

RENÉ NÜNLIST

The Ancient Critic at Work

Terms and Concepts of
Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia



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THE ANCIENT CRITIC AT WORK

The large but underrated corpus of Greek scholia, the marginal and interlinear notes found in manuscripts, is a very important source for ancient literary criticism. The evidence of the scholia significantly adds to and enhances the picture that can be gained from studying the relevant treatises (such as Aristotle's *Poetics*): scholia also contain concepts that are not found in the treatises, and they are indicative of how the concepts are actually put to use in the progressive interpretation of texts. The book also demonstrates that it is vital to study both ancient terminology and the cases where a particular phenomenon is simply paraphrased. Nineteen thematic chapters provide a repertoire of the various terms and concepts of ancient literary criticism. The relevant witnesses are extensively quoted in Greek and English translation. A glossary of Greek terms (with translation) and several indices enable the book also to be used for reference.

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THE ANCIENT CRITIC
AT WORK

*Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism
in Greek Scholia*

RENÉ NÜNLIST

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This book fulfils a promise that was made in the course of developing and writing what is now commonly referred to as the *Basler Kommentar* on the *Iliad*. Though my main focus was on other questions, I was nevertheless able to do more than just preliminary studies for the present book. It is therefore a pleasant duty to acknowledge the financial support that I received at the time from the Swiss National Foundation and the Max-Geldner Foundation (Basel). The actual basis for the book was laid during a junior sabbatical leave from Brown University, which I had the privilege to spend at the University of Cologne as a fellow of the Alexander-von-Humboldt Foundation. I am grateful to all these institutions.

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Providence, Rhode Island

René Nünlist

Introduction

Ancient literary criticism is not the least studied subject of classical studies. The author of a new book on the topic cannot take it for granted that the field will unconditionally welcome the results of his efforts. So why this book?

A general overview of extant scholarship on ancient literary criticism recognises three major areas of interest. Scholars (i) explore the origins of ancient literary criticism (e.g. in Aristophanes or Plato)¹ or (ii) they interpret the relevant ‘technical’ treatises (Aristotle’s *Poetics*, Ps.Longinus’ *On the Sublime*, Ps.Demetrius’ *On Style*, etc.) or specific parts of them,² or (iii) they provide collections (sometimes annotated and/or translated) of relevant passages from the texts of categories (i) and/or (ii).³ Conversely, literary criticism in the scholia is an underworked topic.⁴ Given that there is an undeniable interest in ancient literary criticism, this lack of attention is surprising and, as this book attempts to demonstrate, not justified.⁵ For the scholia are apt to put into perspective and supplement the evidence that

¹ See e.g. most recently Ford (2002), Ledbetter (2003), also Harriott (1969), Kennedy (1989: Chapters 1–3).

² Scholars either focus on the single treatise, e.g. Halliwell (1986) on Aristotle’s *Poetics*, Russell (1964) on Ps.Longinus, Schenkeveld (1964) on Ps.Demetrius, etc., and see also the various articles in Laird (2006), or they present the evidence in the form of a synthesis, e.g. Grube (1965), Fuhrmann ([1973] 1992), Kennedy (1989: Chapters 4–11). The disputed authenticity of *On the Sublime* (Heath 1999) can be ignored in the present context.

³ See e.g. Lanata (1963), Russell and Winterbottom (1972), Murray (1996).

⁴ Cf. Montanari (1993: 355): ‘L’analisi di quanto c’è nella scoliografia di terminologia retorica e di ricorso a concetti retorici è un lavoro che è stato fatto in modo molto parziale e limitato.’ The last decades have seen only one monograph that is entirely devoted to the subject: Meijering (1987), which despite its great merits leaves sufficient room for further research. The same applies *mutatis mutandis* to other contributions, such as the seminal article by N. J. Richardson (1980). On earlier scholarship see below.

⁵ It may be pointless to speculate about the reasons for this lack of attention. It is, however, important to note that the organisational principle of most studies on ancient literary criticism is the individual ancient scholar. Scholia, on the other hand, are very often ‘anonymous’ (see below on sources) and difficult to date, which is not amenable to this format.

can be gathered from the treatises.⁶ Both scholia and treatises have their respective merits and limitations, and much can be gained if one allows one type of source to throw light on the other and *vice versa*.

An important strength of treatises (as compared with the scholia) is their systematic approach. The selection of topics is premeditated and follows a meaningful order. The single phenomenon is given a definition and usually illustrated with an example. Such a systematic approach is not to be found in the scholia because the selection of topics and the order are determined by the text that is commented on (to say nothing of the composite nature and brevity of scholia, on which see below). If one is inclined to deplore the fact that treatises, on occasion, provide too much theory and too little application to actual examples, the scholia probably err in the opposite direction. On the positive side, scholia discuss a much greater number of passages than treatises do. That is to say, the particular term or concept is applied more extensively, whereas treatises tend to focus on one or a few passages (often the *locus classicus* that fits the description particularly well).⁷ Since scholia comment on many passages, they can provide a more complex (occasionally even contradictory) picture of the particular literary device.⁸ In addition, the scholia attempt, at least in principle, to come to grips with texts in their entirety, whereas treatises select single passages that help make the particular point. As a result, the scholia provide a very good insight into how critics made use of the various scholarly tools in the daily business of explaining the Greek 'classics' in their entirety (hence *The Ancient Critic at Work*).

This also applies, no less importantly, to those questions of literary criticism that the treatises do not discuss at all or only *en passant*. Here again the scholia can provide important supplements to the evidence gained from the treatises.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE MATERIAL AND ITS METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Two forms of presentation are in principle available for this type of research. Either the main organising principle is the Greek terms, and the account essentially follows, except for the alphabetical order, the format of a lexicon,

⁶ As to reconstructing the pre-Aristotelian origins of literary criticism, the scholia prove to be of little help.

⁷ Rhetorical handbooks, in particular, are characterised by the recurrence of the same few examples that illustrate a specific phenomenon.

⁸ Such contradictions may of course be the result of different authorship.

or one attempts to form clusters of notes that have a significant common denominator (here, a particular concept of literary criticism), irrespective of whether they make use of exactly the same terminology.⁹ Both methods have their strengths and their weaknesses. However, the second seemed preferable for the present book for the following reasons.

Firstly, the scholia often comment on questions of literary criticism without recourse to 'standard' technical vocabulary. Instead the critic simply gives a periphrastic description of a phenomenon for which others may use a technical term. Or there may be no technical term at all.¹⁰ With a strict focus on Greek terms these instances are usually lost.

Secondly, a focus on Greek terms works best when the material under discussion is fairly homogeneous. In such a case, one is entitled to start from the assumption that the same term has a similar meaning throughout.¹¹ However, a very heterogeneous corpus such as the scholia does not fulfil this condition. In the course of doing research for this book it became increasingly clear that the individual terms are often used with so little consistency that a presentation of the evidence which takes the Greek terms as its primary organising principle does not seem advisable.

These two difficulties tip the balance in favour of a presentation which generally concentrates on the underlying concepts. Consequently, it combines and discusses the Greek material under modern rubrics.¹² This entails the potential risk that the modern scholar imposes on the material concepts that are essentially foreign to his ancient predecessors. The problem is a serious one, and an effort has been made throughout to explain the viewpoint of the ancient scholars and to bring out how *they* understand the phenomenon under consideration.¹³ Whether this attempt has been successful is for the reader to decide. Moreover, the discussion of the particular concept does, of course, draw attention to technical vocabulary and discuss

⁹ The third organising principle, by individual critic, is *a priori* excluded for the reasons given in n. 5. The two methods described in the main text can also be referred to as 'semasiological' and 'onomasiological' respectively.

¹⁰ The absence of a term does not *a priori* mean that the underlying concept is unknown, as Aristarchus knew well (see schol. A *Il.* 14.172^c *Ariston.*).

¹¹ This assumption may, in the individual case, need to be corrected, but this does not disprove the general method as such.

¹² In this connection it is worth mentioning that studies with a professed focus on Greek terminology (e.g. N. J. Richardson 1980, Meijering 1987) also tend to incorporate materials that have been collected according to the method advocated here.

¹³ It is important to note that, in any case, this 'requires a kind of translation: primary material *has* to be recast in "alien" concepts or formats in order to be described at all': Laird (2006: 7), who argues that the principle formulated by Kennedy (1989: xii: 'it [is] best to expound the ancient critics in their own terms rather than to recast their thought in alien concepts') is an 'ideal [that] can never be realized'. See also the preceding n.

its semantics whenever it seems appropriate. Together with the Glossary of Greek terms (pages 368–86), this should enable the reader to have the best of both worlds.

The emphasis on the ancient outlook has an impact on how secondary literature is treated in this book. Modern titles which discuss the ancient view of the particular term or concept take a privileged position, and references to such titles try to be exhaustive or at least representative. Conversely, no attempt has been made to document consistently how the literary phenomenon in question is explained in modern scholarship (without recourse to ancient explanations). Such references are given only sparingly because an explanation of how modern scholars understand the various concepts lies beyond the scope of this book. This can also affect its diction. At times, the account resorts to a straightforward description ('this passage is an example of X') in order to avoid the potentially cumbersome repetition of phrases such as 'this passage is said to be an example of X'. Straightforward description of this kind should, however, not be taken as a sign of agreement on the part of modern scholars in general or the author of this book in particular. The goal throughout is to present the viewpoint of ancient scholars.

As to secondary literature that does deal with literary criticism in Greek scholia, it has already been mentioned that it is scarce, despite a noticeable increase in recent years. Conversely, an interest in, as it was called at the time, 'aesthetic' questions inspired a certain number of studies and dissertations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and they often provide valuable insights and/or collections of relevant scholia (for details see the individual chapters below). There are, however, recurrent difficulties which recommend caution. One is an overemphasis on *Quellenforschung* that often results in two mutually dependent shortcomings. These scholars are often too confident that they can positively identify the source of a scholion.¹⁴ And once they have done so with apparent success, they often stop short and do not look closely enough at the individual instance of the literary phenomenon under discussion and its potential complexities. The latter problem is a general one in that the methods of the period enabled scholars to deal particularly well with questions of textual criticism, whereas literary criticism was often considered second rate and therefore not always

¹⁴ This problem is particularly virulent in the works of Adolf Roemer and, to a lesser degree, those of his pupils, whose criterion for identifying Aristarchean notes often seems to be little more than their own agreement with the point made (M. Schmidt 1976: 14, 23). More generally see the survey of earlier scholarship on the sources of the bT-scholia to the *Iliad* by Schmidt (1976: 9–74), whose conclusions are mostly negative.

pursued with sufficient acumen.¹⁵ Despite these difficulties, however, the relevant studies must not be underrated in their importance and can often be used with great benefit.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part (Chapters 1 to 12) deals with the more general concepts of literary criticism which ancient scholars recognised in various texts and did not *a priori* consider typical of a particular poet or genre. For the sequence of the chapters in this first part, an attempt has been made to proceed from the more general to the more specific (but to keep thematically related chapters together). The second part deals with literary devices that were primarily seen as typical of a particular poet (Homer, Chapters 13 to 18) or genre (drama, Chapter 19).¹⁶

Regarding the distribution of the material over nineteen thematic chapters, it should be clear that its primary purpose is to give the book a transparent structure in order to make it more user-friendly. The risk of separating what belongs together is reduced by cross-referencing, a thematic index and a comprehensive *index locorum*. Besides, a ‘compartmentalised’ presentation of the material is perhaps the most appropriate for a genre that has been described in terms of an ‘atomisation’ (Most 1985: 36–8) or ‘morselisation’ (Goldhill 1999: 411–18) of the texts that are commented on.

As to the selection of topics, it goes without saying that approaches and methods of literary criticism are the central focus of attention.¹⁷ Within this group, preference is given to the topics that are discussed prominently in the scholia because, unlike the treatises, the scholia have so far not received the attention they deserve. For the same reason this book does not normally cover questions of literary criticism that are primarily dealt with in the treatises if they do not play an important role in the scholia too. The main criterion in this case is whether or not the evidence of the scholia substantially adds to that of the treatises and other sources.¹⁸ In

¹⁵ It is no less telling that the authors of such ‘aesthetic’ studies often oscillate between defending and deprecating their topic: e.g. Roemer (1879: v–vi), Lehnert (1896: 5–6), Bachmann (1904: 34–5), Griesinger (1907: 1–3).

¹⁶ Readers will notice that the first part, too, is to some extent dominated by examples that are taken from the Homeric scholia. This is due to the overwhelming position of Homer in ancient scholarship (resulting, among other things, in a corpus of scholia that is quantitatively and qualitatively far superior to any other) and does not contradict the principle of presentation advocated here.

¹⁷ For a brief description of questions other than literary criticism in the scholia see below.

¹⁸ Generally speaking, no topic seems to be altogether absent from the scholia, but on occasion their discussions seem to add comparatively little to what we know from the treatises. Consequently, the following topics are either not discussed at all or only *en passant*: (i) verbal composition (incl. questions of word choice, word order, euphony), on which see e.g. Schenkeveld (1964), Janko (2000); (ii) the various theories of style (e.g. ‘grand, middle, plain’; but cf. Chapter 9), on which see e.g. Russell (1964: xxx–xlII, with bibl.); (iii) biographical data, on which see e.g. Blum (1977),

accordance with the decision in favour of an onomasiological approach, the book does, of course, include scholia that do not expressly address questions of literary criticism, but nevertheless reflect such concepts in their argumentation.¹⁹

There is, especially from an ancient point of view, no clear-cut distinction between literary criticism and rhetoric. The two areas often merge into one another; or rather, literary criticism did not exist as an independent discipline but was a part of rhetoric (and *grammatike*).²⁰ It seems, nevertheless, justifiable for a study on literary criticism not to try to cover the domain of rhetoric exhaustively. The more ‘technical’ rhetorical figures such as *epanalepsis*, *isocolon*, *homoiooteuton*, etc. do not really belong to ‘literary criticism’ and, more importantly, are better studied on the basis of the relevant rhetorical handbooks.²¹

Finally, it will be self-evident that this book does not aspire to completeness in the strict sense. The selection of topics intends to give a representative overview of the major questions of literary criticism that are discussed in the scholia. The examples and references given in the various chapters occasionally strive for exhaustiveness, but are more often, especially in the case of widely used concepts and terms, strictly *exempli gratia*.²² Such a selectivity might seem questionable (cf. Ford 1991: 147: ‘we are always taking from them [sc. the Homeric scholia] what we find

Arrighetti (1987, 1993). The only poet whose biography plays more than a marginal role in the scholia is Pindar (see Lefkowitz 1991: esp. 72–110), in particular the relation to his ‘rivals’ Simonides and Bacchylides (see Chapter 10). In general, however, the bulk of the evidence on the lives of Greek poets comes from sources other than scholia (see e.g. Lefkowitz 1981).

¹⁹ See, for example, Nicanor’s discussion of the punctuation in *Il.* 18.246–8 (schol. *A Il.* 18.247–8 *Nic.*, discussed in Chapter 4).

²⁰ On the interrelationship between literary criticism and rhetoric see e.g. Classen (1993). Some scholars (e.g. Arrighetti in response to Classen’s paper, see Montanari 1993: 358) argue that one should not speak of ‘literary criticism’, because ancient critics do not do so themselves. This, however, would seem a restriction similar to the limitations of a strict focus on Greek terms (see above). The *grammatike*, defined e.g. by Eratosthenes (*ap. schol. D. T.* p. 160.10–11 Hilgard) as ἕξις παντελῆς ἐν γράμμασι (‘the complete skill in literature’, see Schenkeveld 1993: 263), could no doubt entail questions of literary criticism. However, the famous κρίσις ποιημάτων (‘critical judgment of poems’) in the opening section of the *grammatike technē* by Dionysius Thrax (p. 6.2 Uhlig) should not be called into play, since it appears to concern matters of authenticity (Schenkeveld 1993: 264 n. 2).

²¹ The relevant material is usefully collected by Ernesti (1795), Volkman (1885), Lausberg ([1960] 1990), Anderson (2000). For a collection of Iliadic scholia see Erbe (VII: 166–92), but several of his categories seem to be grammatical rather than rhetorical (e.g. infinitive for imperative, etc.). As for Lausberg ([1960] 1990), readers are advised to use the German original. The benefit of the English translation (1998) is impaired by inaccurate translations and typographical errors.

²² The following rule of thumb applies: lists that give up to, say, five examples and, more importantly, add a paraphrase of the scholion (or the passage that is commented on) usually provide a selection that is meant to be representative.

congenial and discarding the rest'), especially if it results in the suppression of relevant evidence. In the present case, an attempt has been made to provide a platform for 'dissenting voices' too. If none are cited, this should be taken as an indication that I could not find one that expressly disagreed with this particular point or methodological concept.²³ As to completeness itself, it seems very unlikely that it can be achieved with such a large and heterogeneous corpus as the scholia and with the onomasiological approach chosen here.

THE MATERIAL AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

The focus on literary criticism determined the selection of primary source material. A systematic analysis has been applied to the scholia on the poets Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Callimachus, Theocritus, Apollonius of Rhodes and the prose writer Lucian. Conversely, the scholia on more 'technical' poetry (Aratus, Nicander, Oppian) rarely deal with questions of literary criticism. The same holds true, albeit for different reasons, for the scholia on the *Batrachomyomachia*, Lycophron and on most prose authors: historiographers (Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon), Plato, the orators (Aeschines, Demosthenes, etc.) and 'technical' prose (e.g. Hippocrates or Dionysius Thrax).²⁴ Consequently, these other scholia have only been studied selectively, usually in the form of index searches for specific terms. Within the group of 'poetic' scholia, *scholia vetera* and *recentiora* have both been taken into account (provided they have been edited), but the argument of the book mostly rests on *scholia vetera*.²⁵

In light of the complementary relation between the scholia and the technical treatises (see above), the latter have been taken into account whenever appropriate.

The interpretation of the Homeric scholia was accompanied by regular consultation of Eustathius' commentaries, especially where the latter helped elucidate the meaning of the former. It is, however, not the goal of this book to analyse Eustathius' terms and concepts of literary criticism in their own right.²⁶

²³ To include instances of implicit disagreement would have been impractical.

²⁴ For a useful description of the various *Scholiencorpora* see Dickey (2007, esp. chapter 2, with extensive bibl.).

²⁵ On the conventions of quotation see below pages 19-20.

²⁶ Much relevant information has been collected by van der Valk in the prefaces to his edition (see also n. 38 below).

As indicated in the subtitle of the book, the focus is on Greek materials. It is clear, though, that, for example, Servius on Vergil or Donatus on Terence draw on essentially the same tradition as their Greek peers. However, a systematic incorporation of Latin materials would have required adding a completely new dimension and discussing the relation between Greek and Latin terminology (despite the fact that Latin commentators often use Greek terms). It seemed preferable to proceed step by step and to leave such a comparison to future research. As a result, Latin sources are taken into account only selectively.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOLIA

One goal of this book is to make the scholia better accessible. In order to help the reader deal with the material (in particular the scholia that are not quoted and translated here), it will be useful to describe the external characteristics of scholia, starting with the ones that can be an obstacle to a correct understanding.²⁷ Most important are:

Composite nature: scholia can consist of up to five basic elements: (i) the lemma (i.e. the verbatim quotation of the passage under discussion; on the principles of quoting see below); (ii) a translation of (part of) the passage; (iii) a paraphrase of (part of) the passage;²⁸ (iv) quotation(s) (e.g. of parallel passages); (v) the commentator's own words (e.g. explanations). The identification of these five basic elements can be complicated by the following facts: (a) the transition from one element to the next can be very abrupt (cf. on brevity below); (b) all five elements are written in essentially the same language;²⁹ (c) all five elements can occur several times in a single scholion. Modern editions of scholia try to clarify the picture by highlighting the lemma (usually by spacing it out) and/or setting it off (colon or square bracket after the lemma), by putting quotation marks

²⁷ The present account only lists a few salient points. For a general introduction to reading scholia see Dickey (2007).

²⁸ Obviously, it is impossible to draw a sharp dividing line between translation and paraphrase. The latter can, but need not be, introduced by expressions such as ὁ δὲ λόγος (τοιούτου), τὸ λεγόμενον (τοιούτου), τὸ δὲ ἕξις (τοῦ λόγου), ὁ νοῦς or ἡ διάνοια. Note, however, that τὸ ἕξις can also introduce a repetition of the passage under discussion which re-establishes the natural word order (also expressed by ἡ ἀκολουθία), or may simply mean 'what comes next'.

²⁹ The general point perhaps needs to be qualified. Lemma and quotation reproduce, of course, the language of the text under discussion, whereas the three other parts are written in a generic Attic Greek, often with distinctly late features (on which see below). However, it will be evident that a modern reader finds τὸ δὲ εἶπες "εἶπας" Ἀρίσταρχος γράφει, κακῶς· εἰπῶν γὰρ αἰεὶ καὶ εἴποιμι λέγομεν (schol. b *Il.* 1.106e *Did.*) more difficult to understand than 'Aristarchus writes εἶπας as εἶπας, wrongly; for we always say εἰπῶν and εἴποιμι'.

around verbatim quotations³⁰ and by separating the various notes on the same line (a, b, c, etc.). Even so the reader must reckon with abrupt changes that can affect virtually every aspect: subject-matter, level of sophistication, etc. To be on the safe side, it is advisable not to take it for granted that what appears as one scholion in the printed edition automatically represents the unequivocal view of a single scholar on one particular issue. This composite and heterogeneous nature of the scholia also advises against making rash generalisations with regard to the scholia on a particular author, let alone the corpus as a whole.

Brevity: scholia can be very short and elliptical, and take many things for granted that the reader is expected to infer for himself or herself. There are three possible sources for this apparent laconism: (i) the original commentator; (ii) the scholar(s) who excerpted the commentaries (ὑπομνήματα), especially when transferring the notes to the more limited space on the margins of the manuscript;³¹ (iii) textual corruption. Of these, the second factor is no doubt the one that is most often to be held responsible for the brevity of the scholia. Textual corruption is particularly insidious because it comprises a component of randomness, whereas in the two cases of deliberate brevity one can at least assume that what is left is meant to make sense. But even then, the omissions can be puzzling and create difficult ambiguities.³² When trying to fill these gaps by inference, the modern reader is well advised to apply a careful analysis to the various sources of information, not least to the text that is commented on in the scholion.³³

Different system of reference: in the absence of the modern system of consistently numbering ancient texts (e.g. *Il.* 1.366), ancient scholars refer to passages by means of verbatim quotation, usually the word(s) from the beginning of the line (e.g. ῥαχόμεθ' ἐς Θήβην, i.e. *Il.* 1.366).³⁴ This applies both to the lemma and to quotations within the scholion. One consequence is that, contrary to modern practice, the lemma does not necessarily quote the word(s) which is/are actually explained in the scholion. The quotation helps the ancient reader to find the passage as such (hence the focus on the

³⁰ Unfortunately, this only applies to actual quotations, but usually not to translations or paraphrases.

³¹ The exact details of the textual history of scholia are extremely difficult to reconstruct (see e.g. Erbse 1960 and below pages 17-19).

³² For example, the scholia regularly omit the subject of the sentence. This often leads to the question whether the subject is the poet or a character (cf. below n. 68) or whether the subject is the same as in the previous sentence, which should not *a priori* be taken for granted.

³³ In recognition of this fact, the scholia quoted in this book will normally be contextualised by means of a brief paraphrase of the passage under discussion. Readers will nevertheless find it useful to have a copy at hand of the texts that are primarily commented on in the scholia (see above).

³⁴ There are, of course, other systems of reference such as intermarginal notes written above the word(s) in question or corresponding signs.

beginning of the line), just as line numbers do in a modern commentary. The specific point of reference within the line need not be spelled out as part of the quotation.³⁵ The same system also applies to quotations (e.g. of parallels) within the scholion. A few words from the beginning of the line have the same function as ‘cf. *Il.* 1.366’ in a modern commentary. Occasionally, the quotation of the first few words can even refer to a passage of several lines (i.e. ‘cf. *Il.* 1.366ff.’).³⁶ The ancient reader was expected to supply the rest for himself by either remembering or, less probably, looking up the relevant passage.

Late Greek: in terms of language, the scholia often display characteristics that are typical of late Greek. This applies to both vocabulary and syntax. Readers who are primarily familiar with classical Greek may profit from consulting specialised works of reference in addition to their usual handbooks.³⁷

Technical vocabulary: the general difficulties of late vocabulary are increased by technical jargon that often comes from a grammatical or rhetorical background. Here again it is advisable to consult specialised works of reference.³⁸

In addition to the characteristics that can impede a proper understanding, other features worth mentioning are recurrent patterns of argumentation. It should, however, be borne in mind that scholia are a very heterogeneous ‘genre’. The features listed in this section recur with some frequency, but do not, of course, apply to all the scholia.

³⁵ Modern editions of scholia usually ‘correct’ the lemma by means of supplementing and excising (e.g. schol. *A Il.* 1.404a *Ariston*. {αἰγολών·} ὁ γὰρ αὖτε (βίη οὐ πατρὸς ἀμείνων)). Such an editorial practice no doubt makes life easier for a modern reader, but is likely to be foreign to ancient practice (van Thiel 1989).

³⁶ E.g. schol. *T Il.* 15.64c *ex. (Did.?)* quotes only the first few words from *Il.* 1.366 and *Od.* 23.310, but the context makes it clear that the commentator has in mind *Il.* 1.366–92 and *Od.* 23.310–42.

³⁷ For morphological and syntactical peculiarities, there is a very useful list by Schneider (1910a) based on Apollonius Dyscolus but equally applicable to the scholia and other ‘technical’ texts. Grammars on the Greek of the New Testament (e.g. Blass and Debrunner 2001) are also helpful. For general vocabulary, LSJ can be supplemented by Lampe’s *Patristic Greek Lexicon* (1961) and the old *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (Stephanus 1831–65); see also the next n.

³⁸ For grammatical terminology see Leidenroth (1884: only words beginning with α; 1903: words beginning with ε) and Heubach (1885), who both focus on the Homeric scholia. More generally see the annotated word indices in Uhlig (1910), Schneider (1910b), Lallot (1997: II 423–39), Dalimier (2001: 437–75) and Dickey (2007: 219–65); cf. also the grammatical dictionary by Bécarea Botas (1985, not always reliable). Terms of textual criticism in the scholia are explained by Heubach (1889, 1903). For rhetorical terminology see especially Ernesti (1795), Volkmann (1885), Lausberg ([1960] 1990), Anderson (2000). Much can be learned for the scholia from van der Valk’s notes on Eustathius’ terminology (these notes can easily be found by means of the Index III (Keizer 1995: 299–474), which marks the annotated passages with an *). See also the Glossary of Greek terms on pages 368–86. The collection of critical vocabulary in papyrus commentaries to the *Iliad* by Nardi (1977) does not give explanations and is mostly superseded by Erbse’s indices.

A very common, probably timeless, principle for a commentator is to compare similar passages and to back the argument with parallels. The ancient equivalent for ‘cf.’ in a modern commentary is ὡς (τό), οἷον (τό), which is followed by a quotation of the (beginning of the) relevant passage (see above on system of reference). However, the scholia can omit such a comparative term, and the reader is expected to make the right inference about the function of the quoted passage (see above on brevity). On occasion, such notes provide clusters of parallels, which points to a systematic treatment of the relevant phenomenon.

Systematic study of entire texts and comparison of relevant passages also underly the notes which argue that the passage under discussion contradicts (μάχεσθαι, διαφωνεῖν) another, thereby testifying to a general concern about inconsistencies of all kinds. The scholia regularly reflect lively discussions about whether the contradiction is real or only apparent.

Another important scholarly principle is to establish a norm that is based on an examination of the entire works, for example, of a particular poet or poets in general. The scholia are rich in notes that refer to a poet’s habit (ἔθος, εἰωθέναι, σύνηθες, ἀεί, ὡς ἐπίπαιον), to what ‘is typical of poet X’ (e.g. ἀριστοφάνειον, schol. Ar. Av. 976) or ‘typical of poets’ in general (ποιητικῶς). Such notes can include the discussion of real or apparent exceptions to the rule. More generally, the scholia display a penchant for commenting on passages that are exceptional in one way or the other, because they stand out in their exceptionality and therefore catch the scholar’s eye. Such notes regularly presuppose a standard norm or pattern, often without spelling it out explicitly.

Scholia often take the form of ‘question and answer’: for example, ‘why is it that (διὰ τί) . . . ? Answer/solution (λύσις): because (ὅτι) . . .’ or the like. This goes back in essence to the period (starting probably with Aristotle) when scholars recognised ‘difficulties’ (ζητήματα) and offered ‘solutions’ (λύσεις) to overcome the problem.³⁹ The argumentative pattern ‘question and answer’ is too common to point to single authorship of the relevant notes (see below). The various λύσεις (‘solutions’) that were common in ancient scholarship include: λύσις ἐκ τῆς λέξεως (lit. ‘solution from the word/diction’, i.e. careful semantic analysis of the word or expression, including its specific context); λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου (lit. ‘solution from the character [speaking]’, see [Chapter 4](#)); λύσις ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ (lit. ‘solution from the specific moment’, i.e. careful examination of the *present* context);

³⁹ On ζητήματα and λύσεις in general see Pfeiffer (1968: 69–70). A recurrent type of ζήτημα is the recognition of contradictions and inconsistencies (both real and apparent), a topic on which the scholia have a great deal to say (see above).

λύσις ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθους (lit. ‘solution from the habit’, i.e. differences between the habits at the fictitious date of the text and ‘now’).⁴⁰

For the most part, scholia cater to an audience of readers (also suggested by the format of the manuscripts and the layout on the page). This even applies to the tragic and comic scholia. Although not completely oblivious to the performative aspect, scholars mostly address questions that a reader of the plays might have (see [Chapter 19](#)).⁴¹

Ancient commentators regularly take issue with how their predecessors or colleagues treat the passage under discussion.⁴² Polemics are not unusual in that connection. The predecessors and colleagues often remain anonymous and are referred to by the indefinite pronoun τινές (‘some’). Often the critic will have known who the τινές are, but decided not to mention them. (As an alternative explanation the expression τινές can also reflect the abbreviation process that the scholia underwent; see above.) In fact, τινές need not even designate more than one scholar (cf. e.g. schol. *A Il.* 3.11*b* *Ariston.*, where τινές designates Zenodotus, see Erbse *ad loc.*). However, his or their identity can be established only rarely, especially if the scholar who wrote the relevant note remains anonymous too, which is often the case in many of the scholia discussed in this book (see below on sources).

Although it does not immediately affect the argument of this book, it may be worth listing other external characteristics of scholia: they tend to peter out towards the end of the text that is commented on. This is likely to reflect, at least in part, a similar tendency of the ancient ὑπομνήματα (‘commentaries’) from which the scholia were copied onto the margins of the manuscripts.⁴³ But an increasingly tired scribe or *excerptor* can also be the cause.

Scholia regularly list alternative explanations without indicating which alternative is to be preferred. Especially in the cases where they are introduced by ἄλλως (‘alternatively’), they are likely to go back to different sources. Conversely, alternative explanations separated by ἢ (‘or’) can derive

⁴⁰ On the various λύσεις see in general Gudeman (1927); on λύσις ἐκ τῆς λέξεως in particular see Combellack (1987); on differences in habit see in general M. Schmidt (1976).

⁴¹ In this connection, an apparent terminological oddity is worth pointing out. The word ἀκούειν (lit. ‘to hear’) and its cognates regularly designate the process of reading (Schenkeveld 1992) and are rendered thus throughout this book. They should not be taken as an indication that ancient scholars were aware, for example, of the oral background and performance of the Homeric epics. This meaning of ἀκούειν derives from the ancients’ habit of reading aloud (Schenkeveld 1992: 130) or having texts read to them (Busch 2002; also [Chapter 19](#) with n. 54). However, I find it difficult to imagine that the latter method also obtained to (texts furnished with) scholia.

⁴² Aristarchus even created a particular marginal sign, the dipole peristigmene (>:), in order to indicate passages where he disagreed with Zenodotus.

⁴³ Note that even the very full commentaries by Eustathius become slightly thinner towards the end, which may be due to the fact that much has been said in the earlier parts that is then taken for granted.

from the same source. However, this general rule of thumb must be applied with caution (on the fundamental difficulty of identifying sources see below).

A rather different type of recurrent characteristic is the one that reflects the critics' outlook or even bias. Five approaches to the material, in particular, are worth mentioning:

- (i) Strong interest in moral questions. Ever since Xenophanes' criticism (DK 21 B 11), the question whether or not poetry undermines the moral basis of a society was a hotly debated topic which pervades ancient scholarship. The scholia are no exception to this rule and provide scores of examples that argue with a view to morality.⁴⁴ Immediate and important products of this moralising outlook are: the allegorical explanation of poetry, which is the most widespread and long-lived form of defence;⁴⁵ the larger issue of the educative function of literature (sometimes in combination with biographical readings).⁴⁶ In addition, scholars repeatedly argue with a view to poetic justice.⁴⁷
- (ii) Greek chauvinism. This bias occurs with particular frequency in the form of anti-Trojan polemics in the scholia to the *Iliad*, but foreigners in other texts can be affected too.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ On the moralising outlook see the classic article on πρέπων by Pohlenz (1965a), who demonstrates that the question of 'appropriateness' can cover both ethics and aesthetics; see also Landon's introduction to his Italian translation of Pohlenz (Lundon 1997c).

⁴⁵ On allegoresis see e.g. Wehrli (1928), Buffière (1956), Pépin (1976), Lamberton (1986), van der Pool (2001), Ramelli (2003, 2004), Struck (2004). The remarkably increased interest in recent scholarship provides further justification for the omission from the present book. Moreover, despite recent protests to the contrary (e.g. Konstan 2005: xxiv–xxv), Russell's point that 'the long and complex history of ancient allegorical interpretation . . . has to do with the history of religion and ethics more than with that of literary criticism' (1981: 95–6) is not completely unfounded.

⁴⁶ Scholia that attribute an educative function to poetry can be found in Schmid (1905, devoted to Homer as the source of all wisdom, see below) and Sluiter (1999: 176–9); see also the Iliadic scholia collected by Erbse (VII: 126–9). A systematic study is being prepared by J. Wißmann. For the notion 'the poet as teacher' in general see e.g. Russell (1981: 84–98). On biographical readings see the works cited in n. 18. The underlying idea in all these cases is that the 'Classics' set a model which can be imitated in various respects (morally, rhetorically, poetically, etc.).

⁴⁷ E.g. schol. bT *Il.* 5.224b ex. (Aeneas will lose his horses because he boasts about them), bT *Il.* 5.666–7b ex. (Tlepolemus dies in the duel with Sarpedon because he opened the verbal altercation, while Sarpedon is only wounded), bT *Il.* 11.146a ex. (Hippolochus' hands are cut off because he took the bribery with them; similarly, Pandarus is wounded in the tongue because he took a false oath and the lesser Ajax' mouth gets filled with dung because he insulted Idomeneus; the last point recurs in schol. AbT *Il.* 23.777 ex.), S. *Aj.* 112a (Ajax is depicted as insubordinate, so that the spectators do not find fault with the poet for having him punished by Athena); also schol. AbT *Il.* 5.67 ex.

⁴⁸ For a collection of Homeric scholia see Dittenberger (1905: 458–70), cf. also von Franz (1940: 108–10), van der Valk (1963: 474–6), N. J. Richardson (1980: 273–4). M. Schmidt (1976: 57) compares a group of tragic scholia collected by Trendelenburg (1867: 131) and makes the interesting suggestion that a strand of ancient literary criticism expected a poet to take sides out of consideration for his audience. Support for this view comes from Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Pomp.* 9, p. 234.22–4 U.-R.), who criticises Thucydides for his lack of patriotism (Meijering 1987: 268–9 n. 18): ἀρχήν

- (iii) Misogyny. Women are the other large ‘fringe group’ that can suffer from a treatment that is less than fair.⁴⁹
- (iv) Conservatism. There is a certain tendency to subscribe to the principle ‘old is good, new is bad’. This holds particularly true for poetry, where Homer is so to speak the incarnation of ‘old is good’. The poetry of the νεώτεροι (lit. ‘younger [poets]’) is regularly considered inferior (cf. Aristotle, e.g. *Po.* 1459a30–b2, 1460a5–11). The term νεώτερος/οι as such can designate any poet younger than Homer (incl. Hesiod: schol. HMPQT *Od.* 4.477, Hes. *Th.* 338), but most often seems to describe the cyclic poets or Euripides.
- (v) Commonsensical argumentation. Scholars repeatedly argue with a view to their (or their readers’) daily experience in real life and compare the passage under discussion with it. Such arguments regularly involve a certain degree of generalisation (‘this is typical of . . .’, ‘this is how . . .’). The poet is then either praised for presenting characters and things ‘how they really are’ or criticised for failing to do so.⁵⁰ Conversely, scholars may of course emphasise the difference between ‘then’ and ‘now’ (esp. with respect to the simplicity of Homeric life, cf. above on λύσις ἐκ τοῦ ἔθους). In addition to generalisation, the commonsensical approach can also lead to rationalisation.⁵¹

As before, it is important to note that these characteristics must not be generalised. By no means all scholia are moralising, chauvinist, etc. The point is that these characteristics are frequent enough to be singled out as recurrent features. There are, however, countless scholia to which none of these features applies.

TOPICS OTHER THAN LITERARY CRITICISM

Literary criticism is an important, but obviously not the only, aspect of a poetic text that caught scholars’ attention. A very brief sketch attempts to

μὲν ἐπιήσατο ὅφ’ ἦς ἤρξατο κακῶς πράττειν τὸ Ἑλληνικόν· ὅπερ Ἕλληνα ὄντα καὶ Ἀθηναῖον οὐκ ἔδει ποιεῖν (‘But he [sc. Thucydides] made the beginning at the point where Greek affairs started to decline. As a Greek and Athenian, he should not have done this’). For the notion that an historian may side with his compatriots see also Polybius 16.14.6 or, less balanced, Plutarch *de Herodoti malignitate* (*passim*).

⁴⁹ Examples from the Homeric scholia are collected by de Jong (1991).

⁵⁰ For examples see especially Chapters 8 and 11.

⁵¹ E.g. schol. bT *Il.* 2.278–82 *ex.* (Nestor’s voice is too weak to roar out above the din of the fleeing army, so Homer has Odysseus speak first and then Nestor), bT *Il.* 3.166a *ex.* (the fact that the Greek fighters have put down their armour allows for Helen to point them out to Priam; while in armour, they resembled each other too much).

give at least an idea of the vast range of topics that are discussed in the scholia.⁵²

Semantics is generally agreed to represent the oldest stratum of the materials that are combined in the extant scholia (e.g. Henrichs 1971). Starting first with the explanation of difficult poetic vocabulary (the so-called glosses), scholars increasingly extended their efforts to all kinds of semantic questions: explanation of the meaning of words and phrases (often in the simplest form of translation or paraphrase), listing of synonyms, information on usage (e.g. *hapax legomena*, correctness of diction, dialectal distinctions, etc.), description of register, semantic explanation of metaphors, katachresis, etc.⁵³ In connection with semantics, some collections of scholia (e.g. the D-scholia to the *Iliad*) regularly display a curious feature in that they also translate or paraphrase words that no ancient reader is likely to have found difficult (e.g. φέρων = κομίζων, schol. D *Il.* 1.13). The point seems to be that these scholia are not primarily meant as a semantic explanation, but reflect a school exercise the purpose of which is to help the student widen his vocabulary (Herington 1972: 29).

Linguistic questions also play a very important role in the scholia. Thus, critics regularly discuss topics such as spelling, breathings, accents, prosody (sometimes in connection with metre), morphology (incl. conjugations, principal parts, declensions, word formation, etc.),⁵⁴ dialects, parts of speech, syntactical questions of all kinds, word order, punctuation (i.e. the determination of ‘intonation units’ in the oral delivery of the text), etc.⁵⁵

⁵² The bibliographical references in this section are selective. Preference is given to fundamental studies that open up the field and to recent titles that incorporate previous scholarship.

⁵³ The *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos* consistently adduces the explanations of Homeric words given in the scholia (D and *scholia minora*), see also the relevant sections of Erbse’s indices (VI: 131–230, VII: 28–80, 227–60). On the glossographers see Dyck (1987); for Aristarchus’ semantic studies see Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 36–161), Dimpfl (1911), Severyns (1928: 103–19); on correctness of diction see Schenkeveld (1993: 281–92); on dialect glosses see Latte (1925); Iliadic scholia on dialect are collected by Erbse (VII: 84–8).

⁵⁴ In the case of morphological explanations, the scholia often simply list the relevant words (e.g. the principal parts of a verb or the words that follow the same principle of accentuation) without further explanation (see Dickey 2007: 113–14).

⁵⁵ On the grammatical principles of Aristophanes of Byzantium see Callanan (1987); on Aristarchus’ see Ax (1982), Matthaios (1999); on prosody and morphology see Lehrs (1837), La Roche (1866: 175–432); on accentuation Laum (1928), to be used with caution; on punctuation L. Friedländer (1850: 9–23), Blank (1983), Gaffuri (1994); Homeric scholia on metre are collected by Rauscher (1886), on the metrical scholia to Pindar see Irigoin (1958) and for a very basic introduction Budelmann (1999). For a collection of Iliadic scholia on various grammatical phenomena see the relevant sections of Erbse’s index (s.vv. *Accentus*, *Canones*, *Grammatica*, *Interpunctio*, *Ordo verborum*, *Orthographia*, *Prosodia*, *Spiritus*; also the relevant parts of his index on Rhetoric, see n. 21 above).

A topic that is worth singling out because it was extremely popular is etymology.⁵⁶

Textual criticism is another focus of Greek scholia. Although modern scholars do not agree to what extent Alexandrian scholars actually produced editions on the basis of systematic collation of different manuscripts, the scholia amply document ancient concern for a correctly edited text. This includes, for example, the discussion of variant readings, the justification or rejection of athetesis, etc.⁵⁷

Leaving the level of the text itself, the explanation of all kinds of facts is of prime importance to the ancient commentator. Regardless of the subject-matter of the passage under discussion, scholars are keen to provide the background information they consider necessary to grasp fully the point of the passage. The list of topics is virtually endless and includes, for example, geography, topography, ethnography, science (botany, zoology, astronomy, etc.), medicine, psychology, history, politics, cultural studies, social studies, religion, philosophy, *Realien*, etc.⁵⁸ Explanations of this type can go hand in hand with the conviction that poets – Homer in particular – are the source of wisdom in every conceivable form (cf. the educative function, above).⁵⁹ On occasion, explanations of fact seem to gain a life of their own and to provide rather more information than is necessary for the correct understanding of the passage under discussion. Scholars take the

⁵⁶ On etymology in scholia see most recently Peraki-Kyriakou (2002, with lit.), also several of the articles in Nifadopoulos (2003). For a collection of Iliadic scholia see Erbse (VII: 92–105). Particular attention was given to the etymology of names, especially those of gods, which was one of the topics of Apollodorus' monograph *περὶ θεῶν* (in Homer) in twenty-four books (Pfeiffer 1968: 261–2, with lit.). Etymological explanation of divine names, while found in many extant corpus of scholia, are particularly frequent in the scholia to Hesiod's *Theogony*.

⁵⁷ Textual criticism is probably the best-documented aspect of Greek scholia, with an enormous bibliography. See e.g. La Roche (1866), Ludwich (1884–5), Wilamowitz ([1895] 1959), Pfeiffer (1968), Nickau (1977), Lührs (1992), Irigoin (1993), M. L. West (2001). However, despite intensive efforts many fundamental questions still remain unclear or disputed; see e.g. the very different views on Zenodotus as a textual critic held by Nickau (1977), van Thiel (1992, 1997), M. Schmidt (1997) and M. L. West (2001: 33–45). For a list of Iliadic *variae lectiones* see Erbse (VII: 196–226). A note on terminology: unlike its modern cognate, 'athetesis' in ancient scholarship means that the line is considered spurious (and therefore marked with a marginal sign, usually an *obelos*). However, the line in question remains in the text and is not deleted (e.g. Nickau 1977: 6–7). Given its focus on ancient scholarship, the present book will use the word 'athetesis' in its original meaning.

⁵⁸ On Aristarchus' studies of the Trojan topography see Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 221–4), Goedhardt (1879); on the *Weltbild* see M. Schmidt (1976); on philosophical questions see van der Valk (1963: 468–9), van der Pool (2001). For Iliadic examples see Erbse's index (s.vv. *Agricultura, Animalia, Geographia, Iura et ius, Medicina, Musica, Philosophia, Publica res, Religio et cultus deorum, Topographia*).

⁵⁹ Relevant material is collected by Schmid (1905). For the various sources that testify to the notion of an 'omniscient' Homer see Hillgruber (1994: 5–35). Comparable is the tendency to credit Homer with all kinds of 'inventions' (relevant scholia collected by Erbse VII: 125).

opportunity to put on display the poet's vast knowledge (and, indirectly, their own).

THE SOURCES OF THE SCHOLIA

The identification of sources is a very difficult task. This can be seen not least from the fact that there is often little agreement among modern scholars, except for the very general lines of the argument. Generally speaking, there are four ways of tracing a scholion back to a source, usually an individual scholar. The four methods, in descending order of reliability, are these:

- (i) The individual scholion (or its gist) is expressly attributed to a particular scholar or a 'school'.
- (ii) A general remark (usually in the form of a *subscriptio* at the end of the text under discussion) lists the source(s) of that particular corpus of scholia.
- (iii) The scholion's diction can be recognised as that of a particular scholar or school.
- (iv) The point made in the scholion can be recognised as that of a particular scholar or school.

The first method is mostly reliable and causes relatively few problems (errors, polemical misrepresentation). Its main deficiency is that it applies only to a comparatively small number of scholia.

The results of the second method are impaired by the fact that it is *a priori* unlikely (and often demonstrably not the case) that every scholion of the particular corpus goes back to the source(s) mentioned. The most reliable results can be gained in the case of the so-called *Viermännerkommentar* (VMK) to the *Iliad*.⁶⁰ In most other cases, however, the subscriptions turn out to be of limited help or, quite often, do not exist at all. Their usefulness for the present study is further reduced by the fact that many of the scholia that can thus be identified deal with questions other than literary criticism.

The third method, though promising in principle, must be applied with great caution. The particular expression, stylistic feature, etc. must be specific enough to function as a litmus test. It has been recognised, for example, that the recurrent pattern 'question and answer' (see above) is not specific enough to guarantee that the source is Porphyry.⁶¹ What is more,

⁶⁰ The famous subscriptions to most of the individual books of the *Iliad* in ms. A (Venetus Graec. 822, 10th cent.) identify four sources: Aristonicus, Didymus, Nicanor and Herodian.

⁶¹ See Erbse (1960: 17–77, esp. 73) against the editorial principle of Schrader (1890: 139). A new edition of Porphyry is being prepared by Jake MacPhail.

even an apparently watertight example such as the phrase σημειωτέον ὅτι . . . (≈ ‘NB’, typical of Aristonicus) can be used to introduce an explanation that contradicts Aristarchus’ view (M. Schmidt 1976: 250, with reference to schol. D *Il.* 3.218). Caution is advised here. Technical vocabulary, too, is not necessarily a reliable guide, for various reasons. Firstly, technical vocabulary can easily become common knowledge and no longer be the hallmark of a particular scholar or school.⁶² Secondly, the individual technical terms are sometimes used with so little consistency that they must have gone through several stages or come from different backgrounds altogether. Thirdly, there is no guarantee that ancient scholars were always consistent in their terminology. Fourthly, it cannot be taken for granted that the scholia always preserve the exact terminology of their source.⁶³

Against this backdrop, the difficulties and hazards of the fourth method will need no further explanation.⁶⁴

This is not to say that the identification of sources is *a priori* a hopeless endeavour and therefore a waste of time. Rather, the purpose is to explain why *Quellenforschung* is not given the highest priority here.⁶⁵ Unlike, say, the comparatively firm ground of questions related to textual criticism (cf., however, n. 57), the type of scholion on which this book is primarily based presents major obstacles to a successful identification of sources on a larger scale.⁶⁶ Instead of devoting too much space to arguments which, at this stage, are likely to remain inconclusive, it seemed preferable to prepare the ground for further research by first examining the considerable range of relevant terms and concepts of literary criticism. It is my hope that, in combination with studies on other areas covered by the

⁶² The mechanism by which technical vocabulary can gain a life of its own is probably a universal phenomenon (cf. e.g. ‘intertextuality’ in today’s scholarship).

⁶³ On the last two points see Dyck (1993: 774 n. 5): ‘It seems doubtful, however, that Herodian’s terminology was as fixed as Wackernagel suggests . . . and it must always be borne in mind that scholia cannot be relied upon to represent the *ipsissima verba* of the grammarians.’

⁶⁴ As to referring particular ideas to a specific school, it has become increasingly clear that the formerly popular method of applying a tag such as ‘Stoic’ is not always based on sufficient evidence or methodological rigour (see e.g. M. Schmidt 1976: 54 n. 40, on the ‘Stoic’ term *συντομία*, which according to Quintilian 4.2.31 occurs in Isocrates already).

⁶⁵ Needless to say, the source is mentioned when it can be identified. For that reason, the Homeric scholia are always referred to in their full form (i.e. including the manuscripts and, in the case of the Iliadic scholia, the source as identified by Erbse). In the case of scholia to authors other than Homer, an immediate correlation between manuscript and source does not seem to exist. Consequently, the *sigla* are not listed, in order to save space.

⁶⁶ A representative example is the book on the bT-scholia by M. Schmidt (1976). Earlier studies which claim certainty are mostly based on unsound methodology (see the critical survey by Schmidt 1976: 9–74).

scholia, this will eventually lead to a better understanding of their sources, too.⁶⁷

TRANSLATION

Given that scholia can be a challenge to the reader (see above), the notes that are quoted in the main text are generally followed by a translation that makes generous use of supplements (in pointed brackets) and identifications (in square brackets). Their purpose is to indicate what the text often presupposes by implication (see above on brevity).⁶⁸ The supplements do not imply that this is how the text actually read at an earlier stage, but are meant only to help understand the reasoning of the ancient critic. As a further aid to the reader, the quotation is introduced by a brief contextualisation, usually focusing on the gist of the passage that is commented on in the scholion.

An especially difficult issue is the translation of technical vocabulary. It has proved impossible to keep using the same equivalent for a particular term, because ancient terminology is no more uniform than the modern tends to be. Wherever appropriate, the semantic range of the relevant term is discussed. In addition, the reader is also referred to the Glossary of Greek terms (pages 368–86), which lists the most important meanings of the individual terms.

NOTE ON QUOTATIONS AND REFERENCES

This book regularly quotes from and makes reference to editions that may not be immediately available to the reader. In recognition of this fact, quotations are given rather generously. As for the references to scholia, they strictly reproduce the form in which they appear in the relevant edition

⁶⁷ One might object that the present book runs the risk of presenting in juxtaposition witnesses that in reality come from rather different periods and/or backgrounds. True, but this risk could, at this point, only be avoided at the price of giving up the idea of presenting a general overview. The alternative, smaller case studies, may or may not succeed in positively identifying the source (see preceding n.).

⁶⁸ One type of identification may need a justification. Scholia often do not specify the grammatical subject of the sentence. In the case of speeches and dramatic texts this can lead to some uncertainty as to whether the ancient critic is speaking of the poet or the character. Although the number of truly doubtful cases is comparatively small, it seemed methodologically more sound to keep all the identifications in brackets. Some readers may find 'he [sc. Homer] . . .' cumbersome after a while, but it has the advantage of not suggesting a certainty which may not be there.

(listed at the beginning of the bibliography) because this will generally allow the reader to look up the text on the electronic TLG.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ NB this means that the system of reference can vary from corpus to corpus and, on occasion, contradicts standard English practice (e.g. 610–4, instead of 610–14, for scholia to the *Iliad*). References to Eustathius' commentary on the *Iliad* are always given in a double form, e.g. 914.12–13 (= 3.419.28–9). The former is the traditional system of reference; the latter reproduces volume, page and line of van der Valk's edition (1971–87), which is adopted in the index volume to that edition (Keizer 1995) and in the electronic TLG.

PART I

Plot

Starting from a definition of plot (and its counterpart *fabula*) that is essentially rooted in ancient rhetorical theory, the present chapter then goes on to explore the various applications of the concept and its ramifications in ancient literary criticism. These include questions such as overall plot structure, motivation and narrative coherence, forward and backward references within the plot (*prolepsis*, *analepsis*) and their functions, the introduction of characters and how this contributes to a coherent plot, changes of scene, and the handling of multiple storylines and digressions.

The general distinction between *fabula* and plot is very common in modern literary criticism.¹ *Fabula* stands for a reconstruction, in chronological order, of the events that are narrated, irrespective of their relative position in the text. Plot refers to the narrated events in the order and disposition that the particular text under consideration exhibits. The plot of the *Iliad*, for example, begins with Chryses' arrival at the Greek ships (*Il.* 1.12), the *fabula*, say, with Paris' judgment (cf. *Il.* 24.29–30).² Although the distinction as such is not explicitly made by ancient literary critics, a comparable distinction nevertheless underlies their reasoning.³

Ancient rhetorical theory differentiates between how to find an appropriate topic for one's speech and how to make use of this topic in order to construct the speech. Of especial importance in the present context

¹ See e.g. Genette (1972: 71–6 = 1980: 25–32), whose terms are *histoire* (Engl. 'story') for *fabula* and *récit* (Engl. 'narrative') for plot. The general distinction, as is well known, goes back to the Russian formalist Shklovsky, who speaks of 'fabula' and 'sjuzhet'. The two concepts and their numerous synonyms are the subject of a scholarly debate (see e.g. Lowe 2000: 3–16) which lies beyond the scope of the present study. The terms chosen here are far from being ideal, but 'plot' is well-established in this meaning, and 'fabula' allows me to keep using 'story' in a loose sense.

² On Aristarchus' doubts about the authenticity see Chapter 12.

³ The present chapter is indebted to the discussion by Meijering (1987: *passim*); cf. also Trendelenburg (1867: 78–81, 90–110), Bachmann (1902: 17–18, 20; 1904: 5–7), Griesinger (1907: 43–51), Steinmann (1907: 40–54), Bonner (1977: 244–5), N. J. Richardson (1980: 268–9), Nannini (1986: 27–8), and the titles listed in n. 7.

is the model of Dionysius of Halicarnassus.⁴ He makes a distinction between ‘subject-matter’ (πραγματικόν) and ‘style’ (λεκτικόν). The former is further divided into ‘preparation’ (παρασκευή or εὔρεσις) and ‘deployment’ (χρησις or οἰκονομία), the latter into ‘word choice’ (ἐκλογή τῶν ὀνομάτων) and ‘composition (of words)’ (σύνθεσις). ‘Preparation’ and ‘word choice’ are analogous, because they both refer to the action of choosing (sc. subject-matter and words). ‘Deployment’ and ‘composition’ are analogous, because they both refer to the action of arranging (sc. subject-matter and words). The notion of arranging the subject-matter in a particular way (οἰκονομία) has many points of contact with ‘plot’.⁵

The other rhetorical term for ‘order’, τάξις, originally meant the proper distribution of the four parts of a speech (proem, narration, proof, epilogue) and as such was a part of οἰκονομία. At some point, however, the two terms came both to mean ‘order’ of and within the speech in general. And later rhetorical sources even make a distinction between τάξις, which stands for the natural order (*ordo naturalis*), and οἰκονομία, which describes the artificial order (*ordo artificiosus*).⁶ Both Dionysius’ model and this later development provide the basis for the denotation ‘plot’, which οἰκονομία repeatedly has in the scholia and elsewhere.⁷ A good illustration of this sense can be found in the ancient *hypothesis* to Sophocles’ *Oedipus at Colonus*,

⁴ D.H. *Dem.* 51 (cf. also *Thuc.* 21). See the discussion by Meijering (1987: 134–43), which includes precursors such as Plato as well as later developments. For Dionysius’ model see also Volkmann (1885: 362–7) and the table in Pritchett (1975: xxxvi).

⁵ The most common word for ‘subject-matter’ in ancient literary criticism is ὑπόθεσις, which, given its broad range of meanings (on which see Holwerda 1976, Kassel 1985, Meijering 1987: 105–33), is more loosely defined than οἰκονομία. Generally speaking, ὑπόθεσις can have the meaning of οἰκονομία (e.g. when ὑπόθεσις stands for ‘plot summary’), but not *vice versa*. There are, however, single instances where οἰκονομία seems to be virtually synonymous with ὑπόθεσις in the sense of ‘subject-matter’, cf. e.g. schol. *Ar. Eq.* 400a. In addition, passages can be adduced where the verb οἰκονομεῖν seems to mean little more than simply ‘to write (poetry)’, e.g. *Vita Aesch.* suppl. d (p. 63 Herington = A. *test.* 129 Radt). This state of affairs makes it extremely difficult to decide exactly what Aristotle means when he criticises Euripides (*Po.* 1453a29: εἰ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα μὴ εὖ οἰκονομεῖ, ἀλλὰ . . . ‘even if he does not arrange the other things well, at least . . .’); cf. the criticism in Ps.Long. 33.5 (on Archilochus) and in schol. *Ar. Ach.* 388a (on the tragic poet Hieronymus, cf. TrGF 31 T 1). Euripides is repeatedly criticised in the *Poetics* and for various reasons: 1454b1 (*deus ex machina* in *Med.*), 1454b31–5 (recognition scene in *Or.*), 1454a28–32 (inappropriate characters in several plays, sim. 1461b20–1), 1456a27 (insufficient integration of choral odes).

⁶ E.g. Sulpicius Victor 14 (p. 320.11–25 Halm). This meaning of οἰκονομία underlies Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 162 (see Hillgruber 1999: *ad loc.*). The implications of τάξις = ‘natural order’ are further explored in Chapter 2.

⁷ On οἰκονομία specifically see (in addition to the titles listed in n. 3) Ernesti (1795: *s.v.*), Volkmann (1885: 362–7), Cardauns 1985, Grisolia 2001 (a slightly revised version of Grisolia 1990, 1992, 1993, 1993–4 and 1995). The first attestation of οἰκονομία in a stylistic context appears to be in Alcidas (*soph.* 25), where, however, it describes the arrangement of words (Mariß 2002: 259). Another ancient concept with strong similarities to ‘plot’ is Aristotle’s μῦθος (on which see e.g. Heath 1989: 38–55), which, however, does not seem to be taken up in the scholia.

which goes under the name of one Sallustius, about whom nothing certain is known (de Marco 1937: 115 n. 29 with lit.).

ἄφατος δέ ἐστι καθόλου ἡ οἰκονομία ἐν τῷ δράματι, ὡς οὐδενὶ ἄλλῳ σχεδόν. (argum. IV S. OC, p. 4.6 de Marco)⁸

Overall the plot of the play is ineffable, as in almost no other.

Although Sallustius does not specify why he praises the οἰκονομία of Sophocles' play, parallels make it very likely that he refers to the plot and not the fabula. Aeschylus, for instance, is praised for presenting the pursuit of Orestes in the middle of *Eumenides* and not at the beginning.⁹ Equally interesting are the cases where the critic does not simply praise the plot, but gives an actual description of it. (In *Iliad* 11, Diomedes is wounded and forced to leave the battlefield. Odysseus deliberates in a monologue whether to do the same or to stay and risk being wounded, which is in fact what happens.)

χρησίμως πρὸς τὴν οἰκονομίαν ἔχει τὰ τοῦ ἐπιλογισμοῦ τῷ Ὀδυσσεῖ· ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ναυμαχίαν [cf. *Il.* 15.415–746] βούλεται εἰσάγειν ὁ ποιητής, προτιπρώσκει τοὺς ἀρίστους [cf. 11.251–595]· ἄτοπον γὰρ ἦν παρόντων καίεσθαι τὰς ναῦς. (schol. bT *Il.* 11.407–10 ex.).

The deliberation scene of Odysseus is useful for the <subsequent> plot. The poet, intent on introducing the battle for the ships, first causes the wounding of the best <fighters>, because it would have been absurd to set the ships on fire with them present.

This critic briefly sketches the plot of *Iliad* 11–15 and describes the function of the deliberation scene. Homer wants Odysseus to be wounded just as Agamemnon or Diomedes have been, lest they figure among the Greek defenders of the ships, which, from a Greek point of view, would make the Trojan success implausible.¹⁰ Another scholion discusses the

⁸ Cf. schol. A. *Eum.* 1a (quoted below), S. OC 237, Ar. *Pax* 619 (all three with explicit praise), E. *Ph.* 1710 (quoted below), Pi. *P.* 4.inscr. a (p. 92.15–16 Drachmann); outside technical literature cf. e.g. Menander's famous explanation why the imminent Dionysia do not scare him: ὠκονόμηται γὰρ ἡ διάθεσις, δεῖ δ' αὐτῇ τὰ στιχίδια ἐπᾶσαι (*test.* 70 K-A: 'The arrangement of the plot is ready, I only need to compose the single lines'). The expression ἄφατος οἰκονομία is also attested in schol. E. *Ph.* 617, but the exact reference remains unclear.

⁹ Cf. schol. A. *Eum.* 1a: οἰκονομικῶς δὲ οὐκ ἐν ἀρχῇ διώκεται Ὀρέστης, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ δράματος καταπάττει, ταμειυόμενος τὰ ἀκμαιότατα ἐν μέσῳ ('with good economy [i.e. resulting in a good plot] Orestes is not pursued at the beginning, but he [sc. Aeschylus] puts this in the middle of the play, saving the climax for the middle'). On ταμειύεσθαι see below.

¹⁰ The wounding of the Greek heroes is similarly explained in schol. bT *Il.* 11.598b ex. (quoted below). Both scholia exhibit an anti-Trojan bias (on which see Introd. page 13).

importance of the goddess Thetis for the plot of the entire *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.¹¹

καὶ τῆς ποιήσεως οἰκονομία ἢ τῆς Θέτιδος χρηστοθήθεια· Διὶ μὲν ἀμύνει, ἵνα καὶ κακώσῃ Ἑλλήνας, Ἡφαίστῳ δέ, ἵνα ποιήσῃ Ἀχιλλεῖ τὴν πανοπλίαν, Διονύσῳ δὲ διὰ τὸν ἀμφιφορῆα, ἵνα τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ εἶη σορός [cf. *Od.* 24.74–5]. (schol. bT *Il.* 18.395–8 *ex.*)

Thetis' goodness of heart has a plot function for his [sc. Homer's] composition. She helps Zeus, so that he even injures the Greeks, and <she helps> Hephaestus, so that he produces Achilles' armour, <she helps> Dionysus because of the jar, in order for it to become Achilles' urn.

This critic argues that decisive steps in the development of the plot depend on Thetis' role as an aid to a major god, who therefore owes her a favour.¹²

The distinction between plot and fabula is also relevant, because both epic and tragedy are traditional poetry and as such make use of traditional stories. This imposes on them some restrictions as to what extent they can change the basic 'facts' of the story, i.e. the fabula (see [Chapter 7](#)). With respect to the plot, however, poets are at liberty to give it the form they want:

ὡς βούλονται γὰρ οἰκονομοῦσι τὰ δράματα. (schol. E. *Ph.* 1710)

They [sc. Sophocles and Euripides] give their plays the plot they want.

In the specific context this critic only mentions the tragedians Sophocles and Euripides.¹³ But the same holds true for epic poets as well. In fact, Homer's decision to have the plot of the *Iliad* begin only towards the end of the Trojan war was often discussed, sometimes explicitly under the rubric οἰκονομία.¹⁴

Among the scholia, there are those of the type which expressly speak of οἰκονομία (see above), while others simply describe the plot without making use of the technical term, for instance:

τοὺς πλείους τῶν ἀρίστων τρώσας πλὴν Αἴαντος τοῦ Τελαμωνίου ἐπὶ τὰς ναῦς ἀπέστειλεν, Ἀγαμέμνονα Διομήδην Ὀδυσσεῖα Μαχάονα Εὐρύπυλον,

¹¹ Cf. the notion of 'central characters' ([Chapter 11](#)).

¹² Admittedly, the Iliadic examples are more convincing than the one from the *Odyssey*, which deals with a minor plot element only. On the assumption that the two poems are by the same poet see below.

¹³ In the former part of the scholion, Antigone's announcement of her intention to bury Polynices in E. *Ph.* 1710 is said to provide the 'seeds' (σπέρματα) for Sophocles' *Antigone*. This must not be understood in a literal sense (it is chronologically false), but in the sense that *Phoenician Women* ends where *Antigone* begins. On 'seeds' see also below.

¹⁴ See in particular Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 162 and Hillgruber (1999: *ad loc.*). The temporal side of Homer's decision is further explored in [Chapter 2](#).

καὶ τὸν Τεῦκρον ἐξῆς [sc. *Il.* 15.462–89], ἵνα εὖλογον τοῖς Ἀχαιοῖς τῆς ἥττης παράσχη αἰτίαν. εἶτα τούτους ἐπὶ τὰς ναῦς ἀπαγαγὼν εἰς ἔπαινον Αἴαντος τὰ λοιπὰ καταναλίσκει ἕως τῆς Πατρόκλου ἐξόδου· καὶ τὸν Πάτροκλον ἀνελὼν ἐπὶ τὸν Αἴαντα ἐπανέρχεται μέχρι τῆς ἐξόδου Ἀχιλλέως· καὶ τοῦτον ἐπὶ τὴν μάχην προαγαγὼν εἰς τὰ ἀνδραγαθήματα αὐτοῦ τὴν Ἰλιάδα τελειοῖ. (schol. bT *Il.* 11.598b ex.)¹⁵

Having wounded most of the best <fighters>, except for Ajax son of Telamon, he [sc. Homer] has sent to the ships Agamemnon, Diomedes, Odysseus, Machaon, Eurypylos, and in the sequel Teucer, so that he can provide a plausible reason for the defeat of the Greeks. Next, having led these men to the ships, he spends the rest <of his narrative> in praise of Ajax until Patroclus' sortie. And having killed Patroclus, he returns to Ajax until Achilles' sortie. And having led this one into battle, he concludes the *Iliad* with his brave deeds.

As this plot summary of *Iliad* 11–24 again makes clear, the convincing arrangement of the single elements (elsewhere called οἰκονομία) depends not least on whether one element provides the justification (αἰτία) for another. In other words, there is a direct relation between a good plot and plausible motivation.

MOTIVATION AND NARRATIVE COHERENCE¹⁶

It is no surprise then that οἰκονομία (and cognates) often refers to questions of motivation. One critic, for example, explains the plot function of the scene in which Nestor drives the wounded doctor Machaon to the Greek ships and how it triggers the subsequent events, because it is witnessed by Achilles (schol. bT *Il.* 11.512–3 ex.). And similar comments can be found, even if it is not the plot at large that is being commented on. (In Euripides' *Orestes*, Clytaemestra's father Tyndareus travels from Sparta to Argos, in order to pour libations at her tomb. There he learns that Menelaus has finally returned home from Troy.)

εὐοικονομήτως [MTB, οἰκονομικῶς A] ἐποίησε τὸν Τυνδάρειον ἀπὸ τῆς Σπάρτης διὰ τὰς χοάς τῆς θυγατρὸς ἐληλυθῆναι, ἵνα εὐκαίρως τῷ Μενελάῳ καὶ τῷ Ὀρέστη διαλεχθῆ. (schol. E. *Or.* 472)

With good sense for motivation, he [sc. Euripides] made Tyndareus come from Sparta because of the libations for his daughter, in order for him to speak at the right time with Menelaus and Orestes.

¹⁵ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 11.0 ex., bT *Il.* 11.273 ex., bT *Il.* 14.0 ex. and the different plot summaries of the *Iliad* and other texts (for a collection see e.g. van Rossum-Steenbeek 1998). These are often called ὑπόθεσις, which, as indicated in n. 5, sometimes has the same meaning as οἰκονομία. On expressions such as 'Homer kills Patroclus' see Excursus at the end of Chapter 4.

¹⁶ Questions regarding motivation are of prime importance to Aristotle's *Poetics*, especially the principle that the single plot elements must have a causal connection (1452a1–11, 18–21).

Tyndareus' meeting with Menelaus and Orestes is motivated by his pouring libations at Clytaemestra's tomb. He does not simply come to Argos 'by chance', but Euripides provides a plausible motive for his presence. This, in fact, is the application of *οικονομία* which prevails in the tragic scholia. The critics concentrate on the single passage and discuss how it is motivated.¹⁷

Similar notes can be found in the Homeric scholia too.¹⁸ Overall, however, the Homeric scholia tend to focus on the connection between two specific passages in the text, one of which motivates the other. The former passage as it were provides the logical preparation for another passage, which is to follow later. This connection between the two passages establishes and is proof of the narrative coherence of the text under consideration. Ancient critics were well aware of this overarching narrative coherence.¹⁹ Terminologically, the Homeric scholia express the preparatory function of the earlier passage by means of the prefix *προ-*, as seen, for instance, in the technical term *προοικονομείν* ('to prepare for, motivate beforehand'), especially when combined with an expression for the later passage.²⁰ (After the theomachy in *Iliad* 21, all the gods return to Mt Olympus except for Apollo, who stays in Troy.)

προοικονομῆί πάλιν εἰς τὰ ἐξῆς, ἵνα ὑπολειφθεῖς μόνος πλανήσῃ τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖα ἀπὸ τοῦ τείχους [cf. *Il.* 21.544–22.24]. (schol. *T Il.* 21.515–7 *ex.*, cf. εἰς τὰ ἐξῆς . . . οἰκονομῆί: schol. *T Il.* 11.318*a'* *ex.*)

Again he [sc. Homer] prepares in advance for the sequel, so that he [sc. Apollo], left alone, can trick Achilles away from the wall.

¹⁷ Cf. schol. *S. Aj.* 342b (on Teucer's absence), *El.* 312 (on Aegisthus' absence), 818 (on Electra not committing suicide; see below on Not to destroy the story), *OT* 118 (on the death of Laius' companions), *OC* 28 (on the stranger's entrance), 297 (on Theseus being on his way), 551 (on Theseus' entrance), 887 (on Theseus' re-entry; quoted below), *E. Ph.* 96 (on the servant's knowledge), *Hipp.* 521 (on the nurse's incomplete answer), 569 (on the postponement of Hippolytus' entrance), 659 (on Hippolytus' absence), 713 (on the chorus remaining silent), 804 (on the chorus lying). Several of these notes deal with the absence and presence of characters and how they are motivated (cf. [Chapter 19](#) on entrances and exits).

¹⁸ E.g. schol. *bT Il.* 6.491 *ex.* (on Hector instructing Andromache 'to mind domestic business', which results in her staying at home during his fight with Achilles in book 22), *bT Il.* 6.515–6 *ex.* (on Paris not being witness to Hector's conversation with Andromache), *bT Il.* 11.813 *ex.* (on Eurypylus, though wounded, not losing consciousness), *MQ Od.* 3.360 (on Mentor/Athena allegedly returning to Telemachus' companions), *Q Od.* 9.185 (on the high fence around Polyphemus' yard), etc.

¹⁹ It is no coincidence that Schadewaldt's (1938) 1966 refutation of the analytical approach uses virtually the same methods and examples as the scholia, a fact of which he himself was fully aware (e.g. 70 n. 3); see also Erbse (1979: 53–4).

²⁰ The chronological implications of these compounds are further explored in [Chapter 2](#). The notion 'motivation in advance' can also be paraphrased, e.g., schol. *HPQ Od.* 7.16 (on the characterisation of the Phaeacians).

The purpose of Apollo staying behind is expressed in 21.516–17: the Greeks must not prematurely take Troy. This will be accomplished by redirecting Achilles' attention away from the city wall (21.544–22.24). Homer keeps Apollo down on earth, the critic argues, so that he can then perform his ruse without the interference of the other gods. In addition to the explanation itself, it is remarkable that this form of προοικονομία is seen as a recurrent feature (πάλλιν) of Homeric poetry.

The term and concept of προοικονομία go back at least as far as Megaclicides of Athens (second half of the fourth century BC).²¹ (Patroclus dons Achilles' armour except for the spear.)

διὰ τί οὔν μόνον τὸ Πηλιωτικὸν αὐτῷ ἀναρμοστεῖ δόρυ, τῶν ἄλλων ἄρμοσάντων ὄπλων; Μεγακλείδης ἐν δευτέρῳ (Περὶ) Ὀμήρου [FHG IV p. 443 = fr. 5 Janko] προοικονομεῖσθαι φησιν Ὀμηρον τὴν Ὀπλοποιίαν· (schol. A *Il.* 16.140b *Porph. vel D*)

Why does only Peleus' spear not fit him [sc. Patroclus], whereas all the other arms do? Megaclicides says in book 2 of 'On Homer' that Homer prepares for the 'Production of the Armour'.²²

Patroclus' donning of Achilles' arms and their subsequent loss motivate in advance the scene, described in book 18, in which Hephaestus produces a new set of armour for Achilles. The scholia prove that such questions of composition and narrative coherence concerned literary critics well before the Alexandrians. Protagoras already appears to have discussed questions of narrative composition.²³ And the master 'economist' Homer provided an abundance of material to study the topic *in extenso*.²⁴ As to προοικονομία itself, the term establishes a close connection between two (or more) separate passages, and this connection testifies to the narrative coherence of the

²¹ The term is attested in rhetorical theory, e.g. Ps.Herod. *fig.* 60 Hajdú: προοικονομία τοίνυν ἐστὶν ἢ τὰ μέλλοντα διατίθεσθαι προπαρασκευάζουσα λέξις. ('*Prooikonomia* is a lexical device which prepares for the things that will be discussed later.') According to Hajdú (*ad loc.*), the term is not found elsewhere in rhetorical theory, but cf. the use of the verb προοικονομεῖν in Nicolaus *progymn.* (p. 8.9–10 Felten), as discussed by Meijering (1987: 202).

²² Porphyry's (?) opening question is answered in the second part of the scholion: there is no wood on Olympus, so Hephaestus could not replace the spear (an instance of rationalisation: see *Introductio*, page 14).

²³ Cf. schol. *T. Il.* 1.213 *ex.* (motivates the embassy in book 9), Erbse and the literature cited there. Conversely, Aristotle's treatment of what he calls σύστασις τῶν πραγμάτων ('structure of events', *Po.* 1450b22), though considered of the highest importance, remains relatively general and unspecific, which is probably due to the different 'genre' of the *Poetics*.

²⁴ Cf. schol. *T. Il.* 1.213 *ex.* (motivates the embassy in book 9), bT *Il.* 2.362a *ex.* (motivates the 'Catalogue' later in book 2), bT *Il.* 3.236a *ex.* (motivates why the Dioscuri will not appear in the *Iliad*), bT *Il.* 3.261–2b *ex.* (motivates Priam's driving a chariot in book 24), bT *Il.* 4.90 *ex.* (motivates Pandarus' protection against Greek missiles), etc.

poem. From that perspective, the function is comparable to that of prolepsis (\approx anticipation, see below). There are, however, differences between προοικονομία and prolepsis, and it is better to keep the two narrative devices apart (see below).

The same phenomenon as προοικονομία can also be expressed by the term προπαρασκευή (and cognates), as can be seen, for example, in a scholion which makes a point similar to Megaclides' above. (Nestor hopes that Patroclus will enter battle in Achilles' armour.)

προπαρασκευάζει τὴν Ὀπλοποιΐαν· (schol. T *Il.* 11.798 *ex.*)²⁵

He [sc. Homer] prepares for the 'Production of the Armour'.

Nestor's wish will be fulfilled, but Patroclus will lose Achilles' armour, which indirectly motivates the scene in the blacksmith's shop on Mt Olympus.

The term προκατασκευή recurs in rhetorical theory.²⁶ There the general idea seems to be that unrealistic or implausible phenomena (such as Polyphemus' supernatural powers) must be carefully 'prepared for' in advance by the orator or poet, lest the audience be taken by surprise and be unwilling to believe them (same idea in schol. Q *Od.* 9.187). In a similar vein, scholia repeatedly argue that the motivating piece of information is there so that the reader need not wonder.²⁷ They spell out what other notes simply presuppose: careful motivation and narrative coherence make it easier for the reader to follow the course of events and are therefore very important.

Given that προοικονομία and related phenomena involve two passages, the commentator needs to decide where he wants to give his explanation: in his note on the earlier passage, on the later, or both. An examination of the extant material shows that he prefers to comment on the earlier passage,

²⁵ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 16.145a *ex.* (motivates Automedon's becoming Achilles' charioteer in book 19), T *Il.* 18.418–20 *ex.* (motivates the production of the armour later in the same book), etc., also προκατασκευή and cognates: schol. bT *Il.* 14.216–7b *ex.* (motivates Hera's successful deception of Zeus later in the same book), AbT *Il.* 17.96 *ex.* (motivates Menelaus' subsequent withdrawal), DE²HKM²Q *Od.* 1.262 (p. 108.5 Ludwig; motivates the killing of the suitors in book 22), etc.

²⁶ Cf. D.H. *Is.* 3 (p. 95.20 U.-R. [substantive]), 15 (p. 112.20 [verb]), Hermog. *inv.* 4.12 (p. 202.17, 203.23 Rabe [substantive]), p. 203.4, 17 [verb]).

²⁷ E.g. schol. A *Il.* 1.504a *Ariston.* (on Thetis protecting Zeus against his opponents), b *Il.* 2.675 *ex.* (on Nireus not appearing in the rest of the *Iliad*), bT *Il.* 14.216–7b *ex.* (on Hera deceiving Zeus, see n. 25), T *Il.* 20.304 *ex.* (on the preceding explanation regarding Dardanus), bT *Il.* 24.334–8 *ex.* (on Hermes, instead of Iris, accompanying Priam), DE²J *Od.* 1.128 (p. 65.2–3 Ludwig; on the spears with which the suitors will allegedly be killed), E²HM²QITVY *Od.* 1.262 (p. 107.22–3 Ludwig; on the poison on Odysseus' arrows), HQV *Od.* 9.209 (on the strength of Maron's wine that will help inebriate Polyphemus).

in that it provides the preparation for the later passage. The opposite is comparatively rare.²⁸ Apparently, the critics are keen on bringing out Homer's qualities as a mastermind who designs his plots well and with foresight. Questions of genre and size may play a role too. Narrative texts of the size of the Homeric epic are in especial need of a well-designed plot, lest the reader be confused (see also below on multiple storylines).

In addition to technical terms such as προοικονομεῖν, the same idea can be expressed by non-technical synonyms such as προπαραδιδόναι ('to set down beforehand': e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 6.401 *ex.*) or προσυνηστάναι ('to introduce in advance': e.g. schol. T *Il.* 17.351 *ex.*). Far more frequent, however, are the cases where a word for 'motivation' or 'preparation' is absent altogether and remains implicit. These are the numerous instances of the type 'the poet wants to achieve X and therefore does Y' or 'in order to achieve X, the poet does Y'. (To give an example: in book 10, the Greek officers around Nestor visit the night watch. Among them are the comparatively minor figures Meriones and Thrasymedes, who, as an exception, take part in the *boule* of the senior officers.)

διὰ τὸν Ἰδομενέα καὶ Νέστορα. ἄμα δέ, ἵνα οἱ κατάσκοποι ὀπλισθῶσιν (cf. *Il.* 10.235–7). (schol. T *Il.* 10.196–7 *ex.*)

<Meriones and Thrasymedes are with them> because of Idomeneus [i.e. Meriones' commander] and Nestor [i.e. Thrasymedes' father], and also in order to equip the spies [sc. Diomedes and Odysseus] with weapons.

One possible reason for the unusual presence of the two minor characters is personal relation. The other is the fact that Diomedes and Odysseus will borrow the armour of Thrasymedes and Meriones (including the famous tusk-helmet). Notes of this type are as unobtrusive as they are numerous in the scholia. They simply indicate the function or purpose of the passage under consideration. The most common formulations include purpose clauses (ἵνα/ὄπως) and similar expressions such as ὑπὲρ τοῦ, διὰ τό ('for the purpose of'), ἐπίτηδες ('on purpose, intentionally'), οὐκ ἄργῶς ('not idly, not without purpose'). In any single instance it is worth examining whether the commentator simply indicates the purpose or combines it with a qualitative evaluation such as καλῶς ('nicely'), πιθανῶς ('plausibly'),

²⁸ See e.g. schol. A *Il.* 1.504a *Ariston.* (on Thetis, see preceding n.), T *Il.* 10.349–50 *ex.* (on the non-removal of the dead bodies from the battlefield), bT *Il.* 15.390 *ex.* (on Patroclus' 'idling' with Eurypylos), bT *Il.* 18.372a *ex.* (on Hephaestus as the blacksmith of the gods; with the interesting remark that the scene has been motivated πρὸ πολλοῦ, sc. in book 1), T *Il.* 20.304 *ex.* (on Dardanus, see preceding n.), bT *Il.* 23.63b *ex.* (on Achilles' fatigue caused by his race with Hector).

εὔ (‘well’, often in compounds), δαίμονιώς (‘marvellously’), θαυμασίως (‘wonderfully’), etc.

To describe the purpose or function of a particular passage is to deny implicitly or explicitly that it is superfluous. Alexandrian scholars such as Aristarchus were prone to athetise verses which seemed to lack a clear function.²⁹ It is, therefore, plausible to conclude that some of the examples adduced above are intended to vindicate the authenticity of the passage in question. All in all, however, the notes dealing with motivation are far too numerous to be always for the purpose of defending the passage against athetesis. There can be no doubt that ancient critics treated motivation as a literary device in its own right and saw in it a regular characteristic of a good poet.

This emphasis on motivation can also be gathered from the notes in which a distinction is made between motivation in poetry and chance in reality (cf. Arist. *Po.* 1452a4–11):

εἴωθε δὲ τὰ ἐκ τύχης ὡς ἐξ αἰτίας λέγειν· (schol. bT *Il.* 22.328–9 *ex.*, T adduces two parallels, *Od.* 12.427–8, 9.154–5)³⁰

He [sc. Homer] is wont to attribute a reason to what (actually) happens by chance.

Poets like Homer are so eager to produce a well-motivated plot that they attribute a reason to things which ‘in reality’ simply happen by chance.³¹ Consequently, scholars are keen to find such a reason and apparently reluctant to resort to the explanation that ‘it’ (e.g. the encounter of Hera with Sleep, *Il.* 14.231) happened by chance (cf. schol. T *Il.* 14.231a¹ *ex.*). At the same time, some critics express the view that the plot should not give the impression that the poet as the designing force stands behind the motivation. The story should so to speak develop automatically (Steinmann 1907: 42, with examples from Donatus). One is reminded of the notion that a story ‘seems to tell itself’ (e.g. Genette 1972: 184–5 = 1980: 163–4), that is, the distinction between ‘showing’ and ‘telling’, which is made by Ps. Demetrius (*eloc.* 288: καὶ πολὺ δεινότερος ὁ λόγος δοκεῖ τοῦ πράγματος αὐτοῦ ἐμφαίνοντος τὸ δεινόν, οὐχὶ τοῦ λέγοντος, ‘and the passage seems much more forceful because the force is indirectly made clear by the fact itself and not by an authorial comment’).

²⁹ The lines in question are said to be περισσοί (‘superfluous’), οὐκ ἀναγκαῖοι (‘not necessary’), etc.; see e.g. Lührs (1992). On the original meaning of ‘athetise’ see *Introd.* n. 57.

³⁰ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 22.329 *Ariston.*, H *Od.* 9.154, H *Od.* 12.427, i.e. the very same Odyssean passages which schol. T *Il.* 22.328–9a¹ *ex.* adduces as parallels (omission of parallels in b is common: Roemer 1879: 16). This is likely to point to direct dependence or a common source.

³¹ Cf. the generalising schol. Pi. *N.* 1.7b. In a similar vein, Homer is said to attribute to the gods what happens by chance in reality (see [Chapter 13](#)).

The goal of avoiding anything that is superfluous (see above) opens a further perspective on the question of οἰκονομία. Ancient literary critics from Aristotle's time on were concerned about the unity and balanced structure of a poem. Ideally, the poem resembles the organic structure of a living organism and is not in any respect deficient or redundant.³² Because of its origin in husbandry (Quint. 3.3.9), the word οἰκονομία is well suited to describe the activity of a poet who gives the parts of his literary text an 'economic' disposition. (In *Oedipus at Colonus*, Creon kidnaps Oedipus' daughters during Theseus' absence. Theseus, however, hears the chorus shout and re-enters the stage.)

ἄκρως τῆ οἰκονομίᾳ τὸ μαθεῖν τὸν Θησέα τὰ γινόμενα πρὸς θυσίαις ὄντα τοῦ Ἰππίου Ποσειδῶνος, ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ διατριβῆν ἐγγενέσθαι μηνύοντός τινος. (schol. S. *OC* 887)

It is excellent plotting that Theseus, who is at a sacrifice to Poseidon Hippios [sc. off-stage], becomes aware of the events, because it avoids the delay while someone tells him.

Theseus' re-entry is prompted by the chorus' shout, which makes it unnecessary to dispatch a messenger. Sophocles avoids this delay and thereby produces a taut plot.³³ Given that the notion of a poet who avoids 'delays' (διατριβή) is particularly frequent in dramatic scholia (Meijering 1987: 188), one may perhaps conclude that this type of 'economy' was considered typical of drama in particular. Likewise, schol. *T Il.* 11.369–95 *ex.* (on Paris wounding Diomedes with subsequent altercation) does not seem to object to its being a 'delay' (διατριβή).

EXCURSUS: A SPECIAL TYPE OF NARRATIVE COHERENCE

Some Homeric scholia also discuss a type of narrative coherence which, from a modern perspective, is somewhat unexpected. They argue that a particular passage in the *Iliad* motivates or prepares for a passage in the *Odyssey*. This must be read against the background of the disputed question whether or not the two poems are by the same poet. The school of the *chorizontes* ('separators') denied this, whereas Aristarchus and his entourage tried to prove that they were in fact by the same poet. The first

³² Cf. Arist. *Po.* ch. 7 (1450b21–51a15) and on the concept in general Heath (1989).

³³ Cf. schol. S. *OC* 297 (the same guard who prompted the chorus to enter the stage is on his way to summon Theseus, which prevents further delay) and *El.* 660 (Orestes' former pedagogue enters the stage while both Clytaemestra and Electra are present, which makes a repetition of his report unnecessary); the latter scholion does not explicitly speak of either οἰκονομία or διατριβή, but the context is comparable (cf. in particular εὐκαίρως).

mention of an Odyssean element in the *Iliad* provides the opportunity to make the point.³⁴ (In *Iliad* 2, Odysseus says he does not want to be called ‘Telemachus’ father’ any longer if he does not punish Thersites the next time.)

ἡ διπλῆ δὲ (ᾧτι) προδιασυνίστησιν [Lehrs, προδιασύγκρισιν A] τὰ κατὰ τὴν Ὀδύσσειαν μέλλοντα λόγου τυχεῖν πλείονος. (schol. *A Il.* 2.260a *Ariston.*)³⁵

The dipole, because he [sc. Homer] introduces in advance what will receive a more extensive treatment in the *Odyssey*.

A similar form of narrative coherence between the two poems is perceived in connection with analepsis, when a passage in the *Odyssey* is said to fill a gap left by the *Iliad* (see below on analepsis).

PROLEPSIS

It has already been indicated above that prolepsis (\approx anticipation, see n. 40) is another literary device which contributes in an important way to the narrative coherence of the plot, because it establishes a connection between two passages. In fact, there is a tendency among modern scholars to discuss the ancient concepts of motivation and prolepsis in one breath.³⁶ Although the devices both contribute to the overall purpose of a well-structured text, which gives evidence of the poet’s master plan, it is nevertheless important to make a distinction between motivation and prolepsis. The best criterion is explicitness: does the text provide explicit indications that the point will be taken up again later? In the case of the more explicit prolepsis, it is clear that the anticipated event will take place at a later stage of the narrative. And the psychological effects attributed to prolepsis (see below) depend on the reader immediately grasping the point. Conversely, a new piece of information may or may not motivate a later development of the story. Obviously, this criterion does not lead to a clear-cut separation between the two groups. There is a grey zone between the two poles, and some modern

³⁴ Comparable to a modern commentator, Aristarchus appears to have discussed the different characteristics when they occur for the first time (cf. *Chapters 14* and *18*). The fact that these notes are often preserved should perhaps strengthen our confidence in the quality of the tradition.

³⁵ Cf. schol. *A Il.* 4.354a *Ariston.* (προτετυπωμένος), *T Il.* 10.252–3a *ex.* (προοικονομεῖ), *T Il.* 10.260 *ex.* (ditto), *T Il.* 12.16 *ex.* (προανακρούεται); similarly, schol. *bT Il.* 4.354b *ex.* argues that Homer introduces in advance the characters and their attitudes (διαθέσεις), which apparently includes Odyssean characters such as Telemachus.

³⁶ See e.g. Duckworth (1931: esp. 324), Erbse (1979: 52–3), N. J. Richardson (1980: 269), Nannini (1986: 41–2, with ref. to Duckworth).

critics would argue that a competent reader is expected to sense the proleptic potential of any newly introduced piece of information.³⁷ Nevertheless, it makes sense to differentiate them. Not the least important support comes from the fact that ancient critics apparently made a distinction as well (see below).³⁸

The most common ancient term for prolepsis is προαναφώνησις and its verbal cognate προαναφωνεῖν ('to announce beforehand').³⁹ Next, there are paraphrases and terms that are less technically determined such as προλέγειν ('to say beforehand': e.g. schol. b *Il.* 17.453–5a² *ex.*), προαπαγγέλλειν ('to report beforehand': e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 3.301–2 *ex.*), προαναφθέγγεσθαι ('to mention beforehand': e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 16.71–2 *ex.*) or προέκθεσις ('exhibition in advance': e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 15.601–2 *ex.*, cf. Ps.Hermog. *Meth.* 12 [p. 427 Rabe]). Most interestingly, the scholia also make use of the terms πρόληψις and its verbal cognate προλαμβάνειν ('to anticipate').⁴⁰

The technical term προαναφώνησις probably originates with rhetorical theory (but is also attested in non-technical contexts, e.g. Plut. *Pel.* 2.9). In any case, the rhetorical handbooks define προαναφώνησις and illustrate it with examples from Homer:

προαναφώνησις δὲ ἢ τὰ μέλλοντα αὔθις διὰ πλειόνων ῥηθήσεσθαι προσυνηστῶσα φράσις, οἷον “ἦ γὰρ ἔμελλεν | οἱ αὐτῷ θάνατόν τε κακὸν καὶ κῆρα λιτέσθαι” [*Il.* 16.46–7] καὶ “ὄφρα μὲν Ἔκτωρ ζωὸς ἔην καὶ μῆνι Ἄχιλλεύς, | καὶ Πριάμοιο ἀνακτος ἀπόρθητος πόλις ἔπλεν, | τόφρα δὲ καὶ μέγα τείχος Ἀχαιῶν ἔμπεδον ἦεν. | αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα κατὰ μὲν Τρώων θάνατον ὄσσοι ἄριστοι, | πολλοὶ δ' Ἀργείων οἱ μὲν δάμεν, οἱ δὲ λίποντο, | πέρθετο δὲ Πριάμοιο πόλις δεκάτω ἐνιαυτῷ” [*Il.* 12.10–15]. (Ps.Herodian *fig.* 61 Hajdú; the second quotation remains incomplete, see *Intro.* page 10)

³⁷ E.g. Genette (1972: 113–14 = 1980: 77).

³⁸ Prolepsis in ancient literary criticism is often referred to in modern scholarship, if only *en passant*. Most helpful are Duckworth (1931), Meijering (1987: 204–9). See also Trendelenburg (1867: 36), Roemer (1879: xvi), Bachmann (1904: 21), W. G. Rutherford (1905: 135 n. 24), Griesinger (1907: 25–6), N. J. Richardson (1980: 269), Nannini (1986: 41–2).

³⁹ Occasionally, the shorter form ἀναφώνησις/ἀναφωνεῖν also designates 'prolepsis' (Duckworth 1931: 323), although, strictly speaking, the prefix προ- is crucial, in order to indicate the 'anachrony' of prolepsis (Genette 1972: 78–80 = 1980: 35–6). For a semantic analysis of the word, see *Excursus* below.

⁴⁰ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 15.610–4b *ex.* (quoted below), D.H. *Thuc.* 19 (p. 353.18–21 U.-R.). Today's use of 'prolepsis' in literary criticism follows the influential model of the French narratologist Gérard Genette (1972: 105–15 = 1980: 67–79), who does not explicitly indicate awareness of his ancient predecessors. The same holds true for Kraut (1863), who already used the term in a very similar way. 'Prolepsis' does not only reproduce an ancient term, it also avoids the psychological connotations that most of its modern synonyms (e.g. anticipation or foreshadowing) have (Genette 1972: 82 = 1980: 39–40).

Proanaphonesis is a rhetorical device which introduces beforehand events which will be narrated again later in detail, e.g., ‘this was his own death and evil destruction he [sc. Patroclus] was entreating’ and ‘So long as Hector was still alive, and Achilles was angry, so long as the citadel of lord Priam was a city untaken, for this time the great wall of the Achaeans stood firm. But afterwards when all the bravest among the Trojans had died in the fighting, and many of the Argives had been beaten down, and some left, when in the tenth year the city of Priam was taken . . .’

προαναφώνησις ἔστι λέξις περὶ τῶν μελλόντων προαναφωνομένη μεταξὺ τῆς συνεχούσης διηγήσεως, “αἶψα δ’ ἑταῖρον ἔδον Πατροκλῆα προσέειπε | φθεγξάμενος παρὰ νηός· ὁ δὲ κλισίηθεν ἀκούσας | ἔκμολεν ἴσος Ἄρηι· κακοῦ δ’ ἄρα οἱ πέλεν ἀρχή” [*Il.* 11.602–4]. (Trypho *fig.* III 203 Spengel)

Proanaphonesis is a form of diction which, in the middle of the coherent narrative, announces beforehand what will happen later: ‘At once he [sc. Achilles] spoke to his own companion in arms, Patroclus, calling from the ship, and he heard it from inside the shelter, and came out like the war god, and this was the beginning of his evil.’

The two definitions concordantly describe προαναφώνησις as an explicit ‘pre-announcement’ of an event which is to follow later in the narrative. Ps.Herodian adds the point that the later treatment is more extensive (διὰ πλειόνων) and is in a way a repetition (αὔθις). Trypho indicates that a προαναφώνησις interrupts the narrative (μεταξὺ τῆς συνεχούσης διηγήσεως).⁴¹ Both descriptions are purely formalistic and do not discuss the possible effects of prolepsis or the motivation for making use of it.⁴²

Conversely, the scholia repeatedly refer to the psychological effects of prolepsis. Two types of interpretation can be found in the scholia (Duckworth 1931: 330): by anticipating the later development of his story, the narrator rouses the curiosity of his readers and thereby ensures their attention.⁴³ (Agamemnon’s hope in *Iliad* 2 to take Troy the same day is exposed by the narrator as futile.)

ἡ προαναφώνησις ἐγερτική. (schol. bT *Il.* 2.39b ex.)⁴⁴

The prolepsis is stirring.

⁴¹ For this point see also Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 65 (with Hillgruber 1994: *ad loc.*).

⁴² The same holds true for schol. A. *Ag.* 1076 (Cassandra predicts the imminent killing), E. *Ph.* 777 (Eteocles unknowingly anticipates Polynices’ burial by Antigone), where, however, it may be due to the abbreviation process which scholia underwent over the centuries (cf. Intro. page 9).

⁴³ These questions are discussed more extensively in Chapter 5.

⁴⁴ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 15.706 ex. (with Maass’ conjecture, on Protesilaus not returning home); also schol. bT *Il.* 12.116–7 ex. (on Asius’ doom to be killed by Idomeneus).

A similar point is made elsewhere in a more generalising note on prolepsis. (Hector is destined to die.)

καὶ ἡ πρόληψις δέ ἐστι σχῆμα ποιητικόν. προσεκτικὸν δὲ ταῦτα τὸν ἀκροατὴν καὶ περιπαθέστερον ἀπεργάζεται [T, ἐργάζονται b]. (schol. bT *Il.* 15.610–4b *ex.*)

And prolepsis is a poetic device. It renders the reader attentive and emotionally more engaged.

The generalising comment combines the more neutral attention of the reader with a decidedly emotional effect. The second part of the scholion is therefore apt to lead over to the other effect of prolepsis as described in the scholia. A considerable emotional involvement of the reader is presupposed if the narrator is said to ‘soothe’ the reader’s anxiety by indicating in advance the positive outcome of the story. (In *Iliad* 15, Zeus sketches the further action, which will eventually lead to the sack of Troy.)

ῥητέον οὖν ὅτι σχῆμά ἐστιν ἡ προανακεφαλαίωσις, ὡς Ὀδυσσεὺς προαναφωνεῖ Τηλεμάχῳ τὴν μνησθηροκτονίαν [sc. *Od.* 16.267–307], ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν ἦσον καὶ διὰ τῶν πρακτικῶν αὐτίκα διηγείται. . . πρὸς δὲ τούτοις παραμυθεῖται τὸν ἀκροατὴν, τὴν ἄλωσιν Τροίας σκιαγραφῶν αὐτῶ· τίς γὰρ ἂν ἠνέσχετο ἐμπιπραμένων τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν νεῶν καὶ Αἴαντος φεύγοντος, εἰ μὴ ἀπέκειτο ταῖς ψυχαῖς τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων ὅτι οἱ ταῦτα πράξαντες κρατηθήσονται. (schol. bT *Il.* 15.56b *ex.*)⁴⁵

NB the device is a *proanakephalaiosis* [≈ proleptic summary];⁴⁶ similarly Odysseus gives Telemachus a prolepsis of the killing of the suitors, and it is nevertheless narrated immediately afterwards by means of a scenic presentation [sc. as opposed to Odysseus’ narrative presentation] . . . In addition, he [sc. Homer] comforts the reader by sketching for him the sack of Troy. For who could have borne it, with the Greek ships being burnt and Ajax fleeing, unless the fact would have been kept in store for the readers’ souls that the people who had done it [sc. the Trojans] will be defeated.

The elaborate defence of *Il.* 15.56–77 against Aristarchus’ athetesis first provides an Odyssean parallel for the repetition which bothered Aristarchus (see n. 56). It then adduces a decidedly emotional effect of prolepsis which is closely related to the subject-matter of the *Iliad* and reflects a pro-Greek

⁴⁵ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 10.274b¹ *ex.*, bT *Il.* 12.173 *ex.* (quoted below), bT *Il.* 15.601–2 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 16.800b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 17.236a *ex.*, T *Il.* 17.272a *ex.*, b *Il.* 17.453–5a² *ex.*; also bT *Il.* 12.13–5 *ex.* All these notes express in various ways that the prolepsis of the eventual Greek success helps the reader endure their current plight.

⁴⁶ Probably coined after ἀνακεφαλαίωσις (‘repeating summary’), which can designate repeating analepsis (see below), the rare προανακεφαλαίωσις was meant as its counterpart. The ανα- component is strictly speaking superfluous, because prolepsis cannot be repeating.

bias.⁴⁷ The success of Hector and the Trojans is only bearable because the reader learns in advance that the Greeks will eventually be victorious.⁴⁸

The two psychological effects of prolepsis – suspense regarding the outcome of the story, on the one hand, relief felt over the Trojan success being temporary, on the other – are not really compatible (Duckworth 1931: 330). The relevant notes may well derive from different sources.

Moreover, knowledge of where the narrative will go need not lead to relief, but actually to increased emotional involvement on the part of the reader. An example comes from the ancient comment on Homer exposing the futility of Achilles' wish that Patroclus survive (16.46–7):

αἱ δὲ προαναφωνήσεις αὐταὶ τὸν ἀκροατὴν ἐπαίρουσιν, ἥδη προσδοκῶντα τὸ δεινόν, ὡς “νηπίη, οὐδ’ ἐνόησεν ὁ μιν μάλα τῆλε λοετρῶν (| χερσὶν Ἀχιλλῆος δάμασε γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη)” [*Il.* 22.445–6]. (schol. bT *Il.* 16.46*b ex.*, the parallel only in T)⁴⁹

These prolepses stir the reader who is already expecting fearsome things, cf. ‘poor innocent [sc. Andromache], nor did she know how, far from waters of bathing, grey-eyed Athene had cut him [sc. Hector] down at the hands of Achilles’.

Here the narratorial prolepsis, building on the reader's already sombre expectations, increases the sympathetic feelings for the doomed character and his closest friend or relative.⁵⁰ It is also noteworthy that the parallel from book 22, Andromache unaware of Hector's death, concerns a ‘Trojan enemy’. This scholion is free of the anti-Trojan bias found in schol. bT *Il.* 15.56*b ex.* and the scholia listed in n. 45. The parallel and the plural (‘these prolepses’) indicate that this psychological effect is considered a recurrent feature of Homer's poetry and his prolepses.

In connection with the former psychological effect, suspense, one scholion develops a theory about the explicitness of a prolepsis. (Patroclus' death is anticipated in *Iliad* II, which is called ‘the beginning of his evil’.)

⁴⁷ Cf. the parallels listed in n. 45 and Chapter 5.

⁴⁸ According to Meijering (1987: 287 n. 208), notes on prolepsis such as schol. bT *Il.* 12.13–5 *ex.* (see n. 45) ‘prevent the great size of an epic from making the suspense unbearable’, but these notes never refer explicitly to the great size of the poem. Most of them seem rather to be concerned with Trojan success.

⁴⁹ Cf. schol. S. *Aj.* 389c: αἱ τοιαῦται προφωνήσεις οὐ διαλύουσι τὴν ὑπόθεσιν προλαμβάνουσαι τὸ μέλλον, ἀλλὰ προσοχὴν ἐργάζονται τῷ θεατῆι προσδοκῶντι πῶς τὸ δεινὸν ἀπαντήσεται (‘Such prolepses do not, by anticipating the future, destroy the story, but they make the spectator attentive, because he is curious how the evil will come about.’) On ‘destroying’ the story see below.

⁵⁰ Cf. the passages listed in n. 44, in which the prolepsis is described as περιπαθῆς (‘deeply moving, emotionally engaging’).

ἀναπτεροῖ τὸν ἀκροατὴν ἢ ἀναφώνησις⁵¹ ἐπιειγόμενον μαθεῖν, τί τὸ “κακὸν” ἦν. προσοχὴν δὲ ἐργάζεται διὰ βραχείας ἐνδείξεως· εἰ γὰρ πλεον ἐπεξεργάσατο, διέφθειρεν ἂν τὸν ἐξῆς λόγον καὶ ἀπήμβλυε τὴν ποιήσιν. (schol. bT *Il.* 11.604c ex.)

The prolepsis sets the reader aflutter and makes him eager to learn what the ‘evil’ was. He [sc. Homer] achieves attention by means of a small hint. If he had given more details, he would have destroyed the sequence and made the poem blunt.

This critic argues that long and explicit prolepses are undesirable, because they interrupt the particular context and take the edge off the narrative. If the reader knows too much already, he loses interest in the story, and the reading becomes dull (cf. schol. S. *Aj.* 389c, quoted in n. 49).

A similar argument underlies Didymus’ (?) report that Zenodotus omitted Zeus’ long prolepsis in 15.64–77, which has been mentioned above:

Ζηνόδοτος ἐνθένδε [15.64] ἕως τοῦ “λίσσομένη” [15.77] οὐδὲ ἔγραφεν· εἰκόσασι γὰρ Εὐριπιδεῖω προλόγω ταῦτα. ἐναγωνίως δὲ ἔστιν ὁ ποιητὴς καί, ἐὰν ἄρα, σπέρμα μόνον τιθεῖς, (ὡς τὸ) [suppl. Nickau] “κακοῦ δ’ ἄρα οἱ πέλεν ἀρχή” [*Il.* 11.604]. τάχα δὲ ὁ ταῦτα ποιήσας καὶ τὸ “ῥαχόμεθ’ ἐς Θήβην” [*Il.* 1.366] καὶ τὸ “ἦρξατο δ’ ὡς πρῶτον Κίκονας δάμασ” [*Od.* 23.310] (ἐποίησεν). (schol. T *Il.* 15.64c ex. (*Did.*?))

Zenodotus omits <the fourteen lines> from here [15.64] to ‘supplicating’ [15.77]. For they are similar to a Euripidean prologue. However, the poet is <not boring like Euripides, but> exciting and, if anything at all, puts only a seed; cf. ‘this was the beginning of his [sc. Patroclus] evil’. The one who composed these lines [sc. 15.64–77] is perhaps the same who composed ‘we went against Thebe’ and ‘he [sc. Odysseus to Penelope] began how he first defeated the Ciconians’.

Apart from the point about the omitted lines, which is also reported in schol. A, it is unclear how much of this commentary goes back to Zenodotus and Didymus.⁵² In any case, the critic prefers short ‘seeds’, exemplified by the passage on Patroclus’ doom which is the standard example in ancient scholarship, and dislikes extended prolepses.⁵³ Like Euripides’ prologues,

⁵¹ Rutherford (see Erbse’s *app. crit.*) proposes προαναφώνησις, but the scholia regularly confuse the two terms (see also προφώνησις in schol. S. *Aj.* 389c, n. 49). Originally, however, their meaning is probably different (see Excursus below).

⁵² For details see Nickau (1977: 245–50).

⁵³ For this type of σπέρμα (‘seed’) see also schol. b *Il.* 2.761–5 ex.; contrast those σπέρματα which are ‘planted’ by one poet and ‘reaped’ by another (see Meijering 1987: 205–6 and above n. 13). Interestingly, the term ‘seed’ recurs in the English translation of Genette’s *Discours du récit* for his original term *amorce* (‘bait’): Genette (1972: 112 = 1980: 76–7). The terminology seems to have come full circle.

they are said to weaken the poem's effect by anticipating too much.⁵⁴ As a final point, the prolepsis in *Iliad* 15 is, interestingly, compared to the equally 'undesirable' repeating analepses in *Iliad* 1.366–92 and *Odyssey* 23.310–41.⁵⁵ The critic argues that, regardless of whether the poet is looking back (analepsis) or forward (prolepsis), he must not cover the same ground twice.⁵⁶

A further point of interest concerns the distance between the 'promise' of a prolepsis and its 'fulfilment'. The occasion is, again, the prolepsis of Patroclus' death:

σημειοῦνται τινες ὅτι οὐ πόρρωθεν ἢ προαναφώνησις. κακῆ οὖν οὐκ ἐπὶ τὰ πόρρω ἢ ἀπὸτασις “Διὸς δ’ ἔτελείετο βουλή” [*Il.* 1.5]. (schol. A *Il.* 11.604b *Ariston*.)

Some mark the line with a sign, because there is not a great distance <between> prolepsis <and fulfilment>. Therefore, in that other passage too 'and the will of Zeus was accomplished' the point of reference is not far away either.

The note first makes the observation that the distance between the prolepsis of Patroclus' doom (11.604) and its textual representation (book 16) is comparatively short.⁵⁷ This is then used as an argument that the (disputed) reference of *Il.* 1.5 must be a prolepsis to an event within the *Iliad*.⁵⁸ In a way Aristarchus seems to be making the point that Homer is fond of internal prolepsis. Other notes simply point out that a proleptic

⁵⁴ The exact meaning of ἐναγγώνιος here is disputed. According to Bühler (1964: 60), the commentator contrasts a narrative prolepsis with a dramatic enactment of the events. Although she generally accepts this as a possible meaning of ἐναγγώνιος, Meijering (1987: 205 with n. 212) convincingly argues that the contrast with σπέρμα μόνον seems to indicate the commentator's concern about the amount of information given in Zeus' prolepsis. To give too much information in advance destroys the poem's tension (see also ἐξαγγώνιος as used in schol. bT *Il.* 18.312–3b ex.); cf. the argument made by the *Anonymus Seguerianus* 36 Patillon (σπερματικῶς). On the semantics of ἐναγγώνιος see also Chapter 5.

⁵⁵ As usual, the critic only quotes a few words from the beginning of the first line, but he clearly means the whole passages (see *Intro.* page 10).

⁵⁶ Similarly, Aristarchus' athetesis of *Il.* 15.56–77 is based, among other things, on the 'unnecessary repetition' (οὐκ ἀναγκαιῶς παλιλλογεῖται, schol. A *Il.* 15.56a *Ariston*). It is, however, noteworthy that Zenodotus allows the implicitly proleptic *Il.* 15.56–63 to stand, whereas Aristarchus obelises all of it. On 'avoidance of repetition' see also Chapter 9.

⁵⁷ The expression σημειοῦνται τινες probably refers to Aristarchus himself (Lehrs [1833] 1882: 9–13, esp. 12). It is not clear whether πόρρωθεν concerns narrative time (six books) or story time (one day); for this distinction see Chapter 2. According to (1987: 204), the note is based on a 'comparison, presumably, with such instances as in *Il.* 2.260, 4.354, *Od.* 1.429', which I fail to understand.

⁵⁸ Others had recognised an analeptic reference to Zeus' plan to deal with what he considered an overpopulation on earth (schol. D *Il.* 1.5 = *Cypria* fr. 1 Bernabé). It remains unclear whether for Aristarchus the prolepsis in *Il.* 1.5 is taken up by Zeus' promise to Thetis (1.524–7) or by the actual fulfilment of the promise (beginning in 8.2).

promise made earlier is fulfilled in the passage under discussion (e.g. schol. T *Il.* 13.386–7 *ex.*).

Finally, the scholia have interesting things to say about external prolepsis, i.e. the anticipation of events which are not narrated because they fall outside the time frame of the narrative.⁵⁹ These notes obviously show awareness of the difference between fabula and plot. Probably the most prominent example of external prolepsis are the events which lead to the fall of Troy. Their proleptic inclusion is praised on several occasions. (The river Scamander refers to the impending fall of Troy.)

ἀναφωνεῖ τὸ τέλος τῆς ἱστορίας εὐκαίρως ὁ ποιητής· οὐ γὰρ προκόψει μέχρι τούτων τὸ σύγγραμμα τῷ Ὀμήρῳ. (schol. bT *Il.* 21.376 *ex.*)

The poet anticipates the end of the story at the right time, because Homer's account will not proceed as far as these <events>.

This critic seems to like the idea that, because the *Iliad* will not get as far as the sack of Troy, the reader nevertheless learns how the story will end.⁶⁰ Unlike other comments (see n. 45), however, the present one contains no explicit anti-Trojan rhetoric.

Another scholion displays a particular fascination with the discrepancy between knowing the end of the story, but not knowing how Homer would have described it. (Thetis weeps over the destiny of her son.)

ἐπειδὴ μέλλει καταστρέφειν τὸν λόγον εἰς τὰς Ἑκτορος ταφάς [sc. *Il.* 24.804], προλαβεῖν τι ἐπιχειρεῖ τῶν ἐξῆς καὶ τὸ κέντρον ἐγκαταλιπεῖν, ὡς ὁ κωμικός φησιν [sc. Eurpolis fr. 102.7 K-A], τοῖς ἀκρωμένοις ὥστε ποθηῖσά τι καὶ περὶ τῆς Ἀχιλλέως ἀναιρέσεως ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἐννοεῖν παρ' ἑαυτοῖς, οἷος ἂν ἐγένετο ὁ ποιητής διατιθέμενος ταῦτα. (schol. bT *Il.* 24.85a *ex.*)

Since he [sc. Homer] has in mind to conclude his account with Hector's burial, he endeavours to anticipate some of the sequel and to leave behind for the readers,

⁵⁹ Note that Ps.Herodian's definition (quoted above) is exemplified by both an internal and an external prolepsis, but he does not explicitly differentiate between the two types. The fact that he adduces two examples may, however, indicate that he is aware of the difference. For the notion 'external prolepsis' see also schol. T *Il.* 12.9–12 *ex.* It discusses a prolepsis that refers to events μετὰ τὴν Ἀχιλλέως μῆνιν, which may well mean 'after the end of the *Iliad*'.

⁶⁰ The reasoning behind this note seems to be: 'if the poet does not narrate a particular event, let him at least indicate its gist by means of an external prolepsis'. A similar reasoning forms the basis of another scholion: in the Trojan Catalogue (2.873–5) Homer anticipates Amphimachus' death at the hands of Achilles in the river battle (book 21). There, however, Amphimachus will not be mentioned: προαναφέρωντες, ἵνα μὴ ἔτι αὐτοῦ μνησθῆ (schol. b *Il.* 2.872b *ex.*: 'He made a prolepsis in order not to mention him again'). It is a fair assumption that other critics were puzzled by Amphimachus' absence from book 21 (in a similar case the lines' authenticity was questioned by Aristarchus: schol. A *Il.* 2.860–1 *Ariston.*), but this scholar seems to make a virtue of necessity with his explanation of the prolepsis' purpose. Cf. also schol. b *Il.* 2.724b *ex.* (on Philoctetes), which, unlike Amphimachus' case, is an example of external prolepsis.

in Eupolis' words, the spur, so that they long to hear something about Achilles' death and to imagine among themselves how the poet would have put it.

In accordance with schol. bT *Il.* 15.610–4b *ex.* (quoted above), prolepsis is described here as creating suspense. In the case of external prolepsis, however, the expectation remains unfulfilled, but the reader receives an incentive to speculate about how Homer would have narrated the death of Achilles.⁶¹ On occasion, this could lead to the conclusion that Homer would have done it differently from his successors (schol. A *Il.* 17.719 *Ariston.*, on the rescue of Achilles' body).

It has been claimed above that ancient literary critics made a difference between prolepsis and motivation ([προ]οικονομία). Duckworth (1931: 324) is aware of the principal difference, but he then adduces examples which are said to blur the boundaries.⁶² A careful re-examination reveals, however, that only one instance of προαναφώνησις is better explained in terms of 'motivation'.⁶³ In all other cases, the meaning is 'prolepsis', which may be more or less explicit.⁶⁴ Conversely, (προ)οικονομῆν (and cognates) always means 'to motivate (in advance), to prepare for'. This may, at times, include the notion 'to adumbrate, to hint at', but never goes so far as to indicate explicit prolepsis. No less remarkable is the fact that προαναφώνησις is applied mostly to agents whose prolepses are certain, because they have privileged access to knowledge about future events: the narrator himself or gods and seers. Further support comes from the fact that only προαναφώνησις and other words for 'prolepsis' are seen as sufficiently dramatic to have the psychological effects described above, whereas the function of προοικονομία is described in more neutral terms. The conclusion is that ancient critics indeed made a difference between προαναφώνησις and προοικονομία and that therefore the distinction made in the present chapter is in accordance with ancient practice.

⁶¹ For the topic 'cooperation of the reader' see Chapter 6; for the Eupolidean phrase τὸ κέντρον ἔγκαταλιπεῖν τοῖς ἀκρωμένοις see schol. *Ar. Pax* 1204.

⁶² Cf. N. J. Richardson (1980: 269 n. 9): 'As he [sc. Duckworth] points out, anticipation (προοικονομία) is really distinct from explicit foreshadowing (προαναφώνησις), although they are often confused in the Scholia.'

⁶³ Schol. HM²TVY *Od.* 1.154 (p. 73 Ludwig; on Odysseus sparing Phemius in book 22). Other examples adduced by Duckworth have a different meaning altogether (see Excursus below); schol. *T. Il.* 1.45a *ex.* is too short to allow a decision over the exact meaning of προαναφώνησις.

⁶⁴ There are cases where προαναφώνησις seems to be closer in meaning to 'adumbration' (instead of explicit prolepsis): schol. A. *PV* 518a (on Zeus' love for Thetis), 519 (ditto), E. *Ph.* 183 (Antigone adumbrating what will happen to Capaneus), *Med.* 40 (see *app. crit.*; the nurse on the killing of the children); cf. schol. E. *Med.* 791. A remarkable, because truly exceptional, case is schol. E. *Ph.* 1046, where προαναφώνῆν seems to designate 'prolepsis' in the grammatical sense, for which cf. *Ap. Dysc. synt.* p. 39.9 Uhlig, schol. *Pi. O.* 3.31a.

EXCURSUS: THE TERMS προαναφώνησις AND ἀναφώνησις

The previous discussion assumes that the terms ἀναφώνησις and προαναφώνησις can both designate 'prolepsis'.⁶⁵ It is, however, *a priori* unlikely that the two words originally meant the same thing. Rather, the situation found in the scholia probably derives from a confusion between the two words. Whereas προαναφώνησις makes perfect sense as a term for 'prolepsis', ἀναφώνησις lacks the prefix προ-, which brings out the crucial point of chronological order. In addition, there are passages in which ἀναφώνησις cannot mean 'prolepsis' (e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 13.665*b ex.*, quoted in [Chapter 2](#)). It is, therefore, likely that ἀναφώνησις was mistaken for προαναφώνησις and not *vice versa*.

In the following, an attempt is made to recover the original meaning of ἀναφώνησις and to reconstruct how the confusion came about. The starting-point is a scholion on *Iliad* 12. (Asius prays to Zeus for victory. The formula which caps the speech indicates that Zeus does not grant his wish.)

ἠθικῶς πάνυ τῆ ἀναφωνήσει (χρηῖται) [Erbse, cl. b]. ἅμα δὲ καὶ προλαμβάνει τι τῶν ἐξῆς, θεραπεύων τὸν ἀκροατὴν ὅτι οὐ τῆς Ἑκτορος ἀρετῆς ἦττους ἐφάνησαν Ἕλληνας, τὸ κατόρθωμα Διὸς εἶναι λέγων. (schol. T *Il.* 12.173*a ex.*, sim. b)

In a very emphatic way he [sc. Homer] makes use of the *anaphonesis*. And at the same time he anticipates something of the following events, thereby conciliating the reader that the Greek defeat is not due to Hector's excellence, indicating that their success is due to Zeus.

The explanation given by the scholion makes a distinction between ἀναφώνησις and προλαμβάνει τι τῶν ἐξῆς, unless one assumes that the comment says the same thing twice.⁶⁶ In the light of the discussion above, the meaning of προλαμβάνει τι τῶν ἐξῆς poses no serious problems: it must refer to the prolepsis of the passage. But what does ἀναφώνησις mean here? A close parallel comes from the scholia on book 10. (Hector promises to give Dolon Achilles' horses for his brave reconnaissance of the Greek camp. The capping formula ('and he swore an empty oath') indicates that Hector's promise will not be fulfilled.)

προσαγωγίμος ἢ τῶν ἀναφωνήσεων τέρψις τῷ ἀκροατῆ. ἠδίστη δέ ἐστιν καὶ κερτομική. (schol. T *Il.* 10.332*b ex.*)

⁶⁵ Duckworth (1931: 323) explicitly equates them. Particularly illustrative are those instances where two redactions on the same passage preserve a different terminology: e.g. schol. *Il.* 11.604*b/c* (A: προαναφώνησις, bT: ἀναφώνησις).

⁶⁶ Note that the b-scholion leaves out the words ἅμα δὲ καὶ προλαμβάνει τι τῶν ἐξῆς.

The pleasure of an *anaphonesis* is attractive to the reader. It is most pleasant and provoking.⁶⁷

Similar to the previous scholion, the word ἀναφώνησις refers to a line which caps a speech and indicates that the speaker's expectations will be thwarted. Most interestingly, the A-scholion on the same passage describes it as τοῦτο δὲ ἔξωθεν ἐπιπεφώνηται, 'this is commented on as a concluding remark from outside (i.e. by the poet)' (cf. the use of ἐπιφώνημα in schol. A *Il.* 6.311a *Ariston.*). In other words, the line is an explicit narratorial comment.⁶⁸ Support for this explanation comes from another note on a capping formula (schol. A *Il.* 10.240 *Ariston.*: ἔξωθεν ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου προσώπου ἀναφώνηϊ 'he makes a narratorial comment from outside in his own voice'). Such a meaning of ἀναφώνησις in the present note fits well in other passages too. It is, therefore, unlikely that ἀναφώνησις is a unique mistake for ἐπιφώνημα.⁶⁹ But how did ἀναφώνησις acquire the meaning 'explicit narratorial comment'?

A possible answer can be found in those passages where ἀναφώνησις means 'apostrophe, address, exclamation'.⁷⁰ In this meaning ἀναφώνησις was also applied to the well-known νήπιος-passages. (All the Trojans leave their chariots at the trench, not so Asius: νήπιος, οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔμελλε κακὰς ὑπὸ κῆρας ἀλύξας . . . ἄψ ἀπονοστήσειν . . . ('fool that he was, for he was not to escape the evil fates . . . and return back again . . .'), *Il.* 12.113–15.) The relevant scholion reads:

σημαντικωτάτῳ ὀνόματι χρῆται τῷ “νήπιος” ἐν ταῖς ἀναφωνήσεσιν· “νήπιιοι οἱ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος” [*Od.* 1.8], “νήπιος, οὐδὲ τὰ ἦδη” [*Il.* 2.38], καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ κεκοσμημένου τῷ χρυσῷ “νήπιος, οὐδέ τι οἱ τό γ' ἐπήρκεσε λυγρὸν ὄλεθρον” [*Il.* 2.873]. (schol. bT *Il.* 12.113 *ex.*, the parallel passages only in T)

In the *anaphoneseis* he [sc. Homer] makes use of the most expressive word 'fool': 'fools [sc. Odysseus' companions], who devoured the oxen of Helios', 'fool [sc. Agamemnon], who knew nothing [sc. of how unjustified his hopes to take Troy were]', and about the one with the golden armour [sc. Amphimachus] 'fool, nor did this avail to keep dismal death back'.

Apparently, ancient critics took νήπιος in these passages to be a form of apostrophe or exclamation, and they expressed this by means of the term

⁶⁷ On the meaning of προσαγώγιμος see Erbse *ad loc.*: 'idem esse vid. quod προσαγωγός'.

⁶⁸ For this meaning of ἐπιφωνεῖν see Nünlist (2003: 66 with n. 12) and Chapter 4. The word ἐπιφώνημα can also be applied to the νήπιος-passages (on which see below), a usage that is criticised by Ps.Demetr. *eloc.* 111.

⁶⁹ See schol. bT *Il.* 13.665b *ex.* (with reference to εἰ εἰδώς), bT *Il.* 23.184 *ex.* (with reference to τὸν δ' οὐ κύνες ἀμφεπέοντο). In both cases ἀναφώνησις describes capping formulae.

⁷⁰ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 8.236 *ex.*, T *Il.* 13.603 *ex.*, b *Il.* 22.297 *rec.* (?), T *Il.* 24.201a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 24.255–60 *ex.*

ἀναφώνησις. Moreover, the second part of these passages regularly contains a narratorial prolepsis that explains the apostrophe or exclamation, as in the examples cited above. If one assumes that the two parts were described in ancient comments by ἀναφώνησις and προαναφώνησις in virtual juxtaposition, one could easily imagine how one got mistaken for the other, or, as an alternative, were treated as apparent synonyms.⁷¹ And the νήπιος-passages are good examples of explicit narratorial comments.⁷² One can therefore see how ἀναφώνησις acquired that meaning too. Whether the sketched semantic development of ἀναφώνησις also reflects a chronological sequence cannot be decided, because the relevant scholia cannot be dated.

ANALEPSIS⁷³

An examination of the Homeric epics reveals that analepsis (≈ flashback) is more frequent than its logical counterpart, prolepsis. However, in conformity with the observation made above that ancient critics prefer to comment on the preparatory function of motivation, prolepsis is treated more often in the scholia than analepsis. Another difference concerns terminology, in that there is virtually no technical vocabulary to describe analepsis.⁷⁴ The only exception is ἀνακεφαλαίωσις ('summary'), which is used to describe internal repeating analepsis.⁷⁵ An example is Achilles' report to his mother, Thetis, which summarises the first half of *Iliad* 1.⁷⁶ Given their general suspicion about verbatim repetitions, Alexandrian

⁷¹ The confusion can also be documented in the other direction. In schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1321a προαναφώνησις means 'exclamation' (cf. e.g. schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1170a, *Pax* 1191a). The two meanings of προαναφώνησις must be kept separate (*pace* Meijering 1987: 286–7 n. 207, 288 n. 224).

⁷² In this connection it is worth mentioning that the νήπιος-passage which is part of Achilles' speech to Patroclus (*Il.* 16.8) is explained in the scholia as 'paralepsis', i.e. representing the focalisation of the narrator, not Achilles (see [Chapter 4](#)).

⁷³ Cf. Bachmann (1902: 17), Roemer (1912: 278–304).

⁷⁴ From a hellenist's point of view, Genette's coinage 'analepsis' is not satisfactory, because the Greek word suggests that a former topic is taken up *again* (cf. e.g. Hdt. 5.62, adduced by LSJ *s.v.* ἀναλαμβάνω), whereas Genette's term expressly comprises both 'repeating' and 'completing analepsis'. The latter adduces new information and is therefore not a repetition. No surprise then that, unlike its counterpart prolepsis (see n. 40), Genettean analepsis has no precursor in the scholia. See, however, Menander Rhetor 441.16.

⁷⁵ The term ἀνακεφαλαίωσις probably originates with rhetorical theory, where it designates the concluding summary or recapitulation (Arist. fr. 133 Rose [cf. *Proleg. Syll.* 4, p. 32.6–8 Rabe], Ps.Hermog. *Meth.* 12 [p. 427 Rabe], also *Proleg. Syll.*, index: *s.v.*); cf. Lausberg ([1960] 1990: §§ 434–5). On the distinction 'internal vs. external' see above on prolepsis, on 'repeating vs. completing analepsis' see preceding n.

⁷⁶ *Il.* 1.366–92, with schol. bT *Il.* 1.366a *ex.*, AbT *Il.* 1.366b *ex.*; for ἀνακεφαλαίωσις also schol. V *Od.* 23.0, QV *Od.* 23.310–43 (used as an argument against the athetesis), Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 174 (with Hillgruber 1999: 373); see also Roemer (1912: 278–304), van der Valk (II: lxvi).

scholars were prone to athetise these passages.⁷⁷ In one case the argument can be followed more closely, because a defence of the relevant passage has been transmitted too. (Thetis' explanation why she needs new armour for Achilles includes a reference to her marriage with Peleus and to Achilles' childhood (18.431–8) and then (444–56) briefly recapitulates *Iliad* books 1–18.)

ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι τρεῖς καὶ δέκα, ὅτι συνήγαγέ τις τὰ διὰ πολλῶν εἰρημένα εἰς ἓνα τόπον, ὡς ἐκεῖνα “ὠχόμεθ' ἔς Θήβην ἱερὴν πόλιν” [*Il.* 1.366]. διὰ δὲ τῶν ἐξῆς [sc. 18.457–61] ἐπιδείκνυσιν ὅτι τε ὁ Πάτροκλος τελευτήσας ἀπώλεσε τὰ ὄπλα καὶ πάρεστιν ἕτερα ληφυσμένα. διὰ μέντοι τούτων [sc. 18.444–56] οὐδὲν ἀναγκαῖον λέγεται. (schol. A *Il.* 18.444–56a *Ariston.*)

The thirteen lines are athetised, because someone has condensed what is said elsewhere more extensively, cf. ‘we went to Thebes, the sacred city . . .’ In what follows, she [sc. Thetis] relates that Patroclus lost the armour when he fell in the battle and that she is here in order to get a new set. Nothing of importance, therefore, is said in the previous lines.

The argument is then followed by a second (not quoted here) that Thetis' summary is not entirely accurate. Conversely, the bT-scholion reads:

ἀνακεφαλαίωσις αὐτῆ. κακῶς οὖν ἀθετεῖ Ἀρίσταρχος· πῶς γὰρ οὐκ ἄποπον τὰ μὲν περὶ τοῦ γάμου [cf. 18.431–5] παλαιὰ τε ὄντα καὶ πᾶσι δῆλα λέγειν, σιωπᾶν δὲ δι' ὃ ἦλθεν; (schol. bT *Il.* 18.444–56b *ex.*)

This <is> a summary, and Aristarchus, therefore, athetises it with no reason. For how is it not absurd <for Thetis> to say the things about the marriage, which are old and known to all, but to pass over in silence why she has come?

Aristarchus athetises the internal repeating analepsis of books 1–18 on the grounds that they are a mere repetition of things said elsewhere in the *Iliad* and therefore ‘not necessary’ (οὐδὲν ἀναγκαῖον). Conversely, he does not object to the external completing analepsis which comprises her marriage, etc. That is to say, Aristarchus is not *a priori* opposed to analepsis. The decisive criterion for him is so to speak whether the relevant passage contains new information (completing analepsis) or not (repeating analepsis). The anonymous critic disagrees with Aristarchus' athetesis on the grounds that Hephaestus is only too familiar with Thetis' marriage, but must be informed of why Achilles needs new armour in the first place.⁷⁸ This is not the case, if the passage is athetised.⁷⁹ In principle,

⁷⁷ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 15.64c *ex.* (*Did.?*) (quoted above) and Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 338).

⁷⁸ This implicitly contradicts the claim that divine characters in general are omniscient.

⁷⁹ To be fair, Aristarchus retains *Il.* 18.457–61, which contain a brief reference to Patroclus losing Achilles' armour. But Hephaestus would probably be left wondering how it all came about.

the note reflects a distinction between narratorial and actorial analepsis. Comparable to other analepses such as *Il.* 1.366–88 or *Od.* 23.310–41 the present passage is an actorial analepsis, i.e. spoken by a character who uses it in order to inform the interlocutor. The passage, therefore, does have a function. And the fact that this leads to a repetition for the reader is only a side effect and must not be used in support of an athetesis. This argument is rooted in the so-called *λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου*: an apparent problem in the text is solved by taking into account the question of who is speaking to whom (see [Chapter 4](#)). In the present case Thetis informs Hephaestus why Achilles needs new armour. The lines must stand.⁸⁰

In a more general vein, analepsis can form the background against which scholia must be read. Ancient and modern readers of Homer express their admiration for his decision to have the *Iliad* begin at a late stage of the fabula.⁸¹ However, he does not simply forgo the past events, but incorporates them by way of external analepsis. Ancient critics normally describe the device periphrastically. For instance:

θαυμάσιος ὁ ποιητῆς μηδ' ὀτιοῦν παραλιμπάνων τῆς ὑποθέσεως, πάντα δ' ἐξ ἀναστροφῆς κατὰ τὸν ἐπιβάλλοντα καιρὸν διηγούμενος, τὴν τῶν θεῶν ἔριν, τὴν τῆς Ἑλένης ἀρπαγὴν, τὸν Ἀχιλλέως θάνατον. (schol. b *Il.* 2.494–877 *ex.*, p. 288.93–5 Erbse)

The poet is admirable: he omits no part of the story, but narrates all events at the appropriate moment in inverse order, the strife of the goddesses [sc. Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite], the rape of Helen, the death of Achilles.

Although the *Iliad* itself covers only a short time span of fifty-one days towards the end of the war, the ‘prehistory’ is incorporated by means of external analepsis.⁸² Given that ancient critics are fully aware of this particular plot structure, it is perhaps surprising that analepsis is not discussed more often in the scholia.⁸³ There are, nevertheless, a few instances where

⁸⁰ Conversely, an athetesis of *Il.* 18.444–56 would indirectly lead to ‘paralepsis’ (see [Chapter 4](#)).

⁸¹ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.1b *ex.* (quoted in Chapters 2 and 5). This is the origin of Horace’s famous phrase *medius in res*, which, as has often been pointed out, would better be called *ultimas in res* (cf. Quint. 7.10.11); see also Arist. *Po.* 1459a30–7 and [Chapter 2](#).

⁸² The scholion’s last example, Achilles’ death, does, of course, not precede the *Iliad* (cf. the discussion in [Chapter 2](#)). Incidentally, the reference to ‘the quarrel of the goddesses’ shows that this critic considers Paris’ judgment (cf. *Il.* 24.29–30) genuine, whereas Aristarchus claimed it to be unknown to Homer (e.g. schol. *A Il.* 24.25–30 *Ariston.*, see [Chapter 12](#)).

⁸³ Conversely, Eustathius repeatedly comments on Homer’s habit of inserting what he calls *παλαιὰ ἱστορία* (lit. ‘old stories’): 100.29–30 (= 1.157.25–6, on Nestor’s exploit as a young man), 225.18 (= 1.342.1–4, on the events in Aulis), 402.4 (= 1.632.34, on Priam’s exploit as a young man), etc. (see Keizer 1995: s.v.). The insertion of a *παλαιὰ ἱστορία* is recognised by Zenodorus as one of the two acceptable cases for presenting a conversation among gods (schol. *Il.* 18.356b *ex.*). For a detailed discussion see [Chapter 13](#).

an external analepsis is said to ‘complete’ the narrative.⁸⁴ Many of these notes establish a connection between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, comparable to the type of prolepsis discussed above (Excursus): they explain that an Odyssean passage fills a gap left in or by the *Iliad*. (In *Odyssey* 4, Nestor’s son Peisistratus weeps over the death of his brother Antilochus, whom the Aethiopian king Memnon had slain.)

τὰ ἐν Ἰλιάδι παραλειφθέντα διὰ τῆς Ὀδυσσεΐας ὡς μιᾶς οὔσης τῆς πραγματείας παραδίδωσι. (schol. Q *Od.* 4.187)⁸⁵

He [sc. Homer] presents in the *Odyssey* the things which were left out of the *Iliad*, as if it were one work.

Strictly speaking, Antilochus’ death falls between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (and was narrated in the *Aethiopis*). It is, nevertheless, seen here as an Iliadic ‘omission’ which is filled by the Odyssean passage. Modern scholars are likely to take exception to such a narrow interrelationship between the two Homeric epics. But leaving this aside, notes such as the one just quoted are indicative of a considerable interest in the phenomenon that the narrator incorporates story elements which fall outside the time frame of his plot. This is further evidence for ancient awareness of the differences between plot and fabula and their ramifications.

Finally, there are the comments which draw attention to the fact that Homer does not ‘present the event as one which is taking place, but refers to it as one which took place previously’ (τοῦτο γινόμενον μὲν οὐ παρέστησεν, ὡς γενόμενον δὲ παραδίδωσιν, schol. A *Il.* 8.230a *Ariston.*). The particular passage is, in other words, a completing analepsis which fills a gap left in the previous account.⁸⁶

All in all, analepsis, though considerably more frequent than its peer prolepsis, received less attention from ancient critics, especially if compared with the notes on the psychological impact of prolepsis. One may perhaps speculate that its very ubiquity made analepsis appear more commonplace and therefore less in need of a specific explanation. At the same time, prolepsis provided better opportunities to praise the mastermind who had designed the plot with foresight.

⁸⁴ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 9.328 ex. (συμπληροῖ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν, on Achilles sacking twelve cities in the Troad), T *Il.* 11.625 ex. (ἐν τοῖς δέουσι τόποις ἀποδίδωσι τὰ λείποντα τῆς Ἰλιάδος, on Achilles sacking Tenedos), cf. also bT *Il.* 8.229a ex. (Agamemnon on the boasts that the Greek army made prior to arriving in the Troad) and bT *Il.* 4.251b ex. (quoted in [Chapter 6](#)) on internal completing analepsis.

⁸⁵ Cf. schol. DE³ *Od.* 1.284 (p. 116.17–19 Ludwig), HM *Od.* 3.103, HM *Od.* 3.128, E *Od.* 3.248, E *Od.* 4.69, Q *Od.* 4.245, MV *Od.* 24.1 (p. 725.8 Dindorf). The passages are collected by Erbse (*ad schol.* bT *Il.* 24.804a ex., which is also relevant). See also Ps.Long, 9.12.

⁸⁶ The relevant scholia are discussed in more detail in [Chapter 6](#).

NARRATORIAL CHOICE: SAVE FOR LATER

The narrator's freedom to organise his plot at will (see above) implies that there are countless choices to make. Among these choices, the scholia repeatedly draw attention to the fact that the poet does not make use of a particular narrative element in the present scene, but rather 'saves', 'preserves' or 'keeps it in store' (φυλάττειν, ταμιεύεσθαι) for a later occasion.⁸⁷ In a war poem such as the *Iliad* this preservation can of course be meant literally. Homer does not allow Hector to die, because he is designated for the showdown with Achilles in book 22. (Apollo advises Hector in *Iliad* 20 not to fight against Achilles.)

ταμιεύεται ὁ ποιητῆς τὸ πρόσωπον Ἑκτορος εἰς τὰ τελευταῖα. (schol. bT *Il.* 20.376b ex.)

The poet keeps the character Hector in store with a view to the end.

Apollo's advice is motivated by the purpose of preserving Hector for the climactic finale of the poem. A similar explanation is given on a number of occasions: when Ajax in the duel with Hector does not wound him lethally (schol. bT *Il.* 7.262 ex.),⁸⁸ when the same duel is brought to an end by the heralds (schol. bT *Il.* 7.274–5 ex.), when Dolon, instead of Hector, reconnoitres the Greek camp by night (schol. T *Il.* 10.414–5 ex.), when Sarpedon, not Hector, enters the fray against Patroclus (schol. bT *Il.* 16.419b ex.) and when Apollo saves Hector by removing him from the battlefield (schol. Ab *Il.* 20.443 ex.). Similarly, Sarpedon is said to be protected with a view to his fight with Patroclus (schol. bT *Il.* 12.402–3 ex.) and Ajax with a view to the battle for the ships (schol. bT *Il.* 11.547a ex.). In the case of Ajax, a virtually identical formulation is used in a context where this protection cannot be meant literally. It is given as a possible answer to the question why Homer gives the first *aristeia* to Diomedes instead of Ajax, who, in the Catalogue, is said to be second after Achilles:

ἢ ὅτι εἰς τὸν μείζονα κίνδυνον αὐτὸν φυλάττει τὸν περὶ τῶν νεῶν [cf. esp. *Il.* 15.415–16.123]. (schol. AbT *Il.* 5.1b ex.)

Or because he [sc. Homer] saves him [sc. Ajax] for the greater danger, the battle for the ships.

⁸⁷ On this topic see Trendelenburg (1867: 94), Griesinger (1907: 79–80), von Franz (1940: 11), (1987: 144–6).

⁸⁸ In the *Addenda* (VII: 296) Erbse withdraws the conjecture he had suggested in the meantime and returns to the text as printed in his edition.

This figurative sense of φυλάττειν ('save, protect') and semantically related words recurs elsewhere, mostly in connection with narrative elements or motifs and not with characters. Homer introduces in the person of Nestor an eloquent mediator of Achilles' quarrel with Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1, but he saves the actual pleas (λιταί) for Phoenix in book 9 (schol. bT *Il.* 1.247–8 *ex.*). In book 5 he avoids a direct confrontation between Ares and Athena, because he wants to save the battle of the gods for book 21 (schol. bT *Il.* 5.850–5 *ex.*). In book 10 he suppresses the dirges for Rhesus and in book 13 the lament of a father for his fallen sons, because in both cases he wants to preserve this motif for the finale of his poem, Hector's death and funeral (schol. bT *Il.* 10.519 *ex.*, T *Il.* 13.658 *ex.*). Two literary-critical principles are at stake here. One is the supposed aim of a suspenseful and climactic development of the plot. The poet keeps a particular narrative element in store because it can be used more effectively elsewhere towards the end of his poem. The other principle prescribes that the poet is to strive for surprise and to avoid monotony, which can best be achieved if central narrative elements and motifs are used only once.⁸⁹

In light of the strong interrelations between the two Homeric epics as perceived by ancient critics (see above), it will hardly be surprising that Homer is also said to conclude his *Iliad* with Hector's funeral and thereby to 'keep in store' (ταμιεύεσθαι) the subsequent events for his *Odyssey* (schol. bT *Il.* 24.804a *ex.*).

