Paideia of Diogenes: Live Like a Dog to Become a Human

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Diogène l'Homme Chien by Yan Marchand presents the biography and the philosophy of Diogenes of Sinope for young readers of the 21st century: The fictive character Androsthène, a young Greek, sets off to Athens to complete his studies in the Platonic Academy. The children's book issued by the publishing house "Les Petits Platons" forms part of the eponymous series, which is famous for its fascinating adaptations of philosophical texts and ideas from different epochs. "Les Petits Platons" are actively spread worldwide, being translated into thirteen languages already. The paper highlights the transformation of the ancient text for the present-day recipient and the doubling of its new addressee, which includes both the youngster and the mediating adult.

Keywords: Diogenes of Sinope, Greek philosophy for children, *Les Petits Platons*, code chains, Gérard Genette, Michel Foucault, self-identification of young readers

Die Lehre des Diogenes. Lebe wie ein Hund, um ein Mensch zu werden
Diogène l'Homme Chien von Yan Marchand vermittelt Biographie und Philosophie von Diogenes von Sinope an junge Leser*innen des 21. Jahrhunderts: Die fiktive Figur Androsthène, ein junger Grieche, macht sich auf nach Athen, um seine Studien in der Platonischen Akademie zu komplettieren. Das Kinderbuch erschien im Verlag "Les Petits Platons" und ist gleichzeitig Teil der gleichnamigen Reihe, die für ihre gelungenen Adaptionen philosophischer Texte, Ideen und Konzepte aus verschiedensten Epochen berühmt ist. "Les Petits Platons" sind in der Zwischenzeit weltweit verbreitet und in 13 Sprachen übersetzt. Der Beitrag beleuchtet die Transformation des alten Textes für moderne Rezipient*innen und die Zweifachadressierung (junge Leser*innen und vermittelnde Erwachsene).

Schlagwörter: Diogenes von Sinope, griechische Philosophie für Kinder, *Les Petits Platons*, Code-Ketten, Gérard Genette, Michel Foucault, Selbstidentifikation junger Leser*innen

Are we Something More than Featherless Bipeds?

Although – as Plato taught – our nails are flat, the name of a real human still has to be merited. In order to find a perfect mentor for soul education and its genuine maturation, one may follow the route outlined in the book *Diogène l'Homme Chien (Diogenes the Dog-Man;* 2011) written by Yan Marchand, a doctor in philosophy and a contemporary French author.

The short story presents the biography and the philosophy of Diogenes of Sinope for young readers of the 21st century. The main ideas as well as famous anecdotes from his life are gathered by Marchand in the newly constructed narration about Androsthène, a young Greek who sets off to Athens to complete his studies in the Platonic Academy. This children's book issued by the publishing house "Les Petits Platons" ("The Tiny Platos") forms part of the eponymous series, which is famous for its fascinating adaptations of philosophical texts and ideas from different epochs. "Les Petits Platons" are actively spread worldwide, being translated into thirteen languages already.[1] Diogenes is not the only ancient thinker whose ideas are adapted for the youth through the books of this series: in addition, it includes texts about Pythagoras, Epicurus, Epictetus, Socrates, Thales, Parmenides, and Heraclitus.

A Question of Code-Switching

While passing from a hypotext to hypertext (to use Gérard Genette's terms) a reader certainly has to deal with code-switching.[2] Both the transformation of the ancient text for the present-day recipient and the doubling of its new addressee, which includes both the youngster and the mediating adult, is of significance.[3] Therefore, for the purpose of examining the reception of classical oeuvres in children's literature the semiological approach seems to be notably beneficial. Firstly, insomuch as semiotics allows registering the transgression of the significant elements between the source text and the target one. Secondly, since it brings to light the changes brought about by this transgression along with the essence of this textual metamorphosis.

This very article is based on a method expounded by Roland Barthes in his book *S/Z* that stands as analysis of *Sarrasine*, the short story by Honoré de Balzac. Barthes formulates five main codes of the sense, which become helpful in "the decomposition of the work of reading" (Barthes 1974, 12). The hermeneutic code steers the narration being formed by various terms through which an enigma can be distinguished, suggested, formulated, held in suspense, and finally disclosed. The proairetic code embodies the sequence of actions. The semic code constitutes the accumulation of connotations, units of meaning or thematic groupings. The referential (otherwise cultural) code relates to the storehouse of knowledge either scientific, moral, cultural or to our everyday experi-

1 The books of the "Les Petits Platons" series are also available in Albanian, Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, English, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Turkish.

