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ACHILLES IN LOCRI: *P. OXY.* 3876 FRR. 37–77

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The death and funeral of Achilles, it has been recently claimed, enjoyed no successful treatment in Greek poetry: the story is confined to texts late, imitative, and clearly mediocre.¹ One might dismiss the account in the *Odyssey* (24.36-94) as minor. And it is true that the more substantial treatment in Quintus' *Posthomerica* is late and imitative.² But the bulk of Greek poetry composed between the *Odyssey* and Quintus' poem is lost. It seems unfair, for example, to condemn the account of Achilles' death in the *Aithiopsis* to mediocrity: not a single line of that poem remains to be praised or blamed on its merits. Alcman may have told the story (cf.frr. 68-70 P), but only hints remain. In recent years we have learned more and more that if a good story is wanted, Stesichorus is an excellent place to go. And now it seems we might just have another early account of Achilles' death and funeral in fragments of Stesichorus' poetry, fragments 37-77 of *P. Oxy.* 3876.³

There is reason to believe Stesichorus could have written such a poem: he treated other material from the epic cycle in his *Iliou Persis* (the fragments of which have been illuminated partly by a comparison with the account in Quintus). Indeed, there is reason to believe that Stesichorus may well have written such a poem: he told of the golden urn that Thetis gave to Achilles to contain his bones after his death (*PMGF* 234), and no poem could be more fitting for such information than one which dealt with Achilles' death. That we have no title for an Achilles-poem is of little concern. After all, we have no title for the Lille poem, and Stesichorus seems to have been most prolific, as the finds from Oxyrhynchus continue to show.

The general importance of Achilles' death for Greek culture is unquestionable. Achilles' death is in fact one of the most insistent concerns of the *Iliad*.⁴ His enemies look forward to his death (18.282) or at least wish for it (22.42-3); his mother bewails that it will come so soon (1.417, 18.95); he himself acknowledges it as the price for his fame (9.412-13); his horse foretells it (19.416-17); and he foresees the details of his own funeral (23.244-8). It is generally agreed that in the *Iliad* the death and burial of Patroclus is made indirectly to serve as

¹ A. Schnapp-Gourbeillon, "Les funérailles de Patrocle", p. 86 in *La mort, les morts dans les sociétés anciennes*, ed. by G. Gnoli and J.-P. Vernant (Cambridge and Paris 1982).

² The death and funeral of Achilles fill the 787 verses of book three; the funeral games and their aftermath, books four and five.

³ The fragments have been presented nearly simultaneously as an appendix to M. Davies' *Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Oxford 1991) I (hereafter *PMGF*), and in *P. Oxy LVII* edited by M. Haslam. I agree with Haslam that frr. 1-24 (and very likely 25-36) belong together and tell the story of Meleager and the hunt for the Calydonian Boar. For more on the connections between the two stories see the conclusion of this article.

⁴ See C. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge 1967), Chapter 9; G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans* (Baltimore and London 1979) 21.

the funeral of Achilles, with Patroclus serving as Achilles' double.⁵ Nor is the importance of Achilles' death seen only in poetry: Achilles' final battle, the struggle for possession of his body, and the rescue of his corpse by Ajax were popular subjects for depiction in art—indeed one of the favorite scenes in Archaic art—with representations from at least the mid-seventh century and probably from some time before.⁶

The narrative account of Achilles' death and funeral can be reconstructed with either of two approaches that are often seen as conflicting: the methods of oral poetry theory or of neoanalysis.⁷ Both approaches begin from the same point: Proclus' summary of the *Aithiopsis* as well as the accounts of Achilles' death and funeral in the *Odyssey* and Quintus' *Posthomerica* give a series of events in which many particulars closely resemble those in the death and burial of Patroclus.⁸ The neoanalysts assume that the story of Achilles' death was developed first (orally rather than in the *Aithiopsis*) and that various elements from that story were taken over by the creator of the *Iliad*. Thus elements entirely appropriate in an original "Achilleis" are often somewhat out-of-place in the *Iliad*: the arrival of Thetis and the Nereids to mourn the death of Achilles makes more sense and better poetry than does their arrival at the death of Patroclus. The oral poetry theorists prefer to think of typical scenes and traditional themes available for the poet to incorporate into his work. The elements common to the deaths of Patroclus and Achilles (and seen also to some extent in the deaths of Sarpedon and Hector) can be seen as thematic formulae: they will have been developed to treat related incidents with related themes, the battle deaths of important figures, heroes whose lives are inextricably bound together by traditional mythology and ritual. Taking a somewhat more sociological or broadly cultural (rather than strictly literary) approach, Vernant has demonstrated the importance of the theme of the heroic death in battle of the beautiful young man and the way it is developed in the *Iliad*: a clear pattern of events or concerns can be found in the accounts of the deaths of Sarpedon, Hector, and Patroclus.⁹ And these are in fact the same events and details found in the surviving references to Achilles' death.

