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A column-top with upper margin about 2.2 cm high and remains of sixteen lines. The back is blank except for some ink stains near the foot. The space between lines is 0.25–0.5 cm deep, with a slightly larger gap of 0.6–0.7 cm between lines 8 and 9 and between lines 13 and 14.
The fragment is written in an informal, somewhat irregular hand, generally upright, generally bilinear (ι and ρ project below the line, φ above and below). A certain cursive tendency shows in line-final α and ε, which prolong their horizontal elements to the right, and in the frequent ligatures (notably after α η ι μ τ). ε sometimes has its upper element written in a single movement together with the cross-bar, sometimes added as a separate oblique. Π appears twice in the formal shape, with strongly curved right-hand upright (2, 14), otherwise cursively as a simple arch.

Dating the hand is complicated by its irregularity, whether we see it as a bookhand with cursive elements or as a formalized cursive. Provisionally I should set it at the frontier between the Roman and Byzantine periods. For datable parallels in (sub)literary texts, see LXIII 4352 (hexameters mentioning Zeus Kapitolios), dated by its content c.285; more cursive and more developed forms in LXXV 5063 (late III?) and in GBEBP 9a (388). Cf. also P. Ant. I 15 (iv?).

Diaeresis marks initial vowels in 5 and 16; in 10 its function is unclear. Elision is indicated in at least one instance (10) and possibly in a second (5, in lighter ink); no certain example of unmarked elision or scriptio plena. There are traces of two accents: one grave or circumflex (5, in lighter ink) and one apparent acute (10); see also 2 n. If lines 10 and 11 are correctly interpreted, iota adscript is not written.

There are several additions or corrections in lighter ink, but not necessarily by a second hand: 2, a sign or letter over -ων; 5, a sign over η and ε struck through (scriptio plena replaced with elision?); 7 and 9 ε struck through (correcting itacistic ει for short ι?); ηι for long ι remains uncorrected (15), and also δοτεϲ for δοντεϲ (11, another phonetic spelling?). 10 seems to be corrupt.

The cursive features of the hand may suggest that the papyrus is not the work of an experienced scribe. We have then to ask whether it is an amateur copy of an existing text, or the actual autograph of the author. Autographs have certainly been identified among literary papyri; see T. Dorandi, ZPE 87 (1991) 18–21, for a list: a striking example is the Encomium of Hermes/Theon, VII 1015, another celebratory composition from Oxyrhynchus. But the corrections there have the character of author variants: those in our papyrus are just orthographic niceties, while the apparent corruption in line 10 remains uncorrected. Thus we cannot tell whether the poem itself is earlier than the copy in 5191 or contemporary with it.

The text is clearly set out in cola. That, the metrical patterns, and the literary vocabulary, identify it as verse. We do not know how much is lost to the left, or whether any of the cola were originally indented; as it is, the column is already quite wide (c.12 cm at line 5). Line 1, the top of a column, may have been the first line (or the title), and there is no reason to doubt that all 16 lines belong to the same composition, though no way of proving it either.

A rigorous account of the metre is difficult, since all the cola lack their beginnings, and some their ends. There is no sign of responson to suggest strophic
construction. The basic movement is anapaestic/dactylic, with occasional single-short elements (4?, 10, 11). In what seems to be an epinician poem, we might naturally look for dactylo-epitrite. But the ‘epitrites’ here are few and mostly (perhaps always) limited to verse-end. Professor D’Alessio therefore suggests that the whole basic structure consists of anapaestic cola, some acatalectic (ending ⏑⏑‒‒), some catalectic (ending ⏑⏑‒‒‒), some apokrota (ending ⏑⏑‒⏑‒‒); or indeed the equivalent in dactyls. This scheme does not quite fit lines 10 and 11, but both lines are in some degree corrupt (see commentary ad loc.

Anapaests appear relatively often in poetry of the imperial period (West, Greek Metre 170–72), notably in hymns such as that to Antinous in the Kourion inscription (I. Kourion 104, SEG 53.1747bis), but also in other genres (cf. the mime 5187). Normally, however, they take the form of dimeters, whereas 5191 includes longer cola: something similar in Philostr. Heroicus 55.3, anapaests with Doric vocalization, in which Achilles summons Echo to sing the praises of Homer. For dactylic lyric compare Macedonicus’ hymn to Asclepius (IG II2 4473 = Furley & Bremer, Greek Hymns (2001) 7.5), late Hellenistic, with C. A. Faraone, Mnemosyne 64 (2011) 206–31, and various oddities of the Roman period (West, Greek Metre 176–7).

