



Anacreon  
The Fragments

DELPHI  CLASSICS

Ancient Classics Series

*The Fragments of*

**ANACREON**

(c. 575-c. 495 BC)



**Contents**

*The Translations*

Fragments of Anacreon (1924)

Anacreontea (Moore translation, 1800)

Anacreontea (Bourne translation, 1844)

Anacreontea (Edmonds translation, 1931)

*The Greek Texts*

List of Greek Texts

*The Biography*

Life of Anacreon (1924) by J. M. Edmonds

*The Delphi Classics Catalogue*



© *Delphi Classics* 2024

Version 1

*The Fragments of*  
**ANACREON OF TEOS**



*By Delphi Classics, 2024*

# COPYRIGHT

## *The Fragments of Anacreon*



First published in the United Kingdom in 2024 by Delphi Classics.

© Delphi Classics, 2024.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated in any form other than that in which it is published.

ISBN: 978 1 80170 161 7

Delphi Classics

is an imprint of

Delphi Publishing Ltd

Hastings, East Sussex

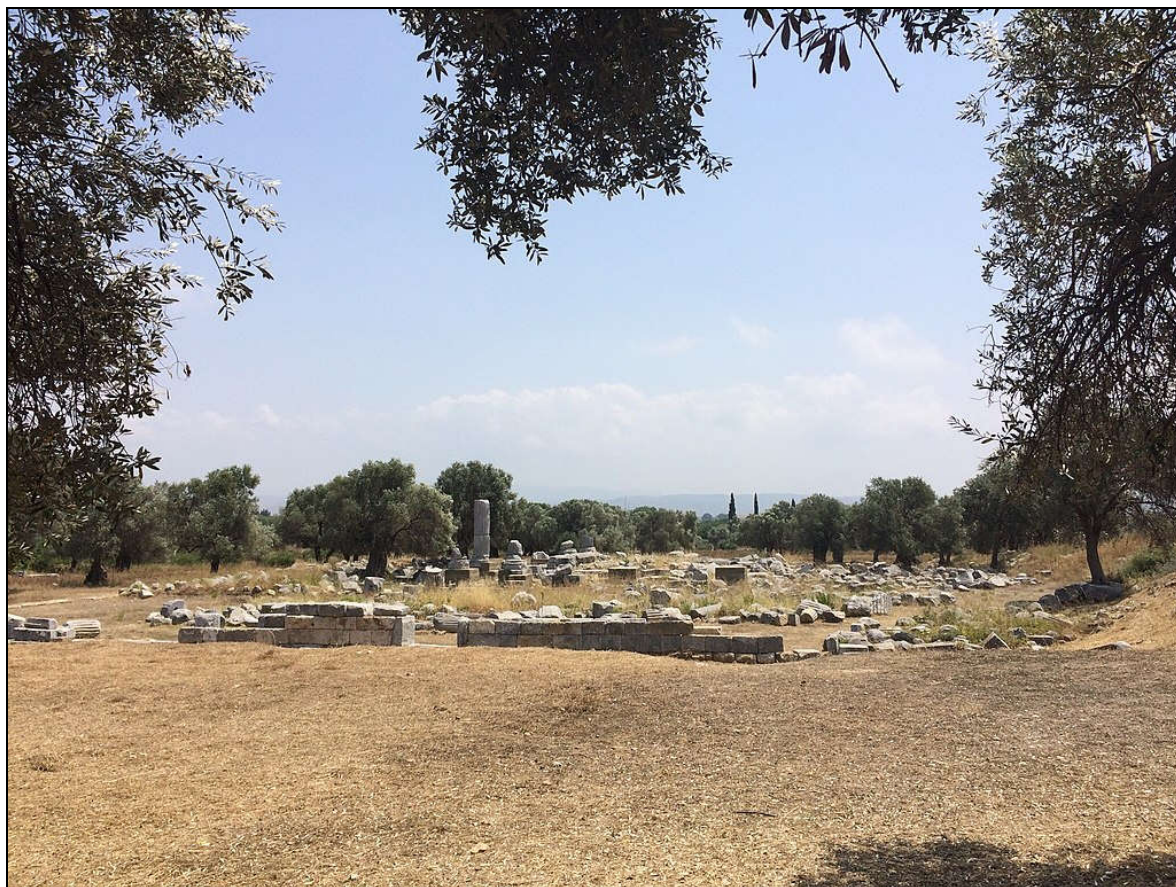
United Kingdom

Contact: [sales@delphiclassics.com](mailto:sales@delphiclassics.com)

