

SIMONIDES, FR. 4D AND P. OXY. 2432

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The poem written by Simonides of Ceos to the Thessalian dynast Scopas has challenged the ingenuity of critics ever since Socrates and Protagoras engaged in their famous verbal duel over the meaning of Simonides' message (*Protagoras* 339A–47A). Agreement on the proper interpretation of the piece seems no closer today than when Protagoras pointed out to Socrates the apparent "contradiction" between Simonides' words at the beginning of the first and the beginning of the second stanzas. Nevertheless, most interpreters do agree that Simonides was making an important statement concerning the nature of man; and it is fitting that this poem, which may be termed the first philosophical discussion of the "good man" in the history of literature, has come down to us in one of the Platonic dialogues.

The purpose of this paper is to show that Simonides was making a conscious attempt to *redefine*, in moral terms, the common notions of the "good" and "bad" man, and, consequently, that he was an important innovator in the formulation of higher ethical thought. The Scopas poem should be understood as an attempt to delineate the "good man" in terms of *inner motivation*, and to arrive at an acceptable compromise with the ideal of moral perfection, as it was understood by the poet. The apparent contradictions and the difficulties of interpretation are occasioned by the poet's lack of suitable ethical categories; to express his new ideas he is forced to employ the old rhetoric. The analysis of the poem to Scopas will be followed by a discussion of the recently discovered papyrus fragment (*POxy.* 2432), which sheds much light on the problems in fr. 4, since it appears to present, in somewhat more simplified and refined form, the same message as the poem to Scopas. To illustrate these points it will be

necessary, first, to discuss briefly the archaic usage of the words *agathos*, *esthlos*, and *kakos*, for it is against the "old" interpretation of these words that Simonides directs his arguments.

It has been noted that *agathos* and *esthlos* were "the most powerful words of commendation used of man both in Homer and in later Greek."¹ *Kakos* and its close synonyms represent, in turn, the strongest terms of disapproval. In the usage of the archaic period these words had an "external" sphere of meaning, evaluating the subject in descriptive terms as he appeared within the user's frame of reference and not in an internalized absolute sense. For example, *agathos* may have originally indicated someone or something "capable" or "efficient," according to the judgment of the speaker. This basic meaning is susceptible of extension; the man who is capable appears "useful" from the point of view of the speaker. In a more active sense, the word indicates "beneficial," also from the user's point of view. An *anêr agathos* (*esthlos*), then, is a man who is capable (objective), useful, beneficial (subjective). The *anêr kakos* is incapable, useless, harmful. Further, in a communal context, the words can also signify "successful," "distinguished," and the opposite—the man who is deemed useful according to the standards of the community is, naturally, judged successful as a member of his community. In the same way, the noun *aretê* signifies both the intrinsic *ability* of a person and the *success* which that worth produces.²

In the Homeric epics, dominated by the values of the warrior-hero, the words *agathos*, *esthlos*, and *kakos* usually indicate physical prowess or its lack ("good" at something, "brave" or "cowardly" in battle).³ In Hesiod, on the other hand, people are judged as good or bad in terms of what the basic reference, useful-profitable or useless-harmful,

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¹ A. W. H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility* (Oxford 1960) 30. Many of the terms and concepts used in this paper (e.g. "cooperative") are Adkins'.

² See Bruno Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind*, tr. T. G. Rosenmeyer (Cambridge, Mass. 1953) 158; E. Schwartz, *Ethik der Griechen* (Stuttgart 1951) 23. For the elemental notion of "capable," "efficient" see M. Hoffmann, *Die ethische Terminologie bei Homer, Hesiod und den alten Eligikern und Jambographen* (Tübingen 1914).

³ Cf. the frequent formula, *boên agathos*; also *Il.* 2.365–66, 4.458, 6.444–45, 13.314.

meant to a farmer not interested in warlike activities. Thus, in the *Works and Days* (346-48), he speaks of the *esthlos geitôn*, the good neighbor, who is useful, beneficial, and the *kakos geitôn* who is a "woe."⁴

Throughout the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. we see these terms of approbation and disapprobation employed in accordance with the user's own notion of what constitutes merit or its lack. Rejecting the Homeric standards of *aretê*, Tyrtaeus defines the *anêr agathos* simply as one who takes his stand bravely in the front ranks without wavering. The "good man" is judged in terms of his usefulness to the community (fr. 9.10-20 D). During this period there occurs a polarity in the usage of the terms of merit and demerit as the aristocratic "heirs" of the Homeric warriors tended to employ them as social terms or even as quasi-technical class terms: "the nobles," "the upper class," or "the commons," "the lower class." The usage of *agathos-esthlos* and *kakos* in Theognis and Pindar reflects this attempt on the part of the "nobles" to use the words as automatic class designations, even at the risk of doing violence to the more elemental notions of "useful-beneficial" and "useless-harmful."⁵ At the same time, the concept of useful and useless continues, often with reference to the community, and sometimes with a more pronounced ethical connotation, as in Phocylides fr. 13 D:

πόλλ' ἀέκοντα παθεῖν διζήμενον ἔμμεναι ἐσθλόν,

where *esthlos* probably means "worthy," "honored" (in the community).⁶

⁴ Cf. also *Works and Days* 295, 715-16, where the terms have a more ethical connotation.

⁵ This tendency can be observed as early as Homer, where several instances of these words appear to indicate a social class, in which the more concrete notion of physically good or bad is submerged, and a group exhibiting the whole nexus of ideas inherent in the adjectives is adduced (e.g. *Od.* 1.411, 4.64, 8.533, 15.324, 22.415). Even clearer social usages are seen in the Homeric *H. Dem.* 213-14, and *H. Aphr.* 131-32. *Esthlos* is found 4 times in Alcaeus, and in each instance the poet seems to be using the word as a "class" term (frgs. 72.13, 360, 6.14, 391 L-P). The merit-demerit words never actually succeeded in becoming technical class terms, as the usage of Theognis (who would, if anyone, have wanted to do this) clearly demonstrates (e.g. lines 53-60, 1109-14).

⁶ Wilamowitz, *Sappho und Simonides* (Berlin 1913) 174, believed that *esthlos* is purely moral here, and, indeed, used this fragment of Phocylides to show that Pittacus' usage of *esthlos* in Simonides' Scopas poem was moral; but see Adkins (above, note 1) 355-56.

Both Simonides and Bacchylides appear to have used the merit-demerit words in the more generalized "ethical-useful" sense rather than in the narrow class sense. In the famous encomium written for those who fell at Thermopylae, Simonides calls the dead warriors *andres agathoi* (fr. 5.6 D). These are men who earned the epithet *agathoi* because of their service in behalf of Hellas.⁷ The "external" force of the merit words during the later archaic period is observed clearly in Bacchylides' usage of *esthlos* in 10.47-48 (Snell):

... τὸ μὲν κάλλιστον, ἐσθλόν
ἄνδρα πολλῶν ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων πολυζήλωτον εἶμεν.

Esthlos here is "a man of worth or value," or, more precisely, the man who is termed worthy because of his achievement.⁸ The frequently occurring formula, *agathos (oi) genessthai*, in inscriptions of the fifth and subsequent centuries illustrates this usage. A citizen earns the epithet *agathos*, bestowed by the polis for some meritorious act which proves his usefulness to the community.⁹

For our purpose here, the most noteworthy aspect of the archaic usage of these words is that, whichever tradition was followed, there is little sign of their development as "internal" moral terms: the sphere of reference remains external. It was simply not possible to use the bare epithets *agathos* and *kakos* to indicate a "good" or a "bad" man as we use the phrases today: "morally virtuous," "of good character," etc. The "non-aristocratic" usage, predicated as it was on the concept of the "cooperative" aspects of goodness, i.e. service, usefulness, esteem within the community, pointed the way to the development of the internal notion. Nevertheless, if one wished to express the concept of the "good man" *not* in external terms but in terms of inner morality and worth of character—in other words, to add a *new* dimension to the words of merit and demerit—one would be forced to use the old words in new ways; to create, as it were, a new vocabulary of merit from the old vocabulary. This is precisely what Simonides attempted to do in his poem to Scopas.

