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Eustathian Moments

Reading Eustathius' commentaries

Eustathius' commentaries (παρεκβολαί) on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were declared by Paul Maas to be 'the most important grammatical achievement of the Middle Ages',[1] but for most modern classicists, even many 'Homerists', Eustathius remains little more than a name. There are a number of reasons for this, not least the fact that the *Odyssey* commentary must be consulted, whether online or in book-form, in an edition of 1825–1826, and even in the case of the *Iliad*, where we are lucky enough to have the edition of Marchinus van der Valk in four bulky volumes (1971–1987), one of the most extraordinary achievements of modern philology, Eustathius does not make things easy for modern readers. A very common structure in the commentaries is for 'general' discussions of a passage or episode to be followed by more detailed, often line-by-line, observations, but Eustathius also regularly goes back on himself to take a second (or third) look, refers to discussions elsewhere in the voluminous commentaries, or picks up a discussion after what looks to modern eyes like a long digression; reading Eustathius on Homer requires practice and patience, and – even then – one can often be left unsure whether Eustathius' last word on a subject has actually been found. Moreover, Eustathius fills out his discussions with a great deal of illustrative matter drawn from classical and later literature, and much of this would not pass modern tests of 'relevance'; page after page can seem filled with a miscellany which might appear to a modern classicist as

Some of the material presented here formed part of an opening lecture delivered at the conference on Eustathius in Thessaloniki in February 2015; I am very grateful to Rebecca Lämmle, Filippomaria Pontani, and a seminar audience at Venice International University for much helpful criticism of earlier versions. I am very conscious that I know far less about Byzantine culture and history than anyone who undertakes to write on this subject should know, but I hope that my essay, and this volume, will encourage other classicists to take the plunge; there is a great deal to do. Van der Valk's edition of the commentary on the *Iliad* (1971–1987) is cited throughout by author name and volume number; references to the commentaries use the traditional continuous numeration found in the editions of Stallbaum (*Odyssey*) and van der Valk (*Iliad*).

1 Maas 1973, 512. The best brief modern introduction to the commentaries is perhaps Pontani 2005, 170–178, and cf. also Pontani 2015, 385–393.

DOI 10.1515/9783110524901-002

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more 'stream of consciousness' than commentary directed to the illumination of Homer.

Beyond the sheer difficulty, a deeper reason for the relative neglect of Eustathius arises perhaps from the nature of much of what he writes. Eustathius clearly had access to collections of scholia on Homer very much like those we ourselves possess,[2] and much of the commentary repeats (often verbatim) and elaborates ancient and Byzantine views which are available to us elsewhere; this has led to the charge, the danger of which Eustathius himself acknowledged (*in Il.* 3.3–7), that he is simply an unoriginal compiler, who is not worth the time even of classicists interested in the ancient interpretation of Homer, for anything which is valuable in the *Commentaries* can be sought in, and is owed to, his sources.[3] It is easy enough to point out that such a perspective is remarkably parochial, for this modern search for 'das Eustathische in Eustathius', for his 'original' contribution to the commentaries, is to treat him merely as a source for our own interest in ancient and Byzantine Homeric criticism, and entirely to neglect the context and purpose of the παρεκβολαί. As well as Paul Maas, however, Eustathius can in fact muster some pretty heavyweight voices in his defence,[4] none more heavy perhaps than Wilamowitz, who stressed what Eustathius himself had contributed from his own learning and declared that some Byzantinist should write a proper monograph about him,[5] a wish which (I believe) remains to this day unfulfilled. Be that as it may, what should matter to us is the study of the παρεκβολαί as an extraordinary moment of Homeric reception, and one poised, as we shall see, between ancient exegesis and a much more modern way of reading Homer.

Eustathius' commentaries were based upon the teaching in rhetoric and classical literature that he gave in Constantinople over several decades before he moved to become Metropolitan of Thessaloniki (c. 1178); the commentaries

2 Cf. Van der Valk I lix–lxiv; Erbse 1950, 1–22; Pagani, this volume.

3 Notably damning is Wilson 1983, 198, who also (p. 204) cites Voltaire's 'Le secret d'ennuyer est de tout dire'; the same essentially damning view of Eustathius' Homer-commentaries appears at Reynolds-Wilson 1974, 62 (= 2013: 70–71, where, however, an acknowledgement of Eustathius' 'high level of scholarly ability' has been added). This essay will only be concerned with identifying Eustathius' 'sources' when that can help in understanding Eustathius' own methods. On the issue see also Pontani, this volume.

4 There is a helpful bibliographical guide in Kambylis 1991, 1 n.1. The attitude that classicists too often take to Byzantine culture is rightly castigated by, e.g., Alpers 1988, 348–349, and some reviews of Wilson 1983 took a similarly corrective line, cf., e.g., Speck 1986; Dyck 1986a. There is a nice appreciation of the commentaries in Browning 1992.

5 Wilamowitz 1920, 22, cf. Erbse 1950, 7; Browning 1995, 85–86. It is remarkable that exactly the same wish is expressed by Browning 1995, 90, but without reference to Wilamowitz.

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show signs of gestation and revision over a significant period, and it is also clear that he continued to add material after moving east, perhaps under the influence of access to different books.[6] We must, moreover, assume more than one audience for the commentaries. On the one hand, there will be Eustathius' students, and it is to the young that the commentaries are explicitly addressed: for them, broadly speaking, what matters is what their teacher has to say and how they can learn from him, not where his learning and material come from. There will, however, also have been Eustathius' fellow teachers and contemporary (and rival) πεπαιδευμένοι; the important element of learned display and self-fashioning on show in the commentaries may be thought primarily aimed at them, and it is perhaps not idle to recall that a particular style of modern commentary on classical texts also places a high value on the display of the commentator's learning. Moreover, claims that Eustathius seeks to conceal his sources and his debt to earlier writers and compilers can be overstated; the seriousness of the charge has certainly been exaggerated. Whether he cites his sources or not, the material in the commentaries is aimed at the benefit and education of his audience, and accurate 'footnoting', as we might call it, unsurprisingly takes second place to that.

So too, Eustathius often cites a classical author as though that author is, at that moment, in his hands or the front of his mind, whereas in fact we can establish that the citation is mediated through an anthologising source; this may be in part an *epideixis* of learning, the attempt to appear more learned than was in reality the case,[7] but it is hardly just empty show. When such citational practices are seen within a didactic context, let alone within the contemporary circumstances governing the consultation and quotation of earlier literature, the seriousness of the charge might be thought to be greatly diminished. It is obviously more impressive and memorable for students if a point is illustrated, for example, from Aristotle than from 'Aristotle reported by Strabo' or from Thucydides rather than from 'Thucydides as cited by the lexicon of Stephanus'. The fact that Eustathius does not behave entirely as a modern classical commentator might does not seem a very grave charge; what, after all, would be gained from the more 'accurate' mode of quotation? The task of establishing Eustathius' exact sources is, of course, very important for the study of Byzantine reading, scholarship and the availability of books, and Eustathius' methods can certainly lead to confusion and error, but his is a view of Greek tradition which is synoptic,

6 The most important case here is that of the citations from Athenaeus, cf. van der Valk I xvi–ii; on the period of composition of the commentaries cf. also van der Valk I cxxxvii–ix. For examples of added material cf. below pp. 30, 37n.67, 41, 44, 45, 62, 68.
7 So, e.g., Van der Valk I xlviii.

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cumulative and all-embracing, and that in itself is a very important lesson about Byzantine learning and teaching.

If a great deal, perhaps the majority, of Eustathius' work does indeed have roots in earlier critical traditions, often preserved for us by the Homeric scholia, much also extends or elaborates that inherited material in such a way that the attempt clearly to delineate 'das Eustathische' can become both fraught with difficulty and methodologically problematic. Let me offer just one example. Among the most famous similes of the *Iliad* is 22.199–201 in which Achilles' pursuit of Hector is compared to a similar pursuit in a dream:

> ὡς δ' ἐν ὀνείρωι οὐ δύναται φεύγοντα διώκειν·
> οὔτ' ἄρ' ὃ τὸν δύναται ὑποφεύγειν οὔθ' ὃ διώκειν·
> ὣς ὃ τὸν οὐ δύνατο μάρψαι ποσίν, οὐδ' ὃς ἀλύξαι.
> Homer, *Iliad* 22.199–201
>
> As in a dream [one man] cannot catch [another] trying to escape; neither can the one get away, nor the other catch; so [Achilles] could not catch [Hector] in running, nor Hector get away.

Aristarchus had excised these verses, and the scholia allege against them that they are weak in both language and thought, inconsistent with what is said elsewhere (notably the horse simile of 22.162–166), and diminish Achilles' renown for speed; the whole pursuit was in fact the subject of an intense critical discussion in antiquity, as it seemed beyond comprehension to some critics that Achilles could not catch Hector. The exegetical scholia point out that the resort to φαντασία (i. e. a dream) rather than reality is a very good way to represent τὸ ἄπρακτον, the 'lack of success', on both sides, that is in both escaping and pursuing. The strikingly compressed expression of the verses, something to which Aristarchus may have taken exception, had also been commented upon and explained long before Eustathius. Eustathius clearly starts from similar lore in noting that to illustrate the fact that both run equally fast, almost a kind of standstill (each with a relative speed of zero, as we might say), Homer uses a simile from φαντασία, rather than from truth (*in Il.* 1266.2–3). Moreover, the remarkably compressed and speedy (τροχαστική) expression of the simile, with its monosyllabic pronouns and a complex ἀπὸ κοινοῦ syntax which unites the pursuer and the escaper within the same verbal forms, functions as an analogy to what is actually being described; the brevity is a way of expressing the vigorous swiftness of the (in)action (τὸ γοργόν) as vigorously as possible (γοργότατα,[8] 1266.4–13).

8 On Eustathius' fondness for this stylistic classification, which he owes to the Hermogenean tradition, cf. van der Valk I xciii.

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Far from being worthy of athetesis, these verses are another *tour de force* by Homer.[9] What is on show here, whether or not we wish to accept (all or some of) the analysis, is a 'close reading', and one very attentive to the text as something to be performed, a reading which can in fact seem, from one perspective, very modern indeed. Not, however, that modern Anglophone commentators have much time for Eustathius' account. Leaf, Richardson and de Jong do not even mention Eustathius' discussion, although Richardson is certainly in the Byzantine's wake in noting that '[T]he repetitions are surely deliberate, suggesting constant, frustrated effort'.

Unsurprisingly, rhetorical teaching plays a prominent role in the commentaries on Homer, as it always had in the long tradition of Homeric criticism.[10] Eustathius places help for 'the prose-writer and the young man wishing to achieve well-timed citations (παραπλοκαί) in rhetoric' at the top of the list of his target audience (*in Il.* 2.28). The spirit of the teacher, which is never far from the surface in Eustathius, can, for example, offer appropriate praise for, and describe the rhetorical category (τὸ ἐγκωμιαστικὸν εἶδος) and style (γλυκύτης) of, Odysseus' famous speech of praise to Nausicaa in *Odyssey* 6.149–185 (cf. *in Od.* 1556.61, 1557.12–20); here both Homer and his character Odysseus show their consummate rhetorical skill in the grasp of the *kairos*, a relationship between poet and character which is sharply pointed by the fact that Homer makes Odysseus use the same comparison of Nausicaa to Artemis which he himself had put in the narrative immediately before. Eustathius' pupils will be expected to admire and imitate such attention to the *kairos* in their own encomiastic productions, for which Byzantium offered almost limitless opportunities.

So too, Eustathius can precisely visualise the speech which Antenor says Odysseus made when he and Menelaus came on an embassy to Troy and his words fell 'like snowflakes in winter' (*in Il.* 408.3–4).[11] We may smile as we

9 Eustathius' method here of discerning a relation between a particular verbal style and the meaning conveyed was not, of course, unique to him, cf., e.g., schol. bT *Il.* 1.530c; schol. *Od.* 3.461a; Nünlist 2009, 215–217.

10 Cf., e.g., Lindberg 1977; Van der Valk I xcii–iii; II li–lxx; Nünlist 2012; for the influence of Hermogenes in other writings of Eustathius cf. also Stone 2001. On the importance of rhetoric in Byzantine high culture more generally cf., e.g., Papaioannou 2013.

11 Eustathius will have had many predecessors here; Libanius' versions of the speeches of Menelaus and Odysseus are preserved, 5.199–221, 228–286 Foerster, cf. Hunter 2015, 687–689. When Eustathius says that Odysseus is likely to have proceeded through the use of a κοινὸς τόπος, the point seems to be that the case was one of 'admitted wrong-doing' (cf., e.g., Nicolaus, III 470.18–19 Sp.) – no-one could deny that Paris had stolen Helen – and so Odysseus could use the *topoi* that one used to attack such a wrongdoer, without wasting his time demonstrating that wrong had actually been committed.

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see the teacher in Eustathius award prizes: Nestor is ‘Homer’s orator’, with a skill which comes from his very long experience (‘for experience is the mother of intelligence’), and Odysseus takes second prize after him (*in Il.* 96.42), though when the ambassadors in Book 9 must reply to Achilles, Odysseus leaps in first, ‘reckoning, as seems likely, that he would either persuade Achilles and carry off first prize for persuasion, or – if he could not persuade him – that he would subsequently knock down the tower of Achilles’ anger through the speeches of those close to him, Phoenix and Ajax, as it were by a second and a third siege-engine’ (*in Il.* 749.26–28). This last example is particularly interesting, and not just for the striking military image which Eustathius uses (and presumably used in his teaching – siege-engines were something very real to twelfth-century Byzantines). The question of why Odysseus responded first to Achilles seems to have been much discussed in antiquity.[12] The exegetical scholia note that we are not to put this down to any unhealthy sense of rivalry (βασκανία) from Odysseus, but rather he draws Achilles’ hostility on to himself and away from the others, and perhaps he also realized that if Achilles’ friends spoke first and failed, then there was absolutely no hope of success (cf. schol. D and bT *Il.* 9.223). Eustathius shares some of this analysis, but his Odysseus is also an ambitious pupil who wants to shine; no doubt Eustathius had seen a few such tiresome creatures. Moreover, it is the teacher who deserves as much attention as the pupil. Achilles, for whom in Eustathius’ view Homer had a very soft spot,[13] was particularly fortunate in having had Phoenix and Cheiron as his teachers in rhetoric (*in Il.* 761.8, 1362.40–42), and when in *Iliad* 24 Achilles consoles Priam with the story of Zeus’s two jars,[14] Eustathius goes out of his way to point out that he either owes this inventiveness to his teachers or that in fact he took the idea from his teachers; no doubt, too, Eustathius had seen more than one of his pupils parade as his own jewels borrowed from the teacher’s lessons (*in Il.* 1362.40–42).

Eustathius’ Homer, who filled out ‘the narrow path’ of the main story of the *Odyssey* with ‘torrential rivers of rhetoric’ (*in Od.* 1379.47–48), has in fact more than a little of the Eustathius about him. The famous ‘epitome’ of *Odyssey* 9–12 which Homer narrates that Odysseus offered to Penelope in bed at *Od.* 23.310–343 and which Aristarchus athetised is actually Homer (and Odysseus) showing us that he knows how to deliver the same material with different narrative orderings, as the order of the epitome follows the order of the events (*in*

12 The embassy to Achilles was a centerpiece of Homeric rhetoric and its study in antiquity, cf., e. g., Aelius Aristides, *Or.* 16 Keil (an address to Achilles); [Plut.], *De Homero* 2.169–170; Libanius, *Decl.* 5 (5.303–360 Foerster, Achilles’ reply to Odysseus).
13 Cf. below p. 27–28.
14 Cf. below p. 43–46.

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Od. 1949.15–22); whereas Homer was renowned for the complexity of his narrative ordering, he can, when the *kairos* demands it, narrate also κατὰ φύσιν or κατὰ τάξιν, i.e. in simple, chronological sequence.[15] Homer in fact would have excelled in the Byzantine rhetorical curriculum.

A related lesson may be drawn from one of the most famous interpretative cruces in the Homeric poems. After the battlefield meeting of Glaukos and Diomedes in *Iliad* 6, Diomedes suggests an exchange of armour so that they will know not to fight against each other in future, and they dismount and make their pledges to each other. What follows is one of Homer's great surprises:

> ἔνθ' αὖτε Γλαύκωι Κρονίδης φρένας ἐξέλετο Ζεύς,
> ὃς πρὸς Τυδεΐδην Διομήδεα τεύχε' ἄμειβεν
> χρύσεα χαλκείων, ἑκατόμβοι' ἐννεαβοίων.
> Homer, *Iliad* 6.234–236
>
> Then did Zeus, son of Kronos, take away Glaukos' wits: he exchanged armour with Diomedes, son of Tydeus, gold for bronze, a hundred oxen's worth for nine.

These famous verses were the subject of almost as many explanations in antiquity as they have been in modern times,[16] and Eustathius' discussion (*in Il.* 638.40–54) naturally draws upon the critical heritage.[17] What is important for him – and here it will not be unfair to hear the moralising teacher at work – is that Glaukos imitates the generosity and nobility of his ancestors in giving Diomedes a gift far more valuable than he himself received, and (on a more practical note) he adds that bronze offered no less security on the battlefield than did gold, implicitly thereby rejecting a charge against Glaukos of neglecting his personal safety in stripping off his armour.[18] More striking, perhaps, to a modern student of Homer will be Eustathius' explanation of v. 234, an explanation which he explicitly takes over from Porphyry:[19] ἐξέλετο does not mean 'took

15 On these ideas cf. Hunter 2009b, 53–54. The rhetorical labelling of the passage is already found in the scholia ad loc., but, as often, Eustathius elaborates on the earlier critical tradition in ways which illustrate the particular focuses of his commentary. Eustathius' observation about narrative ordering is all but repeated by de Jong 2001, 563, though without any reference to Eustathius.

16 For discussion and bibliography cf. Stoevesandt on vv. 234–236; Graziosi-Haubold 2010, 38–40.

17 Cf. the schol. (b)T *Il.* 6.234a.

18 For a view of the passage which is not far removed from this, and which may well have stimulated Eustathius, cf. Aristotle fr. 379 Gigon (= 155 R), cited by Porphyry.

19 Porphyry in fact (cf. MacPhail 2011, 114–116) ascribes this view to 'certain critics' and does not, *pace* Eustathius, himself explicitly approve it.

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away', but rather ἐξαιρέτους ἐποίησεν, i.e. 'made exceptional', so that Zeus in fact is doing honour to Glaukos, not making him look foolish.[20] Eustathius thereby produces a consistent (and didactic) reading of the Homeric passage, even if one which seems to us impossible. Eustathius is well aware that on the two other occasions on which this or similar phrases appear (*Iliad* 9.377, 19.137, both of Agamemnon) the meaning must be 'Zeus took away the wits', but this merely shows the poet's considerable τέχνη in being able to use the same words to express two quite opposite meanings (*in Il.* 757.11), a skill which we may well imagine Eustathius' pupils were encouraged to practise. Here again, then, Homer is both our teacher and also 'one of us'.

Homer nourishes us, just as do Eustathius' commentaries, but the images of hospitality and nourishment with which the commentaries are filled are neither just ornamental nor indeed just biblical and moralising. Rather, the language of criticism draws on, and mingles with, the language of the texts with which it works. In describing the nourishment which Homer offers, Eustathius observes that no serious student in antiquity, whether of philosophy or rhetoric, ever 'came to Homer's tent without receiving hospitality, but all lodged with him', some to stay for the rest of their lives, others just to fulfill a particular need and to take 'something useful' from him for their own discourses (*in Il.* 1.11–16). Hospitality is a key, perhaps in fact one of *the* key Homeric themes, and scenes of hospitality become in Hellenistic and imperial literature (*inter alia*) a setting for inter-generic experimentation or, indeed, for confrontations with the past and the literature of the past. Eustathius' image, however, evokes some of the great scenes of the *Iliad*, notably the embassies to Achilles by the Greeks in Book 9 and by Priam in Book 24. Those moments of unforgettable narrative power become our own, and our predecessors', experience of reading and listening to Homer, who – it is suggested – has crafted these scenes as models for the educational and consolatory experience of listening to epic. Priam becomes one model for the audience of poetry, and Eustathius' complex image figures Homer as Achilles, dispensing his wisdom to all who will be bothered to listen.

The commentary form in fact lends itself readily to images of food and nourishment. In the Preface to his commentary on the geographical poem of Dionysius Periegetes, which he addressed to John Doukas,[21] Eustathius produces an elaborate image of how, by commenting selectively only on things which would prove 'useful' to those who were to imitate Dionysius whether in prose

20 Tzetzes offers a similar explanation (*alleg. Il.* 6.65–66 = Goldwyn-Kokkini 2015, 166): 'Fate extolled (ἐδόξασε) the mind of Glaukos, for the sake of friendship to exchange gold for bronze'.
21 Cf. Kazhdan-Franklin 1984, 139.

