

PAP. ANT. III. 115

AND THE IAMBIC PROLOGUE IN LATE GREEK POETRY

THE latest volume of the *Antinoopolis Papyri* (iii [1967], no. 115) contains fragments of some 40 iambic lines in praise of a certain Archelas. The papyrus is dated by J. W. B. Barns, the editor of the piece, to the sixth century A.D., and the poem itself can be no older, since corrections and alterations show it to be an author's draft. According to Barns it is 'an iambic encomium of a type not uncommon in late Greek occasional poetry from Egypt' (p. 20). I would suggest rather that the surviving lines come in fact from an iambic preface to a hexameter encomium.

In the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries it was standard, if not universal, practice to preface a hexameter poem with an iambic prologue.¹ Since details are not readily available, and are relevant to my argument, I tabulate them here. First the four examples that have come to us by manuscript tradition, as it happens the same manuscript (Palatinus 23), and all dating from the second half of the sixth century. Then the fragmentary examples preserved on papyri, quoted from E. Heitsch, *Griech. Dichterfragmente der röm. Kaiserzeit* i² (Abh. Gött. 1963), referred to simply as 'Heitsch':

John of Gaza's *ekphrasis* on the world map in the winter bath of Gaza, written after the opening of the bath (soon after 535/6), and probably before 563.² Book i consists of 360 hexameter lines and an iambic preface of 25 lines, Book ii of 343 hexameters and a preface of 4 iambs.

Paul the Silentiary's *ekphrasis* of Hagia Sophia (recited early in 563), in 889 hexameters, with three different iambic prefaces. Two successively before the poem opens—the first in 80 lines to Justinian, the second in 45 to the Patriarch—and the third in only 6 lines after what must have been a pause in the recitation at line 410 (277).

Paul's *ekphrasis* of the Ambo in the same church, in 275 hexameters with a 29-line iambic preface.

Agathias' preface to his *Cycle* (*Anth. Pal.* 4. 3), published c. 567.³ 46 iambs precede 87 hexameters (which are themselves a curious combination of a preface to Agathias' *Cycle* and a panegyric on Justin II).

Heitsch xxx and xxxi, two parallel (indeed on occasions verbally similar) hexameter *epikedia* on professors of law at Berytus in the fourth century. The poems are both very fragmentary, but 32 and 24 lines respectively of the iambic prefaces to each survive.

Heitsch xxxv. 3, a poem in 198 hexameters on an autumn day (probably by Pamprepus of Panopolis while in Athens, and so from the 470s),⁴ with an iambic preface of 6 lines.

¹ Cf. P. Friedlaender, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius* (1912), 119 f., and A. Mattsson, *Untersuchungen zur Epigrammsammlung des Agathias* (1942), 106 f.

² Friedlaender, *op. cit.* 110–12, and cf. my suggestion in *JHS* lxxxvii (1967), 131.

³ See *JHS* lxxxvi (1966), 6 f.

⁴ This was the suggestion of H. Gerstinger, who first published the papyrus, but it has not found much favour in recent years. I hope to discuss the matter elsewhere before long.

Heitsch xxxiii, of which wretched fragments of some 35 lines, none more than half complete, survive, but enough to show that the hexameter poem proper was preceded by an iambic preface of at least 17 lines. Fifth century.

Two 'poems' by Dioscorus of Aphrodito (second half of the sixth century), Heitsch xlii. 3 and 12, the first of 67 hexameters preceded by 23 iambs, the second of 20 hexameters preceded by 18 iambs.

Lastly, Heitsch xxvii and xxviii, preserved on the same papyrus but printed by Heitsch as two separate poems. Despite the fact that in our present state of knowledge xxvii with 66 lines (in iambs) is almost twice as long as xxviii (35 hexameters), I should be prepared to regard the first as an iambic preface to the second. One or two reasons will be presented below. It will be seen from the example of Paul that 66 lines would not have been felt to be excessive for a preface.

It might be added that Priscian used iambs for the preface to his Latin panegyric on Anastasius, written in Constantinople in the early years of the sixth century. But if Priscian was influenced here (as would hardly be surprising) by contemporary Greek practice, Corippus returned to the elegiac preface half a century later for his panegyric on Justin II, no doubt in imitation of Claudian (who has 11 elegiac prefaces out of 11).

