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PARODIC INCONSISTENCY: SOME PROBLEMS IN THE *BATRAKHOMYOMAKHIA**

Abstract: This article argues that several problems of character identification in the *Batrakhomyomakhia* should be considered not as matters of textual criticism, to be solved by emendation, excision or transposition, but as authentic features of the poem's parodic engagement with the text of Homer and its scholarship. This engagement comprises another reason for considering the Hellenistic period as the most likely *terminus post quem* for the poem.

In the introduction to his recent edition of the *Batrakhomyomakhia* (hereafter *BM*), Martin West notes that, among the many difficulties and obscurities in this text, 'there is a real problem about the reappearance of certain mice or frogs after they have been killed'.[1] He alerts the reader to three signal examples: (a) Psikharpax ('Filchcrumbe') dies at 99 but reappears at 234; (b) Troglodytes ('Creephole') dies at 213 but reappears at 247; and (c) Prassaios ('Leekhold') dies at 236 but reappears at 252.[2] Scholars have approached these cases as matters primarily of textual criticism, employing a combination of emendation, excision and transposition to fix the problem. There is, however, another explanation, one that takes account of the parodic nature of the *BM* and its engagement with the Homeric epics. This article proposes that these three 'errors' are deliberate allusions to that commonplace of ancient literary criticism, *quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus*, and therefore not to be emended out of the poem.[3]

At the very start of the *BM*, the mouse Psikharpax makes friends with the frog-king Physignathos ('Puffjawe') and rides on his back over the pond. Their journey is interrupted by the sudden appearance of a water-snake, precipitating Physignathos' swift dive into the water and Psikharpax's subsequent death (86–99) – the *casus belli.* However, Psikharpax is then sighted again at the height of the battle (234–46), firstly skewering an unfortunate frog (Prassaios, in fact) (234–36) before being hit by a mud ball thrown by Krambobates ('Mountcabbage') (237–38), at which Psikharpax is enraged and kills the slinger (239–42), before being killed in revenge by Kraugasides ('MacCroak').

How to explain his recovery? Drawing on other errors of this sort (though with much less textual support), Ludwich sees this as simply another 'Homonyme eingeschwärzt' to be emended away, in this case by reading Λειχάρπαξ at 234.[4] Glei realises the weakness in this argument, given the poor attestation of Ludwich's preferred reading, but he still considers the second

* I would like to thank Bill Allan, Bob Cowan, the anonymous readers of *JHS*, and the audience at the Sub-Faculty seminar at Oxford University in Hilary Term 2007, for their help with this article and its material.

[1] West (2003) 234–35. All translations employed in this article are his, though the text is that of Allen (1912). On the famously difficult nature of the text, *cf.* also Wölke (1978) 2: 'doch nicht nur die Zahl der Handschriften ist umfangreich; bedeutend sind auch die Differenzen der Lesarten'.

[2] There is another case: Leikhenor ('Lickhart') dies at 204–05 but reappears at 216, but there are so many textual problems in the second passage that it is relegated to the appendix (see below). One might also compare the case of Embasikhytros ('Paddlepot'), in some mss killed at 209 (Ludwich's ms. [and families] Ven.^{1} Par.^{1} Vulg. Span. M^{g} P^{o} P^{p} = Allen's h i j k A^{2} P^{7} V^{8}) but reappearing as a victor in 226; however, the majority of mss (and editors) in the earlier location make Embasikhytros the victor as well. If the argument of this article be considered cogent, then this case might be worth revisiting.

[3] This is not an entirely new suggestion; *cf.* Bergk (1872) 774: 'Bewusster Spott ist es, wenn Kämpfer, die bereits gefallen sind, wieder lebendig auf dem Schauplatze auftreten; man sieht deutlich, wie der Dichter die Sorglosigkeit der epischen Erzähler verhöhnt' (also n. 84: 'die Homerischen Gedichte in ihrer jetztigen Gestalt bieten mehrfach Belege solcher Widersprüche dar'); *contra* Ludwich (1896) 88–90. The field has generally been held by those of Ludwich's methodological inclinations, though *cf.* now Most (1993) 37–38, esp. 37: 'die vorhandenen Diskrepanzen lassen sich am besten durch punktuelle Erklärungen heilen, und zwar durch deren Interpretation als noch drastichere Übertreibungen von schon bei Homer bekannten Anomalien'. He only discusses the first of our cases.