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or verse, he has produced a full 'mixing–bowl of wisdom, free of all grapeskins and rough grapestones' (*in Dion. Per.* 204.11–21 Müller). He then somewhat changes the image so that what he offers John is 'like the marrow of wisdom, with all the bones of poetic harshness banished', and this he sets before John as Cheiron is said to have reared Achilles on animal marrow; classical poetry and myth was a currency of discourse among this educated Byzantine elite, rather indeed as it had been for the elite of the Second Sophistic. So too were images drawn from the realms of food and drink, and here again – as indeed with Homer's rhetoric – the watchwords are συμμετρία and τὸ εὔκαιρον (*in Dion. Per.* 205.1–2, cf. 206.25). Eustathius continues to John: 'I have blended anything which was tasty (νόστιμον) in Dionysius' poem into a dish of friendship ... brightening it up with exotic sauces, so that there is nothing mean about our hospitality.' The image almost becomes a kind of theory of commentary. Whatever is said must be relevant to what the author has said, for to go beyond that would be nothing but φιλοτιμία κενὴ καὶ φαύλη δοξοσοφία, 'empty showing-off and a vain pretence of learning'. Eustathius proclaims that he will stick closely to Dionysius' text, 'changing some things around to explain them as when paraphrasing, but explicating other passages in Dionysius' own words; if something needs to be added, I will add that, and so I will, as it were, with appropriate measure (συμμέτρως) put a little weight on the slender narrative and gently increase the size of this little text' (*in Dion. Per.* 205.10–16).[22] Commentary here becomes a form of nutritional science. A poem with its commentary is always going to be fatter, have – to use the modern euphemism – a fuller figure, than a poem on its own, but what matters is the measure of that difference. No commentary should be simply calorific junk food, although too often modern classicists (in particular) have approached Eustathius' commentaries as though that indeed is what they are.

In the introduction to the commentary on Dionysius, Eustathius then elaborates further on how he sees his role as a commentator. What Eustathius writes there cannot, of course, simply be taken as reflecting also upon the commentaries on Homer, as it is clear that Eustathius was very conscious that the nature of his commentary had to fit not only the utility of those who read the *Periegesis* and the purposes for which they read it, but also the nature of Dionysius' poem itself, a poem which he characterizes by τὸ λεπτὸν τῆς ἱστορίας, 'the slenderness of the narration', and τὸ μικρὸν ὑποκείμενον 'this little text' (*in Dion.*

22 This imagery can, of course, be traced at least as far back as the Aristophanic Euripides, cf. *Frogs* 939–944. Eustathius picks up the 'weight' metaphor shortly afterwards at *in Dion. Per.* 205.36–39.

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Per. 205.14–15). These are not descriptions that anyone, let alone Eustathius, would apply to Homer:

> Dionysius is an excellent and sweet poet, lively (γοργός) in expression, full of narrative of every kind, one who saw the cities of many men and, with his eyes and the teaching of the Muses, knew their minds.[23] This commentary of mine works with these qualities of Dionysius towards the things which a student of literature (ἀκροατὴς φιλόλογος) wishes to know. If Dionysius sometimes addresses well advanced students in a summary way, then this commentary serves as a reminder by expatiating on what is necessary (τὰ καίρια) for the sake of beginners who are less sophisticated. If, on the other hand, Dionysius elsewhere speaks to beginners, then the present work speaks at greater length for those who enjoy learning. It does not fill in gaps as though what Dionysius has said is incomplete, but rather it expands at greater length on his own topics, as is appropriate for a prose work. ... It also removes much of the labour:[24] the things which a student might wish to learn from somewhere else, he can now acquire here in this commentary, without effort, at least to a reasonable degree (πρὸς τὸ μέτριον) and as is necessary for the subject in hand. Dionysius was concerned to produce a general description of the earth and a review of its peoples; he was not very concerned in every case to set down where or among whom names arose or the characteristics of places and peoples. I have preserved the general limits which Dionysius set himself. In doing this, I do not correct the periegete, nor do I fill in what has been unnecessarily omitted, as I noted above, but I follow my audience's wishes in softening what is imposed by the metrical nature of the narration.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on Dionysius Periegetes*, 205.22–206.11 Müller

Eustathius is thus very conscious of Dionysius' limited aims and of the limited scope of his 'small little body of poetry' (τὸ μικρὸν τῆς ποιήσεως τοῦτο σωμάτιον), a smallness more than compensated by its rich poetic beauties (*in Dion. Per.* 216.27–30). The constant forward movement of the *periegesis*, a movement driven by names and catalogues, clearly lent itself to a very different type of com-

23 Eustathius here combines a citation of *Odyssey* 1.3 (cf. also *in Dion. Per.* 215.3) with an echo of Dionysius' own boast that he is transported over the world, not physically, but by the 'mind of the Muses' (*Perieg.* 715, alluded to in the Introduction at *in Dion. Per.* 211.11–12, 214.23), cf. Hunter 2004: 228–229. Eustathius recognizes too the Hesiodic frame (*Op.* 646–662) for the disavowal of knowledge based on personal experience, cf. *in Dion. Per.* 343.17–42. Eustathius' claim that Dionysius 'saw the cities of many men with his eye' may simply misrepresent (cf. *Perieg.* 707 οὐ μὲν ἰδὼν κτλ.), or it may rather be a way of establishing Dionysius as an Odysseus, as Dionysius himself does (though with the significant difference that he did not 'wander'). Dionysius and his readers both see with 'the mind's eye', cf. *in Dion. Per.* 210.26, in a virtuoso passage about the transport of both poet and reader. For Dionysius putting the reader in the same position as himself cf. *in Dion. Per.* 343.32–36.
24 For this motif cf. also, e.g., *in Dion. Per.* 207.20–25, 210.24; it is tempting to think that its use here picks up the motif of 'ease' with which Dionysius, like other didactic poets before him, plays, cf. Hunter 2004, 223–224; Lightfoot 2014, 419–420.

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mentary, and one with a much more clearly delimited scope, than did the Homeric poems. Not every verse demands commentary, and the problem of 'lemmatisation', the 'what to discuss' question, almost solves itself. Homer is different in almost every way. The epic was all-encompassing, in a way which, as Eustathius' words make clear, Dionysius deliberately avoided, and in a way which demanded a different type of commentary.

The Homer-commentaries reflect Eustathius' sensitivity not merely to genre but also to the particular place Homer held in the Byzantine view of the classical past and in Byzantine education. Their cumulative nature, the sense that they are never finished, that one is always thinking and re-thinking what one wants to say about Homer, reflect this. Eustathius sees his role as a commentator as not limited to the elucidation of the Homeric text, as we might understand that in a strict sense; nor, however, is he simply accumulating 'facts' in a spirit of 'the more the merrier'. The commentaries bear impressive witness to the power of Homer's poetry to generate multiple interpretations, once the 'literal' meaning has been established, but they also aim at the broader 'literate education' of their readers, and in the fulfillment of that aim Homeric poetry can be a jumping-off point, as well as the end to which everything moves. Eustathius' readers and pupils were indeed communities which embraced multiple readings and which sought and found openness, rather than closure, in classical texts (which did not of course mean that there were not 'right' and 'wrong' readings); to this extent, they remain very different from most modern readers of Homer, even from those who actively seek interpretative openness. The fact that Eustathius and those around him read Homer as Christians and therefore, despite all their admiration for the pagan epic, were always dealing with a text to which they could not be ideologically committed, strengthened the drive towards multiple interpretation. There is, in Eustathius, an interpretative generosity and capaciousness which – to generalise sweepingly – is utterly different, for example, from systematising neo-Platonic interpretations of Homer.[25]

In praise of Eustathius

In one sense the aim of ancient and indeed Byzantine teaching was to produce pupils who resembled (without of course surpassing) the teacher, and we are lucky that the funerary lament (μονῳδία) for Eustathius by someone who was his pupil survives. This is Michael Choniates who was Metropolitan of Athens

25 Lamberton 1986 remains indispensible here.

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at the end of the twelfth century (AD 1182–1204) and whose niche in the world of classicists is secured by the fact that he seems to have known (and possessed?) and quoted from the *Hecale* and perhaps also the *Aitia* of Callimachus;[26] we do not know of anyone after Michael of whom the same can be said. Michael's lament[27] for Eustathius will strike anyone unfamiliar with Byzantine rhetoric as emotionally over-heated (to say no more), but near the beginning of the speech Michael himself self-consciously poses the dilemma of whether speechless grief, 'resembling those turned to trees and stones in myths', or the full outburst of lamentation is the appropriate response; this overt concern with the καιρός (284.27 Lampros) does not merely remind us that these works are 'performative' in the sense that there is always a sense of the judging audience, but that, for the classically trained, an important part of that judgement, and hence of the display of the speech, is a 'generic' one where what matters is indeed what is appropriate. In the introduction to his eyewitness history of the Norman capture of Thessaloniki in 1185, Eustathius himself discusses what style of narrative is appropriate, on the one hand, to historians describing events in which they were not involved and, on the other, to those describing events in which they took part and with which they are therefore closely involved.[28] Here too it is questions of καιρός and τὸ σύμμετρον which dominate; as a teacher of rhetoric, Eustathius was heir, not merely to *progymnasmata* on the capture of cities,[29] but also to a long classical tradition of discussions of appropriateness in historiography. For both Eustathius and Michael, questions of rhetorical appropriateness were not merely, as we might say, a 'literary' matter, but were central to how one's life and character are revealed to others.

Michael's funeral oration portrays Thessaloniki mourning for its 'fair bridegroom, lovely shepherd, wise teacher, the saviour of the city, the bulwark and unbending pillar, as Pindar put it [*Ol.* 2.82]' (285.25–28 Lampros); it is as if the city has been sacked all over again (286.2–3), a trope also used by another friend of Eustathius, Euthymios Malakes, in his μονῳδία for Eustathius, delivered shortly after the Bishop's death (*PG* 136.757 Migne). It is, however, Constantinople whose loss is even greater, for it was there where Eustathius had himself been

26 Cf. Wilson 1983: 205, Hollis 1990: 38–40; Pontani 2011: 114–117; Harder 2012: 1.71–72. For an outline of Michael's life cf. Kolovou 1999, 9–23, and for his period in Athens cf. Kaldellis 2007, 318–334, with the bibliography cited there.
27 Cf. Lampros 1879, 283–306; I cite the speech by Lampros' page and line numbers. On Byzantine *monodiai* in general cf. Hunger 1978, I 132–145.
28 *Preface*, pp. 2–4 Melville Jones.
29 For the importance of *progymnasmata* in Byzantine rhetorical education cf. Hunger 1978, I 92–120.

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educated and where he then shared his wisdom unstintingly with his pupils (286.14–22). Michael's rhetoric is, as we would expect, everywhere adorned with echoes of classical literature: the reference to Eustathius as a κοινὸν πρυτανεῖον λόγου καὶ σοφίας πανδεχὴς ἑστία, 'common meeting-hall for literary culture (*logos*) and a hearth of wisdom, open to all' 286.20–21), for example, suggests through evocation of Plato (*Protagoras* 337d) and Athenaeus (5.187d–e) that Eustathius himself was the modern embodiment of, or perhaps replacement for, classical Athens as the centre of Greek learning. Michael, who recognises and values the discursive and digressive nature of Eustathius' lectures and commentaries (287.22–288.2 Lampros), praises his teacher for having initiated young men into the 'mysteries' of literature, rhetoric, metre and mythical allegory (288.17–289.4); in no time at all, Eustathius 'the hierophant' guided young men from the outside of the shrine to the innermost secrets of learning (288.21–25).

It is of course Homer who is at the centre of Michael's representation, both because Homer was central to Eustathius and because Michael is displaying the fruits of Eustathius' learning and teaching. Eustathius is indeed almost a second Homer, claimed – like Homer – by more than one continent (294.9–21). Homer of course also afforded the best images to describe the power of Eustathius' oratory and teaching; his *logoi* were like Homer's lotus-plant: once you started listening, you would forget to go home (290.10). As in the *Odyssey* itself, the Lotus-eaters and the Sirens are variants upon the same theme: 'Eustathius' Sirens' (τῶν Εὐσταθίου Σειρήνων) put all other rhetorical graces in the shade (289.12–13). The compliment is indeed a commonplace: in Euthymios' version (*PG* 136.760 Migne), no educated person would put wax in their ears to avoid listening to Eustathius' enchanting words, and once heard the only remaining wish was to die surrounded by that sweetness, as indeed the Homeric Sirens had caused the death of so many:

> ἤθελον δὲ τῇ ἀκροάσει καὶ ἐπαποθανεῖν, καὶ αὐτῇ συναποθανεῖν τῇ γλυκύτητι.
> Euthymios Malakes, *PG* 136.760 Migne
>
> They wanted to die in response to what they had heard and surrounded by that sweetness.

Euthymios here alludes, not just to Homer, but also to a famous passage of Plato's *Symposium* in which Phaedrus claims that the gods honoured Achilles exceedingly because he chose to avenge his lover Patroclus, not only 'by dying for him, but also in addition to him', ὑπεραποθανεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπαποθανεῖν (180a1). Euthymios thus evokes, in Eustathius' honour, not just the Sirens of the *Odyssey*, but also the central hero of the *Iliad*, and the echo of Plato acknowledges the depth of Eustathius' classical learning.

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However commonplace the comparison of poets and orators to Sirens may be, it is tempting to see in the phrase τῶν Εὐσταθίου Σειρήνων an allusion to the opening words of Eustathius' commentary on the *Iliad*, τῶν Ὁμήρου Σειρήνων; Eustathius begins the *Iliad* commentary with a variation on the very familiar 'allegorising' of the Sirens as the charms of literature more generally.[30] Whether or not Michael is indeed specifically evoking these opening words may be left open, but there can be little doubt, I think, that he has in mind Eustathius' extended discussion of the allegory of the Sirens in the commentary on the *Odyssey* (*in Od*. 1706.23–1711.10).[31] Eustathius is there heir to a very long tradition of allegorising on why the philosopher Odysseus, but not his companions, can listen to the alluring song of the Sirens, but of particular interest is Eustathius' account of 'what song the Sirens sang?'. The answer, broadly put, is 'literature' or, as Eustathius puts it:

> ... stories, old tales, histories, collections of myths, both philosophical and other; a philosopher too will, when appropriate (ἐν καιρῷ) give ear to these. From some he will take sensible pleasure, from others he will take what is useful (τὸ χρήσιμον), and he will mix what is excellent (καλόν) in these sources into his own writings and will himself become, as it were, a marvellous Siren (θεσπεσία Σειρήν).
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Odyssey* 1708.39–43

The traditional idea that one reads 'classical literature' in order to nourish one's own writings and speeches shows Eustathius as very much within the tradition of rhetorical teaching,[32] but the striking idea that one can in this way become a Siren oneself clearly stuck in Michael's mind. In Eustathius' idealising vision, then, the Sirens, if listened to in the right way, become model teachers who can reproduce themselves in their pupils, and Michael identifies Eustathius himself as the very embodiment of that vision. For Eustathius, as the opening of the *Iliad* commentary has already shown us (and cf. further below), there was one special 'Siren' above all others, and that of course was Homer himself. For Eustathius (and not for Eustathius alone), Homer uses the song of the Sirens to advertise the pleasures of his own poetry and of poetry more generally (*in Od*. 1709.1–18). What is it that the Sirens, or any individual Siren, most notably Homer himself, offers? 'Pleasure and knowledge' is the Homeric answer (*Od*. 12.188), and Eustathius stresses that this is indeed what Homer offers us. Michael's implica-

30 Cf. Hunter-Russell 2011, 79–80, citing earlier literature. Kaldellis 2007, 314–315 discusses the possible ironies of Eustathius' appeal to the Sirens.
31 Wedner 1994, 155–165 offers an accurate account of Eustathius' treatment of the Sirens, but does not discuss the matters raised here.
32 Cf. Hunter 2009a, Chap. 4 on Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

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tion, and perhaps also already Eustathius', if – as seems likely – there is a degree of 'self reference' in his description of how to use the literature of the past in one's own work to become a 'Siren', is that this is also exactly what his pupils and audiences took from Eustathius. Elsewhere in the oration, Michael is very explicit about what was to be gained from listening to his teacher's lectures.

Eustathius' account of Odysseus and the Sirens does not stop with the pleasure and knowledge to be gained, for there is also the question of what role 'listening to the Sirens' should play in the life of an educated man engaged in public activity, a πολιτικὸς φιλόσοφος, as Eustathius puts it (*in Od.* 1709.18). The answer is that such a man cannot spend all his time listening to the Sirens, for he has to move on to practical activity in the world. The Sirens, in fact, represent 'theory' or, to put it another way, learning or education (μάθησις); as even an Odysseus knows that learning never stops, so 'I learn as I grow old' (1709.26) comes very readily to Eustathius' pen, and therefore Odysseus wants to hear the Sirens, but he knows that he must also get away from θεωρία into πρᾶξις, for the 'complete philosopher' is put together out of both (1709.23–30). 'Theory' has a very proper and necessary place (ἐν χρῷ, 1709.22), but there is more to a full life than that. Eustathius is here heir to a very long tradition, going back at least to Plato and Aristotle, of argument about the relative merits of the life of activity and the life of philosophical speculation,[33] but it is difficult not to wonder about Eustathius himself, particularly if we take into account his later life in Thessaloniki. He was a man whose life did indeed 'mix action with theory' (1709.21), a man who had reservations (to say no more) about those monks who devoted themselves to ascetic contemplation removed from the world of action. How deep a chord might the Sirens-image have struck in twelfth-century Constantinople (or even Thessaloniki)? In using Eustathius' commentaries to describe his life, or rather allowing the one to seep into the other, Michael may indeed have (again) merely been following Eustathius' own lead.

We may bring another famous Odyssean figure into the picture here.[34] Both explicitly in the *Odyssey*-commentary (*in Od.* 1618.31–32) and by clear allusion in his theological writing (*Opusc.* p. 148.38–48 Tafel), Eustathius compares ascetics and hermit monks to the Cyclopes of the *Odyssey*, 'who, trusting in the immortal gods, neither plant crops with their hands nor do they plough, but everything grows unsown and unploughed … they have neither meeting-places where counsel is offered nor laws, but they dwell on the peaks of lofty mountains and in

33 Key texts here include Plato's *Gorgias* and Aristotle, *EN* 10. On this topic in Eustathius, see also Pizzone, this volume.

34 For what follows cf. Kazhdan-Franklin 1984, 151–153; on some of Eustathius' problems with the monks and lay people of Thessaloniki cf. Magdalino 1996.

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hollow caves, and each man administers law over his children and wife, and they take no thought for each other' (*Odyssey* 9.107–115). Eustathius here seems to take over the ancient view, found as early as Antisthenes, if not before, that the inconsistency between this description of the Cyclopes and the blasphemous savagery of *the* Cyclops is to be explained by the fact that Polyphemos is a one-off: all the other Cyclopes are indeed god-fearing, and when Polyphemos says they are not, he is simply lying (*in Od.* 1617.61–1618.1). In the related passage in Eustathius' encomium of St Philotheus,[35] the tone is perhaps more humorously dismissive (hermits 'cram themselves into caves … and slip into holes in the ground' in their attempts to avoid the life of community, τὸ πολιτικὸν καὶ σύμβιον), but Eustathius then proceeds to acknowledge that the hermits' solitary struggle for virtue, a struggle seen only by God, is indeed a noble and praiseworthy one. Greater, however, was St Philotheus' open struggle in 'the theatre of life' where so many obstacles stand in the way, but where there are also thousands of spectators to see the struggle and – and this is what is most important – be stimulated to imitate the struggle in God's service which they witness. It is not hard to see Philotheus here not just as a model for Eustathius, but also as (here at least) a representative for him and for his view of the public role and responsibilities of a priest. For Eustathius, Homeric allusion is never far away from that role.

Just as, for Eustathius, Homer was a place where one could receive board and nourishment for as long as one wished (*in Il.* 1.11–16, cf. above p. 16), so for Michael Eustathius was an 'unlocked garden of wisdom, a rich field … and a gushing spring of *logoi*' (286.22–24 Lampros) where no one need go hungry or thirsty.[36] According to Euthymios, the stream of Eustathius' words watered the city, surpassing even the cataracts of the Nile; now, however, after the master's death, those who drank so eagerly are dry and burning with thirst (*PG* 136.757 Migne). Using an elaborate version of the same *topos* as Michael, Euthymios describes Eustathios himself as a new paradise open to all, where many came and plucked the fruit of his virtue and teaching, filling themselves to their heart's content (*PG* 136.760 Migne). Even the figure of the Cyclops makes an unexpected appearance here also: for Michael, Eustathius' lectures dripped honey and were like 'distillations (ἀπορρῶγες) of nectar' (287.9 Lampros), a phrase which Michael has taken from the Cyclops' description of the very strong wine which Odysseus has offered him, 'a distillation of ambrosia and nectar';

35 *Opusc.* p. 148.38–48 Tafel. This passage also seems to rework Hesiod's famous verses on the path towards ἀρετή (*Op.* 286–292).

