

ILIAD 1.4 f. AND CATULLUS 64.152 f.:
FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν / οἷωνοῖσί τε δαῖτα.

δαῖτα Zenodotus (teste Athen. 1.12); πᾶσι mss et scholl.

pro quo dilaceranda feris dabor alitibusque / praeda.

Several recent articles on these lines have raised a number of small but fascinating issues.¹ To review briefly, J. E. G. Zetzel concluded from the resemblances, especially the “chiastic” arrangement, in these texts that Catullus must have been deliberately echoing the *Iliad*. Furthermore, since Catullus uses *praeda* instead of, e.g., *cena* to render δαῖτα, Zetzel argues that this avoidance should be explained as Catullus’ acknowledgement of Aristarchus’ objection to δαῖτα, that in Homer δαῖς is not used for animal food. Renehan and Thomas both point out serious objections to this ingenious hypothesis, and I accept without argument their position, that there is no immediate connection between Zenodotus’ text and Catullus’ lines. But there remain several matters which call for further consideration.

Zetzel, Renehan, Thomas, and others as well regard δαῖτα as a reading which may possibly be “genuine” Homer and so deserve to be printed in the text. There are three reasons for doubting this. (1) The separation of κύνεσσιν and οἷωνοῖσι into distinct syntactic units which is produced by Zenodotus’ reading is unparalleled in the other nine Homeric passages involving *two* sets of predators.² Of course, the small number of cases

¹ J. E. G. Zetzel, “A Homeric Reminiscence in Catullus,” *AJP* 99 (1978) 332–33; R. Renehan, “New Evidence for the Variant in *Iliad* 1.5,” *AJP* 100 (1979) 473–74; R. F. Thomas, “On a Homeric Reference in Catullus,” *ibid.* 475–76.

² “Dogs and birds:” *Il.* 2.393, 8.379 = 17.241, 13.831, 22.335, 354, 24.411, *Od.* 3.259, 14.153; “dogs and vultures:” *Il.* 18.271, 22.42; “beasts and birds:” *Od.* 24.491. As it happens, none of these passages provides any parallel for πᾶσι, yet it remains the better choice. The defense of πᾶσι in C. P. Segal, *The Theme of the Mutilation of the Corpse in the Iliad* (Leiden 1971) 9, note 1, that it is “especially appropriate to a statement of the . . . massive inclusiveness of the corpse theme,” is not convincing. J. Redfield, “The Proem of the *Iliad*:

keeps this argument from being conclusive. (2) The “chiastic” arrangement ἐλώρια . . . κύνεσσιν / οἰωνοῖσι . . . δαῖτα is also unparalleled; chiasmi of the AABB type, with two nouns and two adjectives all in one case are common, but not the Zenodotean variety. (3) The grotesque metaphor for warriors’ corpses, “banquet of the birds,” is without any close parallel in Homer and is unlike typical Homeric metaphors. Among older studies, A. L. Keith, Milman Parry, and W. B. Stanford all agree that metaphors in Homer tend to be unspectacular.³ *Iliad* 24.43, εἴς’ ἐπὶ μῆλα βροτῶν ἵνα δαῖτα λάβῃσιν, of a lion, shows at least the possibility of such a metaphor, and there are several passages in which extreme hatred and a desire for revenge are expressed through a wish to eat someone’s flesh. But the virtual isolation of the Zenodotean image seems odd, given the frequency with which Homer emphasizes the pathos of mutilated corpses.⁴

Zetzel, Renehan, and Thomas all accept Rudolf Pfeiffer’s view that the antiquity of the reading δαῖτα is guaranteed by certain passages in Athenian tragedy.⁵ M. van der Valk firmly rejected this opinion with arguments of varying force; in his large monograph on Zenodotus, Klaus Nickau simply concurs with van der Valk without enlarging on his arguments.⁶ It may therefore be helpful to set out in full the relevant texts.

