

Gertjan Verhasselt

Did Homer Nod Off? Aristotle and Homeric Problem-Solving

1 Introduction

The Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are perhaps the most influential texts of antiquity. They were widely admired and used as a source of knowledge and teaching. Yet already early on in history, Homer was criticized as well. He was first attacked on moral grounds. The earliest anti-Homeric voice is found in Xenophanes (6th-5th century BCE), who criticized the representation of the gods in Homer and Hesiod.¹ Similar criticism was voiced by Heraclitus of Ephesus (c. 500 BCE).² The earliest defenders of Homer sought to meet these attacks by explaining the Homeric epics in an allegorical way. So the Theomachy in *Iliad* XX and XXI was explained, for instance, as a conflict between physical elements (e.g. Hephaestus stands for fire, Poseidon stands for water, etc.) or between various conflicting states of the mind (e.g. Athena is wisdom, Ares is stupidity, Aphrodite is desire, etc.).³ The first who is known to have applied this method is Theagenes of Rhegium (sixth century BCE).⁴ This type of Homer exegesis was popular in the fifth century BCE with Metrodorus of Lampsacus the Elder, who explained the *Iliad* in terms of the cosmology of his teacher Anaxagoras,⁵ and also with Democritus of Abdera.⁶

1 Xenophanes, frag. B11 DK = frag. 15 Gentili/Prato² = Sextus, *M.* IX.193; frag. B12 DK = frag. 16 Gentili/Prato² = Sextus, *M.* I.288–289.

2 Heraclitus, frag. A22 DK = Aristotle, *EE* VII 1, 1235a; Simplicius, *In Cat.* 412.26 Kalbfleisch; Numenius, frag. 52 des Places (= Calcidius, *Comm.* 297). Frag. B42 DK = Diogenes Laertius IX.1. Frag. B56 DK = Hippolytus, *Haer.* IX.ix.6. See also Plutarch, *Is.* 48, 370d.

3 See Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XX.67–75 (I.240–243 Schrader = 240–242 MacPhail); Proclus, *In R.* I.91–95 Kroll. See Bernard (1990) 74–90; Richardson (1992) 316–7; Ramos Jurado (1999). See also Xenophon, *Smp.* III.6, where the interlocutor Niceratus is said to have learnt the “deeper meaning” (ὑπόνοια) of Homer from Stesimbrotus, Anaximander and many others.

4 Theagenes, frag. 2 DK = T 4 Biondi = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XX.67–75 (I.240–241 Schrader = 240 MacPhail). See Wehrli (1928) 88–91; Mosino (1961); Pfeiffer (1968) 9–11; Presta (1969); Buffière (1973) 101–5; Richardson (1975) 67–8; Pépin (1976) 97–8; Rispoli (1980); Rocca-Serra (1990); Ford (1999) 35–8; Ramelli – Lucchetta (2004) 53–5; Pontani (2005) 25–7; Martinho dos Santos (2007); Domaradzki (2011) and (2017); Biondi (2015); Fuentes González (2016).

5 Metrodorus, frags. 3–6 DK. See Nestle (1907); Wehrli (1928) 92–4; Buffière (1973) 125–32; Richardson (1975) 68–70; Rocca-Serra (1990); Hammerstaedt (1998); Califf (2003); Fuentes González (2005); Martinho dos Santos (2007).

Such allegorical interpretations were explicitly rejected by Plato (*R.* II 378d), who famously attacked Homer and Homeric ethics in the second and third books of his *Republic*. The anti-Homer trend peaked in the fourth century BCE, with the sophist Zoilus of Amphipolis, whose criticism of Homer earned him the nickname of “Homer-scourge” (Ὀμηρομάστιξ). Zoilus not only attacked Homer on moral grounds (like Xenophanes and Plato) but also criticized errors, inconsistencies and plot holes.⁷ In reply to such attacks, several writers suggested solutions for Homeric problems. The first writer known to have tackled such problems is the fifth-century BCE sophist Stesimbrotus of Thasus.⁸ Homeric problems were also treated by the Socratic Antisthenes, although it is unsure in what type of work or works Antisthenes made these comments.⁹ The most important writer on Homer in the fourth century, apart from Aristotle, was probably Heraclides Ponticus, Aristotle’s fellow student in the Academy, who wrote *Homeric Solutions* (Λύσεις Ὀμηρικαί) in two books.¹⁰

It is against this background that Aristotle, who greatly admired Homer,¹¹ wrote his work on Homeric problems. This work is variously cited as Ἀπορήματα Ὀμηρικά, Ὀμήρου ἀπορήματα, Προβλήματα Ὀμηρικά or Ὀμηρικά ζητήματα.¹² It seems to have originally comprised six books¹³ but now survives only in about

6 Democritus, frag. B25 DK = Eustathius, *Ad Od.* XII.65 (II.11 Stallbaum). See Pépin (1976) 101–3.

7 Zoilus, frags. 1–19 Jacoby. His work was entitled *Against the Poetry of Homer* (Κατὰ τῆς Ὀμήρου ποιήσεως): see test. 1 Jacoby = Suda ζ 130, s.v. Ζώϊλος. See Spindler (1889), Friedländer (1895) 1–46; Apfel (1938) 250–2; Buffière (1973) 22–5; Gärtner (1978).

8 Stesimbrotus, frags. 23–25 Jacoby. See Buffière (1973) 132–6; Richardson (1975) 71–4.

9 Antisthenes, frags. 51–58 Declava Caizzi = Va187–194 Giannantoni. See Apfel (1938) 247; Declava Caizzi (1966) 105–9; Pfeiffer (1968) 36–7; Richardson (1975) 77–81; Pépin (1976) 105–9; Rankin (1986) 175–8; Giannantoni (1990) 331–46; Döring (1998) 278–80; Navia (2001) 39–52; Pontani (2005) 28–31; Prince (2015) 584–677.

10 See Diogenes Laertius V.88 (Λύσεις Ὀμηρικαί α' β'); Heraclides Ponticus, frags. 99–104 Schütrumpf. See Wehrli (1969) 121–2; Heath (2009) 255–63.

11 See McGuire (1977).

12 The title Ἀπορήματα Ὀμηρικά is found in Diogenes Laertius V.26 and Hesychius’ catalogue no 106 (p. 86 Düring = p. 14 Rose³ = p. 27 Gigon). The variation Ὀμήρου ἀπορήματα is used in Phrynichus, *Eclogae* 231 Fischer, s.v. βασιλίσσαν (= frag. 179 Rose³ = frag. 404.1 Gigon), and Antiatticista β 16 Valente, s.v. βασιλίτσα (*AB* vol. 1 p. 84) (= frag. 179 Rose³ = frag. 404.3 Gigon). Schol. Ge Hom. II. XXI.390a Erbse cites the work as Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν Ἀπορήμασιν (without Homer in the title). Προβλήματα Ὀμηρικά recurs in Hesychius’ catalogue no 147 (p. 87 Düring = p. 16 Rose³ = p. 28 Gigon). Finally, Ὀμηρικά ζητήματα is attested in *Vita Aristotelis Marciana* 4 (p. 97 Düring) and *Vita Aristotelis vulgata* 3 (p. 132 Düring). See Mayhew (2019) 25–9.

13 See Diogenes Laertius V.26 (Ἀπορημάτων Ὀμηρικῶν α' β' γ' δ' ε' ζ) and Hesychius’ catalogue no 106 (Ἀπορημάτων Ὀμηρικῶν ζ). According to no 147 in the anonymous appendix to Hesychius’ catalogue (Προβλημάτων Ὀμηρικῶν ι') and Ptolemaeus al-Ġarīb’s catalogue no 101

forty fragments.¹⁴ Almost all of these are transmitted through Porphyry's *Homeric Questions* (Ὅμηρικά ζητήματα),¹⁵ which is itself preserved mainly as excerpts in the scholia on Homer.¹⁶

(p. 439 Hein = no 98, p. 230 Düring = no 91, p. 22 Rose³ = no 104, p. 45 Gigon), by contrast, the work consisted of ten books. See the discussion in Mayhew (2019) 29–30.

14 The authenticity of the *Homeric Problems* was rejected by Lehrs (1833) 226–7, Ritter (1839) 263–6 and Rose (1863) 148–54. Lehrs' main arguments are that the solutions are supposedly unworthy of Aristotle and that the work was not known to any writer, except Porphyry. However, the close connection with chapter 25 of the *Poetics*, where similar solutions are found, refutes this skepticism. So already Heitz (1865) 267 and Vahlen (1867). Indeed, most scholars today accept the work as genuine. Moreover, apart from the *Vitae* of Aristotle, Phrynichus and Antiaticista (see note 12), Aristotle's work on Homer is also mentioned in Strabo XIII.i.36, 598c (= frag. 162 Rose³ = frag. 402 Gigon), Plutarch, *De audiendis poetis* 12, 32f (= frag. 165 Rose³ = frag. Gigon 403) and *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum* 12, 1095a (not included in Rose and Gigon), and schol. Ge Hom. II. XXI.390a Erbse. See already Sengebusch (1855) 75. Another attestation might be Athenaeus 13, 556d (= frag. 144 Rose³ = frag. 42 Gigon), on the reason why, unlike all the other heroes, Menelaus does not have any concubines, though it is also possible that this fragment belongs to *On Good Birth* (cited shortly before in 556a = frag. 93 Rose³ = frag. 71.2 Gigon) or the *Eroticus* (suggested by Gigon (1987) 278). For Athenaeus 7, 298bc, see Mayhew (2020) and note 94 below. Rose (1863) 149 considered the *Homeric Problems* a *quaestionum volumen ex Peripateticorum studiis philologis*. So also Schrader (1890) 179–94 and Heitz (1865) 276. According to Heitz, the later expansion of the Aristotelian collection might explain the difference in reported book numbers (see note 13).

15 Only the first book survives in direct transmission (the so-called *Zetemata Vaticana*); it has been edited by Sodano (1970). The rest of Porphyry's work survives only in excerpts in the scholia on Homer. These fragments have been collected in Schrader (1880) and (1890). However, Schrader relied on inferior manuscripts and is nowadays agreed to have attributed too much to Porphyry. A more conservative edition of the fragments on the *Iliad* is found in MacPhail Jr. (2011).

16 There is one caveat, however: Porphyry never explicitly cites Aristotle's work by its title. For some fragments, this leaves open the possibility that they belong to another work. This is especially true for fragments that include comments on animals, which might belong to a lost zoological work. In the *Zetemata Vaticana*, the only citation of Aristotle is derived from the *History of Animals* (Porphyry, *Zetemata Vaticana* 8 [I.291 Schrader = 43 Sodano] = Aristotle, *HA* VIII 15, 599b). See Mayhew (2015) 132–3. Aristotle's *History of Animals* is also cited (without reference to the book title) in Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXIV.315–316 (I.274 Schrader = 272 MacPhail) = Aristotle, *HA* IX 32, 618b. See also Porphyry, *Zetemata Vaticana* 16 (115–116 Sodano). Other works are the *Constitutions* (Πολιτεῖαι) and *Barbarian Customs* (Νόμια βαρβαρικά), which might also be the source for a number of fragments that discuss solutions οἷα ἦν. See Heitz (1865) 275–6 and (1869) 141 on Aristotle's frag. 166 Rose³ = frag. 389 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXIV.15 (I.267 Schrader = 258–260 MacPhail) (discussed below). See, however, the counterarguments of Sodano (1965) 233–5. For most of the fragments which I will discuss here, the attribution to Aristotle's *Homeric Problems* seems relatively unproblematic.

2 *Poetics* 25

Aristotle's method is in line with his views on literary problems and their solutions set out in chapter 25 of the *Poetics*.¹⁷ Despite some problems arising from Aristotle's condensed and arcane way of expressing himself in the *Poetics*, his methodology is more or less clear. He distinguishes five types of problems: (1) impossibilities (ἀδύνατα), (2) illogical behaviour (ἄλογα), (3) unethical or “harmful” behaviour (βλαβερά),¹⁸ (4) contradictions (ὑπεναντία) and (5) violations of the artistic standards (παρὰ τὴν ὀρθότητα τὴν κατὰ τέχνην).¹⁹ One of the key observations which Aristotle makes at the beginning of chapter 25 is that we should judge poetry first of all by poetic standards,²⁰ i.e. some irrational or unethical actions in Homer can be justified if they serve the artistic purpose. This is perhaps Aristotle's strongest argument against most of the objections made by Plato and Zoilus: poetry needs to abide by its own rules (as they are discussed by Aristotle throughout the *Poetics*) and not by rules imposed from another discipline, such as ethics or biology.

The actual solutions given in the *Poetics* and applied in the *Homeric Problems* roughly fall into three categories: (1) solutions based on the method of imitation; (2) solutions involving an adequate understanding of the context in which the problem occurs; (3) solutions based on a correct understanding of the language (what we today would call “philological” solutions). In what follows, I

17 See the discussions in Vahlen (1867) 351–91, 407–30, Carroll (1895), Gudeman (1934) 418–42, de Montmollin (1951) 99–117, Hintenlang (1961) 11–6, Lucas (1972) 232–51, Rosenmeyer (1973), Gallavotti (1974) 199–217, von Fritz (1976), Dupont-Roc – Lallot (1980) 386–404, Golden – Hardison (1981) 272–8, Halliwell (1987) 176–80, Ledda (1990), Breitenberger (2006) 371–4, Schmitt (2011) 700–23 and Mayhew (2019) 9–23. One of the major cruxes is that, at the end of chapter 25, Aristotle states that there are twelve solutions to the problems discussed before, but it is unclear how the solutions discussed in this chapter can be reduced to twelve and how these twelve should be identified. For this reason, I have used my own classification of problems, based on what Aristotle says in *Poetics* 25.

18 The word βλαβερά is traditionally interpreted as harmful *to the reader*, i.e. immoral. Bouchard (2010) and (2016) 294–6, however, has argued that it means harmful *to the character* who is undertaking a certain action.

19 Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1461b: τὰ μὲν οὖν ἐπιτιμήματα ἐκ πέντε εἰδῶν φέρουσιν· ἢ γὰρ ὡς ἀδύνατα ἢ ὡς ἄλογα ἢ ὡς βλαβερά ἢ ὡς ὑπεναντία ἢ ὡς παρὰ τὴν ὀρθότητα τὴν κατὰ τέχνην (“the censures they bring are of five kinds: that things are either impossible, illogical, harmful, contradictory or in violation of the artistic correctness”).

20 Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1460b: πρὸς δὲ τοῦτοις οὐχ ἢ αὐτὴ ὀρθότης ἐστὶν τῆς πολιτικῆς καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς οὐδὲ ἄλλης τέχνης καὶ ποιητικῆς (“moreover, the standard of what is correct is not the same in the art of poetry as it is in the art of politics or any other art”).

will discuss Aristotle's method through a selection of fragments, assess the validity of his solutions and compare them with those proposed by other ancient writers.

3 Solutions Based on the Method of Representation

3.1 Solutions Οἶα ἦν

The first type of solutions is one that is based on the poet's method of imitation (μίμησις). As Aristotle says at the beginning of chapter 25 of the *Poetics*, the poet can represent things in various ways: as they are (οἶα ἐστίν), as they were (οἶα ἦν), as they are said to be (οἶα φασιν ἢ δοκεῖ), or as they should be (οἶα εἶναι δεῖ).²¹ First, explaining problems οἶα ἦν means interpreting them as obsolete customs: since Homer wrote a long time ago, the argument goes, the customs in the Homeric epics are obviously different from those at the time of Aristotle. So Homer should not be blamed for reporting them. An example is frag. 166 Rose³, which addresses Achilles' immoral behaviour when he drags Hector's corpse around Patroclus' grave (*Il.* XXIV.15–16).

διὰ τί ὁ Ἀχιλλεύς τὸν Ἔκτορα εἴλκε περὶ τὸν τάφον τοῦ Πατρόκλου, παρὰ τὰ νενομισμένα ποιῶν εἰς τὸν νεκρὸν; (...) ἔστι δὲ λύειν, φησὶν Ἀριστοτέλης, καὶ εἰς τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ἀνάγοντα ἔθῃ, ὅτι τοιαῦτα ἦν, ἐπεὶ καὶ νῦν ἐν Θετταλίᾳ περιέλκουσι περὶ τοὺς τάφους.

Why did Achilles drag Hector around Patroclus' grave, acting on the corpse contrary to the customary rites? (...) It is possible to solve the problem, says Aristotle, by also referring to the customs which existed at that time, seeing as that is how they were. For now too in Thessaly, people drag them²² around the graves.

Frag. 166 Rose³ = frag. 389 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXIV.15
(1.267 Schrader = 258–260 MacPhail)

²¹ Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1460b: ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἐστὶ μιμητὴς ὁ ποιητὴς ὡσπερ ἀνεὶ ζωγράφος ἢ τις ἄλλος εἰκονοποιός, ἀνάγκη μιμεῖσθαι τριῶν ὄντων τὸν ἀριθμὸν ἐν τι ἀεί, ἢ γὰρ οἶα ἦν ἢ ἔστιν, ἢ οἶα φασιν καὶ δοκεῖ, ἢ οἶα εἶναι δεῖ (“since the poet is an imitator, like a painter or anyone else who creates images, he must always represent one of three things: either as things were or are, or as they are said and believed to be, or as they should be”).

²² In all likelihood, Aristotle is talking about murderers; see the fragment of Callimachus below, who names the murderers and victims explicitly (below, note 24).

This fragment probably replies, at least implicitly, to Plato, who in the *Republic* had objected to this inappropriate scene.²³ Aristotle explains that Achilles' behaviour is not so unusual, since that was customary at the time, a custom which is said to still exist in Thessaly. Aristotle's reference to Thessaly is no coincidence here, since Achilles came from this very region. A similar explanation recurs in Callimachus, who traces the custom back to the Thessalian Simon, whose brother had been killed by Eurydamas.²⁴ Whether the actual explanation

23 Plato, *R.* III 391b: τὰς τε αὖ Ἔκτορος ἔλξεις περὶ τὸ σῆμα τὸ Πατρόκλου καὶ τὰς τῶν ζωγρηθέντων σφαγὰς εἰς τὴν πυρὰν, σύμπαντα ταῦτα οὐ φήσομεν ἀληθῆ εἰρήσθαι (“Hector being dragged around Patroclus' grave and the captives being slaughtered on the pyre; we will say that these are all lies”).

