

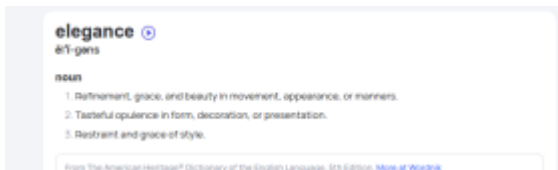
VS63 - "Frugality Too Has A Limit..."

Post by "Cassius" of February 1, 2023 at 1:31 PM

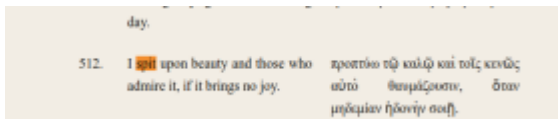
Outstanding work Don.

I presume that where we end up depends in large part on the connotations of the English word "elegance," which carries a positive connotation. The standard / Bailey translation, which as you state would fit a pattern of Epicurus to use contrasts, would be to use a word like "limit" to imply that exceeding or approaching a negative floor "on the bottom" is being contrasted with a negative ceiling "on the top." So what it comes down to me is whether the first part of the balance is best served by a word with positive connotations, such as "elegance" or one that is more implicitly negative, or at least realistic, like limit.

So you've proved to at least my own personal satisfaction that there is no "horror" in what St. Andre for example proposes. However the strain being put on general usage by the word "elegance" would not cause me to change from the Bailey/Usener version, in that a negative assessment seems more clear and consistent with the overall tone of the passage and the philosophy. Epicurus talks a lot about limits in his philosophy, but not so much - as I recall - about "elegance." If there were other instances in which Epicurus praises "elegance" I would see more of a chance of that being an acceptable word here. However we know that Epicurus spits upon beauty unless it bring pleasure, and I would think he would do the same with "elegance," at least in the way we use that word today:



St Andre on fragment 512:



So to me this ends up like "marriage" -- the relevant text appears clearly awkward so as to indicate corruption, but one translation seems to be more consistent with the most general perspective as stated in other places. To me, that overall and overriding general perspective seems to be [VS71](#): "Every desire must be confronted by this question: What will happen to me if the object of my desire is accomplished, and what if it is not?"

And that means to me that the implication is that there is a time for luxury and a time for simplicity depending on circumstances. Menoecus: [130] "Yet by a scale of comparison and by

the consideration of advantages and disadvantages we must form our judgment on all these matters. For the good on certain occasions we treat as bad, and conversely the bad as good. And again independence of desire we think a great good — not that we may at all times enjoy but a few things, but that, if we do not possess many, we may enjoy the few in the genuine persuasion that those have the sweetest pleasure in luxury who least need it, and that all that is natural is easy to be obtained, but that which is superfluous is hard. And so plain savours bring us a pleasure equal to a luxurious diet, when all the pain due to want is removed; and bread and water produce the highest pleasure, when one who needs them puts them to his lips."

Has anyone suggested that [VS71](#) is corrupted or open to question?