In sum, the traditional tale of Memnon's death at Achilles' hands and of Achilles' at Apollo's, eventually recounted in the *Aithiopsis* and elsewhere, may well have provided the

⁵ See, for example, Whitman (n. 4) 136-7, 200-202; Nagy (n. 4) 33; N. Loraux, "Mourir devant Troie, tomber pour Athènes: de la gloire du héros à l'idée de la cité," p. 30 in *La mort, les morts* (n. 1), and Schnapp-Gourbeillon (above, n. 1) 86.

⁶ See *LIMC* I 1 "Achilleus," (A.Kossatz-Deissmann), pp. 181-93.

⁷ As does Kullmann, I believe that the two approaches should ultimately be compatible. See W. Kullmann, *GRBS* 25 (1984) 307-23.

⁸ The claim for the poetic priority of the death of Achilles predates the emergence of neoanalysis. For a summary and bibliography of older work see O. Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte* (Munich 1906) 680-83. For more recent work of the neoanalysts see W. Schadewaldt, in *Von Homers Welt und Werk* (Stuttgart 1952) 155-202; J. Kakridis, in *Homeric Researches* (Lund 1949) 65-95; Kullmann (n. 7); and M. Willcock, in *Homer: Beyond Oral Poetry* (Amsterdam 1987) 185-94, edited by J.M. Bremmer, I.J.F. de Jong, and J. Kalff. H. Mühlestein argues that the name of Patroclus is meaningful: "who obeys his father"; and that this motif is borrowed from the *Aithiopsis* where Antilochus obeys the call of his father; this argument implies the priority of the *Aithiopsis* (*Mus. Helv.* 43 (1986) 209-220 and *Studi Miceni ed Egeo-Anatolici* 9 (1969) 67-94, esp. 86-93 (= *idem, Homerische Namenstudien*, Beitr. z. klass. Phil. 183 [Frankfurt 1987] 174-185 and 67-94, esp. 47-54).

⁹ J.-P. Vernant, in *Mortals and Immortals*, ed. by F. Zeitlin (Princeton 1991) 50-74.

poet of the *Iliad* with much of his material: certainly the examination of the *Iliad* narrative surrounding Patroclus has provided the neoanalysts with some of their most persuasive material. But even if the death of Achilles did not exist in such an early narrative form, the *Iliad* itself insists on the supreme importance of Achilles' death and provides a clear pattern for the manner in which it would be told. Thus one can imagine three somewhat different possibilities for the development of the Achilles death-story: an early *Achilleis* shaped the *Iliad* (the neoanalytical view); the *Iliad* shaped an imitative *Aithiopsis*; or the techniques and history of oral poetry dictated that the way in which both Patroclus' and Achilles' deaths should be told must share a number of thematic details. But on all three views, the elements of Achilles' death and burial seem virtually inevitable. The following reconstruction of these events, then, rests on a surprisingly solid foundation.

Achilles is killed in battle by an arrow guided by Apollo (Quintus 3.56-62, Proclus' summary of the *Aithiopsis*), just as Patroclus is slain in part through Apollo's action (*Il.* 16. 790-93). The corpse of a great hero must be recovered so that he can be given a glorious funeral: Apollo, aided by Sleep and Death, retrieves Sarpedon's body (*Il.* 16.678-83); the gods and Priam achieve the return of Hector (*Il.* 24); Achilles is secured in a great battle (*Od.* 24.40-2, Proclus, Quintus 3.312-65) just as was Patroclus (*Il.* 17).¹⁰ Once secured, the corpse must be protected from decay by some combination of divine oil, nectar and/or ambrosia: Achilles (Quintus 3.533-43, 697-8); Sarpedon (*Il.* 16.666-83); Hector (*Il.* 23.184-7, 24.18-21, 24.411-23); Patroclus (*Il.* 19.37-9).¹¹ Upon news of Achilles' death, Thetis and the Nereids rise from the sea (*Od.* 24.47-50, Proclus, Quintus 3.585-96) just as they had when Patroclus was killed (*Il.* 18.35-67). At any time from this point through the end of the funeral there may be speeches of mourning and consolation: for Achilles, Quintus 3.435-780 (*passim*); for Patroclus, *Il.* 19.287-300, 23.179-83; for Hector, *Il.* 24.725-77. A great pyre is built for Achilles (*Od.* 24.65-70, Quintus 3.673-93) as it was for Patroclus (*Il.* 23.163-77) and for Hector (*Il.* 24.784-7). Winds are called to make the pyre blaze high (for Achilles: Quintus 3.699-711; for Patroclus: *Il.* 23.194-230), and, of course, the pyre does burn: Achilles (*Od.* 24.65-70; Proclus; Quintus 3.712-18); Patroclus (*Il.* 23.216-28); Hector (*Il.* 24.787). Finally, once the pyre has burned down, the embers are extinguished and the bones gathered and placed in a container of precious metal: Achilles (*Od.* 24.72-6, Quintus 3.719-42); Patroclus (*Il.* 23.239-57); and Hector (*Il.* 24.792-5).

