P. Oxy. LXXVII 5106: Exhortation in Hexameters

SCHUBERT, Paul
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68 δόκεω δὲ μὴ τις ἀκοίτη. See Nonn. D. 10.251–3 εἰς δόκεω ἄμμα τίτανεν ἐκ ἱέρᾳ λοξα δοκεῖν, / μὴ Ζεφύρου πνεύσει πλιν θυατηφόρος αὖρη. Perhaps she is watching in case one of the stars should strike her husband.

70 θεόν, or possibly ἄρχεον.
End, ἐνέκιψεν or ἐνέκιψε (both WBH).
72 ἤγιλθον, ἤγιθα δὲ RLC.
73 πέρας ἄξωνος RLC. This phrase is not attested elsewhere in epic poetry. ἄξων refers to the axis of the celestial sphere, of which the end (πέρας) is the pole.
End, e.g. [ἄνα] (WBH).
74 κτιδόνιον (WBH) here of the male, as at AP 5.120.1 (Philod. epigr. 26.1 Sider) and elsewhere; see further LSJ.
76 σέλαι probably represents σέλαις in some case. Alternatives include some form of τελαγέω or τελαγίζω.
78 καλλιτ. [. Perhaps a reference to Callisto, who was turned into the constellation of the Bear.
81 Σιδώνος. For the spelling Σιδώ- (instead of Σιδω-), frequent in hexameter poetry, see e.g. II. 6.209–90 γανακωσίων Σιδώνος; Call. fr. 384.50 P1. Κυνόθε Σιδώνος με κατήγαγεν ἐνθάδε γαλάκτω.
82 Supplement by WBH. The switch to the future tense is noteworthy.
84 ἥπιον. Presumably second person singular future, to judge from the futures in the two preceding lines.

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5106. Exhortation in Hexameters

50.4B:34/D(1–2)b  fr. 1 6 × 16.7 cm  Early third century

Plate 3

One large and two small fragments. Left margin 1.4 cm (fr. 1) and 1.3 cm (fr. 2). Frs. 1 and 2 are both broken at the top and bottom; they could belong to the same column. The margin tends to drift towards the left, following Maas’s law. No sheet-join is visible. In fr. 1.2–5, a defect of the papyrus produced an oblique ridge on which the scribe could not write, leaving a short space in the middle of some words. On the back, upside down in relation to the front, the papyrus has been recycled into a land register; note references to ἐπι(αρµένη). This is quite unusual though not unparalleled; cf. LXXI 4818.

The text is written along the fibres. It is written in a small and informal but regular hand, sloping slightly to the right. Epsilon sometimes takes a cursive shape, although it is often written in two half-loops. The hand can be placed in the early third century; see Seider, Pal. Gr. II 38 and 42; GMIW² 31 and 66. Although we are dealing with a practised scribe, he is apparently not a professional copyist. This could be either an amateur copy of an existing poem or an amateur poet’s autograph draft. The absence of corrections (see e.g. VII 1015) rather suggests the former, but there could have been some corrections in the part now lost. The script on the back is a cursive of more generous size, comparable in many respects with
P. Yale III 137 (216/17), except for the fact that here the script is upright whereas the Yale hand slopes to the right.

The scribe uses diaeresis inorganically, on initial iota (fr. 1.3, 24), and to indicate that ηι is not to be taken as a diphthong (28). A short horizontal stroke above line level (7 (?), 12, 21, 28) could be taken as punctuation, though there are also high dots (4, 7, 16, 26, 30) and a low stop (14). In 12, the scribe wrote γεινώμεθα for γινώμεθα (γειν-).

