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Greek γᾶ & γῆ 'earth' and corresponding theonyms in etymological perspective

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Abstract

This article analyzes the published etymologies of Greek γᾶ & γῆ 'earth' with special attention to the Semitic etymology. The Canaanite origin seems to be the most promising solution.

Keywords

Greek; Semitic; theonym; appellative; etymology

0. A purpose of the present contribution is to summarize and evaluate the existing etymological attempts to explain Greek γαῖα & γῆ 'earth' and corresponding theonyms in perspective of both the internal and external etymology.

1. Documentation

1.1. The word was identified already in the Mycenaean texts, probably in the function of both appellative and theonym:

ka-ja [PY Un 1314.3B], interpretable as the gen.sg. γαῖας 'land, territory' (cf. Aura Jorro 1985: p. 306);

diwe ... ma-ka [KN F 51], interpretable as the dat.sg. *Diwei ... Mā(trei)-Gāi* 'to Zeus ... to Mother Earth'; similarly *ma-ka* [TH Fq 126] = *Mā(trei)-Gāi* (Bartoněk 2003: pp. 530–531).

The same syntagm μᾶ Ἰᾶ 'mother Ga' was used also in the classical period, namely by Aeschylus, in his *Suppliant women* 890:

⁸⁸⁵οιοῖ, πάτερ, βρέτεος ἄρος

⁸⁸⁶ἀτᾶ μ' :: ἄλαδ' ἄγει

⁸⁸⁷ἄραχνος ὡς βάδην.

⁸⁸⁸ὄναρ ὄναρ μέλαν,

⁸⁸⁹ὄτοτοτοτοῖ,

⁸⁹⁰μᾶ Ἰᾶ μᾶ Ἰᾶ, βοᾶν

⁸⁹¹φοβερόν ἀπότρεπε,

⁸⁹²ὦ πά, Ἰᾶς παῖ, Ζεῦ.

'Alas, father; the help of the sacred images

deludes me. Like

a spider, he is carrying me seaward step by step –

a nightmare, a black nightmare!

Oh! Oh!

Mother Earth, mother Earth,

avert his fearful cries!

O father Zeus, son of **Earth!**¹

1.2. In the first mill. BCE the literary and epigraphic documentation is already very rich. The following examples should serve only for illustration:

1.2.1. γαῖα

Iliad

^{2.140}φεύγωμεν σὺν νηυσὶ φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν:

^{2.141}οὐ γὰρ ἔτι Τροίην αἰρήσομεν εὐρυάγυιαν.

'Let us flee with our ships to our dear native **land**; for no more is there hope that we shall take broad-wayed Troy.'

^{7.99}ἄλλ' ὑμεῖς μὲν πάντες ὕδωρ καὶ γαῖα γένοισθε

^{7.100}ἦμενοι αὐθι ἕκαστοι ἀκήριον ἀκλεῆς αὐτως:

'Nay, may ye one and all turn to **earth** and water, ye that sit there each man with no heart in him, utterly inglorious'

^{23.255}τορνώσαντο δὲ σῆμα θεμειλία τε προβάλοντο

^{23.256}ἀμφὶ πυρῆν: εἶθαρ δὲ χυτὴν ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἔχευαν

1 Transl. by H. W. Smyth (1926).

'Then they traced the compass of the barrow and set forth the foundations thereof round about the pyre, and forthwith they piled the up-piled **earth**.'²

Odyssey

^{8.555}εἰπέ δέ μοι γαῖάν τε: τεινὴν δῆμόν τε πόλιν τε

'And tell me thy **country**, thy people, and thy city'

^{12.403}ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὴν νῆσον ἐλείπομεν, οὐδέ τις ἄλλη

^{12.404}φαίνετο γαῖάων, ἀλλ' οὐρανὸς ἠδὲ θάλασσα

'But when we had left that island and no other **land** appeared, but only sky and sea'³

1.2.1.1. Doric γαῖα

E.g. the epiclesis of Poseidon in the Laconian Damonon inscription Γαιαφόχῳ (*IG V I.213*; 5th cent. B.C.) or the inscription from Naples – see: ΤΡΕΙΝΑΚΡΙΑ ΓΑΙΑ ΜΕ ΛΟΧΕΥ-
CATO ... (*IG XIV.803*).

