Many of the imagined difficulties in these two lines owe their existence to the prejudiced notion that a poet who alludes to the text of another poet must reproduce that poet’s text. And yet, perhaps no more artistically than here, the poet of the *Megara* has echoed several of his predecessors and added original touches.

"Ως ἀν' ἐφη' τὰ δὲ οἱ θαλερότερα δάκρυα μῆλων κόλπων εἰς ἰμερέντα κατά βλεψάον εὔέντο"

In Homer, however, the adjective θαλερός when in this position is followed by the phrase κατὰ δάκρων χέωντες (eight times in the *Odyssey*, twice in the *Iliad*). The *Megara* poet retained the verb in tmesi and in the same position but moved it to the following line, thereby giving himself room after δάκρυα to incorporate an appealing metaphor ("tears bigger than apples") which he remembered from Theocritus 14. 38: θάλπη ρηλον. τήνῳ τε αἱ δάκρυα; μάλα δεόντω. "Go and cuddle your other friend. Your tears are for him, are they? Then let them flow as big as apples." [Gow] Cf. also Theocritus 14. 32; ἐκλαίει ἐξεπαίνας θαλερότερον ὣ παρὰ ματοί; In 1. 57 the *Megara* poet substituted Apollonius’ βλεψάον between the preverb and verb for δάκρυα, which would normally appear there (cf. also A.R. i. 1067, καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ βλεψάον ὑσα δάκρυα χεύοντες ἐφατε;[3]).

The comparison of tears with apples (μῆλων) in our passage is thus defended against Sitzler’s πυρὶς and Wakefield’s μῆλων just as μάλα is defended in Theocritus against Wilamowitz’ ἀλλά (see Gow, *Theocritus* II, 254). Likewise, Hartung’s βεόντων should perhaps be retained in Theocritus against Wilamowitz’ βεώντω (confined to inscriptions) on the ground that the poet of the *Megara* in his allusion has also used a plural verb with neuter plural subject (δάκρυα ... εὔέντο).

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2) Cf. also P. Oxy. 2075 fr. 3 = Hes. Fr. 116.6 (Merkelbach-West) in the same position κατὰ δίκρων χέων[νσα and note Hunt’s conjecture at 1. 7, κατὰ κόλπαπον (cf. *Megara* 57).
3) The allusion becomes even more apparent if it is noted that Homer will occasionally use ὀφθαλμοὺς between κατὰ and χέω (e.g. *II.* 16. 344, 20. 421; *Od.* 22. 88) but never βλεσάον.