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Simonides Redivivus


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SIMONIDES REDIVIVUS

Redivivus is not a word to be brought out and batted around every time a few more shreds of an ancient writer come to light. It does seem apt, however, on those comparatively rare occasions when new material appears that for the first time gives us a real sense of the style and character of an author's work. So it was in 1967 with the portfolio of Stesichorus fragments published in volume XXXII of the Oxyrhynchus Papyri; and so it is now, a quarter of a century later, with the fragments of elegies of Simonides in volume LIX.

It has not been easy hitherto to appreciate the reasons for the high reputation that Simonides enjoyed in antiquity. Of his melic poetry some 270 verbatim fragments are to be found in PMG, and another 70 or so (at least) in SLG. But of these hundreds of fragments scarcely a dozen contain more than three lines of continuously legible text; and of them not more than two or three offer anything to kindle any keen sense that we are in touch with a great poet. Of his epigrams we have precisely two whose authenticity is reasonably assured. Of his elegies we had, till now, something approaching fifty verbatim fragments, but it was hardly possible to derive from them any clear idea of what a Simonidean elegy might have been like. The longest piece, one of thirteen lines, had a question mark over its authorship; the question mark has now gone, but the passage has turned out to be a conflation of two separate fragments.

The new fragments, admirably edited by Peter Parsons as P.Oxy. 3965, are 47 in number. The majority of them are, as usual, too exiguous to be informative. A few, however, are of sufficient substance in themselves, or overlap sufficiently with fragments previously known, to yield bigger patches of text than we have had before. What is more, some of these patches can be grouped together as belonging to the same poems, so that we begin to get glimpses of larger pictures.

The elegies represented in the two papyri (2327 and 3965) appear to fall into two categories: narrative poems about the great battles of the Persian Wars, and sympotic elegy of the more traditional sort. We can distinguish two poems in the first category and three in the second. In what follows I will try to recover the sense of parts of these five poems, and

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1 I refer to the fragments of P.Oxy. 2623 (= S 319-386, 'Adespota'), identified as Simonides by E.Lobel in P.Turner (1981), 21 f.

2 The epitaph for Megistias, Hdt. 7. 228. 3 (Epigr. 6 Page); IG I2 673 + 850 (CEG 270). It is plain from Herodotus' words that Simonides was not known to him as the author of ὁ ἡγεῖλον ἐγγέλειν, that damp squib so often extolled by nineteenth-century historians of literature for its 'classical restraint'. Cf. Wilamowitz, Sappho und Simonides, 204 n. 1.

3 Besides those printed under Simonides' name in the first edition of IEG there were the fragments of P.Oxy. 2327, printed as Adesp. Eleg. 28-60, but identified as Simonides by Lobel, op.cit. 23.

4 Fr. eleg. 19 and 20. 5-12 in IEG II2 (1992), formerly fr. 8.
to bring out the most interesting considerations that arise from contemplation of the new material. I hope that this offering of ink to a ghost will enable him to speak to us more clearly than he has hitherto.

POEMS ON THE PERSIAN WARS

It was known that Simonides celebrated several of the great battles of 480 and 479, in verse of more than one genre. In the typically confused Suda notice on Simonides we read: καὶ γέγραπτοι αὐτῶι Δαρίδι διαλέκτωι ἡ Καμβύςου καὶ Δαρείου βασιλεία καὶ Σέρξου ναυμαχία καὶ ἡ ἐπ’ Ἀρτεμιείῳ ναυμαχίᾳ δι’ ἐλεγείας, ἡ δὲ ἐν Σαλαμίνι μελικῶς· θρήνοι, ἐγκώμια, κτλ. It seems highly unlikely that the reigns of Cambyses and Darius formed the subject of a poem or poems (as Schneidewin supposed), and "Xerxes' sea-battle" is equally suspect, especially as Artemisium and Salamis are mentioned separately. Bergk, PLG IV 423, saw the essence of the corruption: "at auctor, quem sequitur Suidas, ut Simonidis aetatem describeret, haud dubie dixerat vixisse poetam regnantibus Cambyse, Dario, Xerxe."

We are left with the statement that Simonides wrote (1) an elegy on the Battle of Artemisium and (2) a melic poem on that at Salamis. Other sources give notice of (3) a melic poem on the Battle of Artemisium (PMG 533), (4) a narrative about the Salamis battle, genre unspecified (Plut. Them. 15.4, Vit. Pind. l.c.), and (5) a narrative about the Battle of Plataea in elegiacs (Plut. De Herod. malign. 42, 872d). Bergk identified (1) with (3) and (2) with (4), assuming that δι’ ἐλεγείας and μελικῶς in the Suda entry should be transposed. This seemed persuasive.

