THEORY INTO PRACTICE:
ARISTOTELIAN PRINCIPLES IN ARISTARCHEAN PHILOLOGY

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The peripatetic influence on many of the fields developed at Alexandria is undeniable: chronology, ethnography, paradoxography, glossography, literary biography, and bibliography (pinakes), as well as medicine and mechanics, owe much to the Aristotelian school and its approach to Wissenschaft. In recent years, against Pfeiffer’s refusal to see any link between Aristotle and the Alexandrian grammarians, scholars like Gallavotti, Nickau, Lührs, Porter, Montanari, Richardson, and Matthaios have argued in favor of the influence of Aristotle on Alexandrian philology and in particular on Aristarchus’ scholarship. Some parallels between Aristotle and Aristarchus can be found in the distinction between Homer and the Cyclic poets; in the idea of the τέλος of a work (in particular, the famous statement that the Odyssey had reached its τέλος at 23.296); in the theory that the Iliad and the Odyssey are creations of one poet, Homer (schol. II. 5.60a, 11.147a); and in the importance of the principle of consistency (Homer does not contradict himself).

In this paper, I would like to return to this issue, focusing in particular on the intellectual relationship between Aristotle and Aristarchus. Passages from the Rhetoric and above all from the Poetics will be compared to the Aristarchean sources from the Homeric scholia. In order to proceed in my analysis, I will take into account only the scholia maiora to the Iliad and the Odyssey and, among them, only those by Aristonicus and, with more caution, by Didymus. These, I believe, are the only secure sources for Aristarchean

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Translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

1. A relationship between Aristotle and Alexandrian medicine, both sharing the principle of teleology, has been highlighted by von Staden (1997).
2. Pfeiffer 1968, 67, 87–88, 95, 272. For a criticism of Pfeiffer’s view, see in particular Rossi 1976, 110–14; and Montanari, in Montanari 1994, 2, 29–31.
3. Gallavotti 1969; Nickau 1977, 132–83 (on Zenodotus and his analysis of the narrative contradictions); Lührs 1992, 13–17; Porter 1992, esp. 74–80; Montanari 1993, esp. 259–64; Richardson 1993, 35–36; 1994; Matthaios 1999, passim; 2002, 174–77, 189–90; cf. also Podlecki 1969; and Montanari 2001.
4. Cf. Gallavotti 1969 and Erbse 1972, 166–77.
5. As a general principle, all the scholia quoted in the present study are by Aristonicus. I always alert the reader in the few cases when I discuss a scholium by Didymus, a much more independent scholar, who hence is a much less reliable source for Aristarchean material.
material when the name of the grammarian is not expressly quoted. All the other scholia that do not explicitly mention Aristarchus are excluded in the present work, however “Aristarchean” they may sound.6

1. SOME PRELIMINARY REMARKS: ARISTOTLE’S THEORY, ARISTARCHUS’ PRACTICE, AND THE QUESTION OF TERMINOLOGY

The comparison between Aristotle and in general the Peripatetic school, on the one hand, and Aristarchus and the work done at the Museum, on the other, must be put in the right context, for it is clear that the ethos and essence of the work of Aristotle and that of Aristarchus were fundamentally different. Whereas Aristotle wrote theoretical treatises, Aristarchus did not produce a single speculative work; all his theoretical background must be inferred from his own practice in dealing with the ἔκδοσις of Homer, as witnessed by the Homeric scholia. We can thus oppose Aristotle’s theory to Aristarchus’ practice and see whether and, if so, how this Aristotelian conceptual framework fits Aristarchus’ methodology.

As for terminology, many of the same terms are to be found both in Aristotle and Aristarchean scholia. However, in approaching this topic, we must employ caution for various reasons. First, at least with Aristarchus, we are dealing not with his own work, transmitted by direct tradition, but with the scholia by Aristonicus. Though beyond a doubt derived from Aristarchus, these scholia are excerpts of his work, and thus may not necessarily preserve Aristarchus’ ipsissima verba. This is especially true for grammatical terminology, since between the time of Aristarchus (third to second century B.C.E.) and that of Aristonicus (first century B.C.E.) grammatical and linguistic analysis developed greatly. Thus Aristonicus had at his disposal a much more precise and extended vocabulary for grammatical categories, and there is evidence that sometimes he rephrased Aristarchus’ Wortlaut in order to update it with the new terminology of the tekhnē grammatikh.7

However, for a different kind of vocabulary, that of literary criticism, the situation is different. First, key words used by Aristotle and Aristarchus in this field (for example μῦθος, ἡθός, πρέπον, διάνοια, to name just a few) are part of a common technical vocabulary, shared by all scholars discussing literary texts (including Crates and the κριτικοὶ too; see below) between the fourth and the first centuries B.C.E. Thus, in this field, unlike in the tekhnē grammatikh, the vocabulary available to Aristonicus was essentially that of Aristotle, and thus that of Aristarchus. When dealing with interpretation and exegesis in a broader sense, therefore, it is much more likely that Aristonicus did not change the Wortlaut he found in Aristarchus’ hypomnemata. Moreover, most of the terms in this field are not, strictly speaking, “technical terminology,” since adjectives like εὐτελής, ἀπίθανος, and ἀδύνατος and

