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DOWN WITH OPPRESSORS!

AN ANONYMOUS HYMN TO EIRENE IN FLORENCE

1. *Introduction.*

I am delighted to be invited to contribute to the collection of papers for the *honorandi* of this volume. Since their kind invitation to teach at the Scuola Superiore di Catania on two occasions, and further during their many stays in Heidelberg, I have been pleased and proud to be counted among their friends and to have shared pleasant hours with them discussing many subjects in addition to the Classics they have devoted their careers to. The subject of my contribution, ‘A Hymn to Peace’, comes at a timely moment when for the first time since the Second World War a large military power has invaded a neighbouring country in Europe without provocation, with a view to conquest and rule. The anonymous author of the present hexametrical composition, composed perhaps in the first century AD, says that peace (personified) is a ‘great benefit to civilization’, that ‘nothing is more cherished by mankind’, whereas without it a ‘dark mist falls on everything’. Let us hope that the present mists clear shortly allowing the sun’s rays of peace to shine again.

PSI XV 1482 contains the remnants of a hymn, or perhaps one should say panegyric, to Eirene, Peace¹. It has been most recently edited by Marco Perale in his collection of anonymous hexametric poetry, with further literature and full *apparatus*². Perale has made good progress in deciphering more of the text, but there is still scope for further thoughts, as the papyrus is maddeningly difficult to read, partly due to the poor state of preservation and partly to the author’s slapdash handwriting³. I say ‘author’ as the text

¹ Trismegistos 63094; LDAB 4297. Istituto Papirologico “G. Vitelli”, Florence. PSI inv. 2232. I thank the staff of the Institute for providing me with high-resolution images of r. and v. of the papyrus, along with infrared images of v. lines 14-19.

² Perale 2020, nr. 20: 224-232.

³ Many of the readings, and most of my new suggestions here, are what the great papyrologist Sir Eric Gardner Turner called ‘divinatory’.

is manifestly an autograph. The writer has written alternative words in interlinear space and has left us two versions of his composition. He appears to have written a first version on the horizontal fibres of the papyrus, then interrupted his composition at line fifteen, turned over the page and tried again, first copying the first ten lines unchanged from the first version. This second version on the vertical fibres continues to line nineteen, then breaks off, leaving much space at the bottom of the sheet. Either this is the end of the piece (as I think likely) or the author meant to continue it, but did not⁴.

The subject of the poem, written in good hexameters, is clearly praise of Peace as made explicit in lines 7-11: «I will hymn Eirene, dripping with charm and loveliness...». The first six lines are a kind of preamble more in epic than hymnodic style, as the author begins by asserting that he holds the sceptre of the Muses, and wishes that his words will lead to metaphorical calm seas, and rejoicing among men. There is no invocation of Eirene at the outset, as would be usual in a hymn. However, lines 7-19 make up for this by making the poet's intention to praise Eirene explicit. First her genealogy is mentioned in conventional hymnodic manner (Zeus and Themis are the parents), then her elevated status among both immortals and mortals. This central section continues with material suited to the 'argument' part of a hymn. There are two instances of relative predication (9 τήνπερ, 14 τῆς γάρ), a common hallmark of hymns. Anaphoric use of κείνη (11 and 12) extends the list of Eirene's admirable qualities. If restorations are correct, it is said that the cult of Peace preserves the 'Royal Court' intact and wards off all the unpleasantness of war. Unfortunately the last six lines are very poorly preserved and can only be deciphered sporadically, except possibly for the last line which may sign off the composition by asserting that 'dark mist' lies over everything if Peace does not reign. The statement sounds like a coda to me, but on the other hand there is no closing prayer or valedictory address to Eirene as might be expected in a hymn. If it is the end, it would be reminiscent of the close of Ariphron's *Paian to Hygieia* (*GH* 6, 3): «With you, Divine Hygieia, (everything) flourishes and shines with the converse of the Graces, but without you nobody is happy»⁵.

Altogether, then, the appellation 'hymn' is justifiable (11 v. ὑμνήσω, 11 r. ὑμνήσαι), although 'encomium', or aretology, might be more appropri-

⁴ Dorandi 1991, 19, calls the piece «das Konzept eines Hymnus an Eirene». Perale's view that the draft on v. is not complete is based on his dubious reading of line 19 ἄλλα τε πάντα, where the τε is anything but secure.

