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"Captain of Homer's guard": the reception of Eustathius in Modern Europe

1 Eustathius from Politian to Politi (1489–1730)

In the fantastic battle between ancient and modern authors envisaged by the French scholar François de Callières in 1688 (a story that inspired Jonathan Swift's *Battle of the Books*, published twelve years later), Eustathius of Thessalonica plays a conspicuous role[1]. Initially enrolled among the orators (and thus on the far left wing of the ancients' army), he soon switches to the middlefield upon the request of the old and blind Homer, who desperately needs a lieutenant, and thus implores Demosthenes to let the archbishop, however ideologically hostile to war, cross over to the infantry of the poets and help him out in this bloodless fight[2]. Once proclaimed captain of Homer's guard, Eustathius starts a thorough examination of the troops, consisting of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and engages in a firm defence of the Shield of Achilles against the attacks of the moderns; shortly after, however, he discovers to his dismay a worrying hole in the ranks of the *Iliad*, corresponding to the description of Aphrodite's *kestos*, "la ceinture de Venus", which has been stolen overnight by the modern poets Voiture and Sarrasin disguised as Greeks – very painful news for poor Homer, who believed *Iliad* 14 to be among the highlights of his entire poetical output[3].

Callières' parody of the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* is subtler and less absurd than it may appear at first glance: when Homer greets Eustathius as the worthiest defender of his person and works[4], this reflects a *communis opinio* grounded in the wide success of the *Parekbolai* to Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* since their *editio princeps* published in Rome in 1542–1550 – a success that will only be properly appreciated by whoever writes a proper history of the art of commenting Homer, perhaps one of the most urgent *desiderata* of contempo-

1 Callières 1688. See Hepp 1968, 553; Santangelo 1984, 370–371; Levine 1991, 129–132. See fig. 1.
2 Callières 1688, 112: "il pria Demosthenes de lui envoyer *Eustatius*, fameux Auteur Grec, qui a fait de si beaux Commentaires sur l'Iliade et sur l'Odissée".
3 Callières 1688, 193–194.
4 Callières 1688, 112–113: "c'est vous, mon cher Eustatius… qui m'avez si genereusement et si dignement défendu contre tous mes Ennemis, je vous remets encore le soin de ma Personne et de tous mes Ouvrages, et je vous prie d'accepter l'emploi que je vous offre de Capitaine de mes Gardes".

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rary reception studies[5]. For the time being, suffice it to recall here some historical elements, along with the judgment of the late Philip Ford, who believed that the Roman edition represented "incontestablement, l'événement le plus important dans l'édition de textes homériques de cette période"[6].

Even well before 1542, the first Western scholar to teach Homer in the original language at university level (*Odyssey* books 1–2), namely Angelo Poliziano, resorted to Eustathius in order to explain matters of grammar and etymology, and above all to retrieve lexical definitions of difficult terms. From Politian's "zibaldone" preserved in Par. gr. 3069 (to be dated between 1487 and 1491) we see that the Italian humanist, while paying attention to the scholia and to the large heritage of Byzantine lexica, vastly employed Eustathius (whose work he could read in ms. Laur. 59.6) both for minute explanations and for the references to ancient authors such as Athenaeus or Strabo[7]. Demetrius Chalcondylas, Politian's colleague at Florence in the years 1475–1491, also annotated a manuscript of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (now Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 81) by penning in the margins a large selection of Eustathian notes: Chalcondylas, as is well-known, marked the history of Western philology as the *editor princeps* of Homer in 1488[8]. A few years later, the Cretan philologist Marcus Musurus chose Eustathius as the basis for his lectures on the *Odyssey* in Padua (1507–1508), and it was precisely from these *excerpta* that his fellow-countryman Arsenius Apostolis arranged a bulky but extremely well-thought selection of ancient commentaries to Homer, which unfortunately never reached the press[9].

That the most outstanding Hellenists of the Italian Renaissance (namely those who could read and appreciate such an impervious text in the original) showed a deep familiarity with Eustathius, should not ring as a surprise: this was *a priori* likely on account not only of Eustathius' relevance to the interpretation of Homer's text, but also of the incredible wealth of information of all kinds scattered in the archbishop's commentaries. At the other end of the story, this success numbered among the primary reasons that prompted the Roman publishers to embark, despite all sorts of technical and financial hard-

5 Latacz 2000, 15 deals in three lines with *Homer-Kommentierung* from the 1488 *editio princeps* to Ameis-Hentze, and openly states (p. 2 note 1) that he is concerned exclusively with "das Philologische".

6 Ford 2007, 111.

7 Silvano 2010, lxxix–xciv on the issue of sources. See also Pontani 2005b, 7 and 24 for Politian's excerpts from Eustathius in an annotated ms. of the *Iliad*.

8 Pontani 2005, 388–394.

9 I am referring to the incunable Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana I, 50, and to ms. Vat. gr. 1321 respectively: see Pontani 2005, 481–509 and Ferreri 2014, 558–560.

ships, on such an ambitious and expensive project as the complete edition of the *Parekbolai*.[10]

The Roman edition made an even greater difference in the other European countries: true, the French Guillaume Budé had filled in the margins of his *editio princeps* of the Homeric poems with a mixed bag of ancient scholia and Eustathian excerpts, the latter certainly derived from manuscript sources[11]; but Budé was, in this respect as in many others, definitely an exception. No hint to the *Parekbolai* appears in the running commentaries to selected Homeric books published in the Franco-German world of the early 16th century, from Melchior Wolmar (Paris 1523), to Joachim Camerarius (Strasburg 1538–1540) down to Johannes Hartung (Frankfurt 1539)[12]. The latter, in particular (1505–1579), is an interesting case in point, for while still unaware of Eustathius in his *Prolegomena* to *Odyssey* 1–3, he did use the *Parekbolai* when discussing matters of Homeric philology in his *Locorum decuriae* (1559); and the epigram appended to Hartung's image in Reusner's *Icones* represents to my knowledge the first attempt for a scholar to claim a parity with Eustathius: "As much as Homer owes to Eustathius, so much does he owe to me: I shall not recall the rest, old lady rumour will talk."[13] We shall see that this sort of "contest" with Eustathius will be picked up by an even greater scholar over two centuries later.

Soon reprinted by Froben in Basle in 1559–1560[14] (it is on a copy of this edition that Isaac Casaubon will pen his marginal notes[15]), and abridged for the readers' comfort as early as 1558 by Adriaan de Jonge in Basle[16], Eustathius' commentaries became vital tools for all modern exegetes, especially in France. Eustathian allegories, when transplanted to the particularly fertile soil of late Renaissance Europe[17], influenced significantly the work and the teaching of Jean Dorat[18] – a somewhat surprising outcome since allegory was not among the archbishop's favourite approaches, especially as far as the *Iliad* was concerned.

10 Liverani 2002; Cullhed 2014, *112–114; Pontani 2000, 42–44.

11 Pontani 2007, 390–410. The notes are now fully edited and discusses by Morantin 2013.

12 Ford 2007, 70–74; Pontani 2007, 384–385.

13 "Eustathio quantum, tantum mihi debet Homerus: / Caetera ne memorem, fama loquetur anus": the portrait with the Latin epigram was edited by Reusner 1587, 368.

14 A copious *index verborum* was added to this reprint of the Roman edition by Sebastian Guldenbeck: Pontani 2000, 42 note 24.

15 London, British Library C.76.h.4 (a book that still awaits proper study).

16 Iunius 1558; see van Miert 2011, esp. 109–111.

17 I am referring chiefly to the ideas of Luther and Zwingli, as well as to Konrad Gessner's editions of ancient allegorical works and to Natale Conti's *Mythologiae:* see Pontani 2007, 386–389.

18 Ford 2007, 213–227; Ford 2007b; Ford 2000.

But the mechanism of Eustathius' penetration in full-fledged 16th-century commentaries on Homer is a promising topic, which still awaits a proper assessment. Eustathius inspired the little-known 16th-century Greek humanist Christophoros Kondoleon in two of his Homeric treatises, the *Ἐκλογὴ παρὰ τῶν Ὁμηρικῶν ἐπῶν περὶ τοῦ ἀρίστου στρατηγοῦ καὶ στρατιώτου*, and an untitled treatise on the heroes' αὐτουργία, not devoid of some references to the ethos of the author's contemporaries[19]. A nice study by Tania Demetriou reveals how massively Eustathius' commentaries contributed to the scanty exegetical notes appended by Hubert von Giffen to his 1572 edition and Latin translation of the poems[20], and especially the hitherto unacknowledged, but absolutely essential, role of Gerrit Falkenburg in the genesis of this book: it thus becomes clear that Falkenburg was among the first scholars to explore ancient authors (and Eustathius in particular) in an attempt to collect erudite evidence but also to advance critical discourse on the text of Homer[21].

