

THE HOMERIC TRADITION IN SYRIANUS

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To the sacred memory of my father Aristotelis Manoleas

Τριποδίσματα ωραίων αλόγων θα με βοηθήσουν
Να πω την προσευχή μου πριν να κοιμηθώ
Στην ψάθα - όπως γεννήθηκα - με λίγες πιτσιλάδες
Ήλιου στο μέτωπο και την αρχαία καρδιά
Που ξέρει όλον τον Όμηρο γι' αυτό και αντέχει ακόμη.
Οδυσσέας Ελύτης, *Μικρός Ναυτίλος*

Beautiful horses trotting will help me
Say my prayer before I go to sleep
In poverty - as I was born - with a few splashes of
Sunlight on my front and the ancient heart
That knows the whole of Homer and this is why it still keeps going.
Odysseus Elytes, *The little Nautilus*

ABSTRACT

The thesis examines the way the philosopher Syrianus, the Head of the Neoplatonic School of Athens (432-437), used the Homeric tradition in his exegetical works. His extant works, namely the *In Hermogenem*, *In Phaedrum* and *In Metaphysica*, are in the form of commentary and cover both fields of rhetoric and philosophy.

The first chapter of the thesis is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the Homeric tradition up to Syrianus. The second section deals with the works of Syrianus and related problems of authorship. The third section is a brief yet comprehensive account of Syrianus' philosophical system.

The second chapter focuses on the Homeric passages to be found in Syrianus' *In Hermogenem* exegesis. The *In Hermogenem* is a commentary on the two major works of the orator Hermogenes, the *De Ideis* and the *De Statibus*. After the thorough examination of the use of all the Homeric passages and their characteristic exploitation in a work of rhetoric, the chapter concludes with a summary of its findings.

The third chapter examines the Homeric tradition in the *In Phaedrum* commentary. Homer is exploited in many different ways, from the simple linguistic use we are familiar with in the rhetorical works of Syrianus, to the more sophisticated use to be found in passages that deal with psychology and metaphysics. Some examples of allegorical interpretation are also present in this exegesis. The chapter concludes with a summary of its findings.

The fourth chapter deals with the use of the Homeric tradition in Syrianus' *In Metaphysica* commentary. The use of Homer in this work is similar to that in the *In Phaedrum*, as stated in the concluding remarks of the chapter.

The thesis ends with final conclusions and an exhaustive bibliography.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis concentrates on how the pagan philosopher Syrianus, son of Philoxenus, treated the Homeric elements in his existing works, and aims to illuminate Syrianus' attitude towards the Homeric tradition, which forms one aspect of Syrianus' literary culture.

Syrianus was the successor of Plutarch in the Neoplatonic Academy of Athens, where he taught philosophy and rhetoric between 432 and 437. After his death his beloved disciple Proclus was appointed as the head of the Academy at the age of twenty-five.¹ The problem of the relation of Proclus' philosophical ideas to Syrianus' teaching and independent thought has been thoroughly and carefully dealt with by A.D.R. Sheppard.² L.R. Cardullo³ has shown how Syrianus was initially referred to by scholars of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as a name only, if referred to at all, and how from the nineteenth century onwards he has gradually come to prominence, at first as the teacher of Proclus and, in our century, as a philosopher with some originality in his thought.

The main factor which led me to the examination of the Homeric passages in Syrianus' extant works is that so far there has been no overall close analysis of Homeric passages in this Neoplatonic philosopher. Given the facts that Homer was prominent in the rhetorical and philosophical writings of late antiquity and that Syrianus has not attracted the attention of philologists, I think that Syrianus' perception of Homer can give answers to wider issues of transmission and perception of Homer and also contribute to our better knowledge of Syrianus' literary interests and background.

Syrianus has hardly gained the place he deserves among the other Neoplatonists. A discussion of the importance and the originality of his philosophical system is beyond

the aims of this thesis; nevertheless, this work, by concentrating on how Syrianus treated Homer, could help to illuminate some aspects of his approach towards philosophical issues.

a. Method

What was Homer for Syrianus? Did Syrianus know him deeply and how is this shown by his use of Homeric quotations? What was Syrianus' purpose when he inserted these references in his commentaries? What is Syrianus' place in the long tradition of Homeric exegesis?

In the existing works of Syrianus, namely his commentaries *In Hermogenem*, *In Metaphysica* and *In Phaedrum* (the last attributed to his student Hermias by the manuscript tradition),⁴ the Homeric references are scattered. Thus, an overall view of Syrianus' perception of Homer is a matter of close reading of the existing rhetorical and philosophical texts of Syrianus and of reconstruction.

In reading Syrianus' commentaries one cannot fail to notice as many as 54 Homeric passages, that include one (or in few cases more) Homeric references. When it came to their examination, it seemed proper to quote from the original Greek text the whole passage which contained either a Homeric verse, or a reference to Homer; thus, not only the writer's thought and aim, but also the course of the exegesis can be followed more easily.

The thesis being a close analysis of select passages from Syrianus' commentaries, it becomes evident that there is no thematic continuity through these passages. Their classification follows the course of each of the three of Syrianus' existing commentaries; thus the unity of each work is preserved. A classification by theme (according to the particular use of the Homeric passage in different commentaries) would be interesting at

first sight, but would be more likely to take us away from the logical sequence of Syrianus' thought in the respective commentaries. The final remarks attempt a thematic classification of the references, aiming to show, once the place of the references in the commentaries has been discussed, Syrianus' general tendencies in using Homer.

Each Homeric reference in Syrianus is explained in relation to his rhetorical and philosophical theories. An attempt is made to clarify what was Syrianus' point in quoting or referring to Homer and what kind of interpretation of Homer he was making. Thus, there are times when the interpretation is in accordance with the exegetical tradition of Homer existing in Syrianus' time; in other cases, a completely new perspective arises.

Knowing Homer's wide use in all kinds of texts before Syrianus, it also seemed in some passages right to attempt to place Syrianus in an exegetical tradition, from both the scholarly and the philosophical point of view. That means that parallel uses of Homer's particular verses by other writers have been put forward. Christian writers have not been excluded from this effort, although the school of Athens does not seem to reflect any Christian influences in its philosophical thought. Additionally, it seemed interesting to examine not only writers prior to Syrianus, but some later works as well. During the course of this procedure, sometimes it has seemed proper, in order to make Syrianus' point clearer, to refer to writers who used not the same verse, but the same idea as Syrianus. But the use of these parallels, whether dealing with rhetorical or philosophical issues, is highly selective: they were used either when the similarity was striking or when they were judged indispensable for the understanding of Syrianus' thought.

By finding parallels in writers as old as Plato and as late as Eustathius of Thessalonica, Syrianus' quotations are put in a context of a living tradition of Greek culture. Therefore, an evaluation of Syrianus' individual remarks becomes easier and their originality and influence are clearly shown.

No modern theory of reception, such as, for example, the theory of the School of

Konstanz, is used in the thesis; several reasons led to this decision, not the least of them being that they are meant to be applied to systematic texts, and not to notes on certain rhetorical or philosophical works. Moreover, in my opinion, when one is dealing with texts of antiquity, one's main concern should be to be as close as possible to their course of thought: a pre-set model of a contemporary theory could occupy the scholar too much and finally prevent him from understanding the ancient writer's thought and aims.

In the course of the research, the existing secondary bibliography proved to be rather limited, since Syrianus himself is not much favoured by modern scholars and as there has been only one effort so far to see Syrianus' use of Homer, mostly from the evidence we have from Proclus.⁵ My thesis could be regarded as complementary to the already existing evidence collected by Sheppard and tries to be more detailed, especially as far as the exegetical tradition that Syrianus might have followed is concerned.

b. Contents

Chapter 1 is introductory and aims to illuminate two things: first, the Homeric tradition until the time of Syrianus, and, secondly, the work of Syrianus as a philosopher. Section 1.1 gives an account of the Homeric tradition up to Syrianus; it presents the perceptions of Homer by major literary figures or by certain literary and philosophical circles in antiquity, laying emphasis on the types of criticism Homer went through and those who volunteered to act as his defenders. Also discussed is the attitude towards Homer of the Neoplatonists prior to Syrianus. Thus, the threads of the perception of Homer from the 6th century B.C. up to Syrianus' time are mentioned and the reader is offered a convenient mode of reference to exegetical circles and schools of interpretation. Section 1.2 deals with the existing works of Syrianus and the difficulties associated with their use as sources. Section 1.3 gives a brief outline of Syrianus' philosophical system,

something that was considered necessary, as his philosophical views often illuminate the use of poetic passages.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 deal with the 54 Homeric passages that can be found in Syrianus' *In Hermogenem* (Passages 1-17), Hermias' *In Phaedrum* (Passages 18-44) and Syrianus' *In Metaphysica* (Passages 45-54), respectively. For matters of chronology, his work on rhetoric was examined first, and then his two philosophical works. The *In Phaedrum* commentary was chosen to be examined before the *In Metaphysica*, first because of the number and the quality of the Homeric references in it. Secondly, although we know that the study of Aristotle, as an expert on logic, preceded the study of Plato in the Academy,⁶ there is no evidence that Syrianus' *In Metaphysica* commentary, as it has come down to us, is earlier than the *In Phaedrum* commentary; after all, Syrianus taught in the Academy only for five years. And thirdly, a work such as Syrianus' *In Metaphysica*, from which we learn such a lot for his philosophical thought, can hardly be considered as either an early work of his or as a work for beginners.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 conclude with some remarks concerning the treatment of Homer in each work of Syrianus. Thus, the conclusions, which form the last part of the thesis, review these remarks and draw an overall picture of Homer's treatment by Syrianus.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 The Homeric tradition up to Syrianus⁷

What Homer was for the Greeks is self-evident, as, from our earliest evidence onwards, his poems used to be the basis of their education,⁸ as well as their respected cultural background.⁹ It has rightly been noted that, when the Greeks said ὁ ποιητής without naming any specific poet, it was Homer that they meant, as he was considered to be the poet κατ' ἐξοχήν.¹⁰ Moreover, the Homeric poems, along with Hesiod's *Theogonia*, constituted their main religious texts.¹¹

To consider the expansion of the Homeric tradition, we cannot but mention the rhapsodes (ῥαψωδοί) first; the role they played not only in the dissemination but also in the interpretation of the Homeric poems is well-known.¹² It was from an Ionian thinker, who was also a rhapsode, Xenophanes of Colophon (6th century B.C.), that the attack against Homer started. His main objection seems to have been Homer's treatment of the gods.¹³ Heraclitus, in his turn, attacked the philosophical authority of Homer (and Hesiod).¹⁴ Maybe the culminating point of this type of criticism for impiety is Plato's famous views on Homer as expressed mainly in the *Republic*, and the banishment of Homer, Hesiod and all existing poets from the ideal city. But this issue is to be discussed later on.

Naturally enough, as Homer's prestige was by tradition extremely high, when the polemic against his poems found its expression, many volunteered to become Homer's defenders. The defence of Homer, an important aspect of which was the effort to interpret his poems allegorically,¹⁵ started in the 6th century B.C., and went on until Syrianus' time.¹⁶ Theagenes of Rhegium (late 6th cent. B.C.) is said to have been one of the

persons who made use of the allegorical method of interpretation, so as to act as Homer's defender;¹⁷ in other words, he is believed to have been the first allegorist of Homer, in his effort to explain the battle of the gods. He also had grammatical interests in Homeric poetry and researched Homer's life and date.¹⁸

It has been argued that Theagenes was a Pythagorean;¹⁹ but given the present state of our evidence, no final verdict is possible. What we can certainly do is to accept M. Detienne's view that Theagenes was first of all a grammarian and in that capacity he interpreted Homer in an allegorical way. Pherecydes of Syros (6th cent B.C.) is also alleged to have attempted to allegorise Homer's poems.²⁰

Metrodorus of Lampsacus (5th cent. B.C.) is yet another allegorical interpreter, maybe the most thorough-going of them all. According to his views, Agamemnon represented the air, Achilles the sun, Helen the earth etc.²¹ He was a pupil of Anaxagoras and is believed to have followed his master on the principle that the subject of Homer's poetry is virtue and justice; as is clear from his effort to interpret the Homeric poems allegorically, Metrodorus used Anaxagoras' cosmology to interpret Homer.²²

Protagoras' attitude towards Homer was included in his view that the early poets (which include Homer, Hesiod and Simonides) in reality were philosophers in disguise, hiding their philosophical truths because they were afraid that their doctrines would be considered offensive.²³ From two preserved fragments of his²⁴ we can conclude that, apart from making linguistic remarks on Homer, he attempted a kind of Homeric criticism that had to do with the poet's compositional techniques.²⁵

N.J. Richardson²⁶ has helped us to cast some light on the obscure figures of rhapsodes like Glaucon and Stesimbrotus of Thasos, who are mentioned along with Metrodorus in a very interesting passage of the *Ion*.²⁷ Glaucon might be thought to have interpreted Homer allegorically, but, as Richardson remarks, after a careful consideration

of all existing evidence, no convincing case for allegory can be made.²⁸ Stesimbrotus' interests, as Richardson points out,²⁹ were both varied and curious: among other things, he seems to have handled mythology in a way connected with mystery and rituals; this could indeed bring us close to the supposition that he may have used allegorisation in general, and of the Homeric poems in particular.³⁰

Antisthenes³¹ is another interesting figure who might have used allegory in his interpretation of Homer.³² As Richardson remarks,³³ the existing evidence permits us to claim that at least he was prepared to interpret a Homeric passage metaphorically, something that brings him close to allegory; nevertheless, all this is different from the system-building of Metrodorus.

But we should not go any further before considering Pythagoras and his school, who seem to have practised Homeric allegorisation on a large scale. To start with, Pythagoras himself is described as having been a pupil of the 'Ομηριδαι,³⁴ and this certainly suggests a strongly Homeric background.³⁵ Furthermore, Pythagoras' criticism of Homer through the famous account of his trip to Hades, where he saw Homer's and Hesiod's punishment, is well-known.³⁶ But this in itself does not prove that Pythagoras rejected Homer - and Hesiod - totally. On the contrary, as has been rightly pointed out,³⁷ Pythagoras' esteem and respect for Homer were clearly considerable. Of course, we cannot be certain of what Homer exactly was for Pythagoras and his early disciples. As R. Lamberton remarks,³⁸ although the *Ilias* and the *Odysea* were used as sacred books by the Pythagoreans, there is no evidence that a systematic early Pythagorean exegesis of Homer, in whole or in part, was ever committed to writing, and the oral tradition is impossible to reconstruct.

Nevertheless, certain ancient sources offer us some interpretations of Homer that can well be called "Pythagorean", in the broader sense of the term.³⁹ Furthermore, evidence from the *Cratylus* on certain etymologies might reflect etymological attempts on

the part of the Pythagoreans.⁴⁰ Finally, late writers, such as Iamblichus and Eustathius, might have preserved Pythagorean allegories of myths, heroes etc, which have a certain Homeric flavour.⁴¹

As far as Plato's own attitude towards Homer is concerned, we must point out his well-known familiarity with Homer and his evident admiration and respect for Homeric poetry. In order to expound and support his doctrines, Plato quotes Homer more frequently than any other ancient writer. Many verbal influences of the Homeric works can be traced in Plato's writings as well;⁴² and yet it was Homer more than any other poet who was bitterly attacked - but not totally rejected - in Books Two and Three and even expelled by the ideal state in Book Ten of the *Respublica*.⁴³ Quite naturally, this contradiction has provoked long discussions both in antiquity and in modern times.⁴⁴

Of course, the problem of Plato's attitude towards Homer is a far-reaching one and many different opinions have been expressed by modern scholars.⁴⁵ T. Gould⁴⁶ gives an account of the interpretative trends of the problem up to his time.

Plato excludes Homer for a number of reasons. It seems to me that one main reason that led Plato to treat Homer and other poets as he did, was his own dialectic. For instance, the arguments he used in Books Two and Three of the *Respublica* were enough to lead him to impose censorship on certain kinds of poetry. Poetry as a whole is not totally rejected up to that stage. I would connect Plato's deeply divided attitude first with the special context of the *Respublica*, and secondly with major issues such as his theological, educational, aesthetic, psychological and cognitive views. Plato was led - or led himself - to the option of banishment because his own views on various related matters pushed him in that direction.

On theological grounds his views on the nature of the divine account for the rejection of poetry, because it lays emphasis on the anthropomorphic aspect of the gods, which he finds impious.⁴⁷

On educational grounds, in the *Leges* he deprives Homer of his prominent place in education. Additionally, Plato's concern to give a model of a well-structured political and ethical system, as well as a significant educational model,⁴⁸ has certainly influenced the way he treated the function of art in his model-state. But it was not only the function of art that was seen as part of an educational context: Plato's trouble seems to have had deeper roots. It was Plato himself who referred to the "ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy".⁴⁹ As a philosopher, Plato had numerous complaints against the poets⁵⁰ and an extreme attitude towards poetry is more understandable from the point of view of a philosopher, whose aim was to give a model of living and thinking, according to the absolute philosophical truth. But it was not only the poets who gave Plato trouble: it has rightly been pointed out⁵¹ that the Sophists and the way they laid claim on education were also included in Plato's "ancient quarrel".⁵²

On psychological grounds, the fact that Plato in the *Respublica* defined art in general and poetry in particular as applicable not to the intellect, but to the lower part of the soul, which is passionate and can frustrate the intellect, certainly did not leave him the choice to permit the existence of such a dangerous thing in his ideal state.⁵³

On cognitive grounds, his definition of imitation (*μιμησις*) in Book Ten, set the matter on a new basis: the artist-imitator was considered to be at the third remove from truth, and therefore his works render the vision of the world of Forms impossible.⁵⁴

On aesthetic grounds, the theme of inspiration seems to have troubled Plato in many of his works.⁵⁵ Of course, inspiration was clearly associated with poetry before Plato; and yet, the concept of poetic inspiration, which is closely connected with *ἐνθουσιασμός* and therefore, being out of control, leads Plato to condemn poetry, seems to be his own creation.⁵⁶ The very fact that the inspired poet is irrational, as well as Plato's opinion that the poet lacks knowledge of the things he speaks of, led him to consider poetical inspiration another "dangerous" theme for the philosopher.

Aristotle, by contrast, who kept his distance from Plato on many points, held a different attitude, as far as poetry in general and Homer in particular were concerned. First, his definitions of μίμησις⁵⁷ and κάθαρσις,⁵⁸ as exposed in the *De arte poetica*, reveal the vast difference between his own and Plato's treatment of poetry.⁵⁹ Then, we must bear in mind that Aristotle did not regard the "ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy" as something that could not be overcome; consequently, he had a far more balanced attitude towards the issues that had troubled Plato.⁶⁰

As far as Aristotle's treatment of Homer is concerned, Richardson⁶¹ convincingly argues that his lost work *Homerica zetemata* (frs. 142-179 Rose) must reflect the whole tradition of the text down to Aristotle's time, as well as his own observations on it.⁶² If, along with Richardson,⁶³ we consider the *Homerica zetemata* as "a preliminary ground-clearing exercise of a practical kind in preparation for the more theoretical approach of the *Ars Poetica*", we shall not be disappointed: in the *De arte poetica*, more than in any other of Aristotle's works, we can see how he regarded poetry in general and Homer in particular. Although Aristotle clearly preferred tragedy to epic,⁶⁴ it is evident that, in Richardson's words, "his immense admiration for Homer as a poet shines through this work again and again".⁶⁵ Finally, Aristotle's lost work *De poetis* and its recent reconstruction should also be mentioned as a major contribution to Aristotle's interest in and admiration of poetry, as well as to the distance he obviously kept from Plato on that matter.⁶⁶

At this point we should examine the impact that Aristotle's Homeric scholarship had on the scholars of the Hellenistic period;⁶⁷ we shall also turn to the fate of Homer at this time.

The importance of the Hellenistic age for the transmission, as well as for the interpretation, of the Homeric texts is widely known.⁶⁸ Quite naturally, the two great centres of scholarship, Alexandria and Pergamum, showed great interest in Homer. We

can bear in mind that the Museum of Alexandria gave priority to the compilation and edition of the ancient Greek texts, while the scholars of Pergamum had wider-ranging interests.⁶⁹ Aristarchus, maybe the best-known of the Alexandrian scholars, seems to have treated Homer in a purely philological way: his greatest contribution was the maintenance of the quality of the Homeric text. Aristarchus in fact edited the Homeric texts, using methods such as atheteses, emendation etc. and putting into practice the famous principle Ὁμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν (elucidate Homer from Homer).⁷⁰ His rival Crates, who belonged to the school of Pergamum, faced Homer from another perspective. His treatment of Homer, apart from being philological,⁷¹ is to be placed in the context of his cosmological interests: under that perspective, he discussed Homeric astronomy and geography. But what is also important is his allegorical treatment of Homer, which, while it should not be considered as identical to that of Metrodorus, can nevertheless be identified with some degree of certainty.⁷²

Generally speaking, as we should expect, the tradition of Homeric criticism on the one hand, and, on the other, the allegorical explanations either of his poems as a whole or of parts of them, persisted through the Hellenistic age to late Antiquity.⁷³ The polemic against Homer, for example, found expression in the work of the Epicureans.⁷⁴ Heraclitus, the writer of the work *Quaestiones Homericae* (or *Allegoriae*), is yet another writer who considered Homer allegorically. As F. Buffière pointed out,⁷⁵ in his treatment of Homer, Heraclitus used three types of exegesis: moral, physical and historical. His main concern seems to have been to save Homer from Plato's criticism and from Epicurean disagreement. Although our information concerning Heraclitus' philosophical affiliations is almost non-existent, it seems that both Buffière⁷⁶ and A.A. Long⁷⁷ seem to be right in not regarding him as a Stoic.⁷⁸ Ps.-Plutarch's *De Homero* makes use of allegory, in order to prove that every philosophical school as well as every art has its roots in Homer.⁷⁹ Ps.-Plutarch's influences from Stoicism and

Neopythagoreanism are also traceable.⁸⁰

The Stoics, in particular, are traditionally believed to have made extensive use of the allegorical interpretation of Homer.⁸¹ Until very recently, it was a generally acknowledged fact that the etymologies of the Stoics involved elements of allegorisation.⁸² Long in a recent article⁸³ has argued that the etymologies used by the Stoics did not involve any allegorisation. His arguments heavily rely on a) the distinction between the notions of weak and strong allegory, b) his above-mentioned opinion that Heraclitus was not a Stoic,⁸⁴ c) his interpretation of Cicero's *De natura deorum* 1.41 and 2.63-72 and d) the lack of evidence from Cornutus, Zeno, Chrysippus and Cleanthes that would prove them to be allegorists. His conclusion is that it is only a common fallacy that the Stoics were allegorists: what passes under the name of allegorisation is the Stoic interpretation of myth. This interpretation is achieved via etymologies, which do not constitute allegories.

To criticise Long's views in detail would take us much further than the aims of this section would allow. Nevertheless, some of Long's points are rather convincing.⁸⁵ It is certain that scholars should take extra care before giving the name of "allegory" to the etymologies found in many cosmological readings of certain myths.⁸⁶ Long's views on Cornutus must be taken into account; but still, there are minor reservations as to whether Cornutus was an allegorist or not.⁸⁷ As far as his arguments concerning Chrysippus are concerned, I feel more at home with P. Steinmetz's point that Chrysippus followed Cleanthes' allegorical method in at least one case.⁸⁸ Additionally, Long overlooks Steinmetz's point that Zeno did not treat Homer allegorically, but did so treat Hesiod.⁸⁹ The differences between Homer and Hesiod pointed out by Long are not necessarily sufficient to exclude some possibility of a kind of allegorical interpretation of Homer by Zeno. And, methodologically speaking, the distinction between strong and weak allegory is certainly convenient for us, and is also accepted by the majority of modern scholars; but

this in itself does not prove that the ancient writers shared our views concerning this distinction.

Long's article has helped us to be much more careful in our consideration of the Stoics as allegorists; the Stoics' contribution towards the allegorical method of interpretation should not be over-estimated.⁹⁰ In my opinion, the matter is not yet closed; what is certain is the fact that the Stoics used methods of Homeric and Hesiodic interpretation that influenced to a greater or a lesser extent the later interpreters of Homer. Evidence such as that of Philodemus' *De Pietate* pushes the matter of allegory further and indicates that it is far from being considered as closed.

As Lamberton remarks,⁹¹ the tradition of mystical allegorical commentary on Homer has survived in a substantial form only in the writings of the Neoplatonists, but evidence from the first two and half centuries of the Christian era indicates that this period was a crucial one for the development of this tradition. One of the most important figures of this era is Numenius, a shadowy and enigmatic Pythagorean of the mid-to-late second century A.D.⁹² Numenius' use of Homer was twofold: on the one hand he adapted the vocabulary and style of Homer in passages where he acted as a polemical historian of philosophy,⁹³ and on the other hand he used the method of allegorisation extensively in his philosophical writings.⁹⁴

Plotinus mentioned Homer directly in his work. He made some 40 quotations, plus some adaptations of certain passages in the *Enneadae*. Moreover, Cilento and Lamberton have traced certain words and phrases that may evoke a specific Homeric episode.⁹⁵ We also have an interesting symbolism of a theme from the *Odyssea* at *Enn.* I 6,8: Plotinus holds that Homer conveys a hidden meaning, when he mentions that Odysseus wished to escape from Circe and Calypso, this meaning being that Homer presented Odysseus as not content with the deceptive delights of the material world and wishing to travel to the origin of all people, which is the immaterial world, the only true world. This evidence is

not adequate to let us conclude that Homer was considered by Plotinus to be a philosopher; it rather means that Plotinus was aware of the tradition of Homer meaning - or being interpreted to mean - things other than the literal meaning of the poems.⁹⁶ J. P  pin has also contributed to our understanding of Plotinus' attitude towards Homer - and Hesiod - not as philosophers, but as poets, whose works helped him to express his thoughts.⁹⁷

Plotinus' disciple, Porphyry, is a most interesting case, not only for his important and influential work *Quaestiones Homericae*,⁹⁸ but also for his allegorical interpretation of a whole passage of the *Odyssea*. His monograph *De antro Nympharum* is a unique example of how Homer used to be read and explained by allegorists.⁹⁹ It has rightly been noted that Numenius' influence on Porphyry's essay on the cave of Nymphs has been considerable.¹⁰⁰ P  pin holds that Porphyry's allegory is both philosophical and physical,¹⁰¹ and also remarks that Porphyry's allegorical treatment did not exclude the historicity of the epics.¹⁰² Porphyry's allegory presents certain problems of unity, which might have been deliberate,¹⁰³ but still it is valuable in relation to the history of Homeric allegories for many reasons.¹⁰⁴ Last but not least, significant references to Homer have been traced in fragments of Porphyry preserved in Stobaeus.¹⁰⁵

Iamblichus, on the other hand, did not follow either his master Porphyry or the existing Stoic tradition in the appreciation of Homer and his works.¹⁰⁶ In fact, in his works we find an almost complete lack of concern for the interpretation of early poetry.¹⁰⁷ Thus, the Neoplatonic tradition did not exploit the rich Homeric material to the extent that was possible; the extensive treatment of Homer started again with the masters of the School of Athens, i.e. Syrianus and Proclus.

1.2 The works of Syrianus: the current state of research

The surviving works of Syrianus are his commentaries on a) Hermogenes' *De Ideis* and *De Statibus* (together they form the *In Hermogenem* commentary), b) Plato's *Phaedrus* c) books B, Γ, M and N of Aristotle's *Metaphysica* and d) Aristotle's *Organon* (surviving in fragmentary form).¹⁰⁸

The main issues relevant to the works of Syrianus are the following:

- i) Whether Proclus and Syrianus wrote works under the same titles.
- ii) Whether Syrianus the Sophist to whom the *In Hermogenem* work is attributed is identical with the philosopher Syrianus, son of Philoxenus.
- iii) To what extent the *In Phaedrum* commentary attributed to Hermias is based on Syrianus' teaching and can be regarded as a reliable source of Syrianus.
- iv) Whether Syrianus' *In Metaphysica* included commentary on more than the four surviving books.
- v) What Syrianus' monographs on Homer were about.

In particular:

- i) Syrianus wrote a large number of works, the majority of which has been lost. In the *Suda* s.v. Συριανός we read:

*Εγραψεν
Εἰς Ὅμηρον ὅλον ὑπόμνημα ἐν βιβλίοις ζ'.
Εἰς τὴν Πολιτείαν Πλάτωνος βιβλία δ'.
Εἰς τὴν Ὁρφέως Θεολογίαν βιβλία β'.
[Εἰς τὰ Πρόκλου] Περὶ τῶν παρ' Ὁμήρω θεῶν.¹⁰⁹
Συμφωνίαν Ὁρφέως, Πυθαγόρου καὶ Πλάτωνος περὶ τὰ λόγια,
βιβλία δέκα
καὶ ἄλλα τινὰ ἐξηγητικά.

None of the existing works of Syrianus is mentioned in the *Suda* catalogue, but they are presumably included in the ἄλλα τινὰ ἐξηγητικά.¹¹⁰

Moreover, in the *Suda* we find more or less the same titles attributed to Proclus as well. To be more specific, s.v. Πρόκλος we read:

Ἔγραψε πάνυ πολλά, φιλόσοφα καὶ γραμματικά.
Ἑπόμνημα εἰς ὄλον τὸν Ὅμηρον.
Ἑπόμνημα εἰς τὰ Ἡσιόδου Ἔργα καὶ ἡμέρας.
Περὶ χρηστομαθείας βιβλία γ'.
Περὶ ἀγωγῆς β'.
Εἰς τὴν Πολιτείαν Πλάτωνος βιβλία δ'.
Εἰς τὴν Ὀρφέως Θεολογίαν.
Συμφωνίαν Ὀρφέως, Πυθαγόρου καὶ Πλάτωνος περὶ τὰ λόγια,
βιβλία ι'.
Περὶ τῶν παρ' Ὀμήρῳ θεῶν (...)

Some scholars have attributed all the common titles to Proclus, while some others to Syrianus. Those who consider Proclus to have been the writer of the works claim that in the *Suda* there has been a direct transfer from Proclus' section to Syrianus'.¹¹¹

On the other hand, K. Praechter, arguing that it is not probable that both the master and the disciple wrote works with the same titles, attributed them to Syrianus. The way Praechter thought the mistake was made is the following: the whole list of Syrianus' works was transferred into Proclus' section.¹¹² Criticising this view, Sheppard¹¹³ says that Praechter is wrong to assume that Proclus and Syrianus cannot both have written works with the same titles; her argument is that the evidence of Marinus, concerning how Proclus' commentaries were created, as well as the nature of ancient school tradition in general, makes it not so improbable. Nevertheless, Sheppard accepts that Praechter does present a good case for at least giving the *Suda* list a hearing as evidence for Syrianus' works; but she remains sceptical towards Praechter's argument that the whole list of writings in the *Suda* has been transferred from Syrianus to Proclus, and not *vice versa*.

More recently, H.-D. Saffrey¹¹⁴ suggested that the *Suda*'s attribution of the work *Συμφωνία Ὀρφέως, Πυθαγόρου καὶ Πλάτωνος περὶ τὰ λόγια* to Proclus means that Syrianus' work was elaborated and perhaps edited by Proclus. Lastly, Cardullo¹¹⁵ points out that the list of Syrianus' works is both incomplete and also suspect.

It seems that we cannot give an adequate answer to the problem, as we lack sufficient evidence to do so. But the fact that either the master Syrianus or the disciple Proclus did direct his attention to themes that surely involved the Homeric poems can be used as evidence to suggest Syrianus' interest in and respect for the long Homeric tradition.

ii) The manuscript tradition attributes the *In Hermogenem* to Syrianus the Sophist, and not to Syrianus, son of Philoxenus. H. Rabe¹¹⁶ argues that probably Syrianus first earned his living as a sophist, i.e. a teacher of rhetoric, and then turned to philosophy. He also brings textual evidence from this commentary to show that the words "sophist" and "philosopher" are treated as synonyms.¹¹⁷

We could add at this point that Plutarch himself, whom Syrianus succeeded in the chair of the Academy in Athens, was called "the Sophist".¹¹⁸

The problem whether Syrianus the Sophist and Syrianus, son of Philoxenus, are identical could be further complicated by the reference to the "divine Proclus" at *In Hermogenem* II 47.18; but this reference is regarded by Rabe as a later interpolation, since it is in the margin of the Codex Venetus, seems to have crept into the text of the Codex Messanensis, and is not referred to at all in the scholia of Aldus.

Cardullo¹¹⁹ recently questioned Rabe's arguments, on the basis of Syrianus' age: she argues that, even if we, along with Rabe, attribute the stylistic and other differences between rhetorical and philosophical works to the diversity of material, Rabe's argument concerning Syrianus' age when he wrote the commentary is not very convincing. She holds that, as the *In Hermogenem* is dedicated by Syrianus to "his son Alexander", Rabe's claim that it is an early work is weakened. But we do not think that this argument is put in a right basis: we may accept that Syrianus was a teacher of rhetoric and then turned to philosophy at a later stage of his life. Thus, he may well have had a son when he quit rhetoric for the sake of philosophy. After all, he died in 432, only five years after he had

succeeded Plutarch: he could well have been middle-aged.

In any case, at the time of Syrianus it was not unusual for a philosopher to be a teacher of rhetoric, for the relation between rhetoric and philosophy was quite close.¹²⁰ Damascius, or even Philoponus, who, apart from being a Neoplatonic philosopher, was also known as a grammarian (γραμματικός),¹²¹ were involved with rhetoric. In the *In Phaedrum* exegesis Syrianus uses rhetorical terms to describe the different styles Plato used in the *Phaedrus*.¹²² Syrianus did sometimes make literary and rhetorical comments on Plato, which is something we should expect from a teacher of rhetoric who later turned to philosophy.¹²³

iii) Syrianus did not himself write down the text of the lessons in which he commented on the *Phaedrus*; nevertheless, his pupil Hermias recorded those lessons ἀπὸ φωνῆς (from his teacher's voice), as he states at the beginning of his work.¹²⁴ According to Marinus,¹²⁵ the *Phaedrus* was included in the syllabus of the preparatory dialogues of the Academy of Athens, where Syrianus taught.

There are five issues which should be examined concerning the authorship of this commentary:

a. Damascius' views about Hermias are crucial since he claimed that Hermias lacked not the zeal but the originality of thought to develop ideas of his own. In his own words (*Vita Isidori*, fr. 120 = *The philosophical History*, fr. 54 Athanassiadi):¹²⁶

οὗτος ὁ φιλόσοφος, ἐπιεικῆς φύσει καὶ ἀπλοῦς τὸ ἦθος, φιλοσοφήσας δὲ ὑπὸ τῷ μεγάλῳ Συριανῷ, φιλοπονία μὲν οὐδενὸς ἐλείπετο τῶν ἐταίρων, οὐδὲ αὐτοῦ γε συνακροωμένου τοῦ πάνυ Πρόκλου <τοῦ διαδόχου> γεγονότος ὕστερον· οὐδὲ ξρωτος μαθημάτων, οἷα παρέχεται φιλοσοφία τῷ ὄντι ἀξιέραστα. ἀγγίνους δὲ καὶ ὄξυς <οὔτι> σφόδρα ἦν <...>

Praechter, using Damascius as a source, concludes that Hermias' commentary can be used as a faithful account of Syrianus' lessons. Praechter alleges that Hermias did not have any originality of thought, in spite of the fact that he had at his disposal everything that existed in Syrianus' exegesis and everything that he himself had read.¹²⁷

At this point, we should perhaps consider Damascius' reliability. The first problem is the crucial word <οὔτι>, which is the editor's emendation, based on Photius' epitome.¹²⁸ Of course, this is not the only point at which the text may have been corrupted; and in any case, it seems to be reasonable to supply οὔτι, as the syntax of the passage implies (especially the word δὲ in the beginning of the clause, most probably introducing an antithesis).

It is a sad fact, then, that this crucial point is not as clear as we would like it to be; nevertheless, we can accept the editor's emendation for an extra reason: apart from being in accordance with the syntax of the passage, as we already mentioned, the emendation is also based on Photius' epitome, which is considered to preserve the original text of Damascius.¹²⁹ We should also add that P. Athanassiadi has chosen the οὔτι (without any brackets) as the correct reading in her own edition.

But the most serious problem of the text in question is Damascius' reliability as a source, as Damascius' information can often be misleading. Some of the judgments in the *Vita Isidori* (or, rather, *The Philosophical History*) do not do justice to the writers or the philosophers in question. Perhaps the most convincing example is the notorious comment on Ammonius.¹³⁰

H. Bernard has tried to discredit Damascius' evidence on Hermias, on the grounds of his own character and tactics: according to her, Damascius tended to maximise details, as well as to accuse some people, who did not in fact deserve it. Hermias and Theagenes are examples of the tendency of false accusations.¹³¹ Furthermore, according to Bernard, the fragmentary character of Damascius' work is also a factor that renders him unreliable as a source.

From this perspective, Damascius' evidence on Hermias may appear weaker, i.e. less reliable. But still, we cannot prove that it is untrue. In other words, Damascius and Marinus are the only ancient sources we have at our disposal. Moreover, Damascius'

opinion on Hermias is not contradicted by another contemporary writer, as in the case of Theagenes, who is in fact praised by Marinus. Moreover, there are no other works of Hermias that are known to us, even by name, to speak for their writer's cleverness. As we are unaware of other philosophical works of Hermias, or of an intellectual activity that could prove his originality of thought, we cannot but accept Damascius' view. After all, in terms of chronology, he is close to Syrianus and Hermias.¹³² As to Damascius' tendency to maximise details, we do not think that this is a factor that renders his evidence about Hermias weaker. And definitely the fragmentary nature of Damascius' work cannot discredit the reliability of his evidence, as he is the closest source in terms of chronology.

b. Possible instances of Syrianus' terminology in the *In Phaedrum* (ὕστερογενής, κοινότητες and κατατεταγμένος) are also to be found in Syrianus' *In Metaphysica*. This internal evidence was claimed to suggest that the whole commentary is nothing other than an account of the exegesis of the *Phaedrus* by Syrianus, a student book from the time when Hermias was studying in Athens.¹³³

At this point, however, we can say that the likeness in terminology is not, in itself, much of an argument for the *In Phaedrum* deriving from Syrianus, as there is a tendency among late Neoplatonists to use a common philosophical terminology. Nevertheless, the argument, if examined in the context of Praechter's views, is not totally without value, for it gives emphasis to a similarity that could be owed to the close relationship between Hermias and Syrianus.

c. There is internal textual evidence suggesting the presence of a class in which Proclus and Hermias were included.¹³⁴

External evidence from Proclus himself confirms that the *Phaedrus* was indeed in Syrianus' syllabus. The evidence from Proclus for the interpretation of words like δικαιοσύνη, as well as his concept of deities of μέση τάξις prove for Praechter that

Hermias did not alter his master's ideas.

Bernard has discussed the *In Phaedrum* 92.6-27, 148.8-13 and 154.21ff. in detail.¹³⁵ In her effort to prove Hermias' originality as a thinker, she says nothing about the fact that the questions posed at the beginning of the passages are undeniable evidence of the presence of a class, including at least Hermias and Proclus, in which the *Phaedrus* was analysed. On the contrary, she examines Syrianus' answers from a philosophical point of view, in an attempt that aims to prove the independence of Hermias as a commentator from Syrianus, but this point has nothing to do with the undeniable fact that during the analysis of the *Phaedrus* the students asked questions and the teacher answered them.¹³⁶

The athetesis of the whole passage *In Phaedrum* 8.4-14 by Couvreur is questioned by Praechter. In these particular lines there is a brief account of the two main topics of the dialogue, i.e the nature of love and the rhetorical exhortation to Phaedrus. Couvreur considers that the passage just repeats what has already been said; but that is the reason why Praechter regards the passage as original and as proof of the oral structure of Syrianus' lessons. Moreover, Praechter rightly points out repetition, which is due to the fact that Syrianus was teaching, is found again at 8.16ff. and 10.27ff.

d. The method of interpretation Hermias uses is a further proof of his dependence, this time on Iamblichus, and therefore of his lack of originality. The method of the *In Phaedrum* exegesis, which is a work of Hermias' youth, allows him to be a part of a chain that will lead to the school of Alexandria; it is Iamblichus who begins this tradition. It is not surprising, then, to see him being treated as "divine". The Platonic texts are interpreted θεωρητικῶς or θεωρητικώτερον; the Iamblichean expression νοερὰ θεωρία is familiar to Hermias.¹³⁷ Hermias, like Iamblichus, also combined moral with physical and metaphysical notions, as we see at *In Phaedrum* 28.24ff.

It is probable then that Hermias did not have originality of his own, but used - or

elaborated - methods of interpretation that others had used before. Nevertheless, Praechter does not consider that it is perhaps Syrianus who used this method, and Hermias just followed his teacher rather than Iamblichus directly, as all existing evidence suggests that he would.

Concerning Hermias' dependence on Iamblichus there is another view.¹³⁸ P.A. Bielmeier, among other valuable remarks concerning Hermias' work, touches two major points that are relevant to the problem we discuss:

First, he remarks that Hermias and Syrianus must be regarded as an intellectual unity in the history of the interpretation of the *Phaedrus*.¹³⁹ Then, he examines Damascius' evidence concerning Hermias, places Hermias' book in the works ἀπὸ φωνῆς and, using passages of Hermias' text, rightly concludes that the teaching method of Syrianus was a combination of lectures and dialogue between the teacher and his students, which Hermias accurately wrote down. The oral structure of many passages is, according to Bielmeier, further evidence that Hermias' exegesis is a report of Syrianus' lessons. Repetitions, grammatical types and oral structure patterns, as well as the beginning of the exegesis are cited as examples.¹⁴⁰ So, Bielmeier reaches the conclusion that there can be little - if any - doubt that Hermias' *In Phaedrum* is the writing up of Syrianus' systematic interpretation of this school text.

However, Bielmeier also draws attention to the degree of elaboration and expansion of the exegesis: in fact, he traces Iamblichean elements in the exegesis and attributes them not to the intellectual heritage of Iamblichus, but to the re-writing of the commentary by Hermias, who added elements from Iamblichus to Syrianus' work. The main arguments that Bielmeier uses are the following: as Damascius says, Hermias had at his disposal everything that Syrianus had written; it is very likely that "the diligent collector Hermias" had other literary works as well, including, of course, Iamblichus' *In Phaedrum*, but lacked the critical spirit to make a balanced use of the elements of both

commentaries, the one by Iamblichus and the other by Syrianus. According to Bielmeier, the Iamblichean elements that can be traced in some parts of the exegesis do not belong to Syrianus himself, but to Hermias. He suggests that the style of Syrianus' *In Metaphysica* proves that if Syrianus had drawn upon Iamblichus, he would have incorporated Iamblichean elements in his exegesis in a more elaborate way.

In any case, as far as the presence of the Iamblichean elements in the *In Phaedrum* commentary is concerned, it has been shown that Syrianus incorporated important Iamblichean principles in the *In Metaphysica* commentary as well.¹⁴¹ Hence, there is no reason to suppose that Syrianus himself did not use the Iamblichean elements in the *In Phaedrum* commentary; the degree of the incorporation of those elements in an exegesis may well vary for different reasons (if the commentary has undergone a second rewriting etc.).

Back to Bielmeier: the passages he cites as evidence of the actual Iamblichean influence on the exegesis can hardly be doubted;¹⁴² but the possibility that it was Hermias who used this material independently seems weak, as the whole theory lays ^{νέει} on pure hypothesis. Additionally, the nature of the commentary ἀπὸ φωνῆς can well include some inconsistencies or double-meanings of words on the part of a teacher, whose main goal was to help his students understand the deep meaning of the dialogue.¹⁴³

C. Moreschini¹⁴⁴ tries to prove that Hermias does have some originality and that he is not as indebted to Syrianus as he is believed to be. He argues that authorities other than Syrianus, such as the *Oracula Chaldaica* and the Orphics, could have played a role in Hermias' thought. But this suggestion is not plausible, as we know that Syrianus himself had been influenced by those authorities, as it appears from his commentary *In Metaphysica*, which was written down by Syrianus himself. Moreschini does not examine this commentary at all.¹⁴⁵

Moreschini then brings forward a further argument to prove Hermias' originality:

he points out that the exegesis *In Phaedrum* is divided into three parts and that the part which is most stressed is the one on metaphysics. But all this seems to be more or less speculative, as it could well have been Syrianus who preferred this division and stressed the metaphysical part. Lastly, Moreschini argues that Hermias perceives "Platonic love" in a way that could show his independence from his master, Syrianus. But his arguments do not show that Hermias is not a reliable source of Syrianus' method of teaching and of his philosophical ideas, as none of the examples he cites is strong enough to prove that Hermias had a significant originality of thought. In addition to this, the devotion and respect Hermias evidently had for his master, if taken into account along with the restricted abilities which, according to Damascius, he had as a philosopher, makes it improbable that Hermias deviated from Syrianus' arguments or teaching methods.¹⁴⁶

v

The Iamblichean character of the work has also been stressed by Bernard.¹⁴⁷ Bernard rightly acknowledges the fact that the commentary depends on Iamblichean doctrines, but is too unwilling to attribute this dependence to Syrianus himself. She therefore considers this dependence as a further proof of Hermias' originality. In my opinion, we are not in the position to deny the Iamblichean influences to this very work, but this does not mean that we cannot accept that it was Syrianus who was responsible for that. After all, Iamblichus' eminent place for all the Neoplatonists after him is an undeniable fact.

e. Another issue is whether material from Hermias' Alexandrian lectures is included in the *In Phaedrum*.¹⁴⁸ The unreliability of Damascius as a source was put forward, on the grounds that Damascius deliberately underestimated a number of philosophers, in order to make Isidore look superior. It was also argued that if Hermias did lecture on the *Phaedrus* in Alexandria it is improbable that he merely reproduced his teacher's lessons. Proclus' sixth essay on the *Respublica* was also put forth as evidence that the politeness of a pupil towards his master may have well prevented him from

stating his own ideas on a topic on which his master had previously written an essay.

In my opinion, the argument referring to the lectures in Alexandria is weak, as nothing obliges us to accept that Hermias made notes of his own for the sake of these lessons. But, even if this is for a moment taken as a fact, there is no evidence that this is the version that has come down to us. Moreover, the argument that Proclus did not specifically mention that the ideas of the sixth essay of the *Respublica* are his own is not valuable either, as I do not think that, right as the case seems on a theoretical basis, we can compare Proclus' original and unquestionable abilities to Hermias'; after all, no source refers to any other work of Hermias (and that is unlikely to have its roots in Damascius' preference for certain philosophers).

To sum up: the lack of other works (or even work-titles) attributed to Hermias is, in our opinion, one of the strongest points that prevent us from acknowledging Hermias' originality and make us regard the work as a more or less accurate account of Syrianus' lessons and philosophical ideas. Moreover, we can by no means ignore Damascius, as he is not contradicted by any other ancient source. On the other hand, the text we have at our disposal, being no more than a teacher's effort to familiarise his students with the Platonic text, accounts for inconsistencies, repetitions etc. on Syrianus' part. Consequently, the commentary we have can - in my opinion - be regarded as an adequate source of Syrianus' thoughts and ideas.

iv) This issue seems nearly impossible to answer: Syrianus' *In Metaphysica* includes the philosopher's comments on books B, Γ, M and N only. Does this imply that he wrote a commentary only on these four books? D.J. O' Meara¹⁴⁹ has dealt with the problem and has shown that, if we consider the nature of the things discussed in the extant books, there is a probability that Syrianus did not cover all parts of Aristotle's work; nevertheless, O'Meara himself acknowledges that external evidence from Asclepius' *In Metaphysica* indicates that Syrianus may have commented on other books, as well

(almost certainly Z and possibly A). Cardullo¹⁵⁰ also believes that those four books have not been selected without a certain purpose: Syrianus chose them because they would give him the chance to express his opposition to Aristotle; after all, Cardullo points out that Syrianus himself declares that the rest has been explained by Alexander of Aphrodisias. But Cardullo also argues that Syrianus had commented on other parts of the *Metaphysica*, and her suggestion is that at least Z should be included in the list of books he commented on.

v) Syrianus' monographs on Homer are a fact; we know that he had dedicated a special monograph on Zeus' and Hera's union on Mount Ida¹⁵¹, and we also know that he composed a work bearing the title *Λύσεις τῶν ὁμηρικῶν προβλημάτων*.¹⁵² But, ^{are ignorant of} as we ~~ignore~~ their exact contents, we can only rely on Proclus and maybe on some dim evidence from the extant works of Syrianus, in order to reach some conclusions on the matter. And as the subject of this thesis is the Homeric tradition in Syrianus, any evidence concerning Syrianus' treatment of Homer in those two works will be discussed in both the course of the analysis of the Homeric passages we find in his extant works and in the conclusions of the thesis.

1.3 Syrianus' philosophical system

This section is based on previous scholarship and does not lay claim to originality; nevertheless, it was considered necessary in order to give a global picture of Syrianus, to the extent that something of this kind is possible. Syrianus' extant works, as well as the information we get from his disciple Proclus, help us reconstruct his philosophical ideas. Praechter¹⁵³ has contributed a lot to our understanding of Syrianus' system, and more recently Sheppard,¹⁵⁴ Cardullo,¹⁵⁵ R. Sinkewicz¹⁵⁶ and E. Tempelis¹⁵⁷ have elucidated important aspects of his doctrines.

First of all, we should say that our primary sources for Syrianus' philosophical doctrines are his commentaries *In Metaphysica* and *In Phaedrum* (transmitted under the name of Hermias, but still a sufficient source of Syrianus' teaching, as we have seen above), as well as Proclus' works *In Timaeum* and *Institutio theologica*.

Concerning Proclus, it is difficult to distinguish to what extent Proclus refers to doctrines of Syrianus or expounds his own views.¹⁵⁸ Proclus praises Syrianus as particularly influenced by Neoplatonic theories on the divine.¹⁵⁹ In his own exegesis,¹⁶⁰ Syrianus emphasizes the theological element and accuses Aristotle of not adequately understanding the theological meaning of a certain theory.

The metaphysical system of Syrianus is clearly Neoplatonic, as can be seen from the study of his work.¹⁶¹ At the top of Syrianus' metaphysical system is the supra-substantial One. Then follow the orders of intelligible, intellectual and physical (otherwise living or bodily) substances.¹⁶²

Like all Neoplatonists, Syrianus regarded the supra-substantial One to be the supreme principle of everything, the source of all goodness and unity.¹⁶³ It is from the One that the two cosmic principles, i.e. the Monad and the Dyad, derive. These two

principles, with their different substantiations, govern all reality, the material world included.¹⁶⁴

Monad is the cause of identity and eternal life, unity, equality, purity and rest. From this transcendent Monad derives a series of consecutive monads, each different from the others, which are responsible for the establishment of the particular classes of beings. These monads secure the unity and continuity of the Universe. Consequently, their energy reaches the lowest level of reality.¹⁶⁵

On the other hand, the Dyad is the metaphysical cause of creation and multiplicity, not only of beings in the intelligible world (gods, intellects, souls), but also of all beings in the sensible world. Due to its indefiniteness, the Dyad is responsible for inequality of all kinds and for the existence of all pairs of opposites.¹⁶⁶

The contrast between the Monad and the Dyad is fundamental in Syrianus' metaphysical system. Syrianus was convinced that the same kind of contrast was present in the metaphysical systems of the Orphics, the Pythagoreans, Empedocles and Plato. The use of different terminology by the above mentioned philosophers was attributed by Syrianus to the inadequacy of human language to denote each cosmic principle with one term; philosophers, therefore, use only symbolical names. In essence, a complete knowledge of these cosmic principles is not possible. A human being can only know the fact that they exist as suprasubstantial principles, from which everything derives.¹⁶⁷

Even though the One and the Monad were for Syrianus the source of goodness, it does not follow that the Dyad was the transcendent principle of evil. Such a principle does not exist; the roots of evil are in the weakness and feebleness of those human souls which are not susceptible to participating in goodness either at all or to a large extent.¹⁶⁸ The Dyad is only indirectly responsible for the existence of evil, in that it is responsible for the otherness and multiplicity which characterise the material world as well. Not even matter was considered as the principle of evil, since matter, too, receives

emanations from the One.¹⁶⁹

According to Proclus, it was Syrianus who introduced the theory about the Henads into Neoplatonic metaphysics. They derive from the One but are not parts or attributes of it. As transcendent causes of individuality, the Henads bridge the gap between the One and everything else. They are identical with the intelligible, intellectual and supra-celestial deities, placed in the First Hypostasis. Syrianus attributes certain qualities to the Henads.¹⁷⁰ Some Henads are self-complete (αὐτοτελείς) and transcend the beings that participate in them. Another kind consists of those Henads which are unions of the beings which participate in them. Generally, each transcendent cause produces a multiplicity which transcends the beings that participate in it and another multiplicity which is inseparable from these beings.¹⁷¹

The Demiurge belongs to the lowest level of intelligible substances and to the highest level of intellectual substances. He has derived indirectly from the One and is the Creator of the world beneath him.¹⁷² The position of the Demiurge between the intelligible and the intellectual plays the role of a link between the two and shows the continuity which is manifested in the progression from a higher to a lower level of reality.¹⁷³

A decisive role in Syrianus' metaphysical system is played by the Demiurge. The sublunary gods assist him in his work and exercise providence for all beings. The Demiurge gives existence to the contents of his intellect and by means of emanations he gives substance, power and perfection to the beings he creates, so that they are as similar to him as possible.¹⁷⁴

Syrianus accepted that there is a plurality in the intelligible and the intellectual worlds. Below the one Demiurge, who is the demiurgic cause of everything, there are three other Demiurges, who have restricted responsibilities as to the creation of the world.¹⁷⁵ The relation between the levels of reality is reciprocal: the divine creates the

material world and exercises providence for it and the material world has an innate desire to be assimilated to the divine.¹⁷⁶

The lowest level in the hierarchy of beings is nature, which is the immediate creator of all natural beings.¹⁷⁷ The material world is created after the Ideas in the Demiurge's intellect, which are the *ante rem* universals. All beings are images of the corresponding Ideas, but no being ever fully receives the emanation from its creative reason-principle. The Ideas pre-exist the Demiurge and constitute divine and good creations of the One. They are not different from the essence of the divine, but they are complementary to it.¹⁷⁸ The Ideas are partless, immutable, intelligible substances, separate from matter. Ideas exist for the universal and perfect substances, but not for anything evil, or for the parts of the natural bodies, or for things which are products of will, chance or dissimilar combinations of natural species.¹⁷⁹ The hierarchy of Ideas is absolute. The more universal Idea is superior to a particular Idea, which is subordinate to it, as for example the idea "Animal" is more universal and superior to the idea "Man".

We have already referred to the Demiurge, who, according to Syrianus, is responsible for the creation of the world, together with the other Demiurges. The cosmic Soul, or the Soul of the Universe, which is immediately below the Demiurges is also creative. Partially above and partially below the cosmic soul are the individual souls of the gods, the heavens, the demons and the humans.¹⁸⁰ The cosmic Soul is linked both with the demiurgic intellect and with the material world.¹⁸¹ The difference between the human souls and the rest is that the human souls only know, while the others know and have the capacity to create what they know.¹⁸² When the human soul is roused and awakened, it comes to a recollection of the cognitive principles it has and refers them to the *ante rem* universals which are the exemplars of all natural beings.¹⁸³

The creation of the world in this way explains the innate tendency of all created beings to elevate themselves to the Demiurge. Their assimilation to the divine is not to

be understood in terms of a *unio mystica* with the divine, because the assimilation is regarded as accomplished when a human being participates in the ideal unity which characterises the divine.¹⁸⁴ When the human soul is assimilated to the divine, it is elevated to the level of the Demiurge and from there it is able to govern the world together with him.¹⁸⁵

CHAPTER 2

2.1 About Syrianus' commentaries on Hermogenes

As is well known, Hermogenes the orator, who lived in the 2nd century A.D., started exercising his profession at the age of fifteen, and became so famous that Marcus Aurelius went to listen to him in Antioch.¹⁸⁶ Five works under his name have been preserved: *Progymnasmata*, *De Methodo Vehementiae*, *De Inventione*, *De Statibus* and *De Ideis*. The last two works, unanimously considered as genuine,¹⁸⁷ are most interesting for us, because Syrianus wrote commentaries on them.¹⁸⁸ In Syrianus' commentaries, as in the majority of the works of this kind, there are many references to literary passages of Greek writers, as well as to orators or scholars of the Hellenistic age.¹⁸⁹

Syrianus' commentary *In de Ideis* is divided into two books and is a line-by-line commentary, which takes the form of lemmata and notes.¹⁹⁰ We should also like to stress that it is the first commentary on this work of Hermogenes; naturally enough, many others followed, a great number of which belong to the Byzantine era.¹⁹¹ Syrianus' commentary *In de Statibus* has a different structure: after a brief introduction, he discusses the fourteen kinds of stasis in a paraphrase, without references to Hermogenes' text.¹⁹²

Syrianus, as a teacher of rhetoric, praised Hermogenes' books as very useful; besides, as Syrianus clearly stated at the beginning of his commentary on the *De Ideis*, Hermogenes was very highly respected in the 5th century A.D. But Syrianus is of the opinion that the *De Ideis* had not been illuminated rightly, and that was the task he himself undertook, as a teacher of rhetoric.¹⁹³

In his commentary *In de Ideis* we find ten Homeric references (Nos 1-10), while in his commentary *In de Statibus* there are only seven (Nos 11-17).

