his audience in Oenoanda. His letter to Antipater on Infinite Worlds begins in imitation of the letter to Pythocles (fr.15 [Chilton], col. i; cf. ad Pyth. 84), and he quotes Epicurus' letter to his mother (frs.52–53 [Chilton]), apparently for his own purposes. It is significant that in New fr.8 Diogenes incorporates ΚΔ κατὰ into his discussion of τῷ θε (col. ii, lines 9–13); but he does not reproduce it in the fuller version known from Diogenes Laertius.


13. ὑμε[τερος] κρινε. Possibly this description originates with Epicurus himself and characterizes his relation with his friends abroad;
cf. Sententia Vaticana 52: 'Ἡ φιλία περιχορεύει τὴν οἰκουμένην κηρύττουσα δῆ πάσιν ἡμῖν ἐγείρεσθαι ἐπὶ τὸν μακαρισμὸν. For the full resonances of the terms κῆρυς and εὐτιρ, cf. A.-J. Festugière, Épicure et ses dieux² (Paris 1968) 57 n.1 and 63 n.1.

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