The context remains uncertain. Καπιτώλιοϲ (6) looks like a reference to Zeus Kapitolios; and that, in conjunction with σταδίοϲ (16), may direct us to the Capitoline Games, whether the great Roman festival or the local imitations set up e.g. at Oxyrhynchus in the late third century (see 6 n.). We can perhaps recognize the outlines of an epinician: news reaches the poet (2–3) of an athletic (16) victory at the Capitoline Games (6). 15 ἱθύτονοϲ may even be a direct reminiscence of Pindar; and with Pindar in mind we could see references to myth (8? 12?) and poetry (7, 9) as part of the traditional structure of the praise-poem. This would be remarkable. The Roman world produced many self-advertising athletic and poetic victors (see e.g. 5202), and the epinicians of Pindar and Bacchylides certainly circulated, yet there is very little evidence that the Pindaric model found imperial imitators; see I. Rutherford in P. Agócs et al. (edd.), Receiving the Komas (2012) 93–104.

If we take our poem as an epinician, we need to ask whether it refers to the Roman or the local games, whether the notional victor was local or foreign, and whether it is an imported or a local composition. Then there is the further question whether this poem celebrates a victor in the competition, or was itself an entry in the competition. Note LXIII 4352, hexameter compositions which celebrate Antinous and then Diocletian and his Prefect, where Zeus Kapitolios has installed the new Emperor and should reward the poet with an Olympic crown: the editor suggested that the verses were composed to be recited at Capitoline games. But of course there were other poetic competitions in Egypt (see 4352 introd.), and perhaps other types of occasion. In the context of athletics (16?), remember the various compositions designed probably for performance at the Gymnasium of Oxyrhynchus (below, 5194 introd.); if Nike is central (2 n.), we could think of
processions in which her statue was carried before images of the imperial family (LXI 4125 7–8 n.) and of the (partly metrical) ‘mime’ for the accession of Hadrian (P. Giss. Lit. 4.4; Mim. adesp. 5 Cunningham).

The poet remains anonymous. Καπιτώλιοϲ shows that he (or she) wrote no earlier than the first century AD. He writes competent anapaests, in a mixture of dialect forms: Doric alpha in ιπτα̣μένα and κάρυς, possibly also τύχαϲ (if genitive singular) and ηριπτομένα (if feminine nominative singular), but epic-Ionic eta in νηοῖϲ and πελώρην (if correct). He seems to know Pindar (15), and if we interpret his work as an epinician we can see the overall design as in the Pindaric tradition. It is remotely possible that we have a local copy of a work by some external author. More likely, no doubt, that we have a local copy of a local composition, perhaps even an autograph. A local composition might refer to the Ludi Capitolini, but again more likely to a local ἀγών καπετωλιακόϲ, provided always that 5191 should be dated iii/iv, a judgment that like all palaeographic judgments may be open to question.

I am grateful to Prof. E. L. Bowie, Dr D. Colomo, Prof. W. Furley, and Dr L. Savignago for sharing their thoughts on the papyrus, and to Prof. G. B. D’Alessio, Dr W. B. Henry, and Prof. P. J. Parsons for the contributions indicated by their initials.
the long cross-bar guarantees τ (cf. 14); then a small diagonal trace on the edge at line level 5, first, specks; second, a slightly curved vertical on the right suits the rounded π ϑ, ϑ likelyest, but possibly 
the loop of π, a vertical on the edge, shorter than most, consistent with the right vertical of α 5, the figure coming in high and a small trace above it favour η over Α. A line coming up out of the lacuna, ϕ or 1; a small trace at mid-height τ, upright τ, the trace above is in lighter ink, either right-hand side of ϑ or a very round apostrophe ϵ deleted with a cancel-stroke γγ rather than γγ, a descending oblique joining an upright; the height of the upright suggests Ν rather than Λ, [high trace ], remains of the base and extended cap as in 3; a small trace above the cap 7, a descending oblique joining an upright 8, deleted with a cancel-stroke in greyer ink ρυ, the top of a small bowl: ς, or ω; a short, slightly concave upright, consistent with Ν, ι or ω, end of a high horizontal stroke: τ, ρ, ι or ω, joined to a, the tail of Α, ϑ, or ι; the height best suits 3, lower parts of the first stroke and bridge, too low for Α, foot of a stroke ascending steeply from left to right, e.g. Ν, deleted with a cancel-stroke in greyer ink 10, a curved foot, most likely π or ι 11, the left-hand diagonal descends too sharply to fit Α, a round letter, probably ι or ω, the foot of the right-hand upright appears unusually pointed, and closer than usual to the left-hand upright a, ligatured to an upright slanting to the right 13, rising from letter-top level, an ascending oblique, slightly curving at the top, with papyrus surface abraded to the right and missing below i appears to have a low horizontal, but does not look like an ε: perhaps ι with a smudge of ink 14, a trace on the line, perhaps the curved foot of a vertical or diagonal 15, ρ or ι, the cross-bar of ι seems to be rewritten (corrected to or from ε?) 16, high trace: c, τ, ρ, or ϊ, a short high horizontal trace; a long cross-bar with a suggestion of the top of the upright of τ, a high curved trace and a horizontal just underneath the tail of Α: perhaps ε
‘... to me, flying, a herald on a chariot ... far-shining ... enormous ... temples of gods in ... streets (?) ... Capitoline ... task ... a foundation (?) of clear-sounding [songs] ... the understood harmony ... strive ... fortune ... having given to the ... goddess ... below, the enormous earth ... lift ... bracing (?) herself ... straight-stretched ... equal to ... in the stadia ...’