More evidently, Eustathius is mentioned by name no less than 406 times (and no doubt many more times does he appear *incognito*) in the 1583 Homeric edition prepared by the French poet Jean de Sponde, a masterpiece of French scholarship that can well be regarded as the first attempt to a running commentary to Homer in the *Neuzeit*. Sponde's achievement (published when the author was 26 years old!), replete with a lot of erudition and many intelligent original observations, embraces systematic references to quotations of or allusions to Homer in other ancient authors, and is definitely less committed to philological, lexical and grammatical issues – some of the latter were to be relegated to a wide-ranging *Lexicon Homericum* that eventually never saw the light[22]. By its very conception, and by its size and ambition, Sponde's edition had to become the obvious modern counterpart to Eustathius' *Parekbolai*, and could rival with its Byzantine predecessor[23]: as opposed to what Dorat had done, Sponde refused all sorts of allegorical reading, and marked a clear-cut distinction between pagan and Christian "theology", although he did not refrain from spelling out some of the moral lessons to be drawn from Homer.

19 Pontani forthcoming; Piasentin-Pontani forthcoming.

20 Giphanius 1572.

21 See Demetriou 2015.

22 See Ford 2007, 155–163 (for the text, Sponde followed Henri Estienne's edition). Deloince-Louette 2001, esp. 62–67 on the presence of Eustathius.

23 Deloince-Louette 2000b, 118–120 and 124–127 on agreements and occasional disagreements with Eustathius (though of course on p. 126 note 23 the Eustathius displaying "une préférence pour Virgile" is the character of Macrobius' *Saturnalia*, not our archbishop).

The moment when Eustathius became most *à la page*, perhaps even more so than in his own days, is beyond doubt 17th-century France, the age when ancient epic came back in fashion, and in a sheer neo-classical key the world of Homer was regarded as a background against which to read the contemporary *siècle de Louis le Grand*[24]. It is a plausible guess that king Louis XIV went so far as to issue a national competition for the study and translation of the *Parekbolai*, thus stirring the interest of a series of civil servants and scholars:[25] the results of this activity are still to be seen in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and do not cease to impress for their ambition. I refer e. g. to the *Extraict des choses les plus remarcables qui se trouvent dans les poetes grecs, et dans leurs scholiastes, et premierement dans Homere et dans Eustathius* by the Guascon scholar Pierre de Marcassus (1584–1664), a bulky anthology of passages from Eustathius in translation, with a special focus on issues of customs, morality, and on ancient sources commenting Homer; I also refer to the *Extraict moral et politique du texte d'Homère et d'Eustathius*, a work emphatically dedicated by a civil servant from Auvergne, Jean Tinerel de Bellérophon (1598–1661), to the powerful and learned minister Pierre Séguier, and consisting of a running commentary on Homer and his world, along the lines of Eustathius' *Parekbolai* but embracing also quotations from different sources, from the Bible to Plutarch to Basil of Caesarea[26].

These books are all the more impressive as to our day no complete translation of Eustathius exists, with the only exception of the legendary Latin version by the Spanyard Vicente Mariner (1619–1623)[27]. It is clear, as observed by Noémi Hepp, that this interest did not proceed from archaeological curiosity, but from the wish to find in Eustathius the most eloquent and most authoritative key to draw from Homer some lessons of moral and behaviour[28]. In the annotations to the *Iliad* of none less than Jean Racine (dated to the years 1663–1666), we can see that the great French playwright owes a lot to Eustathius in terms of moralistic and stylistic observations, but also in matters that could be regarded as

24 Simonsuuri 1979, 12–15.

25 Andres 1822, 121. On the earlier attempt by the Spanyard Immanuel Martí, see Andres 1822, 112–121.

26 Marcassus is preserved in mss. BNF, Coisl. 182–183, Tinerel in mss. Coisl. 396–400: see Hepp 1968, 97–98; Pontani 2000, 56–57.

27 Preserved in Matr. lat. 9859–9862, see Andres 1822, 107–112; Pontani 2000, 57 and Cullhed 2014, *115.

28 Hepp 1968, 126.

strictly pertaining to the theatrical aspect of the epic[29]: for instance, when Racine notes on *Iliad* 3.427 that

> Hélène lui parle (à Paris) en détournant les yeux ailleurs, parce qu'elle le veut quereller, et qu'elle sent bien qu'elle sera amoureuse si elle le regarde[30],

this observation turns out to derive directly from the archbishop's text, without the mediation of Sponde's commentary[31].

However, the phenomenon of *Eustathiomania* was not confined to the boundaries of the Hexagon: Postel's 1700 edition of *Iliad* book 14 (precisely the same book mentioned in Callières' narrative), while containing a large amount of original notes that display a surprising erudition and competence in all domains of ancient literature and lore, also embraced a complete translation of Eustathius' commentary on that book, introduced by a sincere praise of the archbishop and of his activity as a collector of previous exegesis to Homer[32]. In his translation (pp. 20–142), Postel arranged the material according to the strict order of the lines, but he also made a point of not proceeding to cuts or abridgments even of the most arid grammatical observations.

Finally, an even more ambitious task was the Latin translation of Eustathius' commentaries "revus sur les manuscrits et éclaircis par la distinction des citations d'avec le texte, par la vérification de ces citations et par des notes" by the French scholar Claude Capperonnier, started in the early 1700s and still pre-

29 Hepp 1968, 372–393. Racine's earlier (1661–1662) *Remarques sur l'Odyssée* (on books 1–10; Racine 1952, 721–800), being still unaware of Eustathius' *Parekbolai*, are less rich and tasteful than those to the *Iliad* (Racine 1952, 709–721).

30 Racine 1952, 715 on *Il.* 3.427. But all of Racine's notes to book 3 are full of psychological observations.

31 See Eust. *in Il.* 432.5–7, largely reworking the ancient scholia in a very original note, and including an ancient proverb with a verbal paronomasia: ἰστέον δέ, ὡς ἡ Ἑλένη κλίνει τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς πάλιν, ὡς εἴρηται, οὐ μόνον ἀκκιζομένη ἢ θυμουμένη, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐκκλίνουσα τὸν ἐξ ἐκείνου ἔρωτα· οἶδε γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ ὁρᾶν τίκτεσθαι τὸ ἐρᾶν. This passage of Eustathius also impressed Marcassus (ms. BNF, Coisl. 182, ff. 81–82; see above note 26). Sponde 1583, 61 is more committed to explaining – even in opposition to Eustathius – Helen's innocence and moral excellence.

32 Postel 1700, b1 r-v: "Dieser Eustathius ist ein vornehmer geistlicher, und sehr gelahrter Mann gewesen, hat etwan vor acht oder neunhundert Jahren gelebet... er sahe schon zu seiner Zeit, daß die Ausläger dieses grossen Poeten und ihre darüber verfärtigte Schrifften anfingen dünne zu werden, wegen Kostbarkeit des Abschreibens, daher entschloß er sich aus allen denen, die damahls noch in grosser Menge vorhanden waren, einen Auszug zu machen. Daraus denn diese köstliche Erklährung entstanden, die wir noch zu seinem unsterblichem Ruhm, und größtem Nutzen deren die ihn lesen, besitzen".

served in manuscript form[33]. While covering only books 1–6 of the *Iliad*, and despite its still relatively raw state, this Herculean labour shows a remarkable amount of critical work, for not only all passages quoted by the archbishop (both Homeric and other) are identified and sometimes discussed in the notes, but references to parallel or relevant passages either within the *Parekbolai* or in other sources (from Strabo to Hermogenes, from Varro to Horace) are also often provided.

Capperonnier's work was interrupted possibly because of the concurrent project inaugurated in the 1720s by a Florentine Jesuit named Alessandro Politi, who attended for years to an annotated translation of Eustathius *In Iliadem*, availing himself of the help of the famous Hellenist and translator Anton Maria Salvini – their three voluminous *in-folio*s, however, did not reach beyond book 5[34]. Politi's edition deserves praise both for its remarkably learned apparatus of notes to Eustathius (the only such work to appear in print before van der Valk), and for the high consideration bestowed on the *Parekbolai* as a treasure of hidden wisdom that could change the Western perception of the entire Greek world[35]. Above all, Eustathius is viewed here from the outset as the most important and by far the best of all previous Homeric critics – a key feature in the *Nachleben* of this author[36], and an idea already current in René Rapin's 1664 *Comparaison des Poèmes d'Homère et Virgile*, where Eustathius is put on a par with Servius[37]. The continuation of Politi's work by the obscure Roman priest Leopoldo Sebastiani (second half of the 18th century), albeit a remarkable feat of erudition in both philological and exegetical terms, did not go beyond the manuscript form, and covered only books 6, 7 and 8 of the *Iliad*[38].