1.2.2. Γαῖα

Hesiod, *Theogony*

³⁹..... τῶν δ' ἀκάματος ῥέει αὐδὴ

⁴⁰ἔκ στομάτων ἠδεῖα: γελᾷ δέ τε δώματα πατρὸς

⁴¹Ζηνὸς ἐριγδούποιο θεᾶν ὅπι λειριόεσση

⁴²σκιδναμένη: ἠχεῖ δὲ κάρη νιφόεντος Ὀλύμπου

⁴³δώματά τ' ἀθανάτων. αἶ δ' ἄμβροτον ὄσσαν ἰεῖσαι

⁴⁴θεῶν γένος αἰδοῖον πρῶτον κλείουσιν αἰοιδῆ

⁴⁵ἔξ ἀρχῆς, οὓς Γαῖα καὶ Οὐρανὸς εὐρὺς ἔτικτεν,

⁴⁶οἳ τ' ἐκ τῶν ἐγένοντο θεοί, δωτῆρες ἑάων.

'Unwearying flows the sweet sound from their lips, and the house of their father Zeus the loud-thunderer is glad at the lily-like voice of the goddesses as it spreads abroad, and the peaks of snowy Olympus resound, and the homes of the immortals. And they, uttering their immortal voice, celebrate in song first of all the revered race of the gods from the beginning, those whom **Earth** and wide Heaven begot, and the gods sprung of these, givers of good things.'⁴

1.2.3. γῆ

Odyssey 13

^{13.232}καὶ μοι τοῦτ' ἀγόρευσον ἐτήτυμον, ὄφρ' ἐῦ εἰδῶ:

^{13.233}τίς γῆ, τίς δῆμος, τίνες ἀνέρες ἐγγεγάασιν;

^{13.234}ἢ πού τις νήσων εὐδείελος, ἧέ τις ἀκτὴ

^{13.235}κεῖθ' ἀλλὶ κεκλιμένη ἐριβόλακος ἠπείροιο;

2 Transl. by A. T. Murray (1924).

3 Transl. by A. T. Murray (1919).

4 Transl. by H. G. Evelyn-White (1914b).

'And tell me this also truly, that I may know full well. What **land**, what people is this? What men dwell here? Is it some clear-seen island, or a shore of the deep-soiled mainland that lies resting on the sea?'

1.2.4. Γῆ

Iliad

^{3.104}Γῆ τε καὶ Ἥελίω: Διὶ δ' ἡμεῖς οἴσομεν ἄλλον:
'for **Earth** and Sun, and for Zeus we will bring another'

^{19.258γ}ἴστω νῦν Ζεὺς πρῶτα θεῶν ὑπατος καὶ ἄριστος

^{19.259}Γῆ τε καὶ Ἥέλιος καὶ Ἐρινύες, αἳ θ' ὑπὸ γαίαν

^{19.260}ἀνθρώπους τίνυνται, ὅτις κ' ἐπίορκον ὁμόσση,

'Be Zeus my witness first, highest and best of gods,
and **Earth** and Sun, and the Erinyes, that under earth
take vengeance on men, whosoever hath sworn a false oath.'

1.2.5. Doric γᾶ

Sophocles, Oedipus Tyrannus

⁶⁶⁵ἀλλά μοι δυσμόρφω γᾶ φθινὰς

⁶⁶⁶τρύχει ψυχάν, τὰδ' εἰ κακοῖς κακὰ

⁶⁶⁷προσάψει τοῖς πάλαι τὰ πρὸς σφῶν.

'But my unhappy soul is worn by the withering of the **land**, as well as by the thought that our old sorrows should be crowned by new ones arising from the two of you.'⁵

Pindar apud Plato, Theaetetus

[173ε] χόες. Καὶ ταῦτα πάντ' οὐδ' ὅτι οὐκ οἶδεν, οἶδεν: οὐδὲ γὰρ αὐτῶν ἀπέχεται τοῦ εὐδοκμεῖν χάριν, ἀλλὰ τῷ ὄντι τὸ σῶμα μόνον ἐν τῇ πόλει κείται αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπιδημεῖ, ἡ δὲ διάνοια, ταῦτα πάντα ἡγήσαμένη σμικρὰ καὶ οὐδέν, ἀτιμάσασα πανταχῇ πέτεται κατὰ Πίνδαρον 'τάς τε γᾶς ὑπένερθε' καὶ τὰ ἐπίπεδα γεωμετροῦσα, οὐρανοῦ θ' ὑπερ' ἀστρονομοῦσα⁶

