

# Recent / New Edition of Diogenes Laertius - And Problems With it!

Post by "Cassius" of January 26, 2020 at 9:58 AM

Martin and I were talking a few minutes ago about Diogenes Laertius and I just discovered that there is a new 2018 translation by someone I have never heard of - Pamela Mensch. Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Lives-Eminent-...s/dp/0190862173>

I don't see an "about the author" section, and this gives me pause that she is leaning heavily on other people, as indicated here. In the following posts, on the other hand, I'll indicate some ways that she might not have leaned heavily enough, because she departs from some well-established versions of key sections:

## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Pamela Mensch

Close translation, with all its unsolvable difficulties, is the only method by which most translators can hope to do justice to an author's work. The challenge is to respect, capture, and convey the elements of a writer's style—diction, tone, rhythm, and flow—knowing all the while that compromise in each of these areas is inevitable, and that each compromise, no matter how minute, increases the distance between the reader and the original work. That distance can never be eliminated, which is why all translators are bound to revere their intrepid predecessors, whose efforts become a lasting source of moral support. Thus it is a great pleasure to acknowledge the debt I owe to Robert Drew Hicks, Diogenes' Loeb Classical Library translator, and to the seven translators of the French edition published in 1999 by Livre de Poche. The ingenuity of Richard Goulet deserves special mention.

Two of our consulting editors gave me extensive help with the doctrinal material in Books 7 and 10: A. A. Long elucidated the Stoic doxography, and James Allen the letters of Epicurus. I am beholden to them for their expertise and generosity. Jay Elliott reviewed the entire translation; his responses, always astute, prompted a great many improvements. James Romm reviewed all the biographical passages, offered me an invaluable trove of suggestions, and showed himself willing to discuss and debate them to my heart's content, a gift for friendship being among his foremost. And for her unerring grasp of how to make a sentence fulfill its promise, all honor to Prudence Crowther.

Our translation is based on Tiziano Dorandi's edition of the Greek text, published in 2013 by Cambridge University Press.