

VS78 - Alternative Translation

Post by "Don" of July 4, 2023 at 8:16 AM

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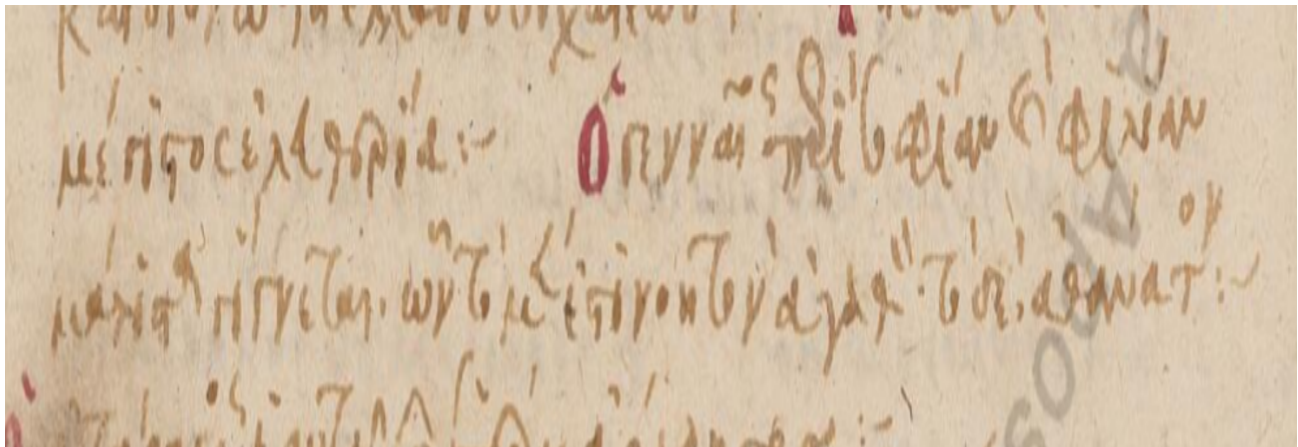
There's the manuscript link.

codex Vaticanus Graecus 1950 (1950 is the reference number, not a date incidentally)

The Vatican Sayings begin at the bottom of folio 401v with the big red T for Το μακαριον και αφθαρτον ... (PD1 and VS1)

Hartel is trying to "improve" the manuscript. Usener evidently accepts the θνητον of the manuscript but adds Hartel's improvement as a footnote to be thorough.

I usually try to stick with the manuscript. So...



There's the line in codex Vaticanus Graecus 1950, starting at the red O for ὁ γενναῖος...

Here's the Greek as shown in Wotke & Usener:

78* ὁ γενναῖος περι σοφίαν και φιλίαν μάλιστα γίνεται, ὦν τὸ μὲν ἐστι θνητὸν ἀγαθόν, τὸ δὲ ἀθάνατον.

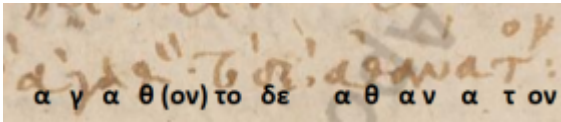
Their footnote then says: (line) 26 θνητον| νοητον V : verb. (verbessert von) H.

What does the manuscript look like to me?

ὁ γενναῖος περι σοφίαν και φιλίαν μάλιστα γίνεται, ὦν τὸ μὲν ἐστι... Wait for it....

[pasted-from-clipboard.png](#) Well, would you look at that!

It certainly looks like **νοητον** to me!! And I don't think you have to know Greek to see those first markings don't look like θνητον. For example, here's a theta from elsewhere in the same saying from agathon:



There's no "loopy" theta at the beginning of that word νοητον within the manuscript. Hmmmm.....

That said, Epicurus did like his parallel constructions and thneton "mortal", athanaton "undying" would be more in keeping... BUT that's not what the manuscript says! νοητόν is the Attic variation of νοητός.

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, νο-ητός](#)

"falling within the province of νοῦς,"

So, I'm not saying some scribe didn't misspell the word and write νοητον when it should have been θνητον (as the prevalent wording has made it), All it would take are two letters. And the parallel of mortal/immortal is in keeping with Epicurus's style... but again, that's not what the manuscript has. And, to the best of my knowledge, we don't have another instance of this saying anywhere else, do we?? As far as I know, this manuscript is the ONLY copy of the "Vatican Sayings" so there's nothing to "compare" to.

GREAT FIND, [Onenski](#) !!!