- A. Aesch. *Supp.* 800 f. κυσὶν δ’ ἐπειθ’ ἔλωρα κἀπιχωρίοις / ὄρνισι δέϊπνον οὐκ ἀναίνομαι πελεῖν. (Cf. *Agam.* 138 στρυγὶ δὲ δέϊπνον αἰετῶν; *Prom.* 1024 f. ἄκκλητος ἔρπων δαιταλεὺς πανήμερος, / κελαινόχρωτον δ’ ἦπαρ ἐκθιοινήσεται.)
- B. Soph. *Ajax* 830 ρίφθῶ κυσὶν πρόβλητος οἰωνοῖς θ’ ἔλωρ; *Ant.* 205 f. εἰδὼν δ’ ἄθαπτον καὶ πρὸς οἰωνῶν δέμας / καὶ πρὸς κυνῶν ἐδεστὸν αἰκισθέν τ’ ἰδεῖν; *Ant.* 697 f. πεπτῶτ’ ἄθαπτον μὴθ’ ὑπ’ ὠμηστῶν κυνῶν / εἴας’ ὀλέσθαι μὴθ’ ὑπ’ οἰωνῶν τινός.

Homer’s Art,” *CP* 74 (1979) 95–110, supports δαῖτα, deriving much of his argument from A. Pagliaro, “Il proemio dell’*Iliade*,” *Nuovi saggi di critica semantica* (Messina-Florence 1956) 3–46, esp. 8, 21, 35–37. Both scholars believe that δαῖτα is more appropriate with τεύχεα, a Homeric “technical term” for making a meal; but surely the predicative expression (“make X to be a meal”) is significantly different from the common phrase (“prepare, make a meal”). I wish to thank the Editor for bringing Redfield’s article to my attention.

³ A. L. Keith, *Simile and Metaphor in Greek Poetry* (Diss., Chicago 1914) 33; M. Parry, “The Traditional Metaphor in Homer,” *CP* 28 (1933) 30–43, esp. 30 and 33 = *The Making of Homeric Verse* (Oxford 1971) 365–75, esp. 365 and 367; W. B. Stanford, *Greek Metaphor: Studies in Theory and Practice* (Oxford 1936) 118–43, esp. 120. Cf. C. Moulton, “Homeric Metaphor,” *CP* 74 (1979) 279–93, for an attempt to revise the *communis opinio*.

⁴ Cf. Segal (above, note 2) and J. Griffin, “Homeric Pathos and Objectivity,” *CQ* 26 (1976) 161–87.

⁵ R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship I* (Oxford 1968) 111–13.

⁶ M. van der Valk, *Researches on the Text and Scholia of the Iliad II* (Leiden 1964) 66–68; K. Nickau, *Untersuchungen zur textkritischen Methode des Zenodotos von Ephesos* (Berlin/New York 1977) 42, note 32.

- C. Eur. *Hec.* 1071 ff. $\pi\tilde{\alpha}$ πόδ' ἐπάξας σαρκῶν ὀστέων τ' ἐμπλησθῶ, θοίαναν ἀγρίων θηρῶν τιθέμενος . . . (1076) ποῖ $\pi\tilde{\alpha}$ φέρομαι τέκν' ἔρημα λιπῶν . . . (1078) κυσὶν τε φοινίαν δαῖτ' ἀνήμερόν τ' οὐρείαν ἐκβολάν; *Ion* 504 f. $\pi\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\iota\varsigma$ ἐξόρισεν θοίαναν / θηρσί τε φοινίαν δαῖτα; *El.* 896 f. $\delta\nu$ εἴτε χρῆξῃς θηρσὶν ἀρπαγὴν πρόθεσ, / ἧ σκῦλον οἰωνοῖσι. (Cf. *Ion* 902 ff. ἔρρει / $\pi\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\iota\varsigma$ ἀρπασθεὶς θοίνα / παῖς; *Ion* 1494 f. οἰωνῶν γαμψηλαῖς φόνευμα θοίναμά τ' εἰς / "Αἶδαν ἐκβάλλῃ; *Rhes.* 515 $\sigma\tau\eta\sigma\omega$ πετεινοῖς γυψὶ θοινατήριον.)
- D. Timoth. *Pers.* 137 f. $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\theta\alpha$ κείσομαι οἰκτρὸς ὀρνίθων ἔθνεσιν ὠμοβρῶσι θοίνα (adduced by Renehan as support for Pfeiffer).