2.2 Homeric passages in the *In de Ideis*¹⁹⁴

Passage 1 (4.16-22)

In the introduction of his work *De Ideis*, Hermogenes argues that the orator must have more than zeal, in order to be considered as a proper professional; one's natural intelligence, without any theoretical knowledge or training, may lead one to say inappropriately whatever crosses one's mind.¹⁹⁵ Syrianus, commenting on the different human natures, writes at 4.16-22:

ὁ μὲν γὰρ μὴ ὀξὺς τὴν φύσιν ἀγαπᾷ κατὰ τὸν Ὀμηρικὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα ἀτρέμας ἦσθαι καὶ ἄλλων μῦθον ἀκούειν, ὁ δὲ τῷ τάχει τῆς φύσεως πεποιθῶς καὶ μόνην αὐτὴν πρὸς ἕκαστα τῶν ἐγχειρουμένων ἀποχρῆν οἰόμενος τὸν τε παρὰ τῆς τέχνης χαλινὸν οὐκ ἀνεχόμενος καταγέλαστος πολλαχῆ τοῖς ἐπιστήμοσι φαίνεται.

The question here is of the training the orator should have: the person who is not particularly intelligent by nature sits and listens to the opinions of others, while the one who is over-confident of his own mental agility goes beyond the limits and becomes laughable to the experts. Syrianus obviously has in mind *Il.* II 200, where Odysseus says to any of the ordinary Achaeans behaving disorderly in the rush to the ships:

δαιμόνιε, ἀτρέμας ἦσο καὶ ἄλλων μῦθον ἄκουε

Syrianus' point seems to be the following: people who are not very clever should be willing to listen patiently to the others, in the way Odysseus advises the Achaeans to be calm and listen. Syrianus actually quotes a verse from the *Iliad*, in order to illuminate the character of a hero to whom the whole *Odyssey* is dedicated; but this is probably due to the familiarity of the students with the *Iliad*, and especially the early books, more than with any other ancient Greek literary text. And, in any case, Odysseus, apart from being the main hero of the *Odyssey*, played, as a character, an important role in the *Iliad* as

well. Moreover, Odysseus was particularly well-known as a speaker, and therefore his words were evidently appropriate to quote in a work of rhetoric. We should also bear in mind the context of this part of the *Ilias*: we have the preparation of an assembly, i.e. a rhetorical context is traceable; this could well have played a part in Syrianus' choice of this particular verse.

It is interesting to consider Eustathius' evidence on the phrase ἀτρέμας ἦσο: according to his testimony,¹⁹⁶ Herodotus at *Historiae* VII 18.3 paraphrased the verse, so as to show the happy state Xerxes, according to Artabanos, would be in if he stayed addicted to peace.¹⁹⁷ Of course, Syrianus talks about something different, i.e. intelligence, when he uses the phrase ὁ μὴ ὄξει τὴν φύσιν in connection with the expression ἀτρέμας ἦσθαι. Nevertheless, the echo of the verse in Herodotus is interesting, and this is not the only case to be found: Xenophon, too, quotes the verse, as he describes the episode to which it belongs (Odysseus tries to convince the Achaeans not to go away, but stay calm and listen to the opinion of the others). The situation in Xenophon's work is the following: the writer, at the beginning of the *Memorabilia*, refers to the accusers' argument that Socrates used to select from the most famous poets (ἐνδοξότατοι ποιηταὶ) the most immoral passages and used them as evidence in teaching his companions to be malefactors (κακούργους) and tyrants (τυραννικούς). The poets mentioned are Hesiod and Homer.¹⁹⁸ According to his accusers, Socrates was supposedly maintaining that the common people (δημόται) and the poor people (πένητες) should be beaten; but Xenophon stresses that Socrates did not share this view (Σωκράτης δ' οὐ ταῦτ' ἔλεγε) and he goes on to argue this point in detail.¹⁹⁹ Xenophon, therefore, is a source that informs us that the episode, to which the phrase ἀτρέμας ἦσο καὶ ἄλλων μῦθον ἄκουε belongs, was already familiar (if not popular) in the mid-4th century B.C.²⁰⁰

It is evident that Syrianus had in mind a quite well-known verse, which stems from a popular part of the *Ilias*, in his effort to stress the fact that a successful orator should

not necessarily be of major intelligence: what is important is his willingness and ability to stay calm and listen to what the others have to say. This is a quite illuminating aspect of Syrianus' theory of what rules an orator should follow; the Homeric example, interesting in itself because of its popularity and wide use, is fitted into an important context.

Passage 2 (9.10-18)

Commenting on Hermogenes' opinion about Demosthenes at *De Ideis* 215.7-11, Syrianus explains at *In de Ideis* 9.10-18 why Demosthenes is superior to the other orators as far as his capacity of expressing ideas in the best possible way is concerned. The first example of someone who has been influenced by Demosthenes' method is not an orator, as we should expect, but Iamblichus:

ὄθεν δὴ καὶ Ἰάμβλιχος ὁ θεῖος ἐν τῷ Περὶ κρίσεως ἀρίστου λόγου φησὶ "δεῖ γὰρ μήτε τὸ σύντομον εἶναι ἀσαφές μήτε τὸ σαφές ἰδιωτικόν, καὶ τὸ μὲν σεμνὸν μὴ εἶναι ἄγαν ἐξηλλαγμένον, τὸ δὲ κοινὸν μὴ εἶναι εὐκαταφρόνητον, ἔχειν δὲ τινα ἐξαιρετὸν ὑπεροχὴν· τὸ γὰρ παντελές τοῦτο καὶ συμπληρωμένον τοῖς ὅλοις κάλλεσι τῶν λόγων παρ' Ὀμήρῳ τε καὶ Πλάτῳ καὶ Δημοσθένει γνώριμὸν ἐστὶν ἰδεῖν".

In this passage of Iamblichus, which is quoted by Syrianus, we see that Homer, Plato and Demosthenes are mentioned as examples of men who made perfect use of language in their works. This indirect transmission of an opinion, which seems to be pure literary criticism, is quite interesting: firstly, we learn Iamblichus' opinion about the three authorities, and secondly we see Syrianus' agreement with the Iamblichean view.

However, the parallel way in which an epic poet, a philosopher and an orator are mentioned should not surprise us: they are praised for common virtues, i.e. their language and their way of expressing their ideas. Apart from that, all three of them were regarded as the leading representatives of the discipline they exercised, so there is no reason why they should not be cited as examples of perfection in their profession.

As far as Homer is concerned, we must always bear in mind that he was considered in antiquity to be the inventor of rhetoric.²⁰¹

Moreover, Syrianus is following an established tradition, i.e. the existence of a recognised and respected κανών of excellence in each field.²⁰² As is well known, "Longinus"²⁰³ in the *De sublimitate* also treated literature in an evaluative way, and Syrianus may well have had the same tendency to evaluate literary works, not as a direct follower of "Longinus", but as a part of an existing tradition.

Lastly, Syrianus' reference to the "the divine Iamblichus" (Ἰάμβλιχος ὁ θεῖος) shows that once again Iamblichus was highly respected; Syrianus thus seems to align himself to the tradition of Iamblichean exegesis.²⁰⁴ What is also interesting in this reference is that this very passage of Syrianus is the only evidence we have of Iamblichus' work *Περὶ κρίσεως ἀρίστου λόγου*.²⁰⁵ It seems to have been a work of rhetoric, but no other information is available.

Passage 3 (14.23-15.1)

Commenting on different concepts such as the mythical, the historical and what is agreeable to the senses, Syrianus cites a Homeric example for the last at 14.23-15.1:

(...) ὄσαι τὰ ταῖς αἰσθήσεσιν ἠδέα ἐκφράζουσιν, ὄψει ἀκοῇ ὄσφρησει γεύσει ἀφῆ, ὡς Ὅμηρος "τοῖσι δ' ὑπὸ χθῶν διὰ φύεν νεοθηλέα ποιήν λωτόν θ' ἐρσήεντα ἰδὲ κρόκον ἠδ' ὑάκινθον" (*Il. XIV 347*).

A beautiful image, that really corresponds to the notion of things that are attractive to the senses: the scenery is marvellous to look at, the flowers are fine to smell and to touch, the whole landscape implies that there is water somewhere nearby, which might even complete the range of images with a characteristic sound. Syrianus has indeed used a suitable example, as it is difficult to find two verses which express all those different qualities in such a limited space. We should also add that the verse belongs to

the famous love scene between Hera and Zeus, which had been bitterly attacked by Plato and many others after him.

The verse had been used by Hermogenes himself²⁰⁶ to describe the rhetorical notion of pleasure (ἡδονή), not the shameful (αἰσχρά) one, but the one that describes a practice that is both mythical and pleasurable by nature, and therefore it is not shameful for the rhetor to produce. Syrianus was, of course, aware of Hermogenes' distinction of the kinds of ἡδονή; at this point, however, he stressed, not the ethical dimension of the pleasure the verse described, but the fact that all senses are included in just one verse.

Sextus Empiricus also quoted the verse in a very different context: he put it in the well-known polemic against Homer. He drew the distinction between grammar and poetry and used the phrase ποικίλως πεφωραμένη, with reference to Homer's poetry; according to Sextus, the varied nature of poetry, in order to describe an act committed in an improper way, is a factor that renders grammar inadequate with reference to the distinction between the mythological lies and the truth.²⁰⁷ From this attitude we can conclude that the beauty and the multi-sided poetic perspective of the Homeric image was recognised even by those who were shocked by the whole scene.

In fact, one of the latter seems to have been Heraclitus, who, in his *Allegoriae*, devotes much space in his effort to prove that the union of Zeus and Hera is allegorical, Zeus being the aether and Hera being the air. During the course of this effort he says at *Allegoriae* 39.13:

Τῆς δὲ συνόδου καὶ κράσεως αὐτῶν τὸ πέρας ἐδήλωσε τὴν ἑαρινὴν ὥραν·
Τοῖσι δ' ὑπὸ χθῶν διὰ φύεν νεοθηλέα ποιήν
λωτὸν θ' ἐρσήεντα ἰδὲ κρόκον ἢ δ' ὑάκινθον
πυκνὸν καὶ μαλακόν, ὃς ἀπὸ χθονὸς ὑψὸς' ἔεργεν.

Eustathius, commenting on the same verse, says: Καὶ ὄρα τὴν ἔκφρασιν χρήσιμον οὖσαν ποτέ εἰς τινα παραπλοκὴν.²⁰⁸ The technical term παραπλοκή means "interweaving" and is used for poetical quotations in prose (παραπλοκή τῶν ποιημάτων

έν λόγῳ). Eustathius therefore acknowledges a common practice, which had started very early in antiquity and was still familiar in his time. What is also interesting in Eustathius' passage is the fact that, like Syrianus and unlike Heraclitus, he makes no reference at all to "immoral" context, from which the verse stemmed.

Passage 4 (16.24-17.2)

Continuing his introduction, Hermogenes refers to each of the seven qualities of Style (ιδέαι), i.e. clarity (σαφήνεια), grandeur (μέγεθος), beauty (κάλλος), rapidity (γοργότης), character (ἦθος), sincerity (ἀλήθεια), force (δεινότης) separately. We should bear in mind that these qualities are examined in terms of the following key-elements that are common to all kinds of discourse and result in the creation of the seven qualities: thought (ἔννοια), approach (μέθοδος), diction (λέξεις), clauses (κῶλα), word order (συνθέσεις), cadences (ἀναπαύσεις) and rhythm (ῥυθμός). According to Hermogenes, some of the seven qualities of Style are divided into sub-qualities: for instance, clarity (σαφήνεια) is divided into purity (καθαρότης) and distinctness (εὐκρίνεια) etc.

At 219.8-220.4 Hermogenes refers to the idea of clarity and the way in which it is achieved through diction. He discusses rhythm and the way to achieve γλυκύτης through a particular type of diction. In his own words (*De Ideis*, 219.8-11):

? λέξεις δὲ ἢ διὰ ἐπιθέτων καὶ ὄση δρομεία καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἢ μὴ διηρημένη μὴδὲ πλατεία φύσει αἶ τε τῆς καθαρότητος ἅπασαι.

Hermogenes might mean that one should use words with poetic effect, but not go so far as to use devices which are poetical only. We should at this point say that C. Wooten²⁰⁹ translates the text as follows: "*the style is that which depends much on adjectives and is subtle; if poetical, it must avoid elevation and natural diffuseness*".

In his effort to define and clarify Hermogenes' remarks, Syrianus suggests at 16.24-

17.2 that:

διηρημένη μὲν ὡς τὸ "κατὰ μῆρ' ἐκάη" (*Il.* I 464), "κατὰ ταύρον ἐδηδῶς" (*Il.* XVII 542), "διὰ τε σκόλοπας καὶ τάφρον ἐβῆσαν" (*Il.* VIII 343), πλατεῖα δὲ ὡς τὸ "βοόωσι", "Πηληϊάδεω".

It is clear from Syrianus' example that the first stylistic phenomenon Hermogenes refers to (called by him διηρημένη λέξις) is tmesis (τμήσις), the consequence of which is elevation, as Wooten rightly translates; the second (called by him πλατεῖα λέξις) is the phenomenon of natural diffuseness (χασμωδία), which occurs when two vowels are found side by side, either in the end of a word and in the beginning of another, or in the middle of one word.

The phenomenon of the use of πλατεῖα λέξις in Homer is also found in Ps.-Plutarch's *De Homero* 2.83 (in his discussion of διήγησις):

Ἔστι δὲ διήγησις παρ' αὐτῷ ὡς μὲν ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον πλατεῖαν φράσιν καὶ ἐξεργασίαν ἀρμόζουσιν τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις ἔχουσα. ἐνίοτε δὲ εὐτονος, ὡς ἡ τοιαύτη·
 κεῖται Πάτροκλος, νέκυος δὲ δὴ ἀμφιμάχονται
 γυμνοῦ· ἀτὰρ τὰ γε τεύχε' ἔχει κορυθαίολος Ἔκτωρ.
τοῦτο δὲ τὸ εἶδος πολλάκις ἐστι χρησιμὸν· τὸ γὰρ τάχος τῶν λόγων εὐτονώτερον καθίστησι καὶ τὸν λέγοντα καὶ τὸν ἀκροώμενον καὶ ῥαδίως τυγχάνει τοῦ προκειμένου.

In fact, in Ps.-Plutarch's example there is the phenomenon of natural diffuseness; but, in objection to Hermogenes' view, Ps.-Plutarch believes that it is a very useful device, as it renders the speed of the speech more vigorous and facilitates Homer's text for both the speaker and the listener. In other words, the poetical effect of the use of the phenomenon is unquestionable.

As a general remark, this is the first time that we encounter the literary tradition (i.e. the Homeric passages) being used by Syrianus in combination with the purely scholarly (grammatical and syntactical phenomena), and especially in order to clarify patterns of the latter. As is well known, in the tradition of the scholiasts (and not only of the scholiasts on works of rhetoric) it was a common practice to deal with problems of language and style, with the aid of Homeric verses or phrases.²¹⁰ Syrianus, therefore,

can lay no claim to originality: we just have an appropriate use of an existing method of interpretation, as it had flourished from the Alexandrian period onwards. It is no wonder that as a good teacher Syrianus was trying to help his students reach a high level of understanding and use of the Greek language, something they would profit from later.

Passage 5 (16.24-17.2)

Having ended the elaboration of the quality of clarity, Hermogenes passes on to grandeur (μέγεθος), which is divided into solemnity (σεμνότης), asperity (τραχύτης), vehemence (σφοδρότης), brilliance (λαμπρότης), florescence (άκμή) and abundance (περιβολή). Examining florescence, at *In de Ideis* 25.13-26.5 Syrianus brings Lysias in as an example of an orator who succeeded in saying nothing more than the absolutely necessary in his speeches. What makes the example worth noticing is the fact that Syrianus does not simply give his opinion of Lysias' excellence, but quotes a passage taken from Dionysius of Halicarnassus' work *De Lysia*.²¹¹ The text is as follows:

φησὶ γοῦν καὶ Διονύσιος ἐν πρώτῳ Χαρακτήρων σφόδρα τὸν Λυσίαν ἐπὶ ταῖς τοιαύταις διηγήσεσιν ἐπαινῶν τάδε "(...) τοσαύτην ἔχει πειθῶ καὶ ἀφροδίτην τὰ λεγόμενα καὶ οὕτω λανθάνει τοὺς ἀκούοντας, εἴτε ἀληθὴ ἔστιν εἴτε καὶ πεπλασμένα, ὡς ἐφαρμόζειν αὐτῷ τὸ 'Ὀμηρικὸν οὐχ ἦττον ἢ τῷ 'Ὀδυσσεὶ "ἴσκει ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα" (*Od.* XIX 203).

It is evident that we are dealing with another indirect transmission of a Homeric passage. This quite well-known verse of the *Odyssey*, also found in Hesiod with a slight difference,²¹² corresponds to a constant element of Odysseus' character, which is to be found not only in Homer, but in the post-Homeric tradition as well. Odysseus is reported by the tragedians, who depended heavily on the Cyclic epics, to have the ability to tell false tales and create fiction.²¹³ Besides, Homer himself is praised by Aristotle for having the ability to tell beautiful and convincing lies and also of having taught the other epic poets to do the same.²¹⁴

A few centuries later than Aristotle, Polyaeus compares ἀνδρεία with εὐβουλία;²¹⁵ the examples Polyaeus brings in immediately after are Sisyphus, Autolycus, Proteus and Odysseus.²¹⁶ We notice the use of the *Od.* XIX 203, in order to show Odysseus' skills in deceit and in making fiction.

Porphry refers to the verse in question, and evidently tries to account for this Odyssean quality.²¹⁷ Eustathius also deals with the matter, both in his commentaries on the *Ilias* and the *Odyssea*.²¹⁸

It is clear, then, that this ability of Odysseus had become a *topos* in antiquity. Homer's attitude seems to have been more popular than that of the tragedians' towards Odysseus and his character, of which the beautiful lies and the ability to create convincing stories are an indispensable element. This Homeric verse cited by Dionysius is interesting because it follows an established tradition, which continued to exist long after him. Syrianus, in his turn, quoted a passage directly related to his subject, which included this Homeric reference and thus corroborated the afore-mentioned tradition.²¹⁹

We should also note that a passage of Dionysius of Halicarnassus is used by Syrianus; but we would expect something like this, as we are dealing with an exegesis of rhetoric and it is well-known that the works of Dionysius of Halicarnassus on rhetoric were highly considered in antiquity.²²⁰

Passage 6 (48.13-21)

The exegesis has proceeded to the third quality of style, beauty (κάλλος). Like all others, it is achieved by key-elements, among which metre (μέτρον) is included. Commenting on the types of metres, Syrianus says at 48.13-21:

καταληκτικὰ δὲ καλοῦσιν οἱ τεχνικοὶ μέτρα τὰ μὴ εἰς τελείους καταλήγοντα πόδας, ὧν ἐπώνυμον τὸ μέτρον ἐστίν, ἢ τελείας συζυγίας ποδῶν, ἐξ ὧν ἐκεῖνο συνέστηκε τὸ μέτρον· ὅθεν καὶ τὸ ἡρωϊκὸν μέτρον καταληκτικὸν καλοῦσιν, ὅταν εἰς τροχαῖον

καταλήγη, ὅς βραχεία μιᾷ ἐλάττων ἐστὶ τοῦ δακτύλου, ὅταν μέντοι εἰς δάκτυλον καταλήγη, ὡς τὸ "οὗς τέκετο ῥέα" (*Il. XV* 187) καὶ "ἀνδρόμεα κρέα" (*Od. IX* 347), τότε ἀκατάληκτον αὐτὸ προσαγορεύουσιν.

Two verses, one from the *Ilias* and one from the *Odyssea*, are brought in as examples of acatalectic verse. Indeed, the two half-verses end in a dactyl (-υυ = δάκτυλος). In both cases there is also a synizesis.²²¹ Syrianus does not mention the synizesis, probably because his point was different. Nevertheless, the passage shows that Syrianus was familiar with metrical forms, as we would expect and as we see from other passages of his work.²²²

As far as the terminology itself is concerned, it seems that it had been established quite a long time before Syrianus. Hephaestion uses the same terminology for catalectic and acatalectic verse.²²³ He also gives a detailed and comprehensive metrical analysis, including, of course, the trochaic foot, to which Syrianus also refers.²²⁴ This particular Homeric reference, therefore, seems to be a quite common example used by a teacher of rhetoric, who made use of an already established terminology, in order to describe the types of metres.

Passage 7 (75.5-7)

Starting his commentary on Book II of Hermogenes' *De Ideis*, Syrianus analyses the fourth quality of style (rapidity), the fifth (character) and the sub-quality of style simplicity (ἀφέλεια), that belongs to character. In his effort to give a definition of simplicity, he follows Hermogenes' thoughts closely and gives more examples of what simple thoughts (ἀφελεῖς ἔννοιαι) are. Hermogenes says at 325.21-326.2:

Ἔτι ἀφελεῖς ἔννοιαι καὶ αἱ ἐν τοῖς ἐπιχειρήμασιν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀλόγων ζῶων λαμβανόμεναι (...) καὶ εἰ ἀπὸ τῶν φυτῶν δέ τις ἐπιχειροῖη, παραπλησίως ταῦτὸν ποιήσει.

Commenting on this passage, Syrianus at 75.5-7 uses as examples the following

quotations:

οἶον "τὰ γὰρ χωρία καὶ τὰ δένδρα οὐδέν με θέλει διδάσκειν" (Plato, *Phaedr.* 230d) καὶ "ὄγχνη ἐπ' ὄγχνη γηράσκει, μήλον δ' ἐπὶ μήλῳ, αὐτὰρ ἐπὶ σταφυλῇ σταφυλῇ, σύκον δ' ἐπὶ σύκῳ" (*Od.* VII 120).²²⁵

Syrianus, in setting forth the Homeric verse, lays emphasis on the connection of simple thoughts with plants, setting forth two very popular passages. Indeed, Syrianus' students should normally have been familiar with both the passages from the *Phaedrus* and from Homer: the *Phaedrus* was one of the most popular dialogues in late antiquity, and this passage is a good example of Socrates' irony, and should therefore not have escaped anyone's notice. As far as the Homeric passage's popularity is concerned, let us listen to what the B.E.P.T. scholia say of *Od.* VII 120:

οὐ κυκλικῶς τὰ ἐπίθετα προσέριπται, ἀλλ' ἐκάστου δένδρου τὸ ἰδίωμα διὰ τοῦ ἐπιθέτου προστήρηται. κάλλος μὲν γὰρ πρόσεστι ταῖς μηλέαις ἐπικειμένον τοῦ καρποῦ, τῶν δὲ συκῶν γλυκὺς ὁ καρπὸς, ἐλαιᾶς δὲ ἀειθαλῆς ἡ φύσις. ἐκόσμησε δὲ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν καὶ ἡ ὁμοιοκαταληξία τῶν λέξεων.

The scholiast is primarily interested in the destructive detail of the passage in question; nevertheless, his literary criticism is worth noticing: he praises the order of words as well as the ὁμοιοκαταληξία (rhyme) Homer uses in his description, which is apparently highly thought of. It is tempting to think that the literary criticism of the era regarded the passage as a kind of reference for the *ἔκφρασις* model concerning the description of any beautiful building, surrounded by a nice landscape.²²⁶

Heraclitus also makes use of the verse ὄγχνη ἐπ' ὄγχνη γηράσκει, μήλον δ' ἐπὶ μήλῳ in his *Allegoriae* 74.6-7. His reference concerns Hades and Persephone, their qualities and the characteristics of Persephone's residence:

Ἄιδης μὲν οὖν ὁ ἀφανὴς τόπος ἐπωνύμως ὠνόμασται, Φερσεφόνη δ' ἄλλως ἢ τὰ πάντα πεφυκυῖα διαφθείρειν· ἐν οἷς οὐκ
ὄγχνη ἐπ' ὄγχνη γηράσκει, μήλον δ' ἐπὶ μήλῳ
τὰ δ' ἐνερριζωμένα πρέμνα τοῖς ἄλσεσιν
αἴγειροι καὶ ἰτέαι ὠλεσίσκαρποι.

It should be added that the phrase ὄγχνη ἐπ' ὄγχνη γηράσκει, σύκον δ' ἐπὶ σύκῳ

had become popular for another reason: it is said that Aristotle used it, laying emphasis on its last part, when he left Athens: he had slanderers (συκοφάνται) in his mind.²²⁷ But Syrianus, who certainly knew the anecdote in question, drops no hint of this usage.

Passage 8 (77.2-4)

The next sub-quality of style that Hermogenes mentions and Syrianus comments on is sweetness (γλυκύτης), which, along with simplicity (ἀφέλεια), subtlety (δριμύτης) and modesty (ἐπιεικεία), forms the fifth quality of style, i.e. character (ἦθος). Hermogenes divides pleasures (ἡδοναί) into shameful to enjoy (αἰσχροί) and not shameful to enjoy (μη αἰσχροί) and says at 331.14-17, referring to the latter:

καὶ τὰς μὲν οὐκ αἰσχροῦς ἔστιν ἀπλῶς ἐκφράζειν, οἷον κάλλος χωρίου καὶ φυτείας διαφόρους καὶ ῥευμάτων ποικιλίας καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα.

Syrianus, commenting on the phrase κάλλος χωρίου καὶ φυτείας διαφόρους καὶ ῥευμάτων ποικιλίας, says at 77.2-4:

οἷον ἠνίκα τὸν Πριάμου καὶ Μενελάου οἶκον ἐκφράζοι Ὅμηρος ἢ τὸν Ἀλκινόου κῆπον ἢ τὰς ἐν Τροίᾳ πηγὰς θερμοῦ καὶ ψυχροῦ ὕδατος.

Syrianus refers to the following Homeric passages: *Il.* VI 242, for Priam's palace, *Od.* IV 71 for Menelaus' palace, *Od.* VII 112 for Alcinous' palace and *Il.* XXII 147 for the springs in Troy. He refers to Alcinous' palace for a second time, shortly after the first reference.

Syrianus' comment must be seen in the context of the established rhetorical tradition, where the praise of cities, buildings, natural beauties and elements of nature is used as common feature.²²⁸ Syrianus already had at his disposal this established tradition of ἐκφρασις, as this description was called by the ancients. Aelius Theon, in the definition of ἐκφρασις, refers to the fact that it is applied to persons, things, places and seasons.²²⁹ We see that the description of all the afore-mentioned elements was

something like everyday routine in the rhetorical schools.²³⁰

Menander Rhetor, in his turn, when he speaks of epideictic speeches, argues that poets are allowed to describe the places themselves, while prose-writers, on the other hand, must necessarily curtail the time spent on these topics.²³¹ In a second passage, Menander gives instructions on how to praise a city: among other features, he refers to how it has been built and to its water-supply.²³² It is well known that Menander influenced the tradition of epideictic speeches to a remarkable extent; it is not improbable, therefore, that Syrianus, as a well-trained teacher of rhetoric, had in mind Menander's rules when he made reference to elements such as springs, etc., which had been the object of rhetorical exercises.

Last but not least, we must take notice of the fact that Syrianus gives four Homeric examples, from both the *Ilias* and the *Odyssea*, just two lines before the passages of Sappho that Hermogenes himself cites, possibly because he considers the Homeric references more familiar to his students than those from Sappho; or Syrianus could have considered the combination of verses from Homer and Sappho to be particularly useful, so as not to leave his students with any doubt about a crucial point of Hermogenes' thought.

Passage 9 (82.8-15)

Hermogenes, after having dealt with character (ἦθος) and its sub-qualities, proceeds to the sixth quality of style: sincerity (ἀλήθεια). In his effort to make sincere style (ἀληθινὸς λόγος) more comprehensive, Hermogenes refers to the provisional concession (συνδρομή or συγχώρησις) at 357.1-4. Arguing about συνδρομή, Syrianus says at 82.8-15:

χρησόμεθα δὲ τῇ συνδρομῇ ἥτοι ὅταν σφόδρα ὁμολογούμενον ἢ τὸ παρὰ τοῦ

ἀντιδίκου λεγόμενον, ὡς ἐκεῖνο "ἀλλὰ τὸ τοῦ Κεφάλου καλὸν καὶ νῆ Δία εὐδαιμόν γε", ἢ ὅταν συμφέρη μὲν καὶ ἡμῖν τὸ λεγόμενον, ἕνια δὲ τοῦ πράγματος ἐνοχλοῦντα πείθεσθαι μὴ συγχωρῆ, ὡς παρ' Ὀμήρω "ναὶ δὴ ταῦτά γε πάντα, γέρον, κατὰ μοῖραν ἔειπες, ἀλλ' ὄδ' ἀνὴρ ἐθέλει" (*Il. I 286-287*).

Of the two quotations used by Syrianus, the first is from Demosthenes and the second is from the first book of the *Ilias*. The verse is spoken by Agamemnon, who answers Nestor and draws his attention to the contrast between Nestor's words and Achilles' action.

Syrianus quotes the verse in the course of his analysis of the technical term *συνδρομή*, which, according to him, is applied in two cases. The first is when we have "*provisional concurrence with an adversary's argument*", as C. Wooten translates it.²³³ The second case in which *συνδρομή* is used has escaped Wooten's notice, as Hermogenes himself does not clarify the use of the term at this very point. Syrianus, for his part, stresses both cases equally and explains the second with the help of a Homeric passage: when what is said by the adversary is in the other party's interest, then one can agree, not with it as a whole, but only with the points that are considered to be beneficial. At this point, the verses *ναὶ δὴ ταῦτά γε πάντα, γέρον, κατὰ μοῖραν ἔειπες, ἀλλ' ὄδ' ἀνὴρ ἐθέλει περὶ πάντων ἔμμεναι ἄλλων* (*Il. I 286-287*) are quoted.

Consequently, the point that Syrianus makes could be taken into consideration, when translating the term used by Hermogenes, or when explaining its application.

Passage 10 (94.20-24)

The seventh quality of style Hermogenes deals with is force (*δεινότης*), which is the proper use of all the previously-mentioned types of style, as well as of their contraries.²³⁴ At 379.2-26 Hermogenes argues that it demands divine powers to expand fully all the elements that form a successful speech. He then makes a detailed list of what

these elements are and what the orator is supposed to do, in order to perform this difficult task. In his own words at 379.21:

(..) καὶ τίσι μὲν πλεονάσαι τῶν ἐννοιῶν καὶ τίνα τρόπον βέλτιον, τίνων δὲ τὴν ταχίστην ἀπαλλάττεσθαι καὶ δι' ἐλαχίστου πως αὐτῶν ἐπιμνησθέντα.

Syrianus draws his attention to this passage at 94.20-24:

τὰς μὲν οὖν ἰσχυροτέρας τῶν ἐννοιῶν καὶ ἐφ' αἷς σφόδρα πέποιθεν ὁ λέγων πρῶτας τε καὶ τελευταίας ὁ ἐπιστήμων τάξει, τὰς δὲ σαθροτέρας ἐν μέσῳ κατακρύψει τὸν Ὀμηρικόν ἀτεχνῶς ἐκμιμούμενος Νέστορα καὶ τοὺς κακοὺς ἐς μέσον ἐλαύνων.

The Homeric reference is from *Il.* IV 299:

ἕρκος ἔμεν πολέμοιο· κακοὺς δ' ἐς μέσον ἔλασσεν.

Although the verse mentions the order of military men before the battle, Syrianus neatly adapts it so as to show the order of ideas in a rhetorical speech. The most interesting point, though, is Syrianus' comment ἀτεχνῶς ἐκμιμούμενος. It is evident - and it has been shown quite clearly up to this point - that Syrianus approves of taking Homer as an example of excellence in many fields. Imitation is certainly one of the essential principles of rhetorical education; Syrianus' reference is yet another one of the many passages that corroborate this.

Thus, according to Syrianus, whose starting point is the military tactic Nestor advocated, the epic poet's structure (in other words, the poet's method) is something everyone should look at with respect and try to imitate in the composition of speeches.

We see then that, for Syrianus, imitation as a method can be traced at many levels: a poet can be used by the composer of speeches as an example of good order and structure. This kind of imitation is different from "Longinus", who put the whole matter in a broader context; in fact, "Longinus" talks of the imitation of great prose-writers and poets of the past and provides as an example Homer and his influence on Herodotus, Stesichorus, Archilochus and Plato.²³⁵ Nevertheless, narrower in context though it might be, Syrianus' use of the concept of imitation is well placed in the everyday practice of

schools of rhetoric in late antiquity.

2.3 Homeric passages in the *In de Statibus*²³⁶

Passage 11 (7.1-7)

Syrianus' commentary *In de Statibus* is rather interesting in itself, because Syrianus first comments on the introduction and the methodological section of the work of Hermogenes; he then chooses to analyse each type of issue separately. Apart from the last one, the Homeric passages to be found in Syrianus' exegesis are in the introductory section.

The commentary *In de Statibus* begins with an account of Hermogenes' life. As we should expect, Syrianus refers to the fact that Hermogenes stopped being an orator at a very young age. He also mentions the criticism by others of the methods of rhetorical training that Hermogenes had to go through, but he does not share these views.²³⁷ He then argues that, of Hermogenes' works, the *De Ideis* is the most akin to philosophy; after that he proceeds to the analysis of the *De Statibus*.

At the beginning of this analysis, Syrianus tries to prove that rhetoric is an art (τέχνη) which has not been treated appropriately by all who have exercised it. In this section he mentions Plato's views (*Apol.* 18a, *Gorg.* 508c, *Phaedr.* 269d), in order to give his students some idea of what the right kind of rhetoric is like. Dionysius of Halicarnassus' view on the role of rhetoric (*De imit.*, fr. 2) is used to reinforce the Platonic one. Then, Syrianus proceeds to the analysis of Hermogenes' work: in the beginning (προοίμιον) of it, Hermogenes expounds the principles of rhetoric as an art (τέχνη). Commenting on the fact that rhetoric is an art and not practice (έμπειρία) Syrianus says at 7.1-7:

έμπειρία δέ έστι λόγος έκ πλειόνων όμοίων καταλήψεως τήν γνώσιν ποιούμενος.

τὸ δὲ ἐξ ἀρχῆς δηλαδὴ ἀφ' οὐπερ ἡ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὑπέστη φύσις· σύνδρομος γὰρ ἡ ῥητορικὴ τῷ λόγῳ τῶν ψυχῶν, καὶ πρὸ Νέστορος τε καὶ Φοίνικος Παλαμῆδους τε καὶ Ὀδυσσεῶς καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἰλίῳ ῥητόρων ἡσκέετο παρὰ ἀνθρώποις ἡ ῥητορικὴ (...).

Although no Homeric verse is quoted this time, we have a reference to at least four epic heroes. Syrianus refers to the oratorical skills of Nestor, Phoenix, Palamedes, Odysseus and to orators in Troy. He tries to be precise in his reference, by referring to each hero's long mythological tradition and by focusing on their oratorical skills. What is also important in this reference is the historical point Syrianus is making: rhetoric is even older than the date of its first named practitioners.

But before giving our full attention to Syrianus' reference, let us consider Xenophon's and Plato's views on the rhetorical skills of Homeric heroes as well as on the relations of Homer with rhetoric. Xenophon in the *Symposium* 4.6-11 writes:

ἐκ τούτου δὲ ὁ Νικήρατος "Ἀκούοιτ' ἄν", ἔφη, "καὶ ἐμοῦ ἅ ἔσεσθε βελτίονες, ἄν ἐμοὶ συνήτε. ἴστε γὰρ δήπου ὅτι Ὅμηρος ὁ σοφώτατος πεποίηκε σχεδὸν περὶ πάντων τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων. ὅστις ἄν οὖν ὑμῶν βούληται ἢ οἰκονομικὸς ἢ δημηγορικὸς ἢ στρατηγικὸς γενέσθαι ἢ ὁμοίως Ἀχιλλεῖ ἢ Αἴαντι ἢ Νέστορι ἢ Ὀδυσσεῖ, ἐμὲ θεραπευέτω. ἐγὼ γὰρ ταῦτα πάντα ἐπίσταμαι.

It is evident that Niceratus looks upon Homer as the great teacher, who has taught men how to manage their households or families, how to speak well, how to become good generals and also how to imitate the Homeric heroes Achilles, Ajax, Nestor and Odysseus. Niceratus' opinion is offered in the context of Homer's excellence in many fields, apart from the field of poetry, an idea that was widespread in antiquity.²³⁸ The four heroes are probably cited by Niceratus as examples of men who did have all the qualities he himself mentions. Of course, by no means are we to forget that the ideal of the Homeric hero was μύθων τε ῥητῆρ' ἔμμεναι πρηνετῆρά τε ἔργων.²³⁹ We may also notice that Nestor and Odysseus are mentioned both by Xenophon and Syrianus; therefore, the beginning of the exegetical tradition concerning these two heroes' oratorical abilities is put in the context of Homer's excellence in the field of rhetoric and can be traced to as early as the 4th century B.C.

At this point we should refer to what Kennedy calls "*the ancient dispute over rhetoric in Homer*".²⁴⁰ As Kennedy has convincingly argued, from Cicero's time onwards there was a widespread belief that rhetorical theories could be found in Homer's works. He rightly attributes this tendency not only to grammarians and scholiasts, but also to various schools of philosophy and rhetoric. In my opinion, evidence such as the passages from Xenophon and from Plato's *Ion* - as well as from Plato's *Phaedrus* 262b, which will be discussed below - could help us argue that the belief may well be as old as the 4th century B.C.²⁴¹ But more on this topic later on.

Back to Syrianus' reference. Of the four heroes mentioned by him, the most challenging name to have been brought in as example is that of Palamedes. Palamedes indeed joined the Greek expedition to Troy, but, as we learn from Proclus' *Chrestomathia*, he died at a time before the beginning of the *Ilias*, i.e. before the wrath (*μῆνις*) of Achilles. In the *Chrestomathia* we find an account of the *Cypria*, in which Palamedes is mentioned twice; firstly, in the famous episode of the fake madness of Odysseus,²⁴² and secondly when his death takes place.²⁴³ For the second case an echo of the *Cypria* is also preserved in Pausanias.²⁴⁴

Nowhere in the surviving epic tradition do we have any reference to his oratorical abilities,²⁴⁵ but Palamedes was very well-known for his cleverness and ingenuity. The episode of Odysseus' fake madness, and the way Palamedes proved, by using Telemachus, that Odysseus was sane, are described, not only, as we pointed out, in the *Cypria*, but also by Hyginus.²⁴⁶ Palamedes' ingenuity is stressed especially in the third case.

Moreover, Hyginus is a further source for Palamedes' death, through Odysseus' trickery, for, as Hyginus says, "Ulysses quod Palamedes Nauplii dolo erat deceptus, in dies machinabatur quomodo eum interficeret".²⁴⁷ We see that Odysseus' cleverness surpassed that of Palamedes. But the most interesting reference has to do with Palamedes' ingenuity and his contribution to civilisation: the invention of eleven letters of the Greek

alphabet is clearly attributed to him by Hyginus.²⁴⁸

In the tragic tradition, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides wrote plays on Palamedes.²⁴⁹ But unfortunately the few fragments that we have do not reveal anything about Palamedes' oratorical abilities; thus, as any corresponding evidence is missing from the tragic sources, we cannot argue that it was the tragic tradition that Syrianus had in mind when he made an example of Palamedes' oratorical skills in Troy.

Gorgias' student, Alcidamas of Elea, has written a work bearing the title *'Οδυσσεύς. Κατὰ Παλαμήδου προδοσίας*. In the fragments of this work we see Odysseus accusing Palamedes of treachery in an elaborate oratorical way,²⁵⁰ but unfortunately nowhere in Odysseus' speech do we find evidence for Palamedes' oratorical skills. It is rather Odysseus' skills that we have demonstration of in the surviving fragments of Alcidamas.

Plato, on the other hand, is definitely more helpful: he refers in the *Apologia*²⁵¹ to Palamedes as a man who died unjustly and we also meet Palamedes as a clever inventor in a tragic context in the *Respublica*;²⁵² but the most important passage, that is a source for Palamedes' oratorical skill, could well have been in Syrianus' mind when he made this reference, is *Phaedrus* 261b:

Ἄλλ' ἢ τὰς Νέστορος καὶ Ὀδυσσεῶς τέχνας μόνον περὶ λόγων ἀκήκοας, ἅς ἐν Ἰλίῳ σχολάζοντες συνεγραψάτην, τῶν δὲ Παλαμήδους ἀνήκοος γέγονας;

This reference is important for several reasons: firstly, because it refers to Palamedes as a man who practised oratory. Secondly, it refers to Nestor and Odysseus as well, i.e. the reference is to the three out of the four persons Syrianus brings in for example (only Phoenix is missing). This is enough, I think, to sustain the idea that it could well be this passage of the *Phaedrus* that Syrianus had in mind here. And thirdly, Plato mentions manuals on rhetoric written by three epic heroes: this is a piece of quite early and rather important evidence of the already discussed, namely that rhetorical theories

could be found in Homer's works. Of course, we should not forget the humour or irony in Socrates' words at *Phaedrus* 261b; but even so, I do not think that the Socratic irony undermines the value of the information the passage gives on rhetorical theories in Homer.

Last but not least, Virgil refers to the glory of Palamedes, and to the Pelasgians' betrayal of the innocent hero in the *Aeneis* II 82-85;²⁵³ R.G. Austin²⁵⁴ reminds us that Palamedes' unworthy death (*mors indigna Palamedi*) was a common rhetorical school theme in Rome, as the *Ad Herennium* II 28 reveals.

The name of Phoenix is mentioned in the *Ilias* sixteen times overall.²⁵⁵ He is an old man, loyal to Peleus and his son, Achilles; it is he who taught Achilles to be a speaker of words and a doer of deeds.²⁵⁶ The most characteristic example of his rhetorical abilities, as well as of his influence on Achilles, is at *Il.* IX 432-605, where he tries to persuade Achilles to stop being angry with Agamemnon.

This embassy consists of Odysseus, Phoenix and Ajax. These three men are the most likely to influence Achilles, for, as he himself admits,²⁵⁷ he loves all of them. But apart from their potential influence on Achilles, we know that the three men's rhetorical abilities are considerable.²⁵⁸ It is then quite probable that this Homeric episode could well have been a source Syrianus had in mind, when he referred to Phoenix's rhetorical skills during the Trojan expedition.

As far as Nestor is concerned, one of his most characteristic qualities is his oratorical skill: from the first book of the *Ilias* onward, where Nestor is presented for the very first time, his ability to speak in a fine way is praised.²⁵⁹ We also notice Nestor's ability to act as an intermediary between opposing parties; he is able to do this because of his authority, which derives from his age and experience, his position and his mild character, as well as his ability to persuade people through his sweet and wise words; in other words, Nestor's use of language is very closely connected with his power.

We can hardly think of any work of the Trojan cycle in which Odysseus is not one of the leading heroes; as far as his oratorical skills are concerned, there are many examples of his ability to give good and persuasive speeches both in the *Ilias* and the *Odyssea*.²⁶⁰

The whole episode of the embassy to Achilles seems to have been quite popular in late antiquity: as D.A. Russell remarks,²⁶¹ it was much studied by later rhetoricians. It had drawn the attention of Aelius Aristides,²⁶² and, generally speaking, it seems to have been a quite popular example of a rhetorical exercise.²⁶³ J.F. Kindstrand²⁶⁴ stresses the fact that Aristides' work shows the importance of the episode, and more generally of Homer for rhetorical studies.

To show how famous the embassy episode was in antiquity we will give just two examples: Ps.-Plutarch refers to the embassy and stresses the different style of speech each of the four members of the embassy has adopted, in order to convince Achilles to return to battle. He devotes much space to the elaboration of this subject; but the most interesting thing of all is his actual reference to the embassy: he just says ἐν αὐτῇ δὲ τῇ πρεσβείᾳ without giving any further explanation (for instance, embassy to whom?). This speaks for the fact that by Ps.-Plutarch's time every reader was familiar with the episode.²⁶⁵

Our second example is from Porphyry, who dedicates much space to the treatment of the episode: he tries to bring in evidence of Nestor's absence, as well as of Phoenix's presence in the embassy. He discusses issues such as why Achilles is found playing the kithara, or how can the poet have the members of the embassy sit twice for dinner, or why Phoenix in his speech mentions the story of his father's concubine etc. For once more we remark that the issues discussed presupposed from the reader's part familiarity with the episode.²⁶⁶

One last thing that should be examined is Syrianus' phrase τῶν ἐν Ἰλίῳ ῥητόρων:

does it imply only the afore-mentioned Homeric heroes, or does Syrianus mean Trojan heroes (e.g. Polydamas, Agenor) as well? I think that in a lecture-like (or even note-like) text this structure is not unusual; maybe what Syrianus wanted was first to lay emphasis on the skills of the Greek heroes, and then of the Trojan ones, but without mentioning the latter by name. Or, maybe, he just wanted to speak of the Greek orators he himself mentioned above and in the course of the lesson the meaning became obscure, against his will.

It is probable, therefore, that Syrianus' reference to the orators in Troy included more than one Homeric passages, and bore influences from the philosophical tradition as well. Anyway, the passage is quite important for Syrianus' consideration of the Homeric heroes as orators, following a tradition established long before his time.

Passage 12 (7.12-15)

Only a few lines further on, at 7.12-15 Syrianus says:

εἰ γὰρ αἰώνιος ὁ ἐν ψυχῇ λόγος, πρόδηλον ὅτι καὶ ἡ τοῦτον διευκρινούσα τέχνη καὶ τὴν ἀγλὸν αὐτοῦ - κατὰ τὴν Ὀμηρικὴν Ἀθηνᾶν - καὶ τὴν ἀπαιδευσίαν διακαθαίρουσα (...)

The mist (ἀγλὺς) that Athena removes first appears at *Il.* V 121-132.²⁶⁷ Athena takes the mist from Diomedes' eyes, so as to enable him to discern gods from men and avoid hurting any god. The second case of mist removed by Athena is at *Il.* XV 668-70.²⁶⁸ As R. Janko remarks,²⁶⁹ "*Athena, as if responding to Nestor, scatters the mist from the Greeks' eyes on both the side of the ships and that of the battle, so that all can see the peril*". Syrianus must have had these two passages in mind, when he wrote καὶ τὴν ἀγλὸν αὐτοῦ - κατὰ τὴν Ὀμηρικὴν Ἀθηνᾶν - καὶ τὴν ἀπαιδευσίαν διακαθαίρουσα.

In Homer's works the appearance of the gods is often accompanied by mist; but

Syrianus makes a more specific reference, having in mind cases in which the gods take the mist from mortals' eyes. So, regarding the idea of education as one of the most prominent, he applies this Homeric image to the idea of the lack of education, where he suggests that it can be taken away from a student's mind in the same way mist was taken away from the Homeric heroes' eyes.

A key-word of Syrianus' remark seems to be διακαθαίρουσα. It can well have been a philosophically-influenced technical term, as we can relate it to καθαρισμός (purification) and its ritual meaning: we know that in the society of late antiquity theurgy played an important role in religion.²⁷⁰ It is also very well known that after Iamblichus, and especially in the context of the school of Athens, theurgy became an important part of the Neoplatonic philosophers' theory and practice.²⁷¹ So, we have a word belonging to the philosophical tradition that may involve extra-rational (theurgical) elements.

We could also relate διακαθαίρουσα to the Aristotelian notion of κάθαρσις, a very well-known and controversial notion both in antiquity and in modern times.²⁷² In any case, whether it is theurgical or Aristotelian in origin, the use of such a word would certainly fit Syrianus' philosophical career (i.e. after he became a member of Plutarch's circle and turned to Neoplatonism); yet it is found in his early rhetorical work. Given the close relations between Neoplatonic philosophy and rhetoric we may regard the reference as a further proof of this interaction. The use of the word in this context, then, need not imply Syrianus' involvement with theurgy during his first period, but indicates how close the borders were between rhetoric and Neoplatonic philosophy.

Passage 13 (7.21-8.4)

At *In de Statibus* 7.21-8.4 Syrianus refers to the men of the golden γένος who used to live on earth:

εὐδηλον γὰρ ὡς κάκεινοι τὰ τε θεῖα διαφερόντως ἐτίμων, εἴ γε τότε μάλιστα δὴ οἱ θεοὶ "παντοῖοι τελέθοντες ἐπεστρωφῶντο πόλῃας" (*Od.* XVII 486), καὶ τοὺς τε ἀγαθοὺς δι' ἐπαίνων ἦγον καὶ τοὺς προπετεῖα φύσεως ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον ὀρμώντας ἐλοιδόρου, ἅπερ ἴδια τῆς πανηγυρικῆς ἰδέας.

Of course, the idea of the gradual decadence of ἀνθρώπινα γένη (human races) is Hesiodic. In the *Opera* 106-201 Hesiod refers to each race separately, giving details of their qualities. The golden race is the perfect one, and from then onwards decadence begins.²⁷³ But in this passage, apart from the Hesiodic echo, a Homeric verse is also quoted, in order to show the relation between the gods and the human beings of that era.

We see that Syrianus accepts (or at least uses) the Hesiodic idea of the golden race²⁷⁴ and refers to the role of the gods, who praise the virtuous mortals and punish the unjust; Hesiod stresses the fact that, as the gods see everything that happens on earth, the mortals who are not just do not escape the gods' anger.

Syrianus seems to have had the Hesiodic passage in mind, when he referred to the gods' presence on earth and its consequences for mortals. And it is quite possible that this passage may have sparked off the Homeric reminiscence in Syrianus, or his source, exactly as it did in M.L. West's commentary on *Opera* 249 ff.²⁷⁵ After all, this co-existence of the traditions of Homer and Hesiod is of course many centuries older than Syrianus.

Ps.-Plutarch is yet another possible source of the idea of the gods' presence among mortals; what is also interesting is the fact that the same verse, i.e. παντοῖοι τελέθοντες ἐπεστρωφῶντο πόλῃας, is used by Ps.-Plutarch, in order to show how the gods stand by mortals.²⁷⁶

Aratus' *Phaenomena* may well have influenced Syrianus in his use of the idea of the gods' presence among mortals: at the beginning of his poem, Aratus explicitly states that all streets, all agorai, all ports and the sea itself are full of Zeus, who is the origin of human race.²⁷⁷ The idea of the gods' presence among mortals is the same, although Aratus mentions only Zeus (and not any other god), probably because he wants to stress

Zeus' superiority over the rest of the gods.

We should also note the adapted tense of the verb in the Homeric citation: Syrianus uses it in the past tense (ἐπεστρωφῶντο), whereas in the text of Homer it is in the present (ἐπιστρωφῶσι). This seems to suggest Syrianus' tendency to suggest that if the presence of gods among mortals was accepted as an idea, this took place not in Syrianus' time, but in the past; Syrianus thus expresses some scepticism for the idea that the "golden age" had passed without return.

Even with that limitation as far as time is concerned, we can suggest that in this point we might have a further element of Syrianus' theological beliefs, as far as the relations of the gods with the human beings are concerned. It is true that for the Neoplatonists gods showed providence for the Earth and the mortals: Proclus refers to it, arguing that it operates automatically.²⁷⁸ He also attributes to the Henads the job of being provident.²⁷⁹ But I do not think that in the later Neoplatonists we have any evidence of the gods' presence among mortals, not even in the remote past, the "golden age": it seems that the general theme of providence is exploited by Syrianus in a different way; thus his scepticism towards the idea of the gods' presence among mortals is justified.²⁸⁰

Passage 14 (17.2-5)

It is worth drawing our attention to another Homeric echo, through a proverb this time. Syrianus comments on Hermogenes' words at 28.15-29.5:

Καὶ πρῶτόν γε, ὃ τι ἔστι πολιτικόν ζήτημα, ῥητέον (ἔστι τοίνυν ἀμφισβήτησις λογικῆ ἐπὶ μέρους ἐκ τῶν παρ' ἐκάστοις κειμένων νόμων ἢ ἐθῶν περὶ τοῦ νομισθέντος δικαίου ἢ τοῦ καλοῦ ἢ τοῦ συμφέροντος ἢ καὶ πάντων ἅμα ἢ τινῶν

Syrianus' remarks on this passage are at 17.2-5:

ἕτερον δὲ τὸ δοκοῦν παρὰ τὸ ἀληθές, οἷον ἀληθές μὲν δίκαιόν ἐστι καὶ συμφέρον

τοὺς ἀρίστους ἄρχειν ἕκασταχοῦ, κἄν Ἴρου πτωχότεροι τυγχάνωσιν.

It is evident that the beggar Irus, who at *Od.* XVIII fights with Odysseus and is defeated and treated in a very humiliating way, had remained famous for his poverty.

The epigram 7.676 from the *Anthologia Graeca*²⁸¹ shows clearly that the expression πενίην Ἴρος (= as far as poverty is concerned, he is as poor as Irus, he is extremely poor) was already in use when the epigram was composed. Unfortunately, as we do not know the author of the epigram, we are not in the position to decide with certainty whether the epigram is Hellenistic or later.²⁸²

It seems then that Irus and his poverty and misery had become a *topos* in antiquity. When someone wanted either to give an example of poverty or a synonym of the word "poor", then Irus seemed to have been the best choice. Both pagan and Christian writers use this scheme.

To start with the pagan, Lucian holds that there is no difference whether a dead man is buried or not; as far as honour in the underworld is concerned, Irus is not different from the great Agamemnon.²⁸³ Dio Chrysostom says that the beggar, who seeks to appear like a Croesus, is confounded by Irus.²⁸⁴

Libanius uses the name Irus to denote the word "poor" in three cases. In the first one, in his effort to defend a friend of his, among other praises he says that he would rather become Irus than Cinyras, as far as the honour of gods is concerned.²⁸⁵ Cinyras' name became proverbial for riches and beauty; therefore, the name "Irus" in this case is proverbial for poverty, and the contrast between Irus and Cinyras is clearly a contrast between a poor and a rich man. In the second case, where Libanius defends his friend Orion against the charge of stealing money from a temple, we also see that the name "Irus" is treated as a synonym of the word "poor".²⁸⁶ The same applies to the third case, where Libanius accuses certain persons who were the king's representatives in Antiochea, of acquiring wealth illegally so that in a short time from the state of Irus they have moved

to the state of Callias (a rich Athenian of the 5th century B.C.).²⁸⁷

Among Church Fathers, Athanasius uses the expression γυμνός Ἴριος καὶ πένης on one of the many occasions when he refers to the rich and the poor.²⁸⁸ Gregory Nazianzenus refers to the Homeric Irus along with the hero Agamemnon, son of Atreus, in order to stress that both were mortals and, regardless of their different status in life, both died.²⁸⁹

If we also add Herodianus²⁹⁰ and the *Suda*'s references s.v. Ἴριος,²⁹¹ along with Eustathius' information that in his time people who lived above Sinope, speaking Greek rather like foreigners, used the word ἄϊρος as synonym to πτωχός,²⁹² it is clear that Irus' poverty used to be a very well-known and widely used *topos* and that the word "Irus" was treated as synonym to the word "poor". This is why Syrianus, having in mind to lay emphasis on poverty, says κἄν Ἴριου πτωχότεροι τυγχάνωσιν.

