

Proceedings of the 29th International Congress of Papyrology



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DI FORMAZIONE INTERDISCIPLINARE

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Mario Capasso, Paola Davoli and Natascia Pellé

II

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A fragment of a Greek novel? PMil I 2. 17 revisited

María Paz López Martínez

University of Alicante

maripaz.lopez@ua.es

Consuelo Ruiz-Montero

University of Murcia

consuelo@um.es

Abstract

P.Mil. I 2. 17 has been interpreted as a mythical or historical text and even considered as a fragment of Timaeus of Tauromenion. It was labeled by López Martínez, *Fragmentos papiráceos de novela griega*, 1998 – number 39 of her edition – as *valde incertum* –. The text is interesting both from a linguistic point of view and for raising a question concerning the literary genre to whom it pertains. The purpose of this paper is to review the text and to deep in the study of its literary genre.

Keywords

Ancient Greek Novel, Ancient Greek Mythography, Ancient Greek Historiography

Introduction

There are several unanswered questions regarding this *Papyrus Mediolaniensis* (P.Med.inv. 36). First edition was by Orsolina Montevechi in 1943 in Aegyptus with the title «Frammento storico o mitografico». Alfonsi wrote a short commentary accompanying this edition and labeled the text as «historiographical». Alfonsi mentions De Sanctis's opinion that the fragment could be considered a mythical-historical text, similar to the Μεσσηνιακά of Pausanias.¹ Daris argued in favor of interpreting the text as an assembly of gods.² Merkelbach did not exclude the possibility that the fragment could be a novel.

¹ Montevecchi / Alfonsi 1943. See also: Hombert 1947 and Merkelbach 1956.

² Daris 1966.

In 1998 the fragment was included in López Martínez's edition of novel fragments as number 39, under the label «*valde incertum*»,³ and Giulia Rossetto studied it in her Bachelor Thesis defended in 2012.⁴ The papyrus forms part of the library of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano. Its provenance is unknown. Montevechi dated it in the third century A.D.

The papyrus is a sheet from a codex that comprises two pieces. The bigger one measures 13.5 x 9 cm. The second one is a much smaller fragment, which is not dealt with by the *editor princeps*. The big one presents the central part of two columns. We are not sure if → follows ↓.

Each column contains 23 lines of writing and none is complete. The most extensive contains 38/40 letters. We want to mention that some lines of the *Phoinikiká* codex, for example, contain 57 letters or, perhaps, more. The writing is cursive and does not look like a professional scribe work, although it is a fluent *ductus* typical of a seasoned writer. It seems to have two *paragraphoi* in lines 16 and 18 (→), and two errors have been corrected *supra lineam*.⁵

One column seems to narrate a naval battle, perhaps in the middle of a storm. The frame of the second column clearly refers to a dialogue or a speech by one only person.

In this paper, we will try to deepen our understanding of the text by providing *loci paralleli* from the classical age onwards that can throw some light on it. Finally, we will try to give some conclusions on the possible literary genre to which our papyrus can belong.

We thank Prof. Carla Balconi for providing us with the excellent images with which we have worked.

1. Text (Mertens-Pack 02268.000 and LDAB: 4121, TM 62929)⁶

Fr. A →

...

] . κ̄ακων . [.] εθ̄ [1
] θαλάττη [.] απη . ο . [
] κερα τοῖς δ' ἐναντ[ίους	
] προς ουτε . [.] η . . αχ . [
] υειν αὐτοὺς ὅπου ἐχρῶ[ντο	5
] παρατάττεσθαί που κάλλι[ον	
] η κινουῦντες καὶ τὰς κορυφ[ὰς	

³ López Martínez 1998.

⁴ Rossetto 2012. We should like to thank her for sending us her Bachelor Thesis.

⁵ Rossetto 2012, 5-33 offers a complete and rich paleographical description of the fragment. She dates it in the first half of 3rd cent. A.D.

⁶ We are very grateful to W. B. Henry, M. Perale, N. Pellé and A. López García (ALG in app.) for their help in the reading of the papyrus. Of course, any possible errors are ours alone.

A ↓

...

1

5

10

15

20

...

B ↓

...

]. [

] .cχ.[

] .βερα[

]προπ .[

...

