

Three Empedoclean Compounds and Empedocles' Evergreen Authority

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abstract: <https://camws.org/sites/default/files/meeting2020/abstracts/2341ThreeEmpedocleanCompounds.pdf>

Three Empedoclean compound words: i) **λιπόξυλος** (“lacking in wood”), ii) **ἐμπεδόκαρπος** (“constant-fruited”), iii) **ἐμπεδόφυλλος** (“constant-leafed”)

The broader debate: technomorphic v. **phytomorphic** (cosmology, psychology, authority, etc.)

1. Empedocles fr. 6 (D-K) = D57 (Laks-Most) = 7 W (Wright)

τέσσαρα γὰρ πάντων **ρίζωματα** πρῶτον ἄκουε· For hear first the four **roots** of all things:
Ζεὺς ἀργῆς Ἥρη τε φερέσβιος ἠδ' Αἰδωνεύς Bright Zeus and lifebearing Hera and Aidoneus
Νῆστις θ', ἣ δακρύοις τέγγει κρούνομα βρότειον. And Nestis, who with tears wets the mortal spring.¹

2. Emp. fr. 117 = D13 = 108 W

ἤδη γὰρ ποτ' ἐγὼ γενόμεν κοῦρός τε κόρη τε For before now I have been boy and girl,
θάμνος τ' οἰωνός τε καὶ ἔξαλος ἔλλοπος ἰχθύς. **bush**, bird, and a mute fish in the sea.

3. Emp. fr. 110.1–5 = D257 = 100 W

εἰ γὰρ καὶ σφ' ἀδινῆσιν ὑπὸ πραπίδεςσιν ἐρείσας For if, having pushed them under dense organs of thought,
εὐμενέως καθαρῆσιν ἐποπτεύσεις μελέτησιν, with pure cares you gaze upon them benevolently,
ταῦτά τε σοι μάλα πάντα δι' αἰῶνος παρέσσονται, they will be present to you throughout your lifetime
ἄλλα τε πόλλ' ἀπὸ τῶνδε κτήσεται· αὐτὰ γὰρ αὐξέαι and many other good things will come to you from them:
ταῦτ' εἰς ἑῶς ἕκαστον, ὅπη φύσις ἐστὶν ἐκάστω. for these themselves grow into each character, according to each
person's nature.

λιπόξυλος

4. Emp. fr. 21 = D77a = 14 W

ἀλλ' ἄγε, τῶνδ' ὄρων προτέρων ἐπιμάρτυρα δέρκευ,
εἴ τι καὶ ἐν προτέροισι **λιπόξυλον** ἐπλετο μορφῆ,
ἠέλιον μὲν λευκὸν ὄραν καὶ θερμὸν ἀπάντη,
ἄμβροτα δ' ὅσ' ἴδει τε καὶ ἀργέτι δεύεται ἀγῆ,
ὄμβρον δ' ἐν πᾶσι δνοφόεντά τε ῥιγαλέον τε· 5
ἐκ δ' αἴης προρούουσι θέλυμνά τε καὶ στερεωπά·
ἐν δὲ Κότῳ διάμορφα καὶ ἀνδιχα πάντα πέλονται,
σὺν δ' ἔβη ἐν Φιλότῃ καὶ ἀλλήλοισι ποθεῖται.
ἐκ τούτων γὰρ πάνθ' ὅσα τ' ἦν ὅσα τ' ἔστι καὶ ἔσται,
δένδρεά τ' ἐβλάστησε καὶ ἀνέρες ἠδὲ γυναῖκες, 10
θηρῆς τ' οἰωνοί τε καὶ ὕδατοθρέμμονες ἰχθύς,
καὶ τε θεοὶ δολιχαίωνες τιμῆσι φέριστοι.

But come, consider further witnesses to those earlier statements,
if anything in what came earlier was **lacking-in-wood** with respect to its form,
the sun, warm to see and shining everywhere,
all the immortal things that are moistened with heat and a bright gleam,
and rain in all things both dark and icy: 5
and from the ground flow forth foundations and solid things.
Under Hatred, all things are divided in form and are separated,
while under Love they come together and desire each other.
For it is out of these that all things come that were, all that are and that will be,
And trees sprouted and men and women, 10

¹ Translations from Laks-Most, modified.

Wild beasts and birds, water-nourished fish,
And long-lived gods, the greatest in honors.
5. Emp. fr. 71 = D61 = 60 W

εἰ δέ τί σοι περὶ τῶνδε **λιπόξυλος** ἔπλετο πίστις,
πῶς ὕδατος γαίης τε καὶ αἰθέρος ἡελίου τε
κιρνομένων εἶδη τε γενοῖατο χροῖά τε θνητῶν
τόσσ' ὅσα νῦν γεγάασι συναρμοσθέντ' Ἀφροδίτη

If for you the proof is at all lacking-in-wood regarding these things,
how from water, earth and aether and sun
mixed together, the forms and colors of mortal things come about,
so many as have now come to be, joined together by Aphrodite

6. Pindar fr. 241, apud Athen. 1.24b, 6.248c

ποτίκολλον ἄτε ξύλον παρὰ ξύλω

like wood attached to wood

7. LSJ s.v. ξύλον : “wood cut and ready for use, *firewood, timber*, etc. . . . hence anything made of wood”

8. Emp. fr. 81 = D256 = 67 W (apud Plut. *Quaest. nat.* 2, 912c, Arist. *Top.* 4, 127a)

οἶνος ἀπὸ φλοιοῦ πέλεται σαπὲν ἐν ξύλω ὕδωρ

wine is water from the bark, rotted in wood

Wright (1981) ad loc.: “In wine making, after the pressing, the juice and the skins of the grapes are put into wooden casks or vats (which is surely the meaning of ἐν ξύλω, for ξύλον is wood cut and put to some use)”

9. Eur. *Cyc.* 572: παπαῖ, σοφὸν γε τὸ ξύλον τῆς ἀμπέλου Hoo-wee, the wood of the vine is wise indeed

πίστις οὐ λιπόξυλος

“son inscription dans le poème d’Empédocle en tant que phénomène organique.” Iribarren (2006) 64

“Empedocles’ *logos* seems to grow.” Trépanier (2004) 176

ἐμπεδό-rhytic

10. Theophrastus *CP* 1.13.2 (trans. Einarson and Link, modified)

And supposing our own trees favoured by uninterrupted mildness in the air, perhaps even what the poets say would not sound unreasonable, nor how Empedocles says that “[trees] evergreen and constant-fruiting (**ἀείφυλλα καὶ ἐμπεδόκαρπα**) bloom with liberality of fruits all year as a result of the air” (θάλλειν καρπῶν ἀφθονίησι κατ’ ἡέρα πάντ’ ἐνιαυτόν), when he supposes a certain vernal tempering of qualities in the air common to all seasons.

11. Plutarch, *Mor.* 649c

ever-blossoming (ἀειθαλὲς) and, as Empedocles says, ‘constant-leafed’ (ὥς φησιν Ἐμπεδοκλῆς **ἐμπεδόφυλλον**).

12. Emp. fr. 77, 78 = 64 W (cf. D 251, 252)

<δένδρεα δ’> ἐμπεδόφυλλα καὶ ἐμπεδόκαρπα τέθηλεν
καρπῶν ἀφθονίησι κατ’ ἡέρα πάντ’ ἐνιαυτόν.

Trees constant-leafed and constant-fruited bloom
with liberality of fruits all year as a result of the air.

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