Despite the fact that very little of it survives, we know a fair amount about contemporary Greek poetry of the fourth to sixth centuries A.D.¹ In addition to tantalizing papyrus fragments, entries in lexicæ and references in the speeches and letters of contemporaries have preserved the names of a great many poets famous in their day, and even the titles of some of their works. And it so happens that Suidas (or the Suda, to taste), to whom we owe most of our information, is helpful enough almost always to specify the metre in which these poets wrote—the hexameter.² Out of the scores of epics, panegyrics, and the like we know of (or possess fragments of) from this period, only two are stated to have been written in iambs. Both the poets in question (like so many at this period) were Egyptians: Andronicus of Hermupolis (second half of the fourth century) and Cyrus of Antinoopolis (date unknown,³ but the context in Photius⁴ suggests an approximate contemporary of Andronicus). Their choice of the iambic metre was probably just an experiment. Photius mentions their work only because it happened to be bound up in the same volume together with various other iambic works by Egyptian writers of the period: some appropriately in iambs (the *δράματα* of Horapollon and Serenus), some (like the panegyrics of Andronicus and Cyrus) less so, *Πάρια* (foundation legends) of Hermupolis and Alexandria respectively by Hermeias and Horapollon, and a *Chrestomathia* by Helladius. The miscellaneous nature of the collection is of itself suggestive.

There is no evidence that Andronicus' innovation caught on at once. Much is often made of the activity of Marianus of Eleutheropolis, a high official at the court of Anastasius (491–518), who 'translated' a number of hexameter poems

¹ See the evidence I collected in *Historia*, xiv (1965), 470–509.

² *Historia*, xiv (1965), 482–3 (though I would no longer subscribe to what I there said about the role of the accent in post-Nonnan poetry).

³ The assertion of Christ-Schmid-Stählin,

Gesch. d. gr. Literatur ii. 2⁶ (1924), 973, that the *dux* Maurice of whom Cyrus wrote was the future Emperor Maurice (582–602) is entirely arbitrary.

⁴ Photius, *Cod.* 279, *ad fin.*: on these characters see (briefly) my remarks in *Historia*, xiv (1965), 487–9.

by Callimachus, Apollonius, Nicander, and Theocritus into iambs.¹ Now it is certainly a fact that ultimately the iambic (or, more accurately, the 'Byzantine twelve-syllable') did oust the hexameter as the vehicle of epic and panegyric poetry.² But it might be unwise to exaggerate the significance of Marianus' 'translations'.³ For with Nonnus and his school the hexameter actually took on new life in the late fifth and first half of the sixth centuries.

The point can be further illustrated by the metres used in the epigrams of the sixth century, for which there is copious material in the *Anthology*, largely from the *Cycle* of Agathias but also in the form of a number of anonymous inscriptional poems copied direct from buildings and statues. In the epigrams from Meleager's *Garland* (last decade or so of the second century B.C.) included in the *Anthology* only 7 are in iambs: in the epigrams from Philip's *Garland* (? reign of Nero) there are 23.⁴ There are 20 in the substantially smaller collection of Palladas (late fourth century), one seventh of the whole.⁵ But this steady iambic trend is reversed completely by the time of Agathias' *Cycle* (c. 567/8): not one iambic poem in the whole collection and remarkably few among the anonymous inscriptional poems of the age. Not one among the more than 50 inscriptions from sixth-century charioteer statues in *AP* 15. 41–50 and 16 (= *A. Plan.*) 335–378.⁶ There is a tendency away from the elegiac couplet for the epigram in the late Empire as a whole (more obvious in the inscriptional poems than in Agathias' *Cycle*): but it is towards the hexameter *κατὰ στίχον*, not the iambic.⁷

After Andronicus we have no knowledge of any more iambic contemporary poetry before the voluminous writings of George of Pisidia early in the seventh century. Thus if *Pap. Ant.* 115 were a true full-scale iambic encomium, it would merit comment as an interesting forerunner of George a century later.⁸ It is true that there are a few feeble iambic effusions by Dioscorus (Heitsch XLII. 15, 16, 17, and 18), but all are very short (6, 7, 24, and 18 lines respectively), and (their poetic, linguistic, and metrical shortcomings aside) hardly merit consideration as panegyrics in their own right.⁹ They would have been laughed to

¹ Suda, s.v. Marianos (on his identity, see Averil Cameron, *Byzantion*, xxxvii [1967], 15, n. 6.)

² P. Maas, 'Der byzantinische Zwölfsilber', *Byz. Zeitschr.* xii (1903), 278–323.

