Solon fragment 4

Demosthenes *On the embassy* 254–256

λέγε δή μοι λαβὼν καὶ τὰ τοῦ Σόλωνος ἐλεγείᾳ ταυτί, ἵν’ ἵδηθ’ οτί καὶ Σόλων ἐμίσει τοὺς οἶνους οὗτος ἀνθρώπους.

οὐ λέγειν εἰσώ τὴν χεῖρ’ ἐχοντ’, Αἰσχίνη, δεῖ, οὖ, ἀλλὰ πρεσβεύειν εἰσώ τὴν χεῖρ’ ἐχοντα. σὺ δ’ ἐκεῖ προτείνας καὶ ὑποσχόμεν καὶ κατασχόν τοῦτος ἐνθάδε σεμνολογητεί, καὶ λογάρια δύστηνα μελετήσας καὶ φωνασκήσας οὐκ οἴει δίκην δώσειν τηλικούτων καὶ τοσούτων ἄδικην, κἂν πιλίδιον λαβὼν περί τὴν κεφαλὴν περινοστῇς καὶ ἦμοι λοιδορῆ; λέγε σύ. ΕΛΕΓΕΙΑ.

ημετέρη δὲ πόλις κατὰ μὲν Διὸς οὔποτ’ ὀλείται δήποτε σαρκομαχήν, καὶ μακάρων θεῶν φρένας ἀθανάτων·

τοῖς γὰρ μεγάθυμοις ἐπίσκοποις ὀβριμοπάτρη

Παλλὰς Ἀθηναῖ, ἂν ἄρα, οὔποτε σαρκομαχήν, καὶ μακάρων θεῶν φρένας ἀθανάτων

αὐτοὶ δὲ φθείρεῖν μεγάλην πόλιν ἀφραδῆςιν ἀστοὶ βούλονται, χρήμασι πειθόμενοι, δήμου θ’ ἡμερῶν ἁδίκοις νόσοις, οῖαν ἐτοίμοι

ὑβριος ἐκ μεγάλης ἀλγείας πολλὰ παθεῖν.

οὐ γὰρ ἐπίσταται κατέχειν κόρον, οὐδὲ παρούσας εὐφροσύνας κοσμεῖν, διατόμος ἐν ἱσχί

καὶ τὰς μεγάλας πόλεις παλαί παρεῖν

ἀλλὰ τὸ δεῖ 

πλούσιοι δ’ ἁδίκοις ἐργασίας πειθόμενοι.

...
 hackers: Solon

 δὴ στάσιν ἐμφύλιον πόλεμόν θ᾽ εὑδοντ᾽ ἐπεγείρει,
 ὅς πολλόν ἐρατὴν ἡλικίην ἀδικοῦσι φίλαις.
 ἐκ γὰρ δυσμενέων ταχέως πολυήρατον ἢστι
 τρύχεται ἐν συνόδοις τοῖς ἄδικοις φίλαις.
 ταῦτα μὲν ἐν δῆμῳ στρέφεται κακὰ τῶν ὅσῳν ἐπεγείρει,
 ὃς πολλῶν ἐρατὴν ὤλεσεν ἡλικίην.
 ἐκ γὰρ δυσμενέων ταχέως πολυήρατον ἄστυ
 τρύχεται ἐν συνόδοις τοῖς ἄδικοις φίλαις.
 ταῦτα μὲν ἐν δήμῳ στρέφεται κακὰ· τῶν δὲ πενιχρῶν
 ἱκνόυνται πολλοὶ ὡς ἀλλοδαπήν,
 ἐκατέκλεισοι δὲ δεσμοῖς τ᾽ ἀεικελίοισι δεθέντες.

 ὡδὴ δημόσιον κακὸν ἔρχεται οἴκαδ᾽ ἐκάστῳ,
 αὔλειοι δ᾽ ἐτ᾽ ἔχειν οὐκ ἐθέλουσι θύραι,
 ὑψηλὸν δ᾽ ὑπὲρ ἔρκος ὑπέρθορον, εὖρε δὲ πάντως,
 εἰ καὶ τὶς φεύγων ἐν μυχῷ ἢ θαλάμου.
 ταῦτα διδάσκαι θυμὸς Ἀθηναίους με κελεύει,
 ὡς κακὰ πλεῖστα πόλει δυσνομίη παρέχει,
 εὐνομίη δ᾽ εὔκοσμα και ἄρτια πάντ᾽ ἀποφαίνει,
 καὶ θαμά τοῖς ἀδίκοις ἀμφιτίθησι πέδας,
 τραχέα λειαίνει, παῦει κόρον, ὑβρίν ἀμαυροῖ,
 αὐαίνει δ᾽ ἄτης ἄνθεα φυόμενα,
 εὐθύνει δὲ δίκας σκολιάς, ὑπερήφανά τ᾽ ἔργα
 πραΰνει, παῦει δ᾽ ἔργα διχοστασίης,
 παῦει δ᾽ ἀργαλέης ἔριδος χόλον· ἔστι δ᾽ ὑπ᾽ αὐτῆς
 πάντα κατ᾽ ἀνθρώπους ἄρτια καὶ πινυτά.

