

<http://hallofpeople.com/en/bio/Palamas.php>

Kostis Palamas

Ancient Eternal And Immortal Spirit

(Lyrics of the Olympic Anthem)

Immortal spirit of antiquity,
Father of the true, beautiful and good,
Descend, appear, shed over us thy light
Upon this ground and under this sky
Which has first witnessed thy unperishable fame.
Give life and animation to those noble games!
Throw wreaths of fadeless flowers to the victors
In the race and in strife!
Create in our breasts, hearts of steel!
Shine in a roseate hue and form a vast temple
To which all nations throng to adore thee.

MOTIONLESS LIFE

And for the temple I struggled to create
a statue on this rock: my body,
to place it naked, and to spend my life
to spend my life and never die

and I created it. And people, latest worshipers
before the wooden statues badly dressed
felt the thrill of anger and fear's shiver
and saw the statue and I as combatants.

And they thrashed the statue and sent me to exile.
And to the foreign lands I led my steps
yet before it I offered a strange sacrifice
I dug a hole and deep into it I buried my statue.

And I whispered to it: "unseen spend your days
along with the roots and ancient ruins,
until your time comes, invincible flower that you are
even temple longs to dress your godly nakedness!"

And with his wide open mouth and voice of a prophet
the hole spoke: "No temple, nor depth, nor light, alas.
For here, for there, nowhere your flower, oh, master craftsman!
Let it for ever vanish in the un-rummaged hole.

It may never have its time! Yet if it appears
let the temple shine filled by the people's statues
immaculate the statues and the all-great sculptors
come back, a phantasm, during the night of the tombs!

Today's day came early, tomorrow's will be late
the dream won't rescue you, the dawn you wish will never come
with the longing of immortality you can't reach, stay,
a hunter of the cloud, Praxiteles of the shadow.

The present and tomorrow's things, snares and seas, all
tools of your drowning and tricky visions
farther from your glory, single violet in the garden
and you will wither, you better learn, and you will die."

And I answered: "Let me wither and let me die!
Creator I also am with my mind and all my heart
let the tomb consume my flesh, perhaps my fast passing
through worthy is more than all the immortal."

Translation Manolis Aligizakis

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