In scholia to texts other than Homer, Aeschylus is once praised for 'saving' the Erinyes' pursuit of Orestes for the middle of *Eumenides* instead of presenting it at the beginning of the play (schol. A. *Eum.* 1a, quoted in n. 9). In addition to this point about the general plot structure of *Eumenides*, several scholia comment on minor elements which are kept in store for a later occasion. In the opening scene of Sophocles' *Ajax*, Athena's list of Ajax' victims 'keeps in store' (i.e. suppresses) the name of Odysseus, until Ajax is present himself.⁹⁰ In *Electra* the heroine's question about the pedagogue's identity is 'kept in store', in order to bring about a second recognition scene later.⁹¹ In the opening scene of *Oedipus the King*, the protagonist maintains

⁸⁹ For the topics 'suspense' and 'avoidance of monotony' see Chapters 5 and 9. The latter principle recurs in connection with 'preservation' when Homer is said not to introduce Andromache among those who plead with Hector before he faces Achilles. Instead, she is 'preserved' for the laments in order to avoid monotony, which arises from using the same characters all the time (schol. bT *Il.* 22.79 *ex.*).

⁹⁰ Cf. schol. S. *Aj.* 57a; the scholion seems to be saying that it is 'kept for Ajax', but it is nevertheless Athena who gives the cue in line 101.

⁹¹ Cf. schol. S. *El.* 1346, which deserves further attention, because it is one of the rare instances where an explicit distinction is made between the motivation of the poet and that of the character: Electra

a good balance between disclosing and withholding (i.e. ‘keeping in store’) his story (schol. S. *OT* 8; on this type of exposition cf. schol. S. *OT* 33 and contrast the critique of Euripides’ prologues above, page 39). And in the other play devoted to the same character, Oedipus ‘keeps in store’ his speech until Theseus’ arrival (schol. S. *OC* 113). Only the last example reacts to an explicit reference to an omission in the text of the play. Similarly, Prometheus expressly withholds a speech, according to schol. A. *PV* 522, with a view to the next play in the trilogy.

All the notes collected in this section explain why the poet decides not to make use of a particular element in the passage under discussion. They never explicitly state that this contradicts the reader’s expectations.⁹² In that respect the present notes differ from the ones on ‘misdirection’ and ‘retardation’, which explicitly argue that the narrator’s postponement thwarts the reader’s expectations (see [Chapters 2](#) and [5](#)).

INTRODUCTION OF CHARACTERS

A further aspect of a good and well-motivated plot is the timely and adequate introduction of (new) characters. This applies in particular to characters who are of central importance, such as Helen in the *Iliad* and Penelope in the *Odyssey*, each of whom is hotly contested in their respective poems (schol. *EHQ Od.* 1.329). More generally, the reader needs to know the characters who inhabit the narrative universe which is presented to him by the narrator. Or, as a commentary on the Catalogue of Ships puts it:

τὸ γὰρ μὴ γνωρίζεσθαι τοὺς ἥρωας ζήτησιν ἐπιοίει. (schol. b *Il.* 2.494–877 *ex.*, p. 289.4–5 Erbse)⁹³

Not to know the heroes would lead to inquiry [i.e. the reader would be confused].

The natural first step for the narrator is to introduce the character by means of his name and, in a Greek context, his patronymic. (Early in book 1, enter ‘Calchas son of Thestor’.)

forgets the question ‘out of joy’ (ὕπὸ τῆς χαρᾶς), whereas Sophocles suppresses it with a view to another recognition scene.

⁹² The only note which comes close to stating this is schol. bT *Il.* 12.181 *ex.* Although Homer says that Zeus declines Asius’ prayer because he wants to support Hector, the narrative at first continues with the successful efforts of the Lapiths: ἐπεὶ προσεῖπεν “Ἐκτορι γὰρ οἱ θυμός” [12.174], τὸ μὲν εἰς ὕστερον ταμιεύεται, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ παρόντος πλεονεκτοῦντας ποιεῖ τοὺς Ἕλληνας, ἕως ἂν ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ Διὸς βοήθεια μεταγάγη τὴν εὐημερίαν ἐπὶ τὸν Ἐκτορα (‘After having said “for it was to Hector that the heart [sc. of Zeus wanted to give glory]”, he [sc. Homer] keeps it in store until later, but for the time being he has the Greeks win until Zeus’ support shifts military success towards Hector’).

⁹³ Cf. the scholia which explain that motivation prevents readers from wondering (see above). On missing ἄν in counterfactuals see Schneider (1910a: 156).

ὄρα πῶς ἐν ἀρχῇ διασαφεῖ τὰ ὀνόματα, ὡς καὶ ἑτέρου ὑπάρχοντος. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.69*b ex.*)

Watch how he [sc. Homer] makes clear the names in the beginning, as if there were another <character> of the same name.

The scholion implies in the second part that, with no other character of the same name present in the *Iliad*, the patronymic ‘son of Thestor’ is strictly speaking superfluous. Homer, however, is at pains to give his characters an unambiguous introduction, regardless of whether there is a possible confusion or not.⁹⁴ Equally important is the critic’s point that the introduction occurs at the beginning of the epic, where the poet is wont to identify his characters (sim. schol. EHQ *Od.* 1.329 on Penelope, mentioned above). In a comparable note, Homer is said to introduce at an early stage the gods who act as ‘allies’ (ἐπίκουροι) of the two parties on the battlefield (schol. bT *Il.* 1.55 *ex.*).

As for the character introduction itself, one scholion implicitly says that the standard introduction includes name, patronymic and/or local origin. Thersites is not introduced in such a way. Instead, his build and his character are described at length:

εὔ δὲ καὶ οὐκ ἀπὸ πατρὸς αὐτὸν συνέστησεν, οὐδ’ ἀπὸ πατρίδος, ἀλλ’ ἀπὸ τοῦ τρόπου μόνου καὶ τῆς μορφῆς, ὧν χρεῖα τὰ νῦν. (schol. bT *Il.* 2.212*b ex.*, p. 228.70–2 Erbse)

Well done also that he [sc. Homer] did not introduce him [sc. Thersites] with patronymic or home country, but only by <describing> his character and build, which is what is at stake in the current scene.

Due to the particular demands of the scene in question, Homer provides Thersites with an unusual introduction and exceptionally omits the genealogical information.⁹⁵ A similar point is made about Sarpedon, whose conspicuous genealogy – he is Zeus’ son – is said to be saved for a later occasion:⁹⁶

εἶασε νῦν τὸ γένος αὐτοῦ, ἵν’ ἐν ἄλλῳ τόπῳ [sc. 5.631] μνεῖαν τούτου ποιούμενος πρὸς πλείονα αὐτὸ ποικιλίαν ἔχη. (schol. b *Il.* 2.876 *ex.*)

In the present passage, he [sc. Homer] forgoes his [sc. Sarpedon’s] genealogy so that he can mention it elsewhere for purposes of improved variation.

⁹⁴ Ancient scholars paid close attention to homonymous characters (see [Chapter 11](#)).

⁹⁵ The lack of a patronymic has in fact led to the still-disputed question whether Thersites is an aristocrat or not, cf. e.g. LfgrE *s.v.* (with lit.). At the same time, the physical description of characters is indeed rare in Homer.

⁹⁶ On ‘saving for later’ see above page 49.

The critic's emphasis on 'here' (ἄρα) and his point about variation (on which see [Chapter 9](#)) testify to his view that Homer normally mentions the character's father when he first introduces him or her. Incidentally, Aristarchus observed that Homer never uses metonymics (schol. A *Il.* 11.709a *Ariston.*, with *test.*). More in line with the note on Thersites (above), schol. HT *Od.* 7.156 implies that the introduction (here of the Phaeacian Echeus) mentions in particular the traits that will be important in the subsequent scene (sim. schol. Q *Od.* 9.187, on Polyphemus).

Many Iliadic characters (including Sarpedon in the note just quoted) are first mentioned in one of the two long Catalogues of book 2, which received considerable attention from ancient scholars. To them, one of the Catalogues' chief attractions is the very fact that they contribute in a substantial way to an 'index' of all Iliadic characters.⁹⁷ Consequently, critics carefully studied Homer's technique of introducing characters in the Catalogues (see nn. 98–100 and Strabo 13.3.1 = 619C.13–20C.7 Radt). They established the following principle: every character is mentioned (often for the first time) in the Catalogues, unless (i) he is not the commander-in-chief of the particular contingent, (ii) he is not fighting or (iii) he has not yet arrived on the Trojan battlefield. Exception (i) explains why minor characters such as the Greek Stichius are not mentioned in the Catalogue.⁹⁸ Exception (ii) accounts for the boycotting Myrmidons (incl. Achilles' horses), and, by implication, old and female characters.⁹⁹ The third category comprises characters who are not present on the battlefield on that first day of fighting.¹⁰⁰

The rather terse format of the Catalogues does not allow for extensive introductions of the individual characters, but the poet can single out one particular characteristic of each character, in addition to name, patronymic and origin. Philoctetes is introduced as an excellent archer:¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ The existence of such an index among Alexandrian scholars is argued in [Chapter 11](#).

⁹⁸ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 13.195 *ex.* and in general schol. pap. *ad Il.* 21.155–6 (pp. 89–90 Erbse); similarly T *Il.* 17.73b *ex.* (on Mentès, different explanation in A *Il.* 17.73a *Ariston.*, see n. 100), bT *Il.* 21.140 *ex.* (on Asteropaeus, different explanation in T *Il.* 21.156 *ex.*, see n. 100); perhaps this is also the implication of bT *Il.* 5.544 *ex.* (quoted below).

⁹⁹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 16.149a *ex.* The point about old and female characters is nowhere made explicitly.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 16.718b *ex.* (on Asius, Hecuba's brother), A *Il.* 17.73a *Ariston.* (on Mentès, but see n. 98), T *Il.* 21.156 *ex.* (on Asteropaeus, cf. T *Il.* 12.102 *ex.*, but see n. 98), also bT *Il.* 20.329 *ex.* (on the Caucones). On late arrivals on the battlefield see also schol. b *Il.* 2.848 *ex.*, A *Il.* 10.429a *Ariston.* (sim. T), bT *Il.* 21.141–3 *ex.*

¹⁰¹ The fact that Philoctetes is not actually present on the battlefield (cf. exception (iii) above) need not surprise. Some critics apparently felt that all the characters who are part of the larger 'Trojan cast' could be introduced (cf. schol. bT *Il.* 23.666–75 *ex.*, on Epeius being introduced because he will build the Trojan horse). Conversely, schol. D *Il.* 5.785 presupposes that Stentor must be present if Hera can be compared to him.

ὁ δὲ ποιητῆς προδιασυνίστησιν ἐν τῷ Καταλόγῳ τὴν {περὶ} ἐκάστου ἀρετὴν.
(schol. *A Il.* 2.718 *Ariston.*)

In the Catalogue the poet introduces beforehand the excellence of each <character>.

Against the background of motivation and good organisation of the narrative, a poet deserves praise if this particular characteristic becomes functional later in the poem, because he is not forced to introduce it there *ad hoc*. (Again in the Catalogue, the ‘lesser’ Ajax is introduced as smaller in size than his namesake, the son of Telamon.)

ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος ἠθέτηκεν αὐτόν. ἀναγκαῖος δέ ἐστι· προδιασυνίστησι γὰρ ὅτι ἦττων ἐστὶ κατὰ τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ Τελαμωνίου. ἐκείνον μέντοι γε “μέγαν” [17.115, cf. 16.358] λέγει. (schol. *A Il.* 2.528 *Ariston.*)

<The dipole periestigmene,> because Zenodotus athetised the line.¹⁰² But it is necessary, because he [sc. Homer] introduces in advance the fact that he [sc. the lesser Ajax] is smaller in size than the son of Telamon. In fact he calls the latter ‘tall’.

It is remarkable that Aristarchus defends the line against Zenodotus’ athetesis on the grounds that the ‘pre-introduction’ of Ajax’ size is an integral part of the plot and therefore indispensable, although it does not play a role in the passage under discussion. This is again indicative of ancient scholars’ interest in Homer’s qualities as a designer of coherent plots. A similar argument forms the basis of another Aristarchean note. (When after Agamemnon’s marshalling of the troops the two armies finally clash, Antilochus is said to be the first (πρῶτος) to kill a Trojan.)

ὅτι οὐ κατὰ τὸ ἐσθλὸν πρῶτον Ἀντίλοχον ἀναιροῦντα παράγει, ἀλλ’ ὅτι τάχιστον αὐτόν προσυνίστησι [Cobet, †παρασυνίστησι† A] διὰ τῶν ἄλλων καὶ εὐκίνητον. (schol. *A Il.* 4.457a *Ariston.*)¹⁰³

<The dipole,> because he [sc. Homer] does not introduce Antilochus killing ‘first’ with respect to excellence [i.e. ‘first’ not in the sense of ‘best’], but because he introduces him beforehand as very fast and mobile with a view to the other <books/scenes of the poem>.

¹⁰² Zenodotus probably athetised 2.529–30 too (Düntzer 1848: 182 n. 12), with Aristarchus following suit.

¹⁰³ Erbse reports Cobet’s conjecture only in the *app. crit.* and suggests ‘an συνίστησι *vel potius* παρίστησι?’, but in the light of the previous note it seems plausible that Aristonicus has in mind the ‘pre-introduction’ of Antilochus’ swiftness. Conversely, Erbse (Addenda *ad loc.*) rightly defends ἄλλων against van der Valk’s conjecture ἄθλων with the argument that it refers to other rhapsodies (= books) or the like.

The explanation must be read against the background of the question why, of all people, the comparatively minor figure Antilochus is said to open the first battle of the entire poem.¹⁰⁴ Aristarchus' answer is: 'he is not the best of the Achaeans, but the fastest'. And this quality will become functional later, when a fast messenger is needed to inform Achilles of Patroclus' death (cf. esp. 17.691). In a similar vein, some scholia observe that a character is mentioned because he will later play an important role. (After his rupture with Agamemnon, Achilles leaves the general assembly in book 1 together with Patroclus, who is mentioned here for the first time.)

κατ' ἔξοχὴν δὲ ἰδιαζόντως εἶπε περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ νῦν, ἵνα ἀξιόχρεως ᾦ, ὅταν τελευταῖον αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν μάχην ἐγείρη. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.307*b ex.*)

Even in the present scene he [sc. Homer] singled him [sc. Patroclus] out as a particular individual, so that he be worthy of mention when he at last urges him into battle.

Patroclus' function in this scene is marginal. If the critic speaks of a remarkable individualisation, he perhaps alludes to the fact that Patroclus is introduced by his patronymic only (cf. schol. A *Il.* 1.307*a Ariston.*), which is then taken as a sign of excellence. Or he finds it remarkable that Patroclus is singled out from the rest of the Myrmidons at all. In any case, the purpose of the introduction is seen in the light of Patroclus' crucial and pathetic function later in the poem. Homer is wont to introduce in advance the characters who will become important in the course of the poem. Consequently, the scholia note that Pandarus is introduced (2.827) 'against Menelaus' (schol. b *Il.* 2.827*b ex.*), that is, he will break the truce and shoot the ominous arrow (4.116–40). And the Trojan hothead Asius is introduced carefully, including his horses (12.95–7), because Homer will have to say more about them (schol. bT *Il.* 12.96–7 *ex.*, cf. bT *Il.* 13.395–6 *ex.*): Asius will ignore Polydamas' advice to leave the horses at the trench – with deadly consequences (12.110–15).¹⁰⁵ And in the *Odyssey*, Eurycleia is carefully introduced, because she will play an important role in various scenes (schol. Q *Od.* 1.429).

Despite their emphasis on the 'pre-introduction' of characters, ancient critics also draw attention to cases of *ad-hoc* introduction. In the case of

¹⁰⁴ Cf. the discussion why Diomedes, and not Ajax, is given the first *aristeia* (schol. AbT *Il.* 5.1*b ex.*, quoted above).

¹⁰⁵ Similarly, the scholia note that Deiphobus is introduced because he will lead the Trojan forces after Hector's death, although this is not described within the *Iliad*; cf. schol. T *Il.* 13.156 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 13.411 *ex.*

the Trojan spy Dolon one critic praises Homer's ability to give a complete outline of the character in a few lines only (cf. [Chapter 11](#)):

ταχέως ἅπαντα ἐδήλωσε, τὸ ἔθνος, τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ τε καὶ τοῦ πατρός, τὴν τέχνην, τὴν τύχην, ὅτι πλούσιος, τὴν μορφήν τοῦ Δόλωνος, τὴν ὠκύτητα. (schol. bT *Il.* 10.314–7 *ex.*)¹⁰⁶

In no time he [sc. Homer] showed everything: the tribe, his and his father's name, his profession, his destiny, that he is wealthy, Dolon's build, his speed.

No less remarkable is the treatment of minor fighters. By definition, they usually appear only once in the poem and often receive no particular introduction. But there are exceptions, for example Crethon and Orsilochus, whom Aeneas kills (5.541–60):

προσυνίστησιν αὐτοὺς αὖξων τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν μάχην. οὐ μέμνηται δὲ αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ Καταλόγῳ, ἐπεὶ Μεσσηνιοί [Bekker, μεσσηνιοί cod.] εἰσιν, οἵτινες ὑπὸ Μενελάῳ ἐτέλουν· [followed by a quotation of *Od.* 21.13, 15–16, which is meant to prove the point made]. (schol. bT *Il.* 5.544 *ex.*)¹⁰⁷

He [sc. Homer] gives them [sc. Crethon and Orsilochus] an introduction, thereby increasing the importance of the fight. He does not mention them in the Catalogue, because they are Messenians, who served under Menelaus [i.e. do not form an independent contingent, see exception (i) above].

Several assumptions seem to underlie this note. Minor characters are normally not given an extensive introduction. And such an introduction is indicative of importance, which, interestingly, reflects on all the characters present, that is, on their opponent, Aeneas, too. The last point recurs in a note on the introduction of Patroclus' slayer, Euphorbus (schol. T *Il.* 16.810–1b *ex.*).

All the examples adduced so far deal with the proper introduction of a character on the occasion of his or her first mention. Ancient scholars are, however, aware that the first mention of a character may actually pass over such an introduction. The occasion is Achilles mentioning Hector in his threat to Agamemnon (1.242):

προσυνίστησιν ἡμῖν τὸν Ἔκτορα λεληθότως ὁ ποιητής, μέλλων αὐτῷ χρῆσθαι πρὸς τὰ ἐπιφανῆ τῆς Ἰλιάδος ἔργα. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.242 *ex.*)

The poet introduces Hector beforehand *en passant* on our behalf, because he wants to make use of him in the glorious scenes of the *Iliad*.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. schol. AbT *Il.* 5.9a D (on the three qualities of narrative: σαφήνεια, συντομία, πιθανότητα, which Quintilian 4.2.31 refers back to Isocrates, cf. [Chapter 9](#)).

¹⁰⁷ Text as suggested by Hölscher (1988: 328 n. 41), accepted by Erbse (1989: 494 n.).

In a way this is comparable to the scholia referred to above which argue that a character is mentioned because he will become important later in the narrative, and for that reason is introduced beforehand to the reader. What is different here, however, is that Hector is introduced inconspicuously (λεληθότως, lit. ‘secretly, surreptitiously’).¹⁰⁸ As a consequence, Hector is later said to be ‘introduced a second time’ (schol. bT *Il.* 2.416 *ex.*).

Overall, ancient critics pay considerable attention to the specifics of character introduction. Its main function can be seen as another aspect of motivation, which results in a well-wrought and coherent plot. It is no surprise, then, that critics tend to emphasise the same aspects both in the case of motivation and in that of character introduction, in particular the preparatory effect on which a coherent plot depends (cf. also Arist. *Po.* 1454a33–6).

TRANSITIONS AND CHANGES OF SCENE

A narrative text of the size of the Homeric epics is bound to involve multiple locations and to comprise several storylines (cf. Arist. *Po.* 1456a12–13), and the scholia describe Homer’s technique in bringing about these transitions. In its simplest form, the note merely states that there is a transition from one location to another. (After the assembly of the gods at the beginning of *Iliad* 8, the narrator returns to the Greeks on the battlefield.)

καλῶς μετὰ θεοῦς εἰς Ἕλληνας μέτεισιν. (schol. T *Il.* 8.53b *ex.*)¹⁰⁹

After the gods he [sc. Homer] makes a nice transition to the Greeks.

This critic does not explain why this particular transition deserves his praise. Other notes, however, are more explicit. A permanent concern of the Homeric narrator is to secure the reader’s attention (see [Chapter 5](#)). This can be achieved, among other things, by avoiding monotony. In the present context, this means that the poet avoids long scenes which take place at the same location. Rather, he attempts to relieve his reader by regular changes of scene. (At the beginning of *Iliad* 4, Homer leaves the battlefield and introduces the first assembly of the gods.)

¹⁰⁸ Cf. schol. S. *Aj.* 340b (Tecmessas reveals Eurysaces’ name λεληθότως, ‘unexpectedly’; children in tragedy normally remain anonymous: Wilamowitz 1875: 185). In other contexts λεληθότως can mean ‘aside’ or ‘*sotto voce*’ (Chapter 19) or ‘unnoticeably, indirectly’ (Chapter 9).

¹⁰⁹ Words such as μεταβαίνειν can also designate transitions in a purely figurative sense, e.g. transitions within the Catalogue: schol. A *Il.* 2.681a *Ariston*. This meaning is at least as old as Homer himself (*Od.* 8.492).

πιθανῶς ἐκ τοῦ κάτωθεν θορύβου εἰς οὐρανὸν τὴν σκηνὴν σεμνύνων μετήγαγε, ποικίλλων ἅμα τὴν ποίησιν τόποις τε καὶ προσώποις καὶ λόγοις. (schol. bT *Il.* 4.1a ex.)¹¹⁰

He [sc. Homer] convincingly brings about a change of scene from the din down on earth to heaven, which makes it nobler, and at the same time he varies his poem by means of <different> locations, characters and speeches.

As the scholion makes clear, this variation entails more than the simple transition from one location to another. Often it (re-)introduces a new topic, thereby giving the reader a chance ‘to take a break’. (Hector’s *parainesis* addressed to his horses provokes Hera’s anger, which leads to a brief conversation with Poseidon on Mt Olympus.)

ἀναπαύων δὲ ἡμᾶς τῆς διηγήσεως τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἀτυχημάτων παρεισάγει τὸν διάλογον τῶν θεῶν. (schol. bT *Il.* 8.209b ex.)¹¹¹

Relieving us from the report of the Greek losses he [sc. Homer] introduces the conversation of the gods [sc. Hera and Poseidon].

Whereas such transitions are seen as a form of relaxation, others are said to increase the tension. (Encouraged by Zeus’ thunder, the Trojans attack the Greek army more vigorously. Cut: Patroclus on his way from Eurypylus to Achilles.)

ὅταν ἐπὶ τὰ ἄκρα ἄγη τὴν ποίησιν, τότε ταῖς μεταβάσεσι χρῆται συνεχῶς, τὴν προσοχὴν τῶν ἀκροατῶν συνάγων. μεταβαίνει οὖν ἐπὶ τὸν Πάτροκλον νῦν. (schol. bT *Il.* 15.390 ex.)

Whenever he [sc. Homer] brings his poem to a critical climax, he constantly makes use of transitions, thereby focusing the readers’ attention. Therefore, he now passes on to Patroclus.

The (Greek) reader is anxious (‘Will Patroclus be back in time before the Trojans burn the ships?’), and this tension is heightened by a rather abrupt change of scene to the character on whom all depends. Regrettably, the critic does not give other examples of what he considers a typically

¹¹⁰ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 14.1b ex. (on the change of scene from the battlefield to Nestor and wounded Machaon), bT *Il.* 18.1a ex. (on the similar change from the battlefield to the Greek camp with Achilles and Patroclus); a comparable concept underlies the notes which speak of Homer introducing ‘new scenes/episodes’ (ἐπιεισόδια καινά): schol. T *Il.* 13.521a ex. (on Ares not having heard yet about the death of his son Ascalaphus, which will be described in book 15), A *Il.* 18.36 ex. (on Thetis in the sea with her father, i.e. in a completely new location), also bT *Il.* 6.37–65 ex. (on Adrestus supplicating Menelaus), bT *Il.* 14.153b ex. (on the deception of Zeus by Hera).

¹¹¹ The note clearly refers to the entire scene (*Il.* 8.198–212). For similar notes see schol. bT *Il.* 16.431–61 ex. (on Zeus lamenting the fate of his son Sarpedon), bT *Il.* 17.426–8 ex. (on Achilles’ horses weeping over Patroclus’ death), although the reader’s ‘relief’ is more implied than actually spelled out in both instances.

Homeric feature: the increased frequency of transitions when the poem reaches a climax. All in all, the two psychological effects described in the preceding two scholia are not really contradictory, because in both cases the overall result is increased attention on the part of the reader.

In connection with abrupt changes of scene, it is worth mentioning that the scholia ‘anticipate’ in a curious way the modern film term ‘cut’ (from cutting the film strips). The transition away from the main army to Hector on the far left of the battlefield is described as *τομή* (‘cut’, schol. T *Il.* 13.674*b ex.*).¹¹² There seem to be no parallels for this particular usage.

In addition to the psychological effects on the reader, scholia can describe the purpose of transitions with a view to motivation and plot structure at large. (At the beginning of *Iliad* 16 Achilles gives Patroclus extensive instructions on how to act on the battlefield. The narrative then returns to Ajax, who is forced to yield.)

μέτεισιν ἐπὶ τὴν μάχην, ὅπως τὴν ναῦν ἐμπιπραμένην δείξας Ἀχιλλεῖ [cf. 16.122–4] τὸν Πάτροκλον ἐξαγάγη. (schol. bT *Il.* 16.101–11 *ex.*)¹¹³

He [sc. Homer] passes over to the battle, in order for him to lead Patroclus into battle by showing the burning ship to Achilles.

In other words, the change of scene in 16.101–2 forms part of and is required by the plot structure of book 16 and, by implication, of the entire *Iliad*. Ajax yields, the Trojans set the Greek ship on fire. This is seen by Achilles, which causes him to urge Patroclus into a battle where he will die, etc.

A similar concept is at work when the poet is said to return to the cornerstones of his narrative. (Book 11 describes Agamemnon’s *aristeia*, which, however, does not last, because Zeus intervenes on behalf of the Trojans.)

δι’ ὀλίγων εὐφράνας τὸν ἀκροατὴν ἐπὶ τὰ συνεκτικὰ ἔρχεται· δεῖ γὰρ συνωθεῖσθαι τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς εἰς τὴν ἔξοδον Πατρόκλου. (schol. b *Il.* 11.181–2 *ex.*)

After having given the reader pleasure for a moment [sc. by having Agamemnon succeed], he [sc. Homer] makes a transition to the essentials <of his story>.¹¹⁴ For the Greeks must be pushed back with a view to Patroclus’ marching out.

¹¹² In reality the passage is part of a so-called *παραγραφή*, which smoothens the transition (see below). Either the critic overlooked this or *τομή* is not so abrupt as the etymology might suggest. On this scholion see also van der Valk (1963: 528–9 with n. 590).

¹¹³ Cf. schol. AbT *Il.* 12.1–2*a ex.* (on the transition from Patroclus and Eurypylos back to the battlefield and why this is important for the plot).

¹¹⁴ Etymologically, the *συνεκτικά* are ‘holding together’ the poem, another aspect of its narrative coherence (cf. schol. T *Il.* 4.66*c’ ex.*: the wrath of Poseidon is the *συνεκτικόν* of the *Odyssey*). See also the notion of *συνεκτικά πρόσωπα* in Chapter 11.

Again the transition is required by the larger plot of the *Iliad*, for which it is crucial that Patroclus enter the battle. (Notes such as these presuppose a difference between essential and less essential scenes, which will be further explored below on Digressions.)

The examples adduced so far focus on the purpose of the transitions. Others are interested in how a change of scene is actually brought about by the narrator. The type of transition which receives the most attention is the so-called παραγραφή ('paragraph').¹¹⁵ Contrary to their general reluctance to give elaborate definitions and descriptions, the scholia are remarkably specific in the case of παραγραφή:

ὅταν δὲ ἄλλων πραγμάτων ἄρχεσθαι μέλλῃ, παραγραφὰς ἐμβάλλει, ὡς οἱ νόμοι τῶν ἱστοριογράφων· μεταβαίνων γὰρ ἐπὶ τὰ Ἑλλήνων ἀπεκορύφωσεν τὸν λόγον. (schol. bT *Il.* 9.0a ex.)

Whenever he [sc. the poet] intends to begin a new scene, he introduces 'paragraphs', like the rules of historiographers: in transition <from the Trojan> to the Greek affairs he summarises his <previous> account.

The line in question (*Il.* 9.1) reads ὡς οἱ μὲν Τρῶες φυλακὰς ἔχον· αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὺς . . . ('Thus the Trojans were holding their watch, but the Achaeans . . .'), where the recurrent phrase ὡς οἱ μὲν + imperfect summarises the preceding description of the Trojans bivouacking on the battlefield, with the tense indicating that the action is understood to continue in the background.¹¹⁶ The general effect of the phrase is that the poet 'announces' the imminent change of scene and, consequently, achieves a smoother transition.

Equally interesting is schol. bT *Il.* 16.1a ex., which gives a description similar to the one above and adds the point that παραγραφή is frequent in Homer. The claim is then supported with no fewer than six parallel passages from both epics, which points to a systematic examination of the device.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Although the term is attested in rhetoric (Ernesti 1795: s.v.), it may nevertheless originate in grammar (see the *testimonia* collected by Erbse, *ad* schol. bT *Il.* 1.304a ex., which remarkably calls παραγραφή a τρόπος, see below); see esp. Uhlig (on Ap. Dysc. *synt.* p. 379.8), who argues on the basis of Arist. *Rh.* 1409a19–21 that the rhetorical/grammatical term παραγραφή derives from the lectional sign, which is what the verb παραγράφειν seems to refer to in schol. A *Il.* 14.153a ex. (?); see also K. E. A. Schmidt (1859: 538–9). Conversely, in contexts such as schol. A.R. 3.114–17b the same verb means 'to imitate' (LSJ s.v. I 4).

¹¹⁶ In the light of the scholion's term 'summarised' (ἀπεκορύφωσεν), it is worth noting that modern scholarship coined the term 'appositive summary' for the same phenomenon (S. Richardson 1990: 31–4).

¹¹⁷ *Il.* 9.1, 11.596 (= 18.1), 12.1, 23.1, *Od.* 7.1, 6.1 (sic); it is unclear why the sequence is inverted at the end. However, the last parallel is only attested in T, not in b (on this phenomenon in general: Roemer 1879: 16). Eustathius (1041.19–26 = 3.794.4–9), commenting on the same passage as the scholion, adds more examples, which he probably collected himself (van der Valk *ad loc.*).

All in all, there is a certain amount of terminological and conceptual variety among the relevant notes. Whereas schol. bT *Il.* 1.304*a ex.* (on the end of the Greek assembly) speaks of a παραγραφή and considers it a τρόπος ('trope'), a similar passage is designated a σχῆμα ('figure') and called μετάβασις ('transition': schol. B *Od.* 4.625, on the transition from Menelaus' Sparta to the suitors on Ithaca), thereby attesting to a common terminological confusion, in particular the one between σχῆμα and τρόπος.¹¹⁸

More in syntactic terms, Nicanor argues that asyndeton is frequent in transitions (μετάβασις, schol. A *Il.* 11.150 *Nic.*, cf. T *Il.* 11.149 *Nic.*), while notes of a more literary-critical nature draw attention to particular changes of scene which are remarkable. (Towards the end of the third day of fighting in *Iliad* 18, the Trojans meet in assembly and then eat dinner, whereas the Greeks mourn for Patroclus.)

ὄρα τὰς μεταβάσεις ὡς ποικίλαι. (schol. A *Il.* 18.314–5 *ex.*)

Watch the transitions, how varied <they are>!

The critic does not specify why exactly he praises the change of scene for its variation, but it is nevertheless indicative of a probably systematic examination of Homeric transitions. Another scholion does give an explanation why the transition is remarkable. (After borrowing Aphrodite's famous love-charm, Hera leaves Mt Olympus in order to meet Hypnus on the island Lemnos. Her journey is described in some detail: Pieria, Emathie (= Macedonia), Thrace, Mt Athos and finally Lemnos.)

ἄκρως κατονομάζει τοὺς τόπους, τὰς ὁμόρους χώρας διεξιῶν [illustrated by an Odyssean parallel: 15.297–9]. τῆ γὰρ ὀνομασίᾳ τῶν τόπων συμπαραθέουσα ἢ διάνοια τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων ἐν φαντασίᾳ καὶ ὄψει τῶν τόπων γίνεται. ἅμα οὖν τὸ ἄργον περιέφυγεν, οὐκ εὐθὺς ἀγαγὼν αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὰ προκείμενα χωρία. μάρτυρας γοῦν ἐπαγόμενος τοὺς ἀκούοντας πιθανωτάτην καθίστησι τὴν διήγησιν. (schol. bT *Il.* 14.226–7 *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] competently names the places, going through the areas which border on each other . . . For the mind of the readers, travelling together with the naming of the places, enters into an imaginative and visual perception of the places. So at the same time, by not bringing her immediately to the locations in question, he avoided inactivity. In any case, by calling in the readers as witnesses he renders his narrative highly plausible.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Schrader (1904: 572), who, however, misses the preparatory function of ὡς οἱ μὲν + imperfect when he describes a line such as *Od.* 4.624 as 'ein nur den Abschluss des Vorhergehenden bildender, aber nicht zu dem Folgenden überleitender Vers'.

This remarkable and complex note combines several issues, some of which will be further explored in other chapters (5, 8). In the present context, the decisive point is that Homer decides not to have Hera go from A to B without further ado, as in fact he does on many other occasions. Instead, he gives a detailed description of her journey, which activates the mental participation of the reader, who so to speak accompanies narrator and Hera on their journey (cf. [Chapter 5](#)). This renders the account plausible, because the description is geographically accurate, as the reader (supposedly) knows.¹¹⁹

The principle ‘avoidance of monotony by means of variation’ is applied to the question of transition by Zenodorus, when he argues against the authenticity of Zeus’ conversation with Hera (*Il.* 18.356–68):¹²⁰

ἔπειτα μέλλοντα τὸν Ὅμηρον διατίθεσθαι τὰ παρὰ Ἡφαίστου πρὸς Θέτιν λεγόμενα [cf. 18.369–468] οὐκ ἂν πρὸ αὐτῶν [Erbse, αὐτῆς cod., ταύτης Maass] ἄλλην διάλεξιν θεῶν παραλαβεῖν, ποικίλλειν ὅλως σπουδάζοντα τὴν ποιήσιν καὶ ἀπὸ μὲν τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἐπὶ τὰ θεῖα, ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν θεῶν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα μεταβάλλειν εἰωθότα. οὐκ ἂν οὖν ἐπαλλήλως τὰ ὅμοια διαθέσθαι. (schol. bT *Il.* 18.356*b ex.*, p. 503.58–63 Erbse)

Next, <Zenodorus says,> Homer, intending to describe Hephaestus’ conversation with Thetis, would not have placed ahead of it another divine dialogue; he constantly makes sure he varies his poem and is wont to make his transitions from the human to the divine plane or *vice versa*. He would not have arranged similar scenes back to back.

The note indicates that Zenodorus systematically studied Homeric transitions and made the observation that the change is never from one divine scene to another. The passage under consideration is in breach of this principle and must therefore be an interpolation. Zenodorus’ systematic approach to the question deserves attention, even if one prefers not to adopt his textual decision.

Given that Greek tragedy normally observes what later become known as ‘unity of place’, it is hardly surprising that notes on changes of scene are virtually absent from the tragic scholia, the sole exception being the notorious change of scene in Sophocles’ *Ajax* (schol. *S. Aj.* 815a, see also *P. Oxy.* 2257 = *TrGF* III pp. 126–7). More surprisingly, perhaps, the corresponding scholia to Aristophanes are neither much more frequent nor more spectacular, although Old Comedy does not adhere to ‘unity of

¹¹⁹ By ‘he avoided inactivity’ (τὸ ἄργον περιέφυγεν) the critic perhaps means to say that Homer avoids *temps mort* (see [Chapter 2](#)).

¹²⁰ For Zenodorus’ other arguments see [Chapter 13](#).

place'.¹²¹ In all three cases the notes simply state the fact and identify the new location, which, to the critics' mind, is all the reader needs to know to understand and visualise the text. The dramaturgical convention as such is not discussed.

While all the examples above deal with the spatial aspect of transitions, others (e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 6.237*a ex.*) combine it with temporal considerations, in particular the question of 'fill-in technique' and simultaneous events. These are further explored in [Chapter 2](#).

Comments such as schol. T *Il.* 13.674*b ex.* (discussed above) presuppose that the narrator 'returns' (ἀναστρέφει) to a former storyline when he brings about a change of scene. In that connection, it is worth adducing scholia which discuss the question when a particular character was mentioned last, because they display an interest in narrative coherence. (After her conversation with Achilles, Thetis goes to Mt Olympus in order to get new armour. The narrative returns to the Greeks fleeing under the Trojan attack.)

δαιμονίως ἀναλαμβάνει, ἀφ' ὧν ἀπέλιπεν. (schol. bT *Il.* 18.148*c ex.*, the T-scholion adds a quotation of the relevant lines: 17.760–1)

In a marvellous way he [sc. Homer] takes up again <the Greeks> from where he had left <them>.

Towards the end of book 17 Homer describes how the Greeks around Ajax finally rescue Patroclus' body and retreat to the camp, with the Trojans in pursuit. The scene then changes to Achilles (18.2–35), then Thetis (18.35–69), then the two together (18.70–148), until the narrator 'marvellously takes up again' the earlier storyline. A good poet is expected to drop and resume the different storylines with masterly circumspection. Similar notes (schol. T *Il.* 11.368*a ex.*, bT *Il.* 13.39*a ex.*) not only explain that the narrator returns to an earlier storyline, but they even quote the relevant lines of the earlier passage. More in the style of a teacher, another critic urges the reader to look for where the storyline had been dropped.¹²² And a D-scholion argues that the re-introduction of a character is achieved

¹²¹ Cf. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 394*a* (change of place to Euripides' house), *Ra.* 273 (change to the underworld, and also chorus turns from frogs into initiates), cf. 270*d*; see W. G. Rutherford (1905: 110 with n. 12), where, however, schol. Ar. *Nu.* 92*b* is misunderstood: it actually describes the movements of the characters on stage (towards Socrates' house), a type of note that is very common (see the examples collected by Rutherford 1905: 122–4). It is true, though, that movements on stage can lead to changes of scene (scholia on entrances and exits are discussed in [Chapter 19](#)). Rutherford's list of notes on changes of scene can be supplemented by schol. Ar. *Pax* 727*a* (change from heaven to earth), sim. argum. Ar. *Pax* A1.13–14, A3.20.

¹²² Cf. schol. T *Il.* 1.430*c ex.*, with reference to Odysseus' embassy to Chryse dropped in 1.312 (the 'answer' given in the scholion erroneously quotes 1.318) and resumed in 1.430.

in such a way that the narrator presents the character as doing the same thing as in the previous scene.¹²³ All these notes are again indicative of the ancient critics' intensive attempts to get to grips with the plot structure and narrative coherence of Homer's epics.

DIGRESSIONS

A rather different type of multiple storyline is at stake when the narrator incorporates material which is not directly related to his immediate subject-matter. The modern term 'digression' (lat. *digressio*) uses essentially the same metaphor and has the same implications as the Greek term παρέκβασις: the narrator leaves his intended track and makes a detour, but ancient critics do not *a priori* consider this a defect (powerfully argued by Heath 1989).¹²⁴ The purpose or effect attributed to digressions is the same as the one brought about by changes of scene: they can cause relief, as argued in the following generalising note:

Ὅμηρικὸν δὲ ταῖς παρεκβάσεσιν διαναπαύειν τὸν ἀκροατήν. (schol. bT *Il.* 14.114b *ex.*)¹²⁵

It is typical of Homer to relieve his reader by means of digressions.

The relaxing effect of digressions is clearly seen as positive. It is acknowledged, among other things, in ancient rhetorical theory, which, however, warns at the same time against the insertion of long digressions, because they may cause the reader to lose touch with the main story (Theon II 80.27–81.7 Spengel).

An allegedly distorted balance between main text and digression is the background to some criticism voiced in the scholia to Pindar.¹²⁶ The criticism seems to be rooted in two somewhat literal-minded approaches to Pindar's odes. On the one hand, ancient critics are prone to take rhetorical *Abbruchformeln* such as ἦρ', ὦ φίλοι, κατ' ἀμευσίπορον τρίοδον ἐδινάθην, ὀρθὰν κέλευθον ἰὼν τὸ πρὶν ('Can it be, O my friends, that I

¹²³ Cf. schol. D *Il.* 14.1 with reference to book 11. The scholion has important chronological implications and will be further discussed in Chapter 2.

¹²⁴ On παρέκβασις in rhetoric see Volkmann (1885: 164–7).

¹²⁵ (1987: 170) aptly adduces Polybius 38.6.1, who explicitly parallels changes of scene (μεταβάσεις) and digressions (παρεκβάσεις). For the relaxing effect of digressions see also schol. bT *Il.* 16.666a *ex.*, schol. Arat. 30–3 (p. 85.4–5 Martin) and Heath (1989: 107, 109–10). On relaxation in general see Chapter 5.

¹²⁶ See also Heath (1989: 160–1). Although his general point about the principally positive treatment of digressions in ancient scholarship is valid, his own examples prove that the scholia on Pindar express criticism with unusual frequency.

got confused where the way forked, when before I was going on the straight road?', Pi. *P.* 11.38–9) at face value: Pindar is said to show awareness of his going astray and to call himself to order.¹²⁷ On the other hand, the Pindaric scholia tend to overemphasise the economic aspect of a victory ode (Lefkowitz 1991: 157–8). They repeatedly insinuate quarrels between poet and commissioner, with the latter complaining that too much of the ode is devoted to a topic other than the praise of the victor, for which he is paying.¹²⁸ Consequently, the scholia claim, for instance, that Pindar uses the break-off formula quoted above in order to return to the topic for which he is being paid.¹²⁹

Generic considerations have an impact on whether or not digressions are acceptable (see Heath 1989: 28–37 on the difference between digressions in forensic and epideictic oratory respectively). The generally positive treatment of digressions in the Homeric scholia points to a broad acceptance of *epische Breite* ('epic breadth/scope'). Conversely, the scholia on tragedy show considerable predilection for a densely woven plot (cf. Arist. *Po.* 1455b15–16), which must be kept free of too much dilatory material. They either criticise the poet for the inclusion of such material¹³⁰ or they write with palpable praise that 'the story advances' towards its dénouement.¹³¹

The fact that *παρέκβασις* can refer to the narrative section within the largely non-narrative Pindaric ode points to a principal terminological difficulty for the modern scholar. The apparently loose definition of *παρέκβασις* allows ancient critics to apply the term to a wide variety of passages, as long as they somehow 'lead away' from the main road. Examples include: external analepsis such as Nestor's and Menelaus' reports about their homecoming, the story about Odysseus' scar or a character's

¹²⁷ Cf. e.g. schol. Pi. *O.* 13.133b, *P.* 10.79b, 11.58a–c (on the passage quoted above), *N.* 3.45c (all on similar break-off formulae); Lefkowitz (1991: 151–2).

¹²⁸ So already the famous anecdote about Simonides (fr. 510 Page).

¹²⁹ Cf. schol. Pi. *P.* 11.58a. The same idea may underlie the interpretation that Pindar had to write a second ode (*P.* 5) in honour of the same victory, because the former (*P.* 4) contained a long digression on the Argonauts (schol. Pi. *P.* 4.inscr. a (p. 92.14–16 Dr.), *P.* 5.inscr.). Heath (1989: 160–1) argues that the digression is criticised for generic reasons. The two explanations need not be mutually exclusive. Pindar is said to have chosen the wrong genre and the wrong subject-matter.

¹³⁰ Cf. e.g. schol. S. *OC* 220, which praises Sophocles for the omission of genealogical information and criticises Euripides for its inclusion (contrast schol. bT *IL* 20.213b ex.). (In general see Chapter 3.)

¹³¹ The scholia's phrase for this is *ἡ ὑπόθεσις προκόπτει*: see Steinmann (1907: 52), (1987: 187–8, with examples). See also the scholia referred to above (page 25), which praise the 'economy' of individual tragedies, and schol. S. *El.* 1404 (Sophocles avoids the insertion of a messenger speech by having Clytaemestra's death-cries heard on stage and in the theatre; on this scholion see also Chapter 19). Conversely, argum. E. *Pb.* (quoted in Chapter 2) considers the play full of fillers (*παραπληρωματικόν*).

genealogy.¹³² At the same time the term can also designate a parenthetical remark (e.g. Achilles on the sceptre in *Iliad* 1), the end of which is indicated by a repetition (ἐπανόληψις) of the last point before the parenthesis, in order to mark the return.¹³³ But an intervening short scene such as Zeus instructing Apollo to remove Sarpedon's body from the battlefield (*Il.* 16.666–83) is called (μικρὰ) παρέκβασις too (schol. bT *Il.* 16.666a ex.). In this example, παρέκβασις comes confusingly close to simple μετάβασις ('transition'). For the divine scene is integral to the plot. A similarly loose application of παρέκβασις can be found in schol. D *Il.* 14.1, where the term designates two entire books (sc. *Iliad* 12–13), which describe, among other things, how the Trojans break into the Greek camp!¹³⁴

In addition to the term παρέκβασις, ancient sources also make use of other compounds such as παραδιήγησις (cf. Arist. *Rh.* 1417a2) or παριστορεῖν, where again the prefix παρα- indicates a distancing from the main story.¹³⁵ The applications are equally varied as with παρέκβασις and include: the middle part in the ABC-scheme of Homeric killings, which provides background information on the victim;¹³⁶ other forms of external analepsis;¹³⁷ the 'non-essential' parts of similes.¹³⁸ The last example is telling because, strictly speaking, the simile itself already 'interrupts' the main narrative. The conclusion is that 'digression' is very broadly defined in ancient scholarship and can comprise aspects which fall outside the concept of plot and its ramifications as explored in the present chapter.

NOT TO DESTROY THE STORY

A similar conclusion applies to the group of scholia which argue that the poet would have destroyed his story if he had done such and such. The most

¹³² Nestor and Menelaus: *Od.* 3.130–95, 262–312, 4.351–586, cf. schol. DE³ *Od.* 1.284 (p. 116.17–19 Ludwig); Odysseus' scar: *Od.* 19.393–466, cf. schol. PQV *Od.* 19.0; genealogies: schol. bT *Il.* 14.114b ex. (quoted above); cf. also argum. A. *PV* (p. 65.6 Herington) on the use of the Prometheus myth in Sophocles' *Colchian Women*, probably as an external analepsis (cf. TrGF IV pp. 316–17).

¹³³ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 18.101–14a *Nic.*, schol. E. *Or.* 1.484, also schol. Hes. *Th.* 807sqq.

¹³⁴ The same scholion seems to imply that this long παρέκβασις covers no story time (see Chapter 2).
¹³⁵ On παρέκβασις and παραδιήγησις as virtual synonyms see Volkmann (1885: 152); the attempt of the *Anonymus Seguerianus* (ch. 61 Dilts-Kennedy = 61 Patillon) to differentiate between the two terms remains isolated (Heath 1989: 94); on παριστορεῖν see Meineke (on Steph. Byz. 258.2).

¹³⁶ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 13.171 ex., in bT *Il.* 20.383–5 ex. the term is ἐπιδήγησις. In schol. T *Il.* 11.243c¹ ex. the same narrative element is explained as interruption (τομή) of the main narrative. On Homeric ABC-schemes in general see Armstrong (1958) and Chapter 16.

¹³⁷ Cf. schol. V *Od.* 21.38 (on Odysseus' bow), schol. A *Il.* 16.56 *Nic.* (Achilles on Briseis, which combines external and internal analepsis), also Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 162.1 (cf. 169.5).

¹³⁸ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 21.257–62a ex.

frequent expression for ‘to destroy the story’ is λύειν τὴν ὑπόθεσιν.¹³⁹ It is significant that the term in question is ὑπόθεσις and not the more narrowly defined οἰκονομία. Equally important, the actual examples frequently deal with threats to the fabula in general, not to the present plot in particular. For example, the premature death of Paris (schol. *D Il.* 3.369) would deprive the entire Trojan war of its *raison d’être*. It would make impossible any poem about the war, not only the plot of the *Iliad* in its extant form. The same holds true for Electra committing suicide when she learns that Orestes is allegedly dead (schol. *S. El.* 818).

Conversely, there are cases which arguably deal with the plot and not the fabula. If Orestes and Electra recognised each other early in the play, this would lead to a surprisingly short *Electra*, but the fabula as such could stand.¹⁴⁰

Still others are borderline cases, because the fabula would not *a priori* become impossible, but considerable adaptation and redesigning of the particular plot would become necessary. If, for example, Penelope learnt in *Odyssey* 4 that Odysseus’ return was imminent, a central element like the revenge on the suitors could stand, but would require major modifications of the plot.¹⁴¹ The same would hold true if Tecmessa recognised Ajax’ intention to commit suicide (schol. *S. Aj.* 462) or if Oedipus believed Tiresias (schol. *S. OT* 354). And if the other Cyclopes came to Polyphemus’ aid in *Odyssey* 9, the escape of Odysseus and his companions would become very difficult indeed.¹⁴²

The conclusion is that the plot–fabula distinction plays no role in the notes on λύειν τὴν ὑπόθεσιν, which simply argue that the story would be destroyed. This aligns well with the generally broad meaning of the word ὑπόθεσις. This, however, is not to say that the present chapter on plot introduces a category which is foreign to ancient practice. Rather, ancient critics are very similar to their modern successors in that they

¹³⁹ Cf. Trendelenburg (1867: 78), Steinmann (1907: 49), (1987: 119). A less unequivocal expression has it that the poet ‘puts in danger his story’ (ἐπὶ τὸ ἐπικίνδυνον φέρων τὴν ὑπόθεσιν, schol. *bT Il.* 7.262 *ex.*), a topic that is further explored in [Chapter 5](#). Aristotle (*Po.* 1460a33) uses the expression ἀναρπῆν τὸν μῦθον.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. schol. *S. El.* 82; conversely, not to have the two siblings recognise each other at all leads to problems too (schol. *S. El.* 1174). A rather different type of ‘destruction’ is at stake in schol. *S. Aj.* 389c (quoted above n. 49), according to which too explicit prolepses can ‘destroy the story’. Unlike, say, the case of Paris’ premature death in the *Iliad*, the risk here is that the reader loses interest. The story does not become impossible but dull.

¹⁴¹ Cf. schol. *PQ Od.* 4.796 (Athena approaches Penelope in human disguise lest she be forced to disclose Odysseus’ whereabouts).

¹⁴² Cf. schol. *BQ Od.* 9.399; cf. also the chorus’ commitment not to betray Phaedra (schol. *E. Hipp.* 713).

easily combine narrowly defined terms with others. One may compare, for instance, the use of 'plot' and 'story' in the present chapter.

CONCLUSION

The sheer length of this chapter is indicative of ancient scholars' interest in various questions concerning plot. Poets of traditional poetry such as Homer and the tragedians must adhere to the traditional *fabula*, but are at liberty to give their plots their individual shape. Plot, then, becomes one of the central factors when a poet's quality is being put to the test. As a result, many of the notes collected in this chapter combine explanation with (mostly positive) judgment. Ancient scholars frequently discuss questions of plot and plot structure in general and the exact working of narrative coherence in particular. The latter is the central thread of the chapter, for it can be seen as the leading question on numerous occasions and in connection with various phenomena such as motivation, logical preparation, *prolepsis*, introduction of characters, transitions, changes of scene and multiple storylines. General interest in the workings of narrative coherence can be shown to be pervasive and old (it predates Aristotle). A common denominator of these notes is the assumption, often implicit, that plausible motivation and narrative coherence decisively help the reader understand the text under discussion. More specifically, several of the comments adduced above put considerable emphasis on 'how exactly it is done' and, consequently, provide important insights into the 'laboratory' of the poet and of the critic who annotates the text. A recurrent method is the attempt to develop standard principles for a particular poet or genre and to assess the individual passage against the background of these principles (cf. *Introd.* page 11). Not the least important result is the insight that the conceptual distinctions made in this chapter (e.g. plot vs. *fabula* or motivation vs. *prolepsis*) reflect ancient practice and do not impose modern principles on ancient sources. Equally important: some notes make use of what appears to be standard terminology, while others paraphrase the phenomenon in question. This lends support to the methodological approach chosen for this book (cf. *Introd.* page 3).

CHAPTER 2

Time

This chapter focuses on the question of how ancient scholars dealt with the various temporal and chronological aspects of a literary text. The first section reviews the several attempts to get to grips with the day structure of a narrative text (the *Iliad* in particular). Such a day structure is an aspect of a text's story time (*erzählte Zeit*), in the narrower sense of the word: that is, the story time that spans from the first to the last event of a narrative text (in the case of the *Iliad*: the fifty-one days from Chryses' arrival to Hector's burial). In this narrower sense, story time does not take into account the timespan of the events that are incorporated by means of external analepsis (events that precede the *Iliad*) and external prolepsis (events that follow the *Iliad*). Given the relevance of story time, the second section examines ancient notions of the relation between story time and narrative time (*Erzählzeit*), that is, the time it actually takes to tell this story. As we shall see, some critics deny that there is an immediate one-to-one correlation between the two. The insight that textual representation need not be identical with 'how it actually happened' can also be gathered from the argument that sequentially recounted events in a narrative text must at times be understood as happening in fact simultaneously. The treatment of simultaneous events is discussed in the third section. Next, a particular type of simultaneous event – an action is recounted in the foreground in order to cover the time needed for a second action in the background – is dealt with in the fourth section on 'fill-in technique'. The last section, 'anachronies', discusses several forms of narrative that breach the chronological order of events.

DAY STRUCTURE

Several indications in ancient sources point to the existence of a system which describes the temporal structure of the *Iliad* by counting and

numbering the days of the poem.¹ The system of determining the *Iliad*'s story time goes back at least to the Alexandrian scholars, who were in disagreement over the exact number of days. An important testimony is the assessment of the day that begins in *Iliad* 2.48 (= day twenty-two, according to modern calculation, see n. 1):

πρὸς (τὸν) τῶν ἡμερῶν ἀριθμὸν, ὅτι τρίτη καὶ εἰκοστή· δέκα μὲν μέχρι τῆς μῆνιδος, δώδεκα τῶν θεῶν ἐν Αἰθιοπία ὄντων. ἡ δὲ ἀνατολὴ αὕτη τρίτη καὶ εἰκοστή ἐστίν. (schol. A *Il.* 2.48a *Ariston.*)

<The dipole> refers to the number of days, because this is the twenty-third: ten until the wrath [i.e. the confrontation between Achilles and Agamemnon in the assembly], twelve for the gods' stay in Ethiopia. This sunrise is the twenty-third.

This is generally believed to be an argument against Zenodotus, whose figure differs, probably by two (i.e. day twenty-one instead of twenty-three, as in Aristarchus' analysis).

The arithmetical details are not entirely clear, but the question may be summarised as follows:² after the assembly of the Greek army that leads to the quarrel of Achilles and Agamemnon (= day ten), Thetis meets with Achilles and informs him (1.425) that she cannot intervene on his behalf before the gods return from their twelve-day stay with the Ethiopians. When does this twelve-day period begin? According to the testimony of the *Tabula Iliaca* from Paris,³ Zenodotus argued that it begins on day nine, because Thetis says 'Zeus went *yesterday*' (1.424). To Zenodotus' mind, book 1 therefore comprises twenty days. The twenty-first begins in 2.48, and ἐκ τοῦ (1.493) does not refer to Thetis' meeting with Achilles (= day ten), but to the 'actual' departure of the gods (= day nine). Aristarchus' scheme apparently differs by two days.⁴ He did not accept Zenodotus' argument about 'yesterday' and was of the opinion that ἐκ τοῦ refers to the day that immediately precedes the day on which it is 'spoken'.⁵ According to Aristarchus, ἐκ τοῦ refers to the day when the embassy

¹ For modern versions of the *Iliad*'s day structure see e.g. Ameis, Hentze and Cauer (1913: 144, for books 1–7 only) or Latacz (2002: 152), whose figures will provide the point of reference in the discussion of the differences between Zenodotus and Aristarchus (see below).

² Cf. Düntzer (1848: 194–8), L. Friedländer (1853: 57–8), Nickau (1972: 36–8).

³ The tabula is dated to the first century AD; text and discussion in Sadurska (1964: 52–5).

⁴ On the proviso that the relevant A-scholium actually represent his view, which is debated (see Nickau 1972: 37).

⁵ The second point is supported by schol. A *Il.* 1.477a *Ariston.*: ὅτι τῇ ἐξῆς ἐκ τῆς Χρύσης κατέρχονται. ἡ δὲ ἀναφορὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σημειώσεως πρὸς τὸν τῶν ἡμερῶν ἀριθμὸν ('<The dipole,> because they [sc. the embassy under Odysseus' command] return from Chryse the next day. The reference of the sign is to the number of days'). In other words, this day had been ignored in other calculations.

returns from Chryse (= day eleven). Consequently, the two calculations differ by two days.⁶

A third reconstruction of the day structure probably forms the background of schol. bT *Il.* 1.493*b ex.*, which refers ἐκ τοῦ to Thetis' meeting with Achilles (= day ten). This leads to a total of twenty-one days for book I, which is the figure given in the hypothesis of P. Achmîm 2.⁷ Although it is impossible now to identify the source of this figure, it may well be that several opinions on the number of days were current in Aristarchus' time and that the A-scholion quoted above is not as specifically anti-Zenodotean as is generally assumed.⁸

Perhaps more important than the question as to which of the three figures is accurate is the observation that it appears to be common practice to establish a scheme for the *Iliad*'s story time. This observation is supported by another scholion, which indicates that the third day of fighting (*Il.* books 11–18) is day fifteen since Achilles withdrew in anger from the battlefield. (Before re-entering the battle, Achilles anticipates that the Trojans will realise 'how long' he has been absent. How long exactly?)

δεκαπέντε γὰρ εἰσιν ἡμέραι σὺν αἷς οἱ θεοὶ εἰς Αἰθιοπίαν διέτριψαν. (schol. A *Il.* 18.125*a Porph.* (?)⁹)

For it [sc. the period of Achilles' wrath] is fifteen days including those which the gods spent with the Ethiopians.

The probable source of this note, Porphyry, twice refers to the fifteen-day period.¹⁰ In the second case, he expressly divides the fifteen days into twelve (absence of gods) and three (fighting).¹¹ The latter figure three is difficult to reconcile with the Homeric text. For the story time of books 2 to 18 covers four or five days (see below), three of which are days of fighting. Porphyry, and probably already Aristarchus, seems to have ignored the period of the truce (7.381–482) and counted only the actual days of fighting. This may have been facilitated by the practice of referring to the 'first, second, etc.

⁶ Zenodotus' and Aristarchus' atheteses in book I do not affect the day structure.

⁷ Text reprinted in van Rossum-Steenbeek (1998: 246).

⁸ Eustathius (171.4–15 = 1.263.13–25) explains all three calculations, but does not attribute them to specific authorities.

⁹ This must be read against the background of the question whether 'long' is strictly speaking true. This has implications for the relation between narrative time and story time, discussed below.

¹⁰ Cf. Porph. on *Il.* 14.304–6 (II 196.16–17 Schr.), on *Il.* 18.125 (II 222.12–13).

¹¹ This distinction, which is reflected in schol. bT *Il.* 18.125*b ex.* and in Eustathius (1134.59–60 = 4.149.13–16), is important, because it thwarts the attempt to reconcile the fifteen days with Zenodotus' scheme. All the sources which mention the fifteen days agree that the starting-point of Achilles' wrath is 1.488, i.e. day eleven.

battle', i.e. to the first, second, etc. day of fighting.¹² Porphyry's figure fifteen is not the only calculation offered by ancient critics for the relevant part of the *Iliad*, as can be gathered from a T-scholion. (The point of reference is another mention of Achilles' wrath on the same third day of fighting as above.)

ὅτι ἦν μετὰ τῆς παρουσίας ἡμέρας ἑκκαίδεκάτη· πρὸς τὸ ἐν τῇ Η ζήτημα. (schol. T *Il.* 16.202b ex.)¹³

<Note> that this was, including the present day, the sixteenth [sc. day of Achilles' wrath]. Cf. the problem in book 7.

This critic does not show explicit awareness of Porphyry's divergent figure, but he is likely to have it in mind, because he too is commenting on the duration of Achilles' wrath. He probably intends to correct Porphyry's figure. More difficult is the question what exactly he means by 'the problem in book 7'. Bergk (followed hesitatingly by Erbse *ad loc.*) connects it with 7.421–3 (the sun is said to rise to heaven, after dawn has already been described in 7.381). This passage does play a role in the discussion about the numbers of days, but it only adds another problem to the two sunrises which are ignored in Porphyry's calculation. If, therefore, the interpretation above is correct and the critic has Porphyry's inaccurate figure in mind, it seems more likely that 'the problem in book 7' refers to the entire truce period (7.381–482). The question is further complicated by the fact that modern calculations actually posit two days for the truce period with another sunrise in 7.433, bringing the total to seventeen.¹⁴ The most one can say is that the T-scholion comes closer to the truth than Porphyry and, more importantly, shows that the matter was the subject of intense study.

The same holds true for another set of bT-scholia. (The context is the question as to why Homer did not mention Asteropaeus in the Trojan Catalogue in book 2.)

πῶς, φασί, πρὸ πέντε ἡμερῶν τὸν Κατάλογον ποιησάμενος Ἀστεροπαῖον παρέλιπε, λέγοντα ῥητῶς [sc. 21.156] πρὸ ἰά ἡμερῶν ἐληλυθῆναι; (schol. bT *Il.* 21.140 ex.)¹⁵

¹² Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 2.480 ex. (first battle), bT *Il.* 3.411–2 ex. (second battle), bT *Il.* 21.18a ex. (fourth battle), also bT *Il.* 11.313a ex. (previous, i.e. second battle) and Eust. (825.35 = 3.133.12, third day of fighting).

¹³ Eustathius (1054.16–17 = 3.833.8–11) duly records this objection and admits that, if it is right, his figures elsewhere need to be adjusted.

¹⁴ Ancient atheteses of lines in book 7, as far as they are known, do not affect the day structure.

¹⁵ The same question, but a different explanation, can be found in schol. T *Il.* 21.156 ex. (see [Chapter 1](#)). Incidentally, the scholion quoted above in the main text amusingly confounds story time and narrative time when it has Homer compose the Catalogue 'five days earlier' (cf. below).

Why, they [sc. critics] ask, did he [sc. Homer] omit Asteropaeus when he composed the Catalogue five days earlier, if he now explicitly says that he returned eleven days ago?

With his ‘five days’ this scholar is in agreement with modern calculations, and again in implicit disagreement both with Porphyry and the T-scholion above.¹⁶

In addition to these scholia, which explicitly discuss the arithmetic of the day structure, others show that it was quite normal to think of the content of the *Iliad* in terms of days. One scholion first discusses the burial customs of the Greek army before Troy and then gives an outline of the second half of the poem:

εἶτα γράφει ἡμέραν εἰς τὴν τοῦ Πατρόκλου ἕξοδον τελευτῶσαν. τῆ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ Ἀχιλλεὺς ἕξεισι, καὶ τὰ ταύτῃ ἐχόμενα γράφει. εἶτα καταλαβούσης ἑσπέρας εἰς τὰ Ἑκτορος λύτρα ἡ Ἰλιάς τελευτᾷ. (schol. b *Il.* 1.4d ex.)

Then [i.e. after the second day of fighting] he [sc. Homer] describes the day which ends with Patroclus’ sortie. The next day Achilles will march out to battle, and he [sc. Homer] recounts the events which follow that day. Then, as the evening comes on, the *Iliad* ends with ‘the ransom of Hector’.

This and other scholia (see also n. 12) illustrate the general ancient practice of using the day structure of the *Iliad* as a common point of reference, while modern scholars are probably more inclined to refer to books.¹⁷

A last group of examples adds another aspect to the general picture seen so far. (Frightened by the Lycian attack under Sarpedon’s command, the Athenian leader Menestheus is looking for support. Finally, he perceives the two Ajaxes and Teucer leaving his quarters ‘just now’ (νέον).)

¹⁶ A numbering of the epic’s days can also be found for the *Odyssey*: see in particular P. Schubart 3 (= P. Berol. 9571 recto, II/III AD, reprinted with corrections in *AFP* 16, 1958, 118–19), which offers a fairly detailed outline of forty days for the *Odyssey* that mostly agrees with modern calculations (e.g. Ameis, Hentze and Cauer 1920: x). Conversely, schol. HPQ *Od.* 8.o speaks of day twenty-three, while the papyrus and modern calculations consider it day thirty-three (perhaps a corruption in the scholion of κγ [= 23] for λγ [= 33]). For other calculations see also schol. bT *Il.* 24.31 ex. on the last twelve days of the *Iliad*. Modern calculations for the *Odyssey* differ between forty (see above) and forty-one days (e.g. de Jong 2001: 588). The question depends on how, based on 17.515, one reconstructs the chronology of the Odysseus- and Telemachus-storylines in books 13–15 (well summarised by Eisenberger 1973: 91 n. 1, whose arguments, however, are not unsurmountable); see also Olson (1995: 91–119).

¹⁷ This latter practice is of course found in the scholia too, as schol. T *Il.* 16.202b ex. (quoted above) proves. Even more common is the reference to single episodes (e.g. the marshalling of the troops, *epipoleis*, or the battle at the (Greek) wall, *teichomachia*, etc.), which may or may not coincide with the book-division.

οὐκ εἰκῆ τὸ “νέον”. χθὲς γὰρ ἐτρώθη ὑπὸ Ἑκτορος [cf. 8.324–9]: νεωστὶ οὖν προῆλθε τῆς σκιρῆς, ὄρων τὸν κίνδυνον. (schol. bT *Il.* 12.336*a ex.*)¹⁸

‘Just now’ is not gratuitous. For yesterday he [sc. Teucer] was wounded by Hector. So just now he came out of the tent, seeing the danger.

The scholion not only refers to Teucer’s wounding in temporal terms, but the word ‘yesterday’ itself is also remarkable, because the critic seems to imagine the present scene so vividly that the previous day becomes ‘yesterday’. A similar point can be made about the critics who speak, though less vividly, of ‘the next day’.¹⁹

STORY TIME VS. NARRATIVE TIME

The distinction between story time (*erzählte Zeit*) and narrative time (*Erzählzeit*) is not explicitly drawn in ancient sources. There are, however, indications that ancient critics were well aware of the difference. A prime testimony is the discussion about the chronology of the events in books 11–15 of the *Iliad*. Of particular relevance is the beginning of book 14, where Nestor becomes aware of the shouting soldiers. He interrupts the ‘drinking party’ with Machaon, which begins in 11.618–43, and leaves his quarters in order to do something about it. Taken at face value, the following D-scholion seems to attest to ancient irritation about Nestor’s shameless behaviour:

ἐζήτηται δὲ πῶς ὁ Νέστωρ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον πίνει χρόνον, ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τῶν ἐσχάτων τῆς Λάβδα. (schol. D *Il.* 14.1)

¹⁸ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 1.225*c ex.* (‘the day before’, with reference to the second and third days of fighting), bT *Il.* 13.745–6*c ex.* (‘yesterday’ (also in the Homeric text), same reference), bT *Il.* 14.46–7 *ex.* (‘the day before’, same reference; the critic perhaps takes exception to Agamemnon saying ‘once’ (ποτ’), whereas it was ‘only the day before’; similar argument in schol. A *Il.* 8.108*a Ariston.*), AbT *Il.* 15.470*a Ariston.* (‘the day before’, same reference), bT *Il.* 21.140 *ex.* (‘five days earlier’, quoted above); see also schol. A *Il.* 19.49*a Ariston.*, which argues that Diomedes, Odysseus and others received their wounds ‘the day before’ (δευτεροῖσι); correct would be ‘two days ago’.

¹⁹ Cf. schol. b *Il.* 1.4*d ex.* (quoted above), A *Il.* 8.475–6 *Ariston.* (‘the next day’, with reference to the second and third days of fighting), A *Il.* 9.709*a Ariston.* (ditto), Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 108.5 (‘the day after’, with reference to the third and fourth days of fighting). The only explicit reference to ‘tomorrow’ (and, incidentally, ‘yesterday’) does not seem to be meant literally: χθὲς γὰρ θεαταὶ ἦσαν τῆς μάχης, καὶ ἔωθεν φιλονεικοῦσι περὶ Ἑκτορος (‘yesterday, they [sc. the gods] were spectators of the fight, and tomorrow they quarrel about Hector’: schol. bT *Il.* 23.206*a ex.*). This is likely to refer to the gods first watching Achilles pursue Hector (22.166) and then quarrelling about the destiny of his body (24.32–77), which happens on days twenty-seven and forty-one respectively. The critic seems to comment with a rhetorical hyperbole on the gods swiftly changing their minds. This is meant to explain why, as Iris claims in her speech to Zephyrus and the other winds, they have unexpectedly gone to the Ethiopians.

Question: how could Nestor have been drinking for such a long time, having begun at the end of book 11?

The basis of the objection is an assumed one-to-one correlation between story time and narrative time (regardless of whether the objection is raised in all seriousness or simply forms the ostensible foil for the subsequent refutation): Nestor has been drinking for approximately 1,500 lines, that is, several hours! The same objection applies *mutatis mutandis* to Patroclus staying first with Nestor and then treating Eurypylus' wound (narrated in 11.809–48 and completed in 15.390–404). In Patroclus' case his behaviour seems contrary to his intention to return quickly to Achilles. A bT-scholion formulates the problem and suggests a remarkable answer:

πῶς δὲ ἐπιλαθόμενος Ἀχιλλέως τοσοῦτον χρόνον διάγει; ἢ οὐ πολλὸς μὲν χρόνος, τὰ δὲ γεγονότα ποικίλα ἐν ὀλίγῳ καιρῷ. (schol. bT *Il.* 15.390 *ex.*)

Why is he [sc. Patroclus], having forgotten Achilles, spending so much time? Or, the duration [sc. of his absence] is not actually long, but many different things happen in a short period of time.

The solution offered here rejects a direct correlation between story time and narrative time. The number of lines (narrative time) is not indicative of the duration of the events recounted in these lines, but of the variety of things that happen during what is in fact a short time. A similar explanation is given in another scholion on the same problem:

εἰ δὲ ἐπιμηκεστέρα γέγονεν ἢ ἐπιμέλεια, μὴ θαυμάσης· διαφόρους γὰρ πράξεις ἐν ἐνὶ λέγειν καιρῷ ἀδύνατον. (schol. AbT *Il.* 12.1–2a *ex.*)

Do not be surprised if the treatment [sc. of Eurypylus by Patroclus] is of greater length. It is impossible to recount different actions at one and the same time.

This scholion also rejects an immediate correlation between story time and narrative time.²⁰ Its explanation implies that a linear form of art such as literature cannot present simultaneous events in literal simultaneity, but must narrate them in successive order (see below).

A further refutation of an immediate correlation between story time and narrative time can be found in a scholion which comments on the discrepancy between the speed of the 'real event' as compared with the

²⁰ Other scholia explain the Eurypylus scene in terms of motivation: schol. T *Il.* 11.809a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 11.809b *ex.* The former does seem to perceive a correlation between story time and narrative time. It argues that Patroclus' immediate return to Achilles would make the battle around the Greek wall (*teichomachia*: 12.35–471) impossible (sim. schol. bT *Il.* 11.677–761 *ex.*). In a way, the Eurypylus scene is seen here as an instance of what will be discussed below, though with slightly different parameters: the delay of Patroclus' return to Achilles so to speak creates a gap into which the *teichomachia* can fall.

leisure of poetic discourse. (The Trojans close in on Nestor. Diomedes comes to his rescue and ‘speaks to him the winged words’, a speech of ten lines.)

τὰ μὲν πράγματα τάχιστα γέγονεν, ἡ δὲ τῶν λόγων σχολή ποιητική. (schol. bT *Il.* 8.101 *ex.*, probably commenting on the entire speech: in T the scholion is written above the opening address, see Erbse *ad loc.*)

The action [sc. Diomedes addressing Nestor] happened most quickly, but the leisurely speed of the words is typical of poetry.

Though somewhat naively realistic in tendency, this note once again rejects a correlation between the length of the narrative and that of the action. In ‘reality’ it all happened much faster.

Although the solution offered in the D-scholion that raises the problem about the length of Nestor’s drinking (quoted in part above) does not itself argue with a direct view to the opposition of story time vs. narrative time, it nevertheless deserves to be quoted here, because it sheds light on other aspects of the topic ‘Time’:

ῥητέον, ὅτι οὐ τοσοῦτον χρόνον ἔπινεν, ἀλλ’ Ὅμηρος κατὰ παρέκβασιν ἀπαγγείλας τὰς πράξεις βουλευθεῖς τε ἐπὶ τὸν Νέστορα μεταβῆναι πάλιν, ἀπὸ ταύτης τῆς πράξεως ἤρξατο ἀφ’ ἧσπερ αὐτὸν κατέλειπε ποιοῦντα. (schol. D *Il.* 14.1)

One must point out that he [sc. Nestor] had not been drinking for such a long time, but Homer, who related the events [sc. of books 12–13] in a digression and intended to come back again to Nestor, began with the action he [sc. Nestor] had been engaged with when he [sc. Homer] left him [sc. in 11.804].

This critic offers the following solution to Nestor’s apparent lack of self-control. Books 12 and 13 are said to be a digression (cf. [Chapter 1](#)), which normally brings the main story to a temporary halt.²¹ Consequently, when the narrator finally returns to the main story, he picks up Nestor where he had left him. Nestor’s behaviour is unobjectionable, because, the note implies, digressions do not take up story time. The critic probably overstrains the concept ‘digression’ when he attaches this label to the crucial events of books 12 and 13, since these describe, among other things, how the Trojans break into the Greek camp. But his explanation is a welcome supplement to our knowledge about ancient concepts of time in narrative: digressions do not take up story time. The narrator returns to the point where he had left the main story.

²¹ That is, a ‘pause’: the narrative time does not take up any story time (Nünlist and de Jong 2000: *s.v.*, with lit.).

To come back to story time vs. narrative time: Achilles' point about 'how long' he had been absent from the battlefield gave rise to a discussion of the exact duration of his absence (see above). In this connection, one critic implicitly blurs the distinction between story time and narrative time:

τὸν δὲ ὀλίγον χρόνον πολὺν ἡγείται διὰ τὸ “ποθέεσκε δ' αὐτὴν τε π(τ)όλεμόν τε” [*Il.* 1.492]. ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ ποιητὴς φησι “δηρὸν δὲ μάχης ἐπέπαυτ' ἀλεγεινῆς” [19.46], οὐ πρὸς τὰς τρεῖς ἡμέρας, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν ποικιλίαν τῶν συμφορῶν ἀφορῶν. (schol. T *Il.* 18.125b' *ex.*, similarly b)

He [sc. Achilles] considered the short period [sc. the three days of fighting] long, as is shown by 'he [sc. Achilles] longed always for the clamour and fighting'. But the poet also says 'he stayed so long from the sorrowful battlefield', not with a view to the three days, but to the variety of their misfortunes.

Despite the explicit reference to *Il.* 1.492, the prior assumption is that Achilles' longing concerns the three days of fighting only. Read against this background, 'long' is indeed in need of an explanation. One possibility is a psychologising λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου (see [Chapter 4](#)): to a bellicose character such as Achilles even three days appear long (similar argument: schol. bT *Il.* 9.247 *ex.*, but from the perspective of the suffering Greeks). The critic questions such an interpretation with reference to the narrator's similar statement in 19.46. He then wriggles out of the dilemma by referring to the abundance of things that happened, which, in his view, gives the impression of a period longer than three days (cf. Heraclitus *All.* 8.7–8, for whom the many events of the 'long day' in books 11–18 are an indication that the action takes place in the summer, when the days are long). Strictly speaking, this confounds the distinction between story time and narrative time drawn in other scholia (cf. also n. 15 above), especially because the critic attributes this reasoning to the poet himself. However, it may well be that the critic does not refute the distinction as such, but makes a virtue of necessity in order to remove the apparent inconsistency.

Two further examples convey a remarkable conception of the relation between story time and narrative time. (After Thetis' promise to go to see Zeus on Achilles' behalf, the narrative returns to Odysseus' embassy to Chryse.)

ὅπως μὴ τῇ τῆς Θέτιδος ἀπαλλαγῆ συνάψῃ τὴν ἐπάνοδον, διὰ μέσου βάλλει τὰ κατὰ τὸν Ὀδυσσεά, μόνον οὐχὶ λόγῳ καταμετρήσας τὸν ἐπὶ Χρύσειν πλοῦν. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.430b' *ex.*)

In order not to connect Thetis' ascent [sc. to Olympus] with her departure [sc. from Achilles], he [sc. Homer] puts Odysseus' mission in the middle, all but measuring out the journey to Chryse by his account.

What this critic seems to be saying is that Homer's in-depth description of the embassy comes close to equalling its actual duration, that, in other words, story time and narrative time are virtually identical. This is an exaggeration, perhaps criticising the poet tongue in cheek for the detailed account, but it nevertheless adumbrates the notion of *zeitdeckendes Erzählen* (i.e. narrative time equates story time) in a remarkable way.²² Another note even argues that the verbal representation takes longer than the action itself. (Pandarus' ominous shot is meticulously described in no fewer than twenty-two lines (4.105–26).)

ἀλλ' ἄμα ἔτεινεν καὶ οὕτως ἀφήκεν, οὐ πρὸς τὴν τῶν λόγων ἀφήγησιν. (schol. bT *Il.* 4.113*b ex.*)

But at the same time as he [sc. Pandarus] was drawing his bow, he thus shot the arrow, not as described in this passage.

This critic describes what modern scholars would call 'retardation' (or 'slowing down'), that is, the narrative time is greater than the story time, because the event receives a detailed description. Conversely, the opposite effect of 'acceleration' can be achieved by the narrator when he quickly 'runs through' (παρατρέχειν) the events in question.²³ The retardation in the Pandarus scene is achieved by 'slowing down' the narration of the single event by means of a detailed description. This type of retardation must be kept separate from the instances where the narrator postpones a particular event by the insertion of other scenes.²⁴ Such an insertion causes a 'delay' (διατριβή; e.g. schol. T *Il.* 11.369–95 *ex.*) which, in the case of tragedy, is mostly uncalled-for (see [Chapter 1](#)).

If the above critic says that Pandarus drew and shot 'at the same time', this is another way of saying that the whole scene was a matter of seconds, one

²² The scholion's point on variation by means of change of scene is discussed in [Chapter 5](#).

²³ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 7.435 *ex.* (on the summary account about the construction of the Greek wall), bT *Il.* 8.78 *ex.* (on the compressed description of several Greek commanders yielding to the Trojan attack), T *Il.* 11.300*b ex.* (sim. b; on the concise catalogue of Hector's victims), bT *Il.* 18.610 *ex.* (on the summary description of Hector's funeral), T *Il.* 22.263*a ex.* (on the brevity of Achilles' similes). Some of these notes display a pro-Greek attitude (cf. the recommendation by Theon II 80.2–7 Spengel). On brevity in general see also [Chapter 9](#).

²⁴ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 14.0 *ex.*: καθελὼν τὸ τεῖχος ὁ ποιητῆς [on such expressions see Excursus at the end of [Chapter 4](#)] καὶ τοὺς Τρῶας εἰσαγαγὼν καὶ ἀναλώσας τὰς πολλὰς ἐνεργείας τῶν λόγων περὶ πτώματα, τὴν ἐπὶ ταῖς ναυσὶ μάχην ὑπερτίθεται διὰ Νέστορος καὶ τῆς τοῦ Διὸς κοιμήσεως ('having brought down the wall [sc. *Il.* 12.442–66] and having led the Trojans in [sc. into the Greek camp: 12.467–8] and having used up many powerful words over the deaths [sc. in *Il.* 13], the poet postpones the battle around the ships [cf. *Il.* 15.346–746] by means of Nestor and the sexual intercourse of Zeus'); see also schol. bT *Il.* 13.1–7 *ex.* (on Zeus directing his attention away from the battlefield and its consequences), bT *Il.* 16.64 *ex.* (on Patroclus' sortie) and the scholia discussed in [Chapter 5](#). A collection of relevant scholia can be found in Griesinger (1907: 76).

action following immediately upon the other. Truly simultaneous scenes are the topic of the next section.

SIMULTANEOUS EVENTS

Homer's treatment of simultaneous events has already been the subject of schol. AbT *Il.* 12.1–2*a ex.* (quoted above), and it is time to consider this question more systematically. Just as the topic is prominent in modern scholarship, so it has left important traces in ancient scholarship too.²⁵ The topic is touched upon already by Aristotle in his *Poetics*, but with the brevity that is typical of this treatise:²⁶

ἔχει δὲ πρὸς τὸ ἐπεκτείνεσθαι τὸ μέγεθος πολὺ τι ἢ ἐποποιία ἴδιον διὰ τὸ ἐν μὲν τῆ ἡ τραγωδίᾳ μὴ ἐνδέχεσθαι ἅμα πραττόμενα πολλὰ μέρη μιμῆσθαι ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν μέρος μόνον· ἐν δὲ τῆ ἐποποιίᾳ διὰ τὸ διήγησιν εἶναι ἔστι πολλὰ μέρη ἅμα ποιεῖν περαινόμενα, ὅφ' ὧν οἰκείων ὄντων αὔξεται ὁ τοῦ ποιήματος ὄγκος. (Arist. *Po.* 1459b22–8)

Epic poetry, however, for the extension of its size, has a feature peculiar to it alone, since in tragedy it is impossible to represent many parts of the action as happening at the same time, but only possible to show the part performed on the stage and involving the actors. In epic poetry, on the contrary, since it involves narration, one can portray many parts taking place at once; and, provided these are relevant, the weight of the poem is increased. (trans. Landon)

Aristotle builds on his principal distinction between the genres of narrative and dramatic poetry and explains that only narrative poetry allows for the presentation of simultaneous events. Thus, the presence of simultaneous events in Homer is in principle acknowledged, but Aristotle does not further explore the details, because he is primarily concerned with the basic difference between the two genres. The details of presenting simultaneous events are discussed among others by Aristarchus and his pupils. They argue that narrative poetry cannot literally present various events simultaneously. The implicit contrast seems to be non-linear forms of art such as painting, which allow strict simultaneity. Conversely, the narrative poet is forced to present one event after the other.²⁷ Accordingly, sequentially

²⁵ Ancient scholarship is discussed by Bachmann (1904: 7–8), Griesinger (1907: 72–4), Roemer (1912: 270), Erbse (1979: 54), N. J. Richardson (1980: 267), Rengakos (1995: 5–8) and in particular Landon (2002a). The topic was re-introduced into modern scholarship most prominently by Zielinski (1899–1901).

²⁶ The passage is mentioned by Mehl (1940: 78 n. 7), who, however, wrongly claims that 'wir bei den hellenistischen Homerkritikern nichts dergleichen lesen'.

²⁷ At first glance, there seems to be a contradiction between Aristotle, who acknowledges the presence of simultaneous scenes in epic poetry, and Aristarchus, who denies it. In reality, the contradiction

narrated events must sometimes be interpreted as simultaneous.²⁸ A chief witness is a papyrus commentary from the first century BC (P. Oxy. 1086). (*Iliad* 2 narrates, among other things, the missions of Dream and Iris.)

δεῖ δὲ νοεῖν ὁ[τ]ι κα[τ'] αὐ[τὸν] τὸν χρόνον τοῦ ὄνειρου ξτι κ(αι) αὐτῆ ἀπέσταλ-
ται. ὁ δὲ ποιητῆς διηγηματικὸς ὢν, [ο]ὐ δυνάμενος ἅ(μα) πάντα εἰπεῖν, τὰ
κατὰ τὸν (αὐτὸν) χρόνον πραχθέντα παρὰ μέρος εἶρηκεν. (schol. pap. *Il.* 2.788,
p. 169 Erbse, suppl. Lunden)²⁹

It is to be noted that she [sc. Iris] too was sent out at the very time of the dream [sc. *Il.* 2.6–16], but the poet, narrative poet that he is and thus unable to recount all things at once, has related events that took place at the same time one after the other. (transl. Lunden)

The dispatch of the destructive Dream is narrated at the beginning of book 2, whereas Iris does not descend to the Trojans until lines 786–7. In ‘reality’, the Aristarchean commentator argues, the two were sent off simultaneously.³⁰ Unlike, say, a painter, Homer is bound by the linearity of his narrative and is therefore forced to present simultaneous events by means of the successive alternation of two narrative stretches (παρὰ μέρος).

The phrase οὐ δυνάμενος ἅμα πάντα εἰπεῖν (which may be a rhetorical topos: Andoc. 1.8) and similar expressions recur several times in the scholia. (The beginning of *Iliad* 22 presents in sequence Achilles’ approach on the battlefield, the supplications of Priam and Hecuba from the walls, and Hector’s indecision whether to stay or to withdraw.)

ὕφ’ ἔν πάντα πράττεται· οἱ μὲν δέονται [cf. *Il.* 22.33–91], ὁ δὲ ἔπεισιν [cf. 22.21–32, 131], ὁ δὲ διαλογίζεται [cf. 22.98–130]. ἅμα δὲ πάντα λέγειν ἀδύνατον. (schol. bT *Il.* 22.131 ex.)³¹

is only apparent and due to the different contexts of the relevant passages. If asked, Aristotle would no doubt have agreed that there is no literal simultaneity in narrative texts (Lunden 2002a: 586).

²⁸ In modern scholarship this is usually known as (the second part of) ‘Zielinski’s law’. In this connection, it is worth pointing out that one of Zielinski’s prime examples, the allegedly simultaneous dispatches of Iris and Apollo in *Iliad* 15, is interpreted differently in schol. bT *Il.* 15.157 ex.: Homer organises the Iris–Poseidon scene πρεπόντως πάνυ, ἵνα ἀποστήσας τὸν Ποσειδῶνα τῆς μάχης τότε παρορμήσῃ τὸν Ἕκτορα διὰ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος (‘very appropriately, so that, after having removed Poseidon from the battlefield, he then rouses Hector by means of Apollo’). Most modern scholars now defend an interpretation similar to the one given in the scholion. The sequence is real sequence, not disguised simultaneity.

²⁹ The papyrus commentary is likely to represent the views of Aristarchus, who is often expressly mentioned (see Lunden 2002b: 42).

³⁰ This interpretation is rejected by schol. bT *Il.* 2.6c ex. (van Thiel ap. Lunden 2002a: 584 n. 10).

³¹ Cf. schol. AbT *Il.* 12.1–2a ex. (quoted above), A *Il.* 12.2 *Ariston*. (Eurypylus’ treatment and the *teichomachia* are simultaneous), T *Il.* 12.199b ex. (Asius’ attack and the deliberations of the Trojan army are simultaneous; probably based on ὄφρα–τόφρα in 12.195–6), T *Il.* 22.437a ex. (same reference as scholion quoted in the main text); see also A *Il.* 5.28a *Nic.*, where, however, the relevance of τὰ γὰρ ἅμα γινόμενα οὐ δυνατὸν ἅμα λέγεσθαι is not easy to detect.

Everything is happening at once: they [sc. Priam and Hecuba] are supplicating, he [sc. Achilles] is approaching, and he [sc. Hector] is deliberating. To say everything at once is impossible.

The three events which precede the final duel between Hector and Achilles are narrated in sequential order, but must be understood as happening simultaneously. As a representative of a linear form of art Homer cannot but proceed according to the sequence of his narrative.

Other scholia simply point out the simultaneity of sequentially narrated events, without explicitly referring to the poet's inability to say everything at once. In two cases the critic's main concern is the 'synchronisation' of the actions on the divine and human levels. The assembly of the gods (*Il.* 4.1–73) coincides with Aphrodite's rescue of Paris from certain death at the hands of Menelaus (3.374–82).³² And when Poseidon perceives that Aeneas' life is in danger, his decision, speech and descent (20.291–320) must take place simultaneously if the god is to rescue him in time.³³

Two further notes (both on book 10) deserve attention. They both state that the linear sequence of the text does not reflect 'reality'. Although the dispatches of the two night expeditions (Odysseus and Diomedes, Dolon) are narrated one after the other (10.180–298 and 299–339), the three spies, in fact, are said to set out at the same time:

ἡ διπλή, ὅτι οὐχ ὡς ἡ τῶν ἐπῶν ἔχει τάξις, οὕτω καὶ τὰ πράγματα: οὐ γὰρ προεληλυθότων ἤδη τῶν περὶ Ὀδυσσεῆα καλεῖ τοὺς προβούλους ὁ Ἔκτωρ, ἀλλὰ καθ' ὃν καιρὸν καὶ ὁ Ἀγαμέμνων: οὕτω γὰρ καὶ ἑαυτοῖς συμπεσοῦνται οἱ ἀπεσταλμένοι: διὸ καὶ ἀντιδιασταλτικῶς λέγει "οὐδὲ μὴν οὐδὲ ὁ Ἔκτωρ εἶασε τοὺς Τρῶας εὐδειν". [cf. *Il.* 10.299–300]. (schol. *A Il.* 10.299a *Ariston.*)

The diplē, because the order of the text does not correspond to that of the events. Hector does not summon his counsellors after Odysseus and Diomedes³⁴ have already set out, but at the same time as Agamemnon. And so it comes about that the parties dispatched will run into one another. That is why the poet opposes one scene to the other: 'nor indeed did Hector let the Trojans sleep'. (transl. Landon)

In addition to the point about the chronology of the two scenes itself, the wording of the scholion is remarkable. It expressly contrasts the verbal *taxis* with that of the events (on *taxis* see below). The argument itself is based on a 'naturalistic' reading of the passage. Unless dispatched roughly at the same time, the two parties will miss each other, or one will reach the

³² Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 4.1a *ex.* The critic in question does not explain where the other intervening scenes (conversation between Helen and Paris, Agamemnon declaring Menelaus the winner) come chronologically.

³³ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 20.292 *ex.*

³⁴ For this translation of οἱ περὶ Ὀδυσσεῆα see Landon (2002a: 588 n. 20).

goal before the departure of the other. A similar ‘synchronisation’ can be found in a scholion on the rising of Agamemnon (10.3–24) and Menelaus (10.25–33):

κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν καιρὸν τῷ Ἀγαμέμνονι. ἀλλ’ ὁ ποιητῆς τῷ βασιλικωτέρῳ προσώπῳ ἀπένειμε τὴν προτέραν τάξιν τοῦ λόγου. (schol. *A Il.* 10.25a ex.)

<Menelaus gets up> at the same time as Agamemnon, but the poet gave the first place in his text to the more kingly character. (transl. Lundon)

This critic adds a new dimension to the question in that he not only considers the two events simultaneous, but also gives an explanation for their sequence in the text. His motivation can be found in other scholia which discuss the chronology of the passages. They argue that Menelaus actually took action *before* his brother,³⁵ probably on the grounds that Menelaus calls on Agamemnon and not *vice versa*. This may seem to betoken a literary critic equipped with a stopwatch. It is, however, remarkable, because it implicitly contradicts a firmly based principle of modern (and, perhaps, ancient) scholarship: ‘Homer never retraces his steps.’³⁶ Some ancient scholars apparently believe that he does, if only to a limited extent. And the scholion above argues that Agamemnon’s higher status induced the poet to overrule the principle of a purely chronological narrative.³⁷ Another instance of the narrator retracing his steps can be found in schol. *Q Od.* 15.1, which argues that Athena is going to Sparta ‘not now’ (οὐ νῦν, i.e. in 15.1), but in 13.439–40. There it had been said that Odysseus and Athena went separate ways, he to Eumaeus, she to Telemachus in Sparta. Occasionally, the Homeric narrator does seem to retrace his steps.

The common denominator of the examples adduced so far is that they all treat as simultaneous events which occur in different places. In addition, there is a group of scholia which argue that a single character speaks and acts at the same time, but that, again, the narrator cannot but recount one thing after the other. (In *Il.* 15.123–42 Athena prevents Ares from rushing down to the battlefield in order to avenge the death of his son Ascalaphus. She disarms him (15.125–7a) and addresses him a speech (127b–41).)

³⁵ See schol. bT *Il.* 10.124b ex.: ἐδήλωσεν ὡς πολλῶ προὔλαβεν αὐτὸν ἐκείνος ἀναστὰς (‘he [sc. Homer] showed that that other one [sc. Menelaus] anticipated him [sc. Agamemnon] by much in getting up’), cf. also bT *Il.* 10.32a ex.

³⁶ For a qualification of this view see the discussion in Nünlist (1998b, with lit.).

³⁷ The notion that sequence normally represents a difference in status or importance is very common in the scholia: e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 2.405–9 ex. (on the sequence of the Greek commanders following Agamemnon’s invitation), *A Il.* 4.457a *Ariston*. (why is Antilochus given the honour of opening the battle? quoted in Chapter 1), bT *Il.* 7.163b ex., bT *Il.* 7.168 ex. (both on the sequence in which the would-be opponents of Hector are said to rise to their feet); also bT *Il.* 10.299b ex.

δῆλον δὲ ὡς ἀφοπλίζουσα τὸν Ἄρεα ταῦτα ἔλεγεν· οὐ γὰρ σιωπῶσα. (schol. T *Il.* 15.127*b ex.*)³⁸

It is clear that she [sc. Athena] says this while disarming Ares. For she <does> not <do so> without speaking.

Again, the sequence of words does not reflect the actual sequence of events. Action and speech are simultaneous.

Finally, there are comments which describe passages in such a way that the scholar clearly took them to be simultaneous, although he does not say so explicitly. For example, Aristarchus refutes Zenodotus' transposition of the sunrise from *Il.* 8.1 to before 8.53 with the following argument:

ὅτι πρὸ τούτου τὴν ἀνατολὴν τίθησι Ζηνόδοτος. τὸ δὲ συνεχὲς τοῦ λόγου οὕτως ἐστίν· ἡμέρας ἐνστάσης ὁ μὲν Ζεὺς θεῶν ἀγορὰν ἐποιεῖτο, οἱ δὲ Ἄχαιοὶ δεῖπνον εἶλοντο. (schol. A *Il.* 8.53*a Ariston.*)³⁹

<The diple peristigmene,> because Zenodotus places the sunrise before this <line>. But the continuity of the account is this [sc. if one considers the wider context]: 'at day-break Zeus called an assembly of the gods while the Greeks took their meal'.

The short paraphrase suggests that the assembly of the gods (8.2–52) and the meal of the Greeks (8.53–9) are interpreted as taking place simultaneously. The delay of the Greek preparations for battle, which probably bothered Zenodotus and made him transpose the line, is only apparent.⁴⁰

FILL-IN TECHNIQUE

All the examples discussed in the previous section point out the simultaneity of two or more scenes of approximately equal weight which are presented one after the other in the narrative. There is, in addition, a group of comments which note simultaneous events of a slightly different type: a first scene is brought to a stage at which the action continues steadily with no significant changes, and it can, therefore, recede into the background. At this point a second scene is introduced which covers the time until the

³⁸ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 22.375*a Ariston.* (sim. bT; the Greek soldiers simultaneously mock Hector and strike his dead body), bT *Il.* 24.746 *ex.* (the Trojan women lament together with Andromache's dirge).

³⁹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 6.503 *ex.* (Hector's conversation with Andromache is simultaneous with Paris' preparation for returning to the battlefield); see also the passages discussed above on 'story time vs. narrative time'.

⁴⁰ Cf. Griesinger (1907: 72–3), not mentioned by Nickau (1977: 202), who expresses his puzzlement over Zenodotus' possible motivation for the transposition.

first scene is resumed.⁴¹ For instance, Hector leaves the plain in *Il.* 6.116–18 in order to exhort the female Trojan population to pray to Athena on his and the Trojan men's behalf. He reaches the Scaean Gate in 6.237. The interim is 'covered' by the conversation between Diomedes and Glaucus which ends in their famous exchange of armour.

εὐκαίρως μεταβαίνει τὸ διάκενον τῆς πορείας Ἐκτορος ἀναπληρώσας τοῖς διὰ Γλαύκου καὶ Διομήδους. (schol. bT *Il.* 6.237*a ex.*, cf. bT *Il.* 6.119*b ex.*, D *Il.* 6.0)

With good timing he [sc. Homer] makes a transition [sc. to Hector in Troy], having filled the gap of Hector's journey with the scene of Glaucus and Diomedes.

Hector's uneventful journey back to the citadel is seen here as a 'gap' which is 'filled' and thereby covered by the intervening scene. Terminology and concept recur several times in the scholia: Agamemnon's meeting with his generals (*Il.* 2.53–84) covers the time it takes for the army to assemble (schol. bT *Il.* 2.53*b ex.*); during the prayer of the Greek army (*Il.* 7.202–5) Ajax puts on his armour before the duel with Hector (schol. bT *Il.* 7.194 *ex.*); the preparations in Nestor's hut, which include his famous cup (*Il.* 11.618–43), cover the time Patroclus takes to get there from Achilles' quarters (schol. bT *Il.* 11.619–43 *ex.*); Thetis' journey from Achilles (*Il.* 18.148) to Hephaestus' dwelling (18.369) is covered by 'the actions around Patroclus' (the rescue of his body, the mourning of Achilles and the other Greeks).⁴²

A similar concept but different terminology is used when the poet is said to put the intervening scene 'in the middle', as, for example, he is said to do in the description of Odysseus' embassy to Chryse (schol. bT *Il.* 1.430*b ex.*, quoted above). Similarly, Patroclus' return to Achilles is not narrated immediately after his departure from Eurypylos (15.405) but almost 350 lines later (*Il.* 16.2):

ἔδει τὸ ἐξῆς παραγαγεῖν ὅτι ὁ Πάτροκλος παρίστατο τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ [cf. 16.2–101]. ἀλλὰ τὸ διάστημα τῆς ὁδοῦ μέσσην ἔχει τὴν μάχην. (schol. bT *Il.* 15.405*c ex.*)

⁴¹ In German scholarship the second scene is called *Deckszene* ('covering scene'), see Nünlist and de Jong (2000: *s.v.*); de Jong (2001: xiv) recently introduced the term 'fill-in technique'. For ancient scholarship on the topic see (in addition to n. 25) Mehl (1940: 10 n. 11, 78 n. 7), von Franz (1940: 28–9), Meijering (1987: 171–2), Porter (1992: 104 n. 96).

⁴² See schol. bT *Il.* 18.148*b ex.*; in fact, the 'gap' contains more than just the 'actions around Patroclus'. A somewhat different type of *Deckszene* is envisaged in schol. bT *Il.* 17.87–8 *ex.*: Homer has Hector first rally his troops so that Menelaus gets the time (καιρός) to deliberate in a speech whether he should stay or withdraw (note the marker of simultaneity in the Homeric text: ἔως . . . τόφρα, *Il.* 17.106–7).

He [sc. Homer] should have recounted⁴³ <immediately> what follows, that Patroclus arrived with Achilles. But the interval of the journey covers the middle of the battle [which takes place during the third day of fighting in books 11–18].

The scholion is witness to an interesting debate. To skip the uneventful journey and to have Patroclus arrive immediately after his departure, as requested in the first part of the scholion, at first looks unobjectionable (and would probably be in line with a more modern narrative technique). But the second part of the scholion objects that the time of Patroclus' journey is covered by the battle. The critic implicitly argues that it is not Homer's technique to skip uneventful story elements such as a journey, but rather that he resorts to fill-in technique. This must be read against the background of a 'naturalistic' view of the relation between story time and narrative time (cf. above). Just as time forms a continuum in real life, Homer is reluctant to make temporal leaps forward in his narrative. Patroclus' journey is therefore not skipped, but covered by a battle scene the duration of which indirectly expresses the time of the journey.

Similarly, the conversation between Zeus and Poseidon (*Il.* 7.443–64) is seen as indicative of the time it takes the Greeks to build the trench and the wall. An athetesis of the lines, as proposed by Zenodotus, Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus, which requires an immediate connection of lines 442 and 465 (i.e. no narrative time for the construction of the wall), is, from a literary-critical point of view, considered absurd (ἄτοπον).⁴⁴ According to this unnamed critic, too, Homer is reluctant to skip story time, that is, to make use of 'temporal ellipsis'.⁴⁵ The interpretation shows that the critic sees a rather close correlation between story time and narrative time (see also n. 20). By doing so, he represents the view that is opposed by scholia such as bT *Il.* 15.390 *ex.* (quoted above), which argue against a one-to-one correlation. To a modern reader the equation of narrative time and story time is particularly striking when, for example, even similes are said to cover story time. (*Iliad* 3 opens with two similes. One illustrates the approach of the Trojan army, the other that of the approaching soldiers in general.)

⁴³ The verbs εἰσάγειν, παράγειν and παρεισάγειν, lit. 'to introduce (a character) on stage', are often used in the more general meaning 'to represent', which includes representation in narrative texts (Kassel and Austin on Eupolis fr. 137, Meijering 1987: 127); see also [Chapter 19](#).

⁴⁴ See schol. bT *Il.* 7.464 *ex.*; Nickau (1977: 178–80) discusses the athetesis proposed by Zenodotus, but does not mention the bT-scholion that argues against it; cf. Wilamowitz (1920: 53).

⁴⁵ On temporal ellipsis see Genette ([1972] 1980: 106–9). Needless to say, there is temporal ellipsis in Homer, e.g. *Il.* 1.493, which skips eleven days.

τὸ διάκενον τῆς πορείας ἀναπληροῦσιν αἱ παραβολαί. (schol. T *Il.* 3.2c¹ ex., sim. b)

The similes fill in the gap of the journey.

The two similes are interpreted in such a way that they cover the time during the approach of the Greek and Trojan armies. Modern readers are likely to treat similes (and other purely descriptive passages) as a form of ‘pause’ (i.e. the narrative time covers no story time, see n. 21). But this scholion shows that at least one ancient critic saw things differently. Similarly, the description of the wells outside of the Trojan citadel, where the women used to do their laundry before the war (22.147–56), is praised for avoiding *temps mort* (καίρὸς ἀργός) during Achilles’ pursuit of Hector around the walls (schol. bT *Il.* 22.147–56 ex., cf. bT *Il.* 14.226–7 ex., quoted in [Chapter 1](#)). This description, again, is seen as covering story time. It appears to be the case that for these critics story time is seen as a seamless continuum of which no part must be skipped (i.e. no temporal ellipsis).

Leaving the field of Homeric scholia, ‘fill-in technique’ is also called upon in tragic scholia. (In Euripides’ *Hecuba* 904 the female servant exits in order to fetch Polymestor. They re-enter together in 953, and the choral ode fills the gap.)

ἡ μὲν θεράπεινα κατὰ τὴν πρόσταξιν Ἑκάβης ἀπέρχεται πρὸς τὸν Πολυμήστορα, ὁ δὲ χορὸς τῶν αἰχμαλωτίδων γυναικῶν λέγει τὰς συμφορὰς αὐτῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀργῇ τὸ δρᾶμα μέχρις οὗ ἔλθῃ ὁ Πολυμήτωρ. (schol. E. *Hec.* 905–22, I 442.1–4 Dindorf)

At *Hecuba*’s command [cf. 890], the female servant exits to <fetch> Polymestor. The chorus of female prisoners of war recount their misfortunes [905–52], lest the play be inert until Polymestor enters.

Unlike a narrative text, which can considerably vary the ‘speed’ of its story time (see above on ‘acceleration’), a dramatic text *a priori* suggests an equality of story time and narrative time, because it consists of speeches only. To increase the ‘speed’ is difficult in drama, and actual temporal ellipsis can only be achieved by act-breaks, curtains, etc., which are of course foreign to the stage conventions of Greek tragedy. Consequently, an immediate re-entry of the maid is dramaturgically impossible. Instead, the choral ode covers the time of her absence.⁴⁶ Similarly to the Homeric instances

⁴⁶ Needless to say, there is no strict naturalism in such cases. The choral ode is, strictly speaking, too short. For the notion that a choral ode prevents play and audience from being ‘inactive’ (ἀργός) cf. Platonius (p. 4.33–4 Koster). See also schol. rec. *Ar. Pl.* 619b (with ref. to 626/7), post 626, 641a (with ref. to 770/1), 1042a (with ref. to 1096/7). All four cases refer to the choral interludes the text

above, the choral ode in *Hecuba* ‘kills’ time until the same character re-enters the stage. Elsewhere a choral ode is explained as a ‘wedge’ between two different scenes. (In Sophocles’ *Ajax* the choral ode 693–718 makes sure that the messenger who delivers Teucer’s warning cannot prevent Ajax’ exit to the place of his suicide.)

χρείας δὲ ἔνεκα τὸ χορικὸν νῦν παρείληπται. ἐξελθόντος γὰρ τοῦ Αἴαντος δεῖ βραχὺ διάλειμμα γενέσθαι, ἵνα μὴ καταληφθῆ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγγέλου. διὸ καὶ τὴν ὄρχησιν ποιεῖται, ἔνθεν καὶ βραχὺ ἔστι τὸ χορικὸν ὡς πρὸς χρείαν εἰλημμένον. (schol. *S. Aj.* 693a)⁴⁷

The choral ode is inserted at this point with a view to its function. After Ajax’ exit, there must be a short break, lest he be intercepted by the messenger. For that reason he [sc. Sophocles] inserts the choral ode, and hence the ode is short, because it is inserted <only> with a view to its function.

In other words, the main motive for inserting the choral ode is dramaturgical in nature. Thus the two choral odes are similar in that they both create a temporal interval between two scenes. In the former case, Euripides’ *Hecuba*, this is perhaps more a question of realistic dramaturgy, whereas in *Ajax* an absence of the ode, the critic argues, would lead to serious consequences for the plot.⁴⁸

ANACHRONIES

The narratological concept of ‘anachrony’ is based on the general assumption, supported by numerous examples from various literary traditions, that the natural order of a story is chronological. Anachronies are passages which breach this chronological principle, either because they look back to events that happened at an earlier stage (analepsis) or because they anticipate future events (prolepsis). As the relevant section in [Chapter 1](#) makes

of which, in this play, is no longer part of the manuscript tradition, but simply indicated by means of the remark χοροῦ.

⁴⁷ Cf. Heath (1987: 138). In addition to the dramaturgical explanation of this note, another scholion (schol. *S. Aj.* 701) discusses the thematic motivation of the ode; see Meijering (1985: 99).

⁴⁸ A rather different type of ‘filler’ is meant (*pace* Porter 1992: 104 n. 96) in one of the *hypotheseis* to Euripides’ *Phoenician Women*: τὸ δράμα . . . ἔστι δὲ καὶ παραπληρωματικόν· ἢ τε ἀπὸ τῶν τειχέων Ἀντιγόνη θεωροῦσα μέρος οὐκ ἔστι δράματος, καὶ ὑπόσπονδος Πολυνείκης οὐδενὸς ἔνεκα παραγίνεται, ὃ τε ἐπὶ πᾶσι μετ’ ὤδης ἀδολέσχου φυγαδευόμενος Οἰδίπους προσέρραπται διὰ κενῆς (argum. 3 E. *Ph.* Mastronarde = argum. c Diggle = I 243.8–12 Schwartz) (‘The drama . . . is overfull. Antigone looking from the walls [cf. 103–92] is not a part of the play. Polynices comes under truce [entrance in 261, cf. esp. 273] for no reason and, on top of all, Oedipus’ going into exile with babbling lyric [cf. 1710–66] is stitched on to no purpose’). This critic is concerned with the Aristotelian unity of the play and its plot. He singles out scenes which do not fulfil the expected standards and are therefore decried as fillers.

clear, ancient critics focus not so much on the temporal aspect when they discuss prolepsis (and, to a lesser degree, analepsis) as on other features. This hardly comes as a surprise. First of all, the various technical terms such as προαναφώνησις (prolepsis) and similar compounds with the prefix προ- prove that critics were well aware of the anachrony.⁴⁹ Thus the chronological ‘disorder’, which is likely to have given rise to the note in the first place, is marked as such but needs no further explanation. Instead the critic can focus on its purpose or function (discussed in [Chapter 1](#)).

There are, however, instances where the question of chronology is discussed in its own right. A very prominent example concerns Homer’s decision to limit the story time of the *Iliad* to a comparatively short stretch of fifty-one days at the end of the Trojan war. Although his decision won universal approval and proverbial status (*medias in res, more Homeric*), the exact chronological implications of the *cause célèbre* were rarely discussed in detail.⁵⁰ A fortunate exception comes from a long scholion on the Catalogue of Ships (partly quoted in [Chapter 1](#)):

θαυμάσιος ὁ ποιητῆς μηδ’ ὀτιοῦν παραλιμπάνων τῆς ὑποθέσεως, πάντα δ’ ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς κατὰ τὸν ἐπιβάλλοντα καιρὸν διηγούμενος, τὴν τῶν θεῶν ἔριν, τὴν τῆς Ἑλένης ἄρπαγὴν, τὸν Ἀχιλλέως θάνατον· ἡ γὰρ κατὰ τάξιν διήγησις νεωτερικὸν καὶ συγγραφικὸν καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἄπο σεμνότητος. (schol. b *Il.* 2.494–877 ex.)⁵¹

The poet is admirable: he omits no part of the story, but narrates all events at the appropriate moment in inverse order, the strife of the goddesses [sc. Hera,

⁴⁹ Similarly, the anachrony of analepsis shines through in expressions such as ἀνατρέχειν (lit. ‘to run back’): Porph. on *Il.* 12.127ff. (I 178.5–6 Schr.), schol. E. *Ph.* 10 (sim. 1207), Pi. *I.* 6.47e, also bT *Il.* 11.769 ex. This use of (προσ)ἀνατρέχειν can also be found e.g. in Polybius (1.5.4, 1.12.6, 1.12.8, etc.).

⁵⁰ Aristotle (*Po.* 1459a30–7) already draws attention to Homer’s selection (ἐν μέρος ἀπολαβῶν), which is then divided by the insertion of episodes. But he does not explicitly comment on the chronological relation between the primary narrative and the inserted episodes. The same holds true for Horace’s notorious *medias in res* (*AP* 146–50), which does not even indicate that the ‘prehistory’ of the *Iliad* is in fact incorporated by way of analepsis. This is spelled out by Ps.Plutarch *Hom.* 162 and implied by Quintilian (7.10.11, cf. 4.2.83). Dio Chrysostomus (11.24) argues – perhaps tongue-in-cheek – that Homer’s late starting-point is random and typical of the non-sequential and evasive narrative of a liar.

⁵¹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 1.1b ex.: λέγουσι δὲ καὶ ἀρετὴν εἶναι ποιητικὴν τὸ τῶν τελευταίων ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι καὶ περὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀνάκαθεν διηγέσθαι (‘they say [sc. in answer to the question why Homer began at the end] that it is also a characteristic of poetic excellence to seize upon the last events first and to narrate the rest from the start’). This description seems to suggest that Homer touches upon the end first and then returns to the beginning and recounts the preceding events in one chronological analepsis, which is not exactly what he does. More accurate is the description given by Eustathius (7.29–31 = 1.12.6–8), esp. ἐνσπείρας ὧδε καὶ ἐκεῖ (‘inserting [sc. the ‘prehistory’] here and there’). Eustathius often praises Homer for distributing his topics over the entire poem (see [Chapter 6](#)). The scholion calls chronological narrating ἀνάκαθεν (‘from the start’), sim. ἔνωθεν (e.g. schol. T *Od.* 7.244).

Athena and Aphrodite], the rape of Helen, the death of Achilles. For chronological narrative is typical of later [i.e. post-Homeric] epic poets and of historians and lacks poetic grandeur.

In other words, the concentration on the comparatively short period of fifty-one days does not result in a complete omission of the events which fall outside this time frame. Rather, they are incorporated at the fitting moment by means of analepsis (strife of the goddesses, rape of Helen) and prolepsis (Achilles' death), all of which breach the principle of a purely chronological narrative. The point about the 'disturbed' chronology of the events is expressed by means of the phrase ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς ('by inversion, in inverse order').⁵² The phrase recurs elsewhere (see below) and is contrasted here with τάξις, the natural (i.e. chronological) order, which points to the rhetorical background of the interpretation. Rhetorical handbooks advise the prospective orator to follow the 'natural order' (τάξις) of the events when he composes the *narratio* of his speech. This is the standard procedure, which may occasionally be abandoned if an order other than the natural can serve the orator's purposes better. In that case he may 'invert the natural order' (ἀναστρέφειν τὴν τάξιν).⁵³ This is exactly what Homer does, and the ancient critic identifies several purposes and effects. Without losing any of the crucial story elements, Homer can use them in the most effective place in his narrative. Temporal concentration and anachronic plot structure result in the absorbing story that is expected of a good poet (or orator).⁵⁴

The phrase ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς returns several times and may belong to the technical jargon of ancient commentators. Scholars apply it with no distinction to the primary narrative as above and to secondary narratives,

⁵² The term ἀναστροφή itself simply means 'inversion'. As a result, it can also indicate inverted word order (cf. schol. D. T. p. 460.7–27, Trypho *fig.* III 197 Spengel). The present chapter focuses on the literary-critical meaning, which may have developed from the rhetorical meaning. On ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς see in particular Meijering (1987: 141–3, 146) and Landon (1998: 223–5), also Lehnert (1896: 12–13), Griesinger (1907: 19–21), von Franz (1940: 11–13), M. Schmidt (1976: 41), Nannini (1986: 38). Note that in the scholion on the Catalogue ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς comprises instances both of analepsis (strife of goddesses, rape of Helen) and prolepsis (Achilles' death), just as Genette's term 'anachrony' does. The decisive factor is the departure from a chronological sequence.

⁵³ See Meijering (1987: 138–42), and add to her examples Quint. 4.2.83, 7.10.11. The phrase ἀναστρέφειν τὴν τάξιν occurs, among others, in Hermog. *id.* 1.4 (p. 235.16 Rabe). Later sources contrast τάξις with οἰκονομία (see Chapter 1). Theon (II 86 Spengel) explores five ways of inverting the natural order, and his first example is taken from the *Odyssey*. For non-chronological narratives see also D.H. *Is.* 15 (p. 113.21–2 U.-R.: τῶ μὴ κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους τὰ προχθέντα εἰρησθαι).

⁵⁴ Chronological narrative, standard in prose/historiography, is the stigma of post-Homeric poets, who are ridiculed by Pollianus (*AP* 11.130 = *Cycl. test.* 21 Bernabé) as those who keep saying αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα ('and then').

for example Nestor's long speech in *Iliad* 11 about his exploit against the Eleians:

ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς τὸ διήγημα· ἐπὶ γὰρ τοῖς ἐπιμηκεστέροις τῶν διηγημάτων τὸ μὲν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἵεναὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀφήγησιν ἀμβλυτέραν τὴν ἀκρόασιν καθίστησιν, τὸ δὲ ἐκ τῶν πρακτικῶν ἀρχεσθαι ἡδύ. (schol. bT *Il.* 11.671–761 *ex.*)

The narrative [sc. of Nestor] is in inverse order. For in longer narratives to recount the story from beginning to end makes for rather dull reading. But to start with the real action is pleasant.

The argument is in line with the previous examples, and it spells out what is left implicit in the others: long chronological narratives are boring.⁵⁵ The sequence of events in Nestor's account is not only not chronological but rather complicated, and requires a careful analysis.⁵⁶ This far-reaching licence is given only to secondary narrators, whereas the Homeric narrator himself mostly sticks to a chronological narrative, which is interrupted by analepses and prolepses.⁵⁷ The Homeric narrator-text itself does not contain anything remotely comparable to Nestor's chronologically complex narrative. However, this distinction between primary and secondary narratives is not made in the scholia. They simply describe the relevant anachronies as ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς, irrespective of whether it is the characters or the primary narrator who make use of it. Another example comes from a note on the Niobe paradigm in Achilles' speech to Priam in *Iliad* 24:

ῥητορικῶς ἀνέστρεψε τὴν διήγησιν· φάγε· καὶ γὰρ Νιόβη. τίς αὐτῆ; ἀπολέσασα δώδεκα παῖδας. ὑπὸ τίνος; ὑπὸ Ἀπόλλωνος καὶ Ἀρτέμιδος. διὰ τί; δι' ὑπερηφανίαν. (schol. bT *Il.* 24.605b *ex.*)⁵⁸

In a rhetorical way [or: in accordance with rhetorical precepts] he [sc. Achilles] inverted the order of his narrative. 'Eat! For Niobe too <ate>.' 'Who is she?' 'The one whose twelve children were killed.' 'By whom?' 'By Apollo and Artemis.' 'Why?' 'Because of her arrogance.'

The vivid analysis of 24.602–8 in the form of questions (Priam) and answers (Achilles) reminds one of ancient school exercises and again

⁵⁵ For ἀμβλυτέρα ἀκρόασις ('duller reading') see [Chapter 5](#).

⁵⁶ See the detailed analysis by Schadewaldt ([1938] 1966: 82–6). Described schematically, the sequence of Nestor's narrative is 7–4–5–2–1–2–6–3–6–5–7 (1 is chronologically the first event, 7 the last). The second part of the schol. bT *Il.* 11.671–761 *ex.* attempts to get to grips with it by giving a chronological paraphrase.

⁵⁷ In fact, Nestor's narrative itself is an (actorial) analepsis, but the ancient critic does not seem to take this into account.

⁵⁸ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 10.558–63 *ex.* (on the inverse order of Odysseus' report on his and Diomedes' night expedition), *Pi. P.* 4.447b (note ἀνεστραμμένως in ms. E for ἀντ-; on a comparatively minor example of inverse order in the story of the Argonauts), *E. Or.* 1009 (ditto in the myth of Thyestes).

suggests that concept and terminology are rooted in catechism literature and rhetoric (cf. also ῥητορικῶς). The dialogue mildly exaggerates the essentially correct observation that Achilles goes back in time.⁵⁹

The same point is made on a smaller scale with respect to an explanatory clause (introduced by γάρ). Such explanations in fact tend to breach strict chronology, because the explanation is the logical foundation of the subsequent event. (Paris kills the Corinthian Euchenor, who was fully aware of his imminent death when he set out for Troy, because his seer-father had predicted it.)

ἵνα τῷ παραδόξῳ τῆς ἀναφωνήσεως εἰς προσοχὴν ἐπισπάσῃται τὸν ἀκροατὴν, εἶτα ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς διηγείται. (schol. bT *Il.* 13.665*b ex.*)⁶⁰

<Homer made line 665 precede 666> in order to attract the reader's attention by means of the paradoxical statement [sc. that Euchenor was aware of his imminent death], and then he narrates the story in inverse order.

Even in the case of such a comparatively trivial example, Homer is seen as having in mind a specific purpose when he changes the natural order of events.

The corpus of Iliadic scholia contains one further instance of the expression ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς, which, however, poses a problem of interpretation. The passage in question is the final sentence of a b-scholion on *Il.* 1.8–9.⁶¹ The former part of the scholion praises Homer for his excellent transition from proem to narrative by means of question ('What god was it then set them together in bitter collision?') and answer ('Zeus' son and Leto's, Apollo') and in general for the effective connection between proem and narrative. The scholion then concludes with the following remark:

τοιοῦτος δέ ἐστι, κεφαλαιώδεις τινὰς ἐκδιδοὺς περιοχὰς καὶ ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς κατὰ μέρος διηγούμενος. (schol. b *Il.* 1.8–9 *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] is of such a type that he <first> gives a concise summary and <then> narrates the events in detail by inversion.

This must be read against the background of rhetorical theory, whereby a good orator should first give a concise summary and then unfold his

⁵⁹ The second part of the speech returns to the natural order, which results in an elaborate ring-composition (Lohmann 1970: 13).

⁶⁰ Cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 13.665*a ex.* (on the same passage): τὸ τελευταῖον τοῦ διηγήματος προὔθηκεν ('he put the end of the story first'), and in general on such explanatory clauses schol. bT *Il.* 16.335–7 *ex.*; see also bT *Il.* 14.476–7 *ex.* On the reader's attention see Chapter 5.

⁶¹ For a fuller treatment of the entire scholion see London (1998).

programme in detail.⁶² The difficulty of the scholion lies in the combination of *κατὰ μέρος* ('in detail') and *ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς*. The former expression, *κατὰ μέρος*, in all probability refers to the actual narrative of the *Iliad* (cf. also *διηγούμενος*), which expands in detail the programme given in the proem, and not to the proem itself.⁶³ This narrative, however, does not display an 'inversion of the chronological order', whereas the proem in fact does.⁶⁴ Before the scholion is dismissed as hopelessly confused, the following solution is perhaps worth considering. The critic may be saying that the narrative inverts the order of the events *as presented in the proem*, which, to repeat, is itself in inverted order. By means of this 'double inversion', the Homeric narrative in fact returns to a chronological order. This leads to the confusion about the exact reference of *ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς* in the scholion, because it seems to contradict most of the other examples, where the expression usually means 'inverting the (chronological) order'. If one accepts the suggestion of the 'double inversion', the contradiction turns out to be apparent: schol. b *Il.* 1.8–9 *ex.* seems to argue that the sequence of the main narrative inverts the order of the proem, with the result that the narrative is in fact chronological, because the sequence of the proem is not.⁶⁵

CONCLUSION

We have seen in this chapter that ancient scholars attempted to make the story time of long narrative texts such as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* more perspicuous by establishing a 'table' of the days, which were counted and numbered. In accordance with the principle of perspicuity, the established figures were then used as a system of reference that complemented other systems (e.g. by named episodes or by books). Apparent discrepancies between narrative time and story time occasionally gave rise to criticism, especially when the relation was interpreted by some in a 'naturalistic' way

⁶² The relevant terms are *κεφάλαια* ('main points') and *(ἐπι)ἔξεργασία* ('elaboration'), as set out e.g. in Dionysius of Halicarnassus: see Meijering (1987: 148–56) and Chapter 9.

⁶³ Scholars normally assume that the quoted sentence comments on the non-chronological sequence of the proem (Lundon 1998: 223), but the expression *κατὰ μέρος διηγείσθαι* seems inappropriate. A proem can hardly be called a 'detailed narrative'.

⁶⁴ See the temporal analysis by Porphyry (on *Il.* 12.127ff. = I 178.5–15 Schrader).

⁶⁵ Perhaps a third possibility should be envisaged for the interpretation of the puzzling last sentence in schol. b *Il.* 1.8–9 *ex.* It cannot be ruled out that the clause *καὶ ἔξ ἀναστροφῆς κατὰ μέρος διηγούμενος* does not refer to the proem at all, whether directly (Lundon) or indirectly (as suggested in the main text), but simply states that Homer's plot structure (beginning towards the end of the Trojan war, incorporating previous events by means of analepsis, see above) leads to an inversion of the chronological sequence. In other words, perhaps the clause does not comment on the proem specifically, but on the *Iliad* as a whole.

(Nestor drinking for hours while the other Greeks were fighting). Other scholars, however, objected and denied an immediate correlation between narrative time and story time. In other words, there need not be a 'mimetic' relation between textual representation and 'what actually happened'. As a consequence, they also realised that the reader of a narrative text can at times be expected to interpret sequentially narrated events as happening simultaneously, especially because, unlike in the visual arts, a linear form of art such as narrative cannot literally present various events simultaneously. In addition, scholars identified a particular type of simultaneous event, which is dealt with here under the rubric 'fill-in technique': a scene is narrated in the foreground in order to cover the time that a second action in the background needs for its completion.⁶⁶ Finally, ancient critics recognised that, although a chronologically proceeding narrative is *a priori* the most natural form, there can be occasions where deliberate anachronies such as analepses and prolepses can increase the effect of the text's overall purpose.

⁶⁶ If applied to a narrative text, this type of interpretation does postulate a correlation between narrative time and story time (or at least it assumes a reluctance on the part of the poet to make use of 'temporal ellipsis'). In tragedy, such an ellipsis is excluded for reasons of genre and ancient stage conventions (e.g. no curtain).

CHAPTER 3

Narrative and speech

This chapter takes as its starting-point ancient classifications of literary art as a whole. The relevant terms, in particular those for ‘narrative’ and ‘drama’, then came to be used in various contexts and for different purposes, including the designation of sections of a text as ‘narrative’ or ‘dramatic’ (i.e. speech). These applications are examined in the second part of the chapter. It is rounded off by briefly looking at other classifications that are developed in the extant scholia.¹

THE THREE PRINCIPAL FORMS OF LITERARY ART: NARRATIVE, DRAMATIC AND MIXED²

A b-scholion on the Homeric Catalogue of Ships explicitly refers to a well-known ancient categorisation of literary art:

τρεῖς δέ φησιν ὁ Πλάτων λόγων ἰδέας, δραματικὴν, ἔνθα ὁ ποιητῆς συνεχῶς εὐδοκιμεῖ τοῖς ἤθεσι τῶν ὑποκειμένων προσώπων, ἀμίμητον, ὡς τὴν Φωκυλίδου, μικτὴν,³ ὡς τὴν Ἡσιόδου. (schol. b *Il.* 2.494–877 *ex.*, p. 289.5–8 Erbse)⁴

¹ The chapter does not address the classification that is arguably the most prominent in modern scholarship and perhaps in ancient scholarship too: the classification by genre. Its omission can be justified as follows: ancient definitions and classifications of genre are often a highly complex and disputed matter that would require a study of its own. This applies in particular to the various ‘lyric’ genres (see e.g. Harvey 1955 on various lyric genres; West 1974 on elegy; Käppel 1992, Schröder 1999 and Rutherford 2001 on the paean; Zimmermann 1992 on the dithyramb; all these studies discuss ancient notions of the relevant genre too). More importantly, the relevant information most often comes from sources other than the scholia. Genre is of course not absent from the scholia, but they usually simply refer to the single genre and add comparatively little to what can be gathered from other sources. This may well be due to the fact that the bulk of the extant scholia comment on genres the definition of which is relatively unproblematic: epic, tragedy, comedy, epinician odes.

² On this classification see Usener ([1892] 1913: II 290–2), Kayser (1906: 10–16), Dahlmann (1953: 146–58), Haslam (1972: 17–24), Nüsser (1991: 177–204).

³ μικτὴν is Erbse’s conjecture for the corrupt μιμητικὴν (based on Eust. 263.9 = 1.400.19, accepted by van der Valk *ad loc.*), cf. also the examples discussed below.

⁴ The wider context of the scholion is a discussion of the rhetorical means by which the author of a purely narrative text (such as the Catalogue) can ensure the attention of his readers (on this topic in general see Chapter 5).

Plato says that there are three forms of literary art, the dramatic, where the poet constantly distinguishes himself by means of the characters represented, the amimetic, such as Phocylides', the mixed, such as Hesiod's.

The reference is obviously to Plato's famous categorisation in the *Republic* (393d–394d) where he distinguishes between (a) διήγησις ἀπλή ('simple/pure narrative'), that is, texts which consist of narrator-text only and contain no speeches,⁵ (b) μίμησις ('mimesis, imitation'), that is, texts which consist of speeches only and contain no narrator-text, and (c) a mixture of both, for which Plato has no specific term and simply writes δι' ἀμφοτέρων ('by means of both'). Plato's examples for the three forms are (a) dithyramb for 'pure narrative', (b) tragedy and comedy for 'mimesis', and (c) Homeric epic for the mixture.⁶

Despite the explicit reference to Plato, the scholion differs from the passage in the *Republic*. The principal tripartition is identical, but the scholion applies the categorisation to a passage within a text. More importantly, examples and terminology are different: type (a) is called ἀμίμητος ('amimetic', i.e. 'free of speech') instead of διηγηματικός ('narrative').⁷ Type (b) is called δραματικός ('dramatic') instead of μιμητικός ('mimetic', i.e. 'consisting of speech (alone)'). The substitution of μιμητικός is at first sight somewhat surprising, because ἀμίμητος obviously is the counterpart to μιμητικός.⁸ Consequently, one might have expected a corresponding pair such as 'amimetic–mimetic'.⁹ The alternative term δραματικός itself has its roots in Aristotle's definition of dramatic art (*Po.* 1448a28–9). This definition is immediately preceded by Aristotle's own description of the three principal forms of literary art in general:

καὶ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ μιμεῖσθαι ἔστιν ὅτε μὲν ἀπαγγέλλοντα, ἢ ἕτερόν τι γινόμενον ὡσπερ Ὅμηρος ποιεῖ ἢ ὡς τὸν αὐτὸν καὶ μὴ

⁵ What is first called διήγησις ἀπλή is then replaced by ἀπαγγελία (Pl. R. 394c), in order to make clearer the distinction between διήγησις ἀπλή and διήγησις διὰ μιμήσεως (S. Koster 1970: 39–41).

⁶ On the general problem of exemplifying 'pure narrative' see below. Plato's example, dithyramb, reverberates in schol. Ar. *Av.* 918b, where the same genre is described as διηγηματικόν.

⁷ The word ἀμίμητος recurs in this meaning in Proclus' commentary on the passage from the *Republic* (I 14.21 Kroll).

⁸ Cf. the pair ἀμίμητος – μιμητ(ικ)ός at the beginning of the *Tractatus Coislinianus* (I–2, p. 22 Janko, p. 63 Koster), where, however, the terms describe a rather different distinction. The two terms and their exact reference are a focal point of the dispute over the Aristotelian roots of the *Tractatus* (see Nesselrath 1990: 106–14, with lit.), but it is undisputed that its distinction ἀμίμητος – μιμητ(ικ)ός is different from the 'Platonic' tripartition in schol. b *Il.* 2.494–877 *ex.*

⁹ In fact, Erbse (*ad loc.*) considers reading (μιμητικὴν καὶ) δραματικὴν (based on Eust. 263.7 = 1.400.16, accepted by van der Valk *ad loc.*). This may not be necessary, given the terminological variety in other texts (see below). And it assumes that the commentator uses two terms for the dramatic type, but only one for the two others.

μεταβάλλοντα, ἢ πάντας ὡς πράττοντας καὶ ἐνεργοῦντας †τοὺς μιμουμένους†. (Arist. *Po.* 1448a20–4)

For in the same media one can represent the same objects: on the one hand in a narrative manner, either in the form of direct impersonation [i.e. speeches], as Homer does <in combination with narrator-text>; or in an invariable narrative voice [i.e. without speeches]; on the other hand <not in a narrative manner but> by direct enactment of all roles.

The passage has been called ‘one of the most difficult in the entire *Poetics*’ (Lucas 1968: *ad loc.*). Nevertheless, most scholars would now agree that the following basic equations are correct:

- (a) ἢ ὡς τὸν αὐτὸν καὶ μὴ μεταβάλλοντα (Aristotle) can be equated with διήγησις ἀπλῆ (Plato)
- (b) ἢ πάντας ὡς πράττοντας καὶ ἐνεργοῦντας †τοὺς μιμουμένους† (Aristotle) can be equated with μίμησις (Plato)
- (c) ἢ ἕτερόν τι γιγνόμενον ὥσπερ Ὅμηρος ποιεῖ (Aristotle) can be equated with δι’ ἀμφοτέρων (Plato).¹⁰

Scholars disagree as to whether in Aristotle (a), (b) and (c) are three different categories as in Plato, or whether his system is bipartite, in which (a) and (c) together form one category (referred to as ἀπαγγέλλειν), which is opposed to (b).¹¹ Some later sources, for example the *Tractatus Coislinianus* (2, p. 22 Janko), in fact reproduce a bipartite system, which may reflect Aristotelian influence. It is, however, equally possible that the reason for combining categories (a) and (c) lies in the difficulty in finding appropriate text examples for ‘pure narrative’ in Greek literature.¹² This applies in particular to treatises which illustrate the various categories with entire genres and not with single texts or authors.¹³ The same lack of actual examples for pure narrative may underlie Aristotle’s model, if indeed it is bipartite.

In the present context it is equally important to emphasise the terminological difference between Plato and Aristotle, especially with respect to μίμησις and its cognates. As scholars have pointed out (e.g. Lucas 1968: 66), Plato’s equation of μίμησις with ‘speech’ (and therefore drama) is based on a narrow, probably original, meaning of the word: ‘imitation =

¹⁰ One of the two elements of the ‘mixture’, narrator-text, is actually not expressly mentioned in Aristotle’s text but can be supplied (Lucas 1968: 67), as in the translation above.

¹¹ See Nüsser (1991: 184–7, with lit.), who adduces arguments in favour of a bipartite system.

¹² The different sources show considerable difficulties in that respect. Their examples for ‘pure narrative’ often change and are not always appropriate (see below).

¹³ E.g. *Tractatus Coislinianus* (l.c.); schol. Lond. D.T. (p. 450.3–9 Hilgard, quoted below n. 18) begins with Plato’s tripartition, but then tellingly combines the categories ‘pure narrative’ and ‘mixed’ when it illustrates the different categories with corresponding genres. Examples of pure narrative appear to be hard to come by.

impersonation' (cf. 'to mime'). Conversely, Aristotle uses the word in a looser sense: 'imitation = artistic representation'. In other words, in Aristotelian terminology μίμησις stands at the top of the model (cf. *Tractatus Coislinianus*) and encompasses all three forms as distinguished by Plato, who uses the term in the narrow sense 'speech' for one category only.¹⁴ This terminological situation is apt to confuse readers. And in fact the term δραματικός (instead of μιμητικός) in the b-scholion cited above may well be an attempt to replace the unusual Platonic term by Aristotle's more common term.¹⁵ (The scribe who wrote μιμητικήν instead of μικτήν was obviously confused by this.)¹⁶

The Platonic tripartition is referred to in other sources as well, for example, in the Prolegomena to Hesiod's *Works & Days*:

ἰστέον ὅτι πᾶσα ποίησις τρεῖς ἔχει χαρακτήρας· διηγηματικόν, δραματικόν, καὶ μικτόν· καὶ διηγηματικόν μὲν ἔστιν ἐν ᾧ ὁ ποιητὴς μόνος φαίνεται φηγεγόμενος, ὥσπερ ἐνταῦθα ὁ ποιητὴς Ἡσίοδος μόνος ἐν παντὶ τῷ συγγράμματι φαίνεται διαλεγόμενος· δραματικόν δὲ ἐν ᾧ οὐδαμοῦ ὁ ποιητὴς φθέγγεται, ὥσπερ ἐν ταῖς κωμωδίαις ὀρώμεν, καὶ ταῖς τραγωδίαις γενόμενον· μικτόν δέ, ἐν ᾧ ὁ τε ποιητὴς διαλέγεται, καὶ πρόσωπα εἰσηῆκται διαλεγόμενα, οἷον ἐν τῇ Ἰλιάδι ἐμφαίνεται. (schol. Hes. *Op. proleg.* pp. 4–5 Gaisford)

Note that all poetry consists of three types: the [purely] narrative, the dramatic and the mixed. The narrative is the one in which the poet alone appears to be speaking, as in the present case [sc. *Works & Days*] the poet Hesiod alone appears to be speaking throughout the poem. The dramatic, in which the poet never speaks, as we see in comedies and in tragedies. The mixed, in which the poet both speaks <himself> and introduces speaking characters, as it is done in the *Iliad*.

The text contains a mixture of 'Platonic' (διηγηματικόν)¹⁷ and 'Aristotelian' (δραματικόν) terminology similar to the b-scholion above.¹⁸ More

¹⁴ The distinction between 'Platonic' and 'Aristotelian' μίμησις is made here in order to facilitate the argument. In reality, Plato elsewhere (e.g. in *Republic* book 10) makes use of μίμησις in the broader sense, which is closer to Aristotle's. Conversely, Aristotle's use of μιμῆσθαι in *Po.* 1460a9 is generally understood in the narrow sense of Plato; cf., however, de Jong (2005, with lit.), who argues that the word has its normal 'Aristotelian' meaning in *Po.* 1460a9.

¹⁵ Other scholia, however, stick to the 'Platonic' terminology or combine the two traditions (see below).

¹⁶ Modern scholars are not immune to the confusion of 'Platonic' and 'Aristotelian' μίμησις. Kitto (1966: 25), for example, explains Aristotle's famous statement that Empedocles is not a poet (*Po.* 1447b17–20) in the sense that Homer 'imitates or represents personages who speak and act', whereas Empedocles does not: 'the voice that we hear is always the voice of Empedocles'. This seems much closer to Plato's pure narrative and his understanding of μίμησις than to Aristotle's.

¹⁷ Passages such as *Poetics* 1459b17–37 show that Aristotle uses διηγηματικός in a looser sense than Plato.

¹⁸ Contrast Proclus (*chrest.* 11–12 Severyns), who uses the 'Platonic' pair διηγηματικόν–μιμητικόν, although he follows Aristotle's bipartition (see Severyns *ad loc.*; on the authorship see Hillgruber 1990). A mixture of 'Platonic' and 'Aristotelian' terminology can also be found in schol. Lond. D.T. (p. 450.3–9 Hilgard): ποιήσεως χαρακτήρες τρεῖς, διηγηματικός, δραματικός, μικτός·

importantly, the first sentence in the Prolegomena to Hesiod is almost verbatim identical with a passage from the Prolegomena to Theocritus.¹⁹ The two texts either depend on each other or go back to a common source.

Interestingly, a supplement to an ancient biography of Aeschylus tries to give the full range of terminological variants:

τῶν ποιημάτων ἃ μὲν ἐστὶ διεξοδικὰ καὶ διηγηματικά καὶ ἀπαγγελτικά, ἃ δὲ δραματικά καὶ μιμητικά, ἃ δὲ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν, ἃ δὲ μόνον δραματικά· αὐτὰ γὰρ ἐνεργεῖ καὶ λέγει ἅμα τὰ πρόσωπα, καὶ αὐτὰ τὸ κύρος ἔχει. διὰ τοῦτο αἱ τῶν δραμάτων ἐπιγραφαὶ προγράφονται τοῦ ποιητοῦ· “Νιόβη Αἰσχύλου”. “Ὀμήρου” δὲ “Ἰλιάς”· μικτὰί γάρ εἰσιν αἱ ποιήσεις αὐτοῦ (Westermann, αὐτῶν cod.). (schol. A. *PV* suppl. e, p. 63 Herington = TrGF III p. 265)

Among the poems some are discursive and narrative and reporting, some are dramatic and mimetic, some <consist> of both, some are purely dramatic. For <in dramatic poetry> the characters themselves act and speak at the same time, and they are in charge. For this reason the titles of the plays are written before <the name of> the poet: ‘Niobe by Aeschylus’.²⁰ But ‘Homer’s Iliad’. For his poems are mixed.