36 For the classical roots of the image cf., e.g., Philostratus, *Heroicus* 4.11.

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whereas, however, Odysseus' wine befuddled the Cyclops and eventually left him unconscious, Eustathius' lectures entered his pupils' souls, there to remain forever.[37] Once again, Michael's praise activates a memory of the teaching which it celebrates: Eustathius wrote a long note on the relevant Homeric phrase and, in particular, on the metaphorical uses of ἀπορρώξ (*in Od.* 1633.39–58).

It should of course be no surprise that food and drink are almost as obsessively interesting in Byzantine society as in classical times, and just as rich a source of critical imagery. It is certainly no surprise that they recur insistently in Eustathius' account of the capture of Thessaloniki in 1185, for a city under siege is a city where food and drink assume an even greater significance than ever. At one point Eustathius offers a marvellous account of how the invaders had no appreciation for the properly aged local wine, which was not sweet enough for their barbarian tastes, and so it was just wasted and poured out (§136, p. 148 Melville Jones). Instead, virtually unfermented new wine which 'seethed and bubbled' was swilled down with a gay abandon which, to Eustathius' delight, was often enough to prove fatal, particularly as the barbarians combined it with gorging themselves on the flesh of pigs and cattle and on the local 'excellent garlic'. Eustathius himself has some marvellous food descriptions,[38] and he can reach for a high level of poeticism: thus, for example, he describes a *coq au vin* washed in wine, 'as Homer says the sun is washed in Ocean' (*Epist*. 5 Kolovou). Eustathius was certainly no ascetic: in several places in Eustathius' letters in fact one is strongly reminded of Petronius' *Satyrica*.

When Michael comes to describe the throng who sought Eustathius out, it is of course Homer to whom he again turns:

> Whenever I watched his pupils coming and going, I was reminded of the Homeric simile. As hordes (ἔθνη) of bees come out from a hollow rock, so every day did countless swarms (σμήνη) of students flit to and from Eustathius' hive like bunches of grapes (βοτρυδόν)
> Michael Choniates, *Funeral Oration for Eustathius* 289.21–28 Lampros

Bees have a very long history as a *comparandum* for students and their teachers,[39] but Michael's evocation of *Iliad* 2.87–90, the comparison of the Greek army rushing to assembly like swarming bees, is not chosen at random:

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37 Michael in fact says that Eustathius' teaching was 'burned into' his pupils (287.11 Lampros), but I wonder whether the burning of the Cyclops' eye plays some (? unconscious) role here; the metaphor comes from encaustic techniques in art.

38 Cf., e.g., Kolovou 2006, 63–68.

39 Cf., e.g., Hunter-Russell 2011, 16, 183, citing earlier literature.

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ἠΰτε ἔθνεα εἶσι μελισσάων ἁδινάων
πέτρης ἐκ γλαφυρῆς αἰεὶ νέον ἐρχομενάων,
βοτρυδὸν δὲ πέτονται ἐπ' ἄνθεσιν εἰαρινοῖσιν·
αἳ μέν τ' ἔνθα ἅλις πεποτήαται, αἳ δέ τε ἔνθα· 90
ὣς τῶν ἔθνεα πολλὰ νεῶν ἄπο καὶ κλισιάων
ἠϊόνος προπάροιθε βαθείης ἐστιχόωντο
ἰλαδὸν εἰς ἀγορήν·
Homer, *Iliad* 2.87–93

As hordes of dense bees come out in a never-ending stream from a hollow rock, and like bunches of grapes fly to the spring flowers, some this way in great numbers and some that, so did the many hordes [of Greeks] proceed in troops from the ships and huts along the deep shore to the place of assembly.

This is the first extended simile in the *Iliad*, as Eustathius notes in his commentary (*in Il.* 179.28), and Eustathius had prefaced his detailed commentary upon it with one of the fullest and most important surviving discussions of the technique of Homeric similes (*in Il.* 176.23–178.1). Moreover, one of Eustathius' letters (3 Kolovou), accompanying a gift of shining grapes of the kind called in contemporary speech κουκοῦβαι ('owls'), is almost an extended riff on the analogy between grapes and bees which this Homeric simile inaugurates: if Homer can say that bees fly βοτρυδόν, then Eustathius can say that his grapes are piled up μελισσηδόν, and so forth. In his discussion of the Homeric passage, Eustathius draws heavily upon ancient criticism,[40] but a leitmotif is that the extended simile is for Homer a technique for τὸ διδάσκειν, by which is meant not just making the narrative vivid and lively by drawing upon images from the everyday, but also teaching the audience about the world around them.

Michael clearly remembers Eustathius' own 'teaching' through his evocation of the Homeric simile and of Eustathius' discussion. One aspect of this discussion was Eustathius' insistence that the point of the comparison is the similarity between the movement of 'swarms' of bees and 'swarms' of men; this is not one of the, in Eustathius' view, rare Homeric examples where every aspect of the tenor matches every aspect of the vehicle. After all, the bees are coming out from one location and then dispersing in various directions, whereas the Greeks are coming together in one place, having been previously scattered among their own camps and ships. Michael's image of students both 'alighting on' and 'flying off' from the one place, which is 'the hive of Eustathius', an image which deliberately omits the destination for which the bees are headed, draws vehicle and tenor closer together, very likely under the influence of Eustathius' discussion. Moreover, Homer had used ἔθνεα of both the bees and the Greeks, and this

40 For relevant bibliography cf. Hunter 2006, 83 n.8.

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had drawn the attention of both the scholiasts and then of Eustathius; the latter explains at some length that the proper term for bees is not ἔθνος, but σμῆνος (*in Il.* 178.10–19). Michael picks up this strand of criticism by referring to the φιλολόγων σμήνη μυρία who thronged Eustathius' 'hive', thus varying Homer's seepage from vehicle to tenor, again under the influence of Eustathius' teaching; the verbal wit is reinforced by using βοτρυδόν of these 'swarms' of students, whereas in Homer this adverb had been applied to the bees, with ἰλαδόν describing the parallel movement of the Greek soldiers.[41]

If Eustathius was an embodiment of Homer, his power of words also evoked the central figures of Homer's two poems. Like Achilles, Michael's Eustathius 'sang of heroic deeds', ἄειδε κλέα (*in Il.* 291.8, cf. *Iliad* 9.189), but Homer's 'heroes' (ἀνδρῶν) are replaced by βασιλέων μεγαλουργῶν καὶ ὑψιθρόνων πατριαρχῶν, 'powerful kings and high-throned patriarchs', who after all were indeed the contemporary equivalent of Homer's elite. Eustathius had in fact noted that, in contrast to Paris' lascivious lyre-playing (*Iliad* 3.54), the poetry of both Achilles and Homer was praiseworthy, 'for Homer's poetry too sings of the glorious deeds of men' (*in Il.* 381.4–5); in his discussion of the famous passage in which the ambassadors find Achilles entertaining himself with poetry in *Iliad* 9, Eustathius observes that Achilles makes those of whom he sung ἀοίδιμοι, 'just as the poet had made him' (*in Il.* 745.52). Michael's Homeric allusion in ἄειδε κλέα thus in fact reincarnates Eustathius as both Achilles and Homer. For Eustathius Homer was φιλαχιλλεύς, 'fond of Achilles',[42] and the poet's attachment to Achilles is a leitmotif of the commentary on the *Iliad*, the last words of which record that while the dead Hector deserved pity, this was not how Homer saw it, because that was not how Homer's *philos* Achilles saw it.[43] Eustathius' devotion to and writing about Homer has now made him as dear to the poet as Achilles himself was. In introducing Achilles' account to Priam

41 Michael here perhaps also remembers Eustathius' observation that 'some ancient' reversed Homer's usage by writing of a 'swarm of grapes' (σμῆνος βοτρύων), *in Il.* 179.33–34; van der Valk I cix conjectures that this is from a lost work of Himerius.

42 This compound is not apparently applied to Homer in the extant scholia. On this topic see also van den Berg, this volume.

43 At *in Il.* 1362.59 Eustathius calls Achilles, in the context of his consolatory speech to Priam (cf. below pp. 43–46), 'the dear comrade of the poet, who was both brave and eloquent'. Eustathius' view of the end of the *Iliad* is an outlier among ancient and scholiastic interpretations; he notes the speed and brevity with which Homer brings the poem to a conclusion, but focuses not, as seems to have been traditional, on how Homer saved material for the *Odyssey* (see on this also Nünlist, this volume), but rather on the absence of details of the actual burial rites and on the absence of funeral games. He then closes with the remark about Achilles which is cited above.

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of Zeus's jars in *Iliad* 24,[44] Eustathius notes that the poet wanted to show 'his beloved Achilles' as also eloquent (λόγιος), which was only reasonable given the quality of his teachers in rhetoric, Cheiron, Peleus, and Phoenix, and Achilles' speech of consolation is analysed by rhetorical criteria (*in Il.* 1362.39–48);[45] it is perhaps not altogether fanciful to imagine that Eustathius himself sometimes daydreamed about what it would be like to teach rhetoric to an Achilles – a star pupil, if ever there was one and, as a 'kingly young man devoted to the Muses', the very model of a young member of the Byzantine élite. Eustathius' commentary insistently impresses upon his pupils what a good teacher can do for you.

Eustathius' fondness for Achilles, which matches Homer's own, may shape interpretation, as we have seen in Eustathius' view of the very end of the poem (above p. 27n.43). In the discussion of *Iliad* 23.187, where Homer reports that Aphrodite protected Hector's corpse with ambrosial oil, 'so that he should not disfigure him as he dragged him [around the walls]', the subject of the verb is obviously Achilles, who has been at the centre of our thoughts for some time and whose preparations at Patroclus' pyre have just been described; Achilles is not, however, named explicitly, and grammarians and teachers obviously felt some difficulty. The D-scholia explain that the reference is to Achilles, and Eustathius is in touch with this same grammatical lore (cf. *in Il.* 1294.13 ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς δηλαδή); the paraphrase in the exegetical b-scholia also names the hero, as though this was necessary for full understanding. Eustathius, however, goes on to note that, because the action of dragging Hector was κακόν (cf. *Il.* 23.176–177 and further below), Homer has, at the price of unclarity, suppressed the name of 'his dear Achilles', thus forcing us to bring it over ἀπὸ κοινοῦ from its last appearance eighteen verses previously. By contrast, notes Eustathius, when Homer describes the funeral procession for Patroclus (23.134–140), 'which was a praiseworthy thing', he names Achilles three times in six verses (*in Il.* 1294.50–59). Homer thus controls every detail of his poem, and when something catches our attention, like a slight grammatical unclarity, we should ponder what that might mean; no aspect of the poem, however apparently trivial, is without purpose.[46]

The fondness of the poet and commentator for Achilles does not, however, put the hero beyond criticism. Achilles' funeral for Patroclus and his maltreat-

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44 Cf. below p. 43–46.

45 Note especially πίστιν τεχνικῶς τῷ λόγῳ πορίζων κτλ. at *in Il.* 1362.46.

46 This critical principle of οὐδὲν μάτην, i.e. the poet included (or excluded) nothing without a purpose, was part of Eustathius' broad debt to the ancient critical tradition, cf., e.g., Dio Chrys. 2.40, 48; schol. bT *Il.* 11.58 and 12.292–293 etc.

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ment of Hector's body, for example, belong to ἱστορία, to 'what happened', and what matters therefore is how Homer chose to present these events. If in the passage just considered Homer is claimed to have done what he could to play down Achilles' responsibility for a 'bad' action, neither Homer nor Eustathius can deny the action itself. Homer had famously called Achilles' treatment of Hector ἀεικέα ἔργα (*Il.* 22.395, cf. 23.24), and Eustathius could draw on a rich critical tradition in seeking to explain the adjective, just as the phrase has become a focus for modern discussion of the narratorial voice in Homer.[47] Eustathius (*in Il.* 1276.1–4) is clear that Homer condemns the dragging of Hector's body, both from the fact that in *Il.* 22.395 he calls the Trojan δῖος and from the fact that the things which were done to him were ἀεικέα, that is, in Eustathius' view, ἀπρεπῆ, 'not fitting' [for Hector], one of the rival interpretations of ἀεικέα which Eustathius inherited from the grammatical tradition (cf. schol. b *Il.* 22.395a2).[48] There are thus limits to Homer's, and Eustathius', fondness for Achilles.

Even worse than the dragging of Hector's body was, of course, Achilles' human sacrifice at Patroclus' tomb:

> δώδεκα δὲ Τρώων μεγαθύμων υἱέας ἐσθλοὺς
> χαλκῶι δηϊόων· κακὰ δὲ φρεσὶ μήδετο ἔργα.
> Homer, *Iliad* 23.175–176
>
> [And he threw on the pyre] twelve noble sons of great-hearted Trojans, killing them with bronze; in his heart he devised grim deeds.

Homer's comment on the action seems unequivocal, even if some modern commentators have read the second half of v. 176 as devoid of criticism of Achilles. The exegetical scholia refer to Achilles' natural ὠμότης, and also note that Patroclus' death 'has made [Achilles] more savage' (πλέον ἠγρίωσεν). Eustathius makes three points about this brief passage (*in Il.* 1294.18–23). First, we have to understand ἐνέβαλλε πυρῆι, 'threw into the fire', from vv. 172 and 174, as what Achilles actually did to the young men: Homer shrank from explicitness here, and this silence (formally an ἔλλειψις) must be judged appropriate (καιρία). Unlike the case of *Il.* 23.187 considered above, modern readers might judge Eustathius at least over-sensitive here: there is no real risk of unclarity, and the syntax would seem to make Achilles' action with regard to the young Trojans explicit. Nevertheless, the hero's actions are very carefully described in vv. 168–177, and

47 Cf., e.g., Hunter-Russell 2011, 108; de Jong on *Il.* 22.395.
48 In the second instance of ἀεικέα ἔργα in this context, *Il.* 23.24, where the reference is less obvious than it is in Book 22, Eustathius notes that Achilles was 'overcome by anger' (*in Il.* 1285.30).

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expressions for 'threw in the fire' occur three times in a brief space; such a pattern suggests to Eustathius that the 'omission' in vv. 175–176 is deliberate and prompts him to ask 'why?'. These should still be the instincts of a modern commentator, however much they are rooted in the analyses of ancient grammarians. Secondly, the language in which the young Trojans are described, μεγαθύμων υἱέας ἐσθλούς, dignifies them (ἀποσεμνύνας), and, finally, Homer explicitly calls Achilles' action κακόν. In a subsequent addition to the commentary, Eustathius goes further:

> [Achilles' action] was beastlike (θηριώδης) and truly barbarian, if one reflects upon the fact that we are told that it was the custom of Gauls to sacrifice the prisoners, whenever they enjoy some success in wars. That custom, however, had some rationale, as it was an offering to the divine, like a sacrifice, whereas Achilles' action is of a completely different kind.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 1294.22–24

Eustathius here extends the traditional criticism of Achilles – 'beastlike and truly barbarian' is an intensification of the scholiastic charge of ὠμότης and ἀγριότης against Achilles – but his use of the case of the Gauls as a *comparandum* for Achilles' action also has an interest beyond that.[49] Aristotle seems to have explained Achilles' dragging of Hector's body around Patroclus' tomb from the fact that such actions were still in his day a Thessalian funeral practice (fr. 389 Gigon = 166 Rose); such appeal to 'other' customs was of course a standard way of dealing with literary 'problems'. Eustathius is heir to such a tradition, but here uses the existence of this custom among 'barbarians' as evidence for the abhorrent nature of Achilles' action; Aristotle's Thessalians were at least Greeks, whereas Gauls are entirely beyond the pale. If anything, the comparative method here complicates the difficulty of the text, rather than providing a 'solution'.

For Michael Choniates, as we have seen, Eustathius was an Odysseus, as well as an Achilles. No figure comes of course more readily to mind in any rhetorical context than Odysseus,[50] but Michael uses this figure in a perhaps surprising way at one crucial point of his eulogy. Eustathius' death was a falling asleep:

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49 Eustathius draws his example of the Gauls from Athenaeus 4.160e where the custom is cited in a quotation of verse by Sopater (fr. 6 K-A); Eustathius, however, seems to have known Athenaeus only in a version of the Epitome (cf. van der Valk I lxxxiv–v; Hunter 1983, 32), and in the Epitome the Gaulish custom is cited but the poetic context concealed. On Eustathius and the customs of other populations see Cullhed, this volume.

50 For some aspects of the use of the figure of Odysseus in Comnenian literature cf. the bibliography in Pontani 2015, 392 n. 473.

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> [Sleep] escorted you through the Gates of Dreams to death or, to put it more fittingly, conveyed you as if from your stay here in a foreign land to your homeland over there, just as in poetry a heroic wise man of much wandering is conveyed while sleeping from a foreign island to the island which bore him.
> Michael Choniates, *Funeral Oration for Eustathius* 302.6–11 Lampros

The allusion to Odysseus being transported by the Phaeacians from Scherie to Ithaca could hardly be clearer:

> ὣς ἡ ῥίμφα θέουσα θαλάσσης κύματ' ἔταμνεν
> ἄνδρα φέρουσα θεοῖσ' ἐναλίγκια μήδε' ἔχοντα,
> ὃς πρὶν μὲν μάλα πολλὰ πάθ' ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν, 90
> ἀνδρῶν τε πτολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων·
> δὴ τότε γ' ἀτρέμας εὗδε, λελασμένος ὅσσ' ἐπεπόνθει.
> Homer, *Odyssey* 13.88–92

> So did [the Phaeacian ship] cut through the waves of the sea in its swift course, bearing a man whose counsels were like the gods'. In the past he had suffered very many griefs in his heart, as he passed through the wars of men and the grievous waves; but at that time he slept quietly, forgetful of all that he had suffered.

Eustathius has gone home: Heaven is where he really belongs (not much later Michael describes the Gates of Heaven opening to receive him (303.23–24)). The Homeric allusion, as so often, is not mere idle display: like Odysseus, Eustathius too was a man 'whose plans were like those of God[s], who before had suffered very many griefs in his heart' but now was asleep, 'forgetting all that he had suffered'. Why the Phaeacians did not wake Odysseus up was a famous Homeric 'problem' which Eustathius had of course discussed (*in Od.* 1733.1–23);[51] once again, then, Michael offers us a truly Homeric Eustathius.

Eustathius and allegory

As what mattered to Eustathius in the commentary on Dionysius Periegetes was 'the useful' (cf. above), so too in the commentaries on Homer. In the Preface to the *Iliad*-commentary (*in Il.* 2.17–47), Eustathius stresses his wish that the commentary be χρήσιμον for young men who are still learning and who wish to understand Homer in order to use that understanding for the benefit of their own rhetoric; we have already seen such a model of 'benefit' in Eustathius' use of the image of the Sirens, and there is certainly something in common between how

51 For discussion and further bibliography cf. Hunter 2009a, 199–201; Hunter-Russell 2011, 155.

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Eustathius wants us to read Homer and how we are to read his commentaries. A particular problem, however, is posed by myth and the question of allegory, for allegorising is a crucial weapon in making poetic myth 'useful' in an educational context. Eustathius notes that Homer is not to be criticized for being 'full of myths', because his myths are not there to make us laugh, but rather 'they are shadows or screens (παραπετάσματα) for noble thoughts', some of which Homer himself created, whereas others which were pre-existing have been transferred (ἑλκόμενοι) to serve a useful purpose in his poetry; both kinds of myth are to be interpreted allegorically (*in Il.* 1.35–40). Eustathius' language here is reminiscent of the interpretative language of the neo-Platonists, notably Proclus, for whom the surface meaning and language of the poems are indeed a set of 'screens' which those who properly understand will remove in their reading to reveal the allegorised truth which they conceal, a truth which will however always remain invisible to the uninitiated and the vulgar.[52] Thus, for example, Proclus notes, in regard to poetry about the gods, that these surface features of the text, which apparently assimilate divine society and behaviour to our own, are rather 'appropriate screens (παραπετάσματα) for ideas about the gods, which are transferred (ἑλκόμενα) from events which came after the gods to the gods themselves' (*in Plat. Remp.* 1.66.7–9 Kroll).[53] Myths seek to conceal the truth 'by screens which can be seen' (παραπετάσματα φαινόμενα, 1.73.15–16 Kroll, cf. 1.74.18–20), a phrase which draws on the distinction fundamental to any allegorising interpretation, namely that between what the text 'appears' to say and what it 'really' means. Both Proclus and Eustathius are, of course, concerned with the useful teaching which lies concealed behind the 'screens', but Eustathius sees Homer's aim, not entirely unlike his own, as much more strictly introductory and educational: 'because they are attractive to the many, Homer wove myths into his poetry with the intention that the outward appearance (τὸ προφαινόμενον) would lure and bewitch those who shunned the subtleties of philosophy so that he might catch them, as they say, "in the nets"; once he had given them a taste of the sweetness which lies in truth, he would release them to go their own way and search for that sweetness elsewhere' (*in Il.* 2.1–4). Homer's aim in fact was precisely in line with how the educational tradition had used him for centuries, namely as an introduction to the higher studies of philosophy; this is, for example, the principal perspective from which Plutarch presents poetry in *How the young man should study poetry*.[54]

52 Cf., e.g., Festugière 1970, 62–63; Sheppard 1980, 16–17; Lamberton 1986, 185.
53 Both the language and the thought go much further back than Proclus, cf., e.g., the opening sections of Dio Chrysostom 5, 'the Libyan myth' on which cf. Hunter 2017.
54 Cf. esp. Plutarch's programmatic statement at *aud. poet.* 15 f–16a.

