

PD17 - Commentary on PD17

Post by “Don” of March 8, 2020 at 10:20 PM

KD 17 Ὁ δίκαιος ἀταρακτότατος, ὁ δ' ἄδικος πλείστης ταραχῆς γέμων.

*One who is just, moral, and virtuous has peace of mind; but **one who is unjust and amoral** is overflowing with agitation, confusion, and uncertainty. (Translation is my own)(ταραχῆς, i.e., the opposite of ἀταραξία).*

This Principal Doctrine just makes sense. If you are just in your dealings with other people, moral in your actions, and do your best to display fair behavior, you have no need to be troubled. You've done your best. Don't get me wrong. Bad things will happen to you, and some people still won't like you. But you don't control that. Your mind can be at peace. On the other hand, if you treat people poorly, display amoral behavior, and are basically an objectively poor excuse for a human being, you have reason to be troubled! People will be out to get you. If you're the latter, you need to have some frank speech with yourself and get on the right track.

To quote (Wil) Wheaton's Law: "Don't be a dick!"* If you take his advice, you and all of us who interact with you will be the better for it.

Wheaton's Law: <https://knowyourmeme.com/memes/wheatons-law>

(Updated 7/15/23)

Post by “Don” of July 15, 2023 at 9:04 AM

I'm going to shamelessly self-promote this thread from March 2020, my early days on the forum. I edited slightly, but am pleased that the post still stands up.

Post by “Eikadistes” of July 15, 2023 at 9:33 AM

Well, while we're at it and I'm sculpting my own translator-voice:

“The just [are] serene, but the unjust are full of shit.”

Post by “Don” of July 15, 2023 at 10:52 AM

I am of the opinion that translations should, if at all possible, reflect the original texts' wordplay, eg, playing off the original here in [PD17](#)'s:

δίκαιος vs ἄδικος

ἀταρακτότατος vs παραχῆς

Post by “Eikadistes” of July 16, 2023 at 10:12 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

am of the opinion that translations should, if at all possible, reflect the original texts' wordplay, eg, playing off the original here in [PD17](#)'s:

δίκαιος vs ἄδικος

ἀταρακτότατος vs παραχῆς

I agree. As far as KD17 goes, it should be "***the greatest troubles.***"

Post by “Don” of July 17, 2023 at 6:53 AM

[Quote from Nate](#)

[Quote from Don](#)

am of the opinion that translations should, if at all possible, reflect the original texts' wordplay, eg, playing off the original here in [PD17](#)'s:

δίκαιος vs ἄδικος

ἀταρακτότατος vs παραχῆς

I agree. As far as KD17 goes, it should be "***the greatest troubles.***"

Good call!

Ὁ δίκαιος ἀταρακτότατος, ὁ δ' ἄδικος πλείστης παραχῆς γέμων.

More literal (formal equivalence):

"The one who acts justly has a fully untroubled mind; but the one who acts unjustly is full of the greatest troubles."

More dynamic/functional equivalence:

"One who acts justly has the greatest peace of mind, free from trouble; but one who acts unjustly is full of troubles, and will be agitated, confused, and uncertain."

There is definitely a place for both formal and dynamic translation. I see Epicurus's wordplay using similar words or constructions often being lost in traditional or scholarly translations. What would be optimal, from my perspective, would be to be able to somehow convey that wordplay as well as to convey the various nuances and connotations the ancient Greek language has in a readable, colloquial English style. Doing both is NOT easy! Anybody who attempts translation, formal or functional, has my respect!

[Dynamic and formal equivalence - Wikipedia](#)

Edit:

In the past, I looked askance at dynamic/functional equivalence. My impression (especially of Bible translation) was that the translator was trying to read their own understanding into the text, to make it say something it wasn't actually saying. While that may be possible, I now think a strictly literal translation could do the same in that choosing one target word to convey one source word can also hide the deeper meaning of a text. Some balance of dynamic and formal equivalence is probably the best approach. And yes I'm trying to remind myself of this all the time 😊