Passage 15 (23.17-24.1)

Hermogenes at *De Statibus* 29.12-30.9 deals with the question which πρόσωπα (persons) can provide a basis for argument; he mentions seven and describes them in order of argumentative force: τὰ ὠρισμένα καὶ κύρια (determinate proper names), τὰ πρὸς τι (relative terms), τὰ διαβεβλημένα (prejudicial terms), τὰ ἠθικά (characterising terms), τὰ κατὰ συμπλοκὴν δύο προσηγοριῶν (terms combining two appellatives), τὰ κατὰ συμπλοκὴν προσώπου καὶ πράγματος (terms combining person and act), τὰ ἀπλᾶ προσηγορικά (simple appellative terms). Syrianus, referring to the κατὰ συμπλοκὴν δύο προσηγοριῶν (terms combining two appellatives) says at *In de Statibus* 23.17-24.1:

οἶδεν ἑκάτερον τῶν προσηγορικῶν ἀσθενὲς σφόδρα πρὸς εὐπορίαν συστάσεως ὑπάρχον καὶ διὰ τοῦτο δύο πρὸς ταῦτ' ἀσθενέστερα. ἢ τε γὰρ νεότης πρόδηλον μὲν ὅτι ὡς ἐπίπαν ἀφρονεστέρα καὶ φίλαρχος - ἀεὶ γὰρ "ὀπλοτέρων ἀνδρῶν φρένες ἠερέθονται" (*II. III* 108) -, σπανίως δὲ κἄν τῷ φρονεῖν ἀριστα διαφέρει - ὁ γοῦν Διομήδης "καὶ βουλῇ μετὰ πάντας ὁμήλικας ἔπλευ ἄριστος" (*II. IX* 54).

The two Homeric examples are used to specify the qualities of youth: the first to show how quick-tempered young people are, and the second to stress the mature thought that most young people do not possess. Syrianus is well aware that the second verse refers to Diomedes, and he mentions this in his example. We notice that both verses, i.e. ὀπλοτέρων ἀνδρῶν φρένες ἠερέθονται and καὶ βουλῇ μετὰ πάντας ὀμήλικας ἔπλευ ἄριστος are very well suited to Syrianus' point.

Eustathius rightly acknowledges the fact that the second verse refers to Diomedes' ability to take the right decisions and draws our attention to the fact that his abilities in battle are equally stressed by the poet in the previous verse IX 53 (Τυδείδη περὶ μὲν πολέμῳ ἔνι καρτερός ἐσσι).²⁹³

Passage 16 (26.25-27.5)

At *De Statibus* 30.10-12 Hermogenes, after having dealt with the πρόσωπα (persons) which provide a basis for an argument, makes the interesting remark that one should adhere to the topics of encomium and use whichever are relevant:

Τὰ μὲν οὖν ἐξεταζόμενα τῶν προσώπων ταῦτα, καὶ δεῖ τοῖς ἐγκωμιαστικοῖς ἀκολουθοῦντα τόποις χρῆσθαι τοῖς ἐμπίπτουσιν

Syrianus seems to consider τοῖς ἐμπίπτουσιν (the ones who are relevant) to be of major importance and dedicates several lines to illuminate it. His interpretation is: τοῖς κατὰ τεχνικὴν θεωρίαν τῷ λέγοντι λυσιτελοῦσιν (25.13-14). He gives several examples of this and then argues at 26.25-27.5:

τὸ μὲν οὖν πρόχειρον τῆς τῶν ἐγκωμιαστικῶν τόπων χρήσεως τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν ὥστε διὰ πάσης ἔχειν φυλακῆς, μὴ τι καὶ προσέσθαι ἀναγκασθῶμεν ἔπος "ὄπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον" (*Od.* XIV 466), ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν πρὸς σύστασιν ἡμετέραν ἐροῦμεν, τὰ δὲ βλάπτοντα σιωπήσομεν.

The expression ὄπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον (*Od.* XIV 466) is from Odysseus' words to Eumaeus with reference to the consequences wine has on men. The point Syrianus

makes is that every speech has to be written in such a way that it exposes whatever is in favour of the case, and passes over all that does harm to it. The Homeric verse is therefore an example not of what the orator must do, but rather of what he must avoid.

The Homeric expression in question seems to have been quite frequently used in rhetorical treatises as well as in other works, in order to show either the bad consequences of drunkenness or, in a broader context, what should be said by someone and what should not. We first encounter it in Aristotle, who, as we learn from Plutarch, used it as an example to show the difference between the state of exhilaration (οἴνωσις) and of drunkenness (μέθη): in the first case one has the feeling of well-being, in the second the inclination to talk too much.²⁹⁴

Athenaeus quotes the verse with reference to wine, remarking that when the wine is correctly mixed, then one can laugh a little or dance and not talk too much; at this point the corresponding Homeric verses are quoted.²⁹⁵ Plutarch uses the same words and the same Homeric example twice, in order to refer to laughing, dancing and talking, as Homer did in the first use of the expression. Drunkenness is considered dangerous, almost as bad as madness and anger; its basic disadvantage seems to be the fact that it leads to intemperate and unlimited talking.²⁹⁶

Aelius Aristides deals with the problem whether it is possible for someone to lead a life which is characterised by justice, while having great power to do wrong. He uses Plato's definition of the orator (someone who has the power to do wrong) and concludes that if, under those circumstances, the orator passes his life justly, then he surpasses the common people in justice, since he abstains from doing wrong by choice, and not by necessity. At this point, Aelius Aristides uses Homer's remark: καὶ τι ἔπος προέηκεν, ὄπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον.²⁹⁷

Libanius uses the verse twice: in the first case, he writes to someone who had spoken ill of Athens and wonders what the consequences might be in case this should

reach Athens. In his own words: ὄρα οὖν, ὅ,τι ἀπολογήσῃ πρὸς Ἀθηναίους· οἶμαι δέ σε ἀπορήσειν, πλὴν εἰ τὸν ἔρωτα τὸν εἰς ἡμᾶς αἰτιάσαιο, δι' ὃν ἤδη τις ἔπος προέηκεν ὅπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον.²⁹⁸ In the second case, he writes to a friend and complains that he did not open the door of his house to admit the men who take part in the celebration of Dionysus. He holds that there are circumstances under which someone prefers either to stay silent, or to speak and then regret it, because he said something that should have better not been said. Libanius is doing his best to make his friend have a third choice the next time, and to open his door and speak.²⁹⁹

Ps.-Plutarch mentions the verse in his discussion of Pythagoras' preference to silence concerning things that are to be mentioned: there he quotes Homer's view over people who drink wine.³⁰⁰

Proclus also uses the Homeric expression ὅπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον without actually referring either to wine or to Homer. Proclus deals with how divine knowledge is acquired and holds that it cannot be characterised by the qualities of human knowledge; therefore, he is in agreement with Porphyry, who believed that the way knowledge is acquired varies according to the intellectual capacities of those who acquire it.³⁰¹

Ammonius, son of Hermias, uses the verse as an example which proves that one can say the same thing affirmatively and negatively, provided that one knows how. In particular, he says that the Homeric phrase "καὶ τι ἔπος προέηκεν, ὅπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον" does not differ from "τὶ τῶν εἰρημένων ῥηθῆναι οὐκ ἔδει".³⁰²

Finally, Olympiodorus, commenting on Socrates' words, uses the Homeric verse in a very interesting way: he holds that Socrates' words in the *Alcibiades* parodies Homeric verses, one of which is the verse in question.³⁰³

It is evident from all these cases that Homer's opinion on wine, which was expressed at *Od.* XIV 463-466, influenced many writers to a greater or a lesser extent. But apart from that, the verse which claimed that something should better remain untold had

its own influence, as it was used by many late writers, often without reference to Homer, in different contexts. In other words, the expression ὅπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον did not stay associated with its Homeric context, but, by becoming a sort of proverb, was widely used throughout antiquity. Syrianus - like Libanius - is, then, one of the many who used the expression in this way.

Moreover, we can argue that Syrianus' point is interesting for an additional reason: he seems to think highly of the orator's ability to know when to talk and when to be silent (τὰ μὲν πρὸς σύστασιν ἡμετέραν ἐροῦμεν, τὰ δὲ βλάπτοντα σιωπήσομεν). Seen under that perspective, the Homeric reference is put in the context of the political consequences of talking: talking can be rather dangerous in certain situations, and this is why Homer's advice ὅπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον can prove itself to be quite useful!

Passage 17 (185.5-14)

The last Homeric reference appears in the course of the analysis of the issues made by Syrianus, and is the only one that is not placed in the introduction of the work. After dealing with the first nine issues, i.e. conjecture (στοχασμός), definition (ὄρος), counterplea (ἀντίληψις), counterstatement (ἀντίστασις), transference (μετάστασις), counteraccusation (ἀντέγκλημα), mitigation (συγγνώμη), objection (μετάληψις) and procedural exception (παραγραφή), Syrianus has reached the tenth: the practical (πραγματική). As usual, he defines it and goes on to discuss separately the different cases to which it applies. He then mentions a division that he himself has cited in the analysis of the *Progymnasmata*: there are three types of rhetoric, each with different aims. The court speeches (δικανικοὶ λόγοι) aim at justice (τὸ δίκαιον), the speeches of advice (συμβουλευτικοὶ λόγοι) at profit (τὸ συμφέρον) and the epideictic speeches (πανηγυρικοὶ λόγοι) at good (τὸ καλόν). In turn, τὸ δίκαιον is divided into νόμιμον, δίκαιον and ἔθος,

or 'the
beautiful'?

τὸ συμφέρον into χρήσιμον, ἀναγκαῖον, δυνατόν, ῥάδιον and ἐκβησόμενον, and τὸ καλὸν into πρέπον and ἔνδοξον.

Syrianus analyses each one of the sub-aims. As he proceeds, he reaches δυνατόν.

In his own words at 185.5-14:

τοῦτο δὲ πρῶτος μὲν Ὅμηρος πεποίηκεν Ἀχιλλεὺς γὰρ ἐπιστρέψαι τὸν βασιλέα βουλόμενος εἰς τὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν παρόντων φροντίδα πρότερον καταπλήττει λέγων "Ἄτρεϊδη, νῦν ἄμμε παλιπλαγχθέντας ὁῖω ἄψ ἀπονοστήσειν, εἴ κεν θάνατόν γε φύγοιμεν, εἰ δὴ ὁμοῦ πόλεμός τε δαμῶ καὶ λοιμὸς Ἀχαιοῦς" (*Il.* I 59-61), εἶτα καταπλήξας οὐ συγκεχώρηκε τραπῆναι πρὸς ἀθυμίαν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἴασιν ἔδειξε πλησίον ὑπάρχουσιν εἰπὼν "ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν ἢ ἱερῆα" (*Il.* I 62).

Both passages referred to here are from the first book of the *Ilias* and are spoken by Achilles. Syrianus wants to show the way Achilles handled a difficult situation, i.e. how he first made an extreme statement, pleading the impossible, and then proposed a solution to the problem. This is indeed a common practice in the speeches of advice. Syrianus is well aware of the use orators like Demosthenes make of the pattern; but apart from giving an example, he makes an attempt to trace its origins.

Both quotations of Syrianus are from the first book of the *Ilias*, which was very famous in antiquity, as we often notice in the work of many writers, where quotations from it are more frequent than from any other book of Homer. Especially the verses ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν ἢ ἱερῆα ἢ καὶ ὄνειροπόλον are very frequently quoted, in order to make the distinction between μάντις, ἱερεὺς and ὄνειροπόλος: the Homeric scholiast,³⁰⁴ Ps.-Plutarch,³⁰⁵ Apollonius,³⁰⁶ Porphyry,³⁰⁷ Herodianus³⁰⁸ and Eustathius³⁰⁹ set out to explain the difference between the most general notion of μάντις and the specialised tasks of the other two. To be more specific, all the above-mentioned sources agree that the word μάντις refers to everyone that can foresee the future in any way, whereas the word ὄνειροπόλος clearly refers to the art of interpreting the dreams and the word ἱερεὺς to the art of telling the future from either the animals' inward parts (heart, lungs, liver, kidneys etc.) or the flight of birds.³¹⁰ We should also

mention that the widespread belief in divination and bird-omens was shared by Plotinus³¹¹ and Proclus.³¹²

Nevertheless, the importance of the two Homeric references is that Homer is regarded to have been the first who made use of themes that are later to be found in speeches of advice, e.g. in Demosthenes' speeches.

2.4 Remarks on Chapter 2

When one goes through Syrianus' use of Homer in his rhetorical work, one is left with the impression that each Homeric quotation is what we would have in fact expected from a teacher of rhetoric, who commented on an important technical work.

To start with, the first thing one notices is that the majority of Homeric references in the *In Hermogenem* commentary actually comes from the *Ilias*: in the 17 passages, in which 21 Homeric verses appear, only 6 verses actually derive from the *Odyssea*, whereas no less than 15 verses come from the *Ilias*. In the exegesis we also have four examples, where the reference is not to an actual verse, but to general themes related to the Homeric tradition (e.g. in passage 11, where the oratorical abilities of certain Homeric heroes are mentioned, in passage 12, where the qualities of the Homeric Athena are discussed, in passage 14, where the echo of the Homeric Irus is treated in a way that shows that its use had become proverbial). The fact that in either form the references from the *Ilias* are more numerous is not surprising, as the *Ilias* was indeed more widely used in the Homeric exegetical tradition than the *Odyssea*.

As to the content of each reference, linguistic examples, which are to be found in many writers on rhetoric, appear in the exegesis: to be more specific, passage 4 refers to natural diffuseness and passage 6 has remarks on metrics. Stylistic elements can also be traced in Syrianus' reference in passage 10 to how a good speech should be composed. This very passage shows how Syrianus, using evidence that actually referred to military practices, managed to apply this method to the composition of speeches. In passage 3 another matter that has to do with stylistics is enforced by a Homeric example; the latter becomes more interesting if we take into account that Hermogenes himself used the same verse for stylistic reasons in his own exegesis. Passage 8, which refers to springs also can

be included in the stylistic remarks Syrianus made, assisted by the Homeric tradition.

In passage 9 Homer's reference went together with a reference from Demosthenes, in a context of judicial rhetoric: from this reference we conclude that Homer's authority was not lesser than Demosthenes', even when the question comes to composition of speeches.

Furthermore, some of Syrianus' references aim at the common knowledge of Homer that any educated man of his time was expected to have acquired. For instance, the famous quotation concerning Odysseus that we have encountered in passage 5 "ἴσκει ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα", as well the equally famous quotation "ὄχνη ἐπ' ὄχνη γηράσκει, μήλον δ' ἐπὶ μήλῳ, αὐτὰρ ἐπὶ σταφυλῇ σταφυλή, σύκον δ' ἐπὶ σύκῳ" in passage 7 can easily be remembered by any student.

Syrianus' use of famous passages goes together with the use of Homeric elements that had become proverbial by his time: this is the case of the example of Irus (passage 14) and of the expression ὄπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον (passage 16).

Widespread opinions are also supported by Homeric examples: in passage 15 the reference to the qualities of youth is enforced by two Homeric citations. In passage 1 Syrianus' remark concerning human nature is also sustained by a Homeric example.

In Syrianus' *In Hermogenem* we also encounter the indirect transmission of others' opinion on Homer: in passage 2 the Iamblichean stylistic view that Homer, along with Demosthenes and Plato, are models of writing is presented by Syrianus. This reference of Syrianus is our source for the Iamblichean work *Περὶ κρίσεως ἀρίστου λόγου*, and we cannot but regret that the remaining surviving works of Syrianus do not provide us with further evidence of Syrianus' knowledge of this work.

Back to the treatment of Homer: as the subject of the exegesis is rhetoric, the Homeric heroes' involvement with it could not have escaped Syrianus' notice: in cases such as passage 11 the oratorical skills of Homeric heroes are mentioned. We have tried

to draw the threads of the different traditions Syrianus might have exploited to reach his conclusion. The case of passage 17 is also interesting: Homer is regarded as one of the teachers of rhetoric, as devices used by model orators such as Demosthenes are to be found in Homeric diction.

But Homer is also used, in order to support theological beliefs that are mentioned in the exegesis. In passage 12 Athena's properties are discussed with the aid of the Homeric tradition, whereas in passage 13 the important belief concerning the gods' presence among mortals is supported by Homeric verses.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 HOMERIC PASSAGES IN THE *IN PHAEDRUM*

Passage 18 (16.16-17)

The first Homeric reference of this commentary is at 16.16-17: in order to explain Phaedrus' double answer to Socrates' double question where he is going and where he is coming from, Syrianus says that this chiasmus (*σχῆμα χιαστόν*) is a Homeric echo that is used in order to make things clear:

Ἐρωτηθεὶς ὁ νέος διπλὴν τὴν ἐρώτησιν διπλὴν καὶ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν δέδωκε, πλὴν τὸ μὲν φαινόμενον κατὰ ζῆλον Ὀμηρικὸν σαφηνείας χάριν χιάσας αὐτὴν (πρὸς γὰρ τὸ π ὅ θ ε ν ἀπήνησε... κατὰ τὸ
... οἰμωγὴ τε καὶ εὐχολή...
ὀλλύντων τε καὶ ὀλλυμένων (II. VIII 64-65)

The A scholia on VIII 65 have no reference to chiasmus; nevertheless, the way in which Syrianus mentions this phenomenon shows that at least the relevant terminology had already been established and that it was quite well-known to the scholars of his age.³¹³

Numenius made use of the Homeric passage that includes this very chiasmus in his fr. 25, which refers to Arcesilaus and Zeno; as Lambertson remarks,³¹⁴ "*Numenius is not quoting Homer here: he is making a complex pastiche of Homer*". The adaptation of Homeric vocabulary to Numenius' own needs is, of course, a far more sophisticated use than that of Syrianus in the case we are examining; nevertheless, it seems to be worth mentioning, as it includes Numenius' sharp criticism of the early Academicians and Stoics. Now, if Syrianus was aware of that passage of Numenius, the evidence from the passage we are examining is not enough to prove anything.

Surprisingly enough, Ps.-Plutarch does not include chiasmus in his section, where the paternity of many grammatical and rhetorical figures that have to do with syntax is attributed to Homer.³¹⁵ But Eustathius offers an illuminating reference to chiasmus; the example he adduces for the phenomenon when it involves words is this particular verse. He also offers evidence of chiasmus when it has to do not only with words, but with whole phrases.³¹⁶ Syrianus, however, did not introduce an example that involves phrases and not words, in spite of the fact that in his text phrases and not words are involved: he used a simple Homeric example, perhaps in order to make things easier for his students, may be in order to stress the Homeric origin of the phenomenon (τὸ μὲν φαινόμενον κατὰ ζῆλον Ὀμηρικόν).

Passage 19 (26.18-25)

At 26.9-25 Syrianus discusses knowledge and ignorance; he divides the latter, which concerns what is outside human beings (περὶ τὰ ἔκτος), into simple and twofold ignorance. He then mentions Socrates' self-awareness (γνώθι σαυτὸν) and says at 26.18-25:

Θεωρητικώτερον δὲ, ὅτι τὸ μὲν λόγιον "γνώθι σαυτὸν" παραινεῖ ἀνακινεῖν οἶον τὸν ἄνθρωπον, οὐχ ἵνα μὴ οὔσαν γνῶσιν λάβῃ περὶ ἑαυτοῦ, ἀλλ' ἵνα μένουσαν ἔχη ταύτην καὶ ἀνεπίληστον. Ὁ γοῦν μὴ ἐπιλελησμένος ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλ' εἰδῶς τίς ἐστίν, ἐκεῖνος καὶ τὰ ἔκτος οὐκ ἀγνοήσει, ὁ δὲ ἀγνοῶν τὰ ἔκτος καὶ ὡς ἐστῶτα τὰ φεύγοντα λογιζόμενος, ἐκεῖνος καὶ ἑαυτοῦ ἐπιλέλησται, εἰδῶς τὸ Ὀμηρικόν
οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα τρέφει ἀνθρώπιον (*Od. XVIII 130*).

The philosopher's point is that the famous saying γνώθι σαυτὸν is in accordance with Socrates' view of knowledge: one is advised to retain all one's knowledge about oneself inside one's mind and not forget it. He who does not forget himself and knows who he is, is not ignorant of the things which are outside himself. On the contrary, anyone who is ignorant of what exists outside himself and considers the unstable things to be stable, will forget himself, according to the Homeric saying that there is nothing weaker

on earth than mortals.

We acknowledge that the widely-accepted Homeric opinion on mortals is given serious consideration; we can go as far as to suggest that the way Homer's view is fitted in a gnosiological context shows that he is considered as an authority whose opinion on a philosophical matter has a weight of its own.

It is the first time in this commentary that Homer's authority is brought in, in a way that points towards the evaluation of Homer not as a poet, whose poetry is loved and admired, but as a "learned man" of the past.³¹⁷

As far as the verse itself is concerned, it has not passed unnoticed, especially by writers of later periods. We find it in Plutarch,³¹⁸ Hermogenes³¹⁹ and Clement of Alexandria.³²⁰ The pattern οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον is also present in an epigram, which has the same meaning as the Homeric verse: "nothing is weaker than mortals".³²¹ More interesting is Olympiodorus' mention of the verse: he holds that man needs more care than animals, regarding not only the body, but also reason. This happens because inventive reason is inside human beings, following desire and varying passions, as in the case of Odysseus. At this point the verse is quoted.³²²

Eustathius refers to the verse as a saying (τὸ γνωμικόν) and is of the opinion that there is an exaggeration in it; he is of the opinion that man, regardless of man's superiority to any other living creature, is more susceptible to pain than any other animal; following the Christian tradition, Eustathius attributes this to man's fall from the heavens. It is also worth mentioning that, according to Eustathius, this fall is due to bad luck (ἀτυχία).³²³

Passage 20 (41.14-20)

At 41.14-20 a passage of the *Ilias* is mentioned as a linguistic example of the usage

of a verb:

καὶ τοῦτο σημαίνει παρὰ τοῖς θεολόγοις τὸ ἔλαθε τὸ κατὰ τὴν οἰκίαν
ιδιότητα ἐνεργεῖν καὶ μὴ κατὰ τὴν τῶν ὑπερκειμένων αἰτίαν σύμπνοιαν· τοῦτο γὰρ
δηλοῖ καὶ τὸ μίγνυσθαι τοῖς θεοῖς

φίλους λήθοντε τοκῆας (II. XIV 296)

τὸ κατὰ τὴν οἰκίαν ἑαυτῶν οὐσίαν καὶ ιδιότητα ἐνεργεῖν μὴ ἀνατεινομένους ἐπὶ τὰ
αἴτια αὐτῶν μηδὲ ἐκεῖθεν δυναμένους.

What makes this reference quite interesting is the fact that it does not involve language only: Syrianus is trying to explain to his pupils the usage of the verb λανθάνω by the theologians. Homer is obviously included among them for the first time in the commentary; of course, it is not Syrianus' innovation to consider Homer as a theologian. As far as the identity of the other theologians mentioned is concerned, as the commentary proceeds, Syrianus will clearly state their names.

Moreover, in this passage the Homeric theological, so to speak, tradition is combined with the traditional scholarly explanation of Homer. This example could therefore be very useful, as it shows that in his perception of Homer Syrianus considered Homer as a multi-faceted unity. He did not distinguish between Homer as a theologian and as a source for examples of linguistic uses; both aspects seem to be expressed simultaneously.

It is worth noticing that the verse in question belongs to the very famous passage from the *Ilias*, in which Zeus' union with Hera is described. As Proclus informs us,³²⁴ Syrianus had written a special monograph dedicated to this passage (as is well known, the passage had been bitterly attacked by Plato in the *Respublica*³²⁵). It is a pity that no further elaboration of this subject is attested in the present exegesis; no single hint is dropped concerning either Plato's criticism, or Syrianus' view on the matter. Although the verse quoted in this case belongs to Zeus' union with Hera, the purpose of the quotation is completely different; perhaps that is why the "immoral" context of the verse, which had been the object of Plato's criticism, is not commented on at this point.

Eustathius in his turn refers to the episode twice: the first time³²⁶ he speaks of Hephaestus' conception in allegorical terms, and along the way mentions the well-known verse of Hera's union with Zeus. His second reference³²⁷ is to the episode in itself: he perceives it as an allegory for the union between air (Hera) and aether (Zeus).

But the verse εἰς εὐνὴν φοιτῶντε φίλους λήθοντε τοκῆας was not only used by philosophers and thinkers who knew Plato's views. It appears in literary texts, as for example in the *Anth. Gr.* IX 381, where the secret meetings of Hero and Leander are described, without any hint of Plato's reservations as to the moral dimension of the act, and of course without any attempt at allegory.³²⁸

Passage 21 (47.1-4)

In his commentary on 236d of the Platonic text, Syrianus has a Homeric reference without actually quoting any verse: talking about the vow of Phaedrus to Socrates, he mentions the Sun's vow to Zeus (47.1-4):

Ὁ δὲ ὄρκος αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ ὀμνῦναι ὅτι "ἐάν μοι μὴ εἴπῃς τὸν λόγον, οὐδέποτε σοι ἕτερον λόγον ἐπιδείξω", βουλομένου ὠφελῆσθαι ἔστι καὶ δηλοῖ ὅτι, εἰ μὴ συνέλθοι αὐτῷ ὁ Σωκράτης, παντελῆς αὐτὸν καθέξει στέρησις, ὥσπερ δὴ καὶ ὁ ἥλιος ὀμνυσι τῷ Διί.

The verses implied by Syrianus when he refers to the Sun's vow are *Od.* XII 382-383:

εἰ δὲ μοι οὐ τίσουσι βοῶν ἐπιεικέ' ἀμοιβὴν
δύσομαι εἰς Ἄϊδαο καὶ ἐν νεκύεσσι φαεῖνω.

Syrianus' remark focuses on the consequences of the vow and the overall chaos that will follow, if the Sun indeed realises his threat. Moreover, the fact that Syrianus just refers to the Sun's vow, without considering it necessary to quote the relevant verses, can be explained by his pupils' increasing familiarity with Homer from their schooldays onwards.

An echo of this verse is in Aristophanes' *Nubes* 585, where the Sun is supposed to realise the same threat, in case that Kleon becomes general; but I do not think that Syrianus had the Aristophanic passage in mind, when he talked about the Sun's vow to Zeus. Familiar with Aristophanes though Syrianus may have been (especially because he had had a rhetorical background), his knowledge of Homer was undoubtedly better and deeper.

Eustathius praises the two verses containing the Sun's vow for their characterisation (ἠθοποιῖα), their simplicity (ἀφέλεια) and their sweetness (γλυκύτης),³²⁹ the point Eustathius makes is a purely rhetorical one, belonging to the Hermogenic tradition, as the terms clearly show. It is interesting in itself, but stresses another aspect of the Homeric text, and not the one Syrianus adopts here.

Passage 22 (49.29-50.2)

A passage of the *Odyssea*, along with a passage from Hesiod's *Opera*, is cited as an example of the usage of an adjective at 49.29-50.2:

Τὸ δὲ αἰμύλος ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀπατεῶν καὶ πανούργου καὶ δόλιου εἰληπταί·
αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισι
θέλγει, ὅπως Ἰθάκης ἐπιλήσεται· (*Od.* I 56-57)
καὶ
αἰμύλα κωτίλλουσα (*Hes. Op.* 372).

Syrianus here comments on the Platonic use of the adjective αἰμύλος, which is found at the beginning of Socrates' first speech on love. He makes a purely linguistic comment on an adjective used by both Homer and Hesiod.

In the case of this adjective (also found in the *Hymni Homeric*,³³⁰ Hesiod,³³¹ Theognis,³³² Apollonius Rhodius³³³ and even Gregory Nazianzenus³³⁴) the V scholia³³⁵ give several completely different explanations: αἰμυλίοισι] παραλογιστικοῖς. ἢ εὐνοϊκοῖς καὶ οἶον συγγενικοῖς, ἢ τοῖς μετ' ἐμπειρίας

συνετοῖς καὶ προσηγέσιν.

On the other hand, Hesychius s.v. αἰμυλίοις writes κολακευτικοῖς, s.v. αἰμύλα προσηγή, s.v. αἰμυλίοισι συνετοῖς καὶ προσηγέσι, whereas s.v. αἰμύλος we find ἀστεῖος, συνετὸς, ὄξυς ἐν τῷ λέγειν.

The *Etymologicum Magnum* s.v. αἰμύλος has the following: ἔμπειρος, συνετός, κολακευτικῶς· ἐκ τοῦ Αἴμων, ὃ σημαίνει τὸν εἰδήμονα καὶ ἔμπειρον· καὶ αἰμυλίοισι [κολακευτικοῖς] λόγοις.

Photius s.v. αἰμύλος has κόλαξ, ἀπατεῶν; Photius thus offers a meaning which is almost identical to the one proposed by Syrianus.

In any case, we are dealing with an adjective, which is found in Homer only once and whose etymology is rather uncertain. But, in my opinion, after trying to fit each of the afore-mentioned meanings of the adjective αἰμύλος to the Platonic text, we come to the conclusion that Syrianus' and Photius' interpretations seem to be the closest to the Platonic text.

We should also add Ps.-Plutarch's remark concerning the use of adjectives in Homer: the wealth of the adjectives, which are properly and successfully fitted to the subjects, makes them have power equal to the proper names.³³⁶ In our passage, Syrianus does not make any reference to the use of the adjective αἰμύλος; nevertheless, nothing prevents us from assuming that he shared Ps.-Plutarch's views concerning the use of the adjectives in Homer. This very passage seems to explain a difficult word, with the aid of both the Homeric and the Hesiodic epics. But the view that Homer made a distinctive use of adjectives was surely accepted by Syrianus.

Passage 23 (54.25-31)

At *Phaedrus* 238c Socrates himself interrupts the continuity of his first speech on

Love, in order to address Phaedrus, and asks him whether he thinks that Socrates has experienced a divine passion. Syrianus explains Socrates' self-interruption, by attributing it to three causes. The first reason is logical, since it was necessary for Socrates to prove the definition of Love, according to which Love is both passion and excess. The second reason of the interruption is moral, because Socrates wanted to see Phaedrus' reaction to this definition. And the third reason is scientific and theological, as we receive emanations and illuminations from the gods which correspond to our own particular types of life. In Syrianus' own words:

τρίτην δὲ ἀποδοίης ἂν ἐπιστημονικωτάτην καὶ θεολογικωτάτην ὅτι ταῖς προσφόροις ἡμῶν καὶ τοιαῖσδε ζωαῖς πρόσφοροι καὶ ἐλλάμπεις καὶ ἐπίπνοιαί ἡμῖν ἐκ τῶν θεῶν ἐνδίδονται, καὶ ἄλλοτε ἄλλῳ θεῷ οἰκειούμεθα κατὰ τὴν τοιάνδε ἡμῶν ζωὴν. Τοῦτο γὰρ σημαίνει καὶ τὸ τὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα νῦν μὲν τῇ Καλυψοῖ, ἄλλοτε δὲ τῇ Κίρκῃ συνεῖναι καὶ ἄλλοτε ἄλλῃ θεῷ· ὅτι γὰρ κατὰ τὴν τοιάνδε ἑαυτοῦ ζωὴν μετεῖχε ἄλλοτε ἄλλων θειοτέρων δυνάμεων καὶ ἐνελάμπετο καὶ ᾤκειούτο ἄλλῳ θεῷ.

Syrianus' point is theological, and the examples used are Homeric. Indeed, Odysseus had relations with two different goddesses, i.e. Calypso and Circe in the *Odyssea*. But what about Syrianus' words καὶ ἄλλοτε ἄλλῃ θεῷ? In Homer (and in the Homeric tradition in general) we find only those two goddesses being related to Odysseus. Does this imply that Syrianus was not aware of this fact?

Syrianus' knowledge of Homer cannot have been insufficient, so as to lead him to such a major mistake. We would rather consider the pattern ἄλλοτε δὲ τῇ Κίρκῃ συνεῖναι καὶ ἄλλοτε ἄλλῃ θεῷ as hendiadys (ἐν διὰ δυοῖν), and thus conclude that Syrianus had indeed only Calypso and Circe in mind when he made reference to the different goddesses Odysseus was related to.

Passage 24 (61.7-10)

At 61.7-10 Syrianus comments on the expression ὡς λύκοι ἄρνα φιλοῦσιν of the

Phaedrus and says:

Τὸ δὲ ὡς λύκοι ἄρνα φιλοῦσι ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὀμηρικοῦ παρῳδῆται
ὡς οὐκ ἔστι λέουσι καὶ ἄρναςιν ὄρκια πιστὰ
οὐδὲ λύκοι τε καὶ ἄρνες ὁμόφρονα θυμὸν ἔχουσι (II.XXII 262-63)

The first thing to note is the form of the verb: παρῳδῆται may stand as a simplified version of πεπαρῳδῆται, something not rare in texts as late as the present commentary; in that case the correct reading is <πε>παρῳδῆται. Another possible version of the verb could have been παρῳδεῖται, as the phenomenon of iotacismus was already a fact both in Syrianus' and in G. Pachymeres' times.³³⁷ In any case, whether the Syrianus' actual words were πεπαρῳδῆται (= stood as a parody) or παρῳδεῖται (= stands as a parody), Syrianus' point does not change: we have two Homeric verses, written by way of parody. Moreover, the two verses seem to have been a very common expression, from which a proverb had stemmed.³³⁸

It should not escape our notice that it is in the Platonic text itself that this proverb appears; this means that the proverb already existed in Plato's time. What Syrianus does is to trace its origins and its character, for the sake of his students.

The two verses appear in Eusebius in a passage where he discusses virtue (ἀρετή) as the supreme element of happiness (εὐδαιμονία) in Plato and Aristotle. Eusebius is of the opinion that Plato's and Aristotle's views on that matter are radically different; at this point the Homeric quotation is brought in.³³⁹

The verse II. XXII 263 as the source of another well-known proverb is mentioned by the bT scholia *ad loc.*:

ψ b. ἄλλως· οὐδὲ λύκοι τε καὶ ἄρνες (—ἔχουσιν): ἐντεῦθεν ἡ παροιμία· "ἄρνα φιλοῦσι λύκοι, νέον ὡς φιλέουσιν ἔρασται".

Finally, Eustathius mentions the verses XXII 262-263 and their proverbial character;³⁴⁰ it seems that the proverb in question (which is different from the one the bT scholia mention) had a Homeric beginning, as Syrianus rightly outlines, and, as we

saw, already existed in Plato's days; it also survived as far as the 12th century. Syrianus is thus a chain in a tradition that concerns another aspect of Homer: that of the use of Homeric survivals in everyday language (mostly in proverbial form).

Passage 25 (68.5-14)

At 68.2-14 Syrianus discusses the divine voice which Socrates used to hear: he draws his attention to how these voices are heard and to the wider theme whether divine entities speak at all:

Ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἔφη "καὶ τινὰ φωνὴν ἔδοξα ἀκοῦσα", δῆλον δὲ ὅτι δαιμονία ἦν ἡ φωνή (ἢ γὰρ ἂν καὶ ὁ Φαίδρος ἤκουσε), ζητητέον πῶς ἀκούονται αἱ τοιαῦται φωναὶ καὶ εἰ ὅλως φωνοῦσιν οἱ δαιμονες. Ὁ μὲν οὖν Πλωτῖνος ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν περὶ ἀποριῶν οὐδὲν ἄτοπὸν φησὶ φωνὴν ἀφιέναι τοὺς δαιμονας ἐν ἀέρι διαιτωμένους· ἢ τοιάδε γὰρ πληγὴ τοῦ ἀέρος ἐστὶ φωνή. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ καὶ τοῖς οὐρανίοις θεοῖς φωνὴν περιτιθέασιν οἱ θεῖοι ἄνδρες καὶ αἰσθήσεις·

ἡέλιος ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ

καὶ

ὃ δὲ μ' ἐς φρένας ἦλθε

καὶ παντὶ δὲ τῷ κόσμῳ φωνὴν περιτιθέασι, ζητητέον κοινόν τινα λόγον ὃς ἐφαρμόσει πᾶσι πῶς φωνοῦσι καὶ ὅλως πῶς αἰσθάνονται τὰ κρείττονα γένη.

The first example relating to the senses evidently refers to either *Od.* XI 109 = *Od.* XII 323 ('Ἡελίου, ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούει) or to *Il.* III 277 ('Ἡελίος θ', ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούεις). The second verse used by Syrianus (ὃ δὲ μ' ἐς φρένας ἦλθε), though not Homeric, will be discussed later on.

The whole context deals with a quite serious and fundamental matter for Syrianus' theology: Syrianus argues that, according to the "divine men" (οἱ θεῖοι ἄνδρες), the gods placed voice and senses in the heavenly bodies (ἐν τοῖς οὐρανίοις).

Syrianus' view on the heavens is not an idea of his own, but a view common to the cosmology of Neoplatonic philosophers. According to their belief, the heavens represented a divinity of lower rank, interposed between the Forms in the intelligible world and those in the material world. As far as the heavenly bodies are concerned, they have divine

characteristics, but they are not gods.³⁴¹

Moreover, the circular movement of the heavenly bodies was a concern of the school of Ammonius: as has been pointed out,³⁴² they cite Plotinus' answer that they imitate the divine Intellect, which, by returning upon itself, thinks all intelligible things and itself. In particular, the heavenly bodies are supposed to aspire to reach the immortality of the demiurgic Intellect. Their rationality is shown by their circular movement, which cannot be caused otherwise than by reason.³⁴³ They are supposed to acquire knowledge by a single application of their Intellect without experiencing any need of discursive knowledge.³⁴⁴

We therefore see that in antiquity the heavenly bodies were believed - at least by philosophers - to be alive and to have sight and hearing; the idea actually originates from Aristotle, as we shall see later. These senses are active rather than passive in perceiving, contribute to a superior mode of existence and, further, are more appropriate to the special kind of immutability the heavenly bodies enjoy.³⁴⁵

Syrianus goes a step further and applies the senses not only to the heavenly bodies, but to the divine soul as well. In that point Iamblichus' tradition seems to have been followed: according to Iamblichus, the human soul's union with its leader-god is brought about by the theurgic ritual. The ethereal vehicle is the receiver of the divine light. The light is the conduit for the vehicle and the source of the uplifting noetic energy. The ethereal and luminous vehicle that surrounds the soul controls the function of sense-perception and imagination; all external and internal stimuli to the vehicle cease and only images from the god are impressed upon it.³⁴⁶

Back to the Homeric quotation: the verse *Il. III 277* (= *Od. XI 109* = *Od. XII 323*) is referred to by Ps.-Plutarch, in a passage where the Sun's properties, according to the Homeric cosmology, are discussed.³⁴⁷

Heraclitus also quotes this verse twice: once in the *Allegoriae* 3.1, where Homer's

piety is discussed,³⁴⁸ and once in the *Allegoriae* 23.1-6, where he deals with the four elements, which are claimed to exist in Homer.³⁴⁹ Porphyry, in his turn, remarks that Homer, by saying that the Sun was able to see "everything", actually means "the majority of things", as the Sun is incapable of seeing what goes on in Hades. According to Porphyry, the Sun is not capable of seeing everything at the same time, either.³⁵⁰ But what is even more interesting is the fact this very verse was used by Neoplatonists as an example of the senses that the heavenly bodies have. P. Courcelle³⁵¹ refers to all the Neoplatonists who made use of these verses in one way or another.

The case of Proclus³⁵² is interesting: he quotes the verse once and argues that the visible gods (ἐμφανείς θεοί) have both the senses of sight and hearing inside them. But according to Proclus they do not have the sense of smell or taste. As we saw above, Olympiodorus³⁵³ says that, according to Proclus and Aristotle, the senses the heavenly bodies have are sight and hearing only; he ascribes this to the fact that sight and hearing are the two senses which contribute not to being, but to well-being; and in order to provide either an example, or a further sustainment of his argument, he quotes this very verse. The evidence from Olympiodorus is valuable for one more reason: he is the standard source of Aristotle's view on the matter in question.³⁵⁴ According to this testimony, Aristotle was the father of the idea of the attribution of senses to the heavenly bodies.

Moreover, Boethius in the *De consolatione philosophiae* V II has a passage which originates from verses *Il.* III 277 and *Od.* XII 323:

Πάντ' ἐφορᾶν καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούειν
 Puro clarum lumine Phoebum
 Melliflui canit oris Homerus.

Boethius uses the Homeric verse, which had evidently become a *topos*, in order to begin a poem that in due course praises God's properties. J. Gruber³⁵⁵ remarks that God's omniscience renders him superior to Phoebus, of whom Homer had said that he

could see and hear everything. The divine sight includes all present, past and future; but this doctrinal element does not enlighten the relation between divine providence and human freedom. It is evident that Boethius uses the Homeric verse in order to stress the superiority of the God of the philosophers, i.e. the divine Intellect (νοῦς), when compared to the pagan god, Phoebus.³⁵⁶ The aim of Homer's muse is completely different from all the afore-mentioned; but still, Boethius' passage can be considered as a further confirmation of the fact that the verse had undoubtedly become a *topos* in late Antiquity.

The Jewish writer Philo of Alexandria has two references that remind us of the famous Homeric verse: in the *Legum allegoriae* 3.171 he argues that, as the sun is capable of ὀρίζειν everything, in the same way ὁ Θεοῦ λόγος ὀξυδερεκέστερος ἐστίν, ὡς πάντα ἐφορᾶν εἶναι ἰκανός. Philo's second example deals with God's power as well: in the *De specialibus legibus* 1.279 he says that the power of God is such, that it makes him see and hear everything. Therefore, the echo of Homer is not to be neglected in Philo's case. Even if what he is discussing has nothing to do with either Phoebus or any other pagan doctrine, Philo uses a well-known scheme in order to express the omnipotence of God and of His will.³⁵⁷

Lamberton³⁵⁸ argues that "*Philo inherits the Stoic tradition of textual exegesis, already thoroughly platonised*". It is no surprise, therefore, that in his theological treatises he makes use of the widespread Homeric tradition, so as to give authority to his arguments. Moreover, the fact that he uses this very verse is further evidence for the verse being regarded as purely theological at a rather early stage.

Lastly, Macrobius uses the verse *Il. III 277* in the *Saturnalia* I 23.9, with reference to the power (*potestas*) which both the Sun and Zeus have. P. Courcelle³⁵⁹ points out that Macrobius' knowledge of ancient Greek literature was largely based either on quotations of previous writers or on anthologies. In any case, even if Macrobius did not have direct access to Homer the fact that the verse of the *Ilias* is being quoted is further

evidence that it had become a *topos*.³⁶⁰

It is evident, therefore, that the Homeric verses which mention the Sun's ability to see and hear everything were very well known; quite early, from Aristotle's time, they were used as examples of the theological argument that the heavenly bodies have senses. The Greek Neoplatonic tradition, of which Syrianus is part, made use of the verses to sustain this theological matter, quite characteristic of Neoplatonic cosmology. In addition to this writers such as Boethius, Philo and Macrobius knew the Homeric *topos*, either directly, or indirectly, and made use of it in a context that referred to the Christian God's properties.

Before finishing this discussion, we should notice that the quotation of 68.11 (ὁ δὲ μ' ἐς φρένας ἦλθε) is characterised by Couvreur as unknown. In fact, Couvreur followed the manuscript tradition, as these are the words found in the Par. Gr. 1810, which is considered to be the *codex optimus*. Couvreur's statement is true, as far as the quotation as a whole is concerned. But if we look only at the second part of it, i.e. the ἐς φρένας ἦλθε, we find that it occurs to Herodotus' *Historiae* I.47.13-14:

Ὀδμή μ' ἐς φρένας ἦλθε κραταιρίνοιο χελώνης
ἔψομένης ἐν χαλκῷ ἄμ' ἀρνείοισι κρέασιν

The Herodotean passage is a poetic one, as it is part of the oracle Pythia gave to Croesus. It is evident that the oracle refers to a sense, and in particular to the sense of smell; therefore, the context of the two passages is similar. Furthermore, it seems that the first part of the quotation Syrianus has (ὁ δὲ μ') does not differ widely from the Herodotean version (Ὀδμή μ'). The apparatus criticus of all the editions of Herodotus do not offer such an alternative, though; but since the pattern "ὁ δὲ μ'" seems to have been misquoted, or misremembered for ὀδμή μ', it cannot be expected to appear in the apparatus criticus as a genuine variant.

Therefore, there are good reasons to propose that the example Syrianus made of

the senses was in fact the Herodotean one, but either Hermias or some unknown scribe made a mistake. This is why Couvereur was not able to trace in a poetic text the quotation in the form in which it appears in the manuscripts.

As stated above, the basic argument that speaks in favour of the attribution of the verse to Herodotus is the context of Syrianus' quotation: undoubtedly in his passage Syrianus gives examples of several senses. Additionally, the expression ὁδμή μ' ἐς φρένας ἦλθε κραταιρίοιο χελώνης seems to have survived through time in Antiquity, as we find it in the *Anthologiae Graecae Appendix*³⁶¹ and in the *Scholia in Lucianum*.³⁶² The oracle itself is attested in sources other than Herodotus: writers like Lucian,³⁶³ Origen³⁶⁴ and Eusebius³⁶⁵ mention it, showing its popularity.

But the most interesting case is that of Porphyry: in the *Vita Plotini* 22, the discussion concerns god's wisdom:

εἰ γὰρ δεῖ ταῖς μαρτυρίαις χρῆσθαι ταῖς παρὰ τῶν σοφῶν γεγενημέναις, τίς ἂν εἴη σοφώτερος θεοῦ; καὶ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς εἰρηκότος οἶδα - ἀκούω.

It is thus possible that Syrianus was familiar with the Herodotean oracle, which was well-known to writers of late antiquity; Syrianus, however, lays emphasis not on the first, but on the second part of the oracle, in order to refer to the sense of smell. If this is the case, Syrianus differs from Proclus, Olympiodorus and probably Aristotle, who attribute to the heavenly bodies only sight and hearing. But, as we learn from Olympiodorus,³⁶⁶ Damascius attributed to the heavenly bodies the other senses as well.

Syrianus thus becomes the first to attribute senses other than sight and hearing to the divine bodies: Damascius must have followed him. Nevertheless, it should not escape our notice that Syrianus did distinguish sight and hearing as ἀρχοειδέστεραι καὶ παραδειγματικώτεραι καὶ καθαρώτεραι at 69.9-13.

In other words, Syrianus' thought was elaborated in two stages: firstly, Syrianus attributed to the heavenly bodies the senses of sight, hearing and smell, and not only sight

and hearing, as did the other Neoplatonists. In that point he was followed by Damascius. In order to give examples of three senses, Syrianus quoted a famous Homeric verse, as well as a part of a well-known oracle, first attested by Herodotus. In the second stage he distinguished only two, more elaborated senses, i.e. sight and hearing, and attributed them not only to the heavenly bodies, but to the divine soul as well.

My last point is the following: Syrianus himself attributes his theory to others; nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge, he is the first to attribute to heavenly bodies all five senses, and then distinguish sight and hearing from the others.

Passage 26 (69.9-13)

Continuing his argument, the philosopher says at 69.9-13:

ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ πασῶν τούτων τῶν αἰσθήσεων εἰσιν αἰσθήσεις ἀρχοειδέστεραι καὶ παραδειγματικώτεραι καὶ καθαρώτεραι ἐν τῷ πνεύματι, δηλονότι κατὰ ταύτας καὶ ἀκούει καὶ ὁρᾷ ἡ ψυχὴ τὰ θεῖα φάσματα. Διδὸν καὶ μόνῃ αἰσθάνεται παρὰ πάντας τοὺς συνόντας·

οἷφ φαινομένη, τῶν δ' ἄλλων οὔτις ὁρᾷτο. (II. I 198)

A Homeric verse is Syrianus' authority, in order to sustain the view that a human being has two kinds of sense: the first kind corresponds to the bodily sense organs and perceives the material world. The second kind of sense corresponds to more primary, original and purer senses, which reside in the human intellect. It is through them that the human soul comprehends the divine. We see that Syrianus applies the senses not only to the heavenly bodies, but to the human soul as well.

This is a well-known Neoplatonic motif also found in commentators like John Philoponus,³⁶⁷ who argues that the heavenly body of the human soul has senses of its own, which enable the soul to know sensible things, when it is completely separated from the flesh of its material body. Philoponus holds that the heavenly body of the human soul is of the same form as light and the stars and is characterised by eternality. So, the senses

of the heavenly body are much superior to those connected with the corresponding sense organs.

The verse treated in this passage belongs to the episode of the first book of the *Ilias*, where Athena drags Achilles ^{by} from his hair and, being visible only ^{to} by him, prevents him from attacking Agamemnon. The episode is also referred to by Heraclitus in the *Allegoriae* 17.1-4:

Ἐφεξῆς δ' ἡμῖν σκεπτέον ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐφισταμένης Ἀθηνᾶς Ἀχιλλεῖ·
 Ἔλκετο γὰρ ἐκ κολεοῖο μέγα ξίφος, ἦλθε δ' Ἀθήνη
 οὐρανόθεν· πρὸ γὰρ ἦκε θεὰ λευκώλενος Ἥρη,
 ἄμφω ὁμῶς θυμῷ φιλέουσα τε κηδομένη τε.
 Στῆ δ' ὀπισθεν, ξανθῆς δὲ κόμης ἔλε Πηλείωνα,
 οἴῳ φαινομένη, τῶν δ' ἄλλων οὔτε ὄρατο.
 Θάμβησεν δ' Ἀχιλλεύς, μετὰ δ' ἐτράπετ', αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω
 Παλλάδ' Ἀθηναίην· δεινῶ δέ οἱ ὄσσε φάανθεν.

Τὸ μὲν γὰρ πρόχειρον ἐκ τῶν λεγομένων ἔστιν εἰπεῖν, ὅτι μεταξὺ τοῦ σπωμένου σιδήρου θεᾶ, παντὸς ὀξυτέρᾳ τάχους τὴν οὐράνιον ἐκλιπούσα διατριβήν, ἐμποδῶν ἔστη τῇ μαιφονίᾳ, πάνυ γραφικῶς σχήματι τῆς κόμης ἀπριξ ὀπισθεν Ἀχιλλέως λαβομένη. Λαμπρὰ γε μὴν καὶ λίαν φιλόσοφος ὑφεδρεῦει τοῖς νοουμένοις κατ' ἀλληγορίαν ἐπιστήμη. Πάλιν οὖν ὁ πρὸς Ὅμηρον ἀχάριστος ἐν τῇ πολιτείᾳ Πλάτων ἐλέγχεται διὰ τούτων τῶν ἐπῶν τὸ περὶ τῆς ψυχῆς δόγμα νοσφισάμενος ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.

What follows is Heraclitus' opinion on the dependence of Plato's dogma of the soul on Homer. F. Buffière, the editor of Heraclitus' text, says that Homer evidently nowhere says that the soul is divided into three parts; nevertheless he acknowledges that the Homeric heroes are often motivated by their θυμός.³⁶⁸ In any case, Heraclitus' attempt at allegorical explanation of the episode is interesting in itself, although Syrianus drops no hint of such an explanation and prefers to incorporate the verse he uses into a Neoplatonic context.

Proclus made use of this Homeric episode at *In Rempublicam* 114.4-21: according to him, we do not need to make symbolic interpretation of it, since the presence of Athena was indicated in the Homeric text only for the purposes of emphasising that the goddess could be perceived only by one person and not by others.³⁶⁹ This is exactly Syrianus' point, although he does not refer to the Homeric heroes but makes a remark

on psychology.

Passage 27 (75.26-31, 77.9-78.3)³⁷⁰

As the commentary continues, two quotations at 75.30-31 and at 77.25-26 are also placed in a most interesting philosophical discussion from a Neoplatonic point of view. The *Phaedrus* 243a-b, as well as the corresponding passage in the commentary, deal with the story of Stesichorus, who lost his sight because of his libel against Helen and regained it after he had composed the *Palinode*, whereas Homer, who did not do that, remained blind. Syrianus draws attention to this story and first mentions three different stories about how Homer became blind.³⁷¹ He then tries to account for Stesichorus' regaining of sight: the Delphic oracle οὐδὲν λανθάνει θεοὺς οὐδὲ ἥρωας ὧν πράττει ἄνθρωπος is put forward, in order to show how Stesichorus, having this oracle in mind, wrote the *Palinode* and regained sight, whereas Homer, who uttered blasphemy against Helen, remained blind.

Syrianus, on the contrary, is not of the opinion that Homer spoke badly of Helen; he wonders at 75.26-31:

Τὶ οὖν βούλεται ὁ Πλάτων διὰ τούτων σημαίνειν; οὐ γὰρ δὴ αὐτόθεν καταψηφιοῦμεθα ὡς Ὅμηρος εἰς τὴν Ἑλένην ἐδυσφήμησε· τίς γὰρ ἄλλος οὕτως ἐπήνεσε τὴν Ἑλένην; Ἀ ρ τ έ μ ι δ ι γὰ ρ χ ρ υ σ η λ α κ ά τ φ έ ο ι κ υ ι α ν αὐτὴν καλεῖ καὶ

Οὐ νέμεσις Τρῶας καὶ εὐκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοὺς
τοιῆδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν (*Il.* III 156-7).

He then describes the view that Plato's aim was to prove that Stesichorus was superior to Homer, whereas Socrates surpassed them both; Plato accounted for just three ἐξεις. Homer did not realise that he had become impious and was punished; on the other hand, Stesichorus realised his deed and, by writing the *Palinodia*, regained his sight. Socrates was the best of all three, because he cured himself before being punished. The

reason for the punishment is the fact that the three men turned to material beauty, instead of the intelligible. This version then proves Stesichorus to be superior to Homer, and Socrates superior to the other two.

But Syrianus does not seem satisfied by this explanation, perhaps because his admiration for Homer can do better than that. So, he puts forward another version, according to which Homer is superior to Stesichorus, whereas Socrates is third in rank.³⁷² As the loss of sight prevents poets such as Thamyris and Stesichorus from seeing mortal beauty, whereas it is capable of acquainting them with intelligible beauty, Homer's blindness is neither a curse nor a punishment, but, instead, a gift of the Muses. Thus, Homer is apparently the most favoured by the Muses; Stesichorus used to have this favour, but lost it, whereas Socrates never had this grace. As Syrianus puts it at 77.9-78.3:

Καὶ ὁρᾷς ὅτι σύμφωνος μὲν αὐτῆ ἡ ἐξήγησις τῷ πανταχοῦ Σωκράτει ἐξυμνοῦντι τοὺς θεολόγους καὶ τοὺς ἔνθους ποιητὰς καὶ Ὅμηρον, βουλομένῳ δὲ αὐτοῖς ἔπεσθαι. Διδὼν ὑπέρτερον πάντων ἐδείξαμεν κατὰ ταύτην τὴν ἀνάπτυξιν τὸν Ὅμηρον. Πλὴν ἡ πρώτη ἀνάπτυξις προσφυστέρη καὶ οἰκειότερη ἐστὶ τοῖς ἐνταῦθα ῥητοῖς. Βέλτιον δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀνάπτυξιν τὴν κατὰ τὴν Ἑλένην καὶ τὸ Ἴλιον ἐκθέσθαι καὶ τὸν πόλεμον τῶν Τρώων καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων, ἵνα τι καὶ ἐκ τούτων σαφὲς εἰς τὰ προκείμενα λάβωμεν. Ἴλιον μὲν νοεῖσθω ἡμῖν ὁ γενητὸς καὶ ἔνυλος τόπος παρὰ τὴν ἰλὴν καὶ τὴν ὕλην Ἴλιον ὠνομασμένον, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὁ πόλεμος καὶ ἡ στάσις· οἱ δὲ Τρῶες τὰ ἔνυλα εἶδη καὶ αἱ περὶ τοῖς σώμασι πάσαι ζωαὶ, διδὼν καὶ ἰ θ α γ ε ν ε ς λέγονται οἱ Τρῶες· καὶ γὰρ οἰκείαν τὴν ὕλην περιέπουσιν αἱ περὶ τὰ σώματα ζωαὶ πάσαι καὶ αἱ ἄλογοι ψυχαί· οἱ δὲ Ἕλληνες αἱ λογικαὶ ψυχαὶ ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος, τουτέστιν ἐκ τοῦ νοητοῦ, ἐλθοῦσαι εἰς τὴν ὕλην, διδὼν καὶ ἐ π ἡ λ υ δ ε ς λέγονται οἱ Ἕλληνες, καὶ κρατοῦσι τῶν Τρώων ἅτε τῆς ὑπερέτερας ὄντες τάξεως. Μάχη δὲ αὐτοῖς γίνεται περὶ τῷ εἰδώλῳ τῆς Ἑλένης, ὡς φησι ὁ ποιητής·

Ἄμφι γ' ἄρ' εἰδώλῳ Τρῶες καὶ δίοι Ἀχαιοὶ
δῆρουν ἀλλήλων ἀμφὶ στήθεσφι βοείας (II. V 451-2),
τῆς Ἑλένης τὸ νοητὸν κάλλος δηλοῦσης, ἐ λ ε ν ὄ η τις οὔσα, ἡ ἐφελκομένη εἰς αὐτὴν τὸν νοῦν. Ἀπόρροια οὖν τούτου τοῦ νοητοῦ κάλλους ἐνδέδοται τῇ ὕλῃ διὰ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης, περὶ ἧς ἀπορροίας κάλλους μάχονται οἱ Ἕλληνες ὡς ἀνθρώπου.