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In Plato's *Republic* (2.378d-e), Socrates, speaking of some of the most notorious acts of violence by Homer's gods against each other, notes that such passages cannot be accepted into the ideal city, 'whether they have been composed with or without underlying meanings (ὑπόνοιαι)', because the young are unable to discern what is and is not such an underlying meaning. Almost immediately before, Socrates had outlawed stories such as Ouranos' castration by his son in Hesiod's *Theogony* 'even if they are true' (2.377e–378a); if, however, they must be told, it should only be to a very small group, and in secret after appropriate sacrifices. From these two passages Proclus developed the view that Socrates/Plato held that there were two kinds of myth, each appropriate to a different audience at different stages of intellectual development:

> One kind of myth is educational (παιδευτικόν), the other initiatory (τελεστικόν); one contributes to ethical virtue, the other to our union (συναφή) with the divine; one can benefit the majority of us, the other is appropriate for very few;[55] one is common and familiar to men, the other secret and inappropriate to those who do not strive to be completely situated in the divine; one corresponds to the condition of the souls of the young, the other scarcely reveals itself after sacrifices and mystical training.
> Proclus, *On the Republic* 1.81.13–21 Kroll

In accordance with the purpose of the *Commentaries*, Eustathius gives pride of place to the first, educational myths; these are what his readers will find χρήσιμα. The distinction which he proceeds to draw concerns the kind of interpretation to be applied to the Homeric text, and he sets his discussion (*in Il.* 3.13–34) within the history of previous interpretation.[56] For Eustathius, the two extremes are represented by those who 'turn everything into allegory', even events and characters which are rooted in reality, what Eustathius terms τὰ ὁμολογουμένως ἱστορούμενα, 'so that the poet seems to speak to us in dreams'.[57] On the other side are those 'who have torn off Homer's wings and never allow him to soar aloft', by refusing to allow any allegorical interpretation; for these people,

55 Proclus' word ἐλαχίστοις picks up *Resp.* 2.378a6.
56 What follows re-uses some material from Hunter 2016, which should be consulted for the background to Eustathius' discussion. Eustathius is heir to a very long tradition, not just of allegorising itself, but of classifications of types of allegory, and Eustathius' division was not the only one current in late antiquity and Byzantium – cf., e.g. scholia on *Odyssey* 1.8 h, 1.26j Pontani etc.
57 Cesaretti 1991, 241 n.13 suggests that Eustathius here recalls Dio's criticisms of Homer at 11.129; Eustathius certainly knew the *Trojan Oration*, cf. *in Il.* 460.10–12. As for Eustathius' target, Cesaretti 1991, 231 suggests allegorists such as Metrodorus of Lampsacus from the fifth century BC (cf. Hunter 2012a, 92, citing earlier bibliography); it is tempting, however, to think that Eustathius is thinking of allegorists nearer in time to himself than Metrodorus.

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whose 'lawgiver' was Aristarchus,[58] myths are just that – myths. For Eustathius the third way, and the way he will follow, is the way of careful examination and discrimination, rather than the imposition of totalising and undiscriminating systems; he will not be the last scholar to use such a rhetoric about the difference between his work and that of others, nor will he be the last whose practice is much less clearcut, and much more of a compromise, than his proclaimed methodology.[59] Eustathius lines himself up alongside οἱ ἀκριβέστεροι, who take the trouble to investigate the material properly: that which is historical is accepted as it is, but with myths, such readers first consider their origin, nature and plausibility and then the nature of the truth which lies within them, which must be revealed through allegorical interpretation, or – in the evocative language which Eustathius inherited – θεραπεία, whether that be φυσικῶς ('pertaining to the nature of the world') or κατὰ ἦθος ('ethical', 'moralising') or ἱστορικῶς, by which last method Eustathius means that many myths contain a central core of reality, an event or events which really did happen, but that reality has been distorted by mythical material to make it more marvellous (τοῦ δὲ μύθου τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐκβιαζομένου πρὸς τὸ τερατωδέστερον) and must therefore be recovered by the interpreter.[60]

Eustathius' *Commentaries* contain allegories from right across the board, from the simplest and most familiar to what can seem the most remarkably *recherché*, although Eustathius does not of course necessarily endorse every theory or interpretation to which he offers space, and it is not rare for a modern reader to feel that mutually incompatible reading strategies have simply been juxtaposed. Often, as for example in his ample commentary on the song of Demodocus about the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite (*in Od*. 1597.42–1598.9), Eustathius offers a list of competing allegories as part of making his commentary 'useful', though in the case of Demodocus' song it is clear that Eustathius in fact endorses a simple *a fortiori* moral didacticism which demonstrates that 'even among those

58 Eustathius is of course referring to Aristarchus' famous view (schol. D *Il*. 5.385, cf. *in Il*. 40.28–34; 561.29–30) that 'what is said by the poet should be accepted mythically, in accordance with poetic licence, and readers should not busy themselves (περιεργαζομένους) with anything beyond what the poet said'; for differing assessments of what Aristarchus actually meant by this cf., e. g., Porter 1992, 70–74; Nünlist 2009, 180–181; Nünlist 2011. Eustathius' description of his own work – περιεργάσεταί που [τοὺς μύθους] ἀκολούθως τοῖς παλαιοῖς – may indeed scornfully pick up Aristarchus' verb.

59 For a helpful survey cf. Cesaretti 1991, 222–274.

60 Eustathius makes very similar points at the head of the *Odyssey*-commentary, where the purpose of τὸ τερατεύεσθαι is the creation of ἡδονή and ἔκπληξις for the audience (*in Od*. 1379.13–14). On the ἀκριβέστεροι see Pagani, this volume; on the general issue, see van den Berg, this volume.

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above us (οἱ κρείττονες) wicked deeds do not prosper' (cf. *Od.* 8.329).[61] Often, of course, it will be the relative didactic weight which determines to which allegories Eustathius gives space: when Athena tells Zeus that Odysseus 'longing to see even the smoke rising from his own land, desires to die' (*Od.* 1.58–59), Eustathius notes an allegorical interpretation by which Homer chooses to dwell on smoke, which like philosophy mounts up to the sky, because philosophical knowledge at first seems murky, whereas the full revelation (i. e. the fire which causes the smoke) is brilliant and bright. If you cannot attain that full and final revelation, then the murky first beginnings are much better than nothing, just as even if you cannot stuff yourself with honey, a little taste is something to be desired (*in Od.* 1391.46–48); Eustathius' pupils and colleagues will not have needed to have the lesson made any plainer.

As an illustration of very familiar and relatively simple allegorising, we may take the case of Athena as φρόνησις or σύνεσις; this is one of Eustathius' most common allegorical strategies, and it was one which had a very long history, stretching back in fact to the beginnings of allegorical interpretation itself.[62] The account, for example, of Nausicaa's reaction to the appearance of the naked Odysseus, when all her maidservants flee, gestures to this interpretation, even though that is not made explicit:[63]

> οἴη δ' Ἀλκινόου θυγάτηρ μένε· τῆι γὰρ Ἀθήνη
> θάρσος ἐνὶ φρεσὶ θῆκε καὶ ἐκ δέος εἵλετο γυίων.
> στῆ δ' ἄντα σχομένη·
> Homer, *Odyssey* 6.139–141a

> Alcinous' daughter alone remained, for Athene put courage into her heart and removed fear from her limbs. She stood still facing him.

> Nausicaa alone remained and did nothing ignoble (ἀγεννές) because of her good sense (σύνεσις). For this reason the poet says that Athena put courage into her heart and took fear from her limbs … [Nausicaa] reckoned sensibly (φρονίμως) that there is nothing frightening on the island … and so there is nothing to fear in the man who has appeared. This also demonstrates Homer's skill in the arrangement of his narrative (δεινότης διὰ τὸ εὔπλα-

61 On the use of this verse as a 'moral' for the story of Ares and Aphrodite cf. Hunter-Russell 2011, 108; Hunter 2012b, 96.

62 Cf., e. g., Democritus, 68 B2 D-K; *LfgrE* I 210–211; for further discussion and bibliography on this allegory cf. Hunter 2012a, 60–67; Hunter 2014b, 34–35.

63 So too, Eustathius observes that it is appropriate that it is Athena who is responsible for making Odysseus larger and more handsome to look upon, 'because it was his *phronesis* which made him admired and seem more impressive' (*in Il.* 258.1); van der Valk ad loc. suggests that Eustathius has misremembered that it is Laertes who is transformed at *Od.* 24.368–370, but cf. *Od.* 6.229–235, 18.69–70.

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> στότερον). If the king's daughter had fled, Homer's fiction (πλάσις) would have become bathetic (κακόζηλον) and succeeding events would not have been plausible.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Odyssey* 1555.28–31

So too, in *Iliad* 2, when Odysseus rises to address the army after having quashed Thersites' shortlived impudence, Athena stands beside him in the guise of a herald to command silence so that everyone in the audience could hear what he has to say and 'take note of his advice' (*Iliad* 2.279–282). For Eustathius, Athena here (as so often) represents Odysseus' good sense (σύνεσις): the Greeks fall silent because they want to hear what Odysseus has to say, as they know of that quality of good sense and intelligence (*in Il.* 220.14–17). That expectation itself obviated the need for a herald, but Homer necessarily represents this sequence of events with the typical 'divine machinery' of epic.[64] Again, when in *Odyssey* 13 Athena shows Odysseus the landmarks of Ithaca to prove to him that he has finally reached home and scatters the mist which had prevented him from seeing clearly, this is really the workings of φρόνησις: Odysseus knows that the Phaeacians have not cheated him, and Athena's words represent an internal process of reflection and dawning memory, by which he recognizes long familiar landmarks one by one; the mist which Athena scatters is the 'mist of forgetfulness' (*in Od.* 1743.35–39), and many modern readers of Homer would attest, I think, to the continuing power of such a critical account.

In the tradition of Homeric criticism, this allegory of Athena assumed particular importance with regard to *Odyssey* 1, where Athena's advice, given in the guise of Mentes, to Telemachus to go in search of information about his father was standardly interpreted as the stirrings of φρόνησις within the maturing young hero.[65] This simple allegory was also often found in conjunction with the allegorizing of Athena's father, Zeus, as νοῦς, as φρόνησις is a product of the mind, and indeed its 'natural', desired state. Eustathius notes that, even if Zeus/the mind is darkened by anger or desire and turns away from the light of Athena/*phronesis*,[66] this will never last long (*in Il.* 717.43–44). The allegory also comes prominently into play at two crucial moments of the poem involving Achilles. Athena's appearance to Achilles in *Iliad* 1 when he is choosing between drawing his sword on Agamemnon or checking this angry impulse is naturally

64 Eustathius' explanation must also be set within the context of a rich critical tradition about the speeches of Odysseus and Nestor in *Iliad* 2; in that tradition Odysseus is indeed the 'people's choice'.
65 Cf. *Hypothesis* c Pontani and the scholia to *Odyssey* 1.44c, 270a etc.
66 Eustathius is fond of the epithet φωσφόρος for Athena, cf. van der Valk I 704; this is not, I believe, attested before Eustathius, though it is obviously connected with the goddess' association with the moon, for which cf. *LfgrE* I 211.

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seen as Achilles coming to his senses, as ἀγχίνοια and φρόνησις now take over (*in Il.* 81.28–82.22).[67] Secondly, in considering (*in Il.* 1267.6–25) the scene in *Iliad* 22 in which Athena tells Achilles to stop pursuing Hector around the Trojan walls as she will deceive him into standing to face Achilles (vv. 214–225), Eustathius begins by noting that, although Homer might seem to downplay Achilles' prowess by giving Athena all the credit for his victory, this is not in fact problematic, for us or for Homer; for Eustathius 'the facts' (ἡ ἱστορία) are clear: 'Hector was brave, but was overthrown by Achilles who was bravest'.[68] The distinction between ἱστορία and the elaborations and 'allegories' of poetry and myth, to which (for Eustathius) Athena obviously belongs, is fundamental to Eustathius' procedure as a commentator (though not of course just his alone), and it is to poetry that Eustathius next moves:

> In its typical fashion, poetry prefers to set out events in ways surpassing the normal (τερατωδέστερον), rather than to set them out as they happened (ἀληθῶς) but in a less exalted way (ταπεινότερον). Here he prefers to show Achilles as dear to the gods than as just brave; many other people are brave, but it is rare to be so loved by the gods ... This passage is also educative, if the divine cares about men to this extent.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 1267.10–17

If the last observation in this passage is very clearly owed to Eustathius' Christian perspective, then what follows is a remarkable rationalising account of Achilles' thought-processes: the whole scene seems to hint (ὑπεμφαίνειν) that intelligence (φρόνησις) has come to Achilles' aid. Realising that both he and Hector were tired, Achilles stopped for a break, which caused Hector, as a result of his own (deceptive) reasoning, also to cease from running away and to stand to face Achilles. One has a choice in fact, notes Eustathius: either we simply understand that Achilles had a rest-break, after which he was too strong for Hector, or that, in addition, Hector gained new courage to face Achilles; either way φρόνησις/Athena was responsible, destroying Hector and bringing glory to Achilles (*in Il.* 1267.18–24).

67 On the allegorising tradition of this scene cf. Hunter 2012a, 60–67. Hera's role in sending Athena is interpreted either in connection with Agamemnon's royal status or, in a later addition to the commentary, through the familiar equation of Hera with ἀήρ: 'Understanding, which is Athena, is sent because the afterthought arising from change of mind comes upon him in obscurity (ἀερίαν) and darkly and, as it were, unseen and unexpected' (*in Il.* 81.43–44). For Eustathius' further assimilation of Athena's intervention to Socrates' δαιμόνιον (*in Il.* 82.9–11) cf. Max. Tyr. 8.5–6; Hunter 2012a, 63 n.71.

68 On Eustathius' fondness for Achilles, and his belief that Homer was similarly fond, cf. above pp. 27–28.

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Even if with such a well established allegory as Athena ~ φρόνησις, however, the commentator and reader must exercise judgement; 'allegorical' reading is not simply a matter of 'global change', so that wherever Athena is named, one can substitute φρόνησις. Part of the depth of Homeric poetry precisely arises from the interpretative demands it makes upon readers. In *Iliad* 5, for example, Athena encourages Diomedes to fear no one, not even Ares, in combat and takes her place beside him in his chariot by dislodging his comrade Sthenelos:

> ὣς φαμένη Σθένελον μὲν ἀφ' ἵππων ὦσε χαμᾶζε,
> χειρὶ πάλιν ἐρύσασ', ὃ δ' ἄρ' ἐμμαπέως ἀπόρουσεν·
> ἣ δ' ἐς δίφρον ἔβαινε παραὶ Διομήδεα δῖον
> ἐμμεμαυῖα θεά· μέγα δ' ἔβραχε φήγινος ἄξων
> βριθοσύνῃ· δεινὴν γὰρ ἄγεν θεὸν ἄνδρά τ' ἄριστον.
> Homer, *Iliad* 5.835–839
>
> So saying, she pulled Sthenelos back with her hand and pushed him out of the chariot to the ground; he quickly leapt clear. With great eagerness the goddess then mounted the chariot alongside the noble Diomedes; the axle made of oak creaked loudly under the weight, for it bore a dread goddess and the best of men.

Eustathius here weighs up the options:

> Note that this passage is entirely unallegorical (ἀναλληγόρητον) and an excellent example of poetic marvellousness (ποιητικὴ τερατεία). It is not possible to understand as factual (νοεῖν ἱστορικῶς) that Sthenelos stepped down from the chariot through some inner thought (κατά τινα σύνεσιν) so that Diomedes would himself be both rider and charioteer, unless such a myth is to be read to mean that Diomedes so cleverly (δεξιώτατα) controlled the whole business of fighting in the chariot that the charioteer Sthenelos is not even to be reckoned into the deeds.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 612.36–41

Eustathius thus works through the possible ways in which this passage could be read with the common allegorisations of Athena as 'forethought' (σύνεσις etc.) or 'skill' (δεξιότης); one he rejects outright and another he offers without apparent confidence. He may have been strengthened in his view that this scene is not to be read allegorically by the following verses (athetised by Aristarchus) in which the chariot groans beneath the weight of the great hero and the dread goddess; intellectual qualities such as σύνεσις tend to be imagined as 'light' rather than heavy. It is, however, typical of Eustathius' methods that he then proceeds to address this question, but in a way which does not sit particularly comfortably with his earlier discussion. He notes that the question of how Athena could weigh so much had been raised, as she should be 'weightless', and he cites a neo-Platonic solution to the problem: the intelligible (τὸ νοητόν) is indeed weightless, but

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when it takes on perceptible form, then it appears to have weight. Rather, however, than trying to combine Eustathius' views on, first, Athena's removal of Sthenelos and, second, the groaning chariot into one single 'coherent' view, we should note that here Eustathius, like the ancient commentators, moves from single problem to single problem, even when they appear close together in the text and might well be thought to be related.

The *Commentaries* contain some remarkable examples of 'physical allegory', such as an extended discussion (*in Il.* 150.40–152.25) of Hephaestus bringing an end to the quarrel of Zeus and Hera at the end of *Iliad* 1 as 'heat' bringing about a reconciliation between 'dry' and 'wet'. The sources of many of these allegories are unknown, though modern scholars are fond of evoking the name of Demo, a female Homeric critic of perhaps the fifth century AD who is indeed cited on more than one occasion by Eustathius.[69] Let me consider here a relatively straightforward physical allegory from *Iliad* 23. In that book Achilles prays to Boreas and Zephyros to come to fire the pyre on which lies the body of Patroclus, surrounded by dead animals and the bodies of twelve young Trojans:

> ἔνθ' αὖτ' ἄλλ' ἐνόησε ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς·
> στὰς ἀπάνευθε πυρῆς δοιοῖς ἠρᾶτ' ἀνέμοισι
> Βορρῆι καὶ Ζεφύρωι, καὶ ὑπίσχετο ἱερὰ καλά· 195
> πολλὰ δὲ καὶ σπένδων χρυσέωι δέπαϊ λιτάνευεν
> ἐλθέμεν, ὄφρα τάχιστα πυρὶ φλεγεθοίατο νεκροί,
> ὕλη τε σεύαιτο καήμεναι. ὦκα δὲ Ἶρις
> ἀράων ἀΐουσα μετάγγελος ἦλθ' ἀνέμοισιν.
> οἱ μὲν ἄρα Ζεφύροιο δυσαέος ἀθρόοι ἔνδον 200
> εἰλαπίνην δαίνυντο· θέουσα δὲ Ἶρις ἐπέστη
> βηλῶι ἔπι λιθέωι. τοὶ δ' ὡς ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι
> πάντες ἀνήϊξαν, κάλεόν τέ μιν εἰς ἓ ἕκαστος.
> Homer, *Iliad* 23.193–203

> The swift-footed noble Achilles had a different thought. He stood away from the pyre and prayed to the two winds, Boreas and Zephyros, and he promised them fine sacrifices. Pouring many libations from a golden cup, he begged them to come, so that the corpses could be consumed by fire as soon as possible, and the wood would quickly catch alight. Iris heard the prayers and quickly went as a messenger to the winds. They were all together feasting in the dwelling of the stormy Zephyros. Iris arrived at a run and stood on the stone threshold; when they laid eyes on her, they all leapt up, and each of them called her to himself.

The swiftness of Iris's response is marked by her sudden intrusion, mid-verse, into the narrative, prompting Eustathius to draw his students' attention to Ho-

69 On Demo cf. Pontani 2005, 87–88, citing earlier bibliography.

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meric technique (καὶ ὅρα τὸ κατὰ τὴν Ἶριν, *in Il.* 1295.65); he points out that either Achilles prayed also to her, but Homer did not mention this (the principle of κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον),[70] or else it was simply Iris's job (which, standardly in epic, it was) to report such things to the winds. What follows, however, offers apparently a clear and explicit two-part explanation: first, ἡ ἀλληγορία, and then ὁ μῦθος. The allegory here is a physical one. Iris is the rainbow, and rainbows are signs not just of rain and war, but also sometimes of winds;[71] when the winds leap up at her arrival, this indicates that the appearance of the rainbow has stirred the winds to blow. They all leap up, because rainbows can rouse winds from all directions; Iris herself, however, departs quickly because rainbows do not linger long, and she heads off to Ocean because rainbows are associated with moisture and appear in fact through raindrops (*in Il.* 1296.1–6). As usual, scholarly interest has been focused on Eustathius's sources, but what is striking here is both the didactic clarity and completeness of Eustathius' exposition and the typical independence of the allegorical interpretation from the narrative which calls it forth. Behind such physical allegories stands (again) the idea of the poet as teacher, and an interpreter, such as Eustathius, here stands in for, almost ventriloquises, the poet's teaching. The closer that teaching is to our own (and to Eustathius' students') experience, the greater the poet's authority; this authority, established through what is now seen to be an accurate account of the physical world, carries over into the non-allegorical narrative: the poet who accurately reports the physical world can also teach us about the moral and ethical world.