6. Interesting results in the analysis of exegetical scholia (which however are not derived from Aristarchus, and also probably represent a later stage in Homeric criticism) were developed by Schmidt (1976) and by Richardson (1980); see also Montanari 1995.
7. See Matthaios 1999, 43–46, 520–22.
adverbs like ἰδίως and κυρίως are part of normal Greek vocabulary. They were also used by Aristotle as well as by other Greek authors in literary exegesis, but were not “invented” to express technical notions (as happened for the parts of speech of the τέχνη γραμματική). Even if the usage of these more common terms in Aristonicus’ scholia does not guarantee that they were exactly the same terms used by Aristarchus, what really matters is not the “form” but rather the “content” of these words, that is, the concept they express. Since Aristonicus’ goal was to preserve Aristarchus’ opinions concerning a line, what matters most are the ideas Aristonicus conveys. Thus, in what follows, even if Greek nouns and adjectives are used to indicate certain ideas common to Aristotle and Aristarchus (since these terms are to be found in both Aristotle’s writings and in Aristonicus’ scholia), the focus is rather on the content they convey—Aristarchus’ ideas—than on Aristonicus’ Wortlaut. As will become clear, the affinity between Aristotle and Aristarchus is evident in shared ideas and common approaches to literature, and this is the direction and the ultimate goal of the analysis that follows.

2. A Preliminary Assumption: Tragedy and Epos Are Strictly Connected

At the beginning of the Poetics (1448b24–1449a6), Aristotle draws a famous distinction between the two main “genres” of poetical works: serious and comic. Among the former he counts tragedy, which, according to him, is derived from the Homeric Iliad and the Odyssey, just as comedy is derived from the Homeric Margites (Poet. 1448b24–1149a2):

διεσπάσθη δὲ κατὰ τὰ ὀικεῖα ἤθη ἢ ποιήσεις· οἱ μὲν γὰρ σεμινότεροι τὰς καλὰς ἐμμιμοῦτο πράξεις καὶ τὰς τοιούτους, οἱ δὲ εὐπλεκότεροι τὰς τῶν φαύλων, πρῶτον ψόγους ποιοῦντες, ὀσπρ ἐτέροι ὕμνους καὶ ἐγκώμια. τῶν μὲν οὖν πρὸ Ὀμηροῦ οὐδενός ἔχομεν εἰπεῖν τοιούτον ποίημα, εἰκὸς δὲ εἶναι παλλοῦς, ἀπὸ δὲ Ὀμηροῦ ἀρχαίους ἔστιν, οἶνον ἐκείνου ὁ Μαργίτης καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα, . . . καὶ ἐγένοντο τῶν παλαιῶν οἱ μὲν ἡρωικοὶ οἱ δὲ ἴαμβον ποιηταί, ὀσπρ δὲ καὶ τὰ σπουδαῖα μάλλιστα ποιητής Ὀμηρος ἡν (μόνος γὰρ οὖν ὅτι εἶ ἄλλα καὶ μημάτικα δραματικά ἐποίησεν), οὕτως καὶ τὸ τῆς κομιδᾶς σχῆμα πρῶτος ὕπεδειξαν, οὐ ψόγον ἄλλα τὸ γέλοιον δραματοποίησας· ὁ γὰρ Μαργίτης ἀνάλογον ἔχει, ὀσπρ Θηλᾶς καὶ ἡ Ὀδύσσεια πρὸς τὰς τραγῳδίας, οὕτω καὶ οὕτως πρὸς τὰς κομιδᾶς.

Poetry was split up according to their particular characters; the grander people represented fine actions, i.e. those of fine persons, the more ordinary people represented those of inferior ones, at first composing invectives, just as the others composed hymns and praise-poems. We do not know of any composition of this sort by anyone before Homer, but there were probably many [who composed invectives]. Beginning with Homer [such compositions] do exist, e.g., his Margites etc. . . . Thus some of the ancients became composers of heroic poems, others of lampoons. Just as Homer was the greatest composer of serious poetry (not that he alone composed well, but because he alone composed dramatic representations), so too he was first to indicate the form of comedy, by dramatizing not an invective but the laughable. For his Margites stands in the same relation to comedies as do the Iliad and the Odyssey to tragedies. (Trans. Janko 1987)

8. The same point has been made by Lührs (1992, 16).
It is this “etiological” derivation that allows us to look at how Aristarchus analyzes epic poetry in search of Aristotelian criteria, for ultimately these two genres are not so far apart. Aristotle himself emphasizes this (Poet. 1449b16–20):

μέρη δ’ ἐστὶ τὰ μὲν ταῦτα, τὰ δὲ ἵστα τῆς τραγῳδίας· διόπερ ὅστις περὶ τραγῳδίας οἴδε σπουδαία καὶ φαύλης, οἴδε καὶ περὶ ἑπόδων· ᾠ μὲν γὰρ ἑποσοφίᾳ ἐχει, ὑπάρχει τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ, ᾦ δὲ αὐτῇ, οὐ πάντα ἐν τῇ ἑποσοφίᾳ.

As for their parts, some are the same, others are particular to tragedy. For this reason, whoever knows about good and inferior tragedies knows about epics too. Tragedy possesses all [the parts] that epic has, but those that it possesses are not all in epic. (Trans. Janko 1987)

It is this close relationship between tragedy and epic that allows for the identification of Aristotelian criteria within the work of a Homeric scholar like Aristarchus. If what I am going to argue is sound, Aristarchus knew what the philosopher had said about the affinity between these two genres and therefore thought it legitimate to apply Aristotle’s criteria for a good tragedy to epic poetry. The Alexandrians knew some of the Aristotelian works, and whether or not the Poetics was available to them, the dialogue On Poets, in which Aristotle discussed the same topics as in the Poetics, and the Homeric Problems were both known.10

For Aristotle tragedy is composed of six parts (Poet. 1450a9–10): plot (μῦθος), characters (γηθην), diction (δεξιζ), thought (διανοια), spectacle (ψυχι), and music (μελοςοια). In the chapters on epic, he picks up this division again, but rightly states that epic lacks the last two, music and spectacle (Poet. 1459b7–10).11 This is a very useful working distinction, which helps Aristotle to set out a systematic view of the main constituents of a tragedy (and of an epos too), as well as to refer to other works such as the Rhetoric for elements that have already been treated elsewhere. This distinction of epic into four elements seems, moreover, to operate also in Aristarchus’ methodology, especially when he must decide about an athetesis, for a line is generally judged with reference to its function for the plot, for the characters, for the thought it expresses, and in terms of style. Therefore we will follow this division in our analysis and will see what Aristotle and Aristarchus have to say about the plot, the characters, the thought-element and the style.