The first striking thing in this passage is how Syrianus expresses his admiration for Homer: he places him among the theologians and the divinely-inspired poets. Secondly, we are impressed by the etymological interpretations which are used in Syrianus' effort to allegorise Helen's myth. The word ἐλενόη is not found in LSJ, but Syrianus has explained his etymological attempt. He links Helen's name with the word

νοῦς and argues that her name implies her intelligible beauty. We cannot say that we are convinced by his etymology; but even though not convincing, the false etymology helps Syrianus to give his interpretation of intelligible beauty (νοητὸν κάλλος).³⁷³

The first who offered an attempt at etymology concerning Helen was no other than Aeschylus in the *Agamemnon*.³⁷⁴ We cannot be sure whether Syrianus was familiar with the actual text of Aeschylus, as we have no reference to Aeschylus or to any of his works in the *In Phaedrum* and the *In Metaphysica*, whereas there is only one reference to *Septem 575* in the *In Hermogenem* (*In de Statibus* 18.4); nevertheless, we may suppose that he might have been familiar with the etymological attempt itself, most probably from some intermediary, or from some compilation containing certain passages from the tragic poet's works.

The bT scholia on *Il.* V 449-450 say:

a. αὐτὰρ ὁ εἶδωλον: εἶδωλον μὲν ἄκουε πᾶν τὸ δημιουργημά τοῦ κόσμου, ὅπερ, τύπος ὢν τοῦ ὄντως ὄντος, ὑπὸ πάντων μὲν τῶν ἐγκοσμίων θεῶν κοσμεῖται, προηγουμένως δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἡλίου, ὃς ἐστὶν ἡγεμὼν παντὸς γενητοῦ τε καὶ ὄρατοῦ. οὐδὲν δὲ ἦττον Αἰνείου ἐστὶ τὸ εἶδωλον, υἱοῦ Ἀφροδίτης καὶ Τρωός, ὃ ἐστὶ τὸ ἐγγώριον κάλλος· πᾶν γὰρ ἐξ Ἀφροδίτης κάλλος ἐστὶ, περὶ ὃ αἱ ὑλικώτεραι τῶν ψυχῶν οὐκ ἀπαλλάσσονται συντριβόμεναι.

It is clear that we have here attempts at an allegorical interpretation of the world, which bears a Neoplatonic flavour. The hero Aeneas is also put in a Neoplatonic context of allegory, as was Helen by Syrianus.

As far as the existing tradition of the myth of Helen is concerned, the use of the word *εἶδωλον* by Syrianus leads us to suppose that in all probability the philosopher was familiar with the Euripidean version of the myth about Helen's fate (how she did not go to Troy herself etc.).

It is not only in his *Helena* that Euripides made use of this particular version of Helen's myth. As early as in the *Electra*, which is dated between 422-413 B.C.,³⁷⁵ Euripides drops the first hint of what later became a complete play; in the *Exodus* the

Dioskouroi appear *ex machina* and say:

Ζεὺς δ', ὡς ἔρις γένοιτο καὶ φόνος βροτῶν,
εἰδῶλον Ἑλένης ἐξέπεμψ' ἐς Ἴλιον. (*El.* 1282-1283)

G. Zuntz³⁷⁶ argues that all these details the Dioskouroi give differ widely from the Homeric version; nevertheless, the phantom story is not a Euripidean innovation. Before Euripides, the story was told in the *Palinodia* of Stesichorus. Herodotus at 2.113-119 tells a story of Helen's stay in Egypt, after she had committed adultery and run away with Paris, along with Menelaus' treasures.³⁷⁷ As M.J. Cropp³⁷⁸ rightly remarks, Herodotus seems to give a rationalised account of Helen's adventures, but excludes the phantom. Consequently, Euripides already had a quite interesting range of material, which he mentioned in his *Electra* and later elaborated in his *Helena*. From those two tragedies, as well as from the fragment 1082 N² (probably from his *Alexander*),³⁷⁹ and some lines of the *Orestes*,³⁸⁰ we see that Euripides connected this story with Zeus' desire to make strife and exterminate the human race. F. Jouan,³⁸¹ who has a detailed discussion of the pre-Euripidean tradition of the story, makes the good point that the phantom story was so bizarre that the poet had to repeat it several times before he succeeded in making it penetrate the mind of his spectators.

In our case, in giving an explanation of the Trojan myth, Syrianus seems to presuppose knowledge of at least one of the above-mentioned texts that made reference to the phantom story. The astonishing thing is that, in order to support his view, he quotes Homer, who never in his works dropped a single hint that not Helen but her phantom was present at Troy. In his quotation Syrianus uses a meaning of the word εἰδῶλον that is not the one Homer meant.³⁸² In any case, at this particular point it seems as though we have a kind of indirect evidence that either the *Palinodia* or the Euripidean tragedies *Helen* and *Electra* were known to Syrianus, something that is certainly no surprise.

The fact that the *Palinodia* is for us a problematic text makes things even more difficult. P. Oxy. 2506 suggests that Stesichorus wrote two works bearing the title *Palinodia*.³⁸³ The claim is attributed to Chamaeleon, and, as D.L. Page remarks,³⁸⁴ we are not in the position to discredit or even to dispute his testimony, for he had certain poems in front of him, which we do not have. But Page's argumentation, convincing though it is, does not give an answer to the problem of whether both *Palinodiae* were extant at the time the papyrus was written; the evidence is insufficient to allow anyone to make any supposition. We cannot argue, therefore, that Syrianus was aware of the existence of two *Palinodiae*.

Another possibility is that Syrianus was familiar with the story from the Herodotean tradition;³⁸⁵ but Syrianus mentions no dream or oracle and, as we have seen, when Herodotus refers to the story of Helen, he gives a rationalised account of it and excludes the phantom. Consequently, although at least some parts of Herodotus' work were known to Syrianus, as both the commentaries on Plato and Hermogenes prove,³⁸⁶ it does not seem very likely that this particular passage of Herodotus was Syrianus' source.

The ancient *Scholia in Aelium Aristidem* hold that Helen did sail for Troy, but travelled only as far as Egypt, for Proteus took her away there.³⁸⁷ An influence on Syrianus is not highly improbable: this version, which belongs to an era not quite far from Syrianus' time, is in accordance with the afore-mentioned papyrus and gives a satisfactory explanation to the tradition that Helen never arrived to Troy, but it was her phantom that Paris took there. Although we can never be in a position definitely to know Syrianus' sources, the fact that the tradition of the scholia on Aelius Aristides mentioned this version of the story makes an influence of this tradition possible.

As far as the *Palinodia* is concerned, we cannot be sure whether he had read the text of Stesichorus, or had just Plato's testimony from the *Phaedrus*. Of course, it is curious that he does not quote some verses from at least one of the three texts (*Helena*,

Electra, Palinodia), which would be well-suited to his argument about the εἶδωλον etc. We have to note that he does not say anything about Helen's divinisation, either.³⁸⁸ But the fact that he neither quotes any of the afore-mentioned texts, nor refers to Helen's divinisation, is by no means sufficient to prove that he was ignorant of them.

Put in this context, Syrianus' attempt to allegorise is thus well-placed. We may also add that, as we know from several passages in Proclus, Syrianus made extended use of allegory as far as Homer is concerned. Sheppard³⁸⁹ argues that there are good grounds for thinking that systematic allegory of Homer in terms of transcendent metaphysical entities was first developed by Syrianus. She also remarks that nowhere before Proclus and Syrianus is there a detailed and systematic application of the Homeric myths to the sphere of transcendent metaphysics.³⁹⁰ Although the metaphysical type of interpretation was being applied in Neoplatonist circles to the most important Greek myths, Syrianus had a reputation for interpreting Plato - and, very probably, Homer - *θεολογικώτερον*. This particular allegory can be characterised as originating from an existing tradition, as we are going to see; nevertheless, it is well placed in Syrianus' metaphysical system (where the Νοῦς is highly regarded) and is also elaborated in a way that reveals the philosopher's familiarity with the scheme of allegory. As Sheppard³⁹¹ remarks, in this passage the philosopher expounds an allegory of the whole Trojan war, making use of etymologies and interpreting the persons and places involved in terms of Neoplatonic philosophy; in this extended allegory in terms of Platonic concepts we may well see the hand of Syrianus.³⁹²

Moreover, the etymological approach to matters linked with the Trojan war can also be found in Proclus' *In Rempublicam* 136.15ff.; Proclus suggests the etymology of Mount Ida as the place of the Platonic Ideas.³⁹³

So, the last two references are very important because they are good examples of the allegorical interpretation of Homer. This metaphysical allegory can be attributed to

Syrianus. Additionally, the second reference and its context could be considered as indirect evidence of the philosopher's knowledge of at least the Euripidean tragedy *Helena* (or even *Electra*), although he makes no explicit reference to them anywhere in his works.

Passage 28 (85.23-29)

In the beginning of the second book of his exegesis, Syrianus comments on divine madness. The whole "madness theme" was developed by Plato in the *Phaedrus* 244a ff. and in the *Ion*. Before he starts his actual commentary on madness, Syrianus tries to define and explain to his students the term ἐνθουσιασμός and its applications to the four different parts of the soul (τὸ ἐν τῆς ψυχῆς, διάνοια, δόξα, φαντασία). Primarily, the part of the soul, which he calls "the one of the soul" (τὸ ἐν τῆς ψυχῆς) is the part of the soul that unifies all psychic powers and all multitude. It is also the first part of the soul, which accepts the goodness of the divine, in order to render the whole substance of the soul good. Since this is the part of the soul which is united with the divine, and contemplates it intuitively, the primarily true divine enthusiasm possesses this particular part of the soul. A consequence of this fact is that the whole human intellect and the body of the human being are illuminated by divine enthusiasm. In addition, the intellect (διάνοια) is possessed by enthusiasm, when it knows and discovers atemporal theorems in a way that transcends the rest of human nature. Additionally, opinion (δόξα) is possessed by enthusiasm when it completes admirable works, whereas imagination (φαντασία) invents arts.³⁹⁴ Finally, when the passions of the soul (θυμός) are possessed by enthusiasm, a warrior acts in a way that transcends his own nature. In his own words at 85.23-29:

λέγεται καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ ἡ φαντασία ἐνθουσιᾶν ὅταν τέχνας εὐρίσκη καὶ ἀποτελεῖ παραδόξα ἔργα, οἷον Φειδίας ἐν ἀγαλματοποιῖα καὶ ἄλλος ἐν ἄλλῃ τέχνῃ, ὡς καὶ Ὅμηρος περὶ τοῦ ποιήσαντος τὸν τελαμώννα εἶπε

μη τεχνησάμενος μηδ' ἄλλο τι τεχνήσαιτο· (Od. XI 613)
λέγεται καὶ ὁ θυμὸς ἐνθουσιᾶν ὅταν ἐν τῷ πολεμεῖν ὑπερφυῶς ἐνεργῆι·
μαίνεται δ' ὡς ὄτ' ἼΑρησ ἐγγέσπαλος (Il. XV 605)

The philosopher adduces two Homeric examples of what ἐνθουσιασμός means. His use of Homer is incorporated in an exegetical passage that deals with madness (μανία).

The Homeric passages quoted by Syrianus are very interesting indeed. The first (Od. XI 613) refers to human creativity in handicraft, which is due to the madness which possesses human opinion (δόξα) and imagination (φαντασία). The V scholia *ad loc.* say that the subject of both the verb and the participle of the verse 613 is either ὁ νοῦς or ὁ ἄνθρωπος. Syrianus takes the view that the subject is ὁ νοῦς, as is clear from his own explanation. The verse quoted immediately afterwards (Il. XV 605) refers to Hector and his attitude during the battle. The bT scholia *ad loc.* have the following remark: "ὁ δὲ (i.e. the poet) καὶ τὸ μ α ί ν ε τ ο προσέθηκεν". We can trace a similarity between the scholiast's insistence on madness and how Syrianus uses the verse, laying emphasis on the madness theme.

Porphyrus also mentions the verse Il. XV 605 in his discussion of the madness caused by Dionysus in the *Quaestiones Homericae ad Iliadem* VI 149:

μαινόμενος δὲ Διόνυσος οὐ κατὰ βλασφημίαν εἴρηται, ἀλλὰ παραστατικῶς τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ βακχεῖαν ὀρμῆς, φλέγοντος ἰσχυρῶς καὶ ἀκμάζοντος ἐρρωμένως ἐν τῇ τῆς χορείας καταστάσει, ὁμοίως· τῷ μ α ί ν ε τ ο δ' ὡς ὄτ' ἼΑρησ ἐγγέσπαλος ἢ ὁ λ ο ὀ ν π ὶ ρ (XV 605). καὶ ἐν τῇ συνηθείᾳ δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ὑπερβαλλόντων τοῖς ἔργοις κατ' ἀνδρείαν μαίνεται φαμέν, μανίαν τὴν ἐνθουσιαστικὴν προᾶξιν λέγοντες.

The use of Homer, therefore, makes the philosopher's views clearer; additionally, it proves that as a teacher Syrianus knew where and how to make apt use of poetry in his exegesis.

Passage 29 (98.25-30)

In the following passage Syrianus still deals with divine madness, and especially

with poetic madness. Here he distinguishes between possessed and non-possessed poets at the time they compose their works. He then argues that the former are superior to the latter. In order to show this very difference, he compares Choerilus and Callimachus with Homer and Pindar; the comparison favours the last two. The text is as follows (98.25-30):

ὅς δ' ἂν ἄνευ, φησὶν, ἐνθέου μανίας τῶν Μουσῶν ἐκ τέχνης ἐλπίση γενέσθαι ἐνθους ποιητῆς, ἀτελῆς αὐτὸς τε ἔσται τοῦτο οἰόμενος καὶ ἡ ποιήσις αὐτοῦ κατακρατεῖται καὶ καλύπτεται ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν μαινομένων ποιήσεως. Τί γὰρ ὁμοῖον ἢ Χοιρίλου καὶ Καλλιμάχου ποιήσις πρὸς τὴν Ὀμήρου ἢ Πινδάρου;

In order to stress an important factor of poetry such as poetic madness and the poet's relation to the Muses, Syrianus refers to Homer and Pindar, two poets who excelled at their field. But what is more important is the fact that we have a further testimony of Syrianus' taste in poetry, written in a way that makes us suppose that it must have been in accordance with the taste of his era. The first testimony is at *In Hermogenem* commentary and concerns stylistic evaluations.³⁹⁵ In the present case the first thing that occurs in one's mind is the following: which Choerilus does Syrianus refer to? Taking into account that Choerilus is compared with Homer, we could think that Choerilus of Samos is actually meant. But C.O. Brink quotes the passage in question and rightly attributes it to Choerilus of Iasos. His main argument is the fact that Choerilus of Iasos has entered the ancient tradition as an unchallenged competitor for the title of *pessimus poeta*.³⁹⁶

Choerilus of Iasos belonged to the *κόλακες* of Alexander the Great.³⁹⁷ As mentioned above, of the quality of his work no one seemed to have a high opinion. Horace in his *Epistulae* II.I.232-234 remarks:

gratus Alexandro regi magno fuit ille
Choerilus, incultis qui versibus et male natis
rettulit acceptos, regale nomisma, Philippos.

In the *Ars Poetica* 357-359 he says:

sic mihi qui multum cessat fit Choerilus ille,
quem bis terue bonum cum risu miror, et idem
indignor quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus

Porphyrion, the scholiast on Horace, seems to have the same opinion.³⁹⁸ As far as Syrianus is concerned, Brink³⁹⁹ has a point in arguing that this passage can be explained fully, if it is set in the context of Hellenistic criticism.

Philodemus in his *De poematis* (Col. XXV Sbordone) says:

κ(α)τὰ τὸ συνέχ[ο]ν καὶ κυριώτατ[ον δὲ τῶν ἐμ ποιητικῆι διαφέρειν Χοιρίλον κα[ι] Ἀναξιμένην Ὀμήρου, καὶ Καρκίνον καὶ Κλεα[ι]νετο[ν] Εὐρειπίδου, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλ[λους] τοὺς πονηροὺς ἐμ ποιητικῆ(ι) τῶν ἀρίστων.⁴⁰⁰

Continuing this tradition, Syrianus compares Choerilus and Callimachus with Homer and Pindar, and "*classes Choerilus with Callimachus as a (Hellenistic) man of τέχνη and contrasts both with the poets of inspiration, Homer and Pindar - a significant Alexandrian echo*".⁴⁰¹ Modern scholars, in their turn, have unanimously a bad opinion of Choerilus.⁴⁰²

"Longinus" makes no reference either to Callimachus, or to Choerilus, but he mentions Pindar in a way that has resemblances to Syrianus.⁴⁰³ "Longinus" compares Pindar to Bacchylides and Sophocles to Ion of Chios, and concludes that Pindar and Sophocles are superior.⁴⁰⁴

It is evident that in this particular passage, as well as throughout his whole work, "Longinus" considers poetry and poets in a clearly comparative and evaluative way. Syrianus also faces poetry in this way, and we could possibly trace a similarity with "Longinus" evaluative attitude at this point.⁴⁰⁵ Both "Longinus" and Syrianus accept the distinction between "good" and "inferior" poets; this view seemed to be entirely plausible in ancient Greek literary criticism.⁴⁰⁶

Passage 30 (99.1-9)

A few lines below, Syrianus makes use of the well-known verses of the second book of the *Ilias*, in which Homer asks the Muses to help him remember all the Greek kings

that participated in the Trojan war. Syrianus also quotes the προοίμιον of both the *Ilias* and the *Odyssea*. The passage 99.1-9 is as follows:

οἱ μέντοι ἔνθεοι ποιηταὶ μονονουχὶ τὰς θύρας τῶν Μουσῶν ἀράπτουσι καὶ οὕτως
ἐκεῖθεν πληροῦνται,
ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι (*Il.* II 484)
βοῶντες, καὶ
μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ (*Il.* I 1)
καὶ
ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα· (*Od.* I 1)
ἀεὶ γὰρ εἰς αὐτὰς ἀνατεινόμενοι τὸν ἐξῆς λόγον ὡς ἐκεῖθεν ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν Μουσῶν
πληρωθέντες διατιθέασιν.

In all three cases we have the motif of ἐπίκλησις (invocation), which is firstly used by Homer and Hesiod and later becomes a *topos* in poetry.⁴⁰⁷

Heraclitus' treatment of the motif is quite interesting: after quoting the Homeric verses containing the motif, Heraclitus quotes the *Phaedrus* 237a, where the same motif is used. But, according to Heraclitus, the pious Homer, whose place is on Mount Helicon, invoked the Muses for serious reasons suited to the ethos of his heroes, whereas the impious Plato used invocation in order to narrate not a cosmological myth, but a myth concerning the love affairs of a young boy who had many lovers.⁴⁰⁸ Heraclitus' bitter irony and distaste for Plato is present even at the beginning of the next problem.⁴⁰⁹ Of course, Syrianus approaches the *Phaedrus*, as well as the whole of Plato's philosophy, from a completely different perspective. However, it is interesting to see how two persons with completely different attitudes towards Plato used the Homeric motif, in order to fit their respective needs.

Passage 31 (122.19-123.2)

At 122.21 Homer is once more mentioned as belonging to the "ἔνθεοι ποιηταί". The whole passage deals with the immortality of the soul (*Phaedrus* 246a) and Syrianus analyses the famous comparison of parts of the soul with a charioteer and his horses. He

then divides the horses into categories and examines the following ones: "κατὰ τὰς δυνάμεις", "κατὰ τὰς ἐνεργείας" and "κατὰ τὰς οὐσίας". He then says (122.19-123.2):

Οὐ πρῶτος δὲ ὁ Πλάτων ἠνίοχον καὶ ἵππους παρέλαβεν, ἀλλὰ πρὸ αὐτοῦ οἱ ἐνθεοὶ τῶν ποιητῶν, Ὅμηρος, Ὀρφεὺς, Παρμενίδης· ἀλλ' ὑπ' ἐκείνων μὲν ἄτε ἐνθέων ἄνευ αἰτίας εἴρηται· ἐνθουσιῶντες γὰρ ἔλεγον. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὁ Πλάτων οὐδὲν εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φιλοσοφίαν παραλαμβάνει ὃ μὴ καὶ αἰτία ἠδύνατο ὑποβάλλεσθαι, ῥητέον ἡμῖν τὰς αἰτίας, εἰ καὶ αὐτὸς μετὰ μείζονος ἀξιώματος προφέρων τοὺς λόγους παρήκε τὰς αἰτίας εἰπεῖν, καὶ τέως ὅτι καὶ οἱ πρὸ αὐτοῦ εἰκόασιν ἐπὶ τῶν δυνάμεων καὶ αὐτοὶ παραλαμβάνειν τὸν τε ἠνίοχον καὶ τοὺς ἵππους. Ζεὺς γὰρ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ κέχρηται τοῖς ἵπποις οὓς λέγεται λυεῖν ὁ Ποσειδῶν, καὶ οὐκ ἀεὶ αὐτοῖς χρώμενος, ἀλλὰ καὶ καθεζόμενος ἐπὶ θρόνου παραδέδοται· εἰ δὲ ἦν ἡ οὐσία τοῦ Διὸς τὸ ἐποχεῖσθαι τοῖς ἵπποις καὶ ἦν ὁ Ζεὺς ὅπερ ὁ ἠνίοχος, ἀεὶ ἂν ἠνιόχει· νῦν δὲ καὶ ἄλλα τινα ποιῶν παραδίδοται.

This is not the first time that he refers to Homer as to a poet inspired by the gods. This case, though, is of particular importance: according to the contemporary view, all the afore-mentioned inspired persons did write in verse, but the only poet in the modern sense of the word was Homer (Parmenides was a philosopher,⁴¹⁰ while Orpheus' works are considered to be philosophical and religious). Even so, the fact that all three had a theological dimension in their works, which, by the time of Syrianus and in the context of Neoplatonism, had acquired a remarkable religious prestige, renders the reference well-placed.

Equally important is Syrianus' literary remark on Zeus: indeed Zeus is traditionally considered to sit on his throne, but sometimes to be a charioteer as well. Syrianus' remark is sustained by the following:

a) Homer has an image of Zeus as a charioteer in the *Ilias* (VIII 438-441):

Ζεὺς δὲ πατήρ Ἰδηθεν ἐύτροχον ἄρμα καὶ ἵππους
Οὐλύμπόνδε δίωκε, θεῶν δ' ἐξίκετο θώκους.
τῷ δὲ καὶ ἵππους μὲν λῦσαι κλυτὸς ἐννοσίγαιος,
ἄρματα δ' ἄμ' βωμοῖσι τίθει, κατὰ λίτα πετάσσας·

b) In the *Orphica* (fr. 40) we also have Zeus' image as a charioteer:

Νύσ[ιον] ἄμ πεδίον τ[ῆ] ὄρουσεν ἄναξ πολυδέ]-
γμων ἵπποις ἀθανάτα[ισι Κρόνου πολυώνυ]-
μος υἱός.(...)

c) The case of Parmenides is interesting, as we have a clear, though indirect, reference to the charioteer image at the beginning of fr. 1 D.-K.:

ἵπποι ταί με φέρουσιν, ὅσον τ' ἐπὶ θυμῶς ἰκάνοι,
πέμπον, ἐπεὶ μ' ἐς ὁδὸν βῆσαν πολύφημον ἄγουσαι
δαιμόνος, ἣ κατὰ πάντ' ἄστη φέρει εἰδότα φῶτα·
τῇ φερόμην· τῇ γάρ με πολύφραστοι φέρον ἵπποι
ἄρμα τιταίνουσαι, κούραι δ' ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευον (...)

This fragment of Parmenides presents not Zeus, but Parmenides himself as a charioteer, who is being carried by the Sun's daughters to the goddess Justice. Even in that case, the image, as it is presented by Parmenides, has a strong echo of the Homeric image of Zeus as a charioteer, and this is the image Syrianus in all probability had in mind, when he referred to the Parmenidean image of the charioteer.

Inspiration is a major issue discussed in that passage; Syrianus' point is the following: all three figures (Homer, Orpheus, Parmenides) were inspired. We cannot but think of the *Phaedrus* 265b, where the types of divine madness are discussed. Apparently Syrianus places Homer's, Orpheus' and Parmenides' inspiration to the poetic madness, which is definitely sent by the gods.

But, according to Syrianus, Homer, Orpheus and Parmenides, ἔνθεοι as they have been, have not given a full justification of the fact that Zeus is a charioteer etc., something that Plato does; in other words, divinely-inspired as Homer, Orpheus and Parmenides were, nevertheless Plato was superior to them all. The justification for this is clear-cut: Plato's philosophy is not based on inspiration, but examines causation in rational terms. This renders him superior to the others, who, nevertheless, do have their own value and their own prestige. This statement is in absolute consistency with Syrianus' attitude towards Plato: all other philosophy and all other fruit of human thought was considered by him to be nothing else but an introduction to the greatest theologian's, i.e. Plato's.

Passage 32 (137.23-138.9)⁴¹¹

In an interesting part of the *In Phaedrum*, covering pages 135-140, Syrianus comments on the Platonic theory of the immortality and essence of the soul. He expresses his views on the soul's relation to Zeus and finds the occasion to develop his theological views on Zeus and the twelve gods. The hierarchy of gods, according to Syrianus, is as follows: he distinguishes three different deities under the name of Zeus. In our exposition, they will be referred to as Zeus₁, Zeus₂ and Zeus₃. Zeus₁ is for Syrianus the transcendent Demiurge of the whole world. Immediately below him follow three subordinate gods, who are called Zeus₂, Poseidon and Pluto. Their role is not explicitly explained by Syrianus: he only tells us that Zeus is the head of the triad. At this particular point we see that Syrianus follows the traditional division. Each one of the last three gods is followed by four deities, in a particular hierarchical order. The first deities of each of the three tetrads are male gods, responsible for the giving of Being to the particular existing beings. The second deities of each of the three tetrads are female goddesses, responsible for the giving of Life to the particular existing beings. The third deities of each of the three tetrads are male gods, responsible for the permanence of the world and the preservation of its order. Finally, the fourth deities of each of the three tetrads are female and are responsible for the reversion of all secondary existents to their ultimate origin, which is the divine.

Thus, there are twelve deities (= six gods and six goddesses), which are subordinate to Zeus₂, Poseidon and Pluto. The leader of the six male gods is Zeus₃. His role is not particularly defined by Syrianus. It is only a suggestion that he may be the first god in the tetrad below Zeus₂. Anyway, their function, to give Being to the secondary beings, is considered to be superior with reference to the function of other gods, which are subordinate to them.

This striking division is referred to by H.-D. Saffrey, who is sure that in this particular passage Syrianus recalls the dynasty of the Orphic gods. He also makes the following remark: "*Sans doute, pour la première fois, le mythe de Phèdre est clairement interprété en termes orphiques, et Homère est aussi invoqué à côté d'Orphée*".⁴¹² The fact that Syrianus quotes Homer in order to support theological views influenced by the Orphics is not odd, if we accept the fact that here, as well as in other parts of the exegesis, Homer is considered a θεολόγος whose poems contain philosophical and religious truths.

Syrianus at 137.23-138.9 says:

Ὅτι δὲ καὶ Ὅμηρος οἶδε τοὺς τρεῖς τούτους Δίας τὸν τε ἐξηρημένον καὶ τὸν πρῶτον ἐν τοῖς τρισὶ καὶ τὸν πρῶτον ἐν τοῖς δώδεκα, καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν Ἑστίαν θεὸν, δηλοῖ διὰ τῶνδε τῶν ἐπῶν·

οὐδέ τις ἔτλη
μείναι ἐπερχόμενον, ἀλλ' ἀντίοι ἔσταν ἅπαντες· (II. I 534-535)

περὶ δὲ τοῦ ἐνὸς καὶ ἐξηρημένου λέγει Διδὸς ἔνθα ποιεῖ τὸν Ποσειδῶνα λέγοντα·
τρεῖς γὰρ τοὶ Κρόνου ἐσμέν... (II. XV 187)

Ζεὺς δ' ἔλαχ' οὐρανόν... (II. XV 192)

καὶ κρατερός περ ἑὼν μενέτω τριτάτῃ ἐνὶ μοίρῃ (II. XV 195)

περὶ δὲ τῶν τριῶν Διῶν σαφῶς λέγει ἔνθα τό·
δώδεκάτῃ δὲ τοὶ αὐτῆς ἐλεύσεται Οὐλυμπόνδε· (II. I 425)

καὶ

Ζεὺς γὰρ ἐς Ὀκεανὸν μετ' ἀμύμονας Αἰθιοπῆας, (II. I 423)

περὶ τοῦ κατὰ τρίτην ἀπόστασιν τοῦ ἐν τοῖς δώδεκα Διδὸς λέγει, διὰ τοῦ Αἰθιοπῆας τὸ ἀφανὲς πᾶν καὶ νοητὸν σημαίνων.

As stated above, all references to Homer are made in order to confirm a theological point of Syrianus influenced by Orphic doctrine. But what Syrianus says about Zeus is by no means close to Homer's own theology. As O. Tsagarakis⁴¹³ remarks, Homer gives the first literary evidence about Zeus as the most important figure of Greek religion. But nowhere in the Homeric poems do we find either any hint of allegorical explanation of the gods, their genealogy and their role, or any classification, involving more than one Zeuses. Nevertheless, it is clear from the passage that this conception is not Syrianus' own, but is an already existing allegory.

Of course, Syrianus knew that Homer talked about one Zeus, who had many cult-

titles, and that Homeric theology was far from his own. In this case, therefore, we have a conscious attempt at an allegorical explanation, which takes things to extremes, as the context of each verse separately has nothing to do with Syrianus' Neoplatonic consideration of Zeus.

Apart from that, the idea of the existence not of one god with many properties, but of two or more separate gods is as early as the *Symposium* of Plato, with reference to Aphrodite.⁴¹⁴ but, as Sheppard remarks,⁴¹⁵ it was Plotinus who spoke of an Aphrodite of the sensible world, and one of the intelligible world.⁴¹⁶ A parallel for Aphrodite can also be found in Proclus,⁴¹⁷ who also refers to the existence of more than one Apollo.⁴¹⁸ The existence of three Zeuses is also mentioned by Proclus.⁴¹⁹ As Sheppard points out,⁴²⁰ in Proclus' system there is one Zeus among the intellectual gods, one among the hypercosmic gods and one among the encosmic gods; it goes without saying that this system derives from Syrianus.

More generally, there can be little doubt that the systematic formulation of the theory of different manifestations of the same god at successive levels of reality is to be attributed to Syrianus, but Syrianus himself inherited it from his predecessors. J. Dillon⁴²¹ has dealt with the matter and proved that Syrianus, and not Iamblichus, was the first to do such a thing. We should also add that Ps.-Plutarch refers at *De Homero* 2.114 to the existence of an intelligible Zeus whose properties are traced in the Homeric epic.

The verses *Il. XV* 187-192 are mentioned by Ps.-Plutarch in order to show the sharing of the elements between the three brothers Zeus, Poseidon and Pluto.⁴²² Heraclitus also quotes *Il. XV* 190-193, in his discussion of the allegorical use of the elements.⁴²³

What is fascinating, however, is the fact that in the bT scholia on *XV* 192-193 there is something that could be characterised as an attempt to explain Zeus' and

Poseidon's powers and properties in a philosophical way. To be more specific, in the T scholia we read that others claim that Zeus is the ether (αἰθήρ) and others the mind governing everything (ὁ διοικῶν τὰ πάντα λόγος). The scholiast seems to accept that Zeus is the cause of life (τοῦ ζῆν αἴτιος). Poseidon, in his turn, is considered as the cause who holds the seawater together and the divine power of the sea (τὸ συνέχων τὴν θάλασσαν αἴτιον καὶ αὐτῆς θεία δύναμις).

The bT scholia's reference to the properties of Zeus might be traced to Aristotelian philosophy; especially in his work *De caelo*, ether is considered to be the cause of everything. Stoic tradition could also have been a source, as the terms διοικεῖν and συνέχων are frequently found in the Stoics.⁴²⁴

As far as Syrianus' view on *Il.* I 423 is concerned, neither the A nor the bT scholia make any reference to the philosopher's claim, i.e. that Homer by his reference to the Ethiopians wanted to show everything that is invisible (ἀφανές) and intelligible (νοητόν). Moreover, Syrianus' allegorical interpretation is in sharp contrast with the scholia, in which we read: δισσοὶ δὲ εἰσιν οἱ Αἰθίοπες· οἱ μὲν πρὸς ἀνατολήν, οἱ δὲ πρὸς δύσιν, ὀριζόμενοι διχῆ ὑπὸ Νείλου. But even if the scholia bear no resemblance to Syrianus' interpretation, Proclus seems to have followed Syrianus closely, when he claimed at *In Rempublicam* 166.12-167.9 that this verse shows Zeus returning to his own intelligible cause. As Sheppard remarks,⁴²⁵ the Ethiopians are οἱ τῷ θείῳ φωτὶ καταλαμπόμενοι; Ocean flows from the νοητὴ πηγὴ and fills the demiurgic Intellect and the gods connected with it.

It is evident that both Syrianus' and Proclus' interpretation have a distinct Neoplatonic flavour; it has been rightly pointed out⁴²⁶ that the allegory is of the metaphysical type which was developed by Syrianus. This allegory, a parallel of which can be traced in Macrobius,⁴²⁷ seems to have influenced Eustathius.⁴²⁸

Lastly, at 139.26-27 of our exegesis we have another Homeric reference, aiming

at confirming Zeus' powers and properties:

Τὸ δὲ μέγας τὸ ὑπερέχον αὐτοῦ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους δηλοῖ
τίπτε με κείνος ἄνωγε μέγας θεός; (*II. XXIV 90*)

This time Syrianus gives a reference that is quite suited to his views; we also have a happy coincidence: Syrianus' view of Zeus and his properties is in some ways not far from Homer's. But for a full treatment of this reference, see passage 33.

Passage 33 (139.11-18)

A few lines below (139.11-18) the philosopher discusses the properties of the other gods, apart from Zeus, and remarks:

Τίς δὲ ἢ ἐκάστου ιδιότης, ἐκ τῆς θεολογίας ληπτέον (...) Οἱ γὰρ τοῦ Διὸς λόγοι
δυνάμεων τινῶν εἰσι δόσεις, ὡς ὅταν λέγῃ πρὸς τὴν Ἀφροδίτην
οὐ τοι τέκνον ἐμὸν δέδοται πολεμῆια ἔργα
ἀλλὰ σὺ γ' ἱμερόεντα μετέρχεο ἔργα γάμοιο. (*II. V 428-429*)

In the above-mentioned passage Syrianus gives an example, in order to show that the duties and properties of the other gods are due to Zeus' will. The goddess who is brought in as an example is Aphrodite, and of course a Homeric quotation is used.

For once more, we see that the Homeric theology concerning Zeus as the chief god, on whom all the other deities depend, is exploited in a Neoplatonic metaphysical context. In other words, there is a kind of agreement between Homer's and Syrianus' theological views.

The verse in question used to be put forward in theological contexts, in order to refer to the properties of each god, as we see in Plutarch⁴²⁹ and Lucian⁴³⁰ It was also used by Dionysius of Halicarnassus,⁴³¹ in a passage where he wants to show that every man should stick to his own duties, and not undertake tasks that belong to others. Under this perspective we should examine the view we find in the bT scholia on V 428, i.e. that the Homeric verse makes reference to the famous Greek concept of γῶθι

σαυτὸν: Aphrodite (and not only she) must know the limits of her nature, properties and duties, which, according to the mythological tradition, were given to her by Zeus. Of course, following that view, the famous Greek concept of self-consciousness could be applied both to mortals and gods; Syrianus could have been influenced by this very concept, when he made reference to the knowledge of their properties that the gods should have.

We should also consider Eustathius' comment on this verse: Παντοίως δὲ ἀναλκίς ἢ Ἀφροδίτη καὶ κατὰ τὸν μῦθον καὶ κατὰ πᾶσαν ἀλληγορίαν ἠθικὴν τε καὶ φυσικὴν. οὐ γὰρ πολέμων ἐπιστατεῖν οὐδ' αὐτὸς ὁ τῆς Ἀφροδίτης λέγεται ἀστήρ.⁴³² He also says that: Ζεὺς δὲ ταῦτα πρὸς τὴν Ἀφροδίτην φησὶ τὴν ἀναλκίαν, λέγων καὶ ὅτι ταῦτα δ' Ἄρηι θεῷ καὶ Ἀθῆνῃ μελήσει, ὡς καὶ ἀλληγορικῶς καὶ μυθικῶς τῆς Ἀφροδίτης μὲν ἀπολέμου οὐσίας, πολεμικῶν δὲ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς καὶ τοῦ Ἄρεος.⁴³³ Eustathius informs us that this very verse was favoured by certain allegorists and especially astrologists, who referred to the star of Venus and its properties. But this use, interesting though it may be, does not seem to have influenced Syrianus: his point, as it is clear from his text, is purely metaphysical, i.e. theological, and not allegorical or astrological.

Passage 34 (139.25-30)

A few lines below, at 139.25-30, still discussing the Platonic expression ὁ μὲν δὴ μέγας ἡγεμῶν, Syrianus adds:

Τὸ δὲ μέγας ὑπερέχον αὐτοῦ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους δηλοῖ·
τίπτε με κείνος ἄνωγε μέγας θεός; (II. XXIV 90)
Τὸ δὲ ἡγεμῶν τὸ ἐξηρημένον καὶ ἀρχικόν· δυνατὸν γὰρ μέγαν εἶναι ἄλλ' οὐκ ἐξηρημένον, καὶ ἐξηρημένον ἄλλ' οὐκέτι καὶ μείζονα τῶν ἡγεμόνων· διὰ τοῦτο ἀμφοτέρω ὁ Πλάτων παρέλαβεν εἰπὼν " μέγας ἡγεμῶν".

Once more, Syrianus expresses with consistency and precision those properties that render Zeus the greatest deity. He lays emphasis on the expression μέγας ἡγεμῶν, giving

an interesting theological, Neoplatonic dimension to the word ἡγεμῶν.

The Homeric verse is used to show Zeus' predominance among the other gods, but I think Syrianus' interesting point is the noun ἡγεμῶν, which, according to him, reveals two chief properties of Zeus: the transcendent (ἐξηρημένον) and the primal (ἀρχικόν). Those properties had been discussed by Syrianus just a few lines ahead: the fact that he insists on mentioning them shows ~~for~~ once more how important he considered them to be.

As far as the verse in itself is concerned, to the best of my knowledge no other writer had used it to lay emphasis on the epithet μέγας, as Syrianus does: in the uses that I am aware of (as, for example in the A scholia on XXIII 802-7 or in the bT scholia on XXIV 90-1) emphasis is laid on the verb ἄνωγε, i.e. on the fact that Zeus gives an order.

Passage 35 (143.5-10)

Continuing his commentary on purely theological matters, at 142.27 Syrianus defines the objects of contemplation by "those who have elevated themselves to the level of the divine" (τὰς θεὰς ἄς θεῶνται οἱ ἀναγόμενοι). He then tries to prove that the gods, unlike mortals, do not view the sensible heavens. But still, as Syrianus says, there are some men who have wrongly claimed that the gods are "pleased by viewing the cities of mortals". According to Syrianus, this claim is wrong, but at 143.5-10 he says:

Τινὲς μὲν οὖν καταγελάστως εἶπον ὅτι "καὶ γὰρ εὐφραίνονται ἀποβλέποντες εἰς τὰς ἀνθρώπων πολιτείας· ὡς καὶ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ ὁ Ζεὺς ἐτέρπετο
καθορώων Τρώων τε πόλιν καὶ λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν (II. VIII 52)

καὶ

νόσφιν ἐφ' ἵπποπόλων Θρηκῶν καθορώμενος αἶαν. (II. XIII 4)

The first thing that we notice in the text is that Couvreur has opened quotation marks after εἶπον ὅτι, but he has not closed them. I think that the quotation marks should be closed in the end of the sentence, just before the colon. Thus, the sentence in quotation

marks should be the following: "καὶ γὰρ εὐφραίνονται ἀποβλέποντες εἰς τὰς ἀνθρώπων πολιτείας". Immediately after that statement, the Homeric examples follow in logical sequence.

In the text under discussion we have a direct reproach by Syrianus to those who maintained this mistaken opinion. Syrianus' criticism is basically turned against those who have maintained that the gods please themselves as they stare at the cities of the mortals. P. Couvreur in his *apparatus criticus* explains "τινές" as interpreters before Hermias (or rather, Syrianus). I do not think that we are in the position of stating who those people are. But the fact remains: those people, whoever they might have been, talked of the gods in a way to be greatly laughed at. Homer does not seem to escape Syrianus' criticism, either.

We should, of course, point out that the criticism is being made from the viewpoint of Neoplatonism.⁴³⁴ We should also remember Syrianus' deep knowledge of Homer, as well as his appreciation and respect for him. For Syrianus, Homer *is* divine; there is no doubt about that. But still, no theologian is beyond making a mistake and no authority is above criticism: an authority, no matter how highly placed in Syrianus' esteem, is subjected to severe (*καταγελάστως*) criticism. But this by no means implies that the prestige of the authority is questioned: Syrianus is just proved to have been an open-minded person, who did not hesitate to express his strong disagreement with any authority of the past, even one that he himself acknowledged and admired.

As far as the verse itself is concerned, it seems to have been quoted quite regularly in antiquity, in order to give geographical information concerning Thrace and its tribes.⁴³⁵ Lucian also uses it twice: in the first case⁴³⁶ he shows the pleasure that can derive from this contemplation, and not only for Zeus; in the second⁴³⁷ he refers to Zeus, who could well contemplate other people and their deeds. The common element between Lucian's first use and Syrianus' quotation is pleasure that is due to contemplation

of the earth: but, of course, Syrianus gives another dimension to this pleasure, which he considers to be improper for gods.

Passage 36 (146.28-147.2)

Commenting on the *Phaedrus* 247c, Syrianus explains the following words of Socrates:

Τὸν δὲ ὑπερουράνιον τόπον οὔτε τις ὕμνησέ πω τῶν τῆδε ποιητῆς οὔτε ποτὲ ὕμνησει κατ' ἀξίαν. Ἔχει δὲ ὧδε - τολμητέον γὰρ οὖν τό γε ἀληθὲς εἰπεῖν ἄλλως τε καὶ περὶ ἀληθείας λέγοντα.

Our commentator is also of the opinion that the supra-celestial place has not been adequately praised by the ordinary poets: they stick to the technical rules of poetry, in contrast with the divine poets. The latter, to whom Homer and Orpheus belong, had the power to describe the supra-celestial world. In fact, he says at 146.28-147.2:

Εἰ μὲν ποιητὰς ἀκούοιμεν τοὺς τρίτους ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας, τουτέστι τὸ πλῆθος τῶν τῆδε ἀνθρωπικῶν ποιητῶν, ὥστε ἐξαιρείσθαι τοῦ λόγου Ὅμηρον καὶ Ὀρφέα (εἴρηται γὰρ αὐτοῖς περὶ τοῦδε τοῦ τόπου, καὶ Ἡσιόδῳ καὶ Μουσαίῳ), πρόδηλον τοῦ λόγου τὸ ἀληθὲς, ὅτι τῶν τοιούτων ποιητῶν τῶν πολλῶν καὶ τεχνικῶν οὐδεὶς ἐφικνεῖται ἐκείνων ἀξίως, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἐνθέων ποιητῶν οἶος Ὅμηρος καὶ Ὀρφεύς.

It is not the first time in this exegesis that Orpheus is mentioned. In this case he is regarded as one of the ἐνθεοὶ ποιηταί: the other one is Homer. On the other hand, Musaeus and Hesiod are presented as having talked of the extra-celestial place, but they are not clearly presented as divinely-inspired. But more will be said on this topic later on.

To start from an important point, Syrianus lays emphasis on how these ἐνθεοὶ ποιηταί spoke about the supra-celestial place. This belief is initially based on Platonic concepts: we know that, according to Plato, the poets, as they describe the earthly world, i.e. the imitation of the real, the supra-celestial world, are third in the rank of truth.⁴³⁸ But Syrianus considers the Platonic idea of inspiration to be of major importance: he distinguishes some poets, the divinely inspired ones, who have been permitted by the gods

to describe the supra-celestial place. Orpheus and Homer are the most eminent ones, as they are referred to twice in the passage and they are the first and last to be mentioned. Other exegetical passages support this claim.⁴³⁹

Naturally, these four poets are mentioned as the ones who, in one way or another, talked of a matter of theological importance: as early as the 5th century B.C. we find reference to the four figures together - or, at least, to the three, excluding Hesiod. The clearly parallel reference to these figures as sages, benefactors of mankind and sometimes divine men, was quite early well known and became a *topos* in the Hellenistic age and onwards. Apart from the existing textual evidence that presents Orpheus to be either the father or the teacher of Musaeus,⁴⁴⁰ Homer, Orpheus and Musaeus (and sometimes Hesiod) together are referred to in many cases.⁴⁴¹

Moreover, in Herodotus' *Historiae* II 53 Homer and Hesiod are characterised as the ones who taught the Greeks about the descent of the gods, gave them their several names, and honours, and arts and declared their outward forms.

Syrianus is thus a link in the chain of a long tradition that considers Orpheus, Musaeus, Homer and sometimes Hesiod to be divinely inspired poets, who have been privileged to learn the divine truths. But he goes one step further and acknowledges basically Homer and Orpheus as inspired. In any case, the context in which he places them is purely Platonic: all poets are in the third rank ^{from} of the truth, and only two are transcendent and divinely-inspired.

We also notice that Syrianus himself makes a reference to Orpheus and Musaeus as divine men in his commentary *In Metaphysica*. At 147.29-148.3 he argues that the decad (δεκάς) contains in itself all numbers, in the sense that it is the sum-total of a) number one, i.e. the monad (μονάς), which is the symbol of identity, sameness etc., b) number two, i.e. the dyad, which is the symbol of otherness, multiplicity and division, c) number three and d) number four.⁴⁴² In the same way, the creation of the world by the

demiurgic Intellect had already incorporated the immaterial Forms of the world: this is a view shared by Orpheus, Musaeus and those following them. In Syrianus' own words:

Τῶν θεῶν ἀνδρῶν δεκάδα τὸν εἰδητικὸν εἰπόντων ἀριθμὸν ὡς κοσμικὸν παράδειγμα καὶ "ὄρον περὶ πᾶσι τεθέντα", καὶ ὅτι ὡσπερ ἡ δεκάς ἐντὸς ἑαυτῆς ἔχει πάντα τὸν ἀριθμὸν οὐκέτι κρυφίως ὡς ἡ μονὰς οὐδ' οὐσιωδῶς ὡς ἡ τετράς, ἀλλ' ἤδη σὺν ἑτερότητι πλείονι καὶ διαιρέσει, τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον καὶ ἡ νοερὰ δημιουργία πάντα προεἶληφεν ἐν ἑαυτῇ τὰ τῶν κόσμων εἶδη. καὶ ταύτην τὴν δόξαν ἀπὸ τε Ὀρφέως καὶ Μουσαίου καὶ τῶν ἐκεῖθεν καταγομένων ὑποδεξαμένων ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ὡς δέκα τῷ ἀριθμῷ ἰδέας αὐτῶν ὑποτιθεμένων οὕτως εὐθύνει τὰς δόξας.

From this passage we may conclude that Homer and Musaeus are regarded as mortal men, who spoke adequately of the divine and were followed by their successors. Here we have no detailed reference to them as theologians, but the way their views are presented reveals respect on the part of Syrianus, which is a consequence of the truths they revealed. In this case Musaeus is included among the divine men who revealed theological truths. I think that this view is not necessarily in contrast with that expressed in our passage: it is true that in the exegesis of the *Phaedrus* only Homer and Orpheus are exempted from the general rule of technical poets, whereas in the *In Metaphysica* Musaeus is put in another level. But the latter case can be regarded as additional to the former. In other words, even if Musaeus is not included in the divinely inspired exemptions in the *Phaedrus* exegesis, his placement among the "divine men" in the other surviving philosophical work of Syrianus restores him in his proper place. Needless to say that this is not the case with Hesiod, who is also admired and quoted by Syrianus (and sometimes in theological contexts), but he is by no means regarded as divinely-inspired.

Lastly, it should not escape our notice that other Neoplatonists such as Proclus⁴⁴³ and Simplicius⁴⁴⁴ also refer to Orpheus and Musaeus together, as sources who are very important for religious matters and have revealed theological truths via their poetry. Proclus also regarded Homer, Hesiod and Orpheus as authorities whose works could be used as authorities on theological matters.⁴⁴⁵

Passage 37 (147.18-148.1)

A few lines below, Syrianus refers to Homer and Orpheus and after calling them "theologians" brings further evidence concerning this property of theirs. In his own words (147.18-148.1):

(...) καὶ τὸ π ε δ ῖ ο ν ἀ λ η θ ε ῖ α ς ἐξῆς ἐὰν λέγη, ταύτας αἰνίττεται· καὶ ἰδίως δὲ ἀλήθειαν οἱ θεολόγοι ἐκεῖ ἰδρῶσιν. Ὁ γὰρ τοι Ὀρφεὺς περὶ τῆς Νυκτὸς λέγων "θεῶν γὰρ ἔχει, φησὶ..." καὶ
μαντοσύνην [δὲ] οἱ δῶκεν ἔχειν ἀψευδέα πάντα.
Καὶ αὕτη λέγεται μαντεύειν τοῖς θεοῖς. Ἐνεδείξατο δὲ περὶ αὐτῆς καὶ Ὀμηροῦ·
μοναχοῦ γὰρ ἐμνήσθη τοῦ τῆς Νυκτὸς ὀνόματος· περὶ γὰρ τοῦ Διὸς λέγων φησὶν·
εἰ μὴ Νύξ δμητέρα θεῶν ἐσάωσε καὶ ἀνδρῶν,
τὴν ἰκόμην φεύγων· ὃ δ' ἐπαύσατο χωόμενός περ·
ἄζετο γὰρ μὴ Νυκτὶ θοῆ ἀποθύμια ῥέζοι. (II. XIV 259-261)
Τολμηρῶς δὲ περὶ αὐτῆς φησὶν ἐρεῖν ἐπειδήπερ ἀποφατικῶς μέλλει περὶ αὐτῆς
διαλέγεσθαι·

The first thing to point out in this passage is the fact that Syrianus once more treats Homer not only as a divinely-inspired poet, but as a theologian as well. In fact, the authority of Homer and Orpheus is adduced, in order to refer to the mythical figure of Night. We should point out that the figure of Night played an important role in Orphic cosmogony: in the Orphics she was believed to have been the daughter of Phanes and the mother of Ouranos. She was also the one who offered valuable advice to Zeus when he took over the reign of the world.⁴⁴⁶ In Homer, as the verse which Syrianus quotes reveals, her prestige is a fact. Janko⁴⁴⁷ rightly points out that "*the Iliadic and Orphic theogonies both adapt a myth which made the primeval waters, perhaps with Night as their parent, the origin of the world*". He also tries to account for the difference between the Orphic-Homeric cosmogony on the one hand and the Hesiodic on the other, by accepting that there is a possibility of divergent myths being current and by arguing that these motifs are Indo-European.

Porphry has an interesting view on the verses in question, in his discussion of the results of certain positions of the stars on human destiny: in order to stress these results,

he mentions Eos and Night and then distinguishes between night (νύξ) and Night (Νύξ), the former being the result, the latter being the goddess, who is responsible for the result. Thus the verses *Il.* VII 282, *Od.* XV 392 and *Od.* XII 286 refer to night, whereas the verses *Il.* XIV 259-261 refer to Night.⁴⁴⁸

We should also notice Syrianus' remark that Homer says that he is going to speak boldly of Night, because he is going to define her by means of privations (τολμηρῶς δὲ περὶ αὐτῆς φησὶν ἐρεῖν ἐπειδήπερ ἀποφατικῶς μέλλει περὶ αὐτῆς διαλέγεσθαι). The terms that are used (ἀποφατικῶς διαλέγεσθαι) are purely theological, showing for once more that Homer is a part of Syrianus' metaphysical discussion.

The last thing to point out is that the Homeric verse used by Syrianus is a part of the episode of the love-scene between Zeus and Hera condemned by Ionian thinkers and Plato. In Syrianus' philosophical works there are several quotations from the "condemned passages" (both in the *In Phaedrum* and the *In Metaphysica* commentaries). The presence of these quotations in itself is a point that should be taken into account for Syrianus' attitude towards the condemnation of the impious Homeric elements. In fact, there is sufficient evidence, both from Syrianus and Proclus, to show that Syrianus did not agree that Homer should be condemned.

The key to this attitude seems to be Syrianus' theory of inspiration. Sheppard has shown the importance and the function of this theory, both in the *In Phaedrum* exegesis and in Proclus' *In Rempublicam*.⁴⁴⁹

Thus, having given (through inspiration) the solution to criticisms of Homer, Syrianus was in the position to become one of "Homer's defenders", like Heraclitus or Ps.-Plutarch; in other words, to give Homer and its tradition the treatment and dimension that he saw fit.

Passage 38 (151.9-11)

Continuing his commentary on *Phaedrus* 247c, Syrianus deals with the genus of science. He recalls Plato's definition that this genus contains all sciences in itself in a unified way. In order to give an example of what it is to contain everything in a unified way, he then mentions the art of divination. This art reduces all time - past, present and future - in itself. To justify this example he quotes the well-known verse of the first book of the *Ilias*, which refers to Kalchas and his abilities as a prophet (*Il.* I 70). At 151.9-11 Syrianus says:

Ὅρῳ δὲ ὅτι ἡ μαντικὴ πάντα συναιρεῖ τὸν χρόνον, καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα καὶ τὰ παρεληλυθότα ὡς παρόντα ὁρᾷ·

ὅς ἤδη τὰ τ' ἐόντα τὰ τ' ἐσόμενα πρὸ τ' ἐόντα. (*Il.* I 70)

Τὸ οὖν πᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐνιαίως περιέχον (...) ὁ δὲ Πλάτων ἐπιστήμης γένος [sc. εἶπεν], ὃ πάσας ἐνιαίως τὰς ἐπιστήμας ἐν ἑαυτῷ συνείληφεν.

No wonder that Syrianus cites as an example a verse that refers to Kalchas, one of the most famous prophets of mythical tradition: his role in the *Ilias* and, generally speaking, in the Trojan expedition is eminent.