Similar lists of alternative terms can also be found in Proclus’ commentary on the passage from Plato’s *Republic* (I 14 Kroll) and, in both Greek and Latin, in the *Ars Grammatica* of Diomedes (I 482 Keil); cf. also Iunius Philargyrius’ commentary to Vergil’s *Eclogues* (p. 2.1–8 Hagen).²¹

διηγηματικός ἐστὶν ὁ κεχωρισμένος μὲν τῶν παρεισαγομένων προσώπων, ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν δὲ τῶν ποιητῶν λεγόμενος. δραματικός δὲ κεχωρισμένος τοῦ ποιητικοῦ προσώπου, ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν παρεισαγομένων προσώπων λεγόμενος· μικτός δὲ ὁ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν συγκείμενος. εἶδη τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ καὶ μικτοῦ τέσσαρα, ἐπικόν, ἐλεγειακόν, ἰαμβικόν, μελικόν· τοῦ δραματικοῦ εἶδη τρία, τραγικόν, κωμικόν, σατυρικόν (‘Three types of poetry: narrative, dramatic, mixed. Narrative does without the introduction of characters, spoken by the poets themselves. Dramatic does without the poet’s character, spoken by the characters who are introduced. Mixed is the mixture of both. Of the narrative and mixed there are four forms, epic, elegiac, iambic and melic poetry; of the dramatic three forms, tragedy, comedy, satyr-play’); cf. n. 13.

¹⁹ Cf. schol. Theocr. pp. 4–5 Wendel (Nüsser 1991: 194). Witness also the second part of the Prolegomena to *W&D*: ἅπαντες δ’ οὗτοι οἱ χαρακτήρες ἐν τοῖς Βουκολικοῖς τοῦ Θεοκρίτου εὐκαίμως ὑπάρχειν· καὶ μῖγμά παντός ἐστὶν εἶδους καθ’ ἕνα συγκεραμένον· ᾧ καὶ χάριέν ἐστὶ τῇ ποικιλίᾳ τῆς κράσεως, ποτὲ μὲν συγκείμενον ἐκ διηγηματικοῦ, ποτὲ δὲ ἐκ δραματικοῦ, ποτὲ δὲ ἐκ μικτοῦ, ἧ γούν διηγηματικοῦ καὶ δραματικοῦ (‘All these types appear to occur in Theocritus’ *Idylls*. And it [sc. Theocritus’ poetry] is a combination of every form, like a mixed drink. And it has grace due to the variety of the mixture, now consisting of narrative, now of dramatic, now of the mixture, that is, narrative and dramatic’); sim. *Anecdoton Estense* p. 11 Wendel. Two further points deserve attention: the prominence of Theocritus in a scholion to Hesiod and the fact that the Prolegomena to Theocritus do not give a definition of διηγηματικόν, δραματικόν and μικτόν, and simply take them for granted. Further attestations of the Platonic tripartition include: Nicolaus *progymn.* p. 12 Felten (= III 455 Spengel), schol. Aphthon. II 13 Walz, Doxopates II 206–7 Walz.

²⁰ In other words, the higher importance of the characters in dramatic poetry is supposedly reflected in the tradition of mentioning the title (usually the name of a character) before the author’s name.

²¹ On the basis of Iunius Philargyrius’ term ἐξηγηματικός, one might be inclined to emend the text of Diomedes (ἐξηγητικός) accordingly (cf., however, schol. E. *Alc.* 163). The relevant sections from

Taken together and presented in the form of a table, the following picture emerges:

(a) Pure narrative	(b) Drama	(c) Mixed
διήγησις ἀπλή	μίμησις	δι' ἀμφοτέρων/ἔξ ἀμφοῖν
διηγηματικός/ἔξ-/ἄφ- ἀμίμητος	μιμητικός δραματικός	μικτός
ἀπαγγελτικός		
διεξοδικός ²²		
ψιλός		

Although there is quite some terminological variety (esp. in the first column), it does not pose serious problems, because each term is normally used for one of the three categories only.²³ The same does not apply to the illustrative examples, where the extant sources show some inconsistencies.²⁴

It is particularly apt for the Prolegomena to Theocritus (see above with n. 19) to set out the entire system of three types of literary art, because the *corpus Theocriteum* consists of both 'dramatic' and 'mixed' *Idylls*. Consequently, the extant scholia to Theocritus regularly discuss whether or not the poet's voice is present in the *Idyll* under consideration. The question is, in other words: is there a framing narrative (i.e. mixed form), or is the *Idyll* purely mimetic/dramatic? For the former type see, for instance, the introduction to *Idyll* 8:

Diomedes and Iunius Philargyrius are usefully reprinted with the Prolegomena to Theocritus in Wendel's edition (pp. 15–16 and 19), Diomedes also in Kaibel (1899: 53) and W. J. W. Koster (1975: 117). The recent dissertation on Diomedes by Dammer (2001) does not treat the passage. For Latin sources see also Servius on Verg. *ecl.* 3.1 (= Isid. 8.7.11) and Probus on Verg. *ecl./georg.* (p. 329.10–16 Hagen).

²² Haslam (1972: 20) argues that pure narrative 'in isolated cases [is] also called διεξοδικόν and διδασκαλικόν', but does not give examples (for διεξοδικόν see the Aeschylus *vita* quoted above; its connotation is fullness, e.g. schol. Hes. *Th.* 463). For ψιλός see e.g. schol. b *Il.* 2.494–877 *ex.* (p. 289.8 Erbse) and *Vita Thuc.* 38.

²³ The same holds true *mutatis mutandis* when μίμησις is used in an Aristotelian sense as in the *Tractatus Coislinianus* (see above). For the sake of completeness it is worth mentioning the vexed problem of Ps.Long. 9.13, where the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are described as δραματικόν and διηγηματικόν respectively, although the *Odyssey* contains considerably more speech (67 per cent, as opposed to 45 per cent in the *Iliad*). Nüsser (1991: 192) may well be right 'daß nicht primär die literarische Darstellungstechnik, sondern der innere Charakter der Dichtung gemeint ist', but the use of the terms remains odd; cf. also schol. Luc. 40.0 where δραματικός describes a purely narrative text and must mean 'dramatic' in a loose sense (sim. schol. Luc. 19.12, p. 46.20–6 Rabe). Conversely, Ps.Demetr. *eloc.* 62 probably thinks of the speech element when he calls the *Iliad* a δρᾶμα (sim. 266 on Pl. *Menex.*).

²⁴ Hesiod represents the mixed form in schol. b *Il.* 2.494–877 *ex.*, but pure narrative in the Prolegomena to Hesiod (both quoted above). Only the former is of course appropriate, but one can see how the low percentage of speech (3.3 per cent in the *Theogony*, 1.3 per cent in the *Works & Days*) led to the impression that 'Hesiod appears to be speaking throughout the poem'.

ὁ δὲ λόγος ἐκ τοῦ ποιητικοῦ προσώπου. (schol. Theocr. 8.0a/b, cf. 12.0a)²⁵

The text <is presented as> from the character of the poet.

Conversely, the identification as a purely dramatic text appears, for example, in the introduction to *Idyll* 1:

ἔστι δὲ ἀμοιβαῖον καὶ δραματικώτερον²⁶ μὴ ὑποδεικνυμένου τοῦ ποιητικοῦ προσώπου. (schol. Theocr. 1.0b)²⁷

<The *Idyll*> is a dialogue and belongs to the dramatic form, with the character of the poet not being represented.

All these scholia seem to reflect an awareness of the theoretical and terminological framework which is given in the Prolegomena to Theocritus. Other scholia, however, simply identify the ‘speaker’ of the first lines and thereby give an implicit answer to the question as to whether or not the voice of the narrator is heard. For instance:

προλογίζει ὁ Θεόκριτος. (schol. Theocr. 7.0c)²⁸

The first speaker²⁹ is Theocritus.

Or, in the form of a paraphrase which dispenses with technical vocabulary altogether:

προσδιιάγεται Ἀράτῳ τινὶ φίλῳ ἑαυτοῦ ὁ Θεόκριτος. (schol. Theocr. 6.0a, cf. 11.0 b/d, 13.0a)

Theocritus converses with a certain Aratus, a friend of his.

In both cases, the technical vocabulary which designates the various literary types does not occur, and the type of the particular *Idyll* is established only implicitly.³⁰ It is, therefore, not entirely clear whether the scholars

²⁵ The expression does not seem to imply that the entire text is spoken by the narrator, but that he provides a narrative frame for the speeches (note that *Id.* 12, too, contains speech, *pace* Nüsser 1991: 195). Conversely, in schol. Luc. 30.1 the same expression describes a purely narrative text.

²⁶ ‘Superfluous’ comparatives are a typical feature of late Greek (Schneider 1910a: 149).

²⁷ Cf. schol. Theocr. 5.0a–c, 15.0 and Servius on Verg. *ecl.* 3.1, 9.1.

²⁸ The scholion apparently assumes that the first-person narrator Simichidas and Theocritus are identical (cf. schol. Theocr. 7.21a).

²⁹ The term προλογίζει does not imply the notion of a prologue in the sense ‘introductory passage’. It simply identifies the first speaker; see Müller (2000: 293), whose argument can be backed with the occurrence of the term in non-dramatic scholia: e.g. schol. Theocr. 9.1/2a (of an unnamed character). The identification of the first speaker is a standard piece of information in dramatic *hypothesis* (e.g. argum. I S. *OC*, argum. E. *Alc.*, cf. element C in the taxonomy of Trendelenburg 1867: 4–5) and dramatic scholia (e.g., schol. E. *Hec.* 1, Ar. *V.* 1a). See also Chapter 19.

³⁰ The same works, in the opposite direction, for ‘dramatic’ *Idylls*: schol. Theocr. 10.0a, 14.0a. In one case, the scholion reflects a debate as to the speaker of the opening lines: schol. Theocr. 3.0a.

who wrote these notes were aware of the theoretical framework given in the Prolegomena to Theocritus and elsewhere.³¹

Notes of the *προλογίζει* type probably intend to inform the reader at the outset of the speaker's identity (cf. also schol. Theocr. 6.1, Pi. *N.* 9.1a) in order to guarantee a proper understanding.³² A similar need may arise in the middle of a text, especially in the case of particularly difficult passages with many changes of speaker and/or narrative levels. As a consequence, the scholia on 'mixed' *Idylls* sometimes clarify that the speaker of the relevant lines is the narrator, who 'interrupts' the dialogue.³³ The phenomenon is obviously not restricted to *Idylls* and can occur in any text of the 'mixed' type, especially in Pindar, where the demarcation of speeches remains a problem to this day.³⁴ And there is even an example in Homer. The absence of an explicit *inquit*-formula that caps Eurymachus' speech (e.g. ὦς ἔφατ', 'so he spoke') apparently induced a critic to clarify that *Od.* 16.351 is spoken by the poet (schol. *H. Od.* 16.351).

The terms *δι' ἀμφοτέρων* and *μικτός* clearly imply that a 'mixed' form such as the Homeric epics consists both of *διηγηματικόν* (narrative) and *μιμητικόν* (speech). Consequently, the two terms can be used in the scholia, in order to refer to the narrator-text (*διηγηματικόν*) and speech (*μιμητικόν*) respectively (see next section). This, together with the use of the word *χαρακτήρ* in several examples cited above, provides the key to the proper understanding of a scholion on *Iliad* 19. The text first describes Briseis' reaction to the sight of the dead Patroclus (19.282–6) and then quotes her speech (287–300), which is capped by two more lines of narrator-text:

ὁ δὲ τόπος μέσου χαρακτήρος ὑπάρχων τῷ μὲν διηγηματικῷ σεμνῶς πέφρασται καὶ λίαν ἔστι γραφικός, τῷ δὲ μιμητικῷ συμπαθῆς καὶ γοερός· (schol. *bT Il.* 19.282–302 *ex.*)

The passage, being of a middle type, is expressed solemnly in the narrative part and is very graphic, in the speech it is sympathetic and mournful.

By *μέσος χαρακτήρ* ('middle type') this critic apparently means the same as others by *μικτός χαρακτήρ* ('mixed type'). He considers *διηγηματικόν*

³¹ The same coexistence of explicit and implicit annotation can also be found in the ancient commentaries on Vergil's *eclogues* (for references see Kayser 1906: 14–15).

³² Their function is similar to the identification of the speakers in the margin (see below).

³³ Cf. schol. Theocr. 7.29–31a, 7.90, 8.81; see also the disputed case discussed in schol. Theocr. 9.28–30a.

³⁴ Cf. e.g. schol. Pi. *O.* 13.100c (sim. 102a), *P.* 9.172 (cf. 161; similar question in schol. Pi. *I.* 7.55b, also *N.* 10.73b); despite their general similarity, schol. Pi. *O.* 13.100c and *P.* 9.172 are different: the former identifies the speaker with the poet, the latter with the chorus. This testifies to difficulties with the separation of the two voices (see Chapter 4). Problems with identifying speech boundaries in Pindar still exist, see e.g. Carey (1999: 20).

and μιμητικόν the two poles of the scale, and what others call their ‘mixture’ is the ‘middle ground’ for him.³⁵

TRANSITION FROM NARRATOR-TEXT TO SPEECH³⁶

In the bT-scholion just quoted, διηγηματικόν and μιμητικόν stand for narrator-text and speech respectively and identify individual passages within a larger text. In this function the two terms repeatedly recur in the scholia, in order to indicate the transition from narrator-text to speech.³⁷ The common expression for this transition is μεταβαίνειν (or similar) ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν (‘to go over from narrator-text to speech’). The phrase can be illustrated, for example, with Aristonicus’ note on Achilles’ speech before the bow contest in the funeral games in honour of Patroclus (*Il.* 23.855–8):

ὅτι ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικὸν μετῆλθεν οὕτως· ὁ γὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς τοῦτο λέγει “ὅς μὲν κε βάλῃ . . .” (schol. *A Il.* 23.855a *Ariston.*)

<The diplo,> because he [sc. Homer] made a transition from narrator-text to speech in such a way. For it is Achilles <and not the narrator>, who says this: ‘The man who hits . . .’

There are in total seven passages in the *Iliad* which are explicitly interpreted in these terms as transition from narrator-text to speech.³⁸ As against a total of 678 Iliadic speeches, 7 is a comparatively small number. It is worth considering whether the phrase does not have a more restricted meaning than ‘transition from narrator-text to speech’. The key can be found in the word οὕτως (see above) and in the fuller explanation of the bT-scholion on the same passage:

λείπει τὸ “τάδε λέγων”. εἴωθε δὲ μεταβαίνειν ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν. (schol. bT *Il.* 23.855b *ex.*)

‘Saying this’ is missing. He [sc. Homer] is wont to make transitions from narrator-text to speech.

³⁵ Differently N. J. Richardson (1980: 276), who argues that μέσος χαρακτήρ is the ‘middle style [which] is rarely mentioned [sc. in the Homeric scholia]’ (on the three styles see Chapter 9); similarly Salvioni (1977–8: 153–4). Conversely, Erbse (*ad loc.*) refers to the passage from Plato’s *Republic* and therefore seems to suggest the same explanation as given here.

³⁶ The present section only discusses transitions from narrator-text to speech. For other differences between narrator-text and speech see Chapter 4.

³⁷ Cf. also D.H. *Thuc.* 37 (p. 388.15–19 U.-R.). For modern discussion see L. Friedländer (1853: 16–17), Usener ([1892] 1913: II 292 n. 73), Lehnert (1896: 91–2), Matthaios (1999: 395–400).

³⁸ See schol. bT *Il.* 1.17 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 4.303b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 6.45–6 *ex.*, *A Il.* 15.346 *Nic.*, T *Il.* 15.425–6 *ex.*, *A Il.* 23.855a *Ariston.*, bT *Il.* 23.855b *ex.* The device is discussed in bT *Il.* 4.127a *ex.* (quoted below), but expressly not with reference to the Homeric passage under discussion. (On the special cases schol. *A Il.* 9.685b² *ex.* and *A Il.* 16.203a *Ariston.* see below.)

Apparently, it is not the simple fact that there is a transition from narrator-text to speech which is commented on. Rather, ancient scholars find it noteworthy that it happens ‘in such a way’ (οὕτως), that is, without a proper speech introduction.³⁹ And this is in fact the common denominator of the seven passages listed in n. 38.⁴⁰ They all treat passages where, contrary to Homer’s standard technique, the beginning of the speech is not expressly marked by a speech introduction. Further proof for the correctness of the suggested interpretation can be adduced from Dionysius’ comment on the ‘Melian dialogue’ (Thuc. 5.85–113). The Thucydidean narrator explicitly introduces the first speech of the Athenians (5.84.3) and the Melians (5.86) with an *inquit* formula. Then in 5.87 he goes over to a purely dramatic presentation with no narrator-text between the speeches:

καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ἀποστρέψας τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ [Usener, διηγῆματος codd.] τὸν διάλογον ἐπὶ τὸ δραματικὸν ταῦτα τὸν Ἀθηναίων ἀποκρινόμενον ποιεῖ. (D.H. *Thuc.* 38 = p. 390.9–11 U.-R.)⁴¹

And after this he [sc. Thucydides] ‘turns away’ the dialogue from the narrative towards the [purely] dramatic and has the Athenian answer the following . . .

Needless to say, unmarked or sudden transitions from narrator-text to speech are particularly apt to cause confusion among readers. Ancient commentators therefore single them out and explain them by means of the phrase μεταβαίνειν ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν.⁴²

As for the origin of these notes, Usener ([1892] 1913: II 291–2 with n. 73) attempts to draw a line between Aristarchus and Aristonicus. The terminology discussed above is said to depend on Aristonicus, not on Aristarchus. Usener’s argument is, however, impaired by the fact that the A-scholia which he cites as preserving genuine Alexandrian terminology explain another type of ἀποστροφή (‘apostrophe, transition’), which is

³⁹ Cf. also Eust. 1333.12 (= 4.848.9), schol. Aeschin. 3.20. Incidentally, the speech in question (*Il.* 23.85–8) is unique, because it is the only Homeric speech which begins in the middle of the line (Führer 1967: 66 n. 2), but the scholia do not expressly mention this. They only comment on the absence of a speech introduction.

⁴⁰ See de Jong (1987: 11), cf. also de Martino (1977).

⁴¹ Dionysius mistakenly places the transition *after* chapter 87 and misidentifies the speaker of chapter 88, but that does not affect my argument here; on the passage see also Nüsser (1991: 196–7), who argues that Dionysius uses διηγηματικόν in an Aristotelian sense in that it refers to the ‘mixed’ form, i.e. narrator-text plus speech.

⁴² The modern reader of Homer has the benefit of quotation marks around the speeches in his edition. This practice is in a way anticipated in those Homeric papyri which consistently identify the name of the speaker (incl. the poet) in the margin. The evidence is usefully collected in Spooner (2002: 117–18). A similar effect could be achieved by means of a simple *paragraphos*, as in dramatic papyri (see Haslam 1997: 57). There is, to my knowledge, no systematic collection of the material, but see the references given by Andorlini and Lundon (2000: 2 n. 10).

different from the transition from narrator-text to speech.⁴³ Given the presence of the relevant phrase in several A-scholialia, it seems better, with L. Friedländer (1853: 16–17), to identify Aristarchus as the source of the terms under discussion.⁴⁴

Among the examples of unmarked transitions, two deserve special attention, because at some point they became the standard examples for this phenomenon in ancient scholarship. The first instance is Nestor's speech in the 'marshalling of the troops' (*Il.* 4.303–9). In addition to the scholia on the passage itself (schol. A *Il.* 4.303a *Ariston.*, bT *Il.* 4.303b *ex.*), this unmarked transition to speech is mentioned as a parallel in three other scholia: once in the scholion on the very first speech of the *Iliad*, which does not have a standard speech introduction either (schol. bT *Il.* 1.17 *ex.*), once in a scholion to Hesiod (see below) and once in a scholion which explains the different forms of *apostrophe*. The relevant list mentions among other types of *apostrophe*.⁴⁵

τὸ [sc. εἶδος ἀποστροφῆς] †περὶ† φράσιν, ὅταν ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ εἰς τὸ μιμητικὸν μετέλθῃ, “ἵππεῦσι μὲν πρῶτα, | ὃς δὲ κ' ἀνήρ” [*Il.* 4.301, 306], ἢ τὸ ἐναντίον· (schol. T *Il.* 4.127a *ex.*)⁴⁶

The [type of *apostrophe*] related to diction (?), when he [sc. Homer] makes an [unmarked] transition from narrator-text to speech, <e.g.> 'To the driver of horses first | When a man', or the opposite.

As 'or the opposite' makes clear, this critic also has in mind cases where the unmarked transition is back from speech to narrator-text, that is, the absence of a capping formula (cf. schol. *H Od.* 16.351, above), which, in fact, is slightly more frequent in Homer than the absence of speech introductions (Führer 1967: 46–8). No scholion, however, has been preserved which discusses the reverse transition exactly in the terms ἀπὸ τοῦ μιμητικοῦ εἰς τὸ διηγηματικόν.⁴⁷

⁴³ Usener's examples, schol. A *Il.* 16.586 *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 16.697a' *Ariston.*, describe the transition from second-person narrative (when the narrator addresses a character, e.g. Patroclus) to third-person narrative and *vice versa* (on this transition see below); see also Matthaios (1999: 396–7). The term ἀποστροφή has a wider meaning than its modern counterpart (see Excursus below).

⁴⁴ In addition to the A-scholialia mentioned above, see also the notes which discuss the absence of a proper speech introduction: schol. A *Il.* 9.224 *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 9.254 *Ariston.* (the latter is an instance of 'speech within speech', on which see below).

⁴⁵ For the other types of *apostrophe* see Excursus below.

⁴⁶ The scholion adduces the parallel passage in a somewhat puzzling way, because it quotes the beginning of two lines which are not immediately related to the topic in question. The last line of the narrator-text is 302 (not 301), and 306 is from mid-speech. This may reflect the abbreviating process of the transmission (cf. *Introd.* page 9), perhaps because this scholion lists several types of *apostrophe*, only one of which is relevant to the actual context in *Iliad* 4.

⁴⁷ Note, however, that ἐπὶ τὸ διηγηματικὸν μετιῶν describes the transition from proem to narrative in schol. b *Il.* 1.8–9 *ex.* And the transition from speech to narrator-text at the end of Nestor's same

The second example of an unmarked transition that is of special interest is Hector's speech in *Il.* 15.347–51. In addition to the scholia on the speech itself (schol. A *Il.* 15.346 *Nic.*, bT *Il.* 15.347a *ex.*), it is used as an example of unmarked transition in Ps.Long. *subl.* 27 and in Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 57. The scholia on the passage discuss not only the unmarked transition itself, but also the disputed question where the speech actually begins, in line 347 or 348. The vulgate opts for the latter:

ἡ συνήθεια συνάπτει καὶ τὸ “νηυσὶν ἐπισσεύεσθαι” [*Il.* 15.347], ἴνα ἡ μετάβασις {ἡ} ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικὸν ᾗ. “ὄν δ' ἂν ἐγὼν ἀπάνευθε” [15.348]. (schol. A *Il.* 15.346 *Nic.*)

The vulgate continues until [i.e. treats as part of the narrator-text] ‘to make hard for the ships’ so that the [unmarked] transition from narrator-text to speech is: ‘That man I <see> apart . . .’

Conversely, the bT-scholion on the same passage considers both possibilities:

νηυσὶν ἐπισσεύεσθαι. ὡς ἐπὶ τὰς ναῦς ὀρμᾶν· λείπει δὲ τὸ “λέγων”. ἡ ἀπαρέμφορτά εἰσιν ἀντὶ προστακτικῶν. (schol. bT *Il.* 15.347a *ex.*)

‘[To] make hard for the ships’: like to run for the ships. ‘Saying’ is missing. Or the infinitives stand for imperatives [i.e. the speech already begins in 347].

Although the half-line formula ἐκέκλετο μακρὸν ἄϋσας (15.346) is used as a regular speech introduction in eight other Homeric speeches, ancient critics do not seem to have recognised it as such.⁴⁸ From their point of view the transition is unmarked, and they consequently discuss the question of where the speech begins.⁴⁹

A scholion to Hesiod also stands out, because at first sight the ancient literary critic seems to have misunderstood the concept:

ταῦτ' ἄρα Μοῦσαι ἄειδον· ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ μετέβη εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον μιμητικῶς, ὡς καὶ Ὀμηρὸς [*Il.* 4.310]· “ὡς ὁ γέρον ὄτρυνε πάλαι πολέμων εὔειδῶς”. οὕτως καὶ Ἡσίοδος· “ταῦτ' ἄρα Μοῦσαι ἄειδον”. (schol. Hes. *Th.* 75)

‘This is what the Muses sang’: he [sc. Hesiod] made a transition from narrator-text to the speech of a character in the style of Homer: ‘Thus the old man [sc. Nestor] wise in fighting from of old encouraged them.’ So Hesiod too: ‘This is what the Muses sang.’

speech is discussed in schol. A *Il.* 4.310a⁴ *Nic.*, albeit in different terminology (μετάβασις . . . ἀπὸ τῶν προσώπων ποιῆσθαι, ‘to make a transition from the characters’).

⁴⁸ *Il.* 6.66, 6.110, 8.172, 11.285, 15.424, 15.485, 16.268, 17.183; cf. esp. schol. T *Il.* 15.425–6 *ex.*

⁴⁹ The question is still disputed among scholars (see the different editions).

Both the passage from Hesiod and the Homeric parallel are actually capping formulae, that is, they mark the end of the speech.⁵⁰ Although it cannot be ruled out with certainty that the critic made such a blatant error, it seems preferable to assume that he meant to say the following: ‘Hesiod made an [unmarked] transition from narrator-text to speech [sc. a few lines before] <and now adds a capping formula> just as Homer . . .’⁵¹

Another remarkable use of the phrase ἀπὸ διηγηματικοῦ κτλ. can be found in connection with the literary device of ‘speech within speech’. Again, it is only the unmarked transition which is commented on and not all the speeches in question. The use of the known phrase is particularly striking here, because, strictly speaking, the incorporating speech is a μιμητικόν itself and not a διηγηματικόν.⁵² But the phrase seems to have acquired the meaning ‘unmarked transition to speech’ independent of the narrative level at which it occurs. An instance can be found in the scholia on *Iliad* 16:

ὅτι ἀπέστροφε τὸν λόγον ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν, καὶ ἐλλείπει τὸ “τάδε λέγων” (τῶ) [suppl. Erbse] “ἕκαστος ἐμέ ἠτιάσθε” [cf. *Il.* 16.202]. (schol. A *Il.* 16.203a *Ariston*.)

<The diplo,> because he [sc. Achilles] has made a ‘turnover’ from narrator-text to speech, and ‘saying this’ is missing in <the phrase> ‘each of you kept blaming me’.

In the passage in question (16.200–9), Achilles speaks to the Myrmidons before they finally go back to war under Patroclus’ command. In his speech, Achilles reminds them of their complaints by quoting their speech verbatim (16.203–6), and the transition again lacks a standard speech introduction. Similar applications of the known phrase to speech within speech can be found elsewhere in the Homeric scholia and also in the scholia to tragedy.⁵³

⁵⁰ Modern scholars would actually deny that a direct speech precedes ταῦτ’ ἄρα Μοῦσαι ἄειδον (Hes. *Th.* 75), but that is how the ancient critic apparently took it. He may have had in mind passages such as *Od.* 8.83 = 521 (ταῦτ’ ἄρ’ ἄοιδος ἄειδε, ‘these things the singer sang’), which cap indirect speeches. On such formulae in general see Führer (1967: 2).

⁵¹ Cf. the wording of schol. H¹KM⁴S *Od.* 1.40 (p. 26.10–11 Ludwig): ἐντεῦθεν ἐκ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ μετῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν, διὸ καὶ ἐπιφέρει “ὧς ἔφαθ’ Ἑρμείας” [sc. 1.42] (‘In this line, he [sc. Homer] went over from narrator-text to speech, and for that reason he then adds “Thus spoke Hermes”). The passage in question is an instance of ‘speech within speech’ (see below).

⁵² However, the phrase ἀπὸ τοῦ μιμητικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν μεταβαίνειν would of course ring oddly.

⁵³ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 9.685b² ex. (cf. also b¹), H¹KM⁴S *Od.* 1.40 (p. 26.10–11 Ludwig, quoted in n. 51), A. *Pers.* 369, 372 (pp. 122–3 Dähnhardt), E. *Alc.* 163, *Hipp.* 1240, *Ph.* 1225, and, without the regular phrase, *Or.* 1447, *Ph.* 1435, also *Hec.* 533. Some of these examples are mentioned by Trendelenburg (1867: 139) and de Jong (1987: 250 n. 33).

OTHER APPLICATIONS OF THE TERMS FOR
'NARRATIVE' AND 'DRAMATIC'

A scholion to Aeschylus' *Eumenides* discusses a categorical difference between narrative and dramatic poetry. In line 29 of the play the priestess refers to her own movement on stage ('thereafter I take my seat as prophetess upon my throne'). The corresponding scholion reads as follows:

τοῦτό φησιν ἐπειδὴ δραματική ἐστὶν ἢ ποιήσις. εἰ δὲ ἦν διηγηματική, εἶπεν ἂν ὁ ποιητής· "ταῦτα εἰποῦσα εἰς θρόνον ἐκαθέζετο". (schol. A. *Eum.* 29)

This she [sc. the priestess] says <herself>, because it is a dramatic composition. If it were a narrative <composition>, the poet would have said: 'With these words she sat down on the throne.'

The passage from *Eumenides* is one of the numerous 'stage directions' which, in ancient drama, are usually given in the text itself (i.e. implicitly, not as external stage direction).⁵⁴ As such they are part of the characters' speeches, whereas in narrative texts, the critic argues, it is the narrator who provides this kind of information instead.

If speeches in Homeric epic add a dramatic element to an essentially narrative genre (see above), the same can be said *mutatis mutandis* about narrative elements in dramatic texts. When Prometheus finally gives in to the chorus' urge to tell them the reason for his punishment (A. *PV* 199–241), the scholion comments:

ἀπὸ τούτων δὲ ἄρχεται τῆς διηγήσεως. (schol. A. *PV* 199a)⁵⁵

From these <events> [sc. how he unsuccessfully tried to give advice to the gods who wanted to oust Cronus] he [sc. Prometheus] begins his story.

And another scholion on the same passage reads:

σχῆμα ῥητορικὸν τὸ λεγόμενον διηγηματικόν. (schol. A. *PV* 199c)

<This is> the rhetorical mode called 'narrative'.

The explicit reference to rhetoric makes it clear that this scholar compares Prometheus' speech to a (forensic) speech which comprises a narrative

⁵⁴ See e.g. Wilamowitz (1914: xxxiv), Taplin (1977a). For the scholia that treat questions of staging see Chapter 19, including an excursus on the semantics of the ancient term for 'stage direction' παραπαραφή.

⁵⁵ Cf. schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1187a (on the beginning of Pheidippides' 'narrative' on Solon, which is, however, punctuated by Strepsiades' questions), Theocr. 2.66–68a (on the beginning of Priapus' story about Daphnis' love), 14.12–14a (on the beginning of Aeschinas' story about himself).

section that in rhetorical theory is called διήγησις (lat. *narratio*).⁵⁶ Similarly, when Prometheus later (846) begins a narrative section of his speech with the typically Homeric device ‘there is a place (called) X’, the scholion again speaks of a σχῆμα διηγηματικόν (schol. A. *PV* 846c).⁵⁷ Likewise, the pedagogue’s false report in *Electra* about Orestes’ death in the chariot race is also called διήγησις (schol. S. *El.* 706). A further example is the nurse’s elaborate report about the love charm in *Hippolytus*, which is again referred to by the verb διηγείσθαι (schol. E. *Hipp.* 514, p. 67.12 Schwartz). In this particular case, Euripides is praised for suppressing such a long narrative, which would be a nuisance (ἐνοχλεῖν). The same objection returns in schol. S. *OC* 220, which criticises Euripides’ inclusion of genealogical information and applauds Sophocles for omitting it (cf. Chapter 1). In a similar vein, Sophocles is praised for the dialogical exposition in *Ajax* (schol. S. *Aj.* 38a), because to have one character introduce everything in the narrative type (διηγηματικὸν εἶδος), that is, in a long speech, would lead to surfeit (κόρος).⁵⁸ The unnamed target of this criticism is again Euripides, whose prologue speakers and messengers were criticised for the length of their speeches (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 416a). Apparently, they were considered ‘too narrative’ to be appropriate to the dramatic genre.⁵⁹

No less interesting are the cases where the known terminology refers to narrative elements within choral odes (schol. E. *Hipp.* 555, 744). Triclinius even established a connection between metre and narrative in choral odes. His note on the *parodos* in *Seven against Thebes* (schol. A. *Th.* 78–150b) explains the metrical structure as bipartite. A monostrophic part of various metres precedes a part that consists of two strophes. The same metrical structure is said to recur in A. *Ag.* 40–2, S. *Aj.* 134–5 and E. *Ph.* 202. He concludes:

⁵⁶ Cf. schol. E. *Hipp.* 625 (explicit comparison with oratory), Ar. *V.* 1381 (on Bdelycleon encouraging his father to ‘be narrative’, i.e. tell stories); cf. also schol. Triclin. Ar. *Eq.* 624b, schol. rec. Ar. *Pl.* 28a, 41a. Interestingly, even narrative sections within a narrative text such as the *Iliad* can be called διήγησις (schol. D *Il.* 5.9, bT *Il.* 10.314 *ex.*). Both passages are examples of the ‘there was a person X’ motif (de Jong 2001: 83, with examples).

⁵⁷ A. *PV* 846 ἔστιν πόλις Κάνωβος, ἔσχατῆ χθονός, κτλ. On the motif ‘there is a place X’ see de Jong (2001: 83, with examples).

⁵⁸ Similar arguments recur in schol. A. *Eum.* 609, S. *Aj.* 506. Conversely, schol. S. *El.* 32 accepts that Orestes gives a narrative exposition of the play. In a rather different vein, the chorus in *Prometheus Bound* are said to punctuate a long *rhexis* in order to give the actor a chance to take a break (schol. A. *PV* 472b).

⁵⁹ Cf. Meijering (1987: 190–1), who discusses other criticisms, e.g. the ‘superfluous’ wealth of information provided in Euripides’ prologues (see Chapter 1). The different prologue technique is also discussed with respect to Sophocles’ and Euripides’ *Philoctetes*. The former has a dialogical exposition, the latter appears to have been monological (schol. S. *Ph.* 1 = E. *Ph.* T 1 Müller).

χρῶνται δὲ τῷ τοιοῦτῳ σχηματισμῷ οἱ ποιηταὶ ὅτε διηγηματικὸν ποιοῦσι τὸν λόγον. (schol. Triclin. A. *Th.* 78–150b, p. 49.5–6 Smith)

Poets use this <metric> form when they make their account narrative.

The general observation and the parallels from other tragedies show that Triclinius systematically studied narrative elements in choral odes. He may have had predecessors among ancient scholars.

More generally, ancient scholars do not refrain from using terms which are generically determined in a loose sense. For example, an ancient discussion on where Euripides should have begun the plot of *Phoenician Women* comprises the argument:

εἰ μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐβούλετο τὰ πράγματα λέγεσθαι, ἐχρῆν τὴν ἐκ Φοινίκης ἀποικίαν τοῦ Κάδμου κατὰ λεπτόν μετὰ τῆς αἰτίας διηγῆσασθαι. (schol. E. *Ph.* 4, p. 247.4–6 Schwartz)

If he [sc. Euripides] had wanted to tell the events from the beginning, he ought to have narrated in detail Cadmus' colonisation from Phoenicia together with its cause.

Although διηγεῖσθαι ('to narrate') is strictly speaking inappropriate to the activity of a dramatic poet, few will take exception to the expression as used in the present note.

OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS

The extant scholia also contain traces of other classifications of literature. A first classification differentiates four types of narrative. The main criterion is whether the source of the 'message' is the speaker himself, the addressee or a third person. (The long note is occasioned by Achilles' speech in *Iliad* I, in which he reminds Thetis of how she used to tell them about her rescue of Zeus.)

τέσσαρες δὲ διηγήσεων ἰδέαι· ἡ μὲν ὀμιλητικὴ, ὡς ὅταν παρά τινος ἀκούσας τις αὐτῷ διηγῆται ἃ ἤκουσεν, ὡς τὸ “πολλάκι γὰρ σέο πατρός” [*Il.* I.396]. τὸ δὲ ἀπαγγελτικόν, ὅταν ἅ παρ' ἐτέρου ἤκουσεν ἐτέρῳ διηγῆται, ὡς τὸ “ἀγγελίην τινὰ τοι, γαίηοχε” [15.174]. τὸ δὲ ὑποστατικόν, ὅταν τῶν πραγμάτων τινὰ ἀπαγγεῖλαι ὑποθέμενοι διηγώμεθα, ὡς τὸ “ὡς ὀπότ' Ἥλειοισι καὶ ἡμῖν νεῖκος ἐτύχθη” [11.671]. τὸ δὲ μικτόν ἐξ ὀμιλητικοῦ καὶ ὑποστατικοῦ, ὡς τὸ “ἀλλὰ σὺ τὸν γ' ἐλθοῦσα, θεά, ὑπελύσαο δεσμῶν” [1.401]· εἰ γὰρ ἦν ὀμιλητικόν, οὕτως ἂν εἶπεν· ἀλλὰ σὲ τῶν δεσμῶν αὐτὸν ἀπολυῖσαι καλέσασαν τὸν ἐκατόγχειρον. ὁ δὲ ἐφ' ἐτέραν πτώσιν μετελθὼν ὡς ἴδιον ἤδη λόγον καὶ οὐχ ὡς παρ' ἐκείνης ἀκούσας διέξεισιν. (schol. AbT *Il.* I.366b ex.)

<There are> four types of narrative: [i] the homiletic <type>, when one has heard something from somebody and narrates to him what one has heard, e.g. [Achilles speaking to Thetis:] ‘For often I heard you <saying> at my father’s . . .’; [ii] the messenger <type>, when one reports to someone what one has heard from another, e.g. [Iris speaking:] ‘Some message, earthshaking <Poseidon, I have> for you . . .’; [iii] the substantive <type>, when we undertake to report some events and narrate, e.g. [Nestor speaking to Patroclus:] ‘When there was a quarrel between the Eleans and us . . .’;⁶⁰ [iv] the mixed, <consisting> of the homiletic and the substantive, e.g. [Achilles to Thetis:] ‘But you, goddess, came and freed him [sc. Zeus] of his shackles.’ For if it were (purely) homiletic, he would have said: ‘But <I heard you saying> that you, having summoned the hundred-hander [sc. Briareus], freed him of his shackles.’ But going over to another case [i.e. nominative, thus giving up indirect speech in favour of direct presentation] he goes through it as if it were already his own story and not as if he had heard it from her.

In other words, in the homiletic type (i) the speaker conveys a ‘message’ he has heard from the addressee himself. In the messenger type (ii) he conveys a message he has heard from a third person. In the substantive type (iii) the speaker conveys his own ‘message’.⁶¹ At the same time, the three terms seem to indicate that the speaker has a different intention in each case. By means of the homiletic type he intends to remind the addressee. In the messenger type he acts as a neutral mouthpiece of another’s message.⁶² In the substantive type the speaker himself is the source of the message, the purpose of which seems to be to encourage the addressee. This classification does not seem to be attested elsewhere.

A second classification is very similar to the modern distinction between narratives in the first, second or third person, and must be reconstructed on the basis of several sources. No single text survives which gives a straightforward description of the three different narrative modes. Rather, ancient scholars identify two of the three modes and discuss their differences, in particular the transition from one to the other:

ἀπὸ τοῦ πρὸς αὐτὸν λόγου εἰς τὸν περὶ αὐτοῦ μετέσθη. (schol. Pi. N. 7.106a)⁶³

⁶⁰ The third type is well explained by Eustathius (ὅταν τις οἰκοθεν ἀφηγηταί τι παρ’ ἑαυτοῦ ἢ παρ’ ἑτέρου προχθῆν, 122.19 = 1.189.3–4), who goes on to claim that Nestor is wont to use it.

⁶¹ This is made explicit in the final part of the scholion, which specifically describes the difference between the substantive type (ὡς ἴδιον λόγον) and the homiletic (ὡς παρ’ ἑκείνης ἀκούσας).

⁶² Cf. the ancient discussion on messenger speeches (see Chapter 16), which includes the question whether or not a messenger such as Iris is entitled to add points that are not part of the original message.

⁶³ Cf. schol. A Il. 16.584 *Ariston*. (transition from third-person narrative to second-person narrative), A Il. 16.586 *Ariston*. (from second- to third-person narrative), A Il. 16.697a’ *Ariston*. (criticising Zenodotus for not having recognised the transition from third- to second-person narrative), AbT Il. 16.789b *Ariston*. (from third- to second-person narrative), AbT Il. 17.705 *Ariston*. (ditto), A Il. 17.681b *Ariston*. (from second- to third-person narrative). The sheer frequency of the notes shows

He [sc. Pindar] went over from the narrative addressed to him [sc. the victor] to the one about him.

In other words, Pindar makes a transition from second-person narrative ('to him') to third-person narrative ('about him').⁶⁴ Terminologically and conceptually the scholion is indebted to Aristotle's communication model (*Rh.* 1358a37–b2). He distinguishes between speaker (ὁ λέγων), addressee (πρὸς ὃν λέγει) and subject-matter (περὶ οὗ λέγει). Perhaps even more instructive is the formulation of the note which introduces *Pythian* II:

προοιμιάζεται δὲ κατὰ τὸν προσαγορευτικὸν λόγον καὶ οὐχὶ κατὰ τὸν διηγηματικόν· πρὸς γὰρ αὐτὰς ἀποτείνεται, οὐχὶ δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν λέγει. (schol. *Pi. P.* II.inscr. b)

He [sc. Pindar] gives a proem in the 'apostrophic' mode and not in the narrative <mode>. For he addresses them [sc. Semele and Ino, the daughters of Cadmus] and does not speak about them.

Here again a distinction is being made between second- and third-person narratives. The former addresses the characters, the latter speaks about them. Interestingly, this scholar makes use of what seems to be established terminology. Second-person narrative is called προσαγορευτικός λόγος (lit. 'apostrophic/addressing speech'), third-person narrative is called διηγηματικός (λόγος). The former reminds one of the ancient term for 'vocative case', προσαγορευτική πτώσις.⁶⁵ The latter term, διηγηματικός, is of course the same that designates '(pure) narrative' in the models discussed above. Its restriction here to the meaning 'third-person narrative' most probably derives from the fact that third-person narrative is by far the most frequent type in Greek (and other Western)

that Aristarchus systematically studied the phenomenon. Cf. also schol. *Pi. P.* II.25c (transition to third-person narrative), *I.* 5.18a (from third- to second-person narrative), *E. Or.* 333 (p. 133.10–11 Schwartz: from third- to second-person narrative).

⁶⁴ In a more general sense, such transitions ἀπὸ προσώπου εἰς πρόσωπον ('from one person to another', in the grammatical sense) are called ἀποστροφή, see schol. *bT Il.* 4.127a ex. (cf. the *Ascholia* listed in the previous n.) and Excursus below. This rubric includes cases where the Homeric narrator apostrophises one of his characters (L. Friedländer 1853: 16, with examples). For this topic see esp. schol. *bT Il.* 20.2a ex., which lists the relevant characters.

⁶⁵ Cf. also Theon's distinction of the various illocutionary forces, statement, question, command, wish, etc., which are comprised in the προσαγορευτική προφορά (Theon *progymn.* II 87.13–91.10 Spengel, esp. 89.21–3). In a common school exercise students were to decline a sentence such as 'Pittacus of Mitylene, having been asked if anyone escapes notice of the gods when doing wrong, said "Not even when thinking of it"' in the five cases, the one in the vocative being a form of second-person narrative (Nicolaus *progymn.* p. 18 Felten, cf. Theon *progymn.* II 101.27–103.2 Spengel).

literature and can therefore count as the default type of narrative.⁶⁶ Furthermore, a confusion is excluded because the transition described in the two scholia above can only occur from second- to third-person narrative or *vice versa*. Conversely, first-person narrative cannot go over into either second- or third-person narrative (unless, of course, the first-person narrator addresses or speaks of another character).

The distinction between first- and third-person narratives may underlie a scholion to Ps.Lucian, which, however, poses problems of interpretation:

ποτέ μὲν ὡς ἀπὸ πρώτου προσώπου δραματικῶς, ποτέ δὲ ὡς ἀπὸ τρίτου ἀφηγηματικῶς, ὅπερ πολὺ παρὰ Πλάτωνι τῷ φιλοσόφῳ ἔστιν εὐρεῖν. (schol. Luc. 58.2)⁶⁷

Now as if [?] from the first person in the dramatic mode, now as if [?] from the third <person> in the narrative mode, as it is often found in the philosopher Plato.

The pair ‘dramatic’ (δραματικῶς) vs. ‘narrative’ (ἀφηγηματικῶς) is familiar from the transitions discussed above, but their connection with ‘first person’ and ‘third person’ respectively is unparalleled. Does the latter distinction relate to one between first-person narrative and third-person narrative?

The Ps.Lucianic text in question, the *Encomium Demosthenis*, presents a first-person narrator who reports his encounter with the poet Thersagoras. (The opening and its narrative situation resemble that of Plato’s *Republic* and other dialogues, and may in fact be a deliberate allusion.) Against this backdrop, one could hypothesise that the scholion simply means to say that ‘there is an alternation between “what I said” and “what he said” as often in Plato’ (examples would be *Republic*, *Charmides* or *Lysis*). But why is ‘what I said’ ‘dramatic’ (δραματικῶς) and ‘what he said’ ‘narrative’ (ἀφηγηματικῶς)?

Given what we know about these two terms, another possibility must be considered as well, namely that the ancient commentator makes a distinction between texts with framing narrative and texts without (cf. above on Theocritus). In that connection, it is worth remembering that there is evidence for an ancient distinction between ‘dramatic’ and ‘narrative’

⁶⁶ Ancient Greek texts which present a first-person narrator are rare, especially if one excludes embedded narratives, where first-person narrative is somewhat more frequent (e.g. Odysseus in *Odyssey* 9–12), see de Jong and Nünlist (2004: 546–7 with n. 2).

⁶⁷ The scholion may refer to ᾗ δ’ ὅς in 58.1 (thus Rabe in the *app. crit.* with reference to a codex from Wolfenbüttel). In any case, the scholion seems to comment on Ps.Lucian’s *Encomium Demosthenis* as a whole.

dialogues of Plato.⁶⁸ The former group will have included purely ‘dramatic’ dialogues without a framing narrative (e.g. *Euthyphro*, *Crito* or *Phaedrus*), the latter those which do contain such a frame (e.g. *Republic*, *Charmides* or *Parmenides*). The problem with this explanation is that the second group of Platonic dialogues and, in fact, Ps.Lucian’s own *Encomium Demosthenis* present a *first*-person narrator in the framing narrative. However, there may be a way out of this impasse.

The wider context in which Plato introduces the tripartition ‘narrative-dramatic-mixed’ (*R.* 393d–394d) expresses his objections to what ensues from direct speech (μίμησις). It forces the poet to slip into the role of the character whom he impersonates or ‘mimes’, to which Plato takes exception. At the beginning of *Iliad* 1, for example, Homer speaks as if he were the priest Chryses. And when he refers to himself, he obviously does so in the first person (‘me, Chryses’). Conversely, in Plato’s ‘purely narrative’ rewriting of the same passage, Chryses and the other characters are always referred to in the third person. Read against this background, it seems likely that ὡς ἀπὸ πρώτου προσώπου (‘as if from the first person’) and ὡς ἀπὸ τρίτου (προσώπου) (‘as if from the third person’) refer to this distinction. Consequently, the two forms are described as δραματικῶς (‘dramatically’, i.e. in direct speech) and ἀφηγηματικῶς (‘(purely) narrative’), because in speeches characters speak ‘as if from the first person’, whereas narrative texts are written ‘as if from the third person’ (cf. n. 66 on the scarcity of first-person narratives in ancient Greek literature).

Although this is a probable explanation of the scholion as such and would testify to an ancient distinction which in a way adumbrates the distinction between first- and third-person narrative, two problems remain. Firstly, the application of the concept to Ps.Lucian’s *Encomium Demosthenis* is problematic, because, to repeat, its framing narrative has a first-person narrator. Secondly, it is difficult to see how the scholion’s point that this occurs frequently in Plato can be justified. For in Plato, too, the narrators of the framing narratives are first-person narrators. If the scholion itself is

⁶⁸ The relevant witness is Diogenes Laertius (3.50), who, however, does not further discuss the model, because he dismisses it as unphilosophical. οὐ λανθάνει δ’ ἡμῶς ὅτι τινὲς ἄλλως διαφέρειν τοὺς διαλόγους φασί – λέγουσι γὰρ αὐτῶν τοὺς μὲν δραματικούς, τοὺς δὲ διηγηματικούς, τοὺς δὲ μεικτούς – ἀλλ’ ἐκεῖνοι μὲν τραγικῶς μᾶλλον ἢ φιλοσόφως τὴν διαφορὰν τῶν διαλόγων προσωνόμασαν (‘I am not unaware that there are other ways in which certain critics classify the dialogues. For they call some of them dramatic, others narrative, still others mixed. But they designated the difference between the dialogues in a way that is more tragic than philosophical’). The tripartition is of course Plato’s own, but the problem is that there are no ‘(purely) narrative’ Platonic dialogues, there are only ‘dramatic’ and ‘mixed’ (cf. the ‘Aristotelian’ bipartition διηγηματικοί–δραματικοί in Plut. *quaest. conv.* 711b–c). This points to a general problem with Plato’s model: it is difficult to find actual examples of the purely narrative type in Greek literature (cf. n. 13).

accurately explained above, one must accept the fact that its application to Ps.Lucian and, indirectly, to Plato is less than fortunate.⁶⁹

A third classification of literature (schol. bT *Il.* 14.342–51 *ex.*) distinguishes between three degrees of representation of reality and is explained in detail by M. Schmidt (1976: 61–3) and Meijering (1987: 67–72).

EXCURSUS: THE VARIOUS APPLICATIONS OF THE
TERM ἈΠΟΣΤΡΟΦΗ ('APOSTROPHE')

Since the present chapter comprises several applications of the term ἈΠΟΣΤΡΟΦΗ ('apostrophe'), it is appropriate to discuss here the range of its meanings. Etymologically speaking, *apostrophe* means that one 'turns away' from one person or thing to another. Consequently, the range of possible applications is considerably wider than that of its modern counterpart. Virtually every form of 'transition' can be designated thus. Ps.Plutarch (*Hom.* 57) differentiates five types: (i) transition from one (grammatical) person to another (cf. above); (ii) the 'apostrophe proper' (i.e. the narrator/speaker apostrophises a character/person; Ps.Plutarch makes it clear that, in antiquity too, this is the most common meaning of the term); (iii) transition from narrator-text to speech (cf. above); (iv) change of addressee within the same speech (cf. e.g. schol. S. *OC* 1354); (v) the narrator addresses the narratee (e.g. in *Il.* 5.85, see bT). Other sources such as schol. bT *Il.* 4.127a *ex.* add to the list: (vi) transition from participle to finite verb; (vii) transition from one location to another. According to Quintilian (9.2.39), even a (viii) thematic transition can be called *apostrophe*. The bottom line is that every instance of ἈΠΟΣΤΡΟΦΗ (and cognates) must be judged on its merits in order to attribute it to one of the many possible categories.

⁶⁹ As to the application to Plato, David Konstan (p.c.) suggests that the critic may have had in mind the fairly extensive passages where Platonic narrators speak about Socrates in the third person, incl. indirect speech (e.g. *Smp.* 174a3–223d12, *Phd.* 58e1–118a14). If this is correct, the critic overlooks the fact that these passages are embedded in first-person narratives. The distinction between first-person and third-person narrative also plays a role in a passage from Plutarch (*glor. Aithen.* 345e–f). He praises Xenophon for introducing the narrator Themistogenes into the *Hellenica* (sc. 3.1.2) and for referring to himself in the third person. (NB Thucydides and Caesar both use the first person when they refer to themselves as *narrators* of the text.) See also the distinction between Aristotle's esoteric works (called αὐτοπρόσωπα, 'in his own person') on the one hand and on the other the διαλογικά δὲ ὅσα μὴ ἐξ οἰκείου προσώπου συνέγραφεν, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ὁ Πλάτων ὑποκρινόμενος ἑτέρων πρόσωπα ('dialogic <works>, as many as he did not write in his own person, but, just as Plato, presented other characters'): Philoponus, in *Cat. pr.*, *CIAG* XIII 1, p. 4.11–14; see Haslam 1972: 21. However, Philoponus' point is whether Aristotle himself 'appears' in his texts or not (as Plato). Therefore, the διαλογικά may nevertheless have a first-person narrator, just as, for example, Socrates in Plato's *Republic*.

CONCLUSION

The Platonic classification that distinguishes between texts that are purely narrative, purely dramatic or mixed pervades ancient literary criticism. It occurs with considerable frequency and a fairly high degree of terminological and conceptual variety. In addition to classifying entire texts (with the 'purely narrative' posing problems of appropriate exemplification), the model also serves to identify individual passages, for example, narrator-text (e.g. διηγηματικόν) and speech (e.g. μιμητικόν) in texts of a 'mixed' character, or narrative sections in essentially non-narrative genres such as tragedy. A particular application of the underlying model is the singling-out of unmarked transitions from narrator-text to speech (ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν), which can even be applied to instances of speech within speech.

Further classifications of literature include the apparently unparalleled distinction between 'homiletic narrative', 'messenger report' and 'substantive narrative', which seems to depend on whether the source of the narrative is the addressee, a third party or the speaker himself. Considerably closer to a modern outlook are the notes which reflect the distinction between narratives in the first, second or third person. As often, the scholia do not preserve a theoretical discussion of the model, but the extant notes (esp. on transitions from third-person to second-person narrative and *vice versa*) clearly reflect a corresponding model. The scholion on Ps. Lucian may even reflect a distinction between first-person and third-person narrators.

Focalisation

Questions of focalisation (or point of view) are of considerable importance in ancient literary criticism, and various aspects are discussed in the scholia.¹ The best-known is probably the interpretative principle that is often referred to by the expression λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου (lit. ‘solution from the character’).² Its point is that if one takes into account in each case who the speaker is, contradictions in a text can often be proven to be apparent only because the speakers are not identical. As Porphyry puts it:

οὐδὲν δὲ θαυμαστὸν εἰ παρὰ τῷ ποιητῇ ἐναντία λέγεται ὑπὸ διαφόρων φωνῶν. ὅσα μὲν γὰρ ἔφη αὐτὸς ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ ἐξ ἰδίου προσώπου, ταῦτα δεῖ ἀκόλουθα εἶναι καὶ μὴ ἐναντία ἀλλήλοις· ὅσα δὲ προσώποις περιτίθησιν, οὐκ αὐτοῦ εἰσιν ἀλλὰ τῶν λεγόντων νοεῖται, ὅθεν καὶ ἐπιδέχεται πολλακίς διαφωνίαν, ὡσπερ καὶ ἐν τούτοις. (Porph. on *Il.* 6.265, I 100.4–9 Schrader)³

No wonder when in Homer different things are said by different voices. Whatever is said by the poet *in propria persona* should be consistent and not contradictory. All the words/ideas he attributes to the characters are not his, but are understood as being said by the speakers. This often leads to an (apparent) contradiction, as in the present case.

From this it follows that exception should not be taken to such contradictions (in the present case: the different views of Hecuba and Hector as

¹ The main argument of this chapter is based on my article on the subject (Nünlist 2003), but it includes more material, especially from scholia to authors other than Homer.

² The expression seems to originate with Porphyry, but the principle is at least as old as Aristotle (e.g. fr. 146 Rose); see M. Schmidt (1976: 24 n. 48, with bibl.), who corrects Dachs (1913), the standard monograph on the topic. On the principle see also Roemer (1911a: 176–7; 1924: 253–6), Schenkeveld (1970: 164), O’Hara (1990: 123–7) and Porter (1992: 78–9), who mistakenly speaks of λύσις ἐκ τοῦ ποιητοῦ.

³ The λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου is explicitly referred to in Porphyry’s notes on *Il.* 1.42 (I 4.3–4 Schrader), 3.122 (I 55.3–6), 4.2 (I 67.36–68.6), 6.116 (I 91.4–6), 6.488 (I 104.19–22), 9.497 (I 140.24–28), 12.25 (I 175.1–3), 14.434 (II 199.5–10), 23.71 (II 260.21–261.10), 24.527 (II 276.17–24), also 19.108 (schol. A *Il.* 19.108b *Porph.*), and on *Od.* 1.33 (p. 23 Ludwich), 3.147 (34.1–4 Schrader), 6.244 (63.4–6), 8.63 (72.10–13), 9.5 (81.1–3), 9.106 (88.24–89.12; also on 9.411), 11.239 (104.13–14), 11.489 (107.15–17), 22.412 (128.10–12).

to whether or not wine has a strengthening effect). The transmitted text is sound, and the usual ‘remedies’ of athetesis or conjecture are uncalled for.⁴

On occasion, a ‘Porphyrean’ interpretation that refers to the λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου is refuted because, the critic argues, there is in fact no disagreement between what character and poet have to say on this issue.⁵

Porphyry’s exact formulation is remarkable because he does not differentiate between any two speakers, but between the poet on the one hand and the characters on the other.⁶ He shows awareness of a categorical difference between narrator-text and speech that essentially goes back to Plato (see [Chapter 3](#)) and applies it to the question of focalisation: a character’s words, views and opinions are not *a priori* identical with the narrator’s.⁷

A comparable awareness of the different focalisations can be found with Aristarchus, who recognised that Homer and his characters do not always designate the same things by the same expression. This applies, for example, to the city of Corinth:

ἡ διπλῆ δέ, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου προσώπου “Κόρινθον”. ὅταν δὲ ἠρωϊκῶς προσώπων περιτιθῆ τὸν λόγον, “Ἐφυραν” λέγει· “ἔστι πόλις Ἐφύρη” [6.152]. (schol. A *Il.* 2.570a¹ *Ariston.*)⁸

The dipole, because *in propria persona* <the poet says> ‘Corinth’, but whenever he has a character speak, he says ‘Ephyra’: <e.g.> ‘there is a city, Ephyre’ [6.152, the speaker is Glaucus].

Likewise, it was probably Aristarchus too who made the observation that geographical epithets that refer to a divinity’s cult location (e.g. Dodonaean Zeus, Idaean Zeus, Paphian Aphrodite, etc.) are rare and only used by characters, not by the poet himself:

⁴ Paradoxically, it is sometimes the agreement between narrator and character that bothers critics; see esp. schol. A *Il.* 17.187 *ex.* (sim. A *Il.* 17.125a *Ariston.*) with the response by schol. A *Il.* 17.205–6a *ex.* (the background of the question is Hector’s claim to have stripped Patroclus’ body).

⁵ See schol. bT *Il.* 18.125b *ex.* (against A *Il.* 18.125a *Porph.*(?)), on the question why Achilles is said to have been absent from the battlefield ‘for a long time’ (δῆρόν), when a careful calculation shows it to be three days only (see [Chapter 2](#)).

⁶ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 17.588a *Ariston.*, which deals with the classic example, the disputed prowess of Menelaus. Needless to say, the λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου is also applied to apparent contradictions when only characters are involved: schol. A *Il.* 6.265 *Ariston.*, commenting on the same passage as Porphyry (quoted at the beginning of the chapter).

⁷ The advantage of this principle cannot be overestimated, because it is often neglected (see [Excursus](#) below). For Porphyry’s general position see also schol. Luc. 21.41, which finds fault with the view that the opinions expressed by characters in a play are identical with the poet’s.

⁸ The same point is made in schol. A *Il.* 6.152b *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 6.210 *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 13.301b *Ariston.* and T 13.664b *ex. Ariston.*; also Vell. Pat. 1.3.3; see Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 228), Schironi (2004: 233 with n. 3).

καὶ γὰρ εἴ ποτε σπανίως ἐπίθετα ἐξενήνοχε ἀπὸ τόπου, (οὐδέποτε ἐξ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ') ἐξ ἡρωϊκοῦ προσώπου κατὰ τὸ εἶκος αὐτὰ λέγει. (schol. D *Il.* 5.422, the text in <> in *EM*, see n.)⁹

For if he [sc. Homer], on one of the rare occasions, produces epithets from the location [sc. of the divinity's cult], he never mentions them in his own voice, but, as can be expected, in the voice of a character.

Aristarchus also noticed that, similar to the case of Corinth and Ephyra, sunrise and sunset are referred to in different ways by characters and narrator.

ὅτι αὐτὸς μὲν ἐξ Ὀκεανοῦ ἀνατέλλειν καὶ εἰς Ὀκεανὸν φησι καταδύεσθαι τὸν ἥλιον. ὁπόταν δὲ πρόσωπον ἡρωϊκὸν εἰσάγη, ὑπὲρ γῆς καὶ ὑπὸ γῆν. τὸ αὐτὸ δὲ ποιεῖ καὶ ἐν Ὀδυσσεΐα. (schol. A *Il.* 7.422 *Ariston.*)¹⁰

<The diple,> because he [sc. Homer] himself says that the sun rises from Okeanos and sets into Okeanos. But whenever he introduces a character, <he says that the sun rises> above the earth and <sets> under the earth. He does the same in the *Odyssey* too.

All three observations must be read against the background that Aristarchus tends to draw a dividing line between Homer's world and that of his heroes. He is concerned about anachronisms and therefore keeps track of phenomena that are known to the poet but not his characters and *vice versa*.¹¹ He presumably thought that it would be anachronistic for a Homeric character to call the city on the isthmus 'Corinth' because

⁹ Cf. *EM* 546.17 = Aristarchus fr. 53 Schironi; the point can probably be traced back to the treatise Περὶ Θεῶν by Aristarchus' pupil Apollodorus (FGH 244 F 353; see van Thiel on the D-scholion and Schironi 2004: 411).

¹⁰ The same point is made in schol. A *Il.* 8.485a *Ariston.*, AT *Il.* 11.735b *Ariston.*, MQR *Od.* 3.335, Q *Od.* 12.3; see Bachmann (1902: 19), but his claim that the scholia do not comment on the single exception (*Od.* 22.197) overlooks schol. T *Il.* 19.1a ex.: καὶ ἐξ ἡρωϊκοῦ προσώπου φησὶν "οὐδὲ σέ γ' ἠριγένεια παρ' Ὀκεανοῦ ῥοάων" (*Od.* 22.197), 'He (sc. Homer) also says "and early Dawn <rising> from the streams of Okeanos <will not go unnoticed by> you" when speaking through a character'. The sunrise/sunset topic is also discussed by Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 173–4), M. Schmidt (1976: 122–4).

¹¹ E.g. the use of the trumpet is known to him only (schol. A *Il.* 18.219a *Ariston.*, AGeT *Il.* 21.388a *Ariston.*, also schol. A. *Eum.* 566–569, E. *Ph.* 1377). On such distinctions between the respective *Weltbild* of Homer and his characters see M. Schmidt (1976: *passim*, on the trumpet 250–1), who also demonstrates that the evidence requires careful analysis in each case: in schol. A *Il.* 13.736b *Ariston.* (on the use of στέφανος), e.g., the distinction is not between Homer and his characters, but between Homeric and later habits (M. Schmidt 1976: 215–16, against virtually all previous interpretations). The notion that characters of the heroic age 'anachronistically' make use of things or concepts that belong to the poet's age recurs in schol. Pi. *P.* 4.341b, 342 (anchors), A. *Th.* 277a (the term τρόπαια), E. *Hec.* 254 (aimed at contemporary demagogues), 573 (*phyllobolia*), *Med.* 233 (notion of marriage).

it did not bear this name at the dramatic time of the *Iliad*.¹² And the same applies *mutatis mutandis* to cult locations. But the example of sunrise and sunset shows that the whole issue goes deeper. The opposition of ‘into Okeanos’ and ‘under the earth’ also reflects a significant difference in how the world in general is perceived – which is the very point of studying differing focalisations.

It should be obvious that it is generally worth paying attention to the question ‘Who says it?’, even if no immediate contradiction occurs in the text. Thus the scholia make the commonsensical observation that a negative characterisation need not be accurate when it comes from an enemy (schol. T *Il.* 17.26 *ex.*). It is therefore all the more significant when it is an enemy who expresses praise. His description must be accurate, because he would have every reason to be less positive.¹³ At the same time, the narrator can avoid appearing biased when he makes it the task of his characters to express praise or rebuke.¹⁴ This point is worth emphasising, because it shows that ancient scholars seem to have recognised Homer’s reluctance to express judgments in his own voice.¹⁵

A further distinction between narrator and character appears in that the narrator is expected to give an ‘objectively’ accurate account, whereas the character is entitled to give a subjectively distorted version.¹⁶ Such a

¹² Cf. the similar discussion in schol. A.R. 4.552–56a: some critics found fault with Apollonius calling Italy ‘Ausonia’ because it got this name only after the generation of the Argonauts. This critic defends Apollonius with the argument that, in the narrator-text, he is free to use names that are appropriate to *his* time. On the question of anachronistic place names see also schol. Pi. *N.* 7.56a (on Molossia), E. *Ph.* 6 (the name Φοινίκη did not yet exist).

¹³ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 12.167a *ex.* (Asius on the Greek defenders of the gate), bT *Il.* 17.164b *ex.* (Glaucus on Achilles), AbT *Il.* 20.89–92 *ex.* (Aeneas on Achilles). All three notes are generalising and argue that the speaker, as an enemy who expresses praise, is ὀξίπιστος (‘trustworthy’, on which see also Chapter 8).

¹⁴ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 17.198–208 *ex.* (Zeus allegedly rebuking Hector); for the notion that a poet can avoid criticism by having the characters express the crucial point see also schol. bT *Il.* 4.13 *ex.* (Homer has Zeus declare Menelaus the victor of the duel with Paris), T *Il.* 20.234d *ex.* (at the end; Homer has Aeneas recount the story of Ganymedes). One is reminded of Aristotle’s advice to have others express criticism (*Rh.* 1418b25–33, with examples, incl. Archilochus fr. 19 and 122 West). Such notes indirectly clash with the ones that do not sufficiently differentiate between the various voices in a text (see Excursus below).

¹⁵ Cf. also schol. A *Il.* 10.240 *Ariston.* (in the relevant passage the narrator discloses Agamemnon’s real intention: fear for his brother), the point of which is presumably that the Homeric narrator rarely adds comments ‘from outside in his own voice’ (ἐξωθεν ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου προσώπου, for this use of ἐξωθεν ‘outside [sc. of the speech]’ cf. schol. A *Il.* 10.332a *Ariston.*). But scholars note exceptions (Bachmann 1902: 23): schol. bT *Il.* 12.113 *ex.* (on a νήπιος passage, quoted in Chapter 1), A *Il.* 16.46e *Ariston.* (the narrator comments that Patroclus is entreating his own death). In all three cases the verb is ἀναφωρῶναι, which here means ‘to make a narratorial comment’ (see also Excursus in Chapter 1).

¹⁶ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 11.388b *ex.*, on the differences between the narrator’s and Diomedes’ version of the impact that Paris’ arrow had on Diomedes. The narrator’s is accurate, whereas Diomedes downplays

difference may depend on the narrator's privilege of being omniscient, which does not apply to his characters, as Aristarchus and others knew well.¹⁷ In fact, the scholia repeatedly address or imply the question 'How does character X know?', mostly in cases where a character's knowledge seems to lack proper motivation (see below).

Despite the fact that human characters are not omniscient, the Homeric narrator has a certain tendency to have *them* narrate 'traditional stories', that is, stories that are not immediately related to the primary story about the Trojan war (Porph. on *Il.* 6.129, I 92.18–19 Schrader).¹⁸

Ancient scholars also recognised that narrator-text and speech differ in terms of style. Several literary devices were considered typical of the narrator, but not the characters. One is the use of ornamental and generic epithets. (In his altercation with Achilles, the river god Scamander refers to his own 'lovely waters', ἔρατεινὰ ῥέεθρα, *Il.* 21.218, although they are stained with blood and full of corpses.)

ἔρατεινὰ ῥέεθρα<:> ὁ Σιδωνιὸς φησιν ὅτ[ι] ὁ πο[ι]ητῆς ἐξέ[πε]σεν εἰς τὴν διηγη[μ]ατικὴν κατασκευ[ῆ]ν μιμητικῶν ὄντων τῶν λόγων. (schol. par. *Il.* 21.218, p. 98 Erbse)

'lovely waters': the Sidonian [i.e. Dionysius of Sidon] says that the poet fell into the style of the narrator, although the words are part of a speech.

The papyrus commentary (P. Oxy. 222, II AD) preserves the invaluable information that Dionysius of Sidon (second half of the second century BC) considered – to use Parry's terminology – generic epithets one of the hallmarks of the narrator's style.¹⁹ As often, the occasion for his comment is a passage which seems to contradict the general principle (see *Introd.* page 11). The same applies to similar notes that cannot be attributed to a specific scholar, but are compatible with Dionysius' position.²⁰ (In *Iliad* 6,

the impact for reasons that are all too obvious. 'Subjective distortion' can also occur in dramatic texts, although there is no narrator-text to compare it with. Thus the chorus in Sophocles' *Ajax*, being compatriots of the title character, speak of his 'anger' (χόλος) and not his 'madness' (μανία, schol. *S. Aj.* 744a).

¹⁷ See schol. A *Il.* 19.114 *Ariston*; the point of Aristarchus' complaint (Agamemnon should say 'Hera left starry heaven' instead of 'the peak of Olympus') is that the restricted knowledge of a human character does not allow him to know where exactly the god is coming from (M. Schmidt 1976: 82 n. 36); see also schol. BPQSV *Od.* 2.262 (on the difference between Telemachus invoking an unnamed god and the narrator calling her Athena, an anticipation of 'Jørgensen's Law', on which see Nünlist and de Jong 2000: s.v.).

¹⁸ Modern scholars have made the similar observation that external analepsis tends to be the task of characters (Nünlist and de Jong 2000: s.v. *Analepse*).

¹⁹ On epithets see [Chapter 15](#).

²⁰ The attempt by Roemer (1912: 339–47) to vindicate these scholia for Aristarchus (accepted by Parry 1928 ≈ 1971: 123) is built on sand (see Schironi 2004: 169 with n. 14).

Hector returns to the citadel and asks the servants where Andromache ‘of the white arms’ (λευκώλενος) has gone.)

τοῦ ποιητοῦ τὸ ἐπίθετον, οὐ τοῦ προσώπου. (schol. bT *Il.* 6.377 *ex.*)²¹

The epithet <derives> from the poet, not from the character.

The view that the epithet ‘of the white arms’ represents the narrator’s rather than Hector’s focalisation is shared by a similar note which adduces the Andromache example as a parallel. (In *Iliad* 10, Diomedes volunteers to go on the night expedition to the Trojan camp because, as he says, he is encouraged by his ‘proud spirit’, θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ.)

παρέλκει τὸ ἐπίθετο(ν) [sc. ἀγήνωρ], καὶ ἔστιν Ὀμηρικόν, ὡς τὸ “Ἀνδρομάχη λευκώλενος” [6.377]. (schol. T *Il.* 10.220*b ex.*)

The epithet [sc. ‘proud’] is superfluous, and it is Homeric, like ‘Andromache of the white arms’ [6.377].

The exact wording of the scholion perhaps requires an explanation. At first glance one might be inclined to understand ‘Homeric’ in the sense of ‘typical of Homer’ (sc. as opposed to other poets). However, the fact that the epithet as used by the character Diomedes is considered superfluous and the parallel from Hector’s speech in book 6 disprove such an interpretation. The adjective Ὀμηρικός (‘Homeric’) has here the same meaning as ποιητικός (‘poetic’) in other contexts: the epithet derives from the poet and not the character.²²

The same point about ‘poetic’ epithets is made elsewhere. When Achilles refers to Agamemnon as ‘far-ruling’ (εὐρὺ κρείων, *Il.* 1.355) and Paris to Menelaus as ‘dear to Ares’ (ἀρηϊφίλος, *Il.* 3.69), this is somewhat unexpected, because neither of them has a reason to apply positive epithets to his enemy. Consequently, some scholars argued that the epithets actually derived from the narrator.²³

It is no less remarkable that the scholia also discuss a case that is only apparently parallel to the ones just mentioned. (When Achilles responds to Ajax’ speech in *Iliad* 9, he speaks of Ἔκτορα δῖον, ‘brilliant Hector’.)

²¹ Roemer (1879: xiii) collects examples from ms. B.

²² Cf. schol. T *Il.* 9.651 *ex.* (quoted below). This equation of Ὀμηρικός = ποιητικός curiously inverts the very common notion that ὁ ποιητής designates Homer.

²³ Cf. schol. b *Il.* 1.355 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 3.69 *ex.*; cf. also schol. D *Il.* 8.19, T *Il.* 15.739*b ex.* Taken in isolation, one might be inclined to understand ποιητικός as ‘poetic’ (i.e. as opposed to prose), but the point is that the epithet derives from the narrator. For the notion that ‘foreign’ elements in a speech ultimately derive from the narrator see also schol. bT *Il.* 6.162*b ex.* (with two Odyssean parallels).

οὐχ Ὀμηρικὸν τὸ ἐπίθετον, ἀλλ' ὁ Ἀχιλλεύς πεποιήκεν αὐτὸ λυπῶν τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς, καὶ Ὀδυσσεῖ ἔλεγε: “νῦν δ' ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἔθέλω πολεμίζειν Ἐκτορι δίῳ” [9.356], ἐπαινῶν καὶ μεγαλύνων τὸν πολέμιον. (schol. T *Il.* 9.651 *ex.*)

The epithet is not Homer's, but Achilles used it to vex the Greeks. To Odysseus too he said: ‘but now I am unwilling to fight against brilliant Hector’ [9.356], praising and exalting the enemy.

It seems likely that this critic is responding to an interpretation of the passage similar to the one of the epithets for Agamemnon and Menelaus (see above). He disagrees and argues that ‘brilliant’ for Hector in this case is not a slip into the narrator's mode, but serves an actual purpose in Achilles' mouth, that is, represents *his* focalisation.

Ornamental and generic epithets are not the only features that Aristarchus considered foreign to the narrative style of the speeches. The same applies to explanation (ἐπεξηγήγησις), elaboration (ἐπεξεργασία) and, apparently, short similes. Thus, when during the chariot race in *Iliad* 23 Idomeneus describes one of the competitors as ‘Aetolian by race, who rules over the Argives’ (*Il.* 23.471), Aristarchus doubted the authenticity of the line, ‘because *epexegetis* belongs to the poet, not to the character’.²⁴ Similarly, the final three lines of Diomedes' boasting speech to Paris (*Il.* 11.393–5) are considered an ‘elaboration’ (ἐπεξεργασία), which is thought typical of the narrator.²⁵

Likewise, Aristarchus was struck by a short simile in a speech by Nestor, who recounts that he assaulted the Epeans ‘like a black whirlwind’ (κελαινῆ λίλαπτι ἴσος):

ὅτι ἐκπέπτωκεν εἰς ποιητικὴν κατασκευὴν τὸ παρηγμένον ἠρωϊκὸν πρόσωπον κατὰ τὴν ποίησιν. (schol. A *Il.* 11.747a *Ariston.*)

<The diple,> because the character who is represented in the poem [sc. Nestor] fell into the style of the narrator.

In this case Aristarchus does not go so far as to question the authenticity of the line, but the wording (strikingly similar to that of Dionysius of Sidon, quoted above) makes it clear that, to his mind, such short similes belong to the narrator's style. This further corroborates the point that he had a clear notion of the various differences between narrator-text and speech. Unfortunately, no comment has survived that explains why

²⁴ See schol. A *Il.* 23.471 *Ariston.*; in this particular case Aristarchus hardly does justice to the passage, because it is part of an elaborate climax which describes the charioteer with increasing precision, but purposely withholds his name to the last line (N. J. Richardson 1993a: *ad loc.*).

²⁵ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 11.393–5 *ex.* (see Schenkeveld 1970: 173); on ἐπεξηγήγησις and ἐπεξεργασία in general see Chapter 9.

explanation, elaboration and short similes are foreign to speeches. One may perhaps hypothesise that they all contribute to an *epische Breite* ('epic scope') that was considered inappropriate to speech. The same may also apply to generic and ornamental epithets. Equally important is the concern about the narrator intruding upon the focalisation of his characters, for example when Paris seems to praise Menelaus (see above).²⁶

This last point is taken up in a comment on Achilles' speech (*Il.* 16.7–19) in which he says that Patroclus is weeping 'like a girl' (ἥύτε κούρη). The comparison is then continued in the next line by 'a mere child (νηπίη), who runs by her mother's side and asks her to pick her up etc.':

οὐκ ἠρκέσθη τῷ "κούρη", προσέθηκε δὲ καὶ τὸ "νηπίη", προανελεῖν αὐτοῦ
θέλων τῆ αἰδοῖ τὴν δέησιν. ταῦτα δὲ ἐκ τοῦ ποιητικοῦ προσώπου εἰσί. πολ-
λαχοῦ γὰρ ἐνδύεται τὰ ἥρωϊκὰ πρόσωπα. (schol. bT *Il.* 16.7–8 *ex.*, the second
part only in T)

'Girl' did not suffice him [sc. Achilles rather than Homer], so he added 'a mere child', because he wanted to refute in advance his [sc. Patroclus'] plea by shaming him. These [sc. words?] come from the poet. For he often [lit. in many places] enters his semi-divine characters [i.e. speaks through them].

The fact that ancient scholars often quote only the opening word(s) of a quotation (see *Intro.* page 10) and the plural ταῦτα make it likely that the note refers to more than just the single word νηπίη. It remains, nevertheless, difficult to determine what this critic's concern is: the presence of a comparison in a speech? The expansion of the comparison? The νηπίη clause itself?²⁷ In any case, he argues that the words in question represent the narrator's focalisation, which, he adds, is 'often' the case in the Homeric epics.²⁸

The rather sweeping claim about the frequency makes this a unique note, but the phenomenon of 'paralepsis' (see n. 26) as such is commented on elsewhere. (In his final speech, Patroclus argues that he has been defeated not by Hector, but by the gods Zeus and Apollo. How does he know?)

²⁶ Such intrusions are called 'paralepsis' in modern criticism (Nünlist and de Jong 2000: *s.v.*, with lit.), for examples see below.

²⁷ Notes such as schol. A *Il.* 10.240 *Ariston.* or bT *Il.* 12.113 *ex.* show that ancient critics considered the word νήπιος to be typical of Homer's narratorial comments in his own voice (ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου προσώπου) in what they took to be 'exclamations' (ἀναφωνήσεις); see n. 15 and the Excursus in [Chapter 1](#). They may have been bothered by the presence of such an 'exclamation' in a speech.

²⁸ Interestingly, the critic specifies τὰ ἥρωϊκὰ πρόσωπα ('the semi-divine characters'), which may indicate that Homer does not speak through his divine characters.

ὁ δὲ ᾗδει ὁ ποιητής, τοῦτο τῷ ἥρωϊκῷ προσώπῳ περιέθηκε. (schol. bT *Il.* 16.844–5 *ex.*)²⁹

What the poet knew he had the heroic character [sc. Patroclus] say.

In other words, the narrator extends his omniscience to the character. Unlike the previous note, this one does not address the question of whether *paralepsis* is frequent in Homer. What is more, other notes expressly refute the interpretation as *paralepsis* in that they explain how the character got to know the particular piece of information. (In his speech to Nestor in *Iliad* 14, Agamemnon refers to Hector's threat not to return to the citadel until he has burnt the ships and killed the Greeks. Hector's speech was addressed to the Trojans. How does Agamemnon know? Did the narrator impart his superior knowledge to Agamemnon? According to Aristarchus, the answer is 'no'.)³⁰

ὅτι ταῦτα ἀναφέρεται ἐπ' ἐκεῖνα “ἔλπομαι εὐχόμενος Διὶ” [*Il.* 8.526] . . . ἐξάκουστα δὲ ἐγένετο παρὰ τοῖς πολεμίοις, ὡς καὶ τὰ περὶ Ὀθρυονέα [sc. *Il.* 13.364–7]. (schol. *A Il.* 14.45a *Ariston.*)

<The diple,> because these words refer to that other passage <where Hector said> ‘I hope and pray to Zeus [sc. that we will expel the Greeks].’ <Such things> could be learned from the enemy, just like the story about Othryoneus.

Aristarchus cautions against interpreting the text too rigidly. Just because the text does not explicitly state that Agamemnon learned about Hector's threat, the reader should not assume he did not do so. It may well have happened without leaving an explicit trace in the text.³¹ The argument is backed by the parallel from *Iliad* 13, where Idomeneus appears to be well informed about Othryoneus' ambition to become Cassandra's husband, a story element which the Homeric text does not mention elsewhere.

²⁹ For the notion that the narrator does not consistently maintain the character's focalisation see also schol. Pi. *P.* 4.67b: μετέπεσεν ἐπὶ τὸ ποιητικὸν πρόσωπον, καὶ οὐκέτι τὸ τῆς Μηδείας ἐφύλαξε διαπαντός ('He [sc. Pindar] fell into the narrator's person and no longer preserved Medea's throughout'). The critic apparently assumes that 'I hear etc.' (πεύθουμαι . . . , *P.* 4.38) is no longer part of Medea's speech. On the problem of identifying speeches in Pindar see [Chapter 3](#).

³⁰ Roemer (1912: 211–16; 1924: 233–5) goes to great pains to show that the question 'How does the character know?' was of no concern to Aristarchus, who simply attributed such passages to 'poetic licence' (on which see [Chapter 7](#)). Instead, he blames Aristonicus for distorting Aristarchus' views, but this is mere speculation (see in general *Introd.* page 4 with n. 14).

³¹ Elsewhere (e.g. schol. *A Il.* 9.709a *Ariston.*) this is called κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον, (lit.) 'silently' (on which see [Chapter 6](#)), most interestingly in schol. HVind. 133 *Od.* 17.501, which refutes Aristarchus' athetesis of *Od.* 17.501–4 with his own argument (discussed in [Chapter 6](#)).

A similar point is repeatedly made with respect to the fact that Homeric characters generally know each other by name, even if no previous encounter is explicitly mentioned. In their discussion of the phenomenon, some critics simply draw attention to the fact that a major fighter such as Achilles knows the name of a minor opponent.³² Others give explanations which tend to rationalise the characters' knowledge (cf. *Introd.* page 14): it is likely that they know each other after ten years of fighting, especially in the case of prominent characters such as Dolon (schol. *A Il.* 10.447*a Ariston.*, sim. bT). They may have seen each other on the battlefield or off it (schol. b *Il.* 5.181–2 *ex.*), for example during a truce (schol. bT *Il.* 14.473 *ex.*). Or they may have learned names and other details from deserters or captives.³³ Conversely, minor characters who recently arrived on the battlefield such as Asteropaeus 'introduce themselves' (schol. bT *Il.* 21.141–3 *ex.*). The general point is that in such cases one should not automatically resort to the assumption of 'paralepsis'. However, Aristarchus is not completely opposed to the idea of athetising a passage because a character's knowledge seems to lack a proper motivation.³⁴

The character's knowledge and its motivation also play a role in a narrative situation that is best exemplified by Odysseus' long narrative 'in the first person' in *Odyssey* 9–12. Does he recount the events as he experienced them at the time ('experiencing I') or does he incorporate things that he learned only afterwards ('narrating I'), that is, with recourse to his *ex eventu* knowledge?³⁵ Ancient scholars recognised that, at least occasionally, Odysseus does make use of his *ex eventu* knowledge, for example when he expects the Cyclops to be 'wild' (ἄγριος, *Od.* 9.215) and lawless before he has actually met him:

³² Cf. schol. *A Il.* 20.389 *Ariston.* (on Iphition, son of Otrynteus), *T Il.* 20.390–2 *ex.* (ditto, with the generalising statement that the Homeric fighters know each other well, supported with a parallel: Dolon); cf. also schol. *T Il.* 11.262–3 *ex.*, which explicitly disagrees with schol. *T Il.* 11.221*b ex.* (Agamemnon did not recognise the Antenor-son Iphidamas when he killed him).

³³ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 13.374–6 *ex.*, cf. bT *Il.* 5.265 *ex.*, *T Il.* 24.488–9 *ex.* For similar rationalisation of characters' knowledge see also schol. BHQ 15.417 (sim. *V Od.* 15.484: both on Eumaeus knowing the details of how he was abducted as a child), *V Od.* 24.28 (on Achilles knowing the details of Agamemnon's death). In a similar vein, schol. *T Od.* 7.263 offers the explanation that Odysseus 'suspects' a divine intervention behind Calypso's unexpected decision to let him go.

³⁴ Cf. schol. *A Il.* 23.405–6*a Ariston.*: Antilochus cannot know that Athena supports Diomedes in the chariot race. Interestingly, this is disputed by schol. bT *Il.* 23.405–6*b ex.* with the argument that, intelligent as he is, Antilochus may well have an idea, just as the lesser Ajax knows who caused his fall in the foot-race. For athetesis based on assumed paralepsis see also schol. HQVind. 133 *Od.* 16.281.

³⁵ The distinction between *erlebendes Ich* (experiencing I, without *ex eventu* knowledge) and *erzählendes Ich* (narrating I, with *ex eventu* knowledge) goes back to Spitzer ([1928] 1961: 448–9).

προληπτικῶς γὰρ τρόπῳ χρῆται, ἃ μετὰ ταῦτα ἔγνω ταῦτα ἐν ἀρχῇ τιθείς. (schol. HQT *Od.* 9.229)³⁶

<There is no real inconsistency.> For he [sc. Odysseus] makes use of an anticipatory mode, putting at the beginning the things which he learned only afterwards.

Considering the phrasing of the note and the rarity of parallels, it is conceivable that ancient scholars considered these cases exceptional rather than typical. That is to say, most of the time Odysseus reports the events as he experienced them. Support for this view comes from schol. HQ *Od.* 9.403, which points out that Odysseus at first does not know Polyphemus' name and addresses him as 'Cyclops' until the other Cyclopes use the name when they come to respond to him. In other words, Odysseus does not make use here of his *ex eventu* knowledge.

The logical counterpart of the narrator intruding upon a character's focalisation in a speech ('paralepsis') is the representation of a character's point of view in the narrator-text. The concept of 'secondary focalisation within the narrator-text' is not foreign to ancient scholars. (Unlike Agamemnon, the Greek army is quite willing to grant Chryses' wish and recommends 'respecting the priest', αἰδεῖσθαί θ' ἱερῆα, *Il.* 1.23.)

ὡς τιμῶντες μὲν οὔτοι ἱερέα καλοῦσι, λέγοντες ὡς χρὴ τὸν ἰκέτην μετ' αἰδοῦς δέχεσθαι. ὁ δὲ καὶ γέροντα αὐτὸν ὀνομάζει [sc. 1.26]. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.23 *ex.*)

Out of a sense of honour these men [sc. the Greek army] call <him> [sc. Chryses] 'priest', saying that one must receive the suppliant with respect. But he [sc. Agamemnon] even calls him 'old man'.

The critic distinguishes between the terms 'old man' (γέρων), used by Agamemnon, and 'priest' (ἱερεύς), used by the army at large (sim. schol. bT *Il.* 1.33 *ex.*). In other words, he interprets the passage in such a way that the word 'priest', though part of the narrator-text, in fact represents the point of view of the characters.³⁷ The same assumption underlies the interpretation of the scene in which Zeus weeps bloody tears 'honouring his beloved son' Sarpedon (παῖδα φίλον τιμῶν):

³⁶ Cf. schol. Q *Od.* 12.240 (on Odysseus describing Charybdis before the actual encounter); in both cases the critic uses the word προληπτικός ('proleptic, anticipatory'). The assumption of *ex eventu* knowledge also underlies schol. HQV *Od.* 10.108, which gives a rationalising explanation of how it is that Odysseus knows the name of a spring near Circe's house before he actually meets her.

³⁷ Modern scholars reach the same conclusion (e.g. de Jong 1987: 266 n. 6).

ἀπήρκεσεν αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα πρὸς ἔνδειξιν τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ διαθέσεως. (schol. bT *Il.* 16.460a ex.)

The word [sc. ‘son’] was enough for him [sc. Homer] to show the attitude of the god [sc. Zeus].

In other words, ‘son’ is indicative of Zeus’ fatherly feelings for his son Sarpedon and is therefore taken to represent *his* focalisation. (The note also has praise for the passage’s conciseness, on which see [Chapter 9](#).) A similar interpretation can be found in a note that explains that the positive adjective ‘great’ (μέγας) for the Trojan hothead Asius represents the viewpoint of the Lapiths Polypoetes and Leonteus who see him approaching (schol. T *Il.* 12.136 ex.).

The same interpretative principle also underlies a comment which argues that the narrator failed to resort to secondary focalisation. (Patroclus, in Achilles’ armour, is seen approaching by the Trojans, who are scared by this sight because they believe him to be Achilles. The narrator expressly mentions Patroclus (to be exact: the son of Menoetius).)

αὐτοὶ μὲν οὐκ εἶδον ὡς Μενoitίου υἱόν, προαναπεφώνηκε δὲ τοῦτο ἄφ’ ἑαυτοῦ ὁ ποιητής. (schol. bT *Il.* 16.278 ex.)³⁸

They themselves [sc. the Trojans] did not perceive him as son of Menoetius [i.e. Patroclus], but the poet has added this piece of information from himself.

This scholar probably defends the passage against the criticism that the Trojans cannot in fact recognise Patroclus, as the expression ‘the son of Menoetius’ suggests, which creates an inconsistency. These other critics took it for granted that a scene of perception (cf. εἶδοντο, 16.278) ought to be presented in ‘secondary focalisation’, which is not the case here. The present scholar does not disagree with the principle as such, but provides an explanation for why Homer decided to neglect it here.

A Pindaric scholion reflects the same assumption about verbs of perception. (The mythical section of *Olympian* 9 treats, among other things, the origins of the Locrian dynasty. After impregnating the daughter of Opous of Elis, Zeus gave her as a bride to Locrus, the childless king of the Locrians, who ‘rejoiced to see his adopted son’, *Pi. O.* 9.62.)

³⁸ The use of προαναφωνεῖν here is unusual. More often, the term means ‘to make a prolepsis’ (see [Chapter 1](#)). There are, however, parallels for the meaning ‘to make a narratorial comment’ (cf. schol. bT *Il.* 12.37a ex., also bT *Il.* 7.104–8 ex.). The prefix προ- seems to indicate that the narrator makes his comment ‘beforehand’, that is, he anticipates the Trojans’ recognition of Patroclus.

“θετὸν” δὲ λέγει ὁ ποιητῆς ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου προσώπου. ὁ γὰρ Λοκρὸς ἴδιον αὐτὸν ἐνόμιζεν. (schol. Pi. O. 9.94b)³⁹

The poet says ‘adopted’ [sc. son] *in propria persona*. For Locrus thought it was his own.

On account of the verb of perception ‘to see’ (ἰδών), one might have expected that the passage represents the character’s focalisation, which, however, is not the case here. Just like ‘son of Menoetius’ in the example above, ‘adopted’ represents the narrator’s point of view, not the character’s.⁴⁰

The same principle of ‘secondary focalisation within the narrator-text’ also plays an important role for Nicanor when he discusses two alternative punctuations. The relevant Homeric passage reads:

ὀρθῶν δ’ ἑσταότων [sc. Τρώων] ἀγορῇ γένετ’, οὐδέ τις ἔτλη
ἔζεσθαι· πάντας γὰρ ἔχε τρόμος, οὐνεκ’ Ἀχιλλεύς
ἔξεφάνη· δηρὸν δὲ μάχης ἐπέπαυτ’ ἄλεγεινῆς. (*Il.* 18.246–8)

Nicanor comments:

ἦτοι συναπτέον ἕως “ἄλεγεινῆς” [18.248], ἵνα αἰτία τούτου τοῦ σχήματος κέηται· πάντες γὰρ εὐλαβοῦντο, ὅτι Ἀχιλλεύς ἐφάνη πολὺν κεχωρισμένους τῆς μάχης χρόνον. ἢ ἐπὶ τὸ “ἔξεφάνη” [18.248] στικτέον, ἵνα τὸ ἐξῆς ὡς ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἐπιφωνούμενον λέγηται. (schol. A *Il.* 18.247–8 *Nic.*)⁴¹

Either one must take <the words from πάντας γὰρ ἔχε τρόμος... > up to ἄλεγεινῆς together as one sentence [i.e. no or soft punctuation] so that the reason for this position [sc. the unusual upright position of the Trojans during the assembly] is provided. For they were all on their guard because Achilles had appeared after a long absence from the battle. Or one has to put a full stop after ἔξεφάνη so that what follows is said as an addendum by the poet.

As the explicit addition of ‘by the poet’ (ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ) shows, Nicanor is deliberating over the question whether δηρὸν δὲ μάχης ἐπέπαυτ’ ἄλεγεινῆς is focalised by the narrator (second interpretation) or

³⁹ Cf. schol. Pi. O. 6.88c.

⁴⁰ See also schol. BQ *Od.* 21.1 (the crucial point actually refers to line 4). At the beginning of *Odyssey* 21, Athena induces Penelope to make preparations for the bow contest. ‘Equipment for the contest’ (ἀέθλια) may well represent Penelope’s focalisation, but ‘the beginning of the killing’ (φόνου ἀρχήν) cannot. As the critic puts it: οὐχ ἡ Πηνελόπη δὲ τὸν φόνον ἐνόησεν, ἀλλ’ ὁ ποιητῆς ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ τὸ συμβησόμενον φησι (‘It is not Penelope who thought about the killing [sc. of the suitors], but the poet mentions from his own point of view what is going to happen’).

⁴¹ The term ἐπιφωνεῖν regularly means ‘to make a narratorial comment’ (L. Friedländer 1850: 12), especially when the Homeric narrator abandons his usual avoidance of expressing judgments (see schol. AbΓ *Il.* 22.442–5 *ex.*, also schol. A *Il.* 10.332a *Ariston.*). Unlike προαναφωνεῖν (see n. 38), ἐπιφωνεῖν usually means that the comment is made ‘afterwards’ (but contrast schol. bT *Il.* 18.17b *ex.*). The simpler form ἀναφωνεῖν can also designate narratorial comments (see n. 27 above). On the narrator expressing his opinion see also schol. bT *Il.* 1.430a *ex.*

by the Trojans (first interpretation). The question for Nicanor is whether or not there is a change of focaliser after ἐξεφώνη. In other words, he takes it for granted that οὐνεκ' Ἀχιλλεὺς ἐξεφώνη in any case represents the fearful thoughts (i.e. the focalisation) of the Trojans.

The note nicely shows that ancient scholars were perfectly happy with interpreting a passage in the narrator-text as presented in secondary focalisation, although they do not seem to have discussed the literary device in its own right. At the same time the note is a good reminder of how one-sided it is to say that Nicanor 'only' dealt with the punctuation of the text, a prejudice already reflected in his nickname.⁴² Rather, his concern was to provide the best possible basis for a proper understanding of the text in all its nuances (for another example see Nünlist 2006).

The notion of secondary focalisation also underlies a note that deals with Homer's technique of having the characters perceive actions and/or objects, instead of the narrator recounting the events or describing the objects himself. (After killing Rhesus and twelve of his companions, Diomedes and Odysseus return to the camp and the Thracians 'gazed in awe at the grim deeds', θηεῦντο δὲ μέμπερα ἔργα, *Il.* 10.524.)

τὰ θαῦμα τῶν θεωμένων τὸ δεινὸν ὑποφαίνει τῶν δεδραμένων, ὡς καὶ τὸ κάλλος τῶν οἰκῶν Καλυψοῦς διὰ τῆς Ἑρμοῦ ἐδηλώσεε θέας [sc. *Od.* 5.55–77]. (schol. T *Il.* 10.524^a ex., sim. but without the Odyssean parallel b)

The awe of the onlookers indirectly shows the dreadfulness of the deeds, just as he [sc. Homer] showed the beauty of Calypso's dwelling through the perceptions of Hermes.

The Homeric narrator does not himself 'tell' his audience that the killing was dreadful and Calypso's place beautiful, but subtly has his characters make these observations.⁴³

An interesting, though unexpected, case of secondary focalisation occurs in a note that refutes a conjecture by Zenodotus. (In *Iliad* 14, the wounded Greek heroes are shocked by the sight of Nestor behind the lines. He 'cast down the spirit of the Greeks', πτήξε δὲ θυμὸν . . . Ἀχαιῶν.)

Ζηνόδοτος “ἐταίρων”· καὶ ὁ Νέστωρ γὰρ Ἀχαιὸς ἔστιν [tempt. Erbse, †ἀχαιοῖσιν† T] ἀλλ' ὡς “περὶ δ' ἱρὰ θεοῖσιν | ἀθανάτοισιν ἔδωκε” [*Od.* 1.66–7]· καὶ ὁ λέγων γὰρ θεός. (schol. T *Il.* 14.40d ex./*Did.*)

⁴² ὁ στιγματίας (Eust. 20.12 = 1.33.13–14), strictly speaking, a slave branded (for running away, stealing, etc.), but applied to Nicanor because he 'punctuated' (στίζειν) the Homeric text.

⁴³ For other examples of 'indirect presentation' (e.g. ἔμφασις) see [Chapter 9](#).

Zenodotus <read> ‘companions’ [sc. instead of ‘Achaeans’]. For Nestor too is an Achaean. But <the case is> similar to <Zeus saying ‘Odysseus who> made ample sacrifices to the immortals.’ For the speaker is a god himself.

The argumentation of the note can perhaps be rephrased as follows: Zenodotus changed ‘Achaeans’ to ‘companions’ because Nestor himself is an Achaean (for such an argument cf. schol. *A Il.* 7.447*a* *Ariston.*). But this is not convincing, because in *Odyssey* 1 Zeus speaks about the ‘immortal gods’, though he is one himself. The remarkable point about this argumentation is that the commentator (Didymus, according to Erbse) compares a speech (that is, a clear case of secondary focalisation) with a passage in the narrator-text which he assumes to follow the same principles as a speech (that is, to be presented in secondary focalisation). And he also thinks that this is how Zenodotus took the passage.⁴⁴ Interestingly, he agrees with Zenodotus on the secondary focalisation of the passage, but denies that the suggested conjecture is needed. The interpretation of the passage in *Iliad* 14 is perhaps not as far-fetched as it might appear at first sight. Modern research has shown that Homeric scenes of the type ‘character meets character’ are often presented in secondary focalisation (de Jong 1987: 107–10).

Generally speaking, Homeric similes are more common in the narrator-text than in the speeches. Thus one could argue that they usually represent the viewpoint of the narrator. However, the wording of an apparently unique, but all the more remarkable, note makes it clear that this critic considers a simile in the narrator-text to be focalised by a character. (After being wounded by Diomedes, Ares shouts terribly and withdraws to Olympus: ‘Just as dark air appears from the clouds, after a day’s heat when the stormy wind arises, thus brazen Ares appeared to Diomedes . . .’, *Il.* 5.864–7.)

γραφικῶς ἔχει Διομήδης τὴν ἄνοδον θεώμενος Ἄρεος. (schol. *T Il.* 5.866–7 *ex.*)
Diomedes is in a ‘descriptive mood’ watching Ares’ ascent [sc. to Olympus].

Clearly, the argument is based on the formulation ‘Thus Ares appeared to Diomedes’ (τοῖος . . . Διομήδῃ . . . Ἄρης φαίνεθ), as are modern interpretations of the simile as being focalised by Diomedes.⁴⁵

Many of the notes above argue on the principle that both narrator and characters ought to say things which are compatible with their own

⁴⁴ Nickau (1977) does not discuss the case, and Düntzer (1848: 105–6) probably did not know the T-scholion (the complete *Townleyanus* was not published until 1887–8).

⁴⁵ Cf. de Jong (1987: 135), who refers to the relevant scholion and adduces other similes that are focalised by characters.

focalisation. Characters, for example, should not say things they cannot know or do not subscribe to (unless, of course, they are speaking ironically or lying). Similarly, what they say must be compatible with their (fictitious) location. On occasion, scholars criticise passages that do not seem to fulfil this condition. (In Euripides' *Hecuba*, the Trojan queen refers to Polydorus as being kept safe 'in Thrace'.)

τοῦτο ὡσπερ οὐκ ἐν Θράκῃ οὐσά φησι τῆς σκηνῆς ὑποκειμένης ἐν Χερρονήσῳ. ῥητέον δὲ ὅτι ποιητικὸν ἔθος ἐστὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον. Ὅμηρος [*Od.* 4.10]: "οὐδὲ δὲ Σπάρτηθεν Ἀλέκτορος ἦγετο κούρη". ἐν Σπάρτῃ γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ Μενέλαος. (schol. *E. Hec.* 74)⁴⁶

She [sc. Hecuba] says this [sc. 'in Thrace'] as if she were not in Thrace, although the play takes place on the Chersonese [i.e. a part of Thrace]. One must say that this is in accordance with poetic custom. <Cf.> Homer: 'From Sparta he [sc. Menelaus] led the daughter of Alector into marriage with his son' [*Od.* 4.10]. For Menelaus is in Sparta <himself>.

Strictly speaking, the critic argues, Hecuba should say 'here' or 'in this country', but her 'mistake' is customary in poetry, as shown by a parallel from the *Odyssey* (similarly explained in schol. *Q Od.* 4.10).⁴⁷ The implication of 'poetic custom' (ποιητικὸν ἔθος) is probably that such minor inconsistencies fall under the rubric 'poetic licence' (see [Chapter 7](#)). The *Odyssean* parallel is somewhat problematic in that it is part of the narrator-text, which in this case is unlikely to represent Menelaus' focalisation. Two passages appear to have been connected that are not exactly parallel. However, the critic feels that they both contain a geographic denomination which is not suitable.

As will be argued in the Excursus below, ancient scholars did not always respect the principle that the various voices within a single text must be kept separate. Though methodologically problematic, this may often be no more than inadvertence on the part of the critic. In other cases, however, the blurring of the boundaries between different voices appears to be deliberate. Examples include passages where a character is said to

⁴⁶ Cf. schol. *Ar. Pl.* 601b: it is inappropriate for a character in Athens to address the city of Argos, which shows that the passage is a quotation (from Euripides' *Telephus*, fr. 713 Kannicht).

⁴⁷ Conversely, a character who quotes another character (i.e. speech within speech) must of course use the words that apply to the character quoted. Thus, Odysseus, quoting what Calchas said in Aulis, is referring to the Troad with 'there' (αὐθι), whereas it would be 'here' (αὐτόθι) if Odysseus spoke in his own voice (schol. *A Il.* 2.328b *Ariston.*). Such 'tertiary focalisation' is discussed as a possible explanation in schol. *bT Il.* 4.181c *ex.* (on the positive adjective 'noble', which Agamemnon puts into the mouth of the Trojan who will gloat over the death of Menelaus), *bT Il.* 5.414 *ex.* (Dione's description of Diomedes as 'best of the Achaeans' could represent the viewpoint of his wife Aegialeia), *bT Il.* 11.761 *ex.* (Nestor refers to himself as 'Nestor', because he imitates the speech of his admirers), *T Il.* 15.94c *ex.* (when Antinous refers to the suitors as 'violent' (*Od.* 21.289), he perhaps adopts the viewpoint of his interlocutor, Odysseus/the beggar: 'whom you consider violent').

speak on behalf of the poet. Not surprisingly, this applies most often to the chorus of a dramatic text.⁴⁸ But single characters are affected too: Euripides allegedly uses Andromache to rebuke the Spartans.⁴⁹ Dicaeopolis is twice said to speak on behalf of Aristophanes (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 377, 502, both on difficulties with Cleon). The passage in which Socrates tells Strepsiades not to act like a comedian is said to be spoken with a view to both the character Socrates himself and the poet.⁵⁰ Conversely, schol. E. *Med.* 296 considers it necessary to point out that in the relevant passage Medea is *not* the mouthpiece of the poet.⁵¹

Scholars also felt that they were faced with a particular problem when it came to interpreting the odes of Pindar. Do they reflect the focalisation of the poet or the chorus? More than once scholars felt unable to decide and simply offered both solutions without expressing a preference.⁵² This should probably be read against the background of the note (schol. Pi. *N.* 7.123a), which argues that the voices repeatedly change in the course of the ode. Apparently, ancient scholars found the separation of the voices of poet and chorus as difficult as the demarcation of speeches.⁵³

EXCURSUS: ANCIENT LITERARY CRITICISM AND THE NARRATIVE VOICE

When analysing a (narrative) text, modern literary critics commonly differentiate between the author and the narrator.⁵⁴ This distinction does not seem to have roots in ancient criticism, where author and narrator

⁴⁸ Cf. schol. E. *Hipp.* 1102, *Med.* 823, *Alc.* 962; favourite passages are the chorus' final words at the end of the play (schol. E. *Or.* 1691, *Ar. Pl.* 1208) and the *parabasis* in Old Comedy (e.g. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 651, *Eq.* 507d, *Nu.* 518c, d, *Av.* 1102c). As to final words, schol. E. *Med.* 1415 says that they are by the chorus (ταῦτα ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ χοροῦ ἐστὶ λεγόμενα). Is this a case of disputed speaker assignment (see Chapter 19), or does the critic mean to say 'by the chorus and not by the poet'?

⁴⁹ See schol. E. *Andr.* 445, with explicit reference to the Peloponnesian war; also schol. E. *Andr.* 734 (discussed in Chapter 10).

⁵⁰ See schol. Ar. *Nu.* 296a; a similar merging of voices is considered by schol. E. *Od.* 4.497: Proteus abstains from enumerating the casualties of the Trojan war because Menelaus was present himself. At the same time, Homer is said to remind the reader that he has heard about this in the *Iliad*.

⁵¹ The notion that characters 'represent' the poet is not limited to their speeches: schol. bT *Il.* 7.214b *ex.* argues that the poet transferred his own feelings (sc. joy at the sight of Ajax) to the characters. The cases of characters who are said to represent the poet explicitly should be kept separate from the instances where an *implicit* self-referentiality is detected: e.g. schol. Ab *Il.* 1.249a *ex.* (on Nestor's rhetorical skills), bT *Il.* 3.126–7 *ex.* (on Helen's tapestry).

⁵² Cf. schol. Pi. *P.* 5.96a, 6.1a, *N.* 1.29a; contrast schol. Pi. *N.* 9.1a (chorus speaks).

⁵³ On the demarcation of Pindaric speeches see Chapter 3 n. 34. The attempt to differentiate between the voices of poet and chorus may well be a problem that is apparent only because the chorus normally represents the viewpoint of the poet (Nünlist 1998a: 24, with bibl.).

⁵⁴ For the purposes of this excursus the modern discussion of whether the model should have two positions (author, narrator) or three (historical author, implied author, narrator) is irrelevant. The former view is held, e.g., by Genette (1983: 93–107 = 1988: 135–54), the latter, e.g. by Booth (1983).

appear to be identical. The opening paragraphs of this chapter (on λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου) will have shown that the more careful critics at least differentiated between the voice of the poet and that of his characters. But it should be emphasised that this distinction is regularly blurred. Ancient critics often write ‘the poet says X’ when in fact they should have written something like ‘the poet has his character A say X’. Athenaeus, for example, duly notes οὐ γὰρ εἴ τι λέγεται παρ’ Ὀμήρῳ, τοῦθ’ Ὀμηρος λέγει (‘for if something is said *in* Homer, this is not said *by* Homer’, 178d3), but this principle is ignored more than once in the rest of his book. Similar shortcuts even occur in comments on dramatic texts (‘Sophocles says X’), although there the narrative voice is absent by definition. In comments on narrative texts, yet another blurring of the boundary between poet and character can be seen in notes that make use of a somewhat unexpected form of brachylogy. They state, for example, that ‘Homer kills Patroclus’, when in fact the note should read ‘Homer has Hector kill Patroclus’.⁵⁵ This, of course, is not to say that these critics were generally unaware of the difference between narrator and characters. But the frequency of comments such as ‘Homer says X’ gives rise to the suspicion that some critics did not always pay sufficient attention to a distinction that is, after all, crucial. The same holds true *a fortiori* for the distinction between author and narrator, which, to repeat, seems to be unknown to ancient critics.⁵⁶

CONCLUSION

The preceding excursus and its critical tone should not obscure the fact that, after all, ancient critics often did differentiate between the various voices in a text (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου). Particularly important is the distinction between the narrator on the one hand and the characters on the other. This includes their respective outlooks, which can have a stylistic component (generic epithets, elaboration and similes are all seen as typical of the narrator), but also how they perceive the world in general. The same distinction between narrator and characters also led to the observation that the narrator occasionally intrudes upon the focalisation of his characters

⁵⁵ See e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 11.598b *ex.* (quoted in [Chapter 1](#)); similarly, ‘Homer destroys the Greek wall’ (schol. bT *Il.* 14.0 *ex.*), etc.; on this phenomenon see Kassel (1991: 367–8) and his and Austin’s note on Eupolis fr. 115 K-A.

⁵⁶ Proof for these points, if proof is needed, can be found, for example, in the ancient biographical tradition. It mainly draws on the poet’s oeuvre itself (e.g. Lefkowitz 1981) and is prone to identify any statements made there with the poet’s own views. Another example is Plutarch, who, in his treatise *de audiendis poetis*, generously ignores the distinction between poet and character when he lists ‘positive’ passages that can be used to balance ‘negative’ statements made elsewhere by the same poet (see esp. the examples, mostly from Homer and tragedy, discussed in *aud. poet.* 20c–21d).

(‘paralepsis’). Conversely, by identifying passages in the narrator-text that represent the viewpoint of a character ancient scholars clearly and most interestingly make use of the seemingly modern concept of secondary (or embedded) focalisation in the narrator-text, although they neither discuss the concept as such nor coin a particular term for it. The same applies *mutatis mutandis* to the recognition of the difference between ‘experiencing I’ and ‘narrating I’, that is, a first-person narrator’s use of *ex eventu* knowledge. In short, the extant scholia demonstrate that ancient critics disposed of methods which allowed them to analyse the different focalisations in a literary text with great sophistication.

Effects on the reader

As a general rule, ancient literary critics focus their attention on the poet as the one who gives the text its particular shape and as such is in control of things.¹ Nevertheless, they fully recognise that the poet is not operating in isolation, but directs his poem to a more or less specific addressee. Consequently, the scholia also regularly discuss the ways in which the poet communicates with the reader. Their arguments concentrate on the effects which the poet intends to bring about in the reader and how this is done.²

A good starting-point is a longer scholion on Odysseus' long narrative in *Odyssey* 9–12 (the so-called *Apologues*). It combines several points which recur elsewhere and therefore can give a first overview of what will later be examined in detail:

ὄσα αὖξει τὴν προσοχήν, προσδοκίαν ἐμποιῶν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ τεχνικὸν ὡς ἐν προοιμίῳ· δεῖ γὰρ παρὰ τῶν ἀκουόντων ἑαυτῷ μὲν εὐνοίαν ἐπισπᾶσθαι, τῷ δὲ λόγῳ προσοχήν, ἵνα τὸν μὲν λέγοντα ἀποδέξωνται, τῶν δὲ πραγμάτων ἐπιθυμήσωσι τὰ λεγόμενα μαθεῖν [Ruijgh (p.c.), καὶ μάθωσιν cod.], – ὅπερ δι' ὄλου κατῶρθωκεν Ὀδυσσεὺς ἑαυτὸν μὲν ἐπαινέσας, τὸ δὲ πλῆθος καὶ τὴν καινότητα τῶν πραγμάτων ἐνδειξάμενος δηλοῖ τὴν προαίρεσιν καὶ πόθεν παραγίνεται καὶ τί βούλεται –, εἴθ' οὕτως καὶ τὰ μείζονος διηγήσεως ἄρξεται “Ἰλιόθεν με φέρων” [*Od.* 9.39]. (schol. T *Od.* 9.14)

How much he [sc. Odysseus] increases the attention, creating expectation, which is the regular rhetorical technique, as can be expected in a proem! For <the speaker> must attract to himself the audience's goodwill and to his speech <their> attention, so that they accept the speaker and long to learn the report of the events – Odysseus has achieved this throughout by praising himself, and by indicating the great number and newness of the events he discloses his intention,

¹ See the discussion in [Chapter 6](#) (including exceptions).

² A considerable number of the Iliadic examples referred to in this chapter are collected by Erbse (*Index V: s.v. audivores*); on the topic in general see also Trendelenburg (1867: 75–7), von Franz (1940: 24–45), N. J. Richardson (1980: 269–70 with n. 11), Nannini (1986: 41–57), Meijering (1987: esp. 169–71), Heath (1987: 5–17, 32 n. 38). On ἀκούειν ‘to read’ and ἀκροατὴς ‘reader’ see *Introduct.* n. 41.

and also from where he has come and what he wants – and <so that> then the lengthy narrative begins thus ‘From Ilios <the wind> bore me . . .’

The note is imbued with rhetorical theory and analyses the opening of Odysseus’ ‘speech’ against the background of standard principles of rhetoric.³ Concentrating on the relation between speaker and audience, the following goals can be identified: attention (προσοχή), goodwill (εὐνοια, cf. ἀποδέξωνται), expectation (προσδοκία), even longing (ἐπιθυμεῖν) to learn an account (μανθάνειν τὰ λεγόμενα) of the events. These goals are achieved by emphasising that the story will comprise many things (πλήθος) which are unheard of (καινότης), and by self-praise, which recommends the speaker to the audience (cf. goodwill).⁴

Before reviewing the single aspects, a methodological point must be made. The scholion’s point of reference is the *Apologues*, that is, a character’s speech within the epic. Despite the obvious resemblances between Odysseus’ performance and that of an epic poet (cf. *Od.* II.368), the audience mentioned in the scholion are first of all the Phaeacians, that is, an intra-textual audience. It is, nevertheless, justifiable, at least in principle, to extend the effects on the Phaeacians to the readers of the epic, because ancient scholars often do not explicitly differentiate between the two narrative levels and describe the effects on the intra-textual characters in the same terms as those on the extra-textual readers.⁵ (A remarkable exception is schol. HQR *Od.* 4.184, quoted below, because it explicitly correlates the two types of audience.) This may be due to the fact that most of these terms and concepts originate in rhetoric, where the two types of audience usually coincide. If the subsequent discussion generally focuses on passages which describe the effects on the reader, this is done primarily for practical reasons and with a view to the general scope of the present book. It should, however, be kept in mind that the same effects can be and often are attributed to the speech of a character. The footnotes try to give a sense of this further dimension of the question, but without aspiring to be exhaustive in that respect.

³ Cf. Anaximenes *Rh.* 29.1, *Rhet. Her.* 1.6, Cic. *inv.* 1.20, Quint. 4.1.5, 10.1.48, also schol. Luc. 59.53 and in general Lausberg ([1960] 1990: §§ 266–79), Hillgruber (1999: on Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 163); for προσδοκία in particular cf. Ps.Aristid. *Rh.* 2.77 (p. 103 Schmid). The present chapter does not discuss the ‘paedagogic’ or ‘didactic’ purpose that is regularly attributed – often with heavy moral undertones – to poetry (cf. *Intro.* page 13).

⁴ Conversely, schol. AbT *Il.* 2.485–6a *ex.* argues that the poet wins the audience’s goodwill by deprecating himself by invoking the Muse.

⁵ A similar observation can be made with respect to the terminology which designates the single parts. The word προοίμιον can refer to the opening both of a speech (as in the Odyssean scholion) and an entire poem.

ATTENTION

Given that the Odyssean scholion explicitly mentions the purposes of a proem, it is hardly surprising that ‘attention’ is discussed in the scholia on the proem of the *Iliad*:

ἔτι ζητεῖται, διὰ τί ἀπὸ δυσφήμου ὀνόματος τῆς μήνιδος ἄρχεται. ἐπιλύουσι δὲ αὐτὸ οἱ περὶ Ζηνόδοτον οὕτως ὅτι πρέπον ἐστὶ τῇ ποιήσει τὸ προϊμίον, τὸν νοῦν τῶν ἀκροατῶν διεγείρον καὶ προσεχεστέρους ποιοῦν, εἰ μέλλοι πολέμους καὶ θανάτους διηγείσθαι ἠρώων. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.1*b* ex., cf. AT *Il.* 1.1*a* D)

Next there is the question as to why he [sc. Homer] begins with the ‘wrath’, an ill-omened word. Zenodotus and his school solve the problem in such a way that the proem is appropriate to the poem, by stirring the mind of the readers and making them more attentive, considering that <the poet> intends to narrate wars and deaths of heroes.

In accordance with standard principles of rhetoric, the note argues that it is an appropriate (πρέπον) function of a proem to make the reader (more) attentive.⁶ In addition, it refers the proposed *lysis* to Zenodotus and his entourage, which provides an approximate date, and it specifies how the intended goal is achieved. The poem begins, in the form of the ill-omened word ‘wrath’ (μῆνις), with a deliberate and calculated provocation which aims at ‘waking up’ (διεγείρειν) the reader’s mind. The initial ‘shock’ caused by the word ‘wrath’ is intended to secure the reader’s attention.⁷

If the opening of the *Iliad* comprises a calculated provocation and therefore takes the reader by surprise, a statement which contradicts the reader’s general expectations (παράδοξον) can have the same effect of attracting his attention (cf. D.H. *Lys.* 24, p. 35.21–4 U.-R.). Thus the *a priori* unexpected fact that a warrior joins the Greek expedition, although he knows about his doom, is explained as a paradox which attracts the reader’s attention (schol. bT *Il.* 13.665*b* ex., on the Corinthian Euchenor, quoted in [Chapter 2](#)).

As to the waking metaphor, one may perhaps not go so far as to claim that the poet literally needs to wake up his readers (and later faces the danger of their falling asleep again), but the image is nevertheless quite

⁶ The same holds true *mutatis mutandis* for the opening scene of a play: schol. S. *El.* 2, 22, OT 8; cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 11.218 ex., which attributes a similar function to the Muse invocations within the poem (similarly schol. bT *Il.* 16.112–3 ex.).

⁷ Similarly, schol. T *Il.* 10.332*b* ex. (quoted in [Chapter 1](#)) describes a narratorial comment as ‘provocative’ (κερτομική), which, however, is seen in positive terms (ἡδίστη, ‘most pleasant’), probably because it is interpreted in pro-Greek terms.

remarkable.⁸ The same effect of waking up the reader and his mind is attributed to prolepsis (on which see [Chapter 1](#)), which, anticipating the further development of the plot, rouses the reader.⁹ Although the relevant scholia do not explicitly make the connection, it seems nevertheless appropriate to connect this effect with the expectation which, according to the Odyssean scholion, is created by a proem. For by setting up a specific programme, the proem automatically has an anticipatory quality which resembles that of a prolepsis. Both types of anticipation make the reader attentive.

In addition to ‘waking up’ (ἐγείρειν), the scholia also make use of the similar expression ‘to lift up, arouse’ (ἐξοίρειν). This effect is repeatedly attributed to passages which have a preparatory function and, by arousing the reader, make him ready for the subsequent narration. The preparatory passage creates an expectation and so to speak ‘keeps the reader in the air’ (cf. below on ‘suspense’).¹⁰ The word ἐξοίρειν is thus applied to elaborate arming scenes which prepare for the *aristeia* of that particular character,¹¹ to summary statements which precede the detailed narrative (schol. bT *Il.* 8.63 *ex.*, on a summary battle description) and, again, to prolepsis.¹²

Once the poet has achieved the intended effect of attention, he will try not to lose it again. Rather, he will try to ‘hold the reader permanently’ (ἐκ παντός συνέχει τὸν ἀκροατήν, schol. T *Il.* 11.401 *ex.*), in the relevant passage by exposing Odysseus to extreme danger.

⁸ Plato’s *Ion* claims to fall asleep whenever the rhapsodes perform a text other than Homer’s epics (Pl. *Ion* 532b8–c4, 533a1–5, 536b5–7); see also Eupolis fr. 205 K-A, Pherecrates fr. 204 K-A and Hor. *AP* 105 on snoring spectators. On the notion of a tired audience in oratory see *Rhet. Her.* 1.9, Quint. 4.1.48. David Konstan (p.c.) reminds me of the passage in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* where Hermes puts Argus to sleep by song (1.668–714).

⁹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 2.39b *ex.* (more losses are said to await the Greeks, contrary to Agamemnon’s hoping to take Troy the same day), cf. bT *Il.* 15.610–4b *ex.* (on prolepsis in general); for ἐγείρειν the reader see also schol. bT *Il.* 3.16b *ex.* (the cause is the confrontation of Paris and Menelaus (cf. Erbse’s *app. crit.*), i.e. the characters responsible for the war), bT *Il.* 17.240–3 *ex.* (the strongest Greek next to Achilles, Ajax, is in difficulties). For διεγείρειν as an effect of speeches on characters see schol. bT *Il.* 14.364–5 *ex.*, b *Il.* 15.661–2a *ex.*, A *Il.* 18.174 *Ariston.*, bT *Il.* 23.408b *ex.* (all four passages are paraenetic in a loose sense).

¹⁰ Cf. also schol. b *Il.* 1.8–9 *ex.*, where the question in the proem to the *Iliad* (‘What god was it then set them together in bitter collision?’) is said to ‘lift up’ (ὑψοῦν) the reader’s mind. It is combined with the expression οὖν ἀναρτᾶν, on which see below.

¹¹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 12.297b *ex.* (on the arming scenes in general); on the preparatory effect of the arming see also schol. T *Il.* 11.17b *ex.*, T *Il.* 13.241 *ex.*

¹² Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 16.46b *ex.* (on Patroclus’ doom; quoted in [Chapter 1](#)); for the correlation between prolepsis and attention see also schol. S. *Aj.* 326, 389c, and in general [Chapter 1](#). Applied to the effect of speeches on characters, ἐξοίρειν has the meaning ‘to exalt’ (schol. bT *Il.* 1.175c *ex.*, bT *Il.* 8.30 *ex.*).

EMOTIONAL EFFECTS

Comparable to ‘waking up’, but perhaps not so dynamic, are the cases in which the poet is said to ‘set in motion’ (κινεῖν) the reader and his mind. There is a difference between ‘setting in motion’ and ‘waking up’, in that the former can describe a patently emotional effect. It should, however, be emphasised that this need not be the case. The word κινεῖν (and cognates) can simply mean ‘to cause, bring about, effect’.¹³ The emotional type of the reader’s κίνησις may be caused by the anticipation of Greek losses or by generally sombre expectations for the Greeks.¹⁴ In other cases, however, κίνησις does not effect a direct emotional participation, but a more neutral form of intensified attention, for example the κίνησις of the audience caused by Oedipus’ announcements which are full of dramatic irony.¹⁵ A similar form of κίνησις seems at stake when the device of περιπέτεια (‘sudden change’) is described as ποικίλον (‘changeful’), θεατρικόν (‘dramatic’) and κινητικόν.¹⁶ Again the reader’s movement has more to do with mental participation than with emotion. This holds especially true for the remarkable case where the poet ‘sets in motion’ the reader’s thinking (διάνοια) by giving a graphic (ἔναργής) description:¹⁷ the Greek commanders who visit the night watch sit down ‘on clean ground, where there appeared a space not cumbered with corpses’ (*Il.* 10.199). The graphic picture of a battlefield littered with bodies stimulates the reader’s

¹³ In that respect, κινεῖν appears to differ from its Latin ‘equivalent’ *movere*, which has decidedly emotional connotations in the context of rhetoric (e.g. Zundel 1989: *s.v.*). For κίνησις as an effect of reading see Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 32, for whom the reader’s κίνησις depends on the speaker’s (for this correlation see also Pl. *Ion* 535c5–e6, Hor. *AP* 101–7). In Latin rhetoric, *movere* is identified by Quintilian (12.10.59) as one of the three major tasks of an orator.

¹⁴ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 1.3a *ex.* (referring to the proem), bT *Il.* 8.470–6 *ex.* (Zeus announces Hector’s triumphant advance, which will last until Patroclus enters the battle), bT *Il.* 10.38–9 *ex.* (Menelaus expresses doubts whether any Greek will be ready to spy out the Trojan camp).

¹⁵ Cf. schol. S. *OT* 141, 264 (with the remarkable claim that Euripides uses this form of κίνησις more extensively than Sophocles). For scholia commenting on dramatic irony see Chapter 10.

¹⁶ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 21.34b *ex.*: Homer is praised as discoverer of the περιπέτεια, which is ποικίλος, θεατρικός and κινητικός. The word περιπέτεια probably has a broad, non-technical (i.e. non-Aristotelian) meaning here, which includes various forms of crisis and sudden transition (see the passages collected by Griesinger 1907: 78). In this broader sense περιπέτεια recurs e.g. in schol. bT *Il.* 1.195–6b *ex.* (discussed in Chapter 13) and plays an important role in Eustathius (see esp. 95.12–17 = 1.149.9–14 with van der Valk’s note, and Keizer 1995: *s.v.*). On Homer as inventor see *Intro.* page 16 n. 59.

¹⁷ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 10.199c *ex.*; cf. also the expression προκαλείσθαι τὴν διάνοιαν (‘to elicit the thinking’: schol. bT *Il.* 14.187 *ex.*, of the reader’s potentially indecent imagination, if Homer had presented Hera naked).

imagination and urges his mind to cooperate actively in the process of making meaning.¹⁸

The anticipation of losses on the battlefield forms the background of another scholion, which combines the somewhat ambiguous κίνησις with the decidedly emotional effect described by the semantic field ἀγωνία ('agony, anxiety').¹⁹ (After the completion of the trench and the wall, the Greeks eat dinner, as do the Trojans in the city. During the night Zeus plans evil for the next day of fighting, 'thundering terribly'.)

προκινεῖ καὶ ἀγωνιᾶν ποιεῖ τὸν ἀκροατὴν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἔσομένοις ὁ ποιητής. (schol. bT *Il.* 7.479 *ex.*)

The poet rouses the reader beforehand and makes him feel anxious in view of the future events.

Though less specific than an explicit narratorial prolepsis, Zeus' thunder has a similar effect and forebodes nothing good. This not only increases the reader's attention before the actual narration (προκινεῖν), but the critic expects him to apply a 'sympathetic' reading to the text that makes him feel an agony (ἀγωνία) similar to the one felt (presumably) by the characters themselves. The reader is not seen as sitting back and savouring the spectacle from a distance. Rather, his direct involvement and empathy makes him respond to the events as if he were present himself.²⁰

The notion of the reader feeling ἀγωνία recurs several times in the extant scholia. Examples include the following: Hector threateningly approaches Nestor, who desperately tries to cut off the dead horse and to clear the way for his chariot (schol. bT *Il.* 8.87a *ex.*, cf. bT *Il.* 8.80 *ex.*); the gradual withdrawal of the wounded Greek commanders renders the situation precarious for those remaining behind (schol. T *Il.* 11.273 *ex.*); the ambush of the suitors puts Telemachus' life at risk (schol. PT *Od.* 5.25). The examples have a common denominator in that it is not so much the actual narration of undesired events which makes the reader anxious. Rather, it is the *expectation* of such events which causes ἀγωνία. The connection between

¹⁸ Similarly, schol. bT *Il.* 22.80b *ex.* (on Hecuba baring her breasts, which is both κινητικόν and γροφικόν); see also the notion 'the reader as spectator' below and, on the reader's cooperation in general, Chapter 6. For κινεῖν as an effect of speech on characters see schol. T *Il.* 11.826a *ex.* (Nestor's on Patroclus), AbT *Il.* 17.142a/b *ex.* (on Glaucus questioning Hector's prowess).

¹⁹ For the reader's ἀγωνία see Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 6, Ps.Demetr. *eloc.* 216 and Nannini (1986: 41–9).

²⁰ 'Sympathetic' or identificatory reading is often presupposed by ancient authors, e.g. Hor. *AP* 101–2 (based on the idea expressed by Plato's *Ion* that the audience share the performer's emotions, cf. n. 13), Plut. *Art.* 8.1; see also the various emotions felt by a reader which are listed in Plut. *aud.poet.* 16d–e. It is noteworthy that in the Homeric passage Zeus plans evil for Greeks and Trojans alike. Unlike scholia of a decidedly pro-Greek stance, the present one does not specify that the reader's sympathetic feelings are with the Greeks alone.

agony and expectation is explicitly made by an Odyssean scholion. (In *Odyssey* 5, Poseidon insinuates that Odysseus' problems will not be over once he finally reaches Ithaca.)

πάλιν ἄλλων δεινῶν προσδοκίαν ὑποβάλλει ἀνακινῶν ἀγῶνα τῷ ἀκροατῆι.
(schol. BPQ *Od.* 5.379)²¹

Again he [sc. Homer through Poseidon's speech] suggests the expectation of more trouble, thereby stirring up an agony in the reader.

Poseidon's unmistakable allusion to the difficulties which the storm-tossed Odysseus will face in the second part of the *Odyssey* makes the reader anxious and puts him on tenterhooks.

Whereas all these examples involve a fatal danger for the characters,²² other instances of the reader's ἀγωνία are somewhat less urgent and are perhaps better explained in terms of 'suspense':²³ will Hector, looking for his wife, Andromache, in several places on the Trojan citadel, be successful in the end (schol. bT *Il.* 6.392 *ex.*)? Whose lot will jump out of the helmet and make him Hector's opponent in the formal duel (schol. bT *Il.* 7.171*e ex.*)? Dolon is about to reach the Greek watches when Athena finally urges Diomedes to act (schol. T *Il.* 10.365 *ex.*). The ram under whose belly Odysseus is hidden is the last to leave Polyphemus' cave (schol. Q *Od.* 9.444). And, on a more generalising note, combatants whose first shots miss their targets increase the suspense.

κατ' ἀρχὴν πολλάκις ἀποτυγχάνοντας ποιῶν τοὺς βάλλοντας ἐναγώνιον ποιεῖ τὸν ἀκροατῆν. (schol. T *Il.* 16.463–76*b ex.*)²⁴

By having the fighters often miss their first shot, he [sc. Homer] makes the reader anxious.

This critic recognises a recurrent pattern in the 'typical battle scenes', as modern scholars would call them (see [Chapter 16](#)): Homeric combatants regularly miss their first shot. This typical battle scene and all the other examples comprise an element of retardation, which creates a tension and brings about the reader's suspense regarding the outcome of the episode.²⁵

²¹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 8.217*a ex.* (quoted below). The Odyssean scholion differs from the preceding in that it speaks of (ἀνακινεῖν) ἀγῶνα, but cf. schol. bT *Il.* 8.80 *ex.*

²² Cf. also schol. E. *Ph.* 1402 (the outcome of the duel between Polynices and Eteocles is open).

²³ Homeric scholia on suspense are collected by Griesinger (1907: 74–7); see also Roemer (1879: xvi).

²⁴ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 21.70*a ex.*, T *Il.* 21.171 *ex.*; unlike the note quoted in the main text, neither of them explicitly mention the reader, but simply read ἐναγώνιον τὸ ἀποτυγχάνειν ('to miss <the target> creates suspense').

²⁵ Conversely, if Zeus says in advance that Hector will not become master of Achilles' horses, the reader is spared the feeling of ἀγωνία (schol. T *Il.* 17.448–9 *ex.*); sim. PT *Od.* 5.25 (on Telemachus' safety).

As to the exact meaning of the adjective ἐναγώνιος, scholars often take Ps.Long. *subl.* 25 as their starting-point and conclude that the poet, so to speak, enters a contest (ἀγών), comparable to an orator in a forensic context.²⁶ This essentially correct explanation must not, however, be extended to all occurrences of the word. The passages collected in this section prove that it may well be the reader who experiences ‘agon’y’. Furthermore, the case of schol. T *Il.* 16.463–76*b ex.* and its parallels (see n. 24) makes one wonder whether ἐναγώνιος, as a quality of the poem, cannot mean ‘full of suspense’. An example would be another passage where the tension is increased by means of retardation. (In *Iliad* 12, the Trojans manage to turn the Greeks, but instead of immediately pursuing them all the way to the ships, they briefly stop at the trench in order to discuss their tactics.)

καὶ μὴν ἔδει διώκειν μᾶλλον· ἀπογόντες γὰρ τῆς ἀνακομιδῆς δεινότεροι ἂν εἶεν. ἀλλ’ ἐναγώνιος τε γίνεται ἡ ποίησις καὶ αἱ ἀπειλαὶ αὐτοῦ “ὥς πυρὶ νῆας ἐνιπρήσω, κτείνω δὲ καὶ αὐτούς” [*Il.* 8.182]. (schol. T *Il.* 12.199*a ex.*)

Indeed they [sc. the Trojans] should rather pursue them. For refraining from the idea of return they would be more dangerous. However, both become full of suspense, the poem and his threats [sc. spoken by Hector] ‘so that I can set the ships on fire, and kill <the Greeks> themselves’.

From a ‘military’ point of view, the immediate pursuit would have led to greater Greek losses, but the retardation, caused by the Trojan debate, increases the tension in the same way as Hector’s threat in book 8 does. Both put the reader in a state of fearful expectation (which is again seen as more important than the description of heavy Greek losses). Both scenes are, in other words, full of suspense.²⁷

The Dolon example above (he almost reaches the Greek camp) shows Homer playing with the near-miss, a principle which he is fond of exploiting in the form of so-called ‘if not’-situations.²⁸ (Hector would have burnt

²⁶ See the literature cited by Meijering (1987: 287 n. 212), to which add Pritchett (1975: 81).

²⁷ Similarly, schol. T *Il.* 15.64*c ex.* (quoted in Chapter 1) deals with different degrees of suspense (Meijering 1987: 205 with n. 212): Euripides’ prologues are not conducive to suspense, whereas Homer, who is said to avoid elaborate prolepsis (used as an argument against the authenticity of *Il.* 15.64–77), is ἐναγώνιος, rendered by Meijering as ‘vivid’; I would suggest ‘full of suspense’; cf. also schol. T *Il.* 11.273 *ex.* (on the suspense created by the withdrawal of the major Greek fighters who get wounded one by one), T *Il.* 20.79–80 *ex.* (on the single combat between the two sons of goddesses, Aeneas and Achilles).

²⁸ I.e. the recurrent pattern ‘X would have happened, if Y had not intervened’ (de Jong 1987: 68–81, esp. 79 on scholia). Note, however, that ancient critics rather generally describe near-misses and other crises; e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.195–6*b ex.* and bT *Il.* 2.156 *ex.* are virtually identical (both quoted in Chapter 13), but only the latter is an ‘if not’-situation. Homer’s fondness of ‘critical situations’ is pointed out by Aristotle (fr. 142 Rose). It is worth mentioning that Nicanor (schol. A *Il.* 3.374*a*

the Greek ships in *Iliad* 8, had not Hera urged Agamemnon to address his troops in a *parainesis*.)

εἰς ἄκρον τοὺς κινδύνους εἴωθεν ἐξάγειν αἰεί, καὶ ἐναγώνιον ποιήσας τὸν ἀκροατὴν τῇ προσδοκίᾳ εὐθύς τὴν ἴασιον ἐπιφέρει. (schol. bT *Il.* 8.217a ex.)²⁹

He [sc. Homer] is wont always to maximise the danger, and having put the reader in a state of agony by means of the expectation, he at once adduces the remedy.

The near-miss is explained here as a narrative device by which the narrator briefly causes the reader to fear the worst, until the tension is eased shortly afterwards. As the adverb ‘always’ (αἰεί) makes clear, this is recognised as a recurrent feature of Homer’s narrative technique. Furthermore, the medical metaphor (see n. 29) presupposes that the reader is temporarily put in a state of real suffering. The first part of the scholion describes Homer as increasing the tension of his poem, a notion which recurs repeatedly, sometimes without explicitly referring to the effect on the reader.³⁰ Other notes on the poem’s climax or crisis, however, do mention that it results in the reader’s increased attention.³¹

The idea of ‘suspense’ can also take the form of an expression which is, as it were, ‘etymologically’ closer: the poet is said to ‘suspend’ (ἀναρτᾶν) the reader’s mind.³² The applications of the expression are similar to the ones seen already: it can refer to the question in the poem to the *Iliad* (schol. b *Il.* 1.8–9 ex.). In another case, the name of the Greek whose lot jumped out of Agamemnon’s helmet, Ajax, is effectively withheld for some time, which ‘suspends’ the reader’s mind (schol. bT *Il.* 7.185b ex., cf. *app. crit.*). The same applies to Agamemnon’s decision to consult with his senior officers in the middle of the night (schol. bT *Il.* 10.43a ex.) and to a remarkable change of scene which interrupts Thetis’ journey to Hephaestus (schol.

Nic.) recognises the irregular syntax of ‘if not’-situations. Normally, the conditional clause precedes the main clause. This sequence is inverted in ‘if not’-situations (de Jong 1987: 68, with lit.).

²⁹ For the medical metaphor cf. schol. AT *Il.* 1.1a ex., bT *Il.* 16.800b ex., also Arist. *Rh.* 1415a25, Hermog. *inv.* 4.12 (p. 202.16 Rabe).

³⁰ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 7.104–8 ex. (Menelaus would have lost the duel with Hector, had not Agamemnon talked him out of his intention to accept the challenge), bT *Il.* 7.262 ex. (Hector is seriously wounded by Ajax, which threatens the continuation of the story, cf. Chapter 1), bT *Il.* 14.424c ex. (Ajax is encircled by Trojan leaders), bT *Il.* 16.114b ex. (Hector challenges Ajax); see also ‘Divine interventions’ (Chapter 13).

³¹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 15.390 ex. (quoted in Chapter 1), bT *Il.* 15.556–8 ex. (Hector announces the decisive battle).