³ For example, no one (I imagine) would care to infer any decline in the popularity of the hexameter in late Latin poetry from the fact that a certain Avienus put 'Vergilii fabulas' into iambs (Servius on *Aen.* 10. 272): whether this Avienus is the fabulist Avianus (more properly Avienus) or Rufius Festus Avienus (more properly Avienius) is uncertain (*CQ* n.s. xvii [1967], 394–5).

⁴ For the figures, see Gow and Page, *The Garland of Philip*, i (1968), xxxviii.

⁵ A. Franke, *De Pallada epigrammatographo* (Diss. Leipz. 1899), 97–8.

⁶ 16. 381–7, which are in iambs, I would assign to the ninth or tenth century rather than the sixth, where editors and commentators have so far been happy to leave them.

⁷ See A. Wifstrand's chapter 'Ein Ge-

schmackswandel in der Epigrammdichtung' in *Von Kallimachos zu Nonnos* (1933), 155–77.

⁸ A. Pertusi, in his edition of George's poems (*Studia Patristica et Byzantina*, vii [1960], 43) claims that George is the first poet to use iambs for encomiastic epic. This ignores several pieces of evidence discussed above.

⁹ Since it has not so far been mentioned in this connection, it is perhaps worth drawing attention here to L. Orosz's publication of *The London Manuscript of Nicephorus' 'Breviarium'* (Budapest, 1948), which offers a fuller text for the early years of Heraclius than the (much later) Vatican manuscript used by de Boor for his (still standard) edition. At pp. 11–12 Orosz notes that there are 'some complete and a larger number of incomplete iambic trimeters' concealed in the text of the British Museum Manuscript, and suggests that Nicephorus drew on an epic in iambic metre—adding the further suggestion that it might have been a now lost epic by George of Pisidia, since 'this verse form is an

scorn by Paul and Agathias in Constantinople. And (as noted already) Dioscorus' longest hexameter poem (Heitsch XLII. 3), his nearest approach to a full-scale panegyric, is indeed preceded by the traditional iambic preface.

But if iambic epics and encomia were not yet the rule by the sixth century, hexameter poems with iambic prefaces were very much the rule. More than ten examples have been listed above, and for all we know the great majority of the numerous other (now lost) hexameter epics of the age had them as well. Of course, on the evidence at our disposal it would be unwise to rule out the possibility of the odd exception. But late Greek contemporary poetry is distinguished less by its originality than by its rigid conformity to tradition, particularly in matters of form.

Perhaps the most noteworthy common feature of these iambic prefaces is that they were written in what their authors at least believed to be the style, metre, and idiom of Attic comedy. Friedlaender compared the practice of rhetors of the Gaza school, who prefaced their elegantly rhetorical *meletae* with prologues (called *dialexeis*) in a much more chatty style.¹ In both cases the object was presumably the same: to obtain the maximum contrast between the introductory remarks contained in the preface and the poem itself. Had the hexameter been used it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to mark the difference between preface and poem. In any case, the solemn epic hexameter, especially the refined hexameter of the post-Nonnan era, was hardly a suitable medium for the communication of prefatory material.

But however the practice grew up, before long it hardened into a rule. By the 560s Agathias and Paul may no longer have had a very clear idea why they were supposed to write comic prefaces, but they continued to do so. Not only do they admit all the metrical 'licences' of old comedy (striking enough, when it is reflected how strictly they observed every Nonnan refinement in their hexameters, Paul in particular being in some respects actually stricter than the Master in his hexameters): there are in addition a number of clear and obviously deliberate verbal echoes of Aristophanes and Menander. John of Gaza, it is true, was too much of a metrical purist for his fastidious ear to pass more than one untragic resolution (i. 19), but he could not avoid the echoes of Aristophanes and Menander.²

Nothing can better illustrate the *intentional* difference between the elevated hexameter poem and the comic iambic preface than the naïve closing lines of Heitsch xxx. A (the restorations seem certain):

[καὶ νῦν] ἰά[μ]βων κωμικῶν πεπανμέν[ος]
[ἥρῳ] ἔπη τ]ὸ λοιπὸν εἰς κυκλήσομαι].

unusual one for historical narrative'. Not all these 'fragments' are convincing, but it must be admitted that there are more iambic runs than one might ordinarily have expected in a dry *Breviarium*. This postulated iambic epic must be considered a possibility, though it will not affect the point under discussion here, since it could only be a few years earlier than George's poems (if, indeed George did not write it, which is perfectly possible). It is a pity that Pertusi used only de Boor's Nicephorus for his edition of

George, and did not touch on this matter.