As far as this knowledge of Kalchas is concerned, Lamberton⁴⁵⁰ rightly stresses that "*the distinction between normal human knowledge, which is restricted to the past and the present, and the abilities of seers, who are capable of knowing the past, the present and the future is a definite Homeric element*"; but, apart from being a definitive Homeric element, for Neoplatonic philosophy divination was a factor not to be regarded as trivial.⁴⁵¹

Syrianus mentions divination more than once: earlier in the exegesis of the *Phaedrus* he focuses on the contrast between the divination which is given to mortals by the gods, and human divination, which occurs to some mortals, like Socrates.⁴⁵² This special ability of Socrates is put forward by Plato,⁴⁵³ who later classifies divination as a type of divine madness and talks about seers possessed by Apollo.⁴⁵⁴ It is evident

therefore that Syrianus finds in Plato's views elements to sustain his own views on divination.

At this point the standard Neoplatonic view concerning knowledge in time should be referred to: according to Neoplatonists, for God there is neither past nor future, since his knowledge of everything is conceived by him in terms of an eternal present.⁴⁵⁵ The common elements between the art of divination and God's knowledge are self-evident.

The verse, in its turn, was one of the most well-known Homeric passages, that used to be quoted very frequently by various writers in antiquity.⁴⁵⁶ Porphyry used it in his works concerning Homer.⁴⁵⁷ Three Neoplatonic philosophers of the school of Alexandria quoted it as well: John Philoponus,⁴⁵⁸ when he attributed the power to know the present, the past and the future to Moses; Olympiodorus⁴⁵⁹ mentioned it in his talk of divination and Elias⁴⁶⁰ with reference to Pythagoras' omniscience.

Passage 39 (156.26-157.3)

Commenting on *Phaedrus* 247d-e, and especially on the Socratic view about how the divine mind is capable of sharing the real knowledge of the soul, Syrianus draws attention to the image of the horses eating ambrosia and drinking nectar. Using the method of allegory Syrianus understands that by horses Plato means the lower powers of the human intellect. In detail the part of the human intellect in which opinions are formed receives measures from the reason and imposes them on the impulses, the passions and the desires of the soul. The ultimate derivation of the measures is to be found in the contemplation of God by the divine souls, which is transmitted to the particular human souls. Syrianus then explains how ambrosia and nectar are to be understood: ambrosia is analogous to our solid food and nectar to our liquid food (156.19-26). He then gives a quite ingenious and interesting explanation of the usage of nectar by the gods: they use

nectar when they want to show providence to mortals. The example he cites is the following (156.26-157.3):

μη ἐὼντες οὖν οἱ θεοὶ τεθάφθαι τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν ψυχὴν, νέκταρι αὐτὴν δεξιούσθαι λέγονται. Καὶ ὅταν δὲ προνοῦντας παραδίδωσι τοὺς θεοὺς, χρωμένους αὐτοὺς ποιούσι τῷ νέκταρι·

μετὰ δὲ σφισι πότνια Ἥβη

νέκταρ ἐφνοχόει· τοὶ δὲ χρυσεοὶς δεπάεσσι

δειδέχατ' ἀλλήλους, Τρώων πόλιν εἰσορόωντες· (II. IV 2-4)

προενόουν γὰρ τότε τῶν Τρώων. Πίνειν οὖν λέγονται καὶ οἱ νῦν ἵπποι τὸ νέκταρ ὡς προεστηκότες καὶ προνοῦντες τῶν δευτέρων, ἐσθίειν δὲ ἀμβροσίαν ὡς ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς ἐνιδρυμένοι.

Syrianus' use of the Homeric image of the gods' banquet could also aim at explaining why the gods are not unjustified in feasting while a war is taking place on earth. From the bT scholia on VI 4b we learn that the fact that gods were pleased by the view of the war was considered to be improper (ἀπρεπές). As if answering to those critics, Syrianus explains the divine banquet as an act of divine providence. It is not that the gods enjoy themselves while the mortals fight with one another; they show their concern by exercising providence, something which is an essential property of the divine.⁴⁶¹

A parallel relevant to ἀμβροσία and νέκταρ can be found at *In Metaphysica* 41.30ff.:

ἐπεὶ οὖν τὰ μὲν αὐτοῖς ἤνεται τοῖς θεοῖς τῶν ἀπογεννωμένων, τὰ δὲ οὐδέποτε αὐτοῖς ἀμέσως συνάπτεσθαι πέφυκε, τὰ δὲ ποτὲ μὲν οὕτω ποτὲ δὲ ἐκείνοις, ἐν οἷς καὶ τὸ ἡμέτερον τέτεται, τὰ μὲν αἰεὶ πρὸς θεοὺς ὀρώοντα τρέφεσθαι φασὶν ἐκεῖθεν ἀμβροσίαν καὶ νέκταρι· παρέχει δὲ αὐτοῖς ἢ μὲν ἀμβροσία χωριστὸν ἀπὸ τῆς γενέσεως, ἐν ἣ ὁ βρότος καὶ ἡ αἱματώδης ἀκαθαρσία, τὸ δὲ νέκταρ τὸ μὴ θέλγεσθαι κατὰ τὴν τῶν τελευταίων προμήθειαν, ἀλλ' ἀμειλίκτως καὶ ἀτρέπτως τῶν ὄλων προνοεῖν· τὰ δὲ ποτὲ μὲν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἀνατεινόμενα, πεφυκότα δὲ ἐκεῖθεν καὶ ἀφίστασθαι, ἀληθεύοντα μὲν καὶ εὐαρκούντα φασὶ τῆς ἀμβροσίας καὶ τοῦ νέκταρος μεταλαμβάνειν, τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τὸ ὄντως ὄν τεταμένα καὶ τὸ θεῖον σεβόμενα, ψευδόμενα δὲ καὶ ἐπινοκούντα, τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν καὶ τὴν γένεσιν ἀποκλίνοντα καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ καταφρονητικῶς ἔχοντα στερίσκεσθαι τῶν ἐκ τοῦ νοητοῦ τροφῶν· τὰ δὲ θνητὰ καὶ ἐπίκηρα μὴδὲ μεταλαμβάνειν αὐτῶν ποτε.

The providence which the gods exercise on mortals is a distinctive theological point, that, according to Ps.-Plutarch, is a common theme in many philosophers, but has its origins in Homer.⁴⁶² Proclus has also considered ~~the~~ divine ~~the~~ providence in his

treatment of the Theomachy at *In Rempublicam* 87.95: as Sheppard has proved,⁴⁶³ Proclus accounts for the fighting in terms of the providence of the gods and the nature of the objects of their providence. Proclus' doctrine of πέρας and ἀπειρία, which has originated from Syrianus, as well as the pre-Syrianic interpretation in terms of demons and the allegory of the combats between pairs of gods are combined in Proclus' consideration of the Theomachy, which seems to have derived from Syrianus.

Providence is also found in Proclus' treatment of Agamemnon's dream: as we learn from Proclus, Syrianus claimed that Zeus, under the wider perspective of his providence for mortals and of his intention to punish the Greeks, cheated Agamemnon for his own good. This Syrianic solution to the problem is not preferred to by Proclus, who offered a different interpretation, based on the doctrine of παρῦπóστασις.⁴⁶⁴ What is interesting for us, though, at this point, is not Proclus' own solution and what he owes to Syrianus, but Syrianus' use of providence for solving a serious Homeric problem.

Proclus also refers to ἀμβροσία at *In Rempublicam* 138.4-15, where he speaks of the meaning of ambrosia and of the oil with which Hera anoints herself. Here we meet again the doctrine of procession and reversion; oil is associated with procession, ambrosia with reversion.⁴⁶⁵

Passage 40 (173.14-15)

Beginning the third book of his exegesis, Syrianus comments on *Phaedrus* 249d and summarises what has been said about the division of divine madness so far. Talking once more about poetic madness, he says (173.14-15):

(...) ἡ ποιητικὴ ᾄδει κλέα ἀνδρῶν καὶ διὰ τοῦτο παιδεύει τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος.

The phrase κλέα ἀνδρῶν is found at *Il.* IX 189, IX 524 and *Od* VIII 73. As B.

Hainsworth remarks,⁴⁶⁶ "*κλέα ἀνδρῶν (...)* is the Homeric expression for all that is now called heroic poetry". Syrianus obviously had heroic poetry in mind when he read Plato's description of poetic madness.

The *Il.* IX 189 belongs to the very well-known episode of the embassy to Achilles, while the IX 524 to the also famous Meleager story, which had a history of its own, independent of the embassy episode, in which it is incorporated.⁴⁶⁷ We saw above⁴⁶⁸ that Syrianus was familiar with the embassy episode; in any case, had he not known two Homeric episodes as famous as the embassy to Achilles and Meleager story, he could not have become a teacher of rhetoric in the first place! But, famous though these Homeric passages might have been, the phrase *κλέα ἀνδρῶν* seems to be another example of a Homeric expression that acquired a history and a significance of its own, independent of the parts of the Homeric epic where it appeared.

Indeed, the use of the phrase *κλέα ἀνδρῶν* by writers such as Plutarch,⁴⁶⁹ Athenaeus,⁴⁷⁰ Aelius Aristides⁴⁷¹ and Dio Chrysostomus⁴⁷² clearly shows that we are dealing with a cliché. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that when he referred to *κλέα ἀνδρῶν* Syrianus had in mind the very Homeric passages where the phrase appeared. As many others before him, he used the phrase in his talk of poetry and poetic madness.

It should also not escape our notice that the cliché is also found in Porphyry twice: the first reference deals with the phrase, giving it the usual sense of "epic deeds".⁴⁷³ But the second reference is much more interesting, as the phrase is used in order to speak of spiritual deeds of men, and most importantly of philosophers, such as Pythagoras.⁴⁷⁴ In this case, the deed for philosophers is not to be brave in battle, but to choose rightly their dwelling in remote, sacred places.

Proclus, in his turn, mentions the whole Homeric verse twice. We firstly find it in an educational context:⁴⁷⁵ according to his views, one of the pedagogical aims of poetry is to make people imitate ancient distinguished men, setting forth their glorious deeds.

Moreover, his second reference also has an educational purpose:⁴⁷⁶ the Homeric heroes were open to gifts and could be persuaded by words, but this did not render them extreme money-lovers. This Homeric ethos is considered by Proclus to be an example that deserves imitation by youngsters of his age.

Eustathius mentions the phrase κλέα ἀνδρῶν several times: he distinguishes five types of odes, in which the heroic ones are included.⁴⁷⁷ He also holds that the subject of Homer's poetry is nothing more than the narration of mens' deeds.⁴⁷⁸ Additionally, he perceives the content of Achilles' song as quite fitted to his ethos: by singing mens' deeds he rendered them famous, as Homer did for Achilles himself.⁴⁷⁹

Passage 41 (183.14-15)

Commenting on 251b of the Platonic text, Syrianus deals with the elevative powers of the soul, which realise the desire of the soul to be united with the divine. The verb used to describe this desire is the verb ἀνακηκίω, which is actually taken from the *Phaedrus* text. A Homeric example is being put forward, in order to make the meaning of the verb clear. In his own words (183.14-15):

Ἄ ν α κ η κ ί ε ι, τουτέστιν ἀναπηδᾷ καὶ ἐνθουσιᾷ καὶ ἐκβακχεύεται· ὁ ποιητής·
...πολὺς δ' ἀνεκήκειεν ἰδρῶς (*Il.* XXIII 507).

For once more we have a Homeric verse used for pure linguistic reasons. Syrianus' students obviously faced some difficulties with the *Phaedrus* verb ἀνακηκίω, which is used by Plato in order to describe the state affecting the soul of a man, who is beginning to sprout wings; Homer was thus put forward, in order to illuminate Plato's meaning.

What is interesting in this passage is the terminology used by Syrianus in this effort: he uses not only the verb ἀναπηδῶ, but also the verbs ἐνθουσιῶ and ἐκβακχεύω, the last two being closely linked to divine madness.

Strangely enough, Hesychius s.v. ἀνακηκίει says ἀναφέρεται. Only a mistake on Hesychius' part can account for this meaning. Photius, on the other hand, has the version +ἀνακηκεῖ+· ἀναπηδᾶ.⁴⁸⁰ We should also add that in Hesychius we find references to divine madness and possession in terminology similar to that of Syrianus in the following cases: ἐκβακχεύει· ἐκταράσσει ἢ ἀσέμνως ἐορτάζει, ἐνθουσιάζουσι· θαυμάζουσι, ἐνθουσιασμός ἐστιν, ὅτε ἡ ψυχὴ ὅλη ἐλλάμπηται ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐνθουσιῶν· μαινόμενος ὄρμῶν ἢ μανίαν ἔχων. Moreover, Photius brings in the following evidence: ἐκβακχευθεῖς· ἐκμανεῖς, ἐνθους· +πεφορημένος+ ἐνθουσιῶν, ἐνθουσιᾶ· ὑπὸ ἐνθέου κατέχεται πνεύματος, ἐνθουσιασμός· ὅταν ἡ ψυχὴ ὅλη ἐλλάμπηται ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐνθουσιαζόμενοι· ἐφορμώντες ἢ ἐλλαμπόμενοι.

Thus, Syrianus' familiarity with the terminology of possession is traceable in this reference; evidence from Hesychius and Photius shows that this terminology antedated Syrianus' time.

Passage 42 (187.25-29)

Talking about Plato's effort to give the etymology of the Greek word ἔρωσ at *Phaedrus* 252b, Syrianus finds the occasion to say a word to his students about the names that the gods use for several things. He argues that the gods have different names, because their essence is different from that of men. In his effort to prove this, he says (187.25-29):

Τοῦτο δὲ καὶ Ὅμηρος ἐποίησεν εἰπὼν·
 χαλκίδα κικλήσκουσι θεοὶ, ἄνδρες δὲ κύμινδιν (*II. XIV* 291),
 καὶ πάλιν·
 ὄν Βριάρεων καλέουσι θεοὶ (*II. I* 403).

It is evident that the incorporation of the passages helps the philosopher to prove his theory concerning the multiple names of gods. In the bT scholia on XIV 291b¹ there is a detailed discussion of κύμινδιν: at first we have an extended version of the bird's

myth, and then a description of its colour and properties follows. But there is no reference to the difference in names, which is central for Syrianus, as it helps to prove the difference of essence between the gods and mortals.

It should not be neglected that both Homeric words, i.e. χαλκίς and κύμινδις are Plato's examples in the *Cratylus* 392a.⁴⁸¹ Sheppard⁴⁸² claims that it is Syrianus' interpretation of the *Cratylus*, which Proclus uses in the *In Rempublicam* 169.25-170.26; but this interpretation seems to have been received from earlier interpretations, probably the 4th century Neoplatonists. This view, which seems quite logical, places Syrianus in an exegetical - philosophical tradition; but what is of particular interest is the fact that it is through Homer - and, of course, Plato - that the links of the tradition are traced.

Heraclitus in his *Allegoriae* 21 makes extensive reference to the Homeric passage, in which Briareus, bearing the two names, belongs. But Heraclitus faces the episode from a different point of view: in his opinion, the episode, which is nothing but a revolt against Zeus, would be in for condemnation, had it not been allegorical.⁴⁸³ But, interesting though Heraclitus' treatment is, Syrianus seems to have drawn his exegetical line from the *Cratylus* and not from Heraclitus.

Passage 43 (219.21-24)

At 219.21-24 Homer is once more quoted as an example of linguistic usage. This time Syrianus deals with the meaning of the words "σοφός" and "σοφίη", according to previous generations. The text is as follows:

Ἴσως, φησὶ, λέγουσι τι οἱ σοφοί· τὸ δὲ σοφὸν ἰδύναται μὲν καὶ ὡς ἐν ἡθει λεχθῆναι, ἡγουν ὅτι τοὺς ὄπως ποτέ [εἰδότας] τι περὶ λόγους ἔχοντας σοφοὺς ἐκάλουν οἱ παλαιοὶ, ὁπότε καὶ τὸν τέκτονα Ὀμηρὸς φησιν
εὐ εἰδῶς σοφίης. (*II. XV* 412)

Syrianus deals with the term "wisdom" and emphasises that traditionally this

property was attributed to anybody who claimed to know something. An example of this use is the verse in which Homer attributes wisdom to a builder.

The T scholia on *Ilias* XV 412b¹ claim that in this verse there is σοφίης instead of τέχνης. Soon afterwards we read: πᾶσαν δὲ τέχνην οὕτω καλοῦσι, σοφοῦς <δὲ> τοὺς τεχνίτας.

Ammonius⁴⁸⁴ and Elias⁴⁸⁵ used the same Homeric verse and elucidated Syrianus' point, in their effort to give an account of the meaning of wisdom: Ammonius considered that the ancients, in which Homer is also included, did not define the meaning of the term "wisdom" correctly, and Elias adds that Homer used to apply wisdom to everybody who claimed to know something, whatever that was. Thus, Elias thought that the ancients did not treat the meaning of this word justly, and polluted it.

Homer is then considered by Ammonius and Elias insufficient regarding the use of the term "wisdom". Syrianus, on the other hand, simply says that the Homeric use of this term has become a matter of habit. In fact, there is a sharp difference in the treatment of Homer between Syrianus and the others: Syrianus just makes a linguistic remark and does not accuse Homer of polluting the meaning of the word "wisdom" as the other two philosophers did.

Passage 44 (260.22-28)

The last reference in the third book is at 260.22-28. Syrianus comments on Socrates' use of the noun παιδιά at *Phaedrus* 276b5 and says:

Ὅπερ ἐπὶ τῆς ἐγκοσμίου δημιουργίας τοῖς θεοῖς ἔχει τὸ παίγνιον αὐτῶν εἶναι τὸν πάντα κόσμον, ὡς καὶ ὁ ποιητῆς φησι·
ἄσβεστος δ' ἄρ' ἐνώρτο γέλως μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν
ὡς ἴδον Ἥφαιστον· (*Il.* I 599-600)
(τουτέστιν, ὡς ἴδον τὰ δημιουργήματα, ἠύφρανθησαν καὶ ἐγέλασαν), ὅπερ οὖν τοῖς θεοῖς ὁ κόσμος, τοῦτο καὶ τῷ σπουδαίῳ ἢ περὶ τάξεως ἐνέργεια· παιδιᾷ γὰρ ἔοικεν, ἢ δὲ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς σπουδῆ.

According to the Homeric verse, the gods laughed heavily when they saw Hephaestus trying to serve wine. G.S. Kirk⁴⁸⁶ remarks that the gods burst out laughing not because that Hephaestus is hobbling; their laughter is part of the comic effect created by the lame god performing the role of wine-pourer in a bustling (and perhaps a deliberately parodying) way. Syrianus places the verse in a cosmological context: for gods the creation of our world is nothing more than a game, which makes them laugh. The Homeric verse is being brought in as an example of their laughter, not in the sense of mocking, but in the sense of joy, as his explanation shows (ὡς ἴδον τὰ δημιουργήματα, ἠύφρανήσαν καὶ ἐγέλασαν).

The gods' laughter had been attacked by Plato at *Republica* 389a.⁴⁸⁷ Of course, as we have seen above, Plato's criticism was famous, and Syrianus, more than any other, was familiar with it. This did not prevent him from using the "forbidden" Homeric verses in his works. But I think that in this case he not only uses the verse, but places it in a philosophical - cosmological context as well, as if he were to give an answer to Plato's criticism.

Ps.-Plutarch in his turn seems to have Plato in mind when he quotes the same verse in his reference to Homer as the first comic poet: he holds that even the most holy and elevated episodes can cause some laughter when they are narrated by Homer. But Homer himself has just caused laughter without offending anyone: it is the comic poets who succeeded him that used in comedy offensive and indecent words.⁴⁸⁸

Porphry has preserved the Cynic philosopher Zoilus' objection to the indecent laughter of the gods; Zoilus' attitude is natural, as he is well known for his attacks on Homer. Nevertheless, Porphyry is of the opinion that the episode's aim is to declare Aphrodite's beauty.⁴⁸⁹

Syrianus' inclination to give a different interpretation to the passage influenced Proclus, who, as has rightly been argued,⁴⁹⁰ explained the gods' laughter, along with

their tears in other passages, as symbols of the gods' productive providence. In the case of laughter, this providence concerns the whole, while in the case of tears particular things only. Orphic influences have been traced in Proclus' explanation, and this is not a fact to be neglected.

Proclus⁴⁹¹ also deals with Plato's censorship of the verse; he chooses to place the gods' laughter in a cosmological context. According to his interpretation, Hephaestus is the creator of the material world. The creation of the whole material world is considered to be a game on behalf of the gods, who are also regarded by Plato as young ones; therefore, mythographers, according to Proclus, have chosen to assimilate the providence these gods exercise for the material world to laughter and this is the way he solves the problem which Plato posed.⁴⁹²

Olympiodorus⁴⁹³ also used the verse, probably following Proclus: he spoke of the divine activity with reference to the material world, and he quoted the verse in order to maintain that divine providence is a game.

We should also note that the verse ἄσβεστος δ' ἄρ' ἐνώρητο γέλως μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν is also found in the *Odyssea* VIII 326: this time the target of the laughter is not Hephaestus; on the contrary, Hephaestus' cunningness towards his adulterous wife and her lover, along with his skill, that enabled him to prove the adultery, has caused the laughter. But we cannot be sure whether this very passage was in Syrianus' mind when he made the reference. It might have been, as the laughter gives them pleasure in this case as well. But unfortunately we do not have the evidence in our text to sustain anything other than a mere possibility.

3.2 Remarks on Chapter 3

The first thing to remark on the Homeric quotations of the exegesis *In Phaedrum*, which contains more numerous references than the other works of Syrianus (Passages 18-44), is that the third part of this exegesis has very few references, either to Homer or to any other ancient writer. This might be the consequence of the fact that the third part is less long as a whole, compared with the first and the second. Limited as it is, it contains few comments on each word, phrase or passage of the Platonic text. As a whole, it gives the impression that it has not been reworked by the author. Taking into consideration the fact that the last part of the *Phaedrus* deals with matters of the utmost philosophical importance, and therefore the commentator on the dialogue, or the teacher, should also devote much of his work to those matters, we may deduce the following: either Syrianus had no time left to say what he should in his lessons, or Hermias, after writing down his teacher's lessons, had no time to rework and revise them. But if we suppose that, as the *Phaedrus* was not the only dialogue which the syllabus of Syrianus included, the teacher was probably out of time, Hermias must have made practically no alterations to Syrianus' commentary. Of course, all this is pure speculation; nevertheless, the argument has a point, as it is based on an existing problem, posed by the unequal articulation of the three parts of the exegesis.

As to the type of the references, the linguistic tradition is present in this commentary in 5 cases: in passage 18, where chiasmus is discussed, in passage 20, where the meaning of the verb *λανθάνω* catches Syrianus' notice, in passage 22, where the adjective *αιμύλος* is discussed, in passage 41, where the reference is to the verb *ἀνακηκίω* and in passage 43, where the usage of the terms *σοφός* and *σοφία* are dealt with. Moreover, passage 42 has a linguistic dimension, as the reference to the double names of

certain gods has both linguistic and theological flavour.

That brings us to the other major category of the Homeric references of this exegesis: the theological ones. This is something new to anyone who is familiar only with Syrianus' commentary *In Hermogenem*, but something self-evident for the reader of a Neoplatonic exegesis. As Syrianus' chief aim is to explain Plato, so that his own Neoplatonic beliefs are demonstrated, the literary evidence to be brought in is put in this theological - and most times metaphysical - context.

In fact, passages like 25, where the celestial bodies are reported to have sight and hearing, or 32, where the properties of the three Zeuses are discussed, have a distinct flavour of Neoplatonic metaphysics. This is also the case with passages 33 and 34, where the properties of the gods are dealt with, as well as of passage 35, where the gods are reported to please themselves by ^{contemplating} staring at the cities of mortals. The providence which the gods exercise on mortals is the subject of passage 39, whereas the gods' laughter is discussed in passage 44. Passage 21 also deals with the gods' vows.

Moreover, other aspects of philosophy, and not only metaphysics, are being enforced by Homeric elements: passage 19 deals with Homer in an epistemological context (gnosiology), whereas passages 26 and 28 deal with Neoplatonic psychology. Passage 38, where divination is discussed, is a further proof of Syrianus' use of Homeric elements when it comes to philosophy.

But, even though the majority of references in this exegesis is philosophical, Homer's proverbial usage is for once more present in passage 24. Homer's use for literary criticism is evident in passage 29. In passage 40 we notice that the Homeric epics are regarded to have a high educational value. Syrianus was familiar with all these usages even since the first stage of his career, i.e. when he was a teacher of rhetoric.

Another important aspect of how Homer is treated by Syrianus comes forward in the important passages 31, 35, 36 and 37, where Homer is considered to be a divinely

inspired poet and a theologian. These properties, which Homer shared with figures such as Orpheus and Musaeus, are quite revealing: by the time when Syrianus composed his commentary, his philosophical thought had been formed. Seen under this perspective, Homer (and the whole of the Homeric tradition) was indeed much more than a convenient source for scholarly or literary reference: the status of a theologian had been generously given to Homer by Syrianus, who, as we have seen, wrote a treatise bearing the title *Περὶ τῶν παρ' Ὀμήρου θεῶν*. Although this work has not been preserved, the Homeric passages of this exegesis lead us to suppose that the Homeric theology that must have been elaborated in this very work would have had a distinct Neoplatonic flavour. Thus, Homer would have deserved a place among the other theologians of the Neoplatonic universe.

Very important also is passage 27, where the allegorical treatment of Helen myth is found. In my opinion this is one of the most interesting passages of the whole exegesis: the celebrity of the Helen myth in itself is one main reason for this attitude. But, apart from that, the metaphysical allegory Syrianus makes is important in itself, as it is one of the proofs we have for Syrianus' use of the method of allegorical interpretation.

Last but not least, it should not escape our notice that in this exegesis Syrianus, devoted to Plato though he was, made use of Homeric passages censored by Plato. This is also the case with the *In Metaphysica* commentary, which we will go through ^{next}. The reasons why Syrianus used these very verses will be examined in our conclusions.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 HOMERIC PASSAGES IN THE *IN METAPHYSICA*

Passage 45 (25.10-13)

Discussing the intellect's ability to see, Syrianus maintains that the conjugate intermediate forms (σύζυγα εἶδη) conceived by the intellect move not in terms of bodily motion, but in terms of intellectual activity. His general view was that there are three levels of reality for every natural thing: in addition to a sensible thing, there is its intelligible reality, but also its intermediate reality, distinct from sensibles and intelligibles. This reality corresponds to incorporeal and universal reason - principles in the soul, which are conjugate with the intelligible Forms and play the role of cognitive principles. As an example of such an intermediate form, Syrianus refers to the intellectual cognitive principles of harmony that the gods have placed in human souls as a gift, before the existence of the perceptible universe.⁴⁹⁴ In the same way, the gods, as well as human beings, share the qualities of the Muses and the harmony owed to them. As Syrianus puts it at *In Metaphysica* 25.6-12:

(...) ἔστι δὲ καὶ ὄμμα ἡμῶν νοερὸν καὶ δύναμις ἐκείνου τοῦ ὄμματος ὀπτική, ἔσται δὲ καὶ εἶδη σύζυγα ταύτῃ τῇ ὀπτικῇ ἀκίνητα μὲν τὴν τῶν σωμάτων κίνησιν, κινούμενα δὲ τὴν νοερὰν ἐνέργειαν. τί δέ; τῶν ἀρμονικῶν λόγων, ὧν ὁ θεὸς δέδωκε τῇ ψυχῇ πρὸ τῆς φαινομένης διακοσμήσεως, ἄρ' οὐδείς ἐστι θεατῆς; αὐτῶν δὲ τῶν Μουσῶν καὶ τῆς ἐξ αὐτῶν προϊούσης ἀρμονίας οὐ πάντες μὲν οἱ ἐγκόσμοι θεοὶ μετέχουσιν, ὡς φησιν Ὅμηρος, πλήρεις "Μουσάων αἰ ἄειδον ἀμειβόμενοι ὀπι καλῆ" (*Il.* I 604) (...)

Syrianus had made several references to the Muses in his exegesis of the *Phaedrus*;⁴⁹⁵ he honoured and recognised them as the source of arts and harmony in human life. The dimension they had for him, therefore, was a part of his theological

views.

The reference, apart from being a literary one, has certain religious aspects. In this passage of the *In Metaphysica* the matter which Syrianus perceives differently from Aristotle is theological - it refers to divine qualities that both the mortals and the mundane gods possess, on the basis of the Neoplatonic theory of intermediates; consequently, a literary reference to figures who played a certain role in religion is quite appropriate.

As far as the Homeric verse itself is concerned, I think that its use by Athenaeus is interesting: he quotes it in his discussion of music and its use by the gods.⁴⁹⁶ Thus, it is not only Syrianus who quoted this particular verse, in reference to the gods' relations with music: Athenaeus used the verse in a similar context.

Eustathius, in his treatment of the episode of book One, to which the verse belongs, mentions the verse as suitable to its context: the Muses' song is well-fitted to the gods' symposium, which is filled with music.⁴⁹⁷

Passage 46 (75.27-34)

At 75.19ff. Syrianus comments on how Aristotle treated those who objected to the axiom of contradiction. Aristotle criticized them for misunderstanding reality and thus having false opinions about it. Syrianus brings in several views shared by Presocratics, whom he considers to be the leaders among the Greek philosophers. Thus, he does not accept that Aristotle's refutation of their own arguments is correct. He believes, for example, that evidently the same food may seem sweet to the healthy and bitter to the sick, or bitter to a human being and sweet to an animal. In his own words at 75.27-34:

ὄθεν καὶ ὁ Δημόκριτος ἀπεφαίνετο μηδὲν εἶναι ἀληθὲς <ἢ> ἡμῖν ἄγνωστον, Ἐμπεδοκλῆς τε καὶ Παρμενίδης εἰς ταῦτόν ἦγον τῷ φαινομένῳ τὸ ἀληθές· Ἀναξαγόρου τε λόγον ἀπομνημονεύει τοιαῦτα ἡμῖν ἔσεσθαι τὰ πράγματα

δισχυριζόμενον ὁποῖοι ποτ' ἂν ᾶμεν αὐτοί· καὶ Ὅμηρος δὲ φησιν τὸν παραφρονούντα Ἔκτορα ὁμοίως ἔχειν φρόνησιν εἰ καὶ ἄλλην, ἀλλὰ μὴ τὴν τοῦ ὑγιαίνοντος· "κεῖτο γὰρ ἄλλοφρονέων". ταῦτα δὲ ὅτι μὲν οἱ παλαιοὶ οὐχ οὕτως εἶπον ὡς νῦν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐκλαμβάνει, πρόδηλον.

As to the Homeric reference, Syrianus transmits a different text from the one preferred to by Allen. The original verse is XV 244-5; Apollo addresses Hector and asks:

Ἔκτορ, υἱὲ Πριάμοιο, τίη δὲ σὺ νόσφιν ἀπ' ἄλλων
ἦσ' ὀλιγηπελέων; ἦ πού τί σε κῆδος ἰκάνει;

The difference is then in the participle ὀλιγηπελέων (=powerless) and ἄλλοφρονέων (=senseless). In fact, it was Democritus who made use of the participle ἄλλοφρονέων, which is a Homeric word, found once in the *Ilias*⁴⁹⁸ and once in the *Odyssea*.⁴⁹⁹ Aristotle himself in his *De anima* 404a is the source for Democritus' reading; he also uses the same verse at *Metaphysica* 1009b. Janko⁵⁰⁰ regards Democritus' reading as a misquotation based on XXIII 698. Van der Valk mentions the case when he discusses that "*contaminations of different Homeric passages were apt to occur, when typical words struck the imagination and were (by errors of memory) interpolated into other Homeric passages*".⁵⁰¹

Democritus' version, which was followed by Aristotle, was adopted by Syrianus, in the passage we are discussing, and by other post-Aristotelian philosophers as well. To be more specific, Alexander of Aphrodisias⁵⁰² and Asclepius⁵⁰³ refer to it in their commentaries on the *Metaphysica*: their source is Aristotle's passage in this work. As Aristotle has a corresponding passage in the *De anima*, Themistius,⁵⁰⁴ Simplicius⁵⁰⁵ and Philoponus⁵⁰⁶ use the same expression, having the *De anima* as a source. The tradition went as far as Sophonias (13th-14th cent. A.D.), who paraphrased the *De anima*.⁵⁰⁷

But it was not only the commentators on the *Metaphysica* and the *De anima* who were influenced by Aristotle: Theocritus uses the phrase κεῖτ' ἄλλοφρονέων in his description of the battle between Amycus and Polydeuces in his *Idyll* XII.⁵⁰⁸

In the passage of Syrianus we are concerned with, the Homeric quotation is put forward as reinforcing the opinion of Anaxagoras as well as of other thinkers. The latter's view is in contrast with the Aristotelian one.

Seen in a broader context, Homer's presence among the philosophers is not negligible; it seems that, for Syrianus, it was acceptable to include Homer and the Presocratics among the philosophical authorities of the past.

Passage 47 (83.1-4)

At the beginning of his commentary on books M and N of the *Metaphysica* Syrianus divides the Forms into three kinds: intelligible (*universalia ante rem*), intellectual (*universalia post rem*) and enmattered (*universalia in re*). The intelligible Forms are in the divine Intellect and are cognitive and creative. Their images are the intellectual forms, which are in human souls and are cognitive. The material Forms are in physical objects. Human knowledge consists in the recollection of the knowledge of the intelligible Forms after the activation of the cognitive principles in the human soul. In order to give examples of the forms, Syrianus first refers to the zodiacal cycle and then quotes a Homeric verse about Hephaestus.

At 83.1-7 he says:

διὸ καὶ <αἱ> ἀποδείξεις τοῖς ἀστρονόμοις ἐκ καθόλου καὶ μερικῶν προτάσεων γίνονται, τῆς μὲν καθόλου τὴν αἰτίαν ἐχούσης διὰ τὸ ἐν ψυχῇ τῇ τὸ πᾶν ὑφιστανούση προϋπάρχειν, τῆς δὲ μερικῆς ἐκ τῶν αἰσθητῶν εἰλημμένης· ἀπέθετο γὰρ δὴ καὶ ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς τὰ πάντα, ὡς ἐνῆν, ὁ μέγας Ἥφαιστος κατασκευάσας, ὡς φησιν ἡ θεία ποιήσις,

"πόρπας τε γναπτὰς θ' ἔλικας κάλυκας τε καὶ ὄρμους
ἐν σπῆϊ γλαφυρῶ." (II. XVIII 401-2)

καὶ ταῦτά ἐστι τὰ τριττὰ εἶδη (...).

In this example, Hephaestus corresponds to the creative soul in which everything to be generated preexists in a unified way. The whole passage gives an analogy which

illumines one of the elements of the theory of the intermediates. Syrianus' point is to prove that material objects are (imperfect) copies of the intelligible Forms in the divine intellect.

The same Homeric verse is quoted by Proclus at *In Rempublicam* 141.14-15 and also at *In Timaeum* II 70.24: in the first case, Proclus discusses Hephaestus' modelling the forms beneath the moon and quotes not the whole verse, but the second half of it, while in the second, concerning the creation of the Universe, Hephaestus belongs to the third level, i.e. after the intellectual gods and the Demiurge. The intellectual gods possess the intelligible shape. The Demiurge receives the creative power from them and creates all mundane shapes. After him, Hephaestus gives shape to everything mundane, to the heavens and the generated world. Hephaestus creates the essence of the bodily world and gives everything its appropriate shape. Hephaestus gives shape to everything through working by himself, while the Demiurge creates through his intellection only. Sheppard⁵⁰⁹ has discussed the role of Hephaestus in these and other passages of Proclus and has also shown that, for Proclus, Hephaestus is the demiurge of the sensible world (he constructed the Forms as they appear in matter); according to her analysis, the passage of Syrianus which we are discussing entitles us to attribute to Syrianus Hephaestus' role in the Ares - Aphrodite story and probably Proclus' allegorical treatment of the story. Moreover, we should not neglect the *In Phaedrum* 149.18-21, where Syrianus claims that Hephaestus was taught by the divine rank of Cyclops about all corporeal shapes, an idea that reinforces the conclusion discussed above.

The verse is discussed by Eustathius, who analyses each word of it (πόρπαι, γναμπταὶ ἔλικες, κάλυκες) separately.⁵¹⁰ What is interesting, however, is the fact that Eustathius mentions this verse as he discusses the episode of Hephaestus' first fall from Olympus; in this discussion Eustathius describes how Hephaestus fell because of Hera and his subsequent rescue by Eurynome and Thetis, and offers an allegorical interpretation

of the story as well.⁵¹¹ The golden chain of Zeus in the *Il.* VIII 7-17 is yet another passage, famous for the allegorical treatment it received.⁵¹² The allegory of Hephaestus' first fall was not as widespread as the allegory of the golden chain; in any case, Syrianus drops no hint of this aspect of the episode, and therefore the matter need not occupy us any further.

Last but not least, I would like to draw attention to Syrianus' remark ἡ θεία ποιήσις: it is a further example of his deep love and admiration of Homer's poetry, which is regarded as something above human abilities: it is not only god-inspired, but divine in itself.

Passage 48 (103.29-31)

Syrianus devotes a lengthy discussion to Plato's theory of Forms. It was common in Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism to view the Forms as numbers, which are in the intellect of the Demiurge and function as the source of sensible things.⁵¹³ Arguing about Plato's theory of ideas (or else εἰδητικοὶ ἀριθμοί, according to the Pythagoreans), Syrianus advances three arguments to prove that "Form" and "eidetic number" denote the same entity. The first argument is that everything is similar to numbers, according to the Orphic theology. The second argument is that, just as the Form (ιδέα) assimilates to itself all those things to which it transmits genus (εἶδος), order, beauty and unity, thus the Form is also called εἶδος, as it eternally preserves εἶδος and transmits it to everything participating in itself. Thirdly, he relates etymologically the Greek term for number to the terms for harmony and love, which are properties of the eidetic cause.

Concerning the third argument, Syrianus says at 103.29-104.2:

ὁ τε ἀριθμὸς ἀρμονίας καὶ φιλίας τοῖς πᾶσιν ἐξηγούμενος ταύτης τετύχηκε τῆς προσρήσεως· ἄ ρ σ α ι μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἀρμόσαι καλοῦσιν οἱ παλαιοὶ ("ἐν δὲ σταθμοῦς ἄρσε", *Od.* XXI 45) καὶ ἀ ν ἄ ρ σ ι ο ν τὸ ἀνάρμωστον, καὶ ἀ ρ θ μ ὸ ν τὴν φιλίαν· "ἀλλὰ

καὶ ἀρθμὸν ἔθεντο μετὰ σφίσιν". ἐξ ὧν ἀπάντων ὁ ἀριθμὸς κέκληται μετρῶν πάντα καὶ ἀρμόζων καὶ φίλα ποιῶν, ὅπερ τῆς εἰδητικῆς αἰτίας ἴδιον εἶναι φάμεν.

Of the two references in our passage, only the first is Homeric. Syrianus, in his effort to give the definition of the noun ἀριθμός, makes an etymological connection with the verb ἀρμόττω, and more specifically with the infinitives ἄρσαι and ἀρμόσαι, which are treated as synonyms. In fact, the infinitive ἄρσαι is from the verb ἀραρισκω, a mainly poetic verb,⁵¹⁴ so, Syrianus was right when he claimed that the form was no longer in use (ἄ ρ σ α ι μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἀρμόσαι καλοῦσιν οἱ παλαιοὶ). The Homeric verse quoted just below is then used as a linguistic example; we found Homeric verses treated in that way in the exegesis *In Phaedrum*.⁵¹⁵ Although, as we said, the students who attended the philosopher's lectures on the *Metaphysica* were advanced, Syrianus used Homer to clarify glosses just as he did when he taught beginners, as we saw in his commentary on the *Phaedrus*.

The verse in question is used in a grammatical context in Herodianus as well: he puts forward the participle ἄρσαντες and the verb ἄρσε, along with this Homeric verse when he refers to the phenomenon of ψιλωσις (writing or pronouncing with the spiritus lenis),⁵¹⁶ but Syrianus' use of the verb and its types has a completely different aim.

It must also be added that it is the only time in this exegesis that a verse from the *Odyssea* is quoted. We have already seen that, in the exegeses on both Hermogenes and the *Phaedrus*, the examples from the *Odyssea* were limited, compared to those from the *Ilias*; this time the verse from the *Odyssea* is unique. Now, as a work of Homer, the *Odyssea* was adequately known both to Syrianus and to his students; but, as we have already mentioned, the exegetical tradition associated with the works of Homer favoured one work more than the other. It seems, therefore, that Syrianus followed this tradition in all his existing works.

Passage 49 (146.8-12)

Commenting on Aristotle's theory of numbers as expounded at *Metaphysica* 1084a2, Syrianus makes the distinction between how the numbers function in the intelligible world, and how they function in mathematics. Evenness and Oddness have correspondingly a particular function concerning eidetic numbers: they are used to distinguish the two genres of deities. As far as this use is concerned, the philosopher remarks at *In Metaphysica* 146.8-12:

Πρὸς τὸν μαθηματικὸν ἂν τις μᾶλλον ἀπορήσειε ταῦτα δικαίως ἀριθμὸν, οὐ πρὸς τὸν θεῖον καὶ εἰδητικόν· ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἄλλως τὸ ἄρτιον καὶ τὸ περιττόν, οὐχ ὡς νῦν οὗτος λαμβάνει, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ὡς εἰώθασιν οἱ ποιηταὶ θεοὺς λέγειν καὶ θεάς·

"κέκλυτέ μευ πάντες τε θεοὶ πάσαι τε θεάιναι". (*Il.* VIII 5, XIX 101)

The verse Syrianus uses is found twice in the *Ilias*, whereas the pattern κέκλυτέ μευ is more common, when someone wants to attract the attention of others.⁵¹⁷ The pattern in itself is also found in many late writers, either poets or lexicographers etc.⁵¹⁸ Syrianus' point, however, is totally different: he uses a symbolic terminology, according to which Evenness in the intelligible world refers to gods, while Oddness refers to goddesses. The Homeric verse as a whole, which, as mentioned, is found twice in the *Ilias*, distinguishes between male and female gods.⁵¹⁹ It is clear that the Homeric example does not prove anything about the existence of intelligible numbers; but we would not expect Homer to do so anyway. What Syrianus actually does is rather to use a simple analogy, so as to make his difficult notions easier. Considered from this point of view, the passage seems to be more appropriate as an analogy than an actual proof.

Apart from that, the fact that Syrianus initially refers to οἱ ποιηταί, but quotes only a Homeric verse, justifies the view that Homer indeed was the most likely, the most natural case of a poet to be used as an example, even to advanced students.

The verb εἰώθασιν seems to declare that the motif of pleading to attract the

audience's attention not only had already been established by poets, but had become a sort of technical procedure for their interpreters.⁵²⁰

The verse's history in itself is not negligible, either, as we have already mentioned. At this point we should perhaps add some more cases, those of Porphyry and Proclus. The former speaks of a *δημηγορία* by Zeus, thus tracing the link between Zeus' words and rhetoric;⁵²¹ the latter includes the verse in a very interesting passage: at *In Timaeum* 2.316.2-9 Proclus discusses Zeus' properties. In particular, he says that Zeus fills all gods below him with all kinds of creative principles and turns all double ranks of gods and goddesses towards himself. To verify this, Proclus quotes the verse of the "divine poet" (ὁ θεῖος ποιητής) in which Zeus addresses his speech to all male and female gods. All these elements are included in his effort to prove that "all Greek theologians attribute all creation to Zeus".⁵²²

Passage 50 (168.9-12)

At 168.1-38 Syrianus deals with a purely theological matter: he argues that, according to the teaching of the Pythagoreans and Plato, there is a principle depending either on the One, or on the Monad which is joined together with the One. This principle emanates from the highest level of the intelligible reality and then is responsible for the arrangement of both intelligible substances and material bodies. In Syrianus' own words (168.9-12):

καὶ πρόδηλον ὅπως ἀπὸ τῆς μιᾶς τῶν ὄντων ἀρχῆς ἢ τῆς ἐκείνη συνημμένης μονάδος ὡσπερ ἀπὸ τινος "βηλοῦ θεσπεσίου" (*II. I 591*) τῷ ὄντι καταπεσὼν ὁ λόγος πάσης μὲν ἀπώλισθε τῆς ἀσωμάτου τῶν οὐσιῶν διαλέξεως, παντὸς δὲ τοῦ ἐγκοσμίου πλάτους (...)

This time Syrianus quotes an expression which is found in a verse belonging to the episode of Hephaestus' second fall from Olympus.⁵²³ Syrianus' whole argument, in

which the verse is incorporated, is against Aristotle, as is Syrianus' tendency throughout the whole exegesis. The use of Homer gives a more concise implementation to the intelligible principle Syrianus refers to, i.e. the absolutely ineffable One or the transcendent Monad. In order to render a difficult notion simple, Syrianus tried to make his students recall a Homeric image (Hera throwing Hephaestus from the threshold of her palace in Olympus down on Earth), so as to help them understand the descent of the divine principle down to the material world.

The actual context of the verse is Hephaestus' sufferings, which acquired great fame in Antiquity, as did this verse: it is quoted with a slight difference by Crates of Mallos⁵²⁴ and by Diogenes Laertius.⁵²⁵ The Crates case is interesting, because, as F. Buffière has pointed out,⁵²⁶ Crates' allegory of Hephaestus' fall is not an innovation of his own, but belongs to a much older tradition of allegory, that reaches back even to Plato's time (the case of Stesimbrotus from Thasos).⁵²⁷

Heraclitus in his turn rejects Crates' theory about Hephaestus' fall and proposes that the allegory of the myth concerns the bequeathing of fire to men.⁵²⁸

Eustathius also gives allegorical explanation for Hephaestus' fall: like Heraclitus in his work, Eustathius considers Zeus to be the aether (αιθήρ) and Hera the air. Now, the air is warm (ἀήρ θερμὸς ὢν), while Hephaestus is warmth itself (τὸ θερμόν), or even fire itself. The aether and the air sometimes have a close relation, as they are both warm, but sometimes they come to hostile terms, because of the opposition between the moist and the dry elements (τὰ τοίνυν στοιχεῖα ταῦτα πῆ μὲν φιλίως ἔχει, ὡς καὶ προεγράφη, καθὸ ἄμφω θερμὰ εἶναι δοκεῖ, πῆ δὲ εἰς ἐχθρὰν διχάζονται κατὰ τὴν τοῦ ὑγροῦ καὶ ξηροῦ ἐναντιότητα); in this quarrel the warm elements (Hera, Hephaestus) are united against the dry (Zeus). Thus the quarrel between the Zeus and Hera, Hephaestus' intervention and Zeus' act to throw Hephaestus from Olympus are explained.⁵²⁹ Moreover, according to this allegorical explanation, Hephaestus cannot remain in

Olympus, but should fall down into the air, as thunder.⁵³⁰

Passage 51 (168.35-38)

A few lines below, Syrianus traces a contradiction in Aristotle's text, with reference to *Metaphysica* 1087b33, and quotes Homer once more. The contradiction Syrianus finds is the following: Aristotle holds that there is nothing, which can be either measure or one, which is not material. But Syrianus claims that when we count ten horses our measure is not one horse, but the number one, which is used by our intellect as a measure; he also finds in Aristotle a passage⁵³¹ where he argues that the good is the most exact measure of everything. In Syrianus' mind, the Aristotelian Good is identified with the Neoplatonic One. Thus, Syrianus finds that Aristotle spoke more logically there. With reference to that passage he applies the Homeric phrase at 168.35-38:

ὥστε δῆλον ὅτι λογικώτερον αὐτῷ νῦν καὶ φιλονεικότερον οἱ λόγοι προβαίνουσι, καὶ δίκαιον ἡμᾶς καθ' ἕκαστον τῶν τοιούτων τὸ Ὀμηρικὸν ἐπιφθέγγεσθαι πρὸς αὐτόν· "οἶσθα καὶ ἄλλον μῦθον ἀμείνονα τοῦδε νοῆσαι" (*Il.* VII 358 = XII 232).

The verse is found twice in the *Ilias*: the first time it is Paris, who addresses Antenor and expresses his disagreement with him; the second it is Hector, who disagrees with Polydamas. G.S. Kirk⁵³² remarks that "*the reproach is sarcastic but ostensibly respectful*". We can argue that the same goes for Hector's use of the verse in *Il.* XII 232. Eustathius, on the other hand, dwells on Paris' sarcasm and characterises him as unfair,⁵³³ additionally, when he deals with Hector's speech, he characterises Hector as arrogant and compares his attitude to that of the foolish Paris.⁵³⁴ But I do not think that Eustathius has interpreted the speeches correctly; in other words, I think that Eustathius overdid it: he overstressed the reproach in the Homeric heroes' remarks and overlooked the positive elements in their attitude.

Syrianus does not seem to follow Eustathius' extreme view: he criticises Aristotle,

using the Homeric verse for saying two contradictory things on the same matter in two different passages. But this does not mean that there is any lack of respect for Aristotle on Syrianus' part: as with the Homeric heroes, Syrianus' sarcastic tone does not exclude the respect he feels for Aristotle.

This Homeric use, therefore, supports the view that Syrianus, although he was attacking Aristotle on philosophical grounds, did this to reinforce his own "true" philosophical arguments; this attitude, although it involved much criticism and occasionally sarcasm, co-existed with his evaluation of Aristotle as a master of philosophy (at least of logic) and with the respect which he consequently deserved.

Passage 52 (170.27-28)

At 170.27ff. Syrianus comments on Aristotle's reference to the multiplicity of Beings. At the beginning of the passage (170.27-28) he says:

"*Ω πόποι, ἦ ὃ' ἀγαθός περ ἔων ὑπέροπλον ξειπες", εἰ Πλάτων εὐήθως ἠπόρησε, καὶ μάλιστα τὰς ἐν τῷ Σοφιστῇ μετιῶν ὑποθέσεις.

The Homeric verse at the beginning of Syrianus' passage is found at *II. XV* 185 (where the verb is in the third person singular) and also at *II. XVII* 170 (the verb is in the second person singular, as in Syrianus' case, and instead of ὃ' ἀγαθός περ we read ῥα σὺ τοῖος). Eustathius remarks that in this verse there is a hidden scornful element.⁵³⁵ Syrianus in his turn maintains that the ultimate principle of everything is the One. His disagreement with Aristotle is evident. Like Poseidon towards Zeus, and Hector towards Glaucus, the Neoplatonist philosopher is scornful towards Aristotle and his attitude on the philosophical matter in question. I think that the issue is the same as in the preceding passage: Syrianus is undoubtedly scornful, but the perspective under which Aristotle is criticised remains the same.

Passage 53 (192.31-193.2)

Syrianus makes a general remark on how the work of ancient writers was interpreted in his day. There is a possibility that this was the attitude not only of Syrianus' contemporaries, but also of people who lived earlier than the 5th century A.D. If this is true, then Syrianus criticises a whole tradition of interpretation of ancient writers followed till his day. This sort of reproach is clear at 192.31-193.2:

Ὅτι καὶ τῶν ἐξηγουμένων τὸν Ὅμηρον τινες τὸ ἀκόλουθον πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς οὐ διασώζουσι, καὶ τῶν ἐπιχειρούντων μιμεῖσθαι τοὺς Πυθαγορείους ἔνιοι τῆς ἀληθοῦς αὐτῶν θεωρίας ἀποπίπτουσι ἐπὶ γλίσχρας τε καὶ καταγελάστους ὑπονοίας καταφέρονται, συγχωρεῖν δεῖ. ἀλλ' οὐδὲν τοῦτο πρὸς Ὅμηρον ἢ Πυθαγόραν ἢ τοὺς δυνηθέντας ἐπὶ τὴν ἀληθεστάτην ἐκείνων θεωρίαν ἀναδραμεῖν.

In this passage Syrianus shows us the diversity of interpretations with reference to what Homer and Pythagoras really wanted to say. One might wonder whether this is a polemic against predecessors, as well as against contemporary teachers of rhetoric and philosophy, who misused Homer and Pythagoras in their lessons and in their theoretical works.

It is indeed difficult to guess who exactly those scholars could have been. Syrianus' information is unclear: he speaks of people who try to give interpretations of Homer. These can well have been grammarians, teachers of rhetoric etc. Of course, philosophers such as Porphyry had given radical explanations of Homer; but, in my opinion, had Syrianus wanted to criticise Porphyry or any other well-known philosopher, he would have given more details, to make his polemic stronger. Moreover, his tone would have probably been more respectful.

As far as the interpreters of Pythagoras are concerned, in this case we can be more confident that the polemic is indeed addressed towards other people who try to get involved in the philosophy of Pythagoras. As D.J. O' Meara has shown,⁵³⁶ in the second

and third centuries A.D. figures such as Numenius of Apamea, Nicomachus of Gerasa, Anatolius and Porphyry represented interesting approaches to Pythagoras' teaching; these are only a few names in the long interpretative tradition of Pythagoras.⁵³⁷ Now, Syrianus seems to believe that there are people who try to imitate the Pythagoreans but fail to do so: we could suppose that he implies people who are not included in the circle of the Athenian Neoplatonic school. As we lack any evidence of a Pythagorean circle, either in Athens or elsewhere, in Syrianus' time, two possibilities arise: firstly, Syrianus may refer to isolated instances of contemporary students, who did not participate in the school's lessons, or left the school in disagreement; secondly, he has in mind older interpretative efforts, which came from the preceding centuries, when Pythagoreanism flourished.

Passage 54 (194.5-9)

As Syrianus criticises Aristotle's discussion of numbers and hours, he reprimands him for not inquiring into the intelligible principle of the hours. According to Syrianus, hours are ultimately derived from Zeus, the Sun or somebody else among the creative entities. Commenting on Aristotle's tendency not to consider the origin of all beings as one, he quotes a famous Homeric passage at 194.5-9:

ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ ἐν ἑκάστοις ἀγαθὸν ὀρώντα μὴ αἰτιολογεῖν αὐτὸ καὶ τὸ μὴ ἀνάγειν πάντα εἰς μίαν ἀρχὴν, ἀφ' ἧς αὐτοῖς καὶ τὸ ὁμοίως ἔχειν καὶ τὸ ἀνὰ τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον προεληλυθέναι διασφύζεται, διασπώντός ἐστι τὰ ὄντα καὶ ἐπιλανθανομένου τοῦ "οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη" (*Il.* II 204).

The verse comes from Odysseus' speech in the second book of the *Iliad*, as he tries to restrain the army from leaving (as a consequence of Agamemnon's testing). Moreover, Aristotle himself had used the same Homeric verse at *Metaphysica* 1076a4; so by using this very passage Syrianus makes his opposition to Aristotle stronger, and perhaps a little

ironical. He has found a contradiction in Aristotle and uses an example that not only illuminates the case, but also implies that Aristotle was not as much of an authority as he was supposed to be: the examples which Aristotle himself offers contradict his views elsewhere.

What is more interesting about this Homeric verse is that it was widely used before Syrianus; among its many uses maybe the most famous is its parodic paraphrase, which, according to Plutarch,⁵³⁸ Augustus used when he ordered the killing of the son of Julius Caesar and Cleopatra, Caesarion: οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκαισαρίη. Aelius Aristides uses the Homeric verse (not its paraphrase) in an educational context,⁵³⁹ while Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his analysis of Odysseus' speech from a rhetorical point of view.⁵⁴⁰ Dio Chrysostom quotes it in his discussion of the types of government.⁵⁴¹ Philo quotes it twice with reference to the Jewish God,⁵⁴² and John Lydus quotes it twice in his discussion of dictatorship and obedience to the political authorities.⁵⁴³ Zacharias Scholasticus uses the Homeric verse in his argumentation against Neoplatonic dualism.⁵⁴⁴ Eustathius in his turn makes a theological point from a Christian perspective: even more than human societies, the society of God should have but one leader.⁵⁴⁵

Ps.-Plutarch quotes the same verse in a passage that has a lot of similarities with that of Syrianus: in his reference to Homer as the founder of Pythagorean arithmology he speaks of the Monad as the source of Goodness and the Indefinite Dyad as the metaphysical principle of evil. He therefore refers to odd and even numbers, of which the odds are superiors, as they are perfect. According to Ps.-Plutarch, Homer himself regarded the nature of the One to be participating in the Good, whereas the Dyad participates in evil. One of the Homeric verses brought in to sustain this view is οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη· εἰς κοίρανος ἔστω.⁵⁴⁶

It is also interesting to examine the use of the phrase by philosophers. Alexander

of Aphrodisias⁵⁴⁷ uses the verse, mentioning that it is spoken by Odysseus. From later Neoplatonists, virtually the whole school of Ammonius made use of the verse: Ammonius himself,⁵⁴⁸ Asclepius⁵⁴⁹ Simplicius,⁵⁵⁰ John Philoponus,⁵⁵¹ Olympiodorus⁵⁵² and Elias.⁵⁵³ As in Ps.-Plutarch's case, the verse occurs in their discussion of the One as the ultimate principle of all reality. We should also note that not every single of them uses the verse in a commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysica*: had this been the case, we could have argued that the source of the verse was Aristotle's work. But, as we saw above, the verse appears in many non-philosophical writings earlier than the Neoplatonists; moreover, the verse is used in different contexts. We may conclude then that a well-known *topos*, which was already in use in several cases by philosophers, and not only them, was put forward by the Neoplatonists so as to serve their own purposes.

