

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

Post by "Bryan" of August 27, 2025 at 10:45 PM

As my post above on ἡ λεπτότης shows, "subtlety" is a word used by Epicurus in discussing physics -- but not (*except for this example of the manuscript's version of VS 63*) when discussing morals.

Among the examples, this quote below must be the best, because Epicurus stacks near synonyms, and in doing better shows us what he thought of the word:

"...It has the force to eject air, [while] carrying [the air] over – and It is evident that this same Force also exists even in the films: for if only a hard Object had the force to produce ejections – but a Film did not [have the force to produce ejections] – then only hard Objects would have the force to be quickly carried in the ejecting way – but the films would not [have the force to be quickly carried], at least [not] in the ejecting [way]: however, in what is completely encompassed around immediately from the ready void, through the settlements into narrowness, subtlety, and minuteness....."

[Epicurus, On Nature, Book 2, P.Herc. 993 col. 10 (column 111inf) | P.Herc. 1149 col. 5 (column 112sup)] "...[ἀέ]ρα ἐξω[θεῖ]ν [δυνα]τὸν περαιοῖ, φα[ν]ερὸν ὡς καὶ τοῖς εἰδώλοις ὑπάρχει καὶ [α]ὔτη ἡ δύναμις· εἰ μὲν γὰρ τὸ στερέμνιον μόνον ἡ δύνατο τὰς | ἐξώσεις π[οιεῖσθ]αι, τὸ δ' εἶδωλον μὴ, ἦν ἂν κατὰ τὸν ἐξωστικὸν τρόπον τὰ στερέμνια μόνον ταχέως δύνασθαι φέρεσθ[αι], [τ]ᾶ δὲ εἶδωλα μὴ, κατὰ γε τὸν ἐξωστ[ι]κό[ν], κα[τ]ᾶ μέντοι τὸ περιλαμβανόμενον εὐθύ[ς] ἐξ[ε] ἐτ[ο]ίμου κενοῦ διὰ τ[ὰς] συνιζήσεις τὰς εἰς σ[τε]νότητα καὶ λεπτ[ό]τητα καὶ μι[κρ]ότη[τ]α..."

We could draw a line from "subtlety" to "simple living" if it was otherwise established, but I do not see that it is.

The closest I have is in *The Double Indictment* (section 2) Lucian has Zeus complain "I myself have to do any number of tasks that are almost impossible to carry out on account of their subtlety (ὕπο λεπτότητος)" -- which *may* be enough to draw it all together and preserve the manuscripts reading.