After the allegory, the μῦθος,[72] that is simply the narrative of the poem as the poet tells it. Here Eustathius is perhaps uncharacteristically brief: 'Each of the winds calls Iris [to himself] as they are in love with her (ἐρῶντας)' (*in Il.* 1296.17–18). Eustathius knew, as did the scholiasts, that poets after Homer had created a romantic relationship between Iris and Zephyros (in Alcaeus fr. 327 V they were the parents of Eros),[73] but here the Homeric text clearly invited a rather more ribald reading. A beautiful woman entering a male feast can mean one of only a few things, and it was easy enough to see each of the winds suddenly competing for her sexual favours, like symposiasts squabbling over a flute-girl; the exegetical T-scholium in fact makes the tentative suggestion that the

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70 Cf. Nünlist 2009: chap. 6.

71 For an association of the two cf., e. g., Anaxagoras fr. 19 D-K; Empedocles fr. 50 D-K (cited by Tzetzes in the *Allegories of the Iliad*, Goldwyn-Kokkini 2015, 274); West on Hes. *Theog.* 266.

72 Eustathius in fact returns to physical allegory concerning the winds after dealing with the μῦθος (*in Il.* 1296.10–12), but not to Iris' relationship to the winds.

73 Plutarch himself offers an elaborate, Platonising allegory of this fragment at *Amatorius* 765d-f, cf. Hunter 2012a, 195–197. For the later attestations of this version cf. Page 1955, 271 n.7.

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winds' erotic excitement can be explained by the fact that they were a bit tipsy (ἀκροθώρακες). Iris, however, makes her excuses and beats a hasty retreat. One strand of ancient interpretation certainly took this view; the schol. bT *Il.* 23.206a observe that Iris tells a lie in order to escape these pestering men (οἱ ἐνοχλοῦντες, the standard verb for 'sexual harrassment'). Of this, there is not a word in Eustathius, and it is not, I think, unreasonable to infer that he here averts his students' eyes from a type of male behaviour that he certainly would not want them to imitate. Rather, he follows another line, familiar also from the scholia (schol. bT *Il.* 23.206b), that the gods really have withdrawn from Troy, now that the course of action concerning Achilles and Hector has been decided (*in Il.* 1296.24–25). As always, however, Eustathius is alive to how one part of the poem corresponds to another. So here, he recalls how, at the onset of the μῆνις, Thetis reported to Achilles at *Il.* 1.423–424 that all the gods had gone off to the Ethiopians; Eustathius' point is not that we have what we would call a simple ring-composition, but rather that the two instances of divine feasting with the Ethiopians are quite different, and 'this is a sign of Homer's skill as he avoids, as far as possible, sameness in his writing' (*in Il.* 1296.25).

Eustathius turns his attention elsewhere also to Iris, and comparison with his discussion of *Iliad* 23 may prove instructive. In *Iliad* 5 Iris, again entering the narrative without introduction, leads Aphrodite away from the battle after she has been wounded by Diomedes. The bT-scholia on *Il.* 5.353 observe that Iris' role here is because 'she serves all the gods in common or is ἐρωτική [i.e. and therefore associated with Aphrodite]'. Eustathius follows this tradition, but seeks to explain it in terms (again) of the physical allegory: because of the rainbow's beautiful colours it has 'something of Aphrodite' (τι ἐπαφρόδιτον) about it, and it is therefore closely connected to Aphrodite (*in Il.* 555.31–33). He then turns to Iris' speed, another characteristic which is always foregrounded in poetry. From the allegorical point of view, this (again) is to be understood from the fact that rainbows appear and disappear very quickly (555.36), but when looked at μυθικῶς, i.e. as poetry depicts the anthropomorphic Iris, she has wings to indicate her speed, as also does Hermes, who is, like her, a messenger, and 'speed is the virtue of the messenger'. Eustathius also notes here, as he does elsewhere (cf. below), that Iris and Hermes share an etymology from εἴρειν, interpreted as 'to tell, announce'.[74] In a subsequent addition to his text Eustathius notes that he has already observed that Iris appears in two forms, one anthropomorphic (σωματοειδής) and the other 'the sign in the sky'; as an example

74 The etymology is not, of course, original to Eustathius, cf., e.g., Plat. *Crat.* 408b; *Etym. Magnum* 475.38–40 Gaisf.

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of the former manifestation he cites *Iliad* 3.121, where Iris (again without explicit narrative causation) comes as a messenger to Helen, having taken the shape of Laodike, 'the most beautiful of Priam's daughters', in order to make Helen come to watch the duel between Paris and Menelaos.

The exegetical bT-scholia on *Il.* 3.121 note that Iris must have been sent by Zeus to Helen and they offer two reasons for the choice of Iris: 'a woman can persuade another woman', and secondly – the explanation we have found elsewhere – Iris is an ἐρωτική goddess and 'is always present with Aphrodite'. This second explanation presumably not only assumes the very close relationship between Helen and Aphrodite, but also the fact that after having spoken to Helen, Iris is said to throw 'sweet desire' into Helen's heart to see her former husband. Eustathius' note on the passage (*in Il.* 391.21–34) is, once again, arranged into ἀλληγορία and μῦθος, although this time it is the latter which comes first. Under this heading, Eustathius places the now familiar (to us) wings, denoting speed, and the etymology of her name. The physical allegory is of course of the rainbow, and here Eustathius notes that the etymology from εἴρειν, 'to tell, announce', is appropriate here too, because rainbows 'announce in the midst of the rain that something is to happen'; for this reason 'she is said to be the messenger of Zeus, that is of the air'. It may, however, not be obvious to us what a rainbow might have to do with Helen being drawn to the walls of Troy, particularly as – as Eustathius in his note on *Il.* 5.353 implicitly acknowledges – Iris here takes on a very human shape to address Helen.[75] Here therefore Eustathius calls on 'the more common treatment (θεραπεία) of the myth', namely that Iris represents φήμη, 'report, rumour', a kind of allegorising (though that is not the word which Eustathius uses) for which the etymology from εἴρειν is also appropriate.[76] It is rumour about the duel, here transmitted by Laodike, which brings Helen out on to the walls, just as when at *Il.* 2.786–806 Iris tells Priam of the mustering of huge Greek forces, that too is the operation of φήμη. Here we might well think that we are very close to epic modes familiar from elsewhere, most notably Virgil's *Aeneid*. Virgil's famous picture of malicious *Fama* may in fact suggest at first, not just

75 Such considerations do not, however, deter Tzetzes for whom Iris' likening of herself to Laodike does indeed mean that she became a rainbow, 'from which Helen realized what was going to happen, as if someone had given her a full and clear account' (*alleg. Il.* 3.82–87 = Goldwyn-Kokkini 2015, 136).

76 φήμη is one of the meanings of Iris found at *Etym. Magnum* 475.45 Gaisf.

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Homeric Eris, but also the rainbow, in a gesture to the linkage between Iris and φήμη which Eustathius attests:[77]

> Fama, malum qua non aliud velocius ullum:
> mobilitate uiget uirisque adquirit eundo, 175
> parua metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras
> ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit.
> Virgil, *Aeneid* 4.174–177
>
> Rumour, the quickest of all evils: movement gives her strength, and she increases in force as she proceeds. Small at first through fear, soon she raises herself to the sky and treads the earth with her head hidden in the clouds.

In the *Commentaries* the allegorical and the non-allegorical in fact constantly bleed into each other, as Eustathius jumps backwards and forwards through his material, repeating here, reworking there. Another excellent illustration of this is the discussion of one passage of the *Iliad* which is itself at least quasi-allegorical, namely Achilles' famous account to Priam of the human condition:

> ὣς γὰρ ἐπεκλώσαντο θεοὶ δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν,
> ζώειν ἀχνυμένοις· αὐτοὶ δέ τ' ἀκηδέες εἰσίν.
> δοιοὶ γάρ τε πίθοι κατακείαται ἐν Διὸς οὔδει
> δώρων οἷα δίδωσι, κακῶν, ἕτερος δὲ ἑάων·
> ᾧι μέν κ' ἀμμείξας δώηι Ζεὺς τερπικέραυνος,
> ἄλλοτε μέν τε κακῶι ὅ γε κύρεται, ἄλλοτε δ' ἐσθλῶι· 530
> ᾧι δέ κε τῶν λυγρῶν δώηι, λωβητὸν ἔθηκε,
> καί ἑ κακὴ βούβρωστις ἐπὶ χθόνα δῖαν ἐλαύνει,
> φοιτᾶι δ' οὔτε θεοῖσι τετιμένος οὔτε βροτοῖσιν.
> Homer, *Iliad* 24.525–533
>
> This is the fate which the gods have allotted to wretched mortals, that they should live in grief; they themselves are free from cares. Two jars stand on Zeus's floor containing the gifts he gives: [one contains] bad things, the other good things. The man to whom Zeus who delights in thunder gives a mixture sometimes meets with ill and at other times with good. However, the man to whom he gives [only] grim things is brought to ruin, and evil hunger drives him over the holy earth, and he wanders honoured by neither gods nor men.

Achilles then proceeds to apply this lesson both to his own father, Peleus, and to Priam himself; both had been very prosperous, but now they live out a wretched old age which has brought them nothing but pain. Since at least the time of Pindar (cf. *Pyth.* 3.80–82), these verses and their sentiment were echoed, discussed

77 On *Fama* cf. above all Hardie 2012 (where, however, there does not seem to be any mention of Iris and the rainbow).

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and sometimes rejected, as by the Platonic Socrates (*Resp*. 2.379d) who banned them from the ideal state on the grounds that they make the god responsible for κακά. Much has been written about the consolatory effect of Achilles' image, a point already made in the scholia and repeated by Eustathius (*in Il.* 1362.57), who was of course very conscious of the 'rhetorical genre' of the speech, but Eustathius' discussion of the image offers a particularly interesting example of the cumulative way in which some parts of his commentary unfold and of how what is by any standards a remarkable Homeric passage has prompted commentary which pays particular attention to the power of Achilles' fable to generate multiple interpretations, once the 'literal' meaning has been established.

The exegetical scholia on *Il.* 24.526 note that when Achilles says that the gods are ἀκηδέες, 'without cares', he must be talking about the truly divine, τὸ φύσει θεῖον, for the gods of poetry, particularly of course those of Homer, certainly feel grief and other human emotions; that Homer's gods are ἀνθρωποπαθεῖς is a commonplace of ancient and Eustathian commentary. The scholia also quote Epicurus to the effect that 'the immortal and indestructible neither feels trouble nor provides it to others; therefore it has nothing to do with anger or grief' (*Kyr. Dox.* 1).[78] The scholia on the following verses about the jars cite Plato's condemnation of them in the *Republic*, but explain that Achilles has invented the jars in order to console Priam. Eustathius helpfully puts these notices about Epicurus and Plato together as 'what the philosophers say' (*in Il.* 1363.8), to be opposed to the poetic view of gods with human emotions which include an unwillingness to allow those beneath them to enjoy equal happiness, a view expressed with allusion to a passage of Herodotus (7.10ε).[79] Eustathius then proceeds to explain the mixture of good and bad that Homer sets out as the model for human life, illustrating this from Demodocus in the *Odyssey* 'to whom the Muse gave good and bad' (*Od*. 8.63); human beings are unable to get unmixed good things from the one jar that contains them, but may get unmixed bad. In a subsequent addition to the commentary, Eustathius illustrated the inevitability of mixed fortune by two characters (including Ptolemy Philadelphus) drawn from the pages of Athenaeus.[80]

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78 Text and interpretation of this saying are very disputed.

79 van der Valk notes that Eustathius 'pretends' ('simulat') that he has taken the observations direct from Plato and Epicurus, rather than from scholia; whether or not this is correct, such a perspective entirely ignores the utilitarian purpose of teaching for which the commentaries are written, cf. above p. 11.

80 Eustathius seems to have made much greater use of Athenaeus when adding to the commentary in Thessaloniki than he did in Constantinople, cf. van der Valk I xvi–xvii; it is natural to connect such differences to the availability of books.

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Having explained, as it were, the ‘literal’ meaning of Achilles’ jars,[81] that human life necessarily involves misfortune, Eustathius now turns to various forms of allegorical interpretation; as often, the shift is marked by ἰστέον δέ, ‘Observe, moreover …’ (*in Il.* 1363.27). The most common way of deflecting Plato’s charge against the verses was to explain that Zeus here stands for ‘fate’, but Eustathius notes that ‘Zeus’ could here stand for νοῦς, ‘mind, intention’, a very common allegorical equation.[82] Not just Zeus’s mind, but human intention and will can cause both good and evil, and so the two jars may represent different ‘states of mind’. If so, Eustathius continues, then human beings may indeed receive any of the three possible options – unmixed good, unmixed bad, and a mixture of good and bad. The first is ‘complete blessedness’ (ἄκρα μακαριότης) and the second ‘wretchedness in the soul’ (ἀθλιότης ψυχική), both of which are presumably to be understood in Christian terms: pagan texts, particularly great texts such as Homer, teach eternal messages, which for Eustathius and his pupils must be understood in Christian terms. The third option utilizes the fundamental division for any priest between the religious or spiritual realm and that of ‘ordinary’ life, for the category of ‘the mixed’ refers in this scheme to our day-to-day life (κατάστασις πολιτική), in which we all must indeed accept human limits to good fortune.

Eustathius’ Christianising interpretation is testimony to the extraordinarily productive power of Achilles’ image, which – as is often pointed out – is in many ways closer to folktale and fable than to ‘high poetry’. Eustathius too feels something of this ‘strangeness’ about the image, for he draws attention to the spherical shape of jars which associates them with the heavens above; by choosing πίθοι, Homer has been concerned, in Eustathius’ account, to lend τὸ σεμνόν to an image for which more vulgar equivalents could easily have been found (the gifts of the gods could have been made to ‘lie on the floor or be kept in boxes or pits’). Eustathius also notes that πίθοι are common in mythic tales; he cites (again) the story from *Iliad* 5 of Ares bound and chained and the leaky jars of the Danaids. In a subsequent addition to the commentary, Eustathius collects some appearances of πίθοι in proverbs and takes the chance to offer an allegorical (συμβολικῶς) interpretation of Hesiod’s gnomic advice on how best to use a πίθος (*Op.* 368–369). The discussion of the jars then closes with an account of the difficult syntax of the verses, made all the more necessary

81 I pass over an intervening note in which Eustathius contrasts the Homeric passage with the Hesiodic jar which Pandora opened; Eustathius will have known that the scholiastic tradition made the Homeric passage Hesiod’s ‘source’ (schol. A and T *Il.* 24.527–528a–b, cf. Hunter 2014a, 244), but that is not his interest here.
82 Cf., e.g., *LfgrE* I 210, above p. 36.

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by the fact that, as Eustathius observes, some thought that Homer indicated that Zeus had in fact three jars, two of bad things and one of good. Eustathius appeals to Homeric usage in ruling that there were only two jars, though he will admit that Homer has been guilty of unclarity; the syntactical discussion is, as often, indebted to the same grammatical tradition which has fed into the scholia.

The Achaean wall

At the opening of *Iliad* 12 the narrator foretells the complete obliteration by Poseidon and Apollo after the fall of Troy of the Achaean fortification which had been constructed at the end of Book 7; the interpretative problems concerning this narrative sequence remain of great interest to modern students of the *Iliad*, and offer a very interesting test-case for Eustathius' use of the critical heritage and for the focuses of his commentary.[83] I will here follow his discussions sequentially (though with some omissions), in order to confront the text as his students and readers may have done; some of the problems which modern scholars find in the conception and role of the wall will, therefore, here find little discussion, because Eustathius did not in fact discuss them, but this itself will, I hope, carry its own instructive value.

The making of a defensive wall and ditch to protect the Greek ships and encampment is first suggested by Nestor at *Il.* 7.325–344, and the Greeks carry out Nestor's instructions almost to the letter at 7.433–441.[84] The scene then switches to Olympus where the gods are watching the Greeks at work. Poseidon complains to Zeus that the successful building of this wall, although the Greeks

83 Cf. Porter 2011, which has been an important stimulus to the present discussion. Some of Porter's arguments have elements in common with Ford 1992, 147–157, though Ford rather sees the wall as (in part) an image for the composition of the *Iliad* itself: 'I conceive of the episode of the wall, for all its ancient elements, as formulated along with the plan to construct a monumental text of the *Iliad* of the sort we now have' (p. 151); some of the concerns of Ford and Porter are picked up by Bassi 2014. Scodel 1982 stresses that the obliteration of the wall by flood marks a complete break between the time of the heroes and the time of Homer and his audience, and West 1995 associates the destruction of the wall with the Assyrian destruction of Babylon in 689–688 BC. Cf. further Grethlein 2008, 32–35.

84 Eustathius (*in Il.* 689.54–55) notes that the σκόλοπες of v. 441 were not in fact mentioned by Nestor and, with a properly didactic eye, he points out how, quoting (but not spelling the quotation out) Eur. *Hipp*. 436, this shows that 'second thoughts are wiser'. Clearly, though Homer does not say so explicitly, the Greeks gave further thought, beyond Nestor's speech, to what kind of fortifications were needed; on this exegetical principle of κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον cf. Nünlist 2009, Chap. 6.

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had offered no sacrifices to the gods, will lead to a decline in concern with the gods and also to the eclipse of the walls of Troy which he and Apollo had built:

Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἦ ῥά τίς ἐστι βροτῶν ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν
ὅς τις ἔτ' ἀθανάτοισι νόον καὶ μῆτιν ἐνίψει;
οὐχ ὁράαις ὅ τε δὴ αὖτε κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοὶ
τεῖχος ἐτειχίσσαντο νεῶν ὕπερ, ἀμφὶ δὲ τάφρον
ἤλασαν, οὐδὲ θεοῖσι δόσαν κλειτὰς ἑκατόμβας; 450
τοῦ δ' ἤτοι κλέος ἔσται ὅσον τ' ἐπικίδναται ἠώς,
τοῦ δ' ἐπιλήσονται, τὸ ἐγὼ καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
ἥρωι Λαομέδοντι πολίσσαμεν ἀθλήσαντε.
Homer, *Iliad* 7.446–453

Father Zeus, is there any mortal on the boundless earth who will in the future reveal his intention and plan to the immortals? Do you not see that now the long-haired Achaeans have built a wall in defence of the ships and dug a ditch along it and have not offered splendid hecatombs to the gods? The fame of this wall will stretch as far as dawn is scattered, but they will forget the wall which I and Phoebus Apollo laboured to build for the hero Laomedon.

Zeus, however, will have none of this, but grants that once the Achaeans have left, the wall may be utterly destroyed:

"ὢ πόποι ἐννοσίγαι' εὐρυσθενές, οἷον ἔειπες.
ἄλλός κέν τις τοῦτο θεῶν δείσειε νόημα,
ὃς σέο πολλὸν ἀφαυρότερος χεῖράς τε μένος τε·
σὸν δ' ἤτοι κλέος ἔσται ὅσον τ' ἐπικίδναται ἠώς.
ἄγρει μὰν ὅτ' ἂν αὖτε κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοὶ
οἴχωνται σὺν νηυσὶ φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν, 460
τεῖχος ἀναρρήξας τὸ μὲν εἰς ἅλα πᾶν καταχεῦαι,
αὖτις δ' ἠϊόνα μεγάλην ψαμάθοισι καλύψαι,
ὥς κέν τοι μέγα τεῖχος ἀμαλδύνηται Ἀχαιῶν."
ὣς οἳ μὲν τοιαῦτα πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀγόρευον,
δύσετο δ' ἠέλιος, τετέλεστο δὲ ἔργον Ἀχαιῶν.
Homer, *Iliad* 7.455–465

"Shame, Earthshaker of mighty strength, for what you have said! Some other god might fear this scheme, one much weaker than you in might and strength. Your fame will stretch as far as dawn is scattered! Come then: when the long-haired Achaeans return in their ships to their own dear land, then break down the wall and pour it all into the sea and cover over the whole shore again with sand, so that the Achaeans' great wall will be nothing." Thus they spoke to each other; the sun set and the Achaeans' task was completed.

