NOTES • KORT BYDRAES

DID HOMER GIVE HIS NEREIDS NAMES? A NOTE ON THE ANCIENT MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

There is enough overlap between the catalogues of Nereids at II. 18. 39-49 and Hesiod *Theogony* 243-62 for scholars to agree that the two are somehow related. But there is no agreement about just how they are related. Is the relationship likely to be merely indirect, with both based on a lost common source? Or is Hesiod’s list based directly on Homer’s? Or, on the contrary, does the Homeric list draw on the Hesiodic? If so, and if (as is generally supposed) the *Theogony* is later than the *Iliad*, then II. 18. 39-49 must be an interpolation. This conclusion has in fact often been drawn, from the time of Zenodotus on. In this note I do not propose to undertake anything so ambitious as to try to assess the validity of each of the various arguments that have been put forward in support of the conflicting positions on this question. Rather, I shall confine myself to a single issue: how much weight should be assigned to the omission of II. 18. 39-49 by one of the ancient ‘city’ texts, the Argolike? Does this omission prove the passage to be an interpolation?

Although this passage was obliterated by the Alexandrians, it was omitted, as far as we know, by only one of their MSS., the Argolike. Our source for this information is an *A* scholium: ὅδε Καλλίστρατος οὖδὲ ἐν τῇ Ἀργολικῇ φησιν αὐτοῦς [sc. τοὺς στίχους] φέρεσθαι. (Callistratus was a contemporary of Aristarchus and a fellow-pupil of Aristophanes of Byzantium.)

Bolling pointed out in 1925 that this omission could be a copyist’s slip under the influence of the homoioteleuton κατὰ βένθος ἄλος Νηρηδέως ἑσαυ in lines 38 and 49, but regarded this explanation as ‘most improbable’, preferring instead to see the omission as evidence of interpolation. In 1944 he relented somewhat: ‘In my earlier discussion ... I should have given more weight to the possibility that ... the disturbance of the tradition may be simply the result of a “blunder”), but when he came to print his own text of the *Iliad* in 1950 he nevertheless relegated the passage to his apparatus. In 1991 M.W. Edwards again mentioned the view that the omission by the Argolike might be accidental, but argued against it that ‘this would involve a huge slip of the eye’. It is the purpose of this note to demonstrate that such a ‘huge slip of the eye’ under the influence of a
strong homoiographon can be amply paralleled in the mediaeval MSS. of Homer and the Homeric Hymns and to argue that this fact strengthens the case for supposing that the scribe of the Argolike may well have succumbed to the same kind of temptation.

In selecting relevant parallel omissions I shall confine myself to passages which are (a) at least eight lines long and (b) absolutely essential to their context (and therefore certainly not interpolations). The most telling parallel is the omission of II. 7. 447–60 by Parisinus gr. 1805 (saec. xv) as a result of the homoioteleuton 446 ἐπ' ἀπελρονα γαῖαν, 460 ἐπικαθαγιαν: although this homoioteleuton is much weaker than the one surrounding the Homeric catalogue of Nereids, it has nevertheless led to the omission of an even longer passage (14 lines against the Nereids’ 11).

Rather similar is the omission of the 8 lines Od. 5. 153–60 by Parisinus gr. 2894 (saec. xiii) through the influence of the homoioteleuton αὐὴν in lines 152 and 160.

I shall next cite four passages omitted as a result of whole-line homoiographa: (1) II. 8. 406–19 (14 lines) om. Harleianus 1771 (saec. xv): line 405 = 419; (2) II. 16. 673–82 (10 lines) om. Parisinus suppl. gr. 1095 (saec. xvi): line 672 = 682; (3) II. 24. 295–312 (18 lines) om. Marcianus gr. 458 (coll. 841) (saec. xii): line 294 = 312; (4) Homeric Hymn to (Pythian) Apollo 261–89 (29 lines) om. Estensis iii. E 11 (164) and Matritensis 4562 (24), two 15th-century MSS. closely related to each other: line 260 = 289.

Little different in principle from long omissions due to homoioteleuta and repeated lines are those due to homoiarcha. I shall list three: (1) II. 2. 563–600 (38 lines) om. Laurentianus 32. 38 (saec. xiv): τῶν αὔὴ ἡγεμόνες starts both 563 and 601; (2) II. 3. 74–94 (21 lines) om. Ambrosianus gr. 463 (I 58 sup.) (saec. xiv): both 73 and 94 start οἱ ἄλλοι ψαλτὴς αὐὴν ἡγεμόνες τοι; (3) Od. 1. 279–92 (14 lines) om. Laurentianus conv. soppr. 52 (saec. xi): both 278 and 292 start πολλὰ μάλι, ὀσσα έκοκκε.