9. As proved also by the last chapters of the Poetics (chaps. 23–26), where Aristotle focuses on epic poetry, drawing on the previous chapters where he analyzed tragedy. For an account of Aristotle’s views on Homer, see Richardson 1992, and 1993, 31–35.

10. Cf. Nickau 1977, 138–39, with n. 16; Lührs 1992, 14–15, Richardson 1994, 17–18, 27. On the debated problem about the destiny of the library and the books of Aristotle, see Moraux 1973, 3–31; Canfora 1988, 34–37, 59–66; Richardson 1994, 8–12; Nagy 1998, 198–206; Barnes 1999; Canfora 2002. The Poetics in particular does not seem to have enjoyed great popularity in antiquity: ancient soruces are silent, and the earliest quotation is in Porphyry (quoted by Simplicius [in Cat., p. 36.16–31 Kalbfleisch]): see Janko 1982, and 1991, 7 and n. 25.

11. One problem is, of course, assessing whether this difference can be interpreted as a demonstration that tragedy is a more accomplished form of art than epic. However, there are also advantages in the lack of spectacle in the epos: see p. 286 below.
3. ARISTOTELIAN THEORY AND ARISTARCHEAN PRACTICE: ΜΥΘΟΣ

Since for Aristotle tragedy (and epic too) is an imitation of a complete and whole action (μίμησις τελείας καὶ ὀλῆς πράξεως; cf. Poet. 1450b24–25) and the plot (μύθος) is defined by Aristotle as the μίμησις τῆς πράξεως (Poet. 1450a3–4), it follows that the plot is “the principle and as it were the soul of tragedy” (Poet. 1450a38–39: ἀρχή μὲν οὖν καὶ οἷον ψυχή ὁ μύθος τῆς τραγωδίας). One of the most important criteria for the plot is that it must be in accordance with probability and necessity (Poet. 1451a36–38 and 1451b8–10):

It is also obvious from what we have said that it is the function of a poet to relate not things that have happened, but things that may happen, i.e. that are possible in accordance with probability or necessity. (Trans. Janko 1987)

A universal is the sort of thing that a certain kind of person may well say or do in accordance with probability or necessity—this is what poetry aims at, although it assigns names [to the people]. (Trans. Janko 1987)

For Aristotle, then, plots can contain what is “necessary” (ἀναγκαίον), but also something which is κατὰ τὸ εἰκός, “according to probability.” 12 In other words, a plot must consist of a necessary or probable sequence of events. This is due to the particular status of poetry, which distinguishes it from history: poetry represents universals, not particulars, like history; hence poetry is more philosophical (Poet. 1451b5–7):

Moreover, in poetry, elements that are impossible in reality are nevertheless admitted because in this way the poet is able to astonish his audience and achieve amazement (τὸ θαυμαστόν: Poet. 1460a17), which is the τέλος of poetry (Poet. 1460b23–26):

12. The same kind of contrast is found again when Aristotle is dealing with episodic plots, where we have one episode after the other without necessity or probability (Poet. 1451b33–35: τῶν δὲ ἀπλῶν μύθων καὶ πράξεων αἰ τεσσαράκοντα εἴσην χειρίστατα· λέγω δ’ ἐπεισοδιῶν μὴν ἐὰν οὐ τὰ ἐπεισόδα μετ’ ἄλληλα οὔτ’ εἰκός οὔτ’ ἀνάγκη εἶλαν [‘Among simple plots and actions, episodic [tragedies] are the worst. By ‘episodic’ I mean a plot in which there is neither probability nor necessity that the episodes follow one other,’ trans. Janko 1987]).
Since supernatural, impossible elements make the poetry more interesting, Aristotle judges the plot not according to whether it is possible or not, but whether it is πιθανός/άπιθανος, “believable or not” (Poet. 1460a26–27 and 1461b9–12):

προαιρετικά τε δεί ἀδύνατα εἰκότα μᾶλλον ἢ δυνατά ἀπίθανα.

Impossible [incidents] that are believable should be preferred to possible ones that are unbelievable. (Trans. Janko 1987)

In general, the impossibility should be explained with reference either to the composition, or to [making something] better [than it is], or to opinion. In relation to [the needs of] the composition, a believable impossibility is preferable to an unbelievable possibility. (Trans. Janko 1987)

What is “probable” (εἰκός) is thus also “believable” (πιθανόν). Thus it is better for Aristotle to choose plots that are believable—though they may not be possible in the real world (πιθανὰ ἀδύνατα)—than stories that could happen but are not believable (δυνατὰ ἀπίθανα). Since a poet, in order to achieve τὸ θαυμαστῶν, has more freedom, the criterion of “believability” becomes an internal one: something is believable if it follows from what has been stated before as a logical consequence. Within a work of poetry there are rules that are typical of poetry and, as long as these rules are respected by the poet, the poetic work is good, no matter how the μῦθος in itself corresponds to truth in the real world. The premise behind these prescriptions is that poetry is a τέχνη that works according to rules that are its own and different from those of other τέχναι (Poet. 1460b13–15):

πρὸς δὲ τούτως οὐχ ἢ αὐτή ὀρθότης ἐστὶν τῆς πολιτικῆς καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς οὐδὲ ἄλλης τέχνης καὶ ποιητικῆς.