The new material puts a different complexion on the matter. It confirms the existence of an elegiac poem on the Battle of Plataea and shows that it was on an ample scale. It also provides apparent confirmation of the statement in the Suda that there was an elegiac poem dealing with the Battle of Artemisium. This removes the basis for altering ἡ δὲ ἐν Σαλαμίνι μελικῶς. In the first edition of IEG, accepting Bergk's reasoning, I included the two (extra Suda) references to a Salamis poem, which Page quotes under PMG 536, and tentatively associated with them two small elegiac fragments that looked as if they could have to do with a naval battle. In the second edition I retained this arrangement, adding P.Oxy. 2327 fr. 31, now that this papyrus was known to be Simonides. I probably ought to have discarded the...
The Battle of Artemisium

We cannot discern anything of the structure of this poem. Its special mention in the Suda entry (where the Plataea poem is not listed), and the fact that the scholiast on A.R. 1. 211-15c cites it simply as Ναυμαχία, suggest that it was a substantial composition. Something of its style can, I think, be gathered from the new fragment most securely assigned to it, 3965 fr. 20 = fr. 3 W². Simonides related a version of the λόγος that Herodotus 7. 189 reports as being current — perhaps he had Simonides’ poem in view — that the great storm which wrecked a good portion of the Persian fleet before the battle arose in response to a prayer by the Athenians to Boreas and Oreithyia. An oracle had advised them to seek help from their γαμβρός, and they identified this "in-law" as Boreas, who had carried Erechtheus’ daughter Oreithyia off from Attica. We knew that Simonides referred ἐν τῇ Ναυμαχίᾳ to the sons of this union, Zetes and Kalais (sch. A.R. l.c. = PMG 534), and now we catch a mention of them in the papyrus: line 4 ἀθανάτον ἱότητι, 5 Ζήτην κοι Ἐλλακαί[ν]. Simonides, then, was happy to embellish his narrative with this story of divine succour. Lines 10 f. may refer to the swift running of the two Boreads:

10 — ῥαοὶ ἀποτιθέμενοι τοίοῦτος ἰακωκαὶ ῥοήσας  ἄλος?
   — ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ἰητρίτη ἵππος ᾠκοίας ᾤσας (Oreithyia?)

The following lines deserve close attention.

12 — ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοὶ ῥαοί...
Man of the Sea. He is in the accusative, so he too appears to be affected by the Boreads’ activity. The couplet may have gone something like this:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ἀφιεναι δὲ θάλας\text{ας} ὑπὸ τοῦ τρύγου \ ιησεῦον, τομῆν ἀγαθόπημον ἄλος.}
\end{align*}
\]

In the next line it seems certain, from the accented \text{τίνα} following a high point, that someone is asking a question. The narrator? It is much easier to suppose that it is the Old Man, roused from his repose and enquiring what is afoot - rather as Aeschylus’ Darius, roused from the lower world by the Persians’ clamour, asks

\[
\text{τίνα πόλις πονεῖ πόνον;}
\]

But a speech by the Old Man of the Sea might be expected to be prophetic, not merely questioning. I restore exempli gratia

\[
\begin{align*}
eἰπὲ δὲ θεσπίζον\; \text{τίνα δὴ [τη]λασ[ὸν ἀκούω} \\
\deltaοὐπον ἄθη ὑμίνη; \; ὡτε χ[μοι]
\end{align*}
\]

"And he spoke in prophecy: 'What is this distantly perceived noise, as of battle, that I hear brushing my ears?" In the sound of the rising storm he hears the coming clash of arms.9

This is all very rococo. It is the sort of thing we know well in Nonnus but did not expect in the ‘chaste’ classical period. Has the urge to restore led us so far astray? Did we miss some alternative way that would have led to equally plausible results? If so, I will be obliged to anyone who can point it out. Meanwhile it may be in place to recall Ibycus’ rhetorical-decorative use of divine myth in contemporary context, a tendency more extensively disclosed by recent papyrus finds.10 Such conceits were to become commonplace in Hellenistic verse, but they had classical origins.

The Battle of Plataea

This is now the Simonidean composition of which we have the largest remains. One piece extends over 45 lines, and several others of lesser dimensions can be assigned to the poem with more or less confidence. The large fragment has revealed a crucial fact about the structure of the work that could not have been predicted. The narrative was preceded, like an epic rhapsode’s narrative, by a hymn, the two parts being linked by a farewell and transition on the same pattern as those seen in many of the Homeric Hymns and in Hesiod’s Theogony. The hymn occupied some thirty lines at least, and the link passage ten. The narrative part must have been much longer; hardly less than a hundred lines, perhaps much more. But the poem did not fill a roll. In both 2327 and 3965 it shared accommodation with sympotic elegies.