24 Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXIV.15–16 (I.268 Schrader) = D schol. Hom. *Il.* XXII.398 van Thiel: διὰ τί Ἀχιλλεὺς θανόντα σύρει τὸν Ἔκτορα; (...) ὁ δὲ Καλλίμαχος φησιν, ὅτι πάτριόν ἐστι Θετταλοῖς τοὺς τῶν φιλάτων φονέας σύρειν περὶ τοὺς τῶν φονευθέντων τάφους· Σίμωνα γὰρ φησι Θετταλὸν τὸ γένος Εὐρυδάμαντα τὸν Μειδίου σῦραι ἀποκτείναντα Θρασύλον τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, ἀψάμενον τοῦ νόμου πρῶτον· τὸν γὰρ φονέα ἐξάψαι τοῦ δίφρου καὶ περὶ τὸν τοῦ τετελευτηκότος τάφον ἔλκειν, φησίν, ὁ νόμος ἐκέλευεν. ὅθεν καὶ Ἀχιλλεὺς ὡς Θετταλὸς πατρίῳ ἔθει τοῦτο πεποίηκεν. (“Why does Achilles drag Hector around after killing him? (...) Callimachus says that it is a Thessalian inherited custom to drag the murderer of loved ones around the graves of the people who were murdered. For he says that Simon, a Thessalian by birth, dragged Eurydamas, son of Meidias, around, because he had killed his brother, Thrasyllus; and he was the first to start the custom. For the law dictated, he says, that he attach the murderer to his wagon and drag him around the grave of the man he had killed. For this reason, Achilles too, being a Thessalian, has acted in this way in accordance with his inherited custom.”) See Proclus, *In R.* I.150 Kroll: ὑπόλοιπον δὲ ἐστὶ μοι περὶ τῶν εἰς τὸν Ἔκτορα τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ πεπραγμένων καὶ τῶν περὶ τὸ σῆμα ἔλξεω τοῦ Πατρόκλου, καὶ ὧν εἰς τοὺς ζωγρηθέντας ἔδρασεν ἐμβάλων εἰς τὴν πυρὰν, τὸν εἰκότα λόγον ἀποδοῦναι. ταῦτα γὰρ οὐκ ἀληθῆ περὶ ἀνδρὸς λέγεσθαί φησιν ὁ Σωκράτης, ὃς ἦν θεᾶς παῖς καὶ Πηλέως τοῦ σωφρονεστάτου, καὶ ἀπὸ Διὸς φύντος καὶ ὑπὸ τῷ σοφωτάτῳ Χείρωνι τεθραμμένον. εἴρηται μὲν οὖν καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν παλαιῶν, ὡς Θετταλικὸν τι τοιοῦτον ἔθος ἦν – καὶ ὁ Κυρηναῖος μαρτυρεῖ ποιητῆς: “πάλαι δ’ ἔτι Θεσσαλὸς ἀνὴρ / ῥυστάζει φθιμένων ἀμφὶ τάφον φονέας” – καὶ ὡς ταῦτα συμπληροῦντα τὴν περὶ τὸν Πάτροκλον ὁσίαν παρείληπται. (“I still need to give a reasonable explanation for what Achilles has done to Hector, for why he dragged him around Patroclus' grave and for what he did to the captives, who were thrown onto the pyre. Socrates says that these are lies told about a man who was the son of a goddess and of the self-controlled Peleus, descended from Zeus and had been brought up under the most wise Cheiron. The ancient people have also said that there was a certain Thessalian custom of this kind; the Cyrenian poet [sc. Callimachus (frag. 588 Pfeiffer)] attests it as well: ‘a long time ago a Thessalian man dragged the murderers around the grave of the dead’; and the ancient people have said that he did this as part of the funeral rites for Patroclus.”) The fragment of Callimachus is often attributed to the *Aetia*: see Schneider (1873) 627–8; Pfeiffer (1965) 407; Asper (2004) 363; Harder (2012) 743–4. According to Heitz (1869) 141, Schneider (1873) 627 and Hintenlang (1961) 22–3, Callimachus draws on Aristotle; Sodano (1965) 236–40, however, argued against this assumption.

is valid or not, it is true that corpses also get mutilated elsewhere in the *Iliad*,²⁵ so Achilles is no isolated case. Interestingly, before citing Aristotle, Porphyry gives his own, psychological motivation: Patroclus' body had been violated and dragged around when he was killed by Hector, so Achilles' behaviour can be justified as a form of retaliation.²⁶ Although Aristotle prefers a historicizing explanation of the problem here, we will see further on that for other problems he also paid attention to such psychological factors (§ 4).

Another example of a solution οἷα ἦν is frag. 160 Rose³, which asks why in *Il.* X.153, when Diomedes and his companions are sleeping outside their tents, their spears are stuck with their spikes in the ground. If these spears fell over, this would cause a lot of noise.

25 See, for instance, the mutilation of Sarpedon's body (*Il.* XVI.638–640).

26 Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXIV.15 (I.267 Schrader = 258–260 MacPhail): ἡ παρανομοῦσι τὰ αὐτὰ οὐχ οἱ ἀμυνομένοι ἀλλ' οἱ ἄρχοντες, ὁ δὲ Ἔκτωρ πρότερος ἐνεχείρησε λωβήσασθαι τὸν Πάτροκλον τοιαῦτα. τίς γὰρ ἡ γνώμη Ἐκτορος περὶ Πατρόκλου; “μάλιστα δὲ φαίδιμος Ἔκτωρ / ἐλκέμεναι μέμονεν· κεφαλὴν δὲ ἐθυμὸς ἀνώγει / πῆξαι ἀνὰ σκολόπεσσι ταμόνθ' ἀπαλῆς ἀπὸ δειρῆς”. εἴλικυσαι τε πρότερος Πάτροκλος διὰ τὴν τῶν Τρώων περὶ τὸν νεκρὸν προθυμίαν· “ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἀνήρ ταύροιο βοὸς μέγαλοιο βοεῖην / λαοῖσι δοίη τανύειν μεθύουσαν ἀλοιφῆ· / δεξάμενοι δ' ἄρα τοί γε διαστάντες τανύουσι / κυκλῶσ', ἄφαρ δὲ τε ἰκμάς ἔβη, δύνει δὲ τ' ἀλοιφή, / πολλῶν ἐλκόντων, τάνυται δὲ τε πᾶσα διαπρό· / ὡς οἱ γ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα νέκυν ὀλίγη ἐνὶ χώρῃ / εἴλικον ἀμφοτέροι”· καὶ πάλιν· “Ἔκτωρ μὲν Πάτροκλον, ἐπεὶ κλυτὰ τεύχε' ἀπήυρα, / ἔλχ', ἴν' ἀπ' ὤμοιιν κεφαλὴν τάμοι”. ἐκείνων οὖν λευκώτων τὸν νόμον, οὕτως ἐχρήσατο αὐτοῖς Ἀχιλλεύς. ὅταν γὰρ βουλόμενός τις κωλυθῆ, ἐκεῖνος μὲν πεποίηκεν, ἀλλ' ὁ πάσχων οὐδὲν πέπονθε. Πάτροκλος δὲ φθάσας περιεἴλικυσαι γυμνὸς ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ διὰ πρόφασιν τῶν προθεμένων αἰκίσασθαι τὸ σῶμα, ὥστ' ἀπολαμβάνοντι ἔοικεν ὁ Ἔκτωρ ἃ δέδρακεν, οὐ μὴν πάσχοντι τὰ παράνομα. καὶ φιλανθρωπότερόν γε, ὅτι μόνον ἃ δρᾶσαι δεδύνηται πέπονθεν, οὐχ ὅσα δὲ δρᾶσαι διενόηθη. (“Surely those who defend themselves do not commit the same crime as those who started it. And Hector was the first to try to mutilate Patroclus in this way. For what is Hector's intention with respect to Patroclus? ‘The glorious Hector was especially eager to drag him around. His heart urged him to cut off his head from his tender neck and fix it to the palisades’ [*Il.* XVIII.175–177]. Patroclus has first been dragged around as a result of the Trojans' effort to secure the body. ‘Like when a man allows the people to stretch the hide of a large bull, drenched with grease; when they receive it, they stand apart and stretch it in a circle; immediately moisture goes up, grease sinks in, while many are pulling it, and it is entirely stretched apart; in the same manner, on both sides, they pulled the corpse in a small spot this way and that way’ [*Il.* XVIII.389–395]. And further: ‘When Hector took the splendid armour, he dragged Patroclus off to cut his head from his shoulders’ [*Il.* XVII.125–126]. So, because they violated the custom, Achilles treated them in this way. For when someone is prevented from doing what he wants, this person has undertaken an action, though the person against whom the action is directed has suffered nothing. Patroclus was the first to be dragged around on the plain, stripped of his armour, because of those who intended to violate the body. Consequently, Hector seems to get what he did to another and certainly does not seem to suffer unlawful things. It is even more humane, since he has suffered only what he had been able to do, not everything he had intended to do.”)

φαύλη δοκεῖ εἶναι ἡ τῶν δοράτων ἐπὶ σαυρωτῆρας στάσις. καὶ δὴ πανταχοῦ θόρυβον ἦδη πεποίηκε νύκτωρ ἔν μόνον πεσόν. λύει δὲ Ἀριστοτέλης λέγων ὅτι τοιαῦτα αἰεὶ ποιεῖ Ὅμηρος οἷα ἦν τότε. ἦν δὲ τοιαῦτα τὰ παλαιὰ οἷάπερ καὶ νῦν ἐν τοῖς βαρβάροις. πολλοὶ δὲ οὕτως χρώνται τῶν βαρβάρων.

The placement of the spears, standing on their spear butts, looks improper.²⁷ For if even a single spear falls over at night, it immediately creates a loud noise everywhere. Aristotle solves the problem by saying that Homer always represents things as they were at the time. The old customs were the same as they are now too among the barbarians. Many barbarians have this custom.

Frag. 160 Rose³ = frag. 383 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* X.153
(I.145 Schrader = 284–285 MacPhail)

Aristotle's solution is that it was a custom at the time, as is the case with barbarians of his own time. What is interesting is that in this fragment Aristotle explicitly refers to his methodological principle set out in the *Poetics*: τοιαῦτα αἰεὶ ποιεῖ Ὅμηρος, οἷα ἦν τότε ("Homer always represents things as they were at the time"). Moreover, when discussing this type of solution in the *Poetics*, he cites this very problem as an example.²⁸ From the *Poetics* we also learn that the barbarian people mentioned in the fragment refer to the Illyrians.²⁹ Barbarians were

27 Carroll (1895) 32 and 35 translated φαῦλος as "poetically bad". Sodano (1965) 229–30, however, objected to this translation, arguing that Hintenlang's translation *unzweckmäßig* (Hintenlang (1961) 18–9) is better. Although Carroll's main point is that φαῦλος does not mean "immoral" (see notes 34 and 36), it is true that the meaning of φαῦλος here is probably "imprudent", i.e. Porphyry probably means that the arrangement of the spears is bad for Diomedes and his companions rather than bad for Homer or his reader (viz. because it is bad poetry).

28 Alternative solutions for this peculiar scene in Homer recorded in the scholia on Homer are that (1) these spears formed a palisade which protected Diomedes and (2) they showed that he was courageous and always ready for battle. See schol. bT Hom. *Il.* X.152–153 Erbse: τρόπον τινὰ περιχαρακούντα τὸν ἡγεμόνα. φοβερὸν δὲ τὸ σχῆμα καὶ κοιωμένων, ἴσως ἐμφαίνοντος τοῦ ποιητοῦ καὶ διὰ τούτου τὸ ἀνδρείον Διομήδους καὶ ἔτοιμον εἰς μάχην· διὸ καὶ τὰ ἐναντία ἐξῆς φησι περὶ Θρακῶν ὡς ψέγων "ἔντεα δέ σφι / καλὰ παρ' αὐτοῖσιν χθονὶ κέκλιτο εὖ κατὰ κόσμον". ("In a way to protect the commander; the appearance of even sleeping people is frightening; the poet probably also shows in this way the courage of Diomedes and his readiness to battle. That is also why further on he [sc. Homer] says the opposite about the Thracians, since he reproaches them by saying: 'their splendid weapons were lying on the ground neatly beside them' [*Il.* X.471–472].") The scholiast compares the scene with Diomedes and Odysseus' sneak attack on the sleeping Thracians, whose weapons are lying on the ground. The same explanation recurs in Eustathius, *Ad Il.* X.150–156 (III.33 van der Valk).

29 Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1461a: τὰ δὲ ἴσως οὐ βέλτιον μὲν, ἀλλ' οὕτως εἶχεν, οἷον τὰ περὶ τῶν ὀπλων, "ἔγχεα δέ σφιν / ὄρθ' ἐπὶ σαυρωτῆρος". οὕτω γὰρ τότ' ἐνόμιζον, ὥσπερ καὶ νῦν Ἰλλυριοί. ("Other cases are perhaps inappropriate but such was the fact, e.g. the case of the arms, 'their spears

indeed thought to preserve a primitive lifestyle resembling that of the Greeks' ancestors. This historical method, which Aristotle shares with many other historians (e.g. Thucydides),³⁰ is also seen in other of his works, especially the *Constitutions*.³¹

3.2 Solutions Οἷα εἶναι δεῖ?

Let us now look at a second type of solution based on the type of *mimesis*. As we have seen, Aristotle explains that a poet can represent things not only “as they are or were”, but also “as they should be” and “as they are said to be”. Representing things “as they should be” (οἷα εἶναι δεῖ) actually poses no real problems. This type is mentioned only briefly in chapter 25 of the *Poetics*, where Aristotle explains the issue by comparing Sophocles with Euripides: Sophocles portrays people as they should be (idealistically), whereas Euripides shows people as they are (realistically).³² Solutions of this kind do not recur in the fragments of the *Homeric Problems*; the reason for this is probably that idealized representations were no major problem for the Homer critics who came before Aristotle.³³ As I have said in the introduction, early critics mainly censured passages in Homer which they deemed inappropriate or immoral. Unrealistically positive depictions in Homer would have actually been applauded by people like Plato.³⁴

(driven) straight (into the ground), on their spear butts' [*Il.* X.152–153]. For that was the custom at that time, as the Illyrians now do too.”)

30 See Thucydides I.vi.6: πολλὰ δ' ἄν και ἄλλα τις ἀποδείξειε τὸ παλαιὸν Ἑλληνικὸν ὁμοίотροπα τῶ νῦν βαρβαρικῶ διατῶμενον (“one could demonstrate that in many other respects ancient Greece lived in a way similar to the barbarians today”).

31 See Huxley (1972).

32 Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1460b: πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ἐὰν ἐπιτιμᾶται ὅτι οὐκ ἀληθῆ, ἀλλ' ἴσως <ὡς> δεῖ, οἷον και Σοφοκλῆς ἔφη αὐτὸς μὲν οἷους δεῖ ποιεῖν, Εὐριπίδην δὲ οἷοι εἶσιν, ταύτη λυτέον. (“Next, if the charge is that something is not true, perhaps it is as it should be, just as Sophocles also said that he himself portrayed people as they should be and Euripides portrayed them as they are. That way this problem can be solved.”)

33 See Hintenlang (1961) 52.

34 According to Carroll (1895) 30, Aristotle means ideal representations “in the aesthetic, not in the moral sense”. See also note 36 below. However, the reference to Sophocles and Euripides makes little sense if Aristotle is merely talking about what is ideal from an artistic viewpoint.

3.3 Solutions Οἷά Φασιν ἢ Δοκεῖ

The third mimetic solution, explaining things “as they are said or believed to be”, is more relevant for Homeric problem-solving. This argument acknowledges that Homer is first of all a storyteller of traditional myths. So if the myth itself contains unlikely or immoral elements, we should not fault Homer for merely following the story. This is indeed the key solution for the objections made by previous philosophers against Homer’s representation of the gods. Unsurprisingly, it is exactly this problem that Aristotle cites as an example in the *Poetics*, with explicit reference to Xenophanes’ criticism.³⁵ The actual corpus of fragments, however, has not preserved many of these solutions, though this may be the result of Porphyry’s own selection criteria. One example is frag. 163 Rose³, which deals with the story in *Il.* XIX.91–124 of how Zeus was once deceived by Hera.

διὰ τί ἡ Ἥρα ὁμόσαι προάγει τὸν Δία; ἢ δῆλον ὡς οὐ ποιοῦντα ἂ ἂν φῆ. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, διὰ τί οὐ κατανεῦσαι ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁμόσαι ἤξιωσεν, ὡς καὶ ψευδομένου, ἂν μὴ ὁμόσει; ὁ δὲ ποιητὴς φησιν ἀληθεύειν “ὅ τι κεν κεφαλῇ κατανεύσει”. τὸ μὲν οὖν ὅλον μυθῶδες. καὶ γὰρ οὐδ’ ἄφ’ ἑαυτοῦ ταῦτά φησιν “Ὀμηρος, οὐδὲ γινόμενα εἰσάγει, ἀλλ’ ὡς διαδεδομένων περὶ τὴν Ἥρακλέους γένεσιν μέμνηται. ῥητέον δὲ ὅτι καὶ ὁ μῦθος εἰκότως εἰσάγει τὴν Ἥραν ὀρκούσαν τὸν Δία. πάντες γὰρ περὶ ὧν ἂν φοβῶνται μὴ ἄλλως ἀποβῆ, πολὺ τῷ ἀσφαλεῖ προέχειν πειρῶνται. διὸ καὶ ἡ Ἥρα, ἅτε οὐ περὶ μικρῶν ἀγωνιζομένη, καὶ τὸν Δία εἰδυῖα ὅτι αἰσθόμενος τὸν Ἥρακλέα δουλεύοντα ὑπεραγανακτήσει, τῇ ἰσχυροτάτῃ ἀνάγκῃ κατέλαβεν αὐτόν. οὕτως Ἀριστοτέλης.