 Solon

 ἀκούετ', ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, περὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἀνθρώπων οἷα Σόλων λέγει, καὶ περὶ τῶν
 θεῶν, οἳς φησὶ τὴν πόλιν σώζειν.

 Demosthenes On the embassy 254–256, trans. Vince & Vince 1926

 Now, please, take and read these elegiac verses of Solon, to show the jury how Solon
 detested people like the defendant.

 What we require, Aeschines, is not oratory with enfolded hands, but diplomacy with
 enfolded hands. But in Macedonia you held out your hands, turned them palm upwards, and
brought shame upon your countrymen, and then here at home you talk magniloquently; you
practise and declaim some miserable fustian, and think to escape the due penalty of your
heinous crimes, if you only don your little skull-cap, take your constitutional, and abuse me.
Now read.

Solon’s Elegiacs

Not by the doom of Zeus, who ruleth all,  
Not by the curse of Heaven shall Athens fall.  
Strong in her Sire, above the favored land  
Pallas Athene lifts her guardian hand.  
No; her own citizens with counsels vain  
Shall work her rain in their quest of gain;  
Dishonest demagogues her folk misguide,  
Foredoomed to suffer for their guilty pride.  
Their reckless greed, insatiate of delight,  
Knows not to taste the frugal feast aright;  
Th’ unbridled lust of gold, their only care,  
Nor public wealth nor wealth divine will spare.
Now here, now there, they raven, rob and seize,  
Heedless of Justice and her stern decrees,  
Who silently the present and the past  
Reviews, whose slow revenge o’ertakes at last.  
On every home the swift contagion falls,  
Till servitude a free-born race enthralls.
Now faction reigns now wakes the sword of strife,  
And comely youth shall pay its toll of life;  
We waste our strength in conflict with our kin,  
And soon our gates shall let the foeman in.  
Such woes the factious nation shall endure;  
A fate more hard awaits the hapless poor;  
For them, enslaved, bound with insulting chains,  
Captivity in alien lands remains.
To every hearth the public curse extends;
The courtyard gate no longer safety lends;
Death leaps the wall, nor shall he shun the doom
Who flies for safety to his inmost room.
Ye men of Athens, listen while I show
How many ills from lawless licence flow.
Respect for Law shall check your rising lust,
Humble the haughty, fetter the unjust,
Make the rough places plain, bid envy cease,
Wither infatuation’s fell increase,
Make crooked judgement straight, the works prevent
Of insolence and sullen discontent,
And quench the fires of strife. In Law we find
The wisdom and perfection of Mankind.

Solon

You have heard, men of Athens, what Solon says of men of such character, and of the gods who protect our city.

**Solon fragment 5**

*Aristotle Athenian Constitution 11–12*


ταῦτα δ ὅτι τούτων τὸν τρόπον ἐσχεν οί τ ἄλλοι συμφωνοῦσι πάντες, καὶ αὐτός ἐν τῇ ποιήσει μέμανηται περὶ αὐτῶν ἐν τοῖσδε·

δήμῳ μὲν γ]ρ ἐδωκα τόσον γέρας ὀδισσόν ἀπαρκεῖ,

τιμῆς οὔτ ἄφελων οὔτ ἐπορεφάμενος

οί δ ἐίχον δύναμιν καὶ χρήμασιν ἦσαν ἄγητοι,
καὶ τοῖς ἐφρασάμην μηδὲν ἀεικὲς ἔχειν.
ἔστην δ’ ἀμφιβαλῶν κρατερὸν σάκος ἀμφιτέροισι,
νικᾶν δ’ οὐκ εἶασ ϑετέρους ἀδίκως.

Aristotle Athenian Constitution 11–12, trans. Kenyon 1907

He, however, had resisted both classes. He might have made himself a despot by attaching himself to whichever party he chose, but he preferred, though at the cost of incurring the enmity of both, to save the country and establish the best laws that were possible.