8 Aiolos is ταμίς ἀνέμων, Od. 10. 21; Poseidon is τριζίνης ταμίας, Ar. Nub. 566, etc.
9 For τηλασός of sound cf. Soph. Ph. 216 τηλασόν ιοῶν. The interpretation of the letters \text{[οτε} as the dual \text{ὁτι} is supported by the variant \text{ω[} (rather than \text{ωι[}) written above \text{(-μ[ε])ον.}
10 ZPE 57, 1984, 23-32.
The poem was thus effectively a mini-epic in elegiacs. The Artemisium elegy may or may not have had a similar form. It was not an entirely new form, for we know of one precedent from a century and a half earlier. I refer to Mimnermus' elegiac poem on the Smyrnaeans' repulse of Gyges, which bore the epic-style title Smyrneis, began with a 'prooimion' involving two generations of Muses, and contained narrative of sufficient amplitude to include speeches. The subject matter was analogous: a glorious victory, against all rational expectation, over a powerful barbarian invader. This is just the sort of event that captivates the people's imagination, inspires new poems (plays, films ...), and demands to be measured against the great events of past times. Mimnermus was too young to celebrate the Hermos battle (which his own name perhaps commemorates) at the time when it was fought, but Smyrna's pride in it burned on for decades, and it was still a potent theme when he came of age. Xerxes' defeat was very quickly taken up by tragedians who normally looked back to the heroic age for their subject matter. At the end of the fifth century Choirilos of Samos was to give it full epic treatment. No one in Simonides' time ventured to go to that length, but Simonides did what Mimnermus had done, presumably not without having Mimnermus' precedent in mind. We may guess that these elegiac epyllia were designed to be performed, as entertainment, in that setting in which elegy was usually performed, with aulos accompaniment.

The discovery that the Plataea poem began with a hymn is less surprising than the fact that the hymn was addressed to Achilles. He is apostrophized as κοῦρης εἰν]αλίς ἀγλαόφη[με πάϊ,12 and again as θεὸς ἐρικυ[δεός υἱέ ι κοῦρης εἰν]αλίου Νηρεός (frs. 10. 5 and 11. 20 W.2). Achilles' cult as a hero is well attested, and in some places he was even venerated as a god.13 That Simonides accorded him the latter status may seem to be implied by his choosing him as the subject of his prooimion, for so far as we know, the rhapsode's prooimion was always addressed to a divinity.14 On the other hand, θεὸς ἐρικυ[δεός υἱέ carries the suggestion that Achilles is not himself a god; there is emphasis on his momentous death; and Simonides does not ask any favours from him in the extant lines. The farewell at 11. 19 (ἀλλὰ ἡ ὧν χεῖρε) would have been the natural place to do so. Instead Simonides turns at that point to the Muse for assistance. Why, then, the initial focus on Achilles? Possibly the poem happened to be composed at the time of some festival or ritual in Achilles' honour, and Simonides took his cue from that.

In the concluding lines of the hymn, if I have interpreted the remains correctly, Simonides refers to Achilles' heroic death and funeral, and appends a series of reflections: (a) it was only by Apollo's agency that Achilles was struck down, for no mortal hand could have done

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11 Mimn. frs. 13-13a; cf. my Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus, 74.
12 For the form πάι cf. fr. 64. 10 (pentameter end) πάιν.
14 Heracles is treated in H.Hom. 15 as having been received in Olympus, and as having the power to grant ὀρετὴν τε καὶ ὀλβον.
it without the god’s help; (b) Troy was after all destroyed, Alexander’s sin being at length punished by divine justice; (c) the victorious Greeks obtained undying glory thanks to Homer, who got the whole truth of the matter from the Muses. Here is the passage with the supplements suggested in my edition; they are of course quite uncertain in detail, but it is my hope that they correctly reflect Simonides’ train of thought.

As Parsons observes (p. 32), the choice of theme implies a comparison of the Persian War to the Trojan, and an analogy between Simonides’ present role and Homer’s. The victors of Plataea, and above all the Spartans under Pausanias, will get their undying glory with the help of Simonides. Parsons (p. 31) aptly cites Theocritus 16. 34-57, where Simonides and Homer are adduced successively as poets without whom many men’s accomplishments would have fallen into oblivion. He is no doubt right in seeing that passage as a reminiscence of this one. Contemporary parallels for the thought are to be found in Pindar (Pyth. 3. 110-15, Nem. 7. 11-16, Isth. 3/4. 53-60). But whereas Pindar regards Homer as liable to embellish the reality with beguiling inventions (Nem. 7. 20-3), Simonides treats him, here and elsewhere, as a guarantor of truth, and speaks of him in terms of unqualified admiration (fr. eleg. 19, 20. 13-16 W2; PMG 564).