2 Cf. the scheme of literary translation described by Yuri Lotman, in Yuri Lotman, *Vnutri mysljaščich mirov* [Inside the thinking worlds], Moskva: Yazyki russkoj kul'tury 1996, 16. See also Roman Jakobson, "On linguistic Aspects of Translation" in: Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings II: Word and language*, Paris: Mouton, 1971, 260-267.

3 In the book *The Narrator's Voice. The Dilemma of Children's Fiction* (1991) Barbara Wall describes *single* addressing, when the author addresses the child from a superior position as an adult; and *double* addressing, when the author appears to be addressing the young reader, but in fact is addressing an adult co-recipient. In turn, Hans-Heino Ewers, defining adults in the course of reading a children's work as mediators, drawing on Umberto Eco, uses the concept of the implied co-reader alongside the implied reader. The researcher proposes the terms *monosemic* and *bisemic* for messages in children's literature and emphasises the possible plurality of addressees on a par with addressing a single reader. See Hans-Heino Ewers, *Literatur für Kinder und Jugendliche: Eine Einführung*, Munich: Fink, 2000, 45-47.

ence. Finally yet importantly, the symbolic code outlines a certain space of associations evoked by rhetorical figures or concepts (Barthes 1974, 19-20). Beyond that, each code finds its realisation in numerous subcodes. For this reason, in the case of *Diogenes the Dog-Man* the primary focus lies in the most significant chains that serve to sketch the stereographic space of writing and hence the plurality of the text.

A Multitude of Sources

Explicitly or not, the children's book points to a multitude of sources. On the one hand, that could be explained historically, i.e. by the rudimentary theoretical framework of Cynicism. Such a *status quo* complicates any coherent storytelling on the subject and forces a writer to combine available antique fragments, whose authors, as a matter of fact, may have their own view of Cynicism (and therefore a different approach towards transmitting information about it). On the other hand, the wide range of hypotexts is caused by the genre or by the discourse type of the children's book itself. Being a short story, a fictional prose tale, it sets as a communicative purpose to acquaint a reader with the personality of Diogenes and his philosophy. However, given that this reader is supposed to be *primo* modern and *secundo* young, the story should be told clearly, provided with supplementary information and presented in an entertaining way. Certain source texts are therefore drawn to clarify the text or to bridge its gaps with details, while others have the aim to entertain a young reader. In this connection, the primary source is, without any doubts, book VI of *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* by Diogenes Laertios. The other significant work is Seneca's *On Benefits* insofar as its fragment V.4.3-4 is cited on the front flap of the children's book jacket:

> Diogène (413 – 327 av. J.-C.)
> Je dois nécessairement été vaincu par Diogène, qui marche nu au milieu des trésors de la Macédoine, et foule aux pieds les richesses des rois. Il était puissant, plus riche qu'Alexandre, alors maître du monde; car il pouvait refuser beaucoup plus qu'un roi ne pouvait donner.
> Sénèque,
> *Des Bienfaits*,
> 61 – 63 ap. J.-C.
>
> Diogenes (413 – 327 BC)
> I must necessarily have been defeated by Diogenes, who walks naked in the midst of the treasures of Macedonia, and tramples underfoot the riches of kings. He was powerful, richer than Alexander, then master of the world; for he could refuse much more than a king could give.
> Seneca,
> *On Benefits*,
> 61 – 63 AD[4]

4 If not indicated otherwise, the English translations were made by the author of this article.

It is worth noting, however, that the children's book does not contain the authentic antique fragment due to the elimination of some of its elements (the italics in Seneca's text and its English translation indicate omissions made in the French version):