¹ Friedlaender, *Johannes von Gaza*, 120 f., and O. Schissel, *Berl. Phil. Woch.* xlix (1929), 1075-7.

² See Friedlaender's commentaries on John and Paul, and, for Agathias, Waltz and Beckby ad loc. or, more fully Mattsson, *Untersuchungen* (p. 119, n. 1), 106 f. and G. Viansino's commentary (1967) ad loc. (defective in many ways, but useful for parallel passages).

Compare too the hardly less explicit lines in which Agathias turns from the casual chit-chat of his iambs to the high-flown hexameter eulogy on Justin II (*A. Pal.* 4. 46-7):

καί μοι μεγίστων πραγμάτων ὑμνουμένων
εὐρεῖν γένοιτο καὶ λόγους ἐπηρημένους.

I have not detected any obvious verbal echoes of either Old or New Comedy in the few lines preserved by *Pap. Ant.* 115. But with regard to the author's metrical practice, I quote the following remarks from Barns's commentary:

'In view of the seriousness of his subject we should perhaps expect him to observe the stricter traditions of the tragic trimeter, but an *occasional* breach of Porson's Law (Maas, *Greek Metre*, § 48) shows that he allows himself the licence of comedy in this respect (e.g. in (a) 12).'

[Add also (a) 10 and (b) 8: a high proportion when barely 20 line-endings are preserved—hence my italicizing of 'occasional'.]

'Note also the resolution of the seventh element (Maas, *op. cit.*, § 111) in (a) 20; there is a split anapaest (Maas, *ib.*) in (a) 16.'

No less plain a 'comic' feature is the second foot anapaest: there are examples at (a) 9, 13, 19 and (b) 16 and? 20, no fewer than 5 out of only 16 reasonably preserved line-beginnings. All these 'licences' are common in the prefaces of Paul and Agathias, and in the papyrus prefaces.

In fairness, however, attention should be drawn to one 'uncomic' feature in the prosody of our fragment: the lengthening ἐποπλίσαντο in (a) 17, unparalleled in Attic comedy except in parody of tragedy (Maas, § 124). But it is legitimate to wonder whether most sixth-century poets were sufficiently acquainted with such niceties of comic prosody to recognize this feature as uncomic. Let us take the case of Agathias, who clearly knew Old Comedy at least as well as and perhaps better than any other poet of the age. The Aristophanic echoes in his preface are more extensive than those in the other prefaces listed above, and there are not infrequent comic echoes in his elegiac epigrams too. Yet in the 46 iambic lines of the preface we find not merely περιφρονεῖν (v. 7), but at v. 27 an example of a final syllable lengthened before initial mute and liquid (untragic as well as uncomic): πέμμασι φρνάττομαι. Since, moreover, Attic correption was almost unknown to late imperial Greek poetry as a whole (especially after Nonnus, who only admits it for words that would not otherwise fit into a hexameter),¹ it is hardly surprising that poets of the age should have continued to avoid it even when attempting to write comic trimeters.

The detail which, I think, confirms my hypothesis, is οὔτοσί in (a) 18. It is well known that deictic iota is, in poetry, virtually confined to Attic comedy²—where it is very common. This, surely, is why it appears in our poem. Compare the iambic preface to the first of the poems on Berytus law professors, Heitsch xxx. 10:

εἰ μὴ τὸν ἄνδρα [τ] ουτονὶ τεθνηκότ[α] . . .

¹ See (e.g.) Keydell's Nonnus, i (1959), p. 40* § 16. On the practice of the early imperial epigrammatists see Gow and Page, *The Garland of Philip*, i (1968), xxxviii-ix.

² ὁδί is an uncertain reading at Ascle-

piades, *APL* 120. 2, retained with hesitation by Gow and Page, *Hellenistic Epigrams*, ii (1965), 147 (1101 n.). Beckby (ad loc.) might at least perhaps have mentioned Hermann's conjecture.

Compare too the second preface to Paul's *ekphrasis* on Hagia Sophia, line 95 :

ταυτὶ πέπονθας ὅπερ ἂν εἰκότως πάθοι,

And Agathias' preface, line 32 :

ταυτὶ μὲν οὖν ἐρεῖ τις . . .

Lastly, Heitsch xxvii. 33, which I have argued above is not an iambic encomium in its own right, but a preface to xxviii :

τουτὶ πεπεῖσθαι τοῦ χρόνου σταθμωμένου.