DELPHI  CLASSICS

[www.delphiclassics.com](http://www.delphiclassics.com)

## The Translations



*Ruins at Teos — Anacreon's birthplace. Teos was an ancient Greek city on the coast of Ionia, which was founded by Minyans from Orchomenus, Ionians and Boeotians. It was one of the twelve cities that formed the Ionian League. Situated on a low hilly isthmus, the city's ruins are located to the south of the modern town of Sığacık, Izmir Province, Turkey.*



*Ruins of the theatre in Teos*

## Fragments of Anacreon (1924)



*Translated by J. M. Edmonds, Loeb Classical Library, 1924*

Notable for his drinking songs and erotic poems, the Greek lyric poet Anacreon flourished in the sixth century BC. Little information is known about his life, save for what can be gleaned from the extant fragments. Ancient sources agree that Anacreon came from Teos, on the coast of Ionia (modern day Turkey). This tradition is attested as early as Herodotus, and at least one of the fragments references the city. When Teos was conquered by Persia in the 540's, the Teians moved to Abdera, Thrace, by which time Anacreon was likely an adult.

He is also believed to have spent time in Samos. According to Himerius, he was invited there to educate Polycrates, the future tyrant of Samos, who Strabo reports was one of the main subjects of his poetry. If Himerius is correct and Anacreon arrived on Samos before Polycrates became tyrant, this would have been before 530. From Samos, Anacreon moved to Athens on the invitation of Hipparchus, some time after Hipparchus came to power in 528. According to Herodotus, the poet was still on Samos in 522 when Polycrates was murdered. No sources record if or when he left Athens. He may have departed after the assassination of his patron Hipparchus in 514, or the expulsion of Hipparchus' brother Hippias in 510, though there is evidence of his presence in the city later than this. Two epigrams from the *Greek Anthology* suggest that he spent some time in Thessaly, though others doubt this tradition. He probably died at the beginning of the fifth century. According to the first century Latin writer Valerius Maximus, Anacreon died by choking on a grape seed, though this is generally considered apocryphal. An epigram in the *Greek Anthology* claims that his tomb was located on Teos.

Composed primarily in the form of monody rather than for a chorus, Anacreon's poetry is written in the ancient Ionic dialect. Like all early lyric poetry, his verses were composed to be sung or recited to the accompaniment of music, usually the lyre. In keeping with the Greek poetic tradition, his poetry relied on metre for its construction. Metrical poetry is a particularly rhythmic form, deriving its structure from patterns of phonetic features within and between the lines of verse. The phonetic patterning in Anacreon's poetry is based on the structured alternation of "long" and "short" syllables. The Ionic dialect also had a tonal aspect that lends a natural melodic quality to the recitation. The metres employed by Anacreon are now known as *anacreonteus*. The Anacreontic verse is an eight-syllable line u u – u – u – –.

The Greek language is particularly well suited to the metrical style of poetry, though the sound of the verses does not easily transfer to English. As a consequence, translators have historically tended to substitute rhyme, stress rhythms, stanzaic patterning and other devices for the style of the originals, with the primary, sometimes only, connection to the Greek verses being the subject matter. More recent translators have tended to attempt a more spare translation which, in spite of losing the sound of the originals, may be more true to their flavor.

Anacreon's poetry concerns universal themes of love, infatuation, disappointment, pederasty, the symposium, festivals and observations of everyday people and life. The subject matter of his poetry helped to keep it familiar and enjoyable to generations of