⁵ μετὰ σείο, μάκαιρ' Ὑγίεια, / τέθαλε καὶ λάμπει Χαρίτων δάροις, / σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς οὔτις εὐδαίμων ἔσθι. Furley – Bremer 2001.

ate. Although the cult of Eirene is mentioned (15), the composition lacks certain elements which would mark it more clearly as a hymn intended for recitation or song in cult. Possibly lines 5-6 point to the performance of the piece ‘in the mouths of men’; on the other hand the mention of ‘wings (of song?)’ in the ‘poet’s heart’ (6) might point not so much to performance but rather that the poet’s composition might inspire ‘charitable thoughts’ (5 *κεχαρισμένα*) upon men’s lips (*ἀνδρῶν στομάτεσσιν*). The formulation might suit the concept of prayer rather better than a ‘song of praise’. On the other hand, poets in antiquity did not write for their own private satisfaction, and I would not wish to rule this composition out as suited to public performance at a ceremony of some sort.

Hymnic address to Eirene is relatively rare in extant Greek literature. Bacchylides *Pa.* 4, 61-81 is an extended aretalogy of Eirene:

Peace gives rise to noble wealth among men, the flowers of honey-tongued songs, the thigh-bones of oxen and thickly-fleeced sheep to burn with golden flame on the elaborately carved altars of gods. She lets youth indulge in aulos-music and celebratory song in the gymnasium. The webs of russet-brown spiders form in the steel-bound grips of shields, rust eats away at spearheads and two-edged swords (...*two lines missing*...) There is no raucous blast of the bronze trumpets, nor is saccharine sleep stolen from the eyelids when, at dawn, it warms the heart. The streets are full of lovely celebrations and the playful hymns blaze up ... (*text missing*)⁶.

There are some points of contact between these lines of Bacchylides and the composition of the anonymous author, which will be worth pointing out below. Further, Aristophanes’ *Peace* 974-77, a prayer to the goddess Peace (fitting for the theme of the play), is worth mentioning.

The author has a good command of epic diction, composition and metre. I would say that he writes better than ‘hobnailed hexameters’, to use West’s description of Hesiod. His spelling is, on the whole, good, although *νίφαδες* (or *-ας* or *-ος*) in line 18 begins with a mis-spelling *ναφ*-. He observes elision (r. line 6 *ἀλλ’ ἀνδρῶν*) and the *iota* adscript (v. line 6 *κραδίηι*). There may be one or two marks of punctuation or diacritics: r. line 8 *δ’α*. An omitted letter is inserted in v. line 11 *κ<ε>ίνης*. Alternative formulations are written above the line in r. line 14, v. lines 13, 16, 17 and 19. As already mentioned the verso seems from line 10 to be a re-write of the recto. The writing is hard to read as this is an author’s copy (or «Konzept», as Dorandi calls it), not intended for others to read.

⁶ Irigoien 1993, fr. 4, lines 61-80.

The consensus of editors places the writing in the first c. AD. The letter forms are similar to those of the Tbilisi Hymn to Dionysos⁷, such that one might wonder whether the same poet had not written both; however the author of the Tbilisi hymn writes a slightly more angular script, leaning somewhat to the right⁸. The provenance of the papyrus is said to be unknown; the Tbilisi hymn is thought to come from the Fayum. Letters are not well formed. *Epsilon* is sometimes barely distinguishable from *alpha*. Likewise *sigma* and *gamma*. *Mu* could sometimes easily be double *lambda*. The top bar of *tau* usually consists of two strokes and sometimes intersects, rather than topping, the descender so that it resembles *psi* in other hands. *Rho* and *phi* descend well below the 'line'. *Phi* is done in an idiosyncratic way.

In presenting this text I concentrate on the *verso* version, which seems to represent the more finished text, and add the discrepant lines of the *recto* side after that. Lines 1-10 represent a combination of the readings of *recto* and *verso*; following that the *verso* (and then the *recto*) are on their own.

2. Bibliography before Perale.

Carlini 1966; Bastianini – Luiselli, PSI XV; Fischetti 1968-1969 (= Id. 1970); Uebel 1976, 219-220; Dorandi 1991, 19, n. 43; Carlini 2004; Maltoni 2008; Barbantani 2008, 17; Ucciardello 2010, 368, n. 134; Barbantani 2018, 112.

