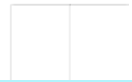


alt.fan.wodehouse



Help needed with this quote.

(too old to reply)

t\*\*\*@gmail.com

2007-01-17 08:43:36 UTC

Can anyone help me finding the source of this Greek/Latin Phrase which comes from THE POTHUNTERS (Chapter 11) citing Thucydides  
-----

'It's his evil conscience,' said Charteris. 'No one who hadn't committed the awful crime that Jim has, could pay the least attention to anything Thompson said. What does our friend Thucydides remark on the subject?--

"\_Conscia mens recti, nec si sinit esse dolorem  
Sed revocare gradum\_."

Very well then.'

-----

1. Can someone help me with the translation?
2. Source of this quote in Latin/Greek

I am compiling a list of Classical Literature References of Ancient Rome and Greek in Wodehouse works.

He often mentions: Cato, Caesar, Herodotus, Cornelia Mother of The Gracchi, Cleopatra, Pliny The Younger among others.. in various books

So far the only place where I have found accurate Literary References on his works has been at Terry Homepage

<http://www.aowy95.dsl.pipex.com/>

I would appreciate the help  
Pip Pip  
Cheers  
z

Ian Michaud, TWS

2007-01-17 13:45:19 UTC

Post by t\*\*\*@gmail.com

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Very well then.'

- 1. Can someone help me with the translation?  
2. Source of this quote in Latin/Greek

In Volume Two of his newly published "A Wodehouse Handbook", Norman Murphy offers the following annotation:

--

"(It), very roughly, translates as 'a mind conscious of virtue will, if it is not to endure sorrow, recall the past/ remember past sins'. Why PGW put this in Latin, not Greek, is beyond me. Maybe he was quoting Lucian or Cicero, both of whom admired Thucydides.

This Greek politician and historian, who died 411 or 391 B.C., employed a flowery style of language, which made him difficult to translate and therefore highly unpopular with English schoolboys. PGW was writing from the heart here. In 'Tales of St. Austin's' Thucydides is awful compared to Pickwick and dismissed as 'Thicksides'; his account of the Athenian expedition to Syracuse is referred to in 'The White Feather'."

--

The Mixer

Ken Miner

2007-01-17 15:44:32 UTC

*Post by Ian Michaud, TWS**Post by t\*\*\*@gmail.com*

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--

The Mixer

I say -- just a thought, you know -- I once wanted to put something on my blog and was afraid too many browsers wouldn't be able to handle the Greek, so I Latinized it. (Might not be so much of a problem today as back then.) So perhaps -- his publisher could have been to blame?

Ken

t\*\*\*@gmail.com

2007-01-17 20:03:32 UTC

Thank you  
lan,

I should get hold of this book, of Norman Murphy.  
That was great and thank you again.

cheers  
z

*Post by Ian Michaud, TWS*

*Post by t\*\*\*@gmail.com*

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--  
The Mixer

t\*\*\*@gmail.com

2007-01-17 20:03:45 UTC

Thank you  
lan,

I should get hold of this book, of Norman Murphy.  
That was great and thank you again.

cheers

Peter Marksteiner

2007-01-17 20:46:04 UTC

\*\*\*@gmail.com <\*\*\*@gmail.com> wrote:

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: comes from THE POTHUNTERS (Chapter 11) citing Thucydides

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: 'It's his evil conscience,' said Charteris. 'No one who hadn't  
: committed the awful crime that Jim has, could pay the least attention  
: to anything Thompson said. What does our friend Thucydides remark on

: the subject?--

: "'\_Conscia mens recti, nec si sinit esse dolorem  
: Sed revocare gradum\_'"

: Very well then.'

: -----

- : 1. Can someone help me with the translation?
- : 2. Source of this quote in Latin/Greek

It's a -probably deliberately- garbled mixture of several Latin quotations. Since it's in Latin verse (hexameters) it has obviously nothing whatsoever to do with the Greek prose writer Thucydides.

"Conscia mens recti" is from Ovid, Fasti IV, 311:

conscia mens recti fama mendacia risit  
Conscious of virtue, she laughed at the rumoured lies

"nec si sinit esse dolorem": couldn't find a direct source

"sed revocare gradum" is from Virgil, Aeneid VI, 128:

sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,  
hoc opus, hic labor est.  
but to recall one's steps and pass out to the upper airs  
this is the task, this the toil!

Naturally, the whole thing doesn't mean much, although some sort of meaning could possibly be construed.

I don't quite get the point of the joke. Perhaps it's just a schoolboy's reaction to being constantly exposed to Latin quotations (and having to learn them by heart).

Peter

--

Peter Marksteiner

**Rich Clancey**

2007-01-20 09:58:58 UTC

*Post by Peter Marksteiner*

It's a -probably deliberately- garbled mixture of several Latin quotations. Since it's in Latin verse (hexameters) it has obviously nothing whatsoever to do with the Greek prose writer Thucydides.

[...]

*Post by Peter Marksteiner*

I don't quite get the point of the joke. Perhaps it's just a schoolboy's reaction to being constantly exposed to Latin quotations (and having to learn them by heart).

It might be useful to figure out which Latin books were in use in Wodehouse's schooldays. I'm sure most of the quotes would be from a textbook rather than original sources.

I had Latin in high school, and recall none of it, but at the time we were fond of translating TV commercials into Latin, plus rendering all of the popular unflattering nicknames for teachers into Latin so we could use them freely in front of the teachers. No "point" to it, just boyish high spirits.

--  
rich clancey \*\*\*@bahleevyooome.world.std.com  
"Shun those who deny we have eyes in order to see, and instead say we see because we happen to have eyes." -- Leibniz

**t\*\*\*@gmail.com**

2007-01-22 12:13:37 UTC

This is another source which I traced back..  
It comes from : The Anatomy of Meloncholy..by Thomas Burton. citing Virg. Aen 6.  
I think it is a better translation

facilis descensus Averni;

Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras;

Hic labor, hoc opus est.---

"It is an easy passage down to hell,

But to come back, once there, you cannot well."

thanks for the help  
cheers  
z

**t\*\*\*@gmail.com**

2007-01-22 12:25:42 UTC

Dear Peter,  
I found another source for the Sed Recovare Gradum part of it.

It comes from : The Anatomy of Meloncholy..by Thomas Burton. citing Virg. Aen 6.  
I think it is a better translation  
<http://www.psyplexus.com/burton/52.htm>  
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Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras;

Hic labor, hoc opus est.---

"It is an easy passage down to hell,

But to come back, once there, you cannot well."

thanks for the help

cheers

*Post by Peter Marksteiner*

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Peter

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Peter Marksteiner