In addition, there is not the same [standard of] correctness in the art of civic life as in that of poetry, nor is there in any other art as in that of poetry. (Trans. Janko 1987)

3.1 Aristarchus: The Criterion of Believability

As for Aristotle, so also for Aristarchus, the main criterion for judging the plot is not the distinction between what is possible and what is not, but that

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13. In this light, Homer is a master of lies (Poet. 1460a18–19; δεδομαχεῖν δὲ μᾶλλον ῳ “Ομηρος καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ψευδὴ λέγειν ὡς δεῖ (“Homer above all has taught the other [poets] to tell untruths in the right way,” trans. Janko 1987)).

14. This is because what is possible is believable, but not all that is believable is possible; hence believability is a wider concept, as Aristotle explains at Poet. 1451b16–19: αὐτὸν δ’ ὅτι πιθανόν ἐστι τὸ δυνατὸν· τὰ μὲν οὖν ἢ γένοιμαι οὗτο πεπεσόμενοι εἶναι δυνατά, τὰ δὲ γένοιμαι φανερὸν ὅτι δυνατά· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἐγέρνετο, οἱ ἦν ἀδύνατα. (“The reason is that what is possible is believable; we do not believe that what has never happened is possible, but things which have happened are obviously possible—they would have not have happened if they were impossible,” trans. Janko 1987).

15. Cf. Richardson 1992, 36.
between what is believable and what is not. Αδύνατα are not necessarily excluded if they help poetic goals. There are only two cases of lines athetized by Aristarchus because they contain Αδύνατα, “impossibilities.” The first case is in the Nekyia: the lines about Otus and Ephialtes’ project to put Olympus on Ossa and Pelium on top of them in order to reach the sky (Od. 11.315–16: “Οσον ἐπ’ Οὐλίμπῳ μέμασον θέμεν, αὐτάρ ἐπ’ Ὀσση / Πηλίον εινοσφιλ-
λον, ἵν’ οὐράνος ἁμβατός ἐπι”) were rejected by Aristarchus ός Αδύνατα (schol. V Od. 11.315). The other case is at Odyssey 22.144–45, where Melanthius, in order to help the suitors, takes out from the chamber twelve shields, the same number of spears and the same number of helmets, as Eustathius testifies (Eust. Od. 1921.56):

Note also that Aristarchus athetized and marked with a chi the line about the twelve shields and the following one, saying that it was impossible that a person could carry all these [weapons].

Nevertheless, in the Iliad, for example, there are no cases of athetesis due to Αδύνατα. Only at Iliad 2.667, when Homer tells the story of Tlepolemus arriving at Rhodes after killing his uncle Licymnius, Zenodotus’ reading αἴγα δ’ ἐγ’ ἔς Ὁδόν (instead of αὐτάρ ἐγ’ ἔς Ὁδόν) was dismissed by Aristarchus because it would be impossible for a fugitive wandering in the Aegean to arrive “at once” at Rhodes. Otherwise, elements that are impossible from a rational point of view are allowed because of poetic license. For example, the fact that the Cyclops knows that ships exist or understands Greek is in itself absurd, but for Aristarchus it is to be kept, because it is poetry (schol. HMQR Od. 3.71):

Aristarchus says that these lines are more properly included in the speech of the Cyclops [than here in Telemachus’ speech]. . . . But, he says, we must allow these [licenses] to the poet. For Homer represents the Cyclops as aware [of the existence] of a ship, [as it is proved by] “but tell me where, arriving, you put your well-made ship” (Od. 9.279), and [the Cyclops] understands the Greek language.

16. An episode that was particularly suspicious to Aristarchus; see p. 288 below.
17. Eustathius is here probably quoting Aristonicus (see Carnuth 1869, ad loc.) from a collection of scholia richer than the one that has reached us (and which does not present any scholium on Od. 22.144–45).
18. The possibility that Melanthius might have carried all these weapons in more than one journey does not seem to have been taken into consideration by Aristarchus.
19. The only case of δοματις- coming up in Aristarchean scholia is at II. 21.475: ἀπὸ τοῦτο ἀδετεοῦς στήχοι τρεῖς: οὐ δοματία γὰρ ὁ αἰδεούμενος “πατροκρασιγήτων μιγήμαν ἐν παλάμην” (II. 21.469) ἀεὶ προκαλείθηκε τὸν Ποσείδωνα ἐν τῷ Ὀλύμπῳ πρὸς μάχην. This οὐ δοματία γὰρ . . . however, is due to internal inconsistency or ἀπέρεπτος of a character; according to Aristarchus it is “impossible” that Apollo once boasted that he was going to fight against his uncle Poseidon, if he is now afraid to face him. This is thus definitely not an athetesis due to something that is “impossible” from an objective point of view.
20. Schol. II. 2.667: αὐτάρ ἐγ’ ἔς Ὁδόν: ὅτι Σημνόδοτος γραφεῖν “ἄγα δ’ ἐγ’ ἔς Ὁδόν,” οὐ δοματία δὲ ταχεῖας ἐλληθέναι ἐπ’ τὴν Ὁδόν ὁ πράττειν μὲν ναὶς πεπηχός, οἰκε ἀδύνατος καὶ οὐκ ἄκος πλούκως.
21. This closely resembles the Aristotelian remark: δοματιον γὰρ ταύτα τοῖς ποιηταῖς in Poet. 1460b13, apropos of metaphors and glossai.
A similar attitude is to be found in Aristotlen when he comments on the episode of the bath in the *Odyssey*: Eurykleia’s recognition of Odysseus is in itself αὐθεντικόν, but it is allowed because in this way the poet achieved τὸ ἑαυτοῦ τοῖς ἀθριπτοῖς (Poet. 1460a11–26). This is to be connected with the comparison between tragedy and epic: according to Aristotle an advantage epic has over tragedy is that, lacking ὄρας, it can afford to be ἀθριπτοῦς, because the audience, not seeing the plot performed, is likely to notice irrationalities and incongruities less (Poet. 1460a11–14):