Why does Hera urge Zeus to swear an oath? Maybe he clearly is not doing what he says. But if that is the case, why was she not satisfied with a nod but demanded an oath, as if he is lying, if he does not swear an oath? The poet says that “whatever he assents to with a nod of his head” [*Il.* I.527] comes true. Well, the entire thing is part of the myth. For indeed Homer does not say this on his own account, nor does he introduce what happens, but he mentions it as a traditional story about the birth of Heracles. One must say that it is also logical that the story presents Hera as binding Zeus with an oath. For everyone tries hard to secure those things safely beforehand which they fear may turn out otherwise. Therefore, since Hera was not fighting over trifle matters and knew that when Zeus saw Heracles living as a slave, he would be extremely vexed, she too bound him by the strongest restraint. So Aristotle.

Frag. 163 Rose³ = frag. 387 Gigon = schol. A Hom. *Il.* XIX.108b Erbse = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XIX.108 (I.235–236 Schrader = 232–234 MacPhail)

³⁵ Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1460b: εἰ δὲ μηδετέρως, ὅτι οὕτω φασίν, οἷον τὰ περὶ θεῶν· ἴσως γὰρ οὕτε βέλτιον οὕτω λέγειν οὐτ’ ἀληθῆ, ἀλλ’ εἰ ἔτυχεν ὡσπερ Ξενοφάνει· ἀλλ’ οὖν φασι. (“If neither of these solutions [sc. the portrayal of people as they are or as they should be] will do, then the solution is that such is the tale; for instance, the tales about gods. It is perhaps inappropriate to say it like this, or untrue, but if it was as Xenophanes thought, the reply is: yet such is the tale.”)

According to the famous myth, Hera tricked Zeus into swearing an oath that a child that would be born that same day would rule over the humans; with the help of the goddess of birth, Eileithyia, she managed to delay the birth of Hercules, thus making sure that Eurystheus would be born before him and become ruler among the humans. The problem here is why Hera demands an oath, whereas elsewhere in the *Iliad* it suffices for Zeus to nod when he makes a promise. Aristotle's solution is that the oath was simply part of the traditional myth and not Homer's own creation (τὸ μὲν οὖν ὄλον μυθῶδες and ὡς διαδεδομένων περὶ τὴν Ἡρακλέους γένεσιν μέμνηται). To this he also adds a psychological justification of Hera's behaviour: it is natural (εἰκότως) to want the other person to swear an oath if important matters are at stake. Hera logically goes for the strongest form of restraint.

4 Solutions Based on the Context in Homer

Another way of solving Homeric problems is by assessing the context in which the Homeric problem is found. Unlike previous critics, Aristotle looks at the greater picture and the underlying psychological motivations of the characters. As he says in chapter 25 of the *Poetics*, the reader needs to ask who acted or spoke, to whom they spoke, at what point they did this, for whom and for what purpose.³⁶ An example is frag. 156 Rose³:

διὰ τί προκαλουμένου Ἐκτορος εἰς μονομαχίαν οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι ἄριστοι “αἴδεσθαι μὲν ἀνήνασθαι, δεῖσαν δ' ὑποδέχθαι”, Μενέλαος δὲ πρῶτος ἀνίσταται καὶ μεμψάμενος τοὺς ἄλλους “κατεδύσατο τεύχεα καλά”, μάχεσθαι προθυμούμενος, ὅτε δὲ προτραπέντες οἱ ἑννέα ἀνίσταντο, οὐδαμοῦ οὗτος ἐν τούτοις εὐρίσκεται, ἀλλ' Ἀγαμέμνων καὶ Διομήδης καὶ οἱ Αἴαντες

³⁶ Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1461a: περὶ δὲ τοῦ καλῶς ἢ μὴ καλῶς εἰ εἴρηται τι νῆ πέπρακται, οὐ μόνον σκεπτόντα εἰς αὐτὸ τὸ πεπραγμένον ἢ εἰρημένον βλέποντα εἰ σπουδαῖον ἢ φαῦλον, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὸν πράττοντα ἢ λέγοντα πρὸς ὃν ἢ ὅτε ἢ ὅτω ἢ οὗ ἔνεκεν, οἷον εἰ μείζονος ἀγαθοῦ, ἵνα γένηται, ἢ μείζονος κακοῦ, ἵνα ἀπογένηται. (“As to the question whether anyone has said or done anything in a good or bad way: one must not only judge this by looking at what has been done or said itself, asking whether this is noble or base, but also by looking at the man who did or said it, to whom he did or said it, when, for whom and for what purpose; for example, in order to secure a greater good or to avoid a greater evil.”) Traditionally, καλῶς ἢ μὴ καλῶς is interpreted as “morally good or bad”: see Vahlen (1867) 361–2; Gudeman (1934) 428; Hintenlang (1961) 14–5n2; Lucas (1972) 240; Gallavotti (1974) 202; Golden – Hardison (1981) 276; Breitenberger (2006) 373; Schmitt (2011) 704–5, 715. According to Carroll (1895) 33–40, however, Aristotle means good from an aesthetic and not from a moral viewpoint. So also de Montmollin (1951) 107. It is indeed true that looking at the context is not only the solution for moral problems. However, most scholars do not agree with Carroll: see e.g. Sodano (1965) 230.

καὶ Ἴδομενεὺς καὶ Μηριόνης καὶ Εὐρύπυλος καὶ Θόας καὶ Ὀδυσσεύς; φησὶ δὲ ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης, ὅτι ἅπαξ ἀκούσας “μηδ’ ἔθειλ’ ἐξ ἔριδος σεῦ ἀμείνωνι φωτὶ μάχεσθαι / “Ἐκτορι” οὐκ ἔμελλεν αὐθις ἀνίστασθαι, καὶ ὅτι τὸ πρότερον ἐκ φιλονεικίας ἢ ἀνάστασις, καὶ ὅτι ἤδη μονομαχίσας ἐτύγγανεν Ἀλεξάνδρῳ καὶ οὐ καλῶς ἀπαλλάξας, καὶ νεωστὶ ἐπέτρωτο ὑπὸ Πανδάρου, καὶ ὅτι ἀποκινδυνεύειν τοῦτον οὐκ ἔχρην ἐν ᾧ τὸ τέλος ἤρητο τοῦ πολέμου· ἐπὶ γὰρ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἴσον ἦν τὸ τοῦ κινδύνου.

Why, when Hector challenges them to a duel, are the rest of the heroes “ashamed to decline but scared to accept” [*Il.* VII.93], whereas Menelaus is the first to stand up and reprehend the others and “put on his splendid armour” [*Il.* VII.103], ready to fight. Yet when the nine heroes, urged on (by Nestor), stood up, he is nowhere to be found among them; instead, the heroes are Agamemnon, Diomedes, the Ajaxes, Idomeneus, Meriones, Eurypylus, Thoas and Odysseus. Aristotle says that, once he had heard “do not wish to fight Hector out of strife, a man who is stronger than you” [VII.111–112], he did not intend to stand up again. Also, he initially stood up out of strife. And he had already fought a duel with Alexander, without success, and had recently been wounded by Pandarus. Moreover, he should not take the risk in a battle in which the purpose of the war was at stake. For in the battle with Alexander, the purpose of the risk had been the same.

Frag. 156 Rose³ = frag. 380 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* VII.93 (I.107–108 Schrader)

When Hector challenges the Achaeans to a one-on-one battle in *Iliad* VII, Menelaus reproaches the other heroes for not accepting it and volunteers himself (*Il.* VII.92–103), but Agamemnon holds him back. After Nestor’s subsequent speech, nine heroes step forward to accept the challenge, but Menelaus is not among them (*Il.* VII.161–168). This makes him come across as a total hypocrite. Aristotle considers various explanations. First, Menelaus was deterred from stepping forth a second time because, when Agamemnon held him back, he had said that he was no match for Hector (*Il.* VII.111). Another solution is that Menelaus’ first reaction was merely an emotional one, induced by φιλονεικία. Aristotle also considers the circumstances preceding Hector’s challenge: Menelaus had already fought a duel with Paris without much success (*Il.* III.340–382) and had recently been wounded by Pandarus (*Il.* IV.139–147). So he was certainly in no shape to fight Hector. Finally, Aristotle points out that, if Menelaus were to fight, the whole purpose of the expedition would be at stake: the Greeks had come to Troy to get Helen back for him, so if he died the war would be over. In the duel with Paris, by contrast, the risk had been the same on either side.

Looking at the context, especially at the person speaking, is also Aristotle’s way of solving some of the blatant “factual” contradictions in Homer. A nice example is frag. 146 Rose³, which asks why, in the Catalogue of Ships (*Il.* II.649), Crete is said to have a hundred cities (ἑκατόμπολις), whereas, in the fictitious tale told by Odysseus to Penelope (*Od.* XIX.173), Crete is said to have ninety cities (ἐννήκοντα πόλεις).

διὰ τί ἐνταῦθα μὲν πεποιήκεν “ἄλλοι θ’ οἱ Κρήτην ἑκατόμπολιν ἀμφενόμεντο”, ἐν δὲ Ὀδυσσεΐα εἰπὼν ὅτι ἔστιν ἡ Κρήτη καλὴ καὶ πείρα καὶ περίρρυτος, ἐπάγει· “ἐν δ’ ἀνθρώποι / πολλοὶ ἀπειρέσιοι καὶ ἐννήκοντα πόλεις”; τὸ γὰρ ποτὲ μὲν ἐνενήκοντα ποτὲ δὲ ἑκατὸν λέγειν δοκεῖ ἐναντίον εἶναι. (...) Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ οὐκ ἄτοπὸν φησιν, εἰ μὴ πάντες τὰ αὐτὰ λέγοντες πεποιήνται αὐτῶ· οὕτως γὰρ καὶ ἀλλήλοις τὰ αὐτὰ παντελῶς λέγειν ὠφείλον.

Why has he written here “and others who were dwelling around Crete of a hundred cities” [*Il.* II.649], while in the *Odyssey*, after saying that Crete is beautiful, rich and surrounded with water, he adds: “in it are many countless men and ninety cities” [*Od.* XIX.173–174]? For the fact that he at one point says ninety but at another one hundred seems to be contradictory. (...) Aristotle says that it is not illogical if he does not depict everyone saying the same. For in this way they should have also said the same things as one another altogether.

Frag. 146 Rose³ = frag. 370 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* II.649 (I.48–49 Schrader = 68 MacPhail)

Nowadays we usually just accept these types of contradictions in Homer as being inherent to the originally oral transmission of the epics. However, ancient critics went out of their way to try and make sense of these inconsistencies. Aristotle’s solution is that these lines are spoken by two different people: Homer himself in the Catalogue of Ships and Odysseus in the *Odyssey*.³⁷ As long as it is not the same person speaking, such contradictions are therefore allowed.³⁸ This also agrees with what Aristotle says in *Poetics* 25, viz. that we must check whether the same person is speaking with regard to the same things.³⁹

37 According to Breitenberger (2006) 383–4, πάντες in εἰ μὴ πάντες τὰ αὐτὰ λέγοντες πεποιήνται αὐτῶ implies that Aristotle is talking about different characters, which excludes the narrator. From this she concluded that the two passages quoted here (I.48.25–29 Schrader and I.49.7–13 Schrader) do not form one fragment. However, the slight inconsistency might also belong to Aristotle. Incidentally, according to Bouchard (2016) 254, αὐτῶ is not the agent of the perfect passive πεποιήνται (“if they are not all depicted *by him* as saying the same things”) but a dative of comparison governed by τὰ αὐτὰ (“if they are not all depicted as saying the same things *as he*”). If Bouchard is correct, this makes Breitenberger’s argument invalid. Bouchard preferred this interpretation, since the subsequent sentence (“for in this way they should have also said the same things as one another altogether”) would otherwise be redundant. Note, however, that such redundant sentences are common in Ancient Greek.

38 Ammendola (1907) 25 inaccurately translated the fragment as *non c’era nulla di strano in quella doppia denominazione di Creta, perchè così conveniva che fosse chiamata* and erroneously concluded that Aristotle agreed with Heraclides.

39 Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1461b: τὰ δ’ ὑπεναντίως εἰρημένα οὕτω σκοπεῖν ὡςπερ οἱ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἔλεγχοι εἰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ὡσαύτως, ὥστε καὶ αὐτὸν ἢ πρὸς ἃ αὐτὸς λέγει ἢ ὃ ἂν φρόνιμος ὑποθῆται. (“Contradictory statements need to be examined in the same way as refutations in the arguments, viz. whether it is the same thing, with respect to the same thing and in the same way, so that he contradicts either what he himself says or what an intelligent person would suppose.”) The same principle is explicitly mentioned in Porphyry, *Ad Il.* VI.265 (I.100 Schrader = 116 MacPhail): οὐδὲν δὲ θαυμαστὸν εἰ παρὰ τῶ ποιητῆ ἐναντία λέγεται ὑπὸ διαφόρων

Porphry next adds two further observations.⁴⁰ First, “a hundred” in the Catalogue of Ships might be a metaphor for “many”. This metaphorical explanation was also used by the Alexandrian grammarians to refute the so-called Chozizontes or Separators, who used such contradictions between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in order to prove that these were written by two different poets.⁴¹ Por-

φωνών. 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. (“It is not at all surprising if contradictory statements are given in the poet by different characters. For everything that he said himself from his own persona must be consistent and must not contradict each other; but everything that he attributes to characters are not his own words but are considered words of the people speaking them. By consequence, he often allows discrepancies.”)

40 Porphry, *Ad Il.* II.649 (I.49 Schrader = 68 MacPhail): μήποτε δὲ καὶ μεταφορά ἐστι τὰ ἑκατόν· πολὺ γάρ τι ἐστι τὰ ἑκατόν, ὡς ἐκ “τῆς ἑκατόν θύσανοι”. οὐ γὰρ ἑκατόν ἦσαν ἀριθμῶ· καὶ “ἑκατόν δὲ τε δούρατ’ ἀμάξης”. ἔπειτα οὐδαμοῦ λέγει ὡς ἐνενήκοντα μόναι εἰσίν· ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἑκατόν καὶ ἐνενήκοντα. (“But perhaps a hundred is also a metaphor. A hundred is a large number, as in ‘a hundred tassels (were suspended) from it’ [*Il.* II.448]. For they were not a hundred in number; and ‘a hundred are the beams of a wagon’ [*Hesiod, Op.* 456]. Moreover, he nowhere says that there are only ninety; ninety are also part of a hundred.”) According to Römer (1884) 287, Ammendola (1907) 25, Hintenlang (1961) 67–9, Breitenberger (2006) 384 and Heath (2009) 255–6, these two explanations go back to Aristotle; Sodano (1974) 23 and 26–8 attributed only the metaphorical explanation to Aristotle but excluded the second one. The two additional explanations were omitted, however, by Rose (1863) 157, (1870) 1502, (1886) 123 and Heitz (1869) 132–3. What speaks against the attribution of Porphry’s additional explanations is that they are introduced by μήποτε “but perhaps”; elsewhere in Porphry, this usually introduces the last solution, which seems to be Porphry’s own: see Porphry, *Zetematata Vaticana* 10 = *Ad Il.* XXI.362ff. (I.252 Schrader = 55 Sodano) (μήποτ’ οὖν, etc.); *Ad Il.* II.447 (I.44.32 Schrader) (καὶ μήποτε πάλιν ῥητέον ὅτι, etc.); *Ad Il.* III.98ff. (I.54.12 Schrader) (ῥητέον οὖν ὅτι μήποτε, etc.); *Ad Il.* VI.200–201 (I.95.6, 10 Schrader) (ἢ μήποτε... μήποτ’ οὖν, ὡς φαμεν, etc.); *Ad Il.* XII.10–12 (I.172.20 Schrader = 192.13 MacPhail) (μήποτ’ οὖν, etc.); *Ad Il.* XII.127–132 (I.177.35 Schrader = 200.8 MacPhail) (μήποτε δὲ, etc.); *Ad Il.* XIV.200 (I.191.25–26 Schrader = 214.37 MacPhail) (μήποτε δὲ καί, etc.); *Ad Il.* XIV.304–306 (I.197.19 Schrader) = XIV.423–424 (220.10 MacPhail) (μήποτε δὲ, etc.); *Ad Il.* XIX.221 (I.237.26 Schrader = 236.17 MacPhail) (μήποτε δὲ, etc.); *Ad Il.* XX.329 (I.248.10–11 Schrader = 288.3 MacPhail) (μήποτε δὲ καί, etc.); *Ad Od.* I.1 (II.1.12 Schrader) = schol. *Hom. Od.* I.1 Pontani (μήποτε οὖν, etc.); *Ad Od.* V.334–337 (II.57.6 Schrader) = schol. *Hom. Od.* V.334e Pontani (μήποτε δὲ, etc.); *Ad Od.* IX.25–26 (I.82.16–83.1 Schrader) (μήποτε δὲ, etc.); *Ad Od.* XVI.188 (II.122.18 Schrader) (μήποτε δ’, etc.). See MacPhail Jr. (2011) 7n60; Bouchard (2016) 254. An exception is Porphry, *Ad Il.* II.305–329 (I.33.10 Schrader = 44.9 MacPhail) (μήποτ’ οὖν, etc.).

41 See schol. *A Hom. Il.* II.649 Erbse: πρὸς τοὺς Χωρίζοντας, ὅτι νῦν μὲν ἑκατόμπολιν τὴν Κρήτην, ἐν Ὀδυσσεΐα δὲ ἐνενηκοντάπολιν. ἦτοι οὖν ἑκατόμπολιν ἀντὶ τοῦ πολύπολιν, ἢ ἐπὶ τὸν σύνεγγυς καὶ ἀπαρτίζοντα ἀριθμὸν κατενήνεκται νῦν, ἐν Ὀδυσσεΐα δὲ τὸ ἀκριβὲς ἐξενήνοχεν, ὡς παρὰ Σοφοκλεῖ. τινὲς δὲ φασὶ τυπλαμένητ’ τὸν Λακεδαιμόνιον δεκάπολιν κτίσαι. (“In reference to the Separators, who objected that on this occasion he calls Crete ‘of a hundred cities’,

phyry's second argument is more convoluted, however: he argues that, technically, Homer does not say that Crete has *only* ninety cities, i. e. saying that there are ninety cities does not exclude the possibility of there being a hundred cities.