33 Paris, BNF, NAL 2074–2076: see Hepp 1968, 578–579.

34 Politi 1730–1735.

35 Politi 1730 (I), c. a I v: "occulto hoc ac latente thesauro, nondum opes omnes Graeciae esse cum Latinis communicatas: quem thesaurum si in oculis conspectuque gentis nostrae exponeremus, Graeciam ipsam totam esse in Latium commigraturam".

36 See also Politi 1730 (I), c. +3 v: "Eustathius, Archiepiscopus Thessalonicensis, qui tum propter admirabilem variae eruditionis copiam, tum propter accuratum et acre in rebus omnibus iudicium, tum propter Operis amplitudinem et granditatem, superioribus Criticis universis est longissime anteponendus. Hic enim, omnibus in unum coactis Graeciae Scriptoribus, quod quisque opportune atque apposite ad Homerum scripsisse et adnotasse visus esset, summa diligentia summoque judicio excerpsit, et ex maximis seculorum omnium ingeniis excellentissima quaeque ac praeclarissima libavit".

37 Rapin 1664, 164: "les plus celebres et les plus exacts Commentateurs de ces deux grands hommes".

38 Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana P 258–260: see Lucà 1988, 662 and 669–670. Andres 1822, 126–127.

2 Aesthetics and ethics: Dacier and Pope

2a Aesthetics

The above sketch of Eustathius' role in early modern Homeric scholarhip intended to fulfil a twofold purpose: on the one hand, to give a context that might shed light on his prominent role in Callières' parody; more importantly, to introduce what I regard as the most remarkable presence of our archbishop in Western culture, namely the massive use of his *Parekbolai* in the footnotes to two landmark editions of the Homeric poems, the French one by Anne Dacier (1699–1708, then 1711–1716)[39], and the English one by Alexander Pope (1715–1726)[40] – the latter also growing out of the increasing English interest in Homer fostered by the translations of Chapman, Hobbes and Dryden, and by Bentley's discovery of the digamma[41].

It should be remarked at the outset that Dacier's and Pope's (together with Sponde's 1583 edition) represent the only full-scale running commentaries to Homer printed in the West before the 19th century: it is no chance that they often draw on, interact and sometimes conflict with each other in their selection of topics and in their interpretive lines; the complex relationship between them would merit a study of its own[42]. On the other hand, focusing on these commentaries alone does not imply disregarding the importance of at least two almost contemporary achievements: Joshua Barnes' 1711 Cambridge edition centers essentially on textual criticism and on the erudite search for ancient readings and scholia (for which it offered a conspicuous amount of fresh material), whereas Samuel Clarke's 1729 *Iliad*, in itself a masterpiece acknowledged as such by the first coryphaeus of the "modern" *Homerkommentierung*,[43] is overtly indebted to its predecessors, but also chiefly oriented (particularly from book 5 onwards) towards the establishment of a reliable text – the numerous references to Eustathius crop up precisely in that perspective.

Dacier and Pope can thus legitimately claim for their editions the status of reference works, for the good reason that they are the only scholars (after Sponde) to have perused and elaborated every word of Eustathius' commentaries, no matter if through direct personal study, as in the case of the French

39 Dacier 1711–1716.
40 Pope 1993.
41 Simonsuuri 1979, 15.
42 See already Foulon 2010.
43 Heyne 1802, I, xxiii.

lady, or – as in the case of Pope, to whom biographers deny a thorough competence in Greek – through the work of obscure translators (Thomas Parnell, William Broome, John Jortin): the latter were charged with the task of making sense of Eustathius' difficult language, chiefly in such notes as "concern the beauties or art of the author – none geographical, historical or grammatical – unless some occur very important to the sense"[44].

Dacier and Pope also owe their prominence in this context to the attitude towards the text they are interpreting: both consider Homer, although from different angles, less as a masterpiece of ancient literature to be revered and set in a distant past than as a text open to inquiries and analyses bearing on the present day[45]. Dacier is sometimes baffling in this respect, e. g. when she praises Telemachus for invoking her mother as "μῆτερ", a practice at odds with the modern habit of calling one's parents by the vocative "Monsieur, Madame"; or when she comments on Penelope's anxiety about her son's departure at the end of *Odyssey* book 4, by a lapidary: "Tous les temps se ressemblent"[46]. Pope's approach, especially in the *Iliad*, is less optimistic and Homerolatric than Dacier's, especially in terms of aesthetic and moral assessment, which also explains the criticism levelled by the English translator at his French predecessor despite his immense (and sometimes undeclared) debt towards her; however, the quarrel between the two does not rest upon a real ideological basis, and eventually a more balanced attitude surfaces in both scholars' notes to the *Odyssey*.[47]

Dacier's use of Homer is of course to be understood in the frame of the then raging *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, which affected the evaluation of Greek archaic epic along two different parameters, the aesthetical and the ethical one[48]. On the aesthetical niveau, Dacier's declared purpose was to show Homer's skill in handling his material: she wished not only to facilitate the pleasure of reading the poems "as a novel", but also to propose them as a model of style

44 See Levine 1991, 197.

45 Patzek 1999, 164: "avec sa précision philologique elle [*scil.* Madame Dacier] se rend bien compte de la différence des moeurs homériques; mais à ses yeux, traduire signifie transposer dans sa propre langue, dans sa propre culture".

46 Dacier 1716, I, 105 and 112 respectively. The latter statement has a flavour of La Bruyère's "Les hommes n'ont point changé selon le coeur et selon les passions, ils sont encore tels qu'ils étaient alors et qu'ils sont marqués de Théophraste", an idea fiercely opposed by the moderns such as Saint-Evremond, La Motte and Fontenelle (Simonsuuri 1979, 20–22).

47 Foulon 2010. See also Simonsuuri 1979, 57–64.

48 Simonsuuri 1979, 19–20 speaks about the *literary critical* problem and the *creative-educational* problem, both linked to the *cultural* problem of the debt owed by contemporary arts and sciences to antiquity (the latter issue, however pivotal, was of course less compatible with Eustathius' main interests).

and writing, provided the poet's text was preserved from distortions and disfigurements such as La Motte's[49]:

> mon dessein n'est pas seulement d'expliquer le texte d'Homere, pour donner le vain plaisir de lire en nostre langue les avantures d'Ulysse comme on lit un Roman, mais aussi d'expliquer l'artifice du Poëme Epique, et l'adresse du Poëte dans la conduite de ses sujets.[50]

A famous case in point is the description of Alcinous' gardens in *Odyssey* book 7, which was contrasted during the *Querelle* with the grander and more magniloquent descriptions of Louis XIII's and XIV's royal gardens. Callières' *Histoire* tackles precisely this issue by letting Eustathius defend the simplicity of Homer's description and utter a maxim of art criticism, endowed with a wider aesthetic meaning that reaches well beyond the controversy on ancient epic.

> Nous sçaurons bien – lui répondit Eustatius – faire les distinctions nécessaires entre la grandeur de leur Maître et la capacité de ses Ouvriers, et leur faire connoître que le tableau d'un païsage où il n'y a que des cabanes, peut surpasser en beauté par l'excellence du Peintre le tableau des plus magnifiques Palais fait par une main moins sçavante.[51]

This is why Madame Dacier intersperses the notes to *Odyssey* book 7 with several polemical notes against Charles Perrault, the foremost "modern" polemist and the author of the *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes* (1692) and of the *Siècle de Louis le Grand* (1687). Dacier retorts against Perrault that Homer "est un grand peintre, et il peint toujours", that his descriptions are charming and perfectly appropriate to the reality he is describing, and finally that

> Il n'y a rien en effet de plus admirable que ces jardins d'Alcinoüs tels qu'Homere les descrit, et j'ay toujours admiré le mauvais sens d'un Ecrivain moderne, qui pour mettre nostre siecle au dessus du siecle d'Homere, a osé préférer nos magnifiques, mais steriles jardins, à ces jardins où la Nature toujours feconde prodiguoit en toute saison toutes ses richesses[52].

49 Simonsuuri 1979, 49–56.

50 Dacier 1716, I, 51.

51 Callières 1688, 115.

52 Dacier 1716, I, 560; 563; 566–567. The attack is addressed against the mockery of Homer's description in Perrault 1693, 168 and 182.