...οὐδὲν ἐν τοῖς τραγῳδιαῖς ποιεῖν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ τοῖς ἀθριπτοῖς, μᾶλλον ὅτε ἐνδέχεται ἐν τῇ ἐποικίᾳ τὸ ἀθριπτόν, διὰ τὸ μὴ ὅραν εἰς τὸν πράττοντα.

[The poet] should put what is amazing into his tragedies; but what is improbable, from which amazement arises most, is more admissible in epic because [the audience] does not see the person in action. (Trans. Janko 1987)

The main criterion for Aristarchus, as for Aristotle, is thus that of probability. Facts in the poems often receive comments along these lines: something takes place according to probability (ἐἰκότως) and is therefore acceptable. For example, in the Dolomeia (II. 10.447) Diomedes addresses Dolon by name: “μή δὴ μοι φώςιν γε Δόλων ἐμβάλλει θυμόι” (“Do not, Dolon, have in your mind any thought of escape”), and some ancient scholars found fault in the fact that Diomedes seems to know the name of Dolon, though this is the first time that they meet. On this basis they read δόλων, the participle of δολώ, “to deceive” (“Do not have in your mind any thought of escape, trying to deceive me”). Aristarchus, however, defended the text: for him, it was probable (ἐἰκός) that the Greeks knew the name of some of their enemies after ten years of siege (schol. II. 10.447a):

Δόλωνς· ὅτι ζητεῖτα, πῶς τὸ ὅνομα ἔγνω· διὸ τινες ἀνέγγισαν “δόλων” ὡς νοῦν... εἰκός δὲ τινῶν γνώσκεσθαι ὀνόματα ὡς ἄν δεκαετῶς γεγονότος χρόνον, καὶ μάλιστα τοῦ Δόλωνος· ἦν γὰρ κήρυκος ύπὸ “πολύχρυσος πολύχαλκος” (cf. II. 10.314–15).

Dolon: [the diple is because there is a question about how [Diomedes] knew his name; hence some scholars read δόλων, “deceiving,” perispomenon like νοῦν... But it is probable that they knew the names of some of them, since a decade had passed [with them there], and in particular the name of Dolon. For he was son of a herald, “rich in gold, rich in bronze” (cf. II. 10.314–15).

This criterion of probability is mainly expressed in Aristonicus’ scholia by the couple πιθανός/ἀπιθανός. It is one of the most common justifications given for an athetesis or for rejecting Zenodotus’ readings which, according to Aristarchus, often lack believability. For example, in the assembly of the Achaean leaders at *Iliad* 2.50–86, Aristarchus did not find believable Zenodotus’ reading according to which Agamemnon stands up to speak in front of only seven heroes (schol. II. 2.55a: ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος γράφει “αὐτάρ ἐπεὶ ἂν ἐγερθεὶς ὄμηγερες τ’ ἐγένοντο, / τοῖς δ’ ἀνιστάμενος μετέφη κρεῖων Ἀγαμέμνον.” ἀπιθανόν δὲ ἐν ἐπτα ὀρθόν δημηγορεῖν). 22 Details that

22. See Lührs 1992, 260–61 n. 365; cf. also schol. II. 2.76a: ὁβείτονται στίχοι ὀκτά, ὅτι οὐκ ὁρθοῦ εἴρηκτος τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος λέγει ἦσον ὅγ’ ὡς εἰπὼν κατ’ ἄρ’ ἔζετο, ὅπερ ἀπιθανοῦν.
seem to go against human chronology are rejected on the same ground, as, for example, that Aethra, the maid of Helen, is to be identified with the mother of Theseus, who would have been extremely old by then (schol. II. 3.144a):

Αἴθρη, Πιτθῆος θυγάτηρ: εἰ μὲν τὴν Θησεώς λέγει μητέρα ἄθετην· ἀπίθανον γὰρ ἐστὶν Ἐλένης ἀμφίπολον ἑαυτήν· τὴν οὕτως ὑπεραρχαίαν, ἂν ὥς ἐκποιεῖ ξῦν διὰ τὸ μῆκος τοῦ χρόνου, εἰ δὲ ὄμωνυμία ἐστίν, καθάπερ καὶ ἐπὶ πλειόνων, δύναται μένειν.