Other writers, by contrast, tried to defend *both* numbers as being correct. Heraclides Ponticus, whose work of *Homeric Solutions* I mentioned at the beginning, is one of these. He claims that there were originally a hundred cities, but, after the fall of Troy, Idomeneus and his men destroyed ten of these;⁴² so by the time Odysseus returned to Ithaca, he had heard of the event and “updated” the number. Another writer who proposed a solution similar to that of Heraclides is the historian Ephorus, who claimed that, after the Trojan War, a decapolis was founded, which increased the number of cities from ninety to a hundred.⁴³

but in the *Odyssey* ‘of ninety cities’. Well, either he uses ‘of a hundred cities’ in the sense of ‘of many cities’, or he has rounded it up to the closest number here but, in the *Odyssey*, has given the exact one, as is the case in Sophocles (frag. 899 Radt). Some people claim that the Spartan †Pylaemenes† founded the Decapolis.”) The alternative solution reported in the *Viermännerkommentar* is that ninety is the correct number, whereas a hundred is a rounded number, or that a decapolis was later founded by “Pylaemenes” (probably an error for Althaemenes, as the name is found in Ephorus).

42 Heraclides Ponticus, frag. 99 Schütrumpf = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* II.649 (I.48–49 Schrader = 68 MacPhail): Ἡρακλείδης μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλοι λύειν ἐπεχείρουν οὕτως· ἐπεὶ γὰρ μυθεύεται τοὺς μετ’ Ἰδομενέως ἀπὸ Τροίας ἀποπλεύσαντας πορθῆσαι Λύκτον καὶ τὰς ἐγγύς πόλεις, ἃς ἔχων Λεύκων ὁ Τάλω πόλεμον ἐξήνεγκε τοῖς ἐκ Τροίας ἐλθοῦσιν, εἰκότως ἂν φαίνοιτο μᾶλλον τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἢ ἀκρίβεια ἢ ἐναντιολογία τις. οἱ μὲν γὰρ εἰς Τροίαν ἐλθόντες ἐξ ἑκατὸν ἦσαν πόλεων, τοῦ δὲ Ὀδυσσεὺς εἰς οἶκον ἦκοντος ἔτει δεκάτῳ μετὰ Τροίας ἄλωσιν καὶ φήμης διηκούσης, ὅτι πεπόρθηται δέκα πόλεις ἐν Κρήτῃ καὶ οὐκ εἰσὶ πῶς συνψικισμένοι, μετὰ λόγου φαίνονται ἂν Ὀδυσσεὺς λέγων ἐνενηκοντάπολιν τὴν Κρήτην. ὥστε, εἰ καὶ μὴ τὰ αὐτὰ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν λέγει, οὐ μέντοι διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ψεύδεται. (“Now then, Heraclides and others attempted to solve it in the following way: since it is said that, after sailing away from Troy, Idomeneus and his men sacked Lyctus and the nearby cities which had been in the possession of Leucon, the son of Talos, who brought war on them as they came from Troy, this would actually be an indication of the accuracy of the poet rather than a contradiction. For those who had gone to Troy had come from a hundred cities, but while Odysseus was returning home in the tenth year after the capture of Troy and a rumour was circulating that ten cities in Crete had been sacked and were not inhabited in any way, Odysseus would obviously call Crete ‘of ninety cities’ with good reason. Consequently, although the poet does not say the same things about the same people [or: “in reference to the same thing”], he nonetheless does not lie because of it.”) Interestingly, the last sentence echoes Aristotle’s words “it is not illogical if he does not depict everyone saying the same” (οὐκ ἄτοπὸν φησιν, εἰ μὴ πάντες τὰ αὐτὰ λέγοντες πεποιήνται αὐτῷ). However, this comment at the end of Heraclides’ fragment (which Porphyry cites right before Aristotle’s solution) might also be Porphyry’s own conclusion. Whatever the case is, the two philosophers obviously disagreed here about how to solve the contradiction in Homer.

43 Ephorus, frag. 146 Jacoby = Strabo X.iv.15, 479c: τοῦ δὲ ποιητοῦ τὸ μὲν ἑκατόμπολιν λέγοντος τὴν Κρήτην, τὸ δὲ ἐνενηκοντάπολιν, Ἐφορος μὲν ὕστερον ἐπικτισθῆναι τὰς δέκα φησὶ μετὰ τὰ

Disagreement with Heraclides is also seen in frag. 147 Rose³, which deals with the Teichoscopy in *Iliad* III.

διὰ τί τὴν Ἑλένην πεποίηκεν ἀγνοοῦσαν περὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ὅτι οὐ παρήσαν, δεκαετοῦς τοῦ πολέμου ὄντος καὶ αἰχμαλώτων πολλῶν γινομένων; ἄλογον γάρ. ἔτι δὲ καὶ εἰ ἠγνόει, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἦν ἀναγκαῖον μνησθῆναι τούτων οὐκ ἐρωτηθεῖσαν ὑπὸ τοῦ Πριάμου περὶ αὐτῶν· οὐδὲ γὰρ πρὸς τὴν ποίησιν πρὸ ἔργου ἦν ἡ τούτων μνήμη. φησὶ μὲν οὖν Ἀριστοτέλης· ἴσως ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐντυγχάνειν ἐφυλάττετο τοῖς αἰχμαλώτοις. ἢ ὅπως τὸ ἦθος βελτίων φανῆ καὶ μὴ πολυπραγμοσίῃ, οὐδὲ τοὺς ἀδελφούς ᾗδει ὅπου εἰσί.

Why has he portrayed Helen as being unaware that her brothers were not present, even though the war was in its tenth year and many prisoners were held captive? That is illogical. Moreover, even if she was unaware of their fate, there was no need to mention them, since Priam had not asked her about them. Mentioning them was not relevant from an artistic viewpoint either. Aristotle says: perhaps she was prevented by Alexander from meeting the prisoners. Or maybe she did not even know where her brothers were so that her character might appear better and she would not come across as meddling.

Frag. 147 Rose³ = frag. 371 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* III.236 (I.58 Schrader)

When Helen is describing the Achaean heroes (*Il.* III.236), she says to Priam at a certain point that she cannot see her brothers (Castor and Pollux) and speculates that they either never joined the expedition or are not showing themselves in battle out of shame for her, showing herself unaware that they are actually already dead and buried in Sparta. The problem is that, since the war had already been going on for over nine years, you would expect her to know about her brothers' absence by that time.

Let us first look at Heraclides' solution, which (like Aristotle's) is reported by Porphyry.⁴⁴ He suggests that the Greek army had split up to attack other cities in

Τρωϊκὰ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀλθαίμενει τῷ Ἀργεΐῳ συνακολουθησάντων Δωριέων· τὸν μὲν οὖν Ὀδυσσεῖα λέγει ἐνενηκοντάπολιν ὀνομάσαι. οὗτος μὲν οὖν πιθανός ἐστιν ὁ λόγος. ἄλλοι δ' ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰδομενέως ἐχθρῶν κατασκαφῆναί φασι τὰς δέκα. ("Since the poet says that Crete has a hundred cities in one passage and ninety in another, Ephorus states that the additional ten were founded later after the Trojan War by the Dorians who came with Althaemenes of Argos. And he notes that Odysseus calls Crete 'of ninety cities'. This is a plausible explanation. Others, however, claim that the ten cities were sacked by the enemies of Idomeneus.") The second explanation reported by Strabo (ἄλλοι) is that of Heraclides.

44 Heraclides Ponticus, frag. 100 Schütrumpf = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* III.236 (I.59 Schrader): ἀπίθανον εἶναι δοκεῖ, ἐννέα ἐτῶν διελθόντων τοῖς Ἑλλησιν ἐν Ἰλίῳ, μηδένα τῶν βαρβάρων ἀπαγγεῖλαι τῇ Ἑλένῃ περὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν, εἴτε καὶ αὐτοὶ ἀφίκοντο εἰς τὸν πόλεμον εἴτε ὅλως οὐκ ἦλθον εἰς Τροίαν, ἢ ἐλθόντες οὐκ ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὴν μάχην· οὐ γὰρ ἐνῆν τοιοῦτους ὄντας μὴ οὐχ ὑπὸ πάντων γινώσκεισθαι παρόντας εἰς τὴν Τροίαν. λέγει δὲ Ἡρακλείδης, ὅτι ἄλογον ἦν ὄντως τοῦτο, εἰ διατελεσάντων ἐν τῇ Τροίᾳ πάντων Ἑλλήνων ἐννέα ἔτη μηδὲν περὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἔσχεν Ἑλένη λέγειν· εἰ δὲ οὐ πάντες ἦσαν οἱ στρατεύσαντες ἐν Τροίᾳ, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν περὶ Λέσβου καὶ τὰς ἄλλας

the vicinity. Since not all Greek heroes were present in Troy, it was therefore impossible for the Trojans to know which heroes had joined the expedition. Porphyry also reports another solution immediately after this, which he may have taken from Heraclides as well: since the Trojans were unsure whether Helen's brothers were alive or dead, they kept her out of the loop and never reported any news.⁴⁵ This point gets a surprisingly Aristotelian twist since it is said that barbarians are typically reluctant to report bad news to their rulers, a custom still observed to this day. Both explanations assume that news can only reach Helen through Trojans, who either did not know it themselves or were unwilling to give the information.

Aristotle, by contrast, points out that the Trojans also had Greek prisoners, which undermines Heraclides' whole argument.⁴⁶ However, Aristotle's own solution is no less contrived than that of Heraclides. He gratuitously assumes that Paris made sure to keep the prisoners away from Helen. Yet Aristotle also adds an explanation based on Helen's character: portraying Helen as being unaware of her brothers' fate shows that she does not wish to meddle with actual warfare,

νήσους, ὃς οἱ Κἄρες εἶχον, ἐπόρθουν, πόλεις δὲ καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ ἡπείρῳ, οὐδὲν ᾗδει εἰ ἐστράτευσαν ἢ οὐ. ("It seems to be implausible that, after nine years had gone by for the Greeks in Troy, not one of the barbarians had reported to Helen about her brothers, whether they had also come to the war or had not come to Troy at all, or had come but did not go into the battle. For it was not possible that men of such a stature would not be recognized by everybody, if they had come to Troy. Heraclides says that this really was illogical, if, since the Greeks had all spent nine years in Troy, Helen was not able to say anything about her brothers. But if not all those who had joined the expedition were present in Troy, but some were besieging the area of Lesbos and the other islands, which the Carians occupied, while others were attacking cities in the west, she did not know at all whether or not they had joined the expedition.")

45 Porphyry, *Ad Il.* III.236 (I.59 Schrader): πιθανώτερον δὲ προσθεῖναι, ὅτι ἠφανισμένων τοῦ Κάστορος καὶ τοῦ Πολυδεύκου καὶ δοκούντων τεθνάναι, διὰ τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τὸ συμβεβηκός, μήτε ὅτι ἐτεθνήκεσαν μήτε εἰ ἔτι εἰσίν, οὐκ ἀνηγγέλλετο τῇ Ἑλένῃ περὶ αὐτῶν. οὐδὲ γὰρ τὰ δυσχερῆ οἱ βάρβαροι τοῖς δυνάσταις πάντα εἰσὶν εἰθισμένοι ἀπαγγέλλειν. καὶ τούτου πολλὰ παραδείγματα λέγειν ἔστιν· ἔτι γὰρ καὶ νῦν χρῶνται τῷ ἔθει. οὐδὲν οὖν ἐκώλυεν ἀμφιδοξεῖν περὶ αὐτῶν τὴν Ἑλένην. ("It is more trustworthy to add that, when Castor and Pollux had disappeared and were believed to be dead, people did not report any news to Helen about them, seeing as they did not know what had happened to the men, neither that they were dead nor whether they were still alive. For barbarians are used to not reporting all the bad news to their rulers either. It is possible to cite many examples of this. It is now too their custom. So nothing prevented Helen from being in doubt about them.")

46 This interpretation also recurs in schol. bT Hom. *Il.* III.236a Erbse (ἡγνόει δὲ τὰ περὶ αὐτῶν, ἴσως μὴ συγχωρουμένη συντυγχάνειν τοῖς αἰχμαλώτοις, "she did not know about them, probably since she was not allowed to meet the prisoners"). As Scodel (1999) 182 pointed out, however, only Trojan prisoners are mentioned in the *Iliad* but no Greek ones.

which matches Homer's positive portrayal of her.⁴⁷ Interestingly, Aristotle's first remark on Greek prisoners implies that this is a reaction to an existing interpretation; otherwise, it would be unnecessary for Aristotle to bring this up in the first place. Therefore, this suggests that Aristotle's work was probably written *after* Heraclides'.⁴⁸

5 Solutions Based on the Language

Having discussed Aristotle's solutions based on the poetic representation and the context, I will now look at the third big category of solutions: those based on a correct understanding of the language. These are essentially linguistic or philological solutions that involve, for instance, an archaic word, a metaphor,

⁴⁷ Porphyry actually mentions two problems: (1) why is Helen unaware of her brothers' fate, and (2) why does Helen bring up her brothers here, although Priam did not ask her about them and mentioning them is not relevant for the plot? According to Breitenberger (2006) 385, Porphyry has not recorded Aristotle's solution to the second problem. However, the reference to the portrayal of Helen's character can also be seen as a solution to this problem: although the detail might not be relevant for the plot, it does serve the artistic purpose, viz. of rehabilitating Helen's character: see Hintenlang (1961) 114n2. In fact, after citing Aristotle, Porphyry goes on to comment on Helen's portrayal in Homer and argues that such details are necessary (καὶ ἡ μνήμη οὖν ἀναγκαῖα εἰς σύστασιν τοῦ προσώπου, "so mentioning them is necessary for the portrayal of her character") and are meant to show that Helen is held in Troy against her will (φαίνεται δὲ πάντα καὶ λέγουσα καὶ οἰκονομοῦσα, ὅπως ὁ τε Πρίαμος καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι πεισθῶσι Τρῶες, ὅτι ἀκούσιος καὶ παρὰ γνώμην αὐτῆς ἢ εἰς τὸν Ἰλιον γέγονεν ἀφιξίς, "she is seen to say and do everything to convince both Priam and the other Trojans that she has come to Troy involuntarily and against her will"). Unlike Rose (1863) 158, (1870) 1502, (1886) 123 and later Gigon (1987) 529, Heitz (1869) 133 also included the latter sentence (which follows immediately after ἢ ὅπως τὸ ἦθος βελτίων φανῆ καὶ μὴ πολυπραγμονοίη, οὐδὲ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ἦδει ὅπου εἰσί) as part of the fragment of Aristotle. So also Ammendola (1907) 10–2. Römer (1884) 288, in contrast, rejected this and instead argued that this sentence is part of a reply to the opinion of the Separators, who used the contrast between the portrayal of Helen in the *Iliad* (where she is distraught and complains about her abduction) and the *Odyssey* (where she came to Troy willingly) to show that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were written by two different poets: see schol. A Hom. *Il.* II.356a1 Erbse. According to Römer, this part was wrongfully inserted in the discussion about the Homeric problem. However, the subsequent discussion shows that the comment does not regard the Separators and is part of the motivation why Helen mentions her brothers. Römer may have been right, however, to exclude the sentence from the fragment of Aristotle, since it does not entirely fit Aristotle's explanation: according to Aristotle, Homer does not want to portray Helen as meddling, whereas Porphyry's subsequent explanation states that Homer wants to show that she is held against her will. The quotation of various passages in Homer which mention Helen is also a trait of Porphyry's method.

⁴⁸ See Heath (2009) 258–9.

polysemy, a homonym or other types of ambiguity. For example, when we read that Ganymedes “pours wine” for Zeus (an example cited in the *Poetics*), we should not be too pedantic and object that the gods drink only nectar but no wine.⁴⁹ It is just a figure of speech. Surprisingly, Aristotle forgets this explanation in frag. 170 Rose³, which deals with Hermes’ visit to Calypso in *Od.* V.93.

εἰ μηδὲν ἄλλο πίνουσιν οἱ θεοὶ ἢ τὸ νέκταρ, διὰ τί αὐτὸ ἡ Καλυψὼ τῷ Ἑρμῇ κέρασσασι δίδωσιν; εἰ γὰρ κεκέραστα σὺν ὕδατι, οὐ μόνον τὸ νέκταρ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὕδωρ πίνουσιν. καίτοι, φησὶ, ψιλὴν ἀμβροσίαν παρέθηκεν, “κέρασσε δὲ νέκταρ ἐρυθρόν”. λύων οὖν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης τὸ κέρασσε φησὶν ἦτοι τὸ μῖξαι ἄλλω ἄλλω ὑγρῷ δηλοῖ ἢ τὸ ἐγγχεῖν· ἄμφω γὰρ δηλοῖ τὸ κέρασαι. νῦν οὖν τὸ “κέρασσε δὲ νέκταρ ἐρυθρόν” οὐ τὸ μῖξαι δηλοῖ, ἀλλὰ ψιλῶς ἐγγχεῖν.

If the gods do not drink anything else but nectar, then why does Calypso give it to Hermes after mixing it? For if it is mixed with water, they drink not only nectar but also water. Nonetheless, he says, she served him mere ambrosia “and mixed red nectar” (κέρασσε δὲ νέκταρ ἐρυθρόν [*Od.* V.93]). Solving the problem, Aristotle says that κέρασσε means either “mix one fluid with another” or “pour”. For κέρασαι can mean either. So, in this case, κέρασσε δὲ νέκταρ ἐρυθρόν does not indicate “mixing” (μῖξαι) but simply “pouring” (ἐγγχεῖν).

Frag. 170.1 Rose³ = frag. 393.1 Gigon = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.93e1 Pontani (Porphyry, *Ad Od.* V.93, II.50 Schrader)

εἰ μηδὲν ἄλλο πίνουσιν οἱ θεοὶ ἢ νέκταρ, πῶς ἡ Καλυψὼ αὐτὸ κερνάει ὕδατι; (...) ἢ ὅτι τὸ κέρασσε κατὰ τὸν Ἀριστοτέλην, ὡς ὁ Πορφύριος λέγει, οὐ μόνον δηλοῖ τὸ μῖξαι ἄλλω ὑγρῷ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἐγγχεῖν ψιλῶς.

If the gods do not drink anything else but nectar, then why does Calypso mix it with water? (...) Or, according to Aristotle, as Porphyry says, κέρασσε indicates not only mixing (μῖξαι) with another fluid but also simply pouring (ἐγγχεῖν).