2b Ethics: an old issue

It is apparent from Dacier's words that Homer's aesthetical praise (to which Alexander Pope will contribute new arguments, directed against Rapin and other critics, and partly relying on Eustathius' remark that Homer "suits his Poetry to the things he relates"[53]) cannot be separated from the ethical message conveyed by Homer: the idea of simplicity and sobriety is in this respect perhaps the most important one to be discussed. The (idealised presentation of the) simplicity of ancient artworks – as opposed to the luxurious production designed for the French king in the frame of his propagandistic agenda – is matched by the (idealised presentation of the) simplicity of Homeric *ethos*, as it emerges from the behaviour of all characters.

What stands out in Dacier's exegetical approach – along with a general distaste for every sort of philological or textual controversy[54] – is the constant need to show that the praiseworthy *moeurs* of the Homeric heroes are not the sign of an "archaic" and "barbarian" civilisation with no access to refinement and education, but rather the effect of a moral niveau that was distinctly higher than ours. Indeed, the entire epic poem is "un discours en vers, inventé pour former les moeurs par des instructions déguisées sous l'allegorie d'une action generale et des plus grands personnages".[55] This was also, to a certain extent, the idea of Pope, who argued that "it would be endless to observe every moral passage in the *Odyssey*, the whole of it being but one lesson of Morality"[56].

This approach will be systematised in the lengthy Homeric *excursus* in book II of Charles Rollin's *Traité des études* (1726–1728), a milestone in 18th-century pedagogical and philosophical thought[57]. By presenting Homer as the purest prototype of the good old times[58], Rollin compares the description of Homeric palaces and royal families with those known from the Old Testament and from the history of the Roman Republic, joining all these paradigms under the heading of simplicity and modesty:

53 Pope 1993, IX, 239 and 242. See Rapin 1664, 95–96.

54 Hepp 1968, 635.

55 Dacier 1716, I, xii.

56 Pope 1993, IX, 32.

57 Touchefeu 1999.

58 Rollin 1726, 377: "Telles étoient les moeurs de ces temps héroïques, de ces heureux temps, où l'on ne connoissoit ni le luxe, ni la mollesse, et où l'on ne faisait consister la gloire que dans le travail et dans la vertu, et la honte que dans la paresse et dans le vice".

> La simplicité et la modestie étoient l'heureux caractère de ces premiers siècles. Leurs palais n'étaient point remplis d'une troupe inutile de domestiques, de valets, et d'officiers capables d'y introduire toutes sortes de vices par leur orgueil et leur fainéantise.[59]

This idea of Homer's simplicity, to which we shall come back presently, was also very dear to an author who had in fact refused the Homeric model on the literary niveau and preferred to center his most important novel on the adventures of an Homeric character re-told in a Virgilian key: I am referring to Fénelon, who as early as 1714 wrote to the "Académie":

> Cette simplicité des moeurs semble ramener l'âge d'or... Les vains préjugés de notre temps avilissent de telles beautés: mais nos défauts ne diminuent point le vrai prix d'une vie si raisonnable et si naturelle.[60]

It should be stressed that Dacier (and later Rollin) were by no means stating the obvious: the idea of Perrault (and in a certain sense of Voltaire, who also criticised Dacier's work) was that "les Princes de ce temps-là ressembloient bien aux paysans de ce temps-cy"[61], and that therefore the level of technological and cultural development – not an alleged ethical superiority – was the sole responsible for the remarkable differences between the behaviour of the Homeric heroes and that of contemporary noblemen. Indeed, some critics (e. g. Houdart de la Motte, who went so far as to change conspicuously the very wording of the *Iliad* in his translation[62]) were convinced that the progress of mankind gave modern writers many advantages over Homer[63]. Now, this opposition (quite crucial in assessing the entire sense of Homer's work) unconsciously follows in the footsteps of a perfectly analogous controversy that marked ancient Homeric exegesis.

Part of the Alexandrian critics, and above all their *chef-de-file* Aristarchus of Samothrace, regarded the Homeric customs, and chiefly the heroes' simplicity and αὐτουργία, precisely as a sign of the *archaische Kulturstufe*, and thus the

59 Rollin 1726, 376.

60 Fénelon 1970 (1714), 79. See Fraigneau 2005, 320; Hepp 1968, 600.

61 Perrault 1693, 68 (le Chevalier); see also 93 (l'Abbé): "A l'égard des moeurs, il y en a de particulières au temps où il a écrit, et il y en a qui sont de tous les temps. A l'égard des premieres, quoyqu'elles semblent ridicules par rapport à celles du temps où nous sommes; comme de voir des Héros qui font eux-mesmes leur cuisine, et des Princesses qui vont laver la lesive, il pourroit y avoir de l'injustice à les reprendre". See A. Grafton in Wolf 1988, 9; Simonsuuri 1979, 23–26 and 37–45. On Voltaire's stance, also critical of Dacier albeit in a different spirit, see Patzek 1999, 165–167 and Simonsuuri 1979, 65–73.

62 See Simonsuuri 1979, 48–52.

63 See Canfora 1997, 93–95.

mark of an underdeveloped civilisation, much in the way Perrault did[64]. The late Martin Schmidt, whose essay remains the reference work on this topic, has shown that this idea – somewhat disparaging for the ἡρωϊκὸς βίος, and ultimately going back to Thucydides' approach in the *archaiologia*[65] – partly affected also the so-called "bT-scholia"; the latter often sought specific justifications for kings and heroes doing manual jobs, since they regarded this practice as unworthy of their status, in full compliance with the habits of their times, whether Hellenistic or imperial[66]. Schmidt further stressed how closely this interpretation went along with the idea of Homer being a trustworthy witness of his own age, *qua* different from ours – a note by Porphyry expresses this idea in the clearest of manners[67], although it ought to be remarked that Porphyry was in fact an admirer of the ethical superiority of ancient times[68].

Other ancient commentators, however, chose a different stance, and identified Homer with the true paradigm of ethical propriety, the *summa* of good moral behaviour to be imitated in the present age. This was the case e. g. for Myrtilus, one of the talking characters of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (1.8e–11b), who argued that Homer aimed to encourage moderation and σωφροσύνη by giving the heroes a simple, self-sufficient way of life[69] – the examples are chosen particularly from their eating habits. It is doubtful whether or not this passage depends on a mysterious Dioscorides (probably not the pupil of Isocrates, maybe a certain Dioscurides of Tarsus of the 1st century BCE) who wrote a treatise *Customs in Homer* (περὶ τῶν παρ' Ὁμήρῳ νόμων) representing Stoic stances[70]; be that as it may, we definitely have here someone arguing that Homer has purposefully made the "lives of all his characters frugal and simple", and more or less indirectly extolling the moral value of this behaviour in opposition to that of his own

64 See esp. the A scholium to *Il.* 3.261–262a, where Aristarchus (Aristonicus) exclaims ὅτι οἱ ἥρωες πάντες ἔμπειροι καὶ αὐτουργοί, when commenting on Priam driving the chariot himself.

65 Schmidt 1976, 161. See on this entire topic also Cullhed, this volume.

66 Schmidt 1976, 159–173. See also the pathbreaking study (not too strongly marred by the usual philo-aristarchean bias) by Roemer 1924, 185–199.

67 Porph. *qu. Il.* 3.281 (p. 61.12–13 Schrader): ὁ δὲ ποιητὴς μιμητὴς ὢν τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ἐποίει, οὐ τὰ μέλλοντα. See Roemer 1924, 187.

68 See Roemer 1924, 198–199.

69 Athen. 1.8e: ὅτι Ὅμηρος ὁρῶν τὴν σωφροσύνην οἰκειοτάτην ἀρετὴν οὖσαν τοῖς νέοις καὶ πρώτην... βουλόμενος ἐμφῦσαι αὐτὴν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐφεξῆς, ἵνα τὴν σχολὴν καὶ τὸν ζῆλον ἐν τοῖς καλοῖς ἔργοις ἀναλίσκωσι καὶ ὦσιν εὐεργετικοὶ καὶ κοινωνικοὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους, εὐτελῆ κατεσκεύασε πᾶσι τὸν βίον καὶ αὐτάρκη.

70 This is what has been argued by scholars on the basis of the quotation in *Suid.* o 251 Adler: see FGrH 594F*8 = Diosc. fr. 1 Weber; see also Schmidt 1976, 16–19 (who is very cautious about the identification of this scholar) and particularly 163–164. *Contra* Heath 2000.

times. What matters to us here is that Eustathius of Thessalonica seems to be so aware of this line of interpretation as to imply or refer to it several times throughout his *Parekbolai:* perhaps the most conspicuous *locus* is his own note to *Iliad* 3.261[71], where he picks up and amplifies Aristonicus' doctrine, but the long list of parallel passages in van der Valk's apparatus shows how frequently the archbishop referred to this topic, with several of his notes ringing a note of nostalgia for a lost, paradigmatic world.