⁷ Cf. J. Gerlach, *ANHP AΓΑΘΟΣ* (Munich 1932) 22.

⁸ Similar usages of *esthlos* and *kakos* are seen in 14.1-6 (Snell). Cf. Wilamowitz (above, note 6) 184.

⁹ See Gerlach (above, note 7) 7-14.

FRAGMENT 4D

The chief difficulty in the interpretation of the poem remains the “contradiction” between the opening lines of the first stanza:

Ἄνδρ' ἀγαθὸν μὲν ἀλαθέως γενέσθαι
χαλεπὸν χερσὶν τε καὶ ποσὶ καὶ νόῳ
τετράγωνον, ἄνευ ψόγου τετυγμένον,

and the lines which begin the second stanza:¹⁰

οὐ δέ μοι ἐμμελέως τὸ Πιττάκειον
νέμεται, καίτοι σοφοῦ παρὰ φωτὸς εἰ-
ρημένον· χαλεπὸν φάτ' ἐσθλὸν ἔμμεναι.

Protagoras' purpose was to show that Simonides was an imperfect composer; his explanation of the contradictory statements was that Simonides “forgot” what he had written a few lines before and went on to disagree with Pittacus who had said just the same thing (339D). Socrates' defense of Simonides, for all its playfulness and subtle twitting of the Sophistic methodology, is basically sound. He says that there is, in fact, no contradiction, because Simonides had said it is difficult to *become* good, and Pittacus had said it was difficult to *be* (i.e. to remain) good. In other words, the argument of Socrates-Simonides is that to become good is truly difficult, although it is possible; but, should anyone succeed in attaining this state, its retention is impossible (344BC). We note that Plato assumed that Simonides' usage of *agathos* (1) and Pittacus' usage of *esthlos* (6) were the same: “good” in the ethical-moral sense.

Wilamowitz, in his extremely influential treatment of the poem,¹¹ insists that there is no difference between Simonides' *genesthai* and Pittacus' *emmenai* (p. 165); therefore, the resolution of the contradiction must be sought elsewhere. According to Wilamowitz' reconstruction of the occasion of the piece, Scopas had asked Simonides what he

¹⁰ That lines 1–3 are the beginning of the poem is shown by *Prot.* 343CD: τὸ πρῶτον τοῦ ἄσματος . . . ὅτι ἄνδρα ἀγαθὸν γενέσθαι χαλεπόν. That 4–6 followed shortly is proved by Protagoras' words at 339C: ὅτι προῖόντος τοῦ ἄσματος λέγει πού, and 339D: τὸ μὲν πρῶτον . . . ὀλίγου δὲ τοῦ ποιήματος.

¹¹ Above, note 6, pp. 159–91, first published as “Das Skolion des Simonides an Scopas,” *NGG* (1898) 204–36. Subsequent reference is to the later version, by author's name (**Wilamowitz**).

thought of Pittacus' apophthegm, χαλεπὸν ἐσθλὸν ἔμμεναι, expecting a compliment of the conventional kind. Instead, Simonides answered him by saying that he did not agree with Pittacus' expression, not because it was not true, but because Pittacus had not said enough. Wilamowitz supposed that by *esthlos* Pittacus had meant morally good (pp. 174-75); Simonides' reply (1-3, 7-12) was that this notion of *esthlos* implied a perfection of body and mind not attainable by men, since human success (*Erfolg*) depends on the whim of the gods, and it is success which gives or withholds the *aretê* of men. Accordingly, says Wilamowitz (pp. 167, 175), Simonides applied a new standard, lower but attainable, for men to follow: to do nothing *aischron* (morally evil) of their own free will (lines 19 ff.). For Wilamowitz, then, the *anêr agathos* of line 1 is an example of human perfection, embodying both internal moral spotlessness and external success—a state not attainable by human will.

Bowra appears to follow this interpretation in most essentials, except that he considers Pittacus' *esthlos* (6) to have the conventional aristocratic meaning: "noble," "well-born." Thus, 1-3 are simply Simonides' restatement of the old aristocratic ideal, formulated more precisely. Then, in the rest of the poem, Simonides proceeds to show that this ideal is no longer valid. Consequently, the next lines, 7-12:

θεὸς ἂν μόνος τοῦτ' ἔχοι γέρας, ἄνδρα δ' οὐκ
 ἔστι μὴ οὐ κακὸν ἔμμεναι,
 ὃν ἂν ἀμήχανος συμφορὰ καθέλῃ.
 10 πράξας γὰρ εὔ πᾶς ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός,
 κακὸς δ' εἰ κακῶς, ἐπὶ πλείστον δὲ κ(αὶ) ἄριστ(οι),
 οὗς ἂν οἱ θεοὶ φιλέωσιν,

are to be understood as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the aristocratic notion of the *agathos*:

He says in effect that it is impossible to be *esthlos* in Pittacus' sense of the word, because the position of an *esthlos* may be changed, and then he becomes *kakos*. In other words Simonides takes the accepted, aristocratic view that the *agathoi* are the rich, the beautiful and the fortunate, and points out that so soon as they lose their money or their looks or their good luck, they cease to be *agathoi* in the old sense.¹²

¹² C. M. Bowra, *Greek Lyric Poetry*, 2nd ed. (Oxford 1961) 329. Bowra's interpretation was first formulated in an article, "Simonides and Scopas," *CP* 29 (1934) 230-39. These will be referred to hereafter as **Bowra (1961)** and **Bowra (1934)**.

The interpretations of Wilamowitz and Bowra regard the poem's opening lines (1-3) as either a modification or a restatement of Pittacus' *gnômé*, but not as Simonides' own thought. Most other modern treatments of the poem follow the basic arguments of these two critics on this point.¹³ In all these interpretations the contradiction is