2 κάρυξ seems more likely than κάροξ’. If this is nominative, the lacuna probably contained a finite verb: cf. Od. 16.488–9 ὑφίστηται δὲ μοι παρ’ ἑταῖρων ἄγγελος ἤωτι, / κήρυξ. It may have been a verb of arrival, like ὕπαγε, or ἱλθε ... B. 18.16–17 ἱλθε(ν) ... κάροξ) or a verbum dicendi like εἰσ (cf. Tim. PMG 802). If κάροξ is vocative, the lacuna may have contained an imperative. I print κάρυξ with the traditional accent; see P. Probert, A New Short Guide to the Accentuation of Ancient Greek (2003) §156.)

The female flying messenger might be Nike. For Νίκα ... πταιμένα, see Eur. Ion 457–60; here Athena is addressed as Nike. See also Ar. Av. 574 αὐτίκα Νική πέτεται πτερύγων χρυσῶν, Paus. 5.17.3 ἐχοῦσα Νίκη πτερά. But I know of no passage where Nike is referred to as κήρυξ. Φήμα or the equivalent might also fit the context, as GBD’A and WBH both suggest: cf. Bacch. 2.1 (messenger), Hdt. 9.100, Aristoph. Av. 720, Nonn. Dion. 44.123, 18.1 and 24.179 (winged); GVI 805.3 (ilc) φήμα κηρύξεις(ει). I have found no reference to a chariot of Pheme, but perhaps such transport was generally available to mobile goddesses.

If a messenger is the subject, ‘the first few lines [may] offer a topos that occurs in the incipits of at least two Hellenistic epinician epigrams: that of the arrival of the news of the victory. This is found in both Callimachus’ Victory of Berenice and his Victory of Sosibius, and reverses the equivalent motif in the classical victory ode, where it is the new poem that is the vehicle for the diffusion of the news: Th. Fuhrer, Die Auseinandersetzung mit den Chorlyrikern (1992) 88–93’ (GBD’A). Maehler on Bacch. 2.1 compares Ebert, Epigr. auf Sieger 59.11–12 [ = SGO I 06/02/21] and 72.7–9, both victory poems.

😡 Breitbart. The apparent χ over the ο seems to be in lighter ink. Its function is unclear. χ is a critical sign commonly used in papyri, whose specific function is often unclear (cf. K. McNamee, Sigla and Select Marginalia (1992) 43–8, table 3), but it always occurs in the margin. GBD’A suggests that it is actually an acute accent corrected to a grave, or the other way round. If so, to distinguish ἐν’ δήλων from ἐποχῶν (ἐποχὴ ἐποχέω)?

3 τηλεφανὴς generally means ‘far-shining’ or ‘visible from afar’ (Achilles’ tomb in Od. 24.83). If it here applies to the subject in 2, and if that subject is e.g. Pheme, compare Soph. Phil. 189 ἀχὼ τηλεφανής, where the meaning seems to be ‘making its appearance from far away’.

4 ἐλμοί. Several words end thus, e.g. (-)άγγελμα, δέλμα, σέλμα, τέλμα. Archimedes, SH 202.1 (FGE 83) has σέλμα πέλωρον, ‘giant deck’, of Hero II’s monster ship. In epinician context, Pind. Ol. 10.21 πελώρων ... κλόες.