The two main fragments preserve remains of the left part of hexameters; in the larger of the two, a little more than half of each verse is lost. It is nevertheless possible to recognize that the speaker addresses a group, sometimes using the first, sometimes the second person plural, as well as the first person singular. A form of dialogue is not excluded, but no clear pattern seems to emerge from the preserved fragment. The speaker claims to have a divine message to convey (15 φράζω ίτιδες τὰ θεία), and stresses the fact that he is not seeking a reward (16 οὐχ ἵνα µιθὸν εἴχω). This is not a prophecy in the sense of a message announcing future events, but a claim from a person who is the holder of a superior truth. He lays emphasis on the idea of shining whiteness (7 λευκοὶ γεινώμεθα; 9 φαινόπτατον; 12 λευκοὶ γεινώμεθα; 13 τὰς ἁγιός λευκάς; fr. 2.10 λευκ[)], and seems to fear that his addressees might not believe him (fr. 1.14 εἰ µὴ πιστεύεσθε; 26 καὶ καταπιστεύεσθε; cf. 21). Death and souls also appear to play a role in this passage (2 ἀργαλέοι θανάτους; 17 ψυχαί; 32 ἀργαλέου θανάτου). Finally, the speaker apparently gives a message of hope in a life after death (29 ἐλπίζοι βουλήτευσε); cf. 21).

This text seems to have no direct parallel either in literary or in magical papyri. Although some elements point to a kind of ritual performance relating to the destiny of the soul after death, it is also possible that this is an early fragment of a Christian homily in hexameters, where the pagan elements have been recycled with a new meaning. To start with the first hypothesis, repeated clauses underline the performative character of the text. A form of cleansing is expected under the metaphor of whitening. From a formal point of view, the closest parallel is to be found in Empedocles. In his hexametric Περὶ φύσεως (31 B 17 Diels–Kranz, revised with supplements by O. Primavesi, Empedokles Physika i (2008)), the extant text starts with δίπλ’ ἐρέω (1 DK = 232 P, repeated in 16 DK = 247 P), indicating direct speech. There is a single addressee (14 DK = 245 P, ἀλλ‘ ὅγε μέθων κλόθιν: µάθη γάρ τοι φέρεις αὐξεί). The speaker also insists on the trustworthiness of his message (26 DK = 257 P, εἰ δ‘ ἄκουες λόγους εὐτόνοι οὐκ ἀπατηλόν). In another poem, the Καθαρμοί, Empedocles addresses his fellow citizens of Acragas (B 112.1–2 DK, ὁ φίλοι,
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οἵ μέγα ἄντων κατὰ ξανθόι Ὄκραγαντος / ναίετ' ἂν' ἀκρα πόλεος). In spite of a resemblance with Empedocles, there is no exact parallel to any extant fragment. The use of the verb καταπιτεύω (26) finds no secure parallel before Polybius (2.3.3, 3.70.7, 3.80.3, 5.34.3), and its use is otherwise restricted to prose. Formally speaking, we could thus be dealing with a distant imitator of Empedocles.

The insistence on whiteness however brings us to Pythagorean doctrine. This philosopher was said to have dressed in white, see Ael. Vit. Hist. 12.32 Πιθαγόρας ὁ Σάμιος λευκὴν ἔθησε καὶ ἐφόρει εὐθιστά ἐφορείν καὶ ἀναξυρίδας. He also allegedly taught that men should perform sacrifices with white and clean garments (Diod. Sic. 10.9.6 λαμπρὰς καὶ καθαρὰς ἐφορεῖς). This teaching is mentioned by Alexander Polyhistor (FGH Hist 273 F 93 = Diog. Laert. 8.33 θεοὶ μὲν ἄνεξ ἐφθομίας λευκεμονοῦτας καὶ ἀγγειόντας), and in Iamblichus’ Vita Pythagorica 153; see C. Riedweg, Pythagoras (2002) 53 (= Eng. tr. 35). A link between whiteness and the eschatological echoes found in our fragments is provided in Iambl. Vit. Pyth. 155 τούς δὲ τελευτήσαντας ἐν λευκάς ἐθηκτά προςεμπέιν ὅιον ἐμόμιζε. Our verses could therefore reflect some Pythagorean teaching, in a tradition close to the so-called Golden Verses; see Riedweg, Pythagoras 161 (= Eng. tr. 123) and J. C. Thom, The Pythagorean Golden Verses (1995) 32: ‘The poem is not cited by this title [i.e. χρυσά ἔπη] before the time of Alciphron and Iamblichus [ii/iii], but verses from the poem are already quoted from the time of Chrysippus [iii bc] onwards.’ This new text differs however from the Golden Verses in at least two respects: the GV consistently address a second person singular; and they contain some sort of paraenetic teaching, whereas the fragment published here looks more like a sort of preamble to the teaching proper.