With this skeleton reconstruction in mind we may turn to *P. Oxy.* 3876. For convenience, the major relevant fragments are presented here with some of Haslam's supplements and suggestions. The spacing between words has been added by me in order to facilitate the

¹⁰ The importance of a glorious death in battle memorialized by a proper funeral is often expressed in inverted fashion by stressing the horror of the mutilation or decay of the corpse. The importance of this theme in the *Iliad* has been demonstrated by C. Segal, *The Theme of the Mutilation of the Corpse in the Iliad* (Leiden 1971).

¹¹ In the *Iliad* (19.347-8, 353-4) Achilles is given nectar to keep him from joining Patroclus in death, but the detail inevitably suggests his own end. For the connection between nectar and the corpse (*nec-ros*) see E. Vermeule, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (Berkeley 1979) 127. Apollo tried to revive Hyacinth with nectar and ambrosia (Bion fr. 1.3). In Ovid nectar causes the fragrant evaporation of a corpse (*Met.* 4.249-51), and once Adonis is dead, nectar is added to his blood to create the anemone (*Met.* 10.131-9).

fr. 48

]αμφ[
] ολ [
] ἐναλιγκ[
] κειμεν[4
] ὠμοφαγ [
] τ [. . .] [

] υ[
] ὕθε[] [
] αυτο[
] ἀνάδρ [] [4
] ὀπαλον[] χε[
] ομενου· [
] [] κυμασι [
 αλος π]ολιας οθεν[8
] ἄλι κλύζο[μεν-
] [για]ιας λα [
] βροτοιει[
 αλλ υδατ]ί τ ελ[ο]εσς[αν 12

fr. 61

fr. 62

c.13] [] [
 . . . ἀ]λειφ[ατι] νε καταρε[ό]δμοι·ω [
 . . .] δα [] τ ν [ξ
] ετέλιεν με[γ]α φαρος ανεψιος [4
] Αιολου Ιπ[π]οτάδα· καθ[ε]αις δ ετα- [
] νυς ἐπ αι[ον]εσ- [
] αι, πυραν δ ο [γ]α μεμβλε[τ]ο νεκρωι [
 ποιει]εθα[ι] περιμάκεα οζους . . ους [8
 ναήσαις μ]ελίας τ εριδα[ν]ους [
 c.9] ἐρ^αθ . . . [
 c.10] τι [] [

5 καθέσαις Davies 8 . . ους [in a smaller hand

fr. 72

] [] φε [
] αιτᾶχθο[] [
] οσα ὀ κα[] [
] παν [4
] ε [
] εα [
 χ]ρύσοτρ[ια]ινα[ι] [
] μακ[] π [8
] ἀμβροσι[] τε [

(a) — — — — —
] τοθ̄εναρ [— — — — —
] ζ̄ ακοτου[— — — — —
] ερασιπτο[— — — — —
] έθαλεε [4 — — — — —
] αγαθ[— — — — —
] κ[— — — — —
 — — — — —
fr. 65
 — — — — —
 col. i — — — — — col. ii — — — — —
] [] [] α [— — — — —
] — — — — — πεφ[— — — — —
] νφυγον χ αυτ[— — — — —
] χ κατ[4 — — — — —
] ζαν — — — — — χᾱιρ[ε — — — — —
] — — — — — κλει[τ- — — — — —
] — — — — — μακα[ρ- — — — — —
] — — — — — κα [8 — — — — —
] — — — — — βρι[— — — — —
] — — — — — τον[— — — — —
 — — — — —

fr. 64
 (b) — — — — —
] μαχα [— — — — —
] αγα · πολ [— — — — —
] οπ[ο]κ εθλα θεος̄ δ̄[ιδοι or -ωηι — — — — —
] ουδε τις εκτ]εκτ αρετᾱ [βρο- 4 — — — — —
] τ̄ων παρα δα[ι]μον[οc — — — — —
] και λάχεειν · τ[ο] δε σα[μα — — — — —
 μα]λ' αριφραδ̄ [— — — — —
 πολ]εμουοτε [8 — — — — —
] . [— — — — —
 — — — — —

(a) — — — — —
] [— — — — —
] άμα [— — — — —
] εφερο[— — — — —
] αιτοσε[4 — — — — —
] ζακοτο [— — — — —
] κρατερ [— — — — —
] ' [— — — — —
 — — — — —
fr. 71
 — — — — —
] ε [— — — — —
] ε [— — — — —
] να [— — — — —
] μα[4 — — — — —
] του[— — — — —
] ετομ[— — — — —
] πόρα[— — — — —
] [— — — — —
 — — — — —

fr. 67
 (b) — — — — —
] [— — — — —
] εραταν[— — — — —
] φιβρότ [— — — — —
 άργ]υ ρεων κ [4 — — — — —
] υc περι χρ[υc- — — — — —
] τηλόθε χα [— — — — —
] ε̄ ε̄λαc [— — — — —
] ειc αλοc ωρτο[8 — — — — —
] [— — — — —
] ονταc ιδοντ[αc — — — — —
] [— — — — —
] [12 — — — — —
] [— — — — —
 — — — — —
 10 written in a smaller hand