¹³ For a fairly complete bibliography of fr. 4 see B. Gentili, "Studi su Simonide," *Maia* 16 (1964) 278 note 1. A brief summary of some of the many articles written about this poem will illustrate how closely the arguments of Wilamowitz and Bowra have been followed. The works cited in this note will be referred to hereafter by author's name. G. Christ, *Simonidesstudien* (Freiburg 1941), maintains that 1-3 are an expansion on Pittacus' saying. Simonides had understood Pittacus' *esthlos* as the "blameless man" (*der Untadelige*), but because of the changes of fortune to which man is subjected by the gods, such a man cannot exist. For Christ, the excellence of the *anēr agathos* of 1 is a blending of bodily and intellectual abilities which form a unity within *aretē* (17). While Christ sees nothing essentially new in the *aretē* standard of Simonides, he does recognize that the poet "betrays a tendency" to concentrate the conception of *aretē* on inner worth, in the sense of the later philosophical ethic (p. 18). For W. C. Greene, *Moirā* (Cambridge, Mass. 1944), 1-3 express the aristocratic meaning of *aretē*. This is an impossible ideal because misfortune alters man's estate; therefore, the aristocrat's goodness is beyond man's control (p. 68). According to H. Fränkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie* (New York 1951) 397-403, lines 1-3 are a paraphrase of Pittacus' saying. Simonides' notion of the *anēr agathos* in these lines is the old (aristocratic) ideal. Simonides has taken this old ideal, implicit in Pittacus' statement, and raised it to its logical extreme; at this point he finds he cannot accept it, and thus this ideal is considered not just difficult, but impossible (p. 398 and note 13). H. Gundert, "Die Simonides-Interpretation in Platons Protagoras," *Hermeneia, Festschrift Otto Regenbogen* (Heidelberg 1952) 71-93, believes that lines 1-3 are a "polemic mimesis" of Pittacus' *gnômé*. Simonides takes the aristocratic ideal of Pittacus' *esthlos* and "elevates" it, so that both its validity and attainability come into question. Gundert, however, sees the second stanza as Simonides' own opinion and not as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the aristocratic outlook (p. 81 note 15). Adkins (above, note 1) feels that *agathos* and *esthlos* in the first 6 verses reflect the "traditional *agathos* standard," i.e. success (166). Simonides understood Pittacus' usage of *esthlos* to be the traditional one, and that is also how Simonides used it (356). According to Gentili, 1-3 are "programmatic" and express the aristocratic ideal of perfect *aretē*, which Simonides holds to be impossible. L. Woodbury, "Simonides on ἀρετή," *TAPA* 84 (1953) 135-63, on the other hand, believes that 1-3 were Simonides' own opinion and not a paraphrase of Pittacus' *gnômé*. Nevertheless, the ideal which Simonides sets forth is the old aristocratic concept of *aretē* (151), just as Pittacus' was (153-54). Woodbury removes the contradiction by supposing that by the beginning of the fifth century it had become evident that the old Homeric *aretē* was no longer attainable, both because of changing social conditions and because of the realization that all human achievement was dependent on divine will (or chance). For this reason *aretē* is impossible. Accordingly Woodbury sees a validity in the Platonic distinction between *genesthai* and *einai*. It is possible (although difficult) to become *agathos*; it is impossible to remain *agathos* (155-57). Recently H. Parry, "An Interpretation of Simonides 4 (Diehl)," *TAPA* 96 (1965) 297-320, has offered the theory that the poem is a *consolatio* for Scopas on "some unknown occasion of disappointment or failure" (p. 298). Parry accepts Woodbury's distinction between the possibility

removed either by recourse to a variation of the Platonic distinction between being and becoming, or by denying that any real contradiction existed. In the latter view (Wilamowitz) Simonides begins by accepting and then denies the possibility of perfect *aretê*: "It is difficult . . . no, not difficult, but impossible." All the commentators, moreover, assume that by *anêr agathos* in 1 Simonides meant essentially the same as Pittacus meant by *esthlos* in 6 (different interpreters presuming a greater or lesser "moral" quality in the usage).¹⁴

But if it can be shown that in 1-3 Simonides is voicing *his own* opinion, which is expressly opposed to Pittacus' saying in 6—in other words, that Simonides is proposing a definition of the "good man" which is contrary to Pittacus' conception—then the "contradiction" automatically disappears. I hope to show that *at the outset* Simonides is defining a new concept of goodness which he finds obscured by the older notion. This new concept is that of the ideal, purely moral man, conceived of in terms of inner perfection, not of success. The poet finds that in order to convince his audience of the validity of this new moral ideal he must combat the commonly held, external notion of the *anêr agathos-esthlos*.

The first three verses appear to be a simple and straightforward exposition of the traditional standard of *aretê*, and this is how they have been understood by most commentators. On closer examination, however, it becomes evident that the ideal set forth is something beyond the usual description of the *anêr agathos*. In the first place, the adjective is modified by the adverb *alatheôs*; Simonides is speaking of the "*truly* good man." The emphatic position of the opening words shows that the subject of the poem is precisely this "*truly* good man," who is *defined* in the next two verses. Nowhere, in the extant

of the momentary attainment of *aretê* and the impossibility of permanent possession (307), and also assumes that the merit words indicate success. These critical examinations are cited because, although they betray their dependence on the theses of Wilamowitz or Bowra, they do attempt to grapple with the complexities of the poet's thought, often with keen and fresh insight. The majority of the other treatments of the poem are usually a simple restatement of the orthodox opinions. The few notable exceptions will be discussed below.

¹⁴ Cf. the admonition given by Adkins on this point (355). Especially with the German critics is it difficult to ascertain the precise quality of the "perfection" implied in *agathos*. Often they drift between the heroic conception of the "good man" and the ethical-moral concept, without making the distinction.

corpus of Greek literature before Simonides, had the term *anêr agathos* been modified by the adverb *alatheôs*. The presence of the particle *μέν* supposes an antithesis: the truly good man *versus* something else.¹⁵ These two facts alone are a clear indication that Simonides intended something other than a more precise formulation of the traditional notion of the *anêr agathos*. The unusual quality of *agathos alatheôs* was noted by Socrates himself, who states that "truly good" is an impossible concept: "As if some things are truly good, while others are good, but not truly so" (343E). Thus Socrates proposes a poetic "hyperbaton," in which *ἀλαθέως* actually modifies *χαλεπόν* (344A).¹⁶

The next point to be noted is that in 2-3 Simonides obviously intended a *definition* of the "truly good man." Very rarely in archaic literature do we find a conscious definition of the merit-demerit terms. As we have seen, these principal terms of approbation and disapprobation express the speaker's value judgment of what is good or bad, and, accordingly, there is no need for elaboration.¹⁷ When there is a conscious attempt to define the terms further, it is a fairly certain indication that the speaker has a quarrel with the generally accepted connotation. Hesiod seems to have done this with *esthlos* in *Works and Days* 295, where the generally accepted Homeric notion of physical prowess is replaced by the more ethical concept of the sound or prudent man. Tyrtaeus did the same thing in his fr. 9, where *aretê* and the *anêr agathos* were stripped of their epic "non-essentials" and redefined in the simplest communal terms.¹⁸

The defining of the "truly good man" is, then, another indication that Simonides is doing something out of the ordinary. By the unusual figure, "four-square in hands and feet and mind," Simonides can only mean physical and mental perfection, that is, complete

¹⁵ The antithesis was noted by Socrates, although he takes the antithesis to be between *genesthai* and *emmenai* (343D-44A).

¹⁶ Needless to say, this is not so. Aristotle, for example, ignores this bit of linguistic tampering in *Nic. Eth.* 1.11, 1100B20: *ἀληθῶς ἀγαθός*.

¹⁷ This is especially true of the aristocratic concept of the *anêr agathos*. A man is *agathos* (by birth or breeding) or he is not; the term is self-explanatory. Indeed, *agathos* is an absolute term which has no true positive or superlative.

¹⁸ Cf. also Xenophanes 2 D, where the older physical ideal of *aretê*, as exemplified by prowess in the games, is condemned as useless to the polis and inferior to Xenophanes' own *sophiê*.

harmony of bodily and intellectual functions, perfection from every aspect. The concept seems to come from the Pythagorean notion of the square as the symbol of perfection.¹⁹ Although the terms are external, it is obvious that Simonides is elevating the concept of the good—the truly good man is something more than the “successful” man. Simonides is employing the terms which he has at his disposal, and in the agonal culture of archaic Greece body and mind are not separable.²⁰ *Nous* implies the “inner” man: intellect, feelings, motivation. The final phrase of the definition, “fashioned without blemish,” continues the image of perfection, and here Simonides comes closer to the “inner” man. *Psogos* is the blame or censure which is pronounced by an individual or by society against some action which it finds repugnant or distasteful.²¹ The participle *tetugmenos* implies that the condition of blamelessness is innate. Thus the truly good man is one who, by nature, is not subject to censure from his fellows. It is clear that Simonides envisioned a standard of *aretê* which exceeded any conventional archaic standard, aristocratic or communal. No literary prototype of the *anêr agathos*, not even Achilles, could have met this standard. It is also clear that the range of perfection is focused inward, away from any norm of external success or achievement.²²

We can only guess at what was contained in the rest of the first stanza. We may assume that neither Protagoras nor Socrates felt that the “gap” contained anything important to their arguments, although

¹⁹ Cf. H. W. Smyth, *Greek Melic Poets* (London 1900) 312–13. The Pythagorean concept of the square and the number four seems to indicate moral and religious perfection. Aristotle, referring to the Simonidean usage, clearly understands *tetragónos* as “perfect” in an ethical-moral sense (*Rhet.* 3.11, 1411b26; *Nic. Eth.* 1.11, 1100b20). Bowra (1934) 232 interprets the Pythagorean usage as aristocratic. See also Woodbury 139 note 8, Fränkel 361.