Since the Achaeans finished the task as the sun set, the building of the wall had taken them one long day. At the opening of Book 12, the poet reports how Poseidon and Apollo did indeed obliterate all trace of the wall after 'the city of

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Priam had been sacked in the tenth year'. The passage naturally attracted critical attention as one of the very few places where the poet explicitly refers to Trojan events that lie outside the scope of his poem and, in particular, to the fall of Troy. Eustathius himself links this to the familiar critical notion (cf. esp. the scholia on *Iliad* 1.1a–b), going back at least to Aristotle, that although Homer severely limited the time-frame of the events of the *Iliad,* his technique allowed him to embrace events outside that frame:

> Observe that, just as in the previous book Homer had, in full accordance with his technique (εὐμεθόδως), inserted some of what happened before the Trojan war, such as the raising of the army and associated events,[85] so here, through the trope of 'foreshadowing' (προαναφώνησις), he vividly (γοργῶς) and briefly sets out the end of the war and some of the events after that ... This is his normal practice, so that, even if the opening he laid down for the *Iliad* was the wrath of Achilles, nevertheless we would not fail to hear about some of the major events outside that, namely what happened before the wrath and after it.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 889.38–43

Before turning in detail to the Olympian conversation in Book 7, Eustathius discusses the Greek wall:

> Observe that the ancients (οἱ παλαιοί) took the view that this Greek wall was a fiction (πλάσμα) of Homer. It did not, they say, happen in truth, but the poet invented (ἐπλάσατο) the wall-building beside the ships and what happened there; he was not relating an event which happened but setting forth one as though it had happened (οὐχ' ἱστορῶν πρᾶγμα γενόμενον ἀλλ' ὡς γενόμενον ἐκτιθέμενος), nor was he speaking the truth, but rather supposing what might have happened (τὰ εἰκότα δὲ ὑποτιθέμενος). His purpose in doing this was later on to be able to exercise (ἐγγυμνάσῃ) his rhetorical skill in [the depiction of] sieges (τειχομαχίαι) and the dangers associated with them, which was for various reasons not possible with Troy itself, but particularly because of Achilles' wrath; without Achilles, the Trojans could not be hemmed in their city and endure a siege, because the will of Zeus which had been announced before [*Iliad* 1.5] had to be brought to fulfillment. The poet invented (ἐπλάσατο) the construction of towers at the ships very convincingly (οὐκ ἀπιθάνως) thanks to the rich variety and abundance of his writing (διὰ πάνυ πολλὴν ποικιλίαν καὶ εὐπορίαν γραφῆς).
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 689.56–63

In drawing attention to the fictionality of the wall, as something which 'might have happened' rather than as something which did, and to the fact that this is an opinion which he has inherited from 'ancient' scholarship, Eustathius uses what would have been to him and his pupils a very familiar classification

85 The reference is to Nestor's account at *Il.* 11.769–790.

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of narrative material into the 'true', the 'as if true (fictional)' and the 'fantastic/ mythical'. In the repetitive fullness with which he notes the difference between what is true and merely probable, it is perhaps not fanciful to hear the careful, didactic voice of the teacher, making sure that his pupils understand. What matters to Eustathius, moreover, is the opportunity that this poetic fiction gives him to highlight Homer's rhetorical virtues, and the way the note is constructed makes it impossible to identify where the views of 'the ancients' end and Eustathius takes over. Homer wanted to exercise (or practise) the rhetorical description of a τειχομαχία, a 'battle involving walls',[86] a term which need not be synonymous with 'siege', but which easily slips into such a meaning, as suits Eustathius' didactic purposes. Eustathius' use of ἐγγυμνάζειν points clearly to rhetorical exercises or *progymnasmata*. Aelius Theon cites the siege of Plataea in Book 3 of Thucydides as a model for the exercise of *ekphrasis* (118.25–26 Sp. = p. 67 Patillon-Bolognesi), and *ekphraseis* of a πεζομαχία and a ναυμαχία are preserved under the name of Libanius (8.460–464, 489–490 Foerster).[87] For any Byzantine of the twelfth century, however, sieges were not simply a subject for school-exercises, but a familiar and awful reality; long before the siege of Thessaloniki in 1185, which he describes so vividly in his history of the Norman sacking, Eustathius will have known all about the κίνδυνοι associated with such events (*in Il.* 689.59). There is, of course, as in fact Eustathius' own introduction to his account of the siege of Thessaloniki makes clear, no gulf between the description of 'real' events and a concern with rhetorical convention and appropriateness, such as he ascribes to Homer here. It was indeed that very concern and the extraordinary riches of his poetic talent which made Homer's account 'utterly convincing'.[88]

If, for Eustathius, the Achaean wall can be explained through rhetorical need, the reason why that rhetorical need could not be fulfilled through a siege of Troy must be explained somewhat differently. It would, of course, be very easy for us to say that the whole design of the *Iliad* excludes a siege of Troy, which might ultimately have led to its fall, and Eustathius' explanation is not in fact far removed from that consideration of the whole sweep of the poem. A siege, he explains, is incompatible with Achilles' wrath and hence withdrawal from fighting, because only Achilles could make the Trojans stay within

86 This explanation also survives, though less clearly expressed, in the schol. T *Il.* 12.3–35. Plato, *Ion* 539b2 shows that τειχομαχία was a title given to all or part of what we call *Iliad* 12.
87 Cf. also Aphthonius *prog.* 12.2. p. 148 Patillon.
88 Eustathius frequently refers to the ποικίλον element of Homeric poetry (cf. van der Valk II lvi–ii), but it is noteworthy that Aphthonius stresses the need in *ekphrasis* to use different σχήματα in order to lend τὸ ποικίλον to the description (12.3 Patillon).

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their walls, and this too does not fit with the 'plan of Zeus', here clearly understood as the promise to Thetis to grant success to the Trojans until the Greeks recompense her son's outraged honour (*Iliad* 1.508–510).[89] Whatever one might think of this explanation, what is notable is the way Eustathius places his discussion of the building of the wall within a wider view of the narrative. The difference that Achilles made is, of course, a recurrent motif of ancient discussion of the design of the poem. The exegetical scholia on the opening verse note, as one explanation of why Homer began in what was to be the last year of the war, that the Trojans did not come out to fight while Achilles was actively engaged on the Greek side, and so there was actually little action to describe, and this is an explanation which Eustathius too offers (*in Il.* 7.6–14). Eustathius thus places the making of the wall within a view of the economy of the poem as a whole; with such a view, ancient and modern worries about why the Greeks only got around to building a defensive wall in the tenth year of the war fade into insignificance. So too, van der Valk (I 493) suggests that the Christian Eustathius deliberately ignored an explanation which is found in the exegetical scholia to *Iliad* 12.3–35, namely that Homer could not stage operations at the walls of Troy because they had been built by (pagan) gods; to focus on this, however, is to fail to appreciate how Eustathius has in fact thought through Homer's overall strategy.[90]

Having explained why Homer has introduced the wall, Eustathius then turns to the Olympian conversation which guaranteed the wall's eventual destruction. Here Homer's purpose was to prevent anyone proving that he had invented the wall by pointing to the complete absence of any traces 'of such a famous piece of wall-building' (*in Il.* 689.68).[91] Poseidon's anger and jealousy (φθόνος) and his rousing of Zeus against the Greek failure to sacrifice will lead to the complete obliteration of the wall and hence to an explanation of why no single trace of it survives. The instruments of that obliteration will naturally be 'earthquake and floodwaters, which are in the control of Poseidon together with Apollo' (*in Il.* 690.4–5).[92] Homer can therefore (though Eustathius does not, for once, use a culinary metaphor) 'have his cake and eat it': he can both have a 'most brilliant τειχομαχία at this invented wall' and also 'avoid being convicted of lying', for, and now Eustathius cites Aristotle (fr. 162 R = 402 Gigon, which Eustathius pre-

89 At *in Il.* 20.21 Eustathius notes this explanation as one of several current for the Διὸς βουλή of *Iliad* 1.5.

90 Porter 2011, 13–14 discusses the relevant scholium.

91 This motive is expressed more briefly in the exegetical schol. T *Il.* 7.445 and 12.3–35.

92 On Apollo's role cf. below p. 56–58.

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sumably took from Strabo 13.1.36), 'the poet who devised the wall also obliterated it'.[93]

Two points of note may be mentioned here. We know from the scholia that Zenodotus, Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus all concurred in the athetesis of *Iliad* 7.443–464, i.e. the Olympian conversation, on the grounds, as represented by the surviving schol. A *Il.* 7.443–464a, that it was an unhappy anticipation of what is said in Book 12. Eustathius presumably knew of this athetesis, but (as often in such cases)[94] he does not mention it, perhaps because to do so would weaken the force of what he is teaching, namely that Homer is operating to a well-devised scheme in which each part plays its role. He will, moreover, pick up and elaborate the themes of divine anger and jealousy and of Poseidon as a god of earthquake in his subsequent discussion; here (*in Il.* 689.63–690.8) they are merely briefly adumbrated, because it is Homer's purpose in creating the divine conversation, not the nature of Homer's gods, which for the present moment is where Eustathius' attention is directed. Secondly, Eustathius' otherwise unusual emphasis on the obliteration of the fictional wall reflects a long tradition, visible not just in the scholia, of critical interest in this poetic construction;[95] Eustathius' discussion, however, is directed towards the whole sequence as an illustration of Homeric poetic technique. That Eustathius is less interested in the notion of fiction than in how this particular fiction functions within the Homeric text is hardly surprising, but the holistic view of the text which he here takes is in fact one which ancient (and Byzantine) commentators are often accused of lacking.

It is the entirely fictional nature of the wall which also accounts, in Eustathius' explanation, for why Homer has it built in a single day (v. 465) and says so little about the building. Eustathius now moves to a consideration of this matter before going back to the individual details of the speeches of Poseidon and Zeus, because this hangs together with the previous discussion of Homer's strategy. That the wall was finished so quickly is not improbable given the large numbers of Greeks available (*in Il.* 690.9, 18), and Homer says so little about the construction – no architects, no builders, nothing about where the wood and other material came from etc. etc. – so as not to waste words in a great rigmarole about something which was a simple invention;[96] to do so would have thrown suspi-

93 Cf. also Strabo 2.3.6, citing Posidonius, and the schol. T *Il.* 7.443–464c.
94 For a further example cf. below p. 60.
95 Cf. Dio Chrys. 11.75–76; Philostr. *Her.* 7–8.
96 van der Valk II 494 notes here a typical Byzantine interest in the proper construction of walls.

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cion 'on his whole poem' and would have created disbelief 'also about what really happened' (690.16). Eustathius draws attention to Homer's elaborate description of the fetching of the wood for Patroclus' pyre (*Iliad* 23.109–126) as an example of how Homer could describe building operations if he wanted to; Patroclus' 'little pyre' (ὀλίγη πυρά) was the object of 'many words' (πολὺς λόγος) and an elaborately detailed description from Homer,[97] whereas nothing comparable accompanies the building of the wall. In his discussion of the differences between Patroclus' pyre and the Achaean wall, modern critics might perhaps say that Eustathius anticipates the idea that 'effects of the real' lend plausibility to fiction, were it not for the fact that, for Eustathius, Patroclus' pyre is not fictional. On the other hand, Homer has made entirely plausible (πιθανόν) the fact that the wall was so completely swept away, as it had been built in a day as an improvised structure on sand (*in Il.* 690.18–19); Eustathius here operates very close to a form of 'rationalising', but he has his eye principally on how well Homer has handled the whole fiction of the wall and its destruction.

One aspect of the whole episode which for Eustathius obviously belongs to μῦθος, rather than to the 'as if true', are the Olympian gods. Eustathius now turns briefly to them, juxtaposing their mythical status to the πιθανότης of Homer's handling of the wall. At one level it is important for Eustathius' students to remember that 'nothing happens without God' (*in Il.*690.20), but these are Homeric gods and, as was very familiar in ancient criticism, Homer makes his gods act ἀνθρωπίνως, 'like human beings', and ἐμπαθῶς, 'with human emotions' (690.21, 26).[98] The idea is perhaps most familiar to us from 'Longinus', *On the Sublime* 9.7. So here Eustathius elaborates on a point he has briefly mentioned before, namely Poseidon's emotions. The god acts from φθόνος, a notorious characteristic of 'the Greek gods', and φιλοτιμία, and he acts against the Greeks, even though they are his φίλοι; he also stirs Zeus to anger against an 'impiety deserving of punishment'. Eustathius thus assimilates a scene which, as we have seen, aroused considerable critical discussion, to the ordinary patterns of Homeric poetry. When Poseidon merely mentions the wall and the ditch (7.449), rather than repeating the detail of vv. 440–441, Eustathius sees here too very 'human' emotions: 'Observe that in his anger Poseidon did not speak at length about the fortification. He said nothing about the towers and the stakes

97 Eustathius does not want us to remember that here Homer refers to the μέγα ἠρίον for Patroclus and Achilles at *Il.* 23.126.

98 Cf. Van der Valk II 107; Eustathius commonly comments on the fact that Homer's gods are ἀνθρωποπαθεῖς, cf., e.g., *in Il.* 1363.10, 1597.50 and the following note.

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or even about the nature of the ditch, but it is as though the very mention of the fortification upset him' (*in Il.* 690.47–48).[99]

Eustathius returns to the fictionality of the wall when he considers Poseidon's claim that 'the fame (κλέος) of [the Greek wall] will stretch as far as the dawn light scatters', whereas the wall which he and Apollo built will be forgotten (*Iliad* 7.451–453):

> The ancients said that poets also had to be prophets, and this is how Homer appears both elsewhere and here when, trusting in the power of his own eloquence (λογιότης), he has Poseidon say that 'the fame' of the wall he has invented 'will stretch as far as the dawn light scatters', that is over the whole earth beneath the sun, as far obviously as his own poetry is distributed. The expression is hyperbolic, for 'as far as the dawn light scatters' embraces both the inhabited and the uninhabited world; the sun's brightness spreads over deserted lands also. This could however be understood differently, with reference, not to space, but to time. In imitation of Homer, Euripides says 'gratitude lasts a long time' (*Hecuba* 320), and so here it could be understood that the fame of the wall will be eternal and everlasting, for as long as the light of day shines. This is clear from the fact that Poseidon says that 'they will forget' our wall, thus opposing forgetfulness to long memory … Observe also that here the poet puts his own invented (πλαστόν) wall on a par with the historical and real wall of Troy. Only the fame of both of them lives on, while in reality neither is visible, but the Homeric one is now the more renowned. Because of the poet's eloquence, this wall exists in some way, having come from nothing, whereas the real Troy has in the sweep of time passed from real existence into nothing and disappeared.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 690.54–64

James Porter has rightly drawn attention to the remarkable nature of Eustathius' reflection on how Homer's poetic fiction now has an 'existence', in contrast to the 'real' wall of Troy.[100] There is indeed much one could say about τὸ μὴ ὄν

99 The exegetical T-scholium on *Il.* 7.445 note that Apollo does not speak at all in the exchange whereas 'Poseidon, being a pro-Greek god [or 'though he is a pro-Greek god'] seems to accuse the Greeks ἀπαθῶς'. The adverb is difficult to understand, and Cobet suggested ἀμαθῶς; Porter suggests that the term implies that Poseidon is 'acting inconsistently, as though he lacked all feeling for the Greeks whom he otherwise favors' (Porter 2011, 16). This interpretation might be supported by the scholium on v. 450 which notes that the lesson there is that, though Poseidon is friendly to the Greeks, he grants no pardon when they do not reverence the gods. Eustathius' discussion perhaps suggests another solution. Might Poseidon speak not ἀπαθῶς, but rather ἐμπαθῶς? I once also toyed with ἀνθρωποπαθῶς: for the adverb cf. Hermogenes 391.18 Rabe, and the exegetical scholia regularly use the adjective of Homer's gods (schol. (b)T *Il.* 4.2a, 5.563, 13.521a, 14.168a, 176b), and cf. Eust. *in Il.* 563.44.

100 Porter 2011, 17–20; Porter 2016, 370–371. Taplin 1992, 140 observes, 'The reason why we, the audience, know about the wall, despite its total obliteration, is that it is preserved in poetry … The poet prompts the thought that it is significant that the gods have not obliterated the *Iliad*'; Taplin makes no reference to Eustathius. See also van den Berg, this volume.

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and the idea of fiction, just as there is much to be said about the very long tradition of contrasting the permanence of poetic 'monuments' with the inevitable decay of their physical counterparts,[101] but from Eustathius' point of view it is indeed the lasting power of Homer's poetry which is proved here. If one looked back from twelfth-century Constantinople (or Thessaloniki) at the classical past, there were physical 'ruins' and 'survivals' or 'traces' everywhere, though Troy was not alone in having utterly disappeared. More potent than any such physical, archaeological remains, particularly for a teacher, priest and scholar like Eustathius, was the immanent power of the book of classical poetry that one could hold in one's hand: this really did have an existence, whereas the physical world of Troy had utterly disappeared. Homer was, as we might be tempted to say, Eustathius' contemporary. It is indeed the sweep of time, ἡ τοῦ χρόνου φορά, and Homer's power to survive it, which Homer's wall has impressed (once again) upon Eustathius' consciousness. We may here catch something genuinely Byzantine.

Here again we can point to the kind of earlier critical tradition upon which Eustathius was drawing. A bT-scholium on *Iliad* 7.451(a) reads as follows (in Erbse's text):

> τοῦ δ' ἤτοι κλέος ἔσται, ⟨ὅσην τ' ἐπικίδναται ἠώς⟩: ἴσως διὰ τὴν ποίησιν αὐτοῦ· διὰ γὰρ ταύτην τὸ τεῖχος ἀοίδιμόν ἐστιν, οὐ δομηθὲν τοῖς Ἕλλησιν, ἀλλ' Ὁμήρῳ γενόμενον ἕνεκεν τῆς ἐπ' αὐτῷ μάχης.
>
> 'the fame of [the Greek wall] will stretch ⟨as far as the dawn light scatters⟩': Perhaps because of his poetry, for it is because of this that the wall is celebrated, not built by the Greeks, but created by Homer because of the battle over it.

The scholium is lacunose, and the reference to Homer in αὐτοῦ comes in rather suddenly, but the meaning can hardly be doubted, and is confirmed – in as much as such things ever can be – by the passage of Eustathius we are considering.[102] The scholiast, like modern scholars, found Poseidon's prophecy[103] puzzling (hence ἴσως, 'perhaps') and wondered whether the reference was to Homer's poetry. No such uncertainty for Eustathius – far from it. From his perspective, Homer's prophecy of the fame of his poetry and of everything in it (such as the Achaean wall) has more than come true.

101 Important moments in that tradition include Pindar, *Pyth.* 6.5–14; Simonides, *PMG* 531; and Horace, *Odes* 3.30.
102 Porter 2011, 21 seems to interpret διὰ τὴν ποίησιν αὐτοῦ, at least at the first level of reading, as 'owing to the making of [the wall]', but that cannot, I think, be correct.
103 Eustathius too saw Poseidon as a tool of Homeric prophecy, *in Il.* 690.52–54.

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In the passage cited above Eustathius offers a second possible interpretation, to which he obviously feels drawn: Poseidon does not say that the fame of the Greek wall 'will stretch as far as the dawn light scatters', but rather 'for as long as the dawn scatters its light', i.e. forever,[104] and he sees support for this interpretation in Poseidon's following verse: '[men] will forget' the wall built by Poseidon and Apollo. 'Forgetting' is a function of time, rather than space. 'Haud recte' is van der Valk's laconic comment on this second interpretation, which is, however, hardly a foolish one: κλέος is habitually associated with time – κλέος ἄφθιτον does not die, but escapes the 'forgetting' of death and *is* forever, just as, Eustathius notes, is the fame of the Greek wall. It would be very pointed indeed for Poseidon, an immortal, to prophesy that the Achaean wall will be 'immortal', whereas the divinely made one will 'perish' and be forgotten.

Space and time may, of course, co-exist in such contexts, but it is time which predominates in Greek thinking, particularly in the context of poetic survival. We may think of Theognis' prophecy of Kyrnos' fame (Theognis 237–254): from one point of view, Kyrnos, like the Achaean wall, is a poetic construct and construction, who owes his very existence, present and future, to the poet; he will not 'lose his *kleos*, even after death' but he will be celebrated 'as long as there is earth and sun' (Theognis 245, 252, cf. *in Il.* 690.59).[105] A Hellenistic inscription in fact declares that the *kleos* of Homer's poetry will last 'while night and the sun revolve' (*SGO* 06/02/18, vv. 7–8). We may say that time and space do indeed already co-exist implicitly in the words which Homer gives to Poseidon, and that Eustathius is drawing a false division in opposing two interpretations which in fact work poetically together; if, however, it was the grammarian and teacher in Eustathius which made him express the matter in terms of alternative interpretations, 'space' vs 'time', it was his deep sympathy with how traditional concepts were expressed which brings him to make this distinction and to draw out the implications of Poseidon's concern with 'forgetting' in ways which go well beyond anything that modern commentary has to offer.

When Eustathius picks up the story of the wall in his commentary on Book 12, he begins first with the theme of the wall as Homer's πλάσμα (*in Il.* 888.52–

104 Whether the textual variation in v. 451 between ὅσον and ὅσην (Aristarchus), of which Eustathius might have known, played any role in alerting him to the possibility of alternate interpretations cannot move beyond speculation. In his famous translation, Richard Lattimore indeed took the text to mean 'as long as dawnlight is scattered', but to what extent this was a 'deliberate misinterpretation' I do not know.

105 Another telling example is the famous epigram on Midas' tomb to which Simonides responded (*PMG* 581), cf. Yunis on Pl. *Phdr.* 264d4–7.