Aethra, the daughter of Pittheus: if Homer means the mother of Theseus, [the line] must be athetized. For it is unbelievable that such a very old woman be the maid of Helen. It is impossible that she has been living for such a long time. If instead it is a case of homonymy, as happens in many other cases, [the line] can remain.23

Also the famous problem of the dual in Iliad 9 is solved by Aristarchus with the criterion of credibility: there are only two people present, Odysseus and Ajax, because, if Phoenix were also present, it would not be believable to have Odysseus leading, since Phoenix was older (schol. II. 9.192a):

τὸ δὲ βάτνῳ ἄρτηρα, ἡγεῖτο δὲ δίος Ὅδυσσεῖου· ὅτι ἔπει Ὅδυσσεώς καὶ Αἰαντος τὸ δύικόν παρόντος γὰρ τὸν Φοίνικος ἀπίθανον λέγειν “ἡγεῖτο δὲ δίος Ὅδυσσείς.”

The two of them came forward, and noble Odysseus led the way: [the diple is] because the dual is for Odysseus and Ajax. For if Phoenix had been present, it would have been unbelievable to say “noble Odysseus led the way.”

The criterion of believability plays a role even in the supernatural episodes where Aristarchus, like Aristotle, seems to put a limit to τὸ θαυμαστὸν; thus within the microcosm of the epos, although the supernatural is allowed, believability still applies. For example, in poetry it is fine for an animal to speak, like Xanthus, the horse of Achilles. However, it is too much to have him speak like a learned man or a seer foretelling his destiny to Achilles, as happens at Iliad 19.416–17, lines that Aristarchus rejected (schol. II. 19.416–17a):

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[we may be running together with the blows of Zephyrus] who they say is the lightest of all things; [yet still your destiny is] to be killed [in force by a god and a mortal]. . . . these two lines also are athetized because . . . it is unbelievable for a horse to say “they say, etc.” like a knowledgeable man.24

Or, again, it is acceptable to have gods intervening in human affairs disguised as human beings. However, at Iliad 21.290, when Poseidon and Athena, disguised as two men, go to Achilles, it is not believable for Poseidon to say “Athena and I will help you,” as Aristarchus remarked in schol. II. 21.290a: ἀθετεῖται, ὅτι ἀπίθανον εἰς ἀνδρὸς μορφὴν ὑμοιομένον λέγειν “ἐγὼ καὶ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη”· τὶς γὰρ ἐστιν, οὐ μὴ νοῆσῃ (“it is athetized because it is not believable that disguised as a mortal he says ‘Athena and I.’ For Achilles will not understand who he is”). How could Achilles know that these two men were divinities?

23. On this athetesis, see Jenkins 1999.
24. Cf. Lührs 1992, 46–48.
The most important case of a limitation of τὸ ἄλογον and τὸ θαυμαστὸν is the second part of the Nekyia (Od. 11.568 [565?]–627), where Odysseus claims to have seen Minos, Orion, Tityus, Tantalus, Sisyphus, and Heracles. Notwithstanding the admissibility of a “marvelous” journey to the Underworld, and although the lines are not bad in style, this episode was rejected as suspicious by Aristarchus. Odysseus never enters Hades but remains at the gate of Erebus (cf. Od. 11.37, 150, 563), and therefore could never have seen all these mythical examples of divine justice and wickedness being punished. The scholia by Aristonicus bear witness to a long series of comments by Aristarchus along these lines: how can Minos come to the sacrifice, together with the trees and the marshy lake in which he lies? Or how did Odysseus see what was within from outside? How can Orion hunt in Hades? How could he come forward with all the beasts that he has slain (schol. HT Od. 11.570: οὐκ ἄρα ὑπεξήλθεν ὁ Μίνως ἵνα συνοφοθῇ. ἄλογον γὰρ τὸ καὶ σὺν δικαζομένοις καὶ αὐτῷ δίφροι ἐξελθεῖν)? How can Tityus come to the sacrifice, if he is lying on the ground with his liver devoured by two vultures (schol. QT Od. 11.577: καταγέλαστα καὶ ταῦτα, εἰ κατεστρωμένος ἐν τῷ δαφέδο προῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὸ σφάγιον: αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ Ὄδυσσεὺς οὐκ ἥδυνατο διαβῆναι ἐπὶ τὸ ἔρεβος?): Or how can Tantalus come to the sacrifice, together with the trees and the marshy lake in which he lies? Or how did Odysseus see what was within from outside (schol. H Od. 11.588: οὐδὲ οὖν δύναται σὺν λίμνῃ καὶ δένδροις ἐξελήλυθαι ἐπὶ τὸ σφάγιον, ἢ πῶς ἔξωθεν τὰ ἔσω ἐνθέρει;)? Or how can Sisyphus, who must push the huge stone up a hill, come to the sacrifice (schol. QT Od. 11.593: πῶς δύναται σὺν τῷ λίθῳ καὶ τῇ ἀκροφικῇ ἐφ’. ἢ ἀνεκύλε τὸν λίθον, ἢκειν ἐπὶ τὸ σφάγια;)? All this, according to Aristarchus, was too much and the risk was that, instead of being astonishing, the episode became ridiculous (on which see pp. 298–99 below).

3.2 Aristarchus: Internal Contradictions

The conception of the work of poetry as a microcosm with its own rules leads to the principle of noncontradiction. Avoiding inconsistencies within the plot is a cardinal principle for Aristotle, who argues repeatedly against what is ύπεναντίον (Poet. 1455a22–26):

δεὶ δὲ τοὺς μίθους συνιστάναι καὶ τῇ λέξει συναπεργάξεσθαι ὁτι μάλιστα πρὸ ὀμμάτων τυθέμενον· οὕτω γὰρ ἄν ἐναργήσατα [ὁ] ὀργὸν ὀφθερ παρ’ αὐτοὺς γεγομένους τοῖς πρατομένοις εὑρίσκοι τὸ πρέπον καὶ ἥκιστα ἀν λανθάνοι [τῷ] τὰ ύπεναντία.