Moving to the second hypothesis, namely that this is a poem of Christian content, one could argue that the speaker is a preacher encouraging his listeners to embrace the Christian faith. In that case, the distinctly pagan Olympus (4), Phaethon (5), and Ares (28) should be understood as metaphors for ‘heaven’, ‘sun’ and ‘strife’. An expression such as ἀργαλεῖο θανάτοιο goes back to Mimnermus, but finds parallels in Gregory of Nazianzus, who also uses Phaethon for the sun, as well as θοί Ἄρη for war. Repeated mention of whiteness could be somehow related to white garments worn by martyrs (see Ἀρισ. 7.14 ἐπλοῦσαν τὰς στολὰς αὐτῶν καὶ ἐλεύκαναν αὐτὰς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ ἀριστοῦ); or it could refer to the purification of sins, see e.g. Euseb. Comm. Psalm. (PG 23.440C) and διὰ μὲν ἀπαθείας καθαριζόμεθα, διὰ δὲ τῆς γνώσεως λευκανόμεθα; Didym. Cæc. Comm. in ᾿Ιαχ. 4.312 τῆς νοητῆς λευκότητος, ἣν μόνος καὶ τὰ ἐχεῖν δύναται ὁ λευκανόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ. See also LXX Ps. 50.9 πλατεῖς με, καὶ υπὲρ χύνα λευκανθήσομαι. The use of καταπιτεύση (26) is reminiscent of LXX Mi. 7.5 μὴ καταπιτεύσῃς ἐν φίλοις. Again, the expression εἰ μὴ πιτεύσητε (14) could echo one of several passages in John’s Gospel, e.g., 8.43 ἐγὼ δὲ ἐστι τὴν ἀλλήλησαν λέγω, αὐ τιτευτεῖ μοι. According to this line of interpretation, at the end of the fragment, the speaker would reject
carnal love (27 μὴ φιλότητι δεθῶμεν) as well as jealousy and strife (28 μὴ ζῆλος καὶ Ἄρης), warning his listeners against false hopes (29 ἐλπὶ διὰ βοσκώμεθα). The true life would follow earthly existence (30 ἡ ζήλευμα μετὰ γαίαν), in spite of the death of the flesh (31 θνήσκομεν ἐν σάρκεσσι).

A Christian interpretation looks attractive, although it should be stressed that there is not a single element in the text that can be unmistakably identified as Christian. Moreover, if a dating of the script in the early third century is correct, this would be a very early case of Christian poetry in hexameters. Looking at early Christian poetry, one could mention a hymn attributed to Clement of Alexandria (preserved at the end of chap. m of his Paedagogus), or another hymn by Methodius of Olympus, both in the third century. There is also an anapaestic Christian hymn with musical notation (XV 1786; late iii). But none of those is in hexameters. We could therefore be dealing with an early precursor of a form of poetry best represented one century later by Gregory of Nazianzus.

Feminine caesura occurs in 66% of cases (21 feminine versus 11 masculine caesurae), a figure comparable to Apollonius Rhodius’ 67% and Dionysius Periegetes’ 65%, and relatively low compared to Callimachus’ 74% and Nonnus’ 82%; see M. L. West, *Greek Metre* 177. Contraction of the second biceps is at 35% (11 versus 20), a rather low figure by all accounts. Meyer’s First Law is broken twice (11 and 27), his Second Law is broken in 21 and 25, and 16 offends against both (but against the First only if οὐχ ἵνα µιθὸν is taken as a single metrical unit). Giseke’s and Hilberg’s Laws are respected. The poet’s level of metrical competence seems on the whole quite acceptable.