Noting the sea in fr. 61.7-9 and the funeral activity in fr. 62, Haslam suggested that the poem recounts a funeral for a victim of drowning. But other fragments point to another interpretation. Fragment 64b seems to suggest battle (v. 1) and war (v. 8), and fr. 69 apparently gives us a shield and bronze (vv. 3-4). Also the verse-initial *κειμεν* [in fr. 48.4 suggests the Homeric corpses found in the midst of battle in verse initial position. Moreover, in the next line (fr. 48.5) the adjective *ὠμοφάγος* suggests an animal simile describing the fierceness of battle.¹² Taken together, the fragments point strongly toward a battle context—and to one more pervasive than if a drowned hero's previous military exploits were simply being rehearsed by those who mourn his death. A funeral by the sea for a hero who died in battle would, of course, be part of the tale of Achilles' death. The fragments provide a number of details which seem to indicate that that is just what we have.

Identifiable actors and actions seem to come into focus with fr. 42. If we do have a child of Thaumias (Θαύμαντος, fr. 42a.7), it is likely to be Iris (cf. Hes. *Th.* 265) descending through the *αιθήρη* (*αιθέρος*, fr. 42a.5).¹³ Since *ὠκέα Ἴρις* is an Iliadic formula, Iris could still be present in the adjacent column (*ὠκέα* [fr. 42c.3). She will have come to give a message to Achilles (fr. 42c.4 δ' Ἀχιλλ[), perhaps from Zeus (fr. 42c.6). Compare her arrival in the *Iliad* (*ὠκέα Ἴρις*, 18.166) with a message for Achilles to encourage him to help defend the corpse of Patroclus.¹⁴

Very soon after this (if—as Haslam thinks likely—fr. 43 joins to fr. 42) Achilles may be shot in the ankle (fr. 43.ii.8 *φυρ[*) with the arrow which kills him.¹⁵ The arrow which struck him unaware may be likened to a snake (*ὄφι εἴκελο-*, fr. 43.ii.3; with a Doric dative (see Haslam's note); cf. *σὺ εἴκελος*: *Il.* 4.253, 11.293) hiding in a thicket (*δριο-*, fr. 43 ii 5). The head of the arrow (*κεφα[*]λ- fr. 43 ii 10) may receive special attention. If this description seems too lively and vivid for an arrow, we need only recall the description of Heracles' arrow and its head in Stesichorus' *Geryoneis*, fr. S15, col. ii,1-9. Note especially *κυγεροῦ θανάτοιο [τέλος] κεφαλῆ πέρι πότμον ἔχων*.¹⁶ Here in *P. Oxy.* 3876 the arrow is most likely guided by Apollo in his capacity as archer (cf. fr. 69.2 Ἀπόλλ[ων]α κλ[υτότοξον]) whether as the direct murderer of Achilles or as Paris' assistant. With Achilles down, the battle for his corpse must rage.¹⁷ At this point some of the heroes may debate whether or not it is right to flee and leave Achilles (fr. 45.4 *νέμεετι φυγ[έειν]*, cf. *Il.* 14.80).

¹² In *PMGF* Davies prints *ὠμοφαγα*], but the final alpha is metrically unlikely if it represents neuter plural and morphologically unlikely if it represents a first declension form. The ink to the right of the gamma seems peculiar in any case.

¹³ Cf. Stes.209 *PMGF* (*Nostoi*) col. i 3-4: *ὠρανόθεν δι' αιθέρος ἀτρυγέτας κατέπτατο*, of the bird omen.

¹⁴ Ours will not be that scene however. In *Iliad* 18 Achilles is unable to enter battle since he has no armor, but the battle is soon concluded. Here the battle evidently continues.

¹⁵ For Achilles being shot in the ankle see Apollod. 5.3-5 *εἰς τὸ φυρόν*, and Quintus 3.62 *κατὰ φυρόν*.

¹⁶ For the boldness of Stesichorus' description of the arrow in *Geryoneis* see D. Page, *JHS* 93 (1973) 152. Note also that there may well have been a standard set of Stesichorean descriptions or phrases used frequently in similar situations. Two poems alone—the *Geryoneis* and the Lille poem—give us the following: *μόρμιον*, S 11.21, 222b.212, and 222b.274; *κυγεροῦ θανάτοιο τέλος*, S 15.ii1-2 and *θανάτου τέλος κυγεροῦ*, 222b.213.

¹⁷ The intensity of the battle is noted at *Odys.* 24.41-2; it is described at length in Quintus.