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54), and then with its destruction by Poseidon and Apollo. Here one detail seems to stand out as surprising:

> Together with the foundations, Homer also removed the possibility that he could later be found out [i.e. be shown to have invented the wall] and he brought the wall down through the agency of Poseidon and Apollo, that is through earthquake, as was reasonable (εἰκός), and inundation; the first of these is under the control of Poseidon, the 'earth-shaker' (σεισίχθων) and the one 'who makes the earth quake' (ἐννοσίγαιος), and the second is controlled by the sun which gathers the clouds (νεφεληγερέτης).
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 888.53–57

Eustathius assumed readers who knew that the gods who destroyed the fictional wall are themselves to be understood as poetic allegories for natural phenomena: the wall was utterly destroyed by seismic movements and floods, which Homer typically ('mythically') presents as gods. Poseidon's seismic role is expected,[106] and it is Zeus who, as also expected, sends torrential rain (*Iliad* 12.25–26, cf. *in Il.* 889.1, 26). Apollo's role seems to be that of Poseidon's helper, and Homer makes him bring all the local rivers together in an overpowering torrent (*Iliad* 12.24, cf. *in Il.* 889.26). The purpose of the note cited above is to explain the simple allegory by means of stock epithets of the gods concerned; νεφεληγερέτης, 'cloud-gatherer' can only be Zeus, but the sun makes a completely unexpected appearance with that epithet, and the sun certainly has nothing to do with the alleged destruction of the wall.[107] Eustathius repeats the explanation a few pages later, and here again there seems to be some confusion:

> The earth-shaker is obviously responsible for the earthquake … and Zeus, as has been explained, the sun, for the inundation, as he sent down rain not just once but continuously through Zeus's air and brought the mouths of the rivers together in flood.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 890.38–40

In this latter passage there is no mention of Apollo and his Homeric task of turning the mouths of the rivers seems rather to be ascribed to Zeus. In contrast to this apparent confusion in Eustathius' explanations, Tzetzes identifies Apollo here as time, 'which is completed through the movement of the sun' (*alleg.*

106 The history of the 'rationalisation' of 'Poseidon' as referring to earthquakes goes back at least to Herodotus 7.129.4, where however de-mythologising is only at a half way point: *if* you think that Poseidon causes earthquakes, then it is reasonable to say of the effects of earthquakes that they are the works of Poseidon.

107 In other contexts, of course, particularly neo-Platonic ones, Zeus could be interpreted as the sun, cf., e.g., *in Il.* 987.33.

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Il. 12.8–9, 18),[108] and a role for time might well seem at least true to the resonance of this extraordinary Homeric passage.

Homer seems to describe two separate cosmic phenomena which led to the obliteration of the Achaean ramparts: Apollo brought the rivers together and unleashed their combined force at the wall (*Il.* 12.24–25), whereas 'Zeus' rained continuously (12.25–26); Eustathius' paraphrase (*in Il.* 889.26–29) makes plain this division of labour. Poseidon is imagined to have directed operations (*Il.* 12.28) and to have used the water to sweep away the Greek foundations and then covered over all the erstwhile traces with sand (12.27–33). Given that in Book 7 Zeus had given Poseidon permission to destroy the wall, once the war was over, and that at 12.17–18 the destruction is said to have been the plan of 'Poseidon and Apollo', it would have been easy enough for any ancient reader to understand the reference to Zeus in 12.25 as an allegorical *façon de parler*, with the 'real gods' involved being Poseidon and Apollo, acting out of protective jealousy for their own Trojan wall. On the other hand, the manner of the destruction strongly suggests the work just of Poseidon, the powerful god of earthquake and water. For an ancient reader attuned to allegorical interpretation, Apollo's presence is an awkward one,[109] for Apollo's principal cosmic manifestation, the sun, has no role to play in the destruction, unless we were to imagine a rather different version in which, after the wall had been swept away, the action of the sun dried up the waters leaving what is now to be seen at the site: sand with no trace left of the wall (cf. 12.30–32 on Poseidon's 'repair work').

In Pseudo-Heraclitus' *Homeric Problems* the destruction of the wall is indeed entirely the work of the allegorised Poseidon (*qu. Hom.* 38), and we may recall how in Book 7 Apollo had been silent as Poseidon remonstrated with Zeus over the Greek fortifications; in discussing that passage, Eustathius had noted that Poseidon was responsible for earthquake and inundation 'together with Apollo' (*in Il.* 690.5), and the awkwardness of Apollo's role here is again very plain to see. What then we perhaps have in the references to the sun in Eustathius' discussion of the opening of Book 12 are remnants of an attempt, in which, as we have seen, Tzetzes succeeded, to find a role for an allegorised Apollo in the destruction, but an attempt which failed before the clear indications of the text. We may even be able to trace the origin (or one of the origins) of such an attempt. In discussing the epithet 'holy' for Troy in the second verse of the *Odyssey*, Eustathius first notes the standard ancient explanation, namely that the city

108 Cf. Goldwyn-Kokkini 2015, 232. Apollo as the sun is Tzetzes' standard interpretation of the Homeric god.

109 That at *Il.* 21.446–449 Poseidon – in a speech to Apollo – claims all the credit for the building of the Trojan walls certainly does not lessen the oddity of Apollo's role in Book 12.

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was founded by Poseidon and Apollo, and then he catalogues a couple of 'rationalisations' of this story. One of these is that any form of building requires 'Poseidon' (i.e. water or moisture) and 'Apollo' (i.e. the heat of the sun) to dry out the building-works, and that this entirely general explanation was applied in particular to the building of Troy (*in Od.* 1382.50–53). As at the building, so at the destruction: a place is found for both gods, even at the expense of some awkwardness.

Finally, it is worth noting that when in Book 15 Apollo breaches the wall as easily 'as a child knocks over a sandcastle' (*Il.* 15.361–366), a simile for which Eustathius expresses the greatest admiration, both the scholia and Eustathius are concerned with the question of how the god could do this so easily, when it later took Apollo and Poseidon nine days (*Il.* 12.25) to obliterate the wall entirely.[110] Eustathius' answer (*in Il.* 1019.58–61) is that in Book 15 we are dealing with 'the Apollo of myth', i.e. the Homeric Olympian, whereas in Book 12 Apollo and Poseidon are 'not the gods of myth', but are allegorical figures.[111] What is most interesting here is not so much welcome confirmation for the above interpretation of the discussion of Book 12, but rather the capacious modes of explanation which allowed Byzantine readers a complete picture of Homeric technique and which assumed a Homer working with principles of consistency familiar to them.

Love and sex

It is a commonplace of modern criticism of the *Iliad* that the scenes in Book 3 in which Aphrodite compels Helen to visit Paris after his duel with Menelaus and make love with him and in Book 14 in which Hera 'deceives' Zeus by arousing him to sleep with her, thus being distracted from what is happening in the battlefield, may be mutually explicative. Paris and Zeus, after all, share verses in which they express their arousal. The similarity between the scenes was certainly not lost on Eustathius, and it is of some interest to see how a Byzantine handles such material. As with the discussion of the Achaean wall of Books 7 and 12, I shall (as far as possible) follow Eustathius' discussion sequentially.

110 Critics were also of course bothered by the fact that the gods took nine days to destroy what the Greeks had built in a day, cf. schol. T *Il.* 12.25, with Porphyry's note cited by Erbse ad loc., Eustathius, *in Il.* 890.34–40.

111 For Tzetzes, however, the allegories continue: the Achaean ditch had been weakened by rain, and 'the sun made it collapse like a dry loaf of bread' (*alleg. Il.* 15.140–141 = Goldwyn-Kokkini 2015, 278).

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Eustathius certainly does not dissent from the standard view of the scholia that the scenes in Book 3 depict Paris as an outrageously dissolute individual, plunged helplessly in τρυφή and ἀκολασία (cf., e. g., *in Il.* 428.14–16). Aphrodite's seductive description to Helen of Paris catches his attention particularly:

> δεῦρ' ἴθ', Ἀλέξανδρός σε καλεῖ οἶκόνδε νέεσθαι·
> κεῖνος ὅ γ' ἐν θαλάμωι καὶ δινωτοῖσι λέχεσσιν,
> κάλλεΐ τε στίλβων καὶ εἵμασιν· οὐδέ κε φαίης
> ἀνδρὶ μαχεσσάμενον τόν γ' ἐλθεῖν, ἀλλὰ χορόνδε
> ἔρχεσθ', ἠὲ χοροῖο νέον λήγοντα καθίζειν.
> Homer, *Iliad* 3.390–394
>
> Come here – Paris is calling you to return to your dwelling. He is there in the bedroom on the intricately carved bed, gleaming with beauty and fine clothing. You would not think that he had returned from a duel with a man, but that he was going to a dance or was resting after a recent dance.

When Eustathius notes that this description would suit 'a bridegroom or some other man of *truphe*' (*in Il.* 428.10), it is tempting to think that he has caught some of the sense, as also has modern criticism, that this scene does not just evoke the first time Aphrodite 'led' Helen to Paris' bed, but is also a kind of 'wedding' in which the bride is transferred to the groom's house.[112] Be that as it may, it is a mark of how Eustathius thinks through the implications of the text that he works out the basis of Aphrodite's comparison of Paris to a dancer:

> He mocks the luxurious Paris, who is not pained like someone who has been beaten, but loves like a dancer, having sweated (ἐνιδρώσας) for a very brief time in the fighting as a dancer in the dance.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 428.15–16

This might seem to us wrong-headed, as Aphrodite's comparison refers merely to Paris' appearance and dress (as Eustathius (*in Il.* 428.30) goes on to point out, we are to understand that Aphrodite not only saved Paris from the battlefield, but also beautified him), but Eustathius typically sets the comparison within a holistic reading of the scene as one which mocks Paris; it is not so much (despite Priam's abuse of his remaining sons at *Il.* 24.261) that being a χορευτής is disreputable, as it is transient – Paris is (to put it briefly) a dilettante in warfare. The

112 On Homer's technique of 'replaying' incidents beyond the temporal scope of his poem cf. above p. 50.

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reference to sweat perhaps picks up a possible implication of Aphrodite's στίλβων, 'gleaming'.[113]

Helen's recognition that the old woman standing in front of her was in fact Aphrodite was a famous moment for the ancient critics:

> ὣς φάτο· τῇ δ' ἄρα θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ὄρινεν·
> καί ῥ' ὡς οὖν ἐνόησε θεᾶς περικαλλέα δειρὴν
> στήθεά θ' ἱμερόεντα καὶ ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα,
> θάμβησέν τ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα, ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζε·
> Homer, *Iliad* 3.395–398
>
> So [Aphrodite] spoke and stirred the spirit in Helen's chest. When she saw the goddess' beautiful neck and lovely breasts and sparkling eyes, then she was amazed and addressed her as follows …

Two issues dominated ancient criticism: How could Helen recognise the disguised goddess?, Why does Helen speak to the god as she proceeds to do? Aristarchus in fact athetised all of 396–418, thus removing the angry exchange between god and mortal altogether; his reasons for doing so seem to have been various, but the improbability of the verses describing the god's lovely body (396–397) and the inappropriateness of the exchange of insults seem to have loomed large (cf. schol. A *Il.* 3.395). The presence of the allegedly intrusive verses was ascribed to someone who took θυμὸν … ὄρινεν in v. 395 to mean 'stirred her anger', rather than 'stirred (i.e. aroused) her spirit/desire'. Those who did not accept these arguments noted that, as the exegetical scholia on v. 397 'lovely breasts' put it, 'there is nothing odd in the goddess appearing naked: she came to be recognised by Helen, but conceals herself from the Trojan women'. In other words, the goddess at this moment grants Helen special vision which she denies to everyone else. Modern critics too would be inclined to note that there is (at least) a special relationship between Helen and Aphrodite, whether or not they subscribe to some version of the view that Aphrodite is 'a projection of personal emotions' (Kirk on vv. 396–398); this scene has always been one of the strongest cases for those who wish to see the interventions of the Homeric gods as, at least in part, a way of describing internal psychological processes and drives. As is his habit, Eustathius does not even mention the Aristarchan athetesis; after all, the scene is a morally didactic one: it shows us Helen strongly, and indeed angrily, resisting Aphrodite's 'pimping' (μαστροπεία), a harsh

113 Cf. Theocritus 2.79, where the reference is presumably to the use of oil after exercise. Through ἐνιδρώσας Eustathius perhaps recalls Xen. *Symp*. 2.18, the only occurrence of this compound verb in the literature of the classical period, where (the notoriously ugly) Socrates uses it precisely in the context of dancing.

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word which Eustathius repeats with pointed effect.[114] Eustathius also does not waste words over how Helen could recognize the disguised god, and whereas the exegetical scholia accept that vv. 396–397 mean that Helen at least saw part of the female body which is normally concealed, for Eustathius 'beautiful neck and lovely breasts and sparkling eyes' are 'simply praise of a beautiful woman' (*in Il.* 428.33); we perhaps here catch a glimpse of Byzantine court society peeping through the commentary. What, however, Eustathius particularly draws our attention to is how this 'simple praise' of beauty is itself 'beautified' (κεκαλλώπισται) in vv. 396–397 by the use of three *parisa*, or noun-adjective phrases of equal length; the rhetorician and stylist in Eustathius is never far away. Thus he also notes that Helen's angry words to Aphrodite (vv. 406–411) come out in short, choppy phrases, a familiar effect of anger (*in Il.* 430.24).

When Helen sarcastically accuses Aphrodite of trying to deceive her and suggests that the god will pass her on to one φίλος after another, just as she gave her to Paris (vv. 399–404), Eustathius suggests that Helen here 'praises herself as being famous and worthy of being loved (ἀξιέραστον)', as Aphrodite would certainly not behave like this if Helen was not a gift worth having (*in Il.* 429.23–24, cf. 429.19). The observation is again driven by a concern with the rhetorical effect of what every character says, with the strategies of speaking; when Nausicaa offers Odysseus the imaginary speech of the jealous Phaeacians about the handsome stranger at her side (*Od.* 6.275–285), another passage which Aristarchus athetised as being inappropriate to the character speaking, Eustathius not only expresses his admiration for the 'wondrous technique' by which Nausicaa declares her love as though someone else was speaking, but – as with Helen in Book 3 – he similarly notes that the princess here subtly suggests to Odysseus that she is ἀξιέραστος, given the number of Phaeacian admirers which she has (*in Od.* 1563.49). The only other occurrence of the term in the *Commentaries* is at *in Il.* 989.26 where the famous catalogue of Zeus's conquests which he recites to Hera as a prelude to their love-making, a passage once again athetised by Aristarchus (as well as Aristophanes before him), is understood as part of Zeus showing himself ἀξιέραστος; if he has had so many lovers, then there must be something worth having there! The strategy of explanation in all three cases is similar. In each of the three cases a plurality (or potential plurality) of lovers or admirers is implicitly a mode of self-praise; in Book 3, however, Helen is not speaking to a man whom she wishes to impress, but to Aphrodite, and Eustathius' interpretation of her words might have been influenced by his

114 Cf. *in Il.* 429.8, 24. The idea itself, but not the word, is already in the scholia, cf. προαγωγόν in the schol. bT *Il.* 3.383a.

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reading of the other scenes, in particular perhaps by Zeus's words in Book 14; as we have already seen, Eustathius recognised the scene in Book 14 as very close in some respects to the analogous scene in Book 3.

Central to the critical engagement with this scene was the outrageous behaviour of Paris: a man who has just been beaten in a duel by the husband whose wife he stole can think only of sex. Why does Homer portray him as so degraded?[115] The man is, as Eustathius puts it, simply μαχλότατος (*in Il.* 431.20). In a later addition to the commentary, Eustathius suggests that Paris' ἐρωμανία is perhaps (ἴσως) to be explained by the effect of the *kestos* which Aphrodite wears and which plays such an important part in the 'deception of Zeus' in Book 14 (*in Il.* 431.24–29); the *kestos* is not mentioned in Book 3, but how else to explain Paris' extraordinary desire? Other than Zeus in Book 14, the other parallel which springs to Eustathius' mind is Herodotus' Candaules, whose obsessive *eros* for his own wife brought him to a nasty end. Eustathius uses exactly the same parallel in his discussion of Zeus's desire in Book 14, and there he elaborates upon ancient semantic discussions[116] to make clear why *eros* is not what a man should feel for his wife:

> A man might be said to love (φιλεῖν) his own wife and cherish (ἀγαπᾶν) her and be of one mind (ὁμονοητικῶς ἔχειν) with her,[117] but not *eran* her. *Eros* refers to things which are not in our power or control, as it is an excess of desire for things which we do not really have. Herodotus indeed reports that Candaules felt *eros* for his own wife, but this brought him the bad end we all know about. Zeus too will get nothing good from the *eros* he feels for Hera, as he did once in the beginning, but he will lose the chance to watch what is happening.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 988.30–33

It is tempting to think that it was consideration of Book 14 which led Eustathius to his second thoughts on Paris' behaviour in Book 3. Be that as it may, the parallels which Eustathius draws, with Zeus and Hera and Candaules and his wife, confirm that Eustathius stands in the critical tradition which viewed Paris and Helen, in this scene at least, as a 'married couple', however unusual an example of the institution. Nowhere is this more striking than in the critical attitude to the verses which close the scene:

115 For some discussion and bibliography cf. Hunter 2009a, 21; Hunter-Russell 2011, 105.
116 Cf. van der Valk's note ad loc.
117 When, however, Odysseus famously wishes ὁμοφροσύνη, 'like-mindedness', for Nausicaa and her future husband (*Od.* 6.180–185), Eustathius wrily comments that this is actually rarely found in married couples, most of whom spend all their lives squabbling (*in Od.* 1558.26).

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ἦ ῥα, καὶ ἄρχε λέχοσδε κιών· ἅμα δ’ εἵπετ’ ἄκοιτις.
τὼ μὲν ἄρ’ ἐν τρητοῖσι κατηύνασθεν λεχέεσσιν ...
Homer, *Iliad* 3.446–447

So he spoke, and led the way to the bed; his wife followed after him. Those two lay on the worked bed ...

For Eustathius these verses describe ‘chaste marital relations’ (*in Il.* 434.9); however strongly one might wish to stress Helen’s σωφροσύνη in this scene, I think that most modern critics would take a rather different view. The exegetical scholia compare the ‘going to bed’ of Zeus and Hera at the end of Book 1, while also noting that Paris and Helen are not a ‘standard’ married couple:

Ζεὺς δὲ πρὸς ὃν λέχος ἤϊ’ Ὀλύμπιος ἀστεροπητής,
ἔνθα πάρος κοιμᾶθ’ ὅτε μιν γλυκὺς ὕπνος ἱκάνοι·
ἔνθα καθηῦδ’ ἀναβάς, παρὰ δὲ χρυσόθρονος Ἥρη.
Homer, *Iliad* 1.609–611

Then Zeus, the Olympian who sends lightning, went to the bed where previously he slept whenever sweet sleep took him. He climbed in and slept, and beside him was Hera of the golden throne.

In that scene also the husband and wife have squabbled immediately before (though Hephaestus has tried to calm things down), and there too the exegetical scholia draw a moralising lesson, which one might think anything but appropriate: ‘The poet is teaching [us] that a husband and wife should share the same bed, so that her absence will not pain him’ (schol. bT *Il.* 1.611b).[118]

Eustathius is alive not merely to the variety of tones in Helen’s short address to Paris (like a good rhetorician she is πολυειδής, *in Il.* 431.30), but he also envisages the scene in his mind’s eye and helps his students to see it. Thus Paris looks at Helen ἀσέμνως, when really he should cover his head in shame (*in Il.* 431.20), and Helen’s gesture of v. 427, ὄσσε πάλιν κλίνασα, which the exegetical scholia see as a further mark of her σωφροσύνη, is acknowledged as an open gesture of multiple possible implications, and here (as so often) Eustathius has set the pattern for modern commentary.[119] On the one hand the gesture is

118 It would be typical of a scholiast to view things from the male perspective, and the note gives due attention to the ordering of the Homeric text, but I have wondered whether we should not read αὑτήν, i.e. ‘so that the husband does not pain his wife by his absence’.
119 Cf., e.g., Kirk’s n. on v. 427. In Tzetzes’ account, Helen is unable to resist Paris’ beauty, despite her inner struggle (πολλὰ ζυγομαχήσασαν πρὸς ἑαυτήν), because Paris was born under the sign of Aphrodite (*alleg. Il.* 3.163–171 = Goldwyn-Kokkini 2015, 142).

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almost flirtatious (*in Il.* 431.31), but she also seeks to avoid his gaze, because she knows that the eyes are the source of *eros* (a very familiar piece of ancient erotic lore)[120] and she does not want to feel the desire which he himself feels (432.5), and Eustathius makes the point by drawing a verbal link between ὁρᾶν and ἐρᾶν, though he does not (quite) imply that Helen herself knew of the etymological link. For good measure he adds a quotation about desire and the eyes from Euripides (*Hippolytus* 525–526) and cites 'some later rhetorician' for the idea that *eros* flows (ῥέειν) from the eyes.[121]

Paris describes his desire by recalling the very first occasion on which he and Helen made love:

> οὐ γάρ πώ ποτέ μ' ὧδέ γ' ἔρως φρένας ἀμφεκάλυψεν,
> οὐδ' ὅτε σε πρῶτον Λακεδαίμονος ἐξ ἐρατεινῆς
> ἔπλεον ἁρπάξας ἐν ποντοπόροισι νέεσσιν,
> νήσωι δ' ἐν κραναῇι ἐμίγην φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῆι, 445
> ὥς σεο νῦν ἔραμαι καί με γλυκὺς ἵμερος αἱρεῖ.
> Homer, *Iliad* 3.442–446
>
> Never before has desire so covered my mind, not even when I first took you from lovely Lacedaemon and sailed away with my seafaring ships and made love to you on a rocky island, as now I feel desire for you and sweet longing lifts me.