This interpretive *Spaltung* in ancient exegesis was important, and its re-surfacing in such a different cultural context as modern Europe is not fortuitous. Before the discovery of the ancient scholia to the *Iliad*, Eustathius played a decisive role of mediation in this respect, for in the frame of a moralistic reading of Homer a selective perusal of the *Parekbolai* could yield precious insights. This is already the case in Marcassus' and Tinerel's aforementioned 17th-century manuscript works[72]; but Dacier, while sometimes disparaging the archbishop as a pedantic investigator of *nugae*[73], more often avails herself directly or indirectly of Eustathius when commenting on *Realien* and matters of ethics or style[74]. Dacier did not intend to by-pass Eustathius, she rather attempted to go beyond Eustathius by implementing an essentially similar approach: this almost sounds like a timid response to Jean Leclerc, who complained in 1707 about the inadequacies of present-day Homeric exegesis[75], perhaps unconsciously repeating a dissatisfaction already uttered by Sponde in his judgment about his ancient predecessors[76].

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71 Eust. *in Il.* 413.14–16: ἰστέον δὲ καὶ ὅτι αὐτοδιάκονοι τὰ πολλὰ οἱ Ὁμηρικοὶ βασιλεῖς. οὕτω γοῦν ἐνταῦθα Πρίαμος ἡνιοχεῖ, Ἀγαμέμνων δὲ τάμνει, ἤτοι θύει, τὰ ὅρκια [*Il.* 3.271], καὶ Ἀχιλλεὺς δὲ ἀλλαχοῦ τάμνει κρέα [*Il.* 9.206]. See Roemer 1924, 195 and Schmidt 1976, 160 note 3.

72 See above note 25: Marcassus' *Odyssey* in ms. Coisl. 183 is particularly instructive in this repect.

73 "ce n'est pas un fort grand critique; il s'amuse longuement à des minuties; il court après de vaines applications, et il ne remonte jamais à la vraie source des idées de ce grand poète… On peut se servir très utilement de ses Comentaires pourvu qu'on s'en serve avec choix. J'en ai tiré plusieurs remarques qui doivent lui faire honneur et qui ne me paraissent pas inutiles" (Dacier 1711, I (*Préface de l'Iliade*), lxxviii – lxxix); see Hepp 1968, 636 note 35.

74 Hepp 1968, 647: "Bien qu'elle ait émis un jugement assez sévère sur Eustathe, elle reste rivée à lui, elle semble ignorer que depuis lui ont coulé plusieurs siècles au cours desquels les exigences de l'esprit ont pu changer".

75 See Hepp 1968, 564: "Je sais que nous avons Eustathe, mais on sait qu'il y a dans ses vastes commentaires bien plus de minuties grammaticales et de subtilités inutiles que de fine critique et de matières agréables".

76 Sponde 1583, 36 (on Didymus and Eustathius): "sed neuter mihi satis in hoc Poeta laborasse videbatur, quod ut plurimum in verbis enucleandis Grammatice versentur, aut in fabularum narrationibus fusius et ad fastidium exponendis, quod ipsum praestitit in suis Commentariis Came-

3 Heroes and dogs

Two examples – both taken from the *Odyssey*, which is by all standards the more "moral" poem – will clarify this situation. At the beginning of book 2 Telemachus proceeds to the assembly of the Ithacans with no other escort than two dogs: *Od.* 2.11 οὐκ οἶος, ἅμα τῷ γε δύω κύνες ἀργοὶ ἕποντο. The ancient scholia observe that this might depend on the simplicity of ancient life, or on the innate disposition of the animal to follow his master:

> schol. (Ariston.) DEGHM[a] *Od.* 2.11b τοῦτό τινες πρὸς τὸν ἄγροικον τῶν παλαιῶν βίον. ἢ ὡς φιλακόλουθον τὸ ζῶον ἕπεται, οὐ κατὰ προαίρεσιν αὐτοῦ.

Eustathius, on the other hand, expands on the ancient exegesis by pasting in one and the same note several ancient scholia, but he ultimately resorts to much the same explanation.

> Eust. *in Od.* 1430.47–52 (p. 352.17–24 Cullhed) οὐ μόνον ὅτι φιλακόλουθον τὸ ζῷον καὶ μάλιστα ἐπὶ δεσπόταις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχει ὁ εὐγενὴς νεανίας ἑτεροίους ἀκολούθους διὰ τὴν τῶν μνηστήρων ἐπιβουλὴν δι' ἣν μεμόνωται... ἔτι ἀκολουθοῦσι τῷ Τηλεμάχῳ κύνες καὶ διὰ τὸ ἀγροικικώτερον τοῦ ἡρωϊκοῦ βίου, καὶ ὡς κυνηγῷ δὲ καθ' ὁμοίαν τῷ πατρὶ ἐπιτήδευσιν....
>
> not only because this animal is a trusty companion, especially to its master, but also because the noble young man did not have other followers due to the scheming of the suitors, which had rendered him lonely... Moreover, dogs follow Telemachus because of the rusticity of heroic life, and also because he is a hunter, cultivating the same habits as his father... (transl. Cullhed)

Let us now turn to the modern commentators. Politian finds Eustathius' note particularly interesting, and reproduces it at length, in his usual mixture of Greek original and Latin paraphrase (p. 214.49 – 215.75 Silvano). The key point of his annotation to the Homeric passage lies in the manifold motivations for the appearance of the two dogs, whereby the "ethical" one is prominent:

> Angelus Politianus, *in Hom. Od.* 2.11 (p. 214.49–54 Silvano) "animal φιλακόλουθον domini. et Telemachus μεμόνωται propter procos: non ergo habet alios pedissequos... sequuntur eum etiam διὰ τὸ ἀγροικικώτερον τοῦ ἡρωϊκοῦ βίου, et ut venatori qualis erat pater, qui Argum canem amabat".

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rarius, non altius assurgens quam vulgus Grammaticorum. Itaque aliquid amplius desiderari ad veram in tam gravi autore commentandi rationem animadvertebam".

Hubertus Giphanius (probably under the impulse of Falkenburg's notes) is the first to venture a comparison with other ancient authors, in what turns out to be one of the nine notes to the entire book 2:

> Vetere instituto, heroës canibus comitantibus procedere solent etiam in concionem: de quo Pollux Virgil. lib. 8 de Euandro *Nec non et gemini custodes limine abacto, etc. gressumque canes comitantur herilem.* [*Aen.* 8.461–462][77]

Jean de Sponde, who obviously had no knowledge of Politian, reacts in a longer note to the "veterum Regum simplicitas", and follows more closely in Eustathius' footsteps when enumerating the possible reasons for the presence of the two dogs (their fidelity, an ancient custom, the tradition of hunting in Odysseus' family etc.):

> Sed illa fuit veterum Regum simplicitas, ut nulla comitatus pompa incedant, nisi in bello... Forsan et hoc in adeundis concionibus magis observatum fuit. Eustathius vero dicit, hoc esse testimonio, procorum opera Telemachum omni esse hominum comitatu destitutum. Caeterum canes solebant heroës ad conciones comitari... putat tamen Eustathius, potuisse etiam ipsos esse venaticos, quod eodem studio venationis ac pater Telemachus teneretur.[78]

Madame Dacier's comment picks up her predecessors' notes, including the reference to Virgil and above all the Eustathian idea of the *simplicitas regum*, while transposing it to a more distinctly polemical tone, and retorting against the contemporary critics of Homer's primitive world (a prince being escorted by dogs!) not only an aesthetical judgment about Homer's poetry, but also the reference to a *locus* of the Old Testament that matches perfectly the *ethos* implied by the world of Ithaca.