It is clear, therefore, that Syrianus was one of the many writers who used this Homeric verse. But Syrianus went further, and used Aristotle's quotation of Homer in order to stress Aristotle's self-contradiction. Consequently, this is once more very well-adapted to the whole context of the exegesis.

4.2 Remarks on Chapter 4

Like his commentary on the *Phaedrus*, Syrianus' commentary on books B, Γ, M and N of Aristotle's *Metaphysica* consists of lectures which he gave in Athens. This time the philosopher addressed more advanced students, as the *Metaphysica* was not included in the syllabus of preparatory works. In this commentary Syrianus' aim was to show the insufficiency of Aristotle's theories expounded in the *Metaphysica*, in order to argue for the supremacy of Plato. He also wanted to emphasise the contradictions he found in Aristotle's work. Such being the nature of Syrianus' effort, the explanatory parts of the exegesis are more sophisticated than his lectures on the *Phaedrus* and the literary references, by which he makes things easier, are limited in number.

In Syrianus' exegesis of Aristotle's *Metaphysica*, there are ten Homeric passages (Nos 45-54). We have already noted that only one comes from the *Odyssea*, for reasons which we have examined in the previous chapters.

Concerning the Homeric elements in this exegesis, Sheppard⁵⁵⁴ remarks that we can learn quite a lot about Syrianus' metaphysical views from this commentary, but only a little about his views on Homeric poetry and allegory. This is true, as we have already seen during the course of our analysis.

Indeed, the content of the Homeric references in the exegesis *In Metaphysica* is not as varied as in the other works of Syrianus we have examined: of the 9 verses quoted in the exegesis, no less than 7 occur in a philosophical context: for instance, in passage 48 a Homeric verse is exploited linguistically, in order to demonstrate philosophical notions, whereas in passage 45 the use of the Homeric verse has philosophical and religious dimensions. The Homeric verses in passages 49 and 54 are also found in purely Neoplatonic philosophical contexts.

Passage 47 should be regarded as belonging to the tradition of allegorical exegesis, and the same goes for passage 50. In fact, the little information about Syrianus' Homeric allegory deriving from this commentary is contained in these two passages.

The case of passage 46 is remarkable, because no actual verse is brought in, but the echo of a long Homeric tradition can be traced. And what is more, we are dealing with the philosophical tradition's use of Homeric elements, which has reached (and surpassed) Syrianus' time.

Passages 51 and 52 in their turn contain Homeric verses, which are used in Syrianus' effort to disagree with Aristotle. What is more, the quality of the disagreement reaches the status of scorn, of bitter irony against Aristotle from Syrianus' part.

The problem of Syrianus' attitude towards Aristotle is worth noticing: Syrianus does not accept the authority of Aristotle purely and simply; in the long dispute as to whether Aristotle was in agreement with Plato, Syrianus keeps his distance from both extremes and distinguishes between the Platonic and the Aristotelian positions. Consequently, even if, like Iamblichus, Syrianus admires Aristotle's logic, ethics and philosophy of nature (physics), he attacks him on the basis of Platonic arguments.⁵⁵⁵ Scornful or critical though his attitude may sometimes be,⁵⁵⁶ his respect for Aristotle in the areas of logic, ethics and philosophy cannot be neglected, as is clear from the beginning of his commentary on book M of the *Metaphysica*.⁵⁵⁷ But, of course, Syrianus' aim is to make up for Aristotle's insufficiencies and to reconcile his views with the philosophy of Pythagoras, which, in his own words, is καλλίστη καὶ ἀρίστη τῶν φιλοσοφιῶν.⁵⁵⁸

So, in our opinion, Syrianus' tone does not reveal any lack of respect towards Aristotle. It can be considered rather as evidence for Syrianus' way of opposing others. So, everything may well have been a matter of character from Syrianus' part (perhaps he enjoyed himself complaining about other interpreters or philosophers).

It should not escape our notice that in passage 53, where no actual verse is quoted, a broader matter appears: the Homeric exegesis is being put at the same level as the Pythagorean one. Thus Homer's treatment as a theologian, which was a distinctive element of the commentary *In Phaedrum*, is also present in the *In Metaphysica*.

CONCLUSIONS

As is well known, Homer was *the* poet for all Greeks and we can hardly think of any writer, or any learned man of antiquity who did not have Homer in mind, or did not cite his works during the study, or even the composition of a rhetorical or philosophical work. At the beginning of the thesis we made a brief reference to the impact this long and rich Homeric tradition had on major thinkers of antiquity, and especially on philosophers. Homer's accusers and defenders were convinced that the task they had undertaken had been a major one. For instance, allegory as an answer to accusations of Homer's impiety was much more than a method of interpretation: it was in fact an effort to restore to his throne a figure whose dethronement would have had a major influence on education, religion and philosophy.

Thinkers of late antiquity, and especially philosophers, were perfectly aware of this fact when they used the Homeric tradition in their works. Homer's poetry might have been used as an educational technique of reference and support of the arguments; Homeric poetry might have also been used as a kind of script, with Homer being considered as a theologian. In any case, it is important to see how Syrianus made use of both these tendencies in his extant works; it is also interesting to compare Syrianus' use of Homer in his work on rhetoric, and his far deeper and multi-sided exploitation of the Homeric tradition in his philosophical works.

Throughout the course of this thesis we made a close reading of the 54 Homeric passages in Syrianus, in both his rhetorical and his philosophical works that have survived (Passages 1-17 in Syrianus' *In Hermogenem*, passages 18-44 in Hermias' *In Phaedrum* and passages 45-54 in Syrianus' *In Metaphysica*). It is a pity that Syrianus' treatment of Homer in his *Λύσεις τῶν Ὀμηρικῶν προβλημάτων*, in his monograph on Zeus and

Hera's union on Mount Ida and in his *Περὶ τῶν παρ' Ὀμήρῳ θεῶν* have not survived. Nevertheless, evidence from Proclus helps us to complete the picture we have from his existing works.

Syrianus' *Λύσεις τῶν Ὀμηρικῶν προβλημάτων* almost certainly included the passages of Homer included by Plato, but, as Sheppard has convincingly argued,⁵⁵⁹ it would have included all passages which had been attacked, on both religious and philosophical grounds, over the centuries of ancient Homer interpretation. The Agamemnon dream, discussed by Proclus in his *In Rempublicam* 115.27ff., as well as the funeral rites in honour of Patroclus are two examples of these passages, both of them having been attacked by Plato, but the latter being discussed by Proclus on a different basis, and not just on the basis of the Platonic criticism.⁵⁶⁰

The second work attributed to Syrianus is the monograph on Zeus' and Hera's union on Mount Ida. Sheppard has proved⁵⁶¹ that Proclus' evidence from his commentary *In Rempublicam*, as well as evidence from the *In Phaedrum* commentary, confirm that Proclus followed closely Syrianus in interpreting the episode; what is more, this evidence suggests that it was Syrianus who in his lost work transposed physical allegory into allegory in terms of late Neoplatonist metaphysics.

Last but not least, the *Suda* reference to Syrianus' work *Περὶ τῶν παρ' Ὀμήρῳ θεῶν* can only be taken into account as a further proof of Syrianus' interest in Homer, and particularly in what he considered to be Homer's theology. We agree with Sheppard⁵⁶² that it would have been a different work from the other two and that it would have had a wider scope in its treatment of Homer.

Let us compare the use of Homeric passages in the *In Hermogenem* commentary with the passages of the two philosophical commentaries: in the former we cannot speak of striking novelties on Syrianus' part in the tradition of Homeric exegesis, or even in the tradition of exploiting Homer in the course of rhetorical exegesis. What we see in this

commentary is Syrianus' knowledge of and respect towards Homer as an authority on poetry and rhetoric. In passages 12 and 13 we also encounter Syrianus' use of Homeric passages, in order to give some support on theological beliefs; but this is, of course, natural, if we take into account first that Homer spoke of both heroes and gods and secondly that the Homeric poems were considered to be texts of theology in the wider sense at least since the 6th cent. B.C.; it is natural, therefore, for a teacher of rhetoric of the 5th cent. A.D. to find in Homer the elements he might need in his scattered and infrequent references to the gods.

If we now consider the use of Homer in the existing philosophical commentaries, we realise that this tradition of exegesis is still there: in fact, this is what we would expect from a teacher of rhetoric, who later turned to philosophy, bringing all his culture to bear on his interpretation. If not Homer, who would be the authority to quote from for the students' sake? But, as we have repeatedly said, Syrianus' use of Homer as a philosophical authority in his philosophical commentaries, as well as his attempts at allegory, reveal that Homer had become a much more important element in his universe.

Before going further, we should remember that in Syrianus' works we found Homeric passages censored by Plato in the *Respublica*. Having in mind that Syrianus did face the problem in works that have not been preserved, along with Syrianus' tendency to give answers to Plato's objections, as well as to express his own view on many matters of Homeric criticism, nobody would then be surprised to find in his classroom discussions on the passages censored by Plato: the master with his works and his lectures had already given a solution to the problem.

Moreover, one of the most interesting issues in Syrianus' treatment of Homer is his Homeric allegories. We saw the passages in which these allegories appear and they are not many in number: in the *In Phaedrum* we encounter the method being used once (passage 27, referring to the Helen myth), whereas in the *In Metaphysica* twice (passage

47, referring to Hephaestus' properties and passage 50, referring to Hephaestus' second fall from Olympus). After examining this material, we can share Sheppard's view that it was most probably Syrianus who transformed earlier physical allegories on Homer into transcendent metaphysical ones.⁵⁶³ Throughout the thesis we had the chance to see Homeric passages treated in the traditional etymological or exegetical way, but we also had the chance to notice Syrianus' ability to exploit the Homeric tradition, in order to fit his Neoplatonic needs.

Indeed, the fact that Syrianus uses allegory in his treatment of Homer reveals to us his will to become a part of the chain of the philosophers who tried to defend Homer's importance. Furthermore, the fact that he was the Neoplatonist who went a step further and incorporated existing physical Homeric allegories into the Neoplatonic universe, thus transforming them into transcendent metaphysical ones is revealing: Homer and his tradition were not just the means of sustaining one's own arguments. They had a distinctive philosophical value for Syrianus.

Nevertheless, as has been adequately shown,⁵⁶⁴ Proclus did not recommend unnecessary symbolism, and, as we have seen in the course of this thesis, neither did Syrianus. The fact that allegory played such a major part in Syrianus' treatment of Homer and in his philosophical teaching did not lead Syrianus to overuse this method; in our opinion, Syrianus' attitude towards Homer was a rather balanced one, and it is worth stating that he knew when to use the appropriate type of the rich Homeric tradition, in order to fulfil his - or his students' - needs.

Moreover, as we saw in passages 31, 32, 35, 36 and 37, Syrianus considered Homer as theologian, and indeed as superior to Orpheus himself. We saw that this was by no means a novelty from his part: he was not the first philosopher, or even the first Neoplatonist to have regarded Homer as a theologian. But this is of no importance whatsoever; what we see in his existing works and in the evidence we have from Proclus

is far more than esteem and respect. It is indeed the willingness to give Homer a distinctive place in a sophisticated hierarchy of Being. Such was Homer's prominence as a philosopher that it was maintained by Proclus that Homer and Plato had the same views on reality and the Homeric myths can be translated into the terminology of Platonic metaphysics.⁵⁶⁵ As has been rightly argued, Syrianus and Proclus allegorised Homer in metaphysical and theological terms and sought to show the harmony between poetry, religion and philosophy.⁵⁶⁶ By interpreting Homer θεολογικώτερον, just as much as he did Plato,⁵⁶⁷ Syrianus raised Homer to a level no other philosopher before him had ever done.

We can now go back to the questions we posed at the beginning of this thesis: What was Homer for Syrianus? Evidently, the major Greek poet, not only because of the poetical level of his works, but because of his theology, placed highly in Syrianus' Neoplatonic system of truth. Syrianus' deep knowledge of Homer - undoubtedly an element of his rhetorical background - is also presupposed when we meet in his lessons allegorical and theological uses of Homeric passages. Of course, Syrianus' purpose when he used Homer in his lessons seems to have been orientated more towards the establishment of a Neoplatonic universe with the aid of Homer's figure and poetry rather than towards an interpretation of Homer for its own sake (although the lost commentary to the Homeric works would be more illuminating than the existing evidence).

Thus, Syrianus' place in Homer's long exegetical tradition is double: on the one hand he was one of the many teachers and writers who formed Homer's scholarly tradition. On the other, he was a philosopher who dared to incorporate purely Homeric elements into critical philosophical and theological discussions. To the best of my knowledge, transcendent metaphysical allegory seems indeed to have been his own contribution to the tradition of Neoplatonic Homeric interpretation.

We saw in Chapter 1.1 that for Plotinus Homer's poetry was probably considered

to mean other things than the literal meaning of the poems; nevertheless, for Plotinus Homer was a poet, not a philosopher and not a theologian either. Porphyry, in his turn, made use of the allegorical method of interpretation, especially in his *De antro Nympharum*, which is a philosophical and physical allegory; but he did not consider Homer to be more than a poet. According to the existing evidence, Iamblichus did not seem to care much for this interpretation of Porphyry.

Following the philosophical tradition of those three major figures, Syrianus went further concerning the use of Homeric poetry in his works: he used the rich Homeric tradition widely, in multiple contexts, and went so far as to use Homer in the transcendent metaphysical allegory developed by him for the first time. This contribution from Syrianus' part is enough, I think, to give him a prominent place among those who formed the tradition of Neoplatonic Homeric exegesis. Under this perspective, Syrianus' contribution to the history of ideas does not seem negligible. Despite his Renaissance "adventure", i.e. Ficino's attribution of his *Phaedrus* commentary to Hermias,⁵⁶⁸ Syrianus was still influencing posterior thinkers. This thesis is, I hope, a small contribution to the understanding of the background of Syrianus and to his placement at his proper place.

NOTES

1. Marinus, *Vita Pr.* 11-12.
2. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 39-103.
3. R.L. Cardullo (1987), 71-181.
4. For a detailed discussion of the attribution of Hermias' commentary to Syrianus, see section 1.2 below.
5. A.D.R. Sheppard, *ibid.*
6. See pp. lv-lvii of vol. 1 of H.-D. Saffrey and L.G. Westerink's introduction to the *Theol. Plat.*
7. It is difficult to give a short account of the reception of the Homeric poems, as well as of their interpretation, from the sixth century B.C. until Syrianus' time, but some introductory remarks are necessary, in order to illuminate certain threads of interpretation that influenced Syrianus directly or indirectly.
8. See H.-I. Marrou (1981), *passim*. Plato's words in *Resp.* 606e are revealing: τὴν Ἑλλάδα πεπαιδευκεν οὗτος ὁ ποιητής.
9. Aeschylus' words "we all eat morsels from Homer's table" (*Athen. Deipn.* 8.347e) show the high respect the Greeks had for Homer as a poetical model.
10. See A.M. Harmon (1923).
11. At this point we should not forget the influences of the Orphic religion, which becomes rather important in late Antiquity, but is assumed to have been active from the fifth century B.C. A short, yet helpful section on Orphism is in W. Burkert (1985), 296-299. We also have to state the role that the beliefs attributed to the mythical figure Orpheus, along with the texts of Homer, Hesiod and the other theologians, played in the formation of Greek religious thought, especially in later times. For more details on the matter, see M.L. West (1983), 3-38 and (1997), 81-90; L. Brisson (1985), 389-420 and (1990), 2867-2931; D. Obbink (1997), 39-54. We should also bear in mind that later Neoplatonic philosophers (Proclus, *Theol. Plat.* I.20.6-7) believed that Pythagoras was the intermediary through which the Orphic teaching was incorporated in Greek theology. Cf. O. Kuisma (1997), 14.
12. See R. Pfeiffer (1968), 8; J.A. Davidson (1955), 7 and (1958), 38ff.; N.J. Richardson (1975), 65-81; J. Herrington (1985), 10-15; G. Nagy (1990), 21-28 and (1996), 113.
13. Xenophanes, fr. A1 D.-K.: γέγραφε δὲ ἐν ἔπεσι καὶ ἐλεγείας καὶ ἰάμβους καθ' Ἡσιόδου καὶ Ὀμήρου, ἐπικόπτων αὐτῶν τὰ περὶ θεῶν εἰρημένα; cf. frs. B10-12, 14-16; also R. Pfeiffer (1968), 9; N.J. Richardson (1992), 30 and (1993a), 26. In Pfeiffer's own words, "*Xenophanes is the starting point of ancient criticism on Homer*". For the rejection of the truth that can be detected in the rhapsodes' words cf. Solon's famous

statement: πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἄοιδοί (fr. 29 West). L. Brisson (1996, 16-19) attributes the change of attitude towards Homer to the intervention of writing, which rendered the Homeric poems accessible not only to a minority of people, but to a wider public, which, towards the end of the archaic period, found many of Homer's beliefs anachronistic, or even shocking.

14. Frs. A22, B42 (τόν τε Ὅμηρον ἔφασκεν ἄξιον ἐκ τῶν ἀγῶνων ἐκβάλλεσθαι καὶ ῥαπίζεσθαι), 56, 57, 106 D.-K.

15. When I refer to the allegorical interpretation of the Homeric poems I mean that the interpreters believed (or were trying to prove) that the poems had a hidden meaning. The ancient terms for this hidden (or oblique) meaning were ὑπόνοιαι (see Plato's *Resp.* 378d-e) and αἰνίγματα (Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 354e; also αἰνίττεσθαι and αἰνιττόμενος, as in Plato's *Theaet.* 194d). From modern discussions on allegory, see J. Pépin (1976), M. Quilligan (1979), J. Whitman (1987), D. Dawson (1992) and A.A. Long (1992). In some of these works there is a tendency to draw a sharp distinction between the purpose of a second-level meaning on the writer's part and the interpretative tendency of later writers, who try to find hidden meanings (allegorical narrative and allegoresis, according to M. Quilligan, strong and weak allegory, in A.A. Long's words). But, in my opinion, J. Whitman's distinction between allegorical composition and allegorical interpretation puts the matter on the correct basis: it is a fact that in the long tradition of Homer's reception many people tried to explain some part of his poems in a way that certainly was not in accord with the poet's intention (even though the interpreters believed, or were trying to prove, that it was). Of course, we should always bear in mind that, at times when science was not clearly defined as far as its methods were concerned and its dependence on myth had not been absolutely overcome, every technical term should be used with some caution.

Another important aspect of the issue of allegory is the types of allegorical interpretation, which the ancients practised: they used to practise physical allegory (representation of elements by gods, heroes etc.), cosmological allegory (representation of the divine bodies and the universe), psychological allegory (representations of the soul) and moral allegory (referring to virtues and vices). For these distinctions see L. Brisson (1996), 49-50.

16. See J. Tate (1929b), 142-144.

17. Theagenes, fr. A2 D.-K.; cf. R. Pfeiffer (1968), 9, 58; N.J. Richardson (1992), 31 and (1993a), 27.

18. Theagenes, fr. A1 D.-K.; cf. R. Pfeiffer, *op. cit.*, 11.

19. A. Delatte (1915, 114-115) suspected that he was, as the Pythagorean community flourished in Rhegium, whilst F. Buffière (1956, 105) had serious reservations on the matter.

20. For the evidence on him see fr. B5 D.-K.; cf. R. Pfeiffer (1968), 10 and 12, where it is stated that both Pherecydes and Theagenes are sure to have written in prose.

21. See Metrodorus, fr. A3 D.-K.: καὶ Μητρόδωρος δὲ ὁ Λαμψακηνὸς ἐν τῷ Περὶ Ὅμηρου λιαν εὐήθως διείλεκται πάντα εἰς ἀλληγορίαν μετὰ γων. οὔτε γὰρ Ἦραν οὔτε Ἀθηνᾶν οὔτε Δία τοῦτ' εἶναι φησιν ὅπερ οἱ τοὺς περιβόλους αὐτοῖς καὶ τεμένη καθιδρύσαντες νομίζουσιν, φύσεως δὲ ὑποστάσεις καὶ στοιχείων διακοσμήσεις. καὶ τὸν

Ἔκτορα δὲ καὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλεὺς δηλαδὴ καὶ τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα καὶ πάντας ἀπαξιαπλῶς Ἑλληνας τε καὶ βαρβάρους σὺν τῇ Ἑλένῃ καὶ τῷ Πάριδι τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως ὑπάρχοντας χάριν οἰκονομίας ἐρεῖτε παρεισηχθαι οὐδενὸς ὄντος τῶν προειρημένων ἀνθρώπων. For what each god or hero represented, see fr. A4 D.-K. : Ἀγαμέμνονα τὸν αἰθέρα Μητροδωρος εἶπεν ἀλληγορικῶς. καὶ περὶ νόμων καὶ ἐθισμῶν τῶν παρ' ἀνθρώποις, καὶ τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα μὲν αἰθέρα εἶναι, τὸν Ἀχιλλεὺς δ' ἥλιον, τὴν Ἑλένην δὲ γῆν καὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἀέρα, τὸν Ἔκτορα δὲ σελήνην καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀναλόγως ὠνομάσθαι τούτοις. τῶν δὲ θεῶν τὴν Δήμητρα μὲν ἦπαρ, τὸν Διόνυσον δὲ σπλήνα, τὸν Ἀπόλλω δὲ χολήν. Cf. also J. Tate (1929b), 1, N.J. Richardson (1975), 69, R. Janko (1997), 75-79.

22. See fr. A1 59 D.-K.

23. Plato, *Prot.* 316 d-e.

24. Frs. A 29-30 D.-K.

25. For this type of criticism on his part, see also N.J. Richardson (1993a), 30.

26. N.J. Richardson (1975), 65-81.

27. *Ion* 530d.

28. N.J. Richardson (1975), 76-77.

29. *Op. cit.*, 71-74.

30. For Stesimbrotus' various interests, see also R. Janko (1997), 72-75.

31. Antisthenes is placed by W.C.K. Guthrie (1969, 304-311) among the Sophists; he is also connected with Gorgias, the Sophist. Nevertheless, we cannot be sure whether he was a Sophist rather than a Socratic.

32. There has been a serious dispute over the matter: R. Höistad (1951, 16-30) argued that Antisthenes was an allegorist, whereas J. Tate (1953, 14-22) strongly disagreed with him. R. Laurenti (1962, 123 ff.) followed R. Höistad; cf. N.J. Richardson (1975), 78.

33. N.J. Richardson, *op. cit.*, 79-81.

34. For the relevant evidence see *Schol. in Pind. Nem.* 2.1c, 3.29.11 Drachmann.

35. Porphyry, *Vita Plot.* 1 and 2; cf. M. Detienne (1962), 13.

36. For this trip, and especially the ancient sources for it, see A. Delatte (1915), 109, n. 4. It seems that the main ancient source was Hieronymus of Rhodes (fr. 42 Wehrli).

37. As R. Lamberton (1986, 35) remarks, early Pythagoreanism was less hostile to the Homeric poems than were other religious and philosophical movements of this era.

38. *Op. cit.*, 36.

39. For instance, the alleged description of the music of the spheres by Homer, metempsychosis, the personification of the monad in Proteus' story etc. For more details, see R. Lamberton (1986), 36-37.

40. For example, the etymologies of ψυχή and σῶμα in the *Crat.* 399d and 400b respectively have been considered Pythagorean, although not all scholars agree on that issue. For more details on these very etymologies and their probable Pythagorean origin, see V. Goldsmith (1940, 117-18) and T.S. Baxter (1992, 99-102). Moreover, Plato's reference to the μετεωρολόγοι in the *Crat.* 401b can be considered as another reference to the Pythagoreans; see P. Boyancé (1941), 141-175 and T.S. Baxter, *op. cit.*, 139-144. For further discussion concerning the etymologies in the *Cratylus*, see D. Sedley (1998), 140-154.

41. For a detailed analysis, see A. Delatte (1915), 115-120 and W. Burkert (1972), *passim*.

42. A first examination of the frequent use of quotations was made by G.E. Howes (1895), 153-210. C.L. Brownson (1896, xxxviii-xl) gave a brief, yet careful account of the internal evidence concerning Plato's use of references to individual poets and his citations of the poets' works. For the multiplicity of the Homeric citations as well as the verbal influences from Homer, see J. Labarbe (1949), *passim*. Moreover, D. Tarrant (1951, 59-67) has successfully classified the use of quotations (among which some Homeric ones) in the works of Plato.

43. Although I believe that H.S. Thayer (1975, 3-26) has a point in remarking that there is one poet who evidently was very much in Plato's mind when the *Respublica* was composed, and this poet is Simonides, this does not render the attack on Homer milder: Homer was in all eyes the best of all poets, and therefore any attack on poets in general would have an impact firstly on him and then on anyone else.

44. For a brief account of the ancient criticism of Plato's views see C. Brownson (1897), 5-41. For a brief reference to the attitude of modern scholarship, see T. Gould (1964), 72-75. It is a fact that the bibliography that deals with Plato's attitude towards poetry and art goes further. The works I will refer to were chosen among many others either because they give a clear and satisfactory account of the problem, or because they are in support of my argumentation. One further point that should also be stressed is that Plato's attitude towards poetry in general and Homer in particular presents major differences if we consider some of his works separately. But for the sake of brevity, what I will try to do will be to draw some lines of interpretation, focusing mainly on the problems posed in the *Respublica*, and using other works of Plato when necessary.

45. Among the first modern discussions that tried to account for the problem we mention C.L. Brownson (1897, 5-41), W.C. Greene (1918, 1-75) and J. Elias (1984).

46. T. Gould (1964), 70-91.

47. The relevant arguments are elaborated in Book Two of the *Respublica*.

48. For the educative aspect of Plato's views in the *Respublica* see J. Tate (1933, 93-101), E. A. Havelock (1963, 11-15), H.-G. Gadamer (1980, 48-52). Cf. C. Gill (1985), 1-26, who focuses on Plato's concept of education in relation to character. For the idea of the poet as a teacher in ancient Greece, see D.A. Russell (1995), 84-98.

49. *Respublica* X 607b. At this point we can recall the Presocratic philosophers' attitude towards poetry and, above all other poets, to Homer, an attitude which, as we saw, was scarcely favourable. We might even remember Solon's opinion, which must have been shared by many philosophers: πολλά ψεύδονται ἄοιδοί. For an analytical discussion of the problem, see L. Versényi (1970-71), 200-212.

50. These complaints can be seen not only in the *Respublica*, but in the *Leges*, the *Apologia*, the *Ion*, the *Protagoras* and the *Gorgias* as well; cf. T. Gould (1964), 78-79.

51. For a brief discussion see P. Murray (1996), 14-19.

52. For a broad and multi-sided aspect of the problem, see T. Gould (1990), *passim*. But when taking Plato's attitude towards this quarrel into consideration, we should not forget the point that S. Halliwell (1984, 49-58) made: in the Platonic works there is explicit testimony that Plato himself, perhaps contrary to his own philosophical views, was involved in the quarrel, acting as someone to whom poetry and the sentiments it arouses meant a lot more than his philosophy would permit.

53. The problem of Plato's attitude towards art in general is even wider: as H.S. Thayer (1977, 595) remarks, Plato's strictures on aesthetic production and experience are developed in the wider context of ethical, epistemological, and metaphysical theory and criticism. I. Murdoch (1977, 32-47) rightly points out that Plato's respect for beauty and the connection he made between beauty and truth rendered it too important a matter to be left to artists or for art to meddle with at all. For Plato what he said in the *Respublica* about the formation and the organisation of a state was indeed something of chief importance: as M.H. Partee (1970, 209) remarks, to Plato, his state is more "real" than any state actually in existence.

54. For Plato's definition of imitation see E. Cassirer (1924), 1-27, J. Tate (1928), 16-23 and (1932), 161-169, R. McKeon (1936), 1-35, E.A. Havelock (1963), 20-31, W.J. Verdenius (1962=1971), 1-23, I. Murdoch (1977), 31-32, G.F. Else (1986), 21-35, G. A. Kennedy (1989), 108-119, P. Murray (1992), 27-46 and (1996), 3-6 and C. Janaway (1995), esp. 106-157. I would also like to point out Plato's related idea that the poet is as ignorant as the sophist. The latter is described as an ironical imitator, limited by the inadequacy of language and writing, while the former, by imitating the natural world (and not the world of Ideas) and by confusing the knowledge by acquaintance with the knowledge by description, diverts people from truth. See also H.S. Thayer (1977, 606-607) for the connection between the fallacy of the imitative art of painting and the fallacy of sophistry.

55. The most revealing passages are: *Apol.* 22b-c, *Ion* 530a-542b, *Phaedr.* 245a, *Leg.* 719c.

56. For Plato's ideas on inspiration, especially as they are presented in the *Ion*, the *Phaedrus* and the *Respublica*, see E. Tigerstedt (1969), 5-77; P. Murray (1981), 87-100 and (1996), 6-12. For the concept of inspiration before Plato, see E.N. Tigerstedt (1970), 163-178.

57. For the Aristotelian notion of μίμησις and its difference from Platonic imitation theory, see P. Woodruff (1992), 73-95. Woodruff argues that this notion is independent of Plato: Aristotle in the *Ars Poetica* did not echo Plato on μίμησις (except perhaps at 1460a8) nor was he directly answering Plato's μίμησις-based criticism of the poets: in Aristotle the word μίμησις has an independent life.

58. For the notion of κάθαρσις see J. Lear (1988), 297-326 and R. Janko (1992a), 341-358. R. Janko in n. 17 offers bibliography of surveys of older works on κάθαρσις. We must always bear in mind that for Aristotle κάθαρσις is achieved by ἔλεος and φόβος (pity and fear); for ἔλεος and φόβος and their perception by later thinkers see W. Schadewaldt (1955); for a more recent study on ἔλεος and φόβος in both Plato and Aristotle see M.C. Nussbaum (1992). A. Nehamas (1992) also offers an illuminating account of these two concepts in both the *Ars rhetorica* and the *De arte poetica*.

59. It is evident that Aristotle did not consider poetry dangerous; on the contrary, apart from enjoying it a lot, he was of the opinion that it can help man in his effort to acquire virtue. This could be achieved by the above-mentioned means (μίμησις, κάθαρσις etc.). For more details, see S. Halliwell (1986).

60. In fact there are some points in Plato's criticism which Aristotle accepted; nevertheless, those which he rejected are more numerous and more important; see T. Gould (1964), 79-83. But generally speaking, as P. Woodruff (1992, 83) remarks, Aristotle falls squarely into the tradition that does not apologise for the deceptive character of poetry.

61. N.J. Richardson (1993b), 32-33.

62. For instance, it is in this work (fr. 166 Rose) that Aristotle tries to account for Achilles' brutal treatment of Hector's body by making the famous comparison with a Thessalian practice.

63. N.J. Richardson, *op. cit.*, 33.

64. *De arte poetica*, ch. 26.

65. For more details on the matter see N.J. Richardson, *op. cit.*, 33-35.

66. For this work, its reconstruction and its attribution to Aristotle see R. Janko (1991, 5-64), where he convincingly argues that at the end of Book IV and possibly at the beginning of Book V of his work *De poematis* Philodemus attacked Aristotle's lost dialogue *De poetis*, which was no less than the major *exposé* of Aristotle's literary theory that existed. For the *De poematis*' reconstruction see R. Janko (1995).

67. For the impact of Aristotle's Homeric scholarship on the scholars of the Hellenistic period, see G. Nagy (1996), 118-132. His words "*the Homeric scholarship of the Alexandrian critics, especially when it comes to information about performance, was a continuation of traditions set by the school of Aristotle*" (p. 132) are totally justified by the existing evidence. His arguments on the existence of a missing link between these two traditions (Demetrius of Phalerum) are rather convincing (pp. 153-206).

68. The works of Homer were edited, commented on and used as examples for linguistic and other philological purposes continuously from the 6th century B.C. up to Syrianus' time (and of course long after Syrianus as well). For more details on the matter see R. Pfeiffer (1968), 87-104; cf. also L.D. Reynolds and N.G. Wilson (1991), *passim*. "Critical editions" of Homer were also attempted by a number of persons well before the Hellenistic age, during which this task became a science. We should remark at this point that Aristotle was one of the first figures to take part in this procedure: Alexander the

Great is said to have slept with a copy of the *Iliad* "edited" (i.e. corrected) by Aristotle (Strabo, *Geogr.* 13.1.27; Plutarch, *Vita Alex.* 8.2). Last but not least, we should bear in mind that the meaning of the ancient term "ἐκδοσις" is not necessarily identical to that of the modern term "edition"; on this matter see G. Nagy (1996), 115-116.

69. See R. Pfeiffer (1968), 210-252 and J.I. Porter (1992), 68-69. L.D. Reynolds and N.G. Wilson (1991, 8) rightly remark that it is no coincidence that five of the first six librarians of the Museum of Alexandria, i.e. Zenodotus, Apollonius Rhodius, Eratosthenes, Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus, were among the most famous literary men of their day and that it is in no small measure due to the success of their methods that the classical Greek texts have come down to us in a state that is reasonably free from corruption.

70. For more information on Aristarchus' interests and methods see the older works of A. Römer (1912 and 1924) and A. Severyns (1928), as well as the more recent ones of K. McNamee (1981), R. Janko (1992b, 25-29), D. Lührs (1992) and J.I. Porter (1992). For the Aristotelian influence on him, as far as Homer is concerned, see J.I. Porter, *ibid.*, N.J. Richardson (1993b), 17-27 and G. Nagy (1996), 107-152. Throughout this interesting work, G. Nagy, committed to the view that there was a long period of oral transmission before a text of Homer "crystallized", has examined the possibility of the development of a tradition of a Homeric "script" as opposed to "transcript"; he has offered a "scheme of five consecutive periods of Homeric tradition culminating with the text of Aristarchus". R. Janko (1998, 206-207), though, has expressed his reservations towards this possibility, by stressing some lack of evidence, in his review of the book.

71. As we see in fr. 17 of his *Sphairōpoia* (ed. Mette), he regarded the sense of γραμματικός as narrow and preferred to be called κριτικός, the latter's task being πάσης λογικῆς ἐπιστήμης ἔμπειρον εἶναι. For this issue see also N.J. Richardson (1993b), 37-38.

72. For Crates' multiple interests on Homer see J.I. Porter (1992), 85-114, and N.J. Richardson, *ibid.* In particular his interpretation of Agamemnon's shield (*Il.* XI 32-40) is an allegorical representation of the universe (*Sphairōpoia*, fr. 23a-c Mette). We should also note two things: firstly, the fact that, as Richardson remarks, it seems to us that he did not offer an extensive and detailed allegory of the poems as a whole, but he used this method of interpretation in several cases, one of which is the above-mentioned case of the shield of Achilles. Secondly, we should keep in mind the possible influence on him by the Stoics and the influence he himself exerted on the famous allegorist Heraclitus; both the Stoics' and Heraclitus' cases will be discussed below.

73. See, for example, F. Wehrli (1928). J. Tate (1929b and 1930) quite convincingly argues that Plato's criticism of Homer and his interpretation did not act as an incentive towards allegorising; if allegorisation continued to exist, we should look for reasons that were in existence before Plato. For a brief account of attempts to allegorical interpretations of Homer not only in antiquity, but as late as in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries see H. Clarke (1981), 60-105.

74. See Plutarch, *Quomodo adulescens poetas audire debeat* 19e; cf. E. Asmis (1995).

75. See F. Buffière's edition of Heraclitus, pp. xxi-xxiv of the introduction.

76. *Op. cit.*, p. xxxviii.

77. A.A. Long (1992), 45-49.
78. On the contrary, P. De Lacy (1948) regards him as a Stoic.
79. See F. Wehrli (1928, ix-xxvi and xxv-xl) for an interesting comparison between Ps.-Plutarch and Heraclitus. For Ps.-Plutarch's allegory see also F. Buffière (1956), 72-77. Cf. also M. Hillgruber's analysis of the Ps.-Plutarchean view in "Homer als Quelle allen Wissens" in M. Hillgruber (1994), 5-35.
80. See F. Buffière (1956, 74) and N.J. Richardson (1993a, 37).
81. P. De Lacy, *ibid.* Although some of the views expressed in this article need to be updated, it is still a good introduction to how the Stoics used to treat Homer.
82. See, for example, J. Tate (1929a), 41-45 and (1934), 105-114, F. Buffière (1956), 137-154, R. Pfeiffer (1968), 237, and A. Le Boulluec (1975), 301-321. P. Steinmetz (1986, 18-30) and G.W. Most (1989, 2014-2065) rediscuss some major issues, trying to put matters into a new perspective, but do not totally deny the existence of allegory in the Stoic circles: rather, they minimise its importance. In our opinion, the tendency to minimise allegory should be reconsidered, especially under the light of evidence such as the end of Philodemus' *De Pietate* (see A. Schober's 1988 edition in *Cronache Ercolanesi*; cf. also D. Obbink's 1996 edition).
83. A.A. Long (1992), 41-66.
84. See above, n. 77.
85. For example, he has a strong point in saying that probably Heraclitus was not a Stoic, and in stressing the fact that Zeno's work on Homer is totally lost and that Chrysippus in all surviving fragments takes Homer literally, not allegorically; cf. P. Steinmetz (1986), 27. His interpretation of Cicero's passages, which were considered to be main sources of the Stoics' allegorical interest in Homer, has also convinced many.
86. Analysed on pp. 53-57 of his article.
87. On that point, cf. G.W. Most (1989), esp. 2018-2029.
88. P. Steinmetz (1986), 26-28.
89. *Op. cit.*, 19-25.
90. Cf. N.J. Richardson (1993a), 36, n.45.
91. R. Lamberton (1986), 44.
92. For Numenius' life and date see the introduction of De Places' 1974 edition, pp. 7-8.
93. *Op. cit.*, 56-68.
94. Our sources for Numenius' allegorical treatment of Homer are: Porphyry's *De antro Nympharum*, Macrobius' commentary on Scipio's dream in Cicero's *De re publica* (fr. 34) and Proclus' *In Remp.* (fr. 35). But still, R. Lamberton (1986, 69) is right in saying

that there is no reason to believe that Numenius undertook a systematic exegesis of all, or even part of the *Ilias* and the *Odyssea*.

95. See V. Cilento (1957, 275-291) and R. Lamberton (1986, 90-107). It should not escape our notice that one of Lamberton's basic points is Plotinus' sensitivity to Homeric thought and diction.

96. We should not forget that the Greek word used by Plotinus is: αὐνιπτόμενος.

97. J. Pépin (1955), 5-27, esp. 8-14.

98. As R. Lamberton (1986, 112) remarks, this work participates in a tradition of commentary at least as old as Aristotle and had an enormous influence on the content of the Byzantine scholia, an influence that has not been exhaustively explored.

99. Unfortunately, the date of the composition of both the *Quaestiones Homericae* and the *De antro Nympharum* is uncertain. R. Lamberton (*op. cit.*, 108-110) questions the traditional theory that the former belongs to an early stage of Porphyry's career, and the latter to a later one. He thinks that we have no basis on which to claim that the *Quaestiones* must belong to a different period from the essay.

100. See J.H. Waszink (1965), 62; R. Lamberton, *op. cit.*, 109.

101. J. Pépin (1965), 235, 252; cf. F. Buffière (1956), 173-176. Generally speaking, it is a fact that Porphyry used to regard Homer as a philosopher, as we see in his *Quaest. Hom. ad Iliad. XV*, ed. Schrader, p. 200, 13ff.

102. J. Pépin, *op. cit.*, 238-240. On the contrary, Heraclitus and Celsus share Plato's views that, if they are not explained allegorically, Homer's epics are impious.

103. See J. Pépin, *op. cit.*, 243-246; cf. R. Lamberton, *op. cit.*, 120-121.

104. For example, it is a source for the allegorical themes of authors such as Numenius and Cronius; see J. Pépin, *op. cit.*, 259-260.

105. For a detailed description and analysis, see R. Lamberton, *op. cit.*, 114-120.

106. B. Dalsgaard Larsen (1974), 7; cf. R. Lamberton (1986), 134, n. 141.

107. See R. Lamberton, *ibid.*

108. See R.L. Cardullo's 1995 edition of Syrianus' fragments.

109. The words εἰς τὰ Πρόκλου are considered by Praechter (1926, 254) to be glosses in the margin of the manuscript; they have been put here by an anonymous Byzantine scribe. Had they been older, the expression would have been ἐν τοῖς Πρόκλου and not εἰς τὰ Πρόκλου. Praechter's views are followed by Adler, the editor of the *Suda*, who has put εἰς τὰ Πρόκλου in square brackets.

110. Cf. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 46.

111. E. Zeller (1903), 818-890.

112. K. Praechter (1926), 257 ff.
113. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 46.
114. H.-D. Saffrey (1984a), 169, n. 28.
115. R.L. Cardullo (1986), 113.
116. H. Rabe in his 1893 Teubner edition of the *In Hermogenem*, pp. v-vii, followed by S. Gloeckner (1901), 63-64 and G.A. Kennedy (1983), 109-112.
117. For this fact since the 2nd cent. A.D. see G.J.P. O' Daly (1991), 52-53.
118. For Plutarch being called "σοφιστής", "ταμίας λόγων" and "βασιλεύς" see fr. 69 Taormina = IG II 3818 and fr. 70 Taormina = IG II 4224; cf. also H.J. Blumenthal (1978), 373-375.
119. L.R. Cardullo, pp. 41-43 of her 1995 edition of Syrianus' fragments.
120. As G.A. Kennedy remarks (*op. cit.*, 53), the Neoplatonic philosophers, beginning with Porphyry, played a major role in reorganizing the discipline of rhetoric on a philosophical basis as an introduction to dialectic. Figures such as Porphyry, Evagoras and Aquila tried to link rhetoric with dialectic in an educational system and wrote on rhetoric from a Platonic point of view (*op. cit.*, 77-79). G. Kustas (1973, 7-8) holds that the reasons why so many Neoplatonists concern themselves with rhetoric are basically two: firstly, they included this discipline in the wide range of their interests, along with religion, literature etc; and secondly, the opportunities for employment in rhetoric were more than in any other of the fields with which they dealt.
121. See Simplicius, *In Cael.* 119.7; cf. R. Sorabji (1987), 5-6.
122. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 86. For this particular commentary's relation with rhetoric see G. Kennedy (1983), 126-129.
123. A.D.R. Sheppard, *ibid.*
124. For the series of works of Neoplatonists, which were written *ἀπὸ φωνῆς* see M. Richard (1950), 191-222; cf. also A.J. Festugière (1969), 281-296.
125. Marinus, *Vita. Pr.* 13; cf. A.J. Festugière (1969), 281-296, L.G. Westerink, pp. lxxvii-lxxiv of his 1990 edition of Anonymous' *Prolegomena*, H.-D. Saffrey (1992), 40 and L.R. Cardullo, pp. 23-24 and 29-31 of her 1995 edition of Syrianus' fragments.
126. For the sake of exactness, I have used the old edition of Damascius' work, as all my secondary bibliography has this edition as a source. The text, though, has been re-edited with a new title (*The philosophical history*) by P. Athanassiadi, and this is why I use a double reference to the text.
127. K. Praechter (1912), cols. 732-735.
128. *Vita Isid., Epit. Phot.* fr. 74 (= fr. 54 Athanassiadi): ὅτι ὁ Ἑρμείας γένος μὲν ἦν Ἀλεξανδρεὺς, πατὴρ δ' Ἀμμωνίου καὶ Ἡλιοδώρου. οὗτος ἐπιεικῆς ἦν τὴν φύσιν καὶ ἀπλοῦς τὸ ἦθος, ἠκροάσατο δὲ καὶ Συριανοῦ σὺν Πρόκλῳ. φιλοπονία μὲν οὗτος

οὐδενὸς ἦν δεύτερος, ἀγχίνους δὲ οὐτι σφόδρα ἦν οὐδὲ λόγων εὐρετῆς ἀποδεικτικῶν, οὐδὲ γενναίος ἄρα ζητητῆς ἀληθείας· οὐκ οὐκ οὐδ' οἶός τε ἐγεγόνει πρὸς ἀποροῦντας κατὰ τὸ καρτερόν ἀγωνίζεσθαι, καίτοι ἐμέμνητο ὡς εἰπεῖν πάντων ὧν τε ἀκηκόει τοῦ διδασκάλου ἐξηγουμένου καὶ τῶν ἐν βιβλίοις ἀναγεγραμμένων.

129. See the introduction to Zintzen's edition of Damascius, pp. v-viii.

130. *Vita Isid.*, fr. 316 (= fr. 118B Athanassiadi): ὁ δὲ Ἀμμώνιος αἰσχροκερδῆς ὧν καὶ πάντα ὀρῶν εἰς χρηματισμὸν ὄντιναοῦν, ὁμολογίας τίθεται πρὸς τὸν ἐπισκοποῦντα τὸ τηρικαῦτα τὴν κρατοῦσαν δόξαν.

131. H. Bernard (1997), 19-23.

132. I do not claim that closeness in terms of chronology is always a guarantee of reliability; especially in Damascius' case, whose judgements are not always trustworthy, as was pointed out above. Still, one cannot ignore the fact that only a few years separate Damascius from Hermias and Syrianus; it would be surprising if Hermias had indeed written works of some originality that were unknown to Damascius.

133. K. Praechter, *ibid.*

134. *In Phaedr.* 92.6-7: Ἠπόρησεν ὁ ἐταῖρος Πρόκλος πῶς, εἰ ἐκ διαιρέσεως λαμβάνονται αἱ μανίαι, δυνατόν ἄλλην εἶναι παρὰ ταύταις; also 148.8-10 Ἐζήτησα διὰ τί αἱ ψυχαὶ οὐ λέγονται ὄραν οὐρανὸν ἀλλὰ γίνεσθαι ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ συνάπτεσθαι αὐτῷ, τοῖς δὲ ὑπὲρ τὸν οὐρανὸν οὐκέτι συνάπτεσθαι ἀλλὰ ὄραν μόνον and 154.21-22: Ἠπόρησα πῶς τὸ ν ὑ π ε ρ ο υ ρ ἄ ν ι ο ν τ ὀ π ο ν ὀ ρ ῶ σ α ι ταύτας καθορῶσιν·

135. H. Bernard (1997), 4-12.

136. At this point I should say that I regret I have not encountered in H. Bernard's work basic bibliographical references to the work of Syrianus, such as L.R. Cardullo's works, for example. When a presentation of Syrianus' philosophical ideas is being made, and when Hermias' independence from Syrianus as a thinker is the aim of the scheme, works such as the ones by Cardullo, are more than valuable.

137. *In Phaedr.* 40.12.

138. P.A. Bielmeier (1930), 31-35.

139. *op. cit.*, 29.

140. For instance, Bielmeier considers *In Phaedr.* 1.1-10.25 as the introductory part, that indeed should have taken a teaching hour, with 10.26ff. as the repetition of it necessary for a class. Further repetitions such as at 31.5-8 and 31.9, 54.10ff. and 55.16ff and grammatical patterns such as at 3.18, 4.32, 5.1, 8.5, 13.9 etc. are also used as evidence of school practice.

141. L.R. Cardullo (1993a).

142. Bielmeier rightly points out the double etymology of the name Ὠρειθία at 29.2ff. and at 29.17ff. This is also the case with the adverb δαίμονιως in 39.9-23 and the important philosophical notion of ψυχή at 145.2ff. The symbolism of the τέττιγες in the *Phaedrus*, as exposed at 213.14ff and at 251.1ff., also leaves much in obscurity, as we

cannot say whether the word symbolises a metaphysical group (divine souls, heroes and gods) or human souls.

143. We should also mention that scholars such as L.G. Westerink (p. x, n. 1 of his 1990 edition of Anonymous' *Prolegomena*), T. Gelzer (1966 22), R.T. Wallis (1972, 141, 144), J.M. Dillon, p. 63 of his 1973 edition of Iamblichus' commentaries on Plato, A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a, 13, 20), D.J. O' Meara (1989, 124) and H.-D. Saffrey (1992, 42) tend to accept the *In Phaedrum* as a reliable source of Syrianus' thought in general and his lectures in particular. Dalsgaard Larsen (1972, 362) also doubts the possibility that Hermias incorporated Iamblichean elements in the exegesis. His main argument is that such an attitude presupposes the existence of both an oral tradition (Syrianus and Proclus) and of a written one as well (Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus and Harpocration), an assumption that is uncertain.

144. C. Moreschini (1992), 451-460.

145. Especially on the Pythagorean influence see D.J. O' Meara (1989), 119-141.

146. L.R. Cardullo (pp. 26-28 of her 1995 edition) discusses and criticises Moreschini's arguments. At this point we should say that Moreschini has, however, contributed to our understanding of Hermias' commentary by stressing the presence and the use of the Homeric passages in this exegesis (see pp. 457-459).

147. H. Bernard (1997), 12-13.

148. See M.W. Dickie (1993), 436-438.

149. D.J. O' Meara (1989), 117-122.

150. R.L. Cardullo (1993b), 197-198; p. 37 of her 1995 edition.

151. Among many references see, for instance, Proclus *In Remp.* 133.5ff.; cf. A.D.R. Sheppard (1982a), 31, 62-74.

152. Proclus *In Remp.* 95.26-31; cf. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 43-46.

153. K. Praechter (1926), (1932).

154. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), (1982a).

155. R.L. Cardullo (1986), (1993a).

156. R. Sinkewicz (1981), 178-181.

157. E. Tempelis (1992).

158. See A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 39-103.

159. Proclus, *In Parm.* 618.4ff., 1085.14; *Theol. Plat.* 4.16, 215.18.

160. *In Met.* 183.15ff.

161. Among many interesting passages, *In Met.* 11.21, 81.33ff, 12.5ff, 48.6ff and 156.2ff. are very important.
162. Syrianus, *In Met.* 4.16-20, 5.16ff, 8.21ff, 41.29ff, 79.22-23, 113.2ff, 119.6ff, 178.11ff. Also Proclus, *In Parm.* 1118.35ff, 1120.32ff.
163. *In Met.* 5.34-35, 11.24-26, 48.8-10, 55.17, 112.14-15, 182.6-7, 184.9-11, 185.23.
164. A.D.R. Sheppard (1982a), 1-17.
165. Syrianus, *In Met.* 140.9-12; Proclus, *Theol. Plat.* 11.43-61.
166. Syrianus, *In Met.* 5.14-6.27, 112.35-113.5; Hermias, *In Phaedr.* 128.4-6.
167. Syrianus, *In Met.* 4.29-31, 9.37-10.10, 11.25-12.12, 43.6-44.36, 110.3-7, 165.33-167.13, 180.6-9. Cf. Proclus, *In Tim.* I 175.2ff., 384.24ff.; *In Parm.* 1119.4ff. See also J.M. Dillon (1975), 3.
168. See E. Tempelis (1998), 60-61.
169. Syrianus, *In Met.* 8.22-25, 59.17-18, 107.5-12, 184.1-20, 185.19-22.
170. See E.R. Dodds (1963) on Proclus' *Instit. Theol.*, props. 112, 115 and 133, pp. 259, 261, 270-71. See also Proclus *In Parm.* 1062.20-34; cf. H.-D. Saffrey and L.G. Westerink, p. lxxxvi of their introduction to Proclus' *Theol. Plat.*, vol. 1.
171. Proclus, *Inst. Theol.* props. 113-165; *Theol. Plat.* III 5-28; *In Parm.* 1061.23-1062.34.
172. *In Met.* 48.8, 140.13.
173. *In Met.* 24.4ff, Hermias *In Phaedr.* 130.4-9.
174. Syrianus, *In Met.* 41.14-25, 48.8, 106.26-30, 116.6-10; cf. Hermias, *In Phaedr.* 55.6-9, 87.12, 136.19-139.30, 155.34-35, 189.17, 207.13-17.
175. *In Met.* 48.8; Proclus *In Tim.* 310.15ff. For the relation between these demiurges and the traditional father of gods, Zeus, see chapter 3, passage 32.
176. *In Met.* 8.11, 10.34, 82.8, 106.28, 117.29, 132.25, 144.35.
177. *In Met.* 12.6, 81.33, 119.6, 147.12.
178. Syrianus, *In Met.* 27.30-37, 82.11-13, 106.30-107.1, 183.24-29; Proclus, *In Tim.* 310.12ff., 317.14ff., 323.20ff. Cf. D.J. O' Meara (1986), 12ff.
179. Syrianus, *In Met.* 107.5-38.
180. *Op. cit.*, 82.16, 88.13, 88.26, 132.15.
181. Proclus, *In Tim.* II 105.30ff.
182. Syrianus, *In Met.* 82.15-83.1, 88.26ff, 97.15ff.

183. This is the case with the astronomer who can demonstrate the essential attributes of the sky. Having in his soul an image of the divine exemplar of the sky in the Demiurgic intellect, he can associate it with the visible sky; thus, he can know the divine exemplar of the sky (Syrianus, *In Met.* 27.9-20, 27.30-37, 28.20-22, 83.7-20). Cf. R.E. Sinkewicz (1981), 178-179.

184. Syrianus, *In Met.* 11.9-25, 14.19-21, 29.2 ff., 41.31, 46.33, 48.9, 82.9, 85.26ff., 115.37ff., 129.8-13, 118.10; Hermias, *In Phaedr.* 84.28ff., 101.15-35, 192.23-24.

185. Syrianus, *In Met.* 7.16, 26.1-8, 28.12, 82.16-20, 85.8, 88.13, 89.14, 132.15.

186. For more details on Hermogenes' life see H. Rabe (1907), 242-260; cf. G.A. Kennedy (1972), 619; D.A. Russell (1983), 6-7.

187. On the various problems of authenticity of the works included in the Corpus of Hermogenes, see H. Rabe's edition (1913), pp. vi-xii of the introduction. Also L. Radermacher (1912), cols. 865.51-877.64, G.L. Kustas (1973), 19-20 and G.A. Kennedy (1983, 102-103 = 1994, 2). They all agree that the works *De ideis* and *De statibus* were written by Hermogenes. M. Patillon (1988, 8-22) attributes the *Progymnasmata*, *De Methodo Vehementiae* and *De Inventione* to Hermogenes the sophist, and the *De Ideis* and *De statibus* to Hermogenes the orator; nevertheless, the theory that posits the existence of two persons under the name of Hermogenes, whose works have been combined, needs further confirmation.

188. As G.A. Kennedy (1972, 626) remarks, there is a considerable body of commentary on Hermogenes, both from late antiquity and Byzantine times. This includes *prolegomena* to the various works by named or anonymous writers, as well as running commentaries, such as that of Syrianus. In Kennedy's words (1983, 109 = 1994, 220) Syrianus was "*an important commentator on Hermogenes*".

189. G.A. Kennedy (1983, 110-112 = 1994, 220).

190. G.A. Kennedy (1983, 111 = 1994, 220).

191. See H. Hunger (1978), 75-91.

192. G.A. Kennedy (1983, 110 = 1994, 220).

193. For this opinion of Syrianus, see G.A. Kennedy (1983, 110-111 = 1994, 220). I would like to stress Kennedy's opinion that the introduction of Syrianus' *In de Ideis* "*reveals the attitude towards Hermogenes in the Fifth Century, as expressed by an intellectual leader of the time*".

194. Syrianus' commentary has not been translated as a whole so far; all translations in this thesis therefore are my own. For Hermogenes' *De Ideis*, each time a translation was required, I used C. Wooten's work (1987), which was very helpful, especially as far as the technical terms are concerned.

