

HYMN II. TO APOLLO

(TRANSLATED BY A. W. MAIR)

[1] How the laurel branch of Apollo trembles! How trembles all the shrine! Away, away, he that is sinful! Now surely Phoebus knocketh at the door with his beautiful foot. See'st thou not? The Delian palm¹ nods pleasantly of a sudden and the swan² in the air sings sweetly. Of yourselves now ye bolts be pushed back, pushed back of yourselves, ye bars! The god is no longer far away. And ye, young men, prepare ye for song and for the dance.

[9] Not unto everyone doth Apollo appear, but unto him that is good. Whoso hath seen Apollo, he is great; whoso hath not seen him, he is of low estate. We shall see thee, O Archer, and we shall never be lowly. Let no the youths keep silent lyre or noiseless step, when Apollo visits³ his shrine, if they think to accomplish marriage and to cut the locks of age,⁴ and if the wall is to stand upon its old foundations. Well done the youths, for that the shell⁵ is no longer idle.

[17] Be hushed, ye that hear, at the song to Apollo; yea, hushed is even the sea when the minstrels celebrate the lyre or the bow, the weapons of Lycoreian Phoebus.⁶ Neither doth Thetis his mother wail her dirge for Achilles, when she hears *Hië⁷ Paeëon, Hië Paeëon*.

[22] Yea, the tearful rock defers its pain, the wet stone is set in Phrygia, a marble rock like a woman⁸ open-mouthed in some sorrowful utterance. Say ye *Hië! Hië!* an ill thing it is strive with the Blessed Ones. He who fights with the Blessed Ones would fight with my King⁹; he who fights with my King, would fight even with Apollo. Apollo will honour the choir, since it sings according to his heart; for Apollo hath power, for that he sitteth on the right hand of Zeus. Nor will the choir sing of Phoebus for one day only. He is a copious theme of song; who would not readily sing of Phoebus?

[32] Golden is the tunic of Apollo and golden his mantle, his lyre and his Lyctian¹⁰ bow and his quiver: golden too are his sandals; for rich in gold is Apollo, rich also in possessions: by Pytho mightst thou guess. And ever beautiful is he and ever young: never on the girl cheeks of Apollo hath come so much as the down of manhood. His locks distil fragrant oils upon the ground; not oil of fat do the locks of Apollo distil but he very Healing of All.¹¹ And in whatsoever city whose dew falls upon the ground, in that city all things are free from harm.

[42] None is so abundant in skill as Apollo. To him belongs the archer, to him the minstrel; for unto Apollo is given in keeping alike archery and song. His are the lots of the diviner and his the seers; and from Phoebus do leeches know the deferring of death.

[47] Phoebus and Nomius¹² we call him, ever since that when by Amphrysus¹³ he tended the yokemares, fired with love of young Admetus.¹⁴ Lightly would the herd of cattle wax larger, nor would the she-goats of the flock lack young, whereon as they feed Apollo casts his eye; nor without milk would the ewes be nor barren, but all would have lambs at foot; and she that bare one would soon be the mother of twins.

[55] And Phoebus it is that men follow when they map out cities.¹⁵ For Phoebus himself doth weave their foundations. Four years of age was Phoebus when he framed his first foundations in fair Ortygia¹⁶ near the round lake.¹⁷

[60] Artemis hunted and brought continually the heads of Cynthian goats and Phoebus plaited an altar.¹⁸ With horns builded he the foundations, and of horns framed he the altar, and of horns were the walls he built around. Thus did Phoebus learn to raise his first foundations.