3. Text.

The following text combines readings from the *recto* and *verso* of the papyrus down to line 10 (from then on the versions diverge; the *verso* appearing to be a revision of the text commenced on the *recto*).

Μουσάων σκήπτρον . . . εϋτ τ . [
 εϋχομαι ἀπταίστωι ψάλλων καλὰ π[αίγμ]ατα [χορδήι,]
 ὡς δὴ μὴ κουφαῖς Ζεφύρου πνοιαῖσι μι[γε]ῖ[σ]α[ι]
 ἐς πόντον σύρωσι βαθὺν τρηχεῖαι ἀελλαῖ
 ἀλλ' ἀνδρῶν στομάτεσσιν αἰεὶ κεχαρισμέν' ἔω[σι] 5
 οἶά μοι ἐν κραδίηι λιγέων πτέρρα . α . εω . [
 δὴ γὰρ ἀποστάζουσιν ἔθεν πολλοὺς μ[ἐν ἔ]ρωτ[ας]
 πολλὰς δ' ἀγλαίας, μέγα δὲ πτολίεσσι[ν] ὄνειρα
 Εἰρήνην, τήνπερ τε Θέμις Διὸς εὐνη[θεῖσα]
 ἐν λέκτροις πρώτην καὶ ἀρίστην γείνατο π[αίδων,] 10

⁷ Recent re-edition: Furley 2007, 63-84.

⁸ Perale compares with P.Oxy. LXXIX 5187.

ὕμνήσω· κ<ε>ῖνη γὰρ ἐν ἀθανάτων μ[εγάροισι κυδίστη, κείνης δὲ καὶ ἀνδράσι φίλτερον οὐδὲν	
ἀνα	
[δ]ε[ί]κνυμεν αὐτίς ἐπιχθόνιον ἐπ[ί] τῆς γὰρ καὶ ῥύεται βασιληΐδος αὐλ[ῆς ..].[εἶρη[ν]ῆς ἴσα καὶ τεμένη μα[15
στυγερ . . (... ...)	
. κρατερόν . . εὐ . ἰα . . . μι[16
μὴν	
ὕψηλούς μάλα πολλὰ καταγρεῖς καὶ κ[ῆμενα, χειμερίων ν<ι>φάδες καὶ ὕ[17
ρα	
ἀλλ' ἀνὰ πάντα μέλαινα κατ' ἀχλὺς κειτ[--	19

4. *Select apparatus.*

For full *apparatus* see previous editions, especially Perale.

- 2 ἀπταιστωὶ ψάλλων [leg. suppl. Furley: ἀπταιστωὶ ἀπ[α]λῶν Perale | π[αίγμ]ατα [χορδῆι,] suppl. e.g. Furley: ἰ[cτῖ] ἀοιδῶν Perale
- 5 fin. ξω[σι Furley: θ[εῖεν vel θ[ῶτι Turner ap. Bastianini et Luiselli: θ[εῖναι Fowler: κ[εῖται Di Benedetto ap. Carlini: ῆ[ιci Carlini
- 10 π[αῖδα] vel π[αῖδων] Carlini
- 13 δείκνυμεν dub. Furley: .[...] μὲν Perale | ἐπιχθόνιον leg. Furley: ἐπι ον Perale | ἐπ[ί leg. Furley: ε.[Perale
- 14 βασιληΐδος Turner ap. Bastianini et Luiselli | αὐλ[ῆς leg. suppl. Furley
- 15 in. εἶρη[ν]ῆς ἴσα leg. suppl. Furley | μα : μα[κάρων] possis
- 17 in. ὕψηλούς leg. suppl. Furley | καταγρεῖς leg. suppl. dub. Furley
- 18 ῆμενα, leg. suppl. dub. Furley | χ[ε]!μερίων Perale | νιφάδες corr. Furley (νιφάδας iam Perale, al.): ναφαδες Π | fin. ὕ[ετ- possis
- 19 ἀλλ' ἀνὰ (ρα superscr.) leg. suppl. dub. Furley: ἄλλά τε (sic) Perale | κατ' leg. Furley: περ Perale | κειτ[leg. Furley (κειται ?): κειτ[leg. Perale

