Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies

Dr. James Bertie Norman Research Report Classical Association Conference 23/03/24

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* **Summary of Research**: I examined the significance of burial rites in Patroclus’ speech in Iliad 23.71-76. Specifically, I argued that, through a close analysis of the language, Patroclus indicates that he is admitted into the underworld despite his lack of burial. The research for this was significant for two reasons. First, it suggested that Homeric epic should be read as a coherent whole, since this new interpretation of Patroclus’ speech conforms to other accounts in Homer where the unburied dead can be in Hades. Second, the paper highlighted the faults of a current anthropological framework of applying cross-cultural model of death ritual onto Homeric eschatological accounts. The present paper established that Homeric presentations of the afterlife are distinct from those of other cultures.
* **Academic progress**: The paper delivered at the CA conference has since been submitted as an article for the *Classical Philology* journal and is under review.
* **Significance of Funding**: The funding provided by SPHS covered registration and travelling costs.
* **Reception of Research**: The paper was received well, with two questions being asked by Douglas Cairns: namely to what extent are the other presentations of the dead lead by the social implications of burial? This question allowed me to move away from the close reading approach of the Greek in the paper, and examine the issue intertextually. The reception of the panel audience enabled me to revise and add relevant material of burial from wider sources into my article.