4 ἡ δ' εὐχὴ legimus : ἦδ[η ο]ὕχ Rossetto | 5 ἔ[στιν] temptamus | 6 γοργόνιον Π : γοργονεῖον Rossetto | τη Π | 6-7 ἀριστερᾶι ed.pr. | 7 γέλωσ legimus : γελω[ed. pr. | 8 τουτω Π | Ἄρ[εος supplemus | 10 π]άντα ed. pr. | 13 ὅτι... [ed.pr. : ἀπατ[Rossetto | 14 βλέπουσ[ι ed.pr. | 15 Ἄρη[ς supplemus | 16 φόνος ed.pr. : φογ[]ος Rossetto | βλέπε[τ]αι ed.pr. | ἦσυχ[ος vel sim. | 17 οὐδ' ἀσπίδα Π | 19 μάταιά Π ubi tertium a supra lineam in papyro scriptum | πά[ντες temptamus | 22 κρατ]εραῖς temptamus : ε.αγς Rossetto

Commentary

Fr. A → The recto contains some expressions that recall a military context, apparently a naval battle, since we read θ]αλάττη (l. 2), ἐναντ[ίους (l. 3), παρατάττεσθαι (l. 6), βαλεῖν ἐπιχειροῦντες (l. 8), τὰ ἀριστεῖα γέγονει (l. 17), and λάφυρα (l. 20).

The Attic -ττ- from θαλάττη used here appears in the following passage of Ninus romance also in a naval context, where discouragement is also rife among them and the protagonist is much more desperate than others: πρὸ [τρι]ῶν μὲν ἡμερῶν ἡγεμῶν [τοσ]αύτης δυνάμεως [έτοιμ]ης ἐπὶ πᾶσαν [ἀόκ]ως στρατεῦσαι [γῆν] καὶ θάλατταν (PSI 1305.48).

3]κερα δ' τοῖς ἐναντ[ίους seems to refer to the flanks of an army and to its enemies. It can be compared with Th. 1. 50. 1 οὐκ ἦσθημένοι ὅτι ἦσσηντο οἱ ἐπὶ τῷ δεξιῷ κέρα, ἀγνοοῦντες έκτεινον and 3. 78; Xen., *Hell.* 6. 5. 16 κατὰ κέρας προσβάλλειν, ἐπιτεσεῖν; Plb. 18. 24. 9 ἐδόθη παράγγελμα ... τοῖς δ' εὐζώνοις κερᾶν... Τίτος, δεξάμενος εἰς τὰ διαστήματα τῶν σημαιῶν τοὺς προκινδυνεύοντας, προσέβαλε τοῖς πολεμίοις; in Herpyllis fragment (P.Dubl. C 3. 26: τὴν μὲν κεραίαν οὐκ ἦν παραβαλεῖν) and κέρας (l. 28: τὸ κέρας οὐριον ἔχοντες)⁷ and in the papyrological fragments of the lost novel *Ninus*, P.Berol. 6926 B.III 4-6, κατέστησε δὲ τὴν μὲν ἵππο[ν ἐπὶ τῶν] κεράτων.

6 παρατάττεσθαί που κάλλι[ον, «to be drawn up in battle-order», is a typical verb for a military context, here with two adverbs, «better, any way»: Xen., *Hell.* 3. 2 ὡς δὲ ταῦτα ἦσθετο ὁ Δερκυλίδας, τοῖς μὲν ταξιάρχοις καὶ τοῖς λοχαγοῖς εἶπε παρατάττεσθαι τὴν ταχίστην εἰς ὀκτώ; *Ninus*, P.Berol. 6926 B. III 4 παρατάττε[ι. Plut., *Ant.* 65. 2-5 offers an interesting description of the battle in Actium with a vocabulary comparable with our papyrus. Cf. Plut., *Phil.* 10. 3-8 as well.

7 κινουῦντες and τὰς κορυφ[ὰς could also refer to a military context: τὰς κορυφ[ὰς could be the object of a participle parallel to κινουῦντες and to ἐπιχειροῦντες. It could be interpreted either as the helmet adornment, and, in this case, it would be a Homeric echo, as the *editor princeps* understood

⁷ We should like to thank Regla Fernández Garrido for this reference.

it, or as the spars of ships, or the summits of the mountains. Regarding the meaning see Plb. 8. 7. 3 ταῖς τῶν κατὰ κορυφὴν λίθων καὶ δοκῶν ἐμβολαῖς διεφθείροντο.