²⁰ See Bowra (1934) 231–32 for examples. Bowra says that “the description is conventional and the words are catchwords,” but fails to see that Simonides is not speaking of excellence of body and mind, but perfection of the whole man. The poet employs the conventional rhetoric because he has no other categories at his disposal. Christ (18) notes the difference in quality between the ideal of these lines and the Pindaric view. Woodbury (156 note 49) also sees a difference, saying that “Simonides’ version of the traditional ideal is less aristocratic and particular”; he calls Simonides’ outlook “bourgeois.”

²¹ E.g. Xenophanes fr. 10 D, where human *ονειδεα* and *ψόγος* are *κλέπτειν μοιχεύειν τε καὶ ἀλλήλους ἀπατεύειν*. Cf. also Aesch. *Ag.* 937; Plato, *Symp.* 182A.

²² Cf. Christ 18.

it is fairly certain that these lines would shed light on the proper interpretation of the poem. It is quite likely that what followed line 3 was a δέ construction,²³ and it is possible that the contrast was concerned with a distinction between *seeming* and *being* truly good.

If we are correct in seeing the opening verses as an attempt to define the good man in terms of moral perfectibility, and the omitted verses as an excursus on the fact that men often seem to be so, the meaning of the second stanza becomes much clearer.

Lines 4 and 5 present linguistic difficulties. Since Wilamowitz most critics are agreed that ἐμμελέως should be taken with νέμεται rather than with εἰρημένον. The verb νέμεται is still difficult, but the meaning, "is current," "is in use," is at once the most natural and the most fitting. These lines may be paraphrased: "But the saying of Pittacus does not ring true to *me*, although spoken by a wise man."²⁴ Close analysis of these lines is crucial; first of all, we note that Simonides does not say that Pittacus is wrong, but that he does not agree with the saying. Second, the phrase τὸ Πιττάκειον does not simply mean "the saying of Pittacus," but rather has the force of "the well-known saying attributed to Pittacus." Thus in 4-6 Simonides indicates that he himself finds something wrong with the old saw "it is difficult to be good." This polite and somewhat qualified disagreement with the old saying must be understood in the light of Simonides' opening statement, in which the poet gave to *agathos* a new dimension, an inner one. The old maxim, stated by Pittacus a century before, was unassailable in its simplicity. To be an *esthlos*, that is, a man of worth, honor, and achievement, was difficult. The attainment of this state inevitably entailed hardship, even suffering, but, although it was difficult to merit the appellation *esthlos*, it was manifestly possible to be *esthlos*. But Simonides is talking of a different kind of goodness, much more difficult, because its chief focus was not external achievement, but internal qualities of character.

²³ So Smyth (above note 19) 312. Many take οὐ δέ of line 4 as the second member, but this would mean a rather lengthy interval.

²⁴ Woodbury (139 note 9) gives a succinct treatment of the differing views; his rendering is "the maxim of Pittacus, although current coin, does not ring true to me." Cf. J. T. Sheppard, *The Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles* (Cambridge, Eng. 1920) xxxi: "Nor to my ears does the current phrase of Pittacus ring true—though wise was he who uttered it."

It is for this reason that Simonides finds himself disagreeing with Pittacus; by juxtaposing the two similar-sounding statements Simonides is trying to express the qualitative difference between the two concepts of "good."²⁵

Simonides' next statement (7), "Only a god would have this prize," proves that he is contesting the old, external notion of "good" implied in the Pittacean saying, and is referring to the new, moral concept of perfectibility, outlined in 1-3. We must suppose that for dramatic purposes Simonides deliberately chose to equate the Pittacean usage of *esthlos* with his own conception of the "truly good man." Otherwise, such a statement would constitute an incredible paradox. No archaic poet had ever even hinted that the state of being *agathos-esthlos* was unattainable for mortals. In the traditional views whether or not one was or became *agathos-esthlos* depended on achievement or prerogative (or luck), but it was always possible. Indeed, men, not gods, were called *agathoi*. Therefore, this was a startling statement, and one calculated to bring his hearers up short.

Having established that only a "god" can be truly good, Simonides goes on to contrast this condition with the state of man: "But it is not possible for a man not to be *kakos*" (7-8). If *τοῦτο γέρας* refers to the new notion of "truly good," or perfect in terms of inner character, then *kakos* must be the opposite of this: "imperfect in respect to inner worth." Critics are unanimous in supposing that *kakos* in 8 has the traditional value of "useless," "unworthy," "unrespected," and that *ἀμήχανος συμφορά* in the next line indicates an external misfortune which causes a man to be *kakos*. Nevertheless, I believe that Simonides continues to speak in terms of inner categories, and that *kakos* and *amêchanos symphora* are both moral terms. Once

²⁵ Christ (14) suggests, only to dismiss, the possibility that Simonides was opposing his own concept of *agathos* to Pittacus' *esthlos* right away. H. D. Verdam, "De carmine Simonideo quod interpretatur Plato in Protagoro dialogo," *Mnem.* 56 (1928) 299-310 (hereafter, **Verdam**), comes close to perceiving the distinction. He sees that in the first stanza Simonides is speaking "de *virtute* hominum" (i.e. a moral quality), and in stanza 2 "de *fortunis* hominum" (achievement). Verdam thinks that the distinction was between the terms *agathos*—which indicates "eos qui *suis* viribus innixi virtutem consequuntur"—and *esthlos*: "vir nobilis" (favore deorum). Cf. Woodbury's criticism (156 note 47). Also Verdam fails to see that 7-9 are in a moral vein, and that 10-12 are an ironical restatement of the contemporary outlook.

again, close examination of the text is necessary. In the first place it is clear that *theos* and *anêr* are being contrasted: divine perfectibility opposed to human imperfection. Next, *ὃν ἂν ἀμήχανος συμφορὰ κατέλῃ* has the form of a general relative condition, implying a universal situation: whom(ever) *amêchanos symphora* attacks, this man *must be kakos*.²⁶ Here, as elsewhere in the poem, Simonides is employing universal categories; given the general situation of attack by *amêchanos symphora*, a man *is kakos*. Conventionally we should expect Simonides to use *genesthai* here instead of *emmenai*;²⁷ the fact that *emmenai* is used (and *κακὸν ἔμμεναι* must be in conscious juxtaposition to *ἐσθλὸν ἔμμεναι* in 6) is a clear indication that Simonides has in mind the universal condition of man as opposed to a specific situation. In addition, if *amêchanos symphora* meant an externally caused accident, which (by implication) reduces a man from a fortunate to an unfortunate position, *genesthai* would be demanded. If, on the other hand, *amêchanos symphora* means, not an unavoidable misfortune, i.e. an accident of fate, but a natural defect of human nature, then the emphatic language, the contrast between human and divine, and the universal quality of the statement (which includes the implied contrast between Pittacus' *esthlon emmenai* and Simonides' *kakon emmenai*) are natural and simple.