ἐν ὑπωρέιας: the traces between ν and ω match no letter perfectly, but the rounded π comes closest; ε small and partly closed, like ο. Then, after a damaged patch, a vertical trace high above the line. In itself, ὑπωρε- would suggest ὑπωρει- or ὑπωροφ-. ὑπωρε[ια]ς[ίοις] could make sense, and the word does occur in poetry (Il. 20.218, A.R. 2.380), though more often in prose. However, the space seems too narrow for as written normally, and [ι] would have to be abnormally tall. ὑπωροφ[ι]ς would introduce a word familiar from poetry, and ϕ would fit the high trace perfectly. However, ο does not match the ink (unless the traditional stroke is a mark of deletion), or the gap that follows.

], τ' [είς]: originally it seems ], τε: then someone, using lighter ink, added an elision mark and struck out ε. We may consider a word-ending ], τε(ε) (the first trace an upright), or the particle τ': perhaps ἐν ὑπωροφ[ια]ς[ίοις] εἰς τ' ἄγον[αιε], or ἐν ὑπωροφ[ια]ς[ίοις] τ' ἄγον[αιε] (PJP, ‘roofed streets’ referring to the four stoai of the Oxyrhynchus town-centre, LXIV 4441), but neither version explains all the ink; see previous note.
μαθεν: see R.(-)εμαθεν is unlikely, since it would give three successive short syllables.

Καπιτώλιος (sometimes Καπτώλιος) occurs occasionally as a proper name, but more commonly as an epithet of Zeus: Ζεύς Καπτώλιος = Jupiter Capitolinus. For his cult in the Greek East generally, see J. P. Oleston et al., ΖΠΕ 140 (2002) 108-9 (and SEG 52.1707); for Roman Egypt, G. Ronchi, Lexicon theonymon ii (1974) 401; for Oxyrhynchus, J. Whitehorne in AVRW II 18.5 (1995) 3084. The Capitoline Games were celebrated in his honour, and εταδιος in 16 suggests that this was the context here. In that case we have to choose between two different festivals. (1) The Ludi Capitoline at Rome, founded by Domitian in AD 86, held prime place on the athletic and musical circuit. See M. L. Caldelli, L'Agon Capitolinus (1999). (2) Imitations of the Roman model, called Καπιτώλια or βυς Καπιτωλικός, appear in Egypt from the later third century on: at Antinoopolis, founded in 267/8, and specifically at Oxyrhynchus, which celebrated its games first in 273 and possessed its own Καπιτώλιος (see J. C. Quinn and A. Wilson, 'Capitolia', JHS 103 (2013) 117-73, at 149). For the documentary evidence see P. Frisch, Zeh agonistische Papyri; LXIII 4352 introd.; below pp. 194-5, 198 [Remijsen].

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1.385).
ἐν . . . γυμνοῖϲι ϲταδίοιϲ; θεοῖϲ ἴκελον. Β. 63-7 τὸ δὲ πηδάλιον δηλοῖ ὁτι κυβερνᾷ τῶν τῶν ἄνθρωπων βίων ἡ τύχη. Σοὶ εὐθύτονοϲ . . . ἀπὸ ϲταλίκων ('straight' or 'upright'). However, as GBD'A points out, the equivalent πελώριοϲ in line 4. But in 12 πελώριον is the norm, and our author has In Homer the longer form than γαῖαν here, rather picked up in Thgn. 9 and in Q.S. 2.225, 6.335, 10.72). This recommends restoring the cross-bar of SH 159). If e.g. (ϲυν)ἔριθοϲ, FGE ἤρατο βρῖθοϲ would fill the space, and give sense; cf. Dorieus, 396.1 (ρ the left of ποδῶν δ' ὑπένερθε may precede it (LSJ s.v. ἔνερθε -εα

But it seems to make no obvious sense, particularly if διόϲτεϲ goes with ἐπιθετ', Therefore I have considered whether it represents a phonetic spelling of αἰϲίω (see for ε instead of αι Gignac, Grammar i 192–3), but this would be the only example of such a spelling in the text.

tύχαις accusative plural or Doric genitive singular?

