

# HOMER'S DAUGHTERS

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IT OFTEN HAPPENS IN SCHOLARSHIP that a correct view is supplanted by an incorrect one, and can only be reestablished by the consideration of old evidence or the production of new: *recentiores non potiores*. The present study concerns a monument from imperial Athens which has been subjected to a variety of interpretations; the original one, often though not entirely unheeded, can be now supported by evidence from Pamphylia.

Exactly thirty years ago Homer Thompson published a statue base from the Athenian Agora. Reconstructed from over sixty fragments, it had on its front face a distich which he supplemented thus:

Ἰλιάς ἡ μεθ' Ὀμηρον ἐγὼ καὶ πρόσθεν Ὀμήρ[ου]  
 πάρστατις ἴδρυμαι τῷ με τεκόντι νέω[ι].

Thompson's translation, though with "begot" substituted for "bore," was as follows: "The Iliad, I that was both after Homer and before Homer, have been set up alongside him that begot me in his earlier years."<sup>1</sup>

Thompson did not explain his understanding of the first line, but evidently took it to mean that the action of the Iliad preceded Homer, while its fame outlasted his death or apotheosis. In support, he adduced the relief of the Apotheosis of Homer by Archelaos of Priene, now in the British Museum, in which the poet is shown being crowned by the World (Oikoumene) and Time (Chronos).<sup>2</sup> I do not know an exact parallel in other epigrams, but several of them play, as might be expected, on the idea of Homer's everlasting fame. One, by Antiphilos of Byzantium who wrote approximately under Nero, is addressed to the Iliad and the Odyssey, and ends thus:<sup>3</sup>

Ἰλατε σὺν Μούσαισι, μεθ' ὑμετέρας γὰρ αἰοιδάς  
 εἶπεν ἔχειν Αἰὼν ἑνδεκα Πιερίδας.

I am grateful to Glen Bowersock and Homer Thompson for very helpful discussion.

<sup>1</sup>Homer A. Thompson, *Hesperia* 23 (1954) 62–65 (hereafter "Thompson (1954)"). Cf. also Homer A. Thompson and R. E. Wycherley, *The Athenian Agora 14: The Agora of Athens* (Princeton 1972) 115 with n. 9; American School of Classical Studies at Athens, *The Athenian Agora: A Guide*<sup>3</sup> (Athens 1976) 183; Homer A. Thompson, *The St. John's Review* 32 (Winter 1981) 11–13 (hereafter "Thompson (1981)").

<sup>2</sup>Thompson (1954) 63 n. 55. On this monument, see *ibid.* n. 54; and add now L. Guerrini, *EAA* 1 (1958) 542–543; Doris Pinkwart, *Das Relief des Archelaos von Priene und die "Musen des Philiskos"* (Kallmünz 1965).

<sup>3</sup>*Anth. Pal.* 9.192 = A. S. F. Gow and D. L. Page, *The Greek Anthology: The Garland of Philip* (Cambridge 1968), Antiphilos no. 36. For αἰὼν in such contexts, see H. Lloyd-Jones and Peter Parsons, *Supplementum Hellenisticum* (Berlin and New York 1983, Texte und Kommentare 11) 485, though they omit this epigram.

Another, anonymous, epigram is addressed to the same two poems, but is put into the mouth of Homer himself:<sup>4</sup>

τόν με γέροντ' αὔξουσ' ἐς αἰὲ νέον· ἡ γὰρ Ὀμήρου  
Σειρήν ὑμετέρων ρεῖται ἀπὸ στομάτων.

In the second line of the present epigram, Thompson is surely right to assume that νέωι is a predicative adjective cohering with the verbal idea expressed in τῶι με τεκόντι, "him that begot me when he was young:" Homer is supposed by "Longinus" to have written the *Iliad* in the vigor of youth, and epigrams in the Greek Anthology, including the one by Antiphilos already quoted, talk of the poems as his "daughters."<sup>5</sup>

Another Neronian epigram may be adduced, which both supports Thompson's interpretation and is itself illuminated by it. "Longinus" and the other ancient sources who share his view that the *Iliad* was composed before the *Odyssey* do not explicitly say that the poet was young.<sup>6</sup> An epigram by Loukillios, however, addressed to Nero, seems not to have been noticed in this connection:<sup>7</sup>

μισῶ, δέσποτα Καῖσαρ, ὅσοις νέος οὐδέποτε' οὐδεὶς  
ἤρεσε, κἂν εἴπη, "Μῆνιν αἶειδε, θεά."  
ἀλλ' ἦν μὴ Πριαμου τις ἔχη χρόνον, ἡμιφάλακρος  
ἢ καὶ κυρτός ἄγαν, οὐ δύνατ' ἄλφα γράφειν.  
εἰ δ' ὄντως οὕτως τοῦτ' ἐστ' ἔχον, ὦ ὕπατε Ζεῦ,  
εἰς τοὺς κληητάς ἔρχεται ἡ σοφία.

