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DOI:

[10.1017/S0009838816000112](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838816000112)

Document Version

Peer reviewed version

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Citation for published version (APA):

Sellars, J. (2016). Epictetus, Dissertationes 1.18.10. *CLASSICAL QUARTERLY*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838816000112>

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EPICTETUS, *DISSERTATIONES* 1.18.10

JOHN SELLARS

In the late nineteenth century J. L. G. Mowat published a short note in the *Journal of Philology* pointing out that in the Bodleian's MS of the *Dissertationes* of Epictetus there is an ink smudge (on fol. 25r) where all the other MSS have lacunae in several lines, leading to the conclusion that the Bodleian MS is the archetype for all other surviving copies.¹

The MS in question (Auct. T.4.13; Graec. Misc. 251)² was acquired by the Bodleian as one of a group of fifty bought in 1820 for £500.³ These all came from the collection of Giovanni Saibante. Little is known about Giovanni Saibante but in the early eighteenth century Scipio Maffei described Saibante's library in his *Verona Illustrata*, reporting that it contained 1300 manuscripts.⁴ Among these were eighty Greek manuscripts, out of which came the fifty purchased by the Bodleian.⁵ We do not know where the Epictetus MS was before then.⁶

¹ J. L. G. Mowat, 'A Lacuna in Arrian', *Journal of Philology* 7 (1877), 60-3.

² See H. O. Coxe, *Bodleian Quarto Catalogues I: Greek Manuscripts* (Oxford, [1853] 1969), col. 804, no. 251, and F. Madan, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, Vol. IV* (Oxford, 1897), 422-3, no. 20531. As well as Epictetus the MS also contains Porphyry's *De Vita Pythagorae* and the latter is discussed in V. Rose, 'Porphyrius', *Hermes* 5 (1871), 360-70. Rose reports readings from the MS made by Ingram Bywater, 362-8, presented as supplements to Nauck's text of the *De Vita Pythagorae* in his *Porphyrii Philosophi Platonici Opuscula Tria* (Leipzig, 1860).

³ The purchase is described in Madan (n. 2), 422. The fifty MSS are described in Coxe (n. 2), cols 774-812.

⁴ See S. Maffei, *Verona Illustrata: Parte Terza* (Verona, 1732), cols 241-4. Maffei mentions 'mille trecento manuscritti' in col. 242. In cols 242-4 he lists the 80 Greek manuscripts in the collection. 'Arriano sopra Epitteto' is no. 59.

⁵ For further discussion of the Saibante MSS and their fate see E. M. Jeffreys, 'The Greek Manuscripts of the Saibante Collection', in Kurt Treu, ed., *Studia Codicologica*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 124 (Berlin, 1977), 249-62. The Epictetus MS is discussed at 259 and is no. 59 in Jeffreys' list. This follows the numeration of Maffei. Of the 30 Greek MSS not acquired by the Bodleian in 1820, Jeffreys traces their current locations where known and Saibante MSS can now be found in Florence, Paris, and London.

⁶ Jeffreys (n. 5) reports what is known of the provenance.

Mowat's observation was built upon by H. Schenkl in his *editio maior* of Epictetus, first published in 1894 and revised in 1916.⁷ Schenkl took the Bodleian MS as the foundation for his edition and included a facsimile of the page with the ink smudge.⁸ Schenkl claimed to have identified the Bodleian MS as the archetype of the surviving tradition, although one of his reviewers thought this was grossly unfair to Mowat.⁹ When a little later J. Souilh  turned to prepare the Bud  edition of Epictetus, the first volume of which was published in 1943, he took the Bodleian MS to be foundational, to the point of printing its foliation in the margins (as had Schenkl in his 1916 editions).¹⁰

Since the days of Schenkl and Souilh  the study of MSS has benefitted from the rise of digital imaging. It is now possible to produce a wide range of images of texts such as high-resolution enlargements and infrared images. Recently there arose the opportunity to look again at the ink smudge in Epictetus and to see if, with the help of modern digital imaging, it might be possible to recover a few more words or to confirm or reject some of the conjectures that editors have made.¹¹

While the ink smudge on fol. 25r extends over approximately 15 lines, there are just 4 lines with letters that have proved completely illegible to previous editors (lines 11-14 = *Diss.* 1.18.10). Mowat, W. A. Oldfather (using Schenkl's text as a base for his Loeb edition),¹² and Souilh  have all proposed different ways of reconstructing those 4 lines, while Schenkl simply marked the gaps without printing any conjectures in his text. Readers of Epictetus have had little independent evidence against which to assess the competing

⁷ H. Schenkl, *Epicteti Dissertationes ab Arriano Digestae* (Leipzig, 1894). This *editio maior* was followed by an *editio minor* in 1898 and second editions of both were issued in 1916. See W. A. Oldfather, *Contributions Toward a Bibliography of Epictetus* (Urbana, 1927), 6-7.

⁸ In the 1916 edition the facsimile plate is mistakenly identified as 'fol. 52a' instead of 25a.

⁹ See the review by J. B. Mayor, *CR* 9/1 (1895), 31-7, supplemented with corrections by W. M. Lindsay, *ibid.*, 37-9. Schenkl replied to what he considered to be a grossly unfair review in *CR* 9/4 (1895), 231-4, to which Mayor responded in the same issue, 234-5.

¹⁰ J. Souilh , * pict te, Entretiens Livre I* (Paris, 1943). A second, revised edition was published in 1975. On the status of the Bodleian MS see lxxii-lxxiii.