11 [λοιχ]γ . . . θεα. Perhaps σταδίοιϲ, often applied to Athena but elsewhere also to other tutelary deities. However, it may be worth considering πηδα[λοιχ], as PJ suggests, if θεὰ (or θεα) refers to 10 Τύχαϲ: for Tyche as pilot (often in art) cf. Pind. fr. 40 διδύμοι ετρέφοιϲα πηδάλιοϲ, Dio. Chrys. Θ. 63.7 τὸ δὲ πηδάλιον δηλοῖ ὁτι κυβερνᾷ τῶν τῶν ἄνθρωπων βίων ἡ τύχη. So GVI 1516.3 τύχηϲ . . . άικαι (Orchomenos, π/1 bc).

δοτεϲ is probably a mistake for δῶτεϲ (cf. XLII 3017 δ ὅτεϲ, 1. δῶτεϲ); see Gignac, Grammar i 116–17. This would be an unexpected lapse in an otherwise quite literate manuscript. Alternatively, WBH suggests a graphic corruption, e.g. δοτεϲ for δ(εδωκ)ότεϲ. For the construction, cf. Eur. ΠΠ 920 μητρι δουσσα εϲι. The object might be e.g. τιμα, 'giving honour to the god(dess)', as at Eur. Βα. 342 μεθ' ἡμῶν τῶι θεῶι τιμὴν δίδου. Since the context is unknown, the possibility of a dual [λοιχ]γ δ’ ὅτι εϲ θεα (‘and when to the . . . goddesses’), though unlikely, cannot be excluded.

12 ], ν νέρθε: νέρθε may be adverb or preposition. The preposition takes the genitive, which may precede it [LS] s.v. ένερθε p.1.1.a): in that case perhaps read λον, which is not excluded by the traces (cf. Ι. 2.150 ποδῶν δ’ ὑπένερθε).

πελώρην γαυ[ων: γαύα πελώρη is a Hesiodic formula at verse end (Th. 159 etc., see West ad loc.; picked up in Thgn. 9 and in Q.S. 2.225, 6.335, 10.72). This recommends restoring γαυ[ων here, rather than γαυ[, where in any case we would expect γυιν. For the Ionic vocalization in πελώρη cf. 5 νηοῖϲ. In Homer the longer form πελώριοϲ is excluded by the space, while πελώρην γαἰα πελώρη (two-termination) is excluded by the traces.

13 ] [δύο ψευδ’: δύο optative or ψευδ’ infinitive? At the beginning, the trace stands well to the left of ρ; there may or may not have been a narrow letter in between. ]βρίθοϲ, with a damaged β, would fill the space, and give sense; cf. Dorieus, SH 396.1 (FGE 159) ἠρατο βριθοϲ. If e.g. (ϲυν)]βρίθοϲ, the cross-bar of ω must have been unusually prolonged.

14 ] χριστομένα: η χριστομένα (Doric feminine) or χριστομένα (neuter plural), c]χριστομένα or c]χριστομένα. If we accept the first articulation, ] η might end a noun agreeing with the participle. But if it was feminine singular, the author should have written Doric -α; if it was neuter plural, we might have expected -εα, though the author is not necessarily in full control of his dialects.

15 εἰθύτονοϲ: l. ἰθυτόνοϲ. The word occurs only at AP 6.187.4 (GP 3359), Alpheus, ἰθυτόνοϲ . . . αὗτοι σταδίων ('straight' or 'upright'). However, as GBD'A points out, the equivalent εἰθύτονοϲ is transmitted at Pind. Ol. 10.64–5 στάδιον μὲν ἀρίϲτευϲεν εὐθύτονοϲ / τοϲϲι τρέχων (where edd. normally print εἰθῦτον τῶον: WBH refers to W. S. Barrett, Greek Lyric, Tragedy, & Textual Criticism (2007) 73–4). The scholia understand it to qualify στάδιον, τὸ μὴ ἔχων καμῆπ, τῶν ἀπόλων ὅρμον, and so here στάδιοϲ appears in the next line.

16 ἰσκολοϲ: i has a diaeresis, as expected on word-beginning. Its dative probably preceded, e.g. θεαϲ ἰσκολοϲ.

στάδιοϲ refers to the racecourse as a place or as an event (cf. Pind. Ι. 1.22–3 λάμπῃ . . . ἀρετά ἐν . . . γεμνοῖϲι σταδίοϲιϲ; 1015 Ἄρεωϲ δ’ ἐν σταδίοϲιϲ ἐναγώνων ἀθλητήρεϲ [sc. κληξιωϲ]). The word following στάδιοϲ begins with α, then indeterminate traces: in this context δε[θα is worth considering.

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