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## A hellenistic epigram recovered

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## A HELLENISTIC EPIGRAM RECOVERED

Although Pierre Jouguet's contributions to the study of the Hellenistic world were most conspicuous in the field of administrative and political history, all the manifestations of the Hellenistic spirit engaged his interest, literature not least; it may therefore not be inappropriate, in tribute to his memory, to recall from the limbo of unidentified fragments an unknown epigram of the second century B. C.

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In the Rendel Harris Papyri Mr J. Enoch Powell published among the 'sub-literary texts' one (No. 56) to which he gave the title '*Magical Spells*' and which he assigned to the first or second century A. D. Through the kindness of the Librarian of the Selly Oak Colleges Library, Mr. L. Jolley, I had an opportunity of studying the original and was astonished to find that the regular, if clumsy, hand was unmistakably Ptolemaic and little, if at all, later than the middle of the second century B. C.<sup>1</sup> At first it seemed that here was a unique example of a magical text of the pre-Roman era, but a closer study of the main fragment (the only one with which we are here concerned)<sup>2</sup> showed it to be written in metre; the ἄλλο which led the first editor to classify the text as a collection of spells is used, as often in the papyri and elsewhere, to distinguish the different items in an anthology, in this case an anthology of epigrams<sup>3</sup>. I give below the text of fr. *a* recto, ignoring the single letter surviving from

<sup>1</sup> It has affinities with M. Norsa, *La Scrittura Letteraria Greca*, No. 4, of 158 B. C. and with W. Schubart, *Gr. Pal.*, Abb. 12 (163 B. C.).

<sup>2</sup> The two other fragments do not connect directly with fr. *a* and are too small to be of independent interest.

<sup>3</sup> Another example of an anthology of epigrams of the Ptolemaic period is BKT V 1, 77-8: cf. also Jouguet-Guéraud, *Un Livre d'Écolier*, ll. 140-161.

a previous column to the left and noting any readings that differ from those of Powell.

θαυμασατωπαντεςθαυ[  
 απελλαθεποειδαιμονιειτ[  
 χαιρετωγραψασκαιτανθηα[  
 ουκοιδαλλακαλωσγραμμασ[  
 ἄλλο

1. θαε . [ Powell

3. τανθηα : τα ηθη [ Powell

The metre is elegiac and the subject a work of the great painter Apelles; so much is clear. In 1. 1 the supplement θαεύ[μενοι (which I owe to Dr. P. Maas) may be regarded as certain. In 1. 2 we have a crasis either for ἀ 'Απελλᾶς (as Maas suggests) or ὁ 'Απελλᾶς<sup>4</sup>; I prefer the latter as the natural place for a relative is immediately after θαεύμενοι (where a word beginning with a vowel is required), followed perhaps by ἔργον or ἔργα at the end of the line. The real problem lies in the second half of this line. Here there are three possibilities. We may place a stop after ἐπόει and regard the next word as a vocative addressed to Apelles (δαιμόνι'); but though εἶ follows easily it is very difficult to find a satisfactory supplement for the rest of the line, particularly as with 1. 3 a new sentence begins. Alternatively, we may treat δαίμονι as a dative qualifying ἐπόει with εἶτε standing in hiatus after it and followed by τ[έχνη or, less probably, τύχη. The objection to this solution is that such a hiatus would (as far as my knowledge goes) be unparalleled in an epigram of this period and very rare at any time<sup>5</sup>. Thirdly, we might read δαιμόνι'<sup>6</sup>, an accusative plural in agreement with ἔργα, but the only supplement that has occurred to

<sup>4</sup> For this crasis see J. D. Denniston in his edition of Euripides, *Electra*, note to 1. 537.

<sup>5</sup> The only example of hiatus after a dactyl in the second half of the pentameter known to me comes from a singularly bad epigram on the *Aitia* of Callimachus, late Byzantine in date (*Anth. Pal.* VII 42: perhaps corrupt, see Schneider, *Callimachus* II p. 36). I am indebted for the reference to Dr. R. Pfeiffer.

<sup>6</sup> I owe the suggestion to my colleague, Mr. D. A. Russell.

me εἴτε τ[έχνης (i. e. τεχνικά) hardly commends itself. The problem is best left open. In l. 3 τᾶνθεα is probably followed by καὶ and another noun in the accusative; otherwise it would be difficult not to refer ὁ γράψας to some painter other than Apelles. The line may have ended with an interrogative particle; the spectators may be imagined as asking how Apelles achieved this masterpiece, a question to which l. 4 supplied the answer. (A possible supplement would be χρησάμενος, but we may hope that the unknown poet's line was not as lame as this would make it).

A number of epigrams on Apelles are extant in the *Palatine Anthology*<sup>7</sup> but this is not among them, nor does any ancient writer, as far as I know, single out for praise Apelles' treatment of flowers as the writer of these lines appears to have done<sup>8</sup>. Poem and theme alike must await further elucidation.

On the verso of the papyrus in a different but contemporary hand are fragments of literary writing too blurred to be easily identifiable. To judge from the last word of l. 3, βαρβαρόστομε (*addendum lexicis*) the lines were iambic and probably tragic.

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<sup>7</sup> XVI 178—182.

<sup>8</sup> Martial, *Ep.* X 32 mentions flowers depicted (? perhaps as a border) in the portrait of the Flavian general, Antonius Primus.