

Mesomedes 3: Hymn to Nemesis

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The meter is *apokrota*, $\varpi\text{---}\cup\text{---}\cup\text{---}\cup\text{---}\cup\text{---}$, mixed with paroemiacs, $\varpi\text{---}\cup\text{---}\cup\text{---}\cup\text{---}$ (4, 6, 9, 10, 13). The language has a superficial Doric coloring, mostly $\bar{\alpha}$ for η .

Νέμεσι πτερόεσσα βίου ῥοπά,
κυανῶπι θεά, θύγατερ Δίκας
ἄ κοῦφα ἰφρυάγματα ἑθνατῶν
ἐπέχεις ἀδάμαντι χαλινῶ,
5 ἔχθουσα δ' ὕβριν ὀλοᾶν βροτῶν
μέλανα φθόνον ἐκτός ἐλαύνεις.
ὑπὸ σὸν τροχὸν ἄστατον ἀστιβῆ
χαροπὰ μερόπων στρέφεται τύχα,

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¹νέμεσις εως ἢ voc. retribution; righteous anger, here a goddess. πτερόεις εσσα εν winged. βίος ὁ (mode of) life. ῥοπή ἢ turn of the scale, weight; decision, outcome, influence; decisive moment.

²κυανῶπις ιδος ἢ voc. dark-eyed. θυγάτηρ τρός ἢ voc. daughter. δίκη ἢ gen.sg. custom; right, justice; judgement.

³ἄ = ἦ. κοῦφος η ον light, nimble; vain. φρυάγμα τό snorting, whinnying of a horse; metaph. insolence. θνητός ἢ ὄν mortal, as noun, mortal person.

⁴ἐπ-έχω hold out; keep in check. ἀδάμας αντος ὁ unconquerable (< ἄ- + δαμάω), adamant; diamond. χαλινός ὁ (pl. τὰ χαλινά) bit.

⁵ἔχθω hate. ὕβρις εως ἢ wantonness, insolence, violence; lust; outrage. The meter is a bit loose here — the final syllable of ὕβριν needs to scan long. ὀλοός ἢ ὄν acc.sg.f. destructive, deadly. βροτός ὁ mortal, human.

⁶μέλας μέλαινα μέλαν acc.sg.m. black; dark. φθόνος ὁ ill-will, envy, jealousy. ἐκτός outside, out(ward). ἐλαύνω drive, march; so ἐκτός ἐλαύνω “drive out.”

⁷ὑπό + acc. under. τροχός ὁ wheel, here a wheel of torture. ἄστατος ον never standing still, unresting. ἀστιβής ἐς untrdden; not to be stepped on, holy; leaving no track.

⁸χαροπός ἢ ὄν nom.sg.f. grim?, fierce?; blue-grey, grey; the meaning of this word is uncertain. μέροψ οπος ὁ articulate, a poetic word used only of humans. στρέφω cause to rotate, turn; mid. turn (oneself). τύχη ἢ luck, success; chance, fortune.

- λήθουσα δὲ πὰρ πόδα βαίνεις,
 10 γαυρούμενον αὐχένα κλίνεις.
 ὑπὸ πῆχυν αἰεὶ βίοτον μετρεῖς,
 νεύεις δ' ἱὺπὸ κόλπον ὄφρῦν αἰεῖ†
 ζυγὸν μετὰ χεῖρα κρατοῦσα.
 ἴλαθι μάκαιρα δικασπόλε
 15 Νέμεσι πτερόεσσα βίου ῥοπά.

- Νέμεσιν θεὸν ἄδομεν ἄφθιτον,
 Νίκην τανυσίπτερον ὄμβρίμαν
 νημερτέα καὶ πάρεδρον Δίκας,
 ἃ τὰν μεγαλανορίαν βροτῶν
 20 νεμεσῶσα φέρεις κατὰ Ταρτάρου.

¹² αἰεῖ Heitsch κάτω Bellermann.

⁹ λανθάνω λήσω ἔλαθον pres.act.part. nom.sg.f. *escape, avoid or elude attention or notice*; here using an alternate pres. stem, λήθω. πὰρ = παρά. πούς ποδός ὁ *foot*; here an idiom, πὰρ πόδα, “in a moment, close behind.”

¹⁰ γαυρόω *make proud*; mid. *be proud, exult*. αὐχὴν ἑνός ὁ *neck, throat*. κλίνω (τι) κλινῶ ἔκλινα *cause to lean, slant; turn aside*.

¹¹ πῆχυς εὖς ὁ *forearm; cubit*. βίος ὁ *life; duration of one's life; means of living*. μετρέω *measure; count, measure out*.

¹² νεύω *incline; nod, nod assent*. κόλπος ὁ *lap, bosom; fold of a garment*. ὄφρῦς ὕος ἡ *eyebrow, brow*; with νεύω often to nod as a sign. Something is not quite right with the text of this line. It appears to mean “nod with furrowed brow” or perhaps “frown down to the lap,” whatever that means exactly.

¹³ ζυγὸν τό *yoke*. χεῖρ χειρός ἡ *hand; arm*; idiom μετὰ χεῖρα “in the hand.” κρατέω *be strong; rule over; seize, hold fast*.

¹⁴ ἴληθι *be gracious* (only this verb form exists, 2sg.imper.). μάκαιρα ἡ *blessed, happy, epith. of the gods*. δικασπόλος ὁ, ἡ *voc. judge, one who gives law*.

¹⁶ θεός ὁ, ἡ *god, goddess*. αἰίδω, ἄδω *to sing, to hymn*. ἄφθιτος ὄν *imperishable, undecaying*.

¹⁷ νίκη ἡ (τι) *victory*. τανυσίπτερος ὄν *long-winged, with long wings*. ὄμβριμος = ὄβριμος (α) ὄν *strong, mighty*.

¹⁸ νημερτής ἐς *unerring, infallible*. πάρεδρος ὄν *sitting beside*; as noun *assessor, co-judge*. δίκη ἡ *right, justice*.

¹⁹ ἄ = ἦ. τάν = τήν. μεγαληνορία ἡ *self-confidence; haughtiness*.

²⁰ νεμεσῶ *feel just anger at + acc. of the cause*. The implied object of φέρεις is βροτούς. κατὰ + gen. *down from; down upon, down into*. Τάρταρος ὁ *Tartarus, the underworld*.