Frag. 170.2 Rose³ = frag. 393.2 Gigon = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.93c2+e2 Pontani

Homer says that Calypso “mixed red nectar” for him (κέρασσε δὲ νέκταρ ἐρυθρόν): mixing it means adding water, which the gods do not drink. Aristotle’s solution is that κέρασσε does not mean “mix” (μῖξαι) but “pour” (ἐγγχεῖν).⁵⁰ How-

⁴⁹ Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1461a: τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἔθος τῆς λέξεως (...) ὅθεν εἴρηται ὁ Γανυμήδης “Διὶ οἰνοχοεῦειν”, οὐ πινόντων οἶνον. εἴη δ’ ἂν τοῦτο γε καὶ κατὰ μεταφοράν. (“Other problems are solved in reference to fixed expressions (...) therefore, Ganymedes is said to ‘pour wine for Zeus’ [*Il.* XX.234], although they do not drink wine. This might also be metaphorical.”) Another problem linked with this passage in the *Iliad* is why, in *Il.* IV.2, Hebe is said to pour wine for the gods, whereas, in *Il.* XX.234, Ganymedes has this function: see Porphyry, *Ad Il.* IV.2 (I.67–68 Schrader) = *Ad Il.* XX.232–235 (242 MacPhail).

⁵⁰ See also schol. Hom. *Od.* V.93c1 Pontani (κέρασσε δὲ νέκταρ ἐρυθρόν· ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐνέχεεν· οὐ γὰρ κερνάται τὸ νέκταρ, “she mixed red nectar: instead of ‘she poured’, since nectar is not mixed”). Schol. Hom. *Od.* V.93d Pontani = D schol. Hom. *Od.* V.93c Ernst combines this interpretation with a supposed old custom of pouring wine in a horn (κέρας), thus also giving it a half-

ever, κεράννυμι always means mix in Homer. The most straightforward explanation is that this is just a projection of a human custom onto the gods. That is also why Homer calls nectar ἐρυθρός here, which is the usual epithet of wine.⁵¹

Indeed, Aristotle's understanding of the Homeric language is often misguided, especially when it comes to the meaning of archaic words. I will illustrate this with two examples, cited in the *Poetics*. At the beginning of the *Iliad*, Apollo famously sends the plague onto the Greek army. In Homer, Apollo first shoots his arrows at the mules and dogs and then strikes the humans: οὐρήας μὲν πρῶτον ἐπέχετο καὶ κύνας ἀργούς, / αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' αὐτοῖσι βέλος ἐχεπευκὲς ἐφίεις / βάλλ' (*Il.* I.50 – 52), “He first attacked the mules and the swift dogs; next he hit the people, firing his sharp arrow at them”. This scene was ridiculed by Zoilus of Amphipolis, the famous critic of Homer: why does Apollo start with mules and dogs when he sends the plague?⁵² Aristotle's creative solution to this problem is that οὐρήας means φύλακας, so Apollo first shoots the guards.⁵³ This solution, which should probably be seen as a direct reply to Zoilus, thus assumes that οὐρέυς is a synonym of Homeric οὔρος. However, ancient lexicographers are very

baked etymology (ἔστιν οὖν ψιλῶς ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐνέχεεν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχαίας συνηθείας, εἰς κέρας γὰρ ἐγγέοντες ἔπινον, “the word is used merely in the sense of ‘she poured’, on the basis of an old custom; for people used to pour wine into a horn to drink it”). See also Eustathius, *Ad Od.* V.93 (I.202 Stallbaum): τὸ δὲ κέρασε νέκταρ, οὐ δηλοῖ κρᾶμά τι, ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐνέχεε κεῖται, ὡς ἀπὸ παλαιᾶς χρήσεως, καθ' ἣν ὡς καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ σαφῶς ἐδηλώθη, κέρασι ζῶων ἐγγέοντες ἔπινον (“the phrase ‘she mixed nectar’ does not indicate some form of mixture but is used instead of ‘she poured’, on the basis of an old custom, according to which people used to pour wine into the horns of animals to drink it, as is also clearly seen elsewhere”); and *Etymologicum Magnum* s.v. νεοκράτας σπονδάς 537 Kallierges: καὶ Ὀμηρος, “κέρασε δὲ νέκταρ ἐρυθρόν”. ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐπέχεεν· οὐ γὰρ ὕδατι κινᾶται τὸ νέκταρ (“so also in Homer: ‘she mixed red nectar’ [*Od.* V.93], in the sense of ‘she poured’, since nectar is not mixed with water”).

51 See Homer, *Od.* V.165, IX.163, IX.208, XII.19, XII.327, XIII.69, XVI.444; also Eustathius, *Ad Od.* V.93 (I.202 Stallbaum): ἐρυθρόν δὲ νέκταρ, καθ' ὁμοιότητα τοῦ “οἶνος ἐρυθρός” (“red nectar, in the same way as ‘red wine’”). See Hintenlang (1961) 56.

52 Zoilus, frag. 5 Jacoby = Heraclitus Homericus, *All.* XIV.2: οὐ γὰρ οὕτως ἄκριτον ἦν παρανάλωμα τῆς Ἀπόλλωνος ὀργῆς τὰ ἄλογα τῶν ζῶων οὐδ' ἂν ὁ θυμὸς ἀφρόνως ἡμίονους ἐνήκμαζε καὶ κυσίν, ὡς τὸ Θρακικὸν ἀνδράποδον Ὀμήρου κατεξανίσταται, λέγω δὲ τὸν Ἀμφιπολίτην Ζώϊλον ἄνω καὶ κάτω τοιούτους τινὰς λήρους φληναφοῦντα. (“It was not so unreasonable that Apollo's anger killed the animals without reason, nor did his anger rage foolishly against mules and dogs, as the Thracian slave accused Homer. I am speaking of Zoilus of Amphipolis, who continuously blurted out such nonsense.”)

53 Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1461a: τὰ δὲ πρὸς τὴν λέξιν ὀρώντα δεῖ διαλύειν, οἷον γλώττη τὸ “οὐρήας μὲν πρῶτον”. ἴσως γὰρ οὐ τοὺς ἡμίονους λέγει ἀλλὰ τοὺς φύλακας. (“Other problems must be solved by looking at the diction, for example, with a rare word in ‘first the οὐρήας’ [*Il.* I.50]. For perhaps he does not mean the mules [ἡμίονους] but the guards [φύλακας].”)

clear that οὐρέυς does not have this meaning.⁵⁴ This interpretation is also explicitly rejected in the *Viermännerkommentar*, which points out that it is contradicted by αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' αὐτοῖσι: Homer clearly means that the plague first hit the animals and only then the humans.⁵⁵

The second example from the *Poetics* deals with the moment when the envoy of Phoenix, Ajax and Odysseus arrives at Achilles' tent in *Iliad* IX. Achilles invites them to have a drink with him and instructs Patroclus to bring a larger bowl and mix a stronger wine: ζωρότερον δὲ κέραε (*Il.* IX.203). Zoilus of Amphipolis was among the critics to object that it is inappropriate to serve undiluted wine to one's guests.⁵⁶ Essentially, Achilles is presented here as someone who is trying to get people drunk. Again, Aristotle engages in linguistic acrobatics: his solution is that ζωρότερον does not mean “unmixed” (ἀκρατότερον) but “faster” (θᾶττον).⁵⁷ Interestingly, this idiosyncratic solution recurs in Porphyry as well, who reports it as an anonymous tradition (οἱ μὲν).⁵⁸ This passage in Por-

54 See D schol. Hom. *Il.* I.50 van Thiel: οὐρήας, ὄρεῖς, ἡμίονους, ὑποζύγια (“οὐρήας: ὄρεῖς, mules, beasts of burden”); Apollonius, *Lex.* s.v. οὐρήας 124 Bekker: οὐρήας ἡμίονους, [ἦτοι ὀριβατοῦσι], διὰ τὸ ὄρουειν πρὸς τοὺς ἀνάντεις τόπους (“οὐρήας: beasts of burden, [they climb mountains], because they run to places uphill”; I have bracketed ἦτοι ὀριβατοῦσι as a gloss, probably to ὄρουειν; ἦτοι is a common way of introducing glosses).

55 Schol. A Hom. *Il.* I.50a Erbse: ὅτι οὐκ ὀρθῶς τινες οὐρήας τοὺς φύλακας ἀντιδιαστέλλει γὰρ διὰ τοῦ “αὐτοῖσι”. (“Some people incorrectly explain οὐρήας as ‘the guards’; however, this is contradicted by ‘at them’.”) See schol. A Hom. *Il.* X.84a Erbse: ἢ ἐ τιν' οὐρήων ἀθετεῖται, ὅτι οὐρήων βούλεται λέγειν τῶν φυλάκων, καὶ οὐκ ἐκράτησε τοῦ σχήματος: οὐρον γὰρ λέγει ὡς κοῦρον τὸν φύλακα, οὐρέα δὲ τὸν ἡμίονον. καὶ ὅτι ἀκαιρος ἢ ἐρώτησις. (“Or one of your mules [οὐρήων]: this part is deleted, since οὐρήων is supposed to mean ‘the guards’; the form does not have this meaning: for he [sc. Homer] uses οὔρος like κοῦρος for guard but οὐρέυς for mule; and also because the question is improper.”)

56 Zoilus, frag. 4 Jacoby = Plutarch, *Quaestiones convivales* V.iv.2, 677e: ἀλλὰ μειρακιώδη τὴν φιλοτιμίαν αὐτῶν ἀπέφαινον, δεδιότων ὁμολογεῖν ἀκρατότερον εἰρησθαι τὸ ζωρότερον, ὡς ἐν ἀτόπῳ τινὶ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως ἐσομένου, καθάπερ ὁ Ἀμφιπολίτης Ζωῖλος ὑπελάμβανεν. (“But I pointed out that their effort was schoolboyish because they were afraid to admit that ζωρότερον means ‘stronger’, as if Achilles would find himself in an awkward position, as Zoilus of Amphipolis claimed.”)

57 Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1461a: καὶ τὸ “ζωρότερον δὲ κέραε” οὐ τὸ ἀκρατον ὡς οἰνόφλυξιν ἀλλὰ τὸ θᾶττον (“and ζωρότερον δὲ κέραε (*Il.* IX.203) does not mean ‘mix it undiluted’ [ἀκρατον] as for drunkards but ‘mix it faster’ [θᾶττον]”).

58 Porphyry, *Ad Il.* IX.203 (I.135 Schrader = 283 MacPhail): ἀπρεπές· ὡς γὰρ ἐπὶ κῶμον ἤκουσιν ἀκρατότερον διδόναι παρακελεύεται. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς λέξεως λούουσι· τὸ γὰρ ζωρότερον εἶναι τάχιον. (“This is inappropriate. He orders to give them unmixed wine as if they have come for a party. Some people solve the problem on the basis of the diction: ζωρότερον means ‘faster’.”) Aristotle's interpretation also lives on in Hesychius ζ 257 Latte: ζωρότερον· ἀκρατότερον· ἔνιοι δὲ τάχιον (“ζωρότερον: less diluted; according to some, it means ‘faster’”).

phyry shows that he (or the excerpting scholiast) does not always mention Aristotle by name when he uses his work, which implies that still more anonymous material from Aristotle's *Homeric Problems* may be hidden in Porphyry.

Il. IX.203 provides the only attestation of the word ζωρός in Homer, which ancient writers therefore interpreted in various ways. Theophrastus, Aristotle's famous student, claimed in his work *On Drunkenness* that the word actually means the opposite, viz. "mixed".⁵⁹ So both Aristotle and Theophrastus try to avoid making Homer say that Achilles is serving unmixed wine and is thus trying to get his guests drunk.⁶⁰ However, their solutions both fall flat, since elsewhere in Greek literature ζωρός always means "unmixed" or "strong".⁶¹ Theophrastus quotes Empedocles for the supposed meaning "unmixed", but there are textual problems with that fragment of Empedocles.⁶² Theophrastus quotes the line as ζωρά τε τὰ πρὶν ἄκρητα "what was unmixed before became *zora* (mixed)". Wright, the most recent editor of Empedocles, however, actually reads this line as ζωρά τε πρὶν κέκρητο "what was *zora* (unmixed) before became mixed".⁶³

Apart from lexical obscurities, a Homeric problem can also involve syntactic ambiguity. That is, there may be more than one way of interpreting a certain line grammatically. An example concerns the famous problem of Nestor's drinking cup described in Il. XI.632–637.

59 Theophrastus, frag. 574 FHS&G = Athenaeus 10, 424a: Θεόφραστος δ' ἐν τῷ Περὶ μέθης ζωρότερον φησιν εἶναι τὸ κεκραμένον, παρατιθέμενος Ἐμπεδοκλέους τάδε: "αἶψα δὲ θητὰ φύονται, τὰ πρὶν μάθον ἀθάνατ' εἶναι, / ζωρά τε τὰ πρὶν ἄκρητα, διαλλάσσοντα κελεύθους". ("Theophrastus in his work *On Drunkenness* says that what is mixed is ζωρότερον, citing the following lines of Empedocles [frag. B35.14–15 DK = frag. 47.14–15 Wright]: 'What had previously been accustomed to being immortal immediately became mortal, and what was previously unmixed became ζωρά, changing its path'.")

60 Alternative interpretations were that ζωρότερον meant "hotter" (as if related to ζέω, "boil"), "livelier" (as if derived from ζήω, "live") or "old" (a supposed compound of ζα- and ὄρος). See: Plutarch, *Quaestiones convivales* V.iv.1, 677c-678b; D schol. Hom. Il. IX.203 van Thiel; and Athenaeus 10, 423e–424a. Plutarch calls all the previous attempts at making sense of ζωρότερον a frivolous game. In his view, Achilles serves unmixed wine simply because Phoenix and Odysseus are old men and therefore prefer strong wine.

61 See also Apollonius, *Lex.* s.v. ζωρότερον 81 Bekker: ζωρότερον ἄκρατότερον.

62 Empedocles, frag. B35.14–15 DK = frag. 47.14–15 Wright. Aristotle quotes these very lines of Empedocles in *Po.* 25, 1461a as αἶψα δὲ θνήτ' ἐφύονται τὰ πρὶν μάθον ἀθάνατ' εἶναι / ζωρά τε πρὶν κέκρητο. The line is also quoted in Plutarch, *Quaestiones convivales* V.iv.1, 677d (ζωρά τε τὰ πρὶν ἄκρητα); Simplicius, *In Cael.* 529 Heiberg and *In Ph.* 33 Diels (both read ζωρά τε τὰ πρὶν ἄκρητα).

63 Wright (1995) 113, 208. So already Arundel (1962). Diels – Kranz (1951) 328, in contrast, read ζωρά τε τὰ πρὶν ἄκρητα. See also the discussion in O'Brien (1965), West (1966) and Solmsen (1967).

διὰ τί πεποίηκε μόνον τὸν Νέστορα αἶροντα τὸ ἔκπωμα; οὐ γὰρ εἰκὸς ῥᾶον αἶρειν νεωτέρων (...) Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ τὸ “Νέστωρ ὁ γέρων” ἀπὸ κοινοῦ ἔφη δεῖν ἀκούειν ἐπὶ τοῦ “ἄλλος”, ἵν’ ἦ ἄλλος μὲν γέρων μογέων ἀποκινήσασκε τραπέζης, Νέστωρ δ’ ὁ γέρων ἀμογητὶ ἄειρεν. πρὸς γὰρ τοὺς καθ’ ἡλικίαν ὁμοίους γενέσθαι τὴν σύγκρισιν.

Why has he depicted only Nestor raising the cup? For it is not likely that Nestor raises it more easily than men who are younger (...) Aristotle said that one must understand “the old Nestor” (Νέστωρ ὁ γέρων) jointly with “another” (ἄλλος), so that it is: “another old man had difficulty moving it from the table, but the old Nestor lifted it with ease”. For the comparison is in regard to those who are similar in age.

Aristotle, *apud* Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XI.637 (I.168 Schrader = 188 MacPhail)⁶⁴

The scene includes the following peculiar comment: ἄλλος μὲν μογέων ἀποκινήσασκε τραπέζης / πλείον ἔόν, Νέστωρ δ’ ὁ γέρων ἀμογητὶ ἄειρεν, “anyone else had difficulty moving it from the table when it was filled, but the old Nestor lifted it with ease” (*Il.* XI.635 – 636). How can it be that the old Nestor manages to lift the cup, while none of the other, much younger and stronger heroes can? This puzzled many people in antiquity, who tried to solve the problem in various ways.

A first man who tried to solve the problem is Stesimbrotus of Thasus, whom I have already mentioned at the beginning as one of the first writers who discussed Homeric problems. Stesimbrotus assumed that despite his old age, Nestor kept his strength, which is why he was able to lift the cup.⁶⁵ Appealing to Nestor’s strength is justified; yet it does not explain why the other heroes could not do the same thing. Another avenue was explored by Glaucón, another early Homer critic. In his view, lifting the cup required some dexterity because of its two handles, and only Nestor knew the right technique for doing this.⁶⁶ So the reason why the other heroes struggled was not so much the weight of the cup itself but rather its peculiar shape.

⁶⁴ The fragment is not included in Rose³ or Gigon. Rose (1863) 166 claimed that Ἀριστοτέλης is an error for Ἀρίσταρχος. However, the explanation in Porphyry is inconsistent with the opinion of Aristarchus as discussed in schol. A Hom. *Il.* XI.636b Erbse (see note 70).

⁶⁵ Stesimbrotus, frag. 23 Jacoby = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XI.637 (I.168 Schrader = 186 MacPhail): Στησίμβροτος μὲν οὖν φησιν, ἵνα δοκῆ εἰκότως πολλὰ ἔτη βεβιωκέναι· εἰ γὰρ παράμονος ἡ ἰσχύς καὶ οὐχ ὑπὸ γήρωσ μεμάρανται, καὶ τὰ τῆς ζωῆς εὐλογον εἶναι παραπλήσια. (“Stesimbrotus says [that Nestor is described as such] so that it would seem logical that he lived for many years. For if his strength remains and has not been withered by old age, it is also reasonable that what concerns his lifetime is similar.”)