[4] The reading of Ludwich's ms. F = Allen's V^{3} = West's F; *cf.* Ludwich (1896) 88–90, 393–94.

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coming of Psikharpax an error, evidence that the battle scene and the first part of the poem were originally composed separately.[5] Brandt simply brackets 234–36 (Ψιχάρπαξ δ᾽ ἤμυν᾽ ἑτάρου περὶ τεθνειῶτος | καὶ βάλε Πρασσαῖον κατὰ νηδύος ἐς μέσον ἦπαρ | πῖπτε δέ οἱ πρόσθεν, ψυχὴ δ᾽ ᾽Αιδόσδε βεβήκει), removing Psikharpax entirely.[6] Finally, and recognizing that these explanations all partake to some degree of special pleading, West suggests that the poet might be parodying the famous Homeric case of the Paphlagonian king Pylaimenes, killed by Menelaos at *Il.* 5.576–79 but alive and well at 13.658 (though sorrowing for his son).[7]

Indeed, this Homeric homonym – amongst others – exercised the ancient commentators, who sought a variety of remedies, from athetesis (Aristophanes) to emendation (Zenodotos read Κυλαιμένεα for Πυλαιμένεα in 5.576). In such a context, the *BM*'s error suggests that its poet – far from being concerned with a simplistic perversion of epic style for a trivial purpose[8] – was aware of the 'serious' critical discourse about Homer's poetry, as has been demonstrated on this and other grounds by Glenn Most and Alexander Sens.[9] This is surely more than just a happy coincidence of scholarly and parodic interest: the *paroidoi* of the fifth to third century BC (whose basic strategy was to deploy epic phrases and actions for humorously non-epic situations)[10] do not seem to have used Homeric (or Hesiodic) errors in this way,[11] and the *BM* exhibits several other such coincidences.[12] There is thus no need to explain the reappearance of Psikharpax by hypothesizing the existence of separate recensions or alternative versions, or even large-scale interpolation. Instead, by deploying the strategy of the 'Homeric mistake', the *BM* advertises its literary affiliations, critical nature and parodic purpose, and it does so in such a way that should help to explain the next two cases as well.

In the first of these, Troglodytes appears initially as the killer of Peleion (206), shortly after which he is killed by Limnokharis (212–13 Λιμνόχαρις δ᾽ ὡς εἶδεν ἀπολλύμενον Πολύφωνον | Τρωγλοδύτην ἀπαλοῖο δι᾽ αὐχένος τρῶσεν ἐπιφθάς).[13] He then reappears, in an admittedly confused passage, retreating from the battle (247–49 Τρωγλοδύτης δ᾽ ὡς εἶδεν ἐπ᾽ ὄχθησιν ποταμοῖο, | σκάζων ἐκ πολέμου ἀνεχάζετο, τείρετο δ᾽ αἰνῶς· | ἥλατο δ᾽ ἐς τάφρους, ὅππως φύγηι αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον) as an apparent response to the second death of Psikharpax (243–46). The earliest of the text-critical solutions to Troglodytes' recovery comes within the ms. tradition, where some witnesses read Σιτοφάγος at 247,[14] but the exercise has not stopped there. Ludwich, for example, prints Τρωγλίτης at 206 but Τρωγλοδύτης at

[5] Glei (1984) 176–83.

[6] Brandt (1888) *ad loc.*, 24.

[7] On the Homeric *crux*, *cf.* Fenik (1968) 147–48; Nickau (1977) 165–66; Janko (1992) *ad* 13. 643–59, 126. Whilst modern scholars are ready to accept this kind of error for an oral traditional poet, the ancients were not; *cf.* Σ AbT *ad* 13.658–59, with Erbse (1974) *ad loc.*, 525–26; also Σ bT *ad* 13.643a for a full list of such homonyms, with Erbse (1974) *ad loc.*, 523–24. For West's suggestion, *cf.* Fusillo (1988) 126; Most (1993) 37.