This strikes me as too high a proportion to be attributable to mere coincidence—especially when it is reflected that only five of these prefaces are perfectly preserved. Surely budding poets had it dinned into them at school that where iambic prefaces were concerned, deictic iota was Ἀττικώτατόν τι, guaranteed to give precisely the comic flavour desired.

And if (as Professor John Gould suggests to me) the Attic *τήμερον*, which closes some 25 lines in Aristophanes alone, is to be restored at (a) 7,]ωτο τημε[, this would be another pinch of comic flavouring.

It has been noted above that some of these prefaces are of substantial length for the service they perform. It took Paul 134 lines before he reached his poem! Thus it is hardly surprising that they sometimes contain encomiastic material which might have seemed more at home in the poem. This is certainly true, for example, of Paul's preface. So it is no argument against the suggestion that *Pap. Ant.* 115 and Heitsch xxvii are prefaces that they are (a) more than 60 and 40 lines in length respectively, and (b) are not restricted in content exclusively to what might have been considered strictly prefatory matter.

At the same time there is material in both these pieces which would, surely, be more at home in a preface. With *Pap. Ant.* 115 (b) 18–19 :

σκοπεῖτ' ἄ
[ε]κριβῶς ὥς ἕκαστον (?-ος, -οι) ἐν μέρει
ἐκ τῶν ἐπαίνων εἰσφέρει[υ]σι τοὺς λόγους

compare Heitsch xxvii. 2–3 :

] ἄλλος μέ[ν
τῶν μυρίων ἐγ[κω]μίων

It would seem that both poets are alluding to other poets who either have already recited or are about to recite other panegyrics on the celebrity in question. This detail might seem more appropriate to a preface. Indeed it may have been a convention of the preface. Compare line 4 (there is no separate self-contained preface in a different metre) of George of Pisidia's panegyric on Heraclius' return from Africa (p. 77 Pertusi) :

ὁρῶ δὲ πολλοὺς ὑμνολογοῦντας, δέσποτα,
ἱππεῖς ἐνόπλους . . .

Note too Heitsch xxvii. 18–19 :

τὸ μὲν οὖν προτάττω καὶ γένος [τῶν πραγμάτων]
ὥς οἱ νόμοι θέλουσι τῶν ἐγκ[ωμί]ων.

Keydell's restoration *τῶν πραγμάτων* (printed by Heitsch) seems less than certain to me. One might have expected a reference to the subject of the poem : after all it was one of the 'rules of the panegyrics' to begin with the *γένος* of the

subject.¹ In any case, this sort of self-conscious allusion to the purely technical and formal aspects of the panegyrist's craft might again seem to be more in place in a preface than in the body of the poem.

If these pieces are indeed prefaces to panegyrics rather than panegyrics, then they are rather more conventional specimens of late Greek poetry than they might otherwise have seemed. The conventional nature of *Pap. Ant.* 115 can be further illustrated by a brief commentary on one or two details in (a).

στέψωμεν ὕμνοις [ἐπιμελη]τὴν Ἀρχέλα[ν].
 μόλις γὰρ εὗρεν ἡ π[όλις τὸν] ἀστέρα
 ὃς δεῦρ' ἐπιφανείς καταλ[υθέν]των τῶν νόμω(ν),
 πάσας διέσωσε τὰς πόλεις [χρησ]τῶ τρόπῳ,
 τίνων ἐκάστη χεὶρ' ἀλεξήτ[η]ριον. (10-14)

For the purpose of illustration and comprehension, I have admitted more extensive restorations than would be proper in an edition.

10: The missing word almost certainly must have described Archelaus' official position as governor (it is clear from what follows that he was a civilian governor, not a general or military man). ἐπιμελητῆς has the right number of letters, but I should have preferred τὸν βραβεύτην or τὸν δικαστήν, less technical and hence more 'poetical' designations of a provincial governor, both found in honorific poetry of the age (for the first cf. Dioscorus, Heitsch XLII. 10. 6 and 3. 17 [restored]: for the second, L. Robert, *Hellenica*, iv [1948], 64, n. 7). But both have two letters too many on Barns's calculations, which have been confirmed for me by my friend P. J. Parsons, after a fresh examination of the papyrus.

11: Suppl. Barns. For this metaphorical use of ἀστήρ cf. again (b) 13-14:

νέμων . . [. . .] . ως τῆς δίκης τὸν ἀστέρα
 παρὰ τὸν βασιλέα τὸν μέγα πρεσβεύεται.