In the commentary, suggestions made by Dr Martin L. West are marked with MLW, those made by Professor Peter J. Parsons with PJP, those made by Dr Ruey-Lin Chang with RLC, those made by Dr Enrico Magnelli with EM, those made by Dr W. Benjamin Henry with WBH.
ίδιοι χθὼν καὶ Ὀλυμπος[ε]

εὐκλέον λευκοῖ γενώμεθα . . . [μηδέν κρυπτὸν ἔχομεν]

τάκς ἀκολούθως Ἀνέ, [εἰ μὴ πιστεύσῃ τά τω, [φράζω ταύτα τά θεία μετέ][ν ἰνα μεθὲν ἔχων δ, [ψυχαί τοὺς μέθεας τη, [μη γὰρ ἀνπάσχοι πες[ε ἀλλὰ μένοι φορό, {[ποι εὐσεβής . . . εσθῆ ἑ][πολλάκι τούτα λέγω, πιστεύ[

και καταπιετεύχθησεν παλλάλλου[ογ-

μη φιλοτητὴ δεθώμενα ου[κ[μη[ξήλωσκαρπη[πλε[ανδην[διὰβοςκωμεθ[α

...]ιομεταγαίνω [...] ,[σκομμενεκαρκεσί[και[στομεμεγευθανάτω[ νωσκοκολακεύοσαζετ[...[]οσκωθανάτοι[]ε[να[...]υπερ[.]...[.]

ίπτομεν ἐκάκλασι δοξάζετε[. . .]τος ὡς θανατο[ε[. . .]ε[. . .]υπερ[. . .]...[.]

Ἀργαλέου θανάτω[ν ὑπὸ κύκλως δοξάζετε[]...]τος ὡς θανάτο[ο . . .]ε[. . .]υπερ[. . .]...[.]

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 

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1. half-loop, open at top  
2. lower left corner  
3. remnants of ascending and descending obliques, followed by a break and the lower part of a descender short space between  
1 and e  
4. trace suggesting the edge of the lower right-hand arc of a circle  
1, only upper part  
5. remains of a small loop  
6. two uprights, the second touched by a descending oblique at the foot  
7. high horizontal followed by trace suggesting upper left-hand arc of circle  
7, displaced but still visible  
8. c, the lower part of the left-hand arc, base, and cap of e or o  
9. upright sloping to the right, then lower part of loop with horizontal across, perhaps o, then lower part of upright sloping to the right, perhaps  
10. n, traces suggesting the upper left corner and upper part of the second upright of e, only lower left part preserved  
11. [the foot of an upright or oblique  
12. short horizontal above line level  
13. forward-sloping upright attached to the preceding e, with the beginning of a stroke going off to the right at the top  
14. the foot of an upright or oblique  
15. t, upright sloping high stop close to a  
16. [trace on edge  
17. top of a descending oblique with left-pointing serif, perhaps a  
18. low speck on edge  
19. a, small trace of descending oblique  
20. a, upright on edge of gap, then high speck; c seems to be missing lower part of curve; after c, left part of a curved letter, e o c; then high trace, followed by tilt of long vertical; then a high horizontal (perhaps a small letter lost in gap), followed by an oblique, perhaps γ or n; a stroke sloping down to the right, attached to a thin vertical, perhaps n; remains of a small hook that could belong to e  
21. top left part of a curved letter  
22. bottom part of upright attached to preceding a x k, ascending oblique attached to preceding k  
23. e, lower part of upright attached to preceding k  
24. lower oblique, shorter upper left oblique, upper part of the oblique and top of the second upright a, ascending oblique attached to preceding e, with upper part of descending oblique barely visible  
25. e, very cursive e between a and i  
26. [only lower left part of loop; then lower part of upright or oblique; traces on a single fibre, the last but one being the base of a loop; after the gap, a heavy trace at letter-top level; the upper part of an upright; γ as in 32; the foot of an oblique or upright  
27. only bottom right part of m  
28. only the upper parts preserved  
29. 9, lower left part of loop  
30. ω has thick dot at end of upper right end; dot below second upright of n  
31. [lower parts only; the last a loop  
32. t, tail touching e in space suit a (cf. 7, 12)  
33. ω, upright attached to preceding γ; left part of ω damaged  
34. 4, high horizontal attached to following ω end of line, mere traces  
35. n, perhaps t  
36. high traces  