8 βαλεῖν ἐπιχειροῦντες «trying to make an attack» or «to throw something». For the possible infinitive form, we refer to the previous l. 3: προσβαλεῖν or βαλεῖν fits here very well. Compare with Ael. Arist. ... περιβαλεῖν ἐπιχειροῦντα νῦν τὴν πόλιν Λεπτινήν ...; Theodoretus, *Historia religiosa* 21 Ἐγὼ δὲ ... λίθοις βαλεῖν ἐπιχειρήσας ...; Id., *Quaestiones in libros Regnorum et Paralipomenon* 80 ... καὶ κατα τάχος ἀνέστρεψαν, οὐδενὸς τῶν ἀλλοφύλων προσβαλεῖν ἐπιχειρήσαντος.

9-11 The verb ἐρρήγνυτο, «was broken», used to refer to a part of the army, like in Th. 6. 70. 2 παρερρήγνυτο ἤδη καὶ τὸ ἄλλο στράτευμα, and D.S. 13. 51 τὸ συνεχὲς ἀεὶ τῆς τάξεως παρερρήγνυτο, but it could refer to the ship as well: Cassius Dio 39. 43 καὶ τὰ σκάφη τὰ μὲν ἀνερρήγνυτο. In this later sense, we could read κεραία, that is, the spar of the ship, quoting Hld. 22. 7. 1 τῶν τε πηδαλίων θάτερον ἀποβαλόντες καὶ τῆς κεραίας τὸ πλεῖστον συντρίψαντες, where a storm is described. It is also possible to read κέρατα as the subject of this verb, «the wings», or «flanks», which were broken in many places (πολλαχο[ῦ]).

In any case, the following lines seem to describe a big storm and the damage it does one, or more, ships: the subject of verb ἐ]πέκλυσεν, «it overflow, flooded», or κατέκλυσεν (l. 11) could be the waves, κύμα, mentioned on l. 10.

A possible verb φέ]ροντα on l. 10, which would recur on l. 13 (φερομε), where the participle could qualify a ship, but, of course, there are other possibilities.

In this line, the reading κ[α]ῖ μὴ οὐθ[] could be compared with Gorgias, Fr. 11a. 89 ἀλλὰ χρήματα μὲν μέτρια κέκτημαι, πολλῶν δὲ οὐθὲν δέομαι (cf. Fr. 11 a. 111-112 as well), and Arist., *EN* 1114 b 3-5 εἰ δὲ μῆ, οὐθεὶς αὐτῷ αἴτιος τοῦ κακοποιεῖν, ἀλλὰ δι' ἄγνοιαν τοῦ τέλους ταῦτα πράττει, διὰ τούτων οἰόμενος αὐτῷ ...; 1172 b. 35-36 οἱ δ' ἐνιστάμενοι ὡς οὐκ ἀγαθὸν οὐδ' ἅπαντ' ἐφίεται, μὴ οὐθὲν λέγουσιν, etc.

The possible verb κα]τέκλυσεν (l. 11) can be compared with that we read from Archilochus onwards (Archil., fr. 24. 9-149 κῶμ' ἄλὸς κατέκλυσεν), such as in Eur., *Or.* 341-44 τινάξας δαίμων κατέκλυσεν δεινῶν/ πόνων ὡς πόντου λάβροις ὀλεθρίοι/σιν ἐν κύμασιν. This poetic verb remains in later prose: cf. Dion. Hal. 20. 9 ὡς γὰρ ἀνήχθησαν αἱ νῆες ἀπὸ τοῦ λιμένος... ἄνεμος δ' ἐναντίος γενόμενος καὶ δι' ὅλης νυκτὸς κατασχὼν ἃς μὲν κατέκλυσεν, ἃς δ' εἰς τὸν τῆς Σικελίας πορθμὸν ἐξέβαλεν, ... καὶ τοὺς μὲν πλέοντας ἐν αὐταῖς ἐν τῇ παλιρροίᾳ τῶν κυμάτων κατακλυζομένους διέφθειρε; Strab. 16. 2. 26 ἐπέκλυσεν ἐκ τοῦ πελάγους κύμα τοὺς φεύγοντας ὅμοιον πλημμυρίδι, καὶ τοὺς μὲν εἰς τὸ πέλαγος ἀπήρπασε καὶ διέφθειρεν. These texts can illuminate our papyrus.

A form of οἴχομαι could be read on l.11, a form which recall us expressions such as Hdt. 4. 145 οἴχεται πλέων, *ibid.* 155 οἴχεται ἀπολιπών, etc., verb usually accompanied by a participle or an adjective.