In lines 23-8 Simonides introduces the theme of his recital: the men who saved Sparta and Hellas from the danger of enslavement. The prediction that they will enjoy

\begin{quote}
\small
\begin{align*}
\pi\alpha\iota\epsilon[c\epsilon]\varsigma & \quad \text{cù δ’ ἥρπες, ὥς ὤτε πεύκην} \\
& \quad \text{ἡ πίτυν ἐν βής[\&]αις οὐρεος οἰσπόλου} \\
& \quad \text{ὑλοτόμοι τάμ[ν]οι} \\
& \quad \text{πολλόν δ’ ἧρπος[} \\
\text{5} & \quad \text{ἡ μέγα πένθος λαόν [ἐπέλλαβε} \quad \text{πολλά δ’ ἐτίμων,} \\
& \quad \text{καὶ μετὰ Πατρ[ό]ικλος ζ’ [ἀγε[ι ἐρύσαν ἑνί.} \\
& \quad \text{οὗ δὴ τις} \quad \text{ἐδ[ά][μασαν} \quad \text{ἐφ[ῃμε[ρίος βροτός αὐτός,} \\
& \quad \text{ἄλλ’ ὑπ’ Ἀπολλ[ό][ν]ος χειρὶ [τυpei [ἐδάμης.} \\
& \quad \text{Παλλάδα δ’ ἔγγυς} \quad \text{ἐοὺςα πε[ρικλ[έ]κ τιν καθεῖ[λεν,} \\
& \quad \text{10} & \quad \text{σὺν δ’ Ἡρη, Πρ[ή]μῳ παι[ς [σ[ε]λεπτ]όμεν[ενοι} \\
& \quad \text{εἰνεκ’ Ἀλέξ[ά]υδ[ρο]ο [κακ[όφρ[ο]νος,} \quad \text{ός τὸν [ἀλιτρόν} \\
& \quad \text{ἄλλα χρόνων] θείης [ἀ]ρμα καθεῖ[λε δ[ικη.} \\
& \quad \text{τοι δὲ πόλιν} \quad \text{πέρασαντες αὐ[δίμων [ο[καδ’ ἢ]κνοτ[ο]ὴσ [φέρσατοι ήρ[ό]ων ἀγέμα[χοι θανατο[ι].} \\
& \quad \text{15} & \quad \text{ο[ιν [ἐπ’ ἀθάνατον κέχυται κλέος ἀν[δρός] ἕκπιτ} \\
& \quad \text{ὀς παρ’ ἵστ[ο]καμῶν δέξατο Πιερ[ίδ[ων} \\
& \quad \text{πάσαν ἅλη[θε]ίν, καὶ ἐπ[όνυμον ὁ[π]οτερ[π]όριν} \\
& \quad \text{ποιής ἥμι]θεων ἀκόμουρον γενε[ν.}
\end{align*}
\end{quote}

15 He adds ‘a possible parallel between Achilles and Pausanias’. But it is hard to descry any point of similarity between the two warriors’ careers.
[κλέος...] ἀθάνατον (28) underlines the parallel with the Danaoi who were invested with ἀθάνατον ... κλέος thanks to Homer (15). But in stating his intention of perpetuating the memory of great deeds into the future (24 ἵνα τις [μνήμη] κέτται ὑ[ἑρετον αὐτό;]), Simonides anticipates Herodotus (Book 1 init.). I wonder if there was anything similar in Mimnermus.

At 29 the narrative begins with the Spartan army setting forth from home, accompanied by their heroes, the Dioskouroi and Menelaus, and led by Pausanias. The latter is mentioned prominently and, as it seems, honorifically:


In the ten remaining and increasingly broken lines of fr. 11 W.2 the progress of the expedition is traced to the Isthmus, the Megarid, and Eleusis; Herodotus' parallel (but much fuller) account helps to suggest restorations.16 It looks as if Simonides kept the gods' favouring attentions in view. He has referred to the Spartans' supernatural escorts; in 39 we seem to have θεῶν τεράτες [πεποιθότες (corresponding to the good sacrificial omens mentioned by Hdt. 9. 19. 2), and in 42 μνημείον ἀντιθέου[ν, viz., the army's seer whom Herodotus identifies as the Iamid Teisamenos and whose prophecies before the battle will be related in fr. 14. All this, taken together with the earlier reference to the divine justice that overtook the Trojans, may suggest that Simonides saw the Persian disasters too as a punishment decreed by the gods. This was also Aeschylus' interpretation, and no doubt a widely popular one at the time.

Fr. 13 must have followed fr. 11 after a not very long interval, since it stood in the column following 11. 13-27 in Oxy. 2327. The armies are now close to the field of battle. Lines 8-13 read


The Medes and Persians are here set in opposition to the sons of Doros and of Heracles. On the Greek side, in other words, the emphasis is on the Peloponnesian Dorians, that is, in the context, the Spartans.17 Line 11 surely refers to the Greeks' descent from their first position on the slopes of Cithaeron (Hdt. 9. 19. 3) to the Asopus plain where the Persians were encamped (9. 25. 2-3). In the 'Simonidean' epigram IG 7. 53 (16 Page) the place is identified by the phrase ἐν πεδίῳ Βοιωτίων, and so we may supplement

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16 By the way; in Hdt. 9. 20 Μακίττων ... τὸν Ἐλλήνης Μακίττων καλέως, MAK invites emendation to MAIC-.