'And all these things the philosopher does not even know that he does not know; for he does not keep aloof from them for the sake of gaining reputation, but really it is only his body that has its place and home in the city; his mind, considering all these things petty and of no account, disdains them and is borne in all directions, as Pindar says, "both below the **earth**," and measuring the surface of the earth, and "above the sky," studying the stars, and investigating the universal nature.'⁷

1.2.6. Cypriot ζᾶ (uncertain)

In the inscriptions from Idalion (Cyprus) written in the Cypriot syllabic script there were attested the following forms (Egetmeyer 1992: p. 215; Hintze 1993: p. 93):

5 Transl. by R. Jebb (1887).

6 Ed. by J. Burnet (1903).

7 Transl. by H. N. Fowler (1921).

za^2-i = dat.sg. $zā^2i$ (ICS² 217 A 8; B 17.24)

za^2-ne = acc.sg. $zā^2n$ (ICS² 217 A 10; B 22/23.28)

za^2-se = acc.pl. $zā^2s$ (ICS² 217 B 30).

2. Internal reconstruction and internal etymology

Various scholars speculate about the Common Greek protoform already 140 years:

2.1. Schmidt (1883: pp. 354–355): *γᾱῖᾱ, gen.sg. *γᾱῖᾱς.

2.2. Wackernagel (1885: p. 264): *gāva.

2.3. Schmidt (1893: p. 349): *γαῖᾱς, gen.sg. *γαῖᾱς.

2.4. Carnoy (1957: p. 60): *gāuῖᾱ < *gīē-aiῖᾱ < *g^uiē-aiῖᾱ, whose components should be connected with ζῆν⁸ 'to live' and αῖα 'earth, land' [*Il.*], but also glossed as αῖα ὑπό Κυρηναίων τηθίς καὶ μαῖα, καὶ ἀδελφῆ Κρήτης· καὶ φυτόν τι. ἔτι δὲ ὁ καρπὸς αὐτῶ ὁμώνυμος [*EM* 27.24], comparable with Latin *avia* 'grandmother'.

2.5. Čop (1971: pp. 23–24): γᾱ & γῆ < *γᾱᾱ < *γῑᾱᾱ, and γαῖα < *γῑᾱῖᾱ, all from the primary paradigm *g^uasiᾱ, gen.sg. *g^uasiᾱs.

2.6. Meier-Brügger (1992[1994]: p. 15): γῆ < γᾱ < *gah₁-ah₂- < *gāh₁-ah₂- < *g^hh₁-ah₂- < *g^hh₁-eh₂- < *g^hh₁-eh₂-, and γαῖα < *gaiῖᾱ < *gaiῖᾱ < *gah₁-iῖah₂- < *gāh₁-iῖah₂- < *g^hh₁-iῖah₂- < *g^hh₁-iῖeh₂- < *g^hh₁-iῖeh₂-, as the Siever's variant of *g^hh₁-ih₂-, both from the root *g^henh₁- 'to give birth', implying the meaning 'fertile' of the derivatives *g^hh₁-eh₂ and *g^hh₁-ih₂-. Cf. Vedic *jāyā* 'wife', derivable also from *g^hh₁-iῖeh₂- (see Mayrhofer 1992–2001, *EWAI* I, 587).

2.7. Peters (1994: p. 206): *gah₁ῖᾱ < *gas₁ῖᾱ < *gans₁ῖᾱ < *gh₂ns₁ῖᾱ from *gah₂- 'to light, shine', cf. γάνος 'brightness, sheen' [*Sapph.* 127], 'gladness, joy, pride' [*A. Ag.* 579], γανεῖν · λευκαίνειν (Hesychius). This solution was anticipated already by Pisani (1925: p. 640), who connected γαῖα with γηθεῖω [*Il.*], Doric γᾱθεῖ [*Theoc.*] 'to rejoice'.

