

Prose Rhythm and Punctuation as an Interpretive Tool in Diogenes of Oinoanda

In the second century CE, Diogenes of Oinoanda (modern day Turkey) commissioned a stoa which included an inscription estimated to have occupied approximately 260 square meters of wall space and to have contained approximately 25,000 words; roughly a third of the inscription has been excavated, and new finds continue to be made (Hammerstaedt 2021; Hammerstaedt & Smith 2014; Smith 1993). The fragmentary nature of the inscription necessitates some textual reconstruction and interpretation. In this paper, I argue that attention to Diogenes' prose rhythm in conjunction with the original punctuation—marked by spacing in the inscription itself—provides an additional tool for the epigrapher or philosopher proposing reconstructions and interpretations for the inscription.

Prose rhythm was a common feature of Greek prose in the first three centuries CE (Hutchinson 2018), and Diogenes of Oinoanda's inscription was no exception (Hammerstaedt 2020; McOsker 2017). My paper focuses on a particular prose rhythm environment within this inscription—namely the 144 analyzable clausulae followed by a punctuation space (marked in modern editions by *v*, *vv*, *vvv*, etc.). Within this group, clausulae preceding punctuation spaces equivalent to two letters or more are especially rhythmic at nearly 80% rhythmic; these clausulae fall within the “safely” rhythmic category set by Hutchinson (2018).

From these data I propose two initial practical conclusions for using prose rhythm and punctuation as an interpretive tool within this inscription. First, at the broad level, as a rhythmic environment within the inscription, proposed reconstructions for clausulae preceding punctuation spaces should favor rhythmic reconstructions over unrhythmic reconstructions. For example, I propose that the reading ἦδη [λέγω]μεν (Hutchinson #2 rhythmic) should be preferred over ἦδη

[δηλῶ]μεν (Hutchinson #6 unrhythmic), especially since ἤδη λέγωμεν is attested elsewhere in the inscription.

Second, at the narrower level, I argue that the Hutchinson #3 rhythm is often employed in proximity to other Hutchinson #3 rhythmic units, linking related ideas rhythmically for additional emphasis. This proposal has implications beyond textual reconstruction and offers insight into interpreting philosophically difficult portions of inscriptional sections with in-tact text. For example, in *Ethics* fragment 32, the interpretation of the secure text is disputed (Masi 2017). At the heart of the question is whether two clausulae are logically connected or logically separated. In other words, the question revolves around which philosophic principal Diogenes is basing his argument on. Here, I argue that the prevalence of multiple Hutchinson #3 rhythms supports Masi's (2017) philosophical argument, connecting the logic of the clausulae across the original space punctuation instead of separating the logic.

This paper demonstrates the promise of using prose rhythm and punctuation as an interpretative tool in the inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda. This tool is useful both for the epigrapher in proposing reconstructions and for the philosopher in interpreting the various philosophical treatises included within the inscription.

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