⁶⁶ Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XI.637 (I.168 Schrader = 186 MacPhail): Γλαύκων δέ, ὅτι κατὰ διάμετρον ἐλάμβανε τὰ ὄψα, ἐκ μέσου δὲ πᾶν εὐφορον (“Glaucón says that he took the handles along the diameter, and everything is easy to carry from the middle”).

The philosopher Antisthenes, by contrast, gave a philological solution. He claimed that ἄειρεν does not mean “lift” but “endure”, i. e., unlike the other heroes, Nestor was able to endure the cup, i. e. he did not get drunk.⁶⁷ A clever solution, but it can hardly be reconciled with the word ἀποκινήσασκε, which shows that Homer literally means lifting or moving the cup.

Aristotle goes for an alternative philological solution. He focuses on the word ἄλλος and argues that it should be combined with γέρων at l. 637, which is *apo koinou*, i. e. the line means “any other old man had difficulty moving it from the table when it was filled, but Nestor lifted it with ease”. So Homer is supposedly comparing Nestor to other old men. This fragment shows how Aristotle wrote his *Homeric Problems* at least in part in order to address Homeric problems that were commonly discussed in his days. His interpretation regarding Nestor’s cup was later adopted by the grammarian Sosibius.⁶⁸ It shows that Aristotle’s interpretation of a specific Homeric passage influenced later generations of scholars. The problem was so heavily debated that the grammarian Asclepiades of

67 Antisthenes, frag. 55 Declava Caizzi = Va191 Giannantoni = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XI.637 (I.168 Schrader = 186 MacPhail): Ἀντισθένης δέ· οὐ περὶ τῆς κατὰ χεῖρα βαρύτητος λέγει, ἀλλ’ ὅτι οὐκ ἔμεθύσκετο σημαίνει· ἀλλ’ ἔφερε ῥαδίως τὸν οἶνον. (“Antisthenes says: He is not speaking about the weight in his hand, but he means that he was not getting drunk; he was easily bearing the wine.”)

68 Sosibius, frag. 26 Jacoby = Athenaeus 11, 493c–494b: Σωσίβιος δ’ ὁ λυτικὸς προθεῖς τὰ ἔπη· “ἄλλος μὲν μογέων ἀποκινήσασκε τραπέζης / πλεῖον ἔόν, Νέστωρ δ’ ὁ γέρων ἀμογητὶ ἄειρεν”, γράφει κατὰ λέξιν· νῦν τὸ μὲν ἐπιτιμώμενόν ἐστι τῷ ποιητῇ ὅτι τοὺς μὲν λοιποὺς εἶπε μογέοντας ἀείρειν τὸ δέπας, τὸν δὲ Νέστορα μόνον ἀμογητὶ. ἄλογον δ’ ἔδοκει Διομήδους καὶ Αἴαντος, ἔτι δ’ Ἀχιλλέως παρόντων εἰσαγεσθαι τὸν Νέστορα γενναιότερον, τῇ ἡλικίᾳ προβεβηκότα. τούτων τοίνυν οὕτως κατηγορουμένων τῇ ἀναστροφῇ χρῆσάμενοι ἀπολύομεν τὸν ποιητὴν. ἀπὸ γὰρ τούτου τοῦ ἑξαμέτρου “πλεῖον ἔόν, Νέστωρ δ’ ὁ γέρων ἀμογητὶ ἄειρεν” ἀπὸ τοῦ μέσου ἐξελόντες τὸ “γέρων” τάξομεν τοῦ πρώτου στίχου πρὸς τὴν ἀρχὴν ὑπὸ τὸ “ἄλλος μὲν”, εἶτα τὸ ἐξ ἀρχῆς συνηροῦμεν· ἄλλος μὲν γέρων μογέων ἀποκινήσασκε τραπέζης πλεῖον ἔόν, ὁ δὲ Νέστωρ ἀπονητὶ ἄειρεν. νῦν οὖν οὕτω τεταγμένων ὁ Νέστωρ φαίνεται τῶν μὲν λοιπῶν πρεσβυτῶν μόνος τὸ δέπας ἀμογητὶ ἀείρων. (“Sosibius, the problem-solver, when citing the lines ‘Anyone else had difficulty moving it from the table when it was filled, but Nestor lifted it with ease’ [*Il.* XI.636–637], writes exactly the following: the poet is criticized nowadays for saying that the others had difficulty lifting the goblet, whereas Nestor alone lifted it with ease. And it seemed illogical, when Diomedes, Ajax and also Achilles are there, that Nestor is presented as stronger than them, although he was an extremely old man. But by making use of the technique of anastrophe, I free the poet from these charges. For if we take the word γέρων from the middle of the hexameter ‘when it was filled. But Nestor lifted it with ease’ and put it at the beginning of the first line after ἄλλος μὲν, we will then construe the beginning as follows: another old man had difficulty moving it from the table when it was filled, but Nestor lifted it with ease. So if the words are arranged like this, Nestor is now presented as the only one of the other old men who can lift the goblet with ease.”)

Myrlea even devoted a whole monograph to Nestor's cup (entitled *Περὶ τῆς Νεστορίδος*).⁶⁹ The solution of the Alexandrian grammarians was much more straightforward: according to the *Viermännerkommentar*, Homer is just exaggerating here in order to praise Nestor.⁷⁰

Solving Homeric problems in a philological manner obviously anticipates the work of the Alexandrian grammarians, who edited and commented on the text of Homer. Even though in many respects Aristotle's studies of Greek poetry can be said to have laid the groundwork for the Alexandrian grammarians, there is one important difference between their method and Aristotle's. Aristotle himself is in fact much more conservative when it comes to the Homeric text as it is transmitted to him. Unlike the Alexandrian grammarians, he does not use athet-

⁶⁹ Asclepiades, frag. 4 Pagani.

⁷⁰ See schol. A Hom. *Il.* XI.636a Erbse: πρὸς τὸ ζητούμενον, πῶς ὁ γέρων ἀμογητί, οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι μετὰ κακοπαθίας, οὐ δεῖ δὲ οὔτε δασύνειν τὴν προφορὰν οὔτε ἐπαίρειν τὴν προσωδίαν, ἀλλὰ νοεῖν ὅτι καὶ τοῦτο τῶν ἐπαίνων λεγομένων Νέστορός ἐστι, καθάπερ καὶ τὸ “Νέστωρ δὲ πρῶτος κτύπον αἶε φώνησέν τε”. (“In reference to the question why the old man lifted it with ease, while the others struggled: it is not necessary to give rough breathing [ἄλλος] or lift the accent [ἄλλ' ὄς], but you need to take into account that this is also part of the praise given to Nestor, as is also found in ‘Nestor was the first to hear the noise and spoke’ [*Il.* X.532].”) There were also other, competing linguistic solutions. Some ancient critics suggested correcting the word ἄλλος to either ἄλλ' ὄς or ἄλλος, both of which would refer to the wounded hero Machaon, who is Nestor's guest in this scene. In the *Viermännerkommentar*, the conjectures ἄλλ' ὄς and ἄλλος are rejected as un-Homeric, however. See also schol. A Hom. *Il.* XI.636b Erbse: ὁ Ἀσκαλωνίτης ψιλοῖ, καὶ φησιν ὅτι ἐπὶ τοῦ Νέστορος κέεται: ἄλλος μὲν γὰρ ἂν τις αὐτὸ μόγις ἐκίνησε, Νέστωρ δ' ὁ γέρων ἀμογητί ἄπειρεν. πολὺ πρότερον δὲ οὕτως καὶ Ἀριστάρχος, τινὲς δὲ βούλονται δασύνειν τὸ α καὶ ἐκτείνειν, ἴν' ἢ ὁ ἄλλος μὲν μογέων, τουτέστιν ὁ Μαχάων. ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐκεῖνο παραφυλάξαί ἔχομεν ὡς ὅτι παρὰ τῷ ποιητῇ οὐ δύναται ἡ τοιαύτη κρᾶσις εἶναι: εἰ γὰρ καὶ κρᾶσιν ἠβούλοντο, παραλαμβάνειν ἐχρήν εἰς τὸ ω, ὁμοίως τῷ “οἴχετ' ἀνὴρ ὠριστος”. εἰσι δὲ οἱ διέστειλαν “ἄλλ' ὄς”, τὸ ὄς δασύνοντες, “ἄλλ' ὄς μὲν μογέων”, ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ ὑπάρχη νοητόν· ἐπὶ γὰρ τοῦ Μαχάωνος πάλιν βούλονται τὴν διαστολὴν λαμβάνειν. ἡμεῖς δὲ συγκατατιθέμεθα τῷ Ἀριστάρχῳ ψιλοῦντι, ἐπεὶ βούλεται ὁ ποιητὴς καὶ διὰ τούτου τὸ εὐρωστον τοῦ γέροντος παριστάνειν. (“[Ptolemy] of Ascalon gives smooth breathing and says that it refers to Nestor: anyone else lifted it with difficulty, but the old Nestor lifted it with ease. So also much earlier Aristarchus. But some want to give alpha rough breathing and lengthen it, so that it is: the other person lifted it with difficulty, i.e. Machaon. But we must avoid this, since such a crasis is not possible in the poet. If they wanted a crasis, they should have accepted changing it to omega, like in ‘the splendid man went away’ [*Il.* XI.288: οἴχετ' ἀνὴρ ὠριστος]. Other people separate ἄλλ' ὄς with rough breathing in ὄς: ‘now he lifted it with difficulty’, so that it has the same meaning: for they again want to understand the separation in reference to Machaon. But we agree with Aristarchus, who gives smooth breathing, since the poet wants to show the old man's strength through this as well.”) Aristotle's solution is also mentioned (without his name) alongside these other solutions in schol. b Hom. *Il.* XI.636c1 Erbse, which is a compilation of the *Viermännerkommentar* and Porphyry.

esis, i.e. he does not delete problematic lines, and he almost never corrects the Homeric text.

The only example of a conjecture is frag. 171 Rose³, but even that involves only a minor change, though not a very successful one.

προσκεισθω δὲ καὶ τὸ “ἦ πρὶν μὲν ἔην βροτὸς ἀυδήεσσα”. ζητεῖ γὰρ ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης, διὰ τί τὴν Καλυψῶ καὶ τὴν Κίρκην καὶ τὴν Ἰνώ ἀυδηέσσας λέγει μόνας· πᾶσαι γὰρ καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι φωνῆν εἶχον. καὶ λῦσαι μὲν οὐ βεβούληται, μεταγράφει δὲ ποτὲ μὲν εἰς τὸ ἀυλήεσσα, ἐξ οὗ δηλοῦσθαί φησιν ὅτι μονώδεις ἦσαν, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς Ἰνοῦς οὐδήεσσα.⁷¹ τοῦτο γὰρ πάσαις ὑπῆρχεν αὐταῖς καὶ μόναις· πᾶσαι γὰρ αὐταὶ ἐπὶ γῆς ὄκουν.

The next point to be addressed is the line “she had been a mortal woman before, gifted with a voice” [*Od.* V.334]. Aristotle asks why only Calypso, Circe and Ino are called “gifted with a voice” (ἀυδηέσσας). For all the other deities had voices too. He has not wished to solve it but changes the word sometimes to ἀυλήεσσα, because he says that it is clear that they lived alone; in the case of Ino, he changes it to οὐδήεσσα. For this applied to them alone, since they all lived on the earth.

Frag. 171.1 Rose³ = frag. 394.1 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* V.334–337 (II.56–57 Schrader) = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.334e Pontani

ὁ δὲ Ἀριστοτέλης “οὐδήεσσαν” λέγει οἰονεὶ ἐπίγειον. οὕτως καὶ Χαμαιλέων.

Aristotle says οὐδήεσσαν, meaning terrestrial. So also Chamaeleon [frag. 24 Martano].

Frag. 171.2 Rose³ = frag. 394.2 Gigon = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.334c1 Pontani

ἀυδήεσσα· Ἀριστοτέλης οὐδήεσσα.

ἀυδήεσσα: Aristotle reads οὐδήεσσα.

Frag. 171.3 Rose³ = frag. 394.3 Gigon = schol. H Hom. *Od.* X.136 Dindorf

Aristotle wonders why Calypso (*Od.* XII.449), Circe (*Od.* X.136; XI.8; XII.150) and Ino (*Od.* V.334) are the only deities to be given the epithet ἀυδήεσσα “gifted with a voice”, although all the other nymphs and gods are able to speak as well. Aristotle chooses to change one letter of the epithet. In the case of Calypso and Circe, he suggests changing the word to ἀυλήεσσα, which he interprets as “living alone” (ὅτι μονώδεις ἦσαν).⁷² Alternatively, he considers changing the

71 The manuscripts actually read ἀυδήεσσα, which is obviously corrupt. In view of schol. Hom. *Od.* V.334c1 Pontani, this is generally corrected to οὐδήεσσα.

72 The manuscripts read μονώδεις or μονώδη, which is a *hapax*. Schrader (1890) 57 and 184–5 conjectured μονωδοί, interpreting this as referring to music (*tibiarum amans*) and explaining ἀυλήεσσα as derived from ἀυλός rather than ἀυλή. Schrader claimed that Calypso (*Od.* V.61) and Circe (*Od.* X.221) like singing on their own in Homer. However, singing and playing the pipes at the same time is impossible. Schrader therefore claimed that they were accompanied by pipers, but this contradicts the supposed *cantus solitarius*.

word to οὐδήεσσα, which supposedly means “living on the earth” (πάσαι γὰρ αὐταὶ ἐπὶ γῆς ὄκουν), so as if derived from the poetic word οὔδας “earth, ground”.⁷³ The conjecture οὐδήεσσα was also adopted by Aristotle’s pupil, Chamaeleon,⁷⁴ who wrote a treatise on the *Iliad*⁷⁵ and perhaps also one on the *Odyssey*. Interestingly, Aristotle seems to have considered this intervention to be not a real solution, since Porphyry states that Aristotle did not wish to solve the problem. Neither of Aristotle’s conjectures are correct Homeric formations, however. The suffix -εις, -εσσα, -εν (originally *-Fεντ-) is a possessive suffix, so αὐδήεις means “in the possession of a voice”. In Attic, the suffix was no longer in use and survives only in χαρίεις, χαρίεσσα, χαρίεν. Aristotle probably thought of it as a strange ending, which he could apply freely to any word he wanted. The Alexandrian grammarians, by contrast, had a better understanding of the Homeric language. Aristophanes of Byzantium, for instance, argues that αὐδήεις means “in the possession of a *human* voice”, i.e. the epithet indicates that the goddesses in question are able to change their voices.⁷⁶

73 Frags. 171.1 and 171.3 Rose³ are somewhat contradictory. In the former, Aristotle is said to have used οὐδήεσσα for Ino and αὐλήεσσα for Calypso and Circe. However, the scholiast goes on to comment that they all live on the earth, which seems to imply that οὐδήεσσα was also used for Calypso and Circe. Frag. 171.3 Rose³ also points in this direction, since that scholion comments on the epithet of Circe, which Aristotle is said to have changed to οὐδήεσσα. Similarly, Eustathius, commenting on *Od.* X.137 (Circe) claims (I.372 Stallbaum): γράφεται δὲ καὶ οὐδήεσσα, τουτέστιν ἐπίγειος κατὰ τὴν Καλυψώ καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς νύμφας (“another reading is οὐδήεσσα, i.e. terrestrial in the case of Calypso and the other nymphs”). For this reason, Römer (1884) 305–6 concluded that Aristotle used οὐδήεσσα for all three goddesses and conjectured changing the text of Porphyry to ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς Ἰνουῦς αὐλήεσσα [corrected from αὐδήεσσα, as the epithet is read in the manuscripts] <οὐχ ἀρμόττει. διὸ οὐδήεσσα ἐν πάσαις>· τοῦτο γὰρ πάσαις ὑπῆρχεν αὐταῖς καὶ μόνας. (“In the case of Ino, αὐλήεσσα <does not fit. Therefore he used οὐδήεσσα for them all.> For this applied to them alone.”) However, this contradicts the claim that Aristotle “changes the word sometimes to αὐλήεσσα”. It is possible that the conclusion “for this applied to them alone, since they all lived on the earth” is actually that of the scholiast, i.e. Aristotle may have initially used the conjecture οὐδήεσσα only for Ino, but later this conjecture also came to be used for the other goddesses.

74 Chamaeleon, frag. 24 Martano.

75 See Chamaeleon, frags. 17–23 Martano.

76 Aristophanes Byzantius ε 334, 197 Slater = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.334c1 Pontani: ὁ μὲν Ἀριστοφάνης τὰς ἀνθρωποειδεῖς θεὰς “αὐδήεσσας” φησὶν οἰονεῖ φωνὴν μετελιφνίας. Alternatively, the epithet can be interpreted as meaning “famous”. See D schol. Hom. *Od.* V.334b Ernst = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.334c2 Pontani: αὐδήεσσα ἥτοι διαβόητος διὰ τὰ συμβάντα, ἢ ἐπεὶ οἱ ἀνθρωποφωνήεντες πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα ζῶα. <ἢ> οὐδήεσσα ἢ ἐπίγειός ποτε. Apollonius Sophista, *Lex.* s.v. αὐδήεσσα 48 Bekker: αὐδήεσσα ὁ Ἀπίων ὀνομαστὴ καὶ ἔνδοξος, οἷον αὐδωμένα, ἐπὶ Κίρκης καὶ Καλυψοῦς. τινὲς δὲ αὐδήεσσας αὐτὰς λέγουσιν, ὅτι εἰς ὀμλίαν ἦλθον ἀνθρώπων τῷ Ὀδυσσεῖ. Porphyry, *Ad Od.* V.334–337 (II.57 Schrader): μήποτε δὲ τὸ αὐδήεσσα οὐ τὸ ἀνθρωπίνῃ

6 Allegorical Interpretations?

Although Aristotle never explicitly rejects allegories, his method shows that, unlike the early defenders of Homer (Theagenes, Metrodorus of Lampsacus the Elder and Democritus) and unlike the Stoics later, he does not allow allegorical interpretations for the solution of Homeric problems. This is perhaps the only point on which he agrees with Plato about Homer. This later becomes one of the key concepts of Aristarchus' exegesis of Homer, viz. "to explain Homer on the basis of Homer" ("Ὀμηρον ἐξ Ὀμήρου σαφηνίζειν).⁷⁷ There is one fragment, however, that seems to involve an allegorical interpretation, viz. frag. 175 Rose³. It concerns the Cattle of Helios in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* XII.129–130):⁷⁸

Ἀριστοτέλης φυσικῶς τὰς κατὰ σελήνην ἡμέρας αὐτὸν λέγειν φησὶ τν' οὐσας. τὸν γὰρ πεντήκοντα ἀριθμὸν ἑπταπλασιάσας εἰς τὸν τριακοστὸν πεντηκοστὸν περιεστάναι εὐρήσεις.