Phoebus, too, it was told Battus¹⁹ of my own city of fertile soil, and in guise of a raven²⁰ – auspicious to our founder – led his people as they entered Libya and swore that he would vouchsafe a walled city to our kings.²¹ And the oath of Apollo is ever sure. O Apollo! Many there be that call thee Boëdromius,²² and many there be that call thee Clarius²³: everywhere is thy name on the lips of many. But I call thee Carneius²⁴; for such is the manner of my fathers. Sparta, O Carneius! was they first foundation; and next Thera; but third the city of Cyrene. From Sparta the sixth²⁵ generation of the sons of Oedipus brought thee to their colony of Thera; and from Thera lusty Aristoteles²⁶ set thee by the Asbystian²⁷ land, and builded thee a shrine exceedingly beautiful, and in the city established a yearly festival wherein many a bull, O Lord, falls on his haunches for the last time. *Hië, Hië, Carneius!* Lord of many prayers, - thine altars wear flowers in spring, even all the pied flowers which the Hours lead forth when Zephyrus breathes dew, and in winter the sweet crocus. Undying evermore is thy fire, nor ever doth the ash feed about the coals of yester-even. Greatly, indeed, did Phoebus rejoice as the belted warriors of Enyo danced with the yellow-haired Libyan women, when the appointed season of the Carnean feast came round. But not yet could the Dorians approach the fountains of Cyre,²⁸ but dwelt in Azilis²⁹ thick with wooded dells. These did the Lord himself behold and showed them to his bride³⁰ as he stood on horned Myrtussa³¹ where the daughter of Hypseus slew the lion that harried the kind of Eurypylus.³² No other dance more divine hath Apollo beheld, nor to any city hath he given so many blessings as he hath given to Cyrene, remembering his rape of old. Nor, again, is there any other god whom the sons of Battus have honoured above Phoebus.

[97] *Hië, Hië, Paeëon*, we hear – since this refrain did the Delphian folk first invent, what time thou didst display the archery of thy golden bow. As thou wert going down to Pytho, there met thee a beast unearthly, a dread snake.³³ And him thou didst slay, shooting swift arrows one upon the other; and the folk cried “*Hië, Hië, Paeëon*, shoot an arrow!” A helper³⁴ from the first thy mother bare thee, and ever since that is thy praise.

[105] Spare Envy privily in the ear of Apollo: “I admire not the poet who singeth not things for number as the sea.”³⁵ Apollon spurned Envy with his foot and spake thus: “Great is the stream of the Assyrian river,³⁶ but much filth of earth and much refuse it carries on its waters. And not of every water do the Melissae carry to Deo,³⁷ but of the trickling stream that springs from a holy fountain, pure and undefiled, the very crown of waters.” Hail, O Lord, but Blame – let him go where Envy dwells!

1. The palm-tree by which Leto supported herself when she bare Apollo. Cf. *H. Delos* 210, Hom. *H. Apoll.* 117, Od. vi. 162 f. Theogn. 5 f. The laurel and the palm are coupled in Euripides, *Hecuba*, 458 ff.

2. For the association of the swan with Apollo cf. *Hymn to Delos* 249; Plato, *Phaedo*, 85; Manilius v. 381 “ipse Deum Cygnus condit.”

3. The schol. on v. 12 remarks that Callimachus emphasizes the presence of the God because “it is said in the case of prophetic gods that the deities are sometimes present (*epidêmein*), sometimes absent (*apodêmein*), and when they are present the oracles are true, when absent false.” Cf. Pind. *P.* iv. 5 *ouk apodamou Apollónos tuchontos*. The Delphians celebrated the seventh day of the month Bysios – the birthday of Apollo – when he was supposed to revisit his temple, and the seventh of the holy month (Attic Anthesterion) was celebrated by the Delians when Apollo was supposed to return to Delos from the land of the Hyperboreans. (W. Schmidt, *Geburstag im Altertum*, p. 86.) Cf. Verg. *A.* iii. 91.

4. *i.e.* if they are to live to an old age.