³² For the image cf. Aristotle’s recommendation that the orator indicate his topic at the outset, so that the audience’s ‘thought is not left hanging’ (ἵνα . . . μὴ κρέμηται ἡ διάνοια, *Rh.* 1415a13). Conversely, Ps. Demetrius (*eloc.* 216) praises the creation of suspense, using the same verb as Aristotle (Meijering 1987: 199).

b *Il.* 18.145–8 *ex.*). A heightened form of the expression has it that the narrator ‘suspends the readers’ longing’ (ἐπιθυμία).³³

The emphasis of the scholia on agony and suspense almost makes one forget the more ‘positive’ emotional effects which pervade ancient discussions of poetry and rhetoric: ἡδονή (‘pleasure’), ψυχαγωγία (‘amusement, allurements, persuasion’), ἐκπληξίς and θαῦμα (‘awe, amazement’). Given the prominence of these terms in ancient treatises, it may come as a minor surprise that some of them have left comparatively few traces in the scholia. This applies, for instance, to the Aristotelian term ἡδονή. It is rare in the scholia and then simply describes a stylistic quality of the poem, but not explicitly for its effect on the reader.³⁴

The other term which is sometimes said to mean little more than ‘pleasure’, ψυχαγωγία (lit. ‘leading of souls’), is more common in the scholia.³⁵ Ancient critics ascribe this effect to the prolepsis of Achilles’ return to the battlefield (schol. b *Il.* 2.694*b ex.*), to the strangeness of the story about the pygmies (schol. AbT *Il.* 3.6 *ex.*), to the description of the Trojan wells during the deadly race of Hector and Achilles (schol. bT *Il.* 22.147–56 *ex.*) or to Odysseus’ dreadful descent to the Underworld (schol. T *Od.* 10.491). The variety of these examples testifies to the broad applicability of ψυχαγωγία.³⁶ The same holds true, not surprisingly, for the many cases where the term describes the effect of a speech on a character.³⁷

Of the terms for ‘awe’ and ‘amazement’, ἐκπληξίς is quite common in the scholia.³⁸ The effect is ascribed to the emphasis on Achilles’ impressive

³³ Cf. schol. Ab *Il.* 20.443 *ex.* (Apollo lifts Hector from the battlefield and thereby postpones the showdown with Achilles); see also schol. EHMQ *Od.* 3.184 (Nestor’s account of the various Greeks’ homecomings remains incomplete; quoted in Chapter 6); on ἐπιθυμία see below.

³⁴ On the ἡδονή of poetry see Arist. *Po.* 1453a36 (tragedy and comedy), 1453b11–12 (tragedy), 1459a21 (epic), 1462b13 (tragedy and epic). Attestations in the scholia: schol. bT *Il.* 1.1*e ex.* (on the ‘singing’ of Homer), bT *Il.* 1.436–9 *ex.* (on the multiple repetition of ἔκ), bT *Il.* 4.482 *ex.* (on the simile).

³⁵ On ψυχαγωγία see Meijering (1987: 5–12), who argues against a general equation with ἡδονή, a view held e.g. by von Franz (1940: 41) and Adam (1971: 66 n. 26); see also Hillgruber (1994: 93).

³⁶ Thus the verb ψυχαγωγῆν also expresses the success of the actor who was particularly good at performing Ajax’ suicide on stage (schol. S. *Aj.* 864a), see Chapter 19.

³⁷ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 2.300*c ex.* (Odysseus using the sparrow omen in the speech to the army), bT *Il.* 2.323*a ex.* (Odysseus quoting Calchas in the same speech), bT *Il.* 8.236 *ex.* (Agamemnon addressing ‘Father Zeus’), bT *Il.* 9.447*b ex.* (Phoenix’ ‘autobiography’ in the embassy to Achilles), bT *Il.* 9.529*a ex.* (the Meleager paradigm in the same speech), T *Il.* 11.741*b ex.* (Nestor’s long speech to Patroclus), HMQ *Od.* 3.115 (Nestor’s speech to Telemachus), also b *Il.* 1.312–3 *ex.* (on Agamemnon’s instruction to perform purifications, which is only reported). The generalising schol. bT *Il.* 23.476 *ex.* recognises Homer’s tendency to create ψυχαγωγία by every conceivable means.

³⁸ On ἐκπληξίς see Hillgruber (1994: 93–5, on Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 6), also Meijering (1987: 46).

figure (schol. b *Il.* 24.630 *ex.*), to the unusual constellation of the Greeks fighting from the beached ships and the Trojans fighting from their chariots (schol. bT *Il.* 15.386 *ex.*) and to Odysseus' descent to the Underworld (schol. T *Od.* 10.491, cf. above). The term seems to indicate a rather strong effect and is therefore appropriate to describe the impact of divine phenomena: the idea of Zeus extending his arm all the way down to earth (schol. bT *Il.* 15.695 *ex.*), the great number of Nereids who mourn together with Thetis (schol. T *Il.* 18.51 *ex.*), or a god who starts from his throne (schol. T *Il.* 20.62a *ex.*). In the scholia to Sophocles' *Ajax*, the term twice describes the effect of a scenic presentation instead of a verbal report: the *ekkyklema* which shows Ajax in the middle of the butchered animals (schol. S. *Aj.* 346a) and his suicide on stage (schol. S. *Aj.* 815a).³⁹

Conversely, θαῦμα (and cognates) is frequent in the scholia, but is not explicitly described as an effect on the reader.⁴⁰ Instead, it is used so to speak *en passant* in order to praise single passages as particularly successful.⁴¹ (Often, words of the root θαυμ- are applied to passages which, depending on the critic's standpoint, should or should not make the reader wonder.)⁴²

In addition, there is a number of mostly unique cases which discuss emotional effects of a very specific nature. In order to convey that the poet causes the reader's anxious expectation, the scholia twice use the word ἀναπτεροῦν ('to set on the wing, set aflutter, put on tiptoe'). The occasions for this increased suspense are the prolepsis of Patroclus' death (schol. bT *Il.* 11.604c *ex.*) and the growing likelihood that the Trojans will indeed burn the Greek ships. (With the Trojans already on the advance, Zeus spurs them and in particular Hector 'so that he might cast wondrous-blazing fire on the beaked ships'.)

³⁹ For ἐκπληξις as the effect of speech on a character see schol. Ge *Il.* 1.242 (T has κατὰπληξις; Achilles speaking of 'man-slaughtering' Hector), AbT *Il.* 3.182a *ex.* (Priam addressing Agamemnon, quoted in Chapter 9), AbT *Il.* 9.29a *ex.* (on the temporary silence caused by Agamemnon's speech), bT *Il.* 16.25–7 *ex.* (Patroclus lists all the wounded Greeks to Achilles), bT *Il.* 24.358–60 *ex.* (Idaeus to Priam on the approach of Hermes). Needless to say, a character's ἐκπληξις need not be caused by speech, see e.g. schol. b *Il.* 10.547b² *ex.* (Nestor is struck by the whiteness of Rhesus' horses, as shown by his faulty syntax).

⁴⁰ The comment which comes closest to doing so is schol. bT *Il.* 18.377b *ex.* (on the phrase θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι, 'a wonder to look at'). It speaks in general terms of Homer presenting in his poetry θαυμαστόν καὶ ἐκπλήττοντα. For θαυμαστόν as an effect of poetry see Arist. *Po.* 1460a11–18, Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 6.1.

⁴¹ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 15.6–7 *ex.* (on the summary description in a few lines: the flight of the Trojans, the success of the Greeks, Poseidon's support and Hector's suffering).

⁴² Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 11.72c *ex.* (on the Greeks' temporary ability to equalise the battle) and the many occurrences of the phrase οὐ θαυμαστόν ('no wonder').

ἀναπτεροῖ δὲ τὸν ἀκροατὴν προσδοκῶντα τὸν ἐμπρησμόν. (schol. T *Il.* 15.594b¹ ex.)⁴³

He [sc. Homer] puts the reader, who expects the burning, on tiptoe.

The expectation that the Trojans might substantiate their threat and set the ships on fire is further intensified by Zeus' intervention. Interestingly, the b-scholion on the same passage says that Homer is 'torturing' (βασανίζειν) the reader's thinking (διάνοια). And another scholion (schol. bT *Il.* 18.151–2 ex., quoted below) speaks of the reader's thoughts being 'troubled yet more' (ἐπιταράττειν). No wonder, then, if the reader is occasionally said 'to be angry' (ἀγανακτεῖν), the reason being Hector donning Achilles' armour.⁴⁴ One of the three relevant notes makes the remarkable point that the reader's irritation is put in Zeus' mouth. (Zeus says 'improperly [οὐ κατὰ κόσμον] have you [sc. Hector] stripped the armour from his [sc. Patroclus'] head and shoulders.')

τὴν ἀγανάκτησιν τῶν ἀκροατῶν ὄρα, πῶς συνελὼν τῷ Διὶ περιέθηκεν. (schol. T *Il.* 17.205a ex.)⁴⁵

Watch the anger of the readers, how he [sc. Homer] has concisely put it into Zeus' mouth!

Similarly drastic are the cases in which the poet 'throws' the reader 'into confusion' (θορυβεῖν) or 'alarms' (ἐκφοβεῖν) him.⁴⁶ The latter note is worth quoting in full. (Left alone in the battle, Odysseus deliberates in a monologue whether to stay or to withdraw. In the meantime, the Trojans 'penned him in their midst, but set on themselves their own ruin'.)

διὰ τῆς ἀναφωνήσεως ἀνακτᾶται τὸν ἀκροατὴν· λίαν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐξεφόβησεν. φησὶν οὖν ὅτι ἐπὶ τῷ ἑαυτῶν κακῷ ἐκύκλωσαν τὸν Ὀδυσσεά. (schol. T *Il.* 11.413f ex.)

⁴³ The other instances of ἀναπτεροῦν describe the effect of speeches on characters: schol. bT *Il.* 2.333a ex. (Agamemnon encourages the Greeks to return home), AbT *Il.* 5.1b ex. (Agamemnon rebukes Diomedes in the *epipoleis*), bT *Il.* 10.160–1 ex. (Nestor wakes up Diomedes), T *Il.* 10.332c ex. (Hector promises that Dolon can have Achilles' horses if he is successful), bT *Il.* 24.343c ex. (on the effect of speech in general). Unlike the two examples referred to in the main text, ἀναπτεροῦν has a more positive meaning in these instances ('to lend wings').

⁴⁴ Cf. schol. S. *Aj.* 762a (the audience, familiar with Ajax' virtue, are almost angry (ὀργίζονται) with how the poet portrays the hero).

⁴⁵ The other two instances are schol. bT *Il.* 16.800b ex. (with the medical metaphor ἰᾶσθαι 'to heal'), AbT *Il.* 17.207–8a ex. The phrase περιτίθημί τι in the meaning 'to have somebody say (in direct speech)' is common in the scholia, e.g. schol. A *Il.* 2.570a¹ *Ariston.*, S. *Ph.* 1; cf. e.g. Theon II 60.28 Spengel.

⁴⁶ For θορυβεῖν see schol. bT *Il.* 14.392 ex.: the sound of the roaring sea is interpreted as foreboding evil. Again the critic argues that the poet throws the reader into confusion before the actual narration of the battle.

By means of the narratorial comment [sc. ‘but set on themselves their own ruin’] he [sc. Homer] revives the reader. For he had alarmed him too much. He says that they [sc. the Trojans] encircled Odysseus to their own detriment.⁴⁷

With the account of the Greek defeat, which results in the withdrawal of the wounded commanders and culminates in Odysseus’ isolation, the poet has, the critic argues, crossed the line. Now he needs to revive the reader, and he does so by announcing Trojan losses.⁴⁸ The poet is seen as blowing hot and cold to the reader. Reading the *Iliad* is a series of ups and downs. For the latter effect see the passages referred to above; the former can be documented from comments that the narrator ‘comforts’ (παράμυθεῖσθαι) the reader.⁴⁹ Similarly, he may be said to ‘oblige him beforehand’ (προχαρίζεσθαι), to ‘conciliate’ (θεραπεύειν) him, to ‘cheer’ (εὐφραίνειν) him, or ‘not to grieve’ (οὐ λυπεῖν) him any longer.⁵⁰ One of these notes is particularly remarkable, because it does not reflect the pro-Greek attitude that is common (cf. n. 49). (During Patroclus’ funeral, Achilles vows not to bury Hector, but to throw his corpse to the dogs. The narrator caps the speech with the comment that this will not happen.)

διὰ δὲ τῆς ἀναφωνήσεως ἐθεράπευσε τὸν ἀκροατὴν· ἤδη γὰρ συνέπασχε τῆ τοῦ Ἑκτορος αἰκίᾳ. (schol. bT *Il.* 23.184 ex.)

By means of the narratorial comment, he [sc. Homer] conciliated the reader. For he [sc. the reader] had already felt sympathy for Hector being treated insultingly.

Even if the scholia to the *Iliad* generally expect the reader to be partial to the Greeks, this does not rule out that he feel sympathy with the Trojans, especially in a truly exceptional case such as the defilement of

⁴⁷ On ἀναφώνησις (‘narratorial comment’) see Excursus in [Chapter 1](#); ἀνακτᾶσθαι is another medical metaphor (LSJ s.v.).

⁴⁸ This requires a reflexive interpretation of μετὰ σφίσι πῆμα τιθέντες (*Il.* 11.413), a matter of dispute since Alexandrian times (see schol. A *Il.* 11.413a *Ariston.*).

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 6.373c ex. (Homer explains before the actual encounter why Hector does not find Andromache at home), T *Il.* 13.348–50 ex. (Zeus does not intend to destroy the Greek army ‘entirely’), bT *Il.* 15.56b ex. (Zeus sketches the eventual sack of Troy), similarly T *Il.* 10.295 ex. (Athena hearkens to the prayers of Odysseus and Diomedes), bT *Il.* 13.348a ex. (Zeus favours the Trojans in order to honour Achilles). The first of these notes stands out, because it does not display a pro-Greek attitude (cf. *Intro.* page 13).

⁵⁰ προχαρίζεσθαι: schol. T *Il.* 10.274b¹ ex. (Homer indicates in advance that the night-time expedition of Odysseus and Diomedes will succeed), sim. bT *Il.* 16.399–418 ex. (on Patroclus’ immediate and sweeping success); θεραπεύειν: bT *Il.* 12.173 ex. (Hector’s success is due to Zeus’ support and not to his own prowess), schol. S. *Aj.* 762a (by having Ajax speak mad things, the poet deflects the audience’s possible anger at the hero’s suicide; cf. n. 44); εὐφραίνειν: b *Il.* 11.181–2 ex. (on Greek successes, quoted in [Chapter 1](#)); οὐ λυπεῖν: b *Il.* 17.453–5a² ex. (Zeus announces temporal limitation of Trojan success), bT *Il.* 12.13–5 ex. (prolepsis of Troy’s fall makes current Greek losses acceptable).

their leader's corpse. Hector, too, deserves proper burial. Therefore, the narratorial comment is seen as setting the reader's mind at rest.

No less remarkable is a note which explains that the reader feels sympathy when a character, Greek or Trojan alike, is unaware of a disastrous turn of the story and nurses vain hopes. (In *Iliad* 17, Achilles is as yet unaware of Patroclus' death.)

εἴωθε συμπάθειαν ἐγείρειν διὰ τούτων, ἐπὶ οἱ τὰ μέγιστα δυστυχοῦντες ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ τῶν κακῶν εἶεν καὶ ἐπὶ φιλανθρωποτέρων φέρωνται ἐλπίδων, ὡς Ἄνδρομάχη [cf. *Il.* 22.437–46] καὶ Δόλων [cf. 10.350] καὶ νῦν Ἀχιλλεύς. (schol. bT *Il.* 17.401–2 ex.)⁵¹

He [sc. Homer] is wont to rouse sympathy by means of this, when the ones who are in the greatest disaster are unaware of the evil and carried towards very tender hopes, such as Andromache [sc. unaware of Hector's death], Dolon [sc. unaware of Odysseus and Diomedes' ambush], and Achilles here.

The juxtaposition of Greek and Trojan characters who equally earn the reader's sympathy gains additional meaning by the presence of Dolon. He normally has a bad press among ancient critics and is, therefore, an unexpected object of the reader's sympathy.⁵²

Returning to the term ἐκφοβεῖν (schol. T *Il.* 11.413f ex., quoted above), one may be reminded of Aristotle's well-known φόβος ('fear') and its peer ἔλεος ('pity'). Given that the terms form part of Aristotle's definition of tragedy, it is hardly surprising that they recur with some frequency in the tragic scholia.⁵³ They are, however, comparatively rare in the other scholia. In fact, φόβος (and cognates) does not seem to be used outside the scholia on tragedy in order to describe the effect of the poem on the reader, except for the one attestation of ἐκφοβεῖν (see above).⁵⁴

The term ἔλεος is used somewhat more frequently with respect to the reader, in the Homeric scholia with reference to the final part of the *Iliad* in general (schol. bT *Il.* 24.776 ex.) and Hector's fate in particular.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Interestingly, schol. AbT *Il.* 22.442–5 ex. speaks of *Homer's* pity (ἐλεεῖν) for Andromache. On ἔλεος see below.

⁵² Martin Schmidt suspects that Dolon is an error and should be replaced by Ares (see Erbse's *app. crit.*).

⁵³ See Trendelenburg (1867: 123–8), Meijering (1987: 209–20).

⁵⁴ For φόβος as an effect of speech on characters see e.g. schol. b *Il.* 1.169b ex. (Achilles threatens to return home), A *Il.* 18.271b ex. (Polydamas anticipates that many Trojans will be devoured by vultures and dogs), bT *Il.* 22.58 ex. (Priam warns Hector that Achilles will kill him), bT *Il.* 23.408b ex. (Antilochus encourages his horses).

⁵⁵ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 22.161b ex. (on Hector's life as the 'prize' of the deadly race), T *Il.* 22.295 ex. (on Deiphobus' unexpected disappearance), bT *Il.* 22.337 ex. (on Hector's ability to address Achilles despite his lethal wounds), b *Il.* 24.18–9a² ex. (Apollo's care and pity for Hector's body induces the reader to feel the same); cf. also the interesting schol. AbT *Il.* 17.207–8a ex. (even if the readers may

Considerably more frequent, however, are the instances where ἔλεος describes the effect of a speech on the characters.⁵⁶

A similar observation can be made in the case of οἶκτος ('pity').⁵⁷ Thus, the fact that Aeneas' victims are twins and young 'stirs the reader towards pity' (εἰς οἶκτον κινεῖ τὸν ἀκροατήν, schol. b *Il.* 5.550a¹ ex.). An Odyssean scholion is especially worth quoting, because it establishes a correlation between the emotions of readers and characters. (Menelaus commiserates over Odysseus and causes Helen, Telemachus and Peisistratus to weep.)

δαιμονίως ἀντιλαμβάνομενος ὁ ποιητής, ὅπως κέκίνηκε τὸν οἶκτον τῶν ἀκροατῶν, φαντασίαν ἐπὶ τοὺς τότε ἀκούοντας μετήνεγκε. (schol. HQR *Od.* 4.184)

With a wonderful grasp of how he had stirred the pity of his readers, the poet transposed the representation to the audience of that time [sc. Helen etc.].

In other words, the poet has his characters feel the emotion (here: pity) that he expects his readers to feel. This note spells out what others on occasion perhaps presuppose: the reader is meant to feel the same emotions as the text-internal audience (cf. the methodological point made at the beginning of the chapter and nn. 9, 12, 18, 37, 39, 43, 54, 56, 57). This may well apply to the numerous scholia that describe the characters' πάθος ('emotion'). However, the extant scholia do not seem to discuss explicitly the πάθος of the reader.

EXPECTATION

The preceding paragraphs contain several examples in which the reader's expectation plays a central role. The present section attempts to complete the picture by adding a few more aspects. One of them is already present in the Odyssean scholion cited at the beginning of the chapter. In an intensified form, the reader's expectation can be described as 'longing' (ἐπιθυμεῖν, ποθεῖν). In the Odyssean scholion the object of the reader's 'desire' is the account, which he longs to 'learn' (μυθθάνειν). The same function is attributed to Dream's epithet 'destructive' (οὔλος, *Il.* 2.6),

take exception to Hector getting Achilles' armour, they may nevertheless pity Hector once they learn that he will not enjoy the armour for a long time).

⁵⁶ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.13–4b¹ ex. (Chryses begging for his daughter), bT *Il.* 1.20a¹ ex. (ditto), etc. (see Erbse Index III: s.vv. ἐλεεῖν, ἐλεεινός, ἔλεος).

⁵⁷ For οἶκτος describing the effect of a speech on characters see e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.13–4a ex. (Chryses begging for his daughter), etc. (see Erbse Index III: s.vv. οἰκτίζειν, οἶκτος, οἶκτρος).

because it makes the reader long to learn the reason.⁵⁸ In both cases the critics presuppose an impartial and ‘objective’ reader, whose appetite for knowledge is whetted. Elsewhere, however, the same direct involvement of the reader is implied as in most examples of ‘agony’ (see above). Now the reader is induced by the narrator to ‘long’ for Achilles re-entering the battle (schol. bT *Il.* 4.512–3 *ex.*) or for Trojan losses (schol. bT *Il.* 17.236a *ex.*).

The same partiality but a different type of expectation is at stake when the reader is filled with ‘hope’ (ἐλπίς), either again for Achilles’ return (schol. b *Il.* 2.694b *ex.*), for an intervention of the pro-Greek gods (schol. bT *Il.* 12.179–80 *ex.*), for a Greek victory (schol. bT *Il.* 15.601–2 *ex.*) or for the rescue of Patroclus’ body.⁵⁹ The last example adds a further point and is therefore worth quoting. (Towards the end of *Iliad* 17, the Greeks finally manage to lift Patroclus’ body from the battlefield. In the meantime, Achilles learns of the death of his dear friend and speaks with his mother. In 18.148 the narrative returns to the fleeing Greeks with Hector right on their heels. The fight for Patroclus’ body is not over yet.)

τοῖς μὲν ἀκροαταῖς ἐλπίς ἦν ἐξεϊλικύσθαι Πάτροκλον, ὁ δὲ πάλιν ἐπιταράττει τὴν διάνοιαν, ἵνα ἐπὶ τὸ ἀκμαιότατον προαγαγῶν τὴν ἀγωνίαν πιθανὴν ποιήσῃται τὴν Ἀχιλλέως ἔξοδον. (schol. bT *Il.* 18.151–2 *ex.*)

The readers were hoping that Patroclus [sc. his body] was recovered, but he [sc. Homer] troubles their thinking yet again, so that, pushing the agony to the utmost, he motivates Achilles’ marching out.

The new point here is that Homer seems to create the reader’s hope only in order to disappoint it then on purpose and all the more efficiently. The latter effect provides the motivation for another scene (see [Chapter 1](#)). The topic ‘creation of false expectations’ recurs several times in the Homeric scholia.⁶⁰ Either the reader’s expectation is not fulfilled at all,⁶¹ or, as in the Patroclus example and overall more often, the expected event is postponed

⁵⁸ See schol. bT *Il.* 2.66 *ex.*; cf. schol. bT *Il.* 11.604c *ex.*, where the reader ‘hastens’ (ἐπιείσθησι) to learn more about Patroclus’ doom (similarly schol. bT *Il.* 12.116–7 *ex.*). An exceptional case is schol. bT *Il.* 24.85a *ex.*, because the reader is exhorted to long to hear about an event (the death of Achilles) which falls outside the *Iliad* (see discussion in [Chapter 6](#)).

⁵⁹ Contrast schol. T *Il.* 22.274b’ *ex.*, which mentions the reader’s hope that Hector might survive the duel with Achilles! In the light of the generally pro-Greek attitude this is exceptional, and perhaps ἐλπίς must be rendered here with ‘expectation’. Also conceivable is some form of corruption, for the b-scholion on the same passage speaks of *Hector’s* hopes.

⁶⁰ Cf. Schadewaldt ([1938] 1966: 72 n. 2), N. J. Richardson (1980: 266), Nannini (1986: 45).

⁶¹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 7.29 *ex.* (previous divine interventions let the reader hope for nothing good when Apollo and Athena arrive on the battlefield, and their suggestion of a formal duel takes him by surprise), bT *Il.* 24.3–4 *ex.* (the Funeral Games led the reader to believe that Achilles’ grief is over, which, however, is not the case).

by means of retardation: Poseidon's anger over the death of his grandson Amphimachus (*Il.* 13.206–7) induces the reader to expect an immediate intervention, which is, however, postponed by more than a hundred lines or several episodes, which are meticulously listed in the relevant scholion (schol. T *Il.* 13.219–329^a *ex.*, sim. b, quoted in Chapter 9). On a larger scale, the various events of *Iliad* 1–10 induce the reader to expect for the Greeks a losing battle in general, and one taking place around the newly built wall and around the ships in particular. Consequently, the *aristeia* of Agamemnon and other Greek leaders in book 11 comes unexpectedly (schol. bT *Il.* 11.0 *ex.*), as does Hera's deception of Zeus (schol. bT *Il.* 14.153^b *ex.*). Both scenes have a decidedly retarding effect.⁶² All in all, the picture emerges of a poet who, almost teasingly, creates and disappoints his reader's expectations at will – with obvious impacts on the 'entertainment factor' of his poem.

A last example makes an additional point about expectation. By having the Trojan horses balk at the trench (*Il.* 12.50–9), the narrator creates the expectation that it cannot be crossed with a chariot.⁶³ And yet the reader directs his attention towards the possibility that somebody might actually try to do it anyway (schol. bT *Il.* 12.52–9 *ex.*), as in fact Asius will. The very denial of an option makes the reader reckon with its (attempted) realisation.

RELAXATION

The preceding discussion shows that an important method of securing the reader's attention is the creation of suspense in various ways. At the same time, however, it is undesirable to keep up a high level of tension throughout the poem. Rather, ancient critics argue, it is advisable to give the readers a chance to relax once in a while and to have them regularly take a break (ἀναπαύειν and cognates).⁶⁴ By doing so the poet avoids their feeling surfeit (κόρος).⁶⁵ The latter is a serious threat to the readers' attention, whereas regular breaks renew their ability to pay attention. (After Thetis'

⁶² Cf. schol. T *Il.* 22.274^a *ex.*, where the point seems to be that the reader does not expect Achilles to miss Hector.

⁶³ The Homeric text actually says it explicitly, though in the qualified form of ἔν with optative (*Il.* 12.58–9).

⁶⁴ See Meijering (1987: 169–71), who adduces Polyb. 38.6.1, D.H. *Pomp.* 3.11 (p. 236 U.-R.), Theon II 80.27–32 Spengel; cf. also Quint. 11.3.44.

⁶⁵ For κόρος, caused by a monotonous or verbose narrative, see e.g. schol. b *Il.* 1.8–9 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 3.201 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 20.460 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 22.79 *ex.*, S. *Aj.* 38a (discussed in Chapter 3); cf. D.H. *Pomp.* 3.11 (p. 236 U.-R.), Quint. 10.1.31. Another expression for the reader's boredom is ἀμβλυτέρα ἀκρόασις ('duller reading', caused by long chronological narratives: schol. bT *Il.* 11.671–761 *ex.*, quoted in

promise to go and see Zeus on Achilles' behalf, the poem first returns to Odysseus' embassy to Chryse, instead of continuing with Thetis' ascent to Mt Olympus.)

ὅπως μὴ τῇ τῆς Θέτιδος ἀπαλλαγῆ συνάψῃ τὴν ἐπάνοδον, διὰ μέσου βάλλει τὰ κατὰ τὸν Ὀδυσσεύα . . . ἑκατέροις δὲ μετρίως χρώμενος διαναπαύει τὸν ἀκροατὴν, τῶν μὲν τὸν κόρον περιαιρῶν, τῶν δὲ τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἀποπληρῶν. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.430b ex.)⁶⁶

In order not to connect Thetis' ascent to her departure [sc. from Achilles], he [sc. Homer] puts in the middle the events around Odysseus . . . By using both <scenes> with moderation, he allows the reader to rest, thereby avoiding the surfeit of the one [sc. the Thetis scene], and fulfilling the longing for the other [sc. the Odysseus scene].

The change of scene in *Il.* 1.430 achieves several goals: both the Thetis and the Odysseus scenes remain moderate in size. Consequently, the reader does not get bored with a Thetis scene that is too long. At the same time, the return to Odysseus fulfils a 'promise' created by the previous change of scene (*Il.* 1.313). And, one may complete the line of reasoning, the present change creates a 'longing' which will be fulfilled in 1.493–532, when the narrative returns to Thetis. As the scholion makes clear, the breaks envisaged by the ancient critics are not actual interruptions of the performance. Rather, the narrative itself is expected to contain a sufficient amount of relaxing 'breaks'. The single most important means to achieve this goal is variety (ποικιλία) or, put negatively, the avoidance of monotony (τὸ ὁμοειδές).⁶⁷ In addition to changes of scene, the following devices are considered apt to have the desired effect of relaxation:⁶⁸ insertion of thematically different scenes;⁶⁹ changes from the human to the divine plane;⁷⁰ insertion of narrative elements which are not immediately related

Chapter 2); cf. schol. bT *Il.* 11.604c ex. (quoted in Chapter 1), *S. Aj.* 41a. This dullness is said to be caused by a surplus of information or, in other words, lack of suspense.

⁶⁶ On the relaxing effect of changes of scene in particular see also Polyb. 38.6.1, D.H. *Pomp.* 3.14 (p. 237 U.-R.), schol. bT *Il.* 15.390 ex. (quoted in Chapter 1). The quotation in the main text omits a point about the chronology of the two scenes that is discussed in Chapter 2.

⁶⁷ See Chapter 9.

⁶⁸ Needless to say, many examples combine several of these devices.

⁶⁹ E.g. the building of the Greek wall (schol. bT *Il.* 7.328a ex.); Achilles perceiving Machaon being driven to the camp (schol. T *Il.* 11.599 ex.); Idomeneus' meeting with Meriones behind the lines (schol. T *Il.* 13.168a ex.); Hephaestus producing the shield for Achilles (schol. bT *Il.* 16.793–804a ex.).

⁷⁰ See schol. bT *Il.* 8.209b ex., also bT *Il.* 16.431–61 ex.; interestingly, such a transition is once said to keep the reader in suspense (ἀναρτᾶν, on which see above), because the narrator does not spell out the plight of the Greeks pursued by Hector (schol. bT *Il.* 8.350 ex.).

to the main story: descriptions, other stories, genealogies, similes and ‘digressions’ in general;⁷¹ great variation in the description of potentially monotonous scenes such as fighting, wounding and killing.⁷² A remarkable, if distinctly pro-Greek, point is the notion that the reader temporarily finds rest from feeling anxious for the Greeks (schol. T *Il.* 8.246*a ex.*).

THE READER AS SPECTATOR

The section on ‘attention’ above ends with a brief reference to the notion that a particularly graphic description stimulates the mental cooperation of the reader (schol. bT *Il.* 10.199*c ex.*). A comparable, but rather more extreme, position is held by the critics who argue that the poet turns his readers into spectators of the events.⁷³ If the comment on the sea simile in *Il.* 2.144 still qualifies the equation with ‘makes the readers *almost* spectators’ (θεατὰς σχεδόν: schol. T *Il.* 2.144*d ex.*; interestingly, b omits the crucial word σχεδόν), the note on the baby Astyanax crying and turning away from the scary sight of his father Hector spells it out in so many words:

ταῦτα δὲ τὰ ἔπη οὕτως ἔστιν ἐναργείας μεστά, ὅτι οὐ μόνον ἀκούεται τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁράται. (schol. bT *Il.* 6.467 *ex.*)

These lines are so full of graphic quality that the events are not only heard [i.e. read] but also seen.

As the further context of the scholion makes clear, this critic is impressed by the description being so true to life that the reader has the impression that he actually sees the whole scene (on lifelike realism see [Chapter 8](#)).

⁷¹ Stories and genealogies: schol. bT *Il.* 6.119*b ex.* (also Polyb. 38.6.1); similes: bT *Il.* 15.362–4 *ex.*; ‘digressions’ in general: bT *Il.* 14.114*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 16.666*a ex.* (also Theon II 80.27–32 Spengel; on the looseness of the term ‘digression’ (παρέκβασις) see [Chapter 1](#)). Similarly, descriptive scenes are said to create attention in schol. bT *Il.* 11.711*b ex.*; cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 22.147–56 *ex.* A unique case is schol. bT *Il.* 11.722*a ex.*, according to which the many fresh starts (τὸ πολύαρχον) of Nestor’s narrative cause relaxation and therefore renew the attention.

⁷² Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 4.539*b ex.* (on killings in general), bT *Il.* 12.330*a ex.* (on Sarpedon and Glaucus attacking with the entire Lycian army). The second note is quoted in [Chapter 9](#), which deals with variation in general.

⁷³ Cf. Plut. *gloria Athen.* 347*a* (on Thucydides’ attempt to make the reader a spectator and on its psychological effects), similarly Plut. *Art.* 8.1 (on Xenophon’s vividness), on both passages see Meijering (1987: 30–1); cf. also D.H. *Comp.* 20 (p. 89.14–18 U.-R., on Homer enabling the reader to see the events happening), Ps.Long. *subl.* 15.2 (on the correlation between the poet’s ‘visualisation’ (φαντασία, cf. [Chapter 9](#)) and that of his spectators/readers), 25 (on the vividness of the historic present).

In a similar vein, a comment on the horse race in the funeral games for Patroclus praises the vividness of the narrative. (The exact point of reference is the start of the race.)

παῖσαν φαντασίαν ἐναργῶς προβέβληται ὡς μηδὲν ἦττον τῶν θεατῶν ἐσχηκέ-
ναι τοὺς ἀκροατᾶς. (schol. bT *Il.* 23.362–72 *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] has projected the entire mental image so graphically that the readers are captured no less than the spectators.

The implication seems to be that the readers could not have received a deeper impression if they had been present themselves as spectators (later explicitly mentioned in the Homeric text: 23.448–99).⁷⁴ Consequently, it may not be the simple slip of an absent-minded critic or scribe if a T-scholion on *Iliad* 15 says that the *spectator* (θεατῆς) is awestruck by the description of the battle around the ships.⁷⁵

The bT-scholion on the horse race in *Iliad* 23 seems to imply that the narrator's projection of a mental image (φαντασία) induces the reader to reproduce this image, with the result that his experience is comparable to that of an actual spectator.⁷⁶ As a consequence, one should reckon with the possibility that at least some of the numerous notes on the poet creating φαντασία (von Franz 1943: 19–34, Rispoli 1984) implicitly argue with a view to an assumed comparison between reader and spectator. The same applies to the notes on the poet 'bringing into view' (ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγειν, see Chapter 9) the events that make up his story. As a result, it is possible for the reader to 'see a sight' (ὄψιν ἰδεῖν, e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 22.474*b ex.*, on the pitiful scenes of book 22: Priam is prevented from leaving the city, Andromache from committing suicide).⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Conversely, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Comp.* 3, p. 12.16–18 U.-R.) argues that Candaules' story is so well narrated by Herodotus that the reader gets a better impression than a witness. For the idea of the reader as spectator cf. in general the notion of the poet as eyewitness (Chapter 8).

⁷⁵ See schol. T *Il.* 15.386 *ex.*; note that the b-scholion on the same passage reads ἀκροατῆς ('reader').

⁷⁶ The same point is made, though in the opposite direction, by schol. HQR *Od.* 4.184 (quoted above), which argues that the poet transfers the φαντασία from the reader to the characters (see also Meijering 1987: 44–5, who, however, assumes that the subject of μετήνευγε is Menelaus; differently and, to my mind, more convincingly 235 n. 44). Cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 15.712*b ex.* (on the accumulation of words for 'weapon'), although the exact meaning of the phrase φαντάζειν τὸν ἀκροατῆν remains doubtful: 'to produce a mental image in the reader'? Rispoli (1984: 336) interprets it as 'aiutare l'ascoltatore a immaginare meglio la scena', but gives no parallels. Perhaps one may compare the unique verb προφαντάζειν in schol. bT *Il.* 11.45*b ex.* (with Erbse's note).

⁷⁷ The Homeric text (*Il.* 22.473–5) actually indicates that the women look after the swooning Andromache, but the critic believes that they prevent her from jumping from the wall.

The exact working of the reader's cooperative activity in conjuring up the mental image is meticulously described in a scholion which, therefore, is an apt way to round off this section and the chapter as a whole. (After borrowing Aphrodite's love-charm, Hera leaves Mt Olympus in order to meet Hypnus on the island Lemnos. Her journey is described in some detail: Pieria, Emathie (= Macedonia), Thrace, Mt Athos and finally Lemnos.)

ἄκρως κατονομάζει τοὺς τόπους, τὰς ὁμόρους χώρας διεξιῶν . . . τῇ γὰρ ὀνομασίᾳ τῶν τόπων συμπαραθέουσα ἡ διάνοια τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων ἐν φαντασίᾳ καὶ ὄψει τῶν τόπων γίνεται . . . μάρτυρας γοῦν ἐπαγόμενος τοὺς ἀκούοντας πιθανωτάτην καθίστησι τὴν διήγησιν. (schol. bT *Il.* 14.226–7 *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] competently names the places, going through the areas which border on each other . . . For the mind of the readers, travelling together with the naming of the places, enters into an imaginative and visual perception of the places . . . In any case, by calling in the readers as witnesses he renders his narrative highly plausible.

By describing the way-stations step by step, the narrator exhorts the reader, who (supposedly) knows these places, to call them to mind and visualise them. The reader's active cooperation is stimulated. As a result his mind, as it were, accompanies the narrator and Hera on their gradual transition from Mt Olympus to Lemnos (cf. Ps.Long, *subl.* 26.2 on the soul of the reader accompanying the Herodotean narrator during a geographical description). Furthermore, the reader's status as '(eye)witness' of the relevant places contributes to the authentication of the narrative (see [Chapter 8](#)). The scholion expresses ideas that are very similar to reader-response theory, whose ancient roots are further explored in [Chapter 6](#).

CONCLUSION

The scholia display a considerable interest in the workings of the relation between poet and reader, with the latter's attention playing a crucial role. Ancient critics discuss several methods of securing this attention. The poet may simply whet the reader's appetite for information. More often, however, the central factor is recognised in the reader's direct psychological involvement with the events of the poem, sometimes in the form of downright partiality. These psychological effects regularly depend on the creation of a particular expectation, which often leads to some form of suspense, especially when the expected event is postponed by means of

retardation. The good poet is seen as alternately increasing and decreasing the 'stress level' of his readers according to the circumstances. At the same time, the reader's attention overall is best when the poet sees to it that his poem maintains a good balance between tension and relaxation, caused in particular by sufficiently varying his poem. A further point is the active stimulation of the reader's mental cooperation, for instance by means of visualisation.

Gaps and omissions

It is a well-established fact that no text is a seamless series of pieces of information which provide the reader with an entirely complete picture. Instead, every text contains minor or major gaps which the reader is to fill in for himself or herself on the basis of the surrounding information that the text does provide. In the case of minor gaps, the reader hardly notices them at all. Other gaps, however, may be considered more serious and may therefore encourage a commentator to give an explanation that something is presupposed, but never explicitly mentioned, in the text. As a consequence, the scholia repeatedly report that a particular event happened *κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον* ('in silence, tacitly' \approx 'implicitly').¹ For instance, in *Il.* 5.221–8 Aeneas invites Pandarus to mount his chariot in order for them to attack the raging Diomedes. They do so in 239–40. What happened to the charioteer?

εἶη δ' ἂν ὁ τοῦ Αἰνείου ἠνίοχος κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον καταβεβηκώς, καὶ ἔστι παρ' Ὀμήρω πολλὰ τοιαῦτα. (schol. *A Il.* 5.231*b* *Did.*)²

Aeneas' charioteer must have dismounted tacitly, and there are many instances of such a technique with Homer.

The passage may in itself seem unspectacular, and the interpretation of the scene perhaps somewhat literal-minded. What is important, however, is

¹ See esp. Meinel's treatise of the same title (1915); cf. also Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 336, 441–2), Naber (1877: 7–11), Bachmann (1904: 8–11), Griesinger (1907: 21–3), Roemer (1912: 211–16; 1924: 181–4, 239–48), Norden (1957: 146–7). Meinel's main flaw is his inclination towards 'Aristarchomania'. He has no doubts that 'good' (i.e. acceptable) comments in Eustathius derive from Aristarchus, regardless of whether they have actually left traces in the relevant scholia or not (see M. Schmidt 1976: 24 with n. 49). On Eustathius' use of the principle see below n. 10.

² Cf. schol. *bT Il.* 1.490–1*a* *ex.*, *bT Il.* 4.159*b* *ex.*, *T Il.* 5.279*a* *ex.*, *AbT Il.* 5.297*c* *Hrd.*, *A Il.* 6.114*c* *ex.*, *A Il.* 6.337*a* *Ariston.*, *bT Il.* 7.276*c* *ex.*, *bT Il.* 8.221*a* *ex.*, *A Il.* 9.698*a* *Ariston.*, *A Il.* 9.709*a* *Ariston.*, *AbT Il.* 11.846 *ex.*, *T Il.* 13.125*a'* *ex.*, *T Il.* 13.177 *ex.*, *T Il.* 13.605*a* *ex.*, *bT Il.* 16.411*b/c* *ex.*, *T Il.* 16.427 *ex.*, schol. *pap. Il.* 21.229–32 (p. 99 Erbse), *T Il.* 21.290*b* *ex.*, *bT Il.* 22.293*b* *ex.*; schol. *Q Od.* 8.2, *HQV Od.* 10.108, *V Od.* 13.185, *H Od.* 13.368, *HQ Od.* 19.2, *V Od.* 20.137 and the notes discussed below.

that κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον is recognised as a recurrent feature of Homeric poetry (καὶ ἔστι παρ' Ὀμήρῳ πολλὰ τοιαῦτα) at an early stage in ancient scholarship.³

Of particular interest are those cases in which the scholia reflect a debate among ancient scholars:

ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος καθόλου περιγράφει τὴν ὁμιλίαν τοῦ Διὸς καὶ τῆς Ἥρας [sc. 16.432–58], οὐκ αἰσθόμενος ὅτι πολλὰ κατὰ συμπέρασμα λέγει ὁ ποιητὴς σιωπωμένως γεγονότα, καὶ οὐ δέον ἐπιζητεῖν, πῶς ἢ μικρὸν ἔμπροσθεν [sc. 15.79, cf. 149] ἐπὶ τὸν Ὀλυμπόν παρακεχωρηκυῖα νῦν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰδῆς ἐστίν. (schol. A *Il.* 16.432a *Ariston.*)

<The diplo periostigmene,> because Zenodotus brackets [here = deletes]⁴ the conversation between Zeus and Hera in its entirety [sc. 16.432–58], not understanding that the poet mentions summarily [i.e. by indicating the result only] many events which happened tacitly, and that one must not investigate why she, who shortly before [sc. 15.79] had retired to Mt Olympus, is now on Mt Ida.

And a very similar observation is found in another note that expressly refers back to the note on the former passage:

ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος καὶ ἐνταῦθα διεσκεύακε γράφων “καὶ τότε ἄρ' ἐξ Ἰδῆς προσέφη Ζεὺς ὄν φίλον υἱόν”, ἵν' ἐκ τῆς Ἰδῆς προσφωνῆ τὸν ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ Ἀπόλλωνα. γελοῖον δὲ τὸ κραυγάζειν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰδῆς τὸν Δία. οὐ νενόηκεν οὖν ὅτι τὰ τοιαῦτα κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον ἐνεργούμενα δεῖ παραδέχασθαι, καθάπερ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐπάνω περὶ τῆς Ἥρας [cf. 16.432]. (schol. A *Il.* 16.666b¹ *Ariston.*)

<The diplo periostigmene,> because here again Zenodotus has manipulated the text and wrote ‘and then from Mt Ida Zeus addressed his son’, having him address his son Apollo in the plain from Mt Ida. But it is ridiculous to have Zeus shout from Mt Ida. Obviously he [sc. Zenodotus] has not understood that such things must be understood as happening tacitly, as in the Hera passage above.

The problem is virtually the same in both instances, as the cross-reference in the second scholion makes clear. In neither case does Homer explicitly mention that the god has moved from one location to another. He simply starts from this assumption, leaving out an actual description of the details.⁵

³ Erbse (*ad loc.*) defends Didymean authorship of the note against Ludwig's objections and adduces parallels from Aristarchus, many of which are quoted below.

⁴ The verb περιγράφειν itself can mean both ‘to doubt the authenticity of’ (leaving the suspect verses in the text) and ‘to omit’ (Nickau 1977: 10–12). However, the expression καθόλου περιγράφειν (with a parallel in schol. A *Il.* 2.156–69 *Ariston.*) and the formulation of the T-scholion (παρὰ Ζηνοδότῳ οὐκ ἦν ὁ διάλογος τῆς Ἥρας καὶ τοῦ Διός) seem to tip the balance in favour of ‘to omit’ in the present case.

⁵ A similar case (Zeus' transition from Mt Olympus to Mt Ida) is discussed in schol. A *Il.* 11.183 *Ariston.*, but without explicit recourse to the κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον principle; see also schol. A *Il.* 11.78–83a *Ariston.*

Zenodotus found fault with this and omitted (or athetised, see n. 4) the conversation of Zeus and Hera (16.432–58) and rewrote 16.666. Aristarchus, on the other hand, defended the transmitted text on the basis of the principle κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον and blamed Zenodotus for not being aware of it.⁶ The same methodological controversy between the two scholars recurs in another context in which no textual consequences appear to be at stake:

ὅτι ἀποτίθεται μὲν τὸ δόρυ ῥητῶς, ἀναλαμβάνει δὲ οὐ κατὰ τὸ ῥητόν, ἀλλ' ὕστερον [sc. 21.67–70] αὐτῷ φαίνεται χρώμενος. ἡ δὲ ἀναφορὰ πρὸς Ζηνόδοτον, ἀγνοοῦντα ὅτι πολλὰ δεῖ προσδέχεσθαι κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον ἐνεργούμενα. (schol. A *Il.* 21.17^b *Ariston.*, cf. AT *Il.* 21.67a *Ariston.*)

<The dipole,> because he [sc. Achilles], though he puts the spear down explicitly, does not take it up again explicitly, but is clearly using it later [sc. 21.67–70]. The reference is to Zenodotus, who is unaware that many actions [and events] must be understood as taking place tacitly.

The line in question (21.17) describes how Achilles puts down his spear before he jumps into the river, but fifty lines later it is simply said that he attacks Lycaon with his spear. It is hard to imagine that the passage caused serious problems of misunderstanding. But it is nevertheless noteworthy for its explicit reference to Zenodotus' alleged ignorance of the principle κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον.⁷ Complete ignorance on Zenodotus' part, however, is not only unlikely, it also clashes with the explicit statement of an Odyssean scholion. (Nestor reminds Telemachus not to stay away from home too long.)

οὗτος ὁ τόπος ἀνέπεισε Ζηνόδοτον ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῆς ἀποδημίας Τηλεμάχου διόλου τὴν Κρήτην ἔναντι τῆς Σπάρτης ποιεῖν. οἶεται γὰρ ἐκ τούτων τῶν λόγων κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον ἀκηκοέναι τὸν Νέστορα παρὰ τοῦ Τηλεμάχου ὅτι καὶ ἀλλαχόσε περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς πεισομένου παρεσκεύαστο πλεῖν. διὸ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἁ' ῥαψωδίᾳ ἔγραψε “πέμψω δ' ἐς Κρήτην τε καὶ ἐς Πύλον ἡμαθόεντα” [*Od.* 1.93]. (schol. HMQR *Od.* 3.313)

This passage convinced Zenodotus in the Telemachy systematically to replace Sparta with Crete. For he believes on the basis of these words [sc. Nestor's] that Nestor has heard tacitly [i.e. not explicitly mentioned in the text] from Telemachus about his plans to sail elsewhere in order to inquire after his father. That is why he also wrote in book 1 ‘I will send you to Crete and sandy Pylos.’

⁶ See Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 336). Nickau's (1977: 139–54) elaborate defence of Zenodotus' motives requires the assumption of quite some maliciousness on the part of Aristarchus and his school, suggesting that they would deliberately misrepresent and banalise Zenodotus' arguments.

⁷ There is no indication that Zenodotus actually objected to the passage, and it is worth mentioning that the marginal sign in A is a simple dipole, not a dipole peristigmene.

According to this witness Zenodotus is familiar with the principle κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον, although it cannot be determined with certainty whether he used this particular expression. One can therefore conclude that Zenodotus decided each case on its merits and did not *a priori* exclude an explanation along the lines of κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον. In the case of the two passages from *Iliad* 16 he appears to have decided against it, only later to earn Aristarchus' criticism. Nickau may well be right that Zenodotus was particularly concerned about implicit movements of the gods.⁸

The other scholion which bears witness to a scholarly debate is an unusually long note on 18.356–68 (another conversation between Zeus and Hera). In this case it is the scholar Zenodorus who is said to doubt the authenticity of the lines in question.⁹ After giving a full list of arguments against their authenticity (see Excursus at the end of [Chapter 13](#)) he writes:

πῶς τε τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰδης μετάβασιν τοῦ Διὸς οὐ δεδήλωκεν; ἀλλὰ ταῦτό ἐν ἄλλοις στίχοις μὴ ἀμφισβητούμενοις οὐχ ἱκανὸν πρὸς κατηγορίαν, (ἀλλὰ) [add. Erbse] συγχωρητέον κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον οὕτω γεγενῆσθαι· ὅπου δὲ τᾶλλα σαθρὰ ἔστι καὶ ὑποπτα, καὶ τοῦτο ὑποπτον. (schol. bT *Il.* 18.356*b ex.*, p. 504.81–5 Erbse)

And why did he [sc. Homer] not mention Zeus' transition from Mt Ida [sc. to Mt Olympus]? Admittedly, the same cannot be used as an objection in the case of lines whose authenticity is undisputed, and one has rather to admit that it happened thus tacitly. Conversely, where the rest is corrupt and suspect, this too [sc. the κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον] must be suspect.

The passage clearly resembles the two former passages in that the silent transition of a god from one location to the other is again the point around which the argument revolves. Zenodorus admits the general validity of the principle κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον, which Aristarchus adduced in the present case too (see schol. A *Il.* 18.356*a*¹ *Ariston.*, sim. T). But he restricts it to 'undisputed' passages and refuses to apply it in defence of passages which are very suspect already: the principle must not be used at random. Although few will follow Zenodorus in excising 18.356–68, his point is worth considering against a more general backdrop. There are undeniably cases where the answer 'κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον' is used as an easy cure.¹⁰

⁸ Nickau (1977: 153); see also Zenodotus' plus-verse *Il.* 17.456*a*. It remains odd, though, that he does not seem to object to silent transitions of gods elsewhere in the *Iliad*. The evidence is usefully collected by Nickau (1977: 143–54), whose argument, however, that Homer's narrative technique is substantially different on the third day of fighting (books 11–18) fails to convince me.

⁹ On Zenodorus see Nickau (1972: 21).

¹⁰ E.g. schol. bT 22.293*b ex.* (a rationalising explanation for why Hector does not have a second spear). See also Wilamowitz (1884: 386), who criticises the κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον as a *Verlegenheitsausrede*. Another source for an inflationary use of the principle is Eustathius. (*Persuasum praeterea mihi*

All the passages discussed so far have had as their common denominator the idea that the narrator presupposes, at a later stage in the narrative, an action which happened κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον. For example, *Il.* 16.432–58 makes no sense unless one assumes that Hera has gone in the meantime from Mt Olympus to Mt Ida, but the narrator never says explicitly that she did.

This is perhaps the moment to bring in the systematic distinction made by Meinel (1915: 11), who differentiates between the σιωπώμενον proper and what he calls, with a term borrowed from scholia such as bT *Il.* 17.648a¹ *ex.*, παράλειψις (‘omission’): the term σιωπώμενον refers to an event that is entirely left implicit and must be reconstructed by the reader, while παράλειψις refers to an event that is first passed over in silence but later explicitly added by the narrator.¹¹ In principle Meinel’s distinction is valid (but see below). The passage from *Iliad* 16 is an actual σιωπώμενον, whereas in the case of παράλειψις, the narrator first omits a piece of information and then adds it at a later stage. As Aristarchus puts it (Agamemnon reminds the troops of their boastful speeches right before the beginning of the war):

ὅτι τοῦτο γινόμενον μὲν οὐ παρέστησεν, ὡς γινόμενον δὲ παραδίδωσιν. (schol. *A Il.* 8.230a *Ariston.*)¹²

<The diplē,> because he [sc. Homer] did not describe this <event> as one which is taking place, but he presents it as one which has taken place in the past.

By having Agamemnon refer to the event in the past, the narrator so to speak fills a gap.¹³ It is, in other words, an analepsis that provides new information (see [Chapter 1](#)). This requires comparatively little cooperation on the part of the reader, because the narrator provides the omitted piece of information himself. Conversely, in the case of the σιωπώμενον the reader is requested to fill in the gap by himself. However, as Meinel (1915:

habeo Eustathium hoc schema, quo admodum videtur delectatus esse, etiam suo Marte nonnumquam accessivisse ad locos Homericos explicandos vel illustrandos: van der Valk on Eust. 154.21 = 1.237.6 with numerous examples.)

¹¹ It should be emphasised that this use of the term παράλειψις is rather different from the one found in rhetoric. There it designates the *explicit* omission of an element (‘I will pass over . . .’, i.e., *praeteritio*): e.g. Anaxim. *Rh.* 30.9–10 (p. 67.7–9 Fuhrmann), Hermog. *Inv.* 2.5 (p. 117.6–7 Rabe).

¹² A similar formulation is found in schol. *A Il.* 12.211a *Ariston.* (Polydamas complains that Hector always takes exception to his suggestion made in the assembly); see also *A Il.* 19.85a *Ariston.* (with L. Friedländer’s note quoted by Erbse *ad loc.*; Agamemnon refers to repeated criticism on the part of the Greeks) and bT *Il.* 8.114a *ex.* (Homer submits the names of the servants later).

¹³ The event referred to ‘predates’ the *Iliad* by several years and could, strictly speaking, not be presented by Homer ὡς γινόμενον. But as notes such as schol. bT *Il.* 17.24–7 *ex.* (discussed below) show, critics were little bothered by this and considered all these cases instances of παράλειψις.

11) himself saw, this basic distinction is not always observed in the scholia, whether conceptually or terminologically. And, in fact, there are borderline cases where one can argue about the correct attribution to one or the other of the two categories.¹⁴

In any case, the several notes on κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον often betray a close familiarity with the Homeric epics. In his speech to Euphorbus, Menelaus triumphantly refers to the death of Euphorbus' brother Hyperenor, who is said to have slighted Menelaus by calling him the worst of the Greek warriors (*Il.* 17.24–7). Hyperenor's death is described briefly in 14.516–19, but no mention is made there of his supposed abuse:

τὸ σημεῖον Διονύσιος [fr. 41 Linke] διὰ τὸν Ὑπερήνορά φησι· προεῖρηται γὰρ “Ἀτρεΐδης δ’ ἄρ’ ἔπειθ’ Ὑπερήνορα ποιμένα λαῶν | οὐτάσε” [*Il.* 14.516–17]. καὶ ἴσως κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον ἐκεῖ αὐτὸν ὠνεΐδισεν. (schol. A *Il.* 17.24a *Ariston.*)¹⁵

Dionysius [sc. Thrax] says that the reason for the sign is Hyperenor. For it was stated earlier that ‘then Atreus’ son struck Hyperenor, shepherd of men’. And it may well be that he [sc. Hyperenor] abused him there tacitly (or implicitly).

Menelaus' apparent analepsis does not have an equivalent in the text, and this absence is explained by referring to a typical feature of Homer's narrative technique. Conversely, it is worth citing a passage in which Aristarchus decided not to make use of the principle. (In the battle at the ships, Athena removes the mist from the eyes of the Greek warriors so that they can see Hector.)

ἀπὸ τοῦτου [sc. *Il.* 15.668] ἔως τοῦ “ἦδ’ ὅσοι παρὰ νηυσὶν” [15.673] ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι ἕξ, ὅτι οὐ προσυνίσταται ἀχλύς, ἀλλὰ συνεχῶς μάχονται. νῦν δέ φησιν “Ἔκτορα δὲ φράσσαντο βοήν ἀγαθὸν καὶ ἑταίρους” [15.671]. πρότερον δὲ οὐ καθεώρων, ὅτε ἔλεγε “τῶ δὲ μιῆς περὶ νηὸς ἔχον πόνον” [15.416] καὶ ὅτε παρεκάλει αὐτούς “ἀλλὰ μάχεσθ’ ἐπὶ νηυσὶν ὁλλέες” [15.494]; (schol. A *Il.* 15.668a *Ariston.*)

From this line [15.668] to ‘and all those by the ships’ (15.673) six lines are athetised, because the mist is not prepared for in advance, but they are fighting without interruption. Now he [sc. Homer] says ‘they [sc. the Greeks] observed Hector, good at the war cry, and his comrades’. And did they not see him before when he

¹⁴ E.g. if *Il.* 1.490–1 (‘never did he [sc. Achilles] go to the assembly, where men win glory, nor ever to war’) is explained as εἰκὸς κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον καὶ ἐκκλησίαν καὶ πόλεμον πρὸς τοὺς περιοίκους γενέσθαι (‘it is likely that there were, tacitly, both an assembly and a war against the neighbours [sc. of the Trojans]’): schol. bT *Il.* 1.490–1a *ex.*), one might argue that we are dealing with an, admittedly short, completing analepsis, not with a σιωπώμενον as defined by Meinel.

¹⁵ Similarly, schol. A *Il.* 14.516a *Ariston.* establishes the connection and records the absence of Hyperenor's abuse, but without using the expression κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον. Conversely, schol. bT *Il.* 17.24–7 *ex.* argues that this Hyperenor is not the same as in book 14. For the question of homonymous characters see [Chapter II](#).

said ‘the two of them [sc. Ajax and Hector] were labouring in the toil of war about the same ship’ and when he [sc. Hector] urged them [sc. the Trojans] ‘But fight at the ships in close throngs?’

Not only does Aristarchus take exception to the missing motivation of the mist, he also perceives a logical inconsistency. To his mind, the quoted passages prove that the Greeks could see and recognise Hector before, and that clashes with the idea of the mist.¹⁶ This appears to be Aristarchus’ main objection, and one may speculate that, without this inconsistency, he might have accepted the ‘sudden’ presence of the mist and explained it in terms of κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον, as in fact the grammarian Telephus does, according to the T-scholion (schol. T *Il.* 15.668*b ex.*).¹⁷

Given that Aristarchus uses the principle κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον in a qualified way, it is perhaps less surprising that the same principle can also be used against him and one of his textual decisions. (In *Od.* 17.501–4 Penelope is aware that the beggar (Odysseus) is present in the palace and is being maltreated by the suitors, although she has not been informed explicitly.)¹⁸

νοθεύει Ἀρίσταρχος δ. πῶς γὰρ ἂν ταῦτα εἰδείη, εἰ μὴ πως κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον; (schol. HVind. 133 *Od.* 17.501)¹⁹

Aristarchus marks four <lines> [sc. *Od.* 17.501–4] as spurious. For how could she [sc. Penelope] know this, unless, perhaps, implicitly?

The witness reports Aristarchus’ verdict and his reasons: the lines in question are doubtful because Penelope cannot know this. What follows looks like second thoughts to defend the passage on the basis of the well-known principle. The critic seems to argue that the lines can stand if one assumes that Penelope learned about the beggar’s presence κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον.²⁰

¹⁶ The third passage, *Il.* 15.494, reflects the critics’ assumption that each side can hear what the other says among themselves (see Chapter 4).

¹⁷ Modern scholars are in disagreement over the attribution of the note. Wendel (1934) and Erbse (*ad loc.*) argue in favour of Telephus against Schrader, who vindicates the note for Porphyry (1902: 574–5).

¹⁸ The question ‘How does the character know?’ belongs to the larger thematic complex of motivation and underlies many a comment in the scholia (see Chapters 1, 4 and 11).

¹⁹ Cf. schol. H *Od.* 16.152–3 (νοθεύονται, ὅτι μὴ πέμπει Πηνελόπη πρὸς Λαέρτην, εἰ μὴ ἄρα σιωπώμενως, ‘the two lines> are considered spurious, because Penelope does not send <a messenger> to Laertes, unless she does so tacitly’). Roemer (1912: 212) boldly rewrites schol. HVind. 133 *Od.* 17.501 in order to make Zenodotus responsible for the athetesis and Aristarchus for the defence.

²⁰ Seleucus’ argument against Aristarchus’ athetesis of *Il.* 21.290 (schol. pap. *Il.* 21.288–90, p. 108 Erbse) is only superficially similar, because he makes use of κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον in a slightly different sense, see below.

It is likely that κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον became a catchphrase at a comparatively early stage and reached a readership beyond the inner circles of ‘professional’ literary critics. For the geographer Strabo wonders about the different treatment of the Dolopians in Homer and in Pindar. Whereas Pindar (fr. 183) mentions that Phoenix led them into battle, Homer does not. Strabo concludes:

τοῦτο δὴ καὶ παρὰ τῷ ποιητῇ κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον, ὡς εἰώθασι λέγειν οἱ γραμματικοί, συνηπακουστέον. (Strabo 9.5.5 = 431C.9–10 Radt)

This then must be understood in Homer too <as happening> tacitly, as the grammarians are wont to say.

Many modern readers (and, in fact, Aristarchus: schol. D *Il.* 5.385, see [Chapter 12](#)) will disagree with Strabo’s method of filling ‘gaps’ in Homer with passages from Pindar. What is more important here, however, is his reference to a well-known principle of interpretation which requires the active cooperation of the reader. Ancient readers draw attention to this cooperation when they argue that something must be ‘understood’ because it is presupposed by the text but not explicitly mentioned. The words they use to express that idea include ὑπακούω (e.g. schol. A *Il.* 7.353a *Ariston.*), also συνηπακούω (e.g. Strabo, quoted above) and προσυπακούω (e.g. schol. A *Il.* 9.77a *Ariston.*), ἐκδέχομαι (e.g. schol. V *Od.* 20.137), προσδέχομαι (e.g. schol. A *Il.* 21.17b¹ *Ariston.*), λογίζομαι (e.g. Theophrastus, quoted below), νοέω (e.g. schol. A *Il.* 6.337a *Ariston.*), ὑπονοέω (e.g. schol. Q *Od.* 17.4, quoted below),²¹ προσεπινοέω (e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 22.91a *ex.*), οἶομαι (e.g. schol. pap. *Il.* 21.229–32, p. 99 Erbse). Most of these words can refer to anything that the reader must ‘understand’ (in addition to or below the surface of what the text explicitly states), not just to cases of κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον as described above.

THE COOPERATION OF THE READER

Of particular interest in this connection is a scholion attributed to Porphyry which explicitly discusses the particulars of the reader’s cooperation that is implicit in words such as ὑπακούω etc. (The Greeks wash their hands before the sacrifice.)

διὰ τί μετὰ τὸ δεῖπνον οὐ ποιεῖ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀπονίζοντας τὰς χεῖρας; . . . ῥητέον δὲ καὶ τοῦτο· ὅταν γὰρ λέγη· “χέρνιβα δ’ ἀμφίπολος

²¹ Related but not exactly the same is the allegorists’ notion of ὑπόνοια, the second meaning which underlies the surface meaning of a passage (see e.g. Ramelli 2004: 58 with n. 32, 74 n. 89, with lit.).

προχώω ἐπέχευε φέρουσα | καλῆ χρυσεῖη ὑπὲρ ἀργυρέοιο λέβητος | νίψασθαι” [Od. 1.136–8], φήσομεν οὐκ εἰς τὸ νίψασθαι πρὸ τοῦ δείπνου μόνον· ἀπλῶς γὰρ τὰς ἀρχὰς μηνύσας οὐκέτι τὰ κατὰ μέρος ἐπέξεισιν, ὥστε παρέκειτο τὰ χειρόνιπτρα ὅτε βούλοιντο νίζεσθαι· καὶ γὰρ καὶ ἡ τράπεζα καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἄχρις ὅτου βούλοιντο χρῆσασθαι αὐτοῖς παρέκειτο. οὕτω καὶ τοὺς Πυλίουσ ἐν τῷ κατάπλῳ Τηλεμάχου εὐωχουμένους [sc. Od. 3.5–9] οὐκέτι δεδήλωκεν, ὅπως ἐκ τῆς ἡϊόνος ἀναστάντες ἀπηλλάγησαν. καὶ τὴν Ἀθηναῖαν Μέντη ὁμοιωθεῖσαν καὶ τὸ δόρυ δοῦσαν τῷ Τηλεμάχῳ [sc. Od. 1.121] οὐκέτι φησὶν, ὅπως τοῦτο ἀπιοῦσα ἀπέλαβεν· ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ τόξον εἰς κατασκοπὴν ἀπιόντι δίδωσι Μηριόνης Ὀδυσσεῖ [sc. Il. 10.260]· ὅπως δὲ τοῦτο ἀπέδωκεν, οὐκέτι ἐπεσημήνατο, διδοὺς τοῖς ἀκροαταῖς καθ’ ἑαυτοὺς λογίζεσθαι τὰ ἀκόλουθα. καὶ πολλὰ τοιαῦτα ἔστι γινῶναι παρ’ αὐτῶ· οὐ γὰρ μόνον, τί εἶπη, ἀλλὰ καὶ τί μὴ εἶπη, ἐφρόντισεν. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.449a *Porph.*)

Why does he [sc. Homer] not portray the characters washing their hands after dinner too? . . . It must also be noted that when he says ‘A maid poured water from a silver pitcher into a golden basin for them to wash their hands’, we will suppose that it is not for washing before dinner alone. For he simply describes the beginning [sc. of the action] and does not go into details. As a consequence, the water for washing their hands was there whenever they wanted to use it. For both the table and the other furniture were at their disposal so long as they needed them. In the same way he describes the feast of the Pylians upon Telemachus’ arrival, but not how they stood up and departed from the seashore. And he says that Athena in the guise of Mentès gave her spear to Telemachus, but not that she took it back when she left. Meriones gives his bow to Odysseus for the night expedition, but he [sc. Homer] does not indicate that he gives it back, thereby leaving it up to the readers to infer the consequences themselves. And many such instances can be noted in him [sc. Homer]. For he not only took care about what to say, but also what not to.

Porphyrus’ argument is repeated almost verbatim in a slightly fuller version of the scholion on another sacrifice scene (schol. HQR *Od.* 4.52). And practically the same thought is expressed in the much shorter scholion on *Od.* 17.4. (At dawn Telemachus gets ready to leave Eumaeus’ farm and to return to the city. He takes a spear.)

μόνον τοῦτο ὠνόμασε, τὸ δὲ ξίφος σεσιώπηκεν, ἐπειδὴ τὸ ξιφηφορεῖν αἰεὶ τε ἦν καὶ σύνηθεσ. ὡς τὸ πρὸ τῆς τροφῆς μὲν αἰεὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἀπονίπτεσθαι δηλοῖ, τὸ δὲ μετὰ τὴν τροφήν, ὡς ἀκόλουθον, ἡμῖν σιωπῆ κατέλιπεν ὑπονοεῖν. (schol. Q *Od.* 17.4; for the last clause cf. schol. bT *Il.* 24.163b *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] only named this [sc. the spear] and has omitted the sword, since people always carried swords and it was customary for them to do so. In the same way he always describes the washing of the hands before the meal only, that after the meal he leaves it up to us tacitly to understand as a consequence.

Porphry's comment contains in principle two arguments which are directly related: (i) it is not unusual for Homer to describe only the beginning of an action summarily and not the subsequent details or the completion; (ii) by deliberately leaving out certain elements, he tries to enlist the active cooperation of the reader. The former argument is quite common and recurs with some regularity.²² Equally relevant in the present context is the striking similarity of the second argument to modern *Rezeptionsästhetik*. The representatives of the so-called 'Konstanzer Schule' of reception theory would probably object to Porphyry's open intentionalism, but apart from that they would agree that it is the reader's task to fill in the gaps left in a text in the course of the cooperative activity called 'reading' (e.g. Iser 1975).

The basis of Porphyry's explanation can be found in a rhetorical theory which Ps. Demetrius in his work *On Style* expounds under the name of Theophrastus (cf. N. J. Richardson 1993a: 43):

ἐν τούτοις τε οὖν τὸ πιθανόν, καὶ ἐν ᾧ Θεόφραστος φησιν, ὅτι οὐ πάντα ἐπι᾽ ἀκριβείας δεῖ μακρηγορεῖν, ἀλλ' ἔνια καταλιπεῖν καὶ τῷ ἀκροατῇ συνιέναι καὶ λογίζεσθαι ἐξ αὐτοῦ· συνεῖς γὰρ τὸ ἔλληφθῆν ὑπὸ σοῦ οὐκ ἀκροατῆς μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μάρτυς σου γίνεται, καὶ ἅμα εὐμενέστερος. συνετὸς γὰρ αὐτῷ δοκεῖ διὰ σὲ τὸν ἀφορμὴν παρεσχηκότα αὐτῷ τοῦ συνιέναι, τὸ δὲ πάντα ὡς ἀνοήτῳ λέγειν καταγινώσκοντι ἔοικεν τοῦ ἀκροατοῦ. (Theophrastus fr. 696 Fortenbaugh = Ps. Demetr. *eloc.* 222)²³

Persuasiveness, therefore, resides in these [i.e. clarity and ordinary usage] and in what Theophrastus says: namely, that one ought not to elaborate everything in detail, but leave some things for the listener, too, to perceive and infer for himself; for when he perceives what you have left out, he not only is a listener but also becomes your witness, and in addition more favourably disposed. For he thinks himself perceptive, because you have provided him with the occasion to exercise perception. Saying everything as if to a fool gives the appearance of despising the listener.

²² Schol. *A Il.* 2.553a *Ariston*. (another dispute with Zenodotus on the 'unfulfilled promise' to portray Menestheus as efficient commander of troops, quoted in [Chapter 9](#)), *A Il.* 10.216a *Ariston*. (Nestor promises gifts to whoever will go and spy on the Trojans, but the fulfilment is not narrated), *A Il.* 10.571a *Ariston*. (ditto), cf. also *A Il.* 11.506a *Ariston*. (on the opposite case where the beginning is 'missing', here: Machaon's *aristeia*), sim. bT *Il.* 10.578b *ex.* (on the sacrifice with subsequent dinner); see Meinel (1915: 9–10). All in all, these are exceptions. Homer is wont to give a short summary and then to elaborate in detail (see [Chapter 9](#)).

²³ Aristotle already developed the notion that the orator should omit elements which are obvious. The audience will supply them for themselves (ἐὰν γὰρ ἤ τι τούτων γνώριμον, οὐδὲν δεῖ λέγειν· αὐτὸς γὰρ τοῦτο προστίθησιν ὁ ἀκροατής; *Arist. Rh.* 1357a17–19), cf. also Theon II 83.20–1 Spengel (παραλείπωμέν τε ὅσα συνυπακούεσθαι δοκεῖ), schol. *Dem.* 2.8 (p. 53 Dilts). A similar idea can be found without the theoretical framework in Callimachus (fr. 57.1 = SH 264.1). As for Theophrastus, Grube (1952: 175) speaks of '[p]erhaps the most original fragment'; see also Nannini (1986: 63–4).

The fact that Theophrastus is talking about rhetoric and not about literature is of minor importance, because literary criticism and rhetoric are closely interrelated in antiquity (Introd. page 6). In Theophrastus' account the stimulation of the listener's mental effort leads to an even stronger bond than in Porphyry's version. The listener is pleased to receive an opportunity to display his inferential abilities (λογίζεσθαι).²⁴ As a consequence he becomes a witness instead of a mere listener, that is, an active participant in the lawsuit who can fill in the gaps in the account known to the jury. The similarities between Theophrastus and Porphyry, however, outweigh any differences of emphasis. Both see the reader not as a passive recipient of the text, but as one who actively participates in the rather complex process of making meaning. In a world which tends to put greater emphasis on the author as the producer of literature, the importance of Theophrastus' and Porphyry's position can hardly be exaggerated.²⁵

OTHER APPLICATIONS OF THE EXPRESSION ΚΑΤὰ Τὸ ΣΙΩΠῶΜΕΝΟΝ

Against the backdrop of the Strabo passage discussed above, it is hardly surprising that the interpretative principle can be found in non-Homeric scholia too. Some notes are similar to the ones discussed above.²⁶ But the scholia on dramatic poets contain several notes such as the following:

κατὰ σιωπῶμενον ὑπανεχώρησαν ὁ Ἐτεοκλῆς καὶ ὁ ἄγγελος. (schol. A. *Th.* 719g)²⁷

Eteocles and the messenger left the stage tacitly.

While most modern commentators posit the messenger's exit in line 652 (Taplin 1977a: 156), this critic has the two leave together after line 719. More importantly, he draws attention to the fact that the exit is not explicitly indicated in the text of *Seven against Thebes* in the form of an

²⁴ One of the anonymous referees has made the attractive suggestion that Aristotle's concept of συλλογίζεσθαι (as used in *Po.* 1448b16) already presupposes the notion that the poet enlists the reader's cooperation. Theophrastus apparently fleshed out an idea inherent in the writings of his teacher and predecessor. The notion that the reader takes pleasure in actively participating in producing the meaning of the passage recurs, in slightly different contexts, in *Ps.Long. subl.* 7.2 (on the effect of the sublime) and *Quint.* 8.2.21 (on understanding deliberately obscure language). I owe these references to the same anonymous referee.

²⁵ It should, however, be repeated that the author retains the main responsibility in both Theophrastus and Porphyry. The only pre-modern critic who seems to have shifted the responsibility fully to the reader is Plutarch, in his treatise *De audiendis poetis* (see Konstan 2004).

²⁶ Cf. schol. *Thuc.* 3.22.7 (Thucydides did not previously mention the order to the 300 soldiers, so it must have happened κατὰ τὸ σιωπῶμενον), schol. *Theocr.* 4.50–1b (Battus tacitly left the scene [and returned to it]), perhaps also schol. A. *PV* 663 (probably corrupt).

²⁷ See W. G. Rutherford (1905: 109 n. 11), who, however, overlooks the present scholion.

implicit stage direction.²⁸ The problem with this type of explanation is that it is also extended to passages which do prepare for the imminent exit (or entrance) of a character. In schol. E. *Med.* 214, for example, the critic seems to be using the known phrase in the sense that the nurse does not utter an explicit exit line (or the like) when she actually leaves the stage after line 203, although she expressed her intention to do so in 184. Contrary to the examples discussed above, her exit is not really left implicit, but she herself does not explicitly mention it.²⁹ Needless to say, such notes cater to a reading audience. The spectators would have been immediately aware of silent entrances and exits.

Another note on a dramatic text shows that at least one critic used the phrase κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον in the sense of ‘what is not presented on stage’:

κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον ἐσφάγη ἡ Πολυξένη. ἔθος γὰρ τοῖς τραγικοῖς τὸ μὴ ἐπιΐψει τῶν θεατῶν ἀναιρεῖν· ἠνιάθησαν γὰρ ἄν ὄρωντες τοιαύτην θέαν. (schol. E. *Hec.* 484)

Polyxena is killed backstage [lit. tacitly]. For it was the habit of the tragedians not to have characters killed in full view of the audience, because they would have been distressed by such a spectacle.³⁰

This is a curious and perhaps unique extension of the phrase’s meaning, for the sacrifice of Polyxena is of course mentioned in the text of the play (e.g. 188–90). The closest parallel for this adaptation are passages where σιωπᾶν means ‘not to present on stage’: argum. A. *Ag.* 16 (on Cassandra being killed backstage). Similarly, the expression κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον can be used in order to explain how a character learns something that is not expressly mentioned in the text or presented on stage: Menelaus has been informed κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον about the events inside the house (i.e. the kidnapping of Hermione: schol. E. *Or.* 1554); Strepsiades learned the elaborate rain theory (not mentioned elsewhere in the play: Dover 1968: *ad loc.*) κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον from Socrates (schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1279a), and the same is said to apply to the question regarding the size of the sea (schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1290).³¹

²⁸ That is, ‘anything said or done before an entry or an exit which prepares for that event or has a bearing on it’ (Taplin 1977a: 9–10), not an explicit stage direction in the margin. For notes on entrances and exits in general see Chapter 19.

²⁹ See Chapter 19 with the parallel case of the silent entrance of the chorus in *Orestes* (schol. E. *Or.* 132); a similar explanation applies to the silent entrances discussed in schol. E. *Or.* 725, 850, *Ph.* 694, Ar. *Nu.* 195a (see Chapter 19).

³⁰ For the dramaturgical convention not to present killings on stage see Chapter 19.

³¹ Cf. also schol. HVind. 133 *Od.* 17.501 (on Penelope knowing about the presence of the beggar/Odysseus, discussed above). Yet another application is the curious note (schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1484)

The meaning of κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον in the scholion to *Hecuba* (quoted above) is perhaps best explained as an extension of Aristarchus' τοῦτο γινόμενον μὲν οὐ παρέστησεν, ὡς γινόμενον δὲ παραδίδωσιν (see above). The tragic poet does not present an event on stage, but has his characters refer to it beforehand and/or afterwards. Although this is not, strictly speaking, a σιωπώμενον, the critic does not hesitate to adapt the term to his purposes.

Latin commentators are familiar with the interpretative principle too. Donatus (*Eun.* 3.1.45, I 366.11 Wessn.) uses the Greek expression in the sense of 'what is not presented (or mentioned) on stage'. The expression is attested in its more regular meaning in Servius too, whether in Greek (*Aen.* 10.238, 10.543), in Latin translation (1.234: *per silentium intellegimus*) or in some other form (1.223, 2.668).

EXCURSUS: SELEUCUS AND THE MEANING OF ΚΑΤΑ Τὸ ΣΙΩΠΩΜΕΝΟΝ

A papyrus commentary on *Iliad* 21 (pap. XII Erbse, second century AD) contains among other things a passage from Seleucus' treatise 'On Aristarchus' critical signs' in which he twice uses the expression under discussion. The commentator (Ammonius?) first gives Aristarchus' reasons for athetising *Il.* 21.290: in his speech to Achilles, Poseidon says 'I (and Athena)' instead of 'Poseidon', the implication being that Achilles recognises them through their human disguise (cf. 21.285), which Aristarchus finds unacceptable.³² The papyrus continues:

πρὸς ταῦτα λέγει Σέλευκος ἐν τῷ(1) γ' Κατὰ τῶν Ἀριστάρχου σημείων ὅτι ἀνδράσιν ὠμοιωμένοι ὁμως κατὰ τ[ὸ] σ[ιωπώμενον] διὰ τῆς δεξιώσεω[ς] ἴχνη τοῦ θεοῦ εἶναι παρέχον[τ]αι [ἐ]πει πῶς εἰρήκασι "τ[ο]ῖω γάρ τοι νῶϊ θεῶν ἐπιταρρόθω [εἰμ]έν" [21.289]; καὶ [ὕ]πὸ Διὸς δὲ κατὰ τὸ σ[ιωπώμενον] ἐπέμφθησαν. (schol. pap. *Il.* 21.288–90, p. 108 Erbse)

To this Seleucus responds in book 3 of his 'On Aristarchus' critical signs' that they [sc. Poseidon and Athena], though in the guise of men, nevertheless implicitly leave a trace of their being gods by means of their greeting. For why did they say 'for such helpers are we two from the gods'? And they were sent out by Zeus tacitly (or implicitly).

The second instance of κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον is in line with the examples seen so far. Zeus' dispatch of Poseidon and Athena is not explicitly

which argues that Hermes (i.e. the herm in front of Socrates' house) advises Strepsiadēs by κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον throwing back his head (ἀναεύειν, as a sign of denial).

³² Ammonius' reports a second reason, see the longer treatment of the passage in [Chapter 13](#).

mentioned in the text and therefore happened ‘tacitly’. The former instance, however, must be understood in the sense that, by means of their greeting, the gods ‘implicitly’ indicate their divine status. The regular application of the expression assumes that it is the poet who ‘remains silent’, whereas here it is the character Poseidon, and the inference must be made by Achilles, not the reader. In other words, the expression κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον no longer indicates a narratorial omission, but is used in the looser sense ‘what the character indicates implicitly’, perhaps even ‘allusively’ (cf. schol. E. *Andr.* 1147). If the papyrus preserves Seleucus’ wording, the expression κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον seems to have been used in a looser sense at a comparatively early date, in any case no later than the date of the papyrus.³³

OTHER NARRATORIAL OMISSIONS

Reference was made above to the term παράλειψις: the narrator omits a certain piece of information and adduces it at a later point in his narrative by means of a completing analepsis. The scholia report that Homer is fond of this narrative device:

Ὅμηρικόν δὲ ἔθος τὸ ἕνια παραλείπειν καὶ ὕστερον φράζειν, “ἀλλ’ ἦδη με καὶ ἄλλοτε δουρὶ φόβησεν” [*Il.* 20.90]· “οὐκ ἐθέλεσκε μάχην ἀπὸ τείχεος ὀρνύμεναι” [*Il.* 9.353]· “πρῶτον [T, πρῶτην Hom.] μὲν ἐμοί τε καὶ Ἥρῃ στεῦτ’ ἀγορεύων” [*Il.* 5.832]. (schol. bT *Il.* 17.24–7 *ex.*, the examples only in T)

It is typical of Homer to omit single elements and to mention them later, <e.g. Aeneas speaking:> ‘but once before now he [sc. Achilles] drove me with his spear’, <or Achilles speaking: ‘so long as I was fighting among the Achaeans,> he [sc. Hector] was not minded to rouse battle far from the wall’, <or Athena speaking: ‘Ares, who> just recently spoke with me and Hera, and promised <he would fight against the Trojans>’.

The passage which triggered this comment is again Menelaus referring to Hyperenor’s abuse (cf. above). In the view of this critic, Hyperenor’s abuse was left out (παράλειπειν) in the former passage (*Il.* 14.516–19) and is now added by the narrator in accordance with his regular technique. The three examples which are meant to illustrate this are not exactly parallel to the passage under discussion, because all three refer to events that happened before the opening of the *Iliad* and as such could not be related by the narrator ὡς γινόμενον.³⁴ Apparently, ancient critics were not bothered by

³³ A parallel for σιωπώμενον in the looser sense ‘implicitly’ (though not in the full expression κατὰ τὸ σ.) can be found in schol. A *Il.* 3.224a *Ariston.* (on what is left implicit in Antenor’s statement). For the full expression cf. also Clement *Strom.* 5.14.111 (= Cleanthes fr. 560 SVF).

³⁴ The inclusion of the three examples is based on the idea that Homer left out most of the Trojan war, but added them to his narrative by means of analepsis (see [Chapter 1](#)).

this (see n. 13). In any case, the general point of the scholion is clear, and like comments occur elsewhere. (In the ‘marshalling of the troops’ in *Iliad* 4 Agamemnon visits his officers one by one.)

οὗς δὲ κατέλεξεν ἡ Ἑλένη [cf. *Il.* 3.172–242], τούτους πάλιν ἡμῖν δηλοῖ, καὶ ὁ παραλείπειν ἐκεῖ, τοῦτο ὧδε ἀναπληροῖ. (schol. bT *Il.* 4.251b ex.)³⁵

The characters listed by Helen he [sc. Homer] shows us again, and what he left out there, he thus fills in here.

The line under discussion (*Il.* 4.251) is the beginning of the *epipoleisis*. Some of the characters involved had been described by Helen in the *teichoscopia*. Homer designs the two scenes in such a way, the critic argues, that they are complementary. The point that two passages complement each other (πληροῦν and compounds) is also made elsewhere.³⁶ However, the word παραλείπειν in the scholia quoted above indicates that the narrator is seen as deliberately omitting elements in the former treatment in order to present them later. Schadewaldt recognised the importance of this narrative principle for Homer and gave a detailed description of what he called *stückweise Enthüllung* (‘piecemeal disclosure’).³⁷ If the narrator’s omission in the former place is noticeable, he creates suspense and whets the reader’s appetite to hear about the rest elsewhere. (Nestor informs Telemachus that, since he sailed straight home, he cannot tell him whether the others got home safely or not.)

δαιμονίως ὁ ποιητῆς ἐμβάλων εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν τῶν νόστων τὸν ἀκροατὴν ἀναρτῆ πάλιν, ἵνα τὰ λοιπὰ δι’ ἄλλου χωρίου δηλώσῃ. τὸ γὰρ ἐνὶ πάντων τῶν κατὰ τοὺς νόστους πραγμάτων ἐμπειρίαν περιθεῖναι οὐ πιθανόν· ἐν μέρει δὲ δηλουμένων τῶν συμβεβηκότων ἀξιόπιστον γίνεται τὸ πᾶν. (schol. EHMQ *Od.* 3.184)³⁸

³⁵ Cf. schol. MV *Od.* 24.1 (probably on the second *nekyia* as a whole): εὐκαίρως ἀναπληροῖ τὰ ἀλλοχοῦ παραλειφθέντα (‘with good sense for timing he [sc. Homer] fills in what has been left out elsewhere’).

³⁶ See schol. A *Il.* 1.591a *Ariston*. (Hephaestus’ story is told in two places which complement each other; sim. A *Il.* 15.18a *Ariston*.), bT *Il.* 4.319a ex. (Nestor’s ‘story’ of how he killed Ereuthalion is completed later, sc. 7.132–56), bT *Il.* 5.651 ex. (the story about Heracles’ sack of Troy is completed in book 20). These notes should probably be read against the general backdrop that a good poet is expected to avoid unnecessary repetition (see Chapter 9).

³⁷ Schadewaldt ([1938] 1966: 112–13 and *passim*). He also saw the relevance of schol. bT *Il.* 17.24–7 ex. to his interpretation (85 n. 2). Cf. also the notion that a poet ‘keeps things in store’ (ταμειέσθαι) for later (see Chapter 1).

³⁸ Partial suppression of information in order to create suspense is documented in rhetorical theory: δεῖ τὰ γενόμενα οὐκ εὐθύς λέγειν, ὅτι ἐγένετο, ἀλλὰ κατὰ μικρόν, κρεμνῶντα τὸν ἀκροατὴν καὶ ἀναγκάζοντα συναγωνιᾶν (‘one should not immediately say of events that they happened, but reveal them only gradually, keeping the reader in suspense and forcing him to share the anguish’: Ps.Demetr. *eloc.* 216; see Meijering 1987: 198–9 and Chapter 5 on the emotional aspect of suspense).

It is extraordinary how the poet rouses the curiosity of the reader to want to hear about the homecomings and once again creates in him suspense, so that he can narrate the rest in another passage. For it is implausible to attribute to a single character knowledge of everything that happened during the returns. To reveal the events in instalments lends credibility to the whole poem.

The gap left by Nestor in his account will be filled in by Menelaus in book 4, with the reader eagerly waiting for it. A similar distribution of labour applies to the report of what happened during Menelaus' absence from Sparta:

αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ κεφάλαιον φράζει· τὸ δὲ κατὰ μέρος περὶ Εἰδοθέας καὶ Πρωτέως καὶ τῆς ἐνταῦθα διατριβῆς αὐτὸς ὁ παθῶν διηγῆσεται. πιθανῶς δὲ συμμεμέρισται τὰ τῆς διηγῆσεως. (schol. Q *Od.* 3.301)

He [sc. Nestor] just gives a summary. It will be the character directly involved [sc. Menelaus] to narrate the details <of his encounter with> Eidothea and Proteus and his stay there. The narrative is split up in a plausible way.

In both cases the critic praises the piecemeal disclosure of information in the Homeric epics. It makes for good reading, not least because such a distribution is plausible, each character covering the part he or she knows best.³⁹ In addition, the avoidance of (potentially tedious) uniformity (Chapter 9) or long stretches of narrative (Chapter 5) is likely to play a role as well. The verb *συμμεμέρισται* in the Odyssean scholion above may well be related to *μερισμός* in the sense of 'distribution of material', which distinguishes the good orator (D.H. *Is.* 3, p. 95.20 U.-R.). Cognate terms fulfil the same function elsewhere: the story of Peisander and Hippolochus is distributed over two places in Homer's account (schol. bT *Il.* 11.123–5 *ex.*), as are Menoetius' instructions in Nestor's speech to Patroclus (schol. T *Il.* 11.785–9 *ex.*). What is more, both the bT-scholion on *Il.* 17.24–7 (quoted above) and Eustathius describe the piecemeal disclosure and the temporary omission connected with it as a typical feature of Homeric narrative technique.⁴⁰

³⁹ The notion that distribution of data over several characters results in plausibility also turns up in tragic scholia (schol. *S. Ant.* 155). The overall result can be the same as in the case of piecemeal disclosure in a narrative text: κατὰ βραχὺν δὲ παρεμβάλλει ἡμῖν ὁ ποιητὴς τὰ τῆς ἱστορίας τοῦ Οἰδίποδος ('the poet gradually inserts for us the elements of Oedipus' story': schol. *S. OT* 33, cf. 8, 14). The opposite principle is observed by Euripides, who discloses his plots εὐθύς (Arist. *Rh.* 1415a18–20, also schol. *S. Aj.* 38a); see Meijering (1987: 193, 198).

⁴⁰ See Eustathius 860.15 = 3.246.3–4: κατ' ἔθος Ὁμήρου, εἰωθότος διαφόροις τόποις μερίζειν τὰς ἱστορικός ἀκολουθίας ('in accordance with Homer's habit, who is wont to distribute the sequence of his story over different places'); see van der Valk (II: xxxvi with n. 8) and Keizer (1995: Index III, s.v. μερίζω).

CONCLUSION

The notion that a (poetic) text contains 'gaps' is widespread among ancient literary critics. They repeatedly draw attention to relevant examples and explain to the reader which pieces of information have been left implicit. More than once the Alexandrian scholars appear to disagree on whether a passage that contains such a gap is genuine. A general rule does not seem to apply. Aristarchus, for example, more often defends, but on occasion also rejects relevant passages. But most scholars seem to be willing to accept it as a standard feature of a (poetic) text.

The most commonly used expression for the mechanism whereby story elements are left implicit by the poet is *κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον* (lit. 'in silence, tacitly'), which by the time of Strabo seems to have the ring of fashionable jargon of literary criticism. Given the success of the expression, it is perhaps inevitable that it is sometimes used rather loosely with reference to virtually anything that is not expressly mentioned in the text. In a similar vein, some critics appear to have (mis-)used it as a cure for all kinds of apparent or real problems.

At a comparatively early stage, probably no later than Aristotle, scholars realised that a 'lacunose' narrative requires and enlists the cooperation of a reader who fills the gaps by inference. The poet can put this to use by carefully selecting which pieces of information are to be left out or submitted at a later stage. The result of such a 'piecemeal disclosure' will at least be a more varied narrative, but may even have the desired effect of creating suspense among the readers.

Poetic licence

There is a general agreement among ancient authors and readers that a poet is not bound by the same constraints as other writers, but instead enjoys a certain liberty, which to this day is often referred to as ‘poetic licence’.¹ An early discussion comes from Isocrates, who expressly opposes poets and logographers:

τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ποιηταῖς πολλοὶ δέδονται κόσμοι·² καὶ γὰρ πλησιάζοντας τοὺς θεοὺς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις οἷόν τ’ αὐτοῖς ποιῆσαι καὶ διαλεγόμενους καὶ συναγόμενους οἷς ἂν βουλευθῶσι, καὶ περὶ τούτων δηλώσαι μὴ μόνον τοῖς τεταγμένοις ὀνόμασιν, ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν ξένοις, τὰ δὲ καινοῖς, τὰ δὲ μεταφοραῖς, καὶ μηδὲν παραλιπεῖν, ἀλλὰ πᾶσιν τοῖς εἶδεσιν διαποικίλαι τὴν ποίησιν· τοῖς δὲ περὶ τοὺς λόγους οὐδὲν ἕξεσσι τῶν τοιούτων κτλ. (Isocr. *Euag.* 9–10)

For many ornaments have been granted to poets. They can represent the gods as interacting with humans, conversing and fighting alongside whomsoever they wish, and they can portray this not only with conventional language but also with borrowings, new terms and metaphors, not neglecting anything but embellishing their composition with every figure. Such devices do not exist for prose writers.

Although Isocrates does not use what later became the standard term for ‘poetic licence’, ποιητικὴ ἄδεια or ἑξουσία (see below), his description contains several of the commonly used arguments: poets are not constrained to adhere closely to the principles of realism or even historicity.³ And they enjoy considerable stylistic liberties.⁴ Isocrates’ description of the poet

¹ On poetic licence in ancient literary criticism see Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 206, 342), Bachmann (1902: 26, 32–3), Lotz (1909: 33–42), Roemer (1912: 91, 134, 202, 210–13), Meinel (1915: 29), Roemer (1924: 209, 225–6, 228, 233), van der Valk (1964: 85 n. 7), Meijering (1987: 62–7), Porter (1992: 70–1), Papadopoulou (1998).

² Cf. Thuc. 1.10.3, 1.21.1.

³ Cf., in addition to the previous note, Aristotle’s distinction between the tasks of a poet and a historiographer respectively (*Po.* 1451a36–b5), which, however, does not expressly speak of ‘poetic licence’.

⁴ For the stylistic liberties of poetry, which will not be further explored in the present chapter, cf. Arist. *Po.* 1460b11–13 (also 1457b35–58a7). The topic is regularly discussed in the scholia, see e.g. schol. *A II.*

is largely negative, because he wants to emphasise the difficulties that a logographer faces, but the arguments themselves are in line with those of others. In the scholia, ‘poetic licence’ is mainly used in order to defend the poets against criticism. The critics repeatedly defend poets against the objections of readers who are slightly more literal-minded and prone to scrutinise the text for (apparent or real) contradictions and inconsistencies (cf. *Introd.* page 11). Why are the nails of Agamemnon’s sword silver in *Il.* 2.45 but golden in 11.29–30?⁵

ὅτι τὸ Ἀγαμέμνωνος (ξίφος) νῦν μὲν “ἀργυρόηλον”, ἐν ἄλλοις δὲ [cf. 11.29–30] χρυσόηλον. καὶ Εὐριπίδης “σφυρῶν σιδηρᾶ κέντρα” εἰπὼν [*Ph.* 26] ἐν ἄλλοις φησὶ [*Ph.* 805]: “χρυσοδέτοις περόναις”. τὰ τοιαῦτα δὲ κυρίως οὐ λέγεται, ἀλλὰ κατ’ ἐπιφορὰν ἔστι ποιητικῆς ἀρεσκείας. (schol. *A Il.* 2.45a *Ariston.*)

<The diple,> because in the present passage Agamemnon’s sword is ‘studded with silver nails’, whereas elsewhere it is studded with golden nails. Euripides too says ‘iron spikes through the ankles’ [sc. of Oedipus] and ‘gold-bound pins’ in another passage. Such things are not to be taken literally, but are indicative of poetic licence on impulse.

As the parallel from Euripides is intended to make clear, inconsistencies such as these are only superficial. They are typical of poetry and need not worry a reader.⁶ It is worth mentioning, however, that in his note on the passage from book 11 Aristarchus considered a second explanation of the difference between the two passages that mention Agamemnon’s sword:

ὅτι νῦν μὲν χρυσόηλον, ἐν ἄλλοις δὲ [sc. 2.45] “ἀργυρόηλον”. ἦτοι κατ’ ἐπιφορὰν ἢ διὰ τὴν ἀριστ(ε)ίαν κοσμεῖ διαφορωτέρᾳ πανοπλίᾳ. (schol. *A Il.* 11.30 *Ariston.*)

<The diple,> because now <the sword> is studded with golden nails, elsewhere it is ‘studded with silver nails’. Either on impulse⁷ or because of the *aristeia* he [sc. Homer] equips <Agamemnon> with different armour.

8.178a *Hrd.* (on word formation), schol. *A Il.* 22.28a *Hrd.* (on morphology) and the examples given in Chapter 9 n. 84.

⁵ This is, in fact, related to the topic ‘internal inconsistency’, which is not explicitly discussed by Isocrates.

⁶ One critic considered the possibility that the variation in Euripides is deliberate in order to do justice to two different versions of the story: ἴσως οὖν διαφόρου οὐσης τῆς ἱστορίας οὕτως ἀμφοτέραις συγκατατίθεται (schol. *E. Ph.* 805: ‘Perhaps, because there is a different <version of> the story, he [sc. Euripides] thus [sc. by referring here to golden pins] attempts to agree with both’).

⁷ The phrase κατ’ ἐπιφορὰν here (and in schol. *A Il.* 2.45a *Ariston.*, quoted above) means ‘on impulse, for no particular reason’ (van der Valk 1964: 230 n. 650; also 1963: 523 n. 572, Meijering 1987: 66). See also schol. *D Il.* 2.494 quoted below. It is perhaps worth mentioning that in schol. *T Il.* 24.699 *ex.* the same phrase κατ’ ἐπιφορὰν refers to the rhetorical figure *epiphora* (Lausberg [1960] 1990: § 631), see Erbse *ad loc.*

That is to say, the higher worth of gold as compared with silver may also be due to the fact that the elaborate arming scene (11.15–46) is intended to prepare for the *aristeia* of the commander-in-chief Agamemnon.⁸ But at the same time Aristarchus considers the possibility that it may have no particular meaning and simply be an instance of poetic licence (κατ' ἐπιφωρόν, see n. 7). The question of Agamemnon's sword is also addressed in schol. bT *Il.* 1.37c *ex.* (on Apollo's epithet ἄργυρότοξος, 'of the silver bow'). This critic argues (without recourse to 'poetic licence') that Homer does not seem to make a difference between silver and gold, for which the sword is adduced as proof.⁹

Aristarchus repeatedly argues that one must not scrutinise poets like Homer too rigorously. Many of the alleged inconsistencies are only apparent, because they are due to poetic licence. Homer can call both Cassandra and Laodice 'the most beautiful daughter of Priam'; the use of the superlative in both cases does not create an inconsistency (οὐ μάρχεται).¹⁰ Likewise, it is unobjectionable that Odysseus' companion Leucus (i.e. probably from Ithaca) appears to be fighting among Ajax' troops (from Salamis).¹¹ And some critics apparently saw a contradiction between Thetis not knowing about Patroclus' death and her predicting that Achilles would lose the best of the Myrmidons (18.63–4 vs. 18.9–11), which was then explained by others as an instance of poetic licence.¹²

In a similar vein, Aristarchus cautions against too strict an application of the question 'How does character X know?', with its potential implications for the issue of 'paralepsis' (the narrator intrudes with his superior knowledge upon the focalisation of the character, see Chapter 4). Aristarchus' remarks are occasioned by *Od.* 3.72–4 and 9.253–5, which are identical (and describe piracy). Verbatim repetition of identical lines was generally looked at with suspicion by ancient scholars, and they often tried to decide which of the two passages was genuine and which was interpolated (e.g.

⁸ The underlying assumption is that elaborate descriptions have a preparatory function for a subsequent scene of high importance (see also Chapter 9). On the preparation of an *aristeia* in particular see schol. A *Il.* 11.17a *Ariston.* (sim. T), T *Il.* 13.241 *ex.*

⁹ Perhaps this critic addresses concerns as to whether Apollo, as a god, should not be equipped with the most precious metal.

¹⁰ See schol. A *Il.* 13.365a *Ariston.*, which, however, does not explicitly refer to 'poetic licence'. A similar explanation of the Homeric superlative is given in schol. A *Il.* 20.233a *Ariston.* (Lehrs [1833] 1882: 342). See also the *testimonia* collected by Erbse (*ad* schol. A *Il.* 13.365a *Ariston.*).

¹¹ See schol. T *Il.* 4.491b *ex.*: Ἀριστάρχος δὲ ὡς ποιητικὸν παραιτεῖται ('Aristarchus excuses it as poetic').

¹² See schol. A *Il.* 18.63–4 *ex.* Another example lurks perhaps in the corrupt schol. T *Il.* 12.162a' *ex.*: a poet can use the phrase 'to clap his thighs' even in the case of an armed soldier, whose thighs are covered. This would then be an instance of poetic licence concerning factual errors, on which see also Galen 3.169 Kühn.

Lührs 1992). In the present case, Aristophanes of Byzantium preferred the lines in the former passage (spoken by Nestor to Telemachus), Aristarchus in the latter (Polyphemus to Odysseus and his companions). Aristophanes had apparently argued that a character such as Polyphemus could not know anything about piracy and its particulars. Aristarchus objected that Telemachus and Peisistratus do not display the behaviour of pirates (i.e. it would be inappropriate for Nestor to raise the issue) and added, with respect to Polyphemus knowing about piracy:

δοτέον δέ, φησι, τῷ ποιητῇ τὰ τοιαῦτα. καὶ γὰρ ναῦν αὐτὸν παράγει εἰδότα, “ἀλλά μοι εἶφ’, ὅπῃ ἔσχες ἰὼν εὐεργέα νῆα” [*Od.* 9.279], καὶ συνήσιν Ἑλληνίδα φωνήν. (schol. HMQR *Od.* 3.71)

The poet, he [sc. Aristarchus] says, must be allowed such things. For he also presents him [sc. Polyphemus] knowing about the ship, ‘But tell me where you put your well-built ship when you came here?’, and he understands the Greek language.

Poetry has its own rules, which include the convention that characters know and understand things which, strictly speaking, they cannot know, for example the language of foreigners.¹³ This pertains even to characters who live in complete isolation, such as the Cyclopes.¹⁴ Consequently, readers must not apply too literal a reading to the text.

A T-scholion explains why such apparent inconsistencies usually go unnoticed by the reader. (In his fight with the river god Scamander Achilles is submerged up to his shoulders (*Il.* 21.269). What happened to the other warriors on the plain?)

ὄλον τὸ πεδῖον πέλαγος γεγενημένον ὑπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἔδειξεν ὥστε καὶ τοὺς ὤμους ἐπικλύζειν τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως. καὶ πρὸς μὲν ἀλήθειαν ταῦτα οὐ πιθανά· τί γὰρ ἐπράττετο περὶ τοὺς ἄλλους στρατιώτας; ἀπίθανον γὰρ μόνον τὸν Ἀχιλλέα ὑπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ ταῦτα πάσχειν. ὡς δὲ ἐν ποιήσει παραδεκτά. καὶ οὕτω τῇ ἀπαγγελίᾳ κατῶρθωται, ὥστ’ οὐδ’ ἀνίησι τὸν ἀκροατὴν ἐπιλογισασθαί τι τῶν λεγομένων, εἰ ἀληθὲς ἦν ἢ μή· (schol. T *Il.* 21.269a ex.)

¹³ It is a literary convention, still very common in modern literature, that in fiction characters of different nationalities simply use the same language. Perhaps the earliest passage that expressly justifies this is *h.Aphr.* 113–16, where the ‘Phrygian princess’ (alias Aphrodite) explains to Anchises why she understands his language. However, the literary convention still applies, in that they both speak Greek in the hymn (as do the Trojans in Homer).

¹⁴ The relevance of Aristarchus’ former example for poetic licence, Polyphemus knowing about Odysseus’ ship, is more difficult to detect. The point seems to be that Polyphemus knows about Odysseus’ ship, which he did not mention, although the Cyclopes are no seafarers themselves (*Od.* 9.125–9). If Polyphemus knows about ships, Aristarchus seems to argue, he might just as well know about pirates.

He [sc. Homer] showed that, caused by the river, the entire plain had become a sea, with the result that it submerges Achilles' shoulders. <Problem:> in terms of realism this is not plausible. For what did he do with the other soldiers? It is unrealistic that only Achilles should suffer this from the river. <Solution:> it must be admitted as poetic [i.e. poetic licence]. And <the minor implausibility> is ironed out by the narrative in such a way that it does not even allow the reader to examine whether it was realistic or not.

A good narrative puts a spell on the reader (see [Chapter 5](#)) and does not give him the freedom to calculate from hindsight whether everything was in perfect order. To do so is foreign to the proper rules of reading poetry. As a consequence, the poet can get away with minor inconsistencies such as the one discussed in the scholion.

So far all the examples in this chapter have had to do with (apparent) inconsistencies and contradictions within the text itself. A related phenomenon comes into play when the passage under discussion seems to contradict another text. This type of comment is more at home in scholia to post-Homeric poetry which discuss the problem of whether or not a poet is bound to follow the traditional myth.¹⁵ This must be read against the background of the numerous scholia which make the criticism that the present passage is *παρ' ἱστορίαν*, i.e. 'runs against the (traditional) myth'.¹⁶ For example, in *Oedipus at Colonus* 712–15 Sophocles attributes the introduction of horsemanship in Colonus to Poseidon, whereas traditional myth connects the eponymous Κολωνὸς Ἴππεύς ('Colonian Horseman', *OC* 59) with the mortal Adrastus (one of the 'Seven against Thebes'):

αὐτόθι φασὶ Ποσειδῶνα πρῶτον ἵππους ζεῦξαι καὶ χαλινῶσαι· καὶ ταῦτα δὲ ἐπὶ θεραπείᾳ φησὶ οἰκείας ὁ Σοφοκλῆς· ὁ γὰρ Κολωνὸς Ἴππεύς ὠνομάσθη παρ' ᾧς ἐξεθέμην αἰτίας διὰ τὸν Ἄδραστον· ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ σεμνότερον ἄγει τὸ πρᾶγμα, τῇ ποιητικῇ καταχρώμενος ἀδεία. (schol. S. *OC* 712)

Here [sc. in Colonus], they say, Poseidon for the first time yoked and bridled horses [i.e. invented horsemanship]. And Sophocles says this in order to please his home town. For the 'Colonian Horseman' was named because of Adrastus for the

¹⁵ This is less frequent in Homeric scholia because the Homeric version is usually considered the standard version from which later poets may or may not depart (but see below). An early exception to this rule is Herodotus (2.116), who assumes that Homer knew another version of the myth (Helen in Egypt), but preferred not to use it in his narrative.

¹⁶ The evidence is collected by Elsperger (1907–10: 101–7), see also Papadopoulou (1998: 214–22). Add to their examples schol. Ar. *Lys.* 785a (on the myth of Meilanon and Atalante), *Pl.* 210a (on the genealogy of Lynceus), and (from scholia to non-dramatic texts) schol. Pi. *O.* 4.31b (quoted below). Due to the broad semantic range of the word ἱστορία, the phrase παρ' ἱστορίαν can also indicate deviations, for example, from historical (schol. Pi. *P.* 7.9b, Ar. *Eq.* 794b, *Nu.* 624a.β, 830a) or factual truth (schol. [E.] *Rh.* 508, Ar. *Pax* 1078b).

reasons I gave.¹⁷ But he [sc. Sophocles] makes the story more noble making use of his poetic licence.

As a poet, Sophocles is not forced to stick to the traditional myth, but, using his poetic licence, can change the myth in order to please his home town (cf. schol. S. *OC* 457; Heath 1987: 64 with n. 49, also schol. Hes. *Th.* 1). Similarly, Pindar makes Adrastus instead of Cleisthenes the founder of the Pythian games at Sicyon ‘using his poetic licence in order to make the *agon* more famous’ (schol. Pi. *N.* 9.20).

Elsewhere the question is discussed of the extent to which a myth may be changed. Sophocles has Agamemnon die in the bath (S. *El.* 445), whereas he died at table according to Homer (*Od.* 4.535):

ἥρκει γὰρ τὰ ὅλα συμφωνεῖν τῷ πράγματι· τὰ γὰρ κατὰ μέρος ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ἕκαστος ὡς βούλεται πραγματεῦσασθαι εἰ μὴ τὸ πᾶν βλάπτῃ τῆς ὑποθέσεως. (schol. S. *El.* 445)¹⁸

[There is no real difference:] For it is enough if the general lines of the stories agree. As for the details, each <poet> has the licence to treat them as he likes, provided he does not do damage to the story at large.

This critic pleads for steering a middle course between tradition and innovation, as long as the core of the myth remains unaltered.¹⁹ Conversely, a scholion to Pindar appears to propagate complete freedom. Contrary to Apollonius of Rhodes (1.620–4), Pindar has Thoas buried on Lemnos and his daughter Hypsipyle found there an *agon* in Thoas’ honour:

δοκεῖ γὰρ παρ’ ἱστορίαν λέγειν· . . . ἀλλ’ ἔξεστι πλάττειν τοῖς ποιηταῖς ἄ βούλονται. (schol. Pi. *O.* 4.31b)²⁰

He [sc. Pindar] seems to contradict traditional myth . . . But poets can invent whatever they like.

¹⁷ This note does not seem to have been transmitted.

¹⁸ Cf. schol. S. *El.* 539 (without explicit reference to poetic licence). Meijering (1987: 244 n. 23) traces this use of ἐξουσία (‘licence’) back to Diphilus (fr. 29 K-A). Her interpretation of lines 4–5, however, needs to be corrected: ‘Diphilus’ reason for mentioning the ἐξουσία here is his parody of the tragic style, but the addition καὶ ποιεῖν seems to imply an equal liberty in subject-matter.’ This is unlikely, because tragic plots, unlike comic plots, are bound by tradition (see n. 19). In fact, the parallel adduced by Kassel and Austin (on Diphilus fr. 29), Antiphanes fr. 189 K-A, shows that the speaker in Diphilus is complaining about the fact that tragic poets can get away with whatever they have their characters say (λέγειν) or do (ποιεῖν).

¹⁹ For the demand not to alter the core of a myth see Arist. *Po.* 1453b22–6.

²⁰ According to schol. E. *Ph.* 1710 (quoted in Chapter 1), poets enjoy equally complete freedom in the way that they construct their plots. On a less sympathetic tone, a scholar claims that Pindar habitually does violence (βιάζεσθαι) to the myth when it serves his interests (schol. Pi. *I.* 1.15b, on the number of Geryon’s dogs; see also Chapter 12). Cf. the notion of πλάσματα τῶν προτέρων in Xenophanes fr. 1.22 West.

This remarkably modern-looking view has the authority of Eratosthenes (fr. I A 19 Berger). However, Eratosthenes' statement was, and was meant to be, 'a highly provocative declaration' (Pfeiffer 1968: 166). Overall, the opposite view of Strabo (1.2.3 = 16C.34–17C.5 Radt), who explicitly polemises against Eratosthenes, is likely to be more representative of the ancient outlook.²¹ As a general rule, ancient critics are concerned about deviations from traditional myth, but they are willing to concede a fair amount of poetic licence in that respect. Although the relevant comments mainly come from non-Homeric scholia (for the reason see n. 15), there are at least two exceptions. One of them is again related to Aristarchus and is of fundamental importance regarding method. The occasion is the list of gods who suffered harm from mortals which Dione uses in order to console her wounded daughter Aphrodite (*Il.* 5.385–404):

Ἄρισταρχος ἀξιοῖ τὰ φραζόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ μυθικώτερον ἐκδέχεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ποιητικὴν ἐξουσίαν, μηδὲν ἕξω τῶν φραζομένων ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ περιεργαζομένου. (schol. D *Il.* 5.385)

Aristarchus demands that what is said by the poet be taken as fiction, in accordance with the poetic licence, without <the readers> busying themselves with what is said in other texts [lit. not busying themselves with anything beyond the things said by the poet].

Aristarchus seems to be making two points here: (i) poets enjoy poetic licence, which allows them to incorporate things that are fantastic, unrealistic, improbable, unnatural, in short: fictional;²² (ii) each text must be interpreted by itself (cf. the famous principle Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν, 'to explain Homer out of Homer', which accurately represents Aristarchus' position, irrespective of whether he himself used this particular expression). The reader must not contrast one version of the myth with that found in another text.²³ Although the scholion does not expressly state

²¹ Eratosthenes' position is not entirely without parallels in antiquity, cf. Lucian *Conscr. Hist.* 8, or passages where poets claim their right to make use of fiction (e.g. *Ov. tr.* 2.353–60). See also the humorous complaints of comic poets about how much effort it takes to invent the plots, whereas tragedy can simply adopt them from traditional myth (e.g. Antiphanes fr. 189 K-A). Another provocation on Eratosthenes' part is his flippant remark about the attempts to localise the stations of Odysseus' wanderings (fr. I A 16 Berger), which promptly incurred the criticism of Polybius and Strabo (1.2.15 = 23C.28–24C.12 Radt).

²² Cf. Isocrates (quoted above) and schol. T *Il.* 2.6c *ex.* (ποιητικὸν δὲ τὸ πλάσσειν ὄνειρους 'it is typical of poets to invent dreams'); similarly, schol. A.R. 2.159–60b considers fiction a typical poetic device, but argues that it does not apply to the passage under discussion (οὐ ποιητικῶς δὲ ἀνέπλασε . . . ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος).

²³ In fact, Aristarchus even cautions against supplementing one version of the myth with elements taken from another source (e.g. schol. A *Il.* 8.368 *Ariston.*, discussed in Chapter 12). Against this backdrop, it is difficult to agree with the view that 'Aristarchus's advice has no sense at all unless it

what the targets of Aristarchus' criticism exactly said, it seems possible to reconstruct the gist of their criticism. They probably took exception to the implausibility of Ares, Hera and Hades being hurt by mortals and backed their argument by adducing other versions of the myths. Aristarchus held against them that, as a poet, Homer is at liberty to invent freely and moreover is not bound by other versions of the myth.²⁴

The second note is not really an exception at all. For it applies a similar argument to the *Odyssey*, the later of the two Homeric epics, as the notes on post-Homeric texts referred to above. How can Homer say that the winds live on the island of Aeolus (cf. *Od.* 10.19–22), if he himself assumes in the *Iliad* that they are located in Thrace (cf. *Il.* 23.229–30)?²⁵

εἴληπται μὲν τὸ πλάσμα πρὸς τὸν καιρὸν, διὸ οὐ δεῖ ζητεῖν τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀνεύθυνα τὰ τῶν μύθων. (schol. T *Od.* 10.20)

He [sc. Homer] has made use of an *ad-hoc* fiction; therefore one must not ask questions such as these. The domain of fiction is not open to investigation.

Similarly to Eratosthenes and the Pindaric scholion quoted above, this critic is ready to grant the poet virtually complete freedom in the way that he constructs his fictional story. This includes the liberty to do so in such a way that it best serves his needs in the present context.²⁶

Poetic licence is also mentioned in connection with a somewhat different type of 'freedom of speech'. Ancient critics wondered how Homer as a mortal dared to give instructions to the Muse in the opening line of the *Iliad* (ᾄειδε, 'sing') and did not rather pray for her support:²⁷

ὅτι κατὰ τὴν ποιητικὴν ἦτοι ᾄδειαν ἢ συνθήειαν λαμβάνει τὰ προστακτικὰ ἀντὶ εὐκτικῶν· καὶ γὰρ Ἡσίοδος φησι [*Op.* 2]· “δεῦτε Δί’ [A, δὴ T] ἐννέπετε”, καὶ Πίνδαρος [fr. 150 Sn.]· “μαντεύεο Μοῦσα”, καὶ Ἀντίμαχος ὁ Κολοφώνιος [fr. 1 Wyss = 1 Matthews]· “ἐννέπετε Κρονίδαο Διὸς μέγαλοιο θύγατρῆς”. (schol. AT *Il.* 1.1d ex.)

is directed against allegorising interpretations of the passage' (Porter 1992: 70, endorsed by Struck 2004: 21–2 with n. 3; cf. already Bachmann 1902: 34). The alleged focus on allegory is based on Eustathius' reading of the note (561.28–30 = 2.101.13–15). However, he added the crucial word ἀλληγορικῶς (van der Valk *ad loc.*), and it is questionable whether this does justice to Aristarchus' views (Pfeiffer 1968: 227 n. 1). Consequently, Aristarchus as the spokesman of an anti-allegorical faction (Struck 2004: *passim*) is at risk of being a – rhetorically effective – construction.

²⁴ Another solution is offered by schol. bT *Il.* 5.385a ex. It cleverly suggests that Homer escapes criticism by having Dione narrate the story (for the general idea cf. Chapter 4), so that he appears to be following traditional myth.

²⁵ The argument assumes, of course, that both epics are by the same poet (see Chapter 1). A scholion on the Iliadic passage (schol. T *Il.* 23.229 ex.) sees the problem differently. If the passage in the *Iliad* assumes that the winds act in their own power, the story about Aeolus must be a poetic fiction.

²⁶ On 'ad-hoc' invention' see also Chapter 12.

²⁷ The question is at least as old as Protagoras (VS 80 A 29 = Arist. *Po.* 1456b15–18).

<The diple,> because in accordance with poetic licence or habit he [sc. Homer] uses imperatives instead of optatives. Hesiod too says ‘<come> hither and tell of Zeus’ and Pindar ‘Give me an oracle, Muse’ and Antimachus of Colophon ‘Tell <me/us>, daughters of the Cronos-son, great Zeus.’

The apparent irregularity is explained with parallels from Hesiod, Pindar and Antimachus. The argument seems to be that, as poets, they are at a higher level and can dare say things which are off-limits to other mortals. Similarly, Aratus is said to be allowed to make the potentially presumptuous claim (*phain.* 5) that the human race descends from Zeus:

ἴσως μὲν ἐκ ποιητικῆς ταύτης ἀδείας τοὺς προγόνους καὶ προπάτορας ἡμῶν θεῶν παῖδας, ὡς τὸ “πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε” [*Il.* 1.544 etc.]. (schol. Arat. 5)

Perhaps based on this poetic licence he [sc. Aratus] <calls> our ancestors and forefathers children of the gods, similar to <Zeus being> ‘the father of men and gods’.

After all, Aratus’ claim, as an instance of poetic licence, has a good parallel in the Homeric epithet for Zeus ‘father of men and gods’.

Yet another type of ‘freedom of speech’ is meant when comic poets who criticise real people such as Cleon are said to make use of their ‘poetic licence’.²⁸ They can get away with this criticism, because it is cast in the form of (Old) Comedy, which, as a genre, entails a certain amount of freedom of speech.

In addition to the examples discussed so far, other comments appear to argue on the basis of ‘poetic licence’ without explicitly mentioning the term. Aristarchus explained the difference between the nails of Agamemnon’s sword in such a way that it is due to sheer impulse (κατ’ ἐπιφορὰν, cf. n. 7) on the part of the poet. It is there for no particular reason. The same explanation recurs in connection with the hotly disputed beginning of the Catalogue of Ships. Why does Homer begin the Catalogue with the Boeotians (*Il.* 2.494)? Among the many explanations we also find the following:

ὁ δὲ Ἀρίσταρχός φησιν “κατ’ ἐπιφορὰν αὐτὸν ἀπὸ Βοιωτῶν τὴν ἀρχὴν πεποιήσθαι· εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἀπ’ ἄλλου ἔθνους ἤρξατο, ἐζητούμεν ἂν τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς ἀρχῆς”. (schol. D *Il.* 2.494, cf. b *Il.* 2.494–877 *ex.*: κατὰ μὲν Ἀρίσταρχον οὐκ ἔκ τινος παρατηρήσεως)

But Aristarchus says ‘he [sc. Homer] began with the Boeotians on impulse. If he had begun with another tribe, we would search for the reason for the beginning.’

²⁸ See Platoniuss p. 3.5–8 Koster, *argum.* *A5 Ar. Av.* p. 3.6–8 Holwerda.

Homer had to begin somewhere, Aristarchus argues, and he did so ‘with no particular design’ (οὐκ ἔκ τινος παρατηρήσεως). The initial position of the Boeotians is coincidental, and it is pointless to speculate about the particular motivation, because Homer did not have one.

A similar argument can also be made with respect to particular motifs within the narrative. When, for example, Hector envisages the dreadful picture of Andromache as a prisoner of war who is obliged to carry water (*Il.* 6.457), this motif is said to be due not to any particular design within the context of the *Iliad* (e.g. as an external prolepsis that anticipates Andromache’s actual future). However, the critic argues, later poets took up the motif as such:

ὅτι κατὰ τὸ προστυχὸν οὕτως εἰπόντος Ὀμήρου οἱ νεώτεροι [fr. trag. adesp. 40b Kannicht-Snell] τῷ ὄντι ὑδροφοροῦσαν εἰσάγουσιν αὐτήν. (schol. *A Il.* 6.457a *Ariston.*)

<The diple,> because, although Homer mentions this [i.e. Andromache carrying water] at random, the younger poets actually present her on stage as a water-carrier.²⁹

The Homeric passage not only triggered the later treatment in tragedy, but the relevant poet(s) gave it a meaning that, Aristarchus argues, it does not have in Homer, but it is there ‘for no particular reason’. The implicit counterpart to this notion can be found in the next chapter on Authentication and the numerous notes on the motivation of scenes and motifs (Chapter 1).³⁰

CONCLUSION

The notion that poets enjoy particular liberties is very common in antiquity. Consequently, readers are repeatedly advised not to scrutinise a poetic text with microscopic precision (or even pedantry). Instead, they should allow for instances of poetic licence, especially if they concern relatively

²⁹ The notion that later poets took their cue from a passage in Homer is very common (for examples see Chapter 12; cf. Meijering 1987: 287 n. 215, with lit., to which add Sengebusch 1856: II 8). The scholion quoted above seems to be unique, however, in that it speaks of the ‘randomness’ of the motif in Homer.

³⁰ Lotz (1909: 33–4) rightly cautions against taking all comments of the type ποιητικόν/-ῶς to mean ‘with poetic licence’. But he offends against his own principle when he includes (36–7) schol. *A Il.* 19.365–8a¹ *Did.* (Aristarchus first obelised the four lines and then removed the *obeloi* ποιητικὸν νομίσαντα τὸ τοιοῦτο, which does not refer to poetic licence specifically). Another source of potential confusion is the cases where ποιητικόν + gen. means ‘producing X’ (e.g. schol. *T Il.* 5.316 ex.: ἀφανείας ποιητικὸν ‘producing invisibility’). For the notes where ποιητικός means ‘the poet’s’ (as opposed to ‘the character’s’) see Chapter 4.

unimportant details such as whether the nails of Agamemnon's sword are made of silver or gold. The same applies to minor implausibilities such as Achilles alone being submerged by Scamander, especially if the narrative is so sweeping that the reader does not have 'time' to go back and examine the story with scrutiny. As to the mythological details of the story, some critics appear to have applied a rather rigorous method of comparison and criticised poets for departures from traditional myth (παρ' ἱστορίων). Others, however, advocated poetic licence in that respect, too, as long as the salient points of the myth remained intact. In that connection, Aristarchus made the important methodological point that one version of the myth should not be played off (or supplemented by) the version found in another text. In addition, their special position as poets also allows them to use frank language in a way that is not open to the rest of us, for example, by 'giving orders' to divinities or in the form of comic attacks *ad hominem*. Finally, readers may on occasion be barking up the wrong tree when they try to find a particular reason for a phenomenon that is in fact random (e.g. the initial position of the Boeotians in the Homeric Catalogue of Ships).

Authentication

The preceding chapter on Poetic Licence has shown that ancient critics were willing to grant poets a considerable amount of freedom, for example with respect to fiction. Another group of scholia makes it clear, however, that poets should not altogether abandon the principle of a story which is probable, plausible and therefore trustworthy.¹ The poet must not lose his reader's trust, and this can be achieved if he authenticates his story.

According to a widely accepted notion, ancient and modern, the best possible source for an authentic report is the eyewitness. The Homeric epics themselves attest to this notion when the still unidentified beggar Odysseus praises Demodocus for his song about the Greek sufferings in the Trojan war (*Od.* 8.489–91). It is important to note the exact wording in this passage. Demodocus presents his song *as if* he had been an immediate witness (ὥς τέ που ἢ αὐτὸς παρεῶν) or relied on one (ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας). Odysseus and the Phaeacian audience know that Demodocus had not been on the Trojan battlefield, but his song gives the impression that he had. A similar concept recurs in the scholia.²

As several indications in the epics show, the lifetime of the Homeric narrator is considerably later than that of his characters.³ The scholia are fully aware of this temporal discrepancy and regularly comment that Homer and his characters display differences in lifestyle, technology, habits, etc. (usually focusing on the simple life of Homeric man, see M. Schmidt 1976). As a consequence, the Homeric narrator cannot literally be an eyewitness to the events. But he can create the impression that he had been present on the Trojan battlefield. (After the duel between Menelaus and Paris

¹ Cf. Aristotle's notion that events in a fictional plot ought to happen κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον ('in a probable or necessary sequence', *Po.* 1451a12–13, 27–8, 38).

² On authentication in the scholia see Griesinger (1907: 33–5), von Franz (1943: 14–15).

³ Cf. e.g. the well-known οἶοι νῦν βροτοί passages (e.g. *Il.* 5.304). Interestingly, a scholion on this passage (schol. bT *Il.* 5.304a ex.) argues that the very temporal distance renders the extraordinary achievements of Homer's characters plausible. For the notion that temporal distance renders things plausible see also schol. T *Il.* 16.328–9 ex. (on the Chimaera).

and the marshalling of the troops, for the first time in the course of the *Iliad* the Greek and Trojan armies clash in 4.446–538. One of the first casualties, the Trojan Simoeisius, provides the opportunity for comment on Homer's narrative technique in these matters.)

οὐ φιλὸν τοῦ τετρωμένου τὸ ὄνομα τέθεικεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν, δι' ἣν ἐκαλεῖτο Σιμοείσιος, καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς τὸ ὄνομα καὶ τὸ χωρίον, ἐν ᾧ ἔτέχθη, καὶ ἐπὶ τί πορευομένη ἡ μήτηρ ἔτεκεν αὐτόν, καὶ τὴν ἡλικίαν ἣν ἔχων ἀπέθανεν, ὅτι ἠῖθεος ἦν. ταῦτα δὲ εἶπε πολλὴν πίστιν ἐπιφέρων τῷ λόγῳ ὡς αὐτόπτης ὢν. (schol. bT *Il.* 4.473–9 *ex.*, cf. bT *Il.* 4.470 *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] has not simply mentioned the bare name of the wounded soldier, but also the reason why he was called Simoeisius [sc. after the river Simoeis], and his father's name and his place of birth and with what purpose his mother went there and gave birth to him and at what age he died; <for the text says [in line 474]> that he was a young man. He [sc. Homer] said these things, adding much trustworthiness to his account, as if he had been an eyewitness.

Characters such as Simoeisius enter the narrative only once and in order to be killed, but Homer nevertheless repeatedly provides a considerable amount of analeptic background information on these characters.⁴ This relative wealth of information is explained in the sense that it renders the narrative trustworthy and creates the impression of an eyewitness report. Although one might imagine a critical reader asking how Homer got to know all these things, the present critic argues in the opposite direction. The very wealth of information renders the account plausible.⁵ One is reminded of what Roland Barthes (1968) calls *l'effet de réel*: a high amount of apparently tangential or even irrelevant detail creates the very impression of actual reality. The ancient critic goes one step further, in that he explicitly compares the effect to that of an eyewitness report.

The same arguments occur elsewhere in the extant scholia. Terminologically, the most frequent expression has it that the poet provides information ὀξιοπίστως ('trustworthily'), and his 'autopsy', if mentioned at all, can

⁴ Modern scholarship has described this technique as 'ABC-scheme' (Armstrong 1958): part A summarises the scene (usually 'X killed Y'), part B provides background information on the victim, part C returns to the fight and describes it in more detail. In ancient scholarship schol. bT *Il.* 11.104–5 *ex.* argues that this middle part (B), which mentions 'race or destiny or type of death' (ἡ γένος ἢ τύχην ἢ σχῆμα πτώματος), contributes to the poem's variety (ποικιλία, on which see Chapter 9). And schol. bT *Il.* 13.171 *ex.* praises Homer for narrating in some detail the death of the distinguished (ἐπίσημοι) among the characters. On part B see also schol. T *Il.* 11.221b *ex.* (n. 7 below), bT *Il.* 11.243c *ex.*, which both underline the pathos that such background information on the slain warriors creates (an idea further developed by Griffin 1976).

⁵ Elsewhere (schol. bT *Il.* 19.407b *ex.*) the potential implausibility of a speaking animal (Achilles' horse Xanthus) is said to be mitigated by making the gods responsible for it.

also be expressed as an apparent presence (ὡς παρών/παρατυγχάνων, for examples see below).⁶

Similarly to the scholion quoted above, other notes argue that Homer renders his narrative authentic by means, for example, of the analeptic background information on minor characters who enter the narrative only once.⁷ Comparable is also the detailed analepsis about the making of Ajax' shield.⁸ If these notes mostly build on the wealth of information given in the poem, others focus on the information being very specific, for example in terms of localisation. When at the beginning of *Iliad* 7 Athena and Apollo leave their respective places on Mt Olympus and on the Trojan citadel in order to intervene, Homer has them specifically meet 'beside the oak tree' (παρὰ φηγῶ), which ancient scholars considered one of the landmarks on the Trojan battlefield. This is seen as a sign of trustworthiness.⁹ Similarly, during Agamemnon's *aristeia*, the Trojans' flight is painstakingly described as past the tomb of ancient Ilus and the fig tree, until they finally reach the Scaean gates and the oak tree there (*Il.* 11.166–70).

ἀξιόπιστως τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν τόπων ὥσει παρών τοῖς γινομένοις φησίν. (schol. T *Il.* 11.167 *ex.*)

Trustworthily he [sc. Homer] mentions the names of the places, as if he were present at the events.

Again it is the precision and explicitness of the different places which lends trustworthiness to the account and creates the impression of autopsy. The same notion is further developed in a remarkable scholion which

⁶ A rather different type of as-if presence is meant when Aristotle recommends that the dramatist envisage the scenes of his play as vividly as possible (*Po.* 1455a22–3). The main purpose here is to exclude internal inconsistencies. On the poet's 'autopsy' see also schol. bT *Il.* 4.541 *ex.* (on the anonymous witness mentioned in the Homeric text): θεατὴν ἑαυτῷ ἀνέπλασε τῆς μάχης, ὑπὸ θεῶν δδηγούμενον, ἵνα ἀθορύβως σκοπῆ καὶ ἐν μέσοις τοῖς μαχομένοις, καὶ ἵνα ἀκριβῶς θεῶτο ('he [sc. Homer] created for himself a spectator of the battle who is led by the gods, so that he could inspect <the action> undisturbed even in the middle of the fighters and could watch with accuracy').

⁷ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 11.221b *ex.* (on the Trojan Iphidamas, son of Antenor and Theano, but the comment speaks about such passages in general), also bT *Il.* 17.575–7 *ex.* (on Andromache's brother Podas, with the remarkable phrase ὡς ἀνιχνεύσας τὴν ἀλήθειαν, 'as if tracking [like a dog] the truth', that is, Homer spares no pains to make his narrative accurate and therefore trustworthy) and bT *Il.* 21.34b *ex.* (on Lycæon; here the completeness of the account renders it plausible).

⁸ Cf. *Il.* 7.220–3 with schol. bT *Il.* 7.220a *ex.*

⁹ Cf. *Il.* 7.22 with schol. AbT *Il.* 7.22b *ex.* (ἀξιόπιστως ἔθηκε καὶ τὸν τόπον, 'trustworthily he [sc. Homer] also mentioned the place'); a strong interest in questions of localisation can also be deduced from the various scholia on what 'left' or 'right' in the text means (e.g. schol. A *Il.* 12.239 *Ariston.*, bT *Il.* 13.675 *ex.*) and from monographs such as Aristarchus' περὶ τοῦ ναυστόθμου (see the *rest.* collected by Erbse on schol. A *Il.* 10.53b *Ariston.*), on which see Goedhardt (1879) and Intro. page 16 with n. 58.

expressly discusses the effect of the details on the reader (quoted in [Chapter 5](#)). (After borrowing Aphrodite's famous love-charm, Hera leaves Mt Olympus in order to meet Hypnos on the island of Lemnos. Her journey is described in some detail: Pieria, Emathie (= Macedonia), Thrace, Mt Athos and finally Lemnos.)

ἄκρως κατονομάζει τοὺς τόπους, τὰς ὁμόρους χώρας διεξιῶν . . . τῇ γὰρ ὀνομασίᾳ τῶν τόπων συμπαραθέουσα ἢ διάνοια τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων ἐν φαντασίᾳ καὶ ὄψει τῶν τόπων γίνεται. ἅμα οὖν τὸ ἄργον περιέφυγεν, οὐκ εὐθὺς ἀγαγὼν αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὰ προκείμενα χωρία· μάρτυρας γοῦν ἐπαγόμενος τοὺς ἀκούοντας πιθανωτάτην καθίστησι τὴν διήγησιν. (schol. bT *Il.* 14.226–7 *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] competently names the places, going through the areas which border on each other . . . For the mind of the readers, travelling together with the naming of the places, enters into an imaginative and visual perception of the places. So at the same time, by not bringing her immediately to the locations in question, he avoided inactivity. In any case, by calling in the readers as witnesses he renders his narrative highly plausible.

The Homeric passage is noteworthy in several respects. Instead of taking Hera without further ado from Mt Olympus to Lemnos (see [Chapter 6](#)), Homer proceeds step by step and gives a geographically accurate report of her journey. This allows the readers so to speak to accompany Hera on her trip. They imagine and visualise the different places. In other words, this time it is the reader who becomes an apparent eyewitness (cf. φαντασία, ὄψις and μάρτυς). And the overall result is, again, the trustworthiness of the account, which, in the present case, is likely to depend not only on the wealth of information, but also on the readers' familiarity with it.¹⁰ They (supposedly) know these places and therefore can judge the accuracy of the report. Perhaps the critic also implies that they then extend the same trustworthiness to the cases with which they are less familiar.¹¹

This and the preceding examples focus on the local details of Homer's narrative. A comparable point is made with respect to temporal information when, on the second day of fighting, Homer specifies the time frame of the particular events 'as long as it was early morning'.¹²

Elsewhere Homer gains his readers' trust by adding the exact location of a wound as 'right under the peak' of the helmet.¹³ The implication probably

¹⁰ For the notion that a speech gains trustworthiness if the audience is called in as witnesses see the generalising schol. b *Il.* 2.302b *ex.* (Odysseus on Calchas' prophecy at Aulis).

¹¹ Cf. schol. T *Od.* 9.39 (Odysseus' wanderings begin with a known place in order to render the others trustworthy too).

¹² See *Il.* 8.66–7 with schol. bT *Il.* 8.66b *ex.*: πρὸς πίστιν τὸν καιρὸν ὡς παρατυγχάνων ('with a view to trustworthiness <Homer mentions> the time, as if he were present').

¹³ See *Il.* 13.615 with schol. T *Il.* 13.615a *ex.* (ἀξιοπίστως).

is that Homer must have been standing so close to the actual fighting that he could view the scene and take down the exact type and location of the wounding. A similar mechanism comes into play when the exact size of Alcinous' orchard is given, when Homer gives the number of tassels on Athena's *aegis* as 'a hundred' and when the messenger in Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* specifies the number of the city gates.¹⁴ In all these cases the detailed information is seen as making the account trustworthy.

Given the scholia's emphasis on Homer's vividness and graphic descriptions (see [Chapter 9](#)), it is perhaps surprising that a connection between these qualities of Homer's narrative and his as-if presence on the battlefield is not made more frequently. The following example seems to be unique in that respect. (Helenus' arrow jumps back from Menelaus' breast plate like beans or peas, but the latter's spear pierces right through Helenus' hand. He is forced to withdraw, the hand powerlessly dangling down and the spear trailing.)

ὡς ἑωρακῶς διαγράφει γραφικῶς. (schol. T *Il.* 13.597 *ex.*)

As if he had seen <the scene>, he [sc. Homer] describes <it> graphically.

The description is so gripping that the reader is led to believe that Homer had been there himself. While this note seems to be the only one which spells this out, one could perhaps argue that other notes about Homer's graphic descriptions make the point about his 'autopsy' implicitly ([Chapter 9](#)).

All the examples adduced so far construct an interdependence between a detailed, explicit, unambiguous account and its trustworthiness. Conversely, one comment pleads in favour of leaving a few things open. (In book 13, Idomeneus is coming out of the tent of an unnamed comrade when he runs into Poseidon in the guise of Thoas. Ancient scholars expressed concern about the anonymity of Idomeneus' comrade and considered several solutions to the problem.¹⁵ One critic dismisses them with the following argument.)

ἀληθείας δὲ μίμησις τὸ μὴ πάντας φράζειν ἔξ ὀνόματος. (schol. T *Il.* 13.211a¹ *ex.*)

Not to mention all the characters by name is an imitation of truth.

¹⁴ Alcinous' orchard: *Od.* 7.113 with schol. PT *Od.* 7.113; tassels: *Il.* 2.448 with schol. bT *Il.* 2.448a *ex.*; city gates: A. *Th.* 800 with schol. A. *Th.* 800–802a/b. In the last case the question remains open whether Aeschylus or the messenger lends trustworthiness to the report. The same problem recurs in schol. T *Il.* 11.771–3 *ex.* (on Nestor giving a detailed report on his and Odysseus' trip to Phthia in order to enlist Achilles as an ally).

¹⁵ Generally speaking, the notion of anonymous characters (or similar cases of 'ambiguity') often does not sit well with all ancient critics. On occasion, this can lead to rather too much effort to disambiguate the poetic text, especially in the scholia on Pindar (e.g. Lefkowitz 1991: 147–60).

In other words, Homer renders his account more plausible if he does not identify every single character. The total of the fighters present on the Trojan battlefield is so large that the narrative would become unrealistic if Homer were to name them all without exception.¹⁶ In a similar vein, the anonymity of another character, the unnamed Achaean who picks up Deipyrus' helmet, is said both to be indicative of a trustworthy account and to hint at the presence of the unnamed masses behind the protagonists.¹⁷

If the realism in these passages is based on the notion that Homer does not go beyond the limits of what is possible for a human being, other notes praise him for incorporating elements of 'real life' into his narrative. (The sight of his father in full armour causes the baby Astyanax to turn away in fear.)

λαβὼν δὲ τοῦτο ἐκ τοῦ βίου ὁ ποιητὴς ἄκρως περιεγέμετο τῇ μιμήσει. (schol. bT *Il.* 6.467 *ex.*)¹⁸

Taking this from life, the poet succeeded brilliantly with his representation.

The scene in question seems to be taken from real life and therefore leaves a deep impression. The reader is taken in by its lifelike quality. This realism can also be expressed thus: the poet successfully 'imitates the manners and speech' (μιμεῖσθαι τοὺς τρόπους καὶ λόγους) of a particular group of people, for example old men (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 211) or old women (schol.

¹⁶ Support for this view could be found in Homer's own programmatic statement in the Catalogue that he will name the leaders but not the common soldiers (*Il.* 2.487–8). At first sight, the expression ἀληθείας μίμησις (lit. 'imitation of truth') reminds one of ὁ μιμητικός τοῦ ἀληθοῦς (sc. τρόπος), which represents the first category of the tripartite classification of literature in schol. bT *Il.* 14.342–51 *ex.* (explained in detail by M. Schmidt 1976: 61–3, Meijering 1987: 67–72). However, the similarity is more superficial than real, because the scholion quoted in the main text seems not to be concerned with the classification of literature, but with plausibility. Cf. the expression φαντασία τῆς ἀληθείας ('appearance of reality') in schol. H *Od.* 2.96, which argues that Antinous by quoting Penelope's deceptive speech to them (i.e. speech within speech) gives the impression of telling the truth.