I hate, lord Caesar, those who never are pleased by anyone young, even if he utters,<sup>8</sup> "Sing, goddess, of the wrath:" but unless someone has the years of Priam, half-bald or completely bent, he cannot write his ABC. If that really is the case, O Zeus above, wisdom has gone to join the ruptured.

Cichorius observed that Loukillios flatters Nero both as a young man and as a poet: one of his poems was a *Troica*.<sup>9</sup> The first couplet should therefore mean more than merely, "Some people are never pleased by a young poet, even if he is as good as Homer:" Loukillios surely expects his

<sup>4</sup>*Anth. Pal.* 9.522, on which see below, 34 f.

<sup>5</sup>[Longinus] *Subl.* 9.13.; *Anth. Pal.* 9. 192 (above, n. 3) lines 1–2 θυγάτερες μὲν Μαιονίδου, *App. Plan.* 16.292 line 3 καὶ τάσδ' ἀντιθέψ ψυχῇ γεννήσας κοῦρας.

<sup>6</sup>See now the excellent discussion of W. Bühler, *Beiträge zur Erklärung der Schrift vom Erhabenen* (Göttingen 1964) 44–47, who however does not mention the epigram from the *Agora* or that of Loukillios discussed below.

<sup>7</sup>*Anth. Pal.* 11.132. On the date, C. Cichorius, *Römische Studien* (Berlin and Leipzig 1922) 372–373. On Loukillios' circumstances and personality, L. Robert, *L'épigramme grecque* (Geneva 1968, *Entretiens Hardt* 14) 181–291; on his relations with Nero, Robert, *CRAI* 1968, 280–288.

<sup>8</sup>εἴπη clearly implies the poet's own composition, not merely the repetition of words written by another.

<sup>9</sup>Cichorius (above, n. 7). Nero's *Troica*: references in Schanz-Hosius 2<sup>4</sup> 428–429.

imperial reader to share the belief that the author of the Iliad was νεός. Like the epigram from the Agora, he seems to contrast Homer's youth with the immortality of his work, a double triumph over time.

As Thompson noted, the language of the new epigram already suggests that the base was not isolated, but implied a juxtaposed statue of Homer and also (no doubt on the other side of the poet) one of the Odyssey. He was thus able to adduce a pair of statues found some forty metres away in 1869, which were recognized by Georg Treu in 1889 as representations of the Iliad and the Odyssey.<sup>10</sup> The remains on the new base did not form a direct join with those of the statue discovered in 1869, but stylistic and other considerations seem to make the association certain. Thompson postulated an original group of three, the Iliad slightly taller and occupying the place of honor on the poet's right, the Odyssey on his left, and the poet himself seated between them holding sceptre and scroll. Since the two statues were found just north of the Library of Pantainos, built about A.D. 100, they should in some way be connected with it, though their precise location remains conjectural.<sup>11</sup>

As Thompson's restoration of the epigram can be corroborated from literature, so also a newly discovered monument, as yet not fully published, appears to corroborate his archaeological argument. He was led to postulate a group of three statues by two existing parallels. One is the Apotheosis of Homer by Archelaos of Priene, already mentioned, in which the poet is shown with his two "daughters" as little girls on either side of his chair, the Iliad on the right and the Odyssey on the left.<sup>12</sup> On a silver goblet from Herculaneum he is shown being carried to heaven by an eagle, and flanked in the same way by the two personified poems.<sup>13</sup> In both works they carry appropriate emblems. On the relief of Archelaos the Iliad carries a sword and the Odyssey a ship's rudder; on the goblet from Herculaneum the Iliad carries a lance, the Odyssey again a rudder. Of the statues from the Agora the Iliad has the remains of a sword and probably carried a spear, while Treu inferred from the traces that the Odyssey carried a steering oar.