5. *Rejected lines from the recto.*

ὕμνησαι γὰρ ἐκεῖθεν ἐπέιγομαι, οὐ γὰρ Ἐνωώ,	11
οὐ [γ]ὰρ Ἐνυάλιον πολέμου πεφρικότ' ἀκάνθαις	12
Ἄρεα c . . [. .] . . . ! βοῆσι [. .] ἐπορυ . . . ν	13
πολέμου[...approx. 14...]	
ῆισ' ἔτερος· γῦν γὰρ ῥα cυ σι κυδοιμοί	14
οἱ περ . . λ . . λυ ἡδὲ κακοὶ [15

11 ἐκεῖθεν Furley: ἐκείνας (contra metr.) Perale | ἐπέιγομαι Furley: ἐπαίρομαι Perale

13 *σάλαπιζχο>σι* Perale

14 *ῆισ'* Furley; *ῆιδ'* Perale | *πᾶσι* Perale

15 *οἷ περ* dub. leg. Furley | *πολὺ* possis | *δὲ κακοὶ* vel *δάκε καί?* : *δέ κε κοι-* dub. Perale

6. *Translation.*

[Holding] The sceptre of the Muses ...
 I pray, playing beautiful [strains] on my unerring [lyre],
 that rough squalls may not mix with the light breezes
 from the West and sweep them into the deep sea,
 but that always pleasing to the mouths of men 5
 be what the wings of clear-voiced [song?] [sing] in my heart.
 For she who is a fount (lit. 'drips') of much loveliness,
 much charm, and who is a great benefactor of cities,
 Peace, whom Themis bore by union with Zeus
 in his bed as the first and best of her children 10
 I will hymn. For she in the halls of the gods
 is most famous, than her no one more beloved by men
 can we show conversely on earth ...
 By her [works?] is the Royal Court preserved ...
 of Peace, as are equally the sanctuaries [of the gods?] ... 15
strong

The high and mighty you very often lay low and [you ?raise
 the sitting [lying?], wintry snow-flakes [and rain?] ...
 but over everything a black mist lies ...

7. *Translation of the rejected lines on the recto.*

For I am moved to praise her from there. Not Enyō 11
 not Enyalios who bristles with the thorns of war 12
 Ares ... with shouts 13
 another sings; for now you ... the din of war 14
 which ... and the bad ... 15

8. *Notes on the new readings.*

1-2 The first half of this composition shows a tendency to fall into couplets of sense and syntax: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 14-15, 16-17 (?). The central section is composed of two longer periods 7-11, 11-13. One might hazard the guess that the author was also versed in elegiac couplets. He will have had various commissions, commemorations (elegiac) as well as the context of worship, for which this hymn/prayer (in hexameters) is presumably intended. One needs to keep in mind that ancient Greek poets did not compose as a form of private expression. The first 'couplet' is a (conventional)

bow to the Muses. There is no indication of place or context except for the mention of the ‘Royal Court’, presumably in Alexandria, as the poet is composing in Egypt.

2 εὔχομαι ἀπταιστωὶ ψάλλων καλὰ π[αίγμ]ατα [χορδῆι], «I pray, playing beautiful [strains] on my unerring [lyre]». There is much that is tentative in this reconstruction but only π[αίγμ]ατα [λύραι] should be considered purely *exempli gratia*. Of ψάλλων, ink traces give some support to initial *psi*, and good support to *omega-nu* at the end. Initial *pi* of παίγματα is plausible, but not the only possibility. The idea of the line is that the poet is now praying for Peace while accompanying himself (in his imagination as he writes, and actually when the piece is performed) on the lyre. For ἀπταιστος, ‘not stumbling’, ‘unshaken’, in hymnody, cfr. Athenaios *Paian and Prosodion to Apollo* (Furley-Bremer 2001, no. 2.6.1) 9 (said of Athens); in an instance in Callimachus *Aet. I SH 250, 4* the noun with ἀπταιστος is missing. For ψάλλων ‘plucking’ (sc. the strings of the lyre) or ‘singing’ (sc. to the lyre), see LSJ *s.v.* 2. For παίγματα as (cheerful) musical song, or music, see LSJ *s.v.*; Eur. *Ba.* 161 (lyr.); *Lyr. Alex. Adesp.* 37, 15 Λύδια παίγματα λύρας. In line 80 of Bacchylides’ praise of peace (*Pa.* 4) quoted above we find the expression παιδικοί ὕμνοι, ‘merry (or ‘playful’) hymns’. At the end of the line Perale suggested καλὰ ἰ[στί] ἀοιδῶν, ‘fine sails of song’, but the hiatus is ugly.