195. Hermogenes, *De ideis* 213.14-214.3: ἡ γάρτοι μίμησις καὶ ὁ ζῆλος ὁ πρὸς ἐκείνους μετὰ μὲν ἐμπειρίας ψιλῆς καὶ τινος ἀλόγου τριβῆς γινόμενος οὐκ ἂν οἶμαι δύναίτο τυγχάνειν τοῦ ὀρθοῦ, κἄν πάνυ τις ἔχη φύσεως εὖ· τούναντίον γὰρ ἴσως ἂν αὐτὸν καὶ σφάλλοι μᾶλλον τὰ τῆς φύσεως πλεονεκτήματα χωρὶς τέχνης τινὸς ἀλόγως ἄττοντα,

πρὸς ὃ τι καὶ τύχοι·

196. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 1.307.14-15: Ἰστέον ὅτι τὸ ἀτρέμας ἦσο παραφράζων Ἡρόδοτος πού φησιν· "ἀτρεμίζοντά σε μακαριστὸν εἶναι".

197. Herodotus, *Hist.* VII 18.3: ἐπιστάμενος ταῦτα γνώμην εἶχον ἀτρεμίζοντά σε μακαριστὸν εἶναι πρὸς πάντων ἀνθρώπων.

198. Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.58.5-15: τὸ δὲ Ὅμηρου ἔφη ὁ κατήγορος πολλακίς αὐτὸν λέγειν ὅτι Ὀδυσσεὺς

ὄντινα μὲν βασιλῆα καὶ ἔξοχον ἄνδρα κιχείη,
τὸν δ' ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσιν ἐρητύσασκε παραστάς·
δαιμόνι', οὐ σε ἔοικε κακὸν ὧς δειδίσεσθαι,
ἀλλ' αὐτὸς τε κάθησο καὶ ἄλλους ἴδρουε λαούς.
ὄν δ' αὖ δήμου τ' ἄνδρα ἴδοι βοῶντά τ' ἐφεύροι
τὸν σκήπτρῳ ἐλάσασκεν ὁμόκλησκέ τε μύθῳ:
"δαιμόνι', ἀτρέμας ἦσο καὶ ἄλλων μῦθον ἄκουε,
οἳ σέο φέρτεροι εἰσι, σὺ δ' ἀπτόλεμος καὶ ἀναλκίς,
οὔτε ποτ' ἐν πολέμῳ ἐνάριθμος οὔτ' ἐνὶ βουλήῳ.

199. *Op. cit.*, 2.59.16-22.

200. The episode to which the verse in question belongs is also analysed in various ways by Eustathius (*Comm. ad Iliad.* 1.303.19-310.24), who refers to Odysseus' words very often, mainly in order to show the contrast between Odysseus' attitude towards the kings and towards the people. But Eustathius' treatment goes further than Syrianus' use of Homer at this point and is of no particular interest for our analysis.

201. For this widespread ancient belief see, for instance, L. Radermacher (1951) and G.A. Kennedy (1957), 23-35.

202. See D.A. Russell (1983), 114-128. We should also note that, as part of the rhetorical tradition, Hermogenes himself constantly refers to Demosthenes as the chief representative of excellence in rhetoric. Now, on Demosthenes' excellence in rhetorical circles of the Hellenistic age and late antiquity, see G.A. Kennedy (1972), (1981), (1983).

203. For a brief yet convincing discussion on the author of the *De sublimitate* see D.A. Russell (1964), pp. xii-xxx of the introduction.

204. See J.M. Dillon (1987), 907; cf. also H.J. Blumenthal and E.G. Clark (1993), introduction.

205. See J.M. Dillon's edition of the Iamblichean fragments (1973), p. 25 of his introduction.

206. *De Ideis* 332.18-23.

207. Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.* 1.291.3-13: Πρόσεστι δὲ αὐτῷ (i.e. Zeus) πρὸς τῇ ἀποτομῇ καὶ ἀκρασίᾳ, ὃς θεασάμενος τὴν Ἥραν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰδῆς κεκοσμημένην οὐ καρτερεῖ μέχρι τῶν ἀποδεδειγμένων αὐτοῖς θαλάμων ἐλθεῖν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τοῦ ὄρου χαμαὶ ῥίψας ἑαυτὸν συγκυλινδεται τῇ γυναικί,
τοῖσι δ' ὑπὸ χθῶν διὰ φύεν νεοθηλέα ποιῆν,

λωτόν θ' ἔρσηντα ἰδὲ κρόκον ἠδ' ὑάκινθον.
ποικίλης οὖν πεφωραμένης τῆς ποιήσεως ἀνωφελῆς ἢ γραμματικῆ μὴ δυναμένη
ἀποδείξαι τίσι πιστευτέον ἐστὶν ὡς ἀληθέσι καὶ τίσιν ἀπιστητέον ὡς μυθικοῖς
ψεύσμασιν.

208. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 3.658.15-16.

209. C. Wooten (1987), 4.

210. On the various ways in which Homer, as well as other poets, were exploited
by the tradition of scholia, see R. Pfeiffer (1968), 87ff.

211. Dionysius, *De Lysia* 29.21.30.13. Syrianus probably made a mistake, when he
attributed the passage not to this work of Dionysius, but to a work named *Χαρακτήρες*,
which is, to the best of our knowledge, nowhere attested as a work written by Dionysius.
We have not been able to trace evidence for *Χαρακτήρες* being an alternative title for
the *De Lysia*, either. For the *De Lysia*, which is considered to be one of the early
treatises of Dionysius, see S.F. Bonner (1969), 37-48.

212. Hesiod, *Theog.* 27: ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα; cf. *Theog.*
713: οὐδ' εἰ ψεύδεα μὲν ποιοῖς ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα. For more details, see M.L. West's
commentary *ad loc.* in his 1966 edition.

213. For Odysseus' ability to tell lies see his role in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*.

214. Aristotle, *De art. poet.* 1460a18-19: δεδίδαχεν δὲ μάλιστα Ὅμηρος καὶ τοὺς
ἄλλους ψευδῆ λέγειν ὡς δεῖ. As D.W. Lucas (1968) remarks commenting on 1460a18-26:
"Here Aristotle's *ψευδῆ λέγειν ὡς δεῖ* is in direct conflict with *Resp.* 377D, where
Homer is condemned because *μὴ καλῶς ψεύδεται*."

215. Polyaeus, *Strat.* 3.19-4.9: Ἄνδρεία μὲν γὰρ, ὅστις ἀλκῆ χρησάμενος
πολεμίων μαχομένων ἐκράτησεν, εὐβουλία δὲ, ἀμαχεῖ τέχνη καὶ δόλῳ περιγίνεσθαι· ὡς
ἔστι πρώτη δεινῶν στρατηγῶν σοφία, κτᾶσθαι τὴν νίκην ἀκίνδυνον. Ἄριστον δὲ καὶ τὸ
ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ παρατάξει μηχανᾶσθαι, ὅπως ἂν ἡ γνώμη τὸ κρατεῖν ἐπισπῶτο, προλαβοῦσα
τὸ τέλος τῆς μάχης. Δοκεῖ δὲ μοι γε ταῦτα συμβουλεύειν καὶ Ὅμηρος· ὅταν γὰρ
πολλάκις ἄδη

ἢ δόλῳ ἢ βίηφι

ἄλλως οὐ παραγγέλλει, ἢ τέχναις καὶ στρατηγήμασι χρῆσθαι κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων· εἰ δὲ
μείον ἐν τούτοις ἔχουσιν, τῆνικαδὲ τῇ βίᾳ τῶν σωματῶν ἀποκινδυνευτέον.

216. Many of Odysseus' devices (στρατηγήματα) are mentioned, including the
Cyclops and the story of the Sirens. At 5.13-15 the writer asks:

Τὶ γὰρ ἂν φαίης τὴν πῆραν τοῦ πτωχοῦ; καὶ ὅσα πρὸς Εὐμαιῶν, ἢ πρὸς τὴν
Πηνελόπην ἐπλάττετο;

Ἴσκει ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα.

A few lines further on Polyaeus mentions some devices of Odysseus, as known
not from Homer, but from the tragedians (5.20-25):

Οἷον δὲ κάκεινο στρατήγημα Ὀδυσσεῶς οἱ τραγωδοὶ ἄδουσι. Παλαμήδην
ἐνίκησεν Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐν δικαστηρίῳ τῶν Ἀχαιῶν, ὑποβαλὼν αὐτοῦ τῇ σκηνῇ βαρβαρικὸν
χρυσίον, καὶ ὁ σοφώτατος τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐκεῖνος ἦλω προδοσίας δόλῳ καὶ
στρατηγήματι.

217. Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Odysseam* 3.20 (ed. Schrader): Ἐναντίον ἐστὶ τοῦτο τῷ ἴσκει ψεῦδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα (τ 203)· καὶ γὰρ πεπνυμένος ὑπόκειται. ἡ δὲ λύσις ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ· τὸ γὰρ κατὰ καιρὸν κατεπείγοντα ψεῦδεσθαι, τοῦτο φρόνησιν εἶναι φασίν.

καὶ πῶς ὁ πεπνυμένος καὶ συνετὸς Ὀδυσσεὺς ἴσκει ψεῦδεα πολλὰ λέγων; ἀλλὰ τὸ πρὸς μηδὲν κατεπεῖγον ψεῦδεσθαι, τοῦτο κομιδῆ νηπίου ἀνδρός.

218. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 3.331.6-9; *Comm. ad Odysseam*. 2.167.5-6, 2.196.40-41, 2.198.41-43. The most interesting remark he makes in his commentary in the *Odyssea* is the following: οἷς ἐναβρύνων τὸν ῥήτορα Ὀδυσσεὺς ὁ ποιητῆς ἔφη τὸ "ἴσκει ψεῦδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα". The word ἐναβρύνων shows that Eustathius also shared the view that Homer praised Odysseus for this ability.

219. It would be tempting to go as far as to think that this very verse of Homer, put in the afore-mentioned tradition, could have played a role in Syrianus' choice of this passage of Dionysius.

220. See, for example, G. Grube (1965), 207-230 and G.A. Kennedy (1972), 342-363.

221. For the example from the *Ilias*, cf. R. Janko (1992b), *ad loc.*

222. See, for example, Syrianus' reference to iambic trimeter and trochaic tetrameter, as well as to their technical characteristics and variations (*In de Ideis* 30.18-31.20). We have also extensive metrical references in the context of the Homeric passage under discussion; at *In de Ideis* 29. 11 and 61.19 there are references to iambic and dactylic metre respectively. Now, whether Syrianus' knowledge of metre was profound, or he was just adequately equipped to deal with the basic metrical issues that would emerge in the course of his lessons, we cannot tell; what is certain is that had Syrianus not had adequate knowledge of metrical issues, he would not have been a teacher of rhetoric in the first place. But unfortunately, we are not in a position to have more details on the breadth and the depth of his learning on those issues.

223. Hephaestion, *Enchiridion de metris* 4.13.1-17.

224. *Op. cit.*, 6.17.19-18.5.

225. For the verse *Od.* VII 120 the *lectio* ὄγχνη instead of ὄχνη is preferred by modern editors.

226. We can at this point remember the ancient aesthetic term ἐκφρασις; for more details see G. Fowden (1982) and A. Laird (1993), 18-30.

227. Aelianus, *Varia Hist.* 3.36.3-6; Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 1.16.14-18; Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae philos.* 5.9.1-4.

228. For the tradition of epideictics see T.C. Burgess (1902), 89-261; cf. G.A. Kennedy (1963), 152-203.

229. Theon, *Prog.* 118.6-119.2.

230. Of course, ἔκφρασις and description are two major issues for modern criticism, as well. For the exploration of ἔκφρασις from a narratological point of view, and especially that of the relation of description to narration, see D.P. Fowler (1991), 25-35; cf. also A. Laird (1993), 18-30.

231. Menander Rhetor, *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν* 335.1-8. We notice the detailed technical instructions given by the writer, which show how this particular genre had developed already in the 2nd cent. A.D. For the placement of the work in this century, see D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson's edition (1981), pp. xxxiv-xl of the introduction.

232. *Op. cit.*, 349.14-30.

233. C. Wooten (1987), 92.

234. Hermogenes, *De Ideis* 368.26-369.1.

235. "Longinus", *De subl.* 13.2: <ή> τῶν ἔμπροσθεν μεγάλων συγγραφέων καὶ ποιητῶν μίμησις τε καὶ ζήλωσις; also 13.3: μόνος Ἡρόδοτος Ὀμηρικώτατος ἐγένετο; Στησίχορος ἔτι πρότερον ὃ τε Ἀρχίλοχος, πάντων δὲ τούτων μάλιστα ὁ Πλάτων, ἀπὸ τοῦ Ὀμηρικοῦ κείνου νόματος εἰς αὐτὸν μυρίας ὄσας παρατροπὰς ἀποχετευσάμενος. For Longinus' belief that Plato imitated Homer - an attitude in sharp contrast with Plato's bitter criticism of Homer and poetry in general, which nevertheless, was not just one man's preoccupation - see D.A. Russell's comment *ad loc.* We would like to mention Hermogenes' reference, in which he regards Homer and Plato to be model-writers of epideictic literature; Homer is, of course, superior to all the others (*De Ideis* 389.25-26: ἀρίστη τε γὰρ ποιήσεων ἢ Ὀμήρου καὶ Ὀμηρος ποιητῶν ἀριστος, φαίην δ' ἂν ὅτι καὶ ῥητόρων καὶ λογογράφων).

236. Syrianus' commentary on the *De Statibus* has not been translated as a whole, either; for Hermogenes' work the translations of R. Nadeau (1964) and M. Heath (1995) were used.

237. *In de Statibus* 2.18-21: φαίνεται δὲ ἀνὴρ εὐδόκιμος ἐπὶ τῇ τέχνῃ γεγωνῶς Ἑρμογένης καὶ κρίναι ῥητορικοὺς λόγους ἰκανώτατος, ὡς δηλοῖ αὐτοῦ τὰ γε εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐλθόντα συγγράμματα.

238. Cf. Plato, who at *Ion* 540b ff. and 540d ff. expounds Ion's claim that Homer can teach one the arts of both rhetoric and strategy. No particular hero is referred to, but the evidence is strong enough to allow us to form some idea of how Plato - and perhaps his contemporaries, as N.J. Richardson (1975, 66) argues - estimated the rhetorical elements of Homer's epics.

239. *Il.* IX 443. Remarkable is G.A. Kennedy's point (1980, 10) that these are the two great areas of distinction for the Homeric hero, and Achilles and Odysseus excel at both. What I find interesting in this ideal is its unity. As A. Parry (1956, 4) has pointed out: "*speech and reality need not to be divided into two opposing realms of experience, as we find them divided in the 5th century by the analytic distinction of logos and ergon*". For more details on the ideal, see also G. Thalmann (1984), 179-182.

240. G.A. Kennedy (1957), 23-35. For the Homeric origins of ancient rhetoric, see also A. Karp (1977), 237-258.

241. For the use of rhetoric in Homer see also R.B. Rutherford (1992), 58-72, who traces well-known rhetorical techniques in both works of Homer that were elaborated in the mid-5th century B.C. For rhetoric during the 5th and 4th cent. B.C., see T. Cole's controversial views (1991, 71-158).

242. *Chrestomathia*, 103.25-27.

243. *Op. cit.*, 105.15-16.

244. Fragment XXI in Allen's edition is as follows: "Παλαμήδην δὲ ἀποπνιγῆναι προελθόντα ἐπὶ ἰχθύων θήραν, Διομήδην δὲ τὸν ἀποκτείναντα εἶναι καὶ Ὀδυσσεῖα ἐπιλεξάμενος ἐν ἔπεσιν οἶδα τοῖς Κυπρίοις."

245. I stress "surviving", simply because we do not have the text of the *Cypria* in detail; speeches by Palamedes are quite likely to have been a feature of the lost text. And, in any case, we should expect Palamedes, as an "Odysseus-type" character, to be skilled in words, as Odysseus is.

246. Hyginus, *Fabulae* XCV. M. Grant (1960, 84) remarks that Hyginus tells the story poorly, for he does not say that Odysseus revealed his sanity by turning aside the blow to spare the child; but he also says that Hyginus follows a better version than that given by Apollodorus, where Palamedes threatens to kill Telemachus.

247. Hyginus, *op. cit.*, CV. Hyginus also refers to the revenge of Nauplius, Palamedes' father (*op. cit.*, CXVI).

248. Hyginus, *op. cit.*, CCLXXVII 3-6: "Palamedes autem Nauplii filius invenit atque letteras undecim (<...>").

249. For Aeschylus' play, see frs. 478-481 Radt (pp. 295-298). For Sophocles' play, see frs. 478-481 Radt (pp. 386-387). Palamedes is also mentioned in Euripides' *Or.* 433, and in Aristophanes' *Thesm.* 769-770, 847-848 and *Ran.* 1450-1451.

250. See J.V. Mun's 2001 edition of Alcidamas' works and fragments.

251. Plato, *Apol.* 41b: ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ πολλάκις θέλω τεθνάναι, εἰ ταῦτ' ἐστὶν ἀληθῆ· ἐπεὶ ἔμοιγε καὶ αὐτῷ θαυμαστῇ ἂν εἶη ἡ διατριβὴ αὐτόθι, ὅποτε ἐντύχοιμι Παλαμήδει καὶ Αἴαντι τῷ Τελαμώνος καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος τῶν παλαιῶν διὰ κρίσιν ἄδικον τέθηκεν.

252. *Resp.* 522d: Παγγέλοιο γοῦν, ἔφην, στρατηγὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα ἐν ταῖς τραγωδίαις Παλαμήδης ἐκάστοτε ἀποφαίνει. ἢ οὐκ ἐννεόηκας ὅτι φησὶν ἀριθμὸν εὐρῶν τὰς τε τάξεις τῷ στρατοπέδῳ καταστήσαι ἐν Ἰλίῳ καὶ ἐξαριθμῆσαι ναῦς τε καὶ τὰλλα πάντα, ὡς πρὸ τοῦ ἀναριθμητῶν ὄντων καὶ τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος, ὡς ξοικεῖν, οὐδ' ὄσους πόδας εἶχεν εἰδότος, εἶπερ ἀριθμεῖν μὴ ἠπίστατο;

253. Virgil, *Aen.* II 82-85: Belidae nomen Palamedis et incluta fama gloria, quem falsa sub proditione Pelasgi insontem infando indicio, quia bella vetabat, demisere Neci, nunc cassum lumine lugent.

254. R.G. Austin (1964), in his commentary *ad loc.*

255. *Il.* IX 168, 223, 427, 432, 607, 621, 659, 690, XIV 136, 321, XVI 196, XVII 555, 561, XIX 311, XXIII 360, 744.

256. *Il.* IX 442-443; cf. G.A. Kennedy (1980), 10.

257. *Il.* IX 197-198.

258. For the type of rhetoric each one of them uses and for their influence on Achilles, see G.A. Kennedy (1980), 11-19.

259. *Il.* I 247-249: (...) τοῖσι δὲ Νέστωρ
ἠδυεπῆς ἀνόρουσε, λιγύς Πυλίων ἀγορητής,
τοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίων ῥέεν αὐδή.

260. One example from the *Iliad* is Helen's opinion of his ability of Odysseus' rhetorical abilities at III 223: οὐκ' ἄν ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσσῆϊ γ' ἐρίσσειε βροτὸς ἄλλος· another is the embassy to Achilles.

261. D.A. Russell (1983), 5, n. 12.

262. Aelius Aristides dedicated an essay to the topic under the title *Πρεσβευτικὸς πρὸς Ἀχιλλεῖα*; cf. A. Boulanger (1968), 273-275.

263. See G.A. Kennedy (1974), 20ff.

264. J.F. Kindstrand (1973), 219.

265. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.169.

266. See Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Iliad.* 9.167-688 Schrader.

267. To be more specific, at *Il.* V 124-128 Athena addresses Diomedes and says:

θαρσῶν, νῦν, Διόμηδες, ἐπὶ Τρῳέεσσι μάχεσθαι·
ἐν γὰρ τοι στήθεσσι μένος πατρῷιον ἦκα
ἄτρομον, οἶον ἔχεσκε σακέσπαλος ἱππότης Τυδεΐδης·
ἀγλὸν δ' αὖ τοι ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἔλον, ἧ πρὶν ἐπῆεν
ὄφρ' εὖ γινώσκῃς ἡμὲν θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα.

268. *Il.* XV 668-70: τοῖσι δ' ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν νέφος ἀγλῦος ὥσεν Ἀθήνη
θεσπέσιον· μάλα δὲ σφι φῶς γένετ' ἀμφοτέρωθεν
ἡμὲν πρὸς νηῶν καὶ ὁμοίου πολέμοιο.

269. R. Janko (1992b), *ad loc.* For the general theme of mist, see also J.T. Kakridis (1971), 89-103.

270. See H.-D. Saffrey (1981, 153-169 = 1990, 33-49); (1984a, 161-171 = 1990, 51-61); G. Fowden (1982), 33-59.

271. For the relation of the school of Athens to theurgy and other pagan practices see Marinus, *Vita Pr.* 3, 18 and 26; cf. P. Chuvin (1990), 102-105 and F.R. Trombley (1993), 310-324.

272. For instance, see J. Lear (1988, 297-326 = 1992, 315-340).

273. Actually, the tradition of the gradual decadence of human races was widespread in antiquity. After Hesiod many Greek writers and philosophers shared the idea of a "golden age" that existed once upon a time. For more details on the matter and variety on that tradition see E.R. Dodds, (1973), 1-25. Cf. also C.J. Fordyce (1961) on Catullus' *Carmen* 64.384-407: he speaks of "*the general ancient belief in the degeneracy of mankind and the decline from a primitive Golden Age*" and gives evidence on the matter from other ancient sources, both Greek and Latin.

274. Hesiod, *Op.* 249-251: (...) ἐγγυς γὰρ ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἐόντες
ἀθάνατοι φράζονται, ὅσοι σκολιῆσι δίκησιν
ἀλλήλους τριβουσι θεῶν ὅπιν οὐκ ἀλέγοντες.

275. M.L. West (1978, commenting on 249ff.) argues that here we are dealing with a piece of Indo-European heritage. E. Fraenkel (1942, 11) also pushes the matter of Zeus' providence regarding the deeds of the mortals a little further: after referring to the Hesiodic passage, he says that the idea that the sins of men and the names of the offenders are written down by Zeus is a genuine Hellenic belief.

276. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.117: Πῶς δὲ καὶ αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὁμιλοῦντας ποιεῖ τοὺς θεοὺς, ἐν πολλοῖς ἐστὶ καταμαθεῖν, ὥσπερ καὶ τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν ποτὲ μὲν τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ, ἀεὶ δὲ τῷ Ὀδυσσεῖ, καὶ τὸν Ἑρμῆν τῷ Πριάμῳ καὶ αὐτὸν πάλιν τῷ Ὀδυσσεῖ. καθόλου δὲ ἀεὶ τοὺς θεοὺς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις παραστατεῖν οἴεται· φησὶ γὰρ
καὶ τε θεοὶ ξείνοισιν ἐοικότες ἀλλοδαποῖσι,
παντοῖοι τελέθοντες, ἐπιστράφωσι πόλιας,
ἀνθρώπων ὕβριν τε καὶ εὐνομίην ἐφορῶντες.

277. Aratus, *Phaen.* 1-5: Ἐκ Διδὸς ἀρχώμεσθα, τὸν οὐδέποτ' ἀνδρες ἐῷμεν
ἄρρητον· μεσταὶ δὲ Διδὸς πᾶσαι μὲν ἀγυαί,
πᾶσαι δ' ἀνθρώπων ἀγοραί, μεστή δὲ θάλασσα
καὶ λιμένες· πάντη δὲ Διδὸς κεχρήμεθα πάντες.
Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος εἰμέν...

As the scholiast (*Schol. in Aratum, ad loc.*) remarks, Zeus' presence in all the afore-mentioned places corresponds to the names that he bears: βουλαῖος, ξένιος, ἑταίρειος, φίλιος, φυτάλιμος, ἐπικάρπιος. J. Martin in his commentary *ad loc.* adds the epithets ἀγοραῖος, λιμένιος, ἀγυεύς. We should also notice J. Martin's remark *ad loc.* in his edition (1956) that the formula τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος εἰμέν must belong to the catechism of ancient Stoicism.

278. Proclus, *Inst. Theol.* prop. 122; *Theol. Plat.* I 15, 74-76; cf. R.T. Wallis (1972), 149.

279. Proclus, *Inst. Theol.* props. 114, 120; *In Crat.* 79.9-15, 79.20-22; for this matter, as well as for the influence that Proclus' beliefs exerted on the school of Ammonius, see M. Mignucci (1985, 237), L. Brisson (1992, 488, 491-92) and E. Tempelis (1998, 148-151).

280. We should bear in mind that in this study all philosophical themes that emerge in the examination of the rhetorical works of Syrianus are treated as evidence of the interaction between rhetoric and philosophy in Syrianus' time.

281. *AG* 7.676: Δοῦλος Ἐπικτήτος γενόμεν καὶ σώμ' ἀνάπηρος
καὶ πενήν Ἴρος καὶ φίλος ἀθάνατοις.

282. Macrobius quotes the epigram (*Sat. I.xi.44-45*): "De Epicteto autem philosopho nobili, quod is quoque servus fuit, recentior est memoria quam ut possit inter oblitterata nesciri. cuius etiam de se scripti duo versus feruntur, ex quibus illud latenter intellegas, non omni modo dis exosos esse qui in hac vita cum aerumnarum varietate luctantur, sed esse arcanas causas, ad quas paucorum potuit pervenire curiositas:

Δούλος Ἐπίκτητος γενόμεν καὶ σώμ' ἀνάπηρος
καὶ πενίην Ἴρος καὶ φίλος ἀθανάτους."

H. Beckby, the editor of the epigram in the *Anthologia Graeca*, says that it has been falsely attached to Gellius Novus Atticus. But more important is the fact that Macrobius considers the epigram to have been written by Epictetus himself ("eius Epicteti etiam de se scripti duo versus feruntur"). From the apparatus criticus we also learn that in one of the manuscripts (Codex Marcianus 481) the epigram is falsely attributed to Leonidas, who is the writer of the preceding epigram in the *Anthologia*, i.e. 7.675.

John Chrysostom is another source for the same epigram (*In acta Apostolorum*, MPG 60, 111.29-33): "Ἔστι μὲν οὖν δὴ τι καὶ ἔπος τοιοῦτο τοῖς ἐξωθεν εἰρημένον· Δούλος μὲν Ἐπίκτητος, σώμα ἀνάπηρος· πενίην Ἴρος, καὶ φίλος ἀθανάτων. Ἄλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν ὁ πένης. Ἡ δὲ τοῦ πλουσίου ψυχὴ πάντων γέμει τῶν κακῶν.

Unfortunately, the epigram is not included in Gow and Page's selection; Al. Cameron (1993) does not mention it either.

283. Lucian, *Charon sine contemplantes* 22.30-31: κάθθαν' ὁμῶς ὁ τ' ἄτυμβος ἀνήρ ὅς τ' ἔλλαχε τύμβου, ἐν δὲ ἰῆ τιμῇ Ἴρος κρείων τ' Ἀγαμέμνων.

284. Dio Chrysostom, *De regno* 66.20.5-6: τὸν πτωχὸν τὸν ἀλαζόνα καὶ θέλοντα φαίνεσθαι Κροῖσον ἐξίστησιν ὁ Ἴρος.

285. Libanius, *Ep.* 571.2-3: οὗτος ἐμὲ φιλεῖ μὲν ὡσπερ ἡ μήτηρ, αἰσχύνεται δὲ ὡσπερ υἱός, φοβεῖται δὲ ὡς ἄν οἰκέτης. τὸ δὲ μέγιστον τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ, νομίζων τὴν μεγίστην ἀνάγκην εἰς ἀρετῆς ἄσκησιν εἶναι θεοὺς τιμῶν δέξαιτ' ἂν Ἴρος γενέσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ μὴ τιμῶν Κινύρας.

286. Libanius, *Ep.* 819.5: εἰ μὲν οὖν ἔχει χρήματα τῶν ἱερῶν Ὠρίων καὶ δύναιτ' ἂν ἐκτίσαι, παιέσθω, κεντείσθω, τὰ τοῦ Μαρσίου παρασχέτω· δίκαιος γάρ, εἰ παρὸν ἀποδόντα ἀπηλλάχθαι χρημάτων ἐστὶν ἡττων καὶ πάντ' ἂν ὑπομένειεν, ὅπως ἔχοι χρυσίον· εἰ δ' ἐστὶν Ἴρος καὶ πεινῶν ἐκοιμήθη πολλάκις, οὐκ οἶδα τί ἂν κερδαίνομεν ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκίας, δι' ἣν εὐδοκμήσει παρὰ τοῖς ἡμῖν ἐναντίοις.

287. Libanius, *Or.* 18.140: Οὗτοι τοίνυν οἱ βασιλέως ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ φάσκοντες ἅπαντα εἰς φῶς ἄφειν καὶ ποιεῖν τοὺς πονηροὺς μετρίους τῷ μὴ ἐξέναι λανθάνειν πάσας ἀνέεσαν εἰς πονηρίαν ὁδοὺς καὶ μόνον οὐκ ἐκήρυττον, ὡς ἀκίνδυνα δράσουσιν. ὡσθ' οἱ κωλυταὶ τῶν ἀδικημάτων αὐτοὶ τοὺς ἀδικούντας ἔσφζον κυσὶν ἐοικότες συμπράττουσι τοῖς λύκοις. διὰ ταῦτα ἴσον ἦν θησαυρῷ τε ἐντυχεῖν καὶ τούτων μετασχεῖν τῶν μετάλλων. ὁ γὰρ ἦκων Ἴρος ἐν βραχεῖ χρόνῳ Καλλίας.

288. Athanasius, *Homilia de passione et cruce domini*, MPG 28, 236.9-13: Καὶ οἱ μὲν ἀνθρώποι μεμαθήκασιν καταφρονεῖν σωματικοῦ πλοῦτου καὶ πλουτοῦσι τῷ λόγῳ καὶ τῇ γνώσει· ὁ δὲ καυχώμενος εἶναι πλούσιος δράκων γεγύμνωται, καὶ νῦν γυμνὸς Ἴρος καὶ πένης ἐστὶ, κατασκυλευμένος ὑπὸ πάντων.

289. Gregory Nazianzenus, *Carmina moralia*, MPG 37, 773.3-6: Τί πλέον ἐν φθιμένοισιν; ἰῆ κόνις, ὀστέα μούνα, Ἦρωσ Ἀτρείδης, Ἴρος ἀλγτοβόρος, Κωνσταντῖνος ἀναξ, θεράπων ἐμός· ὅστις ἀνολβος, ὅστις ἐρικτήμων· ἐν πλέον ἐστι

τάφος.

We notice that Gregory plays with the words *Ἡρώς and *Ἴρος, which had the same sound at the time when he composed his work.

290. Herodianus, *De dict.* 526.19-20: ὄνομα κύριον ἐν ᾿Οδυσσεΐα, ὁ πτωχὸς καὶ πένης (...).

291. *Suda*, s.v. Ἴρος· ὁ πτωχός.

292. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Odys.* 2.164.1-2: Ἰστέον δὲ καὶ ὅτι τὸ τοῦ Ἴρου ὄνομα φέρεται μέχρι καὶ νῦν παρὰ τοῖς ὑπερθεῖν Σινώπης, οἱ τὸν λίαν πτωχὸν ὑποβαρβαρίζοντες πτωχὸν "ἄϊρον" λέγουσιν. Eustathius here implies that the right word that should be used by them should be Ἴρος.

293. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 2.655.19-656.2.

294. Aristotle, fr. 16 Rose: καὶ τι ἔπος προέηκεν ὅπερ τ' ἄριστον ἄμεινον (...) καὶ μήποτε (τὸ ζητούμενον παρὰ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις) λύων ὁ ποιητῆς οἰνώσεως καὶ μέθης διαφορὰν εἶρηκεν, οἰνώσεως μὲν ἄνεσιν, μέθην δὲ φλυαρίαν.

295. Athenaeus, *Deipn.* I 412e: Τὴν γὰρ σύμμετρον κράσιν τοῦ οἴνου ὑπὸ Ἄμφικτύονος βασιλεύσαντος διδαχθῆναι φασὶν Ἀθηναίους, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἱερὸν Διονύσου ὀρθοῦ ἰδρῦσασθαι. τότε γὰρ ὀρθός ἐστι τῷ ὄντι καὶ οὐ σφαλερός, ὅταν συμμέτρως καὶ κεκραμένως πίνηται.

οἶνος γὰρ ἀνώγει
ἦλεός, ὃς τ' ἐφέηκε πολύφρονά περ μάλ' ἀεῖσαι
καὶ θ' ἀπαλὸν γελάσαι καὶ τ' ὀρχήσασθαι ἀνήκεν
καὶ τε ἔπος προέηκεν ὅπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον.

296. Plutarch, *De garrul.* 503e: Ἔτι τοίνυν τὸ μεθύειν πᾶς ἀνθρώπος αἰδήμων καὶ κόσμιος, οἶμαι, φυλάξοιτ' ἄν· μανία γὰρ ὁμότοιχος μὲν ἢ ὀργὴ κατ' ἐνίου, ἢ δὲ μέθη σύνοικος· μᾶλλον δὲ μανία τῷ μὲν χρόνῳ ἦττων, τῇ δ' αἰτίᾳ μείζων, ὅτι τὸ αὐθαίρετον αὐτῇ πρόσσεσι. τῆς δὲ μέθης οὐθέν οὕτω κατηγοροῦσιν ὡς τὸ περὶ τοὺς λόγους ἀκρατέες καὶ ἀόριστον· οἶνος γὰρ, φησὶν,

ἐφέηκε πολύφρονά περ μάλ' ἀεῖσαι
καὶ θ' ἀπαλὸν γελάσαι καὶ τ' ὀρχήσασθαι ἀνήκεν.

Καὶ τι τὸ δεινότατον; ὦδῃ καὶ γέλῳ καὶ ὀρχησῖς; οὐδὲν ἄχρι τούτων·

καὶ τι ἔπος προέηκεν, ὅπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον.

τοῦτ' ἤδη δεινὸν καὶ ἐπικίνδυνον.

Cf. *Quaest. Conviv.* 645a, where similar things about wine and drinking are said.

297. Aelius Aristides, *Πρὸς Πλάτωνα περὶ ῥητορικῆς* 89: εἰ τοίνυν ῥητορεύειν μὲν ἐστὶν ἀδικεῖν δύνασθαι κατ' αὐτὸν σε, δυνατὸν δ' ἐστὶ καὶ δικαίως διαβιῶναι ῥητορεύοντα, μείζον δὲ τεκμήριον δικαιοσύνης τὸ δυνάμενον ἀδικεῖν ἡσυχάζειν ἢ τὸ μὴ, πῶς οὐ πολλὰ τῶν κολάκων ἀπέχουσιν οἱ τοιοῦτοι, οἳ γε καὶ τῶν ἀναγκαιῶς δικαίων τοσοῦτον προέχουσιν; ἔοικεν οὖν τὸ τοῦ Ὀμήρου συμβαίνειν

Καὶ τι ἔπος προέηκεν ὅπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον.

298. Libanius, *Ep.* 1502.2.

299. Libanius, *Ep.* 661.1-4: "Ἴστω νῦν τόδε γαῖα καὶ οὐρανὸς εὐρὸς ὑπερθεν. προστιθημι δέ, εἰ βούλει, καὶ Στύγα καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους θεοὺς, ἢ μὴν τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἐκείνην τοῦ προσήκοντος τετυχηκένοι χρόνου καὶ μηδὲν πεπραχῆται τέχνη. σοὶ δὲ ἴσως οὐ καλῶς ἔχει φεῖδεσθαι τῶν οἰκετῶν κατὰ τῶν φίλων καὶ ὅπως ἐκείνους ἐξέλοιο, τούτοις περιάπτειν αἰτίας. ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ μὲν τούτων ὀλίγον ὕστερον διαδικασόμεθα, Κέλσου τὴν ψῆφον τιθεμένου, τῆς Βακχείας δὲ ἡμῖν ἴσθι τὸ πλέον ἀμβλύνας ὑπὸ τῆς ἀπουσίας. οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὄτφ ἂν τ' ἀπὸ καρδίας λέγοιμεν, ἀλλ' ἢ δεῖ σιγᾶν ἢ εἰπόντα μετεγνωκένοι καὶ ἐπιτιμᾶν τῇ γλώττῃ, ὅτι ἐξελάλησεν ὄπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον. οἶμαι δὲ καὶ σὲ ταῦτὸν περιεστηκένοι, σιγῆν ἢ φόβον. ὅπως οὖν ἡμεῖς τε σοῦ σὺ τε ἡμῶν ἀπολαύοις ἐκάτεροι τε δι' ἀλλήλων ἐλευθερίας, τοῖς στόμασιν ἀνοίγε τὰς θύρας φανείς.

It is worth noticing that the way in which Libanius makes use of the Homeric expression speaks in favour of the opinion that, by his time, the expression had become a proverb.

300. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.149: 'Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐν τούτοις καὶ Πυθαγόρου ἐμνημονεύσαμεν, ᾧ μάλιστα ἤρεσκεν ἢ ἐχεμυθία καὶ τὸ σιγᾶν ἢ μὴ χρῆ λέγειν, θεασώμεθα εἰ καὶ Ὅμηρος ταύτην ἔσχε τὴν γνώμην. ἐπὶ τε γὰρ τῶν παροινούντων ἔφη καὶ τι ἔπος προέηκεν ὃ πέρ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον.

301. Proclus, *In Tim.* I 352ff: αὐτοὶ δὲ οἱ θεοὶ καὶ τὸ γενητὸν ἀγενήτως καὶ τὸ διαστατὸν ἀδιαστάτως ἐγνώκασι καὶ τὸ μεριστὸν ἀμεριστῶς καὶ τὸ ἐγγχρονον διαιωνίως καὶ τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον ἀναγκαίως· αὐτῷ γὰρ τῷ νοεῖν πάντα γεννώσιν, ἃ δὲ γεννώσιν, ἐκ τῶν ἀμερῶν καὶ αἰωνίων καὶ αὐλῶν εἰδῶν γεννώσιν· ὥστε καὶ νοοῦσιν αὐτὰ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον. μὴ γὰρ οἰηθῶμεν, ὅτι ταῖς τῶν γνωστῶν φύσεσιν αἱ γνώσεις χαρακτηρίζονται, μηδ' ὅτι τὸ μὴ ἀραρός οὐκ ἀραρός ἐστὶ παρὰ θεοῖς, ὡς φησὶν ὁ φιλόσοφος Πορφύριος - τοῦτο γὰρ ἂν ἐκεῖνος ἀνεφθέγγετο, ὃ π ε ρ τ' ἄ ρ ρ η τ ο ν ἄ μ ε ι ν ο ν, ἀλλ' ὅτι ταῖς τῶν γινωσκόντων διαφοραῖς ἄλλοίος γίνεταί τῆς γνώσεως ὁ τρόπος.

302. Ammonius, *In de int.* 118.3-5.

303. Olympiodorus, *In Alc.* 147.9-19: Βαβαί, οἶον, ᾧ ἄριστε, τοῦτο εἶρηκας· ὡς ἀνάξιον τῆς ιδέας": πάλιν ἀποδύρεται ὁ Σωκράτης τὸν νέον καὶ ἑαυτὸν καὶ σχετλιάζει λέγων ὅτι "ἀγανακτῶ ὑπὲρ σοῦ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἑμαυτοῦ· ὑπὲρ σοῦ μὲν, διότι μικροπρεπῆς ὑπάρχεις, ὑπὲρ ἑμαυτοῦ δὲ, διότι μικροπρεποῦς ἐρῶ· τὸ δὲ "οἶον τοῦτο εἶρηκας" τὸ ποιητικὸν πάλιν παρωδεῖ

ποιῶν σε ἔπος φύγεν ἕρκος ὀδόντων

καὶ τὸ

καὶ τι ἔπος προέσηκεν ὄπερ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον.

τὸ δὲ "ἀνάξιον τῆς ιδέας", τουτέστιν "εἶδος", "ἔπεσιν" ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστι βίη φρεσὶν οὐδέ τις ἀλκή.

304. *Scholia* A on I 62 say: (...) ὅτι μάντις γενικῶς, ἱερεὺς δὲ καὶ ὄνειροπόλος εἰδικῶς, εἶδη μάντεων. Cf. also A and bT on I 62.63b: Ἡρωδιανὸς τελείαν δίδωσιν εἰς τὸ ἐρεῖομεν, ἵνα γενικὸν εἴη τὸ μάντις. ὁ δὲ Πορφύριος τρία ἀποδέχεται, μάντιν λέγων τὸν διὰ οἰωνῶν ἢ σημείων ἢ τεράτων μαντευόμενον, ἱερέα δὲ τὸν διὰ θυσιῶν, ὄνειροπόλον δὲ τὸν ὄνειροκρίτην.

305. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.212: Ὁφελούνηται δὲ οἱ ἄνθρωποι, ὡσπερ ἀπὸ τῆς ἱατρικῆς, οὕτως ἔστιν ὅτε καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς μαντικῆς. ταύτης μένητοι τὸ μὲν τεχνικὸν φασὶν εἶναι οἱ Στωικοί, οἶον ἱεροσκοπίαν καὶ οἰωνοδὸς καὶ τὸ περὶ φήμας καὶ κληδόνας καὶ σύμβολα, ἄπερ συλλήβδην ὄτταν καλοῦμεν, τὸ δὲ ἄτεχνον καὶ ἀδίδακτον, τουτέστιν ἐνύπνια καὶ ἐνθουσιασμοῦς. οὐδὲ ταῦτα οὖν Ὅμηρος ἠγγόησεν ἀλλ' οἶδε μὲν μάντις

καὶ ἱερεῖς καὶ ὄνειροπόλους, ἔτι δὲ καὶ οἰωνιστὰς (...).

306. *Lexicon Homericum*, s.v. ἱερεὺς, 90, 9-11: ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ προεστῶτος τῆς θεραπείας τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ, "Χρύσης ἱερεὺς", ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ διὰ θυσίων μαντευομένου "ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν ἢ ἱερεία". We notice the mistake in the quotation of the verse, where the word "ἱερεία" has taken the place of the word "ἱερῆα", as the iotacism made it very difficult for people to distinguish εἰ from ἦ.

307. Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Iliad.* 1.62-63 Schrader: ἄλογον ζητεῖν παρὰ ἱερέως πυθέσθαι περὶ τῶν μελλόντων· οὐ γὰρ δὴ μάντιες οἱ ἱερεῖς, οἱ δὲ ὄνειροπόλοι μηδενὸς ὄνειρου νῦν ζητουμένου παρέλκουσι. λύεται δὲ ἐκ τῆς λέξεως· τὸν γὰρ νῦν λεγόμενον θύτην "ἱερέα" φαίνονται καλοῦντες πάλαι, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐτέρωθεν· (...) ὁ δὲ ὄνειροπόλος αὐτὸς ὀρθῶς ὑπὲρ ἐτέρων ὄνειρους.

Ἡρωδιανὸς τελείαν δίδωσιν εἰς τὸν μάντιν, ἵνα ἦ γενικόν. ὁ δὲ Πορφύριος λέγει τὸν δι' οἰωνῶν ἢ σημείων ἢ τεράτων μαντευόμενον, ἱερέα δὲ τὸν διὰ θυσίων, ὄνειροπόλον δὲ τὸν ὄνειροπολούμενον, θεατὴν ὄνειρου γεγονότα.

We can also read with interest Porphyry's statement on the verse, *op. cit.*, 24.221 and in *Quaest. Hom. ad Odys.* 7.197 Schrader: (...) ἄγε δὴ τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν ἢ ἱερῆα ἢ καὶ ὄνειροπόλον. τὸ μὲν γὰρ γενικόν, τὰ δὲ εἰδικά.

308. Herodianus, *De prosodia Iliaca* 3.2, 22, 19-21: (μάντιν ἐρείομεν ἢ ἱερῆα ἢ καὶ ὄνειροπόλον·) μέχρι τοῦ ἐρείομεν διασταλτέον, εἶτα ἢ ἱερῆα ἢ καὶ ὄνειροπόλον, ἵνα γενικὸν μὲν ἦ τὸ μάντιν, εἶδη δὲ τὰ ἐπιφαινόμενα. οὕτως Ἡρωδιανὸς.

309. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 1.76.31-77.6: "Ὅτι ἐν τῷ εἰπεῖν "ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν" ἤγουν ἐρωτήσωμεν "ἢ ἱερῆα ἢ ὄνειροπόλον", ὄνειροπόλον μὲν λέγει τὸν περὶ ὄνειρους στρεφόμενον κακεῖθεν τὸ μέλλον προειδῶτα διὰ τοῦ κρίνειν ὄνειρους, ἱερέα δὲ τὸν τὴν θυτικὴν εἴτ' οὖν ἱερατικὴν μετιόντα καὶ δι' ἐντόμων μαντευόμενον [ἤγουν ἱερείων σφαγείων], ὁποῖον Σοφοκλῆς τὸν Τειρεσίαν ἱστορεῖ. μάντιν δὲ οἱ μὲν γενικῶς καὶ ἀδιορίστως εἶπον τὸν ἀπλῶς εἰδῶτα τὸ μέλλον καθ' οἰονοῦν τρόπον μαντικῆς, ἕτεροι δὲ κατ' ἐξοχὴν μάντιν ἐνταῦθα τὸν οἰωνοσκόπον ἐνόησαν.

310. For the term μάντιες and their function see W.R. Halliday (1913), 54-98; for augury, *op. cit.*, 246-261; cf. W. Burkert (1985), 111-114. Cf. also Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Odys.* 5.334-337 Schrader: διὰ σημείων γὰρ καὶ ὄνειρων καὶ οἰωνῶν καὶ θυσίων, οὐκ αὐδῆς φθέγγονται οἱ θεοί.

311. Plotinus, *Enn.* II.3.7, III 1.6, IV.4.39; cf. O. Kuisma (1997), 57-58.

312. Marinus, *Vita Procli* 757-768; cf. Hermias, *In Phaedr.* 71.4-7; cf. O. Kuisma (1997), 36-37.

313. Earlier scholars (for example, Aristarchus) called the chiasmus ὑστερον πρότερον Ὀμηρικῶς.

314. R. Lamberton (1986), 56-57.

315. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.27: "Ἴδωμεν καὶ τὰς τῆς συντάξεως ἐκτροπὰς, τὰ καλούμενα σχήματα, εἰ καὶ ταῦτα πρῶτος Ὀμηρος ὑπέδειξε. Among the phenomena discussed below are pleonasm, hypallage, hyperbaton and many others.

316. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 1.615.16-616.10: Καὶ οὕτω μὲν ὁ λόγος περιενόηται καὶ οἶον συνέστραπται τῷ σχηματισμῷ καὶ συγκέχυται μιμησαμένου τοῦ ποιητοῦ συγκεχυμένον ἄνθρωπον καὶ μὴ ἐνευκαιροῦντα φυσικῇ ὀνομάτων τάξει. τοιοῦτον δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς τὸ "οἰμωγὴ καὶ εὐχολῆ ἀνδρῶν ὀλλύντων καὶ ὀλλυμένων". δύναται δὲ ὁμοίῳ ζήλῳ μὴ κατὰ λέξεις μόνως γοργότερον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πλατύτερον κατὰ λόγους τοιαῦτά τις σχηματίζει· οἶον Ἀχιλλεὺς μὲν ἠρέθη πολέμαρχος, οἱ βασιλεῖς δὲ περὶ τὸν ναῦσταθμον ἔμενον, ἵνα μὴ στενοχωρῶσι τοὺς Τρῶας, ὁ δὲ τὰ πέριξ λητίζεται. τὸ δὲ τοιοῦτον σχῆμα καὶ ἐπὶ πλειόνων συζυγιῶν νοημάτων μεθοδευθήσεται κατὰ τὴν τοῦ γράφοντος ἰσχύν. ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο καὶ περιβλητικὸν διὰ τὴν τῶν νοημάτων μετάστασιν. ἔχει δὲ τι καὶ σαφηνείας τὸ τῇ μελαίνῃ εὐθὺς συντάξει τὸ κατὰ φύσιν οἰκεῖον, ἡγουν τὴν Γῆν, ὡς καὶ τῇ εὐχολῇ, τούτεστι τῷ καυχῆματι, τοὺς ὀλλύντας, καὶ τοῖς βασιλεῦσι τὸ ἐν Τροίᾳ μένειν. κατὰ φύσιν μὲν γὰρ ἐνταῦθα καὶ εὐτακτον καὶ σαφὲς ἡ τῶν μέσων ἔνωσις, ἀνάπαλιν δὲ ἡ τῶν ἄκρων διάστασις, ὡς ἐν τοιαύτῃ καταγραφῇ, δι' ἧς τὸ προκειμένον σαφηνισθήσεται.

317. Later on in the commentary, Homer will be directly mentioned as a theologian; but this dimension is to be discussed at the corresponding passages.

318. Plutarch, *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 104 d-f: ταῦτα γὰρ καὶ ἄλλα τοιαῦτα καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἐκάστῳ λογίσασθαι ῥάδιον, καὶ ἄλλων ἀκοῦσαι παλαιῶν καὶ σοφῶν ἀνδρῶν, ὡς πρῶτος ἐστὶν ὁ θεῖος Ὅμηρος, εἰπὼν (σ 130)

οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα τρέφει ἀνθρώποιο.

οὐ μὲν γὰρ ποτέ φησι κακὸν πείσεσθαι ὀπίσσω, ὅφρ' ἀρετὴν παρέχῳσι θεοὶ καὶ γούνατ' ὀρώρη· ἀλλ' ὅτε δεινὰ λυγρὰ θεοὶ μάκαρες τελέουσι, καὶ τὰ φέρει ἀεκαζόμενος τετληῶτι θυμῷ.

319. Hermogenes at *Prog.* 9.17 classifies the verse in exaggerated opinions (ὑπερβολικαὶ γνώμαι).

320. *Strom.* 3.14-15.

321. *Anthol. Graec. Append.* 333:

Ἦν πόλις, ἦν στρατός, ἦν καὶ διπλόον ἐνδοθεν τεῖχος·
ἀλλ' ἔτεδν μερόπων οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον.

322. Olympiodorus, *In Alc.* 172.14-22: πρὸς δὲ τὸ δεύτερον φασι ὅτι μᾶλλον τῶν ἄλλων ζῶων ἐπιμελείας δεῖται ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὐ μόνον κατὰ τὸ σῶμα (...) ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ τὸν λόγον, διότι δριμύταται εἰσι αἱ κακίαι τῶν ἀνθρώπων, τῶν ἄλλων ζῶων πλεον, διότι ἐνδον ἐστὶν ὁ πολυμήχανος λόγος οἷον τις Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐξυπηρετῶν τῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ καὶ ποικίλλων τὰ πάθη. διὸ καὶ εἴρηται·

οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα τρέφει ἀνθρώποιο.

323. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 4.79.20-80.2: Τὸ δὲ ῥηθὲν γνωμικὸν ὑπερβολικῶς ἐφράσθη. τοιοῦτον γὰρ τὸ εἰπεῖν, ὡς οὐδὲν τῶν περὶ γῆν ζῶων ἀνδρὸς ἐπιπονώτερον. εἰ μὴ που λέγει ὡς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἐμψυχον ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀτυχία ὑποπέπτωκεν.

For Eustathius' opinion that the verse is a saying (τὸ γνωμικόν) cf. his *Comm. ad Odys.* 2.172.10.

As far as Eustathius' treatment of bad luck is concerned, we are tempted to acknowledge a Gnostic influence on it.

324. Proclus, *In Remp.* 133.5ff. Cf. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 44.

325. Plato, *Resp.*, 390 b-c.

326. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 1.233.3-13.

327. Eustathius, *op. cit.* 3.645.9-13: (...) "ὄτε πρότιστον μιγέσθην φιλότῃ, εἰς εὐνήν φοιτῶντε φίλους λήθοντε τοκῆας". Ὅτι δὲ ἡ τῶν στοιχείων θέσις ἀέρος τε καὶ τοῦ ἀνωτέρω αἰθέρος τοῖς τοιούτοις λόγοις ἐμφαίνεται, καὶ ὡς λεληθότως ἐξ ἀναλόγου τινὸς γάμος τῇ τοιαύτῃ αὐτῶν συναφείᾳ ἐμφαντάζεται, πολλαχοῦ δεδήλωται.

328. *Anth. Gr.* IX.381.9-12: ὄσσαι γὰρ νύκτες τε καὶ ἡμέραι ἐκγεγάασι,
παρθένος ἠϊθεός τ' ὀαρίζετον ἀλλήλοισιν
εἰς εὐνήν φοιτῶντε φίλους λήθοντε τοκῆας
οἷ Σηστὸν καὶ Ἄβυδον ἔχον καὶ δῖαν Ἀρίσβην.

329. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Odys.* 2.30.30-39: Ὅτι ἔδοξεν Ὁμήρῳ ἠθοποιεῖν ἐνταῦθα πλάσαι τί ἂν ὁ Ἥλιος εἶπε παρὰ τῷ Διὶ μαθὼν ὡς ἀπώλοντο αὐτῷ αἱ βόες. καὶ λαλεῖ μὲν εἰς τοῦτο, οὐ μακρολογεῖ δὲ, ὅτι μὴδὲ ἦν εἰκός. καὶ ἃ δὲ λαλεῖ, γλυκέως λαλεῖ, ὡς ἂν ἡ κατὰ νοῦν γλυκύτης παραγάγη τὸν ἀκροατὴν καὶ ὑποκλέψῃ τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ μέμψιν. ἀξιώσας οὖν ἐν δυοῖσιν στίχοις τιμωρηθῆναι τοὺς βοοκτόνους, ἐπάγει γλυκέως κατὰ ἀφέλειαν, ὅτι ἔχειρον μὲν ταῖς βουσίην ἰὼν εἰς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα, ἢ δ' ὀπότε ἄψ' ἐπὶ γαίαν ἄπ' οὐρανόθεν προτραποίμην.

330. *Hymn. In Merc.* 317: αὐτὰρ ὁ τέχνησιν τε καὶ αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισιν.

331. Hesiod, *Theog.* 889-890:

(...) τότε ἔπειτα δόλω φρένας ἐξαπατήσας
αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισιν ἔην ἐσκάτθετο νηδύν.

332. Theognis, *Eleg.* 1.704 : πείσας Περσεφόνην αἰμυλίοισι λόγοις.

333. Apollonius Rhodius, *Arg.* 3.1140-1142:

ἢ δ' οὐπω κομιδῆς μιμνήσκετο, τέρπετο γὰρ οἱ
θυμὸς ὁμῶς μορφῇ τε καὶ αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισιν,
εἰ μὴ ἄρ' Αἰσονίδης πεφυλαγμένος ὄψε περ ἠΐδα.

334. Gregory Nazianzenus, *Carm. quae spect. ad alios*, *carm.* 2 "Nicobuli filii ad patrem", 1535.9-10:

Καὶ μόθον αἰχμάζει, πρηὴν δέ τε φῶτα τίθησι,
Μαλθάσσων ἀπαλοῖσι καὶ αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισι,
Καὶ κρατερόν περ ἔόντα, πῦρός μενος οἶα σίδηρον.

Also *op. cit.*, *carm.* 6 "Ad Olympiadem", 1544.6-8:

Οὐδὲ λεοντοκτόνος θηρὸς μένος εὐνασεν ἀλκῇ,
Ἄσθμασι βρυχαλέοισι χολούμενον, ἀλλὰ δαμάζει
Χερσὶ καταψήγων, καὶ αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισι.

