



Alternative Ancient Readings in the Text of Homer, Iliad

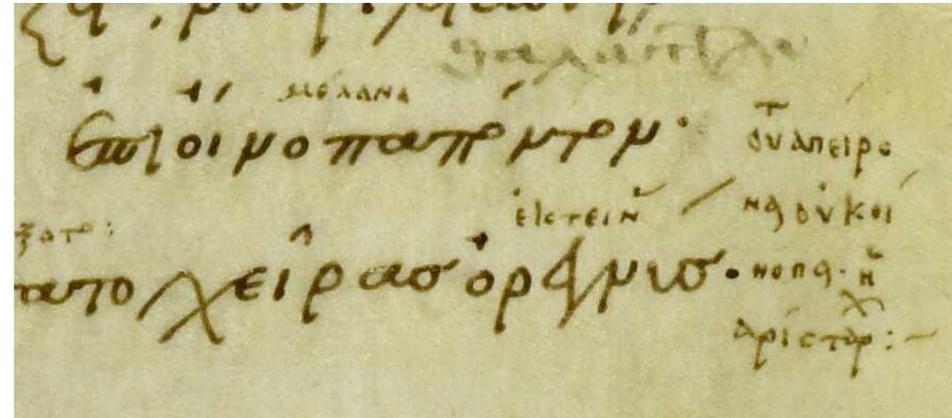
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Introduction

The goal of this project was to thoroughly analyze translations of Homer's *Iliad* to identify differences that have arisen over the 100+ translations from Homeric Greek to English. Primarily working with lines 1.5 and 1.350, we were concerned with the choices made in translation and what manuscripts, papyri, and texts they may have come from and the reasons they were chosen.

Process

- Initially, I started by reading Caroline Alexander's 2015 translation in its entirety.
- Throughout the span of this project, I communicated and corresponded with recent translators of the *Iliad*.
- I attended a lecture led by Pittsburgh's William Guy on his translation.
- I corresponded with Barry Powell and Joe Sachs through email on their translations.



Ancient variation occurs in lines 1.350-351 of Codex Venetus A. Used in the body text is “ἐπὶ οἴνόπῳ πόντον” – “over the wine-dark sea.” Above the main text is the word “ΜΕΛΑΝΑ” meaning “black,” emphasizing “wine-dark.” Indicated in the margin, however, is “ἄπειρονα” – “boundless sea” as an alternative to “wine-dark.” For this passage, some translators, such as Alexander, with her “looked out to depths as dark as wine,” follow the main text of Venetus A, but others, such as Lattimore, with his “looking out on the infinite water,” follow the scholion.



In a representation of Achilles at 1.350 from Gareth Hinds' recent graphic novel (published March 12, 2019), it appears to represent Aristarchus' alternative reading meaning “boundless sea.” The five translations Hinds used (Butler, Rieu, Lattimore, Fitzgerald, and Fagles) also use this alternative reading.

Discussion

- Generally, in 1.4-5, ἐλώρια is present and typically translated as “prey” as well as πᾶσι, translated as “all.”
- Powell and Sachs take an alternative solution, preferred by Zenodotus, where they use δαῖτα (translated as “feast”) in place of ἐλώρια.
- Generally, in 1.350, οἴνοπα πόντον is present and translated to mean something along the lines of “wine-dark sea.”
- Powell and Sachs take an alternative reading – preferred by Aristarchus, and mentioned in the scholia of Venetus A - ἄπειρονα πόντον, which is translated to mean something along the lines of “boundless sea.”

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Classics Department, my mentor Dr. Edwin Floyd, the First Experiences in Research Program, Dr. Barry Powell and Dr. Joe Sachs, and Dr. William Guy.

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References

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