3-4 have been successfully restored by previous editors. The construction ὤς + subj. indicates that the author’s hymn/prayer to Eirene has an intended purpose: to prevent the storms of war. The sense of the image is that the gentle breezes of Zephyros should not become unruly by being mixed with rough squalls (τρηχεῖαι ἄελλαι), and sweep the poet’s words out to the ocean deep where they will not be heard. The (rare) construction ὤς + subj. after εὔχομαι can be paralleled by (later) instances with ἵνα + subj. and with ὅπως (LSJ *s.v.* 2). The normal construction is with an accusative and infinitive.

5 fin. κεχαρισμέν’ ἔω[σι Furley. «Let what is in my heart (i.e. the contents of this poem) be pleasing to the mouths of men», i.e. «may they take up my song!» and praise Peace. Palaeographically the traces after *nu* are faint and ambiguous. Others (see *app.*) have thought the last trace compatible with a *theta*, *kappa*, or *eta*. Whether the verb in this sentence should be in the subjunctive like σύρωσι, or perhaps optative, might be open to doubt. The next line is unfortunately incomplete, but the adjective λιγέων, ‘clear (sc. strains)’ probably refers to song in some form (*e.g.* μέλεων?) which the

poet is fomenting in his heart. In other words, his verses in celebration of Peace should please (κεχαρισμένα), and be taken up by, the mouths of men generally. They should echo his song.

6 λιγέων, ‘clear(-voiced?)’. In line 57 of the Bacchylides paian quoted above, we find the expression μολπαὶ λίγ[ε]αι. One recalls that in Plato *Phaidros* 237a Socrates opens his speech with an appeal to the Muses, offering an etymology of their epithet λίγεια. Here the missing noun seems to be masculine or neuter.

8 ἀγλαΐας, ‘joys’. The word is also used in line 56 by Bacchylides in his praise of peace (quoted above).

13 [δ]ε[ί]κνυμεν. -μεν is clear. The first *nu* seems to have been written over a *delta*, and the *upsilon* over some other letter, although conceivably the relation was the reverse. The space is rather large for δ-ε-ι-κ, but conceivable. Utmost caution advised. ἐπιχθόνιον, ‘on earth’, on the other hand, is likely.

14 βασιληΐδος (Turner) ἀβλ[ῆ]ς (Furley). The Royal Court, perhaps in Alexandria, cfr. Perale 2020, 225, referring to his no. 45 ↓ 1, 19 βασιληΐδος ἀβλῆς (?Zeno’s royal palace). Of ἀβλ[ῆ]ς *alpha* and *lambda* can be discerned, but not much remains of *upsilon*. ἀρχ[ῆ]ς might be a conceivable alternative, but less good, I think. The thought is that Peace preserves the monarchy.

15 εἰρη[ν]ῆς ἴσα καὶ τεμένη μα[] «of Peace, and likewise the sanctuaries», perhaps μα[κάρων], «of the gods», at the break. Peace is also beneficial to the cults of the gods.

17 ὑψηλοῦς ‘the high and mighty’, ‘lofty’. A common thought in hymns: a god is capable of raising the humble and reducing the mighty at will. Cfr. Hesiod *Op.* 3 («by the will of Zeus»); the Berlin Hymn to Tyche (P.Berol 9734) lines 4-7: «The exalted and proud, unwilling, in the course of time, / you dash down to earth, enveloping them in murky cloud. / The paltry and the humble you often raise / on wings to soaring flight, O great goddess». See: Furley 2010, 161-179 (here 169).

καταγρεῖς, ‘you destroy’. A highly tentative restoration. ἀγρεῖ, ‘destroy’, is famously used by Aeschylus *Ag.* 126 of the destruction of Troy, but the composite form is recorded by LSJ only in an Aeolic form κατάγρημι, with several instances, said to be equivalent in meaning to καθαιρέω, ‘destroy’. If the suggestion is acceptable, one might also consider restoring κατάγρεις as a rare thematic variant of κατάγρης, but the Aeolic form is a long shot, to say the least. Some verb meaning ‘take down’, ‘lower’, is needed, one feels, in context with

ὕψηλούς, which is a relatively safe handhold. Otherwise I considered *καταίρεις* and *καθαιρείς* but there are palaeographical objections to both forms.