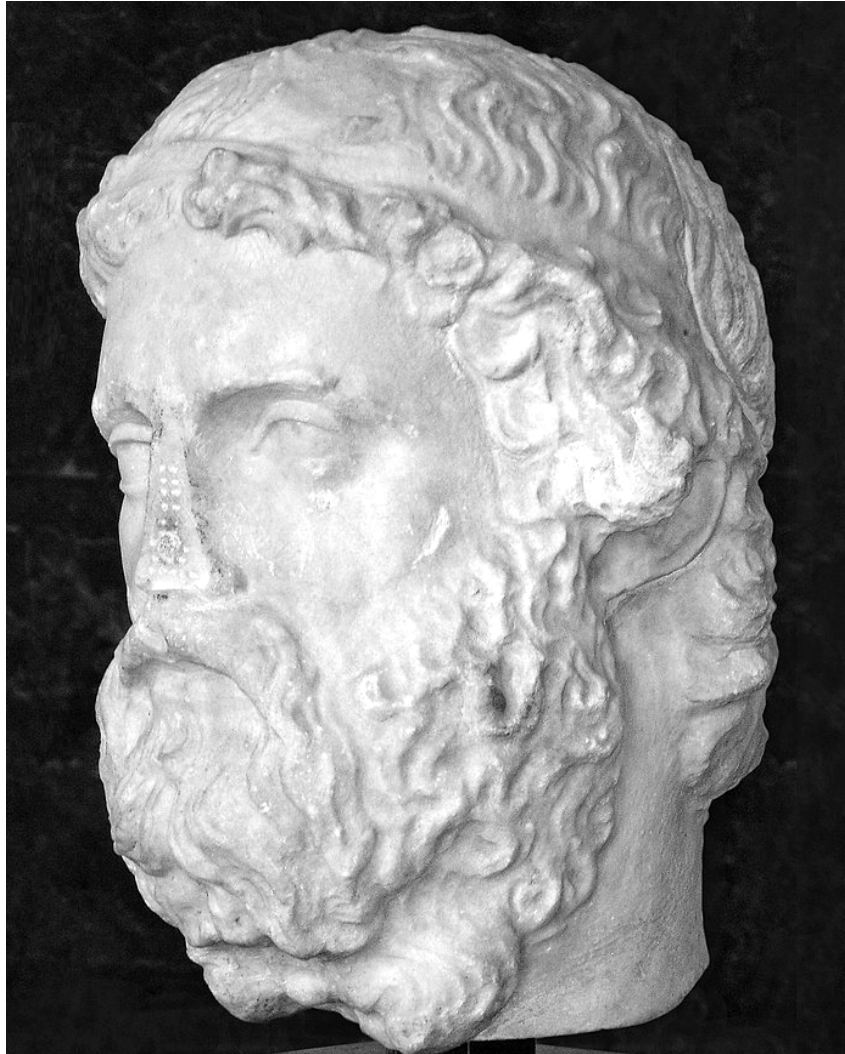
readers and listeners. His widespread popularity over the classical world went on to inspire countless imitators.

He also had a reputation as a composer of hymns, as well as of those bacchanalian and amatory lyrics. Two short hymns to Artemis and Dionysus, consisting of eight and eleven lines respectively, stand first amongst his few undisputed fragments. His frequent allusions to the joys of wine, music and the pleasures of love have caused some ancient commentators to regard him as a poet of a frivolous and libertine nature. According to the early geographer Pausanias, Anacreon's statue on the Acropolis of Athens depicts him as drunk. Still, Athenaeus remarks that Anacreon must at least have been sober when he composed his lyrics. It should also be noted that, like Horace much later, Anacreon's fragments reveal a strong criticism of the brutal characteristics of intoxication, which he regards as fit only for barbarians and Scythians.

The Suda, a seminal tenth century Byzantine encyclopaedia of the ancient Mediterranean world, and Athenaeus record that Anacreon produced five books of lyrical verses extant in their time, of which sadly only the merest fragments exist, largely collected from the citations of later ancient authors. The *Anacreontea*, a collection of poems by numerous, anonymous imitators was long believed to be the works of Anacreon himself. It was preserved in a tenth century manuscript that also includes the *Palatine Anthology*. The poems of the *Anacreontea* appear to have been composed over a long period of time by numerous authors, from the rise of Alexander to when paganism gave way in the Roman Empire. They reflect the light-hearted elegance of much of Anacreon's genuine works, although they were not written in the same Ionic Greek dialect. They also display literary references and styles more common to the time of their actual composition.

Unlike many ancient poets, Anacreon attained fame in his own lifetime, as he is depicted in contemporary Athenian red-figure vase paintings. His writings influenced fifth century Athenian drama, while tragedy adopted his metres, and comic playwrights, including Aristophanes, made allusions to his verses in their works. Ancient philosophical and moralistic writers were divided on Anacreon, with some, such as Plato, portraying him as a wise man, while others condemned him for being too concerned with drunkenness and lust. By the Hellenistic period, a caricature of Anacreon as drunken and lustful was firmly established. Still, Anacreon was respected as a poet and was traditionally included in the canon of Nine Lyric Poets. The Hellenistic poet Callimachus' "Lock of Berenice" is an adaptation of a poem by Anacreon; Ovid and Propertius allude to him; and he was an important influence on Horace, who refers to him three times in his poetry and frequently alludes to his work.





