

VS47 - Source in Vat.gr.1950 and elsewhere

Post by "Eikadistes" of July 17, 2025 at 10:47 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

VS47. "I have anticipated thee, Fortune, and entrenched myself against all thy secret attacks. And I will not give myself up as captive to thee or to any other circumstance; but when it is time for me to go, spitting contempt on life and on those who vainly cling to it, I will leave life crying aloud a glorious triumph-song that I have lived well." (Bailey translation)

I am wondering if it literally says "spitting contempt on life" or what exactly it said?

[Don Bryan](#) @Eikadistes

Great question!

I found differing renderings from different authors. Bailey seems to be an outlier in his transposition; note the verb [προπτύσαντες](#) ([proptúsantes](#)) versus προσπύσαντες ([prosptúsantes](#)).

[Screenshot 2025-07-17 at 10.33.27 AM.png](#)

The **first** rendering [προπτύσαντες](#) ([proptúsantes](#)) is (I believe) the aorist active participle of the verb προπτύω ([proptúo](#)), meaning something like "having spit out" ... or else, the "-αντες" ending refers to a plural, active participle, meaning "you [all] are spitting out"? (...I wasn't really sure).

The **second** rendering [προσπύσαντες](#) ([prosptúsantes](#)) is the aorist active participle of the verb [προσπύσσομαι](#) ([prosptússomai](#)), meaning "having received", "embraced", or "folded to oneself" ... or else, here again, it might be the plural active participle, meaning "you [all] are embracing".

[Screenshot 2025-07-17 at 10.34.36 AM.png](#)

... it looks like the **second** one to me, with the extra sigma, [προσπύσαντες](#) ([prosptúsantes](#)).

...ἀλλ' ὅταν ἡμᾶς τὸ χρεῶν [ἐξάγη](#)
μέγα προ[σ]πύσαντες τῷ ζῆν [καὶ](#)...

A directly-transposed translation might be something like (*it's clunky, but...*) either:

*...but when, [for] us, a [life full] of necessities recedes,
[the] great [thing], [subjects] are spitting out, then, to live, and...*

or perhaps:

*...but when, [for] us, a [life full] of necessities recedes,
[the] great [thing], [subjects] are embracing, then, to live, and...*

So the question I then struggle with, is to decide "*to which of the implied subject(s)/object(s) do the articles/pronouns refer?*" Are people vomiting (rejecting?) their natural impulse to live? Or are necessities vomiting (killing?) people from life? Otherwise (*I think this is the case based on the screenshots above*) people must be **embracing** the necessary end to living (i.e. accepting death).

...but could be totally wrong. 100% amateur here.