The fierceness of the battle for Achilles' corpse might help explain fr. 48.¹⁸ In the *Iliad*, the participle κείμενον (and -μένον, -μένω; the nominative never occurs) is found almost exclusively in line initial position and is used chiefly to describe the corpses of important figures: Sarpedon (16.661), Patroclus (17.86, 18.236), Hector (24.414), and even Achilles, imagined as dead by Priam (22.43). So here, κειμεν[(fr. 48.4), given the apparent mention of Achilles and his ankle (in fr. 42 and 43), may refer to the corpse of Achilles. As Haslam notes, ἐναλιγκ[(fr. 48.3) suggests a simile, particularly since ὠμοφάγος (cf. ὠμοφαγ[, fr. 48.5) is confined in the *Iliad* to the description of lions, wolves, and jackals in similes. As for ἀμφ- (fr. 48.1), compare: κείται Πάτροκλος, νέκυος δὲ δὴ ἀμφιμάχονται (Il. 18.20).¹⁹ Or ἀμφ[could simply be the preposition in a phrase such as ἀμφ' αὐτόν. Compare the description of Patroclus and Hector fighting over the corpse of Kebriones (Il. 16.774-6):

πολλὰ δὲ χερμάδια μεγάλ' ἀπίδα ἐτυφέλιξαν
μαρναμένων ἀμφ' αὐτόν· ὃ δ' ἐν τροφάλιγγι κόνιης
κεῖτο μέγας μεγαλωστί, λελασμένος ἵπποκυνάων.

Besides ἀμφ' αὐτόν (v. 775), note τροφάλιγγι (v. 775), the whirlwind or cloud of dust. One of the only two other occurrences of this word in Homer describes the whirlwind of battle dust in which Achilles' corpse lay (*Od.* 24.39), and Quintus reused the word in a simile describing Achilles as he falls wounded in the ankle (3.64). Surely, then, fr. 74.4 represents Achilles fallen or falling in the dust: τροφά[λιγγι.²⁰

When the news of Achilles' death reaches Thetis and the Nereids, they rise from the sea to visit the Greek ships. This arrival may well account for the watery context of fr. 61: the waves (κύμασι, v. 7), the grey sea (άλος π]ολιᾶς ὄθην[, v.8), and the beating of the wave (ἀλὶ κλυζο[μεν-, v. 9). Compare the description of their arrival in the *Odyssey* (24.47-9):

μήτηρ δ' ἐξ ἄλος ἦλθε σὺν ἀθανάτης' ἀλίησιν
ἀγγελίης ἄϊουσα· βοή δ' ἐπὶ πόντον ὀρώρει
θεσπεσίη, ὑπὸ δὲ τρόμος ἦλυθε πάντα Ἀχαιοῦς.

This is similar to their arrival in the *Iliad* (18.65-7) when Patroclus has been killed:

Ἦρα ἄρα φωνήσαα λίπε πῆρος· αἶ δὲ σὺν αὐτῇ
δακρυόεσσαι ἴσαν, περὶ δὲ σφίσι κῦμα θαλάσσης
ρήγνυτο· ταὶ δ' ὅτε δὴ Τροίην ἐρίβωλον ἴκοντο...

¹⁸ As Haslam noted in his introduction to these fragments, the paragraphos after 48.3 implies that the final line of the strophe begins with two shorts. The paragraphos at 64b.5 indicates a final strophic line beginning with a long. If all were correct, these two fragments would then come from different poems. But as Haslam has noted, misdivision of lines is a relatively common phenomenon in the papyri. In Stesichorus we find examples in *Iliou Persis* (*P. Oxy.* 2619, fr. 1 ii 10 and 18.2; *P. Oxy.* 2803, fr. 3.8) and in *Geryoneis* (*P. Oxy.* 2617, fr. 3.1). See M. Haslam, *QUCC* 17 (1974) 26, n. 31.

¹⁹ Apparently by coincidence, the speech announcing Patroclus' death (in which *Iliad* 18.20 is found) seems to have served as the model for fr. 4 of *P. Oxy.* 3876, Stesichorus' version of the speech announcing to Althaia the deaths of her brothers. For possible connections between the Meleager and Achilles story see the conclusion of this article.

²⁰ This does away with the problem of Haslam's puzzling Strophades in this fragment. If fr. 74.2 does read Αἰολίδ-, it can exist in this context as well. The elements may rage in the midst of this battle or in a simile describing part of it. Zeus puts an end to the battle for Achilles' corpse with a stormwind (*Od.* 24.42) which could be taken as an alternative explanation of the winds in this fragment.

In Quintus as well (3.582-94) the water of the Hellespont echoes to the Nereids' cry. As they rush up through the gray sea (πολιοῖο δι' οἴδματος) it parts around them, and they and the sea combined make a great sound.

The corpse must be cared for. Washing may begin in fr. 61.12 (ἀλλ' ὕδατ]ί τ' ἐλ[ο]-έσσαν) and the preparation of the body continues in fr. 62.²¹ In fr. 62.2, νεκταρε[ό]δμοι suggests the care given in epic to corpses of great heroes who fall in battle. The ambrosia of fr. 72.9 would seem to belong here as well. In Quintus Achilles' corpse is showered with ambrosia by Zeus (3.698).²² The figure placing the shroud (φᾶρος, fr. 62.4), if he is a cousin of Aeolus (ἀνεπιὸς Αἰόλου Ἰπποτάδα, fr. 62.5-6), remains a mystery. Certainly it is very important for the winds to attend the burning of the pyre: Achilles prays for them to come to help speed Patroclus' pyre (*Il.* 23. 198ff.) and in Quintus they rush to Achilles' pyre as well (3.694).²³ But the figure who spreads the shroud could simply be a mortal hero whose genealogy would either be more fully explained elsewhere in the poem or be more obvious (and perhaps relevant) to Stesichorus' audience.²⁴ In any case, Stesichorus was a great innovator and apparently was recognized as such (cf. *PMGF* 193.17, ἐκαινοποίησε): he may have added or changed details here just as he did in his *Oresteia* poem or poems (cf. *PMGF* 217-19). Finally, if the pyre includes branches from an ash tree as Haslam suggests (fr. 62.8), we will be reminded of Achilles' great ash spear.