¹⁷ See *Il.* 13.578–9 with schol. T *Il.* 13.578–9 *ex.* The note is all the more remarkable because modern scholars took a long time to recognise that Homeric battles do not consist of single combats only (see the summary of previous scholarship in Latacz 1977: 21–44). A similar point about the presence of the masses appears in schol. b *Il.* 21.3 *ex.*

¹⁸ Cf. the word βιωτικός ('pertaining to life, lifelike') in schol. AbT *Il.* 1.547a *ex.* (βιωτικὰ μίμημα, on Zeus' response to angry Hera), bT *Il.* 1.571 *ex.* (on having their son Hephaestus ease the quarrel between Zeus and Hera), bT *Il.* 5.370–2 *ex.* (on wounded Aphrodite finding comfort on the lap of her mother), bT *Il.* 8.407 *ex.* (Zeus about his quarrelsome wife), bT *Il.* 22.512–3 *ex.* (on Andromache burning Hector's clothes), bT *Il.* 24.744a *ex.* (on Andromache's lament). It is remarkable that several of these notes involve divine characters. For other notes seem to indicate that the quality of βιωτικόν may also contain a hint of baseness (cf. schol. bT *Il.* 24.266 *ex.*); the word often characterises the plot of comedy as opposed to tragedy (see Koster 1975: index *s.v.* βιωτικός). But after all, Homeric gods are known for being 'like you and me' (see Chapter 13). On the concept 'realism' in ancient scholarship in general see Lehnert (1896: 90), von Franz (1940: 48–9), van der Valk (II: xxxv, on Eustathius), N. J. Richardson (1980: 274). On the notion 'Homer as imitator of life' see also the scholia collected by Erbse (Index V: 135 *s.v.* *Imitatio vitae*).

E. *Hipp.* 433). The implication is again that such a successful imitation adds plausibility to the text under discussion.

To return to the issue of autopsy, one further note deserves attention. It comes from the papyrus commentary on *Iliad* 2 (P. Oxy. 1086, I BC). The Homeric passage in question (2.811–14) describes the hill Bateaia outside Troy ('there is a steep hill . . .'):

τοῦτο ὁ ποιη[τῆς ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ λέγει, ἐκ] δὲ τούτου (ἔαυ)τὸν αὐτόπτ[η]ν ἐνδείκνυσ[ι]. (schol. pap. *Il.* 2.811, p. 172 Erbse, lac. suppl. Erbse e.g., (ἔαυ)τὸν Haslam)

This the poet [says from his own angle; on account of] this he identifies himself as an eyewitness.

The critic appears to comment on the present tense in the passage ('there is a steep hill') and on the topographical details. The latter point has parallels in the passages discussed above, but the point about the implications of the present tense is new.¹⁹ Moreover, the crucial absence of a word such as ὡς ('as if') seems to indicate that, contrary to the examples above, this commentator considers Homer a real eyewitness. This need not make Homer a contemporary of or even a participant in the Trojan war, which would create serious problems of chronology within the *Iliad* (cf. n. 3). The critic may simply envisage that Homer visited the ruins of Troy as a 'tourist' and then made use of his first-hand experience with the Trojan setting.²⁰

To return to the question of authentication: Odysseus' praise of Demodocus (see above) mentions as a second possibility that the poet refers his account to a source. This idea is fleshed out in a scholion which comments

¹⁹ A connection between present tense and trustworthiness is also made in schol. T *Il.* 18.418–20 ex., but the details are different. Homer describes Hephaestus' golden maidservant-robots in the present tense (probably because, as divine creatures, they are omnitemporal). The ancient critic, however, argues along the lines of trustworthiness: ὡς γὰρ πεπεισμένος καὶ παρηκολουθηκὼς ἐκφῆρει ταῦτα ('For he [sc. Homer] utters these things as if he were convinced and showing his allegiance'). It would seem to me that the critic primarily sees Homer as justifying a story element that at first sight might seem unrealistic. Consequently, I do not think that this scholion can help explain schol. A *Il.* 18.378–81 ex. (see n. 20), as suggested by van der Valk (1963: 49) and Erbse (*ad loc.*).

²⁰ The corpus of Homeric scholia contains another note on 'autopsy', but it is difficult to interpret: schol. A *Il.* 18.378–81 ex. Scholars generally assume that the scholion refers to Hephaestus working on the golden tripods which he will temporarily abandon in favour of Achilles' armour. However, it is difficult to see how the phrase ἀξιόπιστως {δὲ} ὡς παρών ('trustworthily as if present') fits in. It is therefore worth considering van der Valk's suggestion (1963: 49) that the phrase in question actually refers to θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι ('a wonder to behold') in the preceding line 18.377 (cf. bT). Homer thus praises the tripods 'trustworthily, as if present'. While van der Valk's far-reaching speculations about the sources of the scholia are rightly dismissed by Erbse (*ad loc.*), his starting-point may well be sound.

on one of the rare occasions when Homer adduces ‘anonymous spokesmen’ (φασί, ‘they say’). (The simile in 17.674–80 focuses on the eagle ‘who, as they say, has the sharpest vision of all the birds in heaven’.)

ἄξιόπιστος τὸ “φασί” [17.674] προσέθηκεν ὡς πρὸ τοῦ ἐπιβαλέσθαι τῇ ποιήσει ἔξητακῶς ἀκριβῶς ἅπαντα. (schol. bT *Il.* 17.674–5 *ex.*)

Trustworthily he [sc. Homer] added ‘they say’, as if he had painstakingly explored everything before adding it to his poem.

In other words, the rhetoric of the passage gives the impression that Homer first consulted specialists (in the present case: ornithologists), before he composed the relevant passage.²¹ Although the exact nuance of the participial phrase ὡς . . . ἔξητακῶς cannot be established with certainty (either ‘as if he had explored’ or ‘because, as he himself believed, he had explored’), it does not, in any case, express an objective cause. That is to say, the Homeric passage creates the impression of thorough research and does not establish it as an objective fact. This distinction is important, because the present scholion is implicitly contradicted by the numerous scholia and other ancient sources which treat the Homeric epics as a textbook from which many insights can be gained.²²

CONCLUSION

Plausibility and trustworthiness are important factors for a poet who wants to win favour with his audience. Trustworthiness, in particular, is often seen by ancient scholars as depending on the poet providing a large amount of (sometimes apparently tangential) information. The wealth and/or specificity of the information gives the reader the impression that he is being given the account of an eyewitness, which is the most trustworthy form of a report and helps the poet authenticate his story. Most of the notes quoted above reflect an awareness that the poet’s presence in the midst of the events that he is narrating is only apparent. He reports ‘as if he were present’ (ὡς παρών) at the scene. The question, in other words, is not so much whether

²¹ A similar point is made about φασί in schol. A *Il.* 19.416–7a *Ariston.*, where, however, it serves to help justify the athetesis of the passage. Conversely, schol. EPQ *Od.* 6.42 treats φασί as a reference to what is known from tradition, that is, general knowledge.

²² See *Intro.* page 16. The rhetoric of a passage and its trustworthiness also play a role in the notes which argue that Homer avoids favouring the Greeks too openly, either by having them occasionally fail (schol. bT *Il.* 11.233 *ex.*) or suffer (schol. AT *Il.* 1.1a *ex.*) or by putting praise for them into the mouth of a Trojan enemy: schol. bT *Il.* 3.182a *ex.* (Priam to Agamemnon), bT *Il.* 11.430a *ex.* (Socus to Odysseus), bT *Il.* 12.167a *ex.* (Asius on the Lapiths), bT *Il.* 17.164b *ex.* (Glaucus on Achilles), AbT *Il.* 20.89–92 *ex.* (Aeneas on Achilles), also bT *Il.* 3.16b *ex.* (on balanced characterisation); see Griesinger (1907: 34–5).

he had actually been there (or, by extension, relies on people who had) – the audience usually know that he had not – but whether his account can create the impression that he had been there. The amount and specificity of the information given (described as *l'effet de réel* by Barthes) are seen as factors crucial for creating this impression, especially if the information given is in agreement with the readers' own knowledge and experience. They are then likely to extend their trust in the poet's account to areas with which they are less familiar. At the same time the eyewitness-like quality of the poet's narrative testifies to the immediacy, vividness and graphic quality of his account.

CHAPTER 9

Style

In accordance with the principles laid out in the Introduction (page 5), this chapter on style focuses on the concepts that are discussed in the scholia with some frequency and does not attempt to give an overview of ancient notions of style in general. As a further restriction, the present account excludes most of the rhetorical figures that deal with single words or very short phrases (metaphor, synecdoche, litotes, etc.) and/or are of a more 'technical' type (*epanalepsis*, *homoiooteleuton*, *isocolon*, etc.). They do not really address the questions of literary criticism that are the focus of this book and, more importantly, are better studied on the basis of the rhetorical handbooks. Instead, the chapter primarily discusses stylistic terms and concepts that can be applied to entire clauses, sentences or even larger units of text.

GRAPHIC QUALITY (*ENARGEIA*)

The title of this section needs a brief explanation. The word ἐνάργεια is usually rendered in English by 'vividness'. However, the Greek concept of ἐνάργεια does not primarily refer to liveliness, vivacity, the state of being animated, etc., as 'vividness' suggests. Rather ἐνάργεια is a visual concept (comparable to German *Anschaulichkeit*) and designates the graphic description that enthral the audience. 'Graphic quality' is an attempt to capture the visual connotations of ἐνάργεια. This visual foundation of the term manifests itself, among other things, in the way that the concept often goes hand in hand with the notion that the gripping account turns the reader into a spectator.¹ An illustrative example is the note on the beginning of the horse race in *Iliad* 23 that combines many of the relevant terms:

¹ Cf. the definition of ἐνάργεια by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Lys.* 7, pp. 14.17–15.1 U.-R.); on the concept of the reader as spectator see [Chapter 5](#).

πᾶσαν φαντασίαν ἐναργῶς προβέβληται ὡς μηδὲν ἦττον τῶν θεατῶν ἐσχηκέ-
ναι τοὺς ἀκροατάς. (schol. bT *Il.* 23.362–72 *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] has projected the entire mental image so graphically that the readers are captured no less than the spectators.

No less telling is a note on Astyanax turning away from the frightening sight of his father Hector in full armour:

ταῦτα δὲ τὰ ἔπη οὕτως ἐστὶν ἐναργείας μεστά, ὅτι οὐ μόνον ἀκούεται τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁρᾶται. (schol. bT *Il.* 6.467 *ex.*)²

These lines are so full of graphic quality that the events are not only heard but even seen [sc. by the reader].

Last but not least, the visual quality of ἐνάργεια invites comparisons between literary and visual art. Thus, Homer's description of Ajax' physical symptoms (shortness of breath, sweat) when the Trojan pressure becomes too strong even for him is praised for being 'more graphic even than painting' (καὶ ζωγραφίας ἐναργέστερον, schol. T *Il.* 16.107–11 *ex.*). A similar point about literary art surpassing painting is made in schol. T *Il.* 17.136c *ex.* (on a simile where the lion is portrayed as 'covering the eyelids').³

As a general quality, ἐνάργεια is a cornerstone of ancient rhetoric and literary criticism and is discussed in various sources.⁴ There is a consensus that ἐνάργεια is a desired goal, but how does a poet or orator achieve it? As Meijering (1987: 39–44) has shown, two factors were thought to be of particular importance. The first is the incorporation of detail, both their quantity and specificity. A large number of details can render the

² Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 17.263–5 *ex.*, which argues that the simile, which, as a text, is 'heard' (i.e. 'read', ἀκούμενον), is even more ἐναργής than what can actually be seen (τὸ ὁρώμενον). Similarly, schol. bT *Il.* 21.325a *ex.* (on the river Scamander boiling with foam, blood and dead bodies) argues, though without using the term ἐνάργεια, that the reader can *see* (ἰδεῖν) what the words describe. Cf. Chapter 5 n. 74.

³ Cf. in general the many notes that speak of poetry in terms of painting (γραφική): esp. schol. bT *Il.* 1.500 *ex.* (Thetis supplicates 'as if in a painting') and bT *Il.* 2.307a¹ *ex.* (Homer/Odysseus describes the scenery in Aulis 'all but with colours'; Roemer 1879: xiv), also T *Il.* 3.385 *ex.*, T *Il.* 4.107a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 4.141c *ex.*, T *Il.* 5.664 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 6.40–4 D, AbT *Il.* 6.213 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 12.463–5 *ex.*, T *Il.* 17.85–6 *ex.*, T *Il.* 22.367 *ex.*, and from scholia to poets other than Homer: schol. Pi. P. 1.17b, A. *Th.* 338b; see also the *testimonia* collected by Erbse on schol. T *Il.* 18.538d *ex.* and Lehnert (1896: 90–1). One scholion (schol. bT *Il.* 16.104–5a *ex.*) makes the interesting point that the repetition of the same word adds a quality that cannot be achieved by painters and sculptors (on sculptors also schol. T *Il.* 22.97b *ex.*). Furthermore, it is worth adducing schol. AbT *Il.* 2.478–9a *ex.*, which offers the following tripartition. Tragedy aims at what is nobler (σεμνότερον) than reality, comedy at what is baser (ἐλαττονον) than reality and painting at reality itself. The scholion then illustrates each with one example from the *Iliad*, which apparently combines all three.

⁴ As a result, it is well documented in modern scholarship too; see, in particular, Lausberg ([1960] 1990: § 810), Zanker (1981), Rispoli (1984), Meijering (1987: 29–52), also Roemer (1879: xiii–xiv), Lehnert (1896: 92).

description complete or bring about, to speak with Barthes (1968), *l'effet de réel*: the wealth of detail makes the reader feel that the account is authentic (see Chapter 8). The same also applies to very specific details, especially if they are particularly striking (visually, acoustically, conceptually, etc.).

A second important factor is the reduction of the distance (temporal or spatial) between the events and the audience. This can be achieved, for example, through the use of the present tense or deictic demonstrative pronouns, by addressing the characters or the audience. This second factor is more typical of oratory and therefore rarely commented on in the poetic scholia.⁵

Conversely, the notion that the ἐνάργεια of a passage depends on the incorporation of details is repeatedly found in the scholia. (Hector and Patroclus fight over the dead body of Hector's driver, Cebriones. Hector is holding his head, Patroclus a foot.)

ἐναργέστατα ἔδειξε τὴν ὀλκὴν τοῦ σώματος προσθεῖς καὶ τὰ μέρη, ὧν ἐχόμενοι οὔτοι ἀνθεῖλκον. (schol. bT *Il.* 16.762–3 *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] described the dragging of the body [sc. of Cebriones] most graphically by adding the limbs which they [sc. Hector and Patroclus] were holding and pulling in opposite directions.

This note makes it explicit that the descriptive details (here: Cebriones' limbs) contribute to or even bring about ἐνάργεια. In other cases, this remains implicit when a passage (usually a detail) receives praise for its ἐνάργεια.⁶ Still other notes seem to build on the view that the details in question are particularly striking. (The dead body of the Trojan fighter Iphition is run over and cut in two by a Greek chariot.)

ἐναργῶς ἔδειξε αἰκισμὸν σώματος ὑπὸ τῶν παραθεόντων τροχῶν διαιρουμένου. (schol. bT *Il.* 20.394 *ex.*)⁷

He [sc. Homer] graphically showed the mutilation of the body that is cut in two by the chariot that is running past.

⁵ One Iliadic scholion (schol. bT *Il.* 1.163*b ex.*) argues: ἐναργοῦς δὲ ἀπαγγελίας τὰ γεγονότα ὡς γινόμενα ἀπαγγέλλειν ('it is characteristic of a graphic narrative to recount the events of the past as if they were happening in the present'), but the application is hardly appropriate. It refers to the passage where Achilles complains that when it comes to the distribution of booty (*Il.* 1.163) 'I never have [ἔχω] a prize that is equal to yours [sc. Agamemnon's].' The present tense here is more likely to be generalising.

⁶ See e.g. schol. T *Il.* 5.664 *ex.* (on the rescue of Sarpedon, with the spear still sticking in his thigh and dragging behind him), bT *Il.* 6.117*b ex.* (on Hector running to Troy, with the shield banging against his neck and heels).

⁷ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.303 *ex.* (on blood spurting from a wound), T *Il.* 4.108*b¹ ex.* (on the he-goat, hit by Pandarus, falling backwards onto the rocks), T *Il.* 23.697*a ex.* (on Euryalus spitting blood and rolling his head over after losing the boxing match against Epeius).

Whereas modern readers tend to shy away from the gory details of Homer's battle description, this ancient critic treats them as an integral part of the account that can contribute to its graphic quality.

Presence or absence of details also seems to mark the decisive difference between ἐνάργεια and σαφήνεια ('clarity').⁸ (When Agamemnon realises that his brother Menelaus is struck with an arrow, he fears the worst and addresses his brother in a desperate speech. The speech introduction and the actual speech are separated by another line, which is not often the case in Homer: 'holding the hand of Menelaus, and the companions groaned in response'.)

ἄφελε τὸν στίχον, καὶ οὐ βλάψεις τὴν σαφήνειαν, ἀπολέσεις δὲ τὴν ἐνάργειαν, ἥτις ἐμφαίνει τὴν Ἀγαμέμνονος συμπάθειαν καὶ τὴν τῶν συναχθομένων ἑταίρων διάθεσιν. (schol. bT *Il.* 4.154 *ex.*)

Take away the line, and you will not destroy its clarity, but you will take away its graphic quality, which reveals Agamemnon's commiseration and the state of the companions who grieve with him.

In other words, from a strictly functional point of view the line is not necessary (its excision does not destroy the clarity of the narrative), but the details (Agamemnon holding his brother's hand, the groaning of the companions) contribute to the ἐνάργεια of the passage.

A particular problem is the relation between ἐνάργεια and ἐνέργεια ('activity, energy'), which are regularly confused in the medieval manuscripts.⁹ A note by Eustathius indicates that ancient critics apparently differentiated between ἐνάργεια as a quality of the narrative and ἐνέργεια as a quality of the action itself.¹⁰ However, since the ἐνέργεια of the action can depend on the ἐνάργεια of the narrative, one can easily imagine that the two concepts get confused, especially in the light of the frequent brevity of the scholia (Introd. page 9).¹¹

⁸ On σαφήνεια in rhetoric see e.g. Meijering (1987: 224–5).

⁹ Cf. W. G. Rutherford (1905: 266–8); his starting-point is Trypho *fig.* (III 199.21–5 Spengel), who defines ἐνέργεια as if he were talking about ἐνάργεια: φράσις ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγουσα τὸ νοούμενον ('an expression that makes the thought visible'). Whether the confusion originates with Trypho or is due to a scribal error is impossible to decide.

¹⁰ See Meijering (1987: 237 n. 70). The passage is Eust. 914.12–13 (= 3.419.28–9): ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι παρασημειοῦνται οἱ παλαιοὶ ἐνταῦθα, ὡς πανταχόθεν ὁ ποιητὴς ἐκίνησε τὴν τῆς μάχης ἐνέργειαν ἢ τὴν τοῦ λόγου ἐνάργειαν ('NB the ancient critics commented on this passage that the poet used every possible source to bring out the dynamics of the battle or the graphic quality of his narrative').

¹¹ Meijering (1987: 40) compares schol. bT *Il.* 10.461a *ex.* (ἐνάργεια) with schol. bT *Il.* 12.461–70 *ex.* (ἐνέργεια) and T *Il.* 20.48c *ex.* (ditto) and concludes that 'the terms are practically synonymous here'. In the light of her parallels for the phrase τὴν ἐνέργειαν κινεῖν, however, one may prefer to read ἐνέργεια in schol. bT *Il.* 10.461a *ex.* too (thus b, against T's ἐνάργειαν favoured by Erbse and

On account of the visual quality of ἐνάργεια, it is justifiable to compare the notes where the poet is praised for ‘rendering something visible’ (e.g. ὑπ’ ὄψιν ἄγειν, lit. ‘to bring into view’), especially where the two expressions (ἐνάργεια, ὄψις) occur in combination, for example in a note on the half-burnt ship of Protesilaus.¹² Both concepts share the ‘synaesthetic’ view that an aural form of art such as poetry can have a manifestly visual quality.

Works that survive only in excerpts such as the scholia are a particularly unsafe basis for *argumenta ex silentio* (cf. *Introd.* page 9). It may, nevertheless, be significant that the dramatic scholia have very little to say on ἐνάργεια, and then almost exclusively on narrative elements such as the messenger speech.¹³ It may well be that ἐνάργεια was considered a feature typical primarily of narrative.

VARIATION AND AVOIDANCE OF MONOTONY

An important focus of ancient literary criticism is a poem’s variation (ποικιλία), or, put negatively, the avoidance of uniformity (τὸ ὁμοειδές), monotony and therefore surfeit (κόρος) on the part of the reader.¹⁴ In order to keep the reader’s attention (see [Chapter 5](#)), a good poet is expected to vary his poem regularly and insert elements which are new (καινός).¹⁵ This notion is so common in ancient criticism and rhetoric that a small

after him Meijering). This does not alter the correct observation that the two terms are easily and often mistaken for each other (see also van der Valk on *Eust.* 861.48 = 3.249.13).

¹² See schol. *bT Il.* 16.294a *ex.*; for ὑπ’ ὄψιν ἄγειν see e.g. schol. *bT Il.* 1.317a *ex.* (on the savour of roasted meat rising to the sky), *bT Il.* 5.82 *ex.* (on a severed hand falling to the ground), *bT Il.* 21.20 *ex.* (on Achilles striking in a circle around him), *S. Aj.* 308d (on Tecmessa recounting how Ajax finally sat among the butchered animals), *OC* 1648 (on the messenger speech). See also *Ps. Long.* 15.7 on Simonides (= fr. 557 Page) and for the phrase ἐναργῶς ὑπ’ ὄψιν ἄγειν *Theon II* 118.7–8 Spengel (on ἔκφρασις), cf. the definition of ἐνάργεια by *Anon. Ségu.* 96 Patillon. It is perhaps worth mentioning that ὑπ’ ὄψιν ἄγειν can also designate what the dramatic poet literally shows on stage (e.g. schol. *Ar. Pax* 1204).

¹³ Cf. schol. *E. Ph.* 1178, also *S. El.* 1404 (quoted in [Chapter 19](#)). Cases such as schol. *Ar. Eq.* 404b are no real contradiction. Here, ἐναργής describes the individual word (λέξις) and means ‘very expressive’, a usage that *W. G. Rutherford* (1905: 268 n. 14) considers ‘foolish’.

¹⁴ Avoiding τὸ ὁμοειδές: e.g. schol. *bT Il.* 6.371 *ex.*, *A. Eum.* 609; κόρος: see the examples collected in [Chapter 5](#).

¹⁵ Put negatively: a poet should avoid unnecessary repetition (δισσολογεῖν). If he does, he is likely to be praised for it: e.g. schol. *T Il.* 11.826a *ex.* (Eurypylos does not give Patroclus a detailed catalogue of the wounded Greeks; Nestor has done so already), *bT Il.* 14.43 *ex.* (Homer has Nestor ignore part of Agamemnon’s question in order to avoid repetition), *S. Aj.* 295a (Tecmessa does not report what happened to Ajax outside the hut: she does not know, and Sophocles does not want to annoy the audience by repeating what has been said already), 735a (the chorus-leader does not elaborate to the messenger why Ajax is not in, because the audience know already), 784d (explains in great detail why Sophocles here abandons his usual avoidance of repetition (the messenger reports first to the chorus and then to Tecmessa), and the repetition is not tedious (προσκορής), because it is shorter), *El.* 1251 (argues that Orestes and Electra do not speak about what happened to Agamemnon, because

selection of relevant notes and a few general remarks must suffice in the present context.¹⁶

Scholars perceive variation and avoidance of monotony in virtually every conceivable part and aspect of a poem. Examples include small stylistic phenomena such as the variation of the grammatical case (schol. bT *Il.* 13.428*b ex.*) or the avoidance of *homoioteleuton* (schol. T *Il.* 9.318*b ex.*) as much as the variation of the poem as a whole (schol. bT *Il.* 4.1*a ex.*). To put it bluntly, *poikilia* is a fundamental principle for poetry in general (e.g. schol. A *Il.* 18.483*a Ariston.*).

Considering the Iliadic scholia on variation as a whole, one notices that they remarkably often adduce the argument in connection with battle scenes. The notes on Homer successfully varying his battle scenes are so numerous that one cannot help suspecting that they reflect a certain apologetic tendency. Scholars either draw attention to Homer's general ability to vary battle scenes:

δι' ὄλου δὲ φυλάσεται περὶ τὰς πληγὰς ποικιλίαν ὁ ποιητής. (schol. T *Il.* 11.378*a ex.*)¹⁷

The poet constantly observes variation concerning the wounds.

or they praise a particular scene for its variation in that it presents a new constellation. (Sarpedon and Glaucus together lead the Lycian forces into battle.)

πάλιν ἄλλη παρασκευῆ χρῆται ὥστε νεώτερον τὸν ἀγῶνα φαίνεσθαι, προσεκτικὸς ἡμᾶς ποιῶν. (schol. bT *Il.* 12.330*a ex.*)¹⁸

the audience already know all of it and are more interested in seeing what Orestes will do). Cf. Odysseus at the end of his tale to the Phaeacians (*Od.* 12.451–3).

¹⁶ For *poikilia* in rhetoric see e.g. Hermog. *id.* 1.1 (p. 222.1–4 Rabe). Variation and avoidance of monotony are virtual synonyms for good poetry and literature in general, see e.g. D.H. *Is.* 4 (p. 60.14–18 U.-R.), Plut. *garr.* 504d (on Homer), *vita Soph.* (test. 1.85 Radt), *vita Eur.* (p. 4.7–8 Schwartz), schol. Pi. *O.* 2.153b. Modern scholarship on the topic: Roemer (1879: xiv–xv), van der Valk (I: xciv, II: lvi–ii), N. J. Richardson (1980: 266), Meijering (1987: 167–71), Heath (1987: 105–6). The notion 'variation pleases' (probably best known in its Latin form *varietas delectat*) reaches well beyond the interpretation of texts, see e.g. Arist. *Rh.* 1371a26–8, who quotes E. *Or.* 234 (cf. fr. com. adesp. 859 K-A).

¹⁷ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 5.70*c ex.* (avoidance of monotony by introducing the characters of attackers and victims), bT *Il.* 11.104–5 *ex.* (variation by detailed information on victim, sim. bT *Il.* 20.383–5 *ex.*; on the topic also Chapter 8), AbT *Il.* 16.339*b ex.* (variation of wounds), bT *Il.* 20.460 *ex.* (Homer passes over the wounds in order to avoid surfeit).

¹⁸ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 5.166*a ex.* (variation: now Pandarus is energetic and Diomedes despondent), bT *Il.* 6.37–65 *ex.* (new scene: Adrestus supplicates Menelaus), bT *Il.* 11.130*b ex.* (Peisander and Hippolochus supplicate Agamemnon from their chariot), T *Il.* 11.498 *ex.* (variation by leaving Ajax behind and change of scene to Hector on the left-hand side), bT *Il.* 16.152*b ex.* (variation: Automedon yokes an extra trace-horse, which will be killed by Sarpedon), bT *Il.* 16.345–7 *ex.* (different way of striking the victim's mouth, comparison with similar scene in book 5), bT *Il.* 16.395–8*a ex.* (subtle

Again he [sc. Homer] makes use of another arrangement [sc. two commanders-in-chief], in order to give a new appearance to the battle, thereby making us attentive.

Obviously the two forms of general and specific interpretation can be combined (e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 20.397 *ex.*, on different wounds in the head). Moreover, praise for variation may either refer to *what* the poet describes (see above) or to *how* he describes it.¹⁹

No less indicative of the prominence of battle scenes is the fact that a relaxing effect is attributed to changes of scene, especially when they lead away from the battlefield.²⁰ Alternatively, they introduce a different type of scene, for example supplication instead of combat. (Asteropaeus supplicates Achilles.)

παραλλάσσων τὸ ὁμοειδὲς ἐποίησέ τινα ἱκετεύοντα. (schol. bT *Il.* 20.463–9*b ex.*)²¹

Avoiding uniformity, he [sc. Homer] has someone [sc. Asteropaeus] supplicate.

Asteropaeus' supplication varies the pattern that Homeric fighters normally engage in combat even if there is a considerable difference in strength between them.

Especially interesting are notes that first give a list of the known forms and then discuss the variation. For instance, in a note on the 'Doloneia':

πολλῶν δὲ κατὰ τὴν ποιήσιν διηυυσμένων μετὰ μάχας ἵππικὰς καὶ πεζὰς, θεῶν τρώσεις, μονομαχίας, δημηγορίας, ἐκκλησίας ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ θεῶν, πρεσβείας, καὶ μέχρι τῆς Ἰδης καταγαγῶν τὸν Δία, καὶ ἄστραπαῖς καὶ κεραυνοῖς ποιήσας λειπόμενον τὸ Ἑλληνικόν, ἐπ' ἄλλο εἶδος τρέπεται ὁ ποιητής, διὰ δόλου καὶ νυκτὸς ἀναπληρῶν τὴν μεθ' ἡμέραν ἀτυχίαν τῶν Ἑλλήνων. (schol. bT *Il.* 10.3–4 *ex.*)²²

With many <story elements> having been used up in the poem, after battles with chariots and foot soldiers, woundings of gods, single combats, public speeches, assemblies of men and gods, embassies, and having led Zeus away to Mt Ida and having isolated the Greek cause by means of thunder and lightning, the poet

variation of similar battle constellations), b *Il.* 21.3 *ex.* (variation by singling out an individual). For the implicit contrast with the notion of 'typical battle scenes' see [Chapter 16](#).

¹⁹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 14.476–7 *ex.* (on varied sequence of narrative), bT *Il.* 17.309 *ex.* (ditto), bT *Il.* 17.600 *ex.* (ditto), bT *Il.* 17.689–90 *ex.* (on variety in describing the death of Patroclus).

²⁰ On changes of scene in general see [Chapter 1](#). Changes that lead away from the battlefield are discussed in schol. T *Il.* 11.599 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 14.1*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 18.1*a ex.*, D *Il.* 18.245, see also bT *Il.* 4.1*a ex.*

²¹ See also schol. bT *Il.* 21.34*b ex.* (on the Lycaon scene, which elaborates the supplication motif) and bT *Il.* 6.37–65 *ex.* (n. 18).

²² Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 21.18*a ex.* (on theomachy and river battle as new forms).

now turns to another form, completing the Greeks' misfortune during the day by means of ruse and at night.

The critic so to speak takes an inventory of the types of scene that occur in books 1–9 and contrasts them with the night expedition in book 10. It is clear that he has in mind the opposition 'variation vs. monotony', although he does not use the standard terms, but simply speaks of a 'new form' (ἄλλο εἶδος).

All the examples adduced so far explicitly or implicitly presuppose that, by varying his poem (or avoiding monotony), the poet creates a form of mild surprise which renews the reader's attention. As [Chapter 5](#) has made clear, an intensified form of surprise can result if the poet first deliberately creates and subsequently thwarts a particular expectation on the reader's part ('creation of false expectations'). Interestingly, the notion of ποικιλία is broad enough to include such cases too. (In *Iliad* 13, Hector kills Poseidon's grandson Amphimachus. The sea god flies into a rage, rushes to the Greek camp and urges them to fight.)

ὁ μὲν ἄκροατῆς ἀκούσας τὸ “καὶ τότε δὴ περὶ κῆρι Ποσειδάων ἐχολώθη” προσδοκᾷ τινὰ συμβολὴν πολέμου γενέσθαι μεγίστην. ὁ δὲ ποιητῆς φιλοποικίλος ὦν ἄλλα ἐπεισάγει, τὴν συνάντησιν αὐτοῦ [sc. *Il.* 13.210–39], τὴν ἐρώτησιν [sc. 13.219–20] καὶ ἀπόκρισιν [sc. 13.222–30], τὸν ὄπλισμόν Ἰδομενέως [sc. 13.240–5] καὶ ἕτερα. (schol. b *Il.* 13.219–329^a ex.)²³

The reader who reads 'and then Poseidon got angry in his heart' expects some very fierce clash of armed forces [i.e. an immediate battle scene between Greeks and Trojans]. The poet, however, being a lover of variation, inserts other <scenes>, his [sc. Poseidon's] encounter [sc. with Idomeneus], the question [sc. Poseidon's] and answer [sc. Idomeneus'], Idomeneus' arming, and so on.

The treatment of battle scenes in the first half of the *Iliad* induces the reader to expect that the two armies will immediately engage in battle. Homer, however, φιλοποικίλος as he is, gives up the former pattern and first inserts (ἐπεισάγει) other scenes before the armies finally clash. The overall effect is that of a retardation (see [Chapter 2](#)).

Poikilia is, to repeat, a cornerstone of ancient literary criticism that is applied in many forms and contexts. As an interpretative principle, it became particularly important in the Hellenistic period. Its application can therefore be somewhat anachronistic, especially when the texts under discussion are the Homeric epics, which display various typical characteristics that are not automatically conducive to an explanation in terms of

²³ The T-scholion on the same passage is more specific about the 'unexpected' scenes, but leaves out the point about Homer being φιλοποικίλος.

variation. As Chapter 16 will show, however, ancient critics were not totally unaware of Homer's typicality. But true to their immediate heritage, they were inclined to emphasise the variation within the typicality.

EXPLANATION (EPEXEGESIS)

It is generally accepted that the oldest stratum of ancient criticism is the explanation of difficult and obsolete words (see *Introd.* page 15). In the course of their careful examination of poetic vocabulary, ancient critics came to discover a recurrent feature which they called ἐπεξήγησις (lit. 'subsequent explanation'). They found that poets have a tendency to explain difficult words themselves. For example, the rare metaphor σηκάζεσθαι ('to be penned up', of the Trojans under siege) is explained by Homer himself, in that he adds 'like sheep' at the end of the line (schol. *A. Il.* 8.131a *Ariston.*). And the same technique could be found in many other places both in Homer and elsewhere.²⁴ Poets appear to be aware of the difficulties of their vocabulary. By means of 'subsequent explanation' they enable the reader to understand properly the particular expression and the text as a whole. Or as a scholion on Aeschylus puts it:

εἰώθασι, ὅταν ἀσαφές τι εἴπωσιν, οἱ ποιηταὶ ἐπεκδιδάσκειν αὐτό. "Ὀμ(η)ρ(ος)·
"κύμβαχος ἐν κονίησιν ἐπὶ βρεγμὸν τε καὶ ὤμους" [*Il.* 5.586]. (schol. *A. Eum.* 45a, sim. b)²⁵

Whenever they say something obscure, poets are wont to explain it afterwards. <Cf.> Homer: '<Mydon fell from the chariot> headlong into the sand, onto his neck and shoulders' [i.e. the difficult word *kymbachos* 'headlong' is explained by the rest of the line].

The critic argues that λήνει ('wool') in Aeschylus is a difficult word that is 'subsequently explained' by ἀργῆτι μαλλῶ ('white fleece'), for which he adduces a Homeric parallel. Strictly speaking, there is a difference between Homer and dramatic texts, because in the latter it is the character who gives

²⁴ Cf. in particular Porphyry *zet.* 11/12 (I 297–302 Schrader) with numerous examples; also *Ap.S.* 135.2, schol. *h. Il.* 1.279, *A. Il.* 2.143a *Ariston.*, *bT Il.* 5.587a *ex.*, *bT Il.* 5.700b *ex.*, *A. Il.* 6.43 *Ariston.*, *bT Il.* 10.188b *ex.*, *A. Il.* 10.486 *Ariston.*, *bT Il.* 12.53–4a *ex.*, *bT Il.* 13.281a *ex.*, *bT Il.* 13.798–9 *ex.*, *bT Il.* 14.30–8 *ex.*, *bT Il.* 15.364b *ex.*, *AT Il.* 15.536 *ex.*, *A. Il.* 21.495b *Ariston.* (sim. Ge), *A. Il.* 23.471 *Ariston.* (on which see below), *A. Il.* 23.627a *Ariston./Nic.* (sim. bT), *bT Il.* 24.752a *ex.*, *Q. Od.* 10.44, *HQ. Od.* 10.161, *A. Ch.* 97, *Eum.* 45a (quoted below), *Supp.* 403, 561, 808–809, *Th.* 400–404b, *E.* 196, 891, *Ph.* 187, *Hipp.* 443, *Alc.* 756, *Ar. Nu.* 130c, 358b, *Pax* 789c, *Au.* 1061a, *Call. h.* 2.50a (p. 51.53 Pf.). Needless to say, notes on *epexegesis* can describe the phenomenon without using the term itself: e.g. schol. *bT Il.* 5.340 *ex.*, *A. Il.* 6.417a *Ariston.*

²⁵ The Homeric example is explained accordingly in schol. *bT Il.* 5.587a *ex.*, *AT Il.* 15.536 *ex.*, cf. *Porphy. zet.* 11/12 (I 300.1–2 Schrader).

the explanation, not the narrator. The present note ignores that difference, and it is likely that the same holds true for many of the notes where the lack of an explicit grammatical subject precludes a clear decision.²⁶

As to the specific details of *epexegetis*, scholars assume that the explanation always follows on the expression that is in need of such an explanation, as, in fact, the prefix ἐπ- in ἐπεξηγήσεις indicates. Consequently, they are surprised by a passage where the regular sequence is inverted:

σημειωτέον δὲ ὅτι προεξηγήσατο, τίς ἡ χηραμός, κοίλη πέτρα [cf. 21.494], ἐπεξηγεῖσθαι εἰωθώς, οὐ προεξηγεῖσθαι· “νεβρόν ἔχοντ’ ὀνύχεσσι, τέκος ἐλάφοιο” [*Il.* 8.248]. (schol. bT *Il.* 21.495c ex. (*Ariston.*), cf. Ge and A)

<The line> must be marked with a sign, because he [sc. Homer] explains beforehand what the *chêramos* is, a hollow rock, whereas he is wont to explain subsequently, not in advance. <Cf. e.g.> ‘with a fawn in his claws, the young of a deer’.

The interpretation of the passage itself may be problematic (κοίλη πέτρα, ‘hollow rock’, is said to explain beforehand what χηραμός means). But the note is important for the general claim about the standard sequence of *epexegetis*, which is backed with an example.

This is perhaps the occasion to mention the notes which argue that the poet himself gives an etymological explanation of a character’s name, even if the critics do not explicitly use the term *epexegetis* in such contexts. The point is made about the names of Astyanax (schol. A *Il.* 6.403 *Ariston.*), Idaeus (schol. T *Il.* 7.278 ex.) and Thoötes (schol. A *Il.* 12.343a *Ariston.*).

Notes on *epexegetis* sometimes use the formulation that the poet ‘himself’ (αὐτός) gives the explanation of the word in question.²⁷ The implied contrast may be ‘he the poet and not I the critic’. It should, however, be mentioned in that connection that the Aristarcheans appear to have seen *epexegetis* as a privilege of the narrator. *Il.* 23.471 (in a speech by Idomeneus) is considered a ‘subsequent explanation’ and is athetised because *epexegetis* is the poet’s task, not the character’s (schol. A *Il.* 23.471 *Ariston.*). The note hardly does justice to the passage in question (see the discussion in [Chapter 4](#)), but the underlying rule as such is remarkable.²⁸ Read against this backdrop, the emphasis on ‘himself’ may well mean ‘he the poet and not the character’.

²⁶ For the general tendency among ancient scholars to write, e.g., ‘Sophocles says’ instead of ‘Sophocles has his character say’ see Excursus at the end of [Chapter 4](#).

²⁷ Cf. e.g. schol. A *Il.* 8.131a *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 21.495b *Ariston.* (sim. Ge), A. *Supp.* 403 (theoretically, αὐτός could refer here to the chorus, but see n. 26).

²⁸ Note, however, that schol. A *Il.* 23.627a *Ariston./Nic.* simply observes the presence of *epexegetis*, although it forms part of a speech by Nestor (Schenkeveld 1970: 173).

Considering the collected evidence on *epexegetis*, one cannot help noticing that the term is sometimes applied to straightforward expressions that are hardly in need of a semantic explanation. An example is the ‘wide’ (εὐρεῖα) trench which protects the Greek camp.²⁹ It is conceivable that over the years the technical term was watered down. As a consequence, any passage which seemed to explain and elaborate a preceding word could now be called *epexegetis*, regardless of whether the word was actually difficult or not. As a complementary solution, one might consider the possibility that *epexegetis* was influenced by the related, but strictly speaking different, concept of (*ep*)*exergasia* (‘elaboration’).³⁰

ELABORATION (EPEXERGASIA)

The term and concept of (ἐπ-)ἔξεργασία (‘elaboration’) are rooted in rhetorical theory. An orator is expected to state the subject-matter of his speech at the outset in a summary list of topics (τὰ κεφάλαια), which he is then to ‘work out’ in detail (ἔξεργάζεσθαι, also ἐπεξε-) in the speech that follows.³¹ Ancient critics apply this principle also to the interpretation of poets and prose writers. Probably the most extensive discussion of *epexergasia* is the one by Dionysius of Halicarnassus. He criticises Thucydides for repeatedly failing to find a good balance between the importance of the topic and the elaboration, that is, the length of his narrative. Dionysius believes that important events should be treated at length, unimportant ones not. To his mind, Thucydides was not very successful in implementing this principle.³²

In the scholia, the concept of elaboration often occurs in the form that a summary passage is said to name the general topic, which is then elaborated in the subsequent narrative (e.g. schol. A *Il.* 17.608–16 *Porph.*).³³

²⁹ See schol. bT *Il.* 12.53–4a *ex.*; sim. bT *Il.* 13.798–9 *ex.* (on πολλά ‘many’), Q *Od.* 10.44 (on ὅτι ‘what’ as denoting quantity too), E. *Or.* 196 (on ἔκτανες ἕθανες ‘you slew, you were slain’), Ar. *Nu.* 130c (where, paradoxically, the ‘explanation’ σκινδάλωμα ‘splinters’ is more difficult than the expression it is said to explain: λόγοι ἀκριβεῖς ‘exact arguments’, but see next n.), 358b (on πρεσβυτής ‘old man’).

³⁰ Note, in particular, the juxtaposition of ἐξήγησις καὶ ἐπεξεργασία in schol. Ar. *Nu.* 130c (see previous n.); cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 16.180–92 *ex.* The discussion by Schenkeveld (1970: 172–3) appears to presuppose that the two terms are synonymous.

³¹ Cf. Anderson (2000: 49), with references. The former part, the list of topics, is also called μερισμός ‘division (of subjects)’ (e.g. D.H. *Is.* 3, p. 95.15, 20 U.-R.). Both elements together belong to the orator’s οἰκονομία (see Chapter 1).

³² Cf. D.H. *Thuc.* 13–20, with Meijering (1987: 148–50).

³³ The same idea can be expressed in different terminology, cf. e.g. schol. Pi. *O.* 3.38a: τὰ κεφάλαια ἐκθεῖς . . . τὸ κατὰ μέρος ἐπέξεισιν (‘having set out the main points . . . he goes through with the details’); schol. Ar. *Nu.* 50g: προσιπῶν καθόλου . . . πάλιν καταμερίζει (‘having first spoken in

The concept is developed in considerable detail in a long Aristarchean note on the passage in which Hector strikes off the tip of Ajax' spear, with subsequent elaboration of the details (schol. A *Il.* 16.116a *Ariston.*). Aristarchus argues that there is no real contradiction between the two parts of the narrative.³⁴ Rather, the second part elaborates the preceding summary. The fact that the tip comes off only after Ajax uselessly wields the spear simply adds a detail that was not mentioned in the summary.³⁵

Given its origins in rhetoric, it is hardly surprising that 'elaboration' and related concepts turn up when the scholia describe the structure of speeches both in epic and, though less often, in tragedy.³⁶ Interestingly, schol. T *Il.* 11.393–5 *ex.* considers the last three lines of Diomedes' boasting speech to Paris a 'poetic elaboration' (ἐπεξεργασία ποιητική). Given that ποιητικός can mean 'in the style of the narrator' (as opposed to a character's speech, see Chapter 4) and given that *epexegetis* was also considered a privilege of the narrator (see above), this critic perhaps means to say that the three lines are in the narrator's style and therefore foreign to Diomedes' speech. Overall, however, it is common among ancient scholars to treat 'elaboration' as an unobjectionable element of a speech (see the examples listed in n. 36).

A particularly interesting example of the concept 'summary with subsequent elaboration' is the generalising analysis of a Euripidean messenger speech:

συνήθως πάλιν Εὐριπίδης προειπὼν ἐν ἐνὶ στίχῳ τῆς συμφορᾶς τὸ κεφάλαιον καταστατικώτερον ὕστερον διηγεῖται τὸ πᾶν. (schol. E. *Ph.* 1339)³⁷

In his typical manner, Euripides [strictly speaking, the messenger], having stated beforehand in a single verse the gist of the plight, then recounts the whole story in a more detailed [i.e. narrative] way.

general... he repeats it in much detail'). A few Homeric scholia on elaboration are collected by Roemer (1879: xiii) and Bachmann (1904: 19).

³⁴ The exact wording is δοκεῖ μάχεσθαι, which need not mean more than 'seems to be in contradiction', that is, apparent contradiction (Schrader 1880: 427 n. 1).

³⁵ In reality, Aristarchus misinterprets the passage (see Janko 1992: *ad loc.*), but the note nicely illustrates how he saw the relationship between summary and elaboration.

³⁶ Epic: schol. Ge *Il.* 1.207–11 (Athena to Achilles), bT *Il.* 1.352b *ex.* (Achilles elaborates his initial prayer; the critic uses the term λεπτολογεῖν instead of ἐπεξεργάζεσθαι), bT *Il.* 4.372 *ex.* (Athena reproaches Diomedes by praising his father), T *Il.* 11.741b *ex.* (Nestor to Patroclus on his exploits as a young man), bT *Il.* 17.142–8 *ex.* (careful structural analysis of Glaucus' critique of Hector), also bT *Il.* 2.340a *ex.* (Nestor and Odysseus both elaborate what the other omits in his speech), bT *Il.* 4.35 *ex.* (Zeus criticising Hera's aggression against Troy). Tragedy: schol. S. *El.* 558 (Electra divides her speech in κεφάλαια like an orator), sim. 998 (on Chrysothemis' speech). For the structural analysis of speeches see also Chapter 17.

³⁷ Cf. schol. AbT *Il.* 18.20a *ex.* (on Antilochus reporting Patroclus' death).

Despite the absence of the usual word for elaboration, it is clear that this scholion, which aptly describes the structure of Euripides' messenger speeches, belongs here.

In a more general sense, the various terms (κεφάλαια, ἐπεξεργάζεσθαι and cognates) can be used more independently of the underlying rhetorical theory in order to designate any form of 'summary' or 'elaboration'.³⁸ This general use of 'elaboration' occurs, for example, in the description of similes (e.g. schol. T *Il.* 11.481*b ex.*, T *Il.* 12.278–86*b ex.*), especially in order to set off the simile against its shorter peer, the metaphor, which lacks the elaboration part (schol. bT *Il.* 17.737–9 *ex.*). In short, ἐν κεφαλαίοις (or similar) can describe any summary and therefore 'rapid' narrative. Conversely, ἐπεξεργάζεσθαι can do the same for any detailed and therefore 'slow' narrative.³⁹

One note (schol. bT *Il.* 4.122–3 *ex.*) testifies to the principle that Homer is wont to give an elaborate description on the first occurrence of the phenomenon in question (in this case, the shooting of an arrow). In a similar vein, schol. bT *Il.* 18.610 *ex.* makes the observation that Homer gives extensive descriptions only once for each phenomenon (he described the corslet of Agamemnon in *Il.* 11.19–40 and therefore does without a detailed description of Achilles' in *Iliad* 18; similarly with the pyres of Patroclus (23.110–230) and Hector (24.782–804) respectively). These notes must be read against the background that poets ought to avoid unnecessary repetition (see above on Variation).⁴⁰

Occasionally, Homer is praised for omitting the elaboration. The prolepsis of Patroclus' death, for example, would take the edge off the narrative if the poet had elaborated the details.⁴¹ And to give a detailed description of every single fighter's death would be prolix (schol. bT *Il.* 16.415–7 *ex.*). Similarly, scholars athetise E. *Med.* 87 on account of what they consider a superfluous elaboration.⁴² Conversely, a scholar argues that Homer must

³⁸ Cf. e.g. schol. T *Il.* 4.140*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 6.119*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 7.197–8*a ex.*, bT *Il.* 8.63 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 9.88*b ex.* (narrative without elaboration is called ψιλός), AbT *Il.* 10.25*a ex.*, A *Il.* 11.17*a Ariston.*, bT *Il.* 11.90–8 *ex.*, T *Il.* 11.226*b ex.* (ψιλός again), bT *Il.* 11.765*a ex.*, bT *Il.* 15.6–7 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 15.369 *ex.*, HQR *Od.* 4.52 (quoted in Chapter 6), Pi. P. 1.101*a*, E. *Andr.* 32, etc. (see also Meijering 1987: 152–3); schol. HPQT *Od.* 5.81 makes the interesting point δύο δὲ τρόποι ἐμφάσεως, ὁ μὲν διὰ τῆς καθ' ἕκαστον ἐπεξεργασίας, ὁ δὲ διὰ τοῦ συμπεράσματος ('there are two modes of emphasis, one by means of the elaboration of detail, the other by means of the outcome').

³⁹ For 'rapid' and 'slow' narrative cf. Chapter 2; see also below on Brevity.

⁴⁰ See also schol. Ab *Il.* 2.615–7 *ex.*, which argues that Homer designates Elis by naming the places located at the border because he did not want to elaborate again (πράλιν).

⁴¹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 11.604*c ex.* (discussed in Chapter 1).

⁴² Cf. schol. E. *Med.* 87, with most modern editors following suit. The same notion of superfluousness probably underlies schol. Pi. I. 2.1*b*, which argues that Pindar 'elaborated' the proem with an eye to his fee. (The Pindaric scholia are rich in such 'economic' insinuations: e.g. schol. Pi. P. 1.173, 3.195*a*, I. 2.19*a*, 5.2*a*, etc. and Chapter 1.)

not be criticised for dwelling on the details of Zeus' kinship with Sarpedon, because it serves a didactic purpose (schol. b *Il.* 16.433–8a² ex.).⁴³

These examples show that Homer may, but need not, elaborate. Perhaps this was one of the reasons why Zenodotus decided to athetise the bulk of the production of Achilles' shield by Hephaestus (*Il.* 18.483–608), leaving untouched only the short summary (ἡ κεφαλαιώδης ἔκθεσις) at the beginning (18.478–82). It is quite likely that he failed to see the function of such a long elaboration at this point.⁴⁴ Aristarchus objected that Homer would not have carefully introduced Hephaestus' bellows if he was not going to make use of them in his narrative (schol. A *Il.* 18.483a *Ariston.*). The explanation shows that Aristarchus knows full well that elaboration can be omitted. But in the present case he considers it genuine on account of the careful motivation of the bellows. Elsewhere, however, Aristarchus himself athetises lines of elaboration if they do not fit the requirements of their context.⁴⁵ A main criterion is, as often in Alexandrian scholarship, whether or not the elaboration has a specific function in that particular context. The lines which describe how Athena changes her clothes (*Il.* 5.734–6 = 8.385–7), for example, are kept in the former scene 'because they achieve something' (πράττεται γὰρ τινα) and athetised in the latter because they allegedly do not.⁴⁶ The note on the former passage (schol. A *Il.* 5.734–6 *Ariston.*) makes it clear that the lines function so to speak as an 'arming scene' which prepares for Athena's subsequent *aristeia* (cf. schol. A *Il.* 11.17a *Ariston.*, on the arming of Agamemnon).⁴⁷

The general topic 'summary without elaboration' also plays a role in the debate over another athetesis. (In the Athenian section of the Catalogue, three lines (*Il.* 2.553–5) praise their leader Menestheus as an excellent horseman and commander, surpassed by nobody except for Nestor.)

ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος ἀπὸ τούτου τρεῖς στίχους [sc. 553–5] ἠθέτηκεν, μήποτε διότι διὰ τῶν ἐπὶ μέρους οὐδέποτε αὐτὸν διατάσσοντα συνέστησεν. πολλὰ μὲν-τοι Ὅμηρος κεφαλαιωδῶς συνίστησιν, αὐτὰ τὰ ἔργα παραλιπών, ὡς τὴν Μαχάονος ἀριστείαν· “παῦσεν ἀριστεύοντα μάχας” [*Il.* 11.506]. (schol. A *Il.* 2.553a *Ariston.*)⁴⁸

⁴³ On didactic purpose in general see *Introd.* page 13.

⁴⁴ See Nickau (1977: 236–40), who, however, is too prone to defend Zenodotus' textual decisions.

⁴⁵ Mostly in speeches; see the examples discussed by Meijering (1987: 153–4). On the notion that elaboration is the narrator's privilege see above.

⁴⁶ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 8.385–7a¹ *Ariston.*; Alexandrian scholars are generally prone to suspect verbatim repetitions (e.g. Lührs 1992).

⁴⁷ See also Bachmann (1902: 36–7), Griesinger (1907: 26–7), Schenkeveld (1970: 170–3).

⁴⁸ The same notion that the elaboration of Menestheus' qualities is missing seems to underly schol. AT *Il.* 4.327–8 ex. The parallel case of Machaon is similarly explained in schol. A *Il.* 11.506a *Ariston.*, whereas schol. T *Il.* 11.506b ex. considers it a real exception; on the question see also schol. T *Il.* 12.35 ex. On 'leaving out' see *Chapter 6*.

<The diplo periestigmene,> because Zenodotus athetised three lines down from here, perhaps because he [sc. Homer] does not anywhere give a detailed account of him [sc. Menestheus] ordering his troops. Homer, however, presents many things summarily, leaving out the action itself [i.e. a detailed account of it], for example, Machaon's *aristeia* [sc. is not narrated in detail, but Homer says only in summary]: ' <The Greeks would not have yielded, had not Paris> stopped <Machaon> from excelling in battle'.

Aristarchus or his pupils hypothesise (μήποτε 'perhaps') that Zenodotus took exception to the missing elaboration of Menestheus' qualities as a military commander in the rest of the *Iliad*. Zenodotus probably objected that the lines in the Catalogue create the expectation of a subsequent elaboration, which is not fulfilled (Nickau 1977: 177–8). Aristarchus refutes his athetesis with the argument that it is quite common for Homer to omit the elaboration (supported with an example).⁴⁹ The passage differs from the ones discussed above in that the elaboration of Menestheus' qualities could not have followed immediately upon the passage from the Catalogue. It is noteworthy, too, that in the Machaon parallel the elaboration would have preceded the summary in *Il.* 11.506. All in all, Aristarchus' note appears to deal with 'summary without elaboration' in a rather loose sense. This, however, is not to say that it is not representative. Rather, the collected evidence seems to indicate that ancient scholars felt free to apply the concepts of 'summary' and 'elaboration' in various forms and contexts. The concepts may well be rooted in specific rhetorical theory (summary programme with subsequent implementation), but the scholia show that critics took the liberty of applying the terms more loosely to any form of summary or elaboration if this served their needs.

BREVITY

The preceding section regularly refers to the opposition 'summary vs. elaboration'. In that connection, it is worth remembering that ancient critics exhibit a certain predilection for brevity. Perhaps the earliest witness is Isocrates, who, according to Quintilian, considered brevity one of the three virtues of a speech's narrative section (the other two being clarity and persuasiveness).⁵⁰ The concept of brevity (or conciseness) in general is very common in ancient scholarship. It can be applied to all kinds of passages

⁴⁹ Note also that the Aristarcheans did not count Menestheus among the main characters (schol. A *Il.* 4.343a *Ariston.*).

⁵⁰ See Quint. 4.2.31 (= *Artium Scriptores* B XXIV 34). It is generally assumed that Isocrates' term for brevity was συντομία, which should therefore not be considered 'Stoic' (M. Schmidt 1976: 54 n. 40); see also Arist. *Po.* 1455b15–16. Isocrates' tripartition is widely attested (see e.g. *Anonymus Sequerianus* 63 Dilts-Kennedy = 63 Patillon, with the parallels listed by Dilts and Kennedy *ad loc.*).

and expressed in various ways: in addition to the central term συντομία ('brevity', with cognates), one can find, for example, ἐν κεφαλαίῳ ('summarily'), ἐν ὀλίγοις ('in a few words'), ἐν βραχεῖ ('briefly, in a nutshell'), ἐν τάχει ('quickly'), κατὰ συμπέρασμα (≈ 'by indicating only the conclusion (or result) of the action') or verbs such as παρατρέχειν ('to run through').⁵¹ A cherished notion is praise for a poet who can achieve much in a single line (ἐνὶ στίχῳ) or even a single word (διὰ μιᾶς λέξεως), for example the characterisation of the figure of Briseis.⁵²

The section on elaboration will have made it clear that scholars do not generally favour brevity, but judge each case on its merits. It is true, though, that their outlook can be influenced by Hellenistic principles of writing poetry. As a result they are sometimes inclined to produce a text that is 'leaner' than is perhaps justified (see e.g. the argument in schol. *A Il.* 1.110 *Ariston.*). It is equally true, however, that they differentiate between the various genres: epic is the more 'leisurely' genre and allows for more *epische Breite* ('epic scope'), whereas tragedy must not fail to press forward towards its completion (see discussion in [Chapter 2](#)).

INDIRECT PRESENTATION

Literature in general and poetry in particular have a predilection for indirect presentation. At the level of individual words and expressions, this can be gathered, for example, from the prominence of figurative language (metaphors etc.). Indirect style also comes into play when the presentation of one story element as it were stands for another that is not explicitly mentioned. (In *Iliad* II, Hector's charioteer, Cebriones, drives the chariot through lost armour and the bodies of soldiers, 'and the entire axle below was sprinkled with blood, and the rims around the chariot'.)

εἶωθε δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν συμβεβηκότων δηλοῦν τὰ πράγματα· νῦν δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀναφερομένου αἵματος ὥστε πιμπλάναι τὸν ἄξονα καὶ τὰς ἄντυγας, τὸ πλήθος ἐνέφηνε τῶν νεκρῶν. βαθὺ δὲ τραῦμα δηλῶσαι θέλων φησὶ "πάν δ' ὑπεθερμάνθη ξίφος αἵματι" [*Il.* 16.333 = 20.476]. (schol. bT *Il.* II.534–5 *ex.*)⁵³

⁵¹ συντομία: e.g. schol. AbT *Il.* 1.110 *Ariston.* (on συντομία in the scholia see e.g. Meijering 1987: esp. 147–8); ἐν κεφαλαίῳ: e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.352b *ex.*; ἐν ὀλίγοις: e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 20.395–9 *ex.*; ἐν βραχεῖ: e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.505c *ex.*; ἐν τάχει: e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 15.6–7 *ex.*; κατὰ συμπέρασμα: e.g. schol. *A Il.* 16.116a *Ariston.*; παρατρέχειν: e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 7.435 *ex.* (discussed in [Chapter 2](#), with parallels). The opposite, a full account, can be expressed by πλατύς ('wide, broad') and cognates: e.g. schol. E *Od.* 4.69, HQ *Od.* 24.74, Lycophr. 486b, Luc. 21.30.

⁵² See schol. bT *Il.* 1.348 *ex.* (quoted in [Chapter II](#), with various parallels listed in n. 39).

⁵³ The sword parallel is similarly explained in the note on the second of the two passages (schol. bT *Il.* 20.476 *ex.*). Note that τὰ συμβεβηκότα ('concomitant circumstances') can also designate the events themselves (schol. EHMQ *Od.* 3.184, quoted in [Chapter 6](#)).

He [sc. Homer] is wont to indicate the action from its concomitant circumstances. In the present case, by means of the blood spurting up so as fully to cover the axle and the rims he indicated the great number of dead bodies. <Cf. the passage where> he wants to show that a wound is deep and says ‘the entire sword grew warm with the blood’.

In other words, instead of stating in plain terms that Cebriones drew the chariot through a great number of dead bodies or that the wound inflicted by the sword was deep, Homer makes this felt by means of indirect presentation. The critic even claims that this is Homer’s regular practice, supported by a parallel. In addition to both scenes being part of a gory battle scene, the parallel was no doubt helped by the fact that in both cases the ‘entire’ (ἅπας, πᾶς) object is drenched in blood.⁵⁴

The explanation of the scholion can be compared to a device that ancient rhetoric considered one of the several forms of *synekdoche*: the text leaves out the event itself and instead indicates it ‘from its consequence’ (ἐκ or ἀπὸ (τοῦ) παρεπομένου or παρακολουθοῦντος).⁵⁵ The scholia are rich in this kind of explanation.⁵⁶ Comparable are the notes on κατὰ συλλογισμόν (‘by inference’). Instead of stating in plain terms, for example, the size of Achilles’ spear, Homer has his readers infer it from the fact that no other hero can brandish it.⁵⁷

A rather different form of indirect presentation is meant in a note that deals with the phenomenon that in Homer inanimate objects sometimes seem to have a volition of their own, for example when Pandarus’ arrow ‘is eager to fly’ (ἐπιπτέσθαι μενεαίνων, *Il.* 4.126) through the throng with the purpose of killing Menelaus. Aristotle (*Rh.* 141b31–12a3) discusses this and other examples under the rubric τὸ τὰ ἄψυχα ἔμψυχα ποιεῖν διὰ τῆς μεταφοῦς (‘making the lifeless living through metaphor’).⁵⁸ An anonymous critic seems to be partly influenced by Aristotle’s explanation, but nevertheless brings it to a point by adding another idea:

⁵⁴ For other examples of indirect presentation see schol. T *Il.* 10.524a¹ ex. (quoted in [Chapter 4](#)) and the forms of indirect characterisation discussed in [Chapter 11](#).

⁵⁵ For a general discussion of *synekdoche* (with numerous examples from the Aristophanes scholia in the *Ravennas*) see W. G. Rutherford (1905: 228–38), who takes his cue from Trypho (*fig.* III 195.27–196.11 Spengel) and Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 22; see also Hillgruber (1994: *ad loc.*).

⁵⁶ Cf. e.g. schol. A *Il.* 2.417a *Ariston*. (Erbse’s *testimonia* list eleven parallels from the Homeric scholia, which can easily be added to from other *corpora*: e.g. schol. Pi. *O.* 3.350, E. *Ph.* 640, A.R. 1.45–47e, see also n. 55).

⁵⁷ See schol. bT *Il.* 16.141–2a ex. (N. J. Richardson 1980: 271, with more examples).

⁵⁸ As is well known, Aristotle’s term ‘metaphor’ is broader than its modern counterpart and can perhaps be rendered here with ‘transference’. The concept ‘metaphor from lifeless to living’ recurs in schol. A *Il.* 11.574a *Ariston*. (on the spears ‘standing (fast) in the ground). On ‘living missiles’ in Homer see also schol. bT *Il.* 10.373–4 ex.

ἐμφαντικῶς δὲ τὴν τοῦ βολόντος προθυμίαν εἰς τὸ βληθὲν μετήγαγεν, ὡς “λιλαίόμενα χροὸς ἄσαι” [*Il.* 11.574, 15.317], “ἀγαλλόμενα Διὸς οὐρῶ” [*Od.* 5.176]. (schol. bT *Il.* 4.126*b ex.*)

Suggestively he [sc. Homer] transferred the eagerness from the archer to the arrow, cf. ‘<javelins> eager to feast on flesh’, ‘<ships> rejoicing in Zeus’ wind’.

While Aristotle focuses on the ‘animation’ of inanimate objects (which he calls ἐνέργεια), this critic gives the whole question his own twist in that he perceives a transference of the warrior’s emotional state (eagerness) to his missile.⁵⁹ The missile ‘feels’ what its carrier feels. The parallels no doubt imply that this is a common feature in Homer.⁶⁰

It is no coincidence that the critic uses the word ἐμφαντικῶς (‘suggestively’). For ἔμφρασις and cognates are regularly used both in rhetoric and in literary criticism to describe passages in which something is not spelled out in plain terms, but rather suggested or insinuated.⁶¹ The examples on ‘indirect presentation’ could be multiplied by including the attestations of ἔμφρασις. An important difficulty is, however, that the same word family can also have the meaning ‘emphasis (or emphatic)’ in its current sense.⁶² Given that scholia often provide very little context, it can be very difficult to decide which of the two meanings the critic had in mind (cf. Erbse VII: 168, on the difficulties that the compiler of a thematic index faces when dealing with ἔμφρασις).

Another adverb that describes what the speaker says ‘between the lines’ is λεληθότως (‘imperceptibly, secretly’), for example on the simile which imperceptibly shows the ignobility of the Trojans (schol. bT *Il.* 11.116–7 *ex.*). More often, however, λεληθότως refers to what characters get across to their interlocutors.⁶³

⁵⁹ The critic in schol. bT *Il.* 21.169*a ex.* gives a comparable explanation (μετήγαγεν) of Achilles’ spear that is ‘straight-flying’ (ἰθυπτιῶν), but calls this (with Aristotle) μεταφορικῶς (sim. schol. bT *Il.* 13.562 *ex.* on the javelin which Poseidon ‘robbed of its power’, ἀμενήνωσεν). See also schol. bT *Il.* 4.217 *ex.*, which explains that Pandarus’ ‘bitter arrow’ (πικρὸς δίστος) is a transfer (again μετήγαγεν) of the pain of the wounded to the object that wounded him.

⁶⁰ The second parallel (*Od.* 5.176) does not illustrate the transfer of the emotion from the human agent to his missile, but is nevertheless a good example for an inanimate object (ships) with human feelings, especially since the speaker is homesick Odysseus.

⁶¹ For ἔμφρασις in rhetoric see e.g. Trypho (*fig.* III 199.14–20 Spengel), to which compare Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 26.

⁶² The semantics of ἔμφρασις are discussed by W. G. Rutherford (1905: 264–6), Schenkeveld (1964: 129–31), Neuschäfer (1987: 226–7), I. Rutherford (1988), Nesselrath (1990: 122–5), Hillgruber (1994: 141).

⁶³ E.g. schol. bT *Il.* 13.728 *ex.* (on Polydamas turning Hector’s prowess imperceptibly into a reproach). The same holds true for ἡρέμα (‘gently, softly’), e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 11.766 *ex.* (Nestor indirectly instructing Patroclus). Both words can also mean ‘aside’ (see Chapter 19).

Finally, there are two fairly versatile expressions for something that is not stated in plain terms. One is αἰνίττεσθαι ('to speak in riddles, hint at'), whose many applications will be further explored in [Chapter 10](#). The other is the phrase ἐν σχήματι φράζειν/δηλοῦν etc. (≈ 'to show/indicate by means of the wording'), which can be applied to all kinds of passages where the speaker says something without saying it.⁶⁴ If Chryses urges Apollo to make the Greeks pay for his tears, this shows that he must have been weeping (schol. bT *Il.* 1.42*b ex.*). If Diomedes is shouting to rally Odysseus, he must have been fleeing with the rest of the army (schol. bT *Il.* 8.92 *ex.*). If Athena removes the dark mist from the eyes of the Greeks, they must have been in the dark (schol. T *Il.* 15.668*b ex.*). None of this is explicitly stated in the text, but the reader reconstructs it on the basis of what the text does say (cf. [Chapter 6](#) on the cooperation of the reader).

IRONY

Irony is another device for endowing a text with a meaning that is not stated in plain terms. At the same time, irony is a slippery issue and apt to cause severe headaches, both conceptually and terminologically. It comes perhaps as a minor consolation that this seems to have been the case from the earliest attestations on. However, this is not the place to write or rewrite the history of irony.⁶⁵ The scope of the present section is much more limited. Considering the many modern concepts that 'irony' encompasses, there will be a restriction to what is perhaps best called 'rhetorical irony', that is, the figure of speech by which 'the speaker means the opposite of what he says'.⁶⁶ As can be expected, ancient scholars have at their disposal several expressions (listed below) that can designate rhetorical irony. The problem is that the meaning of most of these expressions cannot be limited to 'rhetorical irony'. It is therefore difficult to illustrate them with examples, because it is often impossible to determine with certainty

⁶⁴ Cf. the definition of σχῆμα by Zoilus (Quint. 9.1.14): *schemata quo aliud simulatur dici quam dicitur* ('a *schemata* where the speaker pretends to be saying something which he is not saying'); cf. Phoebammon (III 44.1–3 Spengel = *Artium Scriptores* B XXXV 2): σχῆμά ἐστιν ἕτερον μὲν προσποιέσθαι, ἕτερον δὲ λέγειν ('a *schemata* is to pretend one thing and to mean another'). For the semantics of σχῆμα see also [Chapter 19](#).

⁶⁵ For such a history see, e.g., Ribbeck (1876), Büchner (1941), N. Knox (1961), Bergson (1971), D. Knox (1989), Nünlist (2000).

⁶⁶ This limitation can be justified as follows. Of the numerous concepts that today fall under the rubric 'irony', rhetorical irony is the only one that was actually called εἰρωνεία in antiquity. Other 'ironic' phenomena such as 'dramatic irony' (on which see [Chapter 10](#)) or 'the bitter bit' (e.g. Arist. *Po.* 1452a7–10, schol. bT *Il.* 13.831*b ex.*) or 'losing what one cherishes most' (schol. bT *Il.* 7.79a *ex.*) were recognised as such, but, as far as can be seen, never referred to by the word εἰρωνεία (or cognates). Needless to say, εἰρωνεία originally encompasses more than 'rhetorical irony' (see below).

whether ‘rhetorical irony’ is indeed what the critic has in mind when he uses one of the ambiguous expressions.

The only unambiguous term used in the scholia is εἰρωνεία itself (and cognates), which is perhaps not what one would have expected. After all, the earliest attestations of the word rather point to a meaning such as ‘self-deprecation, feigned ignorance’, from which ‘rhetorical irony’ appears to have developed.⁶⁷ However, over the years the meaning ‘rhetorical irony’ seems to have taken over completely, at least as far as the scholia are concerned. Of the dozens of attestations, all appear to fall under the rubric ‘rhetorical irony’ and not under ‘self-deprecation’ or the like.⁶⁸

This is where certainty ends. There are other expressions that can, but need not, designate ‘rhetorical irony’. The problem is, to repeat, that it is often impossible to determine whether ‘rhetorical irony’ is indeed what the critic had in mind, unless, of course, this is made clear in the rest of the scholion. It is, therefore, not easy to give clear examples.⁶⁹ These ambiguous terms for ‘rhetorical irony’ include:

ἦθος (lit. ‘character’), most often in the form ἐν ἦθει or ἠθικῶς, on occasion also μετὰ ἦθους. For a tentative explanation of how the meaning ‘rhetorical irony’ may have developed from ‘in character’ see Excursus in [Chapter II](#) (with examples).

ὑπόκρισις (lit. ‘acting’, hence ‘dissimulation’), especially ἐν ὑποκρίσει, also καθ’ ὑπόκρισιν. The ironic speaker puts up a show and thereby conceals his true feelings.⁷⁰ This meaning is well brought out by schol. E. Or. 488: ταῦτα δὲ ἐν ὑποκρίσει λέγει, οὐ σπουδῆ (‘He [sc. Menelaus] says this in dissimulation, not seriously’).⁷¹

κατ’ ἀντίφρασιν, that is, by means of the ‘opposite’ of the word that would be fitting, that is, not ironic (e.g. schol. E. Hec. 26).⁷²

⁶⁷ See e.g. Ribbeck (1876).

⁶⁸ The only exception seems to be schol. Dem. 4.7 (p. 111.12–17 Dilts), which, however, is not a real exception, because it gives a semantic explanation of εἰρωνεία in the speech of Demosthenes, who of course uses it in the meaning that was prevalent then.

⁶⁹ The reader can easily check this for himself or herself. The *index analyticus* of Schwartz’ edition of the scholia to Euripides (1891: 414, misprinted as 314) collects examples for ‘rhetorical irony’ (variously expressed). But not all examples seem equally appropriate. The same applies to the examples for ironic ἐν ἦθει collected by Kroll (1918). The determination of rhetorical irony appears to be one of those fields of literary criticism where the subjective element is particularly hard to overcome.

⁷⁰ Note that schol. Ar. Nu. 449c glosses εἰρων, among other things, with ὑποκριτής. For ὑπόκρισις as the decisive factor that causes rhetorical irony see n. 72.

⁷¹ A similar distinction is made in schol. Hes. op. 272b: ταῦτα σχετλιάζων καὶ ἐν ἦθει, οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ σπουδῆς λέγει (‘he [sc. Hesiod] says this in indignant irony, not in earnest’).

⁷² For ἀντίφρασις as rhetorical irony see e.g. Quint. 9.2.47. Conversely, Trypho (*fig.* III 204.4–7 Spengel) expressly distinguishes between ἀντίφρασις and εἰρωνεία, in that the former is said to lack the crucial ὑπόκρισις.

Similarly, rhetorical irony can also be expressed by ἐκ τοῦ ἐναντίου ‘from the opposite’ (e.g. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 71a, cf. Trypho *fig.* III 205 Spengel):

βαρύτης (‘indignation’) is described as a form of rhetorical irony by Hermogenes (*id.* 2.8, esp. p. 365.7–12 Rabe).⁷³ In the scholia, however, attestations of the word in this meaning are rare (e.g. schol. Luc. 23.13, cf. βάρως in schol. bT *Il.* 15.504–5 *ex.*). Conversely, Eustathius uses βαρύτης frequently to designate rhetorical irony (van der Valk II: lx).

There are also expressions for ‘sarcasm’ (e.g. schol. S. *El.* 1457: ἐπι-σαρκάζειν, bT *Il.* 13.413 *ex.*: σαρκασμός), which, however, is not universally accepted as falling under rhetorical irony. This view is at least as old as Trypho (*fig.* III 205 Spengel), who treats εἰρωνεία and σαρκασμός as two separate figures. Others, however, see sarcasm as a sub-category of rhetorical irony (e.g. Ps.Herod. *fig.* 16–17 Hajdú, with *test.*).

In addition to the terms that can designate rhetorical irony, other expressions are used in the scholia in order to describe passages that may well be deemed ‘ironical’, but the emphasis is more on the fact that the speaker ‘mocks’ or ‘ridicules’ his addressee: διασύρειν (‘to disparage, ridicule’), (ἐπι)κερτομεῖν (‘to mock’), μυκτηρίζειν (‘to sneer at’), σκώπτειν (‘to mock’), χαριεντίζεσθαι (‘to jest’), χλευάζειν (‘to scoff’).⁷⁴ Although several of these terms recur in the elaborate (if not always successful) attempts of rhetoricians to subdivide the larger concept of rhetorical irony, it seems safer not to treat them as words which by themselves designate rhetorical irony.⁷⁵ Rather, they describe the goal the speaker intends to achieve with his addressee. Rhetorical irony may well play a role in this, but these expressions as such do not seem to point this out. They merely indicate the speaker’s ‘mockery’ (or the like), which may well be achieved by means other than rhetorical irony.

When trying to describe the difficulties of pinning down irony, modern scholars regularly use the word ‘Protean’, which also applies here. Two things are, nevertheless, certain: (i) εἰρωνεία (and cognates) always means ‘rhetorical irony’ in the scholia; (ii) rhetorical irony is frequently commented on in the scholia, despite the various uncertainties indicated

⁷³ Unlike the previous expressions, βαρύτης does not describe how irony works as a rhetorical figure, but designates the illocutionary force that is expressed by it. The context of Hermogenes’ definition makes it clear that he, too, thinks rhetorical irony works by way of the ‘opposite’ (ἐναντίου).

⁷⁴ διασύρειν: e.g. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 443; (ἐπι)κερτομεῖν: e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 20.180–6b *ex.*; μυκτηρίζειν: e.g. schol. A *Il.* 19.49a *Ariston.* (= D.T. fr. *43 Linke); σκώπτειν: e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 3.430 *ex.*; χαριεντίζεσθαι: e.g. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 649a; χλευάζειν: e.g. schol. Ar. *Eq.* 344a.

⁷⁵ Cocondrius (III 235–6 Spengel), for example, differentiates eight sub-categories of rhetorical irony, including διασυρισμός, ἐπικερτόμησις, μυκτηρισμός, χαριεντισμός, χλευασμός. See also Ps.Herod. *fig.* 16–22 Hajdú (with *testimonia*).

above. As for the rest, the evidence examined here is characterised by the well-known lack of certainty that makes irony such a difficult and fascinating phenomenon.

ICONIC RELATION BETWEEN FORM AND CONTENT

Among the numerous notes on metre and prosody (Introd. page 15), there are some which perceive an iconic relation between form and content, that is, the metre depicts the action that is described in the text. (In *Iliad* I Zeus nods in assent and thereby causes Mt Olympus to tremble. The relevant hexameter consists of dactyls only.)

τῶ δὲ τάχει τῶν συλλαβῶν τὸν τρόμον τοῦ ὄρους διαγράφει καὶ τὸ ταχὺ τῆς κινήσεως δηλοῖ. (schol. AbT *Il.* 1.530c ex.)

By means of the speed of the syllables he [sc. Homer] depicts the trembling of the mountain and shows the speed of its movement.

The accumulation of short syllables is said to convey the idea of movement and speed (sim. schol. metr. Pi. O. 1, p. 14.6–17 Dr.). Form and content are seen as identical and probably reinforcing each other.⁷⁶ The same idea probably underlies schol. bT *Il.* 4.222b ex., which argues that Homer ‘adapted the line to the haste (σπουδῆ) of the arming soldiers’, but the line in question is not purely dactylic.

Similarly, the unmetrical end of the notorious line *Il.* 12.208 (it ends with a word consisting of two short syllables, ὄφιν ‘snake’, instead of the required trochee or spondee) is explained as meaningful:

οἱ δὲ “ὄ(π)φιν” φασίν· ἐμφαντικώτερον δὲ ἐχρήσατο τῆ τοῦ στίχου συνθέσει, καίτοι γε ἐγγωροῦν εἶπεῖν “ὄπως ὄφιν αἰόλον εἶδον”. τὴν γὰρ κατάπληξιν τῶν Τρώων καὶ τὸν φόβον παρίστησι τῶ τάχει τοῦ στίχου εἰς βραχείας τελευτῶντος συλλαβάς. (schol. T *Il.* 12.208c ex.)

Some say <the text should read> *oppbin* [i.e. the penultimate syllable becomes long ‘by position’]. But he [sc. Homer] used the composition of the line in a very suggestive manner, although he could have said ‘when they [sc. the Trojans] saw the dappled snake’ [i.e. avoid the metrical problem by changing the word order].

⁷⁶ Another note (schol. bT *Il.* 12.381a ex.) makes the observation that the hexameter in question is purely dactylic (even the sixth foot is dactylic, μιν ῥέα), but does not attribute a particular meaning to the fact; for the two Homeric scholia see N. J. Richardson (1980: 286), who also points out that Aristarchus collected purely spondaic lines (schol. A *Il.* 11.130a *Ariston.*, with the parallels listed by Erbse), because he considered them metrically unattractive. Similarly, Ps. Demetr. *eloc.* 117 cautions against accumulating long syllables. For a collection of spondaic lines see also Ptolemy of Ascalon fr. 64 Baeye (= schol. T *Il.* 5.500 ex.).

For he presents the Trojans' shock and fear by means of the speed of the line which ends in short syllables.

The irregularity of the line is not simply accepted as such. Instead, an (admittedly fanciful) explanation is given for the metrical oddity: it is said to stand for the shock of the Trojans. Another scholion on the same passage (schol. h *Il.* 12.208c, printed by Erbse in the *testimonia*) reports that 'some' thought the 'short-tailed' verse iconically represented this particular snake, whose tail is short. This interpretation may be influenced by the ancient terminology for hexameters that end with an irregular sixth foot. Such a line is called μείουρος (lit. 'mouse-tailed').⁷⁷

Long syllables too can be said to bear meaning. (Sisyphus pushes his boulder uphill, λᾶαν ἄνω ὄθησκε (*lâan anô ôtheske*).

ἐπαινεῖται τὸ ἔπος ὡς διὰ τῶν μακρῶν συλλαβῶν τὴν δυσχέρειαν ἐμφοῖνον. (schol. Q *Od.* 11.596)⁷⁸

The line is praised because the long syllables make felt the difficulty.

The two long o-sounds, made even more noticeable by the hiatus, are said to convey the idea of Sisyphus' supreme effort. The reader can so to speak hear how hard this is on Sisyphus.⁷⁹

In a similar vein, the particular form of a word or expression is sometimes considered to depict the meaning of the passage.⁸⁰ The short word κόψε (*kopse*, '(he) hit'), for example, indicates that the blow was quick (schol. T *Il.* 12.204a ex.). Likewise, Pandarus' quick release of the arrow made Homer use the syncopated form ἄλτο (*âlto*, 'flew') instead of the more regular form ἦλτο (*hêlato*, schol. bT *Il.* 4.125b ex., cf. *Ep. Hom.* α 159).

⁷⁷ Cf. e.g. schol. T *Il.* 12.208c ex. A similarly 'theriomorphic' terminology occasionally applies to hexameters with irregular short syllables in the middle. Such a verse can be called σφηκώδης ('wasp-like', e.g. schol. HQ *Od.* 10.60, schol. Heph. p. 323.1-4 Consrbr.).

⁷⁸ N. J. Richardson (1980: 286 n. 76) compares the discussion in Ps. Demetr. *eloc.* 72 and D.H. *Comp.* 20 (pp. 90-3 U.-R.). The latter, in particular, gives a very detailed description of how Homer succeeded in imitating (μιμητικῶς) the content of the Sisyphus passage by means of verbal composition (σύνθεσις τῶν ὀνομάτων). The example is meant to illustrate Homer's ability to turn a reader into a spectator (see Chapter 5).

⁷⁹ Cf. also the cases where the unusual prosody of words is explained as meaningful: schol. bT *Il.* 7.208a ex. (on the comparatively rare prosody of ἄρης as a spondee, which is said to be indicative of his looks and gait; but why does the critic speak of 'syllables' (plural)?); T *Il.* 9.446a ex.: the length of υ in ἀποξύσας, 'scraping off' (old age; of rejuvenation by a god), is said to convey the idea of how difficult it is to take away old age (the υ is always long; e.g. LSJ s.v.). See also the notes on the *diektasis* of βοᾶς (schol. T *Il.* 14.394b ex.), βοόωσιν (schol. bT *Il.* 17.263-5 ex., sim. bT *Il.* 17.263c ex.). As to hiatus, one critic (schol. T *Il.* 22.152 ex.) thinks their presence in two consecutive lines (see Erbse *ad loc.*) produces a 'soft' metre.

⁸⁰ This discussion does not include the fairly obvious case of onomatopoeia (e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 4.125a ex. with *test.*), which can also be called κατὰ μίμησιν (e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 16.470a ex.). See also the passages collected by Thom (2005: 57-8 n. 77).

And the ‘*tnesis*’ of *τάμη διὰ* (*tamêi dia*, ‘cuts through’, instead of the compound *diatamêi*) imitates what is happening.⁸¹

Even individual sounds can be said to depict or imitate the action described in the passage. (Pandarus airs his frustration at missing Diomedes by vowing that, after his return home, he will immediately burn his bow, ‘breaking [it] with my hands’, *kheri diaklassas*.)

διὰ τῆς ἀναδιπλασιάσεως τοῦ σ τὸν ἀπὸ τῆς συντρίψεως τῶν κεράτων γινόμενον κτύπον ἐμιμήσατο. (schol. bT *Il.* 5.216a ex.)

By doubling <the letter> s [sc. in *diaklassas*, instead of ‘regular’ *diaklasas*] he [sc. Homer, rather than Pandarus] imitated the sound caused by the destruction of the horn pieces.

Similarly, the harsh sound of the verb *ἠρήριστο* (*êrêreisto*, ‘forced its way’, of the spear) is said to indicate the vigour of the blow (schol. bT *Il.* 3.358 ex., cf. bT *Il.* 7.252 ex.). And the harshness (τραχύτης) of the stops in *κύματα παφλάζοντα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης, κυρτὰ φαληριώοντα* (*kumata paphlazonta poluphloisboio thalassês, kurta phalêriôonta*, ‘boiling waves of the much-roaring sea, arched, flecked with foam’) imitates the sound of a stormy sea (schol. bT *Il.* 13.798–9 ex.).

Ancient Greeks in general seem to have been alert to the significance of sounds. Some held strong opinions about whether or not a particular sound was appropriate, beautiful, etc. The lyric poet Lasus of Hermione (second half sixth century BC), for example, composed an entire poem without the letter *sigma* (fr. 704 PMG), and an unknown poet even an entire play (fr. trag. adesp. 655 Snell-Kannicht). In post-classical times, various scholars developed several theories of sounds, culminating in the theory of the so-called ‘euphonists’, according to whom sound was even more important than content.⁸² Such a strong focus on the phonetic part inevitably affects a poet’s word choice and word order (see Ps. Demetr. *eloc.* 68–74, D.H. *Comp.*). No scholion seems to reflect the view of the more extreme among the euphonists, but there is an undeniable interest in sounds and their possible significance.⁸³

⁸¹ See schol. bT *Il.* 17.522a ex., similar notes on *tnesis*: schol. T *Il.* 17.542 ex., with the parallels listed by Erbse; add: schol. bT *Il.* 22.354a ex., T *Il.* 24.358–60 ex., BQ *Od.* 3.462. NB the ancient term is not ‘*tnesis*’ (though eerily suited to the example mentioned in the main text), but ὑπερβατόν, which describes the unusual word order.

⁸² The evidence, largely deriving from Philodemus, is collected and interpreted by Janko (2000: 120–200).

⁸³ See N. J. Richardson (1980: 283–7), who discusses most of the examples above and adds several more.

STYLISTIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENRES⁸⁴

In his *Poetics*, Aristotle regularly points out that tragedy and comedy are different, among other things, in subject-matter and the type of characters that are brought on stage. Generally speaking, comedy is considered the 'lower' of the two genres.⁸⁵ Likewise, the scholia repeatedly discuss the different register of the two genres, especially when the passage under discussion is said to be inappropriate to its genre (e.g. schol. E. *Andr.* 32, p. 254.11–17 Schw.).⁸⁶

A comparable notion of typically tragic style allowed scholars to identify *paratragodia* in Aristophanes, that is, passages which deliberately parody the elevated diction of tragedy.⁸⁷ A slightly less pointed relation is described when Aristophanes is said to 'imitate' (μιμῆσθαι) the style of tragedy (e.g. schol. Ar. *Ra.* 465c, 1331b, 1340a). Although one can assume that in these cases, too, Aristophanes' intention is to make fun of tragedy, the critics do not say so explicitly when they speak of 'imitation'. Likewise, a scholion to Euripides (schol. E. *Or.* 162) makes the observation that Aristophanes uses a tragic word (ἔλακεν, 'screamed, cried aloud') in *Wealth* 39.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ This section is devoted to the differences between poetic genres and does not include the numerous scholia that discuss how poetic style differs from regular usage (examples and references are strictly e.g.): poetic plural (schol. Pi. O. 6.115a), freer use of tenses (schol. Pi. I. 2.54a), patronymic instead of proper name (schol. Pi. N. 6.30), personifications (schol. Pi. P. 8.1a, see Chapter 11), γάρ in the first sentence (schol. E. *Ph.* 886), or, with a view to Homeric style in particular: omission of article (schol. A Il. 1.465b' *Hrd.*, sim. bT), redundant particles (schol. A Il. 1.41c *Ariston.*), repetition of anaphoric pronoun, although there is no change of grammatical subject (schol. A Il. 3.18a *Ariston.*), infinitive as imperative (schol. A Il. 3.459 *Ariston.*), omission of preposition (schol. A Il. 20.375 *Ariston.*), preference of parataxis over hypotaxis (schol. A Il. 22.468b *Ariston.*), fondness of the *schema kath' holon kai kata meros* (schol. A Il. 24.58c *Ariston.*), etc. (see Erbse VII: esp. s.vv. *Grammatica* and *Rhetorica*). Equally omitted are explanations of poetic vocabulary (e.g. schol. Arat. 318).

⁸⁵ The crucial terms are φαῦλος and χείρων, as opposed to σπουδαῖος and βελτίων, which characterise tragedy. On the difference between tragic and comic characters see e.g. *Po.* 1448a16–18, 25–7, 1449a32–4; on subject-matter e.g. 1449b24.

⁸⁶ Relevant material is collected by Trendelenburg (1867: 39–41, 54–62), see also M. Schmidt (1976: 208), Heath (1987: 35 with n. 40). Some of these notes may well go back to or draw on Didymus, who is known to have written extensive works on the usage of the comic and tragic poets (Pfeiffer 1968: 278).

⁸⁷ Cf. e.g. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 1190b (παρατραγωδεῖ), V. 1484 (παρατραγουέεται), *Av.* 1246 (παρατραγωδεῖ), *Th.* 5 (τραγικώτερον), 39 (παρὰ τοῖς τραγικοῖς οὕτω λέγεται), *Pl.* 9d (ἐτραγικέσσατο τῇ φράσει), 39a.α (τραγικώτερον), b (τραγικῆ λέξις), 601a (τραγουέεται, though of a quotation from Euripides: fr. 713 Kannicht); see Rau (1967: 15), who also lists attestations from other sources.

⁸⁸ For the notion that a phenomenon is typical of comedy see also the phrase ὡς ἐν κωμῳδίᾳ (e.g. schol. Ar. *Av.* 1237, on the oath μὰ Δι'), which, however, is also applied to phenomena other than style: e.g. schol. Ar. *Eq.* 167b (on jokes παρὰ προσδοκίαν), *Av.* 1142b (probably on the comic notion that birds can build walls), 1669a (on attributing Athenian habits to the gods). As to tragic diction, schol. Hes. *Th.* 691 observes that the word ἵκταρ ('close together') is also used by the tragedians.

The identification of passages written in the style of another genre also underlies the notes which discover ‘epigrammatic’ lines in the Homeric epics. This applies in particular to passages that catch the gist concisely in a single line, for example when Hector has an imaginary person describe Andromache with ‘This is the wife of Hector, who always excelled in fighting’ (schol. bT *Il.* 6.460*b ex.*); or when Helen describes Agamemnon as ‘both a good king and a strong fighter’ (*Il.* 3.179, discussed in schol. AbT *Il.* 1.29*d ex.*, sim. schol. T *Il.* 3.178 *ex.*).⁸⁹

In addition to these distinctions between genres, scholars also attempted to get a sense for the development of poetic diction, for example when they divided comedy into Old, Middle and New. Thus, a note on Aristophanes’ last extant play (schol. Ar. *Pl.* 515*b*) argues that the line in question ‘already smells like Middle Comedy’ (ῥῆδη τῆς μέσης κωμωδίας ὄζει).⁹⁰ From there it is only a small step towards the attempt to identify the style of individual poets, which plays a role, for instance, when the authenticity of a particular passage is under discussion.⁹¹

Generally speaking, the scholia have much to say on a passage’s (stylistic) appropriateness or lack thereof.⁹² However, one should not automatically assume that such an argument is related to questions of genre, unless this is made explicit in the context of the scholion.

THE THREE STYLES

The doctrine of the three styles (grand–middle–plain) is very popular in ancient rhetoric, and Homer, as often, is the single most important source for illustrating it with examples.⁹³ It comes, therefore, as a mild surprise that the scholia show only a few traces of the doctrine. Interestingly, this not only applies to the scholia on Homer and other poets, but also to the

⁸⁹ The idea of an epigram is particularly appropriate to the passage where Hector as it were composes the inscription of his own tomb (schol. bT *Il.* 7.86*b ex.*, sim. bT *Il.* 7.89*a ex.*). Interestingly, schol. AT *Il.* 3.156–8*b ex.* argues that Homer invented the ‘triangular epigram’ (τριγωνον ἐπιγραμμα). It does not matter with which of the three verses (*Il.* 3.156–8) one begins.

⁹⁰ On this scholion see Nesselrath (1990: 241–2).

⁹¹ Cf. e.g. schol. A *Il.* 24.614–7*a Ariston.*, which argues that the lines in question are ‘Hesiodic in style’ (Ἡσιόδεια τῶν χαρακτῆρι).

⁹² On the question of appropriateness in general see Introd. page 13 with n. 44. More specifically, the Homeric scholia repeatedly discuss the successful incorporation of ‘humble things’ (ταπεινά): e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 5.408*a ex.* (on the word παππάζειν ‘to call someone “daddy”’); cf. Roemer (1879: xii). Such explanations regularly concern similes (see the list in N. J. Richardson 1980: 276), whose subject-matters are often less ‘heroic’ than that of the surrounding narrative.

⁹³ For a concise précis, with useful presentation of the relevant terminology in tabular form, see Russell (1964: xxxiv–vi); cf. Hillgruber (1994: *ad Ps.Plut. Hom.* 72–3).

scholia on the orators. The clearest example is a scholion on the simile in *Iliad* 21 which describes a man who channels water:

ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄδροῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ἰσχνὸν ἔρχεται καὶ ἀνθηρόν. (schol. bT *Il.* 21.257–62a ex.)⁹⁴

He [sc. Homer] makes a transition [sc. by inserting the simile] from the grand style to the plain and florid.

The terms ἄδρός ('grand') and ἰσχνός ('plain') are standard and require no further explanation, while the third term ἀνθηρός ('florid') is somewhat ambiguous. In some treatises (e.g. Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 72–3), the 'florid' style is added as a fourth category to the well-known triad, whereas in others (cf. Quint. 12.10.58) 'florid' is actually identified with the 'middle' style. However, the absence of the definite article before ἀνθηρόν seems to indicate that the critic puts it together with ἰσχνόν (thus Bühler 1964: 77 n. 1), for which there are no parallels. And without further context, it is difficult to determine which line he is following in this note. It is, however, worth mentioning that the Geneva scholion on the same passage (schol. Ge *Il.* 21.257–62b ex.) speaks of γλαφυρόν πλάσμα ('smooth style'), which normally falls together with the 'middle' style.

Ancient scholars tended to credit Homer with the invention of all kinds of things, including rhetoric (cf. Introd. page 16 n. 59). In the same vein, they identified Homeric prototypes for the three styles: Odysseus for the grand style, Nestor for the middle, Menelaus for the plain.⁹⁵ The same distinction recurs in a Homeric scholion that gives a fairly detailed description of the issue.⁹⁶ What is remarkable, however, is that its terminology is 'unorthodox' in the sense that only one of the usual terms for 'grand–middle–plain' is used (ὕψηλός, 'grand'), although the scholion describes each of the three styles with at least three different terms.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ One may suspect that the stylistic comment is influenced by considerations of subject-matter (along the lines 'a humble subject-matter is presented in plain style'). The scholion is briefly discussed by N. J. Richardson (1980: 277).

⁹⁵ The relevant sources are collected in Radermacher (1951: 6–9; cf. 9–10 on Homer as inventor of rhetoric). On the three Homeric prototypes see also Kennedy (1957: 26–9).

⁹⁶ See schol. AbT *Il.* 3.212 ex. (the names of the Homeric prototypes at the end of the scholion occur only in T), not in Radermacher (1951: 6–9), but mentioned by N. J. Richardson (1980: 281).

⁹⁷ Plain: ἀπολελυμένος ('general'), βραχύς ('brief'), ἱκανὸς αὐτὰ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα παραστήσαι ('apt to present the very essentials'); middle: πιθανός ('persuasive'), τεχνικός ('skilful'), πολλῶν πληρῆς δογμάτων ('full of judgments'), γνωμικός ('gnomic'), σαφής ('clear'); grand: ὕψηλός (see above), καταπληκτικός ('striking'), μεστός ἐνθυμημάτων ('full of enthymemes').

Several other scholia point out that the passage under discussion is ‘grand, magnificent’.⁹⁸ But it remains open whether in all these cases the critics are in fact thinking of the three styles in particular, especially when they seem to be talking about phenomena other than style. It seems more likely that terms such as μεγαλοπρεπής are often used simply to praise the ‘greatness’ of the passage, without specific reference to the doctrine of the three styles.⁹⁹

All in all, it is probably fair to conclude that a very popular stylistic categorisation in antiquity seems to have had comparatively little influence on the scholia.

MINOR STYLISTIC PHENOMENA

Increasing number of syllables

A stylistic principle of ancient literature is to increase the number of syllables with each consecutive word. In modern scholarship this is regularly referred to as *Behaghels Gesetz der wachsenden Glieder* (Behaghel 1909). Ancient critics do not seem to have a specific term, but describe the phenomenon periphrastically.¹⁰⁰ (In the *teichoscopia*, Priam addresses Agamemnon at a distance with the line ὦ μάκαρ Ἀτρείδη, μοιρηγενές, ὀλβιόδαιμον (‘O happy son of Atreus, child of fortune, blessed by the gods’, *Il.* 3.182), which displays a regular increase in syllables from one to five.)

σημειώσαίω δ’ ἄν ὡς κατὰ πρόοδον συλλαβῆ ἠϋξῆται μετ’ ἐκπλήξεως ὁ ἔπαινος κλιμακῆδόν. (schol. AbT *Il.* 3.182a ex.)¹⁰¹

You may notice that his [sc. Priam’s] praise, together with his awe, increases step by step by one syllable, thereby forming a climax.

Interestingly, the critic does not simply observe the fact, but attributes a specific rhetorical function to the increasing number of syllables. On account of this function, the note could have been discussed above in

⁹⁸ μεγαλοπρεπής: e.g. schol. T *Il.* 12.278–86b ex. (on the snow similes).

⁹⁹ Regarding the presence of the ‘middle’ style, N. J. Richardson (1980: 276) misunderstands his only example (schol. bT *Il.* 19.282–302 ex.; see Chapter 3). And I have found no examples (except for the one quoted in the main text) for the plain style, which ‘is not often mentioned explicitly’ (Richardson 1980: 277, no examples are given).

¹⁰⁰ N. J. Richardson (1980: 287) describes *Il.* 3.182 (discussed by the scholion quoted in the main text) as a ‘rhopallic’ verse, which is etymologically related to Greek ῥόπαλον (‘club’, with its suggestive shape). However, the Greek term does not seem to be used in this figurative meaning. According to the *OED s.v.*, ‘rhopallic’ stems from late Latin ‘rhopalicus’.

¹⁰¹ Eustathius (401.34–42 = 1.632.14–24) gives a detailed description and parallels.

the section on ‘Iconic relation between form and content’. For the critic recognises an immediate correlation between Priam’s attitude and the form of his address.¹⁰²

Three-word hexameters

A slightly more ‘arithmetic’ observation concerns the fact that an entire hexameter consists of three words only (e.g. *Il.* 11.427: αὐτοκασίγνητον εὐηγενεὸς Σώκοιο, ‘blood brother of well-born Socus’):

ἐκ τριῶν μερῶν τοῦ λόγου ὅλος ὁ στίχος. (schol. D *Il.* 11.427, also in A)

The entire verse consists of three parts of speech.

Ancient scholars clearly recognised that three-word hexameters are an unusual and striking feature of (Homeric) poetry (N. J. Richardson 1980: 287). In the light of other systematic collections (e.g. of purely spondaic lines, see n. 76), the existence of a similar collection for three-word hexameters is plausible, but cannot be confirmed on the evidence available.

Polar expressions

Homer (and Greek poets in general) is fond of so-called ‘polar expressions’, of which there are several types.¹⁰³ One is to contrast a positive expression with its negated opposite, for example ‘(cold-hearted would he be who at the sight of the fighting) could rejoice and not be grieved’ (*Il.* 13.344):

καὶ ὅτι ἀντικειμένως ἀποδέδωκεν “οὐδ’ ἀκάχοιτο”, πρὸς τὸ σύνηθες. (schol. A *Il.* 13.344 *Ariston.*)

<The diplē,> . . . and because he [sc. Homer] contrastingly adds ‘and not be grieved’, against his habit.

Aristarchus points out that the line contains a polar expression, but he adds the somewhat surprising claim that this is contrary to Homer’s usual practice (πρὸς τὸ σύνηθες). The key to the riddle has been provided by Lehrs (*ap.* L. Friedländer 1853: 219). Aristarchus was of the opinion, as several notes show (schol. A *Il.* 9.77a *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 11.287 *Ariston.*, with the *testimonia* collected by Erbse), that the negative second part of a

¹⁰² Incidentally, the critic appears to consider Ἄτρεϊδης trisyllabic, as do Aristarchus (schol. A *Il.* 11.130a *Ariston.*) and the most recent editor of the *Iliad* (M. L. West 1998: xxiii–iv).

¹⁰³ On polar expressions in Greek literature (with particular emphasis on Homer) see Kemmer (1903). Watkins (1995: 43–9) argues that such expressions are an Indo-European legacy.

polar expression is normally not spelled out. Instead, the reader is expected to supply it for himself ([προσ]υπακούειν). Read against this backdrop, the passage under discussion is unusual, because Homer does spell out the negative part. In fact, he does this quite often (*Il.* 4.22, 5.498, 5.527, etc.). One must conclude that, despite his correct observation that polar expressions regularly occur in Homer, Aristarchus, for once, was wrong about Homer's standard practice. In fairness one should add, however, that he noted at least another exception to his rule.¹⁰⁴

CONCLUSION

The present chapter covers a broad range of phenomena and is at the same time fairly selective. For that reason it does not easily lend itself to a summarising conclusion. The least one can say, however, is that notes on stylistic features play an important role in most of the *Scholiencorpora* treated in this book and discuss a respectable variety of relevant features and passages. The phenomena that are commented on with particular frequency, such as graphic quality (*enargeia*), variation (*poikilia*), explanation (*epexegesis*), elaboration (*epexergasia*), indirect presentation (*emphasis*, etc.), or rhetorical irony (*eironeia*, etc.), can usually be paralleled from the relevant treatises on style and/or the rhetorical handbooks. Conversely, other stylistic phenomena that feature prominently in these treatises and handbooks appear to have left comparatively few traces in the scholia: for example, the theory of the three styles or notes on verbal composition, word order or euphony. To observe the fact is easier than to offer an explanation. The various texts that are commented on in the scholia would no doubt have been amenable to this type of stylistic analysis, but for some reason the critics whose notes are reflected in the extant scholia were either less interested in these questions or the relevant notes have not been preserved. The point has been made before (cf. page 198) that the history of the textual transmission of the scholia cautions against drawing conclusions from *argumenta ex silentio*.

On the positive side, the scholia also preserve notes on a few minor stylistic phenomena (e.g. the *Gesetz der wachsenden Glieder* or three-word hexameters) which seem to be unique. But this uniqueness, too, may well

¹⁰⁴ The exception is *Od.* 17.415–16 (Odysseus/the beggar to Antinous: 'You seem to me... not the worst, but the best'), mentioned in schol. A *Il.* 15.11b *Ariston*. The T-scholon on the same passage even says that Homer does this ἐνίοτε ('sometimes'). Interestingly, a scholion on the Odyssean passage (schol. H *Od.* 17.416) is of the opinion that the second part of the polar expression is 'superfluous' (περισσός), thereby testifying to Aristarchus' general rule.

be coincidental. It is, nevertheless, fair to say that the various forms of poetic style mattered a great deal to ancient critics, and the format of line-by-line annotation probably invited this kind of comment. Moreover, the several notes on poetic style were probably meant to encourage the target audience not only to appreciate, but to imitate the model set by the 'Classics'.

CHAPTER IO

Allusions, hints, hidden meanings

The broad title of this chapter is meant to indicate the wide range of concepts that are covered by the term αἰνίττεσθαι ('to speak in riddles, hint at') and its cognates, which constitute the spine of the chapter.¹ If in the following an attempt is made to distinguish between different forms of allusion, etc., it should be stated at the outset that the main purpose of this distinction is to give the material presented here a clearer structure. To judge from the extant evidence, ancient scholars themselves do not seem to have tried to differentiate between the various meanings of αἰνίττεσθαι (which go as far as 'to express allegorically'), but simply used the term in order to express the ideas discussed below.

ALLUSIONS

In the present context allusion will be understood as 'a poet's deliberate incorporation of identifiable elements from other sources, preceding or contemporaneous, textual or extratextual' (Miner 1993: 38–9). Three types of such identifiable elements are discussed in the scholia: (a) historical events and/or persons, (b) stories of traditional mythology, (c) specific works of literature. The main difference between (b) and (c) is that only discussions of the latter type identify the precise source, whereas in the former case a general allusion to a known myth is recognised without specifying its exact source or variant.

Given the prominence of day-to-day politics in Aristophanes' comedies, it comes as no surprise that the scholia to this author are particularly rich in discussions of the first type: allusions to historical events and/or persons.²

For example, in the central scene of *Peace* (performed 421 BC) that eventually leads to the liberation of the goddess Peace from her cave,

¹ Cf. Lehnert (1896: 88). For the omission of allegorical interpretations see Introd. page 13.

² In fact, Aristophanes himself imagined his audience discussing political allusions during the play (*Pax* 45–8).

Hermes (or Trygaeus)³ introduces a ritual libation with the following words (435–6): σπένδοντες εὐχόμεσθα τὴν νῦν ἡμέραν | Ἑλλησιν ἄρξαι πᾶσι πολλῶν κἀγαθῶν (‘As we pour libation, let us pray that this day may be the beginning of many blessings for all the Greeks’). This is recognised by a scholion on the passage (schol. Ar. *Pax* 435b) as an allusion (αἰνίττεσθαι) to a famous incident from the beginning of the Peloponnesian war: when their final diplomatic effort had failed, the Spartan chief ambassador Melesippus ominously said upon leaving Attica: ἦδε ἡ ἡμέρα τοῖς Ἑλλησιν μεγάλων κακῶν ἄρξει (‘This day will be the beginning of many troubles for the Greeks’, cf. Thuc. 2.12.2–3).

Similarly, when in *Frogs* (405 BC) Charon refuses to take a slave aboard his boat ‘unless he fought in the sea-battle over life and death’ (εἰ μὴ νενουμάχηκε τὴν περὶ τῶν κρεῶν, Ar. *Ra.* 191), one scholion (schol. Ar. *Ra.* 191e.β) explains that some scholars prefer the variant reading νεκρῶν (‘corpses’ instead of κρεῶν, lit. ‘flesh, body’, hence ‘life’) because they see an allusion to the sea-battle of Arginusai (406 BC), which they think was fought on account of the corpses (διὰ τοὺς νεκρούς).⁴

Another scholion on the same passage (schol. Ar. *Ra.* 191a), however, simply states that Charon ‘means’ (φησί) the battle of Arginusai. This points to a general difficulty in the material under consideration. It is quite often the case that the scholia simply identify what or who is ‘meant’ in the passage without indicating the exact nature of the reference (e.g. schol. Ar. *Pax* 282, which simply identifies the ‘pestle of the Spartans’ with Brasidas, who had died the summer before). It seems methodologically questionable to assume that in each case these notes have an ‘allusion’ in mind. Consequently, the present account is limited to scholia which expressly speak of an ‘allusion’.⁵

Examples include: Socrates’ question in the *Clouds* ‘What do you [sc. Strepsiades] mean, “swear by the gods”?’ (*Nu.* 247) is explained by schol. Ar. *Nu.* 247a as perhaps (ἴσως) alluding to the fairly widespread critique of Socrates’ (alleged) atheism. Likewise, a notoriously difficult line in *Knights* (Themistocles ‘found our city part-full and filled her up to the brim’, *Eq.* 814) is interpreted by schol. Ar. *Eq.* 814a as an allusion to Themistocles rebuilding Athens’ fortifications after the Persian war. The long scholion

³ The distribution of lines is disputed (see Olson 1998: *ad loc.*).

⁴ The scholars quoted in the scholion confuse the lawsuit that followed the battle (the generals were indicted for negligence in that they did not rescue the corpses) with the actual purpose of the battle. The latter helps to explain Charon’s point. Athens was in such a desperate situation that they promised freedom to any slave who might fight on her behalf. In any case, Charon alludes to the battle of Arginusai, regardless of whether one reads νεκρῶν or κρεῶν.

⁵ Unless indicated otherwise, the term in question is always αἰνίττεσθαι (and cognates).

then goes on to give a detailed paraphrase of the relevant passage in Thucydides (1.90–1).⁶ Similarly, schol. Ar. Eq. 815c.I explains the subsequent line '(Themistocles) kneaded the Piraeus' (sc. like dough for a cake) as an allusion to the building of the long walls.

If all the examples seen so far deal with historical events, it is easy enough to find scholia that discuss allusions to historical persons (e.g. schol. Ar. V. 1030b, one of the fairly frequent notes on Aristophanes' favourite target, Cleon). In at least one case (schol. Ar. Lys. 313a), we are given the invaluable additional information that two named scholars, Didymus (p. 258 Schmidt) and Craterus (FGH 342 F 17), considered the passage an allusion to the Athenian politician and general Phrynichus. Scholars such as Crates' pupil Herodicus compiled lists and wrote monographs on people who were being ridiculed in comedy (κωμωδούμενοι).⁷ Their examples no doubt comprised many cases in which an allusion of the type just mentioned played a significant role. However, whether these scholars actually discussed the literary device 'allusion' as such is a question that cannot be answered on the basis of the extant evidence.

Aristophanes is of course not the only Greek poet who is found to allude to historical events and persons. Pindar can do the same. For example, the phrase 'But upon praise comes tedious surfeit' (ἀλλ' αἶνον ἐπέβρα κόρος, O. 2.95) is said to be an allusion to the enmity between Theron of Acragas (the *laudandus* of the ode) and Hieron of Syracuse (schol. Pi. O. 2.173i).

Similarly, Pindar's poems are seen as alluding to historical persons. For instance, the 'two who, like crows, cry in vain against the divine bird of Zeus' (κόρακες ὧς ἄκραντα γαρεύετον Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιχα θεῖον, O. 2.87–8) is interpreted as an allusion to Pindar's rivals Simonides and Bacchylides.⁸ Generally speaking, the ancient scholars whose comments are excerpted in the Pindaric scholia are very prone to read between the lines and as a result recognise rather too many allusions to historical events and persons.⁹

⁶ Sommerstein (1981: *ad loc.*) says he sees 'no way of eliciting this meaning from the text' and instead assumes a reference to Themistocles holding the office of water-supplies, which he managed to improve during his term (Plut. *Them.* 31.1). Before he took office the 'cup . . . was only half-full, and he gave it full measure'. This may well be right, but one should, perhaps, not exclude the possibility that the 'half-full cup' is more of a metaphor than Sommerstein would have it.

⁷ See Pfeiffer (1968: 242), based on Athen. 586a and 591c.

⁸ See schol. Pi. O. 2.157a, sim. 158d; for alleged allusions to Simonides and/or Bacchylides see also schol. Pi. O. 9.74d, P. 2.97, 132d. Not all these instances make it fully clear whether the allusion is to the person or to his poetry, the latter being more likely in a case such as schol. Pi. O. 9.74d (see below). For allusions to rivals see also schol. Thuc. 1.20.3, 21.1, 22.4 (Herodotus in all three cases). Whereas these passages all explicitly speak of an allusion, others (e.g. schol. Pi. N. 3.143, 4.60b, I. 2.15a) merely state that the passage 'refers' ([ἀπο-]τείνει) to a rival poet.

⁹ In recent years, students of Pindar have become increasingly reluctant to follow their ancient predecessors in that respect (see e.g. Lefkowitz 1991: 75–81, 147–60).

Apparently, that was their way of tackling the problems of a genre and poet that, after all, are not always easy to understand. Generalising statements, in particular, are at risk of being pinpointed to a specific event or person.

Ancient discussions of allusions to contemporary politics also show that scholars readily accepted them in one genre, but sometimes criticised them in another. An example of the latter situation is Euripides, who was reproached for alluding to contemporary politics and thereby committing an error of anachronism.¹⁰ The plots of Greek tragedy are located in a distant mythical past. As a consequence, some scholars would argue, allusions to contemporary events are unacceptable. (In *Andromache* 733–6 Menelaus announces that he will return home in order to fight a war against ‘a city not far off from Sparta which previously was friendly but now is hostile’.)

ἐνίοι φασι (τὸν ποιητὴν) [add. Schwartz] παρὰ τοὺς χρόνους αἰνίττεσθαι τὰ Πελοποννησιακά. οὐκ ἀναγκάϊον δὲ κατασκευοφαντεῖν τὸν Εὐριπίδην, ἀλλὰ φάσκειν πλάσματι κεχρῆσθαι. (schol. E. *Andr.* 734)

Some critics claim that <the poet> anachronistically alludes to the Peloponnesian war. But it is unnecessary to criticise Euripides captiously, but one can say that he has made use of a fiction.

The critic who comes to Euripides’ rescue apparently shares his opponents’ reservations about anachronistic political allusions in tragedy, but he denies that the passage under discussion is a valid example. Rather, he interprets it as an ‘*ad-hoc* invention’, that is, an expansion of the underlying myth. Interestingly, he decries the other interpretation as a form of biased criticism (κατασκευοφαντεῖν). Perhaps some critics were only too eager to scrutinise Euripides’ tragedies for examples of anachronistic allusions.

In this connection, it is worth mentioning that another scholion simply recognises a political allusion without either praising or criticising Euripides for it. (In *Orestes* 772 the title character makes the generalising statement ‘Dangerous are the masses when they have wicked leaders.’)

εἰς Κλεοφῶντα ταῦτα αἰνίττεται πρὸ ἐτῶν δύο ἐμποδίσαντα ταῖς σπονδαῖς. (schol. E. *Or.* 772)¹¹

This is an allusion to Cleophon, who two years earlier [sc. in 410 BC] had prevented the peace treaty [sc. between Athens and Sparta].

¹⁰ Cf. Heath (1987: 66 with n. 56); for ancient concerns about anachronism see also [Chapter 4](#).

¹¹ A second scholion on the same passage (schol. E. *Or.* 772) repeats this interpretation as a possibility (μήποτε ‘perhaps’) and adds a reference to Philochorus’ treatment of Cleophon’s intervention (FGH 328 F 139b); on the historical details see Rhodes (1993: 424–5). Cleophon is ridiculed as a war-monger in Aristophanes (*Ra.* 1504, 1532).

Unlike the former note, this scholion does not make it clear whether a tragedy that alludes to present-day events is a good or a bad thing.

Before leaving the topic of historical allusions, it is appropriate to discuss allusions to a particular historical person: passages in which the poet is said to allude to himself. Readers of all eras are likely to see the Phaeacian singer Demodocus as some form of an implicit self-portrait of the Homeric bard. The unnamed τινές referred to in Porphyry probably give expression to what many readers feel when they read about Demodocus.¹²

Explicit self-references are very common in the poems of Pindar.¹³ It is, therefore, hardly surprising that a scholion (schol. Pi. O. 9.152d) sees Pindar also as ‘alluding to himself’ (εἰς ἑαυτὸν αἰνίττεται) in one passage. Such a comment comes much more as a surprise in a genre like tragedy, where, after all, the poet never speaks ‘in his own voice’. Nevertheless, when Theseus gibes at Hippolytus and mockingly invites him to parade his vegetarian diet like a tradesman and to act like an Orphic initiate and bookworm (E. *Hipp.* 952–4), one scholion deals with this difficult passage by offering the following explanation:

ἀνάγει δὲ τοὺς χρόνους. περὶ ἑαυτοῦ γὰρ αἰνίξασθαι βούλεται ὁ Εὐριπίδης. (schol. E. *Hipp.* 953)

He [sc. Euripides] is being anachronistic. For Euripides wants to allude to himself.

Regrettably, the commentator does not specify in what way Euripides is alluding to himself. Did the notorious trade of Euripides’ mother as a greengrocer (*test.* 24–32 Kannicht) lead to the assumption that Euripides was a vegetarian? Or is the commentator referring to line 954 and has in mind Euripides’ reputation as a lover of books (*test.* 49–50 Kannicht)? Be that as it may, it remains remarkable that the critic sees an allusive self-reference in tragedy (on biographical reading in general see *Introd.* pages 13 and 133 n. 56).

The second type of allusion recognised by ancient scholars includes those to stories of traditional mythology the source of which is not specified. (Given the vagueness of the source, it is perhaps better not to speak yet of ‘literary allusion’, on which see below.) Examples of this type include: the parabasis of *Peace* praises Aristophanes’ feat in terms that are reminiscent of Heracles’ labours (Ar. *Pax* 752–8). The scholia recognise, among other

¹² See Porph. (on *Od.* 8.63, p. 72.16–17 Schrader): τινὲς δὲ φασιν εἰς ἑαυτὸν ταῦτα αἰνίττεσθαι τὸν ποιητὴν (‘some say that the poet alludes to himself in these things [sc. the portrait of Demodocus]’).

¹³ This chapter is, to repeat, devoted to allusions and does not treat instances where the poet is said to apostrophise himself explicitly (e.g. schol. Pi. O. 1.5d, the regular phrase for this is πρὸς ἑαυτὸν, ‘to himself’, see [Chapter 19](#)).

things, that the hundred heads of the serpent-like monster that represents Cleon allude to the hundred-headed hydra (schol. Ar. *Pax* 756c).

Or when distressed Hermione in Euripides' *Andromache* wishes to become a dark-feathered bird and flee from Phthia (E. *Andr.* 861–2), a scholion (schol. E. *Andr.* 862) compares the metamorphosis of Procne and Philomela and suggests that the Euripidean passage perhaps (ἴσως) alludes to them.

If this scholion considers the mythological allusion a mere possibility, another expressly refutes such an interpretation. The occasion is a passage from the exodos of *Hippolytus*. Artemis declares that she will take revenge on Athena by shooting one of her favourites (E. *Hipp.* 1420–2).

εἰς τὸν Ἄδωνιν δὲ αἰνίττεται, ὧς τινες, λῆρος δὲ τὸ τοιοῦτον. οὐ γὰρ τόξοις Ἀρτέμιδος ἀπώλετο Ἄδωνις, ἀλλ' ὑπ' Ἄρεως. ἄδηλον οὖν τίνα φησί. (schol. E. *Hipp.* 1421)

She [sc. Artemis] is alluding to Adonis, according to some critics, but such an explanation is nonsense. For Adonis was not killed by Artemis' arrows, but by Ares. It is therefore unclear whom she means.

As in many notes on Pindar (see above), some critics felt the need to pin down the actual referent of Artemis' unspecific threat. Their solution, however, is refuted with the argument that it does not correspond with the 'facts' of the relevant myth. Instead, the critic implies, one must live with the ambiguity of who precisely is meant in the passage, if anybody.

Finally, there are the literary allusions to texts which are explicitly identified in the corresponding notes. Examples include (mostly from Aristophanes):¹⁴ when in the opening scene of *Peace* Trygaeus is asked whether he should not fly to Olympus on the winged horse Pegasus instead of the dung-beetle, this is recognised as an allusion to Euripides' *Bellerophon*.¹⁵ The *parabasis* of the same play polemically denounces the poor jokes in other plays, which is seen as alluding to plays by Aristophanes' rivals Eupolis and Cratinus.¹⁶ And a passage in *Birds* that mentions a 'swallow in poetry' is said to allude to an ode by Simonides (schol. Ar.

¹⁴ This list only comprises instances of literary *allusion*. In other cases the commentator does not indicate the exact relation between the poet and his 'model' (e.g. schol. Ar. *Av.* 1420, on Aeschylus (fr. 140 Radt)) or identifies the passage as a quotation, imitation, etc. (see below).

¹⁵ See schol. Ar. *Pax* 136 (= E. *Beller. test.* ii a Kannicht); as an alternative, the *Suda* (τ 894) offers the interpretation that the passage alludes to the myth of Icarus (cf. schol. Ar. *Pax* 141b). For another allusion to Euripides see schol. Ar. *Pl.* 203b.α (E. *Ph.* 597).

¹⁶ Eupolis: schol. Ar. *Pax* 740b (= Eup. *test.* 18 K-A); Cratinus: schol. Ar. *Pax* 741c (= Crat. *test.* 26 K-A). Apparently, the case was not entirely clear, for schol. Ar. *Pax* 741c speaks of τινές. To make things worse, in another scholion on the same line (schol. Ar. *Pax* 741b) the allusion is said to be to Euripides (thus, too, the *Suda*, μ 291), but Dobree conjectured Eupolis (= *test.* 19 K-A) on the basis

Av. 1301b = fr. 597 Page). Likewise, the brief mention of Prometheus tricking Zeus in Hesiod's *Works & Days* is considered an allusion to the more extensive treatment of the same incident in his own *Theogony* (schol. Hes. *op.* 48).¹⁷ And although the exact source is not specified in this particular case, it is nevertheless worth mentioning that even Aratus is once said to allude to the doctrine of natural philosophers and mathematicians (schol. Arat. 458). In all these cases the relevant word is a form of ἀνίπτεσθαι, which is their common denominator: the passage that is commented on gives us to understand that it 'aims at' another literary text without saying so explicitly.

Needless to say, ancient critics can focus on many other forms of the relationship between two literary texts: the passage under discussion can be a quotation¹⁸ or an imitation¹⁹ or be related to an intertext.²⁰ Or it can, with a clearer agenda, be a parody²¹ or a derision.²² Quite often, however, the exact nature of the relationship between the two texts is left open (cf. n. 14). The ancient critic as it were says 'cf. X', without telling the reader in what respect he should compare the two passages.

HINTS

All the examples collected in the preceding section on 'allusions' have a common denominator: the passage under discussion incorporates, by way of allusion, a piece of information that does not, strictly speaking, belong

of the previous example. (Schol. Ar. *Pax* 763c deals with an allusion to Eupolis' bad behaviour and therefore belongs to the historical allusions above.)

¹⁷ The notion that an author alludes to a text of his own (here: *Clouds* to *Knights*) probably recurs in schol. Ar. *Nu.* 559b (with Koster's supplement).

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. schol. Ar. *Ra.* 665 (strictly speaking, the phrase παρά + acc. does not specify the exact nature of the relation, but the scholion goes on to quote the passage from Sophocles' *Laocoon* (fr. 371 Radt), which shows that it is in fact a quotation; there seems to be no specific term for it). Interestingly, schol. Ar. *Nu.* 967a mentions scholars' inability to identify the quotation, which still holds true today (= fr. lyr. adesp. 948 Page).

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. schol. Ar. *Nu.* 595c.α (Aristophanes imitates dithyrambographers); see also the notes on Aristophanes imitating the style of tragedy (Chapter 9).

²⁰ E.g. schol. Ar. *Av.* 1410b; interestingly, the critics are in disagreement as to whether the intertext is Alcaeus (fr. 345 Voigt) or Simonides (fr. 597 Page). The same Alcaean poem is said to be the target of a parody in schol. Ar. *Tb.* 162a (cf. next n.). The Simonides passage is considered the target of an 'allusion' in schol. Ar. *Av.* 1301b (see above).

²¹ Not surprisingly, parody primarily recurs in connection with Aristophanes (e.g. schol. S. *El.* 289, Ar. *Eq.* 214a, 221a, 1099, etc.), but see also, for example, schol. Luc. 17.12. The relevant notes often identify the text that is being parodied (e.g. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 119 = E. fr. 858 Kannicht, schol. Ar. *Ach.* 120 = Arch. fr. 187 West). See also Chapter 9 on *paratragodia*.

²² E.g. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 47(i), on Euripides. On occasion, the critic feels unable to decide: is Ar. *Av.* 575 a playful distortion (ψεῦδεται Παρίζων) of Homer or, as other critics have argued, a quotation from another work of Homer (schol. Ar. *Av.* 575a, with the interesting remark that the *Hymns* are genuine: *test.* 24 Allen-Halliday-Sikes)?

to the text's own 'narrative universe'. It is brought in 'from outside' (cf. 'other sources' in the definition of allusion quoted at the beginning of the chapter). However, ancient critics also use the word αἰνίττεσθαι in order to describe that the speaker – poet or character – 'speaks in riddles' and thereby intimates a meaning that is not spelled out explicitly. Unlike an allusion, this rhetorical device does not incorporate an 'external' piece of information, but the speaker chooses to veil his message.²³ As is the case with allusions, the recipient is normally expected to unveil and understand the actual message (for a qualification see below). Thus, when Nestor curses in *Iliad* 9.63–4 'that man who longs for all the horror of fighting among his own people', one critic thinks that he is hinting at Achilles (schol. D *Il.* 9.64). Similarly, when the same Nestor gives Agamemnon the advice to 'let them go perish, these one or two, who think apart from the rest of the Achaeans' (*Il.* 2.346–7), the scholia again recognise a veiled reference to specific characters. In this case, however, there is disagreement over who exactly is meant:

“ἕνα” δὲ “καὶ δύο” εὐφυστέρων αἰνίττεται Ἀχιλλεὺς καὶ Πάτροκλον. ἕτεροι δὲ “ἕνα καὶ δύο” ἀντὶ Θερσίτου καὶ ἕτερον τοιοῦτον. (schol. D *Il.* 2.346)²⁴

<The expression> 'one or two' very cleverly hints at Achilles and Patroclus. Others, however, <say> that 'one or two' stands for Thersites and another character of this kind.

It is noteworthy that the reported dispute does not concern the question whether or not the passage in fact hints at specific characters. This is taken for granted, together with the assumption that Nestor's addressees understand who is meant. At the same time, the scholion gives an indication of the hint's purpose. It displays the speaker's cleverness, whereas, one might complete the reasoning, a plain reference would not. In another context, Porphyry (on *Il.* 19.221ff., II 237.9–11 Schr.) argues that Odysseus prefers a simile over plain speech in order to avoid the impression of flattering Achilles (κολακεία). Likewise, shame (αἰδώς) is seen as the determining factor why Euripides' Phaedra speaks about her love for Hippolytus in riddling terms (schol. E. *Hipp.* 372).

²³ In that connection one may compare the word ἐμφαίνειν (and ἐμφασίς), which also describes the intimation of a meaning that is not stated in plain terms (e.g. schol. HM^aP¹QV *Od.* 1.47, p. 32.15 Ludwich: Athena's wish that whoever acts like Aegisthus should die suggests the suitors). On ἐμφασίς see [Chapter 9](#).

²⁴ Cf. schol. B *Od.* 10.459 (Circe hinting at the Laestrygonians and the Cyclops), V *Od.* 11.437 (Odysseus hinting at Aerope, Agamemnon's mother), E. *Andr.* 444 (Menelaus giving a hint that Hermione will kill Andromache's son Molossus), *Med.* 1132 (Medea hinting at the fact that previously she had been treated unjustly by Jason).

It should be noted that instances of the term αἰνίττεσθαι are very frequent when it comes to indicating that a speaker does not spell things out in plain terms. As a result, the term covers a broad range of possible applications and can refer to virtually every type of meaning that is not stated plainly by the speaker.²⁵ This can include figurative language such as the ‘tenor’ of a metaphor (e.g. schol. E. *Or.* 1385: ‘lion’s whelp’ for Helen’s destructiveness),²⁶ indirect characterisation (e.g. schol. D *Il.* 1.197: ‘blond’ hair for a hot-headed and ‘irascible’ character; D *Il.* 3.371: ‘soft’ throat for a weakling), periphrastic denomination (e.g. schol. A.R. 1.146–49a: Alcman says ‘Glaucus’ daughter’ for Leda²⁷), an unspecific generic expression (e.g. schol. B *Od.* 10.459: ‘hostile men’ for the Laestrygonians and Polyphemus), the exact implication of a rhetorical question (e.g. schol. E. *Or.* 81), the implication of an argument (e.g. schol. E. *Med.* 847) or the implication of a somewhat vague statement (e.g. schol. A. *Th.* 589f). In short, whenever ancient scholars feel that a passage requires an explanation of what is actually meant, they can do so by stating that the speaker or the text αἰνίττεται such and such. Needless to say, this is a much broader meaning than ‘allusion’.

Interestingly, the problem of αἰνίττεσθαι can be combined with questions of genre. One critic, at least, is of the opinion that this ‘oblique’ and ‘allusive’ mode of expression is typical of poets and their stylistic licence.²⁸ However, most scholia do not reflect this distinction. The scholia both to prose authors and to poets frequently find instances of αἰνίττεσθαι. If there is a disproportion in the extant evidence that is perhaps significant, it is the paucity of αἰνίττεσθαι and cognates in the scholia to the *Iliad*. However, it is not easy to give an explanation for this striking gap.

Another ancient critic observes a tendency among Greek poets to move away from the old style of αἰνίττεσθαι towards a plainer style. (Prometheus announces that he will tell his story plainly, ‘without weaving in riddles’, οὐκ ἐμπλέκων αἰνίγματα.)

²⁵ Cf. the definition of αἰνίττεσθαι in schol. Ar. *Eq.* 196a(II): ἄλλα μὲν λέγων, ἄλλα δὲ δηλῶν (‘saying one thing, meaning another’); also schol. E. *Hipp.* 73, where αἰνίττεσθαι and ἀλληγορεῖν (‘to speak figuratively’) are contrasted with κυρίως λέγειν (‘to use plain language’).

²⁶ Conversely, schol. E. *Tr.* 1175 (= Eratosthenes fr. 66 Strecker) explicitly opposes αἰνίττεσθαι and metaphor.

²⁷ The text of the scholion is corrupt. It is therefore not clear which lyric poet is meant (see fr. lyr. adesp. 1012 Page).

²⁸ Cf. schol. Arat. 96–7: ποιητικῆ αἰνιγματώδει ἐξουσίᾳ κεχρημένου τοῦ ποιητοῦ (‘with the poet making use of his poetic licence of speaking in riddles’). On poetic licence see Chapter 7.

οἱ γὰρ παλαιοὶ τὰ ποιήματα αὐτῶν πρῶτον ἐν προοιμίῳ καὶ αἰνίγμασιν γεγράφασιν· ὕστερον δὲ καὶ καθόλου φανερωῖ ἐχρῶντο τῷ λόγῳ. (schol. A. PV 610)

For the ancients have written their poems first in proems [?]²⁹ and riddles. But later on they generally made use of the plain style.

One is reminded of the argument in Aristophanes' *Frogs* (esp. 924–32, 945–7), where Aeschylus' obscure and difficult style is ridiculed and contrasted with Euripides' plainer style.³⁰

Speaking in less than plain terms can entail either the risk or the intention that not everybody understands the actual meaning of the words. Ancient commentators found an example of the former in Euripides' *Hippolytus*. Phaedra attempts to make her love for Hippolytus understood without actually spelling it out.³¹ However, the slow-witted Nurse, a critic argues, fails to grasp the point of Phaedra's 'hints' (schol. E. *Hipp.* 345).

Examples of intentional ambiguity or misunderstanding occur in connection with what modern scholars often call 'dramatic irony': the character who is addressed does not understand the veiled message, whereas the audience does.³² Ancient scholars describe this discrepancy in terms of the speaker making use of αἰνίττεσθαι. As the preceding paragraphs will have demonstrated, the presence of the term αἰνίττεσθαι itself does not *a priori* suffice to indicate that the speaker intends not to be understood by his or her addressee on stage. But ancient scholars have other means to make it clear that they indeed have in mind 'dramatic irony'. One of the clearest examples actually involves a passage where the speaker himself remains unaware of the deeper meaning of his words. (In the first *episodesion* of Sophocles' *Oedipus*, the title character famously declares 'For it will not be on behalf of a distant friend, but for my own sake, that I shall drive away this pollution', S. *OT* 137–8.)

πεπλαγιάσται δὲ πάλιν ὁ λόγος καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν αἰνίττεται τῷ θεάτρῳ ὅτι αὐτὸς δράσας τὸν φόνον ὁ Οἰδίπους καὶ ἑαυτὸν τιμωρήσεται. (schol. S. *OT* 137)³³

²⁹ The meaning of προοιμίῳ here is obscure. The word may well be corrupt (see Herington's *app. crit.*, where he considers the conjecture παροιμίῳς 'obscure figurative language').

³⁰ The analogy is, of course, not perfect, because the scholion refers to a passage in a play by Aeschylus (the authenticity of *PV* is undisputed in antiquity: Lesky 1972: 141).

³¹ Cf. e.g. schol. E. *Hipp.* 141, 337. The Aristophanic scholia repeatedly comment that obscenities are 'hinted at' instead of being spelled out (cf. esp. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 786a: αἰνίττεται δὲ εἰς τὸ κακέμφατον, 'he hints at what is ill-sounding'; sim. schol. Lycophr. 139b).

³² On dramatic irony in ancient scholarship see Steinmann (1907: 41–2), Meijering (1987: 288 n. 222).

³³ Cf. schol. E. *Med.* 679 (Aegeus himself does not understand the deeper meaning of the oracle that he reports). For the notion that the audience understands what the characters do not see also schol. S. *Aj.* 301a, 687, *OT* 132. The verb πλαγιάζειν is used similarly in schol. S. *OT* 1183.

The speech is again oblique [i.e. not straightforward or plain] and intimates to the audience the truth that Oedipus himself is the murderer and will take revenge on himself.

The expression αἰνίττεται τῷ θεάτρῳ (with ὁ λόγος as subject, not the character) makes it clear that only the audience is meant to understand the full implication of Oedipus' declaration, whereas he himself of course does not. Note also that the scholion treats this as a regular feature (πᾶσιν) of the play.

In other contexts, the speaker deliberately speaks in riddles, lest another character understand the actual meaning of the words. (Shortly before she leaves the stage and kills her children, Medea deplores their fate in a long speech. Among other things, she enigmatically refers to the 'dwelling' where they will live without her, E. *Med.* 1022–3.)

λέγει δὲ ἄσήμενος τὸν Ἅιδην, καὶ πάντα δὲ τὰ ἐξῆς αἰνιγματωδῶς ὁμιλεῖ ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ αἰσθῆσθαι τὸν παιδαγωγόν. (schol. E. *Med.* 1021)³⁴

She (sc. Medea) means Hades without saying so, and also the rest of her speech she speaks in riddles lest the pedagogue understand.

Here again the scholion states explicitly that Medea speaks in riddles lest the pedagogue understand,³⁵ the implication being that the audience does. There are similar cases, for instance Ajax duping the chorus regarding his imminent suicide (schol. S. *Aj.* 691, cf. 690), or Heracles telling Admetus in vague terms how he came by the veiled woman, that is, Alcestis (schol. E. *Alc.* 1026).

In other cases, however, the scholia simply mention the speaker's αἰνίττεσθαι and do not specify whether he or she intends not to be understood by the other characters. Sometimes it seems likely that this is what the critic has in mind: for instance, the 'beggar' Odysseus deceives the Suitors with his speech ('it is okay if a man is thrown at when he is fighting for his estate, but I am being pelted as a beggar').³⁶ It cannot be Odysseus' intention that the Suitors grasp the underlying meaning (he is fighting for his estate).

Similarly, a critic recognises in Medea's reference to Glauce's youth an intimation that this is the main reason why Jason prefers her over Medea

³⁴ Cf. schol. S. *OT* 447 (the compound παρ-αἰνίττεσθαι probably means that Tiresias hints at the truth 'past' Oedipus); see also, without the term αἰνίττεσθαι, schol. E. *Med.* 901, 1013: both speak of a 'double meaning' (διπλῆ ἔννοια), one mistaken (meant for the addressee), the other true (no doubt for the audience, though not expressly stated in the scholion).

³⁵ It is disputed whether the pedagogue actually remains on stage (Mastronarde 2002: *ad loc.*), but the ancient commentator clearly thinks he does.

³⁶ See schol. B *Od.* 17.468, probably referring to the entire speech 17.468–76.

(schol. E. *Med.* 967). Given that in the context Medea attempts to lure Jason into letting the children bring the poisoned robe to Glaucus, the alleged lash must go unnoticed by him or it would be counterproductive.

Yet another scholion indirectly discusses the question whether or not the addressee understands the hint. (In Euripides' *Trojan Women*, Talthybius refers in enigmatic terms to Polyxena's destiny – she has been sacrificed at Achilles' tomb – and invites Hecuba to 'call' her daughter 'happy' (εὐδαίμωνίζειν), because she is now free of toils.)

αἰνίττεται ὅτι τέθνηκεν. “οὐ σαφῶς εἶπεν” [E. *Tr.* 625]· καὶ (πῶς) ἡ Ἑκάβη οὔτε στενάζει οὔτε (πυθάνεται πῶς) ἀπηλλάγη; εἶτε γὰρ οἶδεν, (ἔδει) οἰκτίσασθαι περὶ θυγατρὸς· εἶτε μὴ οἶδεν, ἔρωτῆσαι καὶ μαθεῖν. (schol. E. *Tr.* 268, suppl. Wilamowitz et Schwartz)

He [sc. Talthybius] intimates that she is dead. <Cf. Hecuba saying:> ‘He did not state it plainly.’ – And why does Hecuba neither lament nor ask how she [sc. Polyxena] has been freed [sc. from toil]? For if she knows [sc. about Polyxena's death], she should lament her daughter; if she does not know, she should inquire and learn [sc. about the death].

The former part of the scholion refers to and quotes from a passage later in the play (E. *Tr.* 622–5) in which Hecuba learns about Polyxena's death and speaks of Talthybius' αἰνιγμα. In other words, she did not understand the implication of his utterance in the former scene. But the second part of the scholion expresses dissatisfaction with how the former scene runs. Instead, it suggests two scenarios – one in which Hecuba does understand the deeper meaning and one in which she does not – without seeming to favour one over the other. The main point seems to be that in its current form Euripides' handling of the scene fails to convince.

Another feature that deserves to be mentioned here is that ancient scholars recognised different degrees of speaking in riddles. (After Telemachus' arrival at Eumaeus' hut in *Odyssey* 16, Odysseus, still in disguise, questions him about the current situation in the palace and then declares how he would feel and act if it were his house, *Od.* 16.105–11.)

ἐνταῦθα σαφέστερον αἰνίττεται ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς εἶναι τὸν οἶκον ἑαυτοῦ ἐν ᾧ οἱ μνηστῆρες προσεκάθηντο. (schol. H *Od.* 16.106)

Here Odysseus is hinting more plainly at the fact it is his own house which the suitors were besieging.

The scholion implies that in the course of the conversation Odysseus repeatedly adumbrates the truth and that he does so with increasing clarity.

The scene in question is of course followed by Odysseus revealing his true identity to Telemachus, once Eumaeus has left (*Od.* 16.177–89).

HIDDEN MEANINGS

Finally, the word αἰνίττεσθαι can also be used to describe references to hidden meanings that go well beyond the limits of the specific passage and its immediate explanation. When a passage is understood to convey such a deeper meaning, ancient scholars can still describe this as the poet or the text making use of αἰνίττεσθαι (and cognates). The poet does not express the deeper meaning in plain terms, but he is obliquely referring to it. This use of αἰνίττεσθαι lends itself to interpretations as allegory (e.g. schol. Luc. 26.3), moral lessons (e.g. schol. Pi. *I.* 4.83b), oblique instructions (e.g. schol. Pi. *I.* 5.2a) or various generalising statements (e.g. of a political nature: schol. D *Il.* 8.25, Ar. *Eq.* 42g), all of which lie outside the boundaries of the relevant literary text itself.

CONCLUSION

The term αἰνίττεσθαι (and cognates) encompasses a very broad range of meanings and applications. In a more restricted sense, the term can refer to various kinds of allusions (e.g. historical, literary). But this seems to be only one particular application. For, in principle, the term can describe virtually any utterance in which the surface meaning is either supplemented or replaced by an underlying meaning that is not stated in plain language. The scale of these ‘unstated’ meanings ranges from relatively simple issues such as the tenor of a metaphor to deep meanings that are fraught with significance. This versatility of αἰνίττεσθαι can be challenging, because each attestation must be judged on its merits before it can be assigned to one of the categories that have tentatively been introduced above.³⁷ However, the very versatility also makes it a fascinating and rewarding topic, because ancient scholars detected so many, and such different, aspects of not speaking in plain terms.