Finally, one hybrid example, which could have operated by either homoiarchon or homoioteleuton or both: the 16 lines Od. 4. 384–99 are omitted by Parisinus gr. 2894 (saec. xiii): line 383 reads τοιγαρ ἐγὼ τοι, ξεινε, μάλι ἀτρεχῶς ἀγορεύω while 399 reads (in most MSS.) τοιγαρ ἐγὼ τοι ταῦτα μάλι ἀτρεχῶς ἀγορεύω.

To summarize and conclude: we have cited the accidental omission, through the influence of homoioteleuta, homoiarcha and whole-line homoiographa, of ten longish passages in MSS. ranging from the eleventh century to the sixteenth. Eight of these ten passages are even longer than II. 18. 39–49. These parallels strengthen the case for supposing that the omission of II. 18. 39–49 by the scribe of the Argolike could well have been a similar accident provoked by a similar homoiographon. While these parallels certainly do not prove that the omission of the Nereid-list must be
accidental, they nevertheless suggest that the question of its authenticity should not be settled primarily by means of this slender and ambiguous ancient manuscript evidence against it. To put this differently, those tempted to believe in the authenticity of the Homeric catalogue of Nereids should not regard its absence from the Argolike as an insuperable obstacle to such a belief. 16

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7. Bolling (above, n. 5) 178.

8. The Athetized Lines of the Iliad, Baltimore 1944, 158.


10. Edwards (above, n. 1) 147.

11. In what follows I have drawn on the lists of ‘surface corruption’ in G.M. Bolling, AJPh 37 (1916) 2–7 (Iliad) and ibid. 452–3 (Odyssey), and on T.W. Allen’s list of accidental omissions in the Homeric Hymns at JHS 15 (1895) 272–4.

12. This omission is attested by both A. Ludwich (ed.), Homeri IIias, Leipzig 1902–7, ad loc., and T.W. Allen (ed.), Homeri IIias, Oxford 1931, ad loc.

13. Or (with most MSS.) ἐκ, which would slightly reduce the extent of the homoioteleuton. But the second hand of this MS., which has added the missing lines in the margin, has ἐκ (with only two other MSS.), and my text supposes (though this is very far from certain) that the corrector got the missing lines from the original scribe’s exemplar.

14. See A. Ludwich, Homeri Odyssea, Leipzig 1889–91, ad loc. This work and Ludwich’s IIias (above, n. 12) also comprise my sources for all other omissions from the Iliad and Odyssey cited below in my text.

16. For the sake of completeness, a further possibility should perhaps be mentioned which would also be compatible with the authenticity of this passage. In a paper entitled 'The Performance of Lists and Catalogues in the Homeric Epics' delivered at the conference 'Voice into Text: Orality and Literacy in Ancient Greece' at the University of Tasmania in July 1994, Dr. Elizabeth Minchin has argued, utterly convincingly, that long lists of invented names present especial problems of memorization for the oral poet. I would add that the same would be true for rhapsodes, and that the Argotic text may just possibly be descended from a dictation by an inferior rhapsode who had not been able to master the feat of memorizing this difficult passage and so omitted it. (For the theory that oral transmission played some part in the preservation of the Homeric text see, most recently, A.F. Garvie [ed.], *Homer, Odyssey Books VI-VIII*, Cambridge 1994, 15-17 [esp. 17], cf. 35.) However, this explanation seems less likely than the one presented in my text.

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GIBBON AND LIVY: HISTORY OF A READING

By now, we know enough about Gibbon the historian. But Gibbon the philologist comports unfamiliar pleasures and profits. Here is one example.

In chapter four of his Autobiography,1 we find this immodest proposal: 'In the perusal of Livy (xxx. 44) I had been stopped by a sentence in a speech of Hannibal which cannot be reconciled by any torture with his character or argument. The commentators dissemble or confess their perplexity. It occurred to me that the change of a single letter, by substituting *otio* instead of * odio*, might restore a clear and consistent sense, but I wished to weigh my emendation in scales less partial than my own. I addressed myself to Mr. Crévier, the successor of Rollin, and a professor in the University of Paris, who had published a large and valuable edition of Livy. His answer was speedy and polite; he praised my ingenuity and adopted my conjecture, which I must still applaud as easy and happy.'

Lord Sheffield had the good taste to suppress this last bit of bragging.2 Gibbon does not specify the dissembling and perplexed commentators. The edition of Livy by Jean Baptiste Louis Crévier was issued from Paris over the years 1735–1741. Recording the notion in a single sentence, Sandys3 dubs it 'an ingenious correction,' without amplification.

About a century later, Madvig published the same proposal, without any mention of Gibbon.4 'Otio' now prevails in modern editions (e.g., those of Oxford, Loeb, and Teubner). A conspicuous exception is the annotated text of book thirty designed for students by two respectable scholars5 in which 'odie' is retained without a single word of comment in the notes.

The names of Gibbon and Madvig do not adorn modern critical apparatuses at this point in Livy. For the simple reason that their 'otio' had
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