Eustathius' analysis of Paris' language is a good illustration both of his habit of accumulating various interpretations, in a manner which was to prove very influential on the later commentary tradition, and of his persistent attempt to see Homeric language and imagery as hanging-together in a large-scale and meaningful picture:

> ἀμφεκάλυψεν ['covered over'] is either taken from the likeness to a cloud, as *eros* darkens the sun which is the soul, or is a metaphor from nets which, when they are spread out, cover what has been caught,[122] or is simply taken over from whatever conceals what is covered or makes it disappear ... αἱρεῖ ['takes hold of'] is from the language of hunting, and so it follows on from ἀμφεκάλυψεν, so that he is saying '*eros* has covered me in his nets and has caught me, but it is a sweet catching'.
> Eustathius, *Commentary on the Iliad* 433.11–32

At *Il.* 14.294 the poet uses similar language of the effect which the sight of Hera has upon Zeus, and there (*in Il.* 987.29–33) Eustathius repeats the explanation

120 Cf., e.g., Calame 1999, 19–23.
121 At Plato, *Cratylus* 420a9–b4 the link between ἔρως and ῥοή is explicit.
122 This explanation is also found in the schol. bT *Il.* 3.442.

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that ἀμφεκάλυψεν is a metaphor from hunting-nets, but he also notes that one could take it as a metaphor from clouds (Zeus's mind is, after all, the sun in some allegorical interpretations of the cosmos), and – perhaps most surprising of all to us – he draws a link between the two explanations by seeking to connect this occurrence of ἀμφεκάλυψεν with Zeus's subsequent promise to Hera that she need not worry about anyone seeing them, because 'I shall conceal (ἀμφικαλύψω) us in a golden cloud' (v. 343), and by the fact that the word νεφέλη denotes a particular kind of hunting-net, a fact which Eustathius illustrates from Aristophanes, *Birds* 194.[123] Here it is (again) tempting to believe that at least his knowledge of, if not his commentary on, the passage in Book 14 has fed back into the commentary on the analogous scene in Book 3, where the interpretation of ἀμφεκάλυψεν as a metaphor from clouds seems to come in very unexpectedly; if this is correct, it may be thought to have implications for Eustathius' habits of working.

Eustathius' discussion of the 'Deception of Zeus' in *Iliad* 14 naturally records allegorical readings of the joining of Zeus and Hera (*in Il.* 986.60–987.6), but what is perhaps of most interest, as it has also been to modern scholars, is the famous passage in which Zeus catalogues his past conquests as a way of expressing to Hera the strength of his present desire. Eustathius begins by noting that, within a context which is both erotic and 'unrelievedly mythical', i.e. stories about Homer's invented gods, Homer weaves in very brief διηγήματα of a similar kind (*in Il.* 988.25–26); in other words, Homer's technique here is, as we might say, a generically conscious one: the catalogue of erotic narratives, very briefly alluded to, reinforce the generic sense, 'myth', of the framing narrative. Eustathius will shortly return to the importance of the idea of 'myth' for this scene,[124] but he also subsequently points out that such a catalogue of brief allusions to stories has a didactic function in making the hearer πολυμαθής (*in Il.* 988.63). Here, as so often, Eustathius casts Homer's ideal audience in his own image.

In Eustathius' view Zeus is, as we have already noted, trying to make himself ἀξιέραστος to Hera by this display of his amorous past, but he is also speaking, 'already deprived of his *nous*' (*in Il.* 988.28), under the sway of the *kestos* which Hera is wearing and which makes him feel ἔρως ἄτοπος for his own wife (cf. above p. 62).[125] This disturbance of his intelligence, the taking away of his πυκιναὶ φρένες as Homer puts it (*Il.* 14.294), makes him 'pride himself on things he

123 Cf. Dunbar ad loc. and Harder on Call. fr. 75.37 Pf.
124 Cf. below p. 66.
125 Cf. the schol. bT *Il.* 14.315b.

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should not, artlessly and rather simply' (ἀφελῶς καὶ ἁπλούστερον, *in Il.* 988.29); as Van der Valk notes, Eustathius here has in mind rhetorical discussions of ἀφέλεια as a characteristic of style (cf. Hermogenes, *Id.* 322–329 Rabe), and Eustathius' analysis suggests that Zeus is here behaving not unlike, for example, one of Theocritus' rustics, such as the Cyclops telling Galatea about all the wonderful delights of his cave. It might well be thought that this interpretation is not in fact very far off the mark. It is indeed the style and the manner of expression of the passage to which Eustathius wishes us to pay attention. The poet has, for example, 'beautified this erotic passage with the attractive (εὐειδής) figure of negation',[126] and Eustathius notes that the poet gives Zeus the negative οὐ nine times in his catalogue of past conquests; whereas Zeus dwells on this 'conspicuous figure' and also on the repeated reference to the fact that his unions bore fruit, he uses the word 'I desired' (ἠρασάμην) 'very sparingly',[127] only once in fact (v. 317), whereas it must be understood seven times with the individual items in the catalogue.[128] Zeus 'is ashamed of the word ἐρᾶν and does not wish to dwell upon it' (*in Il.* 988.39); the whole catalogue is in fact an excellent example (988.40) of how Homer can emphasise or suppress details in accordance with rhetorical need.

Eustathius then proceeds to a lengthy demonstration of how Zeus's catalogue illustrates Homer's stylistic *poikilia:*[129] to put it simply, Homer takes our minds off the sex by holding our attention on his style and manner of expression. The variation operates at every level of the catalogue: Zeus lists more mortal women than goddesses; he names the children of the mortals, but not of the immortals; the goddesses are given epithets, but the mortals – except for Danae – not, whereas the children of the mortals are given epithets, except for Minos; one mother and one child are followed by one mother and two children, then two mothers in one verse, each of whom had one child, then two mothers in two verses, and so on (*in Il.* 988.41–56). Ancient critics had also been interested

126 On the σχῆμα κατὰ ἄρσιν, which may amount to what we would consider little more than repeated anaphora of οὐ, cf., e.g., Hermogenes 293.16–25 R; Anon. περὶ σχημάτων III 129–130 Spengel.

127 This seems to be the meaning of πτωχικῶς at 988.39, i.e. it is a synonym of ἐλλιπῶς immediately following at *in Il.* 988.40; van der Valk suggests rather the meaning 'furtively'. πτωχικῶς also resonates against the illustration of the richness of stylistic *poikilia* which follows.

128 The grammatical observation is also found in the schol. A *Il.* 14.317a.

129 Erbse's note on the scholium to v. 317 transcribes the whole Eustathian passage, which he thinks contains material from scholia which have not survived; Janko's note on vv. 313–328 refers to Eustathius' 'fine analysis' and offers a summary of that analysis. Eustathius returns to the favourite theme of Homeric *poikilia* at *in Il.* 990.32, in the context of the variety of ways in which Hera can allude to Zeus's desire for sex, without being too explicit about the physical act.

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in why Zeus says θεᾶς ἔρος οὐδὲ γυναικός, but then catalogues his mortal conquests first. One explanation (cf. schol. T *Il.* 14.315c) offered was that ἔρως for one's own kind (e. g. a god for a god) was less fierce than for someone of a different kind (e. g. a god for a mortal); Eustathius explicitly ascribes this view to 'the ancients' (*in Il.* 988.59), but he adds that familiar evidence supports the point: 'for many men who are seized by desire prefer slave-girls to women of good family' (988.61). As so often, it would be very nice to know what (or whom) precisely he has in mind. It may of course (rightly) be objected that a man's desire for a slave-girl does not represent the same disparity of nature as that of a god for a mortal, which the schol. T *Il.* 14.315c describes as a desire for something παρὰ φύσιν, but we may either simply forgive Eustathius for a not particularly apt analogy of hierarchies, or we may wonder just how revealing that analogy is of how slaves were regarded in Eustathius' world.

The final verses of the scene are a famous example of almost cinematic metaphor and distraction:

> ἦ ῥα, καὶ ἀγκὰς ἔμαρπτε Κρόνου πάις ἣν παράκοιτιν·
> τοῖσι δ' ὑπὸ χθὼν δῖα φύεν νεοθηλέα ποίην,
> λωτόν θ' ἑρσήεντα ἰδὲ κρόκον ἠδ' ὑάκινθον
> πυκνὸν καὶ μαλακόν, ὃς ἀπὸ χθονὸς ὑψόσ' ἔεργεν.
> τῶι ἔνι λεξάσθην, ἐπὶ δὲ νεφέλην ἕσσαντο 350
> καλὴν χρυσείην· στιλπναὶ δ' ἀπέπιπτον ἔερσαι.
> Homer, *Iliad* 14.346–351

> So he spoke, and the son of Kronos took his wife in his arms. Beneath them the earth sent forth fresh grass, and dewy clover and crocus and hyacinth thick and soft to form a high barrier between them and the ground. There they lay and a lovely golden cloud enveloped them, as sparkling dew dripped around.

A standard critical approach to these verses is outlined by the exegetical scholia on vv. 347–351:

> As he has to describe a vulgar matter, the poet has turned his verses in another direction, namely to the flowers which grow up from the earth and to the cloud; in this way he has stopped us wondering (πολυπραγμονεῖν) about what happens next.
> schol. bT *Il.* 14.347–351[130]

130 On the idea of πολυπραγμονεῖν here cf. Hunter 2009c, 60–61.

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Eustathius duly offers a version of this explanation (cf. *in Il.* 991.9–10),[131] but he typically also adopts a stylistic approach to the moral problem raised by the verses. Thus v. 346 is harsh in its verbal expression 'so that the passage should not be entirely pleasant and smooth', and Homer also gets the matter over with very quickly (*in Il.* 990.52, cf. 991.30). In the end, however, Eustathius has (in his second thoughts) to admit that 'though neither "love-making" (φιλότητι) nor "took up in his arms" (ἀγκὰς ἔμαρπτεν) are very decent (σεμνόν), nevertheless the poet had no other way to express this passage more decently, however hard he tried to express it appropriately' (991.39).

Eustathius and Koraes

In 1804 Adamantios Koraes published in Paris a two-volume edition with ample commentary of one of the last great works of pagan Greek literature, the *Aithiopika* of Heliodorus.[132] In the long prefatory epistle to his edition, Koraes surveys the history of the Greek novel in antiquity, and then follows this with a scathing attack on what we now call the Byzantine novel; much of Koraes' scorn is of course reserved for the utterly artificial language (as he sees it) of such fiction. When he comes to Heliodorus himself, Koraes naturally draws attention to the very Homeric narrative structure of the *Aithiopika* and to Heliodorus' marvellous depiction of character, which is indeed worthy of being mentioned in the same breath as Homer's. He then turns to the nature of his own commentary, and in particular to its very full coverage of linguistic matters, particularly as regards the relation between ancient Greek and 'this new language which we speak today'. Here Koraes says that his model for the commentary was the 'wise and useful bishop' Eustathius. For Koraes, it was truly remarkable that, at a time of cultural and linguistic decay and political enslavement, when the despised Byzantine novel was being produced and 'other barbarous writings saw the light of

131 Eustathius also (*in Il.* 991.19) repeats the critical observation (schol. bT *Il.* 14.347) that Homer did not include roses among the flowers which the earth sent up because it would not be very nice to sleep on their thorns (!); the implication is that roses would have been expected in such an erotic context. He adds however that perhaps it was also not the season for roses, because roses do not bloom at the same time as crocus and hyacinth. Eustathius' interest in flowers and gardening is familiar from his letters and other texts, but it is hard here not to remember the Cyclops' words to Galatea at Theocritus 11.58–59. Here one might think that Eustathius' didacticism is somewhat misplaced.
132 On Koraes' edition of the *Aithiopika* cf. Tabaki 2010, 161–167; there is an Italian translation of the prefatory epistle in Rotolo 1965.

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day, which are fit only to be buried beneath the earth for all time', Eustathius interpreted the first and greatest poet of Greek wisdom, 'from whom all waters … flow', citing *Iliad* 21.196–197, which – as Koraes well knew, though he does not let on – Eustathius himself had quoted at the head of his *Iliad*-commentary (*in Il.* 1.9). No one can doubt the services which Eustathius had performed for the Greek people; he was truly φιλογενής, as in the scholiastic tradition Homer himself was φιλέλλην, though here again Koraes does not make his 'learned' allusion explicit.

Koraes' expansive and self-confessedly digressive prefatory epistle (cf. τὰς μακράς μου παρεκβάσεις, p. να΄ top) becomes indeed itself an exercise in Eustathian *mimesis*; we may recall Michael Choniates' praise (287.22–288.2 Lampros) for how Eustathius's lectures were filled (and filled out) with παρεκβάσεις which gave the student a complete picture, going far beyond merely explaining the text in hand, and how these 'digressions' were anything but 'inappropriate excursuses' (ἔξωροι παραδρομαί).[133] Here again, there is a direct line of descent from the Homeric text itself. Just as ancient criticism never tired of pointing to the *poikilia* of the texture of the Homeric poems, which always kept the audience refreshed and attentive through variations of scene-type and emotional level, so Eustathius advertises the variety and careful structure of the *Commentaries* which 'are not stretched out in a single text and body of unbroken continuity, which would weary the reader with the lack of breaks' (*in Il.* 2.43–44); rather, 'anyone proceeding on his way through [the *Iliad* commentary], will find many places, as it were, to stop and rest' (2.46).

Koraes then proceeds to discuss why Eustathius was not in a position to deal diachronically (as we would say) with the Greek language and in particular with the correction (διόρθωσις) of the 'common language', as extensively as Koraes has done in his commentaries:

> By 'correction' of the language I mean not only the changing of various barbarous words and structures, but also the preservation of many others which all who have not carefully investigated the nature of the language try to remove from the language as barbarisms. In Eustathius' time such correction was not possible. The time when things are collapsing is not the time for rebuilding.[134] The sensible house-owner laments from afar the inevitable destruction of his house; when the ruins have fallen and the dust has scattered, then he approaches and gathers what he can from the ruins in order to build a new house. At long last the desperately desired time for rebuilding has arrived, and day by day the

133 Cf. Browning 1995, 85. Not all moderns have agreed with Michael's assessment, of course.
134 Earthquakes were, of course, not unfamiliar to Koraes; the present passage perhaps evokes the state in which he found Smyrna and his own family-house on his return in 1779, cf. Kitromilidis 2010b, 5.

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> Greek people are enriched by new Eustathiuses and freed from the horrors of [the language of Byzantine novels].

There follows Koraes' favourite subject of the reform of how the Greek language is currently taught and what should replace that;[135] there is more here than just the fact (remarkable enough in itself) that Eustathius has been adopted into, become indeed a standard-bearer for, Koraes' project for the rebirth of the Greek people and the Greek language, to become almost an Enlightenment figure *avant la lettre*. Koraes is here, in fact, at his most Eustathian, both generally in the close connections he draws between language and morals, and also more specifically. He draws, he tells us, on his experiences with non-Greeks in declaring that once one 'has drunk to the full the cup of this sorceress which is the language of the Greeks' then one is no more a slave to the mere pleasures of the body; the beauty of the Greek language is in fact more entrancing than the Trojan elders found the beauty of Helen (pp. νβʹ–νγ).[136] The allusion, of course, is to the Homeric Circe whose bewitching and metamorphosis of Odysseus' men had been allegorised, many centuries before Eustathius, as the enslavement to bodily pleasure which the sight of beautiful women can produce in the unwary. Odysseus, however, was protected by the μῶλυ which Hermes had given him, and in the allegorical interpretation which Eustathius had accepted (*in Od.* 1658.26–30), Hermes was understood as λόγος with μῶλυ as παιδεία, 'education'.[137] The root of μῶλυ, Homer tells us, is black, and this means, in Eustathius words, that 'for those starting out on education, the end (τέλος) is obscure and hard to see' – the first steps are anything but 'sweet', but the flower is white because the end of education truly is 'bright and gleaming, and sweet and nourishing'.

Koraes – perhaps under the influence of other ancient allegories, such as the explanations for the drug which Helen placed in the drink of Menelaos and Telemachus – has re-mixed Circe's potion, so to speak, so that it is now λόγος which entrances, Greek λόγος to be precise, and which protects the young from the

135 Cf. esp. Mackridge 2010.
136 Cf. Mackridge 2010, 132.
137 This allegory is of a very common kind; we may compare Dio Chrys. 16.10 where the magic potion that Jason received from Medea for protection against the fire-breathing bulls and the dragon was in fact received from φρόνησις, with Μήδεια implicitly connected with μῆτις and μήδομαι. Dio says that we should follow this example and 'show contempt to all (such) things, for otherwise everything will be fire for us and everything sleepless dragons'. In most extant versions of the story, Medea's ointment only protected Jason from the bulls, the dragon being overcome with different magic.

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lusts of the body. Koraes does not conceal that learning Greek properly is difficult, but 'the reward for the labours is inexpressible pleasure (ἡδονή)' (p. νγʹ); here again it is impossible not to be reminded of Eustathius' account of the 'sweet' (ἡδύ) rewards of education as represented by the μῶλυ which protected Odysseus. Both Eustathius and Koraes address themselves to young men, νέοι, and their aim is to help by offering τὸ χρήσιμον (cf. *in Il.* 2.21); Koraes has, he tells his addressee, no aim other than offering 'common benefit to the Greek nation' (νεʹ). Eustathius remains above all an educator and a didactic model. Koraes indeed once planned a new six-volume edition of Eustathius' Homeric commentaries, but for various reasons (including, of course, money) it never came to pass.[138] When Greece recovers, Koraes proclaimed, it should raise statues of Eustathius, an honour which – as far as I am aware – remains unbestowed, though Athens has done the right thing by Koraes himself;[139] there he sits outside the University building on Panepistimiou, an elderly man slightly bowed forward like a kindly and didactic uncle, as though carrying the whole of Greek tradition on his shoulders. The now somewhat worn inscription declares that the statue was erected so that young men should have a model to emulate; Eustathius would have deserved no less.

Homer and Heliodorus, Eustathius and Koraes. The temptation to play with the parallelisms and differences is almost irresistible. Heliodorus was well known and influential in the eleventh and twelfth centuries,[140] and seems also to have been subject to allegorical critical practices ultimately derived from Homeric criticism.[141] Although Eustathius cites Heliodorus only rarely in the *Iliad* commentary we may, I think, assume that he knew the novel, and its 'Homeric' qualities, well.[142] Homer and Heliodorus frame classical antiquity, in one influential (and, who knows?, possibly even correct) view; Eustathius and Koraes were both strikingly interested in the history of the Greek language and how it was spoken in their own day, even if the Bishop lacked Koraes' reforming

138 Cf. Paschalis 2010, 113–116.

139 Cf. Kitromilidis 2010b, 27.

140 Cf. Gärtner 1969; Agapitos 1998.

141 On 'Philip the Philosopher's' famous allegorisation of the *Aithiopika* cf. Hunter 2005.

142 Van der Valk I cvii lists two instances (*in Il.* 55.32–34, 160.15–16), both in the commentary on *Iliad* 1; we should perhaps add *in Il.* 159.25 (also on *Iliad* 1) where ἡμέρα διαγελᾷ looks like a borrowing from the very opening of Heliodorus' novel. A principal witness for Byzantine appreciation of Heliodorus' 'Homeric' qualities is Michael Psellus' comparison of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius from the previous century, cf. Dyck 1986b; Psellus' account of how Heliodorus 'gives the reader breaks through variety and novel diction and episodes and turns of every kind' (61–62 Dyck) assimilates him closely to a familiar scholiastic view of the Homeric poems.

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zeal.[143] Homer's poems were the ideological charter which had founded Greek identity and which was at the heart of how its living sense was handed on from generation to generation; Heliodorus' *Aithiopika* has 'identity', both Greek and other, at its very centre, and is clearly constructed not just as a rewriting of Homer, but as a monument to be set alongside the epic poems. The capacious inclusiveness of Heliodorus' narrative and Eustathius' *Commentaries* allows both to be seen (with hindsight) as innovative repositories of tradition and also as pointing forward to new literary and scholarly forms which would come to dominate their respective worlds. Even more important perhaps is the fact that Eustathius and Koraes both use Homer and Heliodorus respectively as leaping-off points for the promulgation of a larger educational and moral agenda. Homer was never just another text, or even simply just the best text: he was always much more than that.

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143 For Eustathius' interest in the development of Greek and the contemporary vernacular cf., e. g., Koukoules 1950; Hedberg 1946; Hunger 1978, II 64.

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