³⁷ Disagreement is inevitable here. For instance, Struck (2004: 12–13) renders αἰνίττεται in schol. A *Il.* 1.197 *Ariston./D* with ‘allegorises’, while I can detect little more than an ‘indirect indication’ of Achilles’ temper (by means of the word ‘blond’). Incidentally, Struck overlooks the fact that the two parts of the scholion originate with two different traditions and should therefore not be treated as expressing the view of a single critic.

CHAPTER II

Characters

The masterpieces of Greek literature such as Homeric epic and Attic tragedy owe their deep and lasting effect not least to the prominence of fascinating and highly individualised characters. Readers (and spectators) of all times recognise immediately that the characters and their depiction are a central focus of Greek poetry. Little surprise, then, that ancient critics also paid considerable attention to the topic. The present survey first examines issues regarding the casts of dramatic and narrative texts and then turns to the question of characterisation itself.

CAST

In dramatic texts, the cast is limited in size for generic reasons and therefore does not pose major problems to a proper understanding. In tragedy, the number of speaking characters rarely exceeds ten and is unlikely to confuse an attentive reader.¹ Ancient commentators generally confine themselves to listing the *dramatis personae* at the end of the *hypothesis*, often in the sequence in which they enter the stage for the first time (e.g. argum. *A. Ag.* p. 2 Smith). Occasionally, the *hypothesis* contains a few general remarks on characterisation (see below), but the identity of the characters does not receive much attention either in *hypotheses* or in scholia to tragedy.² The cast of Aristophanes' comedies tends to be somewhat larger and is, of course, not bound by tradition (*Arist. Po.* 1451b13–14). The extant scholia on Aristophanes, however, show little further interest in questions of casting.

¹ Euripides' *Phoenician Women* has eleven (plus the chorus) and is therefore called πολυπρόσωπος ('of many characters', argum. b *E. Ph.*, p. 77.7 Diggle). According to Heath (1987: 32 n. 38), this is 'used as a term of praise', but he does not argue the point.

² The question which does pose problems is the correct assignment of parts (see e.g. schol. *Ar. Eq.* 911b and in general [Chapter 19](#)), which, however, is perhaps better considered the task of an editor or textual critic.

Within the corpus of dramatic scholia, virtually the only aspect of casting that is deemed worthy of discussion is the composition of the chorus. The question is of particular importance to tragic poetry, because the chorus is the only major character the poet is at liberty to invent, whereas the other characters are largely determined by tradition (Arist. *Po.* 1451b15). As a consequence, a standard element of ancient *hypotheses* identifies three central constituents of a tragedy (= element C in the taxonomy of Trendelenburg 1867: 4–5): the scene, the composition of the chorus and the character who speaks the prologue.³ An example is the *hypothesis* to Euripides' *Medea*:

ἡ μὲν σκηνὴ τοῦ δράματος ὑπόκειται ἐν Κορίνθῳ, ὁ δὲ χορὸς συνέστηκεν ἐκ γυναικῶν πολιτίδων. προλογίζει δὲ τροφὸς Μηδείας. (argum. E. *Med.*)⁴

The scene of the play is located in Corinth, the chorus consists of female citizens [sc. of Corinth]. Speaker of the prologue is Medea's nurse.

Two tragic scholia have more to say on the composition of the chorus. They discuss in what way the composition relates to the other characters and the play as a whole. The first note is on Sophocles' *Ajax*:

πιθανῶς αὐτῷ ὁ χορὸς ἐσκεύασται ἀπὸ Σαλαμινίων ἀνδρῶν τοῦτο μὲν παρρησιαζομένων ὡς ἐλευθέρων τοῦτο δὲ συμπαθῶς ἐχόντων ὡς πολιτῶν καὶ αἰδημόνως λαλούντων ὡς ὑπηκόων· οὐ γὰρ πιθανὸν ἐξ Ἀχαιῶν εἰσάγειν καὶ διὰ τὸ μὴ ὄντως συνάχθῃσθαι καὶ διὰ τὸ μὴ προσκρούειν τῷ βασιλεῖ. τὸ δὲ τῶν αἰχμαλώτων κηδεμονικὸν μὲν, ὡς Αἰσχύλος ἐν “Θρήσσαις”, οὐ μὴν εὐπρόσωπον· ὄρα γὰρ οἷον (ἦν) [add. dubitanter Radt, iam Trendelenburg] αἰχμαλώτους ἐπιτιμᾶν τῷ Μενελάῳ. (schol. S. *Aj.* 134a, cf. TrGF III p. 206)

His [sc. Sophocles'] chorus plausibly consists of men from Salamis, who, as free men, have freedom of speech, as fellow citizens [sc. of Ajax], are sympathetic, and, as his subordinates, speak with respect. For it would have been implausible to bring them on stage from among the Achaeans, because they would not really condole [sc. with Ajax] nor attack the king [sc. Menelaus]. <A chorus> consisting of prisoners of war would be full of care [sc. for Ajax], cf. Aeschylus in *Thracian Women* [i.e. female prisoners],⁵ but not a good choice for the part. Consider how it would have been for prisoners of war to criticise Menelaus!

³ On the first speaker see Chapter 19.

⁴ Cf. argum. A. *Th.*, *PV*, S. *El.*, *Ant.*, *Ph.*, *OC*, E. *Alc.*, *Andr.*, *Hec.*, *Supp.*, *IT*, *Ph.*, [*Rh.*] (not included in this list are cases where element C lacks the point about the chorus, e.g. argum. E. *Hipp.*). Whether or not all these *hypotheses* are indeed by Aristophanes of Byzantium is disputed, see Pfeiffer (1968: 193, with bibl. in n. 4), Budé (1977), Slater (1986: x), Brown (1987), van Rossum-Steenbeek (1998: 32–3).

⁵ Aeschylus' *Thracian Women* also dealt with Ajax' suicide (schol. S. *Aj.* 815a, cf. TrGF III pp. 205–6). It seems therefore likely that κηδεμονικὸν predicates a quality of that chorus (i.e. care for Ajax).

The critic praises Sophocles for his good choice. It allows the chorus both to rebuke Menelaus (sc. in lines 1091–2) and to sympathise with Ajax, keeping due respect for their master. Sophocles' solution is set off against two alternatives. The first (perhaps only a rhetorical foil, but see the next example) is to make them Achaeans (i.e. subordinates of Menelaus), the second to introduce them as (female) prisoners of war, as Aeschylus did in his *Thracian Women*. Both alternatives, however, would make it impossible for the chorus to censure Menelaus.

The argument about 'freedom of speech' recurs in a debate over the chorus' identity in Euripides' *Phoenician Women*. Some critics apparently held that the chorus should consist of female fellow-citizens or relatives of Jocaste, in order to give her moral support in her plight.⁶ This view is opposed by the argument that, as Thebans, they could not criticise their own king Eteocles in the way they do in line 526 (schol. E. *Ph.* 202).

Other notes resemble the *hypotheseis* in that they simply identify the members of the chorus (e.g. schol. S. *OT* 151, *Ant.* 100). The point may be added, if applicable, that the play is named after the chorus.⁷ An unusual case is Aristophanes' *Frogs*, where the change of scene from earth to Hades goes together with the chorus of frogs being replaced by initiates (schol. *Ar. Ra.* 273).

An altogether different picture is presented by Homer's epics with their dozens of characters, which is a real challenge even for an attentive reader. The scholia show that ancient scholars were aware of the various problems and provided several aids to the reader.

A potential stumbling-block are characters of the same name, especially if, unlike the two Ajaxes, they do not belong to the protagonists. Such characters are frequent in the *Iliad* and receive considerable attention. Ancient commentators are at pains to reduce the risk of confusion. As a result, at least forty-eight extant scholia discuss the question of homonymous characters.⁸ A majority of these notes can be attributed to the Aristarchean school,

⁶ This must be read against the background that the chorus is frequently said to consist of locals (argum. A. *Th.*, S. *Ant.*, *El.*, *OC*, E. *Alc.*, *Med.*, *Andr.*) and/or of people with a special relation to a, usually female, protagonist (argum. E. *Alc.*, *Or.*, sim. *Hec.*, *IT*).

⁷ Cf. e.g. schol. *Ar. Eq.* 225, *Nu.* 275a, sim. argum. II *Ar. V.* (p. 4.7–8 Koster).

⁸ On the device see Schimberg (1878: 23–36), Bachmann (1902: 21). The relevant passages, together with other cases of homonymy, are usefully collected by Erbse (Index V: 134–5, s.v. *homonymia*). (Additions/corrections: to Eurybates add schol. T *Il.* 2.184b ex., b *Il.* 2.517d ex.; to Hodioid add schol. A *Il.* 5.39c^t *Ariston.*; to Chromius add schol. A *Il.* 17.218b^t *Ariston.*; the entry listed under Alcmaon should go under Thestor; add an entry Teuthras (see schol. A *Il.* 3.144a *Ariston.*, where the bracket should read 'cf. *Il.* 5.705, 6.13', unless one assumes the scholion's example, Teuthras, to be an error). For homonymous characters in the *Odyssey* see schol. BV *Od.* 11.283, also QV *Od.* 10.2. Homonymy can, of course, apply to other phenomena, for example toponyms (e.g. schol. A *Il.* 2.511a *Ariston.*). More generally, one might compare the efforts of Demetrius of Magnesia (first century BC), who tried to get to grips with various types of homonymy (poets and authors, cities).

which seems to have put particular emphasis on the topic and perhaps even went so far as to identify characters of the same name consistently.⁹

Interestingly, their effort to identify characters of the same name also applies to characters whose namesake does not appear in the same text itself (i.e. the *Iliad*), but, for instance, in the *Odyssey*. Examples include Priam's son Antiphus, whose namesake is one of Odysseus' companions who are killed by the Cyclops (schol. T *Il.* 4.489–90 *ex.*). Another is the Ciconian leader Mentès, in whose guise Apollo addresses Hector, whereas Athena appears to Telemachus in the guise of the Taphian Mentès (schol. A *Il.* 17.73a *Ariston.*). The purpose of such notes is not only to prevent the readers from getting confused. They also seem to draw attention to the homonymy of characters as such (cf. n. 9), which appears to have become important for its own sake. An alternative explanation may be seen in the Aristarchean conviction that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are not only by the same poet but together form one larger unit. To his mind, the *Iliad*, for example, provides instances of prolepsis of events narrated in the *Odyssey*, thereby contributing to a single narrative composition (see Chapter 1). Consequently, it may well be that Aristarcheans considered cases such as Antiphus as a truly homonymous character, although there is only one in each epic. This second explanation, however, does not sit well with a case such as Orestes. The two minor characters of this name, a Greek slain by Hector and a companion of the Trojan hothead Asius, are both set off against the famous son of Agamemnon.¹⁰ He, however, does not appear in either epic, but is only mentioned (e.g. *Il.* 9.142, *Od.* 1.30, etc.). The conclusion seems to be that critics were keen to reduce the risk of confusion, regardless of whether or not the namesake actually is a character in the text under consideration.

As to the origin of these notes, a prime witness is the comment on the Paphlagonian king Pylaemenes, father of Harpalion (schol. bT *Il.* 13.643a *ex.*). Given its extraordinary length, the note must be paraphrased here. The

⁹ See the fragment re-edited by Erbse (1969: LXV.3–6): σημειοῦται δὲ πρὸς τὸν αὐτὸν [sc. Ζηνόδοτον] ἀπερισκίτῳ διπλῇ τὰς ὁμωνυμίας ἀπάσας, ὅτι οὐ νοήσας τὸ τοιοῦτον ἔγραψεν ὅτε μὲν “Πυλαίμενεα” [*Il.* 5.576, cf. 2.851], ὅτε δὲ “Κυλαίμενεα” [13.643] (‘He [sc. Aristarchus] marks all homonymies with a simple diple, with reference to the same [sc. Zenodotus], because he [sc. Zenodotus], unaware of such a thing [sc. homonymy], wrote “Pylaemenes” in one place and “Cylaemenes” in another’). On the basis of this fragment, Aristonicus has been identified as the source of two T-scholias: schol. T *Il.* 16.197 *ex.*, T *Il.* 21.43a; see also Erbse’s note on *Il.* 5.706 (‘*diple ante versum in A, fortasse exstabat scholium Aristonici πρὸς ὁμωνυμίαν vocis Οἰνόμασον*’). Conversely, the attempt by Roemer (1912: 24–5, 40–2, also 1911b: 166–8) to prove that Aristarchus did not make use of the ὁμωνυμία principle fails to convince; see van der Valk (1964: 255 n. 765), who, however, argues (255–6) that Aristarchus sometimes separated characters who are in fact the same.

¹⁰ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 5.705, A *Il.* 12.139, A *Il.* 12.193b (all attributed to Aristonicus). None of the three notes refers to the homonymy of the two minor characters.

critic argues that this Pylaemenes is not identical with the Paphlagonian leader of the same name who is killed in *Il.* 5.576–7, which would of course create an internal inconsistency.¹¹ Instead, they are said to be characters of the same name (thus also schol. bT *Il.* 5.576 *ex.*), as often in Homer. This claim is backed with a list of eleven groups of homonymous characters, each followed by a short explanation or reference. Their names are Schedius, Eurymedon, Eurybates, Adrastus, Acamas, Astynous, Thoon, Melanippus, Ophlestes, Pylartes, Pisander.¹² As Schimberg (1878: 27) saw, the second part of the list, from Adrastus on, basically follows the Greek alphabet.¹³ It is, therefore, very likely that ancient scholars compiled an alphabetical list of homonymous characters on which the present note drew. As to the first three names in the note, Schimberg (1878: 27) aptly compares schol. b *Il.* 2.517*d ex.* (on Schedius), which adduces the same three characters. A direct relation between the two scholia seems likely, but the exact details of the relationship remain open (one dependent on the other? common source?). In any case, the bulk of schol. bT *Il.* 13.643*a ex.* testifies to the existence of alphabetical character lists.

It is conceivable, but cannot actually be proven on the basis of the extant evidence, that such lists included more than the characters of the same name only. Alexandrian scholars were keen to tidy up their cultural heritage – one need only think of Callimachus' *Pinakes*. It may well be that they also compiled complete character lists that were similar to the alphabetical *index nominum* in modern editions.¹⁴

If homonymous characters can confuse the reader of Homeric epic, the same can be said about silent characters in dramatic texts, because they hardly leave any traces in the text.¹⁵ Consequently, the scholia

¹¹ Pylaemenes appears to have been the *cause célèbre* in the question of homonymy (see n. 9 and schol. A *Il.* 2.851*b Ariston.*). Five notes on homonymous characters explicitly establish a relation to his case (schol. A *Il.* 1.320*a*, A *Il.* 2.517*c*, A *Il.* 2.837–8, A *Il.* 4.295, A *Il.* 15.515*a*, all attributed to Aristonicus). It can be no coincidence, then, that the long list of parallels is adduced in the note that deals with him. See also Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 207, 341), Mühlhelt (1965: 127).

¹² In most cases there are two characters of the same name. In the case of Adrastus, Thoon and Melanippus, the note lists three homonymous characters each.

¹³ Πείσανδροι should come before Πυλάρτοι; the displacement may be due to iotacism or indicative of alphabetisation by the first letter only. Note, however, that the sequence of the three names beginning with α is correct.

¹⁴ For alphabetical character lists see also some of the mythographical catalogues on papyrus (re-edited with commentary by van Rossum-Steenbeek 1998; cf. esp. nrs. 61, 64, 70 and perhaps 71). These lists slightly differ from a list of Homeric characters in that they broadly combine figures in the style of a mythographical compilation such as Ps. Apollodorus and do not limit themselves to a single 'original source'. Cf., however, nr. 58, which follows Hes. *Th.* 975–1018 (in the sequence of the Hesiodic text, not alphabetically).

¹⁵ Stage directions of the type 'enter character X in company of Y (silent)' are foreign to ancient practice.

sometimes explicitly identify what is called a κωφὸν πρόσωπον ('silent character'):¹⁶ Dicaeopolis' bride in *Acharnians* and the goddess Eirene in *Peace*.¹⁷ Although not unknown to tragedy, the phenomenon is more common in comedy with its many supernumeraries. Lucian (*Hist. Conscr.* 4) seems to attest to this when he speaks of a silent 'comic bodyguard' (κωμικὸν δορυφόρημα), which the scholia explicitly refer to silent characters in comedy.¹⁸ More generally, it is worth mentioning that Homer is credited with the invention of silent characters (schol. AbT *Il.* 1.332*b ex.*). Strictly speaking, there is a difference between silent characters appearing in a dramatic or in a narrative composition. In the latter case they are much more common and less problematic, because they leave an explicit trace in the text. The note under consideration does not address this difference and simply credits Homer with introducing another feature of dramatic poetry (cf. Chapter 19).

It has been argued above that there is a connection between interest in the composition of the chorus and the poet's liberty to invent characters. Invention of characters is particularly prominent in comedy and, to a lesser degree, in epic. However, the comic scholia hardly ever discuss the phenomenon. It may have been considered too common to require an explanation.¹⁹

The Homeric scholia do not discuss the invention of characters as such either, but their repeated references to speaking names imply that the character is invented.²⁰ This is indirectly proven by the note on the two names of the river Scamander/Xanthus:

ὡς παραδεδομένοις δηλονότι χρώμενος καὶ οὐκ αὐτὸς πλάσσων τὰ ὀνόματα.
(schol. A *Il.* 20.40*b*¹ *Ariston.*)²¹

¹⁶ Cf. Cic. *Att.* 13.19.3; on silent characters see Steinmann (1907: 30), also Heinze ([1903] 1957: 407 n. 1).

¹⁷ Cf. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 1056 (cf. 1058d), *Pax* 657a. The κωφὸν πρόσωπον in argum. E. *El.* is a mere conjecture by Victorious. Modern editors (e.g. Lloyd-Jones and Wilson 1990: 2, on S. *Aj.*) sometimes mention κωφὰ πρόσωπα among the *dramatis personae*, but this is normally not based on manuscript evidence.

¹⁸ Cf. schol. Luc. 59.4, sim. 24.9; essentially the same explanation is found in Hesychius (δ 2242), but without reference to comedy; Plutarch (*An seni* 791e) speaks of ὡσπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς δορυφόρημα κωφόν ('like a silent bodyguard on the stage').

¹⁹ The notes which do mention the invention of names refer to the ones invented by the *characters* in order to achieve a particular goal in the present context (for references see n. 23 below).

²⁰ Thus Bachmann (1902: 18). The relevant passages are collected by Erbse (*ad* schol. A *Il.* 5.60*a Ariston.*), add schol. P *Od.* 1.429, H *Od.* 3.282; cf. notes on the etymology of names: schol. bT *Il.* 2.212*a ex.* (Thersites), T *Il.* 4.88–9*a*¹ *ex.* (Pandarus), bT *Il.* 6.12 *ex.* (Axylyus), A *Il.* 6.201*a Ariston.* (Aleius), D *Il.* 16.287 (Pyraechmes), T *Il.* 24.730 *ex.* (Hector), also Soph. *test.* 1.81–4 Radt (Odysseus); see also Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 262 with n. 172), Steinmann (1907: 29–30).

²¹ The opposite argument is made in schol. A.R. 1.1040–41: Apollonius of Rhodes invented the names Telecleus and Megabrontes.

<Homer uses both names> obviously taking them from tradition and not coining the names himself.

The wording of the scholion makes it clear that Homer regularly invents names. This aligns well with Aristarchus' notion of Homer being ὀνοματωθετικός, that is, a 'giver of names' (see n. 20). In fact, the presence of speaking names in both *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is seen as proof that they are by the same poet.²² Needless to say, the point about invented names is mostly made in connection with minor characters, some of whom do not even appear in the epics (e.g. the fathers of characters who do). Exceptions are the etymological notes on Thersites, Pandarus and, remarkably, Hector (for references see n. 20). They all seem to presume that the name, and therefore the character, was created by Homer. Given that Aristophanes often uses speaking names in his comedies, it is remarkable that the phenomenon is not explained more often.²³

The preceding discussion differentiates between 'major' and 'minor' characters. The former notion is referred to in ancient scholarship as συνεκτικὸν πρόσωπον (lit. 'a character who is holding together <the plot> (or similar)').²⁴ The central character is seen as giving 'coherence' to the text under discussion (on coherent plots see [Chapter 1](#)). This need not be more than a convenient way of referring to the main character(s) and should probably not be interpreted as contradicting Aristotle's warning not to construct the plot around an individual character (*Po.* 1451a16–35). The notion of major and minor characters also shines through in comments such as schol. *Τ Il.* 10.196–7 *ex.* (quoted in [Chapter 1](#)), which considers it necessary to explain why the comparatively minor characters Meriones and Thrasymedes take part in the *boule*.²⁵ A similar point is perhaps made by schol. *βΤ Il.* 14.476–7 *ex.*, which explains that the character in question is of the 'second rank' (δευτέρω τάξις). It seems possible that the comment refers to the Trojan Acamas, who is one of the few minor characters in the *Iliad* who is given the privilege of a speech (*Il.* 14.479–85). However,

²² See schol. *A Il.* 9.137a *Ariston.*; the same implication seems to underlie schol. *P Od.* 4.630.

²³ Cf. *Ar. Av.* *argum.* 5.24–5, p. 3 Holwerda (sim. *argum.* 6, p. 4), on the two human protagonists, Peis(th)etaerus ('Persuader of his Comrade(s)') and Euelpides ('Son of Good Hope'); see, however, the notes on the invention of names by *characters* (cf. n. 19): schol. *Ar. Nu.* 1150a (Apaloe, 'Almighty Fraud', a personification (see below) invoked by Strepsiades), *V.* 185b (Apodrasippides, 'Runaway-ippides', invented by Philocleon), *Av.* 65a (invented name of a bird), 68a (ditto), 568b (ditto). On speaking names see also schol. *Pi. O.* 7.118c (on the names of the three Fates), *E. Tr.* 457 (on the names of the three Furies).

²⁴ Cf. schol. *βΤ Il.* 24.3–4 *ex.* (on Achilles), *A. PV* 88b (on Prometheus), sim. *Τ Il.* 12.9–12 *ex.* (on Hector and Achilles); see Roemer (1924: 257), but the claimed Aristarchean origin of the term must remain open.

²⁵ Cf. schol. *βΤ Il.* 23.351 *ex.* (on Meriones' participation in the foot-race).

Erbse (*ad loc.*) refers the note to Promachus, who is killed in this scene by Acamas.²⁶

Another group of particular characters are personifications, that is, non-human objects or abstractions that are endowed with life and seen as a person (more often divine than human). In the opening scene of Euripides' *Alcestis*, for example, Apollo ends his monologue by announcing the imminent entrance of Thanatos ('Death'). The relevant scholion explains:

σωματοποιεῖ αὐτόν. (schol. E. *Alc.* 24)

He [sc. Euripides] personifies him [sc. Thanatos].

Similarly, schol. A. *PV* 12c explains that Bia ('Force') is a personification (εἰδωλοποιηθεῖσα), while no scholion seems to have been preserved that says the same about Kratos ('Power') in the same scene at the beginning of *Prometheus Bound*. (In fact, Kratos is the speaking character, whereas Bia is a silent supernumerary, as explained in the same scholion, see [Chapter 19](#).) This points to a general feature of the extant notes on personifications: ancient scholars seem to be primarily interested in the question of personification as such. Conversely, they do not seem to make a distinction as to whether the personified character actually appears himself in the fictional world (that is, on stage, as in the examples above, or, say, on the Trojan battlefield), or whether the personification is only used by a character (e.g. when Eteocles prays to Eulabeia, 'Caution', in E. *Ph.* 782, with schol.). The relevant scholia primarily draw attention to the fact that the passage under discussion is an example of personification.²⁷ It is probably fair to say that for them the question is rather one of who is a divinity and how the Greeks conceptualise their gods.²⁸ The latter, in particular, falls outside the scope of this book. Terminologically, σωματοποιεῖν seems to be both the more common and more specific term for 'to personify', whereas εἰδωλοποιεῖν has a wider range of meanings that includes, for example, the production of actual representations such as statues (see e.g.

²⁶ In that case, the scholion probably explains that Promachus is in fact a name, and in spite of the meaning its bearer belongs to the 'second rank'.

²⁷ Examples include: schol. bT *Il.* 14.344 *ex.* (is Hypnos, 'Sleep', a personification or not? cf. bT *Il.* 20.48a *ex.* on Eris, 'Strife'), Hes. *op.* 102–5 (on νοῦσοι, 'sicknesses', sim. 104a with ref. to Homeric parallels), [Hes.] *sc.* 144 (on Phobos, 'Fear'), Pi. *O.* 2.108e (on Ananke, 'Necessity'), A. *Th.* 224a, b, d (on Peitharchia, 'Obedience'), Ar. *Ach.* 979a (on Polemos, 'War'), etc.

²⁸ See e.g. Arist. fr. 153 Rose (with Hintenlang 1961: 69–76), Porph. on *Il.* 2.447 (esp. I 42.24–45.5 Schrader), on *Il.* 8.1 (I 110.23–114.23), on *Il.* 9.1 (I 127.27–31). The common denominator of these passages seems to be that the name of the (personified) divinity and his or her effect are identical. Eos, for example, can be both the personified goddess of Dawn and the morning light. Cf. also schol. Hes. *Th.* 223a, which argues that Homer knows the concept of 'nemesis' but not the divinity.

LSJ *s.v.*). As always, the phenomenon can also be described periphrastically (e.g. schol. [Hes.] *sc.* 264).

CHARACTERISATION

In the present context, it is useful to distinguish between two related aspects of characterisation: (i) What are the principal techniques used by poets to characterise? (ii) To what results do these techniques lead in the case of the individual characters?

Obviously, the second question, actual characterisation of individual figures, can only be treated selectively here, because an examination of all the characters and the corresponding notes would require a study of its own.²⁹

As to the principal techniques of characterisation, further distinctions can be made. First of all, characterisation can be implicit or explicit: implicit, if a character's actions (including speeches: Arist. *Po.* 1454a17–19) reflect on him or her in a significant way; explicit, if somebody expressly describes the character in question. This 'somebody' can be the character himself, another character or – in the case of narrative texts or embedded narratives (such as messenger speeches) – the narrator. The distinction between implicit and explicit characterisation is comparable to the one between 'showing' and 'telling' (on which see [Chapter 1](#)). A character can be shown to be, say, courageous or he can be said to be courageous.

Ancient scholars do not seem to discuss the technique of implicit characterisation as such, but their interpretations reflect awareness of the phenomenon. (In *Iliad* 6, Menelaus lets Agamemnon get the better of him and rejects Adrestus' supplication, which he was about to accept. However, Menelaus does not kill the suppliant himself.)

μέτριον καὶ ἀόργητον χαρακτηρίζει τοῦ Μενελάου τὸ ἦθος· ὁ πρότερον μὲν (γὰρ) [add. Erbse, cl. b] ἀδικηθεὶς, νῦν δὲ ἐπὶ σπονδαῖς τρωθεὶς φείδεται τῆς τοῦ πολεμίου πληγῆς καὶ ὡς ἰκέτην οὐ φονεύει. (schol. *T Il.* 6.62b¹ *ex.*)

He [sc. Homer] shows the character of Menelaus to be moderate and not irascible. For, though previously wronged [sc. by Paris] and then wounded [sc. by Pandarus in *Iliad* 4] on terms of a truce, he [sc. Menelaus] now refrains from striking the enemy [sc. Adrestus] and does not kill him, because he is a suppliant.

²⁹ For a collection of relevant materials regarding the characters in Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Terence see Steinmann (1907: 8–28). For the major Iliadic characters see von Franz (1940: 72–93) and N. J. Richardson (1980: 272–5).

No one explicitly describes Menelaus' character in this scene. It is his behaviour alone that leads to the characterisation as given by the scholion.³⁰ At the same time, the critic indirectly sets Menelaus off from Agamemnon, who does kill Adrestus (see below on contrasting presentation).

Similar to implicit characterisation, the scholia also argue on the basis of indirect characterisation. Menelaus' wound which is caused by Pandarus' arrow (*Il.* 4.132–40), for instance, is said to be described at length in order to insinuate (ὕποφάινειν) Agamemnon's emotional state (διάθεσις).³¹

As to explicit characterisation, a distinction between self-characterisation and characterisation by others is drawn in a comment by Donatus:

personae aut <ex> suis verbis insinuantur aut ex alienis. (Don. *ad Ter. Ad.* III 1, p. II 66.11–12 Wessner, *sim. An.* I 3, p. I 94.8–13 W., with example)

Characters either become known [≈ are characterised] through their own words or those of others.

Donatus primarily differentiates between self-characterisation and characterisation by others. However, this distinction may well include the one between implicit and explicit characterisation. For characterisation by others is by necessity explicit, whereas self-characterisation can be both explicit and implicit. The latter, implicit self-characterisation, is in fact more common (and, arguably, more subtle) than explicit self-characterisation. So Donatus' sentence may well indirectly testify to the distinction between implicit and explicit characterisation too, although it expressly mentions only the distinction between self-characterisation and characterisation by others.

Donatus is commenting on dramatic poetry and therefore does not consider characterisation by the narrator as opposed to that by the characters themselves. This, however, is done by an Iliadic scholion. (In *Iliad* 13, Deiphobus is unable to pierce Meriones' shield with his spear and withdraws in angry frustration.)

καὶ φθέγγεται μὲν οὐδέν (οὐ γὰρ οἰκεῖον τῷ παρόντι καιρῷ), τὴν δὲ διάθεσιν αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ “χῶσατο” ῥήματος ὁ ποιητῆς παρέστησεν. (schol. bT *Il.* 13.165b ex.)

And he [sc. Deiphobus] does not utter a word (for it would not be appropriate to the present critical moment), but the poet represented his [sc. Deiphobus'] disposition by means of the verb 'was angry'.

³⁰ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 11.600–1a ex. (on Achilles).

³¹ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 4.140b ex.; see also schol. bT *Il.* 10.14–6 ex. (the description of the Trojan success alone is enough to insinuate the Greek misery). Cf. in general [Chapter 9](#).

The present circumstances do not allow for a speech by Deiphobus (i.e. self-characterisation).³² Instead, the narrator omnisciently informs the reader about Deiphobus' current emotional state (διόθεσις) and thereby characterises him.³³ The emphasis on 'by means of the verb (alone)' may indicate praise for succinct and efficient characterisation (see below). The wording of the scholion implies that self-characterisation through speech is a standard method of characterisation.³⁴ Homer, however, prefers not to make use of it in the present scene.³⁵ Self-characterisation through speech as a standard method must be read not only against the notion that Homer favours 'showing' over 'telling' (see Chapter 4). Equally important is the rhetorical exercise of ἤθοποιῖα, that is, the introduction of speaking characters in one's speech or, as a school exercise, the composition of fictitious speeches, often with topics from classical mythology (e.g. Andromache's farewell speech to Hector).³⁶ Its very etymology indicates that a main goal of ἤθοποιῖα is to bring out well the character of the person whose speech is quoted.³⁷ No surprise, then, if the Homeric scholia often describe individual characters on the basis of their speeches.³⁸ Needless to say, the same holds true *a fortiori* for scholia on dramatic texts, which consist of speech only.

All in all, the two distinctions, explicit vs. implicit and self-characterisation vs. characterisation by others, do not seem to be foreign to ancient scholars, but are not discussed in their own right. It is other aspects

³² Interestingly, schol. bT *Il.* 17.695a' *ex.* argues that Antilochus' silence, when he learns about Patroclus' death, brings out his feelings better than a speech could. See also schol. EQ *Od.* 1.334, which argues that the description of Penelope covering her face with a veil before she descends to the dining hall brings out her moderation (σωφροσύνη) before her actual speech (πρὸ τοῦ λόγου).

³³ On the semantics of διόθεσις ('disposition') see Preller (1838: 100 on Polemon fr. 58); on διόθεσις as 'emotional state' in particular see Meijering (1987: 31–3); cf. schol. bT *Il.* 1.330c *ex.*, bT *Il.* 1.346 *ex.*, T *Il.* 4.140b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 4.154 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 5.516 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 12.392 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 16.460a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 17.156–9 *ex.*, T *Il.* 19.366–7 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 22.464–5 *ex.*, T *Il.* 23.815b *ex.*, E. *Or.* 142, *Tr.* 1030.

³⁴ Cf. schol. QT *Od.* 8.166; for the notion that speech conveys character see Arist. *Po.* 1450a29–31, *Men.* fr. 72 K–A. Self-characterisation through speech can be conveyed, for example, by sentence structure (schol. A *Il.* 9.372a *Nic.*, A *Il.* 9.375–8 *Nic.*) or frequent apostrophes (schol. bT *Il.* 22.86a *ex.*).

³⁵ The critic does not specify why a speech would be inappropriate here. Incidentally, the scholia repeatedly comment on the absence of speeches (see Chapter 17).

³⁶ See in particular the *progymnasmata*: Hermog. *progymn.* 9 (pp. 20–2 Rabe), Aphthonius II 44–6 Spengel (with an actual example: Niobe), Theon II 115–18 Spengel; on ἤθοποιῖα in general see Hagen (1966).

³⁷ The progymnastic instructions (see previous n.) expressly require the speech to be appropriate to the character quoted. The words used are πρέπον, οἰκεῖον, ἀρμόττειν (see below). Cf. Aristotle's recommendation (*Po.* 1454a16–36) that a poetic character should be 'good' (χρηστών), 'appropriate' (ἀρμόττων), 'similar' (ὅμοιον), i.e. 'like us', and 'consistent' (ὁμαλόν).

³⁸ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 9.307–9 *ex.* (on Achilles), bT *Il.* 9.622b *ex.* (on Odysseus, Achilles, Phoenix and Ajax), bT *Il.* 3.43b *ex.* (on Hector, with parallels).

of a poet's method of characterisation that primarily attract scholarly attention.

A major point of interest is succinct and efficient characterisation. Critics repeatedly praise poets for their ability to bring out the whole character in a single line or even a single word. (In *Iliad* 1, Briseis is leaving Achilles 'unwillingly' (ἀέκουσα).)

διὰ μιᾶς λέξεως ὀλόκληρον ἡμῖν ἦθος προσώπου δεδήλωκεν. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.348 ex.)³⁹

By means of a single word, he [sc. Homer] has shown us the entire character of the person [sc. Briseis].

A good poet is expected to be able to express the essence of a character in a single word or line. This expectation may well reflect an outlook that is more appropriate to Hellenistic poetry.⁴⁰ As a consequence, it may be doubtful whether the expectation does justice to the poetic principles of Homer, who, however, does avoid extensive characterisation in his own voice and tends to let characters speak for themselves. (It is therefore no coincidence that the comments on Homer's succinct characterisations mostly refer to passages within the narrator-text, whereas it would be more difficult to make the same point regarding Homer's speeches.) If the principle of concise characterisation introduces a potentially anachronistic criterion, the critics remain unaware of this being a methodological problem.

Comparable to succinct characterisation, the scholia sometimes praise a passage for bringing out the characterisation with particular clarity (schol. *Or.* 413, 437, both on Menelaus, Aristotle's example for an overly wicked character: *Po.* 1454a28–9).

Another point of interest is consistent characterisation. Although characters are allowed to develop in the course of the narrative or play, it is nevertheless expected that their behaviour show some consistency, unless, of course, a character's fickleness is the very point.⁴¹ Critics either praise such consistent characterisation or criticise inconsistency. A prominent example

³⁹ Cf. schol. *D Il.* 8.87 (on Homer's ability to bring out the whole character in one word in general and on the corresponding scene in particular: the imperfect ἀπέταμνε, 'cut off', describes the feebleness of old Nestor), *D Il.* 13.249 (a single line serves multiple purposes), bT *Il.* 16.460a ex. (the word 'son' (for Sarpedon) is enough to describe Zeus' emotional state), T *Il.* 23.815b ex. (the emotional state of the spectators is described succinctly, ἐν βραχέϊ), AbT *Il.* 3.200–2 ex. (Helen's description of Odysseus (called an ἐπίγρμμος) contains everything in a nutshell, ἐν βραχέϊ), Soph. *test.* 1.90–2 Radt (Sophocles is able to characterise in half a line or even a single word); see also schol. bT *Il.* 1.115 ex. (a single line describes the virtues of women), sim. A *Il.* 2.765a ex. (with examples); some of these passages are collected by Roemer (1879: xvi), see also Heath (1987: 118 with n. 48).

⁴⁰ Cf. e.g. the 'Stoic' principle of συντομία ('conciseness'), see Chapter 9.

⁴¹ Cf. Arist. *Po.* 1454a26–33, whose example for an inconsistent character is Iphigenia in E. *IT*.

is the ancient debate over Achilles' supposedly inconsistent or uneven (ἀνώμαλος) character.⁴² Similarly, schol. bT *Il.* 16.559c *ex.* expresses wonderment at Patroclus' unexpected display of cruelty, whereas schol. bT *Il.* 17.268–70 *ex.* finds him 'righteous' (εὐσεβής) throughout the poem. Another critic praises Homer for sticking to his initial characterisation of the Greek and Trojan armies through the entire poem (schol. AbT *Il.* 3.2b *ex.*, sim. bT *Il.* 7.306–7b *ex.*). Interestingly, one critic (schol. E. *Or.* 99) uses Aristotle's term ἀνώμαλος when he denies that Electra is characterised 'inconsistently' anywhere in the play. He appears to defend Euripides against such criticism. In fact, the dramatic scholia regularly discuss the question whether or not characterisation is consistent.⁴³

If most of these examples judge the character's consistency (or lack thereof) on the basis of two or more specific passages within the text under consideration, others discuss a single passage against the background of more general expectations regarding this particular character. The question then is, in other words, whether the specific passage is compatible with what one expects from this character in general. In the case of criticism, a particular passage can be said to be 'out of character' (παρὰ τὸ πρόσωπον),⁴⁴ 'not fitting (to the character)' (ἀνάρμοστον and cognates, οὐκ οἰκεῖον),⁴⁵ 'not appropriate' (οὐ πρέπον and cognates),⁴⁶ 'silly' (εὔηθες) or the like. In the case of praise, more or less the same points return in a positive

⁴² Cf. Pl. *Hipp. min.* 369b–71e, Arist. fr. 168 Rose (= schol. bT *Il.* 24.569b *ex.*), differently Plut. *aud. poet.* 31a–c; on Achilles' 'inconsistent' character see also schol. bT *Il.* 18.98b *Porph.* (?).

⁴³ See the examples in Steinmann (1907: 58–64), also Trendelenburg (1867: 115). Sometimes the actual point of consistent characterisation is only implied, for example when a passage is said to bring out 'again' (πάλιν) a particular trait (e.g. schol. E. *Or.* 482, on Menelaus).

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. schol. A *Il.* 3.395 *Ariston.* (on Helen's words in *Il.* 3.406–7), A *Il.* 4.345–6a *Did.* (?) (on Agamemnon criticising Menestheus' and Odysseus' appetite), A *Il.* 9.612b *Ariston.* (rejecting a Zenodotean conjecture), E. *Andr.* 330 (on a gnomic statement in Andromache's speech), 362 (on the final lines of the same speech). The last two notes are both by Didymus (pp. 242–3 Schmidt).

⁴⁵ ἀνάρμοστον (and cognates): cf. e.g. schol. A *Il.* 8.164–6a *Ariston.* (on Hector mocking Diomedes, which is said to be inappropriate to both characters), A *Il.* 15.166–7a *Ariston.* (on Zeus emphasising that he is older than Poseidon), A *Il.* 24.556–7 *Ariston.* (on Priam elaborating on the ransom and wishing Achilles a safe return home); οὐκ οἰκεῖον: e.g. schol. E. *Med.* 922 (on Medea bursting into tears, while she will soon kill her children). On the background of these terms in Aristotle and rhetoric see nn. 36–7 above.

⁴⁶ Cf. e.g. schol. pap. *ad Il.* 2.800 (pp. 170–1 Erbse: the words fit Iris, but not Polites; on this scene see [Chapter 13](#)), schol. A *Il.* 18.143–4a² *ex.* (when talking to the other Nereids, it would have been inappropriate for Thetis to take it for granted (as she did when talking to Achilles) that she will get new armour), A *Il.* 20.180–6a *Ariston.* (on Achilles mocking Aeneas' hope to get a reward for killing him), E. *Or.* 562 (on Orestes saying that he 'sacrificed' his mother), *Pb.* 1566 (on Oedipus calling Jocasta his 'wife', whom he knows to be his mother). It should be emphasised that categories such as τὸ πρέπον (on which see Pohlenz 1965a) are not purely moralising. Quite frequently, the label οὐ πρέπον is put on passages that are inappropriate to the present circumstances (e.g. because they are inconsistent with the speaker's general character). Moralising may but need not be at stake. To treat τὸ πρέπον as a moralising category *tout court* is a simplification (cf. [Intro. page 13](#)).

formulation.⁴⁷ Needless to say, comments of this type can refer to both words and deeds of the character. Regarding the deeds, critics are regularly baffled by the ‘simple life’, esp. of Homeric man, because it contrasts with the life of the élite that is contemporary with them (see M. Schmidt 1976: 159–73).

As to inconsistent or inappropriate characterisation, there is a certain tendency among Alexandrian scholars to ‘mend’ the mistakes by means of textual interventions such as conjecture and athetesis.⁴⁸ (In the rising tension of *Iliad* I, Agamemnon asks Achilles whether he indeed wants to keep his own gift of honour and at the same time leave Agamemnon without one.)

ἀθετοῦνται, ὅτι εὐτελεῖς τῇ συνθέσει καὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, καὶ μὴ ἀρμόζοντες Ἀγαμέμνονι. (schol. A *Il.* 1.133–4 *Ariston*.)⁴⁹

<Lines 1.133–4> are athetised, because they are cheap in composition and thought and do not fit <the character of> Agamemnon.

The lines are thought to be of doubtful authenticity because they result, among other things, in inconsistent characterisation.

Of particular interest are the cases where the reasoning of the scholars can be followed in some detail. (Earlier in *Iliad* I, Agamemnon uses the argument that he, unlike Achilles, wants the Greek army to be safe.)

ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος αὐτὸν ἠθέτηκεν ὡς τῆς διανοίας εὐήθους οὐσίας. οὐ δεῖ δὲ αὐτὸν ἰδίᾳ προφέρεσθαι, ἀλλὰ συνάπτειν τοῖς ἄνω· ἐν ᾗθει γὰρ λέγεται. (schol. A *Il.* 1.117a *Ariston*.)⁵⁰

<The dipole periestigmene [actually missing in ms. A],> because Zenodotus athetised it [sc. the line], because, to his mind, the thought is silly. But one must not pronounce [and understand] the line in isolation, but combine it with the preceding context. For it is spoken ‘in character’.

Zenodotus apparently considered the line ‘I want the Greek army to be safe rather than to die’ (*Il.* 1.117) a flat truism and athetised it, probably

⁴⁷ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 10.382a *ex.* (on the respective speeches of Odysseus and Diomedes when they meet Dolon), T *Il.* 11.171 *ex.* (on the various types of flight depending on whether the pursuer is Agamemnon or Achilles), S. *Aj.* 82a (on the respective speeches of Athena and Odysseus), *El.* 1058 (on the chorus angrily contrasting the caring behaviour of birds), E. *Med.* 296 (on Medea questioning the benefit of deep learning). See also the notes collected by Heath (1987: 116 n. 45).

⁴⁸ This applies even to accentuation, that is, when different accents/pronunciation change the meaning of the word. For example, Nicanor dismisses the reading ᾗ in *Il.* 5.278, because it would be ‘out of character’ (schol. bT *Il.* 5.278b *ex.* (*Nic.*)).

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. schol. A *Il.* 1.139a, A *Il.* 2.76a, A *Il.* 8.164–6a, A *Il.* 12.175a¹, A *Il.* 15.166–7a, A *Il.* 24.556–7 also A *Il.* 8.185a, A *Il.* 9.140a (all attributed to Aristonicus).

⁵⁰ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 9.612b *Ariston.* (rejecting a conjecture by Zenodotus).

because he found it to be inappropriate to a king and commander-in-chief. According to Aristarchus, however, the line is part of an extended argument and is spoken ἐν ῥῥοί. The latter expression is difficult and has a wide range of meanings (see Excursus below). Aristarchus perhaps wants to say here that the line is spoken ‘with stress, expressively’ (NB ἐγώ in the Homeric text) and is therefore indicative of and in line with Agamemnon’s character.⁵¹ In any case, the two scholars disagree on whether or not the line is appropriate to and consistent with Agamemnon’s character. The scholia abound in discussions of this type.

Questions regarding characterisation often reach beyond the realm of the narrative universe itself. For another criterion of propriety is whether the character’s portrait is realistic or true to life. The relevant comments establish a more or less explicit relation between the fictional world of the characters and the real-life experience of the reader.⁵²

The scholia observe, mostly with positive undertones, that poets present characters who are true to life or display a behaviour which is typically human.⁵³ Achilles’ behaviour is typical of a man in love (schol. bT *Il.* 1.349*b ex.*), Hector’s of a peevish person (schol. bT *Il.* 13.768–73 *ex.*) or of human behaviour in general (schol. bT *Il.* 13.824*a ex.*). Paris’ speech is that of a lewd and shameless person (schol. bT *Il.* 7.362*c ex.*). The nurse in *Medea* stands for people in great distress who do not dare to tell anybody about it (schol. E. *Med.* 57). Interestingly, there seems to be no categorical difference between divine and human characters. Hera’s speech is said to be typical of people in anger (schol. AbT *Il.* 4.53*c ex.*) or of a wife.⁵⁴

Generally speaking, the characters’ behaviour is often explained in the light of commonsensical notions of psychology and typical human behaviour. Many arguments run along the lines of ‘X acts or speaks thus,

⁵¹ Differently Nickau (1977: 244 n. 39), whose interpretation of ἐν ῥῥοί as emphasising ‘daß der Sprecher seinen Worten auf Kosten der Objektivität eine bestimmte Färbung zu geben bestrebt ist’ fails to convince me.

⁵² A collection of Iliadic examples is given by Erbse (Index V: 131–2). On commonsensical arguments see Introd. page 14, on realism also Chapter 8.

⁵³ This line of interpretation can be found in Aristotle already (fr. 150 Rose = Porph. on *Il.* 3.441, I 65.22–66.15 Schrader), where Paris’ behaviour in *Iliad* 3 is explained as typical of a man in love who is separated from his object of love. See also his recommendation (*Po.* 1454a24) that a character be ὁμοίον ‘like (us)’.

⁵⁴ Cf. schol. AbT *Il.* 1.542*d ex.*, sim. bT *Il.* 1.520 *ex.*; scholars appear to be particularly fond of commenting on behaviour said to be typical of women (schol. bT *Il.* 1.553*a ex.*, bT *Il.* 4.20 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 8.199*a ex.*, bT *Il.* 14.158*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 14.330 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 15.99*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 18.429–31 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 22.477*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 22.487*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 24.212–3*b ex.*, bT *Il.* 24.292*a ex.*, S. *El.* 126, E. *Hec.* 924, also bT *Il.* 6.260*c ex.*), often with a misogynous slant (de Jong 1991).

because that is how people act or speak in such a situation'.⁵⁵ On the one hand, these comments may clear the poet of apparent peculiarities. On the other, such generalisations tend to treat characters as representatives of a particular type and less as individuals (Heath 1987: 119 with n. 51 speaks of the 'generic' view of character in the scholia). On occasion they may even bring them down to the level of 'you and me'. It should, however, be underlined that these comments often refer to comparatively minor details of the individual character and in any case cannot be said to be typical of the entire corpus (*pace* von Franz 1940: 92–3). Conversely, a note such as schol. bT *Il.* 17.1–2a¹ *ex.*, which is too long to be quoted here, tries to give a differentiated characterisation of Menelaus as an individual.⁵⁶ Collections of the various notes on other individual characters lead to the same result:⁵⁷ the extant corpus of scholia contains both comments that emphasise the typicality of characters and others that emphasise their individuality. They form two sides of the same coin. The single character must strike a good balance between being individualised and idiosyncratic on the one hand, and being typical and representative on the other. Excess in either direction prevents the character from having the desired effect on the readers.⁵⁸

In terms of presentation, ancient scholars have a certain predilection for contrastive comparison: a 'good' character's behaviour is contrasted with a 'bad' character's or *vice versa*: Menelaus and Paris (schol. bT *Il.* 4.207c *ex.*), Hector and Paris (schol. bT *Il.* 6.390 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 6.492a *ex.*), Ajax and Hector (schol. bT *Il.* 7.192 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 7.226–7 *ex.*), Hector and Menelaus as representatives of Trojan and Greek behaviour respectively.⁵⁹ Conversely, schol. bT *Il.* 17.1–2a¹ *ex.* argues that Patroclus and Menelaus are similar in character. As to contrastive characters, schol. S. *El.* 328 makes the remarkable point that Sophocles is wont to make use of them in his plays: Electra and Chrysothemis are contrastive characters in *Electra*, Antigone and Ismene in *Antigone*. If this note puts Electra and Antigone

⁵⁵ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.35 *ex.*, AbT *Il.* 1.287–9a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 1.354c *ex.*, bT *Il.* 1.365b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 2.375 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 3.364–5 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 3.439–40a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 4.195b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 5.118b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 5.352 *Hrd.*, bT *Il.* 6.414b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 9.369 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 9.379–86 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 9.437a *ex.*, T *Il.* 10.409–11 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 11.829–30 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 16.7 *ex.*, T *Il.* 16.131 *ex.*, AbT *Il.* 23.59 *ex.*, S. *Aj.* 342a, 368, *OT* 46, E. *Hec.* 1100, *Hipp.* 177, 198, *Ph.* 446; see von Franz (1940: 54–8), with more Iliadic examples, also many of the examples collected by Steinmann (1907: 56–8).

⁵⁶ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 17.670a *ex.* (on Patroclus).

⁵⁷ See the material collected by von Franz (1940: 72–93), whose conclusions, however, fail to do justice to the actual sophistication of the individual portraits.

⁵⁸ In a somewhat different context Aristotle argues against characters who are excessively wicked (*Po.* 1454a28–9).

⁵⁹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 17.220–32b *ex.*, sim. bT *Il.* 17.248–55 *ex.*; some of these examples are collected by Roemer (1879: xvii).

on a similar level, another (schol. *S. El.* 387) holds the view that Electra's unexpected and sudden resolution to die is too much in the style of Antigone. The scholion's point is probably that this is 'out of character' here. Yet another form of comparison can be found in schol. *E. Or.* 356, which contrasts Menelaus' bad character in *Orestes* with the much more favourable treatment in Homer's *Iliad*, that is, the critic leaves the realm of the single text and compares the depiction of an individual character in different texts.

To return to the actual techniques of characterisation, there are conflicting notions about Homer's favourite method. Whereas schol. *bT Il.* 8.349c *ex. (Did.)* (supported with a list of examples) claims that Homer is wont to characterise by means of the characters' facial expression (καὶ ἄπὸ τῶν ὀμμάτων δὲ εἶωθε καὶ τοῦ προσώπου χαρακτηρίζειν), schol. *QT Od.* 8.166 attributes the same function to their speech. Modern scholars are likely to agree more with the latter view, because physical descriptions of characters are known to be rare in Homer. In fact, one wonders what led the critic in schol. *bT Il.* 8.349c *ex. (Did.)* to make his far-reaching claim about Homeric characterisation by way of facial expression.⁶⁰

EXCURSUS: THE MEANING OF ἔν ῥῆθι AND ῥηθικός

Many of the comments adduced above make use of the word ῥῆθος (and cognates), whose original meaning 'character' can safely be said to form the basis of several among the confusingly disparate applications of the word in ancient rhetoric, poetics and grammar.⁶¹ In his very useful article on the topic, Kroll (19181) tried – in his own words – to fight his way through the jungle and to establish a number of commonly found applications of the word. According to Kroll, ῥῆθος (and cognates) can express:

- (i) a person's character, including different forms of transient moods
- (ii) the stress (or emphasis) with which words are spoken, because it is indicative of the mood
- (iii) words spoken in rhetorical irony (on which see [Chapter 9](#)).

As Kroll himself admits, it is often difficult to draw a clear dividing-line between the different categories. And, in fact, if one reviews his numerous examples, one is inclined more than once to attribute single passages to

⁶⁰ It may of course be that the critic only meant to say that, if Homer characterises by means of physical description at all, he privileges the face (cf. schol. *bT Il.* 2.217b *ex.*). As to his fourth example, Thersites being described as φορκός, it should be remembered that the word was believed to mean 'squinting' in antiquity (schol. *A Il.* 2.217a = *Ep. Hom.* φ 35 Dyck).

⁶¹ See Kroll (1918) and the literature cited there.

another category. The conclusion seems to be that there are no general rules and that each case must be decided on its own merits. And even then no two scholars will distribute the examples equally over the three groups, because the frequent lack of context in the scholia makes a decision extremely difficult. Despite the important efforts of Kroll and others, the semantic field of ἦθος remains elusive, especially in the case of scholia, which are often very short.

As to ἦθος indicating ‘rhetorical irony’ (mostly in the form ἐν ἦθει or ἠθικῶς), Kroll derives this meaning from the second meaning ‘stress, emphasis’, because ancient rhetorical theory argues that irony is brought out by means of pronunciation.⁶² This may well be right, but at least two further explanations are conceivable. Both are deductions from the original meaning ‘character’.

Firstly, it may be worth remembering the fact that a proper understanding of ironic speech acts often depends on knowing the speaker well. Some people are more prone to use irony than others, which creates expectations.⁶³ Read against this background, it makes perfect sense if a speech by a character such as Euripides’ Medea, who repeatedly speaks with irony or sarcasm, is said to be ‘in character’ (ἐν ἦθει). From there the expression may have come to mean ‘ironically’ *tout court*, as in Kroll’s explanation.

The second possible explanation starts from the observation that ironic passages can also be marked with the term ὑπόκρισις.⁶⁴ The meanings of this word range from ‘delivery’ (like an orator), to ‘acting’ and even ‘pretence, dissimulation’. The first, ‘delivery’, leads us back to Kroll’s explanation. The other two, however, open the possibility that ἐν ὑποκρίσει means ‘like an actor, by putting up a show’ or ‘with pretence, in dissimulation’. Both are particularly apt to irony, the latter because an ironic speaker pretends to hold a view which in fact he does not. The former, acting, is also a form of pretence. Moreover, modern studies have shown that irony often depends on what is sometimes called ‘echoic mention’: the ironic speaker echoes another’s words by, so to speak, putting inverted commas around the words with the intention to ironise them (‘this so-called X of yours’).⁶⁵ This echoic mention can easily be seen as a form of acting,

⁶² Kroll (1918: 74) adduces Phoebammon III 53.28 Spengel, Trypho *fig.* III 205.3 Spengel and Quint. 8.6.54.

⁶³ It may well be that this is what Quintilian (8.6.54) has in mind when he has irony depend on *aut pronuntiatione. . . aut persona aut rei natura*.

⁶⁴ Cf. Trypho *fig.* III 205.3 Spengel, schol. bT *Il.* 15.504–5 *ex.*, and Chapter 9.

⁶⁵ On ‘echoic mention’ see Hutcheon (1994: 156). It is worth noting that the model of Sperber and Wilson (1981) attempts to explain all variants of irony as due to some form of echoic mention. The fact that this is a problematic assumption (see Lapp 1997: 81) does not affect my argument here.

which may well be what ‘(to speak) in character’ (ἐν ῥῆθι) occasionally means.⁶⁶

In conclusion, then, the question of how ἐν ῥῆθι came to mean ‘ironically’ seems to allow for more than one possible answer.

CONCLUSION

Characters often take centre stage in Greek literature and form one of its most memorable features. This prominence is reflected by the wealth of notes that ancient scholars produced on the subject of characterisation, of which the preceding discussion could only adduce a representative selection. In addition to the numerous notes which simply describe the character under consideration, critics are particularly concerned with the appropriateness (or lack thereof) of the single trait.⁶⁷ In their interpretations, they repeatedly apply extra-textual criteria such as typically human behaviour in general. Notes of this type can therefore be said to transcend the domain of actual literary criticism, the topic of the present book, towards more general areas such as psychology and ethics. Within the domain of literary criticism, scholars are interested in the techniques of characterisation such as succinctness and consistency. They also show awareness of the difference between implicit and explicit characterisation and between self-characterisation and characterisation by others.

As we saw at the beginning of the chapter, there is some interest in the casting of the various texts, especially in the case of texts such as the Homeric epics, where the characters are many, and where the presence of homonymous characters further complicates the picture. Scholars addressed this problem by compiling character lists in alphabetical order. As a further point regarding casting, they treated the question of invented characters. This has further implications for the liberty with which the poets made use of and adapted the literary tradition to their individual needs and purposes.

⁶⁶ It seems more likely that ἐν ῥῆθι and ἐν ὑποκρίσει coexisted in their similar meanings, whereas W. G. Rutherford’s neat distinction (1905: 126–37, esp. 134), which is said to have been blurred in later times, seems difficult to reconcile with the available evidence.

⁶⁷ As suggested in n. 46 above, the criterion of appropriateness is not *a priori* moralising.

Mythography

The scholia that form the basis of this book comment on literary texts that normally have a plot with a mythological subject-matter.¹ Consequently, the relevant scholia also deal with questions of myth. In fact, these scholia are so numerous and often long (see in particular the mythographical D-scholia to the *Iliad* and the scholia to Apollonius of Rhodes and Lycophron) that a systematic discussion would go beyond the scope of this book.² Instead the following account will try to give a general idea of the major questions which ancient commentators address when dealing with mythological issues.

The most basic (and probably most common) type of comment simply states the ‘facts’ of the relevant myth. Though typologically similar, the notes in this group cover a wide range and vary considerably in scope. The scale ranges from concise notes such as ‘X is the son of Y’ to extensive retelling of entire myths. Despite the difference in size and scope, they have a similar function in that they primarily intend to provide the reader with background information that is deemed necessary to understand the text under discussion (cf. page 16). (On occasion, however, the scholion seems to contain more information than is immediately necessary. The commentator appears to take the opportunity to put his knowledge on display or to provide a ‘mythological handbook’.) Notes which primarily state the ‘facts’ of the myth may or may not mention an authority on which their evidence is based.³ As a further characteristic, notes of this type repeatedly expand or supplement from other sources the ‘incomplete’ account of the

¹ The most significant exceptions are Aristophanes and, to a lesser degree, Theocritus. But Aristophanes, too, incorporates mythological topics into his comedies.

² For such a discussion see now Cameron (2004); further insights can be expected from Fowler’s forthcoming commentary on his *Early Greek Mythographers* (2000). For a collection of Iliadic scholia on myth see Erbse (VII: 119–24, alphabetical by character, does not include D-scholia); see also the discussion by Schwartz (1881).

³ Cameron (2004: esp. 89–163) argues that such references to authorities must be treated with caution, especially if several authorities are mentioned in a row; similarly Schwartz (1881: 438–63).

text under discussion (for Aristarchus' critique of this method see below). A recurrent phenomenon in this connection are notes that identify characters who remain unnamed in the text (e.g. schol. T *Il.* 6.170c *ex.*, on Proetus' father-in-law). In fact, Porphyry appears to have written an entire monograph *On the names omitted by Homer* (περὶ τῶν παραλελειμμένων τῶ ποιητῆ ὀνομάτων: Schrader 1879).

The question of literary dependence is the focus of a second general type of note on mythology. They either argue that the passage under discussion depends on another text or *vice versa*.⁴ By engaging in this form of *Quellenkritik*, these comments automatically (though not always expressly) deal with questions of chronology.

A third type of comment looks more specifically at the particular version of the myth which the poetic text under discussion transmits or presupposes. Such notes either imply or expressly point out that the present version differs from another. Within this group of comparative notes several sub-types can be found:

The most neutral sub-type simply lists the variants without expressing a preference or judgment.⁵ The wording is somewhat less neutral when the critic says that the present passage 'is not in accordance with' (οὐ κατὰ + acc.) or 'different from' (ἐναντίως) or 'contradicts' (ἀντιπύττεται) another.⁶ But there is no explicit preference for one of the two versions.

Aristarchus goes one step further when he deals with the mythological differences between Homer and the νεώτεροι (generally the post-Homeric poets, often the poets of the epic cycle). He scrutinised the Homeric epics for elements of the larger Trojan myth which Homer did not either mention or presuppose (but the νεώτεροι did).⁷ The reason is that Aristarchus advocated the methodological principle that 'gaps' in a poet's account of a myth must not be filled from other sources (see Chapter 7). If, for example, Homer does not mention the name of Cerberus, one should refrain from supplementing it from later sources.⁸

⁴ Cf. e.g. schol. Pi. *I.* 6.53a (Pindar follows the Μεγάλαι Ἥοϊαι, cf. Ps.Hes. fr. 250 M-W), schol. E. *Andr.* 796 (Euripides follows Pindar, cf. fr. 172 Sn-M), schol. Theocr. 7.153b (Theocritus follows Euripides, cf. *Cyclops*); see also the examples listed in n. 9 and Bachmann (1904: 32–3).

⁵ E.g. schol. A.R. 1.45–47a (second part): Pherecydes (FGH 3 F 104a) agrees with Apollonius that Jason's mother is Alcimede. Herodorus (FGH 31 F 40) says his parents are Autolycus and Polypheme, Andron (FGH 10 F 5) mentions Aeson and Theognete.

⁶ Cf. e.g. schol. T *Il.* 14.114b *ex.* (Homer is not in accordance with the tragic poets), Pi. *N.* 1.56 (Pindar is different from Theocritus), *N.* 3.57 (Pindar contradicts Homer).

⁷ Iliadic scholia on myths that are not known to Homer are collected by Erbse (VII: 126, together with other things unknown to him), see also Bachmann (1904: 32–3).

⁸ See schol. A *Il.* 8.368 *Ariston.* (contrast e.g. the note on Proetus' father-in-law). Probably the best-known case is the judgment of Paris, which Aristarchus thought to be unknown to Homer

A second type of Aristarchean note is similar to the ones on literary dependence (see above). Here, he argues that a particular Homeric passage triggered another in post-Homeric poetry. For example, the scene in which Menelaus and Meriones, protected by the two Ajaxes, carry Patroclus' body from the battlefield (*Il.* 17.717–24) is said to have inspired the scene in which Ajax, protected by Odysseus, carries Achilles' body from the battlefield (as, for example, in the *Aethiopsis*).⁹

Aristarchus primarily argued that the various versions of a myth should be kept separate, but the distinction between Homer and the νεώτεροι probably encompassed a preference for the former. The note on the rescue of Achilles' body, for example, argues that Homer would have done it differently. Such a preference for one version becomes even clearer in the comments which presume that a particular variant of a myth is so to speak the standard version. Consequently, a different variant can be said to be παρ' ἱστορίαν, that is, to run against the standard version of the myth.¹⁰

Another form of criticism has it that the later poet(s) did not understand the former version (schol. *E. Hec.* 1279, on Homer's version of Agamemnon's death; see also some of the examples listed in n. 9) or mixed up the chronology of the events (schol. [*E.*] *Rb.* 502, on the question as to when Odysseus steals the *palladion*).

(e.g. schol. *T Il.* 4.32a *Ariston*). He therefore considered *Il.* 24.29–30 an interpolation (accepted by the most recent editor of the *Iliad*). Aristarchus' notes on mythological questions are collected in Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 174–91). For the notion that the νεώτεροι 'expanded' Homer's version see also schol. *E. Or.* 257 (on Orestes' story); see also the examples listed in the next n.

⁹ See schol. *A Il.* 17.719 *Ariston*. (cf. argum. *Aethiopsis* p. 69.15–18 Bernabé); incidentally, modern neo-analysts argue along the same lines, but often turn round the dependence (see Edwards 1991: 132, with lit.). Mythological dependence on a Homeric passage is frequently commented on (by Aristarchus and others): schol. *A Il.* 1.59c *Ariston*. (the passage triggered the Mysia episode of the νεώτεροι, cf. *Cypria* fr. 20 Bernabé), *A Il.* 1.108–9b *D* (?) (ditto with respect to the sacrifice of Iphigenia in Aulis, cf. *E. IA*), *AbT Il.* 4.59b *ex.* (misled Hesiod to believe that Zeus is born after Hera, cf. *Th.* 454–7), *T Il.* 5.880 *ex.* (triggered Hesiod's version of Athena's birth, cf. *Th.* 924), *A Il.* 9.575a' *Ariston*. (induced Sophocles to have a chorus of priests in *Meleager*, cf. *TrGF IV* p. 345), *A Il.* 11.750 *Ariston*. (influenced the way Hesiod describes the genealogy of the Moliones, cf. fr. 17b M-W), *T Il.* 13.348–50 *ex.* (influenced Melanippides' version of Zeus' love for Thetis, cf. fr. 765 Page), *T Il.* 18.38 *ex.* (misled Hesiod to believe that Thetis is the daughter of Nereus, cf. *Th.* 240–64, esp. 244), *T Il.* 18.434a *ex.* (induced the νεώτεροι to write about Thetis' metamorphoses, cf. *Pi. N.* 4.62–5), *T Il.* 22.62–4 *ex.* (triggered the story, common among tragedians, that harm was done to Astyanax and Cassandra, cf. *E. Tr.* 725, *TrGF II F* 450b), *A Il.* 22.210a' *Ariston*. (triggered Aeschylus' *Psychostasia*, cf. *TrGF III* p. 375), *T Il.* 24.257a *ex.* (induced Sophocles to have *Troilus* killed by Achilles, while he trained his horses, cf. *TrGF IV* p. 453), *A Il.* 24.527–8a *Ariston*. (triggered Hesiod's treatment of the πίθοι, 'containers', cf. *Op.* 84–104), *A Il.* 24.735a' *Ariston*. (triggered the post-Homeric version of Astyanax being thrown from the wall, see above).

¹⁰ For a collection of notes on παρ' ἱστορίαν see [Chapter 7](#). Parallel to the meaning 'mythology, mythography' for ἱστορία, the word ἱστορικὸς can also mean 'mythographer' (e.g. schol. *Pi. P.* 4.450a).

Next, instead of criticising a poet for all kinds of mistakes, critics could simply state that he ‘invented’ (πλάττειν) his version.¹¹ Given that ‘invention’ was considered one of the accepted privileges of a poet (see Chapter 7), these notes are not necessarily meant as a criticism.¹² It may well be the case that they primarily point out that the poet did not make use of the variant that was handed down by tradition (sometimes called ὁ παραδεδομένος μῦθος).¹³ Instead, the poet invented one himself, probably with a view to the requirements of the particular passage.¹⁴

A similar notion underlies the comments that speak of ‘new’ (καινός) variants.¹⁵ And the same probably applies to the cases where a poet is said to be ‘alone’ (ἰδίως, ἰδικῶς) with this particular version of the myth.¹⁶ A note on Pindar (schol. Pi. O. 8.41a, on Aeacus helping Apollo and Poseidon to build the Trojan wall) shows that Didymus (pp. 221–2 Schmidt) dealt with questions of this type.

If all these notes underscore (or at least imply) that the passage under consideration forms a contrast with the traditional version, others state that the poet ‘changed’ or ‘adapted’ the traditional myth.¹⁷

¹¹ See schol. E. *Hec.* 241 (on Hecuba seeing Odysseus when he entered Troy as a spy, with the explicit comment that this variant is not Homeric (cf. *Od.* 4.242–64) and unconvincing; Heath 1987: 112), *Andr.* 734 (quoted in Chapter 11), [*Rh.*] 351 (on Strymon fathering a child with the Muse), A.R. 2.51 (on inventing the character Lycoreus; the verb here is ποιεῖν instead of πλάττειν; cf. also schol. A.R. 1.760–62c (on the genealogy of monster-like creatures), where, however, the subject is a generalising plural ‘the poets’; schol. E. *Hipp.* 559 deals with the ‘invention’ of the myth in general, not with different variants. Aristodemus (FGH 383 F 3 = schol. E. *Ph.* 159) criticises Euripides for the alleged ‘*ad-hoc* invention’ (αὐτοσχεδιάζειν) that the Niobids are buried next to one of the seven Theban gates.

¹² This, however, is the case (probably influenced by Pindar’s own argument) in schol. Pi. O. 1.40a on Tantalus serving his son Pelops to the assembled gods.

¹³ Cf. Arist. *Po.* 1453b25, schol. A.R. 3.533a, sim. S. *Aj.* 833a; also διαδεδομένος, e.g., schol. A *Il.* 19.108b *Porph.*, T *Il.* 20.147^a *Ariston.*

¹⁴ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.399–406 *ex.* on the Briareus episode, which some modern scholars, too, consider an ‘*ad-hoc* invention’ (e.g. Willcock 1964: 143–4).

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. schol. Pi. *P.* 4.37 (on having a god in human guise appear to the Argonauts), 447a (on the Argonauts reaching the Red Sea). In notes that comment on style, καινός has a positive tone, because the poet prevents monotony (see Chapter 9). One should perhaps not rule out that this is the case here too.

¹⁶ Cf. e.g. schol. Pi. O. 9.44a (on Heracles fighting against the three gods Poseidon, Apollo and Hades), *P.* 11.25b (on Arsinoe being Orestes’ nurse), E. *Tr.* 448 (on Cassandra being left unburied); interestingly, schol. Pi. *I.* 8.57b raises the question whether Pindar is alone with this version or follows an unknown source. Needless to say, ἰδίως (and cognates) can be applied to all kinds of topics: see Meijering (1987: 226–30, with lit.), Papadopoulou (1998: 227–32), who both adduce more examples than are given here.

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. schol. Pi. O. 1.105d (μεταχειρίζεσθαι, on the Tantalus myth), 9.86c (ἐξαλλάττειν, on the genealogy of Protogeneia), *P.* 3.48d (παρακρούειν, for which Pindar is praised; his Apollo is not informed by a raven of Coronis’ infidelity), *P.* 9.185a (παρατρέπειν, Pindar turns an ancestor of the victor into a suitor of Antaeus’ daughter).

The fact that many of these innovations and adaptations can be illustrated with examples from the scholia on Pindar is probably no coincidence. At least one scholar even felt that ‘Pindar habitually does violence (βιάζεσθαι) to the myth whenever it serves his purposes’ (schol. Pi. *I.* 1.15b, on the number of Geryon’s dogs: Most 1985: 33). Perhaps this sounds harsher than it is actually meant to. For another comment (schol. Pi. *P.* 9.185a, see n. 17) points out that Pindar changed the myth in order to please (χαρίζεσθαι) the victor to whom the ode is dedicated. (A similar intention is attributed to Sophocles when he changed the story about the eponymous ‘Horseman from Colonus’, schol. S. *OC* 712, quoted in Chapter 7, see also schol. Hes. *Th.* 1.) But it is true that notes on modifying the traditional myth are particularly frequent in the scholia on Pindar.

Probably the most frequent type of mythological comment deals with the genealogy of the various characters. In more than one case, however, the character’s parents and other relatives play only a subordinate role in the story, if any at all. As a consequence, the different Greek texts display a considerable degree of variation concerning the genealogy of individual characters. This is regularly commented on in the scholia (see e.g. n. 5). One particular note even has it that Euripides resorts so often to ‘improvisation’ (αὐτοσχεδιάζειν) that he ends up contradicting himself, probably in other plays (schol. E. *Hec.* 3, p. 12.5–9 Schw., on the father of Hecuba).¹⁸ Admittedly, this is an extreme view, but it reflects a methodological principle for which scores of scholia could be adduced: the careful and systematic comparison of mythological data in multiple sources. That questions related to mythology are very close to the hearts of ancient literary critics cannot least be gathered from the fact that the relevant scholia are very numerous and often characterised by lengthy and sophisticated arguments that exhibit a thorough knowledge of the mythographical tradition. It is no coincidence that modern mythological handbooks depend to a considerable degree on scholia, especially when it comes to listing variants. Mythographical ‘handbooks’ such as Ps.Apollodorus’ *Library* tend to give a unified account of the relevant myths, whereas scholia are more likely to list and discuss variants.

MYTHOLOGICAL EXEMPLA

Greek poets and orators are fond of various types of figurative language and indirect argument (metaphor, allegory, simile, etc.). This includes the

¹⁸ Euripides was also criticised for giving too much genealogical information in general: schol. S. *OC* 220, Ar. *Ach.* 47, see Meijering (1987: 190 with n. 162).

device that they, or more often their characters, make their point by telling a story about an event in the past that bears significant resemblances to the current situation. The purpose is often to influence the addressee and to make him change his mind. This device is well documented in the rhetorical handbooks and is called παράδειγμα ('example'):

παράδειγμα δὲ πράξεων ἔκθεσις πρὸς ὁμοιότητα τῶν ἐνεσθηκῶν προτροπῆς χάριν καὶ ἀπροτροπῆς ἢ δηλώσεως ἀπλῆς. (Ps.Herod. *fig.* 65 Hajdú, with *test.*)¹⁹

A *paradeigma* is the presentation of events that bear a resemblance to the present <events>; the purpose is encouragement and discouragement or simple illustration.

The definition is then illustrated with one Homeric example for each purpose: Phoenix' Meleager story (*Il.* 9.527–99) intends to discourage Achilles;²⁰ Athena's reference to Orestes (*Od.* 1.298–300) intends to encourage Telemachus; a simple illustration is the comparison of Hephaestus' shield for Achilles with a work of art by Daedalus (*Il.* 18.591–2).²¹

Given the rhetorical interest in *paradeigma*, it is hardly surprising that the scholia, too, repeatedly comment on it.²² The following aspects are worth singling out.

Ps.Herodian's first example, the Meleager story, is the Homeric *paradeigma* that is commented on most often in the scholia and with much detail (see also Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 169.7). Of particular interest is a note that argues at great length as to the respects in which the cases of Meleager and Achilles are indeed comparable (schol. bT *Il.* 9.527*a ex.*, similar, though shorter, *b*). This includes the salient point that, in the end, Achilles will suffer a destiny similar to Meleager's. While the critic does not explicitly speak of a 'mirror story' (or the like), it seems clear that this is what he has in mind. Thus, the similarities between Meleager and Achilles go well beyond what can be Phoenix' intention. His goal is to persuade Achilles

¹⁹ The other term for 'story with an underlying meaning' is αἶνος, as explained in schol. bT *Il.* 23.652*b ex.* (with *test.*). Considering the attestations of the two words, the difference seems to be that an αἶνος is not necessarily taken from myth.

²⁰ Two other rhetorical handbooks which adduce Homeric examples illustrate the dissuasive type with Diomedes' Lycurgus story (*Il.* 6.130–40): Polyb. Sard. (III 107.16 Spengel), Trypho (*fig.* III 200.29–30 Spengel).

²¹ The third type (equally treated as παράδειγμα by schol. A *Il.* 18.591–2*a Nic.*) is hardly distinct from a comparison or simile. In fact, the term παράδειγμα is sometimes used in the scholia to describe a comparison or simile (e.g. schol. b *Il.* 6.510*b² ex.*). Rhetorical attempts to draw a clear dividing-line (e.g. Trypho (*fig.* III 200.31–201.2 Spengel) explicitly distinguishes between παράδειγμα and simile, παραβολή) were not universally accepted. No surprise, then, if the scholia use the term παράδειγμα in various ways.

²² Cf. Schadewaldt ([1938] 1966: 83 with n. 1), N. J. Richardson (1980: 281).

that, unlike Meleager, he should yield and give up his boycott (argument function). The same Meleager myth, however, induces the reader to expect that Achilles, just like Meleager, will not yield – with corresponding consequences for him and his entourage (key function).²³ The poet has a hidden agenda when he has Phoenix adduce the Meleager *paradeigma*.

On a more generalising note, a critic argues that the elderly are particularly prone to tell stories in general and to give advice by means of *paradeigmata* in particular (schol. bT *Il.* 9.447*b ex.*). This aligns well with the fact that old men such as Phoenix and Nestor receive the most attention in the Homeric scholia when it comes to commenting on *paradeigmata*.²⁴ The same note also makes the point that the *paradeigma* has a positive impact on the addressee's emotions.²⁵ Similar points recur elsewhere.²⁶

As the definitions by Ps. Herodian and other rhetoricians make clear, a *paradeigma* is a form of instruction (persuasive or dissuasive). One scholar spells this out when he interprets Nestor's speech to Patroclus such that Nestor 'artfully instructs him by means of the *paradeigma*' (τεχνικῶς τῷ παραδείγματι . . . διδάσκει, schol. bT *Il.* 11.717–8*a ex.*).

It is also worth mentioning that ancient scholars considered the question of the *paradeigma*'s narrative level. Put in modern terms, a *paradeigma* such as Phoenix' on Meleager is a secondary story: a character who himself is part of a story tells a story. Ancient critics show awareness of the different narrative levels when they treat Phoenix' *exemplum* as a ὑποδιήγησις (schol. bT *Il.* 9.529*a ex.*, with *test.*), that is, a 'sub-narrative' that is located at a narrative level different from the main story of the *Iliad* and serves a purpose within it.

Needless to say, Homer is not the only poet whose *paradeigmata* attract scholars' attention. He is in the company, for example, of Pindar and Apollonius of Rhodes. Thus schol. Pi. *O.* 2.39*a* (sim. b and c) praises Pindar for adducing the story of Cadmus' daughters (i.e. a Theban topic) as an appropriate (οἰκεῖον) *paradeigma*, because elsewhere (fr. 118 Sn-M) he traces the family of Theron, the victor honoured in *O.* 2, to Thebes. Conversely, schol. Pi. *P.* 2.40*a* expresses puzzlement over Pindar's reasons

²³ For the modern concepts of 'mirror story' and 'argument' and 'key function' see Nünlist and de Jong (2000: s.v. *Argument-Funktion*; with lit.).

²⁴ See esp. schol. bT *Il.* 23.630*b ex.*, which praises Nestor for always using the 'appropriate' (οἰκεῖα) *paradeigmata* and adduces several examples.

²⁵ The term in question is ψυχραγωγεῖ (also schol. bT *Il.* 9.529*a ex.*, on the same *paradeigma*), which is discussed in Chapter 5.

²⁶ The effect of the *paradeigma* can also be consolation (παρὰμυθεῖσθαι): schol. A *Il.* 18.117*c ex.* (sim. d: Heracles died too), bT *Il.* 24.601 *ex.* (Niobe mourning over her children); cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 1.261*a ex.* (on the 'softening' function of stories).

for using the fundamentally negative *paradeigma* of Ixion in a victory ode, a question that continues to bother modern students of Pindar.

Schol. A.R. 3.997–1004a observes that Jason uses the *paradeigma* of Ariadne when he tries to assuage Medea's fear of going with him. The subsequent critique that Jason's arguments are 'not true' is based on a cursory reading of the passage and, more importantly, on a comparison with non-Apollonian versions of the story, the very method which Aristarchus rejected (see above).

CONCLUSION

The mythological background of the text under discussion is one of the aspects that are most frequently commented on in the scholia in general. Scores of scholia explain the details of the myth that is narrated or presupposed in the text under discussion. More particularly, there is often great emphasis on comparing this specific variant with versions that are known from other sources. In a similar vein, some scholars are wont to supplement an 'incomplete' version with story elements taken from another version, a method that is expressly rejected by Aristarchus. The comparison of two or more parallels can but need not be accompanied by an explicit judgment as to which variant is preferable. With or without explicit comparison, the scope of the mythographical notes ranges from small points such as a character's genealogy to the retelling of entire myths, sometimes apparently for their own sake. Special attention is given to the insertion of mythological *paradeigmata* and to their pragmatic function. Scholars recognised that such embedded stories are located on a narrative level that is different from that of the main story. As a result, they can have one meaning for the characters who tell and hear them and another for the audience.

PART II

CHAPTER 13

The gods in Homer

The gods play a central role in the *Rezeptionsgeschichte* of the Homeric epics, and it would no doubt be possible to devote an entire book to this topic. The purpose of the present chapter, however, is more limited and modest in scope. It primarily comprises a representative collection of ancient comments which discuss the narrative function of the gods in the Homeric epics, in other words a collection of notes on what is sometimes referred to, if somewhat misleadingly, as the Homeric *Götterapparat*. Conversely, the present chapter does not treat comments on questions of theology, faith, religious behaviour, cult practice, etc., in their own right, because they go well beyond the domain of literary criticism. Equally omitted are the different forms of allegorical explanation, arguably the most common and long-lived hermeneutic ancient approach to the gods in Homer.¹

DIVINE INTERVENTIONS

The scholia recognise a fundamental difference between human and divine characters and their respective spheres of action. Consequently, the appearance of a divine character on the human plane is seen as an exceptional measure which is called for by particular circumstances, for example, if things are going terribly wrong and must be set straight by the intervention of a god. (In *Iliad* 1 Achilles is about to draw his sword and to kill Agamemnon when Hera urges Athena to intervene.)

εἶωθε δὲ εἰς τοσοῦτον αὖξιν τὰς περιπετείας ὡς μὴ δύνασθαι ἀνθρώπων αὐτὰς παῦσαι, ὡς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς Πείρας [sc. *Il.* 2.166–82] χρεῖαν πάλιν ἔσχε τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.195–6b ex.)²

¹ For a justification of this omission and a select bibliography see *Introd.* page 13 with n. 45.

² Cf. schol. HQ *Od.* 5.336: ἔθος τε Ὀμήρω ἐν τοῖς ἐσχάτοις κινδύνοις θεῶν βοήθειαν εἰσάγειν ('it is Homer's habit to bring in divine help in situations of extreme danger'). The passage under discussion is Leucothea coming to the rescue of Odysseus, who is on the verge of drowning.

He [sc. Homer] is wont to increase the crises to such a point that a human being cannot stop them, as in the case of the ‘Test’ too he had need again of Athena.

Achilles’ intention to kill Agamemnon is seen here as a dramatic form of *peripeteia* which the human characters cannot control any longer.³ Since the death of Agamemnon would have disastrous consequences for the Greek cause, the situation must be mended by the intervention of a god. This type of intervention is explained as a recurrent feature of Homeric narrative technique (εἴωθε), for which a parallel is given where the intervening divinity is the same. And in fact a scholion on that other passage repeats the general point and displays a similar wording. (Agamemnon’s test of the troops misfires and would have led to a premature withdrawal of the Greek army, had not Athena urged Odysseus to hold them back.)⁴

εἰς τοσοῦτον προάγει τὰς περιπετείας ὡς δύνασθαι θεὸν μόνον αὐτὰς μεταθεῖναι. πρῶτος δὲ καὶ τοῖς τραγικοῖς μηχανὰς εἰσηγήσατο. (schol. bT *Il.* 2.156 ex.)⁵

He [sc. Homer] pushes the crises to such a point that only a god can set them straight. And he was the first to introduce for the tragedians the <*deus ex machina*>.

The plural (περιπέτεται) shows that this note again takes the divine intervention to be a recurrent Homeric principle. And the same point is made a third time in similar words in connection with Aphrodite rescuing her protégé Paris from certain death at the hands of Menelaus.⁶ In all three cases the narrative is moving in a direction which seriously threatens the continuation of the Trojan war and therefore undermines the *raison d’être* of the *Iliad*.⁷ The divine intervention is not a more or less arbitrary form of influencing the human action, but an urgently needed solution

³ The word *peripeteia* is used here in a looser sense (‘crisis, turning-point’) than in Aristotle’s *Poetics* (Meijering 1987: 277 n. 106).

⁴ The same divine intervention is discussed twice by Aristotle. In his *Homeric Problems* (fr. 142 R., cf. Hintenlang 1961: 106–8) the starting-point is the observation that it is ‘unpoetic’ (ἀποίητον) to solve problems in the plot by means of the *Götterapparat* (μηχανή). Such solutions should come from the plot itself (ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ μύθου). Aristotle responds, however, that a poet, while expected to ‘imitate what normally happens’ (μιμεῖσθαι τὰ εἰωθότα γίνεσθαι), is entitled to increase the suspense by the ‘insertion of dangers’ (τὸ κινδύνους παρεισάγειν). Aristotle’s solution does not explicitly address the question of the μηχανή. It must, therefore, remain open how he judges here the device which in his other treatment of the passage (*Po.* 1454b2) is expressly criticised.

⁵ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 2.453–4b ex. (*Ariston*.?), which asks the rhetorical question how the flight of the Greek army could be stopped without divine intervention.

⁶ See schol. bT *Il.* 3.380c ex.; in both cases Erbse favours the wording of T over b, προάγει against ἄγει on 2.156, *vice versa* on 3.380. Perhaps one might consider reading the same form in both instances.

⁷ A premature death of Agamemnon or Paris would also contradict, of course, the poetic tradition of the Trojan myth.

to a problem which has got out of human control. From that perspective one can see why critics saw a connection with tragedy's *deus ex machina*, although the technical term μηχανή designates the crane on stage and is therefore strictly speaking anachronistic.⁸ The critic quoted above goes one step further in that he credits Homer with the invention of the device 'on behalf' of the tragedians.⁹

Modern scholarship has devoted much effort to the disputed question as to whether or not divine interventions mean that Homeric man lacks a sense of free will and acts virtually like a marionette whose strings are pulled by the gods. This is not the place to re-examine this difficult question in detail.¹⁰ But it is worth noting that at least one ancient critic did not consider Homeric characters to be mere puppets of the gods. (In book 4 of the *Iliad*, the Trojan ally Pandarus, prompted by Athena, shoots the ominous arrow which breaks the truce with the Greeks.)

οὐκ ἀναγκάζουσιν ἐπιρκεῖν Πάνδαρον, ἀλλὰ πειρῶνται εἰς πλείω τε ἄμαρτίαν προκαλοῦνται Τρῶας, ὅπως ἄξιαν τίσωσι δίκην· (schol. bT *Il.* 4.66a ex.)

They [sc. the gods] do not force Pandarus to break the truce, but they tempt and invite the Trojans to a greater mistake [sc. than the abduction of Helen], in order for them to pay the appropriate penalty.

The remark obviously radiates a feeling of Greek moral superiority (cf. *Introd.* page 13), but it is nevertheless noteworthy, because it implicitly subscribes to the idea that the gods only influence the actions of those characters who appear to be ready for it. The divine intervention does not come out of the blue, but affects the appropriate character. Pandarus is not a randomly victimised character.

The puppet metaphor is also problematic because, in fact, countless actions on the human plane are not explicitly attributed to a god who pulls the strings. The poet, in other words, has the choice whether to have the gods intervene or not. The examples above treat the divine intervention as a last resort in a critical situation. The scholia also report some general rules about the intervention of gods. According to such a general rule, the absence of divine involvement adds dignity to the gods' status and would overall be more appropriate. Conversely, divine interventions may detract

⁸ On the phrase ἀπὸ μηχανῆς see also n. 4 and *Chapter 19*. It recurs in schol. bT *Il.* 2.144d ex. with respect to the same scene in *Iliad 2*.

⁹ Cf. Hillgruber (1999: 425). For the notion cf. e.g. schol. AT *Il.* 1.1a ex. (Homer as inventor of the tragic proem). On Homeric 'inventions' in general see *Introd.* page 16 n. 59.

¹⁰ Cf. Schmitt (1990), who forcefully argues against the notion that Homeric man does not possess a sense of self-determination.

from the gods' own status (the underlying assumption is that direct contact with human affairs is below a god's dignity), but they increase the dignity of the poem:

ὅταν εἰς τὴν ἀξίαν ἀτενίσῃ τῶν θεῶν, τότε φησὶν αὐτοὺς μὴ κινεῖσθαι περὶ θνητῶν ὡς οὐδὲ ἂν ἡμεῖς περὶ μυρμηκῶν. ὅταν δὲ ἐπιλογίσῃται τὴν ποιητικὴν, ἔπεται τοῖς μύθοις καὶ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν ἔκτραγωδεῖ, συμμαχίας καὶ θεομαχίας παράγων. (schol. bT *Il.* 8.429 *ex.*)¹¹

Whenever he [sc. Homer] considers the dignity of the gods, then he says that they are not moved by mortals, in the way we would not <be moved> by ants. However, whenever he thinks of his poetry, he follows the mythological tradition and dramatises his subject-matter, presenting gods fighting in alliance <with men> and among themselves.

This is an obvious attempt to defend Homer against the many complaints about the immorality or lack of dignity of his gods.¹² This critic argues that the divine participation actually makes the poem better and perhaps also more respectable. It is also in line with the poetic tradition.¹³ Similar arguments recur elsewhere. Divine interest, whether as active participants or as watching audience, increases the importance of the scene.¹⁴ This holds especially true if the god is fighting on the other side (schol. bT *Il.* 5.23 *ex.*). The same applies to the various assemblies of the gods (schol. bT *Il.* 8.2a *ex.*).

As to the question of which gods actually appear on the human plane, Aristarchus' comment on Athena's intervention in *Iliad* 2 (see above) makes a noteworthy distinction:

¹¹ Similarly, schol. T *Il.* 24.526 *ex.* differentiates between 'real gods' (τὸ φύσει θεῖον), who do not care about mortals, and 'gods in poetry' (ποιητικοί), who do. The former part is supported with a quotation from Epicurus (*Rat.Sent.* 1 = *Gnom.Vat.* 1). For the notion that Homer ἐκτραγωδεῖ ('dramatises') his poems by means of divine participation see schol. bT *Il.* 20.25 *ex.* (superficially on Zeus revoking his ban and encouraging the other gods to help whomever they wish, but clearly meant in a generalising way).

¹² See Roemer (1879: x). Complaints about the inappropriate presentation of the gods is a very common form of moralising in the exegesis of Homer. The passages are usefully collected in the various studies on allegoresis (see *Introd.* page 13), the most common form of defence.

¹³ For adherence to the poetic tradition cf. Porphyry's defence of Demodocus' notorious song about Ares and Aphrodite (Porphyry on *Od.* 8.267ff., 75.4–8 Schrader); see also [Chapter 7](#).

¹⁴ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 13.345a *ex.* (generalising note on gods as combatants and as watching audience), similarly bT *Il.* 4.1a *ex.* (the change of scene to Olympus makes the poem nobler and the divine foreknowledge adds to its suspense), bT *Il.* 5.703–4 *ex.* (Hector's excellence is increased by his 'alliance' with Ares), bT *Il.* 7.58–61 *ex.* (Athena and Apollo as spectators increase the importance of the action), T *Il.* 7.443–64c *ex.* (the erection of the Greek wall is rendered more trustworthy by the corresponding conversation between Poseidon and Zeus), bT *Il.* 16.431–61 *ex.* (Zeus watching the last fight of his son Sarpedon increases its prominence and makes the reader more attentive), bT *Il.* 20.25 *ex.* (see n. 11).

ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος οὕτως ἐπισυντέμηκεν: “εἰ μὴ Ἀθηναίη λαοσσόος ἦλθ’ ἀπ’ Ὀλύμπου. | εὖρεν ἔπειτ’ Ὀδυσῆα”, καθόλου τὸν τῆς Ἥρας λόγον περιγράφας Ὀμηρικῶς ἔχοντα: καὶ γὰρ καὶ τῆς Ξιφουλκίας αὕτη ἀφίστησιν, ἣ δὲ Ἀθηναῖα ὑπηρετεῖ [cf. *Il.* 1.195, 208], κατὰ διαφορὰν τῆς ἀξίας τηρουμένης τῶν προσώπων. (schol. A *Il.* 2.156–69 *Ariston.*)

<The dipole periestigmene,> because Zenodotus cut back the passage like this: ‘if Athena, who rouses the troops, had not come down from Olympus. Thereupon she found Odysseus . . .’, thereby completely omitting Hera’s speech, which is, however, in good Homeric style. For it is she too who prevents <Achilles> from drawing the sword, and Athena assists her, with the respective dignity of the characters being preserved.

Zenodotus’ radical textual intervention (athetesis of 2.157–68, rewriting of 2.156), which makes Athena act of her own accord, is refuted on the basis of the parallel from book I, where Hera is actively involved but does not intervene herself. Her status as first lady makes it impossible for her to appear herself on the human level, but Athena may well do so.¹⁵ It is worth mentioning, however, that later in the poem Hera does go down herself (*Il.* 5.711–909). This is indirectly recognised in a note on Zeus’ unique status in that respect. (With Zeus redirecting his attention towards Thrace in *Iliad* 13, Poseidon seizes the opportunity to enter the fray in support of the Greeks.)

Δία δὲ οὐδέποτε κατιόντα καὶ μεταμορφούμενον ποιεῖ. (schol. T *Il.* 13.18b *ex.*)

<Poseidon enters the human battle:> But never does he [sc. Homer] have Zeus go down and change his guise.

Zeus alone among the major gods never leaves the divine sphere and/or disguises himself (on the latter see below). This essentially correct observation, however, seemed to clash with *Il.* 15.694–5, where Zeus is said to push Hector from behind ‘with his hand’ (χειρί). Did this not require the assumption of Zeus’ presence below on the battlefield? No, according to the scholion which lists several possibilities to solve the apparent problem:

λείπει τὸ “ὡς”. οἱ δὲ τῆ δυνάμει. ἢ ἐκπληκτικὸν τὸ τῆς φαντασίας, εἰ ἡ χεὶρ τοῦ Διὸς μέχρι τῆς γῆς φθάνει θνητὸν ὠθοῦσα. (schol. bT *Il.* 15.695 *ex.*)

The <word> ‘like’ is missing. Others <explain ‘with his hand’ as> ‘with his power’. Or the mental image produces amazement, if Zeus’ hand reaches down to earth and pushes a mortal.

¹⁵ For the difference in status between Hera and Athena cf. schol. bT *Il.* 5.420 *ex.*

The three possible explanations are, in other words: (i) a comparison with suppressed or understood ὥς (a common type of explanation in the scholia), (ii) a metaphor or (iii) (in a rather different vein) Zeus extends his enormously long arm down to earth (with the reader being awestruck, see [Chapter 5](#)). In any case, the point is implicitly maintained that Zeus does not leave the divine sphere in Homer.

In the case of the gods who do intervene, the scholia have a great deal to say about the topic of ‘disguise’, which the scholion above denies in principle for Zeus. The most important questions are: do the gods appear before their human interlocutors in disguise or as themselves? If the former, whose disguise do they choose and why? Do the human characters see through the disguise and recognise the god? To what extent does the human disguise affect the way in which the gods speak and act?¹⁶

The starting-point is the commonsensical observation that gods are not normally visible to humans (schol. bT *Il.* 5.314–6 *ex.*, sim. bT *Il.* 3.397 *ex.*), unless, as in Diomedes’ case (*Il.* 5.127–8), humans are given the special ability to recognise gods.¹⁷ The gods may, however, decide to expose themselves to the human characters, mostly in human disguise.¹⁸ The god will normally choose the guise of the human character who is the most appropriate to achieve the intended goal, for example because he or she is very dear to the character who is visited by a god. (In *Iliad* 3, Aphrodite addresses Helen in the guise of an old woman who is most dear to her.)

ὥς καὶ ὁ ὄνειρος εἵκασται τῷ φιλότατῳ Νέστορι [cf. *Il.* 2.20–1]. (schol. T *Il.* 3.388b *ex.*)¹⁹

Similarly, Dream takes the guise of the most dear Nestor.

¹⁶ At the same time, the scholia inform the reader which god normally intervenes on which side and which of them is neutral; see e.g. schol. A *Il.* 15.212a *Ariston.*, on neutral gods also bT *Il.* 14.354–5 *ex.*

¹⁷ The scholia on the Diomedes passage are in disagreement as to whether ἡμὲν θεῶν ἢ δὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν in the Homeric text means ‘the god [i.e. undisguised] and in human disguise’ (schol. b *Il.* 5.128a² *ex.*) or ‘the god and the man’ (schol. T *Il.* 5.128a¹ *ex.*). Cf. also schol. T *Il.* 2.450a¹ *ex.*, which considers the word παρῆφουσα (derived from φαίνειν and explained as φανεροῦν ἑαυτὸν, ‘to disclose oneself’) indicative of Athena appearing without disguise.

¹⁸ A long note (schol. BPQTE *Od.* 5.337) discusses in detail the difference between gods who appear in the guise of a human character and gods who are simply compared to an animal or natural phenomenon, which usually entails only a particular aspect of their appearance, e.g. their speed; cf. also schol. HQ *Od.* 22.240. Incidentally, a somewhat literal-minded critic argues that Athena can appear undisguised to Telemachus in Nestor’s palace, because it is night and therefore dark (schol. Q *Od.* 15.9).

¹⁹ Essentially the same point is made in schol. bT *Il.* 2.20b *ex.* (on Dream as Nestor, with two Odyssean parallels), bT *Il.* 4.87a *ex.* (on Athena approaching Pandarus as Laodocus), bT *Il.* 13.45b *ex.* (Poseidon talking to the two Ajaxes in the guise of Calchas), T *Il.* 15.281–4 *ex.* (Poseidon in the guise of Thoas; Poseidon’s various guises are discussed in detail in another scholion, quoted below in the main text), bT *Il.* 17.555 *ex.* (Athena appearing to Menelaus in the guise of Phoenix).

The note makes a comparison between the guises of Aphrodite and Dream, who visits Agamemnon with Zeus' false message in *Iliad* 2. They both choose a character who is likely to have a positive impact on the human interlocutor (cf. the parallels listed in n. 19). As a consequence, the same god may decide to choose different guises on different occasions, as in fact does Poseidon. This led one critic to understand the unspecific ἀνδρὶ ἔοικώς ('similar to [i.e. in the guise of] a man', *Il.* 13.357) in a generalising way:

ἄλλοτε ἄλλω, ὡς ἔμπροσθεν Κάλχαντι [cf. *Il.* 13.45], εἶτα Θόαντι [cf. 13.216–18].
(schol. T *Il.* 13.357 *ex.*)

<Poseidon appears> to each <Greek> in a different guise, e.g. earlier on as Calchas, then as Thoas.

The fact that Poseidon previously appeared as Calchas to the two Ajaxes and as Thoas to Idomeneus is used as an argument for a generalising interpretation of the passage where Poseidon takes the guise of an unidentified character. The line is said to mean that Poseidon appears in various guises to different Greek fighters. There is, however, a second passage where Poseidon's guise is that of an unnamed 'old man' (*Il.* 14.136), who supports the Greek army and addresses a speech to Agamemnon. The relevant note is worth quoting in full:

καλῶς ἐπὶ τοῦ ὄχλου Κάλχαντι εἶκασται [sc. *Il.* 13.45], ὅπου ἔπειθεν ὡς εὐδοκιμήσας περὶ τὸν λοιμὸν, ἐπὶ Ἀγαμέμνονος δὲ οὐ φησὶ γὰρ “ἀλλὰ τε καὶ μετόπισθεν ἔχει κότον” [*Il.* 1.82]: ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ Θόαντι [cf. *Il.* 13.216–8]: νέος γὰρ οὗτος. νῦν δὲ ἀπλοϊκῶς ἔφη “παλαιῶ φωτί”, τίνι δέ, οὐ προσέθηκεν, ἀλλ’ ἀπήρκεσε τὰ τῆς ἡλικίας εἰς πίστιν· τὸ γὰρ προστιθέναι τὸν στίχον ἐκείνον “ἀντιθέω Φοίνικι, ὀπάονι Πηλείωνος” [cf. *Il.* 23.360] {καί} περιέργον· καὶ ἀπρεπές, Ἀχιλλέως ἀφροσύνης τῆς μάχης, τὸν Φοίνικα μὴ μόνον φαίνεσθαι μετὰ Ἀγαμέμνονος, ἀλλὰ καὶ καταρᾶσθαι Ἀχιλλεῖ: “ἀλλ’ ὁ μὲν ὡς ἀπόλοιτο” [*Il.* 14.142]. ἔστιν οὖν ὡς τὸ “ἀνδρὶ δέμας εἰκυῖα” [*Od.* 8.194] καὶ “δέμας δ’ ἦϊκτο γυναικί” [*Od.* 4.796]. (schol. T *Il.* 14.136^c *ex.*)

He [sc. Poseidon] nicely takes the guise of Calchas in front of the mob, where he was persuasive because he had won a good reputation regarding the plague, but not in the case of Agamemnon [i.e. the addressee in the present scene]. For he [sc. Calchas, alluding to but not mentioning Agamemnon by name] says: 'but he will keep bitterness afterwards'. And he [sc. Poseidon in the present scene] does not <resemble> Thoas either; for he is young [i.e. unlikely to persuade Agamemnon]. Here he [sc. Homer] simply said 'old man', but did not add which. The point about his age sufficed to induce trust. To add [sc. with Zenodotus] that other verse 'godlike Phoenix, attendant of Peleus' son' is superfluous; and, with Achilles

boycotting the war, it would be inappropriate for Phoenix not only to appear before Agamemnon, but even to curse Achilles: ‘But let him [sc. Achilles] perish thus.’ The present passage is parallel to ‘[Athena] similar in shape to a man’ and ‘in shape she [sc. Athena] was similar to a woman’.

This critic repeats the point that gods choose the most appropriate guise. Calchas is good for an address to the general army because he has a good reputation with them. Hence this guise in *Il.* 13.45.²⁰ But the addressee in the present scene is Agamemnon, who dislikes Calchas. Thoas is too young to have a positive impact here. Conversely, the unnamed ‘old man’ can stand. Zenodotus’ solution to identify him with Phoenix and to add a line to this purpose is out of character and ignores the fact that there are Homeric parallels for gods in the guise of unnamed characters.²¹

As to the range of possible guises, an Odyssean scholion makes the interesting general observation that Homer has female gods appear in male disguise but not *vice versa* (Bachmann 1902: 46):

ὅτι ὁ ποιητῆς ἄρρενας μὲν θεοὺς θηλείαις οὐδέποτε εἰκάζει, θηλείας δὲ ἄρρεσιν.
(schol. HQ *Od.* 13.222, according to ms. H, see Dindorf, *praef.* lxi–ii).

<Note> that the poet never disguises male gods as females, but <he does> female as males.

Another point of interest is the question whether the disguise is seen through by the human characters. The scene with Calchas *alias* Poseidon ends, in fact, in the lesser Ajax recognising the god upon his departure (*Il.* 13.62–72). The scene is used in another scholion as a parallel passage in order to establish the general principle that Homeric heroes – unlike, say, the readers of the epic – recognise gods. (Helen sees through Aphrodite’s disguise as an old woman.)

ἀλλ’ ἔθος τοῖς ἡμιθέοις ἐπιγινώσκειν τοὺς θεοὺς, ὡς Αἴας τὸν Ποσειδῶνα [cf. *Il.* 13.70–2]. (schol. bT *Il.* 3.396 *ex.*)²²

But it is typical of the demi-gods to recognise the gods, as Ajax <recognises> Poseidon.

²⁰ For Poseidon choosing Calchas’ guise on account of his good reputation see also schol. bT *Il.* 2.300c *ex.* (where καὶ Ἀθηνᾶ must be an error, see Erbse *ad loc.*).

²¹ As a further point, schol. D *Il.* 5.785 explains that gods always appear in the guise of a character who is present in the Troad. Consequently, the critic argues, Stentor, in whose guise Hera rallies the Greeks, must be a member of the Greek army, although he is mentioned nowhere else (cf. Chapter 11).

²² Similarly, Helen’s recognition of Aphrodite is adduced as a parallel in the note on Aeneas recognising Apollo behind the disguise of Periphas (schol. T *Il.* 17.334a *ex.*).

The word ‘demi-god’ (ἡμίθεος) indicates the higher status of Homeric characters, who can therefore recognise gods.²³ The note could reflect Aristarchus’ view on the question, who has a general interest in the different way of life of Homeric man (see M. Schmidt 1976). More particularly, he uses a similar argument in connection with the Iris–Polites-scene (*Il.* 2.786–807), which will be treated in more detail below. He justifies the athetesis of lines 2.791–5 among other things with the general claim:

ἔθος τέ ἐστι τοῖς μεταμορφουμένοις θεοῖς κατὰ τὴν ἄφοδον ἀπολιπεῖν τεκμήριον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν. (schol. A *Il.* 2.791 *Ariston.*)²⁴

It is the habit of the gods in disguise to leave on their departure a token for recognition.

And since this is not the case here, Aristarchus implicitly argues, the lines cannot be genuine and Iris, therefore, does not appear in Polites’ guise. In this very general form, the point about the end of divine interventions can hardly be right. And one may perhaps speculate that the departure of Calchas-Poseidon led to rash generalisations about such scenes.²⁵ In any case, other critics hold more moderate views about the recognition of disguised gods. It may, for example, be the privilege of characters with a divine parent such as Achilles, Helen or Aeneas (schol. bT *Il.* 1.199–200 *ex.*).

The Iris–Polites scene (*Il.* 2.786–807) is worth examining in some more detail, because the different arguments complete the picture of the narrative principles which govern divine interventions. The question is, to repeat, whether the lines about Iris in Polites’ guise (*Il.* 2.791–5) are genuine or not.²⁶ Interestingly, the evidence of the medieval tradition (schol. A *Il.* 2.791 *Ariston.*) can here be checked against the information provided by P. Oxy. 1086 (= pap. II Erbse). The result of the comparison is somewhat puzzling, because both sources adduce three supposedly Aristarchean arguments against the authenticity of the disputed lines, but only two of them are

²³ Incidentally, ἡμίθεος occurs only once in Homer (*Il.* 12.23), and the corresponding note (schol. bT *Il.* 12.23 *ex.*) is wondering whether it does not refer to the previous generation of Heracles etc.

²⁴ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 24.460–2 *ex.* (on Hermes disclosing his identity to Priam); conversely, schol. pap. *Il.* 21.290 (p. 107 Erbse) observes that Poseidon does not leave a clear sign on his departure. For Aristarchus’ note on the same passage see n. 33 below.

²⁵ Cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 14.147a *ex.*, which explains Poseidon’s enormous shout as a deliberate indication of his divine status. In a similar vein, schol. DE²HJM²Q *Od.* 1.202 (p. 15.6–7 Ludwig) argues that Athena-Mentes allows her divine status to show through. It is worth mentioning that this comment refers to the middle of the scene, whereas the other notes treat the recognition of gods upon their departure. The point about the departure is implicit in schol. M *Od.* 3.372 (on Athena disclosing her identity when she leaves the scene in Sparta).

²⁶ On the ancient exegesis of this scene see also Bona (1972: 73–5).

identical: (a) The disguise is badly motivated. For if the point of the speech were simply to announce the approach of the Greeks, the human Polites alone would suffice. If, however, the point is to stir the previously passive Trojans into action, Iris must speak in her own name (αὐτοπρόσωπος).²⁷ (b) The language of the speech is inappropriate if spoken by the human character Polites.²⁸ The two other arguments are: (c) As a divine messenger sent by Zeus, Iris always acts as herself, never in disguise.²⁹ (d) On departure gods always leave a token for recognition (see above), which is missing here.

Arguments (a) and (b) consider the possibility that Polites is the speaker, which in both cases is purely theoretical, because the actual question is whether Iris appears in his guise or undisguised. The consideration nevertheless makes it clear that argument (b) expects a god in human disguise to speak in a way that is appropriate to that particular human character, no doubt for reasons of plausibility and unity of character. A further consequence of this presupposition is that the god in human disguise must suppress his superior knowledge and make use of human language.³⁰ The latter point forms the background to discussions about the usage of the adjective αὐδήεσσα ('speaking with (human) voice', of goddesses). Aristotle (fr. 171 R.) wondered why only Calypso, Circe and Ino are described thus, since the other goddesses must have voices too. His solution is one of the rare cases where he decides to alter the text of the relevant passages.³¹ Aristophanes of Byzantium (*ap. schol. HPQ Od. 5.334*, om. Slater) defended the transmitted text and argued that the adjective is used when the relevant divine character appears in human form (ἀνθρωποειδής). This is

²⁷ One wonders how this argument survives a confrontation with the passages (discussed above) in which Poseidon delivers his pep talks in human disguise.

²⁸ Essentially the same argument is used in *schol. b Il. 2.796 ex.* (with Bergler's correction, see Erbse VII: 280). The point that the speech is inappropriate to the human character in whose guise the god appears recurs in *schol. A Il. 14.136a Ariston.* (against Zenodotus' identification of the 'old man' with Phoenix, see above).

²⁹ This interesting point about Homer's narrative technique regarding divine messengers is generally believed to be contradicted by *Il. 3.121–4* (Iris in the guise of Laodice). Ludwig (1914: 714 n. 1), and others argued that Aristarchus cannot be saddled with such a blatant error. Therefore, he could not be the source of argument (c). But the passage is not exactly parallel (it remains open whether or not Iris is sent by Zeus: *Lundon 2001: 832–3; 2002b: 125–6*). The scholia give conflicting answers: *schol. bT Il. 3.121 ex.* (Iris is sent by Zeus) vs. *bT Il. 11.715a ex.* (she acts of her own accord, with explicit reference to the scene in book 3). At the same time Ludwig and others seem to have no difficulties in attributing the hardly less problematic argument (d) to Aristarchus. For other scholia on divine messengers see *schol. bT Il. 20.4c ex.*, *bT Il. 24.334–8 ex.*, *HPQT Od. 5.29*.

³⁰ On the difference between divine and human knowledge see e.g. *schol. A Il. 1.204b Ariston.*, *A Il. 1.212b Ariston.*, *bT Il. 1.212c ex.*; for the different language of the gods see e.g. *schol. T Il. 20.74b ex.* (with the *testimonia* listed by Erbse *ad loc.*).

³¹ Cf. Hintenlang (1961: 89–93), Wehrli on Chamaeleon fr. 21.

reflected in the explanation of schol. T *Od.* 10.136 that Circe is speaking ‘in human language’ (ἀνθρωπωπιστί) when she is called αὐδήεσσα. For, the critic remarkably adds, gods normally do not speak with their voice, but by means of signs, birds, omens and dreams.³²

The argument that gods in human guise must speak ‘in character’ also underlies Aristarchus’ athetesis of *Il.* 21.290. If Poseidon and Athena approach Achilles in human guise (21.285), the sea god cannot say ‘I and Athena’, because Achilles will not recognise him.³³ Similarly, Aristarchus holds against Zenodotus that the human disguise not only affects how gods speak but also how they act.³⁴ This can include menial tasks which, at first sight, might seem below the dignity of a god. Thus, Athena is holding the reins of Diomedes’ chariot,³⁵ and Aphrodite procures a chair for Helen:

εἰ μὲν ὡς γραῦς, οὐκ ἄτοπον· εἰ δὲ ὡς Ἀφροδίτη, καὶ Ἄθηνᾶ λύχνον φαίνει Ὀδυσσεῖ [*Od.* 19.33–4]. (schol. bT *Il.* 3.424a ex.)

If <Aphrodite is carrying the chair> as an old woman, it is not absurd. If as Aphrodite [i.e. without disguise], <one could say that> Athena too lights the way for Odysseus.

This critic actually considers two solutions. In the former case, Aphrodite acts ‘in character’ (thus already Aristarchus: see n. 34). In the latter (Helen has recognised her by now), there are parallels for gods performing ‘menial’ tasks on behalf of humans who know about the divine status of their interlocutor.³⁶ This second argument is likely to be based on the notion which pervades ancient and modern scholarship on the Homeric gods: their strikingly human nature.

³² Elsewhere (*SVF* 2.135, sim. Heracl. *All.* 72.15–17), a distinction is made between ‘internal speech’ (ἐνδιάθετος λόγος) and ‘overt speech’ (προφορικὸς λόγος), with the gods using the former (see Russell and Konstan on Heracl.). The point about Circe being αὐδήεσσα recurs in *SVF* 2.144. Her divine status is also discussed in schol. HQT *Od.* 10.323. Incidentally, Philodemus (*D.* book 3, col. 14.6–7) holds the view that the gods speak Greek.

³³ See schol. A *Il.* 21.290a *Ariston.*; the critic who wrote schol. bT *Il.* 1.199–200 ex. might reply that, as the son of a goddess, Achilles recognises gods.

³⁴ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 3.423a *Ariston.* (on Aphrodite-old woman procuring a chair for Helen, see below; sim. schol. D.T. p. 12.29–33), A *Il.* 4.88a *Ariston.* (sim. b, on Athena-Laodocus looking for Pandarus), T *Il.* 13.34 ex. (Poseidon-Calchas cannot appear on Poseidon’s chariot); for the A-scholias see Bachmann (1902: 46).

³⁵ See schol. bT *Il.* 5.799 ex.; the Homeric passage does not actually say that Athena is acting in human guise. But the critic argues that ‘she imitates the ἦθος of a human, because that is what she is now’.

³⁶ For the notion that gods perform menial tasks without disguise see schol. bT *Il.* 2.163a ex. (Hera urges Athena to go down to the battlefield and stop the flight of the Greeks). U. Friedländer (1895: 60) mistakenly refers the note to the very similar line (2.179), where Athena urges Odysseus to intervene.

GODS LIKE YOU AND ME

Whereas modern scholars tend to favour the concept ‘anthropomorphism’ and thereby underline the humanlike appearance of the gods, the scholia mostly speak of their ἀνθρωποπάθεια, that is, their human feelings. (*Iliad* 4 opens with an assembly of the gods, and the relevant scholion recognises a programmatic function in the sparkling conversation between Zeus and Hera.)

τέως δὲ νῦν ἀνθρωποπαθεῖς εἰσάγει τοὺς θεοὺς προρρυθμίζων ἡμᾶς πληγὰς αὐτῶν ἀκούειν καὶ πάθη. (schol. bT *Il.* 4.2a ex.)³⁷

For a time he [sc. Homer] represents here the gods as having human feelings, thereby getting us in the right mood to read about their blows and sufferings.

Zeus’ patently ironic provocation, Hera’s retort and the subsequent dispute with its gruesome implications set the tone for the rest of the poem. The reader is to expect divine characters who fight and feel emotions just like human beings. Perhaps even more surprising from a human point of view is the fact that gods who fight can be wounded, suffer pain and be in need of medical treatment.³⁸

The specific notion of the gods’ ἀνθρωποπάθεια recurs several times in the extant scholia. It holds true for the gods in general and for the fickle Ares in particular (schol. bT *Il.* 5.563 ex.), but even for ‘personifications’ such as ‘Fear’ (Δεῖμος) and ‘Strife’ (Ἔρις) (schol. bT *Il.* 5.333b ex.). Gods feel humanlike emotions, for example Zeus for his son Sarpedon. As a result, he laments over the latter’s doom more like a man than like a god (schol. bT *Il.* 16.433–8a ex.). Similarly, Athena voicing her frustration with Zeus for neglecting her good services is ‘perfectly human’ (schol. bT *Il.* 8.362 ex.), and Hera’s allegedly inconsistent behaviour is said to be typical of a woman.³⁹

In addition to the domain of emotions and behaviour, the scholia also comment on the gods’ daily life, which resembles that of humans. Hera uses a key to lock her door (schol. T *Il.* 14.168a ex.). She does her hair

³⁷ For ἀνθρωποπαθής cf. schol. bT *Il.* 13.521a ex. (superficially on Ares not knowing about the death of his son, but clearly on Homer’s gods in general). On the topic in general Ps.Long. *subl.* 9.7 with Bühler (1964: 30).

³⁸ Vulnerability of immortals: schol. bT *Il.* 16.152b ex., also T *Od.* 10.323; medical treatment: schol. bT *Il.* 5.401–2b ex.

³⁹ See schol. bT *Il.* 8.199a ex., sim. bT *Il.* 8.206a ex. (on Hera’s boldness), bT *Il.* 14.330 ex. (her calculated coyness), bT *Il.* 15.99b ex. (her deceptiveness), also bT *Il.* 18.429–31 ex. (Thetis does not answer Hephaestus’ question, but speaks about what is grieving her). On scholia with a misogynous slant see Introd. page 14 and [Chapter II](#).

like a mortal woman and dresses without the help of a servant.⁴⁰ On a more psychologising tone, another critic argues that Dione comforting Aphrodite is ‘true to life’ (βιωτικός, see Chapter 8), because parents tend to soothe their children, even if they are not small any more (schol. bT *Il.* 5.370–2 *ex.*). Similarly, Zeus acts like a typical father when he confesses that, despite his anger, he cannot endure seeing his son Ares in pain (schol. bT *Il.* 5.895–6 *ex.*).

Some of the notes collected in this section may be purely descriptive. More often, however, one has the impression that their latent intention is to defend Homer against the criticism that his gods do not behave *comme il faut*.⁴¹ Unlike the propagators of allegorical explanations (see n. 12), however, these critics try to defend Homer without abandoning the idea that gods in Homer are meant to be gods, humanlike as they might appear.

EXCURSUS: ZENODORUS ON DIVINE SCENES IN HOMER

Il. 18.356–68 comprises a short conversation between Zeus and Hera in which Zeus comments with an audible sigh that Hera finally brought about Achilles’ return to the battlefield. The disputed authenticity of the scene has left its traces in the bT-scholia in the form of a long note (schol. bT *Il.* 18.356*b ex.*) which paraphrases Zenodorus’ extensive argumentation. Even in the abbreviated form of the scholion the passage is too long to be quoted here in full. Zenodorus’ arguments against the authenticity can be summarised as follows:

- (a) Conversations among gods can serve two purposes in Homer: internal analepsis of the type that adds new information (e.g. Athena to Zeus on Helen having been deceived by Aphrodite: *Il.* 5.421–5) or external analepsis (e.g. Dione to Aphrodite on other cases when gods suffered harm from humans: *Il.* 5.382–404).⁴² Only the present divine conversation, Zenodorus argues, does not add new information in either of the two forms. [Erbse p. 503.46–58]

⁴⁰ See schol. bT *Il.* 14.176*b ex.*; the simple lifestyle of Homeric man is repeatedly discussed in the scholia (M. Schmidt 1976: 159–73). Apparently it also extends to the gods.

⁴¹ Cf. also the notes on gods who are said to lie: schol. *Ge Il.* 2.12, bT *Il.* 23.206*a ex.*, *E Od.* 3.366.

⁴² Internal analepsis refers to events that fall within the time span of the narrative (i.e. happened after Chryses’ arrival in the case of the *Iliad*), external analepsis to events that happened before the beginning of the narrative (see Chapters 1 and 2). Zenodorus’ note reflects a similar distinction when he differentiates between διδαχή τῶν εἰς τὴν Ἰλιάδα συντελούντων πραγμάτων (‘communication of the events that belong to the *Iliad*’) and ἐπίδειξις ἱστορίας παλαιᾶς (‘making known an old story’).

- (b) No two Iliadic scenes on the divine plane follow upon each other immediately. There is a regular change between scenes on the human and divine levels (see [Chapter 1](#)). [p. 503.58–63]
- (c) The probable point of this difficult argument is the following. Zenodorus seems to recognise a difference between *Il.* 1.522–3/536–7 and the present scene. Whereas in book 1 Homer makes it explicit that Hera sees through Zeus’ concealment, the same does not apply to the present scene. The reader must deduce from Zeus’ speech alone that Hera’s attempt to act furtively (cf. *Il.* 18.168) fails. The narrator himself does not say so, and Zenodorus does not accept this ‘gap’. He probably thought the piece of information too important to be left implicit. [pp. 503.63–504.68]
- (d) It is absurd for Zeus to be angry with Hera for dispatching Iris but not with Athena, who shortly before (18.203–29) supported Achilles and made him scare away the Trojans. Conversely, earlier in the poem (8.407, 421) Zeus is said to pardon Hera and to be angry with Athena. [p. 504.68–73]
- (e) It is absurd that Zeus does not find fault with Hera for changing the natural order by causing the sun to go down prematurely. [p. 504.73–6]
- (f) There is an internal inconsistency if Zeus, who is said in 17.272–3 to oppose Patroclus’ body becoming a prey for the dogs, now gets angry at the rescue of his body. For that is all that Achilles achieves with his return. [p. 504.76–81]
- (g) Zeus’ transition from Mt Ida to Mt Olympus happens tacitly (κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον). This narrative device, though perfectly Homeric under normal circumstances (see [Chapter 6](#)), is not acceptable here in the light of so many other problems. [p. 504.81–5]
- (h) Hera’s apology is implausible. She should have defended herself and not, as in fact she does, blame herself (with particular reference to 18.367). [pp. 504.85–505.89]

Points (d) and (f) adduce the argument of internal inconsistency and (e) and (h) that of insufficient plausibility, both of which recur frequently throughout the scholia. Objections (a), (b), (g) and perhaps (c) are of particular importance in the present context, because they are indicative of Zenodorus examining in detail Homer’s narrative technique in divine scenes. In doing so, he shows awareness of the difference between internal and external analepsis (a), of the principle κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον in general and a god’s tacit transition from one location to the other in particular (g), and he claims a rule about the alternation of scenes on the divine and human planes (b). This systematic examination of Homer’s treatment of

the gods guarantees Zenodorus a significant position in the history of literary criticism, independent of whether one fully subscribes to all his conclusions and the subsequent excision of the disputed lines.

CONCLUSION

Among the numerous questions related to the general topic 'Homeric gods', the narrative function which the gods fulfil in the epics is not the least important in the discussions that are found in the scholia. Ancient scholars seem to concentrate on the various aspects of immediate divine interventions on the human plane and the principles by which they are governed: when do the gods intervene and why (including a refutation of the notion that the human characters are mere puppets of the gods)? Do they act in disguise? If so, how does this affect their behaviour? etc. But the divine scenes themselves receive attention too. Time and again, the strikingly 'human' behaviour of the Homeric gods is commented on in the notes. As in many other chapters, one can observe that ancient scholars are thoroughly familiar with the Homeric epics and attempt to develop general principles of Homer's regular technique on the basis of parallel passages. Individual scenes are then interpreted against the background of Homer's standard technique. It is explained as either agreeing or disagreeing with this general principle, sometimes in combination with judgments on authenticity, athetesis, conjectures, etc. The present chapter differs from others, however, in that the comments collected here display an apologetic tendency more often than elsewhere. This, no doubt, has to do with the subject-matter, arguably the single most important target for Homer's critics.

Homeric similes

It is advisable to begin the chapter on Homeric similes with a note on terminology. The following quotation can safely be said to represent the *communis opinio* among modern scholars:

Ancient rhetoricians appear to have had no technical term referring precisely to the figure now commonly called a ‘simile’. Although they recognized that some comparisons were introduced by words corresponding to ‘like’ and ‘as’, the distinction between these similes and other modes of comparison seems not to have been precisely correlated with any set of rhetorical terms. When similes appear in the literary treatises as illustrations of such common terms as εἰκῶν and *similitudo*, they are often in the company of other illustrative examples which do not correspond to the modern definition of simile. (Snipes 1988: 206–7)

A corresponding note indicates Snipes’ debt to the study of McCall, who had come to the conclusion that:

of the four major terms of comparison – εἰκῶν, παραβολή, *imago*, and *similitudo* – no one of them refers appreciably more to a particular form of comparison, such as simile, than do the other three. (McCall 1969: 258)¹

The assumed interchangeability of the different terms causes difficulties when applied to the scholion which identifies *Il.* 2.87 as the ‘first simile’ (πρώτη παραβολή) of the *Iliad*.² For it seems to ignore ‘short similes’ in book 1 such as Apollo coming to the Greek camp ‘like night’ (*Il.* 1.47) or Thetis emerging from the grey sea ‘like a mist’ (1.359).³ These passages

¹ The point is essentially repeated by Heath (1989: 103 n. 5) and Hillgruber (1999: 199) with reference to Clausen (1913: esp. 86–90).

² See schol. AbT *Il.* 2.87a ex.; similarly, schol. D *Il.* 1.611 expressly states that book 1 is the only one which does not contain a παραβολή.

³ Modern puzzlement over this apparent blunder may also arise from the less than fortunate pair ‘long simile’ and ‘short simile’ (or ‘long comparison’ and ‘short comparison’). It presupposes a common denominator, which, from a Greek point of view, apparently does not exist. It should also be noted that the universality suggested by the phrase ‘the figure now commonly called a “simile”’ is limited. It does not apply, e.g., to German scholarship, where *Gleichnis* stands for the ‘long simile’ only, the ‘short simile’ being called *Vergleich* (Nünlist and de Jong 2000: s.vv.).

apparently do not qualify as παραβολή. Snipes does not fail to draw the inevitable conclusion:

The scholia obviously make a distinction between the short comparison and the longer, more developed comparison . . . only the developed comparison is given a name, *parabole*. (Snipes 1988: 206)

In fact, this argument can be pushed further, and in the end the assumed interchangeability of εικών and παραβολή will prove to need qualification. The extant scholia show that at least some critics used the word παραβολή in a specific sense. A good example is Nicanor discussing the punctuation in *Il.* 2.139 (ἀλλ' ἄγεθ', ὡς ἂν ἐγὼ εἶπω, πειθώμεθα πάντες):

ὑποστικτέον ἐν ὑποκρίσει μετὰ τὸ “εἶπω” διὰ τὸ “ὡς” μόριον· ᾧ λόγῳ καὶ τῶν παραβολῶν αἱ πλεῖσται ἀνήρτηνται μέχρι τῆς ἀνταποδόσεως. (schol. *A Il.* 2.139*b Nic.*)

An *enbupokritos stigmatē* [i.e. a comma that is indicated in delivery by a ‘dramatic’ rise in pitch of the voice] should be put after εἶπω because of the word ὡς. From this word [sc. ὡς] also most of the similes depend until the *antapodosis*.

After discussing the punctuation of the passage, Nicanor makes a general point about the word ὡς: it introduces παραβολαί, more specifically the part which precedes the ἀνταπόδοσις.⁴ Parallel passages demonstrate that ἀνταπόδοσις here designates the part, usually beginning with ὡς (‘so, thus’), by which the Homeric narrator returns from the simile to the narrative.⁵ In other words, the model which underlies Nicanor’s explanation is virtually identical with Hermann Fränkel’s definition of a Homeric simile as consisting of a preceding *Wie-Stück* (‘as’ or ‘like’ part) which is taken up by a *So-Stück* (‘so’ part).⁶

In rhetorical theory, the same ἀνταπόδοσις is identified as the decisive criterion which allows one to differentiate between ‘long simile’ and ‘short simile’:

παραβολή δὲ πράγματος ὁμοίου παράθεσις ἢ γινομένου ἢ οἴου τε ὄντος γενέσθαι [illustrated by an example: *Il.* 10.485–7]. ὁμοίωσις δὲ πράγματος ὁμοίου παράθεσις οἶον “ὄρνιθες ὡς” [*Il.* 3.2]. διαφέρει δὲ τῆς παραβολῆς, ὅτι

⁴ Similarly, Aristarchus speaks of τὸ παραβολικόν and ἀνταπόδοσις (schol. *A Il.* 8.560*a Ariston.*). This and other passages disprove Clausen’s claim ‘daß Aristarch den Ausdruck παραβολή für das poetische Gleichnis nicht kennt’ (1913: 96); cf. schol. *A Il.* 6.506–11*a*, *A Il.* 22.31, also *A Il.* 10.5*a*, *A Il.* 11.548*a* (all attributed to Aristonicus). For Nicanor’s system of punctuation see Blank (1983: esp. 50 on the ἐνυπόκριτος στιγματή, which must be meant: L. Friedländer 1850: 59–60).

⁵ See L. Friedländer (1850: 65). For the parallels from Nicanor see below. This meaning of ἀνταπόδοσις can also be documented for Aristarchus (n. 4), Didymus (schol. *A Il.* 3.10*b*) and Porphyry (e.g. *Quaest. Hom.* I, pp. 20–1 Sodano).

⁶ See Fränkel ([1921] 1977: 4), who does not indicate whether he was aware of his ancient precursors.

διὰ συντόμων ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον λέγεται καὶ χωρὶς ἀνταπόδοσεως φράζονται. ἀνταπόδοσις δὲ φράσις ἐπαγομένη τῇ παραβολῇ καὶ συνάπτουσα τοῖς πραττομένοις αὐτήν [illustrated by an example: *Il.* 10.487]. (Ps.Herodian *fig.* 63–4 Hajdú)⁷

Parabole is the placing of a similar thing which is happening or could have happened. *Homoiosis* is the placing of a similar thing, for example, ‘like birds’. It is different from the *parabole*, because in most cases it [sc. the *homoiosis*] is expressed in a concise way and written without an *antapodosis*. The *antapodosis* is a phrase which follows the *parabole* and connects it with the action [sc. of the surrounding narrative].

‘Like birds’ (*Il.* 3.2) does not have an ἀνταπόδοσις and is therefore a ὁμοίωσις; the passage from book 10 does and is therefore a παραβολή.⁸ From that perspective, it makes perfect sense to say that *Iliad* 1 does not contain a παραβολή, the first being indeed *Il.* 2.87. However, this does not yet disprove the commonly held view that the scholia use the different terms without distinction.

A systematic examination of the word παραβολή (and cognates) in the scholia to the *Iliad* does, however, reveal a consistent pattern. Eighty-one comments make use of the word.⁹ In seventy-seven cases the term παραβολή designates ‘long simile’ in the sense established above. Four attestations refer to other phenomena altogether.¹⁰ No instance can be found where the word means ‘short simile’ or ‘comparison’. This general

⁷ Cf. Quint. 8.3.77, Ps.Plutarch *Hom.* 84 (the translation by Keaney and Lamberton (1996: 147) misses the point), Anonymus III 212.24–8 Spengel, Cocondrius III 242.5–12 Spengel, Choeroboscus III 254.7–12 Spengel. Although Ps.Plutarch’s definition of παραβολή is in perfect agreement with Ps.Herodian’s, he surprisingly does not make use of it in what follows (Hillgruber 1999: 198–9). His examples nevertheless fulfil the criteria of a παραβολή (see also next n.).

⁸ In accordance with common ancient practice (see Introd. page 10), Ps.Herodian only quotes the first line of the simile (*Il.* 10.485). But the definition shows that he has in mind the entire passage, including the ἀνταπόδοσις. A similar observation applies to virtually all illustrating examples given by the other rhetoricians (collected by Hajdú *ad loc.*). Even if they do not explicitly mention the ἀνταπόδοσις in their definition, they seem to take it for granted or at least quote passages which fall into this category, thereby corroborating the point made here. Similarly to Ps.Herodian, Polyb. Sard. (III 106.18–31 Spengel) considers the presence or absence of the ἀνταπόδοσις decisive, but for him both cases represent a form of παραβολή. The only rhetorical support for McCall’s view appears to come from Minucianus (I 342.13–17 Spengel-Hammer), who seems to equate εἰκῶν and παραβολή.

⁹ Scholia which contain several attestations of the word were counted as one example. The passages can easily be gathered from Erbse’s index or from the electronic TLG and need not be listed here.

¹⁰ Two (schol. b *Il.* 4.513b² *ex.*, bT *Il.* 13.358–60a *ex.*) apply παραβολή to metaphor and allegory, one (bT *Il.* 13.339a *ex.*) states the closeness between metaphor and παραβολή and one (A *Il.* 18.600–1 D) applies it to a passage which sets out as a ‘long simile’, but for some reason does not have an ἀνταπόδοσις. The last example, therefore, is not a real exception.

result applies to the nominal forms (παραβολή, παραβολικόν); the usage of the verb παραβάλλειν is somewhat looser.¹¹

Conversely, an examination of the use of εἰκῶν does not reveal a consistent distribution. The word is indeed used indiscriminately for many different modes of figurative language, including ‘long similes’ (e.g. schol. *A Il.* 10.5a *Ariston.*). The picture which emerges from the scholia to the *Iliad* is that παραβολή can be replaced by εἰκῶν, but not *vice versa*. It appears that παραβολή is the marked term which specifically designates ‘long simile’, whereas εἰκῶν is unmarked, comparable to modern ‘imagery’, which can include ‘metaphor’, ‘comparison’, ‘simile’, etc.¹²

The distinction is somewhat less neat in the scholia to the *Odyssey*. Among a total of eleven attestations, eight use παραβολή in the sense ‘long simile’, whereas in three instances the reference is to ‘short similes’ and comparisons.¹³ Conversely, the scholia to Apollonius of Rhodes display the same consistency as those to the *Iliad*. All eleven instances of the word refer to a ‘long simile’.¹⁴ Further support comes from the scholia to Oppian’s *Halieutica*. Of fifty-three attestations, all but five make use of the known meaning.¹⁵

Given that παραβολή appears to describe a typically Homeric device, it is hardly surprising that the term is comparatively rare in the scholia to poets who do not stand in the epic tradition of hexameter verse and therefore provide practically no examples of fully developed similes in the Homeric style. It must be admitted, however, that the small group of relevant notes sometimes uses the term παραβολή ‘inaccurately’.¹⁶ The

¹¹ There are thirty-two instances of the verb in total. Twenty-four describe the ‘long simile’, six (e.g. *T Il.* 18.571–2 *ex.*) the task of a reader to compare one passage with another, three (e.g. *bT Il.* 19.381 *ex.*) the ‘short simile’ or ‘comparison’ (i.e. these are the real exceptions) and one (*b Il.* 8.186–8 *ex.*) Andromache throwing fodder to the horses.

¹² Cf. e.g. the definition of Silk (1974: 5): ‘By imagery I mean primarily metaphor, simile and the various forms of *comparatio*; the tropes and schemes, that is, based on analogy or similarity.’

¹³ Long simile: schol. *EHQ Od.* 4.477 (sim. HPT), *PQ Od.* 4.791, *PT Od.* 5.394, *Q Od.* 5.434, *HQ Od.* 6.235, *T Od.* 8.523, *BV Od.* 13.81, *B Od.* 19.205; short simile: *HQ Od.* 9.292, *HQ Od.* 12.86; comparison in general: *Q Od.* 9.187. The verb παραβάλλειν is not used for either long or short similes.

¹⁴ Cf. schol. *A.R.* 1.5a, 1.269–72b, 1.307, 1.879–83d, 1.879–83e, 1.1003–05a, 1.1201–05d, 1.1265–72c, 2.123–29a, 2.541–48a, 4.1453b.

¹⁵ Four refer to other comparative modes: schol. *Opp. Hal.* 2.563, 2.625, 3.236, 4.586; one (1.709) is very puzzling and may simply be an error.

¹⁶ Metaphor: schol. *A. Th.* 369–371 (παραβολικῶς, sim. 371g), *Ar. Pl.* 269b (conversely, schol. *Ar. Nu.* 559a comes close to ‘simile’). A remarkable instance is schol. *Pi. N.* 1.34b, which reports Aristarchus’ interpretation of the well-known water-smoke metaphor. He considers it a reduced comparison which lacks the word ‘like’ (ταῖς δὲ τοιαύταις παραβολαῖς χρῆται [sc. Pindar] ἀποτόμως, οὐ λέγων τὸ “καθάπερ”), provided that the scholion reproduces Aristarchus’ terminology. An interesting case is schol. *Pi. O.* 2.178b. The passage in Pindar is not a simile, but the scholion paraphrases it as if it were.

collected evidence, nevertheless, justifies the conclusion that the terms παραβολή and εἰκῶν were not used as indiscriminately as many modern scholars would have it.

In the light of this ancient terminological distinction and in order to avoid the pair ‘long simile’ and ‘short simile’, the present study uses the terms ‘simile’, on the one hand, for παραβολή and ‘comparison’, on the other, for passages which lack an ἀνταπόδοσις (or *So-Stück*). As suggested in n. 3, from an ancient point of view the two do not seem to have a common denominator that distinguishes them from other forms of figurative language. This could also mean that ancient scholars would not have subscribed to the widespread modern view that the ‘long simile’ originated as an extension of the ‘short simile’ (e.g. Edwards 1991: 26).

INTERPRETATIONS OF HOMERIC SIMILES¹⁷

Nicanor presupposes and Ps.Herodian expressly describes a standard sequence of the simile in which the *Wie-Stück* precedes the *So-Stück* (both comments are quoted above). In fact, the vast majority of Homeric similes observe this rule and are therefore hardly in need of a corresponding explanation. Nicanor is found to comment almost exclusively on cases which deviate from the standard form, for example when the *So-Stück* is said to precede the *Wie-Stück*.¹⁸

The idea of inverted order recurs in the dispute over the exact interpretation and text of *Il.* 14.400. Zenodotus, Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus read ὅσση (‘as much as’, for τόσση ‘so much’), which seems to result in the inverted order of the two components, because demonstrative τόσσος (*Il.* 394, 396, 398, typical of the *So-Stück*) is taken up by relative ὅσση (typical of the *Wie-Stück*).¹⁹ Nicanor takes exception to this and, defending the vulgate’s τόσση, has a new sentence begin in line 400 (schol. *A Il.* 14.400a *Nic.*), that is, for him the passage is not part of a simile at all. (Modern editors generally follow Zenodotus etc.)

¹⁷ Erbse (Index V, s.v. *similia, similitudines*, pp. 191–2) gives a collection of some 170 passages. The topic is discussed by Bachmann (1904: 12–15), Clausen (1913), von Franz (1943: 32–4), N. J. Richardson (1980: 279), Snipes (1988), Heath (1989: 104–8).

¹⁸ Cf. schol. *A Il.* 2.207–10 *Nic.*, *A Il.* 3.2d *Nic.* (different explanation in bT *Il.* 3.8a ex.), *A Il.* 23.711–3 *Nic.*

¹⁹ Nicanor says ἴν’ ἧ ὁ λόγος ἀνταποδοτικός ἀνεστραμμένος (‘with the result [on ‘consecutive’] ἴνα see Schneider 1910 a: 158) that the *antapodosis* is inverted’, schol. *A Il.* 14.400a *Nic.*). One could actually argue that the two parts occupy their usual position, but the correlative pronouns are reversed, thereby giving the impression that the comparative part (sea, fire, wind) were the *So-Stück* and *vice versa*.

Elsewhere Nicanor simply gives two possible explanations without deciding between them: either the simile of the weaving woman in 23.760–3 is both preceded and followed by a *So-Stück* or, with a full stop in line 760, the *So-Stück* takes its usual position at the end.²⁰ Essentially the same twofold explanation is given in connection with the famous poppy simile in *Iliad* 8 (schol. A *Il.* 8.306–8a *Nic.*). Here, however, Nicanor adds the telling remark that Homer is wont to have a double *So-Stück* elsewhere (καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις δὲ εἴωθεν). Regrettably, he does not give examples.

A further source of scholarly comment is the question whether there must be a close correspondence between the correlative pronouns that introduce the respective parts. An example is *Il.* 2.469–73, which reads ἦ ὕτε . . . τόσσοι . . . ('just as . . . in such numbers . . .'), that is, quality is taken up by quantity. Nicanor argues that this is perfectly in order and supports this view with a parallel passage, *Il.* 8.555–60 (ὡς δ' ὄτ' . . . τόσσα).²¹ This other passage had in fact led to a conjecture (ὡς τά for τόσσα) which smoothens the apparent incongruity of the conjunctions, but had been refuted by Aristarchus (schol. A *Il.* 8.560a *Ariston.*).

In one case, at least, a note on punctuation gives Nicanor an opportunity to interpret the simile in question. (In *Iliad* 11, Hector's attack on the Greek army is compared in a simile to the west wind Zephyrus, which stirs the clouds and the sea.)