2.8. Willi (2007: pp. 171, 178): γῆ/γᾱ < *gā < *geh₂ < *(s)tg-eh₂- 'covering', which should be *nomen actionis* from the root *(s)teg- 'to cover'.

8 Cf. Plato, *Timaeus* 18b: ἀναλίσκειν τε δὴ κοινῆ καὶ συνδιατωμένους μετὰ ἀλλήλων ζῆν / 'they should spend their wage in common and live together in fellowship one with another' (Transl. by W. R. M. Lamb 1925).

3. Etymological attempts based on comparisons with other Indo-European languages

Standard etymological dictionaries are sceptical concerning the etymology:

Boisacq (1916: p. 146): Etym. inconnue.

Frisk (1960: p. 303): Ohne Etymologie.

Chantraine (1968: p. 219): Ni γῆ, ni γαῖα n'ont d'étymologie établie.

Beekes (2010: p. 255): ETYM Unknown.

But several etymologies operating with external comparisons have been proposed:

3.1. Čop (1971: pp. 23–24), projecting γᾱ/γῆ and γαῖα into **g_uasjā* (see §2.5.), compared it with Tocharian B acc.sg. *kwašai* 'village' (nom.sg. *k_ušiyē*; see Adams 2013: pp. 198–199, who convincingly connected it with Germanic **hūsa-* 'house'; Adams' solution excludes any relation of *kwašai* with γᾱ/γῆ and γαῖα).

3.2. Furnée (1972: p. 391) judged that the synonymous pair γαῖα and αῖα implies a substratal origin of both lexemes, but without any specification of this hypothetical substrate. Let us mention that e.g. Woodhouse (1994: p. 99) derived αῖα from **sausja* 'dry land', analogous to the semantic motivation corresponding to Latin *terra*.

3.3. Georgiev (1981: p. 101) also saw in γῆ & γαῖα an adaptation of a substratal form, concretely from his version of Pelasgic, a pre-Greek, but Indo-European language, where the *Lautverschiebung* of Germanic type was realized. This assumption allowed him to connect γῆ & γαῖα with Gothic *gawi*, gen. *gawja* 'χώρα', i.e. 'country', Armenian *gavar* 'region', and Greek proper χᾶος 'space' (cf. Pokorny 1959: p. 449).

4. Etymology based on comparison with non-Indo-European languages

4.1. There is a group of scholars which assume a Semitic origin of Greek γῆ & γαῖα, seeking support in Biblical Hebrew *gay?* 'valley' (see Bernal 1987–2006: Vol. I, p. 57; Vol. III, pp. 146–148; Ray 1990: p. 80; Brown 1995–2001: Vol. I, p. 58; Vol. III, p. 279, fn. 1). Rosól (2013: p. 167) rejected it, classifying this solution among 'abgelehnte Etymologie', but without any arguments. Let us repeat the known facts and their implications. Hebrew *gay(?)* 'valley' does not stand in isolation within Semitic. Besides the closest cognate in Samaritan *gīyyā* (HAL 188–189), there are Arabic *ǧiwā?* 'wide valley, open pasture-ground; sky, air' (DRS 106; Steingass 1988: p. 252) = 'air, i.e. what is between the heaven and the earth', further 'a low or depressed part of the ground, wide part of a valley' (Lane 1863: Vol. I, p. 478); Sabaic *gw?* 'to penetrate into the depth of the earth' (Müller 1962: pp. 38–39); Jibbali *gāl*, pl. *gōi* 'depression, deep hole' (Johnstone 1981: p. 80), Soqotri *gōʔo*, pl. *égwa* 'a wadi where little streams conflate' (CSOL I, 540); Geez *ge* 'territory', Amhara, Argobba *ge* 'country, town' (Leslau 1987: p. 174), Wolane *ge*, Selti

gē 'country, land, village' (Leslau 1979: p. 254). It was already Marcel Cohen (1933: p. 34), who compared Geez *ge* with Hebrew and Arabic, but also with Greek γῆ. The original pattern in a hypothetical donor-language of the Canaanite type⁹ would have been **gayyā* or **gaya?* It is necessary to stress that 'river valley' in the Near East implicitly means 'a fertile soil in a river valley' *vel sim*. Tempting is to mention that Pindar [Pythian 9.101–102; see Appendix] used for Γᾱ the epithet βαθύκολλος. It has been translated as 'deep-bosomed', but the second component also means 'valley, vale', cf. Pindar, *Olympian* 9.87: καὶ Νεμείας ... κατὰ κόλπον: 'and ... in the vale of Nemea'.¹⁰