13 The expression τοῦτο πλείστον ἦν αὐτοῖς τοῦ [p. 508] θορύβου appears in Arist., *Ieroi Logoi* 325 and a possible δίκροος «forked, cloven» could fit well in this context.

14-16 The genitives ἐπιβοωμένων τε καὶ ἐπικαλου[μ]έν[ων] (l. 14-16) seem to describe the desperation of the ship's crew, who are calling for help and invoke the gods, probably, and, at the same time, they are complaining, λοιδορούντων (l. 15), about a fact which is ominous and inevitable at the same time. Cf. Dio Chrys. 74. 22; and especially Luc., *Peregr.* 37, Cassius Dio 39. 38. 4 ἀλλὰ τούς τε ὄρκους οἷς πιστεύσαντες ἐκ τῆς Λιβύης ἐπεπεραίωντο ἐπιβοώμενοι καὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον πρὸς τιμωρίαν σφῶν ἐπικαλούμενοι γ. It seems that we face a rhetorical *topos* taking its origin in classical historiography. In our papyrus an accusative can precede the first participle. Iglesias Zoido observes that Cassius Dio 39. 38 echoes Thucydides 7. 79.⁸ Both verbs could be synonymous, forming a type of rhetorical *amplificatio*. Plut., *Per.* 33. 6 offers the simile of a storm on the sea which could illuminate our text: ἀλλ' ὥσπερ νεὸς κυβερνήτης ἀνέμου κατιόντος ἐν πελάγει θέμενος εὖ πάντα καὶ κατατείνας τὰ ὄπλα χρῆται τῇ τέχνῃ, δάκρυα καὶ δεήσεις ἐπιβατῶν ναυτιώντων καὶ φοβουμένων ἐάσας, οὕτως ἐκεῖνος τό τ' ἄστου συγκλείσας καὶ καταλαβὼν πάντα φυλακαῖς πρὸς ἀσφάλειαν, ἐχρήτο τοῖς αὐτοῦ λογισμοῖς, βραχέα φροντίζων τῶν καταβοώντων καὶ δυσχεραίνοντων.

17 to understand τὰ ἀριστεία in the sense of the reward as a consequence of a victory in a battle seems to be strengthened by the later λάφυρα (l. 20), e.g.: Lys. 2. 43 τὰ ἀριστεία τῆς ναυμαχίας ἔλαβον ...; Dion. Hal., *AR* 9. 14 ... ὁ τὰ ἀριστεία λαβὼν ἐκ τῆς μάχης ... The proposal of ed. pr. μάχης fits well also in this context and is according to Athen. 3. 1. 81. 14-15 ποίας δὲ μάχης ἀριστεία Σωκράτης λαβὼν ἐν Ποτιδαία Ἀλκιβιάδῃ παρεχώρησεν, ὡς φησι Πλάτων, although]τυχῆς is also possible in this context because the frequent topic of ἡ τύχης μεταβολή: Euripides, Plutarchus, Diodorus Siculus and others.

See also Xen., *Ages.* 4. 6 ὦ Τιθραύστα, νομίζεται παρ' ἡμῖν τῷ ἄρχοντι κάλλιον εἶναι τὴν στρατιὰν ἢ ἑαυτὸν πλουτίζειν, καὶ παρὰ τῶν πολεμίων λάφυρα μᾶλλον πειρᾶσθαι ἢ δῶρα λαμβάνειν.

18 A suitable reference to the dawn or the night, or to a precise star on the sky is possible in κατ' οὐρανὸν παρ[ε]χώρει: compare it with D.S. 6. 1. 2 τοὺς μὲν γὰρ αἰδίους καὶ ἀφθάρτους εἶναί φασιν, οἶον ἥλιόν τε καὶ σελήνην καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἄστρα τὰ κατ' οὐρανόν.

As already mentioned, the final words seem to refer to the triumph over the enemies, and the dedication of the victory to Artemis and other gods is very suitable here.

Fr. A ↓

We don't know if this column follows the scene before directly. They could belong to two scenes separate in the same work. We are sure that it is in direct style. It could be a dialogue between two

⁸ Iglesias Zoido 2016. We should like to thank the author for this reference.

different people or a speech given by a single person: see the pronouns σοι (l. 5), ἐμοῦ (l. 7), ἐμοί (l. 10), ἐγὼ (l. 1), ἐμοῦ and σοι (l. 19), and ἡμῖν (l. 21). The gender of the speakers is not clear. According to Daris, they would be two gods.⁹

Apparently two leaders are talking in a military context: see βέλη (l. 10), and especially lines 13 to 21.