*Bust of Anacreon in the Louvre*

## CONTENTS

### *BOOK I*

1 TO ARTEMIS

2 TO DIONYSUS

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43 A and B

44

### *BOOK II*

45  
46  
47  
48, 49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65  
66  
67  
68

*BOOK III*

69  
70, 71, 72  
73  
74  
75  
76  
77  
78  
79  
80  
81  
82  
82 A  
83

*BOOK IV. IAMBICS*

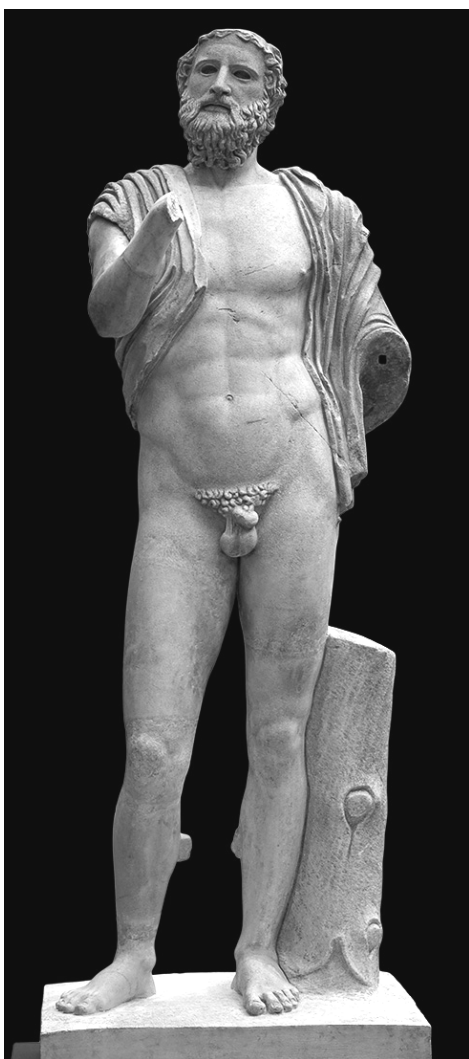
84  
85  
86  
87  
88  
89  
90  
91, 92  
93

94  
95  
96, 97  
98  
99  
100  
101  
102  
103  
104  
105  
106  
107  
108  
109  
110  
111  
112  
113  
114  
115

*BOOK V. ELEGIACS*

116  
117  
118  
119  
120  
121  
122  
123  
124  
125  
126  
127  
128  
129  
130  
131  
132  
133  
134  
135  
136  
137  
138  
139  
140  
141  
142

143  
144  
145  
146  
147  
148  
149  
150  
151  
152  
153  
154  
155  
156  
157  
158  
159  
160  
161  
162  
163  
164  
165  
166  
167  
168  
169



*Anacreon depicted in the act of singing and playing his lyre, second century AD, Copenhagen, Denmark*

# BOOK I

## 1 TO ARTEMIS



HEPHAESTION *ON POEMS*: A poem is known as ‘common in form’ when it is made up of two ‘systems’ or stanzas like the first poem of Anacreon:

To thee I kneel, [*lit. ‘clasp thy knees in supplication’*] thou shooter of deer, flaxen-haired child of Zeus, Artemis queen of wild beasts, who now doubtless lookest down rejoicing beside the eddies of Lethaeus upon a city of valiant hearts; for thou art shepherd to no savage flock of men. [*now: dedicatory of a new temple or statue of Artemis? city: Ionian Magnesia; the poem is prob. complete; see however Kehrhahn Berm. 1914*]

For although according to the edition now in use the strophe has eight lines and the poem consists of a single strophe, this strophe can also be separated into a three-group and a five-group, so that a Pherecratic ends both the three-line and the four-line systems. [*does not necessarily imply that l. 3 ended in the Aristarchean (?) edition in θηρίων, but prob. that there was no division mark put between ll. 3 and 4.*]



DELPHI  CLASSICS

*End of Sample*