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Kyprias, Poet of the *Iliaka*

In this paper I will explore the implications of a lengthy inscription, found at Bodrum in 1995 and dated to the second century BCE, which lists literary figures of Halikarnassos, including Kyprias as the composer of the *Iliaka* (see S. Isager, *ZPE* 1998; with H. Lloyd-Jones, *ZPE* 1999 [twice]). The first issue to address is whether the inscription bolsters an ancient attribution, usually dismissed, of the *Kypria* to Kyprias of Halikarnassos. A second issue to address is whether the inscription is evidence for an alternative version of the *Kypria*, and by implication, evidence for multiformity in the *Kypria* tradition. I will argue that 1) Kyprias is more of a legendary than historical figure, invented to serve local pride, and 2) that the *Iliaka* is an alternative title of the *Kypria* which suggests a larger dimension for the *Kypria* tradition than commonly assumed, but not necessarily multiformity.

The *Kypria*, most commonly attributed to Stasinus of Cyprus, was attributed to Kyprias by Demodamas (ca. 3rd c. BC), as reported at Athenaeus 15.682d (test. 8 Bernabé=test. 12, fr. 4 Davies): "Demodamas from Halikarnassos or Miletus says in his book on Halikarnassos that it is a work of Kyprios of Halikarnassos." At Athenaeus 8.334b (test. 9 Bernabé=7 Davies) it is said that the poet of the *Kypria* is "some Cyprian or Stasinus or whoever he likes to be called." Here some have been tempted to change "Kyprios" to "Kyprias," producing a second reference to this poet. Additional evidence for Kyprias may lie behind the report by Photius that Proclus used a paroxytone accent for the title of the *Kypria* (test. 7 Bernabé = 11 Davies). Of course the name "Kyprias" could have resulted from textual confusion about the title "Kypria" and the adjective "Kyprios;" nonetheless the inscription and the testimony of Demodamas seem to confirm that Kyprias was regarded in Halikarnassos as a local poet.

This, however, does not prove the existence of Kyprias as a historical person. Information about poets in antiquity tends to be untrustworthy (Lefkowitz, *The Lives of the Greek Poets*); in particular testimony for Cyclic poets has been suspected (see Davies, *The Epic Cycle*, 5-6). Yet following Nagy's lead on ancient biography of poets (e.g. in *Best of the Achaeans*), we can consider Kyprias a legendary figure created at Halikarnassos to serve local pride. Undoubtedly the poet's name stems from the title "*Kypria*" or the adjective "Cyprian," perhaps from willful etymological manipulation, not confusion.

Of particular interest is the inscription's claim that Kyprias wrote a poem entitled *Iliaka*. This detail is relevant to the question of multiformity in the *Kypria* tradition, recently argued by Finkelberg (*CP* 2000). A key point for Finkelberg is that Herodotus and Proclus famously differ on an episode in the *Kypria*. Huxley (*GRBS* 1967) argued on the basis of the ancient testimony about Kyprias of Halikarnassos that Herodotus of Halikarnassos knew a different, Halikarnassan *Kypria*. But Herodotus does not know of Kyprias (else he certainly would mention him, since he arguing against the attribution of the *Kypria* to Homer). And Huxley's hypothetical Halikarnassan *Kypria* does not have the same title as the epic ascribed to Kyprias in the inscription. The inscription does not seem helpful in solving the Herodotus/Proclus variance, which I still consider unsolved.

Kyprias is probably a relatively late invention, but the *Iliaka* of the inscription is probably the *Kypria*. A fragment from the beginning of the poem refers to the "Iliac war" (1 Bernabé=1 Davies). The variance in title probably need not suggest multiformity in content, even if multiformity within an early oral tradition of the *Kypria* is reasonable enough. The new, more generic, title would be required to counter the (probably more legitimate) claims on the poem by Cyprus. As well, the title may indicate the dimension of the *Kypria* outside of its place in the Epic Cycle. Proclus indicates that in the Cycle the poem went only up to the *Iliad*, but some testimonia may suggest that originally the poem gave an account of the whole war (Burgess, *TAPA* 1996). The alternative title in the inscription may recognize the state of the *Kypria* as a poem independent of its truncated form in the Epic Cycle.

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