17 For the reference to the Heraclidæ here cf. Hdt. 9. 33. 3 Ἀσκαλομάχωνι δὲ ... μεθύοι ἐπειρόντο πείσαντες Τειχωμένον ποιεθάνα ἀμέν Ἡρακλεόθεν τοὺς βασιλεύεις ἠγέμονα τῶν πολέμων.
At this juncture Herodotus sets out the two armies' dispositions; compare Sim. fr. 15. Then, after a lengthy explanation of how Teisamenos came to be the Spartans' seer, he relates the results of this expert's divination. 9. 36 οὔτως δὴ τότε τοῖς Ἐλλήνες ὁ Τεισαμένδος ἀγώντων τῶν Σαρπητησίων ἐμαντεύετο ἐν τῇ Πλαταιίδῃ. τοῖς μὲν νῦν Ἐλλήνες καλὰ ἐγίνετο τὰ ἱρὰ ὁμονομένοις, διαβαίνει δὲ τὸν Ἀσσαπὸν καὶ μάχη ἀρχομαι οὖ. I believe that this announcement by the seer is to be recognized in the difficult fr. 14 (3965 fr. 21). Direct speech seems to be guaranteed by 3 ἐγὼ, whether it was ἐγὼ or a verb such as προλέγω. There is mention in successive lines of a river, an initial pressing forward (?), a terrible disaster, and everlasting memory. A coherent restoration is not easy to devise, but the following may catch the essence.

προλέγω ποταμὸν λο[οῖς ἐθέλουσιν

οὔτε πέρηκν μάρῳρως πρόπτα θη[εμένοι

δεινῶν ἄμωτα ἑλκετῶν τε κακ[ὸν· μίμνουσι δὲ ἠδέθαι

νίκην, ἤ δε μνήμη μηματο πάντα μενεῖν.

But the prophecy does not stop there. It evidently continues, and widens its scope, in the following lines. 7, [ε[ελαξεινευκαντο[ει, clearly contains ἐλάξει, "X will drive (out) Y",18 and νεόκαντο[c, "with the approval of" (Zeus). I cannot see anything likelier than

7 έξ Ἀ[ε[η[ ε[λάξει[ ε[ν νεόκαντο[c ὁ — —

(Zeus), καὶ[νή συμμα[ε[ν[ήν νήλεω[ν (v.l. νελεων).

If ἐξ Ἀ[ε[η[c right, 'Asia' will here mean 'Ionia', and the reference will be to driving the Persians out of that part of the world. A masculine subject, not Zeus himself: who but Ares? He appears as an agent in some of the rhetorical 'Simonidean' epigrams of the period (45. 2, 47. 2, cf. 15. 1 Page; CEG 421). Ζηνὸς ἀρείς will be too long for 8 if 'καὶ[νή[ is rightly restored. But the sentence must overrun into 9 by one or two words, as is shown by the position of γὰρ at the caesura of that line:

9 έξ Ἀ[ε[η[c νο[ν γάρ [.] [. κρηπίδα τ[η

So there is room for ἀρεῖς (iamb or spondee) there, or just possibly at the beginning of 7 ('Ἀρεῖς cp'), though that would involve an abrupt asyndeton. The space after νεόκαντος might be filled by some adverb, or perhaps by Ἀθηνᾶς. We also need an expressed object. Here, at a hazard, is a possible reconstruction of the whole passage:

Μήδοις δὲ ἐξ Ἀ[ε[η[c ἐλάξει[ ε[ν νεόκαντο[c Ἀθηνᾶς

ὁ ὀλίς, καὶ[νή[ συμμα[ε[ν[ήν νήλεω[ν

'Ἀρεῖς· εὐδά[φιο[ν γάρ [.] [. κρηπίδα τ[ν[άν[κει[ει

10 νῆκεν, ἄθνη] ἐπάλ[γον ε[π]ρηβήν β[ιότου,

18 This future is otherwise first found in Xenophon and the Hippocratic corpus; KB II 416 cites "παρελάξεσεν ψ 427" (which should be Ψ 427), but this is an inferior reading. Perhaps ἐλάξει already had some currency in Ionic in Simonides' time, or perhaps it is a late corruption of ἐλάξει.
Unless this is completely on the wrong track, it appears that Simonides' poem was composed sometime after the establishment of the Delian League, whose aspirations or achievements are here summarized. Simonides has taken the historical fact of Teisamenos' interpretation of the omens before Plataea - "advance across the Asopus and we lose; wait here and we win" - and, picking on this as the fateful moment of decision, upon which hung the whole outcome of the war, he has developed it into a far-seeing vaticination of the glorious future that was there waiting to be chosen. Here we recall the prophecy of the Old Man of the Sea in the Artemisium poem, and wonder whether it served a similar purpose.

