

Additional Selections from Ancient Greek and Other Texts

Translated by Gregory Nagy

Bacchylides Ode 13 lines 61–63

[...] the blossoms [*anthea*] nurture a fame *doxa*] that is *polu-phantos* (made visible [*phainein*] to many) in the recircling of time [*aiōn*]⁶⁵—a fame meant for only a few mortals, lasting forever [*aiei*].

Bacchylides Ode 13 lines 63-66

And when the dark blue cloud of death covers over these few [= victors], what gets left behind is ⁶⁵ an undying glory [*kleos*] for what they did so well, in accord with a destiny [*aisa*] that cannot be dislodged.

CPG I p. 19.6–11

more barren [*a-karpos*] than the Gardens of Adonis

“pseudo-” Demosthenes 61.28

When the [chariot] teams had started and some had rushed ahead while some were being reined in, you, prevailing over both [the faster and the slower chariot teams], first one and then the other, [surpassing each chariot team] in a way that was most suited [for each situation], seized the victory, winning that envied garland in such a way that, even though it was glorious enough to win, it seemed even more glorious and dazzling that you came out of it safely. For when the chariot of your opponents was speeding toward [*enantion*] you and everyone thought that the momentum of their horses could not be resisted, you, aware that some [runners], even when no danger threatens, become overanxious for their own safety, not only did not lose your head or your nerve, but by your courage overcame the impetus of their [chariot] team and by your speed [as a runner] passed even those contenders [= the other runners] whose luck had not yet had any setbacks.

Dio of Prusa 12.60–61

Because of their attraction to the divine unknown [*daimonion*], all humans have a powerful erotic desire [*erōs*] to worship [*timân*] and to take care of [*therapeuein*] the divinity [*theion*] that they do know, by being up close to it and near it, as they approach it and try to touch it in an act of persuasion, and they sacrifice to it and offer it garlands. Quite simply, they are like disconnected [*nēpioi*] children who have been torn away from their father or mother and who, feeling a terrific urge [*himeros*] and longing [*pothos*], often reach out their hands while they are dreaming, in the direction of their parents who are not there, so also are humans in their relationship with the gods, loving them as they do, and justifiably so, because the gods do good things for them and have an affinity with them. And, in their love for the gods, humans strive in all possible ways to be with them and in their company.

Euripides *Herakles* 687-695

⁶⁸⁷ A paeon [*paian*] do the Delian Maidens ⁶⁸⁸ sing as a hymn [*humnos*] around the temple gates, ⁶⁸⁹ singing [Apollo] the true child of Leto ⁶⁹⁰ as they swirl, and they have such a beautiful chorus [*khoros*] [of singers and dancers]. ⁶⁹¹ I too, singing paeans [*paianes*] at your palace, ⁶⁹² aged singer that I am, like a swan [*kuknos*], ⁶⁹³ from my graybearded throat, ⁶⁹⁴ will send forth a cry. For whatever is real ⁶⁹⁵ has a place to stay in my hymns [*humnoi*].

Heraclitus 22 B 93 DK, as quoted by Plutarch *On the oracular pronouncements of the Pythia* 404d

The Lord [= Apollo], whose oracle [*manteion*] is in Delphi, neither says [*legei*] nor conceals [*kruptei*]: he indicates [*semainei*].

Homeric Hymn to Herakles 4-6

⁴ He [= Hēraklēs] used to travel all over the boundless earth and all over the sea, ⁵ veering from his path and wandering off, all because of the missions assigned to him by Eurystheus the king. ⁶ He [= Hēraklēs] performed many reckless things on his own, and he suffered many such things in return.

Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi XXIV 5 I lines 15–16

And for you [= the divinity], here are these ritual substitutes [*tarpalliuš*] | ... And may they die, but I will not die.

Scholia for Lycophron 766

Others say that, in the vicinity of the rocks at Athenian Colonus [*Kolonos*], he [Poseidon], falling asleep, had an emission of semen, and a horse named *Skuphios* came out, who is also named *Skironitēs*.

Matthew 22:14

“Many are called but few are chosen.”

Plutarch *Life of Nikias* 3.5-7

Nikias is remembered for his ambitious accomplishments with regard to Delos—accomplishments most spectacular in all their splendor and most worthy of the gods in all their magnificence. Here is an example. The choral groups [*khoroi*] that cities used to send [to Delos] for the performances of songs sacred to the god (Apollo) used to sail in [to the harbor of Delos] in a haphazard fashion, and the crowds that would gather to greet the ship used to start right away to call on the performers to start singing their song. There was no coordination, since the performers were still in the process of disembarking in a rushed and disorganized way, and they were still putting on their garlands and changing into their costumes. But when he [= Nikias] was in charge of the sacred voyage [*theoria*] [to Delos], he first took a side trip to the island of Rheneia, bringing with him the choral group [*khoros*] and the sacrificial offerings

[*hiereia*] and all the rest of the equipment. And he brought with him a bridge that had been made in advance, back in Athens, to fit the present occasion, and this bridge was most splendidly adorned with golden fixtures, with dyed colors, with garlands, with tapestries. Overnight, he took this bridge and spanned with it the strait between Rheneia and Delos—not a very great distance. ^{3.6} Then, come daylight, he led the procession in honor of the god and brought across the bridge to their destination the performers of the choral group [*khoros*], who were outfitted most magnificently and were all along performing their song. ^{3.7} Then, after the sacrifice [*thusiā*] and after the competition [*agōn*] and after the feasting, he set up as a dedication to the god the [famous] bronze palm tree.

“An die Musik” (“To Music”) by Franz Schubert (D. 547 Op. 88 No. 4). Text by Franz von Schober

You, O sacred art, how often, in hours that were gray,
while I was caught up in the savage cycle of life,
you brought back my heart to warm love, reigniting it,
and spirited me off to a better world.
Often has a sigh drifted from your harp—
a sweet and holy chord coming from you,
revealing from the heavens a glimpse of better times
You, O sacred art, I thank you for this.

Giorgos Seferis, ‘*Arnisi*’ (“*Αρνισή*”, from the collection *Στροφή*, 1931)

At the shoreline the secret one | and white like a dove | we thirsted at noon. | But the water was salty. || On the sand, golden-blond, | we wrote down her name. | Beautiful, the way the sea breeze exhaled, | and the writing was wiped out. || With what heart, with what breath, | what longings and what passion, | we seized our life—no, wrong! | —and we changed life.

Theophrastus *About the aetiologies of plants* 2.16.8

For almond trees, poor soil [is preferable], for if the soil is deep and rich, the trees experience an exuberance [*hubris*] because of all the good nutrition, and they stop bearing fruit [*a-karpeîn*].

Theophrastus *About the aetiologies of plants* 3.1.5

The white lupin [shrub] becomes *a-karpos* [= stops bearing *karpos*, ‘fruit’] when it gets wood-crazy, as it were, and behaves with exuberance [*hubris*].

Theophrastus *Research about plants* 2.7.7

In Arcadia they have an expression ‘straightening [*euthunein*] the sorbapple tree [*oa*]’. There are many such trees in their region. And they say that, when this [‘straightening’] happens to the trees, those that have not been bearing fruit will now start to bear fruit, and those that bear fruit that will not ripen [on the tree] will now have fruit that ripens, and ripens beautifully.

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