In constructing his plots and using diction to bring them to completion, [the poet] should put [the events] before his eyes as much as he can. In this way, seeing them very

25. On the criterion of τὸ ἄλογον applied to atheesis of repeated lines in Aristonicus’ and exegetical scholia, see Lührs 1992, 167–94.
26. Schol. HT Od. 11.568: νοθείτε μέχρι τοῦ ὡς εἰπὼν ὁ μὲν ἄθεος ἔδω δάμον Ἀιδος εἶσο (627), καῖτας οὐκ ὄντες ἄγενες πέρι τὴν φράσιν. ὑπὲρ δὲ τῆς ἀδετήσεως αὐτῶν λέγεται τοιάδε· (H) πῶς οἴδε τοῖς ἄθεοις ἢ τοῖς λαοποῖς ἐπὶ τῶν Ἀιδών πολλὸν ὄντας καὶ τῶν ποταμῶν.
27. For Aristotle on ύπεναντίον, cf. also Poet. 1461a31–1461b9, 1461b15–18.
vividly as if he were actually present at the actions [he represents], he can discover what is suitable, and is least likely to miss contradictions. (Trans. Janko 1987)

Internal contradictions and inconsistencies are constantly rejected by Aristarchus too, who seems to have developed Aristotle's theory into a more complete system, where the philologist has to work on a text as a self-standing unity that must be purged of internal contradictions. Aristarchus takes exception to contradictions in the text (e.g., schol. Il. 8.39–40: ἔναπτονται δὲ ἐνθάδε τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις; schol. BQ Od. 12.374; schol. HQ Od. 12.439) and as a rule, when this happens, he is in favor of athetesis. He also argues against Zenodotus for readings that are contrary to some data present in the poems. He also argues against Zenodotus for readings that are contrary to some data present in the poems.28

The idea that something is consistent or inconsistent with the rest of the plot is expressed in Aristonicus' scholia with comments like συμφωνώς (“in harmony,” “in agreement with”) or ἀσυμφωνώς (“discordant,” “in disagreement with”). άσυμφωνως is used to argue against readings and interpretations by Zenodotus or other colleagues that Aristarchus does not share because they contradict some other passage within the poem (schol. Il. 4.339b, 8.19). On the contrary, a line is συμφωνώς with the rest of the poem when Aristarchus wants to defend Homer against his detractors or against the διασκευασταῖ (schol. Il. 3.230a), or defend his own readings (schol. Il. 7.330b, 8.562). Alternatively, the same idea is expressed with μάχονται/ἐταί ("they/it contradict[s]"), that is, that one or more lines are at odds (μάχεται/-ονταί) with what has been said or known before, as in schol. H Od. 11.452: μαχόμενοι τοῖς προκειμένοις. For example, at Iliad 20.269–72, ancient scholars were puzzled that Aeneas' spear reaches the golden plate of Achilles' shield, having pierced the two external plates, one of bronze and the other of tin, as if the shield had the golden layer underneath, hidden by those of bronze and tin. Aristarchus solved the problem by athetizing the lines, because according to him these lines not only were odd in terms of content (why was the gold hidden by tin and bronze?), but, moreover, they were in clear contradiction with what we know about the shield of Achilles as described at Iliad 18.478–607, where its surface is clearly made of gold (schol. Il. 20.269–72a: ὀθητοῖται στίχοι τέσσαρες, ὅτε διασκευασμένοι εἶσιν ὑπὸ τινος τῶν βουλομένων πρόβλημα ποιεῖν. μάχεται δὲ σαφῶς τοῖς γνησίοις ["four lines are athetized because they were added by someone of those who want to create a question. For these lines are clearly in contradiction with those that are genuine"]).

On the other hand, in Aristonicus’ scholia οὐ μάχεται is used to solve a problem by showing that in Homer there are no internal contradictions.30 One famous question (ζήτημα) was that of how many times Hector and Achilles ran around Troy, because at Iliad 22.208 we read: ἄλλῳ ὀτε δὴ τῷ τέταρτον ἐπὶ κρουνοῦ ἀφίκοντο ("but when for the fourth time they came to the springs"), whereas at Iliad 22.251 Hector says: "τρίς περὶ ἄστυ μέγα Πριάμου δίον" ("[Achilles, I do not flee you anymore, as when before] I ran three times around the great city of Priam"). Ancient scholars had taken

28. See schol. Il. 5.838–39, 7.334–35, 11.767a, 19.407a, 21.570a, 22.199–200a, 24.45a.
29. See schol. Il. 3.334–35α, 5.807.
30. See schol. Il. 9.571α, 13.365α.
exception to this passage, as Aristarchus noticed in schol. *Il*. 22.208a:\footnote{2} σημειούνται δὲ τινὲς διὰ τὸ δοκοῦν ἐναντίον εἶναι “τρίς περὶ ἀστυ μέγα Πριάμου δῖον” καὶ “ἄλλ’ ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον” (“some mark this line because of the apparent contradiction between ‘I ran three times around the great city of Priam’ and ‘but when for the fourth time’ ’ ”). Aristarchus, however, clarified and solved the problem by arguing that there were three full laps, but in the fourth they went as far as the fountain but did not go right around the city. Therefore there was no contradiction between the two lines (schol. *Il*. 22.251a: οὗ μάχεται δὲ τῷ “ἄλλ’ ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον” (II. 22.208)- τρεῖς μὲν γὰρ τελείους κύκλους περιέβαλεν, τὸ δὲ τέταρτον ἐὰς τῶν κρουνῶν ἔλθοντες οὐκέτι περιήλθον τὴν πόλιν [“it does not contradict ‘but when for the fourth time’ (II. 22.208): for they ran in three full circles and in the fourth they arrived at the fountains and did not go around the city’’]).\footnote{31}  