[8] *Cf.*, for example, Ludwich (1896) 32: 'selbst als Parodie verleugnet seine Batr. nirgend den harmlosen Charakter, den sie vom Thiermärchen empfing'.

[9] Most (1993) and Sens (2005); *cf.* also Vine (1986). Though the date of the *BM* is uncertain, Wackernagel's linguistic arguments for the Augustan period are very powerful; *cf.* Wackernagel (1916); Wölke (1978) 46–70; Glei (1984) 34–36; *contra*, for example, Bliquez (1977).

[10] *Cf.* Olson and Sens (1999) 5–12.

[11] *Cf.* Olson and Sens (1999) 37. Caution is of course required here, for the remains of ancient parody are exiguous, but the coincidence dovetails nicely with the growing consensus of a post-Hellenistic date for the poem (above, n. 9).

[12] *Cf.* below, n. 36, for another example. The *BM* would therefore seem to represent a particularly (post-) Hellenistic development in the ancient tradition of parody. I hope to address this question at greater length elsewhere, but *cf.* now Sens (2005). This development is perhaps not that unexpected, as parody and the Hellenistic aesthetic are both predicated on a detailed intertextual engagement, though the *paroidoi* are generally absent from the survey treatments of Hellenistic literature; *cf.*, for example, Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004).

[13] For the unmetrical τρῶσεν ἐπιφθάς, *cf.* below. For other doubts over the authenticity of 210–12, *cf.* below and n. 30.

[14] Ludwich's ms. families Par.[1] Vulg. Span. Flor = Allen's i j k l = West's *l.*

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247;[15] more radically, Glei (who divides the battle into two recensions, a and *l*) explains the reappearance as a corruption in recension a,[16] but 247 must be removed anyway from recension *l* (with Σιτοφάγος), for it has obliterated 'die Homonymie, die in (Rez.) a mit dem Namen Troglodytes verbunden ist'.[17]

There are, of course, reasons to doubt the textual integrity of some of these passages. Allen athetises 213 as part of the passage 210–22: 'eiecimus, nam 210, 213, 213a, 217 plane Byzantini, ceteri cum eis videntur stare'.[18] Indeed, to avoid the metrical anomaly in 213, West first follows Ludwich, Wölke, Fusillo and Glei in transposing 213 and 214[19] and reading the v.l. ἤριπε δ' εὐθύς for the 'Byzantine' τρῶσεν ἐπιφθάς; then, to ameliorate the reappearance problem, he reads (with Glei and Brandt) Σιτοφάγος at 247. Nonetheless, although intralinear emendation is indeed necessary in 213[20] (and the passage as a whole has suffered in transmission), it is surely hard to explain the reappearance of Troglodytes' name at 247 on text-critical grounds alone, if Sitophagos had indeed been the original reading.

In the third case, Prassaios first crops up as a frog who drowns an already dead mouse (232 Πρασσαῖος δὲ ἰδὼν ποδὸς εἵλκυσε νεκρὸν ἐόντα) and is then killed by a rejuvenated Psikharpax (234–35), before reappearing and attacking Physignathos (252–53 Πρασσαῖος δ' ὡς εἶδεν ἔθ' ἡμίπνουν προπεσόντα | ἦλθε διὰ προμάχων καὶ ἀκόντισεν ὀξύσχοινον). There are several difficulties here, and with both scenes. In the earlier, there is the obvious error of killing a corpse,[21] an action whose problematic status is further signposted by the reappearance of Psikharpax. In the later scene, Prassaios seems now to be going after Physignathos, viz. a frog, the species to which Prassaios belonged in the earlier episode.

To correct this second problem, West follows Ludwich in suggesting lacunae between 247–48 and 251–52, and repositions 248–49 after 251 (while Allen removed 251 altogether). He then reads (with Fusillo and Glei) Πρασσεῖος ('Leekhold') in the earlier passage, which allows him to keep Πρασσαῖος in the later.[22] Ludwich (with Brandt), however, decides to read Τρωξάρτης in 252 because of Prassaios' death in 234–35.[23] Indeed, whichever editorial remedy is preferred, the basic stimulus for such intervention remains the reappearance of Prassaios. This is true, to a greater or lesser extent, of the first two cases above. But perhaps we should pause before resorting to rewriting and emending along these lines, for incoherencies of this sort are actually well exampled in Homeric poetry.