> Il seroit bon que ces grands critiques se souvinssent que la Poësie est comme la Peinture, qui tire de grandes beautez des coutumes les plus simples. Et que non seulement dans la Poësie, mais dans la Prose mesme, on prend plaisir à voir relever les moindres choses qui marquent les usages des anciens temps. Ce qu'Homere dit icy de Telemaque n'est pas different de ce que la sainte Escriture nous dit de Tobie, cent cinquante ans ou environ après Homere, *Profectus est autem Tobias, et canis secutus est eum*, Tob. 6.1 Virgile n'a pas dédaigné la mesme circonstance, car dans le liv. 8 en parlant d'Evandre, il dit: *Necnon et gemini custodes limine ab alto / Procedunt, gressumque canes comitantur herilem*. Et c'est ce que les plus grands Peintres ont imité.[79]

77 Giphanius 1572, c. Ggg IV r.

78 Sponde 1583, 17.

79 Dacier 1716, 152–153. See on this passage Mercier 1995, 190–191.

In this respect, Dacier goes further than Eustathius himself: the archbishop had been criticised by some for making hardly any reference to the Holy Writ in his commentaries on Homer – a reproach countered by Alessandro Politi in the preface to his Latin translation[80]. In fact, Dacier (and to a lesser extent Pope)[81] did believe in the possibility of a comparison between Homeric passages and similar Biblical *loci*, and proved ready to point to them on every given occasion.

Alexander Pope, who repeatedly acknowledges his debt to Madame Dacier and to Eustathius in particular, also picks up and discusses Dacier's and Eustathius' notes on Telemachus' dogs and the simplicity of ancient Princes[82], but then turns it into a subtle aesthetic remark on the opportunity of considering the poems within their historical context (this recalls Porphyry's aforementioned warning against anachronisms, augmented by an occurrence of the famous motto *Ut pictura poësis*):

> Poetry, observes Dacier, is like Painting, which draws the greatest beauties from the simplest customs... the Poet, as well as the Painter, is obliged to follow the customs of the age of which he writes, or paints: a modern dress would ill become *Achilles* or *Ulysses*, such a conduct would be condemned as an absurdity in painting, and ought to be so in poetry[83].

This is a nice sample of the slightly more "historicising" perspective adopted by Pope in his commentary[84], although no stern separation or unbridgeable gap between the ancients and us is implied, especially if one considers the feats of Ulysses:

> We can bring the sufferings of Ulysses in some degree home to our selves, and make his condition our own; but what private person can ever be in the circumstances of Agamemnon or Achilles?[85].

80 Politi 1730, c. c2 r-v.

81 See Foulon 2010, 175–176.

82 Pope 1993, 60: "But such was the simplicity of ancient Princes, that except in war they had rarely any attendants or equipage. And we may be confident, *Homer* copies after the custom of the time, unless we can be so absurd as to suppose, he would feign low circumstances unnecessarily, thro' a want of judgment".

83 Pope 1993, 61.

84 Levine 1991, 209. See also Pope 1993, 90: "If we form our images of persons and actions in antient times, from the images of persons and actions in modern ages, we shall fall into great mistakes".

85 Pope 1993, 79.

4 Nausicaa's laundry

My other example is the famous scene of Nausicaa doing the laundry in *Odyssey* book 6. No scholium to that book tackles directly the issue of the propriety, or indeed the plausibility, of a scene where a princess devotes her time and efforts to such down-to-earth occupations. But the issue is framed against the broader background of the heroes' αὐτουργία – indeed it was dealt with in such a context by Porphyry[86]:

> schol. DH(O) (Porph.) *Od*. 1.332 (p. 172.81–85 Pont.): τό τ᾽ αὐτουργεῖν ἐλευθέριον μάλιστα εἶναι ἐδόκει τοῖς παλαιοῖς ὡς καὶ ἐπὶ πλυνοὺς μὴ ὄνειδος εἶναι τὰς τῶν βασιλέων ἀπιέναι θυγατέρας καὶ εἰς ὑδροφορίαν καί τινας τοιαύτας ⟨ὡς⟩ ἰσοδουλικὰς τὸ νῦν ἀποβεβλημένας διακονίας.
>
> personal labour seemed to the ancients absolutely worthy of a freeman, so that it was no shame for the daughters of kings to go to the washing pits and fetch water and perform similar services, which today are looked upon as fit for slaves.

> schol. E (Porph.) *Od*. 3.411a (p. 145.36–40 Pont.): φασὶν οὖν ὅτι ἁπλοϊκῶς καὶ ἀκενοδόξως τότε διέκειντο καὶ οὐκ ἔχοντες ἔπαρσιν. ἀλλαχοῦ δὲ καὶ θυγατέρες τῶν τοιούτων βασιλέων μετὰ οἰκείων χειρῶν ἔπλυναν τὰ ἱμάτια. ὥστε οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς εἰς ἀτιμίαν τὸ οὕτω ποιεῖν διὰ τὴν ἁπλότητα.
>
> They say that at that time their life was plain and without conceit or ambition: elsewhere, the daughters of such kings even washed the clothes with their own hands: it was clearly not dishonourable for them to act like that, due to their simplicity.

Eustathius makes two observations on the passage of book 6: first of all, he remarks that Nausicaa's entire behaviour is an instance of the ἡρωϊκὴ ἀφέλεια καὶ ἁπλότης. Secondly, he insists on the fact that the very nature of the garments – without any gold or similar luxury – is a proof of the modesty of the heroic age.

> Eust. *in Od*. 1549.59–60 (on *Od*. 6.74): καὶ ποιήσει οὕτως ἡ Ναυσικάα διδοῦσα ἑαυτὴν εἰς ὑπερτερίαν εὐτελῆ κατὰ ἡρωϊκὴν ἀφέλειαν καὶ ἁπλότητα, δι᾽ ἣν καὶ ψυχρολουτεῖ ἐν τοῖς ἑξῆς. καὶ φέρει ἐκ θαλάμου ἐσθῆτα φαεινήν, καὶ κατατίθησιν ἐπ᾽ ἀπήνης, καὶ μάστιγα καὶ ἡνίον λαβοῦσα μαστίζει τὰς ἡμιόνους. καὶ ἐν τῷ ἐκ τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἐπανιέναι ζεύξασα τὰς ἡμιόνους, πτύσσει τὰ εἵματα.

86 See Roemer 1924, 195 and Schmidt 1976, 161 note 8, claiming that this idea was ultimately Aristarchean. It should be noted that this passage of the long excerpt from Porphyry's *Quaestiones Homericae* to *Od*. 1.332 does not belong to Dicaearchus (for the correct delimitation of his fragment see fr. 95 Mirhády).

> And Nausicaa will act in this way, placing herself on a humble cart, according to the same heroic simplicity, by virtue of which in another passage she will also bathe in cold water. And she brings from the bedroom a shining robe and deposes it on the cart, then, taking hold of the whip and the reins she whips the mules. And when they come back from the river, she harnesses the mules and folds the garments.

> Eust. *in Od*. 1550.36–39 δήλη δὲ ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἡ ἡρωϊκὴ ἀφέλεια καὶ εὐτέλεια. εἵματα γὰρ φοροῦσιν οἱ βασιλεῖς πλυνόμενα καὶ οὐχ ἁπλῶς, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ποταμῷ, καὶ οὐδαμοῦ χρυσὸς ἐνταῦθα ἤ τι ἕτερον ἀπρόσιτον ὕδατι· ἀλλ᾽ ἔχαιρον καθαρὰ φοροῦντες νεόπλυτα.
>
> In such passages the heroic simplicity and humbleness are manifest, for kings wear robes that are washed – and not only washed, but in a river! – and that do not have any gold or other material that does not stand water: they were happy wearing clean, newly washed robes.

This issue is conspicuously absent from Sponde's commentary, but it soon became one of the *pièces de résistance* of the Ancien Régime scholars, whose reaction was either scandal or admiration. Jean Tinerel de Bellérophon, on the basis of the Nausicaa episode, devoted part of his notes to the fact that "Les princes du temps d'Homere vivoient fort frugalement"[87]. The αὐτουργία of eminent men was a quality praised even by Jean Racine when commenting on Ulysses building his own raft: "il n'est point messéant à un grand homme de savoir faire les plus petites choses"[88]. That precisely Nausicaa should be a paradigm of simplicity in a perspective perfectly compatible with Christendom, was made clear by Charles Rollin[89], but already by Madame Dacier's commentary, which clearly drew on Eustathius, adding the Biblical example of Sarah, perhaps in the wake of the section about virtuous women in Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis*[90].

> C'est selon cette coutume, reste précieux de l'âge d'or, et que nous voyons si bien pratiquée dans l'Escriture sainte, que Nausicaa va elle-mesme laver ses robes avec ses amies et ses femmes. J'ai oüi dire qu'encore aujourd'huy dans quelque Province du Royaume les filles de condition assistent elles-mesmes à ces fonctions du menage, et qu'elles se font une espece de feste de ces jours-là. Nous serions bienheureux de conserver encore dans leur entier des moeurs si simples et si sages, et avec lesquelles on ne ruineroit point sa maison...