**4. ARISTOTELIAN THEORY AND ARISTARCHEAN PRACTICE: ΗΘΗ**

At *Poetics* 444a1–18, Aristotle states that every mimetic art represents ἡθή, which can be either σπουδαῖοι, “serious,” or φαύλοι, “base.” Poetry too, then, has to choose which ἡθή are to be the target of mimesis, and hence it is divided according to the characters that it is going to imitate. In this regard, epic and tragedy are identical, in that both of them represent “admirable,” “serious” people (*Poet*. 444b9–10):

η μὲν οὖν ἐποιοῖ τὰ τραγῳδία μέχρι μὲν τοῦ μετὰ μέτρου λόγου [em. Kassel: μέτρου μετὰ λόγου Β, μέτρου μεγάλου Α] μίμησις εἶναι σπουδαῖον ἠκολουθησεν.

Epic poetry follows tragedy insofar as it is a representation of serious people which uses speech in verse. (Trans. Janko 1987)

Hence, what is valid for tragedy with regard to characters is to be considered valid for epos too. Characters of tragedy and epic must be σπουδαῖοι, “serious,” and better than they are in reality. Hence they must not be caricatures of real people, as happens in comedy, because everything that is ridiculous is to be avoided in tragedy and epic. When Aristotle comes to a detailed account of tragic/epic characters (*Poet*., chap. 15), he first states that they must be χρηστοί, “good,” that is, “of value,” ἄρμοττόντες, “appropriate,” ὄμοιοι, “(life)like,” and ὀμαλοί, “consistent” (*Poet*. 454a16–28):

ἐν μὲν καὶ πρῶτον, ὁπως χρηστά ἧ, ἐξει δὲ ἦθος μὲν ἐὰν ὁσπερ ἐλέχθη ποιή φανερὸν ὁ λόγος ἢ ἡ πρᾶξις προαίρεσιν τινα ἢ τις ἢ (add. Vahlen) ἢ, χρηστὸν δὲ ἐὰν χρηστὴν. ἔστιν δὲ ἐν ἐκάστῳ γένει καὶ γὰρ γνησίον ἔστιν χρηστή καὶ δούλως, κατοι γε ἰδίῳ τούτων τὸ μὲν χείρον, τὸ δὲ ὅλους φαύλον ἔστιν, δεύτερον δὲ τὸ ἁρμόττοντα, ἐστιν γὰρ ἀνδρείαν μὲν τὸ ἦθος, ἃλλ’ ὁμοίοι ἄρμον τοὺς χναυκῆς ὀοῖος ἀνδρείαν ἡ δεινὴ εἶναι, τρίτον δὲ τὸ ὄμοιον, τούτῳ γὰρ ἐτέρων τοῦ χρηστοῦ τὸ ἦθος καὶ ἁρμόττον ποιῆσαι ὡς προκείμενον.

31. In analyzing plot, Aristotle deals also with the difference between simple and complex plots (*Poet*. 452a12–18), which are characterized by the presence of ἀναγωρισμός and περιπέτεια. These concepts are not present in Aristarchus, which is probably due to the fact that they are more part of a theoretical discussion of a literary work than concepts that could be used in his philological activity. For the same reason, Aristarchus does not seem to have taken much from Aristotle’s sections on the different parts of tragedy (*Poet*. 452b14–27), and on the different kinds of actions (pitiiful, fearful, recognitions, *Poet*. 453b1–454a15). This essential difference between the work of Aristotle (theory) and that of Aristarchus (practice) is fundamental.
First and foremost, the characters should be good. [The tragedy] will have character if, as we said, the speech or the action makes obvious a decision of whatever sort; it will have a good character, if it makes obvious a good decision. [Good character] can exist in every class [of person]; for a woman can be good, and a slave can, although the first of these [classes] may be inferior and the second wholly worthless. Second, [they should be] appropriate. It is possible to be manly in character, but it is not appropriate for a woman to be so manly or clever. Third, [the character should be life-like]. This is different from making the character good and appropriate in the way already stated. Fourth, [the character should be] consistent. If the model for the representation is somebody inconsistent, and such a character is intended, even so it should be consistently inconsistent. (Trans. Janko 1987)

If being χρηστοί, “good,” is a necessary characteristic, due to the essence of tragedy, which represents “serious” (σπουδάστοι) actions and characters, the other three characteristics (τὸ ἀρμόττον, τὸ ὁμοίον, and τὸ ὁμαλὸν) are more interesting to define. Characters must be ἀρμόττοντες, “appropriate,” in the sense that each character must fit the characteristics of the kind of individual it represents. This concept is later on coupled with that of πρέπον (Poet. 1454a28–31: ἔστιν δὲ παράδειγμα . . . τοῦ δὲ ἀπρεποῦς καὶ μὴ ἀρμόττοντος ὁ τε θρήνος Ὁδύσσεως ἐν τῇ Σκύλλῃ. Cf. also Poet. 1458b14–15). Furthermore, characters must be ὁμοίοι, “(life)like,” “similar” to their real model (in “real life” or in the mythical tradition to which the poet refers). 32 Finally, they must be ὁμαλοί, “consistent,” and not behaving in a contradictory way. The last three characteristics are thus sharply distinct. Τὸ ἀρμόττον refers to the relationship between the “type” the poet has in mind and how the character relates to it, so how “