4.2. There is still one Semitic lexeme, which could take part in a creation of the mythical function of Greek Γῆ & Γαῖα, namely West Semitic **gawy-a(t)* 'kinswoman', which would continue in the hypothetical Canaanite donor-language as **gayyā*. It is reconstructible on the basis of Hebrew *gōyā* 'gentile woman' (Klein 1987: p. 94). Together with Official Aramaic *gw* 'female slave'? (*DNWS* 217) these words are the feminine from the better documented Semitic masculine **gawy-* 'people, tribe' (*DRS* 107) > Eblaite proper name *Gāy-um* 'clan, tribe' (Pagan 1998: p. 212); Amorite **gayyu*¹¹ 'clan'; Phoenician, Punic *gw* 'community, corporation', Biblical Hebrew *gōy* 'people, nation; persons', frequently 'pagan people' (*HAL* 182–183), Epigraphic Hebrew pl. *gyym* 'the heathens' (*DNWS* 221); Sabaic *gw-m*, *gwy* 'community group' (Beeston et al. 1982: p. 50); West Semitic > Akkadian of Mari *gāzu* 'group, gang (of workmen)' (*CAD* 5, 59) = *gāzum* or *gāwum* 'people' (*AHW* 284).

4.2.1. This alternative etymology of the Greek theonyms Γῆ & Γαῖα can be supported by their epithets (Bruchmann 1893: pp. 71–73). Besides the most frequent 'mother', the goddess was also known as ἄλοχος 'wife' [*Homeric hymns* 30.17], ἄνασσα 'lady' [Euripides, *Electra* 678] or 'queen' [Euripides, *Phoenissae* 686], πότνια 'queen' [*Homeric hymns* 30.6], etc. (see Appendix).

9 With the characteristic change of Proto-Semitic **w* > Canaanite **y* (Lipiński 2001: p. 121, §11.13).

10 Transl. by D. Arnsion Svarlien (1991).

11 The masculine **gayyu(m)* is preserved in such proper names recorded in the Old Babylonian period as *Ba-aḥ-lu-ga-ji-im*, *Ba-aḥ-lu-ga-i-im*, *Ba-aḥ-lu-ga-i*, representing the genitive syntagm /*bašlu-gayyi(m)*/ 'lord of a clan', besides *Ba-aḥ-lu-ga-ju* and *Ba-aḥ-lu-ga-a-ju* /*bašlu-gayyu*/ 'lord is a clan' (Streck 2000: pp. 89, 321). But the spelling *ga-a* implies better the feminine **gayya* (cf. Streck 2000: p. 312: *Um-mi-tā-ba* = /*ummi-tāba*/ 'my mother is good') than the endgless masculine **gayy*. The name *A-na-na-ga-a*, interpreted by Streck (p. 183) as /*hanana-gayy*/ 'Gnädig ist der Clan', should be reinterpreted as /*hanana-gayya*/. If /*gayya*/ is the feminine to /*gayyu*/ 'clan', it is quite natural to ascribe to /*gayya*/ the meaning 'clan-goddess' and the whole name would mean 'gracious is the clan-goddess'. In this perspective it is possible to reinterpret some other names too: *Ba-aḥ-lu-ga-a* and *A-bi-ga-a* are interpreted as /*bašlu-gayy*/ 'lord is a clan' and /*abi-gayy*/ 'my father is a clan' respectively by Streck (2000: p. 183). If the second component is the feminine theonym **Gayya*, the names should mean 'lord of Gayya' and 'my father of Gayya' respectively, expressing so that they belong to Gayya. The final *-a* indicates the genitive in such the syntagm, cf. *Su-mu-ba-la* /*šumu-bašla*/ 'descendant of a lady', *Su-mu-di-ta-na* /*šumu-Diṭāna*/ 'descendant of Diṭānu' (Streck 2000: p. 274).