6 Alfonsi refused to see τὸ γοργόνιον as a reference to the head of Meduse which was carved on the Athena's shield, but we think that it is the most suitable interpretation in the context we are describing. Ar., *Pax* 561 refers to the Ares symbols, taken away by the goddess Peace: ἥπερ ἡμῶν τοὺς λόφους ἀφεῖλε καὶ τὰς Γοργόνας, «she took away our helmet adornment and gorgons». And this seems to be the context of our lines.

7 For ἄνευ ἐμοῦ, see Plat., *Phaedr.* 260 d 7-9 τόδε δ' οὖν μέγα λέγω, ὡς ἄνευ ἐμοῦ τῷ τὰ ὄντα εἰδότει οὐδέν τι μᾶλλον ἔσται πείθειν τέχνη; Id., *Theag.* 122 a 3-5 ἐπειδὴ δὲ οὐκέτι οἶός τέ εἰμι, ἡγοῦμαι κράτιστον εἶναι πείθεσθαι αὐτῷ, ἵνα μὴ πολλάκις ἄνευ ἐμοῦ συγγενόμενός τῷ διαφθαρή. Cf. Aeschyn., *Fals. Leg.* 129. 6-130. 2 and Liban., *Decl.* 10. 1. 41.

The reading ἀλλὰ καὶ γέλως could balance a previous ου μόνον... ἀλλὰ καί. The noun γέλως is also employed as a strong argument in a very rhetorical speech in *Parthenope's* lost novel: P.Berol. 7927 + 9588 + 21179, II. 13 γέλως δ' ἂν εἴη τὸ τοιοῦτο.

9 The speaker insists on his/her opinion: «as well as this, that of Ares», perhaps parallel to the following «that of Artemis». Alfonsi translated the sentence π]άντα ἐν ἐμοί ἐστιν βέλη (l. 10) as «I have all the arrows in my body», that is, «I'm a very strong warrior», but we should prefer to translate «All the arrows depend on me». In addition, the words ἄφυκτα and βέλη are poetic in origin, but frequently used by Hellenistic and Empire prose writers.

11 The construction παρὰ τοῦ ῥήματος is not attested as such in TLG.

13 We propose something like «the reason for this error (ἁμαρτίας) is that», basing ourselves on texts such as Arist., *Metaph.* 1084b 23-25 αἴτιον δὲ τῆς συμβαινούσης ἁμαρτίας ὅτι ἅμα ἐκ τῶν μαθημάτων ἐθήρευον καὶ ἐκ τῶν λόγων τῶν καθόλου ...

14-16 Ares seems to be cited on line 15, and the sentence φόγος δὲ καὶ αἶμα βλέπε[τ]αι (l. 16) seems to refer to him. The possible reading φόγος makes sense because both nouns can be found together in Homer: *Il.* 16. 162 ἄκρον ἐρευγόμενοι φόνον αἵματος. We still read them in later prose, such as D.S. 17. 10. 5 ... τὸ δ' ἐν πλείοσι τόποις φαινόμενον αἶμα φόνον πολλὸν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν ἐσόμενον...; Phlegon ὄρω... ἵππων τε κτύπον δοράτων τε ψόφον καὶ φόνον αἱματοφύρτον; Anon. Seguer. 152 κοινότερον δὲ εἰώθασι χρῆσθαι ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰκότος τῷ σημείῳ, ὥστε κατὰ τοῦτο σημεῖον εἶναι αἶμα φόνου, στέφανον εὐεργεσίας, καὶ τῶν σημείων καὶ τῶν παραδειγμάτων εἶδη τρία, τὰ πρὸ

⁹ Daris 1966, 10: «Protagonisti del verso, a nostro avviso, sembrano essere le divinità stesse, o almeno della loro operante presenza si mostrano consapevoli gli interlocutori».

τοῦ πράγματος, ὡς νέφος χειμῶνος, τὰ ἐν τῷ πράγματι, ὡς καπνὸς πυρός, τὰ μετὰ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ὡς αἷμα φόνου. We want to underline the completely rhetorical character of this later example and the poetic origin of that expression. The hypotext of our text could be Tyrtaeus, fr. 12: οὐ γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς γίνεται ἐν πολέμῳ/ εἰ μὴ τετλαίη μὲν ὄρων φόνον αἱματόεντα. Other later prose writers quote the *topos*: e.g. Iamblich., *Protr.* 92 ἄδικος δὲ ὢν μήτε τολμῶ ὄρων φόνον αἱματόεντα μήτε νικῶ θεῶν Θρηίκιον Βορέην ...

