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***Iliad* 23.82 & Homeric Textual Criticism**

The textual criticism of Homer depends entirely on the critic's conception of the process resulting in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and current scholarship is divided, broadly, into those who hold that this process was mainly oral in nature, and those who don't. Both schools are subject to the same criticism, viz. that independently held models of composition / transmission are allowed to predetermine the analysis of the evidence concerning the paradosis. What is needed is a critical methodology which is not the automatic concomitant of the particular critic's genetic beliefs. This is provided by applying to textual criticism the idea of 'traditional referentiality', developed primarily by the comparativist J. M. Foley. Such an approach, which relies solely on the semantic potentialities inherent in an oral traditional text, allows us to see the purpose and meaning of those abundant 'variations' in the pre-Alexandrian period, but without demanding a prejudgement as to whether variation itself is a primary or secondary transmissional phenomenon.

As an illustration, we discuss one such crux - Aiskhines' quotation of *Iliad* 23.82, where he shows a hemistich variant (*su d' eni phresi balleo sEisin*) for the MSS' *kai ephEsomai ai ke pithEai*. It has been contended (by van der Valk) that Aiskhines deliberately altered the text in order to highlight the pederastical relationship between Patroklos and Akhilleus, on the grounds that *su d' eni phresi balleo sEisin* is a less deferential expression than the (supposedly more doubtful) *kai ephEsomai ai ke pithEai*. Against van der Valk, we suggest that the MSS' expression *ai ke pithE(t)ai* (used at 1.207, 1.420, 11.791, 21.293, 23.82) does not inevitably express doubt or anxiety, but is used to guarantee, to the audience, the success of the measure proposed as the next major narrative development. Any doubt in the character's mind is mitigated by the special nature of his / her relationship with the second or third party, which is such as to place a powerful obligation on that latter figure. Secondly, the expression *su d' eni phresi balleo sEisin* (also used at 1.297, 4.39, 5.259, 9.611, 16.444, 16.851, 21.94) is not necessarily deferential, but employed in speeches which elucidate an opposition between the interlocutors, specifically as a marker for the speaker's paramount hope or consideration for the current situation.

Each expression would connect the death of Patroklos with Akhilleus' extra-Iliadic fate, by directly foreshadowing Akhilleus' fulfilment of his friend's request (MSS) or simply by suggesting its emotional primacy to Patroklos (Aiskhines); both versions lay subtly different emphases on the resonance of the episode, and these differences are not the inevitable, or even the most probable, result of clumsy interference with a completely fixed text.

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