ἐπὶ τὸ “Νότιο” (βραχὺ) διασταλτέον· τὸ γὰρ ἐξῆς, “νέφεα ἀργεστᾶο Νότιο Ζέφυρος στυφελίξη βαθείη λαίλαπι,” ὡς τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ Νότου συναχθέντα νέφη τοῦ Ζεφύρου διασκιδνάντος. καὶ χαριέντως πᾶν ἔχει ἡ ὁμοίωσις· καὶ γὰρ τοὺς Ἑλλήνας ὑπ' Ἀγαμέμνονος ἐπιστρεφεστέρους γενομένους διέλυσεν ὁ Ἔκτωρ. (schol. A *Il.* 11.305–6a *Nic.*)

One must put a comma after 'Notus' (south wind); for the natural word order is 'the clouds [obj.] of the violent Notus Zephyrus [subj.] drives with a deep tempest', since the clouds gathered by Notus are dispersed by Zephyrus. And altogether the simile is lovely. For Hector dispersed the Greeks, who had become more concentrated due to Agamemnon [sc. on account of his *aristeia*].

²⁰ For the former type of explanation cf. schol. A *Il.* 2.781–4 *ex. (?)*, which explains that the *So-Stück* both precedes and follows. Nicanor's other notes on the position of similes simply refer to their 'intermediate' position (διὰ μέσου) with respect to the surrounding context (schol. AbT *Il.* 3.59–64a/b *Nic.*, where the two branches of transmission display a remarkable difference between ὁμοίωσις in A and παραβολή in bT; see also A *Il.* 3.64a *Nic.*). The phrase διὰ μέσου can describe any intermediate position, not just 'parenthesis' in the narrower sense (see Baar 1952).

²¹ See schol. A *Il.* 2.469–72 *Nic.*; there is a minor difficulty in the text of the scholion, in that ἦ ὕτε is described as part of the ἀνταπόδοσις. Given Nicanor's regular usage, one would expect τόσσοι to be explained thus. The same confusion recurs, with respect to correlative pronouns, in Apollonius Dyscolus (*syntr.* 75.6 vs. 77.9 Uhlir; see his note on the former passage).

In other words, Nicanor ‘identifies’ Zephyrus with Hector, Notus with Agamemnon and the clouds with the Greek soldiers (cf. schol. bT *Il.* 11.305–8 *ex.*). By doing so, he implicitly subscribes to the notion that a simile can have more than one *Vergleichspunkt* (point of comparison), which recurs frequently in the scholia (Clausing 1913: 62–3, Heath 1989: 104–6). Three basic forms of comment can be found, which in practice can occur in combination:

- (A) The scholion states that the whole simile is related to the *comparandum* as a whole, thereby explicitly denying the point (made elsewhere, see below) that parts of the simile are not integral.²² An example comes from another note on the poppy simile:

ὅλον ὅλω παραβέβληται. (schol. AbT *Il.* 8.306–8*b ex.*)²³

The whole has been compared [sc. in the form of a simile] to the whole.

- (B) The scholion states that all the single elements of the simile are related to all the single elements of the *comparandum*, again denying expressly that some parts are not integral. For instance, a comment on an extended lion simile:

πάντα παρέβλαλε πᾶσι. (schol. bT *Il.* 17.61–9 *ex.*)²⁴

He [sc. Homer] compared everything to everything.

- (C) The scholion simply identifies and/or explains several ‘vehicles’ (in I. A. Richards’ sense) or multiple components of a vehicle; or the scholion identifies, just like Nicanor above, several *comparanda*. In all these cases the critic implicitly refutes the point about a single *Vergleichspunkt*. This third form is the most frequent.²⁵

Conversely, other scholia explicitly identify a single *Vergleichspunkt* or argue that parts of the simile are not integral. For the former see, for example, schol. bT *Il.* 17.666 *ex.* (πρὸς τοῦτο μόνον).²⁶ The latter notion can be documented from a scholion that is likely to represent Aristarchus’

²² Heath (1989) stresses that, from an ancient point of view, ‘not integral’ is not *a priori* identical with ‘non-essential’ or even ‘superfluous’.

²³ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 17.747–51 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 18.161–2 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 18.318–22 *ex.*, T *Il.* 20.495–7 *ex.*, also schol. A.R. 1.1201–05d, 1.1265–72c.

²⁴ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 16.406–9 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 16.633–4 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 20.490–2 *ex.*, P *Od.* 6.102, also schol. A.R. 1.1003–05a.

²⁵ Several vehicles: e.g. schol. AbT *Il.* 3.24a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 4.130–1 *ex.*; multiple constituents of a vehicle: e.g. schol. b *Il.* 2.780 *ex.* (cf. bT *Il.* 3.222a *ex.* on a comparison); several *comparanda*: e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 4.275–8 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 14.414–5 *ex.*

²⁶ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 12.41–8a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 17.523 *ex.* Heath (1989: 105) also puts schol. bT *Il.* 11.475*b ex.* into this category, but μερικῆ is better explained as ‘minutely subdivided’ (instead of ‘partial’), as the list of single *Vergleichspunkte* shows. The scholion belongs to category (C) above.

view. (In *Iliad* 10, Agamemnon's frequent groans are compared to Zeus causing thunder, rainstorm, hail and snow, which is further elaborated by two more lines.)

ὅτι παραβάλλει τὸν στεναγμὸν [cf. *Il.* 10.9–10]· “ὥς δ' ὅταν —”, οὕτως καὶ ἡ τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος ψυχὴ ἐστέναζεν. καθ' ἕκαστα δὲ οὐκ ἐπέξείργασται, διότι οὐκ ἔστι πρὸς ἅπαντα ἡ εἰκὼν. (schol. A *Il.* 10.5a *Ariston.*)²⁷

<The diple,> because he [sc. Homer] makes the groaning object of a simile. 'As when . . .', thus Agamemnon's soul groaned. But it is not elaborated in every detail, because the image [i.e. the simile] does not correspond in every respect.

Aristarchus appears to have held the view that a part of the simile – the extant scholion does not specify which – is not integral to it and does not contribute to an illustration of Agamemnon's groaning. It remains, however, doubtful whether one is entitled to extrapolate from this note that he generally subscribed to the principle of a single *Vergleichspunkt*.²⁸ More generally, Heath (1989: 105) argues that there is in antiquity no 'conflict between rival modes of interpretation', because ancient scholars generally allow for both and decide each case on its merits. If they identify non-integral parts of similes, they explain them as being due to or contributing to, for example, 'poetic ornament', 'ambition' or 'piety'.²⁹ Occasionally, they simply state that a part of the simile is not integral and give no further explanation (schol. T *Il.* 11.481b *ex.*, Q *Od.* 5.434). It is, however, worth noting that a comment on Apollonius of Rhodes (schol. A.R. 1.879–83d) criticises the partial correspondence of a simile as 'not sound' (οὐχ ὑγιής).

Turning to the narrative functions of similes and to ancient interpretative principles in general, Porphyry's note on the lion simile in *Il.* 11.548–57 is a good starting-point, because it combines several points which recur elsewhere:

διὰ τί ὅτε μὲν λέοντι παραβάλλει τὸν Αἴαντα, ὅτε δὲ ἐν ἄλλῳ [*Il.* 11.558] ὄνω; ὅτι αἱ μὲν παραβολαὶ τριῶν ἕνεκα γίνονται, αὐξήσεως ἑναργείας³⁰ σαφηνείας·

²⁷ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 15.629 *ex.*

²⁸ Thus Clausen (1913: 22–5 and *passim*), criticised by Lührs (1992: 222). In this connection, it is worth noting that according to Eustathius single *Vergleichspunkte* in Homer are the rule, multiple the exception: 177.17 (= 1.271.35–272.1), 177.45 (= 1.272.33–4), 1139.18 (= 4.162.16–17).

²⁹ Poetic ornament (ποιητικὸς κόσμος): schol. bT *Il.* 12.41–8a *ex.* (cf. Erbse's translation 'ornatus talia postulat'), cf. bT *Il.* 21.257–62a *ex.*, also bT *Il.* 4.482 *ex.* (where, however, the context makes it clear that the non-integral part does not belong to the *comparison*, i.e. the passage is not considered a simile); ambition (φιλοτιμία): schol. bT *Il.* 7.208b *ex.*; piety (εὐσέβεια): schol. bT *Il.* 16.393b *ex.* A scholion on Apollonius of Rhodes speaks of 'beauty and description' (κάλλος καὶ ἔκφρασις): schol. A.R. 1.879–83e).

³⁰ The text is uncertain. ἑναργείας is the reading of L, while B has ἐνεργείας (the confusion is common, see Chapter 9). Schrader prints ἐνεργείας on the basis of Eustathius 861.48 (= 3.249.13); van der Valk

εἰς τὸ πρόσφορον δὲ ἔν ἑκάτερον ἐτήρησεν ὁ ποιητής, εἰπὼν Αἴαντα καὶ φονεύοντα λέοντος δίκην καὶ τῶν πολεμίων ἀναχωροῦντα ὡς ὄνον. ταῖς γὰρ φύσεσι τῶν ζώων καὶ τὸ ὀκνηρὸν πρὸς φυγὴν καὶ τὸ ταχὺ πρὸς μάχην τοῦ ἥρωος δεδήλωκεν. (Porph. on *Il.* II.548ff., I 166.12–17 Schrader, cf. schol. D *Il.* II.548)

Why does he [sc. Homer] compare Ajax here to a lion, in another passage to a donkey? Because similes have three functions: amplification, graphic quality, clarity. In each case the poet retained what is useful [or suitable], saying that Ajax kills like a lion and withdraws from the enemy like a donkey. By means of the animals' nature he has shown the hero's reluctance to flee and his readiness to fight.

The note is indicative of the following methodological principles: (i) generalises on the function of similes, (ii) compares two similes which stand for the same character, (iii) compares two similes that are in textual juxtaposition, (iv) evaluates whether the similes are apt and (v) identifies the *Vergleichspunkt* of each simile.

On (i) generalisations: Porphyry recognises three functions of a simile: amplification (αὐξήσις), graphic quality (ἐνάργεια) and clarity (σαφήνεια). Other notes of a generalising nature add emphasis (ἐμφαντικός), correspondence (σύμφωνος), relaxation of the reader (ἀνάπαυσις), variation (ποικιλία) and instruction (μέθοδος καὶ ἔνδειξις πολυμαθείας).³¹ Amplification, graphic quality, clarity, emphasis and variation are all well-known principles of rhetorical theory and recur with frequency in comments on various literary devices, including similes.³² Correspondence probably emphasises the close thematic similarity between *Wie-Stück* and *So-Stück* (or context in general). Relaxation (sc. of the reader) is seen as a crucial function of 'digression', which, in its loose definition, also comprises similes (see [Chapter 1](#)). Instruction is a commonplace of ancient criticism, especially in the numerous notes which discuss the didactic function of poetry (see [Intro.](#) page 13). On the single points in detail:

In the case of amplification (αὐξήσις), it is worth making a distinction. On the one hand, the simile as a whole can amplify, for example, the scene which is illustrated by it. Thus, a simile which combines three hyperbolic

(*ad loc.*) wrongly claims that the D-scholia have ἐναργείας (probably based on Lascaris' edition), see van Thiel's edition. The evidence of other scholia on the ἐνάργεια of similes (see below), to my mind, tips the balance in favour of this reading.

³¹ Emphasis and correspondence (together with graphic quality): schol. bT *Il.* 15.381–4 *ex.*; relaxation: schol. bT *Il.* 15.362–4 *ex.*; variation and extensive learning (together with relaxation and clarity): Eust. 1065.29 (= 3.866.23). See also *Rhet.Her.* 4.59.

³² On αὐξήσις see e.g. N. J. Richardson (1980: 276), on σαφήνεια e.g. Meijering (1987: 224–5), on ἐνάργεια, ποικιλία and the semantically difficult ἐμφασίς see [Chapter 9](#).

vehicles (the sound of a rough sea, blazing fire and stormy wind) is said to ‘leave out nothing which contributes to amplification’ (schol. bT *Il.* 14.394–9 *ex.*).³³ On the other hand, the simile itself can be amplified, for instance by a poet who piles element upon element (schol. bT *Il.* 12.278–86*b ex.*, on an extended snow simile) or specifies the single constituents by means of elaboration.³⁴

The relative similarity of emphasis to amplification justifies a brief departure from Porphyry’s list of general effects. In the present context, only the attestations are taken into account in which ἔμφρασις appears to be more or less equivalent with ‘emphasis’ in its current sense. As is well known, the semantic range of ἔμφρασις is much broader and includes other meanings such as the reference to an underlying or hidden meaning (‘insinuation, implication, hint, suggestion’, see [Chapter 9](#)). ‘Emphasis’ in the current sense can be applied either to the simile as a whole (schol. bT *Il.* 18.318–22 *ex.*, Achilles misses Patroclus like a lion his cubs) or to single elements such as an epithet which ‘emphasises’ the corresponding vehicle (schol. bT *Il.* 13.795*a ex.*, on a wind simile; cf. bT *Il.* 11.297*d ex.*).

The graphic quality (ἐνάργεια) of similes is frequently commented on in the scholia.³⁵ It can be applied to the simile as a whole. Examples include:³⁶ Achilles comparing Patroclus to a little girl who clings to her mother’s skirt (schol. bT *Il.* 16.7–10 *ex.*), the men who stretch an ox-hide as illustration of the fight for Patroclus’ body (schol. bT 17.389–93 *ex.*, with Bekker’s conjecture), Odysseus, surrounded by Trojans, compared to a boar who sharpens his tusk (schol. bT *Il.* 11.414–8 *ex.*), the fish simile for poor Euryalus in the unequal boxing match with Epeius (schol. bT *Il.* 23.692–4 *ex.*), the dyeing simile when Menelaus is shot in the thigh by Pandarus.³⁷ In addition, scholars also recognise ἐνάργεια in minute details of the simile (schol. T *Il.* 12.278–86*b ex.*, an extended snow simile includes the particular effect that snow on the shore has on the surf). Perhaps the most striking claim about ἐνάργεια is that acoustic phenomena are more graphic than visual ones (schol. bT *Il.* 17.263–5 *ex.*, on the loud sound of a river that flows into the sea). The same simile enjoys considerable prestige

³³ Similarly, schol. bT *Il.* 23.222–3 *ex.* (on the simile of the father who buries his son); cf. also Aristarchus’ rejection of Zenodotus’ athetesis of *Il.* 9.15–16 (schol. A *Il.* 9.14*b Ariston.*), which, however, turned the simile into a comparison, because line 16 constitutes the *So-Stück*.

³⁴ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 4.452–5 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 11.305–8 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 17.520–2 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 17.676–7 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 17.737–9 *ex.*; on elaboration see [Chapter 9](#).

³⁵ Cf. also Ps.Demetr. *eloc.* 209. On ἐνάργεια in general see [Chapter 9](#).

³⁶ It can be no coincidence that most of these examples belong to the most memorable Homeric similes to this day.

³⁷ See schol. bT *Il.* 4.141*c ex.*, the word ἐνάργεια itself does not occur in the scholion, but the phrase ὄψιν ἡμῖν γραφικὴν παρέστησεν (‘he presented us a graphic view’) clearly has a similar purpose.

in that it is said to have inspired Plato to write poetry and to have made Solon burn his own drafts (?) in admiration of the superb composition.³⁸

The term ‘clarity’ (σφαρήνεια) as such does not seem to occur in the Homeric scholia on similes, but see schol. A.R. 1.879–83e (on a bee simile).³⁹

Close thematic correspondence (cf. σύμφωνος above) between the simile and the surrounding narrative is an important criterion in ancient scholarship. For instance, schol. bT *Il.* 23.517–21a *ex.* praises the natural kinship of simile and context (προσφυστάτη, on a chariot simile in the chariot race); similarly, bT *Il.* 8.555b *ex.* on a stars-and-moon simile for a scene which is taking place at night.⁴⁰ Next, schol. bT *Il.* 21.22–4 *ex.* makes the observation that the setting determines the vehicle: while fighting on the riverbank, Achilles is compared to fire and the Trojans to grasshoppers (*Il.* 21.12–16); once in the river, they are compared to a dolphin and fish respectively.⁴¹ In addition, many of the notes which praise the simile’s aptness (see below on (iv)) no doubt have in mind the thematic correspondence between simile and narrative. Conversely, an apparent lack of correspondence encouraged scholars to alter the text in *Il.* 9.16, ὥς ὁ γε δάκρυ χέων instead of ὥς ὁ βαρὺ στενόχων (‘thus weeping’ instead of ‘thus groaning deeply’), on the grounds that the groaning did not correspond with the tears in line 14 (rejected by Aristarchus: schol. A *Il.* 9.16a *Ariston.*). Aristarchus himself objected elsewhere to the lack of correspondence between smoke (vehicle) and fire and altered the text.⁴²

On (ii) comparison of similes for the same character: Porphyry’s note deals with the question as to why Ajax can be compared to two rather different animals. He explains that the two similes have a different *Vergleichspunkt* (see on (v) below), which in each case is illustrated by a characteristic of that particular animal. Essentially the same explanation had already been given by Aristarchus in his refutation of Zenodotus’ athetesis of the lion simile (schol. A *Il.* 11.548a *Ariston.*).⁴³ A note on the

³⁸ Plato: schol. bT *Il.* 17.263–5 *ex.*, other ancient sources give a different explanation (see the *testimonia* collected by Erbse *ad loc.*); Solon: schol. AbT *Il.* 17.265 *ex.* (= *test.* 717 Martina).

³⁹ Cf. also schol. Opp. *Hal.* 2.597 (πρὸς δῆλῳσιν ἐντελεστέρον).

⁴⁰ Cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 4.76 *ex.* (on ‘warlike’ Athena compared to the ‘warlike’ comet).

⁴¹ Similarly, schol. T *Il.* 10.5b *ex.* suggests that the ‘humble’ (ταπεινός) sausage simile (*Od.* 20.25–8) is adapted to Odysseus’ disguise as a beggar; and according to schol. bT *Il.* 4.484 *ex.*, the Trojan Simoieus is compared to an aquatic plant because he was born next to a river.

⁴² See schol. A *Il.* 18.207a *Did.*, sim. b; for a different type of insufficient correspondence see Duris’ criticism that the irrigation simile is too weak to express the noise and the danger of the situation (schol. Ge *Il.* 21.257b *ex.*).

⁴³ The reasons for Zenodotus’ athetesis are not entirely clear. Aristicus speculates (ἴσως) that he did not like the juxtaposition of two similes with different vehicles. Nickau (1977: 112–18) replies that there is no other evidence for Zenodotus objecting to double or multiple similes. Instead, he repeats the suggestion of Düntzer (1848: 186) that Zenodotus took exception to the verbatim repetition

similes for the opponents Hector and Patroclus recognises a correspondence between vehicle and state of affairs (schol. bT *Il.* 16.823 *ex.*): as long as the fight is evenly balanced they are compared to the same animal (lion), but once Hector gets the upper hand they are compared to unequal animals (lion and boar).⁴⁴ A comparison of similes for the same character can also be found in schol. AbT *Il.* 17.657–64 *ex.*, which lists the three animals (cow, lion, eagle) to which Menelaus is compared in the course of book 17 and identifies the *Vergleichspunkt* of each. The same type of note recurs in schol. bT *Il.* 10.360 *ex.*, which comments on two similes (dogs, lions) for the night spies Odysseus and Diomedes, in schol. bT *Il.* 12.132–4b *ex.* on the two similes (oak trees, boars) for the two Lapiths Polypoetes and Leonteus, in schol. bT *Il.* 15.586b *ex.* on the two similes (dog, lion) for Antilochus, and in schol. bT *Il.* 16.487–9 *ex.* on the two similes (trees, bull) for Sarpedon.⁴⁵

On (iii) comparison of similes in textual juxtaposition: it seems clear that in all six examples just mentioned the textual proximity of the different similes triggers the question as to why they can represent the same character. Other notes, however, comment on similes in juxtaposition regardless of whether the characters are the same. A possible function of such notes is praise for cumulated similes; for example, the cluster of five similes (and two comparisons) for the Greek army which precedes the Catalogue (schol. AbT *Il.* 2.455–6 *ex.*); similarly, schol. bT *Il.* 15.624–5 *ex.* on the cluster of three similes in book 15. Textual juxtaposition can also invite comparison of two similes (schol. AbT *Il.* 3.33 *ex.*, on the lion and snake similes for Menelaus and Paris respectively), especially if their vehicle is similar (schol. AbT *Il.* 12.278–86a *ex.*, see below on (vi)).⁴⁶

On (iv) aptness of the simile: the scholia are full of praise for the aptness of Homer's similes. They single out qualities such as resemblance (ἐμφορής and cognates) and suitability (οἰκεῖος);⁴⁷ or they simply express their general admiration for the simile: εὖ ('well', also in compounds), καλῶς ('nicely'),

of the lion simile in *Il.* 17.657–67. Even if this is the correct explanation, by Aristarchus' time the question of why the same character can be compared to two different animals seems to have become dominant.

⁴⁴ For the idea cf. schol. bT *Il.* 16.428a *ex.*

⁴⁵ Cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 2.480 *ex.* (on the question why a bull simile follows on a comparison of Agamemnon with gods). Similarly, schol. bT *Il.* 15.237–8 *ex.* compares the simile and the comparison which illustrate the swift movement of the gods Iris (hail or snow) and Apollo (hawk), who both act as messengers.

⁴⁶ Similarly, a lion simile is said to be the elaboration of an immediately preceding lion comparison (schol. bT *Il.* 12.299–306 *ex.*).

⁴⁷ ἐμφορής: schol. bT *Il.* 11.63–4 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 11.113–9a *ex.*, AbT *Il.* 12.451b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 13.298–300 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 16.757–8 *ex.*; οἰκεῖος: schol. A *Il.* 8.557a *Ariston.* (used as an argument why a part of the simile can stand elsewhere but must be omitted here), A *Il.* 15.265a *Ariston.* (ditto), bT *Il.* 5.487b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 10.485a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 17.4b *ex.*; cf. schol. A.R. 1.307.

πιθανῶς ('convincingly'), δυνατῶς ('ably'), ἄκρως ('competently'). One note praises Homer as the 'best judge of resemblances' (ἄριστος κριτῆς ὁμοιοτήτων, schol. bT *Il.* 3.13*b ex.*).

As to the criteria of suitability, one comment specifies that the simile should be suitable both to the general ἦθος ('character') and the present condition (ἡ παροῦσα τύχη) of the hero in question (schol. bT *Il.* 17.4*b ex.*).

On (v) identification of *Vergleichspunkt(e)*: this is arguably the type of comment which is found most often in the scholia. Either the critic (like Porphyry above) simply identifies one or several *Vergleichspunkte*, often in the form πρὸς with acc. ('<the simile refers> to X'), for example schol. bT *Il.* 13.242–4 *ex.*: 'the (lightning) simile refers to the splendour of the weapons and the speed of the carrier'.⁴⁸ Or the critic expressly discusses several possibilities, for instance schol. bT *Il.* 4.422 *ex.* argues that the *Vergleichspunkt* of the sea simile is not the sound but the movement of the army.⁴⁹ These identifications are sometimes accompanied by more or less elaborate explanations, for example regarding the exact nature of the vehicle (see below on (vii)).

Other comments on Homeric similes also discuss questions which cannot be documented from Porphyry's note above. The following topics can be added to the list of interpretative principles: (vi) comparison of similes that have identical or similar vehicles, (vii) factual explanations, (viii) realism, (ix) parallel passages, (x) length of simile.

On (vi) comparison of similes that have identical or similar vehicles: this is the counterpart to (ii) above (comparison of similes for the same character), with the common denominator now siding with the vehicles. The extant corpus of scholia provides comparisons of two similes in close proximity: one is on two wind similes (schol. bT *Il.* 5.523 *ex.*), another on an apparent contradiction between the two snow similes, which is explained as indicative of a different *Vergleichspunkt* (schol. bT *Il.* 12.278–86*b ex.*, sim. *a*).⁵⁰ Two river similes, one for Diomedes, one for Ajax, are contrastingly compared in schol. bT *Il.* 11.492–5 *ex.* Another note (schol. bT *Il.* 17.53–6 *ex.*) gives a list of tree similes. Two scholia compare several lion similes. One (schol. bT *Il.* 20.164 *ex.*) discusses which of the animal's characteristics

⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 4.130–1 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 11.558–62 *ex.*, T *Il.* 12.151 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 16.487–9 *ex.*

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 5.778 *ex.*, AbT *Il.* 8.338–40 *ex.*

⁵⁰ Similarly, schol. bT *Il.* 17.737–9 *ex.* compares the use of the vehicle 'fire' in the simile under discussion and as a metaphor in other passages; also schol. A *Il.* 15.80 *Ariston.* on the 'swift thought' in simile and comparison, which together have caused a proverbial expression. A note on a sun simile (schol. bT *Il.* 6.514*a ex.*) mentions another star simile, another note on a moon comparison (schol. bT *Il.* 19.381 *ex.*) adduces a sun comparison.

is singled out in each case.⁵¹ The other (schol. bT *Il.* 4.253*b ex.*) gives a list of the characters who are compared to a lion. A note on the simile which compares Agamemnon to a bull in the herd (schol. bT *Il.* 2.480 *ex.*) argues that Homer wanted to repeat essentially the same vehicle in the case of Odysseus (*Il.* 3.193–8), but indicated his lower status by replacing the bull with a ram.

The last two examples expressly refer to a hierarchy of vehicles which is presupposed elsewhere. For example, schol. AbT *Il.* 16.352*a ex.* argues that lion similes illustrate the attack of a single fighter, wolf similes that of larger units. Idomeneus is not compared to a lion, but a boar, which is second rate (δευτερεύειν), because he is old and his limbs not nimble any more (schol. T *Il.* 13.471*b ex.*). Other notes clearly consider animals such as dog, deer, sheep or small birds inferior.⁵²

As a further variant to the comparisons documented in (ii) and (vi), some notes compare similes with a similar *Vergleichspunkt*. For instance, an oak and a gravestone simile (*Il.* 12.132–4, 17.434–5) are both said to refer to the characters' steadfastness (schol. bT *Il.* 17.434–5 *ex.*). And a note on the simile of the carpenter's line (schol. bT *Il.* 15.410–2 *ex.*) adduces parallels for tool similes which express equality.

On (vii) factual explanations: scholia in general are wont to give factual explanations (see Introd. page 16) and the notes on similes are no exception. Usually the purpose is to support a claim made about the aptness (see on (iv) above) or the identified *Vergleichspunkt* (see on (v) above). An example of the former is schol. bT *Il.* 7.63*a ex.* (on the wind-sea simile which illustrates the sitting-down of the two armies).⁵³ The latter is found, for instance, in schol. AbT *Il.* 11.596*a ex.*, which explains the *Vergleichspunkt* of the fire simile.⁵⁴ Occasionally, these factual explanations become more independent in that they seem to be given for their own sake.⁵⁵ This must be read against the backdrop of Homer's function as 'encyclopedia', which can instruct the reader on virtually every topic.⁵⁶ Conversely, if the

⁵¹ A similar comparison forms the implicit basis of a note which argues that the lion simile in question is unparalleled (schol. bT *Il.* 15.630–6 *ex.*).

⁵² Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 17.4*b ex.* (dog), bT *Il.* 4.433 *ex.* (sheep), AbT *Il.* 11.475*a ex.* (deer), bT *Il.* 17.755–7 *ex.* (small birds, cf. bT *Il.* 15.690–5 *ex.*), also bT *Il.* 8.338–40 *ex.*; on the hierarchy of vehicles see also schol. bT *Il.* 13.298–300 *ex.*

⁵³ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 11.239*d ex.* (lion simile).

⁵⁴ Cf. schol. AbT *Il.* 11.475*a ex.* (deer simile).

⁵⁵ E.g. schol. bT *Il.* 5.554 *ex.* (on lion cubs), T *Il.* 13.589 *ex.* (on beans and Pythagorean diet). On giving explanations for their own sake see also Introd. page 16.

⁵⁶ See Introd. page 16. An educational function is explicitly attributed to a simile which considers Zeus' autumn storms a divine punishment for crooked judgments (schol. bT *Il.* 16.387*a ex.*, cf. bT *Il.* 16.385 *ex.*).

simile appears to contradict established facts, scholars can feel compelled to alter the text.⁵⁷

On (viii) realism: readers have noticed that the Homeric similes reflect a world which is more realistic, truer to life and in a way ‘more humble’ than the heroic world represented by Achilles or Hector. Most scholars were (and still are) inclined to believe that the similes reflect Homer’s own world and that of his readers. Aristarchus formulated the general rule:

ὁ γὰρ Ὀμηρος ἀπὸ τῶν γινωσκομένων πᾶσι ποιεῖται τὰς ὁμοιώσεις. (schol. *A Il.* 16.364a *Ariston.*)⁵⁸

Homer takes his *homoioseis* [here, probably similes and comparisons together] from the things which are known to all.

The material for Homer’s vehicles is taken from his daily life and that of his readers. This rule provides the key to apparent problems of interpretation, for example anachronisms such as boiled meat or the trumpet.⁵⁹ At the same time, the rule accounts for the mention of phenomena which are too ‘humble’ (ταπεινός) or ‘cheap, banal’ (εὐτελής) for the heroic world. Examples include:⁶⁰ Patroclus compared to a small girl (schol. *bT Il.* 16.7–10 *ex.*), men stretching an ox-hide (schol. *bT Il.* 17.389–93 *ex.*), beans (schol. *bT Il.* 13.589 *ex.*), a fly (schol. *bT Il.* 17.570b *ex.*, *sim. a.*), or grasshoppers (schol. *bT Il.* 21.12–4 *ex.*).⁶¹ On the positive side, the reader’s close familiarity with the phenomena in question obviously makes the similes all the more illustrative and persuasive (cf. schol. *bT Il.* 15.362–4 *ex.*, on Apollo pulling down the Greek wall like a boy who flattens his sandcastle).

On (ix) parallels: commentaries of all times tend to document the point in question with parallel passages (see *Introd.* page 11), and this also holds true for the notes on Homeric similes. Perhaps the most impressive example is schol. *T Il.* 14.394–9 *ex.*, which lists one parallel for each of the three vehicles (sea, fire, wind).⁶²

⁵⁷ Cf. schol. *bT Il.* 13.198a *Did.*

⁵⁸ Cf. schol. *bT Il.* 5.770–2 *ex.*, *AbT Il.* 11.86–9 *ex.*; Clausen (1913: 93) compares Arist. *Top.* 157a14–16.

⁵⁹ Boiled meat: schol. *A Il.* 21.362a *Ariston.* (cf. M. Schmidt 1976: 188); trumpet: schol. *A Il.* 18.219a *Ariston.* (cf. M. Schmidt 1976: 250–1); also *T Il.* 24.480–2a¹ *ex.* (on a killer needing purification). On anachronisms in general see *Chapter 4*.

⁶⁰ The critics display a palpable unease with these examples, in that they often explain how Homer compensates for the commonplace nature of the simile’s vehicle (cf. N. J. Richardson 1980: 276).

⁶¹ The same scholion is also indicative of a rather rigid application of the rule that similes reflect Homer’s own life. The simile led to the theory that Homer is from Cyprus because at some time the island suffered from grasshoppers. Similarly, the simile of the day labourer with the scales (*Il.* 12.433–5) seems to have been taken as a ‘portrait’ of Homer’s mother (Erbse *ad loc.*, based on Eust. 913.3 = 3.417.3–7). On biographical readings in general see *Introd.* pages 13 and 133 n. 56.

⁶² Cf. e.g. schol. *T Il.* 11.292–3 *ex.*, *AT Il.* 16.765–9 *ex.* As often, these parallels are omitted in b (see Roemer 1879: 16–19).

On (x) length of similes: the notes which identify several *Vergleichspunkte* (see on C above) implicitly accept or even praise the length of the simile. In explicit form, a simile on throwing the javelin is praised for its expansion (schol. bT *Il.* 15.359*a ex.*). And a note on a wolf simile mentions the great distance between *Wie-Stück* and *So-Stück* (schol. bT *Il.* 16.156*b ex.*). Conversely, a lion comparison is praised for its conciseness (συντόμως, schol. bT *Il.* 11.239*d ex.*).

The picture of ancient interpretative principles can be rounded off with a number of examples that seem to be more or less unique:

Similes regularly illustrate the action of a human character by means of a vehicle that is ἄψυχος ('inanimate'), i.e. neither human nor animal.⁶³ In one case, however, the critic argues that the 'soulless' tree simile is 'humanised' by the verb τρέφειν ('to bring up, rear'), as if the tree were an animate being (schol. bT *Il.* 17.53–6 *ex.*).⁶⁴

Another note (schol. bT *Il.* 16.101–11 *ex.*) draws attention to the fact that, despite the general inclination of poets towards figurative language in general and similes in particular, the present passage uses neither and receives its special importance from the narrated action itself (i.e. the absence of a simile): Ajax yields to the overwhelming pressure of the Trojans. The implication is perhaps that the present situation is too urgent to allow for the insertion of a 'leisurely' simile.

The river simile which is said to have inspired Plato (see above) is praised for its visual and acoustic qualities. The latter are said to be further emphasised by the imitation that lies in the expanded verb form βοῶσιν (*boōsin*, schol. bT *Il.* 17.263–5 *ex.*).⁶⁵

From a modern perspective, similes can be described as a form of 'pause', that is, the narrative time (*Erzählzeit*) taken up by the simile does not cover story time (*erzählte Zeit*). At least one ancient critic (schol. bT *Il.* 3.2*c ex.*) sees things differently when he argues that the similes at the beginning of *Iliad* 3 cover the time it takes for the armies to arrive on the battlefield (see [Chapter 2](#)).

Another interesting point is the idea, expressed by schol. bT *Il.* 16.753*a ex.*, that a simile can function as a prolepsis (see [Chapter 1](#)). In his attack on Cebriones, Patroclus is compared to a wounded lion who is destroyed by his own prowess, because Patroclus too will die soon. A similar reasoning probably underlies a note on a cloud simile (schol. b *Il.* 5.522 *ex.*). The critic

⁶³ This must be read against the backdrop of Aristotle's theory of metaphor: *Rh.* 1411b31–12a9 (cf. the *testimonia* collected by Kassel *ad loc.*); see also [Chapter 9](#) on indirect presentation.

⁶⁴ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 20.490–2 *ex.* (fire simile).

⁶⁵ For other notes on sound effects see [Chapter 9](#) and N. J. Richardson (1980: 283–7).

expects the steadfastness of the Greek fighters to be compared to towers or mountains. If they are in fact compared to clouds, it is because they will have to yield in the end.

CONCLUSION

The sheer number of scholia which discuss Homeric similes points to considerable interest in the topic. Taken together with the fact that many scholia compare similes with each other (with various points of contact: same character, same vehicle, same *Vergleichspunkt*, textual vicinity), it seems reasonable to conclude that the Homeric simile was studied systematically and as a narrative device *sui generis*. The specific meaning of παραβολή (as opposed to unspecific εἰκῶν) and the clear notion of its constituent parts point in the same direction. At the same time, the scrutiny led to an impressive range of characteristics which the critics were able to discover and describe. Of these characteristics, some correspond with general interpretative principles rooted in rhetorical theory (e.g. graphic quality, emphasis, amplification). Others are more directly related to the device 'simile' as such (e.g. realism, thematic correspondence and therefore aptness to the scene that is illustrated by the simile). Needless to say, ancient scholars did not agree on individual issues (e.g. the number or identification of the *Vergleichspunkte*) any more than modern scholars do. Last but not least, there is a remarkable number of fine observations on the single instance. The similes are a prime feature of Homeric epic, and they brought out the best in the scholars who commented on them.

Epithets

The elaborate use of epithets is a distinctive feature of Homer's poetic style. Of the questions discussed in ancient scholarship, the most frequent is semantic in nature. A considerable number of Homer's epithets were no longer part of his readers' passive vocabulary and needed to be explained. Consequently, the scholia – especially the D-scholia – regularly translate and/or explain the relevant epithet.¹ Within the individual notes, there is a wide range from simple periphrasis ('X means Y') to detailed explanation (often based on etymology) and deduction from various dialects. For instance, the tree adjective βλωθρή (meaning uncertain, see LfgrE *s.v.*) is explained as follows:

τινὲς ἀπαλήν, κατὰ Ἀρκάδας· οἱ δὲ ὑψηλήν, κατὰ Βοιωτοὺς, ἢ φλοιοβαρῆ, κατὰ Μάγνητας, ἢ τραχείαν, κατὰ Δρύοπας, ἢ ηὔξημένην, κατὰ Τυρρηνοὺς, ἢ σκληράν κατὰ Καρυστίους. (schol. AT *Il.* 13.390a' *ex.*, sim. b)²

Some <say it means> 'tender', according to the Arcadians [i.e. in the Arcadian dialect], others 'high', according to the Boeotians, or 'heavy with bark', according to the Magnesians, or 'prickly', according to the Dryopians, or 'grown', according to the Tyrrhenians, or 'hard', according to the Carystians.

Although the semantic, etymological and dialectal explanations given in the scholia do not always stand up to modern scrutiny, they nevertheless form the natural starting-point for modern scholars. The *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos*, for example, recognises the importance of ancient semantics in that each lemma is preceded by relevant quotations from ancient sources (mostly D-scholia and *scholia minora*).

¹ On semantic explanations as the oldest stratum of the scholia see Introd. page 15. Traditional epithets, in particular, are rich in archaic or even obscure words and needed to be explained to Homer's ancient readers. For a comic application of this topic see e.g. the desperate complaint about a 'Homerising' cook in Strato (fr. 1 K-A). Iliadic scholia on epithets are collected by Erbse (VII: 90–2, excluding the D-scholia).

² The different explanations recur in the D-scholia, in Hesychius and other sources (see Erbse *ad loc.*).

A special problem of semantics arises whenever the epithet's usual meaning does not seem to fit the particular context. How can the clothes which Nausicaa intends to wash be called 'glittering' (σιγαλόεντα, *Od.* 6.26) and 'shining' (φαεινήν, *Od.* 6.74)? How can Nestor raise his hands to 'starry' (ἄσπερόεντα, *Il.* 15.371) heaven during daylight? And how can the moon be called 'shining' (φαεινήν, *Il.* 8.555) if it is outshone by the bright stars? The relevant scholia give two explanations which are conceptually very similar. The note on the moon reads:

ὅτι [Roemer, †οὕτως† A] οὐ τὴν τότε οὔσαν “φαεινήν”, ἀλλὰ τὴν καθόλου “φαεινήν”. (schol. A *Il.* 8.555a *Ariston.* (?) = Aristarchus fr. 14a Matthaïos)³

<The diple,> because <the moon> is 'shining' not at that time, but is 'shining' in general.

Similarly, a note on Nausicaa's clothes explains:

οὐ τὴν τότε οὔσαν “φαεινήν” (ἐρρύπτωτο γάρ), ἀλλὰ τὴν φύσει καθαρὰν. (schol. EHPV *Od.* 6.74, text and punctuation as in Erbse's *testimonia* on the previous scholion; PQT give essentially the same explanation and adduce the moon instance as a parallel)⁴

<Nausicaa takes the clothes> not 'shining' at that time – for they were dirty – but clean by nature.

Both types of explanation make a distinction between the state of affairs at that particular time (τότε), on the one hand, and the general (καθόλου) or natural (φύσει) condition, on the other.⁵ The epithet is, strictly speaking, not appropriate to the present scene, but it is appropriate in a more general sense, because it indicates a fundamental quality of the object or character in question. This interpretation paved the way for Parry's notion of a 'generic epithet', as he himself recognised.⁶ What is more, the scholia also

³ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 8.555b ex., D *Il.* 8.555, Ap.S. 161.20, Porph. (on *Il.* 8.555, I 125.9–15 Schr.), Eust. 729.20–5 (= 2.637.12–19).

⁴ The φύσει argument recurs in schol. bT *Il.* 15.371 ex. (on 'starry' heaven during daylight), E *Od.* 6.26 (on Nausicaa's 'glittering' clothes), E *Od.* 6.58 (ditto, with explicit reference to the parallel case of the 'shining' moon), sim. A *Il.* 21.218a *Ariston.* (on Scamander's 'lovely' waters, see below); cf. also the comments which argue that the epithet represents a previous state of affairs: schol. bT *Il.* 2.467 ex. (on 'the blossoming meadows' of the war-ridden Scamandrian plain, with parallels), T *Il.* 3.147 ex. (on old Hicetaon as 'scion' of Ares, one parallel), T *Il.* 12.283b ex. (on 'grassy' land during winter time), bT *Il.* 18.349a ex. (on 'shining' for a used cauldron, one parallel), bT *Il.* 18.484b ex. (on the 'full' moon, one parallel), b *Il.* 19.246^b ex. (on 'strong' for dead Patroclus), D *Il.* 4.47 (on old Priam 'of the strong spear'). The notion that an epithet presupposes a previous state of affairs already occurs in *b.Dem.* 451.

⁵ For καθόλου cf. schol. bT *Il.* 9.555 ex. (on Bellerophon's 'dear' mother), sim. A *Il.* 8.361a *Ariston.* Such epithets could be called καθολικόν: schol. A *Il.* 4.182a *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 8.250a *Ariston.*, etc.; see also κοινόν in schol. A *Il.* 8.399a *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 20.72c *Hrd.*

⁶ Parry (1928 ≈ 1971: 120–4), with reference to Lehms ([1833] 1882: 197) and Roemer (1912: 337–9); on generic epithets see Parry (1928 ≈ 1971: 145–53).

testify to a systematic examination of the phenomenon, in that several of the comments mentioned above and in nn. 4–5 list parallels for generic epithets which do not seem to fit their current context.⁷ The only major difference between Parry and his ancient predecessors is that the latter do not seem to have concluded from the generic epithets that the background of the Homeric epics is oral.

A notion similar to Parry's generic epithet can be detected in other comments as well. A note on the epithet βοὴν ἀγαθός ('good at the war-cry'), applied to Ajax, reads:

καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ “εἰ δέ που Αἴαντός γε βοὴν ἀγαθοῖο πυθοίμην” [*Il.* 17.102] ἐπὶ δὲ Διομήδους καὶ Μενελάου συνεχῶς [cf. *Il.* 2.563 etc. and 2.408 etc.]. (schol. *T Il.* 15.249*b ex.*)

<The epithet 'good at the war-cry' is applied to Ajax> elsewhere too: [Menelaus speaking] 'If I could somehow learn about Ajax, good at the war-cry'. To Diomedes and Menelaus <it is applied> continuously.

The fact that the same epithet can describe several Homeric characters demonstrates that it is generic and not distinctive (cf. schol. b*T Il.* 2.408*b ex.*, sim. b*T Il.* 1.7*b ex.*). At the same time, the note implies that, compared with Diomedes and Menelaus, Ajax is rarely called 'good at the war-cry' and mentions what in fact is the only parallel.⁸ The critic does not show awareness of the fact that both passages come from a speech (more on this distinction below).

Another comment deliberates as to whether the epithet in question is generic or chosen with a view to the present passage (i.e. 'particularised' in Parry's terminology). (In *Iliad* 11, Hector stirs his troops with the argument that Agamemnon, 'the best man' (ἀνὴρ ὄριστος), has left the battlefield.)

ἦ καθ' ὅλου – “κρατερός τε” γὰρ “αἰχμητής” [*Il.* 3.179] – ἦ νῦν ὄριστος. (schol. *T Il.* 11.288 *ex.*)

<The best man> either in general – for <Agamemnon is called> 'mighty warrior' [sc. by Helen] – or the best in the present scene.

In other words, ὄριστος is either generic or particularised with a view to the present scene. As the parallel passage from *Iliad* 3 makes clear, the generic explanation requires a loose interpretation of the superlative

⁷ Cf. schol. *T Il.* 2.467 *ex.*, *T Il.* 3.147 *ex.*, *T Il.* 8.555*b' ex.* (in two cases b, as often, omits the parallels; on this phenomenon see Roemer 1879: 16–19), b*T Il.* 18.349*a ex.*, b*T Il.* 18.484*b ex.*, *A Il.* 21.218*a Ariston.*, *E Od.* 6.58, PQT *Od.* 6.74.

⁸ Cf. schol. b*T Il.* 17.102 *ex.*; modern counts essentially agree (Dee 2000: 475): Menelaus (16*x Il.*, 9*x Od.*), Diomedes (21*x Il.*), Ajax (2*x Il.*), Hector (2*x Il.*), Polites (1*x Il.*).

ἄριστος in the sense of ‘very good, excellent’.⁹ The explanation as particularised restricts the validity of the epithet to the scene under consideration.

The τότε–φύσει distinction above was triggered by the observation that the epithet does not fit the current context. Elsewhere a similar discrepancy is expressed in such a way that the epithet is said to be ἄκαιρος (‘ill-timed’). Aristarchus, for example, objects to Menelaus calling Paris δῖος (‘divine, noble’) and athetises the line in question.¹⁰ The same objection and remedy are applied to Menelaus addressing Antilochus with διοτρεφές (‘nourished by Zeus’) after the disputed chariot race in *Iliad* 23.¹¹ Likewise, the adjective δῖα, said of Anteia, who herself tries to seduce Bellerophon and then claims it was he who tried to seduce her, moves Aristarchus to object and to mark the line with a diiple, but not to athetise it.¹² The same passage, however, received a remarkably different explanation from Herodian:

ἔνιοι δὲ ὑπονοήσαντες ἀτόπως ἔχειν τὸ “δῖα” <διάντειαν ὑφ’ ἔν ἀνεγίνωσκον, κακῶς. τὸ “δῖα” > [suppl. Lehrs, cl. bT] κατὰ κόσμον ποιητικὸν προσέρριπται, ὡς καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ “δῖα Κλυταιμῆστρη” [*Od.* 3.266]. (schol. A *Il.* 6.160b *Hrd.*)¹³

Some, suspecting that ‘noble’ is out of place, <read διάντειαν in one word, wrongly; ‘noble’ > is added for poetic ornament, as, for example, in the case of ‘noble Clytaemestra’.

- ⁹ Such an explanation of the superlative is advocated in schol. A *Il.* 13.365a *Ariston.* (on the epithet ‘most beautiful of Priam’s daughters’, which is applied to two daughters; cf. also the *testimonia* collected by Erbse *ad loc.*, add schol. HQT *Od.* 11.239), A *Il.* 20.233a *Ariston.* (several male characters are called ‘the most beautiful’). A literal explanation of the superlative would make the epithet distinctive (sc. of Agamemnon), a possibility which is not envisaged by the present scholion.
- ¹⁰ See schol. A *Il.* 3.352a *Ariston.* (sim. T *Il.* 20.40c *Did.* (?)). Conversely, schol. bT *Il.* 3.352b *ex.* ingeniously hypothesises that Menelaus intends to provoke Zeus’ anger (for the notion cf. schol. bT *Il.* 13.123–4a *ex.*, D *Il.* 1.242). Elsewhere (schol. bT *Il.* 3.16b *ex.*) Homer is said to call Paris ‘godlike’ (θεοειδής), because a mixture of praise and blame is more credible than utter blame (cf. Chapter 8).
- ¹¹ See schol. A *Il.* 23.581a *Ariston.* Aristarchean athetesis on account of an ἄκαιρος epithet disproves Parry’s point (1928 ≈ 1971: 123, based on Roemer 1912: 339–47) that Aristarchus meant ‘ornamental’ when he said ἄκαιρος; see also Schironi (2004: 169 with n. 14).
- ¹² See schol. A *Il.* 6.160a *Ariston.* The same probably holds true for Hera addressing her son Hephaestus in less than flattering terms (schol. AGE *Il.* 21.331a *Ariston.*), but the text of the scholion is uncertain (see Erbse *ad loc.*). Conversely, schol. bT *Il.* 10.460–1 *ex.* considers Athena’s epithet ληϊτίς (‘distributor of spoil’) as particularly apt to the present circumstances. Likewise the word εὐκαιρος (‘well-timed’) can express praise for epithets: schol. bT *Il.* 1.346 *ex.* (on Briseis ‘of the fair cheeks’), bT *Il.* 9.184 *ex.* (on the ‘great mind’ of Achilles), T *Il.* 12.60a *ex.* (on ‘bold’ Hector), bT *Il.* 21.379 *ex.* (on Hera addressing Hephaestus as ‘glorious’ son), Ar. *Nu.* 265a (on ‘bright’ sky).
- ¹³ Contrast schol. HMQS *Od.* 2.94: οὐ ποιητικῶς κόσμου χάριν προσέρριπται τὸ “μέγαν” [sc. ἰστόν], ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ πολυχρόνιον τῆς τοῦ ἔργου κατασκευῆς (‘The <epithet> “great” [sc. loom] is not added for ornament in the poet’s style, but with a view to the long duration of achieving the work [sc. Penelope weaving the shroud]). The relevant passage is part of a speech (on the distinction between epithets in speech and in the narrator-text see below). For epithets as ornament see also schol. Pi. *P.* 4.10c.

Despite the lacuna in the text, the gist of Herodian's argument is clear. He rejects the suggested textual correction on the basis of the observation, supported with an Odyssean parallel, that Homeric epithets should not always be taken at face value. Occasionally, they have virtually no semantic value in the current context and owe their presence solely to the wider purpose of poetic ornament. This type of explanation was developed by Parry into what he calls 'ornamental epithets'.¹⁴

On a somewhat harsher note, such epithets can also be called 'superfluous' (περισσός).¹⁵ This superfluosity is explained by Apollonius Dyscolus (see n. 15) as due to poetic licence (ποιητική ἄδεια).¹⁶ His example is the epithet 'of the white arms' (λευκώλενος), used by Hector to describe his wife Andromache (*Il.* 6.377), which is a standard example adduced as a parallel in several scholia. Of particular interest is a scholion on the relevant passage itself (schol. bT *Il.* 6.377 *ex.*). It argues that the epithet 'of the white arms' derives from the poet and not the character (Hector); it is, in other words, an intrusion of the narrator upon the focalisation of the character.¹⁷ While Apollonius Dyscolus considers 'ornamental' epithets simply a licence of poetic style, other scholars appear to have argued that it is characteristic of the poet's style, as opposed to that of his characters. Given that this other view is sometimes expressed (e.g. in schol. b *Il.* 1.355 *ex.*) by the ambiguous formulation 'the epithet is poetic' (ποιητικός), which must be understood as 'the poet's and not the character's' (see Chapter 4), one wonders whether Apollonius Dyscolus' explanation as 'poetic licence' does not, in fact, reflect a misunderstanding of such notes. However, it is, of course, conceivable that some scholars simply observed Homer's fondness

¹⁴ Parry (1928 ≈ 1971: 120–4). The possibility should, however, be kept open that the explanation 'poetic ornament' for these epithets post-dates Aristarchus (cf. n. 11 above).

¹⁵ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 23.581c *ex.* (on Antilochus 'nourished by Zeus', with three parallels for other 'superfluous' epithets), also T *Il.* 2.45b *ex.* (on the 'silver-studded' sword of Agamemnon; the problem is that it is 'gold-studded' in another passage, see Chapter 7), T *Il.* 10.220b *ex.* (on Diomedes referring to his own 'proud spirit'; one parallel), bT *Il.* 15.171b *ex.* (on Boreas 'born in the bright air', although it is snowing; one parallel), cf. also Ap. Dysc. *coni.* 249.25–30 Schneider. Homer's fondness of 'superfluous' epithets is mentioned by Galen (7.656 Kühn, cf. 17b.340). Conversely, schol. HPQ *Od.* 6.116 argues that the various epithets are not superfluous, but functional (χρειώδης), cf. schol. A *Il.* 18.416b *Ariston.* (on Hephaestus' 'heavy' stick; one parallel), HMQS *Od.* 2.94 (quoted in n. 13). A similar point is made by schol. BEPT *Od.* 7.115 (on Homeric tree epithets), which adds the remarkable point that random insertion of epithets is κυκλικῶς, i.e. typical of the cyclic poets.

¹⁶ See the relevant chapter, including sources which argue against pedantic criticism, e.g. if the same sword is studded with nails that are golden in one passage and silver in another. In schol. Ar. *Av.* 1383a (cf. 1385a) the epithets used by dithyrambographers are recognised as target of Aristophanic mockery.

¹⁷ For a detailed argumentation see Chapter 4 (with several parallels).

for ornamental epithets and considered it one of the many stylistic liberties that a poet can take.

The notion that traditional epithets potentially lack semantic value in particular contexts forms the basis of another comment. It praises Homer for departing from his usual technique of using stock epithets in order to make the passage in question (Priam sketches the disastrous consequences if Troy is taken by the Greeks) particularly concise and graphic (schol. bT *Il.* 22.61–5a¹ *ex.*, the terms are ἐν βροχῇ and ὑπ’ ὄψιν ἄγειν, see Chapter 9).

Notes on ornamental or ‘superfluous’ epithets are indirectly balanced by those which praise the particular appropriateness of epithets (see also the scholia listed at the end of n. 15). For example, the scholion quoted at the beginning of the chapter continues with a list of trees and their specific epithets, which express the particular characteristic of each tree (schol. AT *Il.* 13.390a¹ *ex.*, sim. b, cf. BEPT *Od.* 7.115). Likewise, schol. T *Il.* 13.399b *ex.* praises the epithet ‘well-built’ (εὖεργής) as particularly apt to Asius’ chariot.¹⁸

The scholia also show that ancient critics studied the exact use of individual epithets. They examined, for instance, which epithet could be applied to which character (cf. schol. T *Il.* 15.249b *ex.*, quoted above). Thus Aristarchus observed that Troilus is the only character who is called ἵππιόχορος (‘fighting from horses and chariot’).¹⁹ He also established the rule that only goddesses can be called βοῶπις (‘cow-eyed’) and duly noted the two exceptions, *Il.* 7.10 and 3.144, the latter of which he athetised (schol. A *Il.* 7.10a¹ *Ariston.*). Conversely, another note (schol. T *Il.* 4.19 *ex.*, sim. b *Il.* 3.121 *ex.*) argues that Helen receives all the epithets which Hera receives. The corresponding list does not comprise Hera’s epithet βοῶπις, so the critic does not openly contradict Aristarchus’ observation.

In a similar vein, one critic notes that δῖος (‘noble’) is never applied to the gods, except for Nicanor’s problematic reading in *Od.* 13.147.²⁰ And the same holds true for βαθυκόλποι (perhaps ‘with the robe falling down in a deep fold’), which is even restricted to the Trojans among mortal women. Zenodotus’ application of the epithet to the Muses (*Il.* 2.484) must therefore be wrong.²¹ A similar distinction between divine

¹⁸ See also Eratosthenes (*ap.* Strabo 1.2.3 = 16C.18–22 Radt) on Homer’s geographic epithets.

¹⁹ See schol. A *Il.* 24.257b *Ariston.* The note receives additional relevance in that Aristarchus either overlooked *Od.* 11.259, where the epithet is applied to Amythaon, or abandoned his usual principle of treating *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as one larger unit (see Chapter 1).

²⁰ See schol. bT *Il.* 9.538 *ex.* Erbse (*ad loc.*) suspects the name Nicanor to be corrupt.

²¹ Cf. schol. T *Il.* 18.339 *Ariston.*, also A *Il.* 2.484 *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 24.215b *Ariston.*, Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 111–12), Nickau (1977: 35–6).

and human characters is made in a note (schol. T *Il.* 11.518 *ex.*) which argues that Homer normally applies the epithet ἀμύμων ('blameless') to humans, but once also to Achilles' immortal horse, Pedasus. Furthermore, Achilles is the only character who can be identified by means of the epithet Διογενής ('sprung from Zeus') alone.²² A similar question led scholars to explore the boundaries between distinctive and generic epithets. The epithet 'destroyer of cities' (πτολίπορθος) normally describes Odysseus, but is said to be applied once to Achilles.²³ Interestingly, schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1372d argues that ἀλεξικάκος ('keeping off ill') is distinctive (ἴδιον) of Heracles, whereas schol. Ar. *Pax* 422b, where it is applied to Hermes, connects it with both Apollo and Heracles.²⁴ The same terminology can be found in schol. A *Il.* 20.72c *Hrd.*, which distinguishes between 'generic' (κοινόν) and 'distinctive' (ἴδιον, on Hermes' epithet ἐριούσιος, perhaps 'very fast').

In an uncommon line of interpretation, schol. D *Il.* 1.242 argues that a speaker can praise others by means of qualities in which he excels himself, that is, the epithet used for others reverberates on the speaker himself.²⁵

CONCLUSION

Ancient scholars appear to have studied epithets extensively and in many cases even systematically. It seems likely that the starting-point was the semantic explanation of epithets, especially the ones that were no longer immediately understood by ancient readers. A related difficulty arose from epithets that did not seem to make sense in their current context. This led to the recognition of generic and ornamental epithets (in the terminology of Parry, who was well aware of his ancient predecessors). The relevant scholia

²² See schol. T *Il.* 21.17a *ex.*, sim. bT *Il.* 1.7b *ex.*; in a similar vein, schol. Pi. *O.* 2.50 observes that Dionysus is identified by means of the epithet κισσοφόρος ('ivy-wreathed') alone. See also schol. AT *Il.* 21.511b *Ariston.* (on Artemis).

²³ See schol. A *Il.* 21.550a *Ariston.* The details of this note are complicated by several factors: (i) schol. A *Il.* 15.56a *Ariston.* claims that Aristarchus never admitted the epithet πτολίπορθος for Achilles; (ii) the vulgate contains four attestations of the epithet in connection with Achilles: 8.372, 15.77, 21.550, 24.108, of which the former two were athetised by Aristarchus; (iii) the entire comment forms part of an argument against the *chorizontes* the details of which remain obscure. See Erbse (*ad loc.*), with lit.

²⁴ Similarly to schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1372d, schol. Ar. *Pax* 422a associates the epithet with Heracles 'alone' (μόνῳ, declared corrupt by Holwerda on the basis of 422b). For Apollo ἀλεξικάκος see e.g. D.Chr. 32.56, Arr. *Ind.* 36.3.2.

²⁵ The occasion is Achilles describing Hector as 'man-slaughtering' (ἀνδροφόνος, *Il.* 1.242). A minor problem is the fact that Hector is not actually present in this scene. Achilles' addressee is Agamemnon (and indirectly the Greek army at large). The former part of the scholion suggests that the epithet is used as a provocation (see above n. 10). Cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 1.346 *ex.* (Briseis' epithet καλλιπάρης 'of the beautiful cheeks', used by the narrator, is said to reflect on the mood of Achilles).

regularly adduce parallels, which points to systematic research on this topic. This also applies to the question as to which epithet is used in connection with which character(s) and how often. Here ancient scholars essentially recognised the difference between generic and distinctive epithets. Needless to say, critics frequently interpreted epithets as particularised (i.e. chosen with a view to the present passage). From a post-Homeric point of view, this latter approach is so to speak the natural way to explain epithets. It is far more striking, though, that ancient scholars recognised that the Homeric use of epithets is in some respects unique, because he regularly uses generic epithets. (This recognition of Homer's particular position includes the observation that the Homeric narrator and his characters use epithets differently.) The sole fundamental difference between Parry and his ancient predecessors is that he linked the generic epithets with the oral background of Homeric poetry, a connection that remained unknown to ancient scholars.

CHAPTER 16

Type scenes

Ancient scholars do not seem to have been aware of the oral nature of Homeric epic (see also [Chapter 15](#)), but they did recognise the recurrent pattern of particular Homeric scenes, as the present chapter will show. Thus their approach is similar to Arend's in his seminal study *Die typischen Szenen bei Homer* (1933), who neither knew of Parry's results nor drew a corresponding conclusion himself. Unlike Arend, the scholia do not make use of a particular term for 'type scene'.

ARMING

The type scene which receives the most attention in the Homeric scholia is the arming scene (ὄπλισμός). The impulse seems to come from Zenodotus' treatment of Paris' arming before his duel with Menelaus in *Iliad* 3, as explained by Aristonicus:

ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος ἀμφοτέρους ἠθέτηκεν, καὶ μετὰ τὸν “οἷο κασιγνήτοιο” [*Il.* 3.333] ὑποτάσσει

“κρατὶ δ' ἐπ' ἰφθίμῳ κυνέην εὐτυκτον ἔθηκεν
ἵππουριν· δεινὸν δὲ λόφος καθύπερθεν ἔνευεν·
ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' ὤμοισιν βάλειτ' ἀσπίδα τερσανόεσσα
εἶλετο δ' ἄλκιμον ἔγχος,” [3.336–7, ≈ 334, 338]¹

ὥστε ἐναντίως τῷ Ὀμηρικῷ ὄπλισμῷ [cf. 11.19–42, 15.479–81] ἔχειν· πρὸ τῆς ἀσπίδος γὰρ φανήσεται ἀναλαμβάνων τὴν περικεφαλαίαν καὶ ξίφος μὴ ἔχων. (schol. A *Il.* 3.334–5a *Ariston.*)

<The diplai periestigmenai,> because Zenodotus omits² both <lines> [sc. 3.334–5], and after the <line beginning with> 'of his brother' [3.333] he attaches 'On

¹ The text printed here takes up a conclusion reached independently by Erbse (*ad loc.*) and S. West (1967: 54): the words εἶλετο δ' ἄλκιμον ἔγχος, which are transmitted before ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' κτλ., must come after that line. This explains why only half of the line is quoted.

² The verb ἀθετεῖν normally means that the lines in question remain in the text (see *Introd.* n. 57), but in the present context it must mean that Zenodotus actually omitted the lines (see e.g. West's *app. crit.*).

his powerful head he [sc. Paris] set the well-fashioned helmet with the horse-hair crest, and the plumes nodded terribly above it. Across his shoulders he slung the [??]³ shield. He took up a strong-shafted spear', so that there is a contradiction with the Homeric arming. For [sc. with Zenodotus' text] he will be seen taking up the helmet before the shield and not having a sword.

Aristarchus has two objections to Zenodotus' text: (i) it alters the standard sequence of the 'Arming' scene; and (ii) it leaves Paris without a sword. Both arguments recur elsewhere. The former argument is repeated in connection with other arming scenes which are used as proof against Zenodotus' transposition in book 3. For example:

ὅτι πρότερον τὴν ἀσπίδα εἴληφεν [sc. 15.479], εἶτα τὴν περικεφαλαίαν. ὁ δὲ Ζηνόδοτος ἐνήλλαχεν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου μονομαχίας [sc. 3.333–8]. (schol. *A Il.* 15.480a *Ariston.*)

<The diplo,> because he [sc. Teucer] first takes the shield and then the helmet.⁴ Zenodotus had changed <this sequence> in the duel of Paris.

This argument recurs three more times in the A-scholia.⁵ As for Aristarchus' second argument, the missing sword,⁶ Nickau (1977: 175–6) convincingly argues that it is Zenodotus' actual reason for altering the text in the first place. In accordance with later sources,⁷ he apparently wondered why Menelaus, with his own sword shattered (3.362–3), drags Paris away (3.369–72), rather than killing him with Paris' own sword. In order to get rid of that sword, Zenodotus had to omit lines 334 and 335 (because of the epithet χάλκεον). But Paris needed a shield, which is mentioned in the second half of line 335. Zenodotus therefore rewrote line 334 and added it after the lines about the helmet. In other words, the altered sequence of the arming scene is the result and not the cause. This is to say that Zenodotus may well have been aware of the standard sequence (he seems not to have altered it anywhere else: Nickau 1977: 175 n. 29), but believed that it had to be overruled in the present case. Aristarchus found fault with this, and his method is very clear. He collected all the Homeric arming scenes, compared them with each other and observed that, although they may vary in

³ The adjective *περσανόεσσα* is not known from any other source and may well be a corruption.

⁴ This sequence is dictated by practical considerations. The Homeric shield is carried by a strap (*τελαμών*) around the shoulders. The process of strapping is unnecessarily complicated if the warrior puts the helmet on first.

⁵ Cf. schol. *A Il.* 11.32, *A Il.* 11.41, *A Il.* 19.380 (all attributed to Aristonicus); see Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 192), Bachmann (1902: 20), Nickau (1977: 173–6).

⁶ Aristarchus' objection in schol. *A Il.* 3.339 *Ariston.* is actually not insurmountable, because *ἔντε(α)* 'armour' need not entail the sword (cf. Nickau 1977: 176).

⁷ Cf. Porph. on *Il.* 3.365ff. (I 64.9–22 Schrader), also schol. bT *Il.* 3.370 *ex.*

length⁸ and specific details, they never alter the sequence.⁹ For him (as for most modern scholars) this was more important than the apparent inconsistency of Menelaus not using Paris' sword. Zenodotus' solution, therefore, could not be right. Although Aristarchus does not discuss type scenes in their own right, his refutation of Zenodotus' textual decision comes close to doing so and reaches results similar to modern research on type scenes.

No other type scene receives treatment as thorough as that of the arming scene, but a number of comments indicate that ancient scholars discussed whether or not a particular scene displayed the characteristics repeatedly found in the other examples of that same type.

BATTLE SCENES

A domain which lends itself to this form of comparison is the *Iliad's* numerous battle scenes. For instance, in *Il.* 13.402–12 Deiphobus aims at Idomeneus, who avoids the spear by ducking under his shield. Deiphobus hits Hypsenor in his stead:

ἀλλ' ὄρα πάλιν τὴν τέχνην· ἀποτυχίᾳ [susp., ἀποτυχῶν Bekker] γὰρ τοῦ Ἰδομενέως ἄλλον ἀναιρεῖ κατὰ τινὰ τύχην ἐπιτυχῶν, ὡς καὶ τὸν Ἀμφίμαχον ἄλλο τι πράσσοντα ἀναιρεῖ [cf. 13.185–6]. (schol. bT *Il.* 13.411 ex.)

But watch again the technique [sc. of the poet]. For failing to hit Idomeneus he happens to kill another by chance, in the same way as he kills Amphimachus, who is busy with other things.

In the parallel passage, it is actually Hector who misses his original target (Teucer) and hits another (Amphimachus) instead. Consequently, either one has to supply at the end ἀναιρεῖ (ὁ Ἐκτωρ) (Erbse tentatively in the *app. crit.*) or one has to assume that the subject of ἀναιρεῖ in both cases is in fact Homer.¹⁰ The pattern 'A aims at B but hits C instead' is amply attested in the *Iliad* (Fenik 1968: 126–8). And although the present scholion mentions one parallel only, the adverb πάλιν ('again') may well have wider implications. For another scholion also mentions Homer's technique of

⁸ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 11.17a *Ariston.*: ὅτι ἐπανεῖληφεν ἐξεργαστικώτερον τὰ περὶ τὸν ὀπλισμὸν τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος, προεπιτηδεύων αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀριστείαν ('<The diplē,> because he has taken up the arming scene of Agamemnon with more detail, preparing for his *aristeia*'); similarly T *Il.* 11.17b ex. On ἐξεργασία see Chapter 9.

⁹ The same result was reached by Arend (1933: 92–7, and Tafel 6, Schema 10), who established the sequence: greaves, corslet, sword, shield, helmet, spear(s).

¹⁰ Expressions of the type 'Homer kills Amphimachus' instead of 'Homer has Hector kill Amphimachus' are very common in the scholia, see Excursus at the end of Chapter 4.

having the warriors miss the target on their first attempt. (In *Iliad* 16, Patroclus and Sarpedon miss each other and hit the other's charioteer and horse respectively.)

κατ' ἄρχῃν πολλάκις ἀποτυγχάνοντας ποιῶν τοὺς βάλλοντας ἐναγώνιον ποιεῖ τὸν ἀκροατήν. (schol. T 16.463–76*b ex.*)

By having the spearmen often miss the target first, he [sc. Homer] makes the reader anxious.

As the adverb *πολλάκις* ('often') makes clear, this critic treats the scene in question as an example of a recognisable narrative pattern which involves an initial miss and subsequent hit of another target.¹¹

Another comment attests to the frequency of initial misses in the Homeric epics and recognises a similar narrative purpose. (In *Iliad* 21, Lycaon attempts to clasp Achilles' knees as a suppliant and thereby manages to avoid Achilles' spear.)

ἐναγώνιον δὲ τὸ ἐνίαχοῦ ἀποτυγχάνειν. (schol. T 21.70*a ex.*)¹²

The occasional missing <of the target> leads to suspense.

As the generalising wording again makes clear, this scholion looks beyond the scene under discussion and indicates that Homeric battle scenes often have a typical structure, the purpose of which is to put the reader in a state of suspense (see [Chapter 5](#)).

A standard method in ancient and modern scholarship is the attempt to recognise a recurrent pattern and to identify the exceptions (see *Introd.* page 11). Among the notes on typical battle scenes an instance is Agamemnon's fight with Iphidamas. The former kills the latter, but is wounded himself (11.221–47). Firstly, Agamemnon throws his spear but misses Iphidamas, who tries to thrust his spear into Agamemnon's groin. Agamemnon then finishes him off with his sword. A D-scholion comments:

νῦν μόνον ὁ πρότερος ἀφείς νικᾷ καὶ δεύτερον ἀφείς. ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἄλλαις μονομαχίαις τετήρηται, ὅτι ὁ πρότερος ἀφείς νικᾷται. (schol. D *Il.* 11.233)

Here alone the first to throw <eventually> wins with a second throw. In all other single combats the rule is observed that the first to throw is defeated.

The observation is methodologically important, although its fundamental claim does not stand up to modern scrutiny. The pattern of the scene

¹¹ As a matter of fact, the scene is unique in one respect, because it 'is the only combat in the poem where both men . . . manage to kill somebody or something instead' (Fenik 1968: 204). For the reader's anxiety see [Chapter 5](#).

¹² On initial misses see also schol. bT *Il.* 13.506*a ex.*

is in fact typical (Fenik 1968: 145–6). It is true, though, that the one who opens the fight is regularly defeated (Fenik 1968: 11), as ancient scholars knew well. The beginning of book 5 describes the clash of Diomedes and Phegeus, who throws his spear first. The scholion in question reads:

πρότερος Διομήδους· οἰκεῖον δὲ τῷ προπηδῶντι καὶ προακοντίζειν. ἀεὶ δὲ τοὺς πρῶτους εἰσάγει ὀλλυμένους. (schol. bT *Il.* 5.15 *ex.*)¹³

<‘Phegeus threw before’>: before Diomedes. It is typical for the one who leaps forward first also to throw his spear first. He [sc. Homer] always presents the ones <who leap forward or throw> first as the ones who are killed.

The warrior who opens the fight is always killed first. The occasion for this generalising note, the encounter between Phegeus and Diomedes, is the *Iliad*’s first single combat that forms part of a larger battle. It is, in other words, not a formal duel such as the one between Paris and Menelaus (3.314–82), but the first single combat within a larger battle. The first occurrence of a phenomenon is so to speak the natural place to explain its particulars in a commentary.

The critics’ awareness of typical battle scenes can also be demonstrated *e contrario* when they single out a scene as being ‘new’. (In the battle over Sarpedon’s dead body, Patroclus and the Greeks chase Hector and his allies. The first Trojan to turn around again is Glaucus, who kills the Myrmidon Bathycles.)

καινὸς δὲ ὁ τρόπος· ὁ γὰρ φεύγων ἐπιστραφεὶς κτείνει τὸν διώκοντα. (schol. bT *Il.* 16.594 *ex.*, cf. Eust. 1077.19 = 3.903.11–12)

The mode is new. For the fleeing <combatant> turns around and kills his pursuer.

The scholion’s generalising approach to the topic can be deduced from the use of the substantivised participles (ὁ φεύγων, ὁ διώκων), whereas the names of the individual fighters are not even mentioned. Glaucus and Bathycles are primarily seen here as representatives of a particular military constellation on the battlefield that is unparalleled in the *Iliad*. Modern scholarship agrees that this battle scene is in fact unique (Fenik 1968: 207–8).

Admittedly, a considerable number of scholia which comment on the ‘newness’ of a particular scene want to emphasise Homer’s versatility and not the typicality of the scenes. They praise his ability to avoid repetition

¹³ The printed text is that of T (Erbse *ad loc.*: ‘*fort. rectius*’). b has ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον before ὀλλυμένους, which either contradicts ἀεὶ or doubles its meaning unnecessarily. For the meaning of ἀεὶ in the scholia cf. Chapter 18 n. 15. The same notion that the one who opens the fight will lose underlies the comment that the reader expects Hector to lose the fight against Ajax (schol. bT *Il.* 14.402c *ex.*).

and the dullness that can result from it (see [Chapter 9](#)). But in order to do so they first had to establish the typical pattern. In the case of battle scenes their comments are so specific that we are entitled to assume the existence of ancient studies which resemble Fenik's *Typical Battle Scenes in the Iliad* at least in principle.

DELIBERATION SCENES

The Homeric epics contain several scenes in which a character deliberates the alternative (διάνδιχα μερμηρίζειν) – whether to do A or B.¹⁴ The scholia do not give a straightforward description of this type scene, but they draw attention to a passage that contradicts the regular pattern. (In book 8, Diomedes is presented in ‘twofold deliberation’, but only one alternative action is then expressed.)

πῶς δύο εἰπὼν τὸν Διομήδην μεριμνήσαι ἔν ἐπάγει; φαμέν δὲ ὡς δύο βουλάς ἐμερίμνησεν εἰς ἔν νεοῦσας “ἵππους τε στρέψαι καὶ ἐναντίβιον μαχέσασθαι” (*Il.* 8.168). (schol. bT *Il.* 8.167 *ex.*)

Why, after saying that Diomedes deliberated two things, does he [sc. Homer] provide only one? Our answer is that he [sc. Diomedes] deliberated two plans which both pointed towards one and the same <action>, ‘to turn around his horses and fight man to man.’

More important than the admittedly unsatisfactory attempt to solve the problem is the fact that the scene under discussion is held against a standard model from which it departs. Other scholars suggested adding a plus-verse (8.168a), which provides the lacking alternative B.¹⁵ In any case both solutions show that the μερμηρίζειν passages were seen as a recurrent scene with a typical pattern. It is not untypical that it is primarily the apparent or real exceptions that give rise to the discussion in the scholia (see *Introd.* page 11).

MESSENGER REPORTS

A further source for comments on typicality are the messenger scenes. Homeric messengers normally repeat the original assignment verbatim. Within the group of relevant examples a special case is the destructive

¹⁴ E.g. *Il.* 5.671–6, see Arend (1933: 106–15).

¹⁵ Cf. schol. A *Il.* 8.168 *Ariston.*; apart from the lack of a textual basis and the weak wording (the plus-verse simply puts the preceding line in the negative), this solution faces the additional problem that the deliberating character normally chooses alternative B (Nünlist and de Jong 2000: 167, *s.v.* *Prinzip des kontinuierlichen Gedankens*).

Dream at the beginning of *Iliad* 2. Zeus' original assignment (2.11–15) is repeated not only once, but twice: once by Dream to Agamemnon (2.28–32) and once by Agamemnon to his officers (2.65–9). Zenodotus did not like the second repetition and rewrote the embedded speech:

ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος συντέτμηκεν, οὕτως εἰπών· “ἠνώγει σε πατήρ ὑψίζυγος, αἰθέρι ναίων, | Τρωσὶ μαχήσασθαι προτὶ Ἴλιον. ὥς ὁ μὲν εἰπών | ὤχετ' ἀποπτάμενος”. τὰ δὲ ἀπαγγελτικὰ ἐξ ἀνάγκης δις καὶ τρις ἀναπολεῖται ταῖς αὐταῖς λέξεσι. καὶ οὐ δυσωπητέον· ἀναγκαῖον γὰρ καὶ τοῖς συγκεκλημένοις βουλευταῖς διηγῆσασθαι. (schol. A *Il.* 2.60–71 *Ariston.*)

<The diplai periestigmenai,> because Zenodotus cut down the passage by writing ‘The father who sits on high and dwells in the sky urges you to march against Ilios and fight with the Trojans. Thus speaking, he [sc. Dream] flew away.’ But messenger reports are by necessity repeated verbatim twice and three times. And one must not shy at it. For it is necessary to report also to the assembled counsellors.

Aristarchus objects to Zenodotus' solution with the argument that ἀπαγγελτικὰ (‘messenger reports’) are by necessity repeated twice or even three times. Nickau (1977: 83 n. 4) argues that the phrase ‘twice or thrice’ is a common saying. But the exact figures do play a role here. If the phrase were taken in a loose sense here, Aristarchus' argument would simply miss the point. For Zenodotus does not take exception to the single repetition of the messenger report, either here or elsewhere (Nickau 1977: 84), but to the double repetition. One can therefore conclude that Alexandrian scholars generally accept that messenger reports are verbatim repetitions of the original assignment. They recognised a Homeric type scene of the name ἀπαγγελτικόν.¹⁶ They appear to disagree on the question whether a third repetition is possible. The problem is that the third repetition in 2.65–9 has no immediate parallel in Homer, which makes it difficult to decide whether Zenodotus acted in ignorance of a Homeric narrative principle or not.¹⁷ In any case, Aristarchus refutes his rewriting of the passage

¹⁶ Conversely, other critics, challenged by Porphyry *zet.* 32 (I 326.9–12 Schrader), appear to have taken exception to verbatim repetition in messenger scenes in general. As to the term ἀπαγγελτικόν, Nickau (1977: 83 n. 6) connects it with the notion of Aristotle, for whom it simply means ‘narrative’ as opposed to ‘dramatic’ (i.e. direct speech, see Chapter 3); cf. e.g. schol. S. *El.* 1404, where the verb ἀπαγγέλλειν designates a messenger speech. But the scholion cited above appears to reflect a more restricted meaning of the word, as exemplified in schol. AbT *Il.* 1.366b *ex.*: τέσσαρες δὲ διηγῆσεων ἰδέαι· . . . τὸ δὲ ἀπαγγελτικόν, ὅταν ἅ παρ' ἑτέρου ἤκουσεν ἑτέρῳ διηγῆται (‘there are four types of narrative: . . . <secondly> the messenger report, when one reports to one person what one has heard from another . . .’). This type is then illustrated by Iris' speech to Poseidon (*Il.* 15.174–83), which repeats Zeus' instruction verbatim (176–83 ≈ 160–68); see Chapter 3.

¹⁷ The question is set out in detail by Nickau (1977: 82–6, with bibl.). It remains, however, doubtful whether *Il.* 24.143–99 (Iris repeats Zeus' instruction verbatim, whereas Priam paraphrases it to Hecuba) is enough to establish a Homeric principle to which Zenodotus adheres when he rewrites 2.60–70.

on the basis of a *lysis ek tou prosopou* (see Chapter 4): the Greek officers assembled in the *boule* need to learn about the Dream too, regardless of whether the audience has heard it twice already, which is a kind of ‘realistic’ explanation.¹⁸

The Alexandrians’ principal acceptance of verbatim repetition in messenger reports is all the more striking because they were generally suspicious about repeated lines and obelised many of them (e.g. Lührs 1992). In the case of messenger reports, however, they recognised their special position and treated them accordingly.¹⁹

In a similar vein, a note on the short speech in which Hera sends Iris and Apollo to Zeus (schol. bT *Il.* 15.147–8*b ex.*) observes that the goddess does not mention the reason for the summons, although verbatim repetition (παλιλλογοεῖν) is common in this type of speech.²⁰ Still in terms of narrative conventions, one critic notes that the Homeric characters who run an errand do not report back to the one who sent them (schol. bT *Il.* 16.25–7 *ex.*, with examples in T).

Moreover, scholars also recognised that the messenger need not limit himself to a verbatim repetition of the instruction. Iris, in particular, is prone to contextualise her report and to add words of her own (schol. bT *Il.* 8.423–4 *ex.*, A *Il.* 15.204*a Ariston.*, both with parallels).²¹

TYPICAL NUMBERS

Finally, Aristarchus and others appear to have recognised that Homer is particularly prone (εὐεπίφορος) to use the number nine.²² Ps.Plutarch (*Hom.* 145.10–11) agrees on the prominence of the number nine and adds that three, five and seven are also frequent. Another scholar (schol. T *Il.*

¹⁸ The same argument is used against Aristarchus’ own athetesis of *Il.* 18.444–56 (schol. bT *Il.* 18.444–56*b ex.*, quoted and discussed in Chapter 1).

¹⁹ Conversely, in the case of two messenger reports by Iris, Aristarchus argues that some lines from the instruction were interpolated into the messenger report (schol. A *Il.* 8.420–4*a Ariston.*) or *vice versa* (schol. A *Il.* 15.166–7*a Ariston.*). In both cases, he argues that the suspected lines are inappropriate to the character in question; see also Lührs (1992: 238–45). Aristarchus also suspected three lines in Agamemnon’s instruction to Talthybius (schol. A *Il.* 4.195*a Ariston.*, A *Il.* 4.205*a Ariston.*). Here, however, he seems to argue that Talthybius need not be told what he knows anyway (Lührs 1992: 245–6); similarly, the athetesis of 12.350 and 363 is not due to their being a repetition (schol. A *Il.* 12.350*a Ariston.*, A *Il.* 12.363 *Ariston.*).

²⁰ The notion that messengers do not report everything recurs in a looser sense in schol. b *Il.* 3.254 *ex.*

²¹ At the same time, scholars wonder why Odysseus’ report about the embassy to Achilles (*Il.* 9.677–92) omits a crucial element, and consider possible answers (schol. A *Il.* 9.680*b Ariston.*, bT *Il.* 9.682–3 *ex.*, D *Il.* 9.679).

²² Cf. schol. A *Il.* 6.174*a Ariston.*, T *Il.* 12.25 *ex.*, also schol. h *Il.* 1.53–5 (quoted by Erbse in the *test.*), which lists corresponding passages: *Il.* 7.161, 2.96–7. Incidentally, schol. Hes. *Th.* 789*b* argues that Hesiod is fond of the number ten.

6.93 *ex.*) remarks that Homer is particularly prone (εὐεπίφορος) to use the number twelve. No ancient scholar, however, seems to have made the further step that many figures in Homer are multiples of three.²³ The question must therefore be left open whether ancient scholars recognised the typicality of Homeric numbers as such or simply observed his propensity for particular figures.²⁴

CONCLUSION

The collected evidence suggests that ancient scholars recognised recurrent patterns in Homeric scenes and their respective characteristics. They do not seem to have coined a particular term such as ‘type scene’, nor did they discuss typical scenes as a separate entity. Apparently, they collected all the relevant passages of one particular group and compared them with each other. In the case of the arming scene, they recognised which characteristics can be varied (length, completeness of single elements) and which cannot (sequence). Moreover, they collected and described typical battle scenes, including the instances which alter or contradict the standard pattern. The same probably applies to the type scene ‘deliberation’. Finally, the examination of Homeric messenger scenes made them understand that verbatim repetition of lines, which they generally treated with suspicion, is acceptable in the case of type scenes. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, ancient scholars do not seem to have made a connection between type scenes and the oral background of the Homeric epics. As a further difference it is perhaps fair to say that ancient scholars, with their emphasis on variation (see [Chapter 9](#)), tend to focus on the aspects that are not typical. However, in order to do so they had to establish the typical pattern first. It is also true that scholia in general tend to comment on passages that are exceptional rather than typical (cf. *Introd.* page 11).

²³ Ancient and modern scholarship on Homeric figures is collected by Hillgruber (1999: 323–4); add *Eust.* 180.16 (= 1.277.1–2) and the parallels listed by van der Valk (*ad loc.*).

²⁴ *Schol. T Il.* 8.562–3*a ex.* makes the observation that Homer is generally fond of numbers in both epics (with parallels).

Homeric speeches

This chapter supplements the general points made in [Chapter 3](#) with some of the more specific characteristics that ancient scholars discovered in the speeches of Homer in particular.

SPEECH INTRODUCTIONS AND THEIR FUNCTION

Homeric speeches are normally introduced and capped by speech formulae, which have a function similar to quotation marks in a modern text.¹ At the same time, the speech introduction allows the narrator to give an idea of what the speech is going to be like. As a note on the line that introduces Odysseus' first speech to Nausicaa puts it:

προστίθησι δὲ τῷ ἀκροατῇ κανόνα τῶν εἰρησομένων λόγων. εἰσόμεθα δὲ εἰ κεκράτηκε τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. (schol. HPQ *Od.* 6.148)²

He [sc. Homer] confers on the reader beforehand a standard for the following speech. But we will learn <only later> whether he [sc. Odysseus] succeeded with his address.

The note makes two observations. Firstly, the speech introduction provides the reader with a standard which he can apply to the speech (the implication probably being that this helps him to orient himself).³ Secondly, however, the information whether or not the speech fulfils its purpose is given only after the speech (e.g. in the capping formula).

¹ Consequently, critics are bothered by the absence of speech introductions (see [Chapter 3](#)).

² For another scholion dealing with the function and meaning of the speech introduction see schol. b *Il.* 1.247–8 *ex.* (προσνίστησι τὸ εἶδος τῶν λόγων ὡς προσηνὲς καὶ καταστέλλειν ὄργην δυνάμενον, 'he [sc. Homer] mentions before the nature of the speech, that it is gentle and able to calm the anger [sc. of Agamemnon and Achilles]'); cf. also bT *Il.* 2.272c *ex.* (*Porph.*?), though not strictly on the speech introduction itself. Similarly, notes such as schol. bT *Il.* 1.104–5 *ex.* and bT *Il.* 6.405 *ex.* explain that the description of the speaker's appearance (Agamemnon looking angrily, Andromache weeping) prefigures what he or she is going to say.

³ If the critic meant to say that Homeric speeches are regularly introduced in such a way, this point is left implicit (contrast Porphyry below).

The general point about Homeric speech introductions is made by Porphyry with considerably more detail and the explicit statement that this is a standard feature of Homeric speeches. The long note first states the general principle:

παρατηρεῖν δεῖ ὡς, ὅταν ἐκ προσώπου τινὸς ἐπάγειν λόγους μέλλη τινὰς ὁ ποιητής, προλέγει προσημαίνων οἷος ἔσται ὁ λόγος ἢ μεθ' οἷας διαθέσεως λεγόμενος. οὕτω γὰρ ὄρον λαβόντες παρὰ τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἐπὶ τὰ αὐτὰ οἷς αὐτὸς παρήγγειλε τῶν λεγομένων ἀκουσόμεθα. (Porph. *Quaest. Hom.* I, pp. 86–7 Sodano; this is the text of ms. V, for textual variants see Sodano *ad loc.*).

NB when the poet is about to adduce the speech of a character, he introduces it by giving an initial indication of what the speech will be like or with what attitude it is spoken. Thus, taking a reference point from the poet, we will understand the speech with a view to the very things which he himself suggested.

This basic principle is then illustrated by several examples and extensive explanation: ms. V, for example, adduces and interprets no fewer than six speech introductions: *Il.* 1.148 (= 22.260, 344, 24.559), *Od.* 18.9, *Il.* 1.73 (= 1.253, 2.78, 283), *Od.* 8.201, *Il.* 4.5–6 (with a long discussion of the (still) disputed meaning of παραβλήδην) and *Il.* 1.513.

Porphyry was not the first to recognise the importance of Homeric speech introductions. In his attempt to defend the Homeric passages that others considered inappropriate for educational purposes, Plutarch suggests, with respect to the speeches, that the introductions indicate whether Homer thought the speech was laudable or not. In the former case, Homer's young readers may well pay attention to it, but not in the latter (*aud. poet.* 19a–c).⁴ A similar function is attributed to the formulae that cap the speeches at the end (19d). Regardless of whether one considers Plutarch's argument as a whole persuasive or not, he clearly treats the introduction as a guide to the understanding of the speech, as many readers and scholars no doubt will have done before him.⁵

A generalising note (schol. PQ *Od.* 6.52) goes some way beyond the limits of the speech introduction itself (see also the examples at the end of n. 2) and argues that Homer is wont to give a sketch of the subsequent encounter of the characters (σύνηθες αὐτῶν προδιατυποῦν τὴν συναγωγὴν τῶν προσώπων).

⁴ Incidentally, the Odyssean passage (6.148) which triggered the note quoted at the beginning of this chapter is among Plutarch's examples of a 'positive' speech introduction.

⁵ The present account only comprises comments that expressly discuss the workings of speech introductions. There are many other notes which simply interpret the introductions (e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 7.225 ex., bT *Il.* 13.413 ex., bT *Il.* 15.103b ex.) or capping formulae (e.g. schol. AbT *Il.* 9.431 ex., bT *Il.* 10.72 ex.).

As for the capping formula, critics do not seem to have discussed its workings as systematically as that of the introductions (but see e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 14.475*a ex.*). Nevertheless, two observations that go back to Aristarchus are worth mentioning. The first (schol. A *Il.* 9.694*b Ariston.*) argues that the expression ‘marvelling at his words’ (μῦθον ἀγασσάμενοι), which is found elsewhere, is inappropriate here, where it describes the reaction of the other Greeks to Odysseus’ speech about the embassy to Achilles. Aristarchus argues that Odysseus’ report (esp. what Achilles said to the ambassadors) does not fall under the rubric ‘astonishing’ (καταπληκτικό). He perhaps means to say that Odysseus’ speech is too negative to justify the phrase in question.

The other observation is of a more formalistic nature and deals with Homer’s usage of the verb ἦ (‘he/she said’). Aristarchus notes that Homer, unlike Plato, never uses it at the beginning of a speech.⁶ Still in terms of formalism, Didymus observes that when a single character speaks as it were on behalf of two, the capping formula can exhibit a participle in the dual (schol. A *Il.* 10.349*a Did.*, sim. T, both with parallels).

NO RAPID DIALOGUE IN HOMER

The formalism of Homeric speeches applies to aspects other than the standard introductions and capping formulae. Homeric speeches, for example, normally do not begin or end in the middle of the line. Moreover, speakers do not interrupt each other. Each speaker is allowed to complete his or her speech. Rapid dialogue, known for example from drama in the form of *stichomythia* or *antilabai*, which can leave sentences incomplete until the same speaker resumes his speech, is foreign to the Homeric epics. This is what a note on *Iliad* I seems to have in mind. (In the rising tension of his quarrel with Achilles, Agamemnon threatens to take Odysseus’, Ajax’ or Achilles’ prize of honour as compensation for the loss of Chryseis. Achilles then decries what he calls Agamemnon’s ‘greed’.)

εἰκὸς ἦν διαπεπυρωῖσθαι τὸν Ἀχιλλέα, ὅτε ἔλεγεν ὁ Ἀγαμέμνων “ἦ τεὸν ἦ Αἴαντος” [*Il.* 1.138]. ὁ δὲ ποιητὴς διαστηματικὸς ὢν οὐκ ἠδυνήθη εἰπεῖν, μέχρις οὗ συγκλείση τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος λόγον. (schol. A *Il.* 1.148 *ex.*)

It would have been natural for Achilles to get angry [i.e. to interrupt] when Agamemnon said ‘either yours or that of Ajax’. But the poet, proceeding in

⁶ The point is made on several occasions: see in particular schol. A *Il.* 20.114*a Ariston.* (cf. AT *Il.* 20.114*b Did.*), where it is used in order to refute a Zenodotean conjecture, cf. also schol. A *Il.* 1.219*a Did. vel Ariston.* (with the *testimonia* collected by Erbse, add schol. E *Od.* 8.186).

intervals as he does, could not speak [sc. in Achilles' voice] until he had completed Agamemnon's speech.

It is not clear what the critic exactly means by διαστηματικός ὤν.⁷ In any case, he seems to describe Homer's technique of not having characters interrupt each other and completing their speeches first, even in scenes where emotions flare up.⁸ The implicit background of the note is the observation that in this case Homer's narrative principles overrule a 'naturalistic' presentation of the dialogue.

RING-COMPOSITION IN SPEECHES

Modern studies such as that by Lohmann (1970) have shown that Homeric speeches often display a thematic and rhetorical structure known as ring-composition. The phenomenon does not receive particular attention in the scholia, but ancient scholars are familiar with it. (In his attempt to ransom the body of Hector in *Iliad* 24, Priam addresses Achilles with a speech in which Achilles' father Peleus figures prominently at the beginning and at the end.)

ὡς ἴκανοῦ εἰς ἔλεον ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἤρξατο [cf. *Il.* 24.486–92] καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔληξεν. (schol. bT *Il.* 24.504a ex.)⁹

Since he [sc. Peleus] was apt to <induce> pity, he [sc. Priam] began [sc. his speech] with him and ended with him.

The structure of the speech is, in other words, dictated by rhetorical considerations on the part of the speaker. The wording of the scholion is reminiscent of Nestor's statement in *Il.* 9.97 (ἐν σοὶ μὲν λήξω, σέο δ' ἄρξομαι) and of Hermogenes' definition of what he calls a κύκλος ('circle'):

γίνεται δέ, ὅταν, ἀφ' οὗ ἄρξηται τις ὀνόματος ἢ ῥήματος, εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ καταλήξῃ πάλιν. (Hermog. *inv.* 4.8, p. 195.7–8 Rabe)¹⁰

⁷ There are no parallels for this expression in a similar context. A possible explanation is based on musical theory, where διαστηματικός means 'proceeding by intervals (of musical progressions)' (LSJ *s.v.*). Just as the musician develops his melody proceeding by fixed intervals (and not, say, by means of *glissando*), Homer brings one speech to an end before he 'jumps' to the next.

⁸ Note that when Achilles finally does interrupt Agamemnon (*Il.* 1.292), Homer nevertheless adheres to his usual principles and indicates the interruption by means of the adverb ὑποβλήθη ('interrupting').

⁹ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 18.457b ex. (Thetis' speech to Hephaestus begins and ends with the subject 'pity', ἔλεος), bT *Il.* 22.508–9 ex. (Andromache's speech begins and ends with the subject 'laments', ὄδυρμοί); also schol. bT *Il.* 22.77–8 ex., which, however, refers to the narrative frame around the speech and not the ring-composition of the speech itself.

¹⁰ Hermogenes first describes a more rigid form of 'circle', in which a sentence's opening and closing word are exactly identical. He then makes it clear, however, that this 'ring-composition' also applies

It [sc. the ‘circle’] comes into being when one ends again with the same noun or verb from which one began.

It is worth pointing out that the scholia, despite the analogy of the verbs ἄρχεσθαι and (κατα)λήγειν, do not make use of the rhetorical term κύκλος itself, which stands sponsor to modern ‘ring-composition’. In the Homeric scholia κυκλικός and cognates always refer to the poets of the epic cycle and their characteristics (Pfeiffer 1968: 230), usually in a critical tone. Conversely, Eustathius uses κύκλος and cognates exclusively in the rhetorical sense.¹¹

Whereas the scholion quoted above seems to be indebted to the terminology found in Hermogenes, in other cases the scholar may simply note that the speaker ‘returns’ (ἀναστρέφειν) at the end to the topic of the speech’s beginning (schol. bT *Il.* 22.508–9 *ex.*, cf. n. 9). All in all, one can conclude that ancient scholars recognised the ring-composition of Homeric speeches as a device of closure. However, they do not frequently draw attention to it or discuss the device in its own right. More particularly, they do not seem to have treated instances of speeches with multiple rings.

OTHER STRUCTURAL ANALYSES OF SPEECHES

Ancient rhetoric expected an orator first to give a summary of his speech’s salient points or topics (κεφάλαια) and then to elaborate them one by one (see Chapter 9). Consequently, the analysis of the speech’s *narratio* could identify the individual topics, as do several notes on Odysseus’ long speech in *Iliad* 9 when they indicate the first, second, third, etc. topic (κεφάλαιον).¹² Likewise, the proof section of a speech consists of two types of rhetorical demonstration, *enthymeme* and *epichireme* (e.g. D.H. *Is.* 16, with Usher’s note). This is reflected in the notes that analyse the speech of Odysseus in *Iliad* 14.83–102 where he refutes Agamemnon’s suggestion that they leave. They identify the first, second and third *epichireme* of Odysseus’ speech.¹³

to entire speeches (e.g. Demosthenes’ *Against Leptines*) and need not entail a verbatim repetition of the opening word(s).

¹¹ See L. Friedländer (1853: 253), van der Valk (I: xciii n. 6), with examples. Note that Eustathius uses the term with reference both to the structure of single lines/sentences (e.g. 818.43–5 = 3.112.14–17) and to larger units, either within speeches (e.g. 671.44–5 = 2.425.12–15) or in the narrator-text (e.g. 194.6 = 1.297.14–15).

¹² See schol. bT *Il.* 9.230–1 *ex.* (πρῶτον κεφάλαιον), bT *Il.* 9.252b *ex.* (δεύτερον κ.), bT *Il.* 9.261a *ex.* (τρίτον κ.), bT *Il.* 9.300a *ex.* (τέταρτον κ.). See also bT *Il.* 9.225a *ex.* (on the speech’s προσίμιον).

¹³ See schol. bT *Il.* 14.84–5 *ex.* (πρῶτον ἐπιχείρημα), bT *Il.* 14.88–94 *ex.* (δεύτερον and τρίτον ἐ.).

Less indebted to rhetorical theory but equally interesting are the notes that explain which part of the speech responds to which part of the interlocutor's speech. The principal occasion is again Odysseus' speech in *Iliad* 9, to which Achilles responds almost point by point. The relevant notes point out that Achilles' words are '(directed) against such and such' (πρὸς τὸ + quotation of the relevant line from Odysseus' speech).¹⁴ This is indicative of careful and systematic analysis of corresponding speeches. A similar conclusion can be drawn from a note such as schol. P *Od.* 7.238, which makes the important observation that Odysseus answers only the last part of Arete's question.

The analysis of corresponding speeches is not limited to speeches that are in immediate juxtaposition. Quite often, characters react 'with delay' to something that had been said on an earlier occasion. Thus, Diomedes' speech at the beginning of *Iliad* 9 not only responds to Agamemnon's harsh critique in the *epipoleis* (schol. A *Il.* 9.34a *Ariston.*), but also to Agamemnon's intention to silence all other would-be challengers to his leadership (schol. bT *Il.* 9.33d *ex.*, with ref. to *Il.* 1.186).¹⁵ Notes of this type testify to a high awareness of a feature that has been discussed in detail in [Chapter 1](#): the overall narrative coherence of the Homeric epics.

THREE-WAY CONVERSATION

Another aspect of speech that caught scholars' attention is the phenomenon that the explicit addressee is not always the real 'target' of the utterance. Ancient commentators recognised such a 'three-way conversation', for example, in the speech in which Odysseus reprimands Thersites. He says, among other things, 'we do not know clearly yet how these things will be, whether we sons of the Achaeans will return home well or ill' (*Il.* 2.252–3):

ἐντέχνως πάνυ ὡς πρὸς τὸν Θερσίτην λέγων πρὸς τοὺς Ἕλληνας ἀποτείνεται· μέσης γὰρ αὐτῶ δεῖ γνώμης στοχαζομένῳ τοῦ πλήθους. (schol. bT *Il.* 2.252–3 *ex.*)¹⁶

Very artfully he [sc. Odysseus], as if speaking to Thersites, is in fact referring to the Greeks [i.e. the entire army]. For aiming at the masses he is in need of a moderate intention.

¹⁴ See schol. bT *Il.* 9.316a *ex.*, bT *Il.* 9.316b *ex.*, bT *Il.* 9.365 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 9.366a *ex.*, and in particular bT *Il.* 9.378a *ex.*: Achilles responds to Odysseus' second topic (δεύτερον κεφάλαιον).

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 8.164c *ex.*, A *Il.* 9.19b *Ariston.*, A *Il.* 14.45a *Ariston.*

¹⁶ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 2.260b *ex.*, T *Il.* 2.284–5a' *ex.* (sim. b), bT *Il.* 13.109 *ex.*, bT *Il.* 17.156 *ex.* The second example is used by Ps.Herod. *fig.* 35 Hajdú to illustrate ἀποστροφή (see below).

The note not only argues that Odysseus' warning about the uncertain outcome of the war is not primarily meant for Thersites' ears, but also hints at the reason why he avoids addressing the Greek army directly: by doing so he might have put them off. He therefore decides to steer a middle course, so that he can have his cake and eat it. Other notes expressly state why the speaker does not directly address his actual addressee: Diomedes is afraid of addressing the commander-in-chief Agamemnon (schol. bT *Il.* 4.413a *ex.*) and therefore speaks to Sthenelus instead. Hector does not deign to address Paris and instructs Helen to send him into battle (schol. bT *Il.* 6.363 *ex.*).¹⁷

'Three-way conversations' are treated in some rhetorical handbooks under the rubric ἀποστροφή ('apostrophe, address'). Ps.Herodian (*fig.* 35 Hajdú), for example, defines it accordingly and illustrates it with an Iliadic example that is treated as 'three-way conversation' in the Homeric scholia too (see n. 16). In other handbooks, however, the term ἀποστροφή only indicates that the speaker changes from one addressee to another, without the notion of an implicit addressee.¹⁸ This gives the impression of being closer to the original meaning (ἀποστρέφειν 'to turn away') and is well attested in the scholia (see Excursus in [Chapter 3](#)). Unlike Ps.Herodian, however, the scholia do not seem to make use of ἀποστροφή and cognates when it comes to describing 'three-way conversations'.

INTERIOR MONOLOGUE

A recurrent feature of the two Homeric epics are the monologues, for example when the character addresses 'his own great-hearted spirit' (πρὸς ὄν μεγαλήτορα θυμόν, 7x *Il.*, 4x *Od.*). At least one ancient critic felt that this was not a real speech. (Left alone on the battlefield in *Iliad* 11, Odysseus deliberates in a monologue the pros and cons of fleeing vs. the risk of getting caught by the enemy.)

ποιητικῶς τὰ ἐνθυμηθέντα ὡς εἰρημένα διατυποῖ. (schol. bT *Il.* 11.403–10 *ex.*)

In the style of a poet he [sc. Homer] presents the thoughts as if they were spoken.

¹⁷ Similarly, a note such as schol. T *Il.* 12.250 *ex.* argues that a speech may have an implicit addressee in addition to the explicit one.

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. Tiber. *fig.* III 61.29–30 Spengel (= 7.2–3 Ballaira), whereas Ps.Herodian's notion is shared, e.g., by Alex. *fig.* III 23–4 Spengel. Unfortunately, Hajdú (*ad* Ps.Herod. *fig.* 35) does not differentiate between the two types of ἀποστροφή in her list of *testimonia*.

The monologue is, in other words, not a real speech, but a typically poetic way of reporting what Odysseus was thinking.¹⁹ Unfortunately, the critic does not further explain his claim that this is typical of poets.

OMISSION OF SPEECHES

Given the unmistakable prominence of speech in the Homeric epics, critics felt that there were instances where one might have expected a speech, but Homer decided to do without. Notes of this type usually suggest a reason for the omission of the speech. They repeatedly explain that a speech would have been ‘inappropriate to the current circumstances’ (ἀνοικεῖον τῷ καιρῷ or the like).²⁰ Sometimes they are more specific and argue that the present haste (σπουδῆ, ἔπειξις) of the characters did not allow for a speech.²¹ The assumption is again that under normal circumstances the character would have spoken. Other speeches are said to have been left out because the character would not really have had anything fitting to say.²² Occasionally, the critics give a psychologising explanation for the character’s silence. Hector does not respond to the housekeeper’s speech because he is overwhelmed by his emotions (ὑπὸ θυμοῦ, schol. bT *Il.* 6.390 *ex.*). Both Ajax and Antilochus remain silent when they learn that Patroclus has been killed, Ajax because he is aggrieved, Antilochus because he is devastated (schol. b *Il.* 17.123a² *ex.*, sim. T). Or a character’s decision

¹⁹ Erbse (*ad loc.*) contrasts Eust. 852.52 (= 3.222.9–13), who speaks of a σχῆμα λόγου that can also be found in the *Odyssey*.

²⁰ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 5.111 *ex.* (Sthenelus does not respond verbally, but simply carries out Diomedes’ instruction), bT *Il.* 6.286 *ex.* (Hecuba does not respond to Hector’s speech), T *Il.* 8.112b *ex.* (Nestor carries out Diomedes’ instructions in silence), bT *Il.* 8.484 *ex.* (Zeus utters a powerful speech, but Hera does not retort, because she could neither agree nor disagree), bT *Il.* 13.165b *ex.* (Meriones fails to kill Deiphobus because his spear breaks; despite his frustration he remains silent); also bT *Il.* 1.345 *ex.* (Patroclus does not speak in order not to irritate Achilles even more). In all these cases, the ‘appropriateness to the current circumstances’ argues on the level of the characters. In one case, however, the same argument is applied to the level of the narrator: schol. T *Il.* 13.658 *ex.* argues that the narrator omitted the speech of the mourning father ‘due to the current circumstances’ (διὰ τὸν καιρὸν) and saved it for the mourning of Hector. On ‘saving for later’ see [Chapter 1](#).

²¹ Cf. e.g. schol. AbT *Il.* 2.183a *ex.* (Odysseus does not respond to Athena’s instruction to stop the fleeing army), bT *Il.* 2.186b *ex.* (in the same scene Odysseus takes Agamemnon’s sceptre, neither of them speaks), bT *Il.* 4.208b *ex.* (Machaon does not speak when he is urged by Talthybius to go and treat Menelaus), bT *Il.* 5.689 *ex.* (Hector does not respond to Sarpedon’s cry for help, because there is no time for talk), bT *Il.* 11.110–1 *ex.* (no gleeful speech of triumph as elsewhere), T *Il.* 11.488a¹ *ex.* (unlike Diomedes in book 8, Menelaus drives wounded Odysseus from the battlefield without a speech), bT *Il.* 12.81 *ex.* (Hector does not respond to Polydamas’ instruction to stop the charioteers at the ditch), bT *Il.* 18.466b *ex.* (Hephaestus turns to his forge without giving Thetis the chance to speak again), A *Il.* 18.615–7 *ex.* (after receiving the new armour, Thetis takes leave without speaking).

²² E.g., Chryses can neither praise nor chastise the Greeks when they return Briseis (schol. bT *Il.* 1.446 *ex.*), similarly Hera (see n. 20).

not to respond is seen as indicative of his personality.²³ Still other notes do not explicitly mention the omission of a speech, but imply it by explaining, for example, that ‘X did not wait for Y’s response’.²⁴

Whereas most or all of these notes seem to consider the omission of speeches acceptable or even praiseworthy, one note, at least, finds fault with it: Homer ought to have quoted the speeches.²⁵ In other words, this critic seems to assume that speeches had actually been delivered, but Homer so to speak suppresses them.

A somewhat different type of omitted speech is meant when a critic makes the observation that Achilles (sc. in the repeating analepsis that brings Thetis up to date, *Il.* 1.366–92) does not quote Chryses’ speech to Agamemnon and Menelaus (*Il.* 1.17–21).²⁶ In a way, the critic is saying that Achilles does not resort to ‘speech within speech’.

SPEECH WITHIN SPEECH

Elsewhere, however, Homer does make use of speech within speech, and the commentators explain it accordingly. Thus schol. bT *Il.* 11.786–9 *ex.*, for example, observes that Nestor in his speech to Patroclus quotes Patroclus’ father Menoetius. The note goes on to adduce the parallel from book 9 where Odysseus in his speech to Achilles quotes Achilles’ father Peleus (*Il.* 9.254–8). In both cases, the critic argues, the device of ‘speech within speech’ results in the addressees being under the impression that they are actually listening to their father.²⁷ If in the case of ‘three-way conversations’ the speaker conceals the real target of the utterance, ‘speech within speech’ allows him to pretend that he is not the actual source of the advice given.

As to terminology, there is no ancient equivalent to ‘speech within speech’. Ancient scholars either paraphrase the literary device²⁸ or they use the same terminology that is actually used when the narrator inserts a

²³ Hector does not respond to Helenus, who, prompted by the conversation between Athena and Apollo, suggests a duel with the strongest Greek fighter. This shows that he is ambitious (φιλότιμος, schol. bT *Il.* 7.54a *ex.*, the subject of ὑπέφηνε probably is Homer, not Hector).

²⁴ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 8.157c *ex.* (Nestor turning the chariot back to the Greek camp), also bT *Il.* 18.466b *ex.* (see n. 21).

²⁵ See schol. bT *Il.* 7.61a *ex.*, on the scene in which Hector and Agamemnon stop the fighting and have their armies sit down in order to prepare for the formal duel of Hector and Ajax.

²⁶ See schol. bT *Il.* 1.374b *ex.*; in fact, Achilles also omits Agamemnon’s response.

²⁷ Conversely, schol. bT *Il.* 11.765a *ex.* seems to ignore *Il.* 11.786–9 when it implies that only Odysseus resorts to ‘speech within speech’. On the quoted speech in *Il.* 9.254–8 see also Ps.Plut. *Hom.* 169.2.

²⁸ Cf. schol. bT *Il.* 2.323a *ex.* (Odysseus quotes Calchas, with explicit praise for not omitting the speech), bT *Il.* 16.839–41 *ex.* (Hector quotes Achilles), H *Od.* 2.96 (Antinous quotes Penelope).

speech.²⁹ In other words, the technical term does not differentiate between ‘speech’ (as opposed to narrator-text) and ‘speech within speech’. The reader must decide by examining the context which of the two applies.

Interestingly, ancient scholars also consider the option of a very short ‘speech within speech’ when a character seems to be using the ‘wrong’ grammatical person. For example, in his report about the embassy to Achilles, Odysseus informs the others that Achilles will return home, because ‘you will not achieve your goal any more’ (*Il.* 9.685). Why does he say ‘you’ and not ‘we’? The answer given is ‘because he is quoting what Achilles said’.³⁰

CONCLUSION

Speeches figure very prominently in the Homeric epics and receive much attention in scholarship, ancient and modern. In addition to the more general features of (Homeric) speech (outlined in [Chapter 3](#)) and to characterisation through speech (see [Chapter 11](#)), ancient scholars also applied a close analysis to the workings and structure of Homeric speech in particular. This includes a discussion of how the Homeric narrator can steer the reader’s response to speeches by means of introductory and capping formulae. Scholars also notice the absence of rapid dialogue in Homer and recognise that Homeric speeches can display a structure known as ‘ring-composition’. Still in terms of the speech’s structure, it can be determined by the preceding speech to which it responds. Or the speaker may react to an utterance made elsewhere in the poem. Regarding the rhetoric of the speeches, in some cases the alleged addressee appears not to be the actual or not the only addressee (‘three-way conversation’). And despite his usual preference for speeches, Homer occasionally decides to pass over a speech in silence or to omit it, because another goal (e.g. appropriateness or urgency) is more important now. Scholars also discuss the device of ‘speech within speech’. In most of these cases scholars try to explain what function the various devices have either in general or in the specific passage under discussion.

²⁹ See [Chapter 3](#) for the (strictly speaking inappropriate) use of the phrase ἀπὸ τοῦ διηγηματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ μιμητικόν for speech within speech (with list of examples, also from tragedy); cf. also schol. bT *Il.* 9.252b ex. (οὐτε ἐξ ἰδίου προσώπου . . . ἀλλ’ ἐν ἠθοποιίᾳ).

³⁰ See schol. T *Il.* 9.685b¹ ex. (sim. b²); Aristarchus (schol. A *Il.* 9.685a *Ariston.*) gives the same explanation and adds that Achilles said ‘you’ (δῆετε, *Il.* 9.418) not ‘they’ (δῆουσιν). For characters who use the ‘wrong’ grammatical person because they are quoting somebody see also schol. A *Il.* 2.12c *Ariston.* (whereas Zenodotus read ἔλοι, Aristarchus decided in favour of ἔλοις, which turns the passage into speech within speech), schol. A *Il.* 16.496a *Ariston.* (Sarpedon speaks about himself in the third person, perhaps because it is an instance of speech within speech).

Reverse order

The structural principle here called ‘reverse order’ is regularly referred to in ancient and modern scholarship on Homer, but there is no generally accepted term to designate it.¹ ‘Reverse order’ describes the Homeric narrator’s tendency to return first to the last of a series of two or more elements previously mentioned.² Therefore, the structure of the principle can be represented as: A–B—B’–A’. To give an example:

τίς τὰρ τῶν ὄχ’ ἄριστος ἔην, σύ μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα,
 αὐτῶν (A) ἢ δ’ ἵππων (B), οἳ ἄμ’ Ἀτρεΐδῃσιν ἔποντο.
 ἵπποι (B’) μὲν μέγ’ ἄρισται ἔσαν . . . [4 lines omitted]
 ἀνδρῶν (A’) αὖ μέγ’ ἄριστος ἔην . . . (*Il.* 2.761–3, 768)

The horses, which are mentioned last, are taken up first, which is especially striking as one might expect precedence to be given to the human fighters. This Homeric structural principle was well known to Aristarchus, who referred to it with the phrase πρὸς τὸ δεύτερον πρότερον ἀπαντᾶν, for example in the scholion on the quoted passage.

ὅτι πρὸς τὸ δεύτερον πρότερον ἀπήνητηκεν. (schol. *A Il.* 2.763 *Ariston.*)

<The diple,> because he [sc. Homer] has taken up the second [i.e. the horses] first.³

¹ For ancient scholarship see the present chapter, for modern scholarship see Nünlist and de Jong (2000: 167, *s.v. Prinzip des kontinuierlichen Gedankens*, with bibl.), de Jong (2001: xvii). In addition to ‘reverse order’, scholars also use the terms ‘inverted order’, ‘Homeric *hysteron proteron*’ or ‘(principle of) continuity of thought’. On ‘chiasm’ see n. 34 below.

² The description by M. Schmidt (1976: 124 n. 27b) is too restrictive: ‘wenn im Vordersatz zwei Substantive stehen, [schließt Homer] den Relativsatz in der Regel an das letztgenannte Substantiv an’.

³ This technical use of ἀπαντᾶν (‘to take up, refer to, respond to’) is widely attested in ancient grammar, e.g. πρὸς τὸ σημαίνόμενον ἀπαντᾶν (e.g. schol. *A Il.* 18.514–5a *Nic.*); see also Schneider (1910b: *s.v.*).

The extant corpus of scholia provides a remarkably high number of notes which comment on the principle.⁴ Perhaps even more interesting is the fact that the scholia contain traces of a scholarly debate as to whether the principle is always adhered to or not. The crucial scholion reads:

ὅτι καὶ πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ὑπαντᾷ ὁ ποιητής, ὡς καὶ ἐν τῷ “ἀρχοῦς αὔ νηῶν ἐρέω νῆάς τε προπάσας. | Βοιωτῶν μὲν Πηνέλεως” [*Il.* 2.493–4], “(Ἀμφίμαχος) καὶ Θάλπιος (ἠγησάσθην), | υἱες (ὁ) μὲν Κτεάτου” [*Il.* 2.620–1], “Ἀθηναίη τε καὶ Ἥρη· | ἦτοι Ἀθηναίη ἀκέων ἦν οὐδέ τι εἶπεν” [*Il.* 4.20, 22], καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ παρατίθησιν [Wilam., see Erbse *ad loc.*] ὁ Ἐπαφρόδιτος [fr. 37 Lünzner]. (schol. *T Il.* 15.6–7 *ex.*)⁶

<Note> that the poet also takes up the first [i.e. does not always adhere to reverse order] as also in ‘I shall tell of the leaders of the ships and all the ships. Of the Boeotians [i.e. taking up the ‘leaders of the ships’] Peneleus . . .’, <next example:> ‘Amphimachus and Thalius were leaders, sons one [i.e. Amphimachus] of Cteatus . . .’, <next example:> ‘Athena and Hera. Still Athena stayed silent and said nothing . . .’, and Epaphroditus lists many other examples.

The scholion clearly disputes the claim that Homer always adheres to ‘reverse order’ and gives examples. It is noteworthy that the examples for ‘parallel order’ (i.e. A–B–A’–B’)⁷ are listed in their sequence in the text of the *Iliad*. It is likely that this reflects Epaphroditus’ arrangement, which may well have been a systematic collection of relevant passages, with *Il.* 2.493–4 being the first example of the feature in the entire *Iliad*. It is generally agreed that the remarks of Epaphroditus (first century AD) are directed against Aristarchus, who appears to have held that Homer *always* takes up the second first.⁸

πρὸς τὴν ἀμφιβολίαν, πότερον ὁ Μέγης ἀπώκησεν ἢ ὁ Φυλεύς, ὃ καὶ (Ὀ)μηρικώτερον Ὀμηρος γὰρ αἰεὶ πρὸς τὸ δεῦτερον πρότερον ἀπαντᾷ. (schol. *A Il.* 2.629a *Ariston.*)

⁴ There are collections of passages by Lehrs ([1833] 1882: II) and Erbse (*ad schol. A Il.* 2.621 *Ariston.*, together with VII: 190), none of which is entirely complete. A-scholia: 2.629a, 2.763 (cf. also pap. II), 4.451a, 6.198, 7.8a, 7.276a, 7.306–7a, 8.65, 9.531, 11.221a, 11.834, 12.400c, 13.584a, 14.324a, 14.391, 15.8a, 15.330a, 18.595a, 20.68a, 20.233a, 24.605a (= 21 notes), cf. also schol. *H Od.* 15.6, *V Od.* 21.278. bT-scholia: 5.60–2, 13.1d, 13.763, 14.63b, 15.329–37, 15.330b, 17.110–1b, 23.679c (= 8 notes), cf. also 13.780, 20.233b and schol. *BM^aT Od.* 1.239 (p. 100.6 Ludwig). For the discussion of exceptions see below.

⁵ The reading of the ms. was rightly defended by van der Valk (1963: 437 n. 124) and others against the conjecture αἰεὶ (Wilamowitz/Maass), which Erbse does not even report in his *app. crit.* N. J. Richardson (1980: 282) returns to the conjecture but does not explain why.

⁶ The same argument and examples are given by Eustathius (1002.2–21 = 3.690.10–691.4). On the differences in diction between A and bT see below.

⁷ See Nünlist and de Jong (2000: 166, *s.v. Parallelkonstruktion*), de Jong (2001: xvi).

⁸ See van der Valk (1963: 437–8), M. Schmidt (1976: 124 n. 27b), N. J. Richardson (1980: 282).

<The diple refers> to the ambiguity, whether it is Meges who emigrated or, and this would be more Homeric, Phyleus. For Homer always takes up the second item first.

The question as to whether the relative clause in *Il.* 2.629 refers to Meges or his father, Phyleus, is answered by resorting to the principle of reverse order. No less important is the fragment of a commentary on book 2, preserved in P. Oxy. 1086 (first century BC, pap. II Erbse), composed not long after Aristarchus' own lifetime. The Homeric passage under discussion is again the one which opens the present chapter.

σημειοῦται δὲ ὅτι διὰ παντός [ὁ ποιητῆς οὕτως πρ(ὸς) τὸ δεύτερον πρότερον ἀπαντᾷ κατὰ ἰδίαν συνήθειαν. (schol. pap. *ad Il.* 2.763, p. 165 Erbse, suppl. ed. pr. e.g.)⁹

<The line> is marked with a sign, because throughout [the poet] takes up [in this way the second item] first according to a habit peculiar to him.

Despite the variation between αἰεί and διὰ παντός, the general sense of the two comments is virtually identical.¹⁰ Unlike other poets, it is argued, Homer always adheres to 'reverse order'. It still needs to be determined, however, whether Aristarchus did allow for exceptions or not. After all, another A-scholion in the vicinity of the one on 2.629 (cf. above) reads:

ὅτι παρὰ τὸ ἠθισμένον πρὸς τὸ πρότερον ἀπήντηκεν· ἔστι γὰρ ὁ προκατειρημένος Ἀμφίμαχος [*Il.* 2.620] Κτεάτου υἱός, ὁ δὲ Θάλπιος [*ibid.*] Εὐρύτου. (schol. *A Il.* 2.621 *Ariston.*, cf. also D: τετήρηκε δὲ τὴν τάξιν)¹¹

<The diple,> because in violation of his regular custom he [sc. Homer] takes up the former <first>. For Amphimachus, who is mentioned first, is the son of Cteatus, Thalpius, <who is mentioned second, is the son> of Eurytus.

This, as will be remembered, is the second in the list of examples cited in schol. T *Il.* 15.6–7 *ex.*, which derives from Epaphroditus (see above). If one is inclined to consider this the proverbial single exception, it must be said that in fact two more notes that can reasonably be attributed to Aristonicus-Aristarchus mention exceptions (cf. also n. 11). (Medon and Iason are described in parallel order.)

⁹ This note is preceded by a longer discussion of the same literary device (see below). The readings πρότερον and ἀπαντᾷ (pres.) are London's (2002b: 57), who expressly excludes Erbse's πρότερος and ἀπήντα (impf.).

¹⁰ The *scholia minora* regularly gloss αἰέν with διὰ παντός: P. Amh. 19recto.12 *ad Il.* 11.565, P. Köln IX 362.17 *ad Od.* 1.68, P. Strasb. inv. 33, VII 27 *ad Il.* 1.290 (J. London, p.c.).

¹¹ Cf. also schol. *A Il.* 6.219a *Ariston.* (with the telling comment σημειοῦνται τινες, which could, however, refer to Aristarchus himself: Lehrs [1833] 1882: 11).

ὅτι . . . καὶ ὅτι πρὸς τὸ πρότερον ἀπήντηκε παρὰ τὸ ἔθος. (schol. A *Il.* 15.333a *Ariston.*)

<The diple,> . . . because he [sc. Homer] takes up the former item <first> against his regular custom.

Similarly, the wounding of two sons of Priam, Isus and Antiphus, is narrated in parallel order:

ὅτι ἐπανείληφεν τὸ ὄνομα διὰ τὸ προειρηκέναι [cf. *Il.* 11.101–4] δύο (καὶ πρὸς τὸ πρότερον [sc. 11.102] ἀπήντησεν), ἵνα σαφηνίσῃ, κατὰ τίνα τόπον ἑκάτερος ἐπλήγη. (schol. A *Il.* 11.109 *Ariston.*)¹²

<The diple,> because he [sc. Homer] repeated the name [i.e. Antiphus] on account of his previously mentioning two <names (?)> (and he takes up the former [i.e. Isus] <first>), in order to make clear where each of the two was hit.¹³

It should also be mentioned, however, that in two other cases the presence of parallel order instead of reverse order is used in combination with other arguments in order to justify the athetesis of a passage.¹⁴ All in all, then, Aristarchus seems to have been aware that the principle of reverse order was not used without exception. But he nevertheless held that, as relatively rare exceptions, they did not disprove the existence of the principle as such.¹⁵ Epaphroditus, apparently taking Aristarchus' ἀεί literally, found fault with this view and collected a larger number of passages which did not display reverse order. And, in fact, a considerable number of bT-scholia reflect this other view.¹⁶ As for the source of these scholia, M. Schmidt (1976: 124 n. 27b) holds against Lehrs and others: 'Entsprechend können die bT-Scholien, in denen es heißt: πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ὑπήντησε ο.ä., sowohl

¹² The bulk of the scholion appears to comment on the fact that, though both names are mentioned in line 101, Homer repeats Antiphus' name in 104 and again in 109, whereas Isus is twice referred to with ὁ μὲν (103, 108). The purpose of the repeated name is to make clear who is wounded in which way. For another note on parallel order see also schol. M *Od.* 2.42 (quoted below).

¹³ In fact, the whole passage (*Il.* 11.101–9) is dominated by parallel order (cf. bT *Il.* 11.103b ex.).

¹⁴ See schol. A *Il.* 6.433–9 *Ariston.* and schol. A *Il.* 15.56a *Ariston.* with the remarkable explanation ὅτι ὡς ἐπίπαν πρὸς τὸ δεύτερον πρότερον ἀπαντᾷ, νῦν δὲ πρὸς τὸ πρότερον ἀπήντηκεν ('<The lines are athetised,> because he [sc. Homer] for the most part takes up the second first, but here he has <first> taken up the first'). Contrast the defence reported by Eustathius (1006.5 = 3.702.25–6): ὅτι οὐκ ἀήθης ἢ πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ἀπάντησις 'because the taking up of the first is not uncommon' (cf. schol. T *Il.* 15.56c ex., which simply records the 'parallel order'). Schrader (1880: 201) attributes the passage from Eustathius to Porphyry on no obvious grounds.

¹⁵ As for Aristarchus' ἀεί, Lehrs (*ap.* L. Friedländer 1853: 74) writes: ἀεί non 'semper' significat [. . .] sed 'plerumque', ut haud raro apud grammaticos. This explanation is in line with Aristarchus' alternative expressions ὡς ἐπίπαν (see previous n.), πυκνῶς (schol. A *Il.* 20.68a *Ariston.*) and συνθήως (schol. A *Il.* 18.595a *Ariston.*), which are more flexible than a literal ἀεί.

¹⁶ See schol. bT 11.103b ex., T 15.6–7 ex. (quoted above), T 15.56c ex., T 15.329–37 ex., T 15.330b ex., T 15.333b ex., T 16.251 ex., T 18.406 ex. (?), T 22.158b *Ariston.* (on this attribution see below); cf. also schol. BM^aT *Od.* 1.239 (p. 100.6 Ludwich).

aus Aristonikos als auch aus Epaphroditos stammen’, and he adduces two T-scholia which have been attributed to Aristonicus by several scholars.¹⁷ In fact, one can even go one step further. For the relevant scholia which can safely be attributed to Aristonicus, because they come from ms. A, show a remarkable terminological consistency: notably with respect to the verb, which is always ἀπαντᾶν. Conversely, in the bT-scholia the verb used is, with one exception, always ὑπαντᾶν.¹⁸ Especially striking are the cases where both redactions have been preserved:

ὅτι πρὸς τὸ δεύτερον πρότερον ἀπήντηκεν· ὁ γὰρ Ἀρκεσίλαος [cf. *Il.* 15.329] ἔστι Βοιωτός [cf. *Il.* 2.495]. (schol. A *Il.* 15.330a *Ariston.*)

<The diple,> because he [sc. Homer] takes up the second <name> first. For Arcesilaus is a Boeotian.

ὅτι πρὸς τὸ δεύτερον ὑπήντησεν· ὁ γὰρ Ἀρκεσίλαος Βοιωτός ἐστιν. (schol. T *Il.* 15.330b)

<Note> that he [sc. Homer] takes up the second <name> first. For Arcesilaus is a Boeotian.

Despite the terminological difference, Erbse attributes both notes to Aristonicus, but the clear-cut distribution of ἀπαντᾶν and ὑπαντᾶν over A and bT raises the possibility that the notes come from different sources. And especially in the cases where the bT-scholia reflect Epaphroditus’ and not Aristarchus’ view (see n. 16), it is more likely that they do not derive from Aristonicus but from Epaphroditus (or a scholar who uses his insights).¹⁹

If this terminological distinction is accurate, an Odyssean scholion can be vindicated for Aristarchus that is important for another reason too:

¹⁷ See schol. T *Il.* 18.406, attributed to Aristonicus by Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 11) and L. Friedländer (1853: 287), though not by Erbse, and schol. T *Il.* 22.158b, attributed to Aristonicus by Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 11) and L. Friedländer (1853: 319), with Erbse following suit.

¹⁸ The exception is schol. bT *Il.* 13.763 (attributed by Erbse to Aristonicus). Virtually the same clear-cut division can be observed with the adverbs, with πρότερον outdoing πρώτον by the ratio 24:3 in A, whereas the bT-scholia never use πρότερον, always πρώτον.

¹⁹ This last point is made already by van der Valk (1963: 438), but he does not discuss the particular diction of the bT-scholia, which agree in principle with Aristarchus but exhibit a specific and characteristic terminology. One wonders whether the critic who introduced ὑπαντᾶν perceived a semantic difference or tried to set off his ‘school’ against Aristarchus’. Rhetorical handbooks from the second century AD onwards, however, mix the two words without hesitation. The same holds true for Apollonius Dyscolus (*syn.* 276.5 with Uhlig’s note). Witness also P. Gen. inv. 272 a–b, GH 5 (third century AD, Plutarch), which has ἀπα[ν]τωσαι instead of ὑπαντῶσαι in all the mss. (J. Landon, p.c.).

τηρητέον ὅτι πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον τῆ τάξει πρῶτον ἀπήντησεν, ὅπερ σπανίως ποιεῖ. (schol. M *Od.* 2.42)

NB he [sc. Homer] took up the first in the sequence first, which he rarely does.

Similarly to the Aristarchean notes quoted above, the scholion argues that the present instance of parallel order is exceptional. What is remarkable is its point of reference. It refers to Telemachus answering to Aegyptius' query as to why the Ithacan assembly has been convened: is it due to the news that Odysseus' army is returning from Troy (*Od.* 2.30–1) or to another matter of public interest (2.32)? Telemachus answers in parallel order that it is neither. The note, therefore, shows an awareness of the fact that 'parallel' and, it is argued, more often 'reverse order' determine the structure of corresponding speeches. The notion recurs in Aristarchus' interpretation of Odysseus' and Anticleia's speeches in *Odyssey* II (see below).

Aristarchus' and Epaphroditus' disagreement over 'reverse' and 'parallel order' is not the only scholarly debate which can be glimpsed in the extant scholia. Two more cases, one possible, one certain, can be found.

The possible case concerns a disagreement between Aristarchus and his notorious Pergamene 'rival' Crates.²⁰ The passage in question comes from book 23 of the *Iliad*:

Εὐρύαλος δέ οἱ οἶος ἀνίστατο, ἰσόθεος φῶς,
Μηκιστῆος υἱὸς Ταλαϊονίδαο ἄνακτος,
ὃς ποτε Θήβασδ' ἦλθε δεδουπότος Οἰδιπόδαο
ἔς τάφον· (*Il.* 23.677–80)

The relevant scholion reads:

ὅτι ἐπὶ τοῦ Μηκιστέως ἀκουστέον “ὃς ποτε Θήβας ἦλθεν”, οὐκ ἐπὶ τοῦ Εὐρυάλου, ὡς ὁ Κράτης [fr. 34 Broggiato]. (schol. A *Il.* 23.679a *Ariston.*)

<The diple,> because 'who once came to Thebes' must be referred to Mecisteus and not, as Crates <argues>, to Euryalus.

Crates apparently thought that the relative clause 'who once came to Thebes' goes with Euryalus. This leads to problems of chronology in that it makes Oedipus a contemporary of the Trojan war. But Lehrs has argued that more is at stake here. Although the A-scholion does not expressly mention 'reverse order' (but cf. schol. bΓ *Il.* 23.679c *ex.*: πρὸς γὰρ τὸ δεύτερον ὑπαντᾷ), the argument seems to be that Crates was either unaware of the

²⁰ On the relationship between Aristarchus and Crates see e.g. Porter (1992), Broggiato (2001).

Homeric principle of ‘reverse order’ or at least ignored it in the present scene.²¹

The certain case is Aristarchus’ disagreement with Praxiphanes (fourth to third century BC, a pupil of Theophrastus) over the interpretation of an Odyssean passage, for which he resorts to the principle of ‘reverse order’. The starting-point is the same passage from book 2 discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

τὸ σημεῖον ὅτι]ι πρ(ὸς) τὸ δεύτερον πρότερον ἀπήντησεν. τὴν δ’ ἀ[πολογία]ν τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἐντεῦθεν ὁ Ἄρ]ισταρχος πεποίηται πρ(ὸς) Πραξιφάνην [fr. 20 Wehrli]· ἐκεῖνος [γὰρ θαυμάζει τὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα ἐπὶ τῷ]ι παρη[γ]ορικῶς ὠμιληκότα τῇ μητρὶ κα[τὰ τὴν τελευταίην περὶ Τηλεμάχου κ(αί)] Πηνελόπτης ἔρωτῆσαι, ἐπειδήπερ ὡς ἐνὶ μάλιστα [ἀκοῦσαι θέλει τὴν τούτων τύχην ἐν τῇ ἀ]πουσίᾳ. ἡ δέ, φησὶν, ἡ Ἀντίκλεια συνετωτάτη [οὔσα εὐθύς περὶ αὐτὰ ταῦτα κατα]γίνεται· δι’ ἣν αἰτίαν ὁ Ἄρισταρχος δεικνύς ὅ[περ δεῖ ἀποφαίνει] ὅτι ὀρθῶς λέγ]ει ἡ Ἀντίκλεια. (schol. pap. *ad Il.* 2.763, p. 165 Erbse)²²

[The sign, because] he took up the second <item> first. Aristarchus based his [defence of Homer] against Praxiphanes [on this passage. For] he [i.e. Praxiphanes] [is surprised that Odysseus] in his consolatory conversation with his mother [cf. *Od.* 11.170–9] asks only [at the end about Telemachus and] Penelope, because in his absence he [wants] above all [to know about their plight.] But Anticleia, says <Praxiphanes>, [being] very intelligent, [turns immediately to this very subject.] For that reason, Aristarchus, showing [what is necessary, makes it clear that] Anticleia [speaks in the right order].

Although the lacunae in the papyrus leave open a number of questions, the general sense of the note is quite clear. In *Od.* 11.170–9, Odysseus asks the soul of his dead mother, Anticleia: (A) ‘How did you die?’, (B) ‘How is my father (and my son)^{23?}’, (C) ‘How is my wife?’ In her answer (11.181–203), Anticleia takes up the third and last question first (C’), and then passes on to the second (B’) and the first (A’).²⁴ Praxiphanes apparently questioned this sequence, supposing that Odysseus ought to have asked first what was at the front of his mind. But Anticleia senses Odysseus’ actual

²¹ As Lehrs ([1833] 1882: 103–4) puts it: ‘*Hoc (nemo vero dubitabit) non tantum eo ninitur, quod Cratetem neglexisse mireris, quod Oedipus non potest Troianorum heroum aequalis esse sed patrum. . . sed simul consuetudine, ad quam propendere poetam Aristarchus observaverat:* ὅτι πρὸς τὸ δεῦτερον πρότερον ἀπαντᾷ; more guardedly Broggiato (2001: 198).

²² The supplements (ed. pr., Erbse) are given e.g. only. For an exhaustive treatment of the passage (incl. papyrological evidence, full bibliography, etc.) see Lundon 1999c; cf. also Lundon (2002b: 104–6).

²³ This is in fact where Telemachus’ fate comes in. One may, therefore, need to rethink the supplements περὶ Τηλεμάχου κ(αί) and τὴν τούτων τύχην, but this does not affect the present argument.

²⁴ Cf. the structural analysis of de Jong (2001: 279–80).

interest and answers what for him was the most important question first.²⁵ Aristarchus replies to Praxiphanes' psychologising argument by calling into play the Homeric narrative principle of 'reverse order'.²⁶

As indicated in n. 9, the papyrus commentary then immediately adds '<The line> is marked with a sign, because throughout [the poet] takes up [in this way the second item] first according to a habit peculiar to him' (quoted above). It is unusual that the same marginal sign should receive two rather different explanations. In other words, does the papyrus commentary draw from one source or from two? In the former case, the sentence just quoted could be explained as a generalisation of the preceding specific explanation, which, in addition, emphasises the Homeric peculiarity (κατ' ἰδίαν συνήθειαν) of reverse order. Conversely, the assumption of two sources is worth considering too, because it raises the intriguing possibility that the point about Homer's *permanent* observation of 'reverse order' was made not by Aristarchus himself, but by one of his pupils. Unfortunately, the question cannot be decided on the basis of the evidence currently available.

On the assumption that the positions of Praxiphanes and Crates represent their own interpretative principles and those of their respective contemporaries, it appears possible that it was none other than Aristarchus who actually discovered the Homeric principle of reverse order. In that connection it is worth adducing schol. *A Il.* 2.872*a* *Ariston.*, which lacks the technical vocabulary, but clearly argues on the basis of reverse order. More importantly, Aristarchus here criticises Simonides (fr. 565 Page) for misunderstanding the Homeric passage and therefore for not being familiar with the principle.²⁷ Whether it was Aristarchus who discovered reverse order or not, in any case it is thanks to him and his school that the principle became

²⁵ A similarly psychologising explanation of the sequence can be found in schol. *QT Od.* 11.177: εἰδὼς δὲ Ὀδυσσεὺς τὰς ἐκυράς ἐχθροδῶς περὶ τὰς υἱοὺς διακειμένους περὶ Πηνελόπης ὑστάτης ἠρώτησεν. ἡ δὲ εὐφραίνουσα τὸν υἱὸν περὶ πρώτης αὐτῆς ἀπεκρίνατο ('Knowing that mothers-in-law are hostile to their daughters-in-law, Odysseus asked about Penelope last. But she [i.e. Anticleia], in an attempt to cheer up her son, answers about her first'). The notion that one normally mentions first what one loves most underlies schol. *bT Il.* 3.236*a ex.* (explains why Helen is not looking for her brothers first), sim. *b Il.* 9.674*a' ex.*

²⁶ Wehrli (*ad loc.*) perceives only a mild contrast between the two scholars: 'Der... Gegensatz zwischen P(raxiphanes) und Aristarch beschränkt sich darauf, daß dieser auf eine durchgehende Erzählungsform zurückführt, was P(raxiphanes) als besonderes Ethos der einzelnen Szene rühmt.' But this seems difficult to reconcile with the expression πρὸς Πραξιφάνην ('against Praxiphanes'), leaving aside arguments based on the inevitably hypothetical supplements. Incidentally, Aristarchus only explains the sequence of Anticleia's answers, but not why Odysseus did not ask the allegedly most important question first. For the notion that the second speech is in 'reverse order' see also schol. *bT Il.* 9.605*c ex.*, which, however, argues that Achilles takes up Ajax' last point because he has nothing to say about the previous points.

²⁷ I owe this reference to Martin Schmidt.

known outside the circles of ‘professional’ literary critics and entered the conversations of learned men such as Cicero and Atticus.²⁸ He or (one of) his followers, however, seem to have overstated the pervasiveness of reverse order and they were corrected by Epaphroditus, who collected instances of parallel order.

From the earliest attestations on, reverse order is explained as peculiar to Homer.²⁹ It is, therefore, not surprising that there are few traces of its application outside the Homeric scholia. A scholion to Euripides is one of the few exceptions:³⁰

πρὸς δὲ τὸ δεύτερον ἀπήντησεν· εἰπὼν γὰρ “ἀνὴρ τε καὶ γυνή” ἐπήγαγεν τὸ “γυνὴ ἀδικουμένη πρὸς ἀνδρός”· ἀπὸ κοινοῦ γὰρ τὸ “γυνή”. (schol. E. *Andr.* 672)³¹

He [sc. Menelaus or Euripides] took up the second <item first>. For having said ‘husband and wife’ he added ‘the wife being done injustice by the husband’. ‘Wife’ stands *apo koinou*.

This critic wants to interpret the text as if it read: ἀνὴρ τε καὶ γυνὴ σθένει³² | (γυνὴ) ἀδικουμένη πρὸς ἀνδρός (i.e. husband–wife–[wife]–husband). The interpretation depends on a word standing *apo koinou*, which, despite the looseness of this concept in ancient grammar, is not a satisfactory application of reverse order.³³ But the scholion is nevertheless important, because it calls into play an Aristarchean argument, if only terminologically.