87 See above note 25: ms. Coisl. 397, ff. 44r-v (and 47r-v).

88 Racine 1952, 760.

89 Rollin 1726, 329–330.

90 *Strom*. 4.19.123.1: ἐπεὶ καὶ ἡ τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ γυνὴ Σάρρα ἡ μακαρία αὐτὴ τοὺς ἐγκρυφίας παρεσκεύασε τοῖς ἀγγέλοις [Gen 18.6–7], καὶ βασιλικαὶ κόραι παρὰ τοῖς Ἑβραίοις τὰ πρόβατα ἔνεμον [*Gen*. 29.6; *Exod*. 2.16], ὅθεν καὶ ἡ παρ᾽ Ὁμήρῳ Ναυσικάα ἐπὶ τοὺς πλυνοὺς ἦει.

> Eustathe fait remarquer encore icy une simplicité, une modestie et une propreté de ces temps-là, toutes ces robes sont sans or et peuvent toutes estre lavées[91].

On this issue of the ancient Hellenes' shocking habits, Pope follows in Dacier's footsteps[92], by replying to the critics of Homer that

> such Critics form their idea of ancient, from modern greatness: It wou'd be now a meanness to describe a person of Quality thus employ'd, because custom has made it the work of persons of low condition: It would be now thought dishonourable for a Lady of high station to attend the flocks; yet we find in the most ancient history extant that the daughters of Laban and Jethoro, persons of power and distinction, were so employ'd, without any dishonour to their quality. In short, these passages are to be look'd upon as exact pictures of the old World, and consequently as valuable remains of Antiquity[93].

This is the "historical" explanation of the primitive customs of those early times; but then Pope goes on to quote Eustathius about the

> modesty and simplicity of these early times, when the whole dress of a King and his family (who reign'd over a people that delighted in dress) is without gold: for we see Nausicaa carries with her all the habits that were used at the greatest solemnities; which had they been wrought with gold could not have been washed.[94]

Pope often insists on heroic simplicity, and he regularly does so in the footsteps of Eustathius: e. g. about the furniture of Nestor's palace in book 3[95], or when Telemachus goes to sleep at the end of book 1:

> The simplicity of these Heroic times is remarkable; an old woman is the only attendant upon the son of a King: She lights him to his apartment, takes care of his cloaths, and hangs them up at the side of his bed. Greatness then consisted not in shew, but in the mind: this conduct proceeded not from the meanness of poverty, but from the simplicity of manners[96].

We can thus see that Eustathius' notes, as vehicle of the ancient debate on Homer's morality, sometimes stir and open up interpretive perspectives that have a

91 Dacier 1716, 502.
92 Foulon 2010, 167.
93 Pope 1993, 206.
94 Pope 1993, 209.
95 Pope 1993, 88: "It is the remark of Eustathius, that Pisistratus the son of a King does not seat these strangers upon purple Tapestry, or any other costly furniture, but upon the Skins of beasts, that had nothing to recommend them but their softness".
96 Pope 1993, 57.

great deal to say about the modern reception of the epics. The influence of the *Parekbolai*, both as representatives of ancient exegesis and as a reading of Homer in their own right, is momentous, and concurs to shaping the debate about the "moral Homer" between the 17th and the 18th century. It is perhaps not by chance that precisely the simplicity of Alcinous' gardens and the episode of Nausicaa doing the laundry are evoked in a pivotal passage of Fénelon's *Lettre à l'Académie* (1714)[97] and in a crucial moment of J.J. Rousseau's novel *Émile* (1762). In the latter, it is through Sophie's reaction to the story of Nausicaa (told by the narrator), as well as through her promptness to act as an *alter ego* of the Phaeacian princess, that the Odyssean intertext of the entire book comes to the surface; the moral and paedagogical model represented by Homer thus becomes a foil for Rousseau's own representation of countenance and love.

> La fille voudrait savoir ce que c'est qu'Alcinoüs, et la mère le demande. Alcinoüs – leur dis-je – était un roi de Corcyre, dont le jardin, décrit par Homère, est critiqué par les gens de goût, comme trop simple et trop peu paré. Cet Alcinoüs avait une fille aimable... Le père... prend la parole, et dit que la jeune princesse allait elle-même laver le linge à la rivière. Croyez-vous, poursuit-il, qu'elle eût dédaigné de toucher aux serviettes sales, en disant qu'elles sentaient le graillon?[98]

5 Eustathius damnatus

The praise of Eustathius sounds very remote to our ears. Many contemporary scholars ignore or overlook the role of the *Parekbolai* in the reception and interpretation of Homer; in recent years, no less an authority than Hartmut Erbse uttered the harshest of verdicts on the archbishop's lack of method and of consequential reasoning[99]. The rationale for the trajectory that leads from the Eustathiomania of the *âge classique* to contemporary skepticism is in fact rather straightforward, and may be sketched as the outcome of several concurring elements. First of all, the primitivistic approach: Vico's new, disparaging consider-

97 Fénelon 1970 (1714), 138: "Homère n'a-t-il pas dépeint avec grâce l'isle de Calypso et les jardins d'Alcinoüs, sans y mettre ni marbre ni dorure? Les occupations de Nausicaa ne sont-elles pas plus estimables que le jeu et que les intrigues des femmes de notre temps? Nos pères en auraient rougi, et on ose mépriser Homère pour n'avoir pas peint par avance ces moeurs monstrueuses, pendant que le monde étoit encore assez heureux pour les ignorer!".

98 Rousseau 1966 (1762), book V, 534. See Patzek 1999, 168–170. Perrin 1999. Touchefeu 1995, 186–188.

99 Erbse 1965, 927, quoted with approval by Latacz 2000, 14.

ation of the Homeric world as the age of uncivilised "bestioni", marked by their "costume immanissimo" and a fierce and uneducated pride (*Scienza nuova*, 1744), slowly replaced the subtle charm of heroic simplicity – which, as we have seen, had played such a relevant role for Homer's partisans during the *Querelle*[100].

Moreover, the erudite and pedantic side of Eustathius fell the victim of the new Romantic sensibility: the consideration of Homer, after Winckelmann, as an "ursprünglicher Genie", as an "original genius" (to quote Robert Wood), as a genuine and isolated representative of a world of popular songs and beliefs, as the most immediate and faithful literary transposition of a primitive world[101], entailed two consequences for Romantic poets:

- the allergy for all sorts of moralistic reading (as early as 1779, Johann Heinrich Voss stressed that the poet's words had above all a sensory meaning[102]);
- the distaste for all the erudition that encumbered and impaired a direct and first-hand, emotional fruition of the poems; this is the definitive verdict about Homeric philology given by that heir of John Keats, Matthew Arnold, in 1861:

> Rather will the poetry of Homer make us forget his philology, than his philology make us forget his poetry. It may even be affirmed that every one who reads Homer perpetually for the sake of enjoying his poetry... comes at last to form a perfectly clear sense in his own mind for every important word in Homer, such as ἀδινός, or ἠλίβατος, whatever the scholar's doubts about the word may be.[103]

But even more importantly, the decisive element for the dethronement of Eustathius from the *pantheon* of Greek philology was the rise of *Alterthumswissenschaft*. The surfacing of new manuscript material changed dramatically the priorities of scholars, drawing them away from the perusal and interpretation of the *Parekbolai* and into the analysis of the sophisticated rhetoric of Hellenistic and imperial scholia[104]. The practice of reconstructing lost exegesis from new manuscript material and through a fresh look at the indirect tradition was particularly valued by Valckenaer (1747) and his successors, and it obviously came to its

100 See Lehnus 2012, 112–114, with further bibliography. Rotta 1999. Simonsuuri 1979, 77–98.
101 See e. g. Simonsuuri 1979, 99–142; Häntszchel 1977, 1–15. Lehnus 2012.
102 Voss 1779, 169: "Eustath und die Scholiasten irren am gewöhnlichsten da, wo sie Worte erklären, die bei Homer bloß sinnliche Begriffe hatten, und nachmals moralische annahmen".
103 Arnold 1903 (1861), 280.
104 See Pontani 2006, 203–210.

acme with the publication of the Venetian *scholia vetera* to the *Iliad* by Villoison, and their subsequent use in F.A. Wolf's *Prolegomena*[105].

It is no chance that the removal of Eustathius from the foreground of Homeric exegesis is overtly declared in the very first words of Villoison's momentous preface to his *Iliad* (1788):

> Quod olim in Graecia confecit Eustathius, idem ego nuper Venetiis, quo, ante meam in Germaniam et Graeciam profectionem, a Christianissimo Rege missus fueram, tentavi. Scilicet varias antiquissimorum Criticorum in Iliadem observationes huc usque ineditas, nec non editione dignissimas, descripsi, selegi, collegi, et secundum Homericorum versuum ordinem ac seriem disposui atque digessi, Arsenii, Monembasiae Archiepiscopi, qui Scholia in Euripidem primus edidit, exemplum sequutus[106].