The account of the battle itself still lies ahead. I have conjecturally assigned to it fr. 17 (3965 fr. 19), connecting Δημήτη[ in the first line and δηρόν [ in the fifth with the decisive engagement round the shrine of Demeter Eleusinia at Argiopion (Hdt. 9. 57. 2); cf. Hdt. 9. 62. 2, ἐγίνετο μάχη ἱερή παρ᾽ αὐτῷ τὸ Δημήτριον καὶ χρόνον ἐπὶ πολλόν. It was here that Mardonios was killed, and νίκην ἀναπερίττει καλλίστην ἀπάσεων τῶν ἡμεῖς ἵδιον Πανοκάνης ὁ Κλεομβρότου τοῦ Ἀναξανδρίδεω (63. 2-64. 1). But there are 24 line-beginnings in the fragment, and I cannot catch any sense-connections between them.

The greater part of the poem is lost. But from what we have we can see that it was characterized above all by grandeur, not only of scale but also of style. The initial hymn to Achilles struck an epic note for the composition and set the conflict against Mardonios upon a heroic plane. It is full of elevated language, Homeric and para-Homeric epithets, and there is even an epic simile (fr. 11. 1-3). There is no change of register as we move into the main narrative. Corinth is dignified as ἐπικλέα ἐργα Κορίνθου (11. 35) or as πόλιν Γλαύκοτο, Κορίνθιον ἄστυ (coupled with the Homeric Ephrya, 15. 3); Megara is Νίκου πόλις (11. 37); the Peloponnese is [νήσος] Τανταλίδεω Πέλλας (11. 36); Attica is [γαία] Πανδίουνοι (11. 41); the Spartans are Δῶρου καὶ Ἡρακλέος παῖδες (13. 9 f.). The human heroes are assisted by gods; Teisamenos is made into a Homeric seer like Helenos (II. 7. 44 ff.), who can report on the Olympians' deliberations and sketch out the whole plan of the events that are to unfold. History is shown subject to divine justice, to the nod of Zeus.

**SYMPOTIC ELEGIES**

We had little of these till now. A couple of improvised requests for delicacies; a couple of phrases in praise of wine; a thirteen-line fragment on the brevity of life, which many people (including Wilamowitz, Diehl, and Maas) preferred to assign to Semonides of Amorgos; that was all. The new papyrus gives us a feeling of wealth.
Lives, leaves
Firstly it confirms that those thirteen lines came from the elegies of Simonides of Ceos. However, it shows that the first five lines, which stand only in the oldest manuscript of Stobaeus (S), were a self-contained excerpt, and that 6-13 should have been separated from them by a new heading, τοῦ αὐτοῦ, as these lines now appear in Oxy. 3965 fr. 26 preceded by remnants of verses unknown. They are followed by a recommendation to pay heed to something old Homer once said, and at least three lines seem to have been devoted to praise of Homer's timelessness and infallibility. Here is a conjectural restoration of the passage (fr. 20. 13-19 W.):

...... ...(...) φράζω δὲ παλα[τενέω ἐποκ ἀνδρός·
η λήθην] γλῶσση ἐκφυγ’ ὤμη[ος ἕηε,
15 κοῦ μιν] πανθαμά[τω αἱρεὶ χρόνος οὐδ’ ἀπαμαυροῖ,
οὐδὲ ἐ πῖο ψυδήχιε έ[ἶλεν ἐπ’ ἀγαλλίης,
ἀκ νῦν] ἐν θελήμει [καὶ εἰλαπίνησι ματαίως
αἰεὶ] ἐμέτρησοι [μαυρ παταγεῦσι λόγοι (v.l. ἐμέτρησον)
ἀνδρ]ον ἐνθα καὶ [ἐνθα.

As the elegy was presumably performed in sympotic surroundings, these last lines would be a humorous put-down of other people's efforts. Simonides must have gone on to say which particular sentiment of Homer's he wished to be remembered. There is a good chance that the Homer quotation in the first Stobaeus excerpt (fr. 19 W.) in fact belongs here, a few lines after the passage which we had thought it preceded. It fits the context perfectly, and makes for an excellent example of ring composition:

Fr. 20. 5 When he is young, a man is foolish. A
7 He has no anticipation of old age or death, and does not appreciate the brevity of mortal youth and life. B
11 But you must learn this lesson and make sure you enjoy life. C
13 Take heed of what Homer said— D
14 he has escaped oblivion, and never proved false, E
17 in contrast to the sophistries of present-day elegy—

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19 As I had argued in Studies, 179 f., though with some reservation about the authenticity of the verses, which I no longer see any reason to question.

20 Among the minor fragments of the new papyrus we find probable or possible mentions of garlands (27. 4, 30. 3, 32. 4), Dionysus (30.5) a ποίε ἐρωτός (27. 5), and a βαρήπιτος (29. 3; see my Ancient Greek Music (1992), 57 f., especially n. 47).