> Necesse est *a Socrate beneficiis* vincar, necesse est a Diogene, qui per medias Macedonum gazas nudus incessit calcatis regis opibus. *[4] O! ne ille tunc merito et sibi et ceteris, quibus ad dispiciendam veritatem non erat obfusa caligo, supra eum eminere visus est, infra quem omnia iacebant*. Multo potentior, multo locupletior fuit omnia tunc possidente Alexandro; plus enim erat, quod hic nollet accipere, quam quod ille posset dare (Sen. Ben. V.4.3-4).[5]

> I must be worsted *in a contest of benefits with Socrates*, or with Diogenes, who walked naked through the treasures of Macedonia, treading the king's wealth under his feet. *[4] In good sooth, he must then rightly have seemed, both to himself and to all others whose eyes were keen enough to perceive the real truth, to be superior even to him at whose feet all the world lay.* He was far more powerful, far richer even than Alexander, who then possessed everything; for there was more that Diogenes could refuse to receive than that Alexander was able to give.[6]

Although the Latin and the French fragments are not identical, the cross-textual reference they make establishes the connection between two traditions (Greek and Roman), two epochs (Classical Greece and Roman Empire), two philosophers (Diogenes and Seneca) and two schools of thought (Cynicism and Stoicism) accordingly. Moreover, the quotation functions as a *prolepsis* for an episode with Diogenes and Alexander the Great in the children's book. As the result, from the perspective of signification, it presupposes not only a semantic comprehension of the fiction text by young readers, but also a semiotic one (referring to Émile Benveniste),[7] i.e. based not so much on cognition as on recognition of the signs already given.

In addition to the classical texts mentioned above, other important sources of *Diogenes the Dog-Man* are the letters attributed to Diogenes of Sinope (notably letter 6 to Crates; letters 13 and 16 to Apolexis; letters 7 and 30 to Hicetas; letter 19 to Anaxilaus), the Discourses of Dio Chrysostom and Emperor Julian (especially Oration 6), and several works of Plutarch. It should be noticed that since this range of the ancient hypotexts is highly cross-textual itself, tracing the source of every single fragment or estimating its influence frequently becomes an issue.

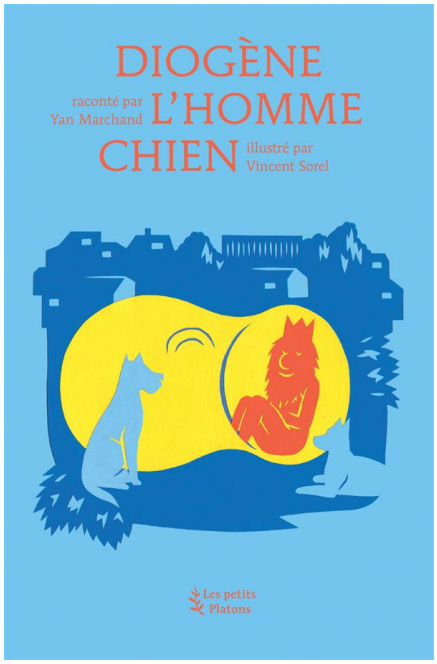
5 The text is taken from Perseus Digital Library: Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, ed. John W. Basore, online: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2007.01.0023%3Abook%3D5%3Achapter%3D4%3Asection%3D3 (Date of access: 09.05.2022).

6 The translation is taken from the Project Gutenberg library: Seneca, *On Benefits*, ed. Aubrey Stewart, online: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3794/3794-h/3794-h.htm (Date of access: 09.05.2022).

7 For further information on semantic and semiotic modes of significance see Émile Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale, t. II: 1965-1972*, Paris: Gallimard, 1980, 52-55.

Intertextuality in the (Para)Text – Looking for Code Chains

Nevertheless, such intertextuality concerns not only the text, but its paratext[8] as well. The process of reading starts with the title and the cover. The title does not pose the question of whether Diogenes is a man or a dog but says directly: both. It contains a paradox that softly prepares a reader to embrace not less paradoxical cynical philosophy. On the cover of the book [Ill. 1], in turn, we find crowned Diogenes sitting in his *pythos* in the company of dogs, and then, on the title page, the thinker with a lantern [Ill. 2]: as if he was introducing himself to a young reader in a way that would later become recognisable, or – in case they had already met – as if the Cynic reminded them of himself.