¹¹ The occasion for this was a small exhibition of Stoic-related texts, including the Epictetus MS, at the Bodleian Library under the title 'Stoicism and its Legacy', displayed at the Proscholium in May-June 2013. Digital images of the MS (along with prints of the same) were made possible by a small grant from the Lorne Thyssen Research Fund of the Ancient World Research Cluster at Wolfson College, Oxford, very gratefully acknowledged here.

¹² W. A. Oldfather, *Epictetus, The Discourses as Reported by Arrian, the Manual, and Fragments*, 2 vols (London, 1925-28).

reconstructions. These 4 lines of fol. 25r, as printed by Mowat, Schenkl, Oldfather, and Souilh  are as follows:

Mowat (1877):

11. καὶ μισητικόν; [μὴ εἰσενέγκης] τὰς φωνὰς ταύτας
12. ἃς οἱ πολλοὶ [εἰκὴ ἐροῦσιν]· τούτους οὖν τοὺς κα-
13. ταράτους καὶ μι[σήτους ἐλεήσ]ω; σὺ πῶς ποτ' ἀπεσο-
14. φώθης ἄφνω[ς οὕτως ὥστε] χαλεπὸς εἶ; διὰ τί οὖν

Schenkl (1916):

11. καὶ μισητικόν· μὴ ἐ πῆς τὰς φωνὰς ταύτας
12. ἃς οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν φ των 'τούτους οὖν τοὺς κα-
13. ταράτους καὶ μιαιροὺς' ἔστω· σὺ πῶς ποτ' ἀπεσο-
14. φώθης ἄφνω . . . γ . ἄλλως χαλεπὸς εἶ. διὰ τί οὖν

Oldfather (1925):

11. καὶ μισητικόν· μὴ εἰσενέγκης τὰς φωνὰς ταύτας
12. ἃς οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν φιλοψογούντων "τούτους οὖν τοὺς κα-
13. ταράτους καὶ μιαιροὺς μωροὺς" ἔστω· σὺ πῶς ποτ' ἀπεσο-
14. φώθης ἄφνω ὥστε ἄλλοις μωροῖς χαλεπὸς εἶ; διὰ τί οὖν

Souilh  (1943):

11. καὶ μισητικόν· τίς οὐ<ν> εἶ ἄ<νθρωπε> <ἴ>να εἴπῃς τὰς φωνὰς ταύτας
12. ἃς οἱ πολλοὶ εἰώ<θασιν λέγειν> « τούτους οὖν τοὺς κα-
13. ταράτους καὶ μιαιροὺς <ἄρον> »;> ἔστω· σὺ πῶς ποτ' ἀπεσο-
14. φώθης ἄφνω <καὶ νῦν> ἄλλοις χαλεπὸς εἶ; διὰ τί οὖν

On the basis of a fresh examination of prints of high-resolution digital photographs of the MS the following points may be made about each line:¹³

The lacuna on line 11 remains illegible. Schenkl was probably correct to print πῆς afterwards and this accords with Souilh 's reading too. The κῆς required for Mowat's proposal of εἰσενέγκης adopted by Oldfather seems doubtful.

In line 12, again the lacuna remains illegible. Schenkl's τῶν after πολλοὶ seems right and this may well be followed by φιλ (this is plausible but not certain), making Oldfather's proposal of φιλοψογούντων certainly possible. This counts against Souilh 's εἰώ.

¹³ All of the following observations are by Nigel Wilson, who very generously agreed to examine enlarged images of the MS.

In line 13 Schenkl's *μιαροὺς* and *ἔστω* both look secure. It is not possible to discern the word in between. Oldfather and Souilh  offer different conjectures here, neither of which can be confirmed.

In line 14 Schenkl and Souilh  both print *ἄφνω*, which looks secure. However Souilh 's suggestion <*καὶ νῦν*> does not look right, for there is space for punctuation immediately after *ἄφνω*. However, Souilh 's *ἄλλοις* looks to be correct, against Schenkl's *ἄλλως*. On the basis of what can be discerned, the most plausible reading here might be *ἄφνω· τί τοῖς ἄλλοις χαλεπὸς εἶ*; There is no room on the line for the *μωροῖς* added by Oldfather.¹⁴

Taking all of these observations into account, it is possible to discern the following text:

11. καὶ μισητικόν· μὴ πῆς τὰς φωνὰς ταύτας
12. ἃς οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν φιλ[οψογούν]των 'τούτους οὖν τοὺς κα-
13. τάρατους καὶ μιαροὺς' ἔστω· σὺ πῶς ποτ' ἀπεσο-
14. φώθης ἄφνω· τί τοῖς ἄλλοις χαλεπὸς εἶ; διὰ τί οὖν

Oldfather's version of this passage, which is probably the most widely read, now looks somewhat harsh. If there is one word that stands out in his text of *Diss.* 1.18.10 it is the repeated *μωροί*. But there are no secure grounds for accepting the first instance and simply no room on the line for the second. The context of the passage as a whole makes Oldfather's *μωρούς* (supplied by Capps) in line 13 quite reasonable, if this meant to be the exclamation of an imaginary interlocutor angry at others. However the insertion of *μωροῖς* in line 14 not only does not fit in the space of the line but also seems contextually inappropriate, for here Epictetus is referring in his own voice to people to whom he has been arguing we ought to display understanding (they may be acting wrongly, but all wrongdoing is the product of unintentional error). Where Oldfather translates the final section as 'but how is it that you have so suddenly been converted to wisdom that you are angry at fools?' we might instead put 'but how is it that you have so suddenly been converted to wisdom; why are you so severe to everybody else?'

¹⁴ In a note Oldfather reports that *μωροῖς* was 'supplied by Capps', presumably Edward Capps (1866-1950), the first American Editor of the Loeb Classical Library.