5. *i.e.* the lyre, originally made by Hermes from the shell of a tortoise. *égasamên* = Well done!
6. Lycoreus, by-name of Apollo, from Lycoreia, town on Parnassus above Delphi: Strabo 418. *3 hyperkeitai d' autês hê Lukôreia eph' topou proteron hidrunto hoi Delphoi hyper tou hierou.* Legends of its foundation in Pausanias x. 6, 2-3. *Ph. Lukôreioio* Apoll. Rh. iv. 1490.
7. Though *iê*, not *hiê*, is the usual form, it is perhaps better here to write the aspirated form to suit the suggested etymology from *hieî* "shoot." See vv. 97-104 for the legend.
8. Niobe, daughter of Tantalus, had, according to Hom. *Il.* xxiv. 602 ff. six sons and six daughters, who were slain by Apollo and Artemis respectively, because she boasted over their mother Leto, who had but two children. Niobe was turned into a stone, and this was identified with a rude rock figure on Mount Sipylus near Smyrna which is still to be seen. The water running down the face of the rock was supposed to be Niobe's tears – *entha lithos per eousa theôn ek kêdea pessei*, Hom. *l.c.* 617, *cf.* "Phrygium silicem," Stat. *S.* v. 3. 87.
9. Ptolemy III. Euergetes, according to the schol.
10. Lyctos, town in Crete.
11. As a personification Panacea appears frequently as the daughter of Asclepius. In the Hippocratean oath she is named after Apollo, Asclepius and Hygieie. Such "all-healing" virtue was in early times ascribed to various plants (*Panakes Cheirônion, Aslêpieion*, etc.).
12. *Cf.* Pind. ix. 65.
13. River in Thessaly where Apollo tended the flocks of Admetus. *Cf.* Verg. *G.* iii.2 "pastor ab Amphryso."
14. King of Pherae in Thessaly.
15. Hence Apollo's titles *Archêgetês, Ktistês*, etc.
16. Delos.
17. A lake in Delos. *Cf.* *H.* iv. 261, Theognis vii, Apollo is born *epi trochoeidei limnê*, and Eur. *I.T.* 1104.
18. The *keratin* (Plut. *Thes.* 21, Dittenb. *Syll.* No. 588, 172) *bômos keratinos* (Plut. *Sollert. animal.* 35), made entirely of horns, was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. *Cf.* Anon. *De incredib.* 2; Ovid, *Her.* 21. 99.
19. Battus (Aristoteles), founder of Cyrene, birthplace of Callimachus.
20. The raven was one of the birds sacred to Apollo.
21. The Battiadae.
22. Boëdromius: *Et. Mag. s.v. Boëdromiôn. Hoti polemou sustantos Athênaióis kai Eleusinióis summachêsantos Iónos . . enikêsan Athênaiói. apo oun tês tou strateumatós boês tês epi to astru dramousês ho te Apollôn boëdromios eklêthê kai hê thuria kai ho autois ho theos meta boês epithesthai tois polemiois.* Doubtless the Athenians associated the name with help given them by some superhuman champions (*boëdromoi = boadooi*, Pind, *N.* vii. 31). Mommsen, *Feste d. Stadt Athen*, p. 171.
23. Clarius, by-name of Apollo, from Claros near Colophon.
24. Carneius, by-name of Apollo in many Dorian states, as Sparta, Thera, Cyrene.
25. The genealogy is Oedipus – Polyneices – Thersander – Tisamenus – Autesion – Theras, who led the colony to Thera and who is the sixth descendant of Oedipus according to the Greek way of reckoning inclusively. *Cf.* Herod. iv. 147.
26. Battus.
27. The Asbystae were a people in Cyrenaica.
28. Cyre: stream at Cyrene which after running some distance under ground reappears at the Temple of Apollo as the fountain of Apollo (Herod. iv. 158, Pind. *P.* iv. 294).
29. Azilis or Aziris where the Theraeans with Battus dwelt for six years before they went to Cyrene (Herod. iv. 157 ff.).
30. Cyrene.

31. *i.e.* “Myrtle-hill” in Cyrene.
32. Eurypylus: prehistoric king of Libya, who offered his kingdom to anyone who should slay the lion which was ravaging his land. Cyrene slew the lion and so won the kingdom (Acesandros of Cyrene in schol. Apoll. Rh. ii. 498).
33. In Strabo 422 Python is a man, surnamed Draco. Python was popularly derived from the fact that the slain snake rotted (*puthō*) there.
34. Callimachus seems to adopt the old derivation of *aossētēr* from *ossa* (voice). Thus *aossētēr* = *boëthoos*. For *ezeti* cf. *H.* iv. 275.
35. Cf. Apoll. Rhod. iii. 932.
36. Euphrates.
37. Deo = Demeter, whose priestesses were called Melissae (Bees): Porphyry. *De antro nympharum* 18 *kai tas Dêmêtros hiereias hōs tēs chthonias theas mustidas Melissas oi Palaioi ekaloun autên te tēn Korēn Melitôdē* (Theocr. xv. 94).