Ill. 1: Cover (Yan Marchand, Diogène l'Homme Chien. Paris: Les Petits Platons 2011), illustrations by Vincent Sorel.

Some very significant code chains appear therefore yet on the cover. Through the title and the image on the dust jacket, the following hermeneutic subcodes pose the riddles that will then have to be solved: Who is Diogenes? Why is he a Dog-Man? How is it possible to be both a man and a dog? etc. At the outset, the semic subcodes sketch some subjects of the story, while the oppositions representing the symbolic code announce its future conflicts, both internal and external. Speaking of the reference code, it does not include all the possible associations, but only those cultural citations *sensu largo* that are embedded in the story as important for the author-reader communication and the process of reading as well. For example, textual references to the image of Diogenes appear relevant, in particular to his own words from so-called *Cynic Epistle* 19 to Anaxilaos, for the philosopher's regal attributes – the walking-staff (*baktron*) as a sceptre, the cloak (*tribôn*) as a king's mantle and the leather pouch (*pêra*) as a shield. Nonetheless, regarding dogs, the significance does *not* concern, e.g., their description by Pliny the Elder or by Anacharsis the Cynic to Frasiloh, *nor* does it concern the representation of dogs in Greek mythology, but it *does* concern everyday knowledge, because further on in the text it becomes essential for linking their behaviour with the lifestyle of Diogenes. With respect to the proairetic code, it comes into play later, as unfolding of the plot is demanded. Hence, the encoding nature of the title and cover can be demonstrated with the following table:

8 'Paratext' should be understood according to Gérard Genette, see Gérard Genette, *Seuils*, Paris: Seuil, 1987, 7-8.

Hermeneutic code (the voice of truth)	Semic code (the voice of the person)	Symbolic code (voice of the symbol)	Proairetic code (the voice of empirics)	Reference code (the voice of citation / of knowledge)
[enigmas of the title] Who is Diogenes? Why is he a Dog-Man? How is it possible to be both a man and a dog? [enigmas of the image] Where is he? Why is he sitting in a jar? Why is he wearing a crown?	[background] civilisation [crown] superiority, [*pythos*] modesty, [dogs] close-to-nature, [solitude] autarkeia, [smile] happiness.	I. A city versus an individual; II. A man versus a dog / dogs; III. A king versus a beggar.	—	I. Antique culture; II. The image of Diogenes [the story about the *pythos*] (see letter 16 to Apolexis);[1] III. Common knowledge about character and behaviour of dogs; IV. Cynicism.

1 Cf. letter 16, from Diogenes to Apolexis with D. L. VI.22; D. Chr. IV.13; Stob. I.5.67.

Without dwelling further on examining the visual narration in the children's book, it is worth noting, however, that Diogenes' images often reproduce situations from the most famous anecdotes, such as his meeting with Alexander, or the thinker himself eating the *mortifer* octopus. At the end of the story, for instance, there is a picture of a dog above the colophon that may recall his posthumous marble monument described *inter alia* by Diogenes Laertios (D. L. VI.76) or Pausanias (Paus. II.2.4).

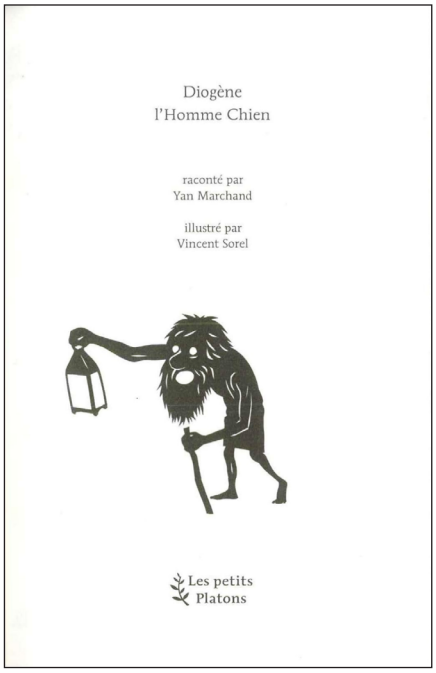
Learning Philosophy by Decoding Diogenes

Proceeding *ad rem*, or rather *ad textum*: the children's story begins almost two-and-a-half thousand years ago, on Aegina. Onésicrite, its wealthy citizen, is deeply concerned that his well brought-up son had not received the last missing lesson, namely the education of his soul. At the father's request, Androsthène goes not just anywhere, but to Athens to address himself not to anyone, but to Plato. The young Greek does not appreciate preparation for entering the Academy too much, but the city fascinates him with its luxury.