In the first case it would seem to be the governor himself who is likened to a star, appropriately enough, whereas in the second the governor is apparently 'wielding' the star of justice, a distinctly less coherent notion. That the poet should use such a striking metaphor twice within 20 lines (and once in such a way that his meaning is unclear) suggests, what can be confirmed by comparing similar works, that it is a cliché of the genre. Barns compares only Eur. *Hipp.* 1122 and Alcaeus Mess., *Anth. Pal.* 7. 1. 8 (the only two examples quoted by LSJ). It is unlikely that these examples were present to our poet's mind as he wrote: note rather the following random selection. Christodorus, *Anth. Pal.* 7. 697. 1-2, an epitaph on the prefect John written some time in the 480s:

Οὗτος Ἰωάννην κρύπτει τάφος, ὃς ῥ' Ἐπιδάμνου
 ἄστρον ἔην.

Cf. Kaibel 978. 3, and (by Christodorus again) *AP* 2. 362. In a second-century² inscription from Nicaea, the high priest Sacerdos is Ἀσκανίης ἄστρον ἐπιχθόνιον. Cf. *AP* 7. 373. 4 by Thallus³ (early first century A.D.) of athletes, and for ἀστήρ of cities see Gow and Page on *AP* 7. 297. 1 (*Hellenistic Epigrams*, ii (1965),

¹ Cf. (among countless passages) Julian, *Or.* 1. 3-4, p. 14 Bidez.

² Not fourth century, as supposed by Weisshäupl, Peck, and Beckby: see L. Robert, *Hellenica*, viii (1950), 90.

³ On which poem see now, rather than the commentaries of Waltz, Beckby, or even Gow and Page, *Garland of Philip*, ii (1968), 412, L. Robert, *Rev. de Phil.* xli (1967), 21 ff., at p. 24.

3048 n.). Compare too, reflecting the same encomiastic style, Libanius, *Epp.* 947. 4, τὸν ἀστέρα δὲ τῆς Ἑλλάδος τὴν Ἀθηναίων πόλιν, καὶ ἕτερον ἀστέρα Πρίσκον, and (from the new Supplement to LSJ) Themistius, *Or.* 16. 213a (p. 304. 12 Downey), τὸν ἀγαπητὸν ἀστέρα τῆς οἰκουμένης. As late as the tenth century, Alexander, Metropolitan of Nicaea, is σοφίης ἐρικυδέος ἀστήρ (*A. Plan.* 281. 5, with Beckby ad loc.).

12: καταλ[υθεν]των: .[.] . . . [..]των Barns. My supplement is two letters too long on Barns's calculation, but Parsons, again from a re-examination of the papyrus, tells me that: 'The trace of the first letter is quite substantial, and allows κ (not e.g. ἀνατραπέντων). The traces following are very slight, but I should say that καταλ[υθεν]των is a good try: the space is not obviously too small, and the traces allow καταλ, even if they don't directly suggest it.' Obviously there might be other and shorter appropriate participles beginning κατα-, but so far neither of us has managed to think of one.

13: Suppl. Lloyd-Jones (*ap.* Barns).

διέσωσε πόλεις. σώζειν is frequently used in panegyrics and honorific epigrams of the period meaning in effect no more than 'administer'. It is regularly implied that the administration of the governor in question has saved the city, province, etc. from ruin. Cf. line 2 of the fifth-century epigram from Aphrodisias published by L. Robert in *Hell.* iv (1948), 47:

Τατιανὸς θεσμοῖς τε δίκης πτολίεθρα σαώσας

and from late-fourth-century Achaëa, Kaibel 915 (*IG* ii². 4223):

Ἄρχον ὀρᾶς Θεόδωρον, δς εὐδικίης ἀγανῆσι
σῶσε Πανελλήνων σώματα καὶ πόλεις.

Here l. 1 makes it clear that the 'salvation' was merely brought about by Theodorus' just government. Earlier commentators, not realizing this, had detected an allusion to the Gothic invasion of Greece (cf. Robert, *op. cit.* 23).

At Kaibel 901 (*IG* xiv. 1075, *ILS* 1274) Eusebius, vicar of Italy (again a purely civil post) is described as [Ἰταλ]ίης ἀρχοντα σ[α]ό[π]ι[τ]ο[λ]ιν. Heitsch xxxiii, a fifth-century encomium on an unknown governor, calls him σαόπτολις (l. 30), and cf. the late imperial epigram on a governor called Rufus (*IG* v. 2. 153, Groag. *Reichsb. von Achaia*, 68) σαόπολι, ὕπατε Ῥούφε. Note especially Dioscorus, Heitsch XLII. 13. 9-10:

καὶ πτολίεθρον ἔσωσαν ἐϋδμήτον Ἀντινοῆος
καὶ πόλιν ἐξεσάσεν εὐκτιτον Ἀντινοῆος

As Heitsch observes (ad loc.), these are presumably two drafts for the same line (it will be remembered that we possess Dioscorus' own autograph copy). Nothing could reveal more clearly the extent to which the motif had become a cliché of the genre.

