

Emerald with Gold: Polycrates' Ring in Asclepiades AP 12.163

<p>1. <u>Asclepiades AP 12.163</u> εὔρεν Ἔρωσ τί καλῶ μεῖζαι καλόν, οὐχί μάραγδον χρυσῶ, †δὲ μήτ' ἀνθεῖ, μήτε γένοιτ' ἐν ἴσῳ, † οὐδ' ἐλέφαντ' ἐβένω, λευκῶ μέλαν, ἀλλὰ Κλέανδρον Εὐβιότῳ, πειθοῦς ἄνθεα καὶ φιλίης.</p>	<p>Love has discovered what beauty to mix with beauty; not emerald with gold, which neither sparkles nor could ever be its equal, nor ivory with ebony, black with white, but Cleandrus with Eubiotus, the blossoms of persuasion and friendship.</p>
<p>2. <u>Posidippus AB 9</u> ἡρή[ς]ω σφρηγ[ί]δα], Πολύκρατες, ἀνδρὸς ἀοιδοῦ τοῦ φο[ρ]μίζ[οντος σοῖς] παρὰ π[ρο]σ[θ]ε[ν]νί λύρηεν κρ[υ]σταλλ[ο]ῦ. αὐγ[α]ῖς ἐξ[ε]χέ δὲ σὴ χεῖρ]εκρ[υ]σταλλ[ο]ῦ. ν[ο]ν κτέανον</p>	<p>[You chose] as your seal, Polycrates, the lyre of the bard [who pl]ayed [at your] feet. [It has a light with golden] rays; and yours was the hand that held [this gemstone, a most famous] possession. Trans. C. Austin and G. Bastianini</p>
<p>3. <u>Herodotus, Histories, 3.40-41</u> 40. Καὶ κως τὸν Ἄμασιν εὐτυχέων μεγάλως ὁ Πολυκράτης οὐκ ἐλάνθανε, ἀλλὰ οἱ τοῦτ' ἦν ἐπιμελές. πολλῶ δὲ ἔτι πλεῦνός οἱ εὐτυχίης γινομένης γράψας ἐς βυβλίον τάδε ἐπέστειλε ἐς Σάμον. “Ἄμασις Πολυκράτει ὧδε λέγει. ἡδὺ μὲν πυνθάνεσθαι ἄνδρα φίλον καὶ ξεῖνον εὔ πρήσσοντα· ἐμοὶ δὲ αἱ σαὶ μεγάλα εὐτυχία οὐκ ἀρέσκουσι, τὸ θεῖον ἐπισταμένῳ ὡς ἔστι φθονερόν· καὶ κως βούλομαι καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ τῶν ἄν κήδωμαι τὸ μὲν τι εὐτυχέειν τῶν πρηγμάτων τὸ δὲ προσπταίειν, καὶ οὕτω διαφέρειν τὸν αἰῶνα ἐναλλάξ πρήσσων ἢ εὐτυχέειν τὰ πάντα. οὐδένα γάρ κω λόγῳ οἶδα ἀκούσας ὅστις ἐς τέλος οὐ κακῶς ἐτελεύτησε πρόρριζος, εὐτυχέων τὰ πάντα. σύ νυν ἐμοὶ πειθόμενος ποιήσον πρὸς τὰς εὐτυχίας τοιάδε· φροντίσας τὸ ἄν εὐρύης ἐόν τοι πλείστου ἄξιον καὶ ἐπ' ὧ σὺ ἀπολομένῳ μάλιστα τὴν ψυχὴν ἀλγήσεις, τοῦτο ἀπόβαλε οὕτω ὅκως μηκέτι ἦξει ἐς ἀνθρώπους· ἦν τε μὴ ἐναλλάξ ἦδη τῶπὸ τούτου αἱ εὐτυχία τοι τῆσι πάθησι προσπίπτωσι, τρόπῳ τῷ ἐξ ἐμεῦ ὑποκειμένῳ ἀκέο.” 41. Ταῦτα ἐπιλεξάμενος ὁ Πολυκράτης καὶ νόψ λαβὼν ὡς οἱ εὔ ὑπετίθετο Ἄμασις, ἐδίξητο ἐπ' ὧ ἄν μάλιστα τὴν ψυχὴν ἀσηθείη ἀπολομένῳ τῶν κειμηλίων, διζήμενος δὲ εὗρισκε τόδε. ἦν οἱ σφρηγίς τὴν ἐφόρει χρυσόδετος, σμαράγδου μὲν λίθου</p>	<p>Now Amasis was in some wise aware and took good heed of Polycrates' great good fortune; and this continuing to increase greatly, he wrote this letter and sent it to Samos: “From Amasis to Polycrates, these. It is pleasant to learn of the well-being of a friend and ally. But I like not these great successes of yours; for I know how jealous are the gods; and I do in some sort desire for myself and my friends a mingling of prosperity and mishap, and a life of weal and woe thus chequered, rather than unbroken good fortune. For from all I have heard I know of no man whom continual good fortune did not bring in the end to evil, and utter destruction. Therefore if you will be ruled by me do this in the face of your successes: consider what you deem most precious and what you will most grieve to lose, and cast it away so that it shall never again be seen among men; then, if after this the successes that come to you be not chequered by mishaps, strive to mend the matter as I have counselled you.” Reading this, and perceiving that Amasis' advice was good, Polycrates considered which of his treasures it would most afflict his soul to lose, and to this conclusion he came: he wore a seal set in gold, an emerald, wrought by Theodorus son of Telecles of Samos; being resolved to cast this away, he embarked in a fifty-oared ship with its crew, and</p>

ἐοὔσα, ἔργον δὲ ἦν Θεοδώρου τοῦ Τηλεκλέος
Σαμίου. ἐπεὶ ὦν ταύτην οἱ ἐδόκεε ἀποβαλεῖν, ἐποίηε
τοιάδε· πεντηκόντερον πληρώσας ἀνδρῶν ἐσέβη ἐς
αὐτήν, μετὰ δὲ ἀναγαγεῖν ἐκέλευε ἐς τὸ πέλαγος· ὡς
δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς νήσου ἐκάς ἐγένετο, περιελόμενος τὴν
σφρηγίδα πάντων ὀρώντων τῶν συμπλόων ῥίπτει ἐς
τὸ πέλαγος. τοῦτο δὲ ποιήσας ἀπέπλεε, ἀπικόμενος
δὲ ἐς τὰ οἰκία συμφορῇ ἐχρᾶτο.

bade them put out to sea; and when he was far from
the island, he took off the seal-ring in sight of all that
were in the ship and cast it into the sea. This done, he
sailed back and went to his house, where he grieved
for the loss.

Trans. A. D. Godley

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