There seem to be two speeches in fragments 64 and 65. Fragment 64 may well be a consolation to Thetis. The apparent mention of battle in fr. 64b.1 (μαχα) combined with οὐδέ τις ἐστ' ἀρετό[strongly suggests not only a warrior but one whose ἀρετή and κλέος have been assured by his death in battle. Of course Achilles was preeminent for this form of ἀρετή: he was the best of the Achaeans partly because he chose to remain at Troy and die an early death.²⁵ That is, although god has given different goods to different men, it was Achilles' destiny (λάχειν, 64b.6) to die at Troy, still young and beautiful.²⁶ As Haslam suggests, the speech in fr. 65 should be a farewell to the corpse. A mother's lament will be particularly likely to figure in Stesichorus, where mothers and children (even monstrous ones like Geryon) figure so prominently.²⁷ Thetis, then, would be a likely (but not certain) speaker. Our frag-

²¹Thetis could wash Achilles, but Briseis would be another likely candidate—a woman to whom Stesichorus could give one or more of his notable speeches. Certainly Propertius (2.9.9-16) makes Briseis prominent: in his version she is the only woman present to wash Achilles' corpse.

²² See J.-P. Vernant (above, n. 9). The corpse of the hero who dies gloriously (and young) in battle must be kept beautiful. The importance of preserving the beauty of the battle dead further suggests that in these fragments we have a hero who has died in battle.

²³Kakridis (above, n. 8) 75-83 sees the episode of the winds as further evidence of the priority and importance of the story of Achilles' death. He persuasively argues that the details in the calling of the winds are far more fitting for Achilles' than for Patroclus' funeral.

²⁴ H. Lloyd-Jones, *ZPE* 87 (1991) 297-300 makes a case for Odysseus placing the shroud at the burial of Misenus. M. Haslam, *ZPE* 88 (1991) 297-9 is rightly sceptical.

²⁵ For Achilles as ἄριστος, the best of the Achaeans, see Nagy (above, n. 4) 26-35.

²⁶ I take it to be coincidence that ἀριφραδ- (fr. 64b.7) occurs here and in the descriptions of the bones of Patroclus and Achilles (*Il.* 23.240, Quintus 3.724) after their pyres have burnt.

²⁷ Compare Helen in the *Nostoi*, concerned about Penelope's feelings for her son Telemachus; the mother (almost certainly Jocasta) of Polyneices and Eteocles in the Lille poem; and of course Callirhoe in *Geryoneis*

ment seems most likely to begin with a mention of the slain (πέφ[νε or πέφ[αται, fr. 65 ii 2; cf. *Il.* 17.689-90, πέφαται δ' ὄριτος Ἀχαιῶν | Πάτροκλος). Thetis might, for example, mention her resentment of the slayer. The speech will, in its conclusion, resemble Achilles' speech to Patroclus (χαῖρ[έ μοι (?), fr. 65 ii 5; cf. χαῖρέ μοι ὦ Πάτροκλε, *Il.* 23.19 = 23.179), but it differs from that speech too. Achilles will have great fame (κλει[τ-, fr. 65 ii 6) and he will be carried to the land or the isles of the blessed (μακά[ρων ἐπὶ γαῖαν (?), fr. 65 ii 7, as at Quintus 3.762; or perhaps ἐπὶ νῆcov or νήcουc).²⁸ The farewell climaxes with that promise of eternal blessedness, and then it may be that the final animal victims, laden with fat, are thrown onto the pyre (βρί[θονταc ἀλοιφῆ (?), fr. 65.ii 9; cf. Quintus 3.682, cὺν δ' ὄίαc τε cύαc τ' ἔβαλον βρίθονταc ἀλοιφῆι).²⁹

Fragment 67 is one of the most tantalizing of the group. The golden (?) funeral urn (fr. 67b.5)—perhaps with silver decoration (fr. 67b.4; cf. Stesichorus fr. 209, col.ii.1-2: another heirloom decorated with both gold and silver) may well be mentioned here. The final line of column b, written in a smaller hand, could well be a gloss (as Haslam suggests): some participle ending in -όνταc (means) ιδόνταc. Who are these men, and what have they seen? Perhaps they have seen a gleam (κέλαc, v. 7), a gleam that may be observed from a distance (τηλόθε, v. 6) and from the sea (άλόc, v. 8). If these are sailors at sea, seeing a flash, the flash may well be a source of joy to them (χαρά[μα, v. 6). At the scene of Achilles' funeral, reference could be being made (either by Thetis, with her knowledge of the future, or by the poet in his own voice) to the future function of Achilles' tomb at the Hellespont. Compare the description of Achilles' tomb in the *Odyssey* (24.80-4):

ἀμφ' ἀντοῖσι δ' ἔπειτα μέγαν καὶ ἀμόμονα τύμβον
 χεύαμεν Ἀργείων ἱερὸc στρατὸc αἰχμητάων
 ἀκτῆ ἐπι προῦχούcη, ἐπὶ πλατεῖ Ἑλληcπόντω,
 ὥc κεν τηλεφανῆc ἐκ ποντόφιν ἀνδράcιν εἶη
 τοῖc', οἱ νῦν γεγάαcι καὶ οἱ μετόπιcθεν ἔcονται.