In essence, what Simonides has said thus far is that no one can be termed *esthlos* (morally perfect) because every man is by nature *kakos* (morally imperfect). Only a god could be *ἄνευ ψόγου τετυγμένον*; and for that reason Pittacus' maxim is not valid. What Simonides has done is consciously to alter the notion of "good." We must suppose that he was aware that Pittacus had used the word *esthlos* in its traditional sense, but that the poet elected to interpret it in moral terms; in other words, he is making a conscious attempt to divest the chief epithets of approbation of any external significance. The poet says in effect that these words should no longer be used to describe man in his external fortunes, but rather in terms of his internal worth. This is perfectly natural. If *agathos-esthlos* and *kakos* were the highest

²⁶ Cf. G. S. Farnell, *Greek Lyric Poetry* (London and New York 1891) 363. For an analogous construction cf. Aesch. *Prom.* 35: *ἅπας δὲ τραχὺς ὅστις ἂν νέον κρατῇ*.

²⁷ Cf. J. and A. M. Adam, *Platonis Protagoras* (Cambridge, Eng. 1928) note on 344E, 27; Verdam 304; Gundert 82.

terms of approval and disapproval available (and they were), and if these words had come to have a predominantly external "success" connotation (as they did), then, at the point when a higher "ethical-moral" standard for behavior became apparent, there was no recourse but to shift the focus of meaning of these words from external to internal categories.²⁸ This also helps to explain why Simonides does not say that Pittacus' statement is wrong, but merely that he does not agree with it.

In conventional terms *amêchanos symphora* should mean an external occurrence against which one has no recourse; but it can also mean a force or passion over which the subject has no control. Basically a *symphora* is an event or circumstance, something that happens by chance. It could be used neutrally, but usually it was accompanied by an adjective which gave it its positive or negative coloration. Most often it had a bad significance: "mischance," "misfortune."²⁹ Sometimes the word signified an unfortunate circumstance or state which was caused by the subject's own acts. Thus *συμφορὰ οἰκτρὰ* in Pindar, *Ol.* 7.77 refers to Tlepolemus' murder of Licymnius. In Herodotus the crime of murder is called *symphora*.³⁰ Oedipus calls the possibility that he may have slain Laius a *κηλῖδα συμφορᾶς*.³¹ In the *O. C.* Oedipus berates Creon for cataloguing his sins (962-64):

ὅστις φόνους μοι καὶ γάμους καὶ συμφορὰς
τοῦ σοῦ διῆκας στόματος, ᾧς ἐγὼ τάλας
ἤνεγκον ἄκων.

In the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, the unnatural passion of Phaedra for

²⁸ This is all the more natural when we consider that the primary notion of these merit-demerit terms did, in fact, have reference to intrinsic capability and its lack, and only by extension came to indicate success or failure measured by public approbation or disapprobation. In point of fact, *agathos-esthlos* and *kakos* continued to be used on several levels. *Agathos* never lost its early connotation of "brave" or its extended meaning of "useful," "esteemed," in the community, even as it came to express the idea of "morally virtuous."

²⁹ *Symphora*, without a modifier, as a happy event: Aesch. *Ag.* 24; Simon. 512 (Page). Denoting both fortunate and unfortunate circumstances: Bacch. 14.3 (Snell). In a bad sense: Hipponax 45.4 D; Pindar, *P.* 8.87.

³⁰ 1.35, 41, 42, 45: murder of a brother (committed unwillingly); 3.50, 52: murder of a wife; 7.190: murder of a son.

³¹ *O. T.* 833. Cf. 99: *τίς ὁ τρόπος τῆς ξυμφορᾶς*; (= defilement), and see Jebb's note *ad loc.*; also 1347.

Hippolytus is referred to as *symphora*.³² The word is used unambiguously in Thucydides to indicate defects of character. In 1.122, the Corinthian ambassador says to the assembled Lacedaemonians: καὶ οὐκ ἴσμεν ὅπως τάδε τριῶν τῶν μεγίστων συμφορῶν ἀπήλλακται, ἀξυνεσίας ἢ μαλακίας ἢ ἀμελείας.³³

The usage of *améchanos* is uniform in Greek. In its passive sense (as here) it always signifies someone or something against which or over which the subject has no resource or control. One who has been seized by a force or event which is *améchanos* becomes himself *améchanos*: "helpless," "unable to resist."³⁴

Améchanos symphora in this poem can, therefore, indicate the condition of man who is seized by passions beyond his control. Simonides, as usual, is forced to express his conception of the natural weakness of man's character in external terms, because the vocabulary of inner responsibility has not yet been developed.³⁵

If our interpretation of the second stanza is correct thus far, in lines 4-9 Simonides has challenged the older, simpler concept of the *agathos-esthlos*, saying that only a god could be truly *agathos*, but that man is *kakos*, imperfect in respect to character, because of helpless passions which overcome him. Then, in 10-12, he returns to his attack on the older assumptions, the external notion of good and bad. The language is rapid and compressed and the note of irony is unmistakable. These lines are, in fact, a *reductio ad absurdum* of the common notion of the good and bad man: "For every man is good when he fares well, bad if badly, and, for the most part, they are best whom the gods love." Lines 10-12 form the logical conclusion to 7-9: Only a *divine being* can be "truly" good, *every man* is "conventionally" good if he is fortunate; a *man* cannot help being "morally" bad when he is the victim of his passions; *every man* is "conventionally" bad if he is unfortunate. The words from ἐπὶ πλεῖστον to φιλέωσι may not be the precise words of Simonides, but Plato's paraphrase must be

³² Lines 433, 483, 596, 691; cf. 295, 458. In *Medea* 571, *symphora* indicates marital infidelity.

³³ In Plato, *Laws* 854D, *symphora* refers to the crime of temple-robbing; in *Laws* 934B it is the state of mind which leads to criminal acts induced by emotion. In Xenophon, *Cyr.* 6.1.37, *symphora* indicates the state of a man who had attempted rape.

³⁴ *Od.* 19.363; *H. Hymn Apoll.* 192; *Soph. Ant.* 79.

³⁵ Cf. Christ 20; Gundert 82.

correct in essentials. It is a general truth, says Simonides, that men are best when the gods love them. That this is ironical language for "luck" can hardly be doubted, and it would be a mistake to believe that the poet is indulging in religious platitudes.³⁶ Being loved by the gods implies no reciprocal act of piety or merit; the formula $\epsilon\delta$ ($\kappa\alpha\kappa\omega\varsigma$) $\pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\tau\epsilon\upsilon\iota\nu$ indicates success or failure on the simplest and most external level, and it implies little intrinsic merit on the part of the subject.³⁷ Simonides means that we call a man *agathos* if he satisfies the most obvious conventional requirements of success: if he is wealthy, for example, or wins a victory in the games. If he fails, that is, loses his money or position, he is *kakos*. This is the realm of *to dokein*, and not applicable to real goodness. Simonides speaks of "every man" because he is combatting the conventional definition of external success.

In the first two stanzas Simonides established the category of the morally perfect man and explicitly differentiated this ideal from the older concept of the successful man. In addition, he indicated that the former ideal is not attainable by men because of their imperfect nature, and that the latter category is irrelevant because it deals only with external success or failure and not with internal character. The main thrust of the first two stanzas was polemical because Simonides had to establish firmly his *moral*, inner-directed usage of the merit-demerit terms, to purge, as it were, these terms of their commonly held associations. At this point Simonides could turn to the main theme of his poem: the morally acceptable man. The ironic tone of the previous lines is continued in 13-18:

τοὔνεκεν οὐ ποτ' ἐγὼ τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι
 δυνατὸν διζήμενος κενεὰν ἐς ἄ-
 15 πρακτον ἐλπίδα μοῖραν αἰῶνος βαλέω,
 πανάμωμον ἄνθρωπον, εὐρυεδοῦς ὅσοι
 καρπὸν αἰνύμεθα χθονός·
 ἔπειθ' ὑμῖν εὐρὼν ἀπαγγελέω.