More generally, L. Robert has shown in detail in chapter i-ii *passim* of his *Épigrammes du Bas-Empire* that the motif of the just administration of the governor is one of the two principal themes of such honorific epigrams and panegyrics.¹ Several examples could be adduced from the fragments of pane-

¹ Cf. too I. Ševčenko, *Synthronon* . . . A. Grabar (1968), 30 f., and for the motif of the governor sharing his throne with Dike herself, E. H. Kantorowicz, *AJA* lviii (1953),

gyrical poetry, which Robert did not consider: e.g. Heitsch xviii. v. 33, where the governor is described as φαίνων εὐνομίης ἱερὸν φάος, or xlii. 3. 30, where (for Dioscorus) he is νιέα Δίκης.

It is obvious from this that administration of justice was felt to be the prime function of a provincial governor. It might have been hoped that justice was something that could be taken for granted; but the concentration on a motif such as the 'saving' of a city by justice suggests, sadly enough, that the average governor might be expected διαφθείρειν πόλιν.¹ Against this background, it is clear from the reference to the(?) trampling of the laws at (a) 12, to the saving of the cities at (a) 13, to δίκη and νομίμῳ at (a) 19 and 20, and to δίκη again and ἀδικία at (b) 13 and 16, that Archelas is a civilian governor, with duties mainly judicial.

14: This motif of the governor stretching out his hand to protect his charges is one of Dioscorus' favourites. Cf. Heitsch xlii. 6. 28: ἀρηγόνα χεῖρ' ἀτανύσ[σ]ης. (One's natural instinct here, of course, would be to divide *after*, instead of before, the first alpha of the verb (χεῖρα τανύσσης), but clearly Dioscorus did not do so: cf. xlii. 4. 16, χεῖραν [sic] ἐμοὶ ἀτάνυσσον [the formula is repeated ib. 3. 24, 3. 25, 7. 21].) Cf. also 13. 14 [ἐλε]ημύ[να] χεῖρ' ἀτανύσσεις. For the same motif of the hand outstretched, but this time in (anticipated) generosity instead of protection, cf. 9. 20, τῷ σῶ ὄρεξον οἰκέτη ἄλβου χεῖρα (again at 5. 62).

The list of parallels, both verbal and thematic, with contemporary poetry could doubtless be extended. For example ἀκριβῶς at (b) 18 (where the full meaning 'exactly', 'precisely' is not especially in point) is another favourite Dioscoran word: cf. Heitsch xlii. 3. 1, 5. 40, 9. 18, 12. 5 (all, of course, iambic passages). At line 20 of (b) what should probably be restored as [χ]όρος ἐκ Νεῖλ[ου . . .] is followed after a gap of four letters by χορεύεται. One of the favourite openings for Dioscorus' iambic pieces is Θήβη πᾶσα χόρευσον (xlii 9. 1, 10. 1, 11. 1, 3. 9, 5. 53). In the sadly fragmentary Heitsch xxxiii (fifth century), two lines after hearing the governor described as σαόπολις we read (l. 32) θέμης ἄρτι χορεύειν. Compare too Himerius, writing his poetry in prose, who praises Cerveronius, proconsul of Achaëa, as ὀρθόπολις, and then describes how the city κωμάζειν τε καὶ χορεύειν ἄρχεται (*Or.* 38 [4]. 9, pp. 157–8 Colonna). With (b) 14 παρὰ τὸν βασιλέα τὸν μέγαν compare Paul's preface to the poem on Hagia Sophia, l. 134: οὐκοῦν ἐπάνειμι πρὸς βασιλέα τὸν μέγαν.

But enough has been said already to show that *Pap. Ant.* 115 conforms very closely, in almost every possible respect—style, vocabulary, motifs, metrical technique, subject-matter—to the pattern of the genre. Apart from its attestation of Archelas, its interest lies principally in its demonstration that the traditions of the genre had not sunk to the level of Dioscorus all over sixth-century Egypt.