1. . . painful death . . . practise holy glory . . . let earth and Olympus know . . . if anyone . . . Night and Phaethon (sun?) . . . let us desire prosperous . . . let us become white . . . let us have nothing hidden . . . What is fair is most brilliant . . . shining with lights (stars) . . . let us have no object of suspicion . . . let us become white . . . rouse ears that are white . . . if you do not trust: the . . . i utter these divine (words?) . . . not in order that I may have a reward . . . souls . . . talk . . . for let no one try to fly up . . . but remaining . . . where (are you going?) . . . god . . . often do I say this; trust . . . and pursue . . . by peaceful . . . refute (?) vainglory . . . practise holy glory . . . often do I say the same . . . and trust . . . recapitulation (?) . . . let us not be bound by love . . . not by jealousy and strife . . . let
2 ἄργαλεον θανάτοι[ο]. Cf. 32. See Minnern. fr. 4.2 W. (= 1 GP) θανάτου μέγιον ἄργαλεον; later examples: QS 7.282 χειροθή δὲ μέλαθρον ὑπ’ ἄργαλεον θανάτου; Greg. Naz. Carm. 1.2.2.54 (PG 37.532) εὕλη καὶ κακία, καὶ ἄργαλεον θανάτου; 1.2.5.70 (PG 37.672) μεστιγία ζωῆς τε καὶ ἄργαλεον θανάτου.

3 εἰκ[λο]ε[ν] ἑρῴν μελετήσατε. These words are restored on the basis of 24. Similar exhortations are found in the Church Fathers, e.g. Greg. Naz. Ox. 42.25 (PG 36.480a) ὑμεῖς μὲν οὖν τοῖς προ-πεμπτισάντως ήμιν μελετήσατε λόγους; Basil. Seleuc. Or. 28.3 (PG 85.3211) ὦ μαθηταί, τὰς Χικαδ村民们 φώνει μελετήσατε. Also in a pagan context, Strat. AP 12.187.5 μελέτητα μῶν.

4 εἰτ[ο] WBH, comparing II. 15.36 = Od. 5.184 ἐστο νῦν τὸ Παία καὶ Θήριον ἐφές ἐπεθεύει. Then e.g. χθῶν καὶ Ολυμπίμπης ἡ ἥχησε νῆμακα (PJP); or ‘fire’ and ‘water’ as the other two elements.

5 εἰ] τοι suggested by WBH. Perhaps the general sense of this and the preceding line was ‘let the world know if Night or the Sun sees anyone behaving wickedly’, e.g. εἰ] τῷ Νίξ Φαεθῶν τῷ [τῶν κακῶν ἐργα αἴδώτα (WBH), i.e. ‘if anyone behaves wickedly by night or by day’.

6 εἰκόνα ποθῶμεν. The adjective is not attested elsewhere, but the substantive εἰκόνα is found in AP 14.121.4, with the meaning of ‘good season’, ‘prosperity’: Ταύρῳ χθῶν βοήθει σῶμα ἄπν’ εἰκόνα. The uncontracted form ποθῶμεν is also not found in the TLG: see however Jo. Chrys. In Genesis (PG 54.442) ταῦτ’ ἄν εἰκόνα, ἐκεῖνα ποθῶμεν τὰ μέσα, καὶ δίκαια ἀγαθά.

7 . . . [θ] may be considered, but it would require one to take the cross-bar following the high stop as punctuation, a function already performed by the high stop itself; and the second person singular verb is unsuitable between two verbs in the first person plural.

8 ἔχουμεν. In theory one could also restore ἔχω μ[,] but the context favours the plural. The same applies to ἔχουμεν in 11.

9 δὲ λαμπόμενον τὸ καλὸν ΜΠ. See Theogn. 255 κάλλιστον τὸ δικαίωστον.