In the same vein, our text says βλέπε[τ]αι, which seems to be an echo of Tyrtaeus' ὄρων. This is important for the literary quality of our text, a topic on which we shall return later.

15 The previous φοβεῖν τοὺς πολεμίους (l. 15) and δεινὸν βλέπουσι (l. 14) point to god Ares as well, and again we offer a parallel by a rhetorician, the grammarian Aristophanes, *Epit.* 2. 590 Οἱ δὲ Ἄρκαδες ἵπποι δεινὸν βλέπουσι καὶ τὴν ὄφρῶν αἴ<ρου>σι.

17-18 We think we face there an opposition between this god, Ares, as the main symbol of the war, and someone who has no shield neither armour (οὐδ' ἀσπίδα οὐδ' αἰγίδα l. 17), probably Artemis, quoted on l. 9, or much better Athena, although we could read also ἔχουσι. The race between Ares and Athena who represent very different types of war, has become a topic since Homer, *Il.* XXI 396-458. On these warlike symbols see Luc. Sat. 3; *D Deorum* 8; 6. As typical for Athena: Arist., *Athena*.10; *IEROI LOGOI* 300; Paus. 5. 26. 6; Max. Tyr. 8. 6d 1-5: καὶ ὅστις ἄλλος δαίμων Ὀμηρικός; μή με οἶον πυνθάνεσθαι εἰ τοιαύτην ἡγεῖ τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν οἶαν Φειδίας ἐδημιούργησεν, οὐδὲν τῶν Ὀμήρου ἐπῶν φαυλοτέραν, παρθένον καλήν, γλαυκῶπιν, ὑψηλήν, αἰγίδα ἀνεζωσμένην, κόρυν φέρουσαν, δόρυ ἔχουσαν, ἀσπίδα ἔχουσαν·

On line 18, the speaker probably insists on avoiding this warlike behavior. On l. 16, the speaker is talking in the first person, ἐγὼ. We wonder whether this is the same speaker we read on line 10, ἐν ἐμοί. Moreover, the reading ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ ἡσυχ[ι] supports our hypothesis in favor of a possible *antilogía*. The expression ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ plus nominative appears in Iseus 7. 45; Plat., *Phaed.* 85 b 4-5; *Leg.* 923a1-2; Men., *Dysc.* 671-72; Luc., *D. Mort.* 20. 13-8 and *D. Meretr.* 9. 5, etc. At the end, ἡσυχ[ι] points to the words ἡσυχ[ί]α «quietness» or ἡσυχ[ι]ος «quiet», that is, the opposite of Ares and his values. The word is frequent in Greek, in both poetic and prosaistic texts, and we only want to quote Th. 6. 34 ὃ δὲ μάλιστα ἐγὼ τε νομίζω ἐπίκαιρον ὑμεῖς τε διὰ τὸ ζύνηθες ἡσυχον ἥκιστ' ἂν ὀξέως πείθοισθε, ὅμως εἰρήσεται. We think in our papyrus somebody is arguing against an opponent's previous, or later, speech, like in Thucydides.

18 The ending -ασα, could belong to another participle referring to the goddess Artemis or Athena. And a form of ἀφαιρέω is also possible here: Καὶ τὰ ὄπλα ἀφαιρεῖται Dion. Hal. II 33.2.11; Nicolaus hist., Frag. 70. 47.¹⁰

¹⁰ We should like to thank Antonio López García for both references.

19 The opposition between the two speakers is very clear in l. 19, where μάταιά σοι, «useless for you», is contrasted with the previous ἐμοῦ.