To begin with, the reappearance of characters with more or less 'generic' names, even on opposite sides, is common in Homer's battle scenes. Consider, for example, the personnel of the catalogue of Teukros' Trojan victims at *Il.* 8.273–77: another Orsilokhos (this time a Greek) is killed by Aineias at 5.541–42, another Trojan Ormenos is killed by Polypoites at 12.187, another

[15] Ludwich (1896) 88–90, 384, 396–97; Τρωγλήτης is the reading in Ludwich's ms. family Flor. = Allen's a = West's *a* Z; Τρωγλίτης of Ludwich's ms. E = Allen's V^5.

[16] Glei (1984) 179: 'diese Homonymien [viz, 247 and 252; *cf.* below] sind natürlich auf Korruptel zurückzuführen, da sie Widersprüche innerhalb der Schlacht selbst darstellen und nicht zwischen Schlacht und Vorgeschichte'.

[17] Glei (1984) 183; *cf.* also Wölke (1978) 220–21; Fusillo (1988) 127.

[18] Allen (1912) *ad loc.*, 178, followed by Ahlborn (1968) (but he also deems 247 an interpolation); *contra* Wölke (1978) 158, though *cf.* his 2–3.

[19] Wölke (1978) 2–4.

[20] *Cf.* below, n. 30.

[21] *Cf.* the proposal (justifiably rejected by Wölke (1978) 269) of Ludwich (1896) 393 to read νεκρώσαντα in 232, 'denn einen Toten kann man nicht ertränken'.

[22] West (2003) 287; Ludwich (1896) 397, 399; Glei (1984) 190; Fusillo (1988) 56. Πρασσοφάγος is also attested at 232 (Ludwich's ms. [and families] Ven.[1] Par.[1] Vulg. Span. Flor. O Π^a = Allen's h i j k l J L^2 P^1), though no editor adopts the name. Given, firstly, the epic practice of onomastic *Kurzformen* (as, for example, Ἀλκιμέδων / Ἄλκιμος; *cf.* von Kamptz (1982) 10–13, esp. §3c 1 for later parallels) and, secondly, the *BM's* use of Ἅρπαξ (274) as the *Kurzform* of Μεριδάρπαξ (260), Πρασσοφάγος could still refer to the same figure as Πρασσαῖος.

[23] Ludwich (1896) 88–90, 398–99 (the reading of his mss [and families] Par.[1] Vulg. Z J = Allen's i j $A^{8\,(7?)}$ O^2 = West's Z J).

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Ophelestes is killed by Akhilleus at 21.210, whilst Melanippos is a prominent Trojan addressed by Hektor at 15.545–59 (and killed by Antilokhos at 575–78), a victim of Patroklos at 16.695, and one of the Greeks entrusted with the conveying of the gifts at 19.240. Finally, Khromios seems to spend much of his time wandering about the battlefield under some confusion about which side he is actually on (a Pylian Greek at 4.295, a son of Priam killed by Diomedes at 5.160, a Trojan killed by Odysseus at 5.677, a Myrmidon exhorted by Patroklos at 17.218, a Trojan helping Hektor and Aineias to attack Automedon at 17.494 and 534). As mentioned above, homonyms induced the ancient scholars into providing identities and histories for these generic characters which the poet himself – and I dare say his audiences – did not consider necessary.[24]

Secondly, the killing of a corpse responds *indirectly* to another, even more notorious Homeric *crux*. At *Il.* 13.423 Hypsenor is carried off the field βαρέα στενάχοντα, even though he is actually dead (13.421–22).[25] This verse-final expression is usually applied to wounded heroes being carried from the field (*cf.* 8.334, 13.423, 13.538, 14.432) and Aristarkhos was forced to emend to στενάχοντε (referring to those carrying Hypsenor) in order to remove the anomaly.[26] One might also consider, in this regard, the *Iliad*'s penchant for addressing characters who are already dead, as Hektor's vaunt (16.859–61) to Patroklos τεθνηῶτα (16.858), and Akhilleus' final τέθναθι (22.365) to Hektor τεθνηῶτα (22.364).[27] All these cases are predicated on, or may be characterized from a parodic perspective as, a failure to recognize the fact that the character in question is dead. The *BM*'s replication of this error makes a pointed comment on this facet of Homer's composition.