³⁶ This is not to say that Simonides denies the truth of lines 10-12. The idea that human success, *aretê*, is the product of fate, luck, or divine favor, and the concept of the sudden mutability of human affairs were by his time almost clichés. Simonides himself wrote about these things: e.g. frs. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 D, but here he emphasizes the irrelevance of the "success" standard, which does not consider man's inner character and will.

³⁷ E.g. Aesch. *Ag.* 551, *Pers.* 212-13, *Prom.* 265, 979, *Sept.* 77.

The opening phrase, *τοῦνεκεν*, refers to the whole of the second stanza, where Simonides disputed the old definition of the *agathos-esthlos* and established the claim that men are morally imperfect because of passions over which they have no control. It will now be clear to his listeners that he is speaking of the "truly good man" of the opening lines. The *τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι δυνατόν* (13-14) is the *πανάμωμον ἄνθρωπον* (16), that is, the morally blameless ideal of 1-3. It would be a waste of time, "an idle hope" to seek such a man. The irony reaches its peak in 18: "When I have found him I will announce the news to you." In addition to the unmistakable irony we note a tone of passionate personal involvement, and didactic intent. The prominently positioned *ἐγώ* of 13 emphasizes the use of the first person in lines 15 and 18 and the first plural of 17. In 18 the poet's audience is revealed for the first time as the plural "you." The theme of universality, noted already, is underscored by the use of the archaic expression, "as many of us who enjoy the fruit of the spacious earth" (16-17).³⁸ This expression echoes the *πᾶς ἀνὴρ* of 10 and the universal *ἄνδρα* of 7; no man is "all-blameless," "entirely without fault." It is tempting to see here an allusion to the lost lines of the first stanza, where, we have conjectured, Simonides might have spoken of the *illusion* of perfect moral goodness. In any case, it is perfectly clear that in 13-16 Simonides is speaking of the "truly good man," defined in 2-3 and referred to in 7.³⁹

Lines 19-21 are the core of Simonides' didactic message:

πάντας δ' ἐπαίνημι καὶ φιλέω,
 20 ἐκὼν ὅστις ἔρδῃ μηδὲν αἰσχρόν. ἀνάγ-
 και δ' οὐδὲ θεοὶ μάχονται.

³⁸ II. 6.142.

³⁹ The fact that *panamōmos* is found only in Simonides may be an indication that the poet was concerned with establishing a new ethical vocabulary. It scarcely needs to be mentioned that the phrase *panamōmos anthrōpos* proves that the ideal of 2-3 is internal and moral, and has no reference to the older *aretē*-standard of external success, and any attempt to treat this as a success-term leads to difficulty. Thus Adkins (166) says of *panamōmos*: "If one evaluates a man from the point of view of prosperity and success, there is always something with which one can find fault. One could always have more money." It must be stressed again that the conventionally good man was introduced in stanza 2 only to be set aside emphatically in order that no confusion of categories would result.

In these lines Simonides indicates the extent of the *human* possibility of perfect morality: "I praise and love all, whoever willingly does nothing reproachable." Most critics are agreed in seeing in these words a new moral dimension;⁴⁰ however, few have considered exactly how this statement is the logical climax of the poem. Such a man is not *τετράγωνον, ἄνευ ψόγου, or πανάμωμον*; such a man is the victim of *ἀμήχανος συμφορά*, but, despite his imperfect human nature, he merits high consideration if he does nothing morally wrong *deliberately*. Especially worthy of note is the universal *πάντας*, and the very strong verbs *ἐπαίνημι* and *φιλέω*. Simonides does not give grudging acceptance to men who willingly refrain from evil; rather, he regards them with honor, bestowing on them two powerful verbs of commendation. The poet is very carefully marking the distinction between *πράξας εὖ πᾶς ἀνὴρ* and *πάντας . . . ἐκὼν ὅστις ἔρδῃ μηδὲν αἰσχροῦν*.⁴¹ The one is known as "good" in the conventional (mostly passive) sense; the other achieves praise by positive action. To be called "good" in the first sense is relatively easy; it is the second sense which is hard. The concluding statement of the stanza can only be understood in the light of the previous arguments. The thought that not even the gods fight against necessity is corollary to 19–20. Even the gods are victims of forces or passions beyond their control—what is *anankē* to the gods is *amēchanos symphora* to men.⁴²

In the third stanza Simonides established the attainable limits of the "truly good man"; in the last stanza he refines this possible ideal and directs a final thrust at those who pretend to know what a "good man" is. Lines 22–27 sum up, in effect, Simonides' concept of attainable goodness:

. . . οὐκ εἶμι φιλόμωμος . . .
 . . . ἔμοιγ' ἔξαρκεί, ὃς ἂν μὴ
 κακὸς ᾖ — μὴδ' ἄγαν ἀπάλαμνος εἶ-
 25 δὼς γ' ὀνησίπολιν δίκαν,
 ὑγίης ἀνὴρ — οὐ μιν ἐγώ
 μωμήσομαι.

⁴⁰ Wilamowitz 165 ff., 175–76; Bowra (1934) 235–36; (1961) 331–33.

⁴¹ *Hekôn* implies not only the free exercise of will, but also deliberation and judgment; e.g. Aesch. *Prom.* 266, Soph. *O.C.* 985–87. Cf. also Soph. *Ajax* 455, *Trach.* 727, *Phil.* 301, 436. In Aesch. *Eum.* 550 and Soph. *Phil.* 1027, *hekôn* is opposed to *anankē*. For

The words *φιλόμωμος* (22) and *μωμήσομαι* (27) recall *πανάμωμον* (16). Simonides is repeating the point he has made already, that he does not expect to find a "perfect" man, because none can exist; but, he says, "Sufficient for *me*, at any rate, he who is not *kakos*, nor too helpless, but knows at least the justice which helps his country, a sound man." Simonides continues to speak passionately in the first person; he is teacher, this is his subject.

Kakos in 24 must be understood as "bad" in the new moral sense. Obviously the "aristocratic" meaning cannot fit here. Many critics suggest the "cooperative" meaning of "unsuccessful," "useless,"⁴³ but it seems quite clear that *ὅς ἂν μὴ κακὸς ᾖ* in 23-24 is simply a negative restatement of *ἐκὼν ὅστις ἔρδῃ μηδὲν αἰσχροῖον* (20).⁴⁴ The word *apalamnos* (24) means "helpless," and clearly refers back to the mental state implied in *amêchanos symphora* and *anankê*.⁴⁵ Simonides states that he is satisfied with the man who is not evil in the positive sense, and who is not too helpless in the face of passions and temptations.

The poet sums up the suitable man by employing the rhetoric of the ideal of the polis. Simonides is a man of his time; for him the ordinary citizen who has the ability to know what is good for the commonalty is precisely the type which can achieve the new morality, for he already understands the basis of human cooperation. He is, in short, a "sound man"—basically healthy, but far from perfect. Simonides' acceptable version of the morally blameless man is the average citizen of good intent.⁴⁶ In these lines the poet implies that

aischron as a moral concept see Wilamowitz 177-78; Bowra (1934) 236, (1961) 331; Christ 22-23; Fränkel 400.

⁴² Cf. Wilamowitz 178 note 2; Bowra (1934) 237.