10 λαμπόμενον φαίθων. For the use of φαίθων in the plural with the meaning of ‘a beam of light’, see e.g. Hes. fr. 252.4 M-W θηρός τ’ εὐετία, ἐκέννα φαίθως εκλέγει. See also [Ophr.] II. 66.2 ἐκείνης φαίθως αὐγάς, φαίθωμεν δαιμόν; Greg. Naz. AP 8.3.3-4 ἐκείνης φαίθων . . . κάλλιστον λαμπόμενον.

11 ἔχουμεν. See 8 n.

12 τὰς αὐτὸς δεικνύεις ἀνεύ[ει] (ἀνεύ[ει] = RLC); cf. Philo De decalogos 1.18 τὰ ὀστα ἀνευκοδήθη καὶ ἐποιεύσατο ἔτε. WBH proposes ἀνεύ[ει] (ἀνεύ[ει] would breach Meyer’s Third Law). The audience is perhaps being asked to pay close attention and take the speaker’s words to heart. In Martial 13.2.9, candidus aure is used of someone who is expected to lend a benevolent ear to the poet.

End, WBH proposes e.g. δεικνύσι ἔτε (cf. II. 18.206 ὀδός γὰρ ἔτε) as apodosis to the conditional clause at the beginning of the next line.

14 End, WBH proposes e.g. τὰ τῶν [προτέρων ἔτε] ἀνθρώπων, to be taken with what follows.

15 μετ’[]. Perhaps μετ’[ἀγγελος (RLC)].

20 τοι εὐετίας . . . ἐεθεθε ϑε[ι]. There must be a verb indicating movement: ‘where will you go?’ This could be followed e.g. by θε[ίον ἀλλατίστεις ἐφέτειμα, ‘if you transgress the gods’ orders’, see II. 24.570 ὄνος δ’ ἀλλατιστείς ἐπετιμής; or perhaps δεικνυτε ἀλλατίστεις ἐφέτειμα when you hear the gods’ orders’, see Coll. 100 μητρίῃς ἐρᾶστε ἀλλατίστεις ἐφέτειμα.

21 πολλάκιον τότο πάθη. πείτε[εισατε] (WBH, noting the aorists at 14 and 26) or πείτε[εισατε]. Expressions of this kind are frequently used in exhortations; see e.g. Dem. Eudid. 48.1 ἔως ἀρχηγός, ὦ ἀδερετίς Ἀθηναίοι, τείνων ὑμῶν εἶναι δοκικό, πολλάκιον πάθων περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ὡς; Απ. Ηρών. 2.1.25 διὰ τότο πάθη πολλάκιον ‘ταῦτα μελέτατε καὶ ταῦτα πρόξειμα ἔχετε’; Cyrril. Hier. Catheches ad ἀ-
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luminandos γὰρ λέγω τὸ αὐτὸ πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ὅντα ἐντυπωθῆ ὑμῶν τῷ τῇ διανοίᾳ. καὶ ὅτι μὲν ὁ Θεὸς Υἱὸς ἔχει, τοῖς διανοίας.

22 ὃς γεγυναί[µεν] διώκετε. The object of διώκετε is lost; ‘pursue (happiness) by peaceful means’?

23 τὴν κενεαὐχήν. The substantive κενεαὐχήν is not found elsewhere; a form of the adjective κενεαὐχή̂ would be a more secure alternative; see e.g. Nonn. D. 1.426 κενεαὐχήα ῥήξατο φωνήν. A substantive κενεαὐχήμαα finds a late attestation in Eust. De capta Thessalonica p. 32 Kyriakidis ἐν οἰκείοι κενεαὐχήμαι.

End, ἀπείλετε (WBH), ‘refute,’ would give suitable sense. ἀπείλαυνετε may also be considered. The participle ἀπείλαυνεσσα would give a breach of Meyer’s Third Law and be out of place in the chain of verbs in the 2nd pl.

26 καὶ καταπιτεύστε. Perhaps paired with another subjunctive in the protasis of a condition, with the apodosis placed first in the sentence (following πολλὰκι τὰῦτα ἐν ὑμῖν in 25); cf. 14.