Aristotle gives a scientific explanation when he says that he (sc. Homer) is referring to the number of days of the lunar calendar, which are 350. For if you multiply the number fifty by seven, you will find that this results in 350.

Frag. 175.2 Rose³ = frag. 398.1 Gigon = schol. Q Vind. Hom. *Od.* XII.129 Dindorf = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* XII.128 ff. (II.111–112 Schrader)

“ἔπτα βοῶν ἀγέλαι”· Ἀριστοτέλης φυσικῶς φησὶ· λέγει γὰρ τὰς τκαθ' ἡμέρας πεντήκοντα πρὸς ταῖς τριακοσίας.

φωνῆ μόνον χρῆσθαι δηλοῖ, ὡς τὸ αὐδήεντα δ' ἔθηκε, σημαίνει δὲ καὶ τὸ ἔνδοξον καὶ ἐπίφημον. καὶ ἐκάστη δὲ τούτων ἔνδοξος, ὥσπερ ἡ Ἰνώ, ὅτε ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἦν, ἔνδοξος ἦν καὶ πᾶσι περίφημος. Finally, the epithet might also be a meaningless *epitheton ornans*, as it is also used in Homer, *Od.* VI.125 (ἦ νύ που ἀνθρώπων εἰμὶ σχεδὸν αὐδηέντων).

77 Porphyry, *Zetemata Vaticana* 11 (I.297 Schrader = 56 Sodano). Although the phrase "Ὀμηρον ἐξ Ὀμήρου σαφηνίζειν" might be Porphyry's own, it does accurately describe Aristarchus' approach. See D schol. Hom. *Il.* V.385 van Thiel: Ἀρίσταρχος ἀξιοῖ τὰ φραζόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ μυθικώτερον ἐκδέχεσθαι κατὰ ποιητικὴν ἔξουσίαν, μηδὲν ἔξω τῶν φραζομένων ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ περιεραζόμενους.

78 Lamberton (1992) xiii–xv also cited frags. 145 Rose³ = 369 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* II.305–329 (I.32–33, 34 Schrader = 44–46 MacPhail), 153 Rose³ = 377 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* II.447 (I.44–45 Schrader = 98–100 MacPhail) and 149 Rose³ = 373 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* XII.374 (II.113–114 Schrader) as supposed examples of allegorical interpretations. However, none of these concern actual allegories. Frag. 145 Rose³ involves the interpretation of an oracle by Calchas, which Aristotle considers to be inadequately explained. Frag. 153 Rose³ merely interprets the head of Gorgo on Athena's *aegis* to be a metaphor (the effect of the *aegis* is similar to the petrifying effect of the Gorgo head) rather than being the actual head, which elsewhere in Homer is said to dwell in Hades. Finally, frag. 175 Rose³ merely involves a comparison between Helios and humans: like the humans need eyes to see, so too does Helios need Lampetia in order to see all. See Bouchard (2016) 58–65. See also the discussion in Mayhew (2019) 191–3.

“Seven herds of cows”: Aristotle gives a scientific explanation when he says: for he [sc. Homer] is referring to the 350 days.

Frag. 175.1 Rose³ = frag. 398.2 Gigon = D schol. Hom. *Od.* XII.129 Ernst

Ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι τὰς ἀγέλας ταύτας καὶ μάλιστα τὰς τῶν βοῶν φασι τὸν Ἀριστοτέλην ἀλληγορεῖν εἰς τὰς κατὰ δωδεκάδα τῶν σεληνιακῶν μηνῶν ἡμέρας, γινομένης πεντήκοντα πρὸς ταῖς τριακοσίαις, ὅσος καὶ ὁ ἀριθμὸς ταῖς ἑπτὰ ἀγέλαις, ἐχούσαις ἀνὰ πεντήκοντα ζῶα. διὸ οὔτε γόνον αὐτῶν γίνεσθαι Ὅμηρος λέγει οὔτε φθοράν. τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ ποσὸν αἰεὶ ταῖς τοιαύταις ἡμέραις μένει.

It is necessary to know that Aristotle is said to interpret these herds and especially the herds of the cows allegorically as referring to the days according to the twelve lunar months, which are 350. This is the same number for the seven herds, which have fifty animals each. For this reason, Homer says that they have no birth or death, since the number always remains the same for such days.

Frag. 175.3 Rose³ = frag. 398.3 Gigon = Eustathius, *Ad Od.* XII.130 (II.18 Stallbaum)

Aristotle seems to have argued that the number of oxen in the cattle of Helios is (approximately) equal to the number of days in the lunar calendar. Eustathius explicitly calls this an allegorical interpretation (ἀλληγορεῖν). However, this label might be inaccurate. In fact, the other two scholia call it a scientific explanation (φυσικῶς). The essential difference is that a scientific explanation addresses the origin of the myth, whereas an allegorical interpretation claims to reveal the true, underlying meaning of the poem. This type of scientific interpretation is also found elsewhere in Aristotle.⁷⁹ What Aristotle seems to have done is ponder why Homer gives 7 herds of 50 cows each, as opposed to any other random number.⁸⁰

A further reason to not jump to conclusions is that the fragment might belong to another work of Aristotle. The appendix of Hesychius' catalogue lists a work entitled “Why did Homer make the Cattle of Helios <...>” (τί δήποτε Ὅμη-

⁷⁹ See especially the discussion in Mayhew (2019) 188–90. Another reference to a supposedly allegorical interpretation of Aristotle in Eustathius is *Ad Od.* XII.65 (II.11 Stallbaum) (Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ φασι ἀλληγορικῶς εἶπε, etc.). Eustathius cites an allegorical interpretation of the doves (πέλειαι) that bring ambrosia to Zeus in *Od.* XII.62–63. However, Eustathius appears to have taken this information from Ptolemaeus Chennus' *Novel History* (Καινὴ ἱστορία Iviii.13–15 Chatzís), which is notorious for its fake information and bogus citations. According to the summary in Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 190, 147a Bekker, Ptolemaeus reported a conversation between Aristotle and Alexander the Great about the reason why doves serve to bring food to the gods. See also Mayhew (2019) 177–87.

⁸⁰ This interpretation later recurs in Lucian, *Astr.* 22. A much more straightforward “solution”, of course, is that 7 and 50 are common symbolic numbers to denote a large group. See Roscher (1917) 80–90.

ρος ἐποίησεν τὰς Ἡλίου βοῦς <...>).⁸¹ First, it seems that this title is incomplete, since a second accusative is expected with ἐποίησεν. Hintenlang, for instance, suggested restoring the text as <διὰ> τί δήποτε Ὅμηρος ἐποίησεν τὰς Ἡλίου βοῦς <ἀφθάρτους> “Why did Homer portray the cattle of Helios <as immortal>”.⁸² Indeed, one of the puzzling details is that, although Helios’ cattle does not give birth, their number stays the same. This implies that they are immortal, which raises the question how Odysseus’ men are able to kill and eat them. Although the scholia have not preserved a Homeric problem along these lines, it is possible that this was a debated issue and that Aristotle wrote a treatise on this passage, similar to Asclepiades of Myrlea’s *On Nestor’s Cup*. Another possibility is that the fragment belongs to another lost work of Aristotle, viz. *On Mythological Animals* (Περὶ τῶν μυθολογουμένων ζώων).⁸³

7 Aristotle’s Legacy

Aristotle’s *Homeric Problems* are at the origin of a long-standing tradition of Homeric questions that flourished in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Homeric problems were first of all studied by Aristotle’s own pupils. I have already mentioned Chamaeleon, who wrote one or more works on Homer. Other Peripatetics who discussed Homeric problems were Demetrius of Phalerum, Megaclides and

81 Hesychius’ catalogue no 142 (p. 85 Düring = p. 16 Rose³ = p. 28 Gigon). This item is sometimes considered to belong together with no 141 (Περὶ μακαριότητος) and therefore restored as Περὶ μακαριότητος <ἢ> τί δήποτε Ὅμηρος ἐποίησεν τὰς Ἡλίου βοῦς, “On Happiness or Why Homer Made the Cattle of Helios”: see Düring (1957) 85; Gigon (1987) 28; Dorandi (2006) 101. Moraux (1951) 251, however, followed Menagius’ suggestion to correct Περὶ μακαριότητος to Περὶ μακροβιότητος, i.e. the title might actually refer to Aristotle’s *On Longevity and the Shortness of Life* (Περὶ μακροβιότητος καὶ βραχυβιότητος). Mayhew (2019) 31–2 suggests that περὶ μακαριότητος might be a corruption of περὶ μακάρων νήσου, which would be a work on the Island of Blessed.

82 Hintenlang (1961) 132n1. Supplementing διὰ is unnecessary, however. Hintenlang also considered the supplement εἰ δήποτε Ὅμηρος ἐποίησεν τὰς Ἡλίου βοῦς, “Whether Homer Invented the Cattle of Helios”, proposed by Heitz (1869) 148, i.e. whether it was an element of the traditional myth or whether Homer first introduced this. Hintenlang’s first suggestion is much more plausible, however.

83 The title is attested in Diogenes Laertius V.25 and Hesychius’ catalogue no 95 (p. 87 Düring = p. 14 Rose³ = p. 27 Gigon). Mayhew (2019) 32–3 suggests, however, that Τί δήποτε Ὅμηρος ἐποίησεν τὰς Ἡλίου βοῦς and Περὶ τῶν μυθολογουμένων ζώων may be subtitles of Aristotle’s *Homeric Problems*.

Praxiphanes.⁸⁴ Aristotle and the Peripatetics also inspired Hellenistic grammarians, who wrote their own works on Homeric problems. I have already mentioned Sosibius of Sparta when I discussed the problem of Nestor's cup; other grammarians who wrote on Homeric problems are Apollodorus of Athens, Satyrus "Zeta" (a pupil of Aristarchus) and Zenodotus of Alexandria.⁸⁵ In the Roman period, the tradition was continued with Soteridas,⁸⁶ Cassius Longinus,⁸⁷ and most importantly Porphyry, whose *Homeric Questions* preserve the bulk of the fragments of Aristotle's work and probably contain numerous solutions which were tacitly adopted from Aristotle.⁸⁸

Apart from inspiring these writers of Homeric problems, Aristotle also influenced the great Alexandrian grammarians.⁸⁹ Aristotle's method can be seen to have influenced Aristarchus. Like Aristotle, Aristarchus paid attention not only to linguistic matters but also to questions about the archaic lifestyle of the Homeric heroes and the relation of the Homeric epics with the traditional myths.⁹⁰ To a certain extent, Aristarchus can thus be said to have perfected Aristotle's method, especially with regard to linguistic problems.

Admittedly, Aristotle's solutions to Homeric problems are far from perfect. His understanding of Homer's language lacks the refinement of the Alexandrian grammarians, and his love for Homer often leads him to wild speculations and contrived solutions. However, his main contribution to Homeric philology lies not so much in his actual solutions but rather in the methodology that underlies them. He developed this method in reply to critics who wrote before him. Contrary to the early detractors of Homer, Aristotle stressed the importance of judging Homer by poetic standards instead of by external criteria. He did not indulge in far-fetched allegorical interpretations in order to justify Homer either but instead tried to put the Homeric epics in what he believed was their historical con-

84 See Demetrius of Phalerum, frags. 143 and 145 SOD; Megaclides, frags. 5–6 and 11 Janko; Praxiphanes, frag. 25 Matelli. For Dicaearchus, see my discussion in Verhasselt (2018) 407–12.

85 Apollodorus wrote *Grammatical Questions on the Fourteenth Book of the Iliad*, as the subscription in P.Mil.Vogl. I 19 shows. For Satyrus Zeta, see Satyrus, test. *7 and frag. *32 Schorn (he was called "Zeta" because of his love for ζητήματα). Zenodotus of Alexandria wrote *Solutions to Homeric Problems* according to Suda ζ 75, s.v. Ζηνόδοτος.

86 Soteridas wrote *Homeric Questions* according to Suda σ 875, s.v. Σωτηρίδας. A fragment of his *Homeric Questions* might be found in schol. A Hom. Il. IV.412b Erbse (which cites Σωτήρας).

87 Cassius Longinus wrote *Homeric Problems and Solutions* according to Suda λ 645, s.v. Λογύγιος. He was Porphyry's teacher in Athens.

88 Porphyry later wrote a work *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, in which he interprets Homer allegorically.

89 See also Richardson (1993).

90 See Lehrs (1882); Nickau (1977) 136–9; Lührs (1992) 13–7.

text and paid attention to potentially ambiguous passages which could be interpreted in more than one way. But most of all, he appreciated Homer as an artist.

Appendix: A List of Fragments According to Their Solutions

In this appendix, I give a list of fragments arranged according to the method of solution, with the Homeric question and Aristotle's solution(s). The fragments in bold are discussed in the main text of this article.

1. Solutions based on the method of representation

1.1 Solutions οἶα ἦν

- 1) Frag. 158 Rose³ = frag. 382 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* IX.17 (I.132 Schrader)
 - Problem: why does Agamemnon address only the leaders in *Il.* IX.17, although the entire army is assembled?
 - Solution: old custom, according to which the common people are only allowed to listen, while only the leaders are allowed to act.
- 2) **Frag. 160 Rose³** = frag. 383 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* X.153 (I.145 Schrader = 284–285 MacPhail)
 - Problem: why are the spears of Diomedes and his companions stuck with their spikes in the ground in *Il.* X.152–153?
 - Solution: old custom, still observed by the Illyrians (cf. Aristotle, *Po.* 25, 1461a).
- 3) Frag. 164.1 Rose³ = frag. 388.3 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXIII.269 (I.261–262 Schrader = 256 MacPhail) + Frag. 164.3 Rose³ = frag. 388.2 Gigon = schol. T Hom. *Il.* XXIII.269b Erbse + Frag. 388.1 Gigon (not in Rose³) = schol. b Hom. *Il.* XXIII.269a Erbse
 - Problem: why are the four talents of gold only the prize for the fourth in the race at the games for Patroclus (*Il.* XXIII.262–270), although this prize is by far the most valuable?
 - Solution: the exact weight of a talent was not yet fixed in Homer's time.
- 4) **Frag. 166 Rose³** = frag. 389 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXIV.15 (I.267 Schrader = 258–260 MacPhail)
 - Problem: Achilles commits injustice by dragging Hector's corpse around Patroclus grave in *Il.* XXIV.15–16.
 - Solution: old custom, still observed in Thessaly.

5) Frag. 169 Rose³ = frag. 392 Gigon = schol. Hom. *Od.* IV.356a1 Pontani

- Problem: why does sailing from Pharos to Egypt take a whole day in *Od.* IV.354–357?
- Solution: the head of the Nile used to be located at Naucratis.

6) **Frag. 175.1 Rose³** = frag. 398.2 Gigon = D schol. Hom. *Od.* XII.129 Ernst + Frag. 175.2 Rose³ = frag. 398.1 Gigon = schol. Q Vind. Hom. *Od.* XII.129 Dindorf = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* XII.128 ff. (II.111–112 Schrader) + Frag. 175.3 Rose³ = frag. 398.3 Gigon = Eustathius, *Ad Od.* XII.130 (II.18 Stallbaum)

- Problem: why does the cattle of Helios consist of 7 herds, which contain 50 oxen each (*Od.* XII.129–130)?
- Solution: there are 350 oxen in total, since this was the number of days in the lunar calendar.

1.2 Solutions οἷά εἶναι δεῖ (no fragments)

1.3 Solutions οἷά φασιν ἢ δοκεῖ

1) **Frag. 163 Rose³** = frag. 387 Gigon = schol. A Hom. *Il.* XIX.108b Erbse = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XIX.108 (I.235–236 Schrader = 232–234 MacPhail)

- Problem: why does Hera demand an oath from Zeus in *Il.* XIX.91–124, whereas elsewhere in the *Iliad* it suffices for Zeus to nod when he makes a promise?
- Solution 1: the oath was part of the traditional myth.

2) Frag. 172 Rose³ = frag. 385 Gigon = schol. HQ Hom. *Od.* IX.106 Dindorf = schol. T Hom. *Od.* IX.311 Dindorf = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* IX.106 ff. (II.84 Schrader)

- Problem: how can Polyphemus be a Cyclops if neither his father nor his mother are Cyclopes?
- Solution: these elements are part of the traditional myth; in the same way, horses are born from Boreas, and Pegasus is born from Poseidon and Medusa.

2. Solutions based on the context in Homer

1) Frag. 142 Rose³ = frag. 366 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* II.73 (I.24 Schrader = 40 MacPhail)

- Problem: why does Agamemnon test the Achaean army in *Il.* II.55–141?
- Solution: this is a way for Homer to introduce more suspense.

