
When Hugh Lloyd-Jones and Peter Parsons published their massive Supplementum Hellenisticum in 1983, the fragments of Hellenistic poetry suddenly became more accessible to modern scholars than they had ever been before. The shattered bits and pieces of a few “major” poets were already available in separate editions (notably Pfeiffer’s magisterial Callimachus), and the epigrams had been organized and briefly commented on by Gow–Page. But the standard text of most other “lost” Hellenistic poets was still Powell’s 1925 Collectanea Alexandrina, which was incomplete from the first and rapidly became more so, as additional papyri and inscriptions were read and published, and the ancient literary sources scrutinized more closely.

As the title of their book made clear, Lloyd-Jones and Parsons aimed to supplement the existing editions rather than replace them. But the sheer volume of new material abruptly made available in an up-to-date and reliable form in the Supplementum was nonetheless astounding: 862 fragments, some over 100 lines long, attributable to individual poets in Section A; 98 papyrus adespota (most admittedly very badly damaged) in Section B; and 186 previously overlooked bits and pieces (only three of them longer than two verses or partial verses, and many consisting of only a few words) of unidentified poets, drawn from scholars, lexicographers and the like in Section C. In addition, the Greek text in the Supplementum was accompanied by a solid critical apparatus, substantial if concise notes, and a series of massive indices, including an index verborum that also took account of the material collected in Powell. The most obvious weaknesses of the volume were the fact that the apparatus for the book fragments was generally drawn from the standard edition of the source author, rather than from inspection of the manuscripts themselves, and its price. But the book was beautifully produced, and whatever it cost, there was little doubt that it was worth it.

In part due to the existence of the Supplementum itself, an increasing amount of work has been done on Hellenistic poetry in the last few decades, and new papyri continue to be published. The Supplementum Supplementi Hellenistici (produced by Lloyd-Jones alone, Parsons being committed to other projects) is an attempt to respond to the dilemma posed by this wealth of new texts, conjectures and commentaries, by offering a “supplement to the Supplement.” The most substantial contribution of the volume for the non-specialist will be the adespota papyrus fragments, all previously published elsewhere, but now made available to a broader audience. Parti-
cularly intriguing are SSH 970 (a marvelous 24-line elegiac threat by the goddess Dikê against a shameless wrong-doer, considerably expanded from the version of the text printed in SH via the discovery of a new scrap of the papyrus); 985 (a substantially improved text of a terribly damaged, but still intriguing set of epigrams on early Athenian dramatic poets); and 1190 (a Michigan papyrus containing about 40 lines of a mock-Homeric War of Mice and Weasels, originally published by Schibli in ZPE 53 (1983) 1–25). Also worth noting are a few new bits and pieces of Callimachus (notably SSH 257–8; 276A; 279A–B) and other poets (notably Euph. SSH 454C). Beyond that, the average reader will find little of interest. Instead, the bulk of the volume consists of brief textual notes and notices of new bibliography or editions, with the material often presented less succinctly than it might have been; indeed, many pages contain little more than very generously spaced lists of equivalent numbers. One might nonetheless argue that the volume is worth owning, if only for the papyri; and de Gruyter is to be commended for offering a combination of the reprinted SH (seemingly on different paper, and thus much thinner than in its previous incarnation) and SSH at a relatively affordable price.