4.3. Both the hypothetical Semitic sources of the Greek theonym presented in §§ 4.1. & 4.2. would be inconvincing, if there was none Semitic theonym generated by one of these two etymons. They can really be identified:

4.3.1. Eblaite *Ga-ù / Ga-u_o / Ga-um / Ga-a-a!-ù* is connected with the etymon proposed in §4.2. (Mander 2005: p. 77). This theonym is apparently masculine, but it is no problem – in the Semitic pantheon there are deities which are masculine in one tradition and feminine on other tradition or even both genders are represented in one and the same tradition. Symptomatic is the pair of the Semitic theonyms **ṣattar*- and **ṣattar-at*-, cf. Old Babylonian *Ištar* f. = Sumerian goddess *Inanna*, *ištaru(m)* f. 'goddess', Young Babylonian *ištartu* f. id. (remodelled according to pl. *ištarātu* – CAD 271–274); Eblaite *aš-dar* f. / *ṣattar*/ = ^dInana (Krebernik 1982: p. 31); Ugaritic deities *ṣtr* m. & *ṣtr* f. (*DUL* 190–192); Phoenician *ṣšrt* f. 'goddess of fertility and war', Hebrew *ṣāštorēṭ* ~ *ṣāšterēṭ* f. 'the goddess of Sidonians'; Epigraphic South Arabian *ṣtr* m. 'male deity connected with East' etc. (Blažek 1996: p. 133).

4.3.2. Ugaritic *Āgy*, syllabic *A-ga-ia*, Nuzi *A-ga-ia* (Watson 2012: p. 324; *DUL* 28), if the initial syllable represents the Semitic prefix **ʔa*-, forming the relative in Ugaritic, e.g. *ālīy* 'very strong': Akkadian *le'ū* 'to prevail', *le'ū* 'able' (*DUL* 51; cf. Lipiński 2001: pp. 221–222, §29.16). Separating **ʔa*-, the root proper can be connected with both the etymons analyzed in §4.1. and §4.2.

5. Conclusion

Summing up, it seems the Greek forms originated as the adaptation and merging of two Canaanite (quasi-)homonyms reconstructible as **gayyā*, one designating '{fertile soil in a} river valley', second 'female representative of a clan'. At least one of these lexemes was also used as a divine name in the hypothetical donor-language, perhaps close to Amorite.

Appendix

Homeric hymns 30 (to Earth), v. 17:

¹⁷χαῖρε, θεῶν μήτηρ, ἄλοχ' Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος,

¹⁸πρόφρων δ' ἀντ' ᾠδῆς βίσιτον θυμήρε' ὄπαζε:

¹⁹αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σεῖο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' ἀοιδῆς.

'Hail, Mother of the gods, **wife** of starry Heaven; freely bestow upon me for this my song substance that cheers the heart! And now I will remember you and another song also.'¹²

¹² Transl. by H. G. Evelyn-White (1914a).

Euripides, *Phoenissae* 686

καὶ διώνυμοι θεαί,

Περσέφασσα καὶ φίλα

⁶⁸⁵Δαμάτηρ θεά,

πάντων ἄνασσα, πάντων δὲ Γᾶ τροφός,

κτήσαντο — πέμπε πυρφόρους

θεάς, ἄμυνε τᾷδε γᾶ:

πάντα δ' εὐπετὴ θεοῖς,¹³

'and the goddesses of twofold name, Persephone and the kindly goddess Demeter, the **queen** of all, **Earth** the nurse of all, won it for themselves; send to the help of this land those torch-bearing goddesses; for to gods all things are easy.'¹⁴

Euripides, *Electra* 678

καὶ Γαῖ' ἄνασσα, χεῖρας ἧ δίδωμ' ἐμὰς¹⁵

'And **Lady Earth**, to whom I give my hands'¹⁶

Homeric hymns 30, 6

γαῖαν παμμήτειραν αἰέισομαι, ἠυθέμεθλον,

πρεσβίστην, ἧ φέρβει ἐπὶ χθονὶ πάνθ' ὀπόσ' ἐστίν,

ἡμὲν ὅσα χθόνα διὰν ἐπέρχεται ἡδ' ὅσα πόντον

ἡδ' ὅσα πωτώνται, τάδε φέρβεται ἐκ σέθεν ὄλβου.