Therefore, there is good Homeric precedent (a) for the reappearance of Troglodytes and Prassaios (added to that discussed earlier for Psikharpax) after their deaths; (b) for the apparent defection of Prassaios from one side to the other; and (c) for the drowning of a character already dead. Furthermore, these are all features which clearly worried the ancient commentators on Homer. By themselves, then, these parallels would be enough to establish a *prima facie* case for the authenticity of the phenomena in question within a parodic engagement influenced by the scholarly discourse on the Homeric poems. But this conclusion becomes even more attractive when it is realized that the poet of the *BM* has actually gone out of his way to connect these characters and their anomalous episodes.

Firstly, Psikharpax is revived precisely in order to kill Prassaios for the first time (234–35). Secondly, Psikharpax's second death (243–46) directly precedes Troglodytes' reappearance (247–49) and spurs his retreat. Thirdly, Troglodytes returns from the dead and retreats (247–49) immediately before Physignathos crops up once more, this time to be wounded (250) and then attacked by the revived – and turnspecies – Prassaios (252–54). In short, Psikharpax, Troglodytes and Prassaios are all linked to one another both directly, in the confusing reciprocity of battle, and indirectly, through the figure of Physignathos, who was responsible for the death of Psikharpax in the first place.[28]

Furthermore, although the following suggestion is more speculative, it might be worth considering that the problematic passage 210–22 could produce another link between these characters. Troglodytes in his first life kills Peleion ('MacMudd') (206), a quasi-heroic patronymic appro-

[24] *Cf.* Σ *ad Il.* 13.643a (above, n. 7).

[25] For discussion of this notorious case, *cf.* Fenik (1968) 132; Erbse (1974) on Σ *ad* 13.324, 484 (with refs); Nickau (1977) 165–66; Janko (1992) *ad loc.*, 99–100; Kelly (2007) 397–98.

[26] *Cf.* Σ AbT *ad* 13.423 – all Aristarchean, and criticizing Zenodotos for reading στενάχοντα.

[27] Σ bT *ad* 22.365 saw it differently (probably closer to the poet's intention): ὑπερβολὴ ὀργῆς τὸ καὶ πρὸς νεκρὸν διαλέγεσθαι.

[28] One might compare, as an allusion to Homeric narrative (given also the Akhillean reminiscence pointed out below, n. 29), the way in which that character is used as a narrative pivot in the *Iliad*; his attendant Patroklos, sent out because of Akhilleus' own refusal to join battle, is killed by Hektor, whom Akhilleus then kills, but whose death necessarily brings Akhilleus' own death ever nearer.

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priate for Physignathos as the son of Πηλεύς (19)[29] who, on his first appearance in the poem, was described as λιμνόχαρις πολύφημος (12). Both of these adjectives (the second marginally altered to Πολύφωνος) return as character names (210–12) very shortly after Troglodytes' *batrakhoktasia*, though this time Limnokharis is so grieved at the death of Poluphonos (212) that he attacks and kills Troglodytes (213). In other words, Troglodytes kills the patronymic of Physignathos at 206, one of whose other epithets then kills him in turn in 213.[30] The textual difficulties in this passage do not make it possible to be more decisive than this, but the problems, specifically with the crucial verses 212–13, are not insurmountable.[31]

One can see in the connections described above a remarkably sophisticated engagement with the epic. The *BM* has not only drawn attention to some isolated, and famous, errors in Homeric composition, viz. the failure to recognize or remember a dead character. Nor has it only shown the rather generic nature of some of Homer's battlefield participants, in that they can reappear and apparently change sides almost at will. (Nor, if the immediately preceding suggestion about Limnokharis be considered persuasive, has it only illustrated the (closely related) fact that names and characters are sometimes coined out of epithets.)[32] Instead of making these points in isolation, the poet of the *BM* has deliberately connected them so that the attentive reader can link them as well. Taken together, this is a sustained passage of critical commentary on several aspects of Homeric battle narrative, a commentary which augments its basic parodic purpose with the concerns and discoveries of ancient scholarship.[33]