Note especially τηλεφανῆc (v. 83; cf. our τηλόθε, fr. 67b.6); the tomb is to be a sign for men who will see it from afar. Quintus too mentions the giant mound heaped at the tomb (3.739-41) beside the waters of the Hellespont. If this is the sort of picture Stesichorus is giving, it could be additional evidence for Nagy's suggestion that the *Iliad* looks forward to the flash from the tomb which will be a salvation for sailors (*op. cit.* [n. 4] 338-43). The distant flash (κέλαc; cf. fr. 67b.7) from Achilles' shield (*Il.* 19.374-80) is likened to a distant beacon for sailors on stormy waters, a beacon which signals their salvation. More simply (and perhaps more likely) we may have in fr. 67 a description of the gleam from the magnificent golden urn which includes a simile influenced by the one describing Achilles' shield in

who reminds her son Geryon that when he was an infant she offered her breast—presumably to all three of his hungry mouths.

²⁸ Fr. 65 ii 7, μακ], is in responson with fr. 71.4, μα[. There is some reason, then, to consider 71.4 some form of μακαρ-. For other such instances of near or total tautometric responson in Stesichorus see *Geryoneis* S11 *PMGF* v. 16 φίλε and v. 25 φίλον; vv. 13 and 22 καῖ; the Lille poem vv. 218 and 232 μύθοιc; v. 211 παῖδαc, v. 218 παῖδεc; v. 201 ἐπ' ἄλγεcι, and v. 215 ἄλγεc(ς)ι.

²⁹The iota in βρίθω is long. Haslam suggests that 65 ii 9 may begin with a short (responding with fr. 71.6), but he acknowledges that the indications are not certain for this line of the strophe.

Iliad 19. In any case, the burial of Achilles would likely suggest the importance of the Achilles of cult who for many centuries presided over the Hellespont.

Would such a reference have meaning for a Stesichorean audience? And more generally, what Stesichorean audience might be interested in the death of Achilles? Stesichorus could have provided poetry for virtually any Greek city in Southern Italy. There was a cult of Achilles at Croton, where the women annually bewailed Achilles as Thetis and the Nereids had done, but Croton, although a possibility, does not seem the best candidate.³⁰ Stesichorus is persistently associated with Locri and seems virtually certain to have spent at least some part of his working life there.³¹ One odd story associates Stesichorus' Palinode with the aftermath of the Battle of Sagra, a battle in which Locri defeated Croton. One account indicates that among the supernatural powers aiding Locri was Achilles (TA42, *PMGF*).³² This might well indicate that Achilles was honored at Locri (*R-E*, 223). For a civic celebration Stesichorus could have told of Achilles' glorious battle death, of the hero's tomb which still to this day cheers sailors as a beacon on the Hellespont, and of the soul of the hero Achilles whisked away by his mother and by the windy family of Aeolus to the Isles of the Blessed.

Given the state of *P. Oxy.* 3876, it must be admitted that such a reconstruction is conjectural. But in the end the sum of the evidence in favor of this interpretation is encouraging. Internally, the fragments lend themselves well to Achilles' story and offer no serious conflicting evidence. Moreover, in a notable number of instances, words or phrases are suggested which seem virtually formulae primarily associated with the Patroclus-Achilles death narrative. Externally, we have not only the evidence that Stesichorus referred to Achilles' death and burial but also the indication of a cult of Achilles at Locri. And the latter evidence comes from one of the testimonia which also links Stesichorus with Locri. Finally, there is the general importance to Greek culture of the theme of the beautiful corpse and the glory of the battle dead (cf. Vernant, *loc. cit.* [n. 9]). The theme was, of course, modified as the city state developed, but was hardly abandoned. In Sparta, for example, Tyrtaeus drew on this theme when using the beauty of the young corpse as partial proof of his assertion that it is beautiful to die in battle (10W). His poetry makes use of the Homeric preoccupation with the corpse—specifically of Priam's vision of horror presented to Hector as Hector is about to die (*Il.* 22.66-76).³³ And Loraux has shown how the theme was adapted for use at Athens (*loc. cit.* [n. 5]).

As a coda I would like to draw attention to a curiosity—perhaps merely a coincidence—involving the contents of the other main group of fragments published as *P. Oxy.* 3876. We seem destined never to know exactly what reasons led Lobel to collect the fragments of *P. Oxy.* 3876 into their four folders. But frs. 1-26, which (as Haslam has noted) seem almost

³⁰ See L.R. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults* (Oxford 1921) 285-89.