335. See *V Scholia in Odys.* I 56.

336. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.17: Πολλὴ δὲ ἐστὶν αὐτῷ καὶ ἡ τῶν ἐπιθέτων εὐπορία, ἅπερ οἰκείως καὶ προσφυῶς τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις ἡρμοσμένα δύναμιν ἴσην ἔχει τοῖς κυρίοις ὀνόμασιν, ὥσπερ τῶν θεῶν ἐκάστῳ ἰδίαν τινα προσηγορίαν προστίθησι, τὸν Δία "ὑψιβρεμέτην" καὶ τὸν Ἥλιον "Ἐπερίονα" καὶ τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα "Φοῖβον" καλῶν.

337. Codex Parisinus Graecus 1810, which is the codex optimus of our *In Phaedrum* commentary, was written by G. Pachymeres in the 13th century. For more details see L.G. Westerink's introduction to the 1989 edition of G. Pachymeres *In Parmenidem*.

338. Indeed in the *Scholía vetera in Phaedr.* 241d 3-5 we read:

ὡς οὐκ ἔστι λέουσι καὶ ἀνδράσιν ὄρκια πιστά,
οὐδὲ λύκοι τε καὶ ἄρνες ὁμόφρονα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν.
ἡ παροιμία ἐπὶ τῶν ἐρωτικῶς ἐχόντων.

Cf. also the bT scholia on XXII 263b: οὐδὲ λύκοι τε καὶ ἄρνες < --ἔχουσιν >: ἐντεῦθεν ἡ παροιμία· "ἄρνα φιλοῦσι λύκοι, νέον ὡς φιλέουσιν ἔρασταί".

The proverbial nature of the two verses is also mentioned in N.J. Richardson's commentary (1993a, *ad loc.*).

339. Eusebius, *Praep. Evang.* 15.4.20-21: ἕως οὐ γὰρ σὺ μὲν εἶτε ὁμώνυμος εἶτε ὅπως βούλει καλῶν ἀγαθὰ τὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς, ἄλλα πρὸς τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν ὡς ἀναγκαῖα παραλαμβάνεις, τὸ ἱκανὸν τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀφαιρούμενος, Πλάτων δ' ἐκ περιουσίας περὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζητεῖ τὸ δὴ ἐκπλεων εἰς εὐδαιμονίαν ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς ἀρετῆς ἔχων, οὐδὲν ἂν ὑμῖν εἶη κατὰ τοῦτο κοινόν· ἄλλων σοὶ δεῖ λόγων, ἄλλων τοῖς Πλάτωνος

ὡς γὰρ οὐκ ἔστι λέουσι καὶ ἀνδράσι ὄρκια πιστά
οὐδὲ λύκοι τε καὶ ἄρνες ὁμόφρονα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν,

οὕτως οὐκ ἔστι Πλάτωνι καὶ Ἀριστοτέλει φιλία περὶ τοῦ κορυφαιοτάτου καὶ κυριωτάτου τῆς εὐδαιμονίας δόγματος. διαμπερὲς γάρ, εἰ μὴ καὶ κακὰ φρονέουσιν ἀλλήλοις, τὰ γε ὑπεναντία περὶ τῶν εἰς τοῦτο διαφερόντων φαίνονται λέγοντες.

340. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 4.613.12-18: Εἶτα δεικνύων εἰς ὅσον ἀποστέργει τὰς ῥηθείσας συνθήκας, λέγει ἅπερ καὶ πᾶς ἂν εἶποι ἐγκοτήσας λίαν τινί, τὰ καὶ εἰς παροιμίαν πεσόντα τὴν ἐπὶ ἀσπὸνδῷ ἔχθρα τιθείσαν, "ὡς οὐκ ἔστι λέουσι καὶ ἀνδράσιν ὄρκια πιστά, οὐδὲ λύκοι τε καὶ ἄρνες ὁμόφρονα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν, ἀλλὰ κακὰ φρονέουσι διαμπερὲς ἀλλήλοισιν. ὡς οὐκ ἔστ' ἐμὲ καὶ σὲ φιλήμεναι, οὔτε τι νῶϊν ὄρκια ἔσονται, πρὶν ἢ ἕτερόν πεσόντα αἵματος ἄσαι "Ἀρηα" (...).

341. Olympiodorus, *in Meteor.* 21.25-27; cf. Aristotle, *De Caelo* 269a30 ff; David, *Prol.* 28.34, 151.13-17; See also Philoponus, *in Meteor.* 11.20-37; *in Nicom. Isag.* I.γ.46-54, I.δ.4-5; cf. Syrianus ap. Simplicium *in de Cael.* 397.29-32. For more details on the matter see E. Tempelis (1998), 139, n. 639.

342. E. Tempelis, *ibid.*

343. Philoponus, *in Meteor.* 9.31-32, 12.24-32, 117.13-19; *Aet.* 486.16-23; *in de An.* 56.19-34, 138.30-139.5, 141.3-4, 260.14-25, 595.33-598.7; cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* II.2.1; Syrianus ap. Simplicium *in de Cael.* 397.29-32; Simplicius, *in de Cael.* 382.8 ff. Cf. Ph. Merlan (1935); R.L. Cardullo (1986), 121; E. Tempelis, *ibid.*

344. Philoponus, *in de An.* 260.18-25.

345. Olympiodorus, *in Phaed.* 4 § 9; cf. Ammonius, *Prol. in Isag.* 10.7 ff.

346. J.F. Finamore (1985), 144-146.

347. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.105.

348. Heraclitus, *Alleg.* 3.1: Τίς οὖν ἐπὶ τούτοις Ὅμηρον ἀσεβῆ λέγειν τολμᾷ;
Ζεὺ κύδιστε, μέγιστε, κελαινεφές, αἰθέρι ναίων,
Ἡέλιος θ', ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷς καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούεις,
καὶ ποταμοί, καὶ γαῖα, καὶ οἱ ὑπένερθε καμόντες
ἀνθρώπους τίνυσθον, ὅστις καὶ ἐπίορκον ὁμόσση,
ὕμεις μάρτυροι ἔστε

τῆς Ὀμήρου θεοσεβοῦς προαιρέσεως, ὅτι πάθεσιν ἐξαιρέτοις ἅπαν νεωκορεῖ τὸ δαιμόνιον, ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτός ἐστι θεῖος.

349. Heraclitus, *Alleg.* 23.1-6: Ἄρ' οὖν, εἴ τις θέλοι τάληθες ἐξετάζειν, οὐχὶ καὶ ταῦτα τὰ στοιχεῖα παρ' Ὀμήρῳ φιλοσοφεῖται; καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν Ἡρας δεσμών, ἐν οἷς ἡ τάξις ἀλληγόρηται τῶν τεττάρων στοιχείων, εὐκαιρότερον αὐθις ἐροῦμεν· νῦν δ' ἀποχρώσιν οἱ κατὰ τὴν τρίτην ῥαψωδίαν ὄρκοι τὸ λεγόμενον ὑφ' ἡμῶν βεβαιῶσαι·

Ζεὺ κύδιστε, μέγιστε, κελαινεφές, αἰθέρι ναίων,
Ἡέλιος θ', ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷς καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούεις,
καὶ ποταμοί, καὶ γαῖα, καὶ οἱ ὑπένερθε καμόντες
ἀνθρώπους τίνυσθον, ὅστις καὶ ἐπίορκον ὁμόσση.

Πρῶτον ἐπικαλεῖται τὸν ὀξύτατον αἰθέρα τὴν ἀνωτάτω τάξιν εἰληχότα· πυρὸς γὰρ εἰλικρινῆς φύσις, ἅτ' οἶμαι κουφοτάτη, τὸν ὑψηλότερον ἀποκεκλήρωται χῶρον. Εἴη δ' ἂν οἶμαι τοῦτο Ζεὺς ἐπώνυμος, ἦτοι τὸ ζῆν παρεχόμενος ἀνθρώποις ἢ παρὰ τὴν ἔμπυρον ζέσιν οὕτως ὀνομασμένος.

350. Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Odys.* 12.374-75 Vd (ed. Schrader): (...) τὸ γὰρ πάντα δηλοῖ τὰ πλεῖστα· (...) πάντα μὲν γὰρ ἐφορᾷ, οὐ κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ καιρὸν πάντα ἐποπτεύει. According to the version of B, the remark that the Sun sees everything, but not at the same time, belongs to Aristotle.

351. P. Courcelle (1967), 166.

352. Proclus, *In Crat.* 37.8.

353. Olympiodorus, *In Phaed.*, 26.22-26.

354. See frs. 48 Rose, 903 Gigon and 24 Ross.

355. J. Gruber (1978), 385.

356. For Boethius' intellectual and philosophical background, as well as for his attitude towards both Christian and secular tradition, see G.J.P. O'Daly (1991), 8-14, 24-6.

357. R. Lamberton (1986, 49) argues that "*the direct evidence for an allegorical understanding of the passages cited is slight. Most of his citations of Homer are purely rhetorical and decorative*". But even in this case, Homer's perception, limited in its dimensions though it might be, is a fact not to be neglected.

358. R. Lamberton (1986), 45.

359. P. Courcelle (1969), 15-16, 19-26, where the corresponding bibliography.

360. For the width and the depth of Macrobius' knowledge of Homer, see J. Flamant (1973), 2, 232, 291-292.

361. *Anthologiae Graecae Appendix*, 64.2-3.

362. *Scholia in Lucianum*, 20.14.5-6, 21.30.16-17.

363. Lucian, *De salt.* 62: (sc. ἡ ὄρχησις) κινήμασι τὰ ἀδόμενα δείξειν ὑπισχνεῖται, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἔφη ὁ πυθικὸς χρησμὸς, δεῖ τὸν θεώμενον ὄρχησιν καὶ "κωφοῦ" συνιέναι καὶ μὴ "λαλέοντος" "τοῦ ὄρχηστοῦ" ἀκούειν.

364. Origen, *C. Cels.* II 9: κατὰ (...) Ἕλληνας ὁ λέγων οἶδα - ἀκούω θεὸς νενομίσται.

365. Eusebius, *Praep. evang.* V, 34,1: ἐπεὶ (...) οὐ μόνους ποητὰς, ἤδη καὶ πύκτας καὶ ἀθλητὰς ὁ θαυμάσιος θεὸς διὰ τῶν οἰκείων χρησμῶν ἐξεθέωσεν, εἰκότως μοι δοκεῖ καὶ ταῦτα ἀπέλεγχεν ὁ δεδηλωμένος τούτοις τοῖς ῥήμασιν "ὡς εἰδὼς ψάμμου τ' ἀριθμὸν καὶ μέτρα θαλάσσης καὶ κωφοῦ ξυνιείς καὶ λαλέοντος ἀκούω".

366. Fr. 48 Rose.

367. See John Philoponus, *De intell.* 18.26-28, 24.60-65; cf. W. Charlton (1991), p. 13 of his introduction.

368. See F. Buffière's comment *ad loc.*

369. Cf. O. Kuisma (1997), 85, 92.

370. Here I include two passages from Syrianus' exegesis, as they both refer to the myth of Helen.

371. *In Phaedr.* 75.1-26.

372. *Op. cit.* 76.24-27: Δυνατὸν δὲ ἐτέρως τὴν ἀνάπτυξιν ποιησάμενον περὶ τῆς τυφλότητος ἀνάπαλιν τὴν τάξιν τῶν ἀνδρῶν δεῖξαι, ὑπέρτερον μὲν πάντων τὸν Ὅμηρον ὑφειμένον δὲ τὸν Στησίχορον, καταδεέστερον δὲ πάντων τὸν Σωκράτην.

373. For Syrianus' treatment of the *Palinodia*, see also H. Bernard (1997), 45-50; nevertheless, H. Bernard regards the treatment, as well as the whole of the commentary, Hermias' contribution to the history of ideas. I have discussed my objections to the theory in 1.1 of my thesis; as far as the treatment of the Palinode is concerned, H. Bernard is doing no more than analysing the text.

374. *Agam.* 686-90: τὰν δοριγαμβρον ἀμφινεῖ-
κεῖ θ' Ἑλένην; ἐπεὶ προπόντως
ἐλένας ἔλανδρος ἐλέ-
πτολις ἐκτεῶν ἀβροσίμων
προκαλυμμάτων ἔπλευσεν.

For the misery Helen brought, cf. also 403-408, 737-750.

375. For the chronology of both the *Electra* and the *Helena*, see M.J. Cropp (1988), pp. I-li of the introduction.

376. G. Zuntz (1955), 65.

377. For Herodotus' version of Helen's trip to Egypt, see N. Austin (1994), 118-136.

378. M.J. Cropp (1988), 187.

379. fr. 1082: Ζεὺς γὰρ κακὸν μὲν Τρωσὶ, πῆμα δ' Ἑλλάδι
θέλων γενέσθαι ταῦτ' ἐβούλευσεν πατήρ

380. *Or.* 1639-42: ἐπεὶ θεοὶ τῶ τῆσδε καλλιστεύματι
Ἑλληνας εἰς ἓν καὶ Φρύγας συνήγαγον
θανάτους τ' ἔθηκαν ὡς ἀπαντλοῖεν χθονὸς
ὑβρισμα θνητῶν ἀφθόνου πληρώματος.

381. F. Jouan (1966), 52.

382. According to LSJ, the word εἶδωλον has the meaning "phantom", which Homer probably meant, but without giving it the interpretation which Syrianus did. In all probability, Syrianus considered the word's meaning to be "image in the mind, phantom of the mind, fancy", like Xenophon in his *Symposium*, 4.21.

383. P. Oxy. 2506, fr. 26, col. i = Stesichorus, fr. 193 PMG.

384. D.L. Page (1963), *ad loc.*

385. It is not very probable that Syrianus was familiar with the text of Herodotus as a whole; C. Ehrhardt (1988), cols. 854-856 has shown that even writers earlier than Syrianus, such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and the writer of the *De sublimitate* knew Herodotus only *grosso modo*. Lucian's quotations are likely to have derived from Anthologies, while Hermogenes himself seemed to know Herodotus in rough lines. In Greek philosophical tradition Herodotus' work was used as material for philosophical debates, like those about the truth of oracles, dreams etc. Chrysippus, as we learn from Cicero (*Tusc.* 1, 45.108), had collected some patterns frequently used by their antecedents. Consequently, Syrianus is more likely to have known only the most famous parts of the Herodotean work, through indirect transmission.

386. Herodotus is mentioned in the *In Phaedrum* twice (28.19, 96.27), and only once in the *In Hermogenem* (*In de Ideis* 76.21).

387. *Schol. in Ael. Aristid.* 3.150; cf. N. Austin (1994), 98.

388. For Helen's divinisation see Theocritus, *Id.* XVIII 43-48, Plutarch, *De Herod. malign.* 857b. A.S.F. Gow (1950), 358, points out that the afore-mentioned lines from Theocritus plainly relate to a cult of Helen in Sparta.

389. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 47-48.

390. The recent evidence concerning Zeus' allegorical identification with Air and Nous, which comes from the Derveni papyrus (col. 7 Laks and Most = col. II ZPE) does not eliminate the validity of this remark for many reasons: first, the Derveni papyrus is a problematic text in itself and there are many things to be clarified as to its authorship and its content. Secondly, even if we accept that the Derveni papyrus evidence speaks of an allegorisation that goes as early as 420 B.C., this is not sufficient evidence for a

systematic application of the Homeric myths to the sphere of transcendent metaphysics. For a new translation of the fragment in question and of its attempt at allegory, see R. Janko (2001), 21 and 26.

391. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 66-67.

392. Cf. *op. cit.*, 92-95.

393. Cf. F. Buffière (1956), 410-413; P. Bielmeier (1930), 84; A.D.R. Sheppard, (1980a), 66-67.

394. For a brief yet comprehensive description of the meaning of the term φαντασία in Greek philosophy, see A.D.R. Sheppard (1994), 15-18.

395. See above, Chapter 2, passage 3.

396. C.O. Brink (1985), 365-66, where the ancient sources and the corresponding modern bibliography.

397. See O. Crusius (1889).

398. Porphyrio, *In de arte poetica* 357.

399. C.O. Brink, *op. cit.*, 366.

400. Cf. frs. 7-8 Nardelli, which describe Homer and Archilochus as "good poets", by contrast to the "bad poets". As M.L. Nardelli says in her comment *ad loc.*, Choerilus is the most probable "suspect" to bear the characterisation of the bad poet. For Anaximenes' and Choerilus' fame as bad poets, see also pp. 232-233 of R. Janko's 2000 edition of the *De poematis* Book I.

401. R. Janko, *op. cit.*, 366.

402. See A. Lesky (1963), 278. W. Richter (1960), 41, n. 3 calls Choerilus "*den höfischen Schmeichler Alexanders, das notorische Spottbild eines Pseudodichters*".

403. "Longinus", *De subl.* 33.5.

404. W.R. Roberts (1907), 241, remarks that the eulogistic half of Longinus' sentence seems perhaps more obviously true of Pindar than of Sophocles.

405. For the dating of "Longinus'" work, see D.A. Russell's edition (1964), p. xxix of the introduction.

406. Cf. Aristotle, *De arte poetica*, *passim*.

407. Cf. Hesiod, *Op.* 1-2:

Μούσαι Περιήθεν ἀοιδῆσι κλείουσαι
δεῦτε, Δί' ἐνέπετε, σφέτερον πατέρ' ὑμέουσαι

The poet's close relation to the Muses can be found in epic and lyric poetry. For example, in the *Theog.* 1-4 we read:

Μουσαίων Ἑλικωνιάδων ἀρχώμεθ' ἀείδειν,
αἶθ' Ἑλικῶνος ἔχουσιν ὄρος μέγα τε ζάθεόν τε

καὶ τε περὶ κρήνην ἰοειδέα πόσσ' ἀπαλοῖσιν
ὄρχεῦνται καὶ βωμὸν ἐρισθενέος Κρονίωνος
Archilochus in fr. 1W says:

εἰμὶ δ' ἐγὼ θεράπων μὲν Ἐνυαλίῳ ἄνακτος
καὶ Μουσέων ἐρατὸν δῶρον ἐπιστάμενος

For this motif cf. also R. Lamberton (1986), 4.

408. Heraclitus, *Alleg.* 77.1-11: Συνεχῶς οὖν καθάπερ εἰς χῶρον αὐτῷ συνήθη τὸν Ἑλικώνιον ἐφίσταται λέγων·

Ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι,
οἵτινες ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν καὶ κοῖρανοι ἦσαν.

Ἡ πάλιν ἠνίκα τῆς Ἀγαμέμνονος ἀνδραγαθίας ἐνάρχεται τὸν τρισὶ θεοῖς ἦρωα
σύμμορφον ὕμνων·

Ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι,
ὄστις δὴ πρῶτος Ἀγαμέμνονος ἀντίος ἦλθεν.

Ἄλλ' ὃ γε θαυμαστὸς Πλάτων ἐν τῷ περικαλλεῖ Φαίδρῳ τῆς σώφρονος ὑπὲρ ἐρώτων
διακρίσεως ἀρχόμενος ἐτόλμησεν, ὡς ὁ Λοκρὸς Αἴας ἐν τῷ παρθενῶνι τῆς ἀγιωτάτης
θεᾶς, ἄγος τι Μουσῶν κατασπείσας, τὰς σώφρονας ἔργων ἀσελγῶν καλεῖσαι βοηθοῦς·

Ἄγετε δὴ, Μοῦσαι, εἴτε δι' ᾤδῆς εἶδος λιγυῖαι εἴτε διὰ γένος τι μουσικὸν
ταύτην ἔσχετε τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν, σύμμοι λάβεσθε τοῦ μύθου.

Περὶ τίνος, εἵποισ' ἄν, ὃ θαυμασιώτατε Πλάτων; ὑπὲρ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς τῶν ὄλων φύσεως
ἢ περὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάττης; ἀλλ' οὐδὲ περὶ ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης οὐδ' ὑπὲρ ἀπλανῶν τε καὶ
πλανήτων κινήσεως. Ἄλλὰ τί τῆς εὐχῆς πέρας ἐστίν, αἰσχύνομαι καὶ λέγειν·

Ἦν δὲ παῖς οὕτω καλός, μᾶλλον δὲ μειρακίσκος, οὐ πολλοὶ μὲν ἦσαν ἐρασταί,
εἰς δὲ τις αἰμύλος. ὃς ἐπεπείκει αὐτὸν ἐρώων ὅτι οὐκ ἐρῶη καὶ ποτε αὐτὸν αἰτῶν
ἔλεγεν...

Ὡδε γυμνοῖς τοῖς ὄμμασι τὴν ἀσελγειαν ὡς ἐπὶ τέγους ἀνέφξεν, οὐδ' εὐπρεπεῖ
σχήματι τὸ τοῦ πράγματος αἰσχρὸν ὑποκλέψας.

409. Heraclitus, *Alleg.* 78.1: Τοιγαροῦν εἰκότως ὁ μὲν Ὀμήρου λόγος ἡρώων ἐστὶ
βίος, οἱ δὲ Πλάτωνος διάλογοι μειρακίων ἔρωτες.

410. The problem of why Parmenides wrote in verse was dealt with by E.D. Floyd
(1992), 251-265. In this article Floyd tries to prove that only verse was suitable for the
right expression of Parmenides' ideas.

411. Here I include two passages from Syrianus' exegesis, as they both refer to
Zeus' properties.

412. H.-D. Saffrey (1992), 43.

413. O. Tsagarakis (1977), 1-33. For Zeus' superiority, see especially pp. 1-8, and
for his relation to the other gods, see pp. 27-33.

414. Plato, *Symp.* 180d 3-10: πάντες γὰρ ἴσμεν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνευ Ἐρωτος
Ἀφροδίτη. μῖς μὲν οὐσης εἰς ἄν ἦν Ἐρως· ἐπεὶ δὲ δὴ δύο ἐστὸν, δύο ἀνάγκη καὶ
Ἐρωτε εἶναι. πῶς δ' οὐ δύο τῷ θεᾷ; ἢ μὲν γέ που πρεσβυτέρα καὶ ἀμήτωρ οὐρανοῦ
θυγάτηρ, ἦν δὴ καὶ Οὐρανίαν ἐπονομάζομεν· ἢ δὲ νεωτέρα Διδς καὶ Δωδώνης, ἦν δὴ
Πάνδημον καλοῦμεν.

415. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 71.

416. Plotinus, *Enn.* III 5.2.14ff.
417. Proclus, *Hymn II* 11.4-6; cf. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 71.
418. Proclus, *In Remp.* 147.6-148.13; cf. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 83.
419. See *PT*, vol. I, pp. lxxv-lxxvii of the introduction.
420. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 65.
421. See J.M. Dillon's 1973 edition of the fragments of Iamblichus' commentaries on Plato, pp. 48-49 of his introduction; see also p. 251 (referring to fr. 3 of Iamblichus' *In Phaedrum*) as well. Cf. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 65, n. 67; also 87, 92-95.
422. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.97.
423. Heraclitus, *Alleg.* 41.3-5: Διευπορῶν γέ τοι καὶ ἐπὶ καλοῖς ἀλληγορικῶς παριστάναι βουλόμενος ταυτί τὰ στοιχεῖα, καὶ μετ' ὀλίγον ἐν τοῖς Ποσειδῶνος πρὸς Ἴριον λόγοις αὐτὰ ταῦθ' ὑφίσταται λέγων·
 Ἦ τοι ἐγὼν ἔλαχον πολιὴν ἄλα ναιέμεν αἰεὶ
 παλλομένων, Ἄιδης δ' ἔλαχε ζόφον ἠερόεντα,
 Ζεὺς δ' ἔλαχ' οὐρανὸν εὐρὸν ἐν αἰθέρι καὶ νεφέλησιν·
 γαῖα δ' ἔτι ξυνή πάντων καὶ μακρὸς Ὀλυμπος.
 Οὐ μὰ Δί' οὐ κλήρος ὁ μυθευόμενος ἐν Σικυῶνι ταῦτα καὶ διαιρέσεις ἀδελφῶν οὕτως ἀνώμαλος, ὡς οὐρανὸν ἀντιθεῖναι θαλάττῃ καὶ ταρτάρῳ. Πᾶς γὰρ ὁ μῦθος ἠλληγόρηται περὶ τῶν ἐπ' ἀρχαῖς τεττάρων στοιχείων.
424. For Stoic terminology, see D. Tsekourakis (1974).
425. Cf. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 87.
426. *ibid.*
427. Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.23.
428. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 1.197.1-15.
429. Plutarch, *Quomodo adulescens poetas audire debeat* 35f-36a.
430. Lucian, *De astrol.* 22.7-16.
431. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *De Demosthenis dictione* 178.21 - 179.12: ἐγὼ τὴν μὲν ἐν τοῖς διαλόγοις δεινότητα τοῦ ἀνδρὸς καὶ μάλιστα ἐν οἷς ἂν φυλάττῃ τὸν Σωκρατικὸν χαρακτήρα, ὥσπερ ἐν Φιλήβῳ, πάνυ ἄγαμαί τε καὶ τεθαύμακα, τῆς δ' ἀπειροκαλίας αὐτὸν οὐδεπώποτ' ἐζήλωσα τῆς ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθέτοις κατασκευαῖς, ὥσπερ ἔφην καὶ πρότερον, καὶ πάντων ἥκιστα ἐν οἷς ἂν εἰς πολιτικὰς ὑποθέσεις συγκαθεῖς ἐγκώμια καὶ ψόγους κατηγορίας τε καὶ ἀπολογίας ἐπιχειρῆ γράφειν. ἕτερος γὰρ τις αὐτοῦ γίνεται τότε καὶ καταισχύνει τὴν φιλόσοφον ἀξίωσιν. κάμοι γε πολλάκις ἐπῆλθεν εἰπεῖν ἐπὶ τῶν τοιούτων αὐτοῦ λόγων, ὃ πεποιῆται παρ' Ὀμήρῳ πρὸς τὴν Ἀφροδίτην ὁ Ζεὺς λέγων·
 οὗ τοι τέκνον ἐμὸν δέδοται πολεμῆια ἔργα
 ἀλλὰ σὺ γ' ἡμερόεντα μετέρχεο ἔργα γάμοιο
 Σωκρατικῶν διαλόγων, ταῦτα δὲ πολιτικοῖς καὶ ῥήτορσιν ἀνδράσι μελήσει.

432. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 2.82.4-5.
433. *Op. cit.*, 2.117.17-19.
434. See A.S.J. Madigan (1986), 149-171.
435. See, for example, Strabo, *Geogr.* 1.2.20 and 7.3.2; also Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 3.425.18-23.
436. Lucianus, *Icaromen.* 11.17-23.
437. Lucianus, *Hist. conscr.* 49.1-6.
438. For Plato's reservations concerning poetry, especially as expressed in Book X of the *Republica*, and for his ideas on inspiration see my discussion in chapter 1.1.
439. See above, passage 31.
440. For example, Diodorus of Sicily (*Bibl. hist.* 4.25.1.8-9) says that Orpheus is Musaeus' son; also Claudius Aelianus, *Var. hist.* 14.21.1-3 and Flavius Philostratus, *Her.* 693.3-4. For a brief, yet illuminating discussion on Musaeus, see M.L. West (1983), 39-44.
441. For instance, Plato in the *Ion* 536b refers to poetic madness sent by Orpheus, Musaeus and Homer. Aristophanes (*Ranae* 1030-1037) has the first literary evidence for Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer together as men who performed great services to mankind. Moreover, Diodorus of Sicily in his talk of Greek sages who are linked with Egypt (*Bibl. Hist.* 1.96.1-6) mentions Orpheus, Musaeus and Homer as a part of a list of men, either mythological or historical, who were involved either in letters or in science and, of course, offered much to civilisation. Even the Christian Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* 5.4.24.1-2) accepts that some pagan figures spoke adequately of the divine and includes among them Orpheus, Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer.
442. On the importance of the monad and the dyad in Syrianus' philosophical system, see A.D.R. Sheppard (1982a). On the function and the importance of numbers one, two, three and four in the Pythagoreans and on Pythagorean number theory, see J.A. Philip (1966), 76-109, esp. 79.
443. *In Remp.* 2.312.17-19.
444. *In Cael.* 7.560.20-21: τῶν δὲ ἄλλων πρώτους φυσιολογῆσαι Ὀρφέα καὶ Μουσαῖον λέγειν εἰκόσ, οἵτινες πλὴν τοῦ πρώτου πάντα γενέσθαι λέγουσι. δῆλον δὲ ὅτι διὰ μύθων οὗτοι θεολογοῦντες γένεσιν ἐκάλουν (...)
445. See L. Brisson (1987), 43-103; cf. C. Faraggiana di Sarzana (1987) and O. Kuisma (1997), 56-57.
446. For Night in the *Derveni papyrus*, see col. XIV (Laks and Most 1998) = col. X (ZPE 1982). For the role of Night in Orphism, see M.L. West (1983), 70-73, 85-88, 98-101, 116-121.
447. R. Janko (1992b), commenting on XIV 200-207
448. Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Iliad.* 8.1 Schrader.

449. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 95-103, 171-182.
450. R.D. Lambertson (1986), 4.
451. For theurgy and divination see H.-D. Saffrey (1981, 153-169 = 1990, 33-49) and (1984a, 61-171 = 1990, 51-61). For prophetic dreams see also E. Tempelis (1998), 150, n. 695.
452. *In Phaedr.* 70.10-13.
453. Plato, *Phaedr.* 242c-d.
454. *Op. cit.*, 265 b-c.
455. For God's knowledge in time see, E. Tempelis (1998), 124-133.
456. First of all, we find it in Hesiod's *Theog.* 31 and 38 and also in the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* 38-39 and 94-97; in those cases the reference is not to Kalchas, but to the Muses' knowledge of the past, present and future. This quality, indicated by the same verse, is also attributed to the Muses by Aelius Aristides (*Περὶ τοῦ παραφθέγματος* 370). Thales is said to have extended his knowledge to include not only the present, as Diodorus of Sicily and Diogenes Laertius inform us (*Bibl. Hist.* 9.3 and *Vitae philos.* 1.33 respectively). Of course, in other writers the verse is quoted with reference to Kalchas' abilities (see, for example, Lucianus *De Salt.* 36.4-6).
457. Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Iliad.* 19.79.40-41.
458. John Philoponus, *De opif. mundi* 187.10-13.
459. Olympiodorus, *In Meteora* 1.7.
460. Elias, *Prol. philos.* 10.24.
461. See R.T. Wallis (1972), 130; cf. M. Mignucci (1985), 225 and E. Tempelis (1998), 148-151.
462. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.115: Τῆς δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ διανοίας ἔχεται καὶ ἡ πρόνοια καὶ ἡ εἰμαρμένη, περὶ ὧν εἰρηναῖοι λόγοι πολλοὶ παρὰ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις. τούτων δὲ πάντων τὰς ἀφορμὰς Ὅμηρος παρέσχε. τὰ μὲν γὰρ τῆς προνοίας τῶν θεῶν τί ἂν καὶ λέγοι τις, ὅπου διὰ πάσης τῆς ποιήσεως οὐ μόνον πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνθρώπων διαλέγονται, ἀλλὰ καὶ καταβάντες ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὁμιλοῦσιν;
463. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 49-58.
464. *Op. cit.*, 58-62.
465. For this particular connection see A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 70. For the Monad, which, according to Syrianus, stands for procession, and the Dyad, which stands for reversion, as well as for Proclus' relevant doctrines of πέρας and ἀπειρία, see A.D.R. Sheppard (1982a), 1-17.
466. J. B. Hainsworth (1993), commenting *ad loc.*

467. For details of the Meleager story as presented in Homer, see J.B. Hainsworth (1993), commenting on IX 524-605 (pp. 130-132).

468. See passage 11.

469. Plutarch, *De Alexandri magni fortuna aut virtute* 331d.

470. Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 14.33.30-32.

471. Aelius Aristides, *Πρὸς Πλάτωνα περὶ ῥητορικῆς* 22.31-32.

472. Dio Chrysostomus, *Orat.* 2.31.1.

473. Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Iliad.* 9.186.6-9.

474. Porphyry, *De abstin.* 1.36.1-5: οὕτως γὰρ καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἀκούομεν κλέα ἀνδρῶν, Πυθαγορείων τε καὶ σοφῶν· ὧν οἱ μὲν τὰ ἐρημότατα χωρία κατῴκουν, οἱ δὲ καὶ τῶν πόλεων τὰ ἱερὰ καὶ τὰ ἄλση, ἐξ ὧν ἡ πᾶσα ἀπελήλαται τύρβη. Πλάτων δὲ καὶ τὴν Ἀκαδημειαν οἰκεῖν εἶλετο.

475. Proclus, *In Remp.* I.58.10-15: καὶ γὰρ καὶ οὗτός ἐστιν παιδείας τις τρόπος τοῖς ἀρχαίοις μάλιστα συνήθης, διὰ δὴ τινὰ πείραν τῶν κατ' ἀρετὴν ζησάντων ὀδηγεῖν ἄλλους κατὰ τὴν ἐκείνων μίμησιν εἰς ἀρετὴν· οἶον δηλοῖ καὶ ἐκεῖνος παρὰ τῷ ποιητῇ λέγων οὕτω·

καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπευθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν.

476. *Op. cit.*, I.145.23-146.5: πῶς δὲ ὁ Φοῖνιξ φιλοχρηματίας διδάσκαλος, ἔθος τι παλαιὸν Ἑλληνικὸν ἀποπληροῦν κελεύων; ο ὕ τ ω γάρ, φησί,

καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπευθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν,

δωρητοὶ τ' ἐπέλοντο παραρητοὶ τ' ἐπέεσιν.

ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τοῖς ἡρωϊκοῖς πρέποντα χρόνοις καὶ τοῖς ἔθεσιν, οἷς ἐκεῖνοι πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐχρῶντο, τῆς ἀκροτάτης ἡξίωται παρ' Ὀμήρῳ μιμήσεως. τοῖς δὲ παρ' ἡμῖν τρεφομένοις νέοις πολλοῦ δεῖ τὰ τοιαῦτα προσήκειν, οἷς οὐδὲν ἔργον ὑπὸ τοῦ νομοθέτου προστέτακται πλὴν τῆς παιδείας καὶ τῆς εἰς ἀρετὴν ἀγωγῆς· χρημάτων δὲ ἐπιμέλεια καὶ τῶν ἀναγκαιῶν τοῖς τὸν θνητὸν βίον διαζῶσιν φροντίς ἄλλοις παραδέδοται τοῖς εἰς τὴν κάτω πόλιν τελοῦσιν.

477. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 1.211.23-26.

478. *Op. cit.*, 1.601.19-21.

479. *Op. cit.*, 2.694.12-14.

480. Photius (or some anonymous scribe) most probably made a mistake, having ἀνακηκίει in his mind; thus the editor has rightly deleted the ἀνακηκεῖ.

481. For the context of this use see T.S. Baxter (1992), 48-51. See also D. Sedley (1998).

482. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 91.

483. Heraclitus, *Alleg.* 21.1-22.1: Βαρυτάτον δ' ἔγκλημα κατὰ Ὅμηρον καὶ πάσης καταδίκης ἄξιον, εἴπερ ἄρα μεμύθευκεν ὡς ἐν τοῖς ἐφεξῆς ἐνεστὶν εὐρεῖν, ὅτε τῶν ἀπάντων ἡγεμόνα

ξυνδήσαι Ὀλύμπιοι ἤθελον ἄλλοι,
Ἥρη τ' ἠδὲ Ποσειδάων καὶ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη.
Ἄλλὰ σὺ τὸν γ' ἐλθοῦσα, θεά, ὑπελύσασο δεσμῶν
ὧχ' ἐκατόγχειρον καλέσασ' ἐς μακρὸν Ὀλυμπον,
ὃν Βριάρεων καλέουσι θεοὶ, ἄνδρες δέ τε πάντες
Αἰγαιῶν· ὁ γὰρ αὐτε βίη οὐ πατρὸς ἀμείνων.

Ἐν τούτοις τοῖς στίχοις ἀξιόσ ἐστὶν Ὅμηρος οὐκ ἐκ μίας τῆς Πλάτωνος ἐλαύνεσθαι πολιτείας, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ Ἡρακλέους φασὶν ἐσχάτας στήλας καὶ τὴν ἄβατον Ὠκεανοῦ θάλασσαν.

Ζεὺς γὰρ ὀλίγου δεσμῶν πεπειράται, καὶ τὴν ἐπιβουλήν αὐτῷ συνιστᾶσιν οὐχ οἱ Τιτᾶνες οὐδὲ τὸ κατὰ Παλλήνην θράσος Γιγάντων, ἀλλ' Ἥρα, διπλοῦν ὄνομα, φύσεως καὶ συμβιώσεως, ὁ τ' ἀδελφὸς Ποσειδῶν, ἐξ ἴσου νεμηθεὶς ἅπαντα καὶ οὐχὶ τοῦ διαμαρτεῖν ἧς ὠφελεε τιμῆς ἠξιῶσθαι κατὰ τοῦ πλεονεκτήσαντος ἡγανακτικῶς, τρίτη δ' Ἀθηνᾶ, διὰ μίας ἐπιβουλῆς εἰς πατέρα καὶ μητέρα δυσσεβοῦσα. Νομίζω δ' ἔγωγε τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς Διὶ τὴν σωτηρίαν ἀπρεπεστέραν· Θέτις γὰρ αὐτὸν ἀπήλλαξε τῶν δεσμῶν καὶ Βριάρεως· ἀπρεπεῖς δ' αἱ τοιαῦται ἐλπίδες, ὡς τοιούτων δεηθῆναι συμμάχων.

Ταύτης τοίνυν τῆς ἀσεβείας ἐν ἔστιν ἀντιφάρμακον, ἐὰν ἐπιδείξωμεν ἡλληγορημένον τὸν μῦθον· ἡ γὰρ ἀρχέγονος ἀπάντων καὶ πρεσβυτέρα φύσις ἐν τούτοις τοῖς ἔπεσι θεολογεῖται.

Cf. also *op. cit.*, 25.1: Λοιπὸν οὖν σκοποῦμεν, εἰ ἡ κατὰ Διδὸς ἐπιβουλή τῶν στοιχείων ἐστὶν ἀπαριθμησις καὶ φυσικωτέρας ἅπτεται θεωρίας and *op. cit.* 25.6-7: Διὰ τούτων τοίνυν τῶν ἐπῶν μέλλουσιν τινὰ ταραχὴν ἐν τοῖς ὄλοις Ὅμηρος ὑποσημαίνει· Ζεὺς γὰρ, ἡ δυνατωτάτη φύσις, ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιβουλεύεται στοιχείων, Ἥρας μὲν, τοῦ ἀέρος, Ποσειδῶνος δέ, τῆς ὑγρᾶς φύσεως, Ἀθηνᾶς δέ, τῆς γῆς, ἐπεὶ δημιουργός ἐστιν ἀπάντων καὶ θεὸς ἐργάνῃ.

484. Ammonius, *In Isag.* 9.7-24.

485. Elias, *Prolog.* 23.31 - 24.5.

486. G.S. Kirk (1985), commenting *ad loc.*

487. *Resp.* 389a: Οὔτε ἄρα ἀνθρώπους ἀξιόσ λόγου κρατούμενος ὑπὸ γέλωτος ἂν τις ποιῆ, ἀποδεκτέον, πολὺ δὲ ἤττον, ἂν θεοῦσ. Πολὺ μὲντοι, ἢ δ' ὅσ. Οὐκ οὖν Ὅμηρον οὐδὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα [ἀποδεξώμεθα περὶ θεῶν],

ἄσβεστος δ' ἄρ' ἐνώρτο γέλωσ μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν,

ὡς ἴδον Ἥφαιστον δώματα ποιπνύοντα,

οὐκ ἀποδεκτέον κατὰ τὸν σὸν λόγον.

488. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.214: Οὐδὲν δὲ ἔλασσον καὶ ἡ κωμῶδια ἐνθένδε ποθὲν ἔλαβε τὴν ἀφορμὴν· εὐρε γὰρ ὅτι καὶ παρ' <αὐ> τῷ τὰ σεμνότατα καὶ ὑψηλότατα διηγουμένῳ ἐπεισόδια τινὰ ἔστι γέλωτα κινούντα, ὡσπερ ἐν τῇ Ἰλιάδι ὁ μὲν Ἥφαιστος χωλεύων εἰσάγεται, οἰνοχοῶν τοῖς θεοῖσιν,

ἄσβεστος δ' ἀρ' ἐνώρτο γέλωσ μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν (...)

τοιαύτη μὲν καὶ ἡ θυμηδία παρὰ τῷ ποιητῇ εὐρίσκεται. εἰ δὲ οἱ μετ' αὐτὸν εἰσαγαγόντες τὴν κωμῶδιαν λόγοις αἰσχροῖς καὶ ἀποκεκαλυμμένοις εἰς παρασκευὴν γέλωτος ἐχρήσαντο, οὐκ ἂν εἴποιεν ἀμεινόν τι εὐρηκέναι.

489. Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Odys.* 8.267ff.: ἐπιτιμᾶ δὲ αὐτοῖς (v. 326ff.) ὁ Ζῶϊλος, ἄτοπον εἶναι λέγων γελᾶν μὲν ἀκολάστως τοὺς θεοὺς. ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις, τὸν δ' Ἑρμῆν εὐχεσθαι, ἐναντίον τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῶν ἄλλων θεῶν ὁρώντων, δεδέσθαι σὺν τῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ. οὐκ εἰσὶ δὲ οἱ ποιητικοὶ θεοὶ φιλόσοφοι, ἄλλως τ ε κ α ἰ παίζοντες. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ κάλλος ἠθέλησε δηλῶσαι τῆς Ἀφροδίτης, ὡς καὶ ἐν Ἰλιάδι ἐπαινοῦντες οἱ δημογέροντες (Γ 146ff.).

490. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 81-82.

491. Proclus, *In Remp.* 126.5-128.23.

492. On the way Proclus deals with the divine laughter and associates it with divine providence, see A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a) and O. Kuisma (1997), 97-98.

493. Olympiodorus, *In Alc.* 176.4-5.

494. How Syrianus examines the intermediates is further explained by A.S.J. Madigan (1986).

495. See *In Phaedr.* 48.13-49.2, 76.28-31, 88.17-19, 90.16-27, 99.25-28, 147.6, 173.9-11, 213.8-9, 215.9-11, 258.1-3; cf. my passage 27.

496. Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 14.24.16-22: περιαιρουμένη γὰρ τὴν στυγνότητα ποιεῖ πρότητα καὶ χαρὰν ἐλευθέριον, ὅθεν καὶ Ὅμηρος εἰσήγαγε τοὺς θεοὺς χρωμένους ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις τῆς Ἰλιάδος τῇ μουσικῇ. μετὰ γὰρ τὴν περὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖα φιλοτιμίαν διετέλουν γὰρ ἀκροώμενοι

φόρμιγγος περικαλλέος, ἦν ἔχ' Ἀπόλλων
Μουσάων <θ'>, αἱ ἄειδον ἀμειβόμεναι ὅπῃ καλῇ.

497. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 1.248.18-21: εἰ δὲ καὶ μουσικὴ χάρις ἐπανθεῖ τῷ συμποσίῳ, προσφυῆς εἰπεῖν καὶ τὰ ἐφεξῆς, οἷον· "οὐδέ τι θυμὸς ἐδεύετο δαιτὸς ἔϊσης, οὔτε μὴν φόρμιγγος περικαλλέος, ἦν ἔχεν ὁ δεῖνα", οἷον ὁ Ἀπόλλων, "Μουσάων θ', αἱ ἄειδον ἀμειβόμεναι ὅπῃ καλῇ".

498. Homer, *Il.* XXIII 698: καὶ δ' ἄλλοφρονέοντα μετὰ σφίσιν εἶσαν ἄγοντες.

499. Homer, *Od.* X 374: ἀλλ' ἤμην ἄλλοφρονέων, κακὰ δ' ὄσσετο θυμός.

500. R. Janko (1992b), commenting on XV 244-6.

501. M. van der Valk (1964), 339.

502. Alexander of Aphrodisias, *In Met.* 307.3-14.

503. Asclepius, *In Met.* 277.27-278.6.

504. Themistius, *In de an.* 9.35-10.4.

505. Simplicius, *In de an.* 12, 26.34-27.12.

506. John Philoponus, *In de an.* 72.1-7.

507. Sophonias (*In de an.* 11.29-12.1) might have followed Themistius' paraphrase, as verbal similarities (in the commentary as a whole and at that particular point) show.

508. Theocritus, *Id.* XII 127-130:

αἶει δ' ὀξύτερω πιτύλω δηλεῖτο πρόσωπον,
μέχρι συνηλοῖησε παρήια. πᾶς δ' ἐπὶ γαίῃ
κεῖτ' ἄλλοφρονέων καὶ ἀνέσχεθε νεῖκος ἀπαυδῶν
ἀμφοτέρους ἅμα χεῖρας, ἐπεὶ θανάτου σχεδὸν ἦεν.

509. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 68.

510. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 4.201.19-203.15.

511. In Eustathius' own words in *Comm. ad Iliad.* 4.202.6-13: οὐ προσίσταται δὲ πάντως τῇ ἀλληγορίᾳ τὸ εἶτε ὑγρὸν εἶτε ὑγρόβιον τῆς Θέτιδος καὶ τῆς Εὐρυνόμης, τῆς τοῦ Ὠκεανοῦ ὕδατος θυγατρὸς. ὃν γὰρ λόγον Ἥρα ὁ θερμὸς καὶ ὑγρὸς ἀῆρ γεννᾷ Ἥφαιστον ἀλληγορικῶς, οὕτω περισφύζουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ αὐταί. αἱ γὰρ, ὡς ἐρρέθη, ἀναθυμιάσεις, δι' ὧν τὰ νέφη γίνονται, ὕλη κεραυνοῖς καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις γίνεται, δι' ὧν ἄνωθεν Ἥφαιστος κατασκήπτει.

512. See A.O. Lovejoy (1948), 3-66 and P. Lévêque (1959).

513. For example, see more details of their placement and their role in Asclepius, *In Met.* 72.9-13, 73.6-14 and 92.29-39; cf. E. Tempelis (1998), 82-83.

514. See L.S.J. s.v. ἀραρίσκω.

515. See my passage 17.

516. Herodianus, *De prosodia catholica* 3.1. 538.7-8 and *De prosodia Odysseaca* 3.2. 163.25-26.

517. It is found eleven times in the *Ilias* and no less than twenty times in the *Odyssea*; cf. G.S. Kirk (1990), commenting on V 5-6. I agree with Kirk that G.P. Shipp's view (1972, 262) that they are not traditional is rather perverse.

518. Cf. the use of the verse as a whole in the *Hymni Homericæ*, and more specifically at *In Apol.* 311. See also the use of the verse in a rather parodical way in Lucianus' *Zeus Tragicus* 25. The pattern κέκλυτέ μευ alone is also used in the *Argonautica* 281 and by Quintus Smyrnaeus in the *Posthomericæ*, 6.59 and 8.15.

519. This distinction is reminiscent of the Pythagorean lists of opposites in which male and female are included; see fr. B5 D.-K.

520. In fact, the motif in itself is as old as Homer, but was developed by rhetoric; it was very common in the great orators, such as Demosthenes, and drew the attention of rhetorical theorists such as Hermogenes.

521. Porphyry, *Quaest. Hom. ad Iliad.* 8.5.1-2: ἐν τῇ Διὸς δημηγορίᾳ οὕτως ἐχούση· κέκλυτέ μευ, πάντες τε θεοὶ πᾶσαι τε θέαιναί (...)

522. *In Tim.* 316.12-13: (...) σύμπασαν τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν θεολογίαν ἀπεφῆναμεν τῷ Διὶ τὴν ὄλην δημιουργίαν ἀπονέμουσαν (...).

523. As G.S. Kirk (1985) remarks in his commentary *ad loc.*: "There were presumably two variant and in fact contradictory stories to account for his (i.e. Hephaestus) lameness; the monumental composer uses both of them, at a long interval in the poem, to motivate first Hephaistos' role as mediator between Hera and Zeus, and then his special gratitude to Thetis".

524. Crates, fr. 12 Diehl: ἔλκε ποδὸς τεταγῶν διὰ βηλοῦ θεσπεσίοιο.

525. Diog. Laert., *Vitae philos.* 6.90.11: ἔλκε ποδὸς τεταγῶν διὰ βηλοῦ θεσπεσίοιο.

526. F. Buffière (1956), 134 ff; cf. also his comment on Heraclitus' *Alleg.* 27.

527. For Crates and Stesimbrotus as allegorists, see R. Janko (1997) and (2001).

528. Heraclitus, *Alleg.* 27: Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν περὶ Ἑφαιστοῦ φιλοσοφητέον. Ἐὼ γὰρ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος ὡς τερατεῖαν τινὰ τὴν Κράτητος φιλοσοφίαν, ὅτι Ζεὺς ἀναμέτρῃσιν τοῦ παντὸς ἐσπουδακῶς γενέσθαι δύο πυρσοῖς ἰσοδρομοῦσιν, Ἑφαιστῶ τε καὶ Ἥλιῳ, διετεκμήρατο τοῦ κόσμου τὰ διαστήματα, τὸν μὲν ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ βηλοῦ καλουμένου ῥίψας, τὸν δ' ἀπ' ἀνατολῆς εἰς δύσιν ἀφείδς φέρεσθαι· διὰ τοῦτ' ἀμφοτέρω καὶ συνεχρόνισαν, "ἅμα γὰρ ἡελίῳ καταδύντι κάμπτεσεν Ἑφαιστος ἐν Λήμνῳ". Τοῦτο τοίνυν εἴτε κοσμικὴ τις ἀναμέτρησις, εἴθ', ὃ μᾶλλον ἀληθές ἐστιν, ἀλληγορικὴ τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς πυρὸς ἀνθρώποις παράδοσις, οὐδὲν ἀσεβὲς ὑπὲρ Ἑφαιστοῦ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ λέλεκται.

529. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 1.231.17-233.37.

530. *Op. cit.*, 1.240.21-26: Ὅτι τὸ ποδὸς ῥιφῆναι τὸν Ἑφαιστον ἀπὸ βηλοῦ θεσπεσίοιο ὑπὸ τοῦ Διὸς οὐδὲν ἄλλο δηλοῖ, καθὰ καὶ προεῖρηται, ἢ ὅτι πολλάκις αἱ ἄνω ἐκπυρωθεῖσαι ἀναθυμιάσεις ἐν τοῖς μετεώροις κάτω ῥιπτοῦνται, ὡσπερ οἱ κερανοὶ καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο τοιοῦτον, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπὶ πολὺ παραμεῖναι τοῖς ἄνω τόποις τοιοῦτον Ἑφαιστον, ἀλλὰ ἢ ἄλλως ἀφανιζόμενος λύεται καὶ σκεδάζεται ἢ κάτω βάλλεται.

531. Fr. 79 Rose.

532. G.S. Kirk (1990), commenting *ad loc.*

533. Eustathius, *Comm. ad II.* 2.475.4-6: Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ - βαρὺ γὰρ τοῖς ἀδικοῦσιν ὁ ἔλεγχος - οὕτως ἄδικος φαίνεται, ὥστε καὶ τὸν Ἀντήνορα, εἰ ταῦτα σπουδάζων λέγει, ἐκπεσεῖν φησι τῶν φρενῶν.

534. *Op. cit.* 3.381.24-31: Ὅτι οὕτω θρασὺς ὁ Ἐκτωρ, ὡς καὶ ὑπόδρα ἰδεῖν τὸν σοφὸν Πολυδάμαντα καὶ αὐτὰ ἐκεῖνα εἰπεῖν ὡς ἐκ διδασκάλου πρὸς μάθησιν ἀπογραψάμενον, ὅσα καὶ ἄφρων Ἀλέξανδρος φθάσας ἔφη τῷ εἰς ἀγαθὸν συμβουλευόντι, "Πολυδάμα, σὺ μὲν οὐκέτ' ἐμοὶ φίλα ταῦτ' ἀγορεύεις". καὶ οὐκ ἐπαινεῖ [οὐδ' αὐτὸς] τὸν Πολυδάμαντα ὡς εὖ εἰπόντα, ψέγει δὲ ὡς μὴ φίλα αὐτῷ ἀγορεύοντα. Εἶτα καὶ νομίσας ἴσως ἀληθῶς ἐνδοιάσαι τὸν Πολυδάμαντὰ φησιν "οἶσθα καὶ ἄλλον μῦθον ἀμείνονα τοῦδε νοῆσαι (...)."

535. *Op. cit.* 4.33.21-25: Φησὶ γὰρ "Γλαῦκε, τίη δὲ σὺ τοῖος ἐὼν ὑπέροπλον ἔειπες; ὦ πόποι, ἢ τ' ἐφάμην σε περὶ φρένας ἔμμεναι ἄλλων, τῶν ὅσοι Λυκίην ἐριβόλακα ναιετάουσι· νῦν δὲ σευ ὠνοσάμην πάγχυ φρένας, οἶον ἔειπες". Καὶ ὄρα

σκῶμμα λεληθός.

536. D.J. O' Meara (1989), 9-29.
537. See W. Burkert (1972), *passim* and R. Lamberton (1986), 31-43, 73-76, 108-133.
538. Plutarch, *Vita Antonii* 81.5.
539. Aelius Aristides, *Εἰς Ἐτεωνέα ἐπικήδειος* 76.29-77.1: νομίσας δ'εὖ ἔχειν τὸ Ὀμηρικὸν τὸ "Οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη", καὶ τοὺς διδασκάλους τοὺς πολλοὺς εἰς ἀμαθίαν μᾶλλον φέρειν (...)
540. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ars Rhet.* 9.8.
541. Dio Chrysostom, *De Regno* 3.46.
542. Philo, *De confusione linguarum* 170; *Legatio ad Gaium* 149.
543. John Lydus, *De magistr. pop. Rom.* I.36; II.7. In the first case the Homeric verse takes the form of a proverb or at least of a common saying.
544. Zacharias, *Amm.* vv. 320-321. See E. Peterson (1935), 119, n. 63.
545. Eustathius, *Comm. ad Iliad.* 2.515.20-21: Ὡς γὰρ ἐν τοῖς κάτω οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη, οὕτω καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἄνω, καὶ πολλῶ μάλιστα ἐκεῖ.
546. Ps.-Plutarch, *De Homero* 2.145.
547. Alexander, *In Top.* 225.22-23.
548. Ammonius, *In de Int.* 96.63.
549. Asclepius, *In Met.* 17-8; 151.21; 244.3.
550. Simplicius, *In Phys.* 250.26, 256.21, 1254.14.
551. John Philoponus, *Aet.* 88.20, 179.21.
552. Olympiodorus, *in Gorg.* 202.33, 218.2-4, 221.7-21.
553. Elias, *in Cat.* 119.30-33, 138.2-3.
554. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 40.
555. H.-D. Saffrey (1987a), 205-214 and D.J. O' Meara (1989), 121-123.
556. Cf. R.E. Sinkewicz (1981), 181.
557. Syrianus, *In Met.* 80.4-7: Οὐκ εἶμι τῶν φιλαπεχθημόνων, οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ τῶν ἐν ὀλίγοις ἢ τοῖς τυχοῦσι τὸν Ἀριστοτέλη διδάσκαλον ἐπιγραφομένων, ἀλλὰ τῶν τὰς τε λογικὰς αὐτοῦ μεθόδους ὡς ἐπὶ πᾶν τεθραυμακότων καὶ τῶν τὰς ἠθικὰς τε καὶ φυσικὰς πραγματείας ὑπερφυῶς ἀποδεχομένων.

558. *In Met.* 81.9-11 and 25-31; cf. D.J. O' Meara (1989, 122), who rightly stresses Syrianus' opinion that Aristotle introduced disharmony into Pythagorean philosophy.

559. A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 43-44, 75.

560. For Proclus' treatment of Agamemnon's dream and of his debt to Syrianus on the matter, see A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 58-62. For the same issues concerning the rites in honour of Patroclus, see *op. cit.*, 74-78.

561. *Op. cit.*, 62-74.

562. *Op. cit.*, 46.

563. *Op. cit.*, 47-48.

564. O. Kuisma (1997), 92.

565. Proclus, *In Remp.* I 71.12-17; cf. O. Kuisma (1997), 51.

566. See A.D.R. Sheppard (1980a), 41.

567. *Op. cit.*, 78.

568. See M.J.B. Allen (1980); A.D.R. Sheppard (1980b); M.J.B. Allen and R.A. White (1981).

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