ἐκ σέο δ' εὐπαιδές τε καὶ εὐκαρποὶ τελέθουσι,

πότνια, σεῦ δ' ἔχεται δοῦναι βίον ἡδ' ἀφελέσθαι

θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισιν: ὃ δ' ὄλβιος, ὃν κε σὺ θυμῷ

πρόφρων τιμήσης: τῷ τ' ἄφθονα πάντα πάρεστι.

'I will sing of well-founded **Earth**, mother of all, eldest of all beings. She feeds all creatures that are in the world, all that go upon the goodly land, and all that are in the paths of the seas, and all that fly: all these are fed of her store. Through you, **O queen**, men are blessed in their children and blessed in their harvests, and to you it belongs to give means of life to mortal men and to take it away. Happy is the man whom you delight to honor!'

Orphic fragment 57 (39)

Πρεσβεία περί των Χριστιανών Ἀθηναγόρου:

Οὐρανός δὲ Γῆ μιχθεὶς γεννᾷ θηλείας μὲν Κλωθῶ, Λάχεσιν, Ἄτροπον, ἄνδρας δὲ Ἑκατόγχειρας Κόττον, Γύγην, Βριάρεων καὶ Κύκλωπας, Βρόντην καὶ Στερόπην καὶ Ἄργην· οὐς καὶ δῆσας κατεταρτάρωσεν, ἐκπεσεῖσθαι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν παιδῶν τῆς ἀρχῆς μαθῶν. Διὸ καὶ ὀργισθεῖσα ἡ Γῆ τοὺς Τιτᾶνας ἐγέννησεν

13 Ed. by A. T. Murray (1913b).

14 Transl. by E. P. Coleridge (1938b).

15 Ed. by A. T. Murray (1913a).

16 Transl. by E. P. Coleridge (1938a).

Κούρους δ' Οὐρανίωνας ἐγείνατο **πότνια Γαῖα**,
 οὓς δὴ καὶ Τιτῆνας ἐπὶ κλησιν καλέουσιν,
 οὐνεκα τισάσθην μέγαν Οὐρανὸν
 ἄστερόεντα.

'...and Ouranos, by his union with Γε, begot females, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos; and males, the hundred-handed Cottys, Gyges, Briareus, and the Cyclopes Brontes, and Steropes, and Argos, whom also he bound and hurled down to Tartarus, having learned that he was to be ejected from his government by his children; whereupon Γε, being enraged, brought forth the Titans.

'The godlike Gaia bore to Ouranos
 Sons who are by the name of Titans known,
 Because they vengeance took on Ouranos
 Majestic, glitt'ring with his starry crown.'¹⁷

Pindar, *Pythian* 9.101–102

⁹⁷πλεῖστα νικάσαντά σε καὶ τελεταῖς

⁹⁸ῥίαις ἐν Παλλάδος εἶδον ἄφωνοί θ' ὡς ἕκασται φίλτατον

⁹⁹παρθενικαὶ πόσιν ἦ

¹⁰⁰υῖὸν εὐχοντ', ὦ Τελεσίκρατες, ἔμμεν,

¹⁰¹ἐν Ὀλυμπίοισι τε καὶ **βαθυκόλπου**

¹⁰²**Γᾶς** ἀέθλοισ ἔν τε καὶ πᾶσιν

¹⁰³ἐπιχωρίοις. ἐμὲ δ' ὦν τις αἰοιδᾶν

¹⁰⁴δίψαν ἀκειόμενον πρᾶσσει χρέος αὐτίς ἐγείραι

¹⁰⁵καὶ παλαιὰν δόξαν ἑὼν προγόνων: οἶοι Λιβύσσας ἀμφὶ γυναικὸς ἔβαν

¹⁰⁶Ἰρασα πρὸς πόλιν, Ἀνταίου μετὰ καλλίκομον μναστήρες ἀγακλέα κούραν¹⁸

'The women saw your many victories at the seasonal rites of Pallas, and each silently prayed that you could be her dear husband, Telesicrates, or her son; and in the Attic Olympia too, and in the contests of **deep-bosomed** Mother **Earth**, and in all your local games. But while I am quenching my thirst for song, someone exacts an unpaid debt from me, to awake again the ancient glory of his ancestors as well: for the sake of a Libyan woman they went to the city of Irasa, as suitors of the very famous daughter of Antaeus with the beautiful hair.'¹⁹

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