The plot of the book, which is formed around the anecdote mentioned briefly by Diogenes Laertios (D.L. VI.2.75-76), gets transformed into the third-person narrative with an omniscient narrator and zero focalisation. The children's text also includes numerous chreias (*khreiai*), brief and useful anecdotes, that are typical for the cynic education. As a result, on the one hand, the story has a coherent form, which facilitates its perception. On the other hand, such a form is marked with particular semantics, as it is made – according to the cynic tradition – of such anecdotes intended for illustrating be-

haviour patterns and relationship matrices.

The protagonist is young Androsthène. It is his actions that determine and expand the proairetic code, and therefore the chronotope of the story throughout its greater part: namely he is the person who encounters Diogenes in Athens, he gets bored during Plato's classes, he experiences a cynic lifestyle imitating Diogenes, etc. In addition, the figure of Androsthène becomes a main source for the hermeneutic subcodes due to the questions he poses to himself or to anyone around him (while a reader poses the same ones): "who is this strange character?", "is he [Diogenes – A.G.] always like this?", "is his [Androsthène's – A.G.] family happy despite their wealth?" (Marchand 2011, 9, 18, 20). Since this is an adolescent searching for a teacher but also searching for himself, it is not difficult for young readers to identify themselves with the character and thus get the impression of *de se fabula narratur*, that they read about themselves. In the ancient culture, as Michel Foucault states in his 1984 lectures at the Collège de France, *Le courage de la vérité* (*The Courage of the Truth*), telling the truth about oneself was an "activity with one other person, a practice for two" (Foucault 2011, 5). For this reason, when Androsthène decides to join the cynics, there is a pact for *paideia* signed not only between him and Diogenes, but also between Diogenes and the present-day young reader. However, like everything else in Cynicism, this *paideia* is paradoxical in being an educational process without education in its proper sense.



Ill. 2: Title Page (Yan Marchand, Diogène l'Homme Chien. Paris: Les Petits Platons 2011), illustrations by Vincent Sorel.

As for Diogenes, for the first time he appears in the text in the same yet recognisable way as on the title page of the book. Then and later his actions or speeches are explained explicitly unlike in the source texts. For example, while looking for a human with the lantern in broad daylight, Diogenes adds that he sees no one, although, as the narrator points out, the Athenian *agorá* is crowded at the moment. This case is only one of many others when the meaning of Diogenes' act is additionally verbalised to assist the reader's understanding. Therefore, a *signifié*, every act of significance, is reinforced by redoubling its *signifiant*.

Other episodes from antique hypotexts may be modified to a greater extent, often in order to convey cynical ideas in a more concentrated way. This happens, for example, to the anecdote, where Diogenes sabotages the discoursing of Anaximenes, the rhetorician, with some salt fish. Unlike in the fragment of Diogenes Laertius (D. L. VI.2.57), in the children's book the Cynic summarises this accident with a rhetorical question: given that the audience was eventually more interested in the fish than in the performance,

which one is more powerful in dealing with the crowds, Anaximenes or the herring? In addition to that, the anecdote is supplemented with remarking on the luxurious dresses of the listeners who are afraid to get dirty. In this way, attention turns to be focused on Diogenes' own appearance and thus on the contrast between him and the society – both external and, symbolically, internal. A similar situation occurs with the anecdote about Diogenes and Demosthenes meeting in a tavern (D. L. VI.2.34; Ael. *VH* IX.19). The Cynic contrasts water with the wine of Lesbos, and thus proceeds to a discussion on whether one can buy pleasure and, then, more generally, what happiness is:

> [Diogenes speaks to Androsthène – A.G.] Tu hésites à devenir un Chien! Je vois bien que tu préfères ton petit confort. Va, retourne voir Platon, ce vaniteux qui prétend enseigner la sagesse mais qui se vautre dans le luxe, qui complote avec les tyrans pour devenir tyran à son tour. Rejoins-le, deviens comme lui, puis tu me diras si tu es heureux (Marchand 2011, 37).
>
> You hesitate to become a Dog! I can see that you prefer your own comfort. So, go back to Plato, that vain man who claims to teach wisdom but wallows in luxury, who plots with tyrants to become a tyrant in his turn. Join him, become like him, then tell me if you are happy.