Wolf's *Prolegomena* refined and completed this vilification of Eustathius:

> At ille, qui in Homero nihil praeter pulchrum poëtam mirabatur, priscorum eius fatorum minus curiosus, et rhetoricos potius quam criticos interpretes sectatus, omnino ab hac parte non tantam, quanta vulgo fruitur, laudem meruit, plurimam debet iacturae doctiorum Scholiorum.[107]

It is with Wolf that Eustathius becomes forever a mere indirect source for alien opinions, and a mere repository of ancient readings:

> At in Eustathio non Eustathii opiniones quaerimus, sed vetustiorum litteratorum, quorum Scholia ante oculos habebat. Ex his autem Scholiis eum ubique et in iis versibus maxime, ubi rem non obiter tractat, alia omnia referre, paullo mox viderimus.[108]

This "murder" of Eustathius, partly proceeding from scholars who ignored much about Byzantine culture (and for instance believed Eustathius to be a contempo-

105 Pontani 2006, 211–218.

106 Villoison 1788, i.

107 Wolf 1795, pp. 12–13 Peppmüller. Transl. in Wolf 1988, 54 (I.5): "He admired in Homer only the beauty of the poetry, taking little interest in the early portion of his afterlife and following rhetorical rather than critical commentators. On this side of things he deserves less praise than he commonly enjoys, and owes a vast amount to the loss of the more learned scholia".

108 Wolf 1795, p. 58 Pepp. Transl. in Wolf 1988, 94 (I.18): "But we seek in Eustathius not the opinions of Eustathius but those of earlier grammarians, whose scholia he had before his eyes. And we will see a little later that he reports everything else from these scholia, both in general and above all on those verses where he treats a subject not in passing". See, in the same spirit, Wilamowitz 2006 (a lecture of 1887), 137: "Für uns ist seine Weisheit nichts Massgebendes... Sein Commentar ist eine sehr respectable Leistung, wenn schon die eines Compilators".

rary and friend of Michael Psellus[109]), will entail the quick disappearance of the archbishop from the most influential commentaries of the 19th century such as those by Heyne, Nitzsch and Ameis-Hentze, where he is evoked but sporadically as a complement to the ancient scholia. Nor will the very trend of attention to ancient exegesis and its transmission last long: comparative grammar and linguistics, structural and narratological analysis, and other modern tools soon moved the scholars' gaze away from the heritage of ancient exegesis altogether: "After Heyne, Homeric study took a different course"[110].

It is of course true that much of the material offered by Eustathius is derivative, and perhaps even superfluous for readers who have access to the ancient scholia. However, the overarching interpretation of Homer given by the archbishop of Thessalonica, while consisting of a series of single, detailed interpretations, did respond to a wider image of the poet, in which the moral (and to a lesser extent religious) issue played a certain role. With the triumph of scholia, not only was Eustathius ushered into forgetfulness, but also a certain image of Homer was superseded and relegated into a more or less distant past: the demands of "close reading" and philological interpretation were definitively severed from the issues of contemporary aesthetics and ethics. Homer left the battlefield in order to enter the museum, and Eustathius stopped being the captain of his guard in order to become one of his old and wrinkled keepers – the smartest one being Aristarchus, or actually a fragmented, if fascinating image of Alexandrian criticism[111].

Perhaps the last intellectual who celebrated Eustathius in a meaningful way was another Greek scholar, Adamantios Koraes, who embarked on the ambitious project of an annotated edition of the *Iliad* (based on the text established by Wolf), which eventually covered only books 1–4[112]. While convinced that the Byzantine Empire had been a dark age for every sort of learning, Koraes celebrated Homer as "the common educator of the Greek *genos*" (viewing him and his poems as the sources for every moral rectitude and the cornerstone for the education of the young), and Eustathius as the champion of the humanistic attitude that was ready to blossom once more on Greek soil, had not the Latin (1204) and then the Turkish conquest (1453) forestalled its ripeness, interrupting periods of compelling intellectual evolution (Koraes' appeal to patience and confidence re-

109 Wolf 1988, 36; but the same is true for Politi 1730, c. c i *recto*.

110 Allen 1931, 267.

111 The same image that, one century before Wolf, had seduced Pierre Bayle into adorning his *Dictionnaire* with a long article devoted to the philologist of Samothrace: see on this Canfora 1997, 103.

112 Paschalis 2010. See Hunter, this volume.

lied on the certainty that τὸ δὶς ἐμποδισθὲν δὲν εἶναι φόβος νὰ ἐμποδισθῇ καὶ τρίτον)[113]. It is for this reason that in 1806 Koraes envisaged a new edition of Eustathius, which eventually aborted because of the printer's withdrawal[114]. Nonetheless, his opinion was that the Greek people should celebrate Eustathius in the *espace public:*

> Ὁ σοφὸς καὶ χρήσιμος οὗτος ἱεράρχης, εἰς τὸν ὁποῖον τὸ γένος, ὅταν ἀναλάβῃ, χρεωστεῖ νὰ ἀνεγείρῃ εἰκόνας....[115].

Perhaps a good suggestion for the Δῆμος Θεσσαλονίκης?

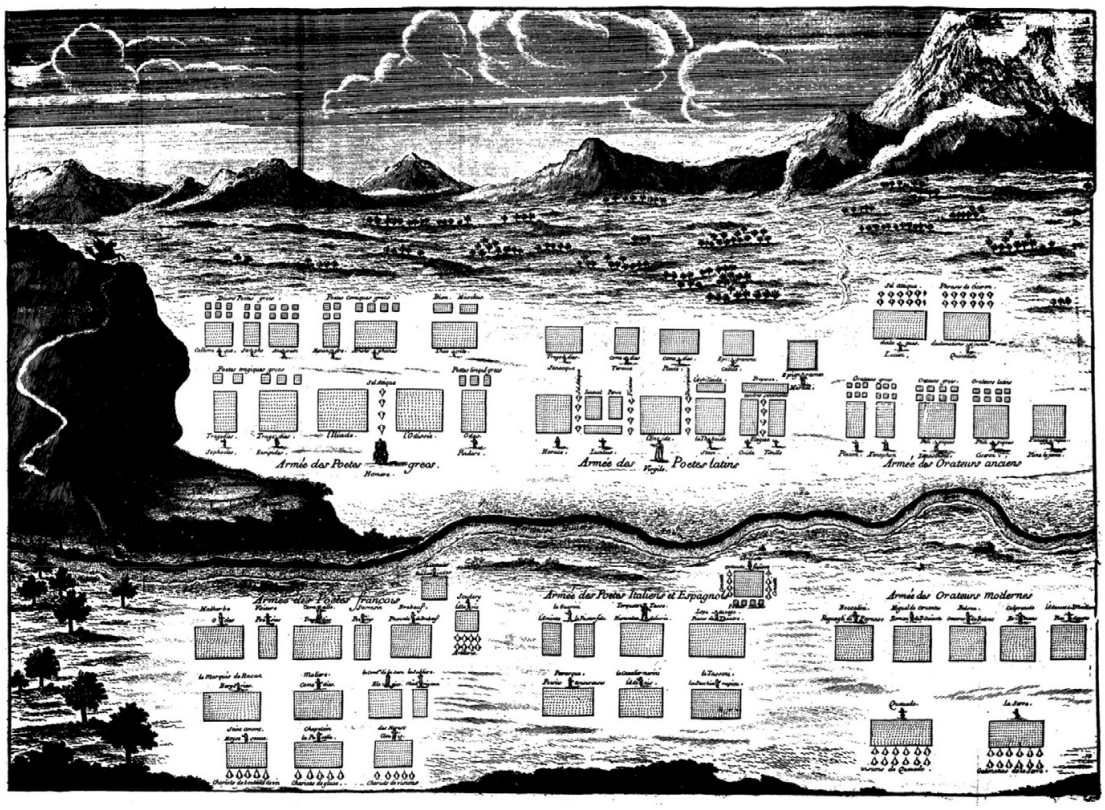

Fig. 1: F. de Callières, *Histoire poétique de la guerre nouvellement déclarée...*, Amsterdam 1688, table before the frontispice

113 Korais 1988 (1811), 128–131, esp. 130–131 note 1.
114 Paschalis 2010, 114–119.
115 Korais 1988 (1811), 38.

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