Several points emerge. (1) Only the first Aeschylean passage is at all close, word for word, to the Zenodotean text; and, as Martin West has observed, "the imitation [of Homer in Aeschylus] could not have been used to infer a reading *δαῖτα* if its existence had not been recorded."⁷ Indeed, Heinrich Düntzer and van der Valk drew the opposite conclusion from *Ajax* 830, that Sophocles must have had a text with $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\sigma\iota$.⁸ It would certainly be odd (though not "absurd" as van der Valk puts it) to say that Aeschylus' text of Homer had *δαῖτα*, while Sophocles' text, hardly a decade later, had $\pi\tilde{\alpha}\sigma\iota$. It is surely better not to force either tragedian's text back upon Homer. (2) There is, as van der Valk observed, unmistakable self-repetition in Euripides, and possibly also in Aeschylus and Sophocles. This tendency, especially noticeable in tragedy, to adapt one's own striking metaphors and borrow from predecessors makes it unprofitable to collect such passages and label them, as Pfeiffer does, a "rare concord" among the tragedians, for their concord is probably only with each other, not necessarily with Homer. (3) If we ask whether Homer or Aeschylus, omitting others for simplicity's sake, is the one most likely to have introduced the "corpses as banquet" metaphor, the acknowledged sparseness of metaphors in Homer, their extraordinary profusion and vividness in Aeschylus, and the frequency of this particular metaphor in tragedy combine to suggest an answer: the eldest tragedian, drawing upon familiar Homeric phraseology, took this aspect of the "mutilation" theme one step further, *more suo*, by describing corpses as a $\delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\pi\nu\omicron\nu$.⁹ There is, then, no firm ground for thinking that a fifth-century text of Homer possessed *δαῖτα*. Where it came from, a pre-Alexandrian manuscript or Zenodotus himself, remains a mystery. Nickau argues that no reading ascribed to

⁷ *Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique* (Stuttgart 1973) 11–12.

⁸ H. Düntzer, *De Zenodoti studiis Homericis* (Göttingen 1848) 111; van der Valk (above, note 6) 68.

⁹ The Zenodotean word *δαῖς* appears first among the surviving texts in Euripides, by which time it can have no unequivocal relation to the Homeric problem.

Zenodotus' edition can be shown to be his own creation;¹⁰ however that may be, I would suggest that *δαῖτρα* entered the tradition of Homer later than, and under the direct influence of, such passages as those quoted above.

Finally, there needs to be a demonstration of the assumption underlying Zetzel's thesis, that Catullus would have thought it worthwhile to express in so obscure a fashion his opinion on a scholars' quarrel over a textual detail in Homer. Homer, after all, was not a favorite poet of Callimachus, nor, so far as one can tell, of Catullus and the neoterics.¹¹ As Nicholas Horsfall has recently observed, great efforts were required for any Roman to master the complexities of difficult literary texts, primary and secondary, in Greek;¹² poems 51 and 66, among others, show that Catullus had the necessary patience in certain areas of literature, but a comparable interest in Homer and the Homeric scholia seems to me far from evident—Catullus was no Vergil in this regard. Scholarship in this century has rightly emphasized the Alexandrian side of Catullus, rather reversing Yeats' contrast and making poor Catullus walk the way of the scholars; but I believe that Zetzel's argument carries this tendency further than the present evidence warrants.

¹⁰ Nickau (above, note 6) 45–48.

¹¹ For Callimachus' firm ideological opposition to Homer, cf. most recently R. F. Thomas, "New Comedy, Callimachus, and Roman Poetry," *HSCP* 83 (1979) 179–206, esp. 187, and R. O. A. M. Lyne, "The Neoteric Poets," *CQ* 28 (1978) 167–87, esp. 180–85, where he discusses Catullus' "Callimacheanism." That a few verse translations of Homer into Latin seem to have been made in Catullus' lifetime does not weaken my generalization; one rarely finds Cn. Matius or the shadowy figures Sueius and Ninnius Crassus in treatments of the neoterics—cf. J. Granarolo, "L'époque néotérique ou la poésie romaine d'avant-garde au dernier siècle de la République (Catulle excepté)," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* I.3 (Berlin 1973) 278–360, esp. 290–92 and 327–44.

¹² N. Horsfall, "Doctus sermones utriusque linguae?" *EMC* 23 (1979) 79–95.