

- p. 288 ". . . I myself believe, though with certain reservations, that the main processes of composition of the two great poems were carried out by two separate singers.

In any case it is misleading to think of genius all concentrated in one man, the monumental composer. Behind him there undoubtedly lay oral heroic material of very high quality; his special gifts were those of integration, and above all the imaginative concept of a large-scale unity. This idea did not have to recur independently; if the Odyssey was subsequent to the Iliad it seems likely that there was some degree of imitation, whether by the same composer or another.

- p. 297 In assessing all these vocabulary differences we must remain keenly aware of the truth that even a single author will often favour certain words and certain expressions at different stages of his development and decline, so that particular words, phrases and locutions, often of quite general and trivial meaning, will occur relatively frequently at one stage and very rarely, or even not at all, at another. This has been adequately demonstrated in the case of Aristophanes, Milton and others; and it may be recalled that the dialogues of Plato have been set in order of composition, to the satisfaction of generations of Platonic scholars, by the 'stylometric criterion' - in particular by Plato's changing habits in the use of connecting particles.<sup>1</sup> Style
- p. 298

Footnote<sup>1</sup> Aristophanes: e.g. C. J. Ruijgh, L'Élément achein dans la langue grecque (Assen, 1957), pp. 19-21. Milton: D.C.C. Young, Greece and Rome, n.s. 6 (1959), 96ff., especially his remarks on pp. 107f. and reference to G. Udny Yule, The Statistical Study of Literary Vocabulary (Cambridge, 1944). Much of Mr. Young's article is amusing, but as one-sided as anything he is attacking. Plato: R. Simeterre, Rev. des Études grecques, 58 (1945), 151ff.

15. Stages of Development

- p. 316 One of the difficulties of Homeric studies is that the critic tends to get caught up in the web of his own hypotheses. He starts out by determining to keep them in their place, but from time to time they take on the deceptive appearance not of hypothesis but of fact. The picture presented so far of the development of oral poetry and the origin of the Homeric songs is bound to be false or distorted in some places and over-simplified or excessively a priori in others. In this chapter, . . . I wish to re-examine certain basic assumptions more closely and finally to emphasize once again the complexities of oral poetry and the utter impossibility of assigning its threads and themes to particular, determinable people or influences.

- p. 316 One of the primary assumptions is that of the monumental composition of each poem in the 8th century. By 'monumental composition' I have meant the making, on the basis of preexisting traditional materials, of an aggregated and expanded poem of great size and with a strong central theme; and as the agent of such composition it has seemed necessary to imagine a single singer for most of each poem. Neither a corporation of singers nor a later rhapsodic effort could have achieved the same result - . . . Nor can the poems have gradually coalesced, in some other way, without individual design - . . .

- p. 318 The hypothesis of monumental composition, then, remains unshaken.