⁴³ Bowra (1934) 239, (1961) 333, takes *kakos* here as "base" in the social sense. Adkins (196-97) understands it as "unsuccessful," and, therefore, denoting the class below the *agathoi*, i.e. below the hoplite group; cf. Woodbury 161. It is possible that *kakos* has the common archaic meaning of "harmful" (to others or to the state). Fränkel (401) supplies *noon* with *kakos*, but see Gentili's objection (286).

⁴⁴ Gentili 288; Christ 23.

⁴⁵ Wilamowitz (175) interprets *apalamnos* as *hybristês*, but Bowra (1934) 239, and most other critics take it as "helpless," but in the sense of "unsuccessful" or "incompetent"; cf. Woodbury 161 note 68. Hesychius' gloss, *apalamnos: asthenês: amêchanos*, supports my contention that Simonides is referring to a state of moral helplessness. Christ (23-24) seems to suggest something like this.

⁴⁶ On *hygiês* as an ethical term see Bowra (1934) 238, (1961) 335; Christ 25-26; Woodbury 162; Gentili 288-89.

he is espousing a morality for Everyman, consonant with the theme of universality which is marked in the rest of the poem. A further implication is that he is rejecting the claims of people like Theognis and Pindar, who also sought to define a higher ethical mode of behavior, but who saw the ethical virtues as the private preserve of the "nobles." Simonides understood that the essence of private morality is the ability to refrain from intentional evil; it is not too far-fetched to suggest that he saw the genesis of this true morality in the ability of the ordinary citizen to cooperate with his fellows in civic affairs.

Lines 27-29 serve as an effective summary of the poem's two main points:

τῶν γὰρ ἡλιθίων
ἀπείρων γενέθλα. πάντα τοι καλά,
τοῖσιν αἰσχρὰ μὴ μέμικται.

He berates, for the final time, those who would misinterpret the true meaning of the "good man"; they are the "boundless race of fools."⁴⁷ And, in the last two lines, he turns once more to the theme of the attainable inner morality: "Everything is noble in which there is no admixture of evil," that is, if the intentional commission of *aischra* is absent, then the result is *kalon*.⁴⁸

P. OXY. 2432

The Oxyrhynchus fragment no. 2432 is a valuable aid for the interpretation of the Scopas poem and the new ethical values propounded by Simonides. On the basis of certain obvious similarities the original editor suggested that the new fragment was by Simonides.⁴⁹ That attribution has since been challenged, but the majority opinion holds to the Simonidean authorship.⁵⁰ If the papyrus fragment is not by

⁴⁷ Cf. Woodbury 148, who sees that by "fools" Simonides meant those who disagreed with him. Woodbury, however, believes that Simonides directs his ire against those who are demanding perfect *aretê*, not those who have an incorrect conception of "good" and "bad."

⁴⁸ Fränkel 402.

⁴⁹ E. Lobel, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Part xxv (1959) 91-94: henceforth, **Lobel**.

⁵⁰ H. Lloyd-Jones, *CR* 11 (1961) 19, suggests Bacchylides. This suggestion was taken up by C. M. Bowra, "Simonides or Bacchylides?" *Hermes* 91 (1963) 257-67: henceforth, **Bowra**, *Hermes*. M. Treu, "Neues zu Simonides (P.Ox.2432)," *RhM* 103 (1960) 319-36 (henceforth, **Treu**); and B. Gentili, *Gnomon* 33 (1961) 338-41 (hence-

Simonides, then we have a valuable example of another author (unknown), who was himself caught up in the surge of the "new" morality. In what follows I shall refer to the author as Simonides, without implying acceptance of the attribution as certain.

Unfortunately, the text is fragmentary, and some amending has been necessary to produce an intelligible text. The text which I am following is that of B. Gentili (above, note 13), who has incorporated most of the likely supplements of earlier editors:

	τό τ]ε καλὸν κρίνει τό τ' αἰσχρόν· εἰ δέ
	... κ]ακαγορεῖ τις ἄθυρον [σ]τόμα
	περι]φέρ[ω]ν, ὁ μὲν καπνὸς ἀτελής, ὁ δέ
	χρυ]σὸς οὐ μαινέτ[α]ι,
5	ἀ δ'] 'Αλάθε[ι]α παγκρατής,
	ἀλλ'] ὀλίγοις ἀρετὰν ἔδωκεν θ[ε]ός
	ἐς τ]έλος· οὐ γὰρ ἐλαφρόν ἐσθλ[ὸν] ἔμμεν·
	ἢ γ]ὰρ ἀέκοντά νιν βιάται
	κέρ]δος ἀμάχητον ἢ δολοπλ[ό]κου
10	με]γασθενής οἴστρος 'Αφροδίτ[ας]
	ἐρ]ίθαλ<λ>οί τε φιλονικίαι.
	εἰ δ]ὲ μὴ δι' αἰῶνος ὅσιαν
	... ἐλ]θεῖν κέλευθον,
	ἀλλ' ἀγα]θὸς ἐς τὸ δυνατόν.[
15]αγκυλαν[
]δίκαιος.[
	ε]ὐθυς ἀπο[
]θέοντι· το[
].ντρο[
20]α.[
].ο[

The main thought of the fragment is essentially the same as the poem to Scopas; specifically, that it is difficult to be *esthlos* (7), that man is buffeted against his will by forces and desires over which he has no control (8–11), that perfect goodness is not attainable, but one should strive to be as good as possible (12–14).

forth, Gentili, *Gnomon*), and above, note 13, affirm Simonidean authorship. D. L. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford 1962) prints the poem as Sim. fr. 36. In his *Greek Lyric Poetry* Bowra accepted Simonides as the author, although he did not discuss the fragment (332 note 4, 336 note 2).

The chief difference between the two poems is that in the papyrus fragment there is little trace of the dispute concerning the proper meaning of the terms of merit, which forms one of the main themes of the Scopas poem. There is no doubt that the words of merit and demerit in the papyrus fragment are purely moral. For this reason, despite the textual gaps, the fragment presents few problems of interpretation. Taken side by side the two poems illuminate each other; and, what is most important for our purpose here, the papyrus fragment answers some of the more difficult questions concerning the interpretation of fr. 4. It is also pertinent to note that the progression of ideas in the second poem is smoother and more logical, and one is tempted to see in this poem a later, more polished expression of Simonides' new moral ideas, which were still being formulated when he wrote the poem to Scopas.

A detailed examination of the papyrus fragment will serve to show how closely the two poems conform in thought and language. One of the remaining problems is the subject of *κρίνει* in line 1. Someone distinguishes between what is noble or fine (*kalon*) and what is disgraceful or morally wrong (*aischron*). The obvious and natural candidate for the subject is Simonides' "acceptable" man, defined in fr. 4, who does nothing *aischron* willingly. Here he is described as having the ability to discriminate between good and bad action; in fr. 4 *ἐκὼν ἔρδηι* is the active consequence of the mental *κρίνει*.⁵¹ In the papyrus fragment the subject *knows* the difference between morally good and bad; in fr. 4 he is portrayed as *acting* on this knowledge. We have already noted that the last two verses of fr. 4 formed a summary statement to the key expression of fr. 4, *ἐκὼν ὅστις ἔρδηι μηδὲν αἰσχροῦν*. The *kalon* and *aischron* of line 1 of this poem reflects the same antithesis, *kala . . . aischra*, as fr. 4.28–29. The thought is the same in all three places.

In the next lines (2–5), the poet speaks of a possible detractor who "carries around a doorless mouth," but the smoke (of calumny?) is ineffectual, while the gold (of correct moral judgment?) is not defiled.⁵²

⁵¹ Just as *hekôn* implies not only will but judgment (see above, note 41), so also *krinei* indicates knowledge and judgment. Cf. Bacch. 5.131 (Snell), Aesch. *Prom.* 485.