³¹ See M.L. West, *CQ* 65 (1971) 302-5.

³² The Crotonian general Leonymos must be healed by the one who wounded him—Achilles. Hence Leonymos' trip to the Isles of the Blessed.

³³ One can think of Tyrtaeus adapting an epic theme for use in the city-state no matter what one feels is the relation between his text and that of our *Iliad*. However, in extant Greek poetry from before 400 B.C., the beginning of *Iliad* 22 is alluded to more than any other part of the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. See R. Garner, *From Homer to Tragedy* (London 1990) 194, 224 n. 12.

certainly to tell the story of Meleager's death after the hunt for the Calydonian Boar, make an intriguingly fitting accompaniment to fragments relating the death of Achilles. Meleager's story is told in the *Iliad* (9.529-99) as an instructive example to Achilles. The two men's lives are there made to have many parallels. When Bacchylides retells Meleager's story, he seems still to have Achilles in mind: the vocabulary strongly suggests the famously short life of Achilles.³⁴ And Stesichorus also seems to have Achilles in mind in the Meleager fragments of *P. Oxy.* 3876: the telling of the news of Althaea's brothers (especially as reconstructed by Haslam) seems likely to be closely modeled on the Iliadic scene in which Achilles learns of the death of Patroclus (*P. Oxy.* 3876, fr. 4; *Il.* 18.17-21). Finally, as Haslam noted, we appear to have the phrase Ζηνὸς ἐπιφωράγου in fragment 42c.6 (the Achilles story)—the exact phrase found in Bacchylides' poem which tells the Meleager story (Bacch. 5.20). Did Bacchylides' have Stesichorus' poem or poems in mind when he wrote Ode 5? Are the two poems of *P. Oxy.* 3876 now together because one scribe found them already grouped together for reasons of cult or genre?³⁵ Did the scribe himself make the grouping? Did Lobel? Or have the stories of Meleager and Achilles simply ended up through the workings of fate juxtaposed one more time just as they were by Phoenix on the beach at Troy?³⁶

Appendix: Memnon, Achilles, and the Psychostasia

How much of the *Aithiopsis* did Stesichorus cover in this poem represented in *P. Oxy.* 3876? In the cyclic poem summarized by Proclus and in Quintus' *Posthomerica*, the death of Achilles was preceded by the death of Memnon. Although the story of Memnon could be told here, none of our fragments demands to be taken as part of his battle. Still, there are several places where Memnon might be worked in. Haslam suggests that the name of Memnon may be read in fr. 56.5 (Μεμνων) and that his immortalization may be alluded to (fr. 37.2, ἄμβροτον). It is even tempting to add a reference to Memnon's mother, Eos (φάος] ἄγνὸν Ἄοῦς, Haslam's suggestion, fr. 39.13). Memnon's and Achilles' mothers, Eos and Thetis, plead with Zeus for the lives of their sons, and Zeus weighed the two heroes' souls in his scales. Aeschylus told this story in his *Psychostasia*, and it would seem to have been perfect for Stesichorean treatment—as if Jocasta from the Lille poem and Callirhoe from the *Geryoneis* were combined. But I find no trace of this story in our fragments. The Dawn could well be mentioned without reference to her son Memnon. Finally, there is an odd lexical coincidence that pushes for inclusion of the death of Memnon: the extremely rare adjective ζάκοτος apparently occurs twice in our fragments, at 64a.2 and 67a.5. The word is a Homeric

³⁴ Cf. ὠκύμορον (B. 5.141), used almost exclusively in the *Iliad* by Thetis to describe Achilles (*Iliad* 1.417, 505; 18.95, 458); μινύνη (B. 5.151) and μινυθᾶδιον (of Achilles, *Iliad* 1.352).

³⁵ Presumably the poems were not written for the same festival. Some cult of Achilles—whether at Locri or elsewhere—seems the natural occasion for relating his death. The Meleager poem—especially the version of *P. Oxy.* 3876, which seems to feature Artemis (frr. 2, 6, 19)—might more naturally fit one of the Western festivals for Artemis, perhaps even the one at Rhegium which may also have provided the occasion for Stesichorus' *Oresteia* poems. See A.P. Burnett, *CA* 7 (1988) 144-7.

³⁶ For what it is worth, I note that on the François vase we find both the Calydonian hunt and what is almost certainly the golden urn in which Achilles and Patroclus' ashes were buried (Dionysos carries the urn). For a discussion of the combination of these themes—the urn, the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, Achilles, and the Calydonian hunt—see A. Stewart, "Stesichorus and the François Vase," pages 53-74 in *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography* (Madison 1983) ed. W. Moon.

hapax. It is used twice by Pindar, once of the spear with which Achilles kills Memnon (*Nem.* 6.51-5). Moreover, immediately after telling of Memnon's death Pindar says that this was the theme of earlier poetry. Of course he could be referring to the *Aithiopsis*—but perhaps now we should consider whether the rare word in Pindar might not be an echo of the murder in Stesichorus.³⁷

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