The truth of this view of Solon’s policy is established alike by the common consent of all, and by the mention which he has himself made of the matter in his poems. Thus:—

I gave to the mass of the people such rank as befitted their need,
I took not away their honour, and I granted naught to their greed;
While those who were rich in power, who in wealth were glorious and great,
I bethought me that naught should befall them unworthy their splendour and state;
So I stood with my shield outstretched, and both were safe in its sight,
And I would not that either should triumph, when the triumph was not with right.

Solon fragment 36

Aristotle Athenian Constitution 12

[πάλιν] δὲ καὶ περὶ τῆς ἀρ[ο]πῆς τῶν χ[ρε]ῶν καὶ τῶν δουλευόντων μὲν πρότερον ἐλυθερωθέντων δὲ διὰ τὴν σεισάχθειαν·

ἐγὼ δὲ τῶν μὲν οὔνεκα ξ[υ]νήγαγον
dήμον, τί τούτων πρὶν τυχεῖν ἐπαυσάμην;

ςυμμαρτυροῖς ταῦτ ἄν ἐν δίκῃ χρόνου
μήτηρ μεγίστη δαίμονων Ὀλυμπίων ἀριστα, Γῆ μέλαινα, τῆς ἐγὼ ποτε ὅρους ἀνείλον πολλαχὴ πεπηγότα[ς],
πρόσθεν δὲ δουλεύουσα, νῦν ἐλευθέρα.
πολλοὺς δ᾽ Ἀθήνας. πατρίδι εἶδ θεόκτιτον,
ἀνήγαγον πραθέντας, ἄλλον ἐκδίκως,
ἄλλον δικαίως, τοὺς δὲ ἀναγκαίης ὑπὸ
χρειούς φυγόντας, γλώσσαν οὐκέτ Ἀττικὴν
ιέντας, ὡς ἂν πολλαχῇ πλανωμένους,

toὺς δὲ ἐνθάδ αὐτοῦ δουλίην ἀεικέα
ἔχοντας, ἡθῇ δεσποτῶν τρομευμέναις,
ἐλευθέροις ἔθηκα. ταύτα μὲν κράτει
νόμου, βιάν τε καὶ δίκην συναρμόσας,
ἐρέξα, καὶ διήλθον ὡς ὑπεσχὸς μὴν.

θεσμούς θ ὡς κακῷ τε κάγαθῳ,
eὐθείαν εἰς ἐκαστὸν ἁρμόσας δίκην,
ἐγραψα. κέντρον δὲ ἄλλος ὡς ἐγὼ λαβὼν,
[κ]ακοφραδῆς τε ἰαὶ φιλοκτήμων ἀνήρ,
οὐκ ἄν κατέσχε δήμον· εἰ γὰρ ἤθελον
ὁ τοῖς ἐναντίοις[ισι]ν ἠνδανεν τότε,
ἀὐθις δὲ τοῖσιν ὀὔτεροι φρασάιτο,

πολλῶν ἂν ἀνδρῶν ἢδ ἐχηρώθη πόλις.
τῶν οὐνεκ ἂλκην πάντοθεν ποιούμενος
ὡς ἂν κυσιν πολλαῖσιν ἔστράφην λύκος.

Aristotle Athenian Constitution 12, trans. Kenyon 1907

Once more he speaks of the abolition of debts and of those who before were in servitude,
but were released owing to the Seisachtheia:—
Wherefore I freed the racked and tortured crowd
From all the evils that beset their lot,
Thou, when slow time brings justice in its train,
O mighty mother of the Olympian gods,
Dark Earth, thou best canst witness, from whose breast
I swept the pillars broad-cast planted there.
And made thee free, who hadst been slave of yore.
And many a man whom fraud or law had sold
Far from his god-built land, an outcast slave,
I brought again to Athens; yea, and some,
Exiles from home through debt's oppressive load,
Speaking no more the dear Athenian tongue,
But wandering far and wide, I brought again;
And those that here in vilest slavery
Crouched 'neath a master's frown, I set them free.
Thus might and right were yoked in harmony,
Since by the force of law I won my ends
And kept my promise. Equal laws I gave
To evil and to good, with even hand
Drawing straight justice for the lot of each.
But had another held the goad as I,
One in whose heart was guile and greediness,
He had not kept the people back from strife.
For had I granted, now what pleased the one,
Then what their foes devised within their hearts,
Of many a man this state had been bereft.
Therefore I showed my might on every side,
Turning at bay like wolf among the hounds.