21 The plural ἡμῖν seems to refer again to the group the speaker belongs to, a group which will be the object of a war and will be killed by the other group or band in the future, as we read in the future tenses καὶ διαπολεμήσεται, «you will make war through» (l. 20), and .. c κατακτενεῖ, «you will kill» (l. 22). The first verb is documented from Thucydides onwards, while the second one is frequent in Homer and tragedy, and in later authors it appears only in Plutarch and Herodian. For the union of similar verbs see Plut., *Dio* 38. 6 ἐφόρμησαν ὡς ῥαδίως ἐπικρατήσοντες ἐν τῇ πόλει καὶ πάντας αὐτοὺς κατακτενοῦντες, and Hdn., *Ab excessu divi Marci* 1. 15. 1. ὁ δὲ Κόμοδος μηκέτι κατέχων ἑαυτοῦ δημοσίᾳ θέας ἐπετέλεσεν, ὑποσχόμενος τά τε θηρία πάντα ἰδία χειρὶ κατακτενεῖν καὶ τοῖς ἀνδρειοτάτοις τῶν νεανιῶν μονομαχίσειν. In Th. 8. 42. 1-43. 4 a negotiation among two bands follows a battle, and this could be the context to which our column is referring to.¹¹

There is nothing to suggest that this might be a dialogue between Ares and Athena or Artemis in person rather than one between two contenders who propose a different type of struggle or, at least, a dialogue in which one of them defends his right or ability to contend in an unconventional way.

Stylistic and rhetorical aspects. The literary genre.

The stylistic and rhetorical level of the two columns is very high: we read Atticist double –ττ- in recto, l. 2 and 6. Both columns contain many occurrences of repetitions of sounds, words, or even parallel clauses, e.g. Recto: αὐτοῦ[...]η..χ[...]ειν αὐτοὺς ὄπου ἔχρ[...] παρατάττεσθαί που κάλλι[ον...]η κινουῦντες καὶ τὰς κορυφ[ὰς...] βάλειν ἐπιχειροῦντες οὐ β[... ἢ κερ]αία τε ἐρρήγνυτο πολλαχοῦ[...]οντα καὶ κῦμα κ[α]ὶ μὴ οὐθ...; κινουῦντες καὶ... ἐπιχειροῦντες; ἐπιβωομένων τε καὶ ἐπικαλου[μ]έν[ων...]των δὲ καὶ λοιδορούντων. Verso: βλέπουσ[ι / βλέπε[τ]αι; οὐδ' ἀσπίδα οὐδ' αἰγίδα ...

For this reason, the particles μὲν/δὲ are very frequent. We have mentioned some poetical vocabulary as well. That is, we find a Gorgianic style, which is typical for the Second Sophistic, but is well documented before, as we shall see. From a linguistic point of view, we would like to add a detail: the combination of οὕτω μὲν δὴ καὶ (recto l. 16) is not attested before Diodorus, according to TLG, but of course we can't be sure that it didn't appear before this date.

The text is highly problematic when we try to discern which literary genre it belongs to. As we have said, at the moment, it is not possible to ensure the correct order of the fragments, neither if both

¹¹ E.g. the Battles of Artemisium and of Salamis (both in 480 B.C.), the Battle for the Great Harbour of Syracuse (413 B.C.), the Battles of the Ionian Coast (412-411 B.C.), the Battle of Arginusae (406 B.C.): cf. Rees 2018.

of them correspond to the same work. We cannot even rule out the possibility they could be independent texts neither the papyrus could contain an anthology of feats of war.

Alfonsi labelled the text as «historiographical» and argued in favor of the idea that, because of the mention of τὸ γοργόντιον, the historian Timaeus could be the author of this fragment, but he could not prove it.

The dramatism of the narration, and the use of the first person in the second column, could explain Merkelbach's, and others's, hypothesis in favour of a novel. Reeve included our papyrus in his study on the hiatus in the novelists and, in fact, the treatment of the hiatus in this text can be compared to that of the love novelists.¹²

Although the rhetorical level of Achilles Tatius, Longus, and Heliodorus, is also very high, our text seems to surpass the rhetorical level of these authors. Nevertheless, we ought to take into account that the first historical novels that remain in fragments, that is those of *Ninus* and *Parthenope* exhibit a rhetorical level which we think can be compared to our papyrus, both from a stylistic and subject-matter point of view. We already referred to *Ninus*' novel when dealing with col. I, l. 3 and 6, a novel dated by López Martínez in the first century B.C.¹³ Now we give some additional data which can be compared with those we have observed in our text.

At first, we should like to underline the rhetorical and repetitive style in *Ninus*, P.Berol. 6926 A.II.18 and 17: ἀδιάφορος... ἀδιάφοροι; A. III.18, 26, 27 and 28: σπ[ε]υσάτω ... σπευσάτω ... σπευσάτω; A. III.112,114 and IV.119 ἀγαιδῆ, ἀναιδῆς, ἀναιδῆς.

