

What if Kyriai Doxai was NOT a list?

Post by “Don” of July 26, 2023 at 1:08 PM

Okay, after going through three manuscripts:

- Plut.69.35 (12 c.)
- Parisinus gr. 1759 (14th c.)
- Grec. 1758 (1401-1500)

I have the following VERY preliminary, conservative proposal to make. The only thing this post looks at is where the 3 texts agree in NOT putting an interpunct (dot - signifying a full stop or full breath) between what are usually individual "[Principal Doctrines](#)." I purposefully did NOT try to remember what each of the PDs were, so the text didn't sway me on "Is that a dot or not?" All three manuscripts appear to NOT place a dot:

- EDIT: between 5 & 6 (Plut..69.35 places a comma)
- between 10 & 11 (Plut.69.35 places a comma)
- between 12 & 13 (every manuscript started a new line with 13 with no dot after 12)
- between 15 & 16 (Plut.69.35 places a comma)
- between 16 & 17
- between 18 & 19 (gr.1759 is inconclusive but does not appear to have a dot)

There are other sections worth looking at, but here are those non-dotted PDs listed above for your consideration, using Hicks for the quick-n-dirty translation.

(5 & 6) It is impossible to live a pleasant life without living wisely and well and justly, and it is impossible to live wisely and well and justly without living pleasantly. Whenever any one of these is lacking, when, for instance, the man is not able to live wisely, though he lives well and justly, it is impossible for him to live a pleasant life. In order to obtain security from other men any means whatsoever of procuring this was a natural good.

(10 & 11) If the objects which are productive of pleasures to profligate persons really freed them from fears of the mind,--the fears, I mean, inspired by celestial and atmospheric phenomena, the fear of death, the fear of pain ; if, further, they taught them to limit their desires, we should never have any fault to find with such persons, for they would then be filled with pleasures to overflowing on all sides and would be exempt from all pain, whether of body or mind, that is, from all evil. If we had never been molested by alarms at celestial and atmospheric phenomena, nor by the misgiving that death somehow affects us, nor by neglect of the proper limits of pains and desires, we should have had no need to study natural science.

(12 & 13) It would be impossible to banish fear on matters of the highest importance, if a man did not know the nature of the whole universe, but lived in dread of what the legends tell us.

Hence without the study of nature there was no enjoyment of unmixed pleasures. There would be no advantage in providing security against our fellow-men, so long as we were alarmed by occurrences over our heads or beneath the earth or in general by whatever happens in the boundless universe.

(15 & 16 & 17) Nature's wealth at once has its bounds and is easy to procure ; but the wealth of vain fancies recedes to an infinite distance. Fortune but seldom interferes with the wise man ; his greatest and highest interests have been, are, and will be, directed by reason throughout the course of his life. The just man enjoys the greatest peace of mind, while the unjust is full of the utmost disquietude.

(18 & 19) Pleasure in the flesh admits no increase when once the pain of want has been removed ; after that it only admits of variation. The limit of pleasure in the mind, however, is reached when we reflect on the things themselves and their congeners which cause the mind the greatest alarms. Unlimited time and limited time afford an equal amount of pleasure, if we measure the limits of that pleasure by reason.

There are other idiosyncracies of the manuscripts that I want to explore, but figured I'd share this since ya'll have been patient. There are also instances where two manuscripts will lack a dot "between" PDs but not the third. There are some gaps, other marks, other things to consider. But those above seem to hang together, done better than others admittedly.

EDIT: And this also doesn't take into consideration different forms of words, missing lines or different phrasing.