Outside the domain of scholia, ‘reverse order’ is discussed in some rhetorical handbooks under the rubric προ(συν)απάντησις, προὔπαντησις or *praeoccurio*, for example, by Alexander (second century AD), who again takes Homer as his starting-point:

προσυναπάντησις ἔστιν, ὅταν δύο ἐξενεγκῶν ὀνόματα πρὸς τὸ τελευταῖον πρότερον τὴν ὑπάντησιν ποιήσῃται, ὡς καὶ τὸ Ὀμηρικόν, “ἔνθα δ’ ἄμ’ οἰμωγὴ τε καὶ εὐχλωτὴ πέλεν ἀνδρῶν ὀλλύντων τε καὶ ὀλλυμένων.” (*Il.* 4.450–1 = 8.64–5)

²⁸ Bassett (1920) convincingly argues that ὑστερον πρότερον Ὀμηρικῶς means ‘in reverse order in the style of Homer’ in *Cic. Att.* 1.16.1.

²⁹ Cf. κατ’ ἰδίαν συνήθειαν in P. Oxy. 1086 (first century BC), quoted above.

³⁰ In addition, there are several instances of the phrase πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον/δευτερον ἀπ-/ὑπαντᾶν (e.g. schol. Ar. *Pl.* 712b, schol. Dem. 19.234, p. 77.6–7 Dils) which do not deal with the principles of ‘parallel’ and ‘reverse order’.

³¹ The passage in question (bracketed in Diggle’s edition) reads: καὶ μὴν ἴσον γ’ ἀνὴρ τε καὶ γυνὴ σθένει [Dobree, σθένει cod.] | ἀδικουμένη πρὸς ἀνδρός· ὡς δ’ αὐτῶς ἀνὴρ | γυναικα μωραίνουσσαν ἐν δόμοις ἔχων (E. *Andr.* 672–4).

³² In accordance with all ancient sources, the scholion reads σθένει (see previous n.).

³³ On *apo koinou* see Wilamowitz ([1895] 1959: ad E. *HF* 237).

τὸ γὰρ ὀλλύντων τὸ εὐχόμενον προσαποδέδοται. (Alexander III 40.12–17 Spengel)

<The definition of> *prosynapantesis* (≈ reverse order) is: one puts forward two nouns and returns to the last <noun> first, as in Homer: ‘then there was alike the sound of groaning and the cry of triumph, of the slayers and the slain’. For ‘of the slayers’ corresponds with ‘the cry of triumph’ (followed by another example perhaps invented by Alexander himself).

While the explanation and the example (duly recorded by schol. *A Il.* 4.451a *Ariston.*, *A Il.* 8.65 *Ariston.*) are straightforward, there is a curious mixture between ‘Aristarchean’ and ‘Ephroditian’ terminology.³⁴

The present account would be incomplete without a reference to a remarkable passage in Galen in which he discusses the question of order. He is commenting on a section of the *Corpus Hippocraticum* where the author first catalogues his topics but does not treat them in the same order. For he deals with them starting with the surgeon, who was mentioned second, instead of the patient, who was mentioned first.³⁵ Galen comments:

ἐν δὲ τῇ προκειμένη ῥήσει καὶ ταῖς ἐφεξῆς ἕκαστον τούτων ὁποῖον εἶναι χρῆ διδάσκει, μὴ φυλάττων τὴν τάξιν, ἐν ᾗ τὸν κατάλογον ἐποιήσατο· πάντως γὰρ ἂν ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀσθενοῦντος ἤρξατο. σύνηθες δὲ τοῖς παλαιοῖς ἅπανσι τοῦτο καὶ μυρία παρὰ πάντων αὐτῶν βουληθεὶς ἐκλέξῃ παραδείγματα. πρὸς δὲ τὸ παρὸν ἀρκήσειε παρὰ τοῦ ποιητοῦ τὸ τε κατὰ τὸ β' τῆς Ἰλιάδος εἰρημένον ἐν τῷ καταλόγῳ· (Galen, *In Hipp. de off. med. librum* 18b.675–6 Kühn)

In the present speech and in the following <ones> he [sc. Hippocrates] teaches <us> how each of them must be, without sticking to the order of his list. For then he would certainly have started with the patient [who was mentioned first]. This is common among all the ancients and countless examples might be drawn

³⁴ Similarly, the Anonymus (III 187.15–21 Spengel), while the rhetoric attributed to Zonaeus (III 170.3–6 Spengel) preserves a purely Aristarchean terminology. As for προσυπαπάντησις in Alexander, Sauppe suspected a corruption of προὔπάντησις (see Schindler 2001: 190, also D'Angelo 2001: 130; but cf. προσπάντησις in 'Zonaeus' and the Anonymus). *Praeocursio* is the Latin translation for προὔπάντησις in the *Carmen de figuris vel schematibus* (154–6). Finally, Lausberg ([1960] 1990: § 865) adduces *Rhet. Her.* 4.24 as an example of *Überkreuzstellung* (chiasm), but his explanation of the passages seems strained, and, more importantly, the *Auctor* does not himself discuss the principle of 'reverse order'. As to chiasm in particular, it should be noted that its prevalent definition (which is modern: Lausberg [1960] 1990: § 723 n. 1) focuses on individual words or very short units (contrast Hermog. *inv.* 3.4, pp. 181.6–183.8 Rabe) and on pairs of corresponding terms. Conversely, reverse order can also refer to longer units and to more than two corresponding elements (e.g. the example from *Od.* 11, discussed above). In short, instances of chiasm can always be described in terms of reverse order but not necessarily *vice versa*.

³⁵ It should, however, be emphasised that the list contains more than the two items. τὰ δ' ἐξ χειρουργίης κατ' ἰητρείου· ὁ ἀσθενέων [patient]· ὁ δρῶν [surgeon]· οἱ ὑπηρέται· τὰ ὄργανα· τὸ φῶς· ὄκου· ὄκως· ὄσα· ὄκως· ὄκου τὸ σῶμα, τὰ ἄρμενα· ὁ χρόνος· ὁ τρόπος· ὁ τόπος. δρῶν κτλ. (*Hipp. de officina medici* 2.2). For the meaning of δρῶν in medical contexts see Schreckenberg (1960: 8–10).

from all of them at will. But for the time being, this example from the Catalogue in book 2 of Homer's *Iliad* should suffice . . .

Galen then adduces two examples from the *Iliad*, 2.761–9 and 4.450–1.³⁶ The latter passage is expressly explained by Galen in 'Aristarchean' terms:

ἐπήνευκε πρὸς τὸ δεύτερον ἀπαντήσας πρότερον [Galen, *In Hipp. de off. med. librum* 18b.676 Kühn].

He [sc. Homer] added [sc. line 4.451] by taking up the second [sc. the triumphant cry of the prevailing soldiers] first.

Galen seems to be less concerned with reverse order in the strict sense (the passage from Hippocrates is not an exact instance) than with cases of changed order in general. His third example from Homer is similar to the passage from Hippocrates but not, strictly speaking, an instance of 'reverse order'. The five Greek tribes that are mentioned in *Il.* 13.685–6, Boeotians, Ionians (= Athenians), Locrians, Phthians and Epeians, are taken up in the order B'-E'-D'-C'-A'.³⁷ In other words, Homer 'took up the second <tribe> first' (Galen: πρὸς μὲν γὰρ τὸ δεύτερον ἀπήντησε πρῶτον) in a very literal sense, but the passage as a whole does not display a perfect reverse order.³⁸ A possible explanation is that for Galen (or his source) the phrase has lost the specific meaning it had for Aristarchus and his school. And whereas reverse order had been a Homeric peculiarity for Aristarchus, Galen claims that it can be found in any classical author. His examples, however, still come from Homer. An alternative explanation could be that Galen is showing off his learning to an innocent audience by making a confident overgeneralisation, in that he extends a catch-phrase of Homeric criticism to the entire Greek corpus of authors.³⁹

CONCLUSION

The numerous notes on 'reverse order' (A–B—B'–A') testify to the great interest that ancient scholars had in narrative technique in general and

³⁶ Both passages are explained in the same way in the A-scholia. Is it a coincidence that no passage between 2.761–9 and 4.450–1 is explained as reverse order in the A-scholia? Was there a list of examples of reverse order (similar to Epaphroditus' list of counter-examples) on which Galen drew? Note also that the second of Galen's examples recurs in Alexander's rhetoric (quoted above).

³⁷ Galen oddly attributes the passage to book 7. Or is η' a corruption for ν'? (Same mistake in schol. E⁴ *Il.* 7.75c⁴ ex. (see *app. crit.*) with respect to books 7 and 13 of the *Odyssey*.) For the structure of the passage see Janko (1992: ad 13.685–722).

³⁸ The passage seems to have been known for its unusual order, see schol. T *Il.* 13.689 ex.: οὐκ ἐτήρησε τὴν τάξιν· πρῶτους γὰρ εἶπε Βοιωτοὺς ('He [sc. Homer] did not keep the order. For he mentioned the Boeotians first'); similarly Eustathius (954.24–7 = 3.536.16–22).

³⁹ This second explanation has been suggested to me by an anonymous referee.

questions of structure in particular. 'Reverse order' was found both on a small scale (e.g. the narrating of how two minor characters died in battle) and on a larger scale (e.g. the structure of two successive speeches that correspond to each other). A point can perhaps be made that the principle known as 'reverse order' was discovered by Aristarchus. In any case, by his time scholars systematically scrutinised the Homeric epics for instances of reverse order, which also led to the recognition of the exceptional cases where the order is actually parallel (A—B—A'—B'). In fact, Epaphroditus appears to have made a systematic collection of passages in parallel order, which he exploited against the view that Homer 'always' adheres to reverse order. Most interestingly, the contrast between the two 'schools' appears to be reflected in slightly different terminologies (esp. ἀπαντάω vs. ὑπαντάω). No later than the first century BC the notion of 'Homeric reverse order' appears to have entered the vocabulary of learned men, who could season their conversations by applying the known concept in a looser sense to various instances of reverse order.

Staging, performance and dramaturgy

Unlike editions of modern plays, ancient dramatic texts were extremely laconic when it came to providing the reader with crucial information such as the identification of the various speakers, stage directions of all sorts, descriptions of the scene, etc. At an early stage readers were given little more than the bare text and were apparently expected to supply all the other pieces of information themselves by inferring them from the text.¹ However, the limits of this system made themselves increasingly felt, and readers started, for example, to identify the speakers in the margins and between the lines. Not only had it become increasingly clear that this type of information was vital for a proper understanding of the plays, but the laconic presentation of the early manuscripts also led to a considerable amount of confusion and disagreement. As a result, the extant corpus of scholia contains numerous traces of ancient discussions and explanations.²

IDENTIFICATION OF SPEAKERS AND ADDRESSEES

The easiest and most common way of identifying the speaker is an abbreviation of the character's name in the margins or interlinear space of the

¹ For example, the earliest manuscripts originally indicated only that there is a change of speaker (*paragraphos* in the left-hand margin below the line in question, *dikolon* or space within the line), but not who the speakers are (cf. e.g. numbers 29, 40, 41 and 42 in Turner and Parsons 1987).

² It is now generally accepted that we must reckon with a gradually increasing flow of information and not with a fully annotated original manuscript that became thinner in the course of the textual transmission. Consequently, the stage directions given in the scholia cannot *a priori* claim to have the authority of the poet or first producer. They must therefore be treated with caution when it comes to reconstructing the original production of the play (see e.g. Taplin 1977a: *passim*, esp. 435–8 or Bain 1977: 18). However, Taplin's repeated polemics against ancient interpretations seem gratuitous. Even if they are sometimes 'mistaken' (sc. with respect to the original staging), they can nevertheless be of importance because they show how the passage was understood at some point in the history of scholarship. For the topics treated in this chapter see in particular Trendelenburg (1867), Weissmann (1896), W. G. Rutherford (1905), Malzan (1908), Meijering (1987), Jouanna (2001), Falkner (2002), Easterling (2006), Easterling (in press).

manuscript.³ However, the scholia, too, explicitly identify the speaker with some frequency. A scholion on *Wasps* (schol. Ar. V. 174a), for example, indicates that the line in question is spoken by ‘one of the slaves’ (εἷς τῶν οἰκετῶν).⁴ Given that the rapid dialogue scenes of comedy with their frequent changes of speaker (often in mid-line) pose a greater challenge to the reader, notes of this type are more common in the comic scholia, but they do occur in tragic scholia too. One of the recurrent problems of attribution in tragedy is the question whether the line is spoken by the chorus (leader) or a character (cf. schol. E. *Med.* 169, also *Hipp.* 852).⁵

It would, perhaps, be rash to assume that notes which identify the speaker always presuppose a real debate over the correct assignment. Scholars and readers may simply have felt the need to make things clear. But quite frequently there is in fact disagreement or uncertainty.⁶ Of particular interest are the comments which do not simply mention what according to them is the correct assignment, but actually argue the case. As the following note on *Frogs* makes clear, questions of this kind were discussed and answered by the Alexandrian scholars. (Who is the speaker in *Frogs* 1149?)

τοῦτο ὁ Διόνυσος λέγει, ὑποτεμνόμενος τὸν Εὐριπίδου λόγον διὰ τὸ ὑπερσπεύδειν, ὡς καὶ Ἀρίσταρχός φησιν. οὕτω γὰρ εἰκότως ὁ Αἰσχύλος ἐπήγαγε: “Διόνυσε, πίνεις οἶνον οὐκ ἀνθοσμίαν.” (schol. Ar. *Ra.* 1149a)

Dionysus says this, on account of his excessive eagerness cutting off Euripides’ speech, as Aristarchus, too, says. For with this distribution of speakers it was reasonable for Aeschylus to continue: ‘Dionysus, the wine you drink does not have the best of bouquets.’ (*Ra.* 1150)

The note testifies to the careful analysis of the line in its context. It results in the suggestion that Dionysus cuts off Euripides (whose conditional period in 1148 remains incomplete), for which a ‘psychological’ motivation is given: Dionysus cannot wait to make his joke. With this distribution, Aristarchus argues, it makes better sense for Aeschylus to address Dionysus

³ Here and throughout this chapter ‘name’ is short for how the character is identified in the play, which includes professions (e.g. τροφός ‘nurse’) or terms of kinship (e.g. θυγατήρ ‘daughter’) in the case of nameless characters. For names supplied in the margins and between the lines of ancient manuscripts see e.g. numbers 28, 31 and 43 in Turner and Parsons (1987).

⁴ For a collection of such notes (as usual all from the *Ravennas*) see W. G. Rutherford (1905: 115). A character’s name need not of course be mentioned in the text immediately upon his or her first entrance, but only some time later. As a result, there are also scholia of the type ‘this is where we learn the name’ (e.g. schol. Ar. *Tb.* 760, on Mica, who enters with the chorus in 294, speaks first in 380 and leaves in 764, just after the audience has finally learned her name).

⁵ The question of speaker assignments also occurs in scholia to non-dramatic texts, e.g. schol. Theocr. 3.1a, 10.56–8a, and once even in a Homeric scholion (schol. *A Il.* 12.439a¹ *Ariston.*, sim. T); cf. also the Homer papyrus (P. Oxy. 223), which identifies the speakers (incl. the poet) in the left-hand margin.

⁶ For a collection of relevant comic scholia see W. G. Rutherford (1905: 116–17).

in the next line. The note demonstrates that Alexandrian commentaries could contain detailed arguments regarding the proper distribution of lines and their justification.⁷

A somewhat unusual type of speaker assignment is at stake when a passage seems to require the assumption that it is spoken by several characters together.⁸

The proper understanding of a passage may depend not only on knowing who the speaker is, but also on who the addressee is (e.g. schol. S. *Ant.* 444: Creon speaks to the messenger, i.e. the guard).⁹ Here again the scholia reflect efforts to clarify the potential or real ambivalence of the text's bare bones. (Early in the *parodos* of Euripides' *Medea*, she is heard screaming inside the house. The chorus says 'Did you hear, O Zeus and earth and light of the sun, what a wail the miserable woman utters?', E. *Med.* 148–50.)

τὸ “ἄϊες” ὁ Δίδυμος [pp. 243–4 Schmidt] ὡς πρὸς τὰς τοῦ χοροῦ φησι λέγεσθαι: “ἠκούσατε;” καὶ οὐ πρὸς τὸν Δία. (schol. E. *Med.* 148)¹⁰

Didymus says that 'did you [sg.] hear' is spoken to the women of the chorus [sc. addressing each other], <i.e.> 'did you [pl.] hear?', and not to Zeus.

The passage in fact shows that the identifications of speaker and addressee are often interrelated. As the context of the scholion demonstrates, Apollodorus of Tarsus apparently thought that 'did you hear, O Zeus . . .?' cannot be spoken by the chorus, because it would be ridiculous (γελοῖον, schol. E. *Med.* 169), and made Medea the speaker. Didymus refuted Apollodorus' assumption that 'did you hear' is addressed to Zeus and vindicated the line for the chorus.¹¹

Determining the addressee of an utterance also depends on who is on stage. Thus schol. S. *Aj.* 1003a, for example, argues that the addressee of the imperatives ἴθι, ἐκκάλυψον ('come, uncover [sc. Ajax' dead body]') must

⁷ Needless to say, this includes a number of long-term *zetemata*, for example, whether the (second) chorus in *Frogs* is split into two semi-choruses, as Aristarchus argued (schol. Ar. *Ra.* 354a, b, 372c, cf. Dover 1993: 63–8). These and other notes on semi-choruses are collected by Weissmann (1896: 9–11), whose conclusion, however, that they all go back to Aristarchus must be treated with caution.

⁸ E.g. schol. Ar. *Ra.* 184b (even claiming three simultaneous speakers, but the Corpse should not have been included), 1378d (two speakers, Aeschylus and Euripides, correctly).

⁹ Whereas the speaker can easily be identified in the margin or interlinear space of a manuscript, it is much more difficult to do the same for the addressee without creating unnecessary ambiguity.

¹⁰ For a collection of comic scholia see W. G. Rutherford (1905: 116). The most common way of identifying the addressee is πρὸς + acc. (also in non-dramatic scholia: bT *Il.* 19.205a ex.), which, however, can also designate a referent who is not physically present on stage (e.g. schol. Ar. *Pax* 669b).

¹¹ Cf. Roemer (1892: 637), Malzan (1908: 26–7).

be the chorus or a servant, because Tecmessa had left the stage previously (on exits see below).¹²

Another potential stumbling-block for the reader is a change of addressee, which again is commented on in the scholia. A standard phrase for such a change is ἀποστρέφειν τὸν λόγον πρὸς τινὰ (lit. ‘to turn away the speech <from X> to Y’, e.g. schol. A. *PV* 705a–c).¹³

The question of the speaker’s addressee also plays a role in the case of asides, which are of course defined by the absence of an addressee. For example:

πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἀποστραφεῖσα λέγει. (schol. E. *Hec.* 736)¹⁴

Turning away she [sc. Hecuba] speaks to herself.

Although Hecuba herself explains in line 736 that the vocative δύστην(ε) ‘luckless’ is a self-address, some critics apparently thought that Polydorus is the addressee. This can be gathered, among other things, from Didymus’ rather curious interpretation that the vocative is directed both to Polydorus and herself (schol. E. *Hec.* 736, with Schwartz’ supplement).

Elsewhere (schol. S. *Ant.* 328 = fr. com. adesp. 870 K-A) the interpretation of the verse as an aside adds the interesting point that this literary device is particularly common in comedy. The phrase for ‘aside’ in these scholia is ‘(speaking) to oneself’ (πρὸς ἑαυτόν/-ήν). It is worth noting that the same expression can also indicate a monologue (e.g. schol. Ar. *V.* 799a), where there is literally no addressee present on stage. The expression also occurs in scholia to non-dramatic texts (e.g. schol. Hes. *Th.* 34, on Hesiod’s self-address).

The alternative expression for asides has it that the utterance is spoken ‘silently’ (ἡσυχῆ, ἡρέμα).¹⁵ In other words, this expression does not specify the (absence of an) addressee, but explains how the passage is delivered (on delivery see below). Occasionally, the two forms occur in combination.¹⁶

¹² Cf. the similar argument in schol. A. *Eum.* 64a, S. *El.* 1384. Incidentally, another scholion on the same passage from *Ajax* (schol. S. *Aj.* 1003b) mistakenly claims that the addressee is Tecmessa. As in schol. E. *Med.* 148, the question as such seems to have arisen on account of the imperative singular.

¹³ On the various meanings of ἀποστρέφειν/ἀποστροφή see Chapter 3. On occasion the same can be expressed by ἐπιστρέφειν (e.g. schol. E. *Hec.* 383).

¹⁴ Cf. schol. E. *Med.* 764, *Tr.* 98. On Hecuba’s posture see below.

¹⁵ For ἡσυχῆ see e.g. schol. Ar. *Ra.* 606 and the interlinear notes in the Bodmer papyrus (Men. *Asp.* 93, 467); ἡρέμα e.g. schol. E. *Hec.* 1024, Ar. *Ra.* 554g, but also schol. A. *Il.* 7.390–1 *Nic.* For asides cf. also λεληθότως in schol. Ar. *Ach.* 778 (on λεληθότως see also Chapter 9). The word ἡρέμα does not always indicate asides. In schol. Ar. *Th.* 1063 it means that two characters converse unbeknownst to a third, in schol. A. *Ch.* 46 that the chorus utters δύσθεος γυνά *sotto voce*; cf. also σιωπῆ in schol. HQ *Od.* 18.235.

¹⁶ Cf. schol. E. *Or.* 671, *Med.* 899.

Interestingly, the scholia identify yet another type of addressee, namely the audience in the theatre. This feature, nowadays often referred to as a form of ‘breaking the dramatic illusion’, is comparatively common in comedy.¹⁷ But it comes as a real surprise that ancient scholars seem to recognise instances of this device in tragedy too.¹⁸ Their comments make it clear, however, that addressing the audience is not a commonly accepted feature of tragedy.¹⁹ In one case, Euripides is criticised for it.²⁰ Another relevant scholion reports an interesting debate over the exact reference of the word εἶδετε (‘you [pl.] saw’), spoken by Electra, who is briefly alone on stage after the opening scene in Euripides’ *Orestes*:

τὸ “εἶδετε” ἀντὶ τοῦ “ἴδοι τις ἄν” [supported by two Iliadic parallels: 3.220, 4.223]. ἔνιοι δὲ φασι ταῖς δμωσὶ ταῦτα λέγειν. οἱ δὲ πρὸς τὸ θεάτρον, ὃ καὶ ἄμεινον. ἐφελκυστικὸς γὰρ ἔστιν αἰεὶ μᾶλλον τῶν θεατῶν ὁ ποιητῆς, οὐ φροντίζων τῶν ἀκριβολογούντων. (schol. E. *Or.* 128)

‘You saw’ in the sense of ‘one could see’ [cf. *Il.* 3.220, 4.223].²¹ But some claim that she [sc. Electra] says this to her female servants [sc. mute extras]. Still others <that she says this> to the audience, which is even better. For the poet always tries to be particularly attractive to the spectators, not caring about meticulous critics.

In the first part the scholion considers the possibility that the second person plural is either generic or addressed to the mute servants. The

¹⁷ Admittedly, it is not so often commented on as one might expect: schol. Ar. *Ach.* 770a, *Pax* 20a, 150. Slightly more frequent are comments on the rather unproblematic case of the *parabasis* (schol. Ar. *Eq.* 508b, *Pax* 734b, *Av.* 685b, also *Ach.* 971a and schol. Luc. 17.17). A different form of breaking the illusion is when characters speak *about* the audience: e.g. schol. Ar. *Ra.* 276a, 783. Incidentally, the concept ‘breaking the dramatic illusion’ is itself not without difficulties (Easterling 1997: 165–73).

¹⁸ On this topic see Bain (1975) and especially Meijering (1987: 193–8), who, however, does not sufficiently differentiate between characters who directly address the audience and characters who speak on behalf of or with a view to the audience (for the latter see e.g. schol. E. *Tr.* 1, *Ph.* 88). I therefore disagree with her claim that schol. A. *Eum.* 1a deals with ‘Euripides’ habit of addressing the spectators’ (1987: 195). The point is that Euripides’ prologue speeches are not sufficiently motivated, but cater to the audience.

¹⁹ Only schol. E. *Andr.* 622 simply mentions the device without either positive or negative comment, whereas schol. S. *El.* 86 categorically states ἐπεὶ δὲ ζηθῆς ἐστὶ πρὸς τοὺς θεατὰς ἢ πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ταῦτα διαλέγεσθαι (‘since it is inappropriate to address these things [sc. Electra’s lament] to the audience or herself, she calls to witness several gods). Although the note specifically deals with Sophocles’ *Electra*, it may well be indicative of the general rule that tragic characters ought not to address the audience.

²⁰ See schol. E. *Tr.* 36 (on the prologue). It is true that Poseidon does not actually address the audience, but the critic apparently understands the scene in such a way (ψυχρῶς τῷ θεάτρῳ προσδιαλέγεται, ‘in a frigid way he addresses the audience’).

²¹ E. *Or.* 128–9 is usually taken as a question (‘did you see...?’) by modern interpreters (except for Willink 1986: *ad loc.*, who advocates the variant ἴδετε), but at least some of their ancient predecessors considered it an assertion (otherwise the suggested interpretation as generic second person is inconceivable). For such explanations as generic second person see the *testimonia* collected on schol. A. *Il.* 3.220a *Ariston*.

second part, endorsed by the critic, sketches a remarkable picture of a ‘populist’ Euripides. In his permanent attempt to attract the audience at large, Euripides makes use of directly addressing the audience in spite of the few ‘professional critics’ who will find fault with it. The term ἀκριβολογοῦντες has negative undertones (‘nitpicking’, see Elsperger 1907–10: 153 n. 141); this commentator is at pains to defend Euripides from the criticism of his colleagues, which was probably the prevailing view.

ENTRANCES AND EXITS

A topic similar to the assignment of lines to speakers is the identification of entrances and exits, including those of silent characters, which can pose particular problems. Entrances and exits are among the many characteristics of a play that place the spectator in a much better position than the reader. Whereas the spectator is immediately aware of them, the reader needs to visualise and then keep in mind the entire stage action. Explicit indication of entrances and exits no doubt makes the task easier. This could be done in the text itself by means of a marginal sign, the so-called *koronis*.²² But the system has its limitations: the *koronis* can only indicate the entrances and exits that mark the beginning or end of an entire scene, but not entrances and exits that happen in the course of a scene, and, equally important, it cannot specify the name(s) of the character(s) involved. The scholia are in a better position to provide this kind of information.²³ For example:

ἔξέρχεται ὁ Στρεψιάδης ἀριθμῶν τὰς ἡμέρας. (schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1131b)²⁴

Enter [sc. from the house] Strepsiades counting the days [sc. until his debts are due].

All in all, entrances such as Strepsiades’ are mostly unproblematic: he re-emerges after a choral ode and begins to speak immediately. In such

²² As explained by Hephaestion (p. 75.1–4 Consbruch): τῆ μὲν οὖν κορωνίδι κατὰ τρόπους τρεῖς ἦτοι ὅταν τῶν ὑποκριτῶν εἰπόντων τινὰ καὶ ἀπαλλαγέντων καταλείπηται ὁ χορός ἢ ἔμπαλιν ἢ ὅταν μετάβασις ἀπὸ τόπου εἰς τόπον γίνεσθαι δοκῆ τῆς σκηνῆς. The Aristophanic scholia frequently mention the *koronis* (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 204a.11, 242b, etc.); see also Taplin (1977a: 57).

²³ Terminologically, the scholia make use of a system that is apt to create confusion. The word ἔξέρχεσθαι ‘to go out’ (and cognates) appears to designate both entrances (e.g. schol. S. *Aj.* 201) and exits (e.g. schol. S. *Aj.* 646a), as does the opposite term εἰσέρχεσθαι ‘to go in’ (and cognates; entrance: e.g. schol. S. *OT* 144; exit: e.g. schol. S. *El.* 1402). The riddle’s solution seems to be (see e.g. schol. E. *Hec.* 53, p. 18.11–12 Schw.) that ἔξέρχεσθαι denotes (a) entrances from the stage house or (b) exits through the wings, εἰσέρχεσθαι (c) exits to the stage house or (d) entrances from the wings. In accordance with (a), ἔσω means ‘within’ (i.e. backstage), e.g. schol. E. *Ph.* 690.

²⁴ For a collection of comic scholia see W. G. Rutherford (1905: 118–19).

cases the identification of the new character is not really a problem, and many notes of the type just quoted provide other information in addition to simply mentioning the entrance (see below).²⁵

Things can be more difficult, however, when the new character is temporarily or permanently silent.²⁶ (In the final scenes of *Acharnians*, the slave of a groom and a bridesmaid approach Dicaeopolis with requests to get a share of his newly made peace for the couple. Only the slave has a speaking part, whereas the bridesmaid is a mute character who whispers her request into Dicaeopolis' ear.)

ἔρχεται νυμφεύτρια δεομένη Δικαιοπόλιδος καὶ λέγουσα ὅτι ἔπεμψέ με τις νύμφη δεηθῆναί σου πρὸς τὸ λαβεῖν τῆς εἰρήνης . . . κωφὸν δὲ εἰσάγεται τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς νυμφευτρίας. (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 1056)²⁷

Enter a bridesmaid entreating Dicaeopolis and telling him 'A bride has sent me to ask you for a share in your peace' . . . The character of the bridesmaid is brought on stage as a mute.

The critic not only explains the entrance of the mute bridesmaid, he even 'quotes' the words which she supposedly whispers into Dicaeopolis' ear (based on what he says in 1058–60, cf. schol. Ar. *Ach.* 1058a, b).²⁸

In addition to κωφὸν πρόσωπον ('silent character', on which see also [Chapter II](#)), ancient critics also make use of the term παραχορήγημα, which, however, is somewhat elusive. Not only is the exact meaning unclear (perhaps 'something furnished in addition': Taplin 1977a: 80 n. 3), but it can also be applied both to 'real' mutes (schol. A. *Eum.* 574a, PV12c) and to a minor character such as Trygaeus' daughter (schol. Ar. *Pax* 114d), who does speak a few lines, as the commentator correctly observes.²⁹ The common denominator is perhaps that παραχορήγημα stands for characters that are added to the ones played by one of the three (tragedy) or four (comedy) 'professional' actors (paid for by the state), regardless of whether these

²⁵ As argued in n. 23, the verb usually indicates whether the character enters from the house or through the *parodos* (for a discussion of the two possibilities see e.g. schol. E. *Hec.* 53). The extant scholia do not seem to discuss whether entrances or exits are from or to left or right.

²⁶ Failure to recognise the presence of mute characters has in fact led to long-term misunderstanding (see e.g. Dover 1993: 263 on *Ra.* 569–71).

²⁷ Cf. the notes which mention (or imply) that a character is accompanied by a mute: schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1214b, 1485.α, *Lys.* 1114, *Pl.* 891b, etc. (see W. G. Rutherford 1905: 119–20).

²⁸ On whispering extras see also schol. S. *OT* 78 (the youths indicating to the priest the arrival of Creon).

²⁹ The latter case seems compatible with the definition given by Pollux (4.110: εἰ δὲ τέταρτος ὑποκριτῆς τι παραφθέξαιτο, τοῦτο παραχορήγημα ὀνομάζεται, 'if a fourth actor says something, this is called *parachoregema*'). His example, Aeschylus' *Memnon* (TrGF III p. 236), shows that he is thinking of tragedy, where a fourth character must be an extra. For the three-actor rule in ancient scholarship see below.

additional characters have a small speaking part or not. Admittedly, even this tentative explanation fails to do full justice to a fourth attestation of the word in schol. Ar. *Ra.* 209b, which states that the chorus of frogs is called παραχορηγήματα because they are invisible to the audience (on invisible characters see below).³⁰ The notion is perhaps that the chorus of frogs is an ‘addendum’ to the ‘real’ chorus of initiates, whose training was paid for by the *choregus*. (In reality the same people could of course perform in both choruses.) All in all, the (probably late) term παραχορηγήματα does not seem to be used with as much terminological consistency as one would wish.³¹

It is a well-known fact that the texts of Greek plays are particularly rich in indications that help reconstruct the action on stage (e.g. Wilamowitz 1914: xxxiv, Taplin 1977a). Consequently, notes on entrances and exits frequently draw on such textual markers, sometimes explicitly (cf. e.g. schol. S. *El.* 1402: the present passage makes it clear that Electra had gone inside beforehand).

On occasion, however, an entrance or an exit may leave no explicit trace in the text, but must be reconstructed on the basis of the action. These cases can create particular difficulties and are therefore commented on as well. (In *Medea* 115, the nurse is alarmed by Medea’s screams within the palace. A proper understanding of the passage requires the assumption that the children have gone back in.)

κατὰ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν εἰσηλθόν οἱ παῖδες, ἡ δὲ πρεσβῦτις οὖσα ἕξωθεν ἐπι-
στενάζει. (schol. E. *Med.* 115)³²

It follows from the stage action that the children have gone inside, but the old woman, who is <still> outside [i.e. on stage], is groaning.

The general sense of the scholion is clear, but the exact meaning of κατὰ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν is difficult. Meijering (1987: 132) seems to connect it with ὑπόθεσις in the sense ‘subject-matter, plot’ (cf. Chapter 1) and glosses the expression in the scholion with ‘(according) to the way Euripides presents the situation here’. In any case, the scholion implies that the children’s exit has left no noticeable trace in the text.

The same can also be said by means of a somewhat unusual adaptation of the expression κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον (lit. ‘silently, tacitly’, hence

³⁰ Cf. also the list of *dramatis personae* in ms. V, which reads βατράχων παραχορηγήματα (and παραχωρήματα in ms. R is probably a corruption of the same word).

³¹ On παραχορηγήματα see Rees (1907), Pickard-Cambridge (1988: 137).

³² Cf. schol. E. *Or.* 141.

‘implicitly’).³³ (In *Medea* 214 Medea enters the stage and addresses the chorus.)

χρή νοεῖν ὅτι κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον εἰσελθοῦσα ἢ γραῦς παρεκάλεσε τὴν Μήδειαν ἐξελεῖν πρὸς τὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ χοροῦ. (schol. E. *Med.* 214)³⁴

One must understand that the old woman [i.e. the nurse] having tacitly gone inside [sc. after 203] encouraged Medea to leave the house and meet the women of the chorus.

The expression κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον normally means that something is left implicit in the text. At first sight, this does not exactly apply here because in the preceding conversation the chorus explicitly urges the nurse to fetch Medea (180–3), and the nurse says she will comply (184). However, she first delivers a fairly substantial speech (184–203). The critic appears to miss a clearer indication of her actual exit after line 203 (e.g. an explicit exit line) and explains that it happened ‘tacitly’.³⁵

In a similar way, the expression κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον can also be used to describe ‘silent’ entrances. (In Euripides’ *Orestes*, Electra refers with deictic αἶδ’ αὖ πάρεσι (‘these women are here again’) to the impending entrance of the chorus.)

κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον ἔρχονται αἱ γυναῖκες ἰδεῖν τὸν Ὀρέστην πῶς ἔχει, καὶ ἐθεάσατο αὐτάς. (schol. E. *Or.* 132)³⁶

The women approach silently in order to see how Orestes is doing, and she [sc. Electra] noticed them.

Given that Electra expressly announces the impending entrance, the expression κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον probably does not mean (as elsewhere) that the entrance leaves no explicit trace in the text at all. Rather, the critic probably means to say that the chorus approaches ‘in silence’, that is, without singing (yet).³⁷ The critic decides to alert the reader to the fact that the chorus’ presence on stage must be assumed before their first speaking part appears in the text; in other words, their entrance does not coincide

³³ On κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον see [Chapter 6](#). ³⁴ Cf. schol. A. *Th.* 719g.

³⁵ On presupposed entrances and exits see also schol. E. *Ph.* 690, Ar. *Nu.* 1303b, *Pl.* 1199b. Other notes, e.g. schol. S. *Ph.* 134, simply indicate ‘exit X’ (here Odysseus).

³⁶ Cf. schol. Ar. *Nu.* 195a.

³⁷ I suspect that a similar explanation can be given for schol. E. *Or.* 725: κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον εἶδε τὸν Πυλάδην ἐρχόμενον (‘<Orestes> saw Pylades coming *kata* τὸ *σιωπώμενον*’), which is slightly odd, because Orestes explicitly mentions the impending entrance. A possible solution (adopted in the translation) is to take κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον with ἐρχόμενον, despite the Greek word order. A similar difficulty recurs in schol. E. *Ph.* 694, also *Or.* 850.

with their first utterance. One might, of course, object that the characters in question need not be visible on stage but may well be seen approaching by the character(s) only.³⁸ But the ancient critic perhaps does not intend to imply more than the idea that the new character affects the stage action before he or she first speaks, which is the only explicit clue that an ancient reader normally receives in the text.

The virtual opposite of silent characters on stage are characters who deliver their text without being visible on stage. This again is crucial information for a reader who wants to understand and visualise the play. The scholia help by explaining that a character speaks ‘from within’ (ἐνδοθεν) or ‘(being) inside’ (ἔσω).³⁹ Well-known cases of disputed visibility on stage are, for example, the age-old questions whether the (first) chorus of *Frogs* actually appears on stage at all (schol. Ar. *Ra.* 209b) and whether the chorus in *Clouds* sings the first part of the *parodos* off stage (schol. Ar. *Nu.* 344b).⁴⁰

Although it trespasses into the territory of acting (on which below), it may be appropriate to treat an apparently unusual entrance here. It is envisaged by a notorious scholion on the Phrygian slave in Euripides’ *Orestes*, who describes his flight from inside as ‘Out of death I have escaped the Argive sword in Asian moccasins over (ὑπέρ) the boudoir’s cedared timbers and the Doric triglyphs’ (E. *Or.* 1369–72). Many readers, ancient and modern, took ὑπέρ to mean ‘over’ and assumed that the actor spectacularly leapt down from the roof of the stage house. This assumption openly clashes with the chorus’ description of his impending entrance through the door (E. *Or.* 1366–8). Consequently, these lines were excised as the interpolation of actors who feared they might get hurt if they leapt down from the roof.⁴¹ In reality, the transmitted text may well be sound and the Phrygian’s entrance less exciting but more in accordance with usual ancient stage practice, that is, through the door. In order to support this interpretation, modern scholars offer two solutions that both have their roots in ancient explanations. Either the spectacular leap happened inside

³⁸ For the notion that a character describes on behalf of the audience what is happening inside see e.g. schol. Ar. *Pax* 33a (on the slave describing the meal of the dung-beetle).

³⁹ For ἐνδοθεν see e.g. schol. S. *Aj.* 333, E. *Hec.* 1035, Ar. *Pax* 82j, for ἔσω e.g. schol. E. *Med.* 96. Occasionally, the question depends on who the speaker is (e.g. schol. E. *Hipp.* 776: the nurse from within or a messenger on stage?). It should be pointed out that remarks such as ἔσωθεν in modern editions (e.g. Mastronarde 2002: 116, at E. *Med.* 96) are not normally based on manuscript evidence.

⁴⁰ A rather different type of invisible character comes into question when the utterance is heard only by the character on stage (e.g. schol. E. *Hipp.* 569).

⁴¹ See schol. E. *Or.* 1366; the explanation is both accepted and rejected by modern scholars (see Willink 1986: 306, with lit.). For scholia on actors’ interpolations in general see Page (1934), Hamilton (1974), Garzya (1980).

the palace (i.e. invisible to the audience), or ὑπέρ here means ‘beyond the confines of’.⁴²

The rubric ‘entrances and exits’ would be an appropriate place to discuss two special technical devices: the theatre crane and the so-called *ekkyklema*. But it seems better to treat them together with other technical devices (see below).

An interesting note on the opening scene of *Eumenides* alerts the reader to the fact that the exit of the priestess into the temple (from where she will re-emerge shortly afterwards) results in the stage being empty for a short time (παρ’ ὀλίγον ἔρημος ἡ σκηνὴ γίνεται, schol. A. *Eum.* 33a).⁴³

Turning briefly to non-dramatic texts, it may at first sight seem inappropriate to speak of a character’s ‘entrance’. But ancient scholars have no difficulty using the word (παρ)εἰσάγειν, which seems to originate with the description of dramatic poetry (‘to bring on stage’), when a new character is (re)introduced by the narrator. (Towards the end of *Iliad* 1, the tension between Zeus and Hera is eased by Hephaestus, who acts the part of Ganymede.)

βιωτικῶς οὖν διὰ τοῦ παιδὸς λύει τὴν στάσιν καὶ τὸ κατηφές τοῦ συμποσίου, γελώμενον παρῆισάγων τὸν Ἥφαιστον. (schol. bT *Il.* 1.571 ex.)⁴⁴

With lifelike realism he [sc. Homer] has the son [sc. of Zeus and Hera] resolve the strife and the gloom of the banquet, introducing Hephaestus as one to be laughed at.

More often, however, (παρ)εἰσάγειν seems to mean little more than ‘to represent’ (in literature), without the specific notion of an ‘entrance’.⁴⁵ Contrary to the fairly frequent notes on entrances, the non-dramatic scholia hardly ever comment on exits. This probably reflects the scarcity of explicit exits in, for example, the Homeric epics, with their numerous characters who, as it were, drop out of the narrative because they are no longer mentioned. This assumption of a silent exit is explicitly contradicted by the rather extreme note which argues that Iris is still present in *Il.* 5.353

⁴² Inside the palace: Dale (1969: 126–7), cf. schol. E. *Or.* 1371 (noted by Weissmann 1896: 35 and Malzan 1908: 15); ὑπέρ = ‘beyond the confines of’: Willink (1986: 306–7, with parallels and reference to schol. E. *Or.* 1371).

⁴³ Another scholion on the same passage (schol. A. *Eum.* 33b) explains it in temporal terms and speaks of a διάλειμμα (‘pause, interval’; cf. S. *Aj.* 693a, quoted and discussed in Chapter 2). On the two Aeschylean scholia see also Lundon (1999b: 507 with n. 3).

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.247–8 ex., A *Il.* 2.220a *Ariston.*, bT *Il.* 3.16b ex. The difference between εἰσάγειν and παρῆισάγειν seems to be that in the latter case the new character is added to others who are already present. On βιωτικῶς see Chapter 8.

⁴⁵ E.g. schol. bT *Il.* 5.15 ex., A *Il.* 16.747a *Ariston.*; cf. LSJ s.v. II, also Chapter 2 n. 43.

because she never left the scene after her entrance in *Il.* 2.786 (schol. bT *Il.* 5.353 *ex.*; the critic seems to be bothered by Iris' sudden appearance).

It has already been stated above that few scholia make only the single point of identifying a speaker or marking an exit. More often they combine several elements that are treated here in different paragraphs. Notes typically run 'Enter X and says', followed by a more or less concise summary or paraphrase of X's utterance, which can cover as much as a whole speech. The note may also contain further indications regarding, for example, delivery, acting, costume, props, etc., all of which are treated in more detail below. A good example is the note on Helen's first entrance in *Orestes*, in which she apostrophises Electra as 'daughter of Clytaemestra and Agamemnon':

ἡ μὲν Ἑλένη ἕξεισιν ἔχουσα χοὰς καὶ τὸν βόστρυχον ἀποτετμημένον, ἅμα δὲ
 δυσωπεῖ τὴν Ἥλέκτραν καὶ λυπεῖ ὑπομιμνήσκουσα τοῦ ὀνόματος Κλυταιμῆσ-
 τρας καὶ προτάσσουσα. (schol. E. *Or.* 71)

Enter Helen [sc. from the stage house] with libations and the lock of hair that has been cut off, and at the same time she puts Electra out of countenance and vexes her by mentioning and placing first [sc. in her speech] the name of Clytaemestra.

Not unlike their modern successors, ancient commentators try to kill several birds with one stone.

DELIVERY

In addition to identifying speaker and addressee, the proper understanding of an utterance can depend on or gain from having a sense of the tone in which it is spoken.⁴⁶ However, whereas a modern reader would usually be content with knowing the intonation that is most appropriate to the passage under consideration, an ancient reader was often expected to reproduce it in his delivery. In fact, the proper delivery of literary texts was an important aspect of ancient education.⁴⁷ Consequently, the scholia abound in instructions and discussions that deal with the para-verbal question of delivery.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ An illustrative modern example is Sommerstein's translations of Aristophanes, which are seasoned with notes of the type 'matter-of-factly', 'hesitating', 'annoyed', 'pleadingly', 'fortissimo', etc.; see also the commentaries by van Leeuwen (1893–1906).

⁴⁷ See e.g. Quint. 1.8 and 11; such recitations could take the form of actual competitions (Nilsson 1955: 42–9).

⁴⁸ The topic is treated extensively by W. G. Rutherford (1905: 97–179). The present account only highlights a few points.

The scholia provide examples for virtually every conceivable aspect of delivery, including the speaker's emotion (e.g. anger, joy, fear),⁴⁹ the speaker's attitude (e.g. surprise, spite, irony, sarcasm),⁵⁰ the illocutionary force of the utterance (e.g. interrogative, threatening),⁵¹ its specific tone (e.g. shouting, yelping like a dog, with piercing voice, *sotto voce*),⁵² etc.⁵³

Given the widespread ancient habit of delivering literary texts aloud (instead of simply reading them),⁵⁴ it comes as no surprise that the same type of notes also occurs in the scholia to non-dramatic texts, for example, the Homeric epics, and there with an understandable preference for the speeches.⁵⁵ (At the beginning of *Iliad* 22, Achilles acknowledges that he has been deceived by Apollo and says 'I would surely pay you back, if only I had the power.')

προφέρεσθαι δὲ ταῦτα δεῖ οὐ τεθαρρηκινία φωνῆ, ἀλλ' ὡς ἄν εἴποι ἀνὴρ γενναῖος μεγαλόφρων ἀπειλῶν θεῶ. (schol. T *Il.* 22.20c¹ ex.)⁵⁶

This should not be uttered with a voice full of confidence, but such as a noble and high-minded man would speak in threat to a god.

There is, however, a basic difference between dramatic and non-dramatic scholia. In the former case, the suggested delivery is purely the commentator's interpretation, whereas the notes to non-dramatic texts sometimes

⁴⁹ Anger: schol. Ar. *Av.* 1671a (ὀργή); joy: schol. Ar. *Av.* 1342a (ἠδονή); fear: schol. Ar. *Ra.* 286 (φοβεῖσθαι). (In this and the next three notes the references are strictly e.g.)

⁵⁰ Surprise: schol. Ar. *Ra.* 51a (θαυμάζειν); spite: schol. E. *Ph.* 550 (σχετλιασμός); irony: schol. E. *Hec.* 26 (with an interesting combination of the three most common terms ἐν εἰρωνείᾳ, ἐν ἤθει and κατ' ἀντίφρασιν, see Chapter 9); sarcasm: schol. Ar. *Av.* 1009a (σαρκασμός).

⁵¹ Interrogative: schol. E. *Ph.* 550 (πενστικῶς), 713 (ἔρωτηματικῶς); threatening: schol. Ar. *Pl.* 56 (ἀπειλητική). The distinction between ἐρώτημα and πᾶσις corresponds to the modern distinction between 'yes-no questions' and 'x-questions': e.g. D. T. p. 349 Uhlig vs. pp. 29.8–33.8 Uhlig, Theon II 97.26–30 Spengel.

⁵² Shouting: schol. A. *Ag.* 22b (ἀνακροῦζειν); yelping: schol. S. *Aj.* 334a (κυνικώτερον βουῦζειν); with piercing voice: schol. Ar. *Av.* 227c.α (ὀξυτόνωος τῆ φωνῆ); *sotto voce*: see above on asides.

⁵³ For a collection of comic scholia see W. G. Rutherford (1905: 153–5).

⁵⁴ In this case, the notorious debate over silent reading in antiquity does not come into play. The difference made here is between the 'dramatic' delivery similar to that of an actor, on the one hand, and more neutral reading, on the other, regardless of whether this is actually done silently or not. In this connection, it is important to note that the ancients were in the habit of having texts read to them (Busch 2002).

⁵⁵ It is this preference for the speeches and their 'dramatic' quality which justifies the treatment of delivery in this part of the book and not in Part I. Needless to say, speeches are the preferred but not the only location to instruct the reader, cf. e.g. schol. T *Il.* 16.131 ex. or schol. Call. *h.* 1.7 (where, by the way, ἐν ἤθει cannot mean 'ironically' (cf. Chapter 11), perhaps 'emphatically?').

⁵⁶ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 3.57b² ex., bT *Il.* 10.141–2 ex., T *Il.* 13.123–4a¹ ex. (with van der Valk's conjecture ἀνατάσσεως, accepted by Erbse (*ad loc.*), who later suspected (VII: 312) that c had ἐμφάσσεως), also AbT *Il.* 2.339–42 ex.

draw on clues such as the speech introductions, by which the narrator can indicate the tone or intention of the speech.⁵⁷

The paragraph on delivery is perhaps the right place to discuss phenomena such as groaning, sighing, etc., which are essentially non-verbal and therefore often leave no explicit trace in the text of the play itself. Of particular interest here is a note on Euripides' *Orestes* (cf. Weissmann 1896: 13), triggered by the word θωύξασα ('shouting'), which Electra uses when she reprimands the chorus for waking Orestes (E. *Or.* 168):

τινὲς δὲ φασιν ὅτι φωνῆ ἔχρησατο θρηνώδει ὁ χορὸς γραφῆναι μὴ δυναμένη, ἰυγμῶ ἢ καὶ ἰυγμοῦ τραχυτέρᾳ, ὅπερ εἰώθασι ποιεῖν αἱ γυναῖκες ἐπὶ τοῖς ὑπερβάλλουσι κακοῖς. ἂ γὰρ μὴ δύναται γράφεσθαι, ταῦτα δι' ἐτέρων προσώπων δηλοῦται, οἷόν τι καὶ παρὰ τῶ κωμικῶ οἰκέτου στενάξαντος ἕτερός φησιν (Ar. fr. 967 K-A): "ἀκούεις ὡς στένει;" (schol. E. *Or.* 168)

Some <critics> say that the chorus made use of a lamenting sound that cannot be written down [sc. in the text of the chorus], a shriek or <a sound> harsher than a shriek, as women are wont to do in the case of extraordinary disaster. For what cannot be written [sc. as part of the character's utterance] is shown through other characters, for example when in Aristophanes one slave is groaning, the other says 'Do you hear how he is groaning?'

The unnamed critics apparently assume that the chorus' verbal utterance in *Orestes* is punctuated by non-verbal shrieks of lament. More importantly, they make the general observation that dramatic poets incorporate non-verbal utterances by having the interlocutor comment on it, as exemplified by a passage from Aristophanes.

ACTING

On the one hand, it is only a small step from the para-verbal aspect of delivery to the decidedly non-verbal questions of gesture, posture, etc. On the other hand, notes on the latter are quite different because they no longer simply fulfil the needs of a reader, but seem to have in mind an actual performance of the text under consideration. This holds especially true for the comments which explicitly mention what the *actor* does or is supposed to do.⁵⁸ (In Sophocles' *Electra* the chorus finally despairs of all hope and asks why the gods do not intervene. Electra cries out in grief and despair, φεῦ, S. *El.* 828.)

⁵⁷ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 5.419 *ex.*; on speech introductions in general see Chapter 17.

⁵⁸ Cf. Weissmann (1896: 17–18), Malzan (1908: 29–35), Falkner (2002).

δεῖ δὲ τὸν ὑποκριτὴν ἅμα τῆ βροῆ ἀναβλέψαι τε εἰς οὐρανὸν καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἀνατεῖναι ὃ δὴ κωλύει ὁ χορὸς “μηδὲν μέγ’ ἄυσης”. (schol. *S. El.* 823)

The actor must, together with the exclamation, look up to the sky and raise his hands, which the chorus prevents <by saying> ‘do not cry out extravagantly’.

Whether the critic is thinking of an actual performance of the play is difficult to say. As an alternative, he may well observe the principle that a good commentator ought fully to visualise the play if he is to explain it properly (e.g. Dover 1966: 2). In any case, he gives fairly detailed instructions as to how the scene ought to be played by an actor.⁵⁹

A very common feature of scholia is to summarise or paraphrase the passage under consideration (see *Intro.* page 8). In the case of dramatic scholia such paraphrases can include a description of the action on stage. For example, Hephaestus speaks while at the same time putting Prometheus in chains (schol. *A. PV* 57a). Dicaeopolis invokes Heracles for help because he is being pelted by the chorus (schol. *Ar. Ach.* 284c). Strepsiades imitates the snoring of his son and then attempts to go back to sleep himself (schol. *Ar. Nu.* 11). One of the slaves of *Peace* covers his nose with one hand and kneads the smelly ‘dough’ with the other (schol. *Ar. Pax* 9b). Xanthias throws off the luggage from his shoulder (schol. *Ar. Ra.* 160).⁶⁰ Euripides underlines the statement that Aeschylus’ characters do not make ‘even this much’ of a sound by snapping with his fingers (schol. *Ar. Ra.* 913), etc.

In addition to describing the action on stage, other notes deal with the positions of the characters relative to each other (e.g. schol. *S. OC* 163, on the distance between the chorus and Oedipus).

As is the case with many examples in this chapter, the scholar’s reconstruction of the stage action is primarily based on a careful analysis of the text and its implicit stage directions. On occasion the scholia make this explicit. The passage from *Hecuba*, for example, in which the title character

⁵⁹ For similar instructions and descriptions see the passages collected by Trendelenburg (1867: 136–7): (in the following ‘Odysseus’ etc. is short for ‘the actor playing Odysseus’, all the scholia explicitly mention actors) schol. *S. Aj.* 1a (Odysseus is looking in various directions, as if in fear of being detected), *OT* 41 (the priest is falling to Oedipus’ feet in supplication), 1297 (the chorus are turning away from the horrible sight of the blinded Oedipus), *E. Or.* 643 (Menelaus is raising his hand indicating his objection; cf. *Proleg. Hermog.* p. 265.9–19 Rabe), *Hipp.* 215 (Phaedra acts out on stage her intention to go hunting in the woods); add schol. *S. OC* 1547 (Oedipus, although now on his own, does not stumble, but leaves the stage straight as if led by a god). For a description of acting see also *Ps. Demetr. eloc.* 195 (on *E. Ion* 154–69).

⁶⁰ The commentator acutely observes that this allows the joke when Xanthias is ordered shortly afterwards (*Ar. Ra.* 165) to take it up again.

is said to speak aside and turn away from her interlocutor Agamemnon (quoted above) is explained thus:

δῆλον δὲ ἐξ ὧν ὁ Ἀγαμέμνων πρὸς αὐτὴν λέγει (E. *Hec.* 739)· “τί μοι προσώπω
νῶτον;” (schol. E. *Hec.* 736)⁶¹

<This is> evident from what Agamemnon says to her [sc. Hecuba]: ‘Why <do you turn your face>⁶² back to my face?’

Agamemnon’s retort is explicitly used as evidence for Hecuba’s posture. In many other cases, it is quite obvious that the commentators simply flesh out the implications of the text (e.g. schol. Ar. *Pax* 682 on Eirene turning her head). No less often, however, scholars will have relied primarily on their own imagination. Consequently, their notes must be used with great caution when it comes to reconstructing the gestures and postures which the playwright himself had envisaged for the scene (see n. 2 above).

In this respect these notes are different from the scholia which comment on the meaning or function of gestures and poses that are explicitly mentioned, for example in a narrative text such as the *Iliad*. These notes single out a posture or gesture that is explicitly mentioned in the text and discuss its possible meaning.⁶³ Conversely, the dramatic scholia repeatedly reconstruct the gestures on the basis of an imaginative reading. As such, these reconstructions are valuable sources for the reception of the text in question, but are not necessarily reliable witnesses for the original staging of the play.⁶⁴

MASKS, COSTUMES AND PROPS

Other visual features such as masks, costumes and props are hardly less important than the acting itself for a full visualisation of the play, especially because the information they provide is immediately evident to a spectator.

⁶¹ Cf. schol. S. *OC* 1437 (Antigone clinging to Polyneices in her appeal).

⁶² As often, the critic only quotes the beginning of the relevant line (cf. *Introd.* page 10).

⁶³ Cf. e.g. schol. bT *Il.* 1.500 *ex.* (on Thetis supplicating Zeus), bT *Il.* 7.225 *ex.* (Ajax standing menacingly close to Hector), bT *Il.* 18.71b *ex.* (Thetis touching Achilles’ head), bT *Il.* 22.37 *ex.* (Priam imploring Hector with outstretched arms), bT *Il.* 22.80b *ex.* (Hecuba baring her breasts for the same purpose); it is worth mentioning, however, that at least one scholion imagines a gesture that is not explicitly mentioned in the text: schol. T *Il.* 2.231a¹ *ex.* envisages Thersites proudly putting his hand on his chest. Similarly, schol. bT *Il.* 10.434a *ex.* assumes that Dolon accompanies the deixis of οἶδε with a gesture.

⁶⁴ On the question of acting see also schol. S. *Aj.* 864a, which argues that a persuasive performance of Ajax’ suicide requires a strong actor. The critic apparently presumes that the actor falls on the sword and then remains in a position that requires much strength. He goes on to say that one Timotheus of Zakynthos performed the scene so persuasively that he got the nickname ‘Slayer’.

It is again the scholia on Aristophanes which are particularly rich in this kind of comment.⁶⁵ In particular the notes on the openings of the plays tend to provide much relevant information, for example, on *Frogs*:

ὁ Ξανθίας ἐπὶ ὄνου παράγεται καθεζόμενος, ἔχων ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων ἀνάφορον ὄπου ἦν τὰ στρώματα. (schol. Ar. *Ra.* 1a)⁶⁶

Xanthias is brought on stage sitting on a donkey, holding on his shoulders a bearing-pole with bedding.

The note obviously draws on the various indications given in the course of the subsequent scene. By describing Xanthias' visual appearance at the outset, the commentator puts the reader in a position similar to that of a spectator who would have seen all this immediately.⁶⁷

The detailed sources describe many things: faces, that is, masks, especially of the spectacular birds in Aristophanes' play (e.g. schol. Ar. *Av.* 61 and below): but also the monster-like one-eyed Persian ambassador (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 95a). On a more general note, schol. Ar. *Eq.* 230a.I explains that the masks of characters who served to ridicule historical persons resembled their 'models' in order to facilitate the identification.⁶⁸

Another note of interest concerns Creon's entrance early in *Oedipus the King*. Oedipus utters the wish that Creon 'may come radiant with preserving fortune, like a bright eye' (S. *OT* 80–1):

λεληθότως δὲ δείκνυσιν ἡμῖν τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ ὑποκριτοῦ ὁποῖον εἰσηλθε. (schol. S. *OT* 80)

He [sc. Sophocles rather than Oedipus] shows us implicitly the appearance in which the actor enters.

Unfortunately, the details are not entirely clear. Firstly, the word σχῆμα can mean various aspects of a character's appearance: mask, costume, but also posture. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, Oedipus utters a wish, not a straightforward description. One should therefore consider the possibility that the transmitted text of the scholion, which connects the point about the actor's σχῆμα with Oedipus' utterance, is defective. This part of the scholion may, in fact, refer to the chorus describing Creon

⁶⁵ See the collection by W. G. Rutherford (1905: 120–2), but not all the examples are equally relevant.

⁶⁶ For similar notes on the opening scene see schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1a, *Av.* 1b, *Pax* 1c, *Ec.* 1a.

⁶⁷ It is true that the spectators do not learn Xanthias' name until line 271 (though some will have known it from the *proagon*), but they are immediately aware of the decisive point: he is Dionysus' slave.

⁶⁸ As often, the generalising note is triggered by an exception. The critic claims that no maker of masks dared to produce a mask for the 'Paphlagonian' that resembled Cleon, because they feared repercussions.

as ‘coming with a head crowned with luxuriant bay leaves’ (S. *OT* 82–3). Either way, the Sophoclean text is taken as an implicit description of Creon’s appearance, probably his mask.⁶⁹

The scholia also provide numerous descriptions of appearances in general and costumes in particular, for example Ajax is covered with blood (schol. S. *Aj.* 346a), Philoctetes’ appearance is savage (schol. S. *Ph.* 226), Euripides is dressed in rags (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 412), the Furies have no wings (schol. A. *Eum.* 250), the chorus in *Wasps* is wearing wasp costumes with stings (schol. Ar. *V.* 224a), the Megarian’s daughters are dressed up as piglets (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 729), Tereus’ hoopoe costume is incomplete, he is part man, part bird (schol. Ar. *Av.* 104a), similarly Procne’s nightingale costume (667b), etc. Another note (schol. Ar. *Lys.* 1093) explains that the Spartan ambassadors must have taken off their cloaks (sc. in 1077), thereby revealing their erect phalluses, which the critic considers ‘utterly vulgar’ (φορτικῶς πάυυ).

Finally, the scholia repeatedly describe stage props of various types and sizes: Xanthias’ donkey (see above), Oceanus’ griffin (schol. A. *PV* 284a, b), Charon’s boat (schol. Ar. *Ra.* 180b.α), theatre masks (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 418c, 429a) and costumes (434) that are used as props, the Sausage-seller’s full equipment (schol. Ar. *Eq.* 150a), Peisetaerus’ jackdaw and Euelpides’ crow (schol. Ar. *Av.* 1b, 2a), the helmet with which one of Lysistrata’s companions feigns her pregnancy (schol. Ar. *Lys.* 751), Mica’s ‘baby’ that turns out to be a wineskin with boot-shaped ends (schol. Ar. *Th.* 730),⁷⁰ etc.

DÉCOR

Contrary to the numerous notes on masks, costumes and props, information about the décor is hard to come by. *Hypotheses* and scholia normally limit themselves to identifying the fictitious location of the play (Thebes, Mycenae, etc.), without actually describing the scene itself.⁷¹ Such notes may specify what is presumed to be found next to the stage, that is,

⁶⁹ Cf. the similar remark on Electra’s costume in schol. S. *El.* 190 (Weissmann 1896: 7), and the section above on non-verbal utterances which are reflected in the interlocutor’s reaction.

⁷⁰ The explanation clearly depends on the Inlaw’s reference to the ‘Persian bootees’ (Ar. *Th.* 734), which was taken literally also by the painter of an Apulian bell-crater around 370 BC (now in Würzburg). For a picture see the frontispiece in the editions of the play by Austin and Olson (2004, in colour) or Sommerstein (2001, black and white).

⁷¹ This can include the additional point, usually with reference to Aristophanes, that the scene changes from A to B in the course of the play (see Chapter 1). Occasionally, a note identifies the relevant passage from which the location of the play can be deduced (e.g. schol. E. *Or.* 46).

invisible to the audience (e.g. schol. S. *OC* 1590),⁷² or what is understood to be visible from the stage (e.g. burning Troy in *Hecuba*, which takes place on the Chersonese: schol. E. *Hec.* 1215, sim. 939). Other comments argue that a particular passage does not match the fictitious location of the play.⁷³ But actual descriptions of the décor are scarce. A scholion on the opening of *Hippolytus* (schol. E. *Hipp.* 3) assumes that Aphrodite is flanked by statues of Eros, one representing vengeance (τιμωρία), the other the gift (δωρεά), presumably of love. A note on *Peace* (schol. Ar. *Pax* 224) mentions a cave, and one on *Wasps* explains that Bdelycleon is seen sitting on the roof of the stage-building (schol. Ar. *V.* 68).⁷⁴

Given that virtually every other aspect is better documented than décor, it is unlikely that the hazards of textual transmission are to be held responsible for this gap. It is more likely that scholars did not consider the décor very important for a proper understanding of the play in question. This could be an indication that the décor was in fact of limited importance. But this seems to apply better to the classical stage, whereas the Hellenistic stage is characterised by considerably more equipment (see n. 74). This, however, clashes with the fact that the scholia reflect Hellenistic (or later) practice when it comes to commenting on acting (see below). Another explanation may therefore be the assumption of Peripatetic influence. As is well known, Aristotle focused on the plays' text and thought the visual aspects (ὄψις) to be of secondary importance only.⁷⁵ It is true, though, that for him the visual aspects included masks etc., which are rather well documented in the scholia.

SPECIAL TECHNICAL DEVICES

Though in a way part of the décor, the theatre crane (μηχανή) and the *ekkyklema* received attention mostly as technical devices of the ancient

⁷² This critic's main goal is actually not to describe the off-stage scenery for its own sake but to argue against a *prima facie* inconsistency with an earlier passage. Off-stage scenery is also referred to in schol. Ar. *Nu.* 323d: δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ ὄρος ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ τὴν Πάρνηθα, ἐξ οὗ κατέρχονται ('he [sc. Socrates] shows him [sc. Strepsiades] the mountain Parnes in the theatre, from where they [sc. the chorus of Clouds] are coming down'), which is unlikely to mean that the critic thought that the mountain was actually represented on stage (thus Weissmann 1896: 19).

⁷³ Cf. e.g. schol. E. *Hec.* 74 (quoted in Chapter 4), 521.

⁷⁴ A discussion of the various levels and locations of the (mostly Hellenistic) stage cannot be given here, because it would require a thorough comparison with the archaeological evidence. On θυμέλη ('stage'), λογεῖον ('stage'), θεολογεῖον ('platform for gods' appearances'), etc. see e.g. the various contributions and the glossary in Easterling and Hall (2002).

⁷⁵ See e.g. Taplin (1977a: 477–9); on décor in particular, Aristotle has little more to say than that it was Sophocles who introduced it (Arist. *Po.* 1449a18). Conversely, the *hypothesis* to Euripides' *Phoenician Women* deems the play ταῖς σκηναῖς ὄψεσι καλόν (p. 243.8 Schw.), but it is difficult to say what exactly is meant.

stage. The crane was used for characters (often, but not exclusively, divine) who enter, move or exit ‘through the air’.⁷⁶ Examples include Trygaeus on the dung-beetle in *Peace* (schol. Ar. *Pax* 80), a parody of Euripides’ *Bellerophon* (schol. Ar. *Pax* 76b). More surprising is the assumption that an entire chorus could enter the stage on the crane, as is claimed for the Oceanids in *Prometheus Bound* (schol. A. *PV* 128a/b, also 284a/b).⁷⁷

The *ekkyklema* is a trolley that was rolled out when the scene was assumed to take place within the stage-house.⁷⁸

Both devices, crane and *ekkyklema*, seem to have fired ancient critics’ imagination, with the result that they find rather more occasions for their use than is actually necessary or practical.⁷⁹ This seems to apply to no less a scholar than Aristophanes of Byzantium. He appears to have thought that the entrance of Phaedra in *Hippolytus* requires the *ekkyklema* and criticised Euripides for having the chorus say that the nurse ‘is bringing (Phaedra) out of doors’ (ἐκκομιζουσα, E. *Hipp.* 171).⁸⁰ In reality, the *ekkyklema* is not needed here at all (e.g. Barrett 1964: 318).

Interestingly, a Homeric scholion describes the passage in which Homer shows Hephaestus working in his forge (*Il.* 18.476–7) ‘as if it were an *ekkyklema* on the stage’ (ὡσπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς ἐκκυκλήσας).⁸¹ The notion that conventions typical of the stage are used to interpret a non-dramatic text recurs in another Homeric scholion (see next paragraph).

As to the crane, another consequence of frequently claiming its use is the adaptation of the term *μηχανή* to describe any form of ‘superhuman’ intervention. This includes divine interventions in non-dramatic texts, especially when the god brings back on track a plot that is about to ‘derail’. Here scholars were apparently reminded of the *deus ex machina* at the end

⁷⁶ Cf. schol. Ar. *Pax* 80 (≈ Su. ε 1897), Pollux 4.128 (with *test.*), see also the *testimonia* collected by Kassel and Austin (*ad Ar. fr.* 160, Eubul. fr. 15).

⁷⁷ Moreover, if this explanation were correct, it might point to an early introduction of the crane, which, however, is dependent on the thorny question of the play’s authenticity.

⁷⁸ See the description by Pollux 4.128; the *ekkyklema* is expressly mentioned in schol. A. *Ch.* 973, S. *Aj.* 346a, E. *Hipp.* 171 (see below), *Med.* 96, Ar. *Ach.* 408 (= Su. ε 132), *Nu.* 184b (cf. *argum.* A5, p. 3.12 Holwerda), *Th.* 96, ante 277, and is perhaps meant in schol. A. *Eum.* 64b (στραφέντα μηχανήματα). Conversely, *παρεγκύκλημα* in schol. S. *Aj.* 346b does not specifically designate the *ekkyklema* (mentioned in 346a), but is an (admittedly odd) variant for *παρεπιγραφή* ‘stage direction’ (on which see Excursus below): see W. G. Rutherford (1905: 110–11) with reference to schol. Ar. *Nu.* 18b, 22a, 132b, 218b.

⁷⁹ For a collection of scholia see Weissmann (1896: 26–9), also Meijering (1987: 130–2), Revermann (2006: 323–4, missing some tragic scholia). It is difficult to say whether the critics’ enthusiasm was indeed triggered by (mal)practice on the post-classical stage (thus, e.g., Wilamowitz [1895] 1959: 153–4).

⁸⁰ Cf. Aristophanes fr. 390 Slater (with lit.) = schol. E. *Hipp.* 171. A similar mistake underlies schol. E. *Alc.* 233.

⁸¹ See schol. bT *Il.* 18.476–7 *ex.* (Trendelenburg 1867: 82).

of a tragedy. Examples include Athena stopping the flight of the Greek army in *Iliad* 2 (schol. bT *Il.* 2.144d *ex.*, quoted in [Chapter 13](#)). At some point the expression ἀπὸ μηχανῆς became proverbial for an unexpected turn of events.⁸²

A rather curious technical device is the βροντεῖον, an engine that produces stage-thunder. The sound is made by pebbles whirled in a bronze cauldron, as the scholion explains on the passage from *Clouds* where Socrates refers to the thunder that accompanies the song of the chorus.⁸³

DRAMATURGICAL CONVENTIONS

The various questions documented in this chapter, in particular the ones dealing with entrances and exits, also gave scholars the opportunity to explain general conventions of the stage. These conventions include, for example, the so-called three-actor rule, according to which Greek tragedies could be and in fact were played by three actors only (on the rule see MacDowell 1994). A scholion on Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* refers to the rule in unambiguous terms:

μετεσκεύασται ὁ ἐξάγγελος εἰς Πυλάδην ἵνα μὴ δ' ἑλέγωσιν. (schol. A. *Ch.* 899)⁸⁴

The messenger has changed into Pylades lest there be four actors [lit. speakers].⁸⁵

In other words, the messenger leaves the stage after his last line (*Ch.* 886) in order to return as Pylades in l. 899, because tragedy does not make use of a fourth actor.⁸⁶ The situation is different in Old Comedy, which sometimes requires a fourth actor. No wonder, then, if the fact of four speaking actors is mentioned in some comic scholia (schol. Ar. *Ra.* 549b, 1414a, differently b).

⁸² See Diogen. 2.84 (I 210 Leutsch-Schn.), Su. α 3438 (with *test.*). Polemics against the 'unimaginative' solution by means of a *deus ex machina* begin early: Pl. *Cratyl.* 425d.

⁸³ Cf. schol. Ar. *Nu.* 292b (of the two redactions β is virtually identical with the definition given by Su. β 549), for a description see also Pollux 4.130. Whether the original production in 423 BC actually involved this device is disputed: *pro* e.g. Sommerstein (1982: *ad loc.*), *contra* e.g. Dover (1968: *ad loc.*).

⁸⁴ Cf. Hor. *AP* 192 (*nec quarta loqui persona laboret*).

⁸⁵ As the discussion on παραχορηγήματα made clear, ancient scholars did recognise that on occasion supernumeraries would speak a few lines, which, however, is not the concern of the present note, hence 'actors' instead of 'speakers'.

⁸⁶ The interpretation is accepted by many modern scholars, see Taplin (1977a: 353–4), who argues against it. Regardless of whether the scholion correctly interprets the passage, it remains important for stating the rule.

The note on *Choephoroi* presupposes that the actor is needed for another character, a notion that recurs in a scholion on the end of the opening scene of Sophocles' *Oedipus*:

ἔξεισιν ὁ ἱερεὺς πράξας δι' ὅπερ ἦλθεν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ χώραν εἶναι ἐτέρω ὑποκριτῆι. (schol. S. *OT* 147)

Exit the priest, having fulfilled the purpose of his coming, and at the same time in order to make space for another actor.

In the second part the wording of the scholion is somewhat unfortunate because the actor who plays the priest in fact 'makes space' for another character (presumably Tiresias), not another actor.⁸⁷

The ancient convention of having the main characters played by a limited number of actors inevitably influenced the way the poet organised his play. He may even have been encouraged to distribute entrances and exits in such a way that, for example, a character can be played by a particular actor. Thus a note on Euripides' *Phoenician Women* argues that the Servant and Antigone do not enter together in l. 88 so that the protagonist, who played Iocaste in 1–87, can play Antigone too (schol. E. *Ph.* 93). This should not *a priori* be discarded as fanciful. For 'if only the protagonist had an excellent singing voice, it would be reasonable (though taxing) for him to play all of Joc(asta)'s scenes and to play Ant(igone) in the scenes in which she sings [88–201, 1485–end]'.⁸⁸

Also related to the question of entrances and exits is the principle that the chorus does not leave the stage in the course of the play (e.g. schol. S. *Aj.* 330a, Ar. *V.* 1536a). But another note on *Ajax* (schol. S. *Aj.* 719) clearly states that the chorus does leave the stage (sc. in 814) in search of Ajax. And schol. E. *Alc.* 897 adduces *Ajax* as a parallel in order to support its argument that the chorus had left the stage together with Admetus in *Alc.* 746 (re-entering in 861).⁸⁹ The phrasing of both scholia makes it clear, however, that the commentators were aware of these choral exits being exceptional.

⁸⁷ Wilamowitz ([1895] 1959: 154 n. 64) criticises the note: 'Auch wenn über das Umkostümiern geredet wird, ist die Verkehrtheit der Bemerkung Beweis genug, daß das am Schreibtisch ausgedacht ist, Schol. Soph. OT 147, E. Phoen. 93.' But the critic may not mean to say more than that the actor who plays the Priest leaves the stage in order to return as Tiresias after the *parodos*, because the three-actor rule applies. Moreover, he also says that the exit is well motivated because the Priest has done his job (on motivation see Chapter 1).

⁸⁸ Mastronarde (1994: 179); Wilamowitz (see n. 87) is less sympathetic.

⁸⁹ In that connection it is worth mentioning that Triclinius was of the opinion that the chorus leaves the stage in A. *Th.* 784 and re-enters in 822 (schol. A. *Th.* 778–784d, 792–821b). Unlike the two examples mentioned in the main text, this one runs against modern interpretations (e.g. Taplin 1977a: 375).

Another convention concerns the avoidance of openly presenting violence on stage (cf. Arist. *Po.* 1452b12, without explicit condemnation). Instead, such scenes are presupposed to be taking place backstage or off-stage and are then reported to the other characters (and indirectly to the audience) by a messenger. The general principle is stated with reference to the killing of Polyxena in *Hecuba*:

κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον ἐσφάγη ἡ Πολυξένη. ἔθος γὰρ τοῖς τραγικοῖς τὸ μὴ ἐπ' ὄψει τῶν θεατῶν ἀναιρεῖν· ἠνιάθησαν γὰρ ἄν ὀρώντες τοιαύτην θέαν. (schol. *E. Hec.* 484)

Polyxena is killed backstage [lit. tacitly].⁹⁰ For it was the habit of the tragedians not to have characters killed in full view of the audience, because they would have been distressed by such a spectacle.

The scholion also gives an explanation for the convention, the essence of which recurs in a Homeric scholion that includes a discussion of the principles of the tragic stage. Excessive violence is avoided in general because it would be 'overly harsh' (ἄγαν πικρόν) and 'inhuman' (ἀπάνθρωπον). Tragedy therefore avoids presenting killings on stage and resorts to messengers instead (schol. bT *Il.* 6.58–9b ex.).

Other notes on tragedy clearly presuppose the same convention (schol. *A. Ch.* 904, *S. Aj.* 297a, *El.* 1495, also 1404 quoted next). As an alternative to the messenger speech, the playwright can decide to make the characters heard from within the stage-house, for example when Clytaemestra is killed towards the end of Sophocles' *Electra* (cf. Bremer 1976: 46–8):

ἔθος ἔχουσι τὰ γεγονότα ἔνδον ἀπαγγέλλειν τοῖς ἔξω οἱ ἄγγελοι, νῦν δὲ διὰ τὸ μὴ διατρίβειν ἐν τῷ δράματι οὐκ ἐποίησεν· . . . νῦν τοίνυν βοώσης ἐν τῇ ἀναιρέσει τῆς Κλυταιμίστρας ἀκούει ὁ θεατῆς καὶ ἐνεργέστερον τὸ πρᾶγμα γίνεται ἢ δι' ἀγγέλου σημαινόμενον· καὶ τὸ μὲν φορτικὸν τῆς ὄψεως ἀπέστη τὸ δὲ ἐναργές οὐδὲν ἦσσαν καὶ διὰ τῆς βοῆς ἐπραγματεύσατο. (schol. *S. El.* 1404)

Customarily the messengers report what happened inside to the people on stage, but in the present case he [sc. Sophocles] did not do so in order not to make the drama linger. . . . In the present case, however, the spectator hears Clytaemestra screaming while she is being killed, and the action is more powerful than if reported by a messenger. And at the same time he [sc. Sophocles] kept the spectacle free of the vulgar and by means of the scream brought out the graphic quality no less.

⁹⁰ For this curious adaptation of the expression κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον see Chapter 6. Cf. argum. A. *Ag.* 16, where σιωπᾶν means 'not to present on stage'.

The scholion combines several points, which may represent different redactions: (a) the standard solution would have been a messenger speech, which (b) Sophocles avoided because he did not want to slow down the pace of his play.⁹¹ (c) Compared with a messenger speech, Clytaemestra's scream is more powerful. (d) Compared with the (unacceptable) acting-out on stage, the scream is no less graphic.⁹² Sophocles has so to speak chosen the best of both worlds, but the solution is exceptional.

Finally, schol. S. *Aj.* 815a argues that Sophocles departed from the model set by Aeschylus, who reported Ajax' suicide in a messenger speech in *Thracian Women* (TrGF III p. 205), because he wanted to be innovative (καινοτομεῖν) or to amaze (ἐκπληῖξαι) the audience (see Chapter 5). The latter option again presupposes that such scenes are not normally presented on stage.

CRITIQUE OF CONTEMPORARY PRODUCTIONS⁹³

A recurrent theme in discussing questions of staging is the critique of current (mal)practice (see above on the entrance of the Phrygian slave in *Orestes*), but it is often difficult to determine with exactitude what 'current' means. Many modern scholars tend to assume that such notes refer to post-classical, that is, Hellenistic practice. But one can hardly rule out that at least some of them refer to later practice still.

In any case, it is remarkable to read about a production of Euripides' *Orestes*, the opening of which apparently showed a triumphal procession of booty, slaves, etc. when Helen is brought back to Menelaus' palace. This contradicted Electra's explicit statement (*E. Or.* 56–60) that he had her return during the night, that is, before the opening of the play:

οὐκ ὀρθῶς νῦν ποιοῦσί τινες τῶν ὑποκριτῶν πρῶ εἰσπορευομένην τὴν Ἑλένην καὶ τὰ λάφυρα. ῥητῶς γὰρ αὐτὴν νυκτὸς ἀπεστάλθαι φησί, τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὸ δρᾶμα ἡμέρα συντελεῖται. (schol. *E. Or.* 57)

Some of today's actors incorrectly bring in Helen and the booty early in the day. For she [sc. Electra] explicitly says that she [sc. Helen] was sent during the night. The action of a play takes place during the day.

The wording of the note (τινές) makes it clear that only some producers turned a blind eye to the textual evidence in order to have a more pompous

⁹¹ For this notion see Chapter 1. ⁹² On ἐνάργεια see Chapter 9. ⁹³ Weissmann (1896: 32–8).

opening of the play. At the same time, the scholar states the rule that there are no 'night scenes' in Greek tragedy.

Another critique of a contemporary production is related to the scene from *Orestes* where the title character, in a fit of madness, asks a (presumably imaginary) squire to hand him the bow he was given by Apollo, in order to shoot the Furies, which only he can see:

Στησιχώρα [fr. 217 Page/Davies] ἐπόμενος τόξα φησὶν αὐτὸν εἰληφέναι παρὰ Ἀπόλλωνος. ἔδει οὖν τὸν ὑποκριτὴν τόξα λαβόντα τοξεύειν. οἱ δὲ νῦν ὑποκρινόμενοι τὸν ἥρωα αἰτοῦσι μὲν τὰ τόξα, μὴ δεχόμενοι δὲ σχηματίζονται τοξεύειν. (schol. E. *Or.* 268)

Following Stesichorus, he [sc. Euripides] says that he [sc. Orestes] has received a bow from Apollo. Thus the actor ought to take a [real] bow and shoot. But the actors who now play the role of the hero [sc. Orestes] ask for a bow, but, not receiving one, <only> mime the shooting.

Post-classical productions of the play apparently mimed the bow-giving and shooting. It is worth pointing out, however, that the scholar's criticism 'is not based on evidence of a different pre-Hellenistic practice, but avowedly on the precedent (with an 'actual' bow-giving) in Stesichorus' (Willink 1986: *ad loc.*). Thus, it may well be that the original performance in 408 BC, too, mimed the scene. Admittedly, the somewhat literal-minded commentator would not have liked it.

Finally, the passage in *Acharnians* where Dicaeopolis tries to borrow Telephus' 'felt cap' (πιλίδιον, 439) from Euripides gave rise to a complaint about 'today's actors'. The critic finds fault with their failing to equip Telephus with the relevant item when they put Euripides' play on stage (schol. Ar. *Ach.* 439a).

The notes of this section, which in our time are more likely to be found in the feuilleton of a newspaper than in a commentary, show that at least some ancient literary critics were quite willing to leave their studies and attend performances of the very plays they were working on.

EXCURSUS: THE MEANING OF ΠΑΡΕΠΙΓΡΑΦΗ⁹⁴

The technical term for the various 'stage directions' discussed in this chapter is *παρεπιγραφή*. Its etymology seems to point to a note that is written next to and/or in addition to the text of the drama itself. This interpretation is corroborated by the fact that the stage directions found in papyri are

⁹⁴ The present account is indebted to Holzinger (1883), Weissmann (1896: 21–32), W. G. Rutherford (1905: 103–7, 113–14), Koster (1955), Taplin (1977b).

often written in the margins or the interlinear space.⁹⁵ There are many scholia which align well with this meaning, in that they report or expand a marginal or interlinear stage direction. (In the opening scene of *Acharnians*, Dicaeopolis cross-examines the Persian ambassador and asks him whether the Persian king really intends to send money, *Ar. Ach.* 113.)

ἀνανεύει: τοῦτό ἐστι παρεπιγραφή, ὑπὲρ τοῦ σαφὲς γενέσθαι ὅτι ἀρνούμενος ἀνένευσεν. (schol. *Ar. Ach.* 113a)⁹⁶

He [sc. the ambassador] throws his head back [as a sign of denial]: this is a stage direction, the purpose is to make clear that he threw back his head in denial.

The lemma ἀνανεύει is not part of Aristophanes' text, but occurs between lines 112 and 113 in the manuscripts. In other cases, the manuscripts do not actually preserve a παρεπιγραφή, but the word's occurrence in the relevant scholia is consistent with its original meaning 'marginal or interlinear stage direction'.

There are, however, several other instances that do not seem to fit this meaning. (In Aristophanes' *Knights*, the Paphlagonian *alias* Cleon is physically attacked by the entering chorus. He shouts, among other things, 'I'm being punched in the belly!' (γαστρίζομαι), *Ar. Eq.* 273.)

γαστρίζομαι: [semantic explanation of the verb, then] παρεπιγραφή· συγκέκυψε γὰρ καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν διωκόντων τύπτεται. (schol. *Ar. Eq.* 273)

I am being punched in the belly: . . . Stage direction: for he [sc. the Paphlagonian] has doubled up and is being hit by his persecutors.

This note is unlikely to refer to an actual παρεπιγραφή in the margin or between the lines (now lost). Rather, the commentator fleshes out the implicit stage direction that is provided by the text of the passage. Implicit stage directions of this kind are very common in Greek drama and by far the best guide for a reconstruction of the stage action (Taplin 1977a). Such passages are repeatedly called παρεπιγραφαί in the scholia.⁹⁷ Although it cannot always be ruled out with certainty that these scholia go back to actual παρεπιγραφαί, the sheer number of such notes tells against such an assumption.⁹⁸ It seems therefore likely that the etymological meaning of παρεπιγραφή faded over the centuries and that the word came to

⁹⁵ Cf. e.g. ἡσυχῆ (‘aside’, see n. 15) in *P. Bodm.* 26 = *Men. Asp.* 93 (right-hand margin), 467 (interlinear).

⁹⁶ Cf. schol. *Ar. Av.* 222c (ἀύλει).

⁹⁷ Cf. schol. *Ar. Eq.* 157a, 432a (with the telling explanation ὁ γὰρ εἶπε, καὶ ποιεῖ), 493a, 710a, 784a, 883b, 891a, 959a, etc.

⁹⁸ Contrast the number of such notes in the scholia with the scarcity of actual παρεπιγραφαί in the manuscripts (on the latter Taplin 1977a: 15).

designate any form of stage direction, explicit (in the margin or between the lines) or implicit (in the text itself).⁹⁹ Consequently, scholars could apply it to any passage that was conducive to a reconstruction of the stage action. On occasion, the term even precedes a fairly detailed description of what is happening on stage (e.g. schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1a, 11, on Strepsiades' elaborate acting in the opening scene).

Interestingly, a scholion on *Orestes* seems to draw a distinction between the two dramatic genres. (The medieval manuscripts transmit as E. *Or.* 1384 the words ἀρμάτειον ἀρμάτειον μέλος, which were already suspected in antiquity.)

τινὲς τοῦτο παρεπιγραφὴν εἶναι ὡς εἰς τὰ κωμικὰ δράματα. (schol. E. *Or.* 1384)¹⁰⁰

Some say this is a *parepigraphē* just as when referring to [i.e. annotating] comedies.

As another scholion on the same passage demonstrates, the unnamed scholars include a certain Apollodorus of Cyrene, but it is unclear whether he already made the point about comedy. And what does the point exactly mean in the first place? According to W. G. Rutherford (1905: 114), '[i]t is not that annotators on tragedy ignore the things with which παρεπιγραφαί deal. They merely do not use (or misuse) the term.' This is counter-intuitive and hard to reconcile with the (admittedly few) instances where the term does occur in tragic scholia, both in the 'genuine' and the 'loose' meanings.¹⁰¹ It seems more likely that the scholar quoted above meant to say that explicit stage directions in the form of actual παρεπιγραφαί are more common in (annotated) editions of comic texts, which is in fact what the extant evidence suggests.

⁹⁹ An idea of how this development took place is perhaps provided by a note such as schol. Ar. *Eq.* 451a. In the relevant passage the Paphlagonian shouts ἰοῦ ἰοῦ, which is explained as παρεπιγραφὴ in the scholion. Elsewhere such non-verbal exclamations are not part of the dramatic text, but are added as παρεπιγραφαί in the margin (cf. e.g. schol. A. *Eum.* 117). One can imagine that the term was then equally applied to such exclamations within the text. For a similar terminological development see n. 78 above on παρεγκύκλημα.

¹⁰⁰ For the present argument it does not matter whether the specific passage actually is a παρεπιγραφὴ or not.

¹⁰¹ 'Genuine': schol. A. *Eum.* 117, E. *Or.* 1384 (two different redactions, one attributing term and explanation to Apollodorus of Cyrene); 'loose': schol. A. *Th.* 258e (on the gesture of the chorus leader, the scholion refers to the entire line), *PV* 663 (but what does it refer to? Το τέλος as a 'metanarrative' comment?). In schol. rec. S. *Aj.* 14f, the παρεπιγραφὴ is said to refer to φιλότατης (supplied as lemma by Christodoulou). It is, however, more likely that the note refers to the entire line, because Odysseus can only hear Athena (thus the schol. vet., without the term παρεπιγραφὴ). In other words, the schol. rec. takes the line as an indication that Athena is not visible to Odysseus and perhaps not to the audience either.

CONCLUSION

Questions of staging and dramaturgy play an important role in the dramatic scholia.¹⁰² Despite an unmistakable interest in actual performances of the plays, however, most of the relevant notes primarily serve the needs of a reading audience. The commentator tries first and above all to help the reader understand the play and its action, especially by providing the kind of information that would have been immediately evident to a spectator in the theatre. Given that scholia accompany an edition of the play (the same holds true *mutatis mutandis* for the commentaries (ὑπομνήματα) on which the scholia draw), this is not so very surprising. Modern commentaries and annotated editions address the same questions too. A proper understanding of the play depends on the reader fully visualising all its aspects. For an ancient reader this means that he pays close attention even to features which a modern reader is less likely to take into account (e.g. how to deliver the passage under consideration). In any case, the (ancient) commentator is expected to address all the issues that enable the reader to visualise the play. In this respect, comedy often poses a greater challenge to the reader than tragedy. Consequently, passages from comedies are commented on more frequently and in more detail. The evidence collected from notes on both genres shows that these notes cover a broad field and vary greatly in scope. They range from very basic yet indispensable questions such as ‘Who speaks and to whom?’ or ‘Who is on stage?’ to more sophisticated points about the specific tone of an utterance, the acting of a particular scene or a description of a character’s mask. Within this fairly rich stream of information there are only a few fundamental gaps (needless to say, the extant scholia on the individual plays exhibit great differences in length and density of annotation): the commentators have little to say on the décor and nothing on the music of the plays, often in striking contrast with elaborate metrical analyses.¹⁰³ All in all, however, ancient notes on Greek plays appear to have provided much information that is crucial for a proper understanding.

¹⁰² Needless to say, the dramatic scholia also address questions that are not specifically related to the dramatic genre (see [Chapters 4 to 12](#)).

¹⁰³ Information on music was apparently lost at an early stage of the transmission; on the comparatively few papyri with musical annotation see Pöhlmann and West (2001); on metrical scholia see [Intro.](#), page 15.

Epilogue

This final part is deliberately not called ‘conclusion’. All the preceding nineteen chapters are capped by a brief conclusion. Little could be gained from repeating or even summarising them here. More importantly, it is in the nature of conclusions to generalise. It is, however, doubtful whether a heterogeneous corpus such as the poetic scholia is conducive to such generalisations. The material has gone through too many different hands that often cannot be identified – at least not now. At the same time too much seems to depend on the sheer randomness and hazards of textual transmission. The latter point should also caution against drawing conclusions from statistical data (‘notes on X are three times more frequent than notes on Y’) or from *argumenta ex silentio*. It would be difficult to argue that scholars were not interested in a particular device just because it is never discussed in the extant scholia (or in one of the relevant treatises) – leaving aside the question whether ‘never’ could be said with sufficient confidence about a corpus that is vast, heterogeneous and to some extent insufficiently edited. This, of course, is not to say that one should not draw conclusions from the material presented here at all. The reader will find them at the end of each chapter with respect to that particular topic. It is, however, less clear to me whether one could (or even should) draw general conclusions about literary criticism in the corpus of poetic scholia as a whole. Instead, I will conclude this book with a few general remarks about its goals and my motivation in writing it.

The book attempts to dig a tunnel into the mine of Greek scholia. The purpose is to demonstrate that the effort of digging, though at times laborious, can bring to light precious little nuggets of evidence about the principles and goals of our ancient predecessors and is therefore well worth making. In areas such as textual criticism, this has long been recognised. Much important research has been conducted in the past and will be in the future. In other areas such as literary criticism, however, the work seems only to have begun. The mine is far from being exhausted, and many more

tunnels can and, hopefully, will be dug. It is my hope to have shown that for literary criticism too the scholia are a source of the highest importance that deserves to be examined carefully and systematically.

The reader will have noticed that the present book shuns the word 'scholiast'. It not only has a derogatory ring but also conceals the fact that these people often drew on sources of the highest quality and, no doubt, more than once contributed excellent ideas of their own. True, not all the scholia are equally satisfactory and illuminating, and not everybody involved was a genius. However, using the less satisfactory scholia to discredit the corpus as a whole is questionable methodology. The composite nature of scholia makes it inevitable that sparkling genius and second-rate scholarship can occur in clashing juxtaposition, just as a vein of gold is surrounded by solid rock. Some may be troubled by this uneven quality. Conversely, the disadvantage is more than compensated for by the fact that few sources provide as immediate an insight into the study of ancient critics as the scholia. A patient student of scholia is often rewarded by seeing 'The Ancient Critic at Work'.

Glossary of Greek terms

The glossary lists words and expressions that can be used to discuss literary criticism (including grammar and rhetoric, for which see also the works of reference listed in the Introduction n. 38). It does not aspire to document the full semantic range of the individual word or expression. Cognate words are added in round brackets; their meaning can easily be deduced from that of the lemma. Page numbers refer to the passages where the meaning is discussed.

ἀγανακτέω (ἀγανάκτησις)	<i>to be angry, displeased</i> (of the reader) 146
ἄγγελος	<i>messenger</i>
ἀγωνία (ἀγωνιάω)	<i>agony, anxiety</i> (of the reader) 140–1
ἄδεια ποιητική	<i>poetic licence</i> 174
ἄδρός	<i>grand</i> (of style) 220
ἀεί	<i>always</i> (not always literally) 11, 329 n. 15
ἀήθης	<i>unusual, uncommon</i>
ἀθετέω (ἀθέτησις)	<i>to consider spurious, mark as spurious</i> (but without excising) 16 n. 57, 307 n. 2
αἰνίττομαι	<i>to allude to, hint at, speak in riddles, adumbrate, speak figuratively, allegorically</i> 212, 225–37
αἶνος	<i>story with an underlying second meaning</i> 262 n. 19
αἰτία	<i>cause, reason, justification</i> 27
ἄκαιρος	<i>ill-timed</i> 302
ἄκόλουθος	<i>following, consequent, consistent</i>
ἀκούω	<i>to read, understand</i> 12 n. 41

ἀκρίβεια	<i>accuracy</i>
ἀκριβολογοῦντες	<i>meticulous critics</i> 343
ἀκροατής (ἀκρόασις)	<i>reader</i> 12 n. 41
ἄκρως	<i>competently</i> 294
ἄλληγορέω	<i>to speak allegorically,</i> <i>figuratively</i> 233 n. 25
ἄλλοις, ἐν	<i>elsewhere, in another passage</i>
ἄλλως	<i>or, alternatively</i> (in lists of alternative explanations) 12–13
ἅμα	<i>together, at the same time,</i> <i>simultaneously</i>
ἄμβλύς	<i>blunt, dull</i>
ἄμίμητος	<i>(purely) narrative, without</i> <i>speeches</i> 95, 99
ἄμοιβαῖον	<i>dialogue</i>
ἄμφιβολία	<i>ambiguity</i>
ἄμφισβητέω	<i>to dispute</i>
ἀναγιγνώσκω	<i>to read</i>
ἀναγκαῖος	<i>necessary</i> (to reject or defend athetesis) 32 n. 29, 40 n. 56, 46
ἀνάγω τοὺς χρόνους	<i>to be anachronistic</i>
ἀνακεφαλαίωσις	<i>(repeating) summary, recapitulation</i> 37 n. 46, 45 n. 75
ἀνακινέω	<i>to stir up</i>
ἀνακτάομαι	<i>to revive</i> (the reader) 147 n. 47
ἀναλαμβάνω	<i>to take up again</i> 45 n. 74
ἀναπαύω	<i>to relieve</i> (the reader) 151
ἀναπλάττω	≈ πλάττω
ἀναπληρώω	<i>to fill</i> (a ‘gap’ in the narrative) 171
ἀναπτερόω	<i>to set on the wing, set aflutter, put on</i> <i>tiptoe</i> 145, 146 n. 43
ἀνάρμοστος	<i>not fitting</i> 250
ἀναρτάομαι	<i>to depend</i> (grammatically)
ἀναρτάω τὸν νοῦν	<i>to suspend the mind</i> (of the reader) 143
ἀναστροφή (ἀναστρέφω)	<i>inversion, reverse order</i> 89–92, 320
ἀνατρέχω	<i>to run back</i> (of anachronies) 88 n. 49
ἀναφορά (ἀναφέρω)	<i>reference</i>

ἀναφώνησις (ἀναφωνέω)	<i>apostrophe, address, exclamation; ≈ προαναφώνησις; narratorial comment</i> 43–5, 119 n. 15
ἀνέκαθεν	<i>from above</i> (i.e. chronologically) 88 n. 51
ἀνεύθυνος	<i>not open to objection</i>
ἀνθηρός	<i>florid</i> (of style) 220
ἀνθρωπιστί	<i>in human language</i> 277
ἀνθρωποειδής	<i>in human form</i> (of gods) 276
ἀνθρωποπαθής	<i>having human feelings</i> (of gods) 278
ἀνιχνεύω	<i>to track</i> 187 n. 7
ἀνταπόδοσις	<i>corresponding clause</i> , (esp.) ‘ <i>So-Stück</i> ’ (of a simile) 283–6
ἀντι τοῦ	<i>instead of, in the sense of</i>
ἀντιδιασταλτικός	<i>contrasting</i>
ἀντικειμένως	<i>contrastingly</i>
ἀντιτάττομαι	<i>to contradict</i> 258
ἀντίφρασις, κατ’	<i>by means of the opposite</i> 213
ἄνωθεν	≈ ἀνέκαθεν
ἀνώμαλος	<i>inconsistent, uneven</i> 250
ἄξιόπιστος	<i>trustworthy</i> 119 n. 13, 186
ἄπαγγέλλειν (ἄπαγγελία)	<i>to narrate, report</i> 95 n. 5, 96, 99
ἄπαγγελτικός	<i>messenger report</i> 313
ἄπαμβλύνω	<i>to make dull, blunt</i>
ἄπαντάω	<i>to take up, treat</i> 326 n. 3
ἄπαντάω, πρὸς τὸ δεύτερον	<i>to take up the second item first</i> 326, 330, 334 n. 30
πρότερον	
ἄπαρέμφατον	<i>infinitive</i>
ἄπειλητικός	<i>threatening</i>
ἄποδίδωμι	<i>to deliver, provide</i> (a story element previously ‘withheld’) 161
ἄποκορυφός	<i>to summarise</i> 60 n. 116
ἄποστροφή (ἄποστρέφω)	<i>apostrophe, transition</i> (of all kinds) 103–4, 111 n. 64, 114, 322, 341
ἄποτείνω (ἄπότασις)	<i>to refer to, aim at</i> 277 n. 8
ἄποτόμως	<i>concisely</i>
ἄποτροπή	<i>discouragement</i>
ἄπρεπής	<i>inappropriate</i>
ἄργός (ἄργέω)	<i>idle</i> 62 n. 119, 86

ἀργῶς, οὐκ	<i>not idly, not without purpose</i> 31
ἀρέσκεια ποιητική	<i>poetic licence</i>
ἀρμόττω	<i>to fit</i>
ἀσήμεως λέγω	<i>to say implicitly</i>
ἄτοπος	<i>absurd</i>
αὔξησις	<i>amplification</i>
αὐτοπρόσωπος	<i>in his/her own person (or name)</i> 276
αὐτόπτης	<i>eyewitness</i>
αὐτοσχεδιάζω	<i>to improvise, make an ad-hoc invention</i> 261
ἀφήγησις (ἀφηγηματικός)	≈ διήγησις
ἄψυχος	<i>inanimate, without soul</i>
βαρύτης (βάρος)	<i>indignation</i> 214
βασανίζω	<i>to torture</i> 146
βιάζομαι	<i>to do violence</i> 179 n. 20, 261
βιωτικός	<i>pertaining to life, lifelike</i> 190 n. 18
βραχεῖ, ἐν	<i>briefly, in a nutshell</i> 209
βροντεῖον	<i>device to produce stage-thunder</i> 358
γελοῖος	<i>ridiculous</i>
γενόμενα	<i>past events, past action</i> 48
γινόμενα	<i>present events, present action</i> 48
γλαφυρός	<i>smooth (of style)</i> 220
γραφική τέχνη	<i>painting</i>
γραφικῶς	<i>graphically</i>
γράφω	<i>to write, represent</i>
γράφω, οὐ	<i>to excise (i.e. athetise in the modern sense)</i>
δαιμόνιος	<i>marvellous</i> 32
δείκνυμι	<i>to show, represent</i>
δευτερεύω	<i>to be second rate</i> 295
διὰ τό	<i>for the purpose of</i> 31
διὰ τὸ α	<i>with α (or any other letter; with respect to spelling)</i>
διαγράφω	<i>to describe, depict</i>
διαδεδομένος	≈ παραδεδομένος
διάθεσις (διατίθημι)	<i>attitude, mood, arrangement</i> 34 n. 35, 247–8
διάκενον	<i>gap</i> 84
διάλειμμα	<i>break, interval, pause</i> 348 n. 43

διαναπαύω	≈ ἀναπαύω
διάνοια	<i>thinking; sense of the passage</i> (preceding paraphrases) 8 n. 28
διασαφέω	<i>to make clear</i>
διασκευάζω	<i>to revise, interpolate, tamper with</i>
διαστέλλω (διαστολή)	<i>to put a comma</i>
διάστημα	<i>dimension, interval</i>
διαστηματικός	<i>proceeding by intervals (?)</i> 319
διασύρω (διασυρμός)	<i>to disparage, ridicule</i> 214
διατριβή (διατρίβω)	<i>delay</i> 33, 78
διατυπώω	<i>to (re)present</i>
διαφωνία (διαφωνέω)	<i>contradiction, inconsistency</i> 11
διδασκαλικόν	<i>narrative</i> 99 n. 22
διδάσκω	<i>to teach, instruct</i>
διεγείρω	≈ ἐγείρω
διεξέρχομαι	<i>to go through</i> (in one's account)
διεξοδικός	<i>narrative</i> 99
διηγηματικός	<i>narrative, narrator-text</i> 94–115
διήγησις (διήγημα, διηγέομαι)	<i>narrative</i> 94–115
διπλή	<i>diple</i> (the marginal sign >)
διπλή περιεστιγμένη	<i>diple periestigmene</i> (the marginal sign >:) 12 n. 42
δισσολογέω	<i>to repeat (verbatim)</i> 198 n. 15
δρᾶμα	<i>drama, play</i>
δραματικός	<i>dramatic</i> (also <i>speech</i> as opposed to <i>narrative</i>) 95–9, 112–14
δυνατῶς	<i>ably</i> 294
ἑαυτόν, καθ'	<i>by itself, separately</i> (of clauses in syntactical explanations)
ἑαυτόν, πρὸς	<i>to himself</i> (of self-apostrophes) 229 n. 13, 341
ἑαυτοῦ, ἀφ'	<i>from himself, from his own point of view</i>
ἐγείρω (ἐγερτικός)	<i>to wake up, stir</i> (the reader) 137
ἔθος (εἴωθα)	<i>custom, habit</i> 11
ἔθος, παρὰ τὸ	<i>against regular custom</i>
εἶδος	<i>type, form</i>
εἰδωλοποιέω	<i>to personify</i> 245
εἰκάζομαι τι	<i>to resemble, take the guise of</i> (of gods)

εἰκός	<i>likely</i>
εἰκῶν	<i>image, comparison, simile</i> 282–6
εἰρωνεία	<i>self-deprecation, feigned ignorance; rhetorical irony</i> 212–13, 350 n. 50
εἰσάγω	(lit.) <i>to bring on stage</i> , (hence, generally) <i>to represent</i> (in art incl. literature) 85 n. 43, 348
εἰσέρχομαι	<i>to enter the stage</i> (through the wings), <i>to exit</i> (to the stage house) 343 n. 23
ἐκδέχομαι	<i>to understand</i> 164
ἐκκύκλημα	<i>ekkyklema</i> (theatre trolley) 357
ἐκλογή τῶν ὀνομάτων	<i>word choice</i> 24
ἐκπλήττω (ἐκπληξίς, ἐκπληκτικός)	<i>to strike with awe, amazement</i> 144–5
ἐκτραγωδεῶ	<i>to dramatise</i> 270 n. 11
ἐκφοβέω	<i>to alarm, scare</i> (the reader) 146
ἔλεος (ἐλεέω)	<i>pity</i> 148
ἐλλείπω	≈ παραλείπω
ἐλπὶς	<i>hope, expectation</i> 150
ἐμφασίς (ἐμφαίνω)	<i>indirect presentation, suggestion, insinuation; emphasis</i> 211, 232 n. 23, 291
ἐμφερέης	<i>resembling</i> 293
ἐμψυχος	<i>animate(d)</i>
ἐναγώνιος	<i>anxious; full of suspense; taking part in a contest</i> 40 n. 54, 141–2
ἐναλλάττω	<i>to change</i>
ἐναντίον	<i>opposite</i> 214, 258
ἐνάργεια (ἐναργής)	<i>graphic quality, vividness</i> 194, 197
ἐνδοθεν	(from) <i>within</i> (i.e. backstage) 347
ἐνδύομαι	<i>to enter</i>
ἐνέργεια	<i>activity, energy</i> 197
ἐνεργέομαι	<i>to take place, happen</i>
ἐνθένδε ἕως τοῦ + quotation	<i>from here to ' . . . '</i> (used to indicate a passage of consecutive lines)
ἐννοέω	<i>to think, consider, imagine</i>
ἐννοια, διπλή	<i>double meaning</i> 235 n. 34
ἐνοχλέω	<i>to be a nuisance</i> 108
ἐνσπείρω	<i>to insert</i> 88 n. 51
ἐντέχνως	≈ τεχνικῶς

ἐντυγχάνω	<i>to read</i>
ἐξαιρώ	<i>to lift up, arouse</i> (the reader) 138
ἐξαλλάττω	<i>to change, adapt</i> 260 n. 17
ἐξεργασία (ἐξεργάζομαι)	<i>elaboration</i> 92 n. 62, 204
ἐξέρχομαι	<i>to enter the stage</i> (from the house); <i>to exit</i> (through the wings) 343 n. 23
ἐξετάζω	<i>to examine, scrutinise, explore</i>
ἐξηγηματικός	≈ διηγηματικός
ἐξῆς, τό	<i>normal word order, grammatical sequence; following, next</i> (esp. καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς = etc.) 8 n. 28
ἐξουσία ποιητική	<i>poetic licence</i> 174, 179 n. 18
ἐξωθεν	<i>(from) outside</i> (the text, of words that readers must supply themselves), <i>(from) outside</i> (the speech, i.e. in the narrator-text); <i>(from) outside</i> (i.e. on stage) 44, 119 n. 15
ἐπάγω	<i>to add, continue</i>
ἐπαίρω	<i>to stir</i> (the reader)
ἐπαλλήλως	<i>one close after another, back to back</i>
ἐπανάληψις (ἐπαναλαμβάνω)	<i>repetition</i> 66
ἐπείγομαι (ἔπειξις)	<i>to hasten</i> 150 n. 58
ἐπεισάγω	≈ εἰσάγω
ἐπεισόδιον	<i>scene, episode</i>
ἐπεκδιδάσκω	<i>to explain afterwards</i> (cf. ἐπεξήγησις)
ἐπέξειμι	<i>to elaborate</i>
ἐπεξεργασία (ἐπεξεργάζομαι)	≈ ἐξεργασία
ἐπεξήγησις	<i>(subsequent) explanation</i> 202
ἐπιγιγνώσκω (ἐπίγνωσις)	<i>to recognise</i> (disguised gods)
ἐπιγραφή	<i>title</i>
ἐπιδηγήσις	<i>digression</i> 66 n. 136
ἐπιζητέω	≈ ζητέω
ἐπίθετον	<i>adjective, epithet</i>
ἐπιθυμέω (ἐπιθυμία)	<i>to long for</i> (of the reader) 144, 149
ἐπικερτομέω (ἐπικερτόμησις)	≈ κερτομέω
ἐπιλογίζομαι	≈ λογίζομαι
ἐπιλύω	≈ λύω
ἐπίπαν, ὡς	<i>for the most part</i> 11, 329 n. 15
ἐπισαρκάζω	<i>to speak with sarcasm</i> 214
ἐπιστρέφω	≈ ἀποστρέφω

ἐπισυντέμνω	<i>to cut back</i> (a passage)
ἐπίτηδες	<i>on purpose, intentionally</i> 31
ἐπιταράττω	<i>to trouble</i> (the reader) 146
ἐπιφέρω	<i>to add</i>
ἐπιφοράν, κατ'	<i>on impulse, without premeditation</i> 175 n. 7
ἐπιφωνέω (ἐπιφώνημα)	<i>to make a narratorial comment</i> 44, 128 n. 41
ἐρωτηματικός	<i>interrogative</i> 350 n. 51
ἔσω	<i>within</i> (i.e. backstage) 343 n. 23, 347
εὐεπίφορος	<i>prone to</i> 314
εὐήθης	<i>silly</i> 250
εὐκαιρος	<i>well-timed</i> 302 n. 12
εὐκτικόν	<i>optative</i>
εὐνοια	<i>goodwill</i>
εὐρεσις	<i>preparation</i> (of the subject-matter) 24
εὐσεβής	<i>righteous</i>
εὐτελής	<i>cheap, banal</i> 296
εὐφραίνω	<i>to cheer</i> (the reader) 147
ζήτημα (ζητέω)	<i>problem, difficulty, inquiry</i> 11
ζωγραφία	<i>painting</i> 195
ἦ	<i>or</i> 12–13
ἦγουν	<i>i.e., that is</i>
ἡδύς (ἡδονή)	<i>sweet, pleasant</i> 144
ἦθει, ἐν (ἠθικός)	<i>in character; ironically; emphatically</i> 213, 254–6, 350 n. 55
ἠθισμένον, παρὰ τὸ	<i>against regular custom</i>
ἠθοποιΐα	<i>introduction of characters</i> (i.e. speech) 248, 325 n. 29
ἦθος	<i>character</i> 213, 254–6
ἠρέμα	<i>silently, gently, softly, aside</i> 211 n. 66, 341
ἠσυχῆ	<i>silently, aside</i> 341
θαυμάσιος (θαῦμα)	<i>admirable, wonderful, amazing</i> 32, 145
θεατής	<i>spectator</i> 153
θεατρικός	<i>dramatic</i> 139
θέατρον	<i>theatre, audience</i>

θεολογεῖον	<i>platform for gods' appearances</i> 356 n. 74
θεραπεύω	<i>to conciliate (the reader)</i> 147
θορυβέω	<i>to throw into confusion (the reader)</i> 146
θυμέλη	<i>stage</i> 356 n. 74
ἰάομαι (ἰάσις)	<i>to heal, cure</i> 146 n. 45
ἴδιος	<i>distinctive (of epithets)</i> 305
ἰδίως (ἰδικῶς)	<i>alone, against the tradition</i> 260
ἰκανός	<i>sufficient</i>
ἰστέον ὅτι	≈ NB
ἰστορίαν, παρ'	<i>contrary to traditional myth</i> 178, 259
ἰσχνός	<i>plain (of style)</i> 220
καθόλου (καθολικόν)	<i>(in) general (also of generic epithets)</i> 300
καινός	<i>new, unheard of</i> 260
καινοτομέω	<i>to be innovative</i> 361
καιρός	<i>(critical, decisive) moment, time</i> 323
καλῶς	<i>nicely</i> 31, 293
κανών	<i>standard, model</i>
καταλείπω	≈ παραλείπω
καταμετρέω	<i>to measure out</i>
καταπληκτικός	<i>astounding</i> 318
κατασκευή	<i>style</i>
καταστατικός	<i>narrative</i> 205
καταστρέφω	<i>to bring to an end, conclude</i>
κερτομέω (κερτομικός)	<i>to mock, provoke</i> 214
κεφάλαιον	<i>main point, topic</i> 92 n. 62, 204, 320
κεφαλαίω (-οις), ἐν	<i>summarily</i> 206, 209
κεφαλαιώδης	<i>summary</i>
κινέω (κίνησις)	<i>to move (emotionally)</i> 139
κλιμακτηδόν	<i>step by step</i>
κοινός	<i>generic (of epithets)</i> 300 n. 5
κόρος	<i>surfeit</i> 108, 151, 198
κορωνίς	<i>coronis (the marginal sign)</i> 343
κόσμος ποιητικός	<i>poetic ornament</i> 289 n. 29
κρεμνάω	<i>to keep (the reader) in suspense</i>
κρίσις ποιημάτων	<i>critical judgment of poems</i> 6 n. 20
κυκλικός	<i>typical of cyclic poets</i> 303 n. 15, 320
κύκλος	<i>circle, ring</i> 319–20

κυρίως λέγω	<i>to use plain language (and not figurative)</i> 233 n. 25
κωμικός	<i>comic</i>
λείπω	<i>to be missing</i>
λεκτικόν	<i>style</i> 24
λεληθότως	<i>imperceptibly, secretly, indirectly, en passant, sotto voce, aside</i> 57, 211, 341 n. 15
λέξις	<i>word</i>
λεπτολογέω	<i>to set out in detail</i> 205 n. 36
λεπτόν, κατὰ	<i>in detail</i>
λογεῖον	<i>stage</i> 356 n. 74
λογίζομαι	<i>to understand, infer</i> 164, 167
λόγος	<i>narrative, speech, word; sense of the passage (preceding paraphrases)</i> 8 n. 28
λυπέω	<i>to grieve</i> 147
λύσις (λύω)	<i>solution</i> 11–12
λύω τὴν ὑπόθεσιν	<i>to destroy the story</i> 67
μανθάνω	<i>to learn</i>
μάχομαι	<i>to be in disagreement, inconsistent, contradictory</i> 11, 176
μεγαλοπρεπής	<i>great, grand</i> 221
μεθίσταμαι	<i>to go over, make a transition</i>
μείουρος	<i>mouse-tailed (of an irregular hexameter)</i> 216
μερίζω	≈ <i>συμμερίζω</i>
μέρος, κατὰ	<i>in detail</i> 92
μέρος, παρά	<i>one after the other, in instalments</i> 80
μέσου, διὰ	<i>in the middle (in general, not just parentheses in the narrow sense)</i> 287 n. 20
μεταβαίνω (μετάβασις)	<i>to pass on to (i.e. change of scene)</i> 57 n. 109, 61, 66
μεταβάλλω	<i>to change, alter, go over to (i.e. change of scene)</i>
μετάγω	<i>to lead over (i.e. change of scene)</i>
μεταμορφέω	<i>to change the guise (of gods)</i>
μεταπίπτω	<i>to fall into</i>
μετασκευάζω	<i>to change (the costume)</i>

μεταφέρω	<i>to transfer</i> 210 n. 58
μεταχειρίζομαι	<i>to change, adapt</i> 260 n. 17
μέτειμι	<i>to make a transition</i> (i.e. change of scene)
μηνύω	<i>to show, represent, narrate</i>
μήποτε	<i>perhaps</i>
μηχανή	<i>theatre crane, deus ex machina</i> 269, 357–8
μικτός	<i>mixed</i> 95–9, 101
μιμέομαι (μίμησις)	<i>to imitate</i> (i.e. represent in art, incl. literature); <i>to make use of speeches</i> 94–115
μιμητικός	<i>speech, drama(tic)</i> 94–115
μόριον	<i>word</i>
μῦθος (μυθικός)	<i>plot; fiction</i> 24 n. 7, 180
μυκτηρίζω (μυκτηρισμός)	<i>to sneer at</i> 214
νεώτεροι (νεωτερικός)	<i>the younger poets</i> (i.e. post-Homeric) 14, 258
νοέω	<i>to understand</i> 164
νοθεύω	<i>to mark as spurious</i> (cf. ἄθετέω)
νῦν	(also) <i>in the present passage</i>
ὄζω	<i>to smell</i> 219
οἰκεῖος	<i>fitting, suitable, peculiar</i> 250, 293, 323
οἰκονομία (οἰκονομικός, οἰκονομέω)	<i>deployment, arrangement, order</i> (of the subject-matter, hence:) <i>plot</i> 24–8, 33, 42, 67
οἶκτος	<i>pity</i> 149
οἶομαι	<i>to understand</i> 164
οἶον	<i>for example</i> 11
ὀλίγοις, ἐν	<i>in a few words</i> 209
ὀμαλός	<i>consistent</i> 248 n. 37
ὀμιλητικός	<i>homiletic</i> 109–10
ὀμοειδής	<i>uniform</i> 198
ὀμοιόομαί τι	<i>to take the guise of</i> (of gods)
ὅμοιος	<i>similar</i>
ὀμοιότης	<i>resemblance</i>
ὀμοίωσις	<i>comparison, simile</i> 283–4, 296
ὀμωνυμία	<i>homonymy</i>
ὀνομάζω	<i>to name</i>

ὀνοματοθετικός	<i>giver of names</i> 244
ὄπλισμός	<i>arming scene</i> 307
ὄράω	<i>to see, visualise</i> (of the reader)
ὀργίζομαι	<i>to be angry</i> (of the reader)
ὀρθῶς	<i>correctly</i>
οὐ κατὰ + acc.	<i>not in accordance with</i>
ὄψις	<i>vision, sight, visual aspect</i> 356
ὄψιν, ἄγω ὑπ'	<i>to bring into view</i> 154, 198
πάθος	<i>emotion</i>
παιδεύω	<i>to educate</i>
παλιλλογέω	<i>to repeat (verbatim)</i> 314
παρὰ τό	<i>from</i> (often in etymological explanations)
παράβασις	<i>parabasis</i> (in Old Comedy)
παραβολή (παραβολικόν, παραβάλλω)	<i>simile</i> 262 n. 61, 282–6
παραγραφή	<i>paragraph</i> 60–1
παράγω	≈ εἰσάγω
παραδεδομένος	<i>transmitted, traditional</i> 260
παράδειγμα	(mythical) <i>exemplum</i> 262
παραδέχομαι	<i>to understand</i>
παραδίδωμι	<i>to transmit; represent, narrate</i>
παραδιήγησις	<i>digression</i> 66
παράδοξος	<i>paradox, contrary to expectation</i> 137
παραινίττομαι	<i>to hint at</i> ('past' a person present) 235 n. 34
παιριτέομαι	<i>to excuse</i>
παρακολουθοῦντος, ἀπὸ/ἐκ τοῦ	<i>from the consequence</i> 210
παρακρούω	<i>to change, adapt</i> 260 n. 17
παραλείπω (παράλειψις)	<i>to leave out, omit</i> 161, 170–1
παραλιμπάνω	≈ παραλείπω
παραλλάττω	<i>to avoid</i>
παραμυθέομαι	<i>to comfort</i> (the reader) 147
παραπληρωματικόν	<i>full of fillers</i> 87 n. 48
παρασημειῶ	≈ σημειῶ
παρασκευή	<i>arrangement, preparation</i> 24
παρατήρησις	<i>design, purpose</i>
παρατραγωδέω	<i>to parody tragedy</i> 218 n. 87
παρατρέπω	<i>to change, adapt</i> 260 n. 17

παρατρέχω	<i>to run through</i> (of 'fast' narrative) 78, 209
παρατυγχάνων	<i>present</i> (as an eyewitness) 187
παραχορήγημα	(lit. perhaps) <i>something furnished in addition</i> (e.g. of mute characters) 344–5
παρεγκύκλημα	≈ <i>παρεπιγραφή</i> (not ≈ <i>ἐκκύκλημα</i>) 357 n. 78
παρεισάγω	≈ <i>εἰσάγω</i>
παρέκβασις	<i>digression</i> 64–6
παρέλκω	<i>to be superfluous</i>
παρεπιγραφή	<i>stage direction</i> 357 n. 58, 362–4
παρεπομένον, ἀπὸ/ἐκ τοῦ	<i>from the consequence</i> 210
παρίστημι	<i>to represent, narrate, describe</i>
παριστορέω	<i>to insert a digression</i> 66
παρών	<i>present</i> (as an eyewitness) 187, 192
περιγράφω	<i>to doubt the authenticity, bracket; to omit</i> 158 n. 4
περίεργος	<i>superfluous</i>
περιπαθής	<i>emotionally engaging/-ed, deeply moving/-ed</i> 38 n. 50
περιπέτεια	<i>crisis, turning-point, peripety</i> 139, 268
περισσός	<i>superfluous</i> (of lines, to defend athetesis; of epithets) 32 n. 29, 303
περιτίθημί τινι λόγον	<i>to have somebody say</i> (in direct speech) 146 n. 45
πευστικός	<i>interrogative</i> 350 n. 51
πιθανός (πιθανότης)	<i>plausible, convincing</i> 31, 56 n. 106, 294
πίστις	<i>trust(worthiness)</i>
πλαγιάζω	<i>to speak obliquely</i> (as opposed to <i>plainly</i>) 234
πλάσμα (πλάττω)	<i>fiction, invention</i> 260
πλατύς	<i>wide, broad</i> (of a full account) 209 n. 51
ποθέω	<i>to long for</i> (of the reader) 149
ποίησις (ποιητικός)	<i>poetry, poem; poetic</i> (also <i>the poet's</i> as opposed to <i>the character's</i>) 11, 121, 183 n. 30, 205, 303
ποικιλία (ποικίλλω, ποικίλος)	<i>variation, diversity</i> 139, 198–202

πολυπρόσωπος	<i>of many characters</i> 238 n. 1
πράγματα (πράξεις)	<i>events, action</i>
πραγματεία	<i>(literary) work</i>
πραγματεύομαι	<i>to treat (in one's poetry)</i>
πραγματικόν	<i>subject-matter</i> 24
πρακτικά	<i>action, events</i>
πρέπον	<i>appropriate, apt, fitting</i> 13 n. 40, 250
προανακεφαλαίωσις	<i>summary in advance</i> 37 n. 46
προανακρούομαι	<i>to introduce as a prelude</i> 34 n. 35
προαναφθέγγομαι	<i>to mention beforehand (i.e. prolepsis)</i>
	35
προαναφωνέω (προαναφώνησις)	<i>to announce beforehand (i.e. prolepsis)</i>
	35–6, 42–5, 88, 127 n. 38, 128 n. 41
προαπαγγέλλω	<i>to report beforehand (i.e. prolepsis)</i>
	35
προαπάντησις	≈ προσυναπάντησις
προδιασυνίστημι	<i>to introduce beforehand (a character or story element)</i>
	<i>to sketch in advance</i>
προδιατυπόω	<i>exhibition in advance (i.e. prolepsis)</i>
προέκθεσις	35
προεξηγέομαι	<i>to explain beforehand</i>
προεπιτηδεύω	<i>to prepare for beforehand</i>
προκατασκευή	<i>preparation, motivation in advance</i>
(προκατασκευάζω)	30
προκινέω	<i>to rouse beforehand</i> 140
προκόπτω	<i>to proceed, advance (of the narrative)</i>
	65 n. 131
προλέγω	<i>to say beforehand (i.e. prolepsis)</i> 35
πρόληψις (προλαμβάνω)	<i>prolepsis</i> 35
προλογίζω	<i>to be the first speaker (not necessarily in a 'prologue' in the narrow sense)</i>
	100
προοικονομία (προοικονομέω)	<i>preparation, motivation in advance</i> 28–30, 34 n. 35, 42
	<i>poem, introduction</i> 136 n. 5
προοίμιον	<i>to set down beforehand</i> 31
προπαραδίδωμι	<i>preparation, motivation in advance</i>
προπαρασκευή	30
(προπαρασκευάζω)	
προρρυθμίζω	<i>to prepare beforehand (the reader)</i>

πρὸς + acc.	(refers) to 294, 340 n. 10
προσαγορευτικός	apostrophising, addressing, vocative case III
προσαγώγιμος	attractive 44 n. 67
προσδέχομαι	to understand 164
προσδιαλέγομαί τιμι	to converse with
προσδοκάω (προσδοκία)	to expect (of the reader) 136
προσεκτικός	attentive
προσεπινοέω	to understand 164
προσέχω τὸν νοῦν	to pay attention
προσκορής	tedious
προσοχή	attention 136
προστακτικόν	imperative
προστίθημι	to add, supply
πρόστυχον, κατὰ τὸ	at random
προσυναπάντησις	reverse order 334
προσυνίστημι	to introduce beforehand 31
προσυπακούω	≈ ὑπακούω
πρόσφορος	useful, suitable
προσφυής	naturally belonging, suitable
πρόσωπον	character
πρόσωπον, κωφόν	silent character 243, 344
πρόσωπον, παρὰ τὸ	out of character 250
πρόσωπον, συνεκτικόν	central character 244
προσώπου, ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου	in propria persona 44, 119 n. 15, 325 n. 29
προσωποποιῖα	introduction of speaking character, speech
προτροπή	encouragement
προτυπώω	to mould beforehand 34 n. 35
προϋπάντησις	≈ προσυναπάντησις
προφέρομαι	to pronounce
προφώνησις	≈ προαναφώνησις
προχαρίζομαι	to oblige beforehand (the reader) 147
πυκνῶς	often 329 n. 15
ῥαψωδία	book (of the <i>Iliad</i> / <i>Odyssey</i>)
ῥητέον ὅτι	one must say that (in response to a 'problem')
ῥητῶς	explicitly
σαθρός	unsound, corrupt

σαρκασμός	<i>sarcasm</i> 214
σαφήνεια	<i>clarity</i> 56 n. 106
σαφηνίζω	<i>to explain, make clear</i>
σεμνός (σεμνότης)	<i>solemn</i>
σημειόω (σημείωσις, σημείον)	<i>to mark with a marginal sign</i>
σημειωτέον ὅτι	≈ <i>NB</i> 18
σιωπάω	<i>to pass over in silence, not represent</i> 168, 360 n. 90
σιωπώμενον, κατὰ τὸ (σιωπωμένως)	<i>silently, tacitly, implicitly</i> 124 n. 31, 157–64, 167–9, 346
σκηνή	<i>stage, acting area, stage building</i>
σκώπτω	<i>to mock</i> 214
σπανίως	<i>rarely</i>
σπέρμα	<i>seed</i> 26 n. 13, 39
σπουδή	<i>haste; earnestness</i> 213, 323
στιγμή	<i>punctuation mark, (esp.) full stop</i>
στιγμαί, δύο	<i>colon (to indicate change of speaker)</i>
στίζω	<i>to punctuate</i> 129 n. 42
συγγραφικός (σύγγραμμα)	<i>prose (occasionally any form of writing)</i>
συγκατατίθεμαι	<i>to agree</i>
συλλογισμός	<i>inference</i> 167 n. 24, 210
συμβεβηκότα, τὰ	<i>concomitant circumstances; events, action</i> 209 n. 53
συμμερίζω	<i>to split up, distribute (an account)</i> 172, 204 n. 31
συμπάθεια (συμπάσχω)	<i>sympathy</i>
συμπέρασμα, κατὰ	<i>summarily</i> 209
συμπληρώω	<i>to fill (a 'gap' in the narrative)</i> 171
συμφωνέω	<i>to agree</i>
σύμφωνος (συμφωνία)	<i>consonant, corresponding</i> 290, 292
συναγωνιάω	≈ <i>ἀγωνιάω</i>
συνάπτω	<i>to connect, combine</i>
συνεκτικός	<i>essential, crucial, salient</i> 59 n. 114
συνεχές, τὸ σ. τοῦ λόγου	<i>the natural order (or continuity) of the account</i>
συνεχῶς	<i>permanently, without interruption</i>
σύνηθες, πρὸς τὸ	<i>contrary to the usual practice</i> 222
συνήθης (συνήθεια)	<i>regular, habitual, customary</i> 11, 329 n. 15

σύνθεσις	<i>composition</i> 24, 216 n. 78
συνίημι	<i>to understand, perceive</i>
συνίστημι	<i>to introduce</i> (a new character), <i>characterise, represent, describe</i>
συντέμνω	<i>to cut down</i> (a passage)
σύντομος (συντομία)	<i>concise, brief</i> 18 n. 64, 56 n. 106, 208–9
συνυπακούω	≈ ὑπακούω
σύστασις τῶν πραγμάτων	<i>structure of events</i> 29 n. 23
σφηκώδης	<i>wasp-like</i> (of an irregular hexameter) 216 n. 77
σχετλιάζω	<i>to utter indignant complaints</i>
σχῆμα	(<i>rhetorical</i>) <i>figure, scheme; appearance, posture</i> 61, 354
σχήματι, ἐν σ. φράζω/δηλώω	<i>to indicate by means of the wording</i> 212
σχηματίζομαι	<i>to mime</i> (an action on stage)
σχολή	<i>leisure</i>
σωματοποιέω	<i>to personify</i> 245
ταμιεύομαι	<i>to keep in store, save for later</i> 49–51
τάξις	(<i>natural</i>) <i>order</i> 24, 81, 89
ταπεινός	<i>humble, modest, base</i> 219 n. 92, 292 n. 41, 296
τάχει, ἐν	<i>quickly</i> 209
τέρψις (τέρπω)	<i>pleasure</i>
τεχνικῶς	<i>rhetorically</i> (opposite: φυσικῶς <i>naturally</i>) 263
τηρέω	<i>to preserve, retain</i>
τινές	<i>some</i> (usually of unnamed scholars) 12
τομή	<i>interruption, cut</i> (between two scenes) 59, 66 n. 136
τραγικός	<i>tragic</i>
τραχύτης	<i>harshness</i> 217
τρόπος	(<i>rhetorical</i>) <i>trope, mode</i> 61
ὑγιής	<i>sound</i> 289
ὑπακούω	<i>to understand</i> (something presupposed but not explicitly stated in the text) 164
ὑπαντάω (ὑπάντησις)	≈ ἀπαντάω

ὑπὲρ τοῦ	<i>for the purpose of</i> 31
ὑπερβατόν	<i>inversion of words or clauses</i> 217 n. 81
ὑπερτίθεμαι	<i>to postpone</i>
ὑποδιήγησις	<i>sub-narrative</i> 263
ὑπόθεσις	<i>subject-matter, plot (summary)</i> 24 n. 5, 67, 345
ὑπόκρισις	<i>delivery, acting; dissimulation,</i> 213
ὑποκρίσει, ἐν	<i>ironically; in delivery</i> 213, 255
ὑποκριτής	<i>actor</i>
ὑπόμνημα	<i>commentary</i> 12
ὑπονοέω	<i>to understand</i> (cf. ὑπακούω) 164
ὑποπτος	<i>suspect</i>
ὑποστατικός	<i>substantive</i> 109–10
ὑποστίζω	<i>to put a comma</i>
ὑποτέμνω	<i>to cut off</i> (a speaker)
ὑποφαίνω	<i>to show indirectly</i> (cf. ἐμφαίνω) 247
ὑφ' ἑν	<i>(lit.) in one unit, hence: at once, in one word</i>
ὑψηλός	<i>grand</i> (of style) 220
ὑψόω	<i>to lift up</i> (the reader's mind) 138 n. 10
φανερός	<i>clear, plain</i> (as opposed to <i>figurative</i>)
φαντάζω	<i>to produce a mental image</i> (in the reader)? 154 n. 76
φαντασία	<i>mental image; representation</i> 154
φιλοποίκιλος	<i>fond of variety</i> 201
φράζω	<i>to say, tell, narrate</i>
φράσις	<i>diction, expression</i>
φυλάττω	<i>to save, protect, preserve</i> 49–50
χαρακτήρ	<i>type, character</i> 101
χαρακτηρίζω	<i>to characterise</i>
χαριεντίζομαι (χαριεντισμός)	<i>to jest</i> 214
χαρίζομαι	<i>to please</i> 261
χλευάζω (χλευασμός)	<i>to scoff</i> 214
χορηγός	<i>producer</i>
χορικόν	<i>choral ode</i>
χορός	<i>chorus</i>
χρεία	<i>need, use</i>
χρειώδης	<i>functional</i> 303 n. 15

χρῆσις	<i>use, deployment</i> (of the subject-matter) 24
χρηστός	<i>good</i>
χρόνους, παρὰ τοὺς ψιλός	<i>anachronistically with a smooth breathing; (purely) narrative</i> 99, 206 n. 38
ψυχαγωγία (ψυχαγωγέω)	<i>amusement, allurement, persuasion</i> 144
ψυχρός	<i>frigid</i>
ὡς	<i>cf., for example</i> 11

Editions of scholia

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- schol. A. *Scholia Graeca in Aeschylum quae exstant omnia*, ed. O. L. Smith (2 vols. to date). Leipzig 1976–82 (for all plays except *Pers.* and *PV*).
- schol. A. *Pers.* *Scholia in Aeschyli Persas*, ed. O. Dähnhardt. Leipzig 1894.
- schol. A. *PV* *The Older Scholia on the Prometheus Bound*, ed. C. J. Herington. Leiden 1972.
- schol. A.R. *Scholia in Apollonium Rhodium vetera*, ed. C. Wendel. Berlin 1935.
- schol. Arat. *Scholia in Aratum vetera*, ed. J. Martin. Stuttgart 1974.
- schol. Ar. *Ach.* *Scholia in Aristophanis Acharnenses*, ed. n. G. Wilson. Groningen 1975.
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- schol. Ar. *Pax* *Scholia in Aristophanis Pacem*, ed. D. Holwerda. Groningen 1982.
- schol. Ar. *Av.* *Scholia in Aristophanis Aves*, ed. D. Holwerda. Groningen 1991.
- schol. Ar. *Lys.* *Scholia in Aristophanis Lysistratam*, ed. J. Hangard. Groningen 1996.
- schol. Ar. *Ra.* *Scholia vetera in Aristophanis Ranas*, ed. M. Chantry. Groningen 1999.

- schol. Ar. *Th./Ec.* *Scholias in Aristophanis Thesmophoriazusas et Ecclesiazusas*, ed. R. F. Regtuit. Groningen 2007.
- schol. Ar. *Pl.* *Scholias vetera in Aristophanis Plutum*, ed. M. Chantry. Groningen 1994.
- schol. Dem. *Scholias in Demosthenem*, ed. M. Dilts (2 vols.). Leipzig 1983–6.
- schol. E. *Scholias in Euripidem*, ed. E. Schwartz (2 vols.). Berlin 1887–91.
- schol. Hes. *th.* *Scholias vetera in Hesiodi Theogoniam*, ed. L. di Gregorio. Milan 1975.
- schol. Hes. *op.* *Scholias vetera in Hesiodi Opera et Dies*, ed. A. Pertusi. Milan 1955.
- schol. [Hes.] *sc.* *Hesiodi quod fertur Scutum Herculis ex recognitione et cum animadversionibus Fr. Aug. Wolfii*, ed. C. F. Ranke. Quedlinburg and Leipzig 1840.
- schol. *Il.* *Scholias Graeca in Homeri Iliadem*, ed. H. Erbse (7 vols.). Berlin and New York 1969–88 (except for D and Ge).
- schol. D *Il.* *Scholias D in Iliadem*, ed. H. van Thiel (proecdosis 2000). (PDF downloadable at: www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/ifa/vanthiel)
- schol. Ge *Il.* *Les scolies Genevoises de l'Iliade*, ed. J. Nicole. Geneva and Basle 1891 (repr. Hildesheim 1966).
- schol. *Od.* *Scholias Graeca in Homeri Odysseam*, ed. W. Dindorf (2 vols.). Oxford 1855 (except for 1.1–309).
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- schol. Luc. *Scholias in Lucianum*, ed. H. Rabe. Leipzig 1906.
- schol. Lycophr. *Scholias et paraphrases in Lycophronis Alexandram*, ed. P. A. M. Leone. Rome 2002.
- schol. Opp. *Hal.* *Scholias in Oppiani Halieutica*, ed. U. C. Bussemaker, in *Scholias in Theocritum*, ed. F. Dübner. Paris 1849.
- schol. Pi. *Scholias vetera in Pindari carmina*, ed. A. B. Drachmann (3 vols.). Leipzig 1903–27.

- schol. Pl. *Scholia Platonica*, ed. W. Ch. Greene. Haverford 1938 (repr. Hildesheim 1988).
- schol. S. *Scholia in Sophoclis tragoedias vetera*, ed. P. N. Papageorgios. Leipzig 1888 (for all plays except *Aj.* and *OC*).
- schol. S. *Aj.* *Τὰ ἀρχαῖα σχόλια εἰς Αἴαντα τοῦ Σοφοκλέους*, ed. G. A. Christodoulou. Athens 1977.
- schol. S. *OC* *Scholia in Sophoclis Oedipum Coloneum*, ed. V. de Marco. Rome 1952.
- schol. Theocr. *Scholia in Theocritum vetera*, ed. C. Wendel. Leipzig 1914.
- schol. Thuc. *Scholia in Thucydidem: ad optimos codices collata*, ed. C. Hude. Leipzig 1927.

Other abbreviations

- Ap.S. *Apollonii Sophistae Lexicon Homericum*, ed. I. Bekker. Berlin 1833.
- Did. *Didymi Chalcenteri grammatici Alexandrini fragmenta quae supersunt omnia*, ed. M. Schmidt. Leipzig 1854 (repr. Amsterdam 1964).
- Ep.Hom.* *Epimerismi Homerici*, ed. A. R. Dyck (2 vols.). Berlin and New York 1983–95.
- Eust. Eustathius, *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem pertinentes*, ed. M. van der Valk (4 vols.). Leiden 1971–87. (The prefaces to this edition are quoted, e.g., as ‘van der Valk II: lv’.)
- Eust. *Od.* *Eustathii archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam*, ed. G. Stallbaum. Leipzig 1825–6.
- GG *Grammatici Graeci*, eds. A. Hilgard, A. Lentz, R. Schneider and G. Uhlig (6 vols.). Leipzig 1867–1910 (repr. Hildesheim 1965).
- Hesych. *Hesychi Lexicon*, ed. K. Latte (vols. I–II: α–ο), Copenhagen 1953–66; P. A. Hansen (vol. III: π–σ), Berlin and New York 2005.
- LfgrE *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos*, eds. B. Snell et al. (α–φεύγω). Göttingen 1955–
- LSJ *A Greek–English Lexicon*, eds. H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. S. Jones and R. McKenzie, 9th edn. (with new suppl.). Oxford 1996.
- Porph. on *Il.* Porphyrius, *Quaestionum Homericarum ad Iliadem pertinentium reliquias*, ed. H. Schrader (2 vols.). Leipzig 1880–2.

- Porph. on *Od.* Porphyrius, *Quaestionum Homericarum ad Odysseam pertinentium reliquias*, ed. H. Schrader. Leipzig 1890.
- Porph. . . . Sodano *Porphyrii Quaestionum Homericarum liber I*, ed. A. R. Sodano. Naples 1970.
- Ps.Herod. *fig.* Ps.-Herodian, *De figuris*, ed. K. Hajdú. Berlin and New York 1998.
- Ps.Plut. *Hom.* Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero*, ed. J. F. Kindstrand. Leipzig 1990.
- Su. *Suidae Lexicon*, ed. A. Adler (5 vols.). Leipzig 1928–38.
- TrGF *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, eds. B. Snell, R. Kannicht and S. Radt (5 vols.). Göttingen 1981–2004.
- Trypho *fig.* Trypho, *De figuris*, in *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. III, ed. L. Spengel. Leipzig 1856: 191–206.
- Trypho II Trypho [II], *De tropis*, ed. M. L. West, *CQ* 15, 1965: 230–48.

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