2) Frag. 143 Rose³ = frag. 368 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* II.183 (I.27–28 Schrader = 40 MacPhail)

- Problem: it is inappropriate of Odysseus to throw off his mantle and run around in only his tunic in *Il.* II.183.
 - Solution: Odysseus does this so that he may catch the attention of the people and his voice may reach further.
- 3) Frag. 144 Rose³ = frag. 42 Gigon = Athenaeus 13, 556d [perhaps from another work]
- Problem: why is Menelaus the only Achaean hero to not have concubines?
 - Solution: Menelaus does this out of respect for Helen.
- 4) **Frag. 146 Rose³** = frag. 370 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* II.649 (I.48–49 Schrader = 68 MacPhail)
- Why is Crete said to have a hundred cities in *Il.* II.649 but ninety cities in *Od.* XIX.173?
 - Solution: these lines are spoken by two different persons (viz. Homer in the *Iliad* and Odysseus in the *Odyssey*).
- 5) **Frag. 147 Rose³** = frag. 371 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* III.236 (I.58 Schrader)
- Problem: Why is Helen unaware of her brothers' fate in *Il.* III.236, even though the Trojan War has already been going on for nine years?
 - Solution 1: Paris made sure to keep Greek prisoners away from Helen.
 - Solution 2: Helen comes across as not meddling.
- 6) Frag. 148 Rose³ = frag. 372 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* III.276 (I.59–60 Schrader = 76 MacPhail)
- Problem: why does Homer assume that the Trojans swear falsely when making a truce with the Achaeans? The Trojans never did this, since the agreement was that Menelaus had to kill Paris; since Paris was rescued by Aphrodite, he was not killed, and the Trojans were therefore not required to give back Helen.
 - Solution: in their oath, the Trojans cursed themselves if they violated the truce; Pandarus' attack on Menelaus was a violation of this truce.
- 7) Frag. 149 Rose³ = frag. 373 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* XII.374 (II.113 Schrader)
- Problem: how can Homer claim that “Helios sees all” in *Il.* III.277 but, in *Od.* XII.374–375, let Lampetia report to Helios that his cattle have been slaughtered?
 - Solution 3: the lines are spoken by two different people (viz. Agamemnon in the *Iliad* and Homer himself in the *Odyssey*). It is also

fitting that Agamemnon would say in his oath that Helios sees all, since this is intended to be a threat towards both the Greeks and the Trojans to not break the oath.

- 8) Frag. 150 Rose³ = frag. 374 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* III.441 (I.65–66 Schrader)
- Problem: Paris is a despicable character since he is not only saved after being defeated by Menelaus but also immediately wants to have sex with Helen after returning from the battle (*Il.* IV.428–448).
 - Solution: Paris' sexual desire was already present before; this desire naturally increases if it is not satiated or if the person in question thinks that he will not be able to satiate it anymore in the future.
- 9) Frag. 151 Rose³ = frag. 375 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* IV.88 (I.70 Schrader)
- Problem: why does Athena tempt Pandarus (part of the auxiliary troops) to break the truce rather than a Trojan (*Il.* IV.85–103)?
 - Solution: the Trojans hated Paris and therefore would not risk the action just to get in his favour; Pandarus is a logical choice since he was a greedy man.
- 10) Frag. 155 Rose³ = frag. 379 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* VI.234 (I.96 Schrader = 114 MacPhail)
- Problem: why does Homer criticize Glaucus for exchanging his golden armour for Diomedes' iron armour in *Il.* VI.232–236?
 - Solution: Homer is not criticizing Glaucus for giving away his much more valuable armour; Glaucus is criticized for doing this in the middle of battle.
- 11) **Frag. 156 Rose³** = frag. 380 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* VII.93 (I.107–108 Schrader)
- Problem: why does Menelaus initially rebuke the Achaean heroes for not accepting Hector's challenge (*Il.* VII.92–103) but, after Nestor's speech, no longer volunteers (*Il.* VII.161–168)?
 - Solution 1: Agamemnon had told him that he was no match for Hector.
 - Solution 2: Menelaus' initial reaction was emotional.
 - Solution 3: Menelaus was in no shape to fight Hector, since he had recently been wounded by Pandarus.
 - Solution 4: the stakes were not the same for both parties in a duel between Menelaus and Hector.
- 12) Frag. 157 Rose³ = frag. 381 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* VII.229–230 (I.109 Schrader = 126 MacPhail)

- Problem: why does Ajax reveal Achilles' wrath to Hector in *Il.* VII.226–230?
 - Solution: Ajax mentions Achilles' wrath to show to Hector that Achilles is not cowering away and that there are other Achaean heroes who are stronger than Achilles.
- 13) Frag. 159 Rose³ = frag. 384 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* X.194–197 (I.145–146 Schrader = 168 MacPhail)
- Problem: why do the Achaean leaders meet outside the wall in *Il.* X.194–202, although this is less safe?
 - Solution 1: it was unlikely that the Trojans would risk a sneak attack, since they already had the upperhand.
 - Solution 2: it is customary to discuss important matters in a quiet place.
 - Solution 3: it would be illogical to not get closer to the Trojans, since they sent out scouts.
 - Solution 4: meeting inside camp would create panic because of the noise.
- 14) Frag. 162 Rose³ = frag. 402 Gigon = Strabo XIII.i.36, 598 C + Eustathius, *Ad Il.* VII.445–463 (II.494 van der Valk)
- Problem: why does Homer report that the Achaeans built a wall to protect their camp in *Il.* VII.434–441, although in the present-day site no remnants of such a wall are found?
 - Solution: Homer invented the existence of the wall for dramatic purpose and therefore adds a prophecy that it will later be destroyed by Poseidon and Apollo.
- 15) **Frag. 163 Rose³** = frag. 387 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XIX.108 (I.235–236 Schrader = 232–234 MacPhail)
- Problem: why does Hera demand an oath from Zeus, whereas elsewhere in the *Iliad* it suffices for Zeus to nod when he makes a promise (*Il.* XIX.108–111)?
 - Solution 2: it is logical to want the other person to swear an oath if important matters are at stake.
- 16) Frag. 165 Rose³ = frag. 403 Gigon = Plutarch, *De audiendis poetis* 12, 32f
- Problem: Agamemnon's behaviour is immoral, since he accepts a horse as bribe to release Echeolus from duty in *Il.* XXIII.296–298.
 - Solution: it is good to prefer a good horse to a bad man (cf. Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXIII.296 ff. [I.263 Schrader]).
- 17) Frag. 168 Rose³ = frag. 391.1 Gigon = schol. T Hom. *Il.* XXIV.569b1 Erbse = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXIV.559 ff. (I.277 Schrader) + frag. 391.2 Gigon (not in Rose³) = schol. b Hom. *Il.* XXIV.569b2 Erbse

- Problem: Achilles' character is anomalous since out of nowhere he suddenly becomes angry with Priam in *Il.* XXIV.569.
 - Solution: unknown; probably: Homer portrays Achilles as someone with a lot of mood swings (cf. Aristotle, *Po.* 15, 1454b).
- 18) Frag. 173.1 Rose³ = frag. 396.2 Gigon = schol. HT Hom. *Od.* IX.345 Dindorf = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* VIII.564 ff. (II.79–80 Schrader) + Frag. 173.2 Rose³ = frag. 396.1 Gigon = schol. MQ Hom. *Od.* IX.333 Dindorf
- Problem: why does Odysseus tell the Phaeacians that he blinded Polyphemus (*Od.* IX.375–398), although the Phaeacians were also descendants of Poseidon?
 - Solution: Odysseus knew that the Phaeacians were enemies of the Cyclopes, who had driven them away to Scheria.
- 19) Frag. 176 Rose³ = frag. 399 Gigon = schol. N Hom. *Od.* XIII.789 Dindorf = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* XVI.188 (II.121 Schrader)
- Problem: why does Odysseus reveal his identity to Telemachus (*Od.* XVI.188–189), the servant Euryclea (*Od.* XIX.474–475) and the two herdsmen (*Od.* XXI.207–220), but not to Penelope?
 - Solution 1: Odysseus needed the help of Telemachus and the selected servants in order to fight the Suitors.
 - Solution 2: if Penelope stopped crying, this would be suspicious and thus might jeopardize the plan.
- 20) Frag. 177 Rose³ = frag. 400 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* XVII.291 ff. (II.124 Schrader)
- Problem: uncertain; perhaps: why does Odysseus' dog die so suddenly in *Od.* XVII.326–327?
 - Solution: the old dog died overcome with joy upon recognizing his old master.
- 21) Frag. 178 Rose³ = frag. 401 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* VII.258 (II.68–69 Schrader)
- Problem: why does Odysseus not accept the gift of immortality, offered to him by Calypso (*Od.* VII.255–258)?
 - Solution 1: Odysseus wants to come across as more honorable to the Phaeacians, to whom he is telling his story, so that they speed up his return home.
 - Solution 2: Odysseus did not trust Calypso.
- 22) Eustathius, *Ad Od.* XIX.472 (II.213 Stallbaum) = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* XVII.476 ff. (II.126–127 Schrader) (not in Rose³ or Gigon)
- Problem: Odysseus proves his identity to the herdsmen Eumaeus and Philoetius on the basis of a scar on his foot; however, by

this logic, any man with a scar can be identified as Odysseus (*Od.* XIX.467–475).

- Solution: unknown; perhaps: Euryclea does not merely recognize him by his scar but also by his stature and voice.

23) P.Oxy. II 221 col. xiv 27–32 = schol. *Hom. Il.* XXI, pap. 12, 286 Erbse (not in Rose³ or Gigon)

- Problem: why are Athena and Poseidon not helping Achilles in his fight against the Scamander but are only encouraging him (*Il.* XXI.284–297)?

- Solution: Hephaestus was already the opponent of the Scamander (cf. schol. bT *Hom. Il.* XXI.288–291 Erbse = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXI.288 [I.250 Schrader]).

3. Solutions based on the language

1) Frag. 145 Rose³ = frag. 369 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* II.305–329 (I.32–33, 34 Schrader = 44–46 MacPhail)

- Problem: why does Calchas, in his interpretation of the portent in *Il.* II.308–332 (a snake appeared at the altar, devoured a nest of 8 little birds along with their mother and then turned to stone), not discuss the petrification of the snake, and what does it mean?

- Solution: the petrification denotes the length and hard nature of the war.

2) Frag. 149 Rose³ = frag. 373 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* XII.374 (II.113 Schrader)

- Problem: how can Homer claim that “Helios sees all” in *Il.* III.277, but, in *Od.* XII.374–375, let Lampetia report to Helios that his cattle have been slaughtered?

- Solution 1: Helios sees all but not at the same time.

- Solution 2: Lampetia is to Helios what the eyes are to humans.

3) Frag. 152 Rose³ = frag. 376 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* IV.297–299 (I.73 Schrader = 84 MacPhail)

- Problem: why does Nestor advise to put the cavalry before the infantry and the cowards between these two (*Il.* IV.297–300: ἰππῆας μὲν πρῶτα σὺν ἵπποισιν καὶ ὄχρεσφι, / πεζοὺς δ’ ἐξόπιθε στήσεν πολέας τε καὶ ἐσθλοὺς / ἔρκος ἔμεν πολέμοιο· κακοὺς δ’ ἐς μέσσον ἔλασσεν, / ὄφρα καὶ οὐκ ἐθέλων τις ἀναγκαίῃ πολεμίζοι)?

- Solution: Nestor actually advises to put the cavalry on the flanks (πρῶτα = ἐπὶ τοῖς κέρασιν); in both the cavalry and the infantry, cowards stand next to courageous men (ἐς μέσσον = ἐναλλάξ μεταξύ).

- 4) Frag. 153 Rose³ = frag. 377 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* II.447 (I.44–45 Schrader = 98–100 MacPhail)
- Problem: why is the head of Gorgo part of the *aegis* in *Il.* V.741 but at the same time is said to dwell in Hades in *Od.* XI.634–635?
 - Solution: the *aegis* does not literally contain the head of Gorgo; instead, its stunning effect is compared to the petrifying effect of the Gorgo head.
- 5) Frag. 154 Rose³ = frag. 378 Gigon = schol. bT Hom. *Il.* V.778 Erbse
- Problem: uncertain; perhaps: why does Homer compare Hera and Athena to fearful doves, although they are going to battle (*Il.* V.778: αἱ δὲ βάτην τρήρωσι πελειάσιν ἴθμαθ' ὁμοῖαι, “they both went on, resembling fearful doves in their ἴθματα”)?
 - Solution: ἴθματα means “trace”, i. e. the goddesses are compared to doves, since their traces are invisible.
- 6) Frag. 161 Rose³ = frag. 385 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Il.* X.252–253 (I.149–150 Schrader = 174 MacPhail)
- Problem: how can Homer claim in *Il.* X.252–253 that “more than two thirds of the night had passed” (παρώχηκε δὲ πλέω νύξ / τῶν δύο μοιράων), while at the same time stating that one third is left (τριτάτη δ' ἔτι μοῖρα λέλειπται)? If more than 2/3 of the night has passed, *less than* 1/3 of the night is left.
 - Solution: παρώχηκε δὲ πλέω νύξ / τῶν δύο μοιράων means that “more than half of the night had passed”. The night consists of two parts, each containing six hours. Of the 12 hours in total, more than half (8 hours) have passed. What remains is 4 hours, or 1/3 of the night.
- 7) **Frag. 170.1** Rose³ = frag. 393.1 Gigon = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.93e1 Pontani (Porphyry, *Ad Od.* V.93 [II.50 Schrader]) and frag. 170.2 Rose³ = frag. 393.2 Gigon = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.93c2+e2 Pontani
- Problem: why does Calypso mix nectar for Hermes (κέρασσε δὲ νέκταρ ἐρυθρόν), although the gods do not drink water (*Od.* V.93)?
 - Solution: κέρασσε means “pour”.
- 8) Frag. 174 Rose³ = frag. 397 Gigon = schol. HQT Hom. *Od.* IX.525 Dindorf = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* IX.525 (II.94–95 Schrader)
- Problem: why does Odysseus provoke Poseidon by saying to the Cyclops that not even Poseidon will heal the now blind Cyclops (*Od.* IX.525: ὡς οὐκ ὀφθαλμόν γ' ἴησεται οὐδ' ἔνοσιχθων).
 - Solution: Homer means that not even Poseidon *will be willing to* heal Polyphemus (οὐ βουληθήσεται) rather than *will be able to* heal (οὐ δυνήσεται), since Polyphemus is evil.

- 9) schol. Ge Hom. *Il.* XXI.390a Erbse (not in Rose³ or Gigon)
- Problem: it is inconsistent for Zeus to condemn Ares' love for strife and war in *Il.* V.890–891 but, at the same time, enjoy seeing the gods fight among each other in *Il.* XXI.388–390.
 - Solution: Zeus rebukes Ares for *always* wanting war; similarly, there is a difference between someone who likes wine and an alcoholic (cf. Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XXI.388 ff. [I.254–255 Schrader = 288 MacPhail]).⁹¹
- 10) **Porphyry, *Ad Il.* XI.637** (I.168 Schrader = 188 MacPhail) (not in Rose³ or Gigon)
- Problem: how can the old Nestor lift his drinking cup, while the others are unable to do this (*Il.* XI.635–636: ἄλλος μὲν μογέων ἀποκινήσασκε τραπέζης / πλεῖον ἔόν, Νέστωρ δ' ὁ γέρων ἀμογητὶ ἄειρεν)?
 - Solution: Homer is comparing Nestor to other old men (ἄλλος = ἄλλος γέρων).
- 11) Eustathius, *Ad Il.* XI.385 (III.218 van der Valk) (not in Rose³ or Gigon)⁹²
- Problem: uncertain; perhaps: why is Paris addressed as κέρα ἀγλαέ “famous for your horn” in *Il.* XI.385?
 - Solution: κέρασ means “penis” (αἰδοίω σεμνυνόμενον); the implication is probably that Paris excels in the bedroom rather than on the battlefield.
4. No solution
- 1) **Frag. 171.1 Rose³** = frag. 394.1 Gigon = Porphyry, *Ad Od.* V.334–337 (II.56–57 Schrader) = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.334e Pontani + frag. 171.2 Rose³ = frag. 394.2 Gigon = schol. Hom. *Od.* V.334c1 Pontani + frag. 171.3 Rose³ = frag. 394.3 Gigon = schol. H Hom. *Od.* X.136 Dindorf
- Problem: why is the epithet αὐδήεσσα used only for Calypso (*Od.* XII.449), Circe (*Od.* X.136; XI.8; XII.150) and Ino (*Od.* V.334), although other deities have voices too?
 - Solution: αὐδήεσσα should be changed to αὐλήεσσα “living alone” or οὐδήεσσα “living on the earth”.
- 2) Perhaps also *Et. Gen.* α 1507 Lasserre/Livadaras, s.v. Ἀχερωΐς (not in Rose³ or Gigon)

⁹¹ See Mayhew (2016) and (2019) 154–67.

⁹² See Mayhew (2019) 143–8. Schol. T Hom. *Il.* XI.385f Erbse and schol. Ge Hom. *Il.* XI.385 Nicole cite Aristotle for the explanation that κέρασ means bow (τῷ τόξῳ σεμνυνόμενε). However, Ἀριστοτέλης is probably an error for Ἀρίσταρχος, who is known to have defended the bow interpretation (cf. Apollonius, *Lex.* s.v. κέρ' ἀγλαέ 98 Bekker).

- Problem: perhaps: what type of tree is the ἀχερωΐς (*Il.* XIII.389 and XVI.482)?
 - Solution: perhaps: ἀχερωΐς should be changed to ἀχελωΐς and refers to the black poplar.⁹³
- 3) Perhaps also frag. 198 Gigon = Athenaeus 7, 298cd.⁹⁴
- Problem: why does Homer distinguish eels from fish (*Il.* XXI.203 and 353), when eels are a type of fish?
 - Solution: eels are biologically different from other fish.
- 4) Frag. 130 Rose³ = frag. 386 Gigon = schol. T Hom. *Il.* XVI.283 Erbse
- Problem: unknown.
 - Solution: unknown.
- 5) Frag. 167 Rose³ = frag. 390 Gigon = schol. T Hom. *Il.* XXIV.420b Erbse
- Problem: how can the wounds of Hector's corpse close (*Il.* XXIV.420–421), since wounds inflicted on a corpse after death do not close but rot.
 - Solution: unknown.

⁹³ See Mayhew (2019) 35–40.

⁹⁴ See the discussion in Mayhew (2020). Athenaeus 7, 298bc, first cites Aristotle's discussion of eels from one of his lost works (frag. 311 Rose³ = frag. 198 Gigon, probably from the *Zoica*). Athenaeus then goes on to cite information offered by Aristotle in another work (ἐν ἄλλοις). Rose (1863) 305 considered the second citation to be derived from the *History of Animals* (VI 16, 570a), which indeed provides the same biological information. However, in that second work mentioned by Athenaeus, Aristotle is said to have cited Homer (διὸ καὶ Ὅμηρον τῆς τῶν ἰχθύων φύσεως χωρίζοντα τάδε εἰπεῖν, sc. Ἀριστοτέλης ἱστορεῖ). Since the *History of Animals* contains no such mention of Homer, it is possible that the second work was the *Homeric Problems*.