Moreover, and interestingly, the PSI 1305, which describes a storm suffered by the hero, Ninus, and his subsequent shipwreck, offers some lexical and content resemblances with our papyrus. We quote a part of PSI 1305, 18-48: ... ἄλσος ὑπὲρ α]ὐτῆς σκιερὸν· οὐ κατ'[αὐτ]ὸ τὸ μέσον εἰς ρεῖθρον [ἐ]ξαρκοῦσα πηγὴ μέ[χρ]ι τῆς κυματωγῆς κα[τε]ρρήγγυτο· τὸ μὲν οὖν [σ]κάφος, οὐ γὰρ ἀγχιβαθῆς ἦν ἢ ἀκτὴ, πρὸς τ[ι]σιν ὑφάλοις ταινίαις ὀκεῖλαν διεσαλεύετο κα[ὶ] δῆλον ἦν ὡς ταῖς ἐμβολαῖς κυμάτων ἀπολούμενον, οἱ δ' [ἐ]ξέβαινον ὅσον εἰς ἄκρους μαζοὺς κλυζόμενοι καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν τῇ νηὶ διασώσαντες {ε}ιδρύθησαν ἐπὶ τῆς ἡϊόνος· ἐν μὲν οὖν [τ]ῶ(ι) πελάγει πάντ' ἐ[μ]όχ]θουν ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρ[ία]ς, διασωθέντες δ' ἐπεθ]ύμουν θανάτου· καὶ ο[ἱ] μὲν ἄλλοι μετριώτε[ρ]ον τὴν μεταβολὴν [έ]φερον, ὁ δὲ Νίνος ἀγρίως αὐτῆς ἤισθετο· πρὸ [τρι]ῶν μὲν ἡμερῶν ἠγεμὼν [τοσ]αύτης δυνάμεως [έτοιμ]ης ἐπὶ πᾶσαν [ἀόκ]γως στρατεῦσαι [γῆν] καὶ θάλατταν... «... a shady grove above it. Where in the very middle into a stream an ample spring plashed with the waves. So the vessel – for the beach was not steep – came to ground on some underwater shoals and was bobbing there, and clearly by the pounding of waves, it was going to be destroyed. And the men disembarked from it, awash up to their chests in the waves, and having saved all that was on the ship they set up camp on the sand. So in the

¹² Reeve 1971 and López Martínez 2021.

¹³ López Martínez 2019.

sea they gave thought to achieve safety, but having achieved it, they were desirous of death. And the others were bearing the catastrophe more moderately; but Ninus bore it wretchedly. For three days before, leader of such a force, ready to march without hesitation toward all countries by land and sea...».¹⁴

Artemis is very present in the novels. For instance, in Xen. Ephes. (5. 15. 2) the heroes dedicate all their sufferings to Artemis. In Ach. Tat. (6. 5. 2), Leucippe defends her virginity in the city of Artemis. In *Aethiopica* (5. 31. 1), the female protagonist dedicates herself to Artemis and Calasiris refers to Charicleia as αὐτὴν τὴν Ἄρτεμιν ὄψει προκαθημένην.

Both *Ninus* and our papyrus are part of a rhetorical tradition working on historical contents, so rich in Hellenistic times, but flourishing in the Empire as well. For this reason the chronology of the work cannot be taken for sure. Our papyrus seems to belong to historical genre, in the vein of dramatic and theatrical type so frequent in Hellenistic times but still alive in the Empire.¹⁵ The absence of proper names and of any reference to private affairs difficults it could be considered as a novel fragment. Nevertheless, given the *poikilia* of literary genres which characterized Greek literature from the Hellenistic age onwards, we can neither deny the possibility of dealing with a military episode inside a historical novel or with a novel describing pseudo or para-historical facts. In any case, we face a high product of the rhetorical school, that is a *narratio mythistorica*,¹⁶ and, because of the similarities between our papyrus and the rhetorical formulae of the Empire authors we have quoted, we would tend to situate our text in the 2nd century A.D.

¹⁴ The edition is that by López Martínez (in preparation) and the translation belongs to Stephens and Winkler 1995, with minor additions. For a recent review of this papyrus, with a commentary, we refer to Bastianini 2010.

¹⁵ Chaniotis 2013, with further references.

¹⁶ In fact, in *Quomodo Historia Conscribenda Sit*, Lucian shows how common would be the genre μυθιστορία – Capitol. *Macrin.* – or μυθιστορικός λόγος – Vopisc., *Firm.* – in his time. It is worth mentioning here F. M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus* 1907.

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