⁵² Bowra, *Hermes* 263: smoke=slander, gold=a deserved reputation; Lobel (93) has the same interpretation, but see the next paragraph in the text. I would put the full stop after 5.

It is not possible to know with any certainty what the poet means here, but we should not be too far from the mark if we suppose that he is referring to the group of fault-finders mentioned in fr. 4: "the boundless race of fools" (27-28), whose standards of the good are different from Simonides'. In the last stanza of fr. 4 he had said twice that he was not a fault-finder, and these words bracketed his description of the "acceptable" man. The next words, the reference to the boundless race of fools, were followed immediately by the concluding statement that all is *kala* in which *aischra* is not mixed. Here the thought is the same, although the order is different. Line 5 seems to summarize this portion of the fragment; the maxim that truth is all-powerful should refer to what precedes, namely Simonides' contention concerning the true nature of goodness as opposed to the external conception of the conventionally good man. For Simonides the problem concerns the difference between *alatheia* and *to dokein*, the reality of true goodness (insofar as it can be achieved) and the appearance of external success.⁵³

In line 6 Simonides turns to the central ideas of his new ethical outlook; the idea that *aretê* is available in perfect form to few is followed by a paraphrase of the Pittacean *gnômê*: "For it is not an easy thing to be *esthlos*." The sequence of thought in these two verses is clear and simple; perfect *aretê* is attained by only a few, because it is difficult to be morally good.⁵⁴ We do not know what the subject of *ἔδωκεν* is;

⁵³ The difficult word is *alatheia*, but it is much more reasonable to interpret it in the sense of "reality" rather than as an abstract personification. Thus the *alatheia* of this fragment corresponds to the *alatheôs* of fr. 4, i.e. true goodness. The phrase *παγκρατὴς ἀλάθεια* is found in Bacch. fr. 14 (Snell), where it must mean the reality of actual achievement (as also in 14.204). The notion of the "proofstone" is implicit in Simonides, explicit in Bacchylides. Bacchylides, of course, is speaking of external success, while Simonides means inner goodness. Simonides refers to this problem in 55 D: *τὸ δοκεῖν καὶ τὰν ἀλάθειαν βιᾶται*. In the papyrus fragment he indicates that truth, that is, the true goodness which consists in the ability to distinguish *kalon* and *aischron*, is victorious over the illusion of the conventional view of goodness. But just as appearance can do violence even to reality, true goodness is not easily attainable, as he says in the next lines.

⁵⁴ Bowra, *Hermes* 258, interprets *es telos* as "keeping"; Gentili (304) translates "la virtù sino al successo"; Lobel (94) as "consistently virtuous." Treu (326) also interprets *es telos* in a temporal sense. I believe that *es telos* here refers to the degree of *aretê* or, more precisely, to its fulfilment (cf. Hesiod, *Works and Days* 218). Bowra, *Hermes* 259, implies that the papyrus fragment is concerned with moral virtue, and, for this reason, is different from the Scopas poem. In truth, the subject matter is the same in both poems.

Gentili supplies *θεός*, which seems to be the obvious solution.⁵⁵ What is clear, however, is that ἀρετὰ ἐς τέλος is the new moral ideal, corresponding to ἀγαθὸς ἀλαθέως of fr. 4, and that *esthlos* here is ethical-moral and not external. The thoughts in 6-7 are directly parallel to those expressed in fr. 4.1-3 and 6-7, except that here they are expressed more simply, without the polemic against the "false" interpretation of the merit-words: It is difficult to be morally good, perfect *aretê* (a gift of the gods) is not attainable.⁵⁶

In lines 8-11 of the papyrus fragment Simonides tells why it is difficult to be morally good. The reasons he adduces are the same as those implied in the poem to Scopas, but here the categories of human moral imperfection are described precisely and definitely: certain irresistible forces, which spring from man's own weak nature, press him against his will. Even here these forces are characterized as coming from without, but it is nevertheless clear that the poet is attempting to evolve a conceptual vocabulary of internal motivation. Because these forces stem from man's imperfect nature they are all the more irresistible and they press a man against his will. The descriptive adjectives which accompany the triad of character defects emphasize both the power of the forces themselves and their irresistibility.⁵⁷ Thus, *kerdos* is *amachêtos*; Aphrodite is treacherous and her sting *megasthenês*; *philonikiai* are blooming, luxuriant (?).⁵⁸ Were Simonides living in a later age, he might have called them "vices": Greed, Lust, Contentiousness; at the end of the sixth century B.C. he sees them as forces which prevent a man from being truly *agathos-esthlos* because they are irresistible and operate on him against his will. In fr. 4 he had characterized these forces as *amêchanos symphora* and *anankê*.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Also Treu 326. Bowra, *Hermes* 258, has *echein theos*.

⁵⁶ Simonides uses *aretê* in the old sense of "achievement" in 10 D, and perhaps in 37 D, but in the latter fragment *aretê* has a much more ethical-religious connotation.

⁵⁷ If any further proof were necessary to show that *esthlos* here refers to inner morality and not to success, these lines supply it. Never, in the older conception of goodness, is it suggested that love of gain, desire, or ambition could keep one from being *agathos-esthlos*. The opposite, indeed, is true, although in the sixth century the aristocratic poets did begin to censure *kerdos* as a mark of the *kakoi* (e.g. Theognis 43-52, 85-86, 401-6, 465-66).

⁵⁸ For *erithalloi* see Treu 322, Gentili 304.

⁵⁹ Bowra, *Hermes* 260, equates *symphora* in Bacch. 14.3 (Snell) with "those powerful impulses which a man feels in himself and is unable to control," but he does not see the

The remainder of the intelligible portion of the fragment parallels stanzas 3 and 4 of the Scopas poem, but without any reference to the criticism directed against those who would quarrel with his new moral evaluation of the merit-terms. Despite their incomplete condition, fair sense can be made of 12-14: if a man cannot go along the "holy way" all his life (*sc.* live a life of moral virtue), he can attain the possible measure of moral goodness.⁶⁰ It is not unlikely that in 15-21 the notion of the attainable measure of inner morality was expanded in language similar to lines 24-26 of fr. 4. The one legible word, *δίκαιος*, in 16 may be reminiscent of *ὀνησίπολιν δίκαν* in fr. 4.25.⁶¹

The papyrus fragment not only treats of the same problems as the poem to Scopas, it also illuminates several of the obscure points of that poem, notably by making it clear that Simonides used *agathos-esthlos* as moral and not as social terms, and by showing precisely what Simonides meant by *améchanos symphora* and *anankê* in fr. 4. The papyrus fragment yields its meaning much more readily than the Scopas poem, chiefly because in the latter Simonides was concerned with establishing proper categories of meaning for the merit-words by showing that the old, external notion was no longer relevant. In the papyrus fragment the poet has a firmer control over his ethical vocabulary, and is better able to express the difficult concept of internal forces which impel a man to commit evil against his will.

connection with Simonides fr. 4. Gentili, *Gnomon* 340, and Treu (330) equate the three forces of the papyrus fragment with *anankê* in fr. 4. Treu (327 ff.) also notes that in 9-11 of the papyrus fragment occurs the first example of the three *bioi* of later philosophical thought: the *philochrêmatos*, the *philêdonos*, and the *philotimos* which prevent a man from being virtuous. Wilamowitz saw traces of this in Bacchylides and other archaic authors (188 ff.), and, as Treu points out, brilliantly anticipated the papyrus fragment, when he noted that *erôs* could be considered as an *anankê*, i.e. a *force majeure* (178 note 2).

⁶⁰ Lobel 94; Gentili, *Gnomon* 340. Treu (322) shows that the verb to be supplied in 13 is "can" and that the "holy way" is a moral concept.

⁶¹ Treu 331.