παλιλλογία. End, e.g. (WBH) παλιλλογίας δὲ πίθηθε (as a new sentence) or πίθηθε (continuing the protasis of the assumed condition). ‘heed my repeated words.’ παλιλλογία is otherwise a prose word, but παλιλλογία is found at E. 1.1.26. For the form of the second half of the verse, cf. e.g. paradisaeis πίθηθε (AR 2.324, 3.354).

27 μὴ φιλότητι δεθίβψχγεν αἰνεῖτε. See Basil. Seleuc. Or. 36.2 (PG 85.385) ἐθεῖται νοσήματε. EM suggests ἔθησθε, or perhaps ἔθησθε παθεωόσθε. See Greg. Naz. Carm. 1.2.29.103 (PG 37.987) ἄρχη γὰρ φιλότητος ἀπάθειος ὅσε ἀναιδής.

28 μὴ ζῆλου καὶ Ἀρηίς. The pairing of ζῆλος and Ἀρηίς supports a metaphorical understanding of the latter (i.e. ‘strife’). See Ep. Rom. 13.13 μὴ ἐρῆ λαβεῖ καὶ ζῆλον.

29 ἔλπίς μοι βοῶμεις ἑλ. In a Christian context, one could understand ‘let us feed on the hope (of salvation)’. This is however almost a proverbial expression already among pagan writers: see Soph. Ant. 1246 ἐλπίς δὲ βάσκους; I. 948 Radt ἐλπίς γὰρ ἡ βάσκους τοὺς παλλόν βροτὰν; Eur. Bacch. 617; Phoen. 396; Men. Sent. 51 αἱ ἐλπίδες βάσκους τοὺς κενοὺς βροτὰν. Nonnus has ἐλπίδα βάσκων at D. 3.359, 34.102, 35.248.

30 ἡ ζήλος μετὰ γάιαν. Tight space allows only a spondee at the beginning of the line, hence ἡ ζῆλος. The formula μετὰ γάιαν is found frequently in Nonnus, always at the same metrical position as in our verse. It is regularly applied to a change from the life on Earth to a life in Heaven, both in a pagan and in a Christian context: see D. 1.446; 9.150; 21.296; 25.139; 31.238; pse. ὥ. ἔρ. 14.73; 16.27; 17.44.

31–2 E.g. (WBH) θητείςκουμεν εν σάρκεσσα [i], ἀταρ παρῆν . . . | λείτουμεν ἀργαλέων θανάτου ν πατὶ τέρμα μαλῶνετε. Perhaps an allusion to Ἐπ. Ὁμ. 8.13 εἰ γὰρ κατὰ σάρκα ζῆςτε μέλλετε ἀποθῆκενεν, εἰ δὲ πνευματί τας πράξεις του εὐματος θανατοῦ ζῆετε; or ‘our flesh dies (but our soul is immortal)’.

33 and 34 αὕτις τις καὶ αὕτις τις καὶ αὐτής καὶ αὐτής τις. The general idea of verses 30–33 seems to be: ‘You should strive for a life after your earthly existence; for we die in our flesh and cannot escape the consequences of painful death; you should therefore consider your earthly existence as a form of punishment and not be afraid of death.’
88

HEXAMETERS

fr. 2

[...][
κ[...][
ev[
χρ.[

φρο[  
λυ[  

ου[  
ευ[  

λευ[  

γλθο[  
ζευ[  
fr. 3

[...][, ascending oblique; the base of a circle on the line with traces above to left and right
[...][, upright, with oblique ascending from mid-level; then traces of ink
[...][, trace at mid-level suggesting the lower left-hand arc of a circle
[...][, flat trace above the line
horizontal at line level, with an ascending oblique attached to its left end, perhaps θ or ϖ
[...][, speck at line level

10 Perhaps λευ[οί γενώμεθα as at fr. 1 7, 12 (WBH).

fr. 3

[...][, the base of a small circle
[...][, an upright; the lower part of an upright or oblique with a further trace to the right; perhaps the first stroke and belly of ά

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