Therefore, if Androsthène is in charge of the enigmas of the story and their solutions, at the same time Diogenes becomes the central figure for semic, symbolic, and reference codes.

First, he determines the thematic fields of the text. The character of the thinker functions as a compendium of cynical notions: the modesty of his outfit and gastronomical preferences illustrate self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*), while his brutally sincere words embody courageously spoken truth (*parrêsia*), and his actions show shameless liberty (*anaideia*). Besides, Diogenes calls nature his only mistress. No mention of Antisthenes, his actual predecessor, portrays him both as an autodidact and as the founder of the philosophical school. At the same time, the question of his mysterious origin is of increasing importance: one of the secondary book characters is terrified of what kind of woman could give birth to such a monstrous creature as a dog in a human body. And he gets his answer: the mother is philosophy, *φιλοσοφία*. Indeed, such a Cynic, self-taught and nearly magically born, stands as a mythological[9] image of Diogenes of Sinope, which is easier to perceive for young audiences at the first acquaintance with his ideas.

In relation to the symbolic code, Diogenes of the short story is the starting point for different conflicts. He pushes the young Androsthène towards a choice: what to learn from and from whom. Hence, by opposing Plato and Diogenes, some specifics of Cynicism are demonstrated. Aristotle's teacher requires a student of his academy to be knowledgeable at least in Euclidean geometry. Beyond that, the Athenian talks for hours

9 'Mythologizing' here should be understood in Roland Barthes' terms. Firstly, because sense-making in the selected book consists in a constant interweaving of language-object (at the level of plot) and metalanguage (at the level of ideas). Secondly, because, in addressing the reader, they impose their own intention, both informing and prescribing. Thirdly, as in myth, in the book studied there is a Barthesian naturalisation of concepts: the text is seen as an innocent communication in which *signifiant* and *signifié* are naturally related, but they are also a means of communicating ideology.

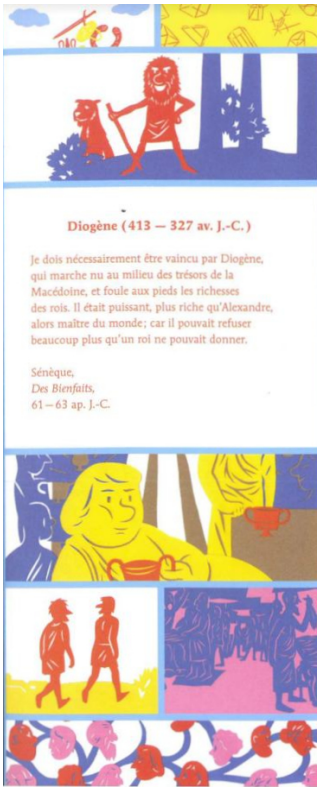
and, according to the book, treats his students with arrogance. On the contrary, Cynicism is represented as the simplest philosophy. It does not require any special preparation, it does not teach, but it exercises giving models to imitate a certain *modus vivendi*. Being a Dog demands nothing more than courage. Thus, on one side, Cynicism appears to be natural and generally available. However, on the other side, its popular character is somewhat smoothed in the children's book, since Diogenes' pupils (Androsthène and his family, Xenocrates and his sons) belong to nobility. Otherwise, such a lack of "class conflict" was not specific to antiquity. As Lucian mentions in his *Fugitivi* (*The Runaways*; Luc. *Fug*. 12), the people who are said to dedicate themselves to Cynicism were usually used to tough work since childhood, forced to earn their living and practice trades suited to their condition. So, in the children's story, Cynicism serves as an instrument of revaluation: it replaces fame, wealth and power (questioned also by the episode with Alexander the Great) by the highest value – freedom.