This study has tried to demonstrate that the *BM's* familiarity with the Homeric poems and their scholarship is central to its parody of Iliadic battle narrative.[34] In simple terms: because

[29] The heroic nature of the allusion is made clear by the fact that Πηλείων means not only 'MacMudd' (West) but also 'son of Peleus'; *cf.* Most (1993) 37–38, especially with regard to *Il.* 16.174, an entry in the catalogue of Myrmidons, where one of the contingent leaders, Menesthios, is called a grandson of Peleus; *cf.* Σ *ad* 16.175, and Janko (1992) *ad* 16.173–78, 340–41 (also *ad* 16.33–35, 319–20, for the link with πηλός). This link could well have been made earlier in the parodic tradition, by Euboios of Paros in his *Battle of the Bathmen* (*SH* 412); *cf.* Olson and Sens (1999) 10. The *BM*'s allusion to Akhilleus is strengthened by the fact that, just as Akhilleus, Physignathos is later wounded ἐς ποδὸς ἄκρον (250); *cf. Il.* 11.376–77 with Hainsworth (1993) *ad loc.*, 267; Fenik (1968) 234.

[30] *Contra* Ludwich (1896) 77–78, who takes these names 'als spätere, unechte, verwerfliche Erfindungen', initially because of the faulty scansion of 210, but also because 210–12 are absent from his Oxf. and Flor. ms. families (= Allen's a l = West's *a*); *cf.* also Glei (1984) 186. However, the argument above does not require the presence of 210, though its absence would leave the death of Polyphonos undescribed, and so make 212 (Λιμνόχαρις δ' ὡς εἶδεν ἀπολλύμενον Πολύφωνον) a trifle disconnected. Compare, however, the similarly abrupt way in which Kalaminthios ('Catmint') flees at the sight of the previously unmentioned Pternoglyphos ('Hamgraver') (224). I would therefore suggest either a one verse lacuna after 212 (for example, ἀγχίμολόν ῥά οἱ ἦλθε κατὰ στίχας, οὗτα δὲ δουρί *Il.* 16.820; compare 212 with 16.818–19) followed by 213 emended with West as above, or 213 following straight after 212 and emended in order to provide a strike expression such as, for example, ἔφθη τρώσας (Matro F 1. 29 Olson and Sens (1999) = *SH* 534.29) or οὗτασ' ἐπιφθάς.

[31] *Cf.* above, n. 30. The same passage (210–22) provides the example of Leikhenor (215–18) referred to earlier (above, n. 2), but this is treated in the appendix (below) because its difficulties are more serious.

[32] *Cf.*, for example, Janko (1992) *ad* 13.386, 96–97; *ad* 14.442–48, 217 (and, for many other cases, index s.v. 'epithets', 434). This is only one of the several ways in which the Homeric poet (or the tradition) generates names; *cf.* Rank (1951) esp. ch. 2; von Kamptz (1982) §66–81 for a complete tabulation (and §10 for the invention of 'sprechende Namen').

[33] I suspect that the *BM* poet is also (at least sometimes) poking fun at those scholars, for their critical acumen is humorously exaggerated in the patently absurd context of the *BM*, where the somewhat chaotic combat resists the kind of military sense that Alexandrian scholarship sought in Homer (*cf.* above, nn. 7, 26 and 27). In other words, by focusing on Homeric errors in such a concentrated manner, the *BM* is calling attention to more than just its epic inheritance; *cf.* below, n. 36, for a slightly different case.

[34] Most (1993) 38: 'Zusammenfassend darf festgehalten werden, daß alle diese Anomalien interpretiert werden können und daß hierin die *Batrachomyomachia* sich nicht als eine vordergründe Polemik gegen Homer erweist, sondern als eine auf intimer Kenntnis der homerischen Gedichte und der Homerphilologie basierende Überbietung der für Homer selbst eigentümlichen dichterischen Freiheiten'.

