

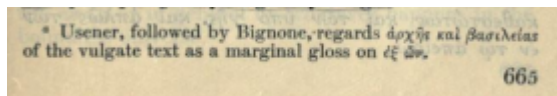
# PD06 - Disputes as to correct translation of PD6 - Should it refer to "sovereignty" and "kingship"?

Post by "Cassius" of November 23, 2017 at 6:40 PM

I am informed by Elli P. that there are serious issues with the standard English translation of PD6. The versions we most commonly see are:

Bailey: "To secure protection from men anything is a natural good, by which you may be able to attain this end." (note the strangely-placed comma)

Hicks/Loeb: "In order to obtain security from other men any means whatsoever of procuring this was a natural good."



But Hicks notes a problem:

Elli cites this version of the ancient Greek text by Archontia Liontaki, who is a philologist of the ancient and new Greek language, and a member of the current Garden of Epicurus in Athens :

VI. 6 Ἔνεκα τοῦ θαρρεῖν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἦν κατὰ φύσιν ἀρχῆς καὶ βασιλείας ἀγαθόν, ἐξ ὧν ἄν ποτε τοῦτο οἶός τ' ἦ παρασκευάζεσθαι.

And this is Liontaki's translation from the ancient to new Greek:

VI.(6) Με σκοπό την απόκτηση ασφάλειας απέναντι στους ανθρώπους, υπήρχε (πάντα) το φυσικό αγαθό της κυριαρχίας και της βασιλείας, μέσω των οποίων (κάποιος) μπορούσε κάποτε να το καταφέρει αυτό.

Elli translates this new Greek into English as follows:

**VI. (6) In order to obtain security from other people, there was (always) the natural good of sovereignty and kingship, through which (someone) once could have accomplished this.**

Elli also notes that Eric Anderson translates:

PD 6 That natural benefit of kingship and high office is (and only is) the degree to which they provide security from other men.

What a tangled web.

If specific words such as kingship are there, it would seem they should be included. But some of the best academic minds of the 20th century decided that they had good reason for leaving it out. I would think a fair discussion of which translation is best would have to discuss why Bailey / Bignone / Usener came to the conclusion they did, even if in the end it was wrong. No doubt they had a reason, and they were not just being sloppy. Just saying "they were wrong" doesn't seem like the best approach, or else we call into question everything else they decided (which probably should be done, but can't practically be attempted without a strong foundation).

Which brings up another topic- many of the ancient texts are translated in very "stilted" and unwieldy English, which is probably not necessarily the way it would be translated by a scholar starting from scratch today. And so we are left with texts written in very hard-to-read fashion that are not necessarily the most accurate in communicating the message intended. We desperately need a full rewrite done by someone who is both (1) competent, and (2) friendly to Epicurus, so as to avoid contamination from Stoic/Platonist preconceptions.

Elli tells me that such a work is being planned by leaders of the Athenian Garden of Epicurus. As I find out more I will update that information here.