As mentioned above, Diogenes challenges *doxa*, common opinions and traditions, with his own appearance and way of life. His vagrancy, poverty and the lifestyle in general is associated with *parrêsia*, the statement of truth. As Michel Foucault noted, typical of Cynicism was "life strongly connected to the principle of truth-telling, without shame or fear, which pushes its courage and boldness to the point that it becomes intolerable insolence" (Foucault 2011, 165). Besides, in the book Diogenes does not hesitate to satisfy physiological needs publicly. A dog, he states, wants nothing more than what is necessary for life, so he wants to imitate these tireless creatures who can endure any deprivation and be content with little (Marchand 2011, 29). Opposing nature to culture, Diogenes also opposes his honest shamelessness, his *anaideia*, to false morality. For this purpose, he uses – as Peter Sloterdijk writes in *Critique of Cynical Reason* – the animal body in the human and its gestures as arguments (Sloterdijk 1988, 103). The reversal of acceptable behaviour emphasises the innocence of human *physis* and suggests that it is rather a culture that can be worthy of shame. All together, *parrêsia* and *anaideia*, make the entire existence of the Cynic an *alethurgy* (in terms of Foucault), a manifestation of truth.

Finally, concerning the cultural code: Diogenes causes a great increase of the referential subcodes, to intertextuality in particular, because each of his appearances in the story may be interpreted as a reference to ancient authors. For example, the description of the attributes of the thinker is known not only from book 6 of Diogenes Laertios or *Oratio* 6 of emperor Julian, but also from several other sources. To put more emphasis on the cloak, which in the text is one of the symbols of *autarkeia*, there is an explanation in the children's text that Diogenes wore it both summer and winter. This fact may refer to *Oratio* 6.14 by Dio Chrysostom and to letter 30 of the so-called Cynic epistles from Diogenes to Hicetas,[10] his father, in which Diogenes' endurance to the cold weather is pointed out. As for the walking-staff, in Marchand's book it finds its comparison with a sceptre, like in letter 19 from Diogenes to Anaxilaus the Wise: the Cynic calls his walking-staff a sceptre, calls the double cloak a king's mantle, and his leather wallet a shield.[11]

10 See Epistle 30 (to Hicetas) in Abraham J. Malherbe, ed., *The Cynic Epistles*, Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977, 130-133.

11 See Epistle 19 (to Anaxilaus) ibid., 112-113.



Ill. 3: Jacket's Front Flap (Yan Marchand, Diogène l'Homme Chien. Paris: Les Petits Platons 2011), illustrations by Vincent Sorel.

The Image(s) of Diogenes – Mythology vs. Reality

These references, even though they could be far from obvious for a young reader, play an important role in the short story, as they aim to provide it with factual matters. Details give the impression of authenticity, which makes the Cynic not only a fairytale character, but the real one in terms of history, albeit slightly mythologised. However, speaking of the referential code, it would be interesting as well to review transtextual links to later texts that may not be fundamental to Diogenes' image, but which, nonetheless, actively function as basics of contemporary culture, especially French.

In this case, for instance, it could be beneficial to consider the associations, for example, between the children's book by Yan Marchand and e.g. the works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (as Diogenes exemplifies the natural man) or Karl Marx (since the importance of the community is particularly emphasised). From this perspective, the figure of Diogenes proves to be extremely propitious to trace ideological shifts from one period to the following one. In the texts of popular culture, Diogenes is often represented as either an ascetic or a hedonist. However, at all times the thinker's image and the way it is treated may stand as a marker of the *mores* of each particular epoch.

Fit for the 21st Century

Being asked what was the most beautiful thing in the world, Diogenes replied, that it is freedom of speech (D.L. VI.2.69). In today's world, full of mistrust and fake news, full of control and fear, when showing caricatures on sensitive subjects may lead to a violent assassination or when expressing one's opinion may imprison, it is Diogenes who still delivers us relevant and effective survival instructions.

In the 21st century, it may not be essential to sleep on the cloak or to pee on opponents, but of particular value is to be courageous to speak the truth and to act accordingly. Even though *pulchra res homo est, si homo est*, it is worth remembering that only getting along with a certain animal part within us is all we need to remain a real human.

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