18 ἤμεγα, '(things) sitting', i.e. not standing proud. Or, conceivably, we should read κ<ε>ίμεγα, 'lying', 'prostrate', which would be a more radical description of the meek and humble than merely 'sitting'. But great uncertainty surrounds the reading.

γ<ι>φάδες. The penultimate letter could be *epsilon*, *alpha*, or *omicron*. Since ἀχλύς in the next line is in the nominative, I prefer νιφάδες here. The poet wrote *alpha* by mistake for the *iota* in second position, probably thinking ahead to the upcoming *alpha*.

19 μέλαινα ἀχλύς, 'black cloud' (or 'mist'). In the lines from the Berlin Hymn to Tyche quoted above (line 5) we read that Tyche is able to drag the high-and-mighty to the ground 'casting a black cloud' around it: νέφος ἀμφιθηκαμένη γύχ[ιον]. For the cloud of war, cfr. also Euripides *Hec.* 905-909:

Χο. σὺ μὲν, ὦ πατρὶς Ἰλιάς,
τῶν ἀπορθήτων πόλις οὐκέτι λέξι·
τοῖον Ἑλλάνων νέφος ἀμφὶ σε κρύπτει
δορὶ δὴ δορὶ πέρσαν.

κατ(α) and κεῖτ[αι] are very uncertain (but possible) interpretations of the traces. Perale read *περ* for *κατ*-. Cfr. Hesiod *Op.* 31 *κατάκειται*. Tmesis with various composite forms of *κεῖται* e.g. *Iliad* XXI 364 ὑπὸ δὲ ξύλα κάγκανα *κεῖται*, *Od.* XIII 424 *παρὰ δ' ἄσπετα κείται*. Nic. fr. 78, 2 Gow-Scholfield *ἀπὸ πήματα κείται*, Aratus I 317 *περὶ τέσσαρα κείται*.

9. Notes on the rejected lines of the recto.

11 I think both ἐκεῖθεν and ἐπαίρομαι are better palaeographically than Perale's ἐκείνας (unmetrical) and ἐπαίρομαι, although the sense is not much different. The idea of hymning a deity *from* (ἐκεῖθεν) some initial point or thought is very widespread in hymnology.

13 σαλπίζ<ο>υσι Perale, finds some support in line 75 of Bacchylides' praise of peace (quoted above): χαλκεῶν δ' οὐκ ἔστι σαλπίγγων κτύπος, but is very difficult palaeographically.

14 ἦισ', 'sang', marginally preferable to ἦιδ' (Perale) both palaeographically and morphologically ('timeless' aorist).

15 ἦδὲ κακοὶ, 'and the wicked'. Since the scribe at times hardly distinguishes *epsilon* from *alpha*, this group of letters is subject to a number of interpretations.

10. *Resumé.*

If the recto was indeed rejected in favour of the revised version on the verso, we see the poet structuring his composition around a lengthy lead-in to the subject of his aretalogy, Peace, and then being in two minds how to continue. It seems that the recto dwells on the alternative to Peace – Enyo, Enyalios, Ares himself – deities which ‘another has sung’ (line 14 r.). His (her?) tendency to ‘naturalize’ the forces of Peace (as gentle zephyrs as opposed to storm winds at sea) continues with War, who is said to ‘bristle with thorns’, like a gorse hedge. We read of ‘shouts’ (line 13 r. βοῆσι) associated with Ares, a picture familiar as early as Homer (βόην ἀγαθός *e.g.* *Il.* II 408). Line 14 r. seems to return to the ‘good people’ (κυδοιμοί) who, presumably, prefer peace to war.

In the verso, by contrast, he seems to remain with the naturalistic imagery to describe the blessings of peace. First he comments on peace’s high status among both gods and men on earth, how her presence is conducive to the preservation of both the seat of human governance (line 14 βασιληΐδος ἀύλ[ῆς]) and the gods’ places of worship (15 τεμένη). Then if we join up the dots of the surviving legible words, he seems to say that Peace, like other gods such as Tyche, can take down the high-and-mighty. The nature imagery then turns to ‘wintry snow-flakes’ and a ‘black mist’. Most naturally, one feels, these must be what Peace inflicts as punishment on the hybriatic, covering them in a layer of snow, as it were, or obscuring them from sight with impenetrable mist. It is not quite certain, however, whether line 19 is the end of the poem in the poet’s mind, nor whether we have correctly grasped the drift of the last lines 16-19.

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