

Confidence in Katastematic Pleasure

Post by “Don” of February 13, 2023 at 7:44 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

As literal as possible:

ὁ τῆς φύσεως πλοῦτος "The wealth of nature..."

καὶ ὤριστα* καὶ εὐπόριστός ἐστιν, "is the best and easily procured..."

ὁ δὲ τῶν κενῶν δοξῶν (kenōn doxōn "empty beliefs/principles/doctrines") εἰς ἄπειρον ἐκπίπτει. "But that of empty opinions runs onto infinity."

*πλοῦτος ploutos. Ex., plutocracy. Wealth, riches.

**ὤριστα is, according to LSJ, a contraction of ὁ ἄριστος (o aristos) from which we get aristocracy. So, it literally means "best, finest; best in its kind, and so in all sorts of relations, serving as Sup. of ἀγαθός (agathon "good"). I'm wondering if the "limited" translation is from the idea of oligos as in oligarchy as in rule by a few or limited number. If I've misunderstood ὤριστα I am more than open to correction!

PS. There is ὀριστός from ὀρίζω (horizō, "separate, delimit") but ὤριστα with its sense connected to "the good" seems to me to make sense here.

https://en.m.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%84...2#Ancient_Greek

I would be curious to get @Nate 's take.

PS: I found it interesting that the predicates in the first phrase are ὤριστα ooristai and εὐπόριστός euporistos. The first appears to be a feminine plural and the second appears to be masculine? So, do they apply to ploutos (it would appear given the ending of the euporistos) or to "nature" physeos? This is where my Greek knowledge begins to break down 😞

Per LSJ:

[εὐπόριστος](#) , [ον](#), ([πορίζω](#))

A. easy to procure or secure, *Id.Ep.3p.63U.*, *Sent.21*, *Fr.469*, *Dsc.Eup. Praef.*: Sup., [ἀμπεχόνη](#), [οἰκία](#), *Ph.2.424*, cf. *Phld.D.1.15*; feasible, **Cic.Att.7.1.7**; [εὐπόριστα](#) (sc. [φάρμακα](#)), [τά](#), common, family medicines: title of work by *Dsc.*, *Orib.Eup.Praef.* (called [περὶ ἀπλῶν φαρμάκων](#) in codd. of *Dsc.Eup.*); also, ordinary food, opp. game out of

season, [Plu.Luc.40](#), [Pomp.2. II. Act.](#), *providing one's subsistence with ease*, [Ptol. Tetr.155](#).

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I just realized there's this epitaph of Epicurus from Atheneaus quoted by Diogenes Laertius:

And here is the epigram²⁰ in which Athenaeus eulogizes him :

[12] Ye toil, O men, for paltry things and incessantly begin strife and war for gain ;

but nature's wealth extends to a moderate bound, whereas vain judgements have a limitless range.

This message Neocles' wise son heard from the Muses or from the sacred tripod at Delphi.²¹

[12] ἄνθρωποι, μοχθεῖτε τὰ χεῖρονα, καὶ διὰ κέρδος ἄπληστοι νεικέων ἄρχετε καὶ πολέμων:

τᾶς φύσιος δ' ὁ πλοῦτος ὄρον τινὰ βαιὸν ἐπίσχει, αἱ δὲ κεναὶ κρίσεις τὰν ἀπέραντον ὁδόν.

τοῦτο Νεοκλῆος πινυτὸν τέκος ἦ παρὰ Μουσέων ἔκλυεν ἢ Πυθοῦς ἐξ ἱερῶν τριπόδων.

²⁰ Anthology of Planudes. iv. 43.

This text mentions "nature's wealth extends to a moderate bound, whereas vain judgements have a limitless range" but the same wording is not used as in the PD itself. However, in light of this, I can see how the PD is translated with "limited". That said, I'm not 100% convinced that "the best of its kind" can't be correct. I'm less sure than I was, but not entirely dissuaded.