One last question obviously suggests itself. Is it possible to identify Archelas? It should be observed first that the man's name was probably not in fact Archelas, but Archelaus. Archelas is a recognized dialect variant for Archelaus,

65 f. (= *Selected Studies* [1965], 1 f.). For a brilliant interpretation of a very fragmentary inscription from Corinth on the basis of these motifs, Robert again, *REG* lxxix (1966), 760–1.

¹ On the corruption and rapacity of provincial governors, see A. Alföldi, *Conflict of*

Ideas in the Late Roman Empire (1952), ch. iii *passim*, and A. H. M. Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, i (1964), 399 f., neither of whom makes use of the very revealing evidence of these honorific epigrams, so admirably analysed by Robert.

just as Menelas is for Menelaus and Agesilas for Agesilaus (cf. Pape-Benseler, *Wörterb. d. griech. Eigennamen*, s.vv.). It is even found for the adjective ἀρχέλαος at Aristophanes *Equ.* 164. Indeed, in view of what has been said above of the influence of Aristophanes on these late imperial iambic prefaces, there is just a possibility of a direct Aristophanic echo here. In any case, since Archelas is extremely rare and Archelaus (in certain periods at least) relatively common, we must certainly consider Archelai as possible candidates for the subject of *Pap. Ant.* 115.

As it happens, no Archelas is attested in office, whether in Egypt or elsewhere, during the sixth century. But there is a prominent Archelaus. First known as praetorian prefect of the East from 524 to 527, he accompanied Belisarius to Africa as an elder statesman in 533, and was made praetorian prefect of the newly reconquered Africa in 534¹. He must presumably have held some administrative post before his first tenure of the praetorian prefecture, and the prefecture of Egypt would certainly have been a possible jumping-off point. A few years later the energetic Hephaestus won himself the prefecture of the East by his efficient handling of the difficult post of *Augustalis* of Alexandria for six years.² This was after the post of *praefectus Augustalis* of all Egypt had been abolished in Justinian's reform of 539,³ but before 524 Archelaus could have held it. The allusion to Archelas saving *all* the cities in (a) 13 shows that a number of different cities were under his jurisdiction, and ἐκάστη in 14 confirms that this is not just a rhetorical plural.

We learn from (b) 14 that he went on an embassy to the Emperor. This might suggest that he was (like Hephaestus) an Egyptian himself, since non-Egyptians would not often have become so concerned at the welfare of their temporary subjects as to go to the trouble of a personal embassy to the Emperor to protest at corruption. Most such embassies we know of were undertaken by Egyptians. The forces of evil Archelas battles against are described as ζῶντες ἐκ τυραννίδος, taking up arms against οἱ ἐλεύθεροι and as originally intending to take no notice of Archelas and carry on as before (τὸν αὐτὸν ἐβουλεύσαντο βιοτεύειν βίον). But Archelas καθεῖλε πάντας. These πονηροί ((a) 15) are presumably, rather than simple criminals or footpads, the Egyptian landowning aristocracy and their agents exercising illegal patronage over the poorer classes, against whom the government had been waging a losing battle for centuries.⁴ The fact that Archelas could tackle these people with at least some measure of success (we must not take his panegyrist's superlatives too literally) is further evidence that he was a man of some standing.

Our poem was found at Antinoopolis, and since it is only an author's draft it was presumably both written and recited (if it ever was recited) in Antinoopolis. But this proves little. At (b) 18–19 we have the allusion to other poets with panegyrics on Archelas, but there is no indication that they too were Antinoopolites. They could equally be representatives of all the other cities Archelas had 'saved'.

Naturally, nothing firm can be based on these hints, but we have seen that Archelas must have been an official with judicial powers, and the implication is that these powers were fairly extensive. Possibly, then, the *praefectus Augustalis*

¹ E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, ii (1949), i. 281.
313, 319, 783.

² Stein, *Bas-Empire*, ii. 754.

³ Stein, 476 f.; Jones, *Later Roman Empire*,

⁴ E. R. Hardy, *Large Estates of Byzantine Egypt* (1931), *passim*, and Stein, 162 f.

himself. It would be nice to think that it was his courageous and energetic stand against the Egyptian landowners that drew attention to his ability at court, and won him the prefecture of the East and the favour of Justinian.¹

Bedford College, London

ALAN CAMERON

¹ On the iambic prologue in general, and for a few remarks about *Pap. Ant.* 115, see now T. Viljamaa, *Studies in Greek Encomiastic Poetry of the Early Byzantine Period* (Comm. Hum. Litt. Soc. Sci. Fenn. 42. 14), 1968.