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Homer erred, the *BM* erred. The engagement presupposed by this strategy, its willingness to comment in a scholarly way on its predecessor text, is something readily associated with Hellenistic and Roman poetry.[35] The *BM*'s treatment of Homer's nods indicates that it, too, should be located firmly within that critical and artistic context.[36]

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APPENDIX: LEIKHENOR

Leikhenor is the very first victim at the start of the combat (202–05), but he is soon (216–17) spotted striking at Okimides ('MacBasil') before falling on the bank after seeing the fleeing Kroustophagos[37] ('Pastrygobble'), though he recovers sufficiently to kill him.[38] At least partly because 216–17 are missing from some mss, Ludwich, Fusillo and West excise them (though Allen well explains their absence as the result of the homoeoteleuton ὡς δ' ἐνόησε at 215 and 217).[39] The major difficulty with this passage is that 217 is unmetrical and does not lend itself to easy emendation (nor can the problem be solved by excision).[40] Nonetheless, without large-scale rewriting, something is required simply in order to account for the accusative noun at the start of 218. Whatever remedy is sought for 217, the reappearance of Leikhenor in 216 *could* remain unaffected.[41] If so, it would be significant that he is revived (216) very soon after the death of Troglodytes (214–13), for this would add a fourth to the series of connections between the anomalies. It would certainly not be surprising to find yet another example of the phenomenon, but the rather troubled state of the passage makes it unwise to push the point any further than this.

[35] A truism of modern scholarship: *cf.,* for example, Schlunk (1974) for Vergil's deployment of Homeric scholarship, and Rengakos (2001) and Fantuzzi (2001) for Apollonios'; also Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) for a recent survey.

[36] *Cf.* above, and nn. 9–12, for the poem's date and literary affiliations. As another example of the *BM*'s engagement with Alexandrian Homeric scholarship, consider how the course of the arming scenes in the *BM* (124–31, 161–65) follows closely Zenodotos' version of Paris' arming (*Il.* 3.330–38) in omitting the sword from the sequence, though it retains the Iliadic position of the helmet (i.e. after the shield). On precisely this point, Σ A *ad* 3.334–35 and 11.32 criticize Zenodotos for putting the helmet before the shield because of the practical difficulties in getting the shield straps over the helmet. In avoiding this problem, therefore, the *BM* seems to show knowledge both of Zenodotos' version *and* the criticisms which it received. Rengakos (2001) has argued persuasively that Apollonios' arming of Aietes (*Arg.* 3.1225–34) also responds to Zenodotos' text of the *Iliad*, i.e. by omitting the sword and changing the position of the helmet, and the *BM* has just as good a claim on such an engagement, for it has the same number of items as Zenodotos (whilst Apollonios omits the greaves) but refuses to make the further change for which the Alexandrian scholar was censured by his critics.

[37] West's emendation for the obscure Κουστοφάγος (or Κωστ-) of the ms.

[38] West reads βαθείαις δ' ἔμπεσεν (218) with a colon after φεύγοντα, thus making Kroustophagos the subject of the action in 218–19 (i.e. he had fallen in the water but was still trying to fight).

[39] Nonetheless, Allen removes them as part of the passage 210–22; *cf.* above, and n. 30.

[40] It is not the only problem: 215 and 216 as they stand were not designed to be connected (though the excision of δ' in 216 could solve that).

[41] Though at least the first half of 217 would seem guaranteed by the Homeric parallel of 13.159–60 (Μηριόνης δ' αὐτοῖο τιτύσκετο δουρὶ φαεινῷ | καὶ βάλεν, οὐδ' ἀφάμαρτε, κατ' ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἐΐσην), I would propose at least a one-verse lacuna after 216, pointing to *Il.* 13.370 (Ἰδομενεὺς δ' αὐτοῖο τιτύσκετο δουρὶ φαεινῷ – i.e. something parallel to 216 but without καὶ βάλεν, οὐδ' ἀφάμαρτε, κα[τὰ] in the next verse), though some verb of striking would be required in whatever verse was replaced by 217.

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