Much closer to Thompson's reconstruction of the monument from the Agora, however, is a mosaic floor recently discovered by Jale İnán at a site north-east of Side in Pamphylia, and now in the Antalya Museum: from the style it is dated to the third century.<sup>14</sup> It consists of a central panel,

<sup>10</sup>For these statues see now Thompson (1981) figs. 20–23.

<sup>11</sup>In his most recent discussion Thompson suggests the top of the arch between the Library and the Stoa of Attalos: Thompson (1981) 13 with fig. 26.

<sup>12</sup>Above, n. 2.

<sup>13</sup>V. Spinazzola, *Le arti decorativi in Pompei e nel Museo Nazionale di Napoli* (Milan, etc., 1928) 231.

<sup>14</sup>M. Mellink, *AJA* 83 (1979) 337, cf. 86 (1982) 567: I owe my knowledge of some of the details to information kindly supplied by Christina Kondoleon and Homer Thompson. For

now largely lost except for the captions above the three figures, in which Homer was shown seated with the Iliad standing to his right and the Odyssey to his left: the Iliad carried a spear, while a tiny trace to the right of the caption ΟΔΥΣΣΕΙΑ could be the top of a similar emblem, presumably an oar or rudder. Around the border, much of which is preserved, are busts of literary men and philosophers. The building which housed the floor was on the north side of the agora, and might also be conjectured to be a public library.

Two other interpretations of the monument from the Agora, the one developed from the other, may be given brief consideration. In the same volume of *Hesperia* in which Thompson published the Iliad base, a note on the same subject entitled "The New Homer" appeared from A. E. Raubitschek.<sup>15</sup> It is best to quote his arguments: "The pentameter indicates that the statue of the Iliad was set up next to a statue of her 'new' father. The first line also speaks of two Homers, one older and one younger than the Iliad herself. The older Homer must be the famous poet of the Iliad, but it was the new Homer next to whose statue stood that of the Iliad. This interpretation permits at once the identification of the 'New Homer' with C. Iulius Nicanor who was known as the *Neos Homeros*." Raubitschek proceeds to discuss the evidence for this Nicanor, known from several inscriptions and a passage of Dio Chrysostom as a benefactor of Augustan Athens, and suggest that he was the author of the *Ilias Latina*.<sup>16</sup>

Raubitschek's exposition, though widely accepted, seems linguistically impossible. The fact that Homer's name is repeated in the first line no more implies two Homers than Theocritus' line,<sup>17</sup> ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα καὶ ἐς Δία λήγετε, Μοῖσαι, implies two gods called Zeus. In the second line, νέωι is shown by its position outside the noun phrase with which it agrees to be predicative, "while young," not the attributive "new." Raubitschek's conception of the whole monument is also difficult to follow. The Iliad depicted would presumably be that of the first Homer, and yet the poet beside whom it stood would have been the second one; Raubitschek does not say how he understands the statue of the Odyssey, but he seems to imply that Nicanor wrote a second Odyssey as well as a second Iliad.

Raubitschek's thesis has now been carried a step further by R. Merkel-

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the name of the site, probably Pamphylian Seleuceia, G. E. Bean and T. B. Mitford, *Journeys in Rough Cilicia 1964-1968* (Vienna 1970, Denkschr. Wien 102) 18-19.

<sup>15</sup>A. E. Raubitschek, *Hesperia* 23 (1954) 317-319.

<sup>16</sup>On this person, separate from the C. Iulius Nicanor of *IG* 2<sup>2</sup> 3785, see most recently C. P. Jones, *Phoenix* 32 (1978) 222-228 (where I took Thompson's interpretation to be self-evident); L. Robert, *REG* 94 (1981) 348-349; G. W. Bowersock in *Caesar Augustus: Seven Essays* (Oxford 1984) 175-176, 179.