The bad news is that SSH has been so poorly produced and proofread that there is little point in purchasing it until a systematically corrected second edition appears. The most obvious, if least significant problem involves matters of editorial consistency. Should inclusive page-number references be written out in full (e.g. “223–229” at SSH 76), or in a modestly more succinct if still pleonastic form (e.g. “286–88” at SSH 79A), or in the most economical fashion possible (e.g. “132–4” at SSH 81)? Ought there to be a period at the end of citations of equivalent numbers (e.g. “= Page, FGE 439–444.” at SSH 226) or not (e.g. “= Page, FGE 444–9” at SSH 225)? Should a notice of an equivalent number be followed by a return (as in SSH 121), or should the line continue (as in SSH 122)? And is “Herodotus” to be abbreviated “Herod.” (as in SSH 145) or “Hdt.” (as in SSH 135)? Much more important, something has gone systematically wrong with the Greek, transforming numerous half-stops into what appear to be English cola (e.g. SSH 289A.5; 738.3; 975.1; 976.6, 10, 12, 20), and obels into something resembling crude plus-signs (e.g. p. 54, Euph. fr. 84 CA; SSH 1187.21). Likewise enough primary and secondary references are obviously incorrect to suggest that no one has checked them systematically (e.g. at fr. 140 CA read “= Gow–Page, HE 1801–4” [not 1001–4]; at SSH 758 read “Sophron, PSI XI” [not XI]; at SSH 975 read “= Page, FGE 1686–91” [not 459–60]; and in the apparatus on p. 116 read “ΣVEBarbø Ar. Ra. 473” [for the multiply garbled “c Ar. VEBarbo ad Ran. 473”]).
The *index verborum* is similarly chaotic. In the corresponding index in *SH*, words are given in the case and number in which they appear in the poetic text or testimonium in question, and this form serves as the lemma unless it would disturb the alphabetical order: thus the accusatives "*Aγχιτον* and *Aγώνα* appear as lemmata in place of the alphabetically equivalent nominatives "*Aγχιτος* and *Aγώ*, but *Aγαγον* is indexed under *Aγω*. In *SSH*, this system is sometimes respected, but sometimes not: although genitive *Aίακίδαο* in Euph. fr. 40.2 CA, for example, is indexed in that form between *Aθλον* and *Aγειραν*, "*Αγαμέμνονα* in *SSH* 276A.13 is unnecessarily indexed under the nominative "*Αγαμέμνων* (between *Aγάλλω* and *Aγγελος*), while "*Αθήνης* in *SSH* 276A.9 is unnecessarily indexed under the nominative "*Αθήνη* (between "*Αθήνα* and *Aθλον*)—in neither case with any indication that the word appears in an oblique case in the text. επεα, meanwhile, is indexed between ἐπαύλαον and ἐπί, where no one will ever find it, rather than under ἐπος. In addition, numerous words or fragments of words are missing from the index (e.g. *Σωσι-φάνος*, ἀειό- and *κέρτο* in *SSH* 985, 16, 24); others are included that should not be (e.g. "*Ασίς* in *SSH* 319.2, which is a comparandum rather than a conjecture); indications of dubious (*) or conjectural (**) readings are frequently omitted or garbled (e.g. ἀκόφας in *SSH* 1190.59 and ἄρη in *SSH* 1187.18 are both ** rather than *); and other, seemingly random errors abound (e.g. s.v. *Aδάνατος* read "79 A 2" [not 97 A 2]; remove the parentheses around ἄρθρῳν).

The most unfortunate aspect of *SSH*, however, is the way the papyri have been handled. In some cases, the text has merely been badly set up: *SSH* 1187, for example, represents the right-hand side of one column of elegiac couplets and the left-hand side of the next, but the text has been so clumsily laid out on the page as to render it unrecognizable as such. Many problems are more serious than this. Thus *SSH* 985 (the epigrams on Athenian playwrights) draws on the work of F. Maltomini, who in a marvelous bit of scholarly detective work rediscovered the papyrus (long thought lost) in the Bodleian Library and published a radically improved version in *ZPE* 134 (2001) 55–66. Comparison with Maltomini’s article, however, shows that what appears in *SSH* is a strikingly inferior text. 25 επὶ τ. [.], for example, although set all the way to the left in *SSH*, is a title introducing the epigram partially preserved in 26–9, and should be set in about three letters—as on the papyrus and in Maltomini pp. 56–7—to match the titles in 30, 35 and 40; and 35 is patently to be restored ἐπιλ, while ἐπίστ in 40 must represent ἐπὶ τ.]. So too what *SSH* prints as οὕτε σκπρο. [. in 37 is undoubtedly οὕτε σκπρο- (thus Maltomini—and the *SSH index verborum* s.v. οὕτε!), just as θρπαρ [. in 29 must be θρπας παρ-, and διακατω in 39 is surely δις καὶ τῶν (both Maltomini; cf. the *SSH index verborum* s.v. δις);
while the mysterious δαλλατον in 38 ought to be articulated ἀλλὰ τὸν (Maltomini), the initial δ (absent from SH) being an intrusion into SSH rather than into the papyrus. Some of the most basic conventions for the presentation of fragmentary papyrus texts, meanwhile, have been ignored throughout the volume. Thus sublinear dots (which indicate badly damaged letters that require a bit of guesswork to be read) are routinely omitted, while the precise relative position of letters, lines and gaps in the papyrus—upon which proper restoration and often sense depend—is misrepresented again and again. In the case of badly damaged and obscure texts in particular, where interpretation often turns on tiny points, these are not trivial errors; and the ubiquity of such problems in the most interesting sections of this volume defeats what would seem to be its primary purpose, of making difficult but important material more widely available in a reliable form.

Exactly what went wrong with SSH is unclear. But the press (which has a distinguished history of publishing top-quality work in the classics) would be well-advised to cease printing and distribution of the volume until it can be re-issued in a more carefully produced form.

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