21 Suggested by Parsons, 43.
and one thing the Chian poet said that was finest of all:
οὕτη περὶ φύλλων γενεῆ, τοιῆδε καὶ ἄνδρῶν.

Few men have taken that properly to heart,
for they have (false) expectations,
that grow naturally in the breasts of the young.

Spots on the ivory
Secondly, in view of the overlaps of 3965 with 2327 we are now able to identify as Simonides the author of that intriguing fragment of 2327 which was Adesp. eleg. 28; it is now Sim. eleg. 21. Here is the main portion, lines 3-9, with a new restoration of line 8:

Ποδίδαμαι ψυχή πεφυλαγμένος εἰς νομίζω.

Simonides announces that he can no longer maintain circumspection in ministering to his soul, that is, in allowing himself enjoyment of the good things in life. He has, albeit with pain, respected the golden visage of Right ever since he saw on his young thighs the signs that his boyhood was at an end. Dark hairs sprouted to speckle the ivory white; the image of the ivory and the theme of the colour contrast on the maculate thighs are no doubt drawn from Iliad 4. 141-7. In the next line the metaphor changes. The previously unblemished thighs are now represented by νιφάδες, snows. What was the complementary symbol representing their maculation? I think the picture must be of a snow-covered field in which, as spring approaches and the snows melt, spots of grass begin to appear here and there. Diffugere niues, redeunt iam gramina campis. It is a brilliant image, not just pictorially apt but hinting at the burgeoning of sexual vigour.

Where is the poet heading? He has always striven, hard though it was, to stay on the path of right; ἀιδός held him in check; but now he is unable to minister to his soul πεφυλαγμένος, with proper caution. It is evidently a love poem. The degree of

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22 I wrote some notes on it in Studies, 167 f.
23 Cf. 20. 12 ψυχή τῶν ἀγαθῶν τῆς ἐλεήμονος with Studies, 180, adding Eur. Supp. 884 (ψυχή for φῶς cf. Lenting). Perhaps I was wrong, in editing 21. 3, to substitute a vocative for the papyrus' presumed ψυχή; the sense is not greatly affected, but ὀπήδος is easier with a dative expressed.
24 Cf. Soph. fr. 12 τὸ χρύσεον δὲ τὰς Δίκας δέδωκεν ὡμά, Eur. fr. 486 Δικαιοσύνης τὸ χρύσεον πρόεσσον. In quoting these two passages, Aristoxenus (fr. 50 Wehrli) forgot Simonides.
introspection is unusual, but the general category, "I am in love, but reluctantly", is familiar. In this case it is not just that the poet is apprehensive of the pain and stress of love. He feels it to be somehow discreditable. We can compare Theognidea 1341 f. (Euenus fr. 8e),

\begin{quote}
αἰαὶ, παιδὸς ἔρωτο ἀπαλόχρουσ, ὡς μὲ φίλους
πάει μαλεξηρά ἔχοι μαλεξηρά ἔμοι.
\end{quote}

That poem, if 1341-50 are all one piece, is addressed to a Simonides, and he may well be our Simonides.\(^{26}\) Perhaps Thgn. 1271-4 comes from the same period or circle.

**The Happy Island**

The advent of 3965 fr. 27 welds what were three scrappy Adespota (29-31) into one coherent fragment of singular beauty (22 W.\(^2\)). It followed the snows fragment quite closely — there were probably less than twenty lines between them — but it comes, to all appearance, from a different poem, doubtless the next in the book. In lines 5-18 Simonides is describing a journey that he wishes he could make to that island of shady trees and pleasant breezes where he might be reunited with the fair Echekratidas, erase the wrinkles of old age, and enjoy the perfect pleasures of song, fragrant garlands, and a delightful companion.

5

\begin{quote}
πρῆκε]ομι κέλευθόν,
φόρτων ἀγων Μουκέων κόμηι ν ῥιστράφων,
εὐαγήραν δ ἀνδρῶν ἕκθες πολύδενδρον ἵκοι ἵππην
ε smtp]ελεέα νήρουν, ἑκατόμια β[ίοι.
καὶ κεν] Ἐχεϊρο[τάτην ἕκασθο[τρὶς τοῖ[δε γεραίος

10

\begin{quote}
ἁφρα νεός ν[χαρίς[τοῦ ἀπὸ χροὸς ἃν[θος ἁείη,
καὶ κεν] ἐγ[ῶ μετὰ πα]ὐδὲ ἐν ἄνθε[ειν ἄβρα πάθοιμι
κεκλημένον, λευκάς φαρκὸδακτές ἔκτρος ἐλλῶν, \(\ldots\)

15

\begin{quote}
π[ικιλοί]ν ἐὐανθεία πλε[ξάμενος στέφανον.
Μο[^]ύσας] δ ἵμερο[ν]τα ληγόν π[ροχεοίμι κεν ὦμο

\end{quote}

The island must be the Isle (or one of the Isles) of the Blest, where it is attractive to believe that the best people go after death.\(^{27}\) Echekratidas can reasonably be identified as that ruler of Larisa whose son Antiochus was one of Simonides’ patrons.\(^{28}\) He is dead now, but Simonides recalls him as an old and dear friend.