<sup>17</sup>Theoc. *Id.* 17.1.

bach.<sup>18</sup> At the end of line 1 of the epigram, Merkelbach proposes 'Ομήρ[ωι] and explains (I translate): "Nicanor did not write a second *Iliad* in rivalry with Homer, but an *Ilias ante Homerum* (so on the material of the *Kypria*) and an *Ilias post Homerum* (like Quintus of Smyrna). This *Iliad* introduces herself: 'I, the ante-Homeric and post-Homeric *Iliad*, am set up here standing beside my creator, the new Homer.'" This view seems even more difficult than that of Raubitschek. 'Ομήρου now has to be supplied from the preceding 'Ομηρον, and νέω is detached from the phrase it follows and made to qualify 'Ομήρ[ωι] at the end of the previous line. Like Raubitschek, Merkelbach does not fully explain his conception of the whole monument. He seems to understand Nicanor's *Iliad* as a single poem that covered events both prior and subsequent to those of Homer's *Iliad*, and no doubt those in between as well; he does not mention Nicanor's *Odyssey*, but since the statue that personified it showed Scylla, the Sirens, Aeolos, and Polyphemos,<sup>19</sup> it can hardly have diverged much from its exemplar. In short, the complications which both Raubitschek's and Merkelbach's theses entail tend to corroborate that of Thompson.

The close similarity between the reconstructed group from the Agora and the mosaic from Pamphylia suggests a known iconographical type. Some of the epigrams in the Greek Anthology devoted to Homer and his two "daughters" seem to have been written to accompany, or at least describe, visible objects.<sup>20</sup> An anonymous one, already quoted above, is of especial interest.<sup>21</sup>

Ἰλιάς, ὦ μέγα ἔργον, Ὀδυσσεύης τε τὸ σῶφρον  
γράμμα, τὸ καὶ Τροίη θῆκεν ἔσσην Ἰθάκην,  
τὸν με γέροντ' αὔξουσ' ἐς αἰὶ νέον· ἡ γὰρ Ὀμήρου  
Σειρὴν ὑμετέρων ρεῖται ἀπὸ στομάτων.

*Iliad*, O great work, and wise book of the *Odyssey*, you who made Ithaca equal even to Troy, keep me, an old man, ever young: for it is Homer's Siren that flows from your lips.

This little poem has caused great difficulty. It was the excellent Friedrich Jacobs who led the way out. By a familiar figure of speech, both Greek and Latin, a speaker may refer to himself in the third person, not merely

<sup>18</sup>R. Merkelbach, *ZPE* 33 (1979) 178–179, and also *Epigraphica Anatolica* 1 (1983) 30. Merkelbach's reading and interpretation are accepted in *SEG* 29.192, and have now been grasped at by E. Kapetanopoulos, *Ἑλληνικά* 33 (1981, published 1983) 231, in an attempt to show that the Nicanor of Dio Chrysostom is different from Iulius Nicanor the New Homer: this does not convince.

<sup>19</sup>Thompson (1954) 64, (1981) 12 with fig. 22.

<sup>20</sup>Thus the poem of Antiphilos (above, n. 3), with the commentary of Gow and Page: *App. Plan.* 16.292, cited in n. 5 above, where τᾶσδ' implies a visible object.

<sup>21</sup>*Anth. Pal.* 9.522.

when dictating messages and the like, but to express pride or some other emotion; and the same speaker may use the first and the third persons singular almost in the same breath.<sup>22</sup> Jacobs proposed that the speaker of this epigram was Homer addressing his two "daughters," and he is followed by the latest editors.<sup>23</sup> The same editors adduce the Agora Monument and, accepting Thompson's interpretation without question, suggest that their epigram might have been placed "beneath an allegory of the two works flanking the poet, either in the frontispiece of an edition of Homer, or beneath a sculptural group." That seems entirely plausible, with the qualification that the epigram might have applied to Homer alone, with individual ones for the two personifications on either side of him. In other words, it is not excluded that it comes from the base of Homer in this very group, or at least from a monument exactly similar.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>M. L. West on Hes. *Theog.* 22; R. G. M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard on Hor. *Carm.* 1. 7. 27.

<sup>23</sup>P. Waltz, *et al.*, *Anthologie Grecque* 8 (Budé ed., Paris 1974) 74 n. 1; the discussion by A. Skiadas, *Homer im griechischen Epigramm* (Athens 1965) 146, is not satisfactory.

<sup>24</sup>This suggestion may seem bold, but note the μέγα of line 1, appropriate for the taller of the two statues, and the play on the subject of the poet's age in line 3, exactly as in the Agora epigram; the fact that Homer receives four lines, the Iliad and (presumably) the Odyssey two apiece, would be explained by the supposition, already made by Thompson (1954) 63, that Homer was shown sitting and so on a larger scale.