

*Hymn To Nemesis By Mesomedes Of Crete by Petros Tabouris*

In addition to his great provincial travels and skills of leadership, Hadrian was a great patron of the arts. He was considered an expert in many fields such as arithmetic, geometry, architecture, painting, poetry and music. Hadrian surrounded himself with men of genius: the poet and satirist Juvenal, the philosophers Epictetus and Heliodorus, the historians Tacitus, Suetonius and Arrian and writers Pliny the Younger, Pausanias and Plutarch but also Mesomedes, a Greek lyric poet and composer.

Mesomedes, of Cretan birth, was a freedman and court poet of Hadrian. He wrote *paens* glorifying his patron and his policies, such as the “Hymn to Nemesis”. The hymn is one of four which preserve the ancient musical notation written over the text; the other three are “Hymn to the Muse”, “Hymn to the Sun”, “Invocation of Calliope and Apollo”. A total of fifteen poems by Mesomedes are known. They were preserved through Alexandrian and later Byzantine sources.

Here is a translation by D. Yeld reprinted in Michael B. Hornum, *Nemesis, the Roman State & the Games* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993), p. 116:

Winged Nemesis, turner of the scales of life, blue-eyed goddess, daughter of justice, who with your unbending bridle, dominate the vain arrogance of men and, loathing man’s fatal vanity, obliterate black envy; beneath your wheel unstable and leaving no imprint, the fate of men is tossed; you who come unnoticed, in an instant, to subdue the insolent head. You measure life with your hand, and with frowning brows, hold the yoke. Hail, blest immortal goddess, winged Nemesis, turning the scales of life, imperishable and holy goddess Nemesis; Victory of unfurled wings, powerful, infallible, who shares the altar of

justice and, furious at human pride, casts man into the  
abyss of Tartarus.

Enjoy! 🎵

Related post: [Music for Hadrian \(part two\)](#)

Links and further reading:

- [Wikipedia](#)
- [Find A Grave](#)

Share this:

- [Click to share on Facebook \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on Twitter \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on Pinterest \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on Tumblr \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on Reddit \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on LinkedIn \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [Click to share on WhatsApp \(Opens in new window\)](#)
- [More](#)