\(^{26}\) Sim. eleg. 33. 4 o]όκ ἀχαρίς γε [ recalls Thgn. 496 (also from an elegy addressed to Simonides, presumably by the same poet), χοῦτος συμπόσιον γίνεται σύκ ἀχαρί.

\(^{27}\) See Parsons, 46 and 49.

\(^{28}\) Theoc. 16. 34 with sch. (PMG 528), see Gow II 312; Y.Béquignon, RE Supp. XII 1051 f.

7 V.1. πολύωμναν. The supplement at the beginning, besides being suitable for the sense, has the merit of helping to account for the presumed corruption of εὐάκεα (νήσων) to εὐσαγέα in the next line. Otherwise one might opt for εὔσεβέων, with an eye on the θάλαμος or χώρος εὔσεβέων of fourth-century and later epitaphs (CEG 545, Call. epigr. 10. 4 Pf.; Rohde, Psysc.² 383 (Eng. II 571 n. 133); [Pl.] Ax. 371c).


What was the context of this idyllic fantasy? The elegy was surely addressed to Echekratidas’s son Antiochus or to some other member(s) of the family. Aristides, Or. 31. 3 (PMG 528), implies that Simonides wrote a lament for Antiochus’ death and that it referred to the prince’s grieving mother, Dyseris. This melancholy event had probably not yet occurred at the time of our elegy, or Simonides might have pictured Antiochus in the Happy Island rather than his father. Simonides already feels old, but that need not exclude a date as early as the 490s.²⁹

Preceding the passage quoted above are the line-ends 1 ] ὀιο θαλάκης, 2 ]ροεμα πόρον (φέ]ρομα, subject a ship?), 3 ]μένος ἐνθα περανα[. After it, we find the line-beginnings 19 τῶνδε [ ], 20 εὐπομπ[. I suspect that these are not part of the Elysian visit — Simonides will hardly have spent seven lines getting from his embarkation to the mention of his destination — but of its frame: a voyage to be undertaken by Antiochus, or whoever the poem was addressed to. It was, in other words, a propemptikon.³⁰ The word εὐπομπ[ is especially suggestive; perhaps εὐπομπ[ος predicatively of a god (e.g. Poseidon), with optative verb.

This provided the point of departure for the imaginary journey. From wishing his noble Thessalian patron godspeed, Simonides turned aside for a few moments to describe the voyage he personally would like to make: to the Happy Island, to see Echekratidas again, grasp his hand, surrender anew to the charm that used to surround him; and himself to shed the weight of years, to return to the blithe, garlanded, songful times he had shared with his friend long ago. One may well be reminded of Callimachus:

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²⁹ The dates 520-490 given for Antiochus’ ταγεία by Béquignon, RE Suppl. XII 1053, seem to be mere guesswork.
³⁰ Early examples of this ‘genre’ are Sappho 5, Thgn. 691-2; cf. Sol. 19.
Is the Cyrenaean elegist recalling the Cean?

However that may be, we cannot but feel that in this fragment, more than anywhere else, we have found the real Simonides, speaking from the heart. And it is wonderful.

**ADDENDUM**

In fr. 11. 35 f. of the Plataea poem,

[\(\gamma \kappa \alpha \iota \varepsilon \pi \iota \kappa \lambda \varepsilon \alpha \varepsilon \rho \gamma \alpha \ \Κορίν\[\theta\]ον

\(\Ταντάλιδε\ω \Πέλοπος\),

the sense is 'they reached the Isthmus and Corinth'. 36 certainly referred to the Peloponnese as \(\nu\ς\varepsilon\ Πέλοπος\). But how was the phrase attached to 35? In ed. pr., Parsons thought of \(\nu\ς\varepsilon\ ν\ς\varepsilon\ Πέλοπος\), and I of \(\ni\ς\varepsilon\ τ\e\ς\varepsilon\ ι\ς\varepsilon\). The poet's nephew suggests a different solution. In his first Ode, which is for an Isthmian victor, he apostrophizes the Isthmus thus (13 f.):

\(\delta\ Πέλοπος \lambda\i\pi\ar\ac\ ν\ς\varepsilon\ θε\ο\d\δ\μ\α\τ\ο\ι\ π\υ\l\a\i\).

So perhaps

\(\varepsilon\nu\\theta\α \pi\υ\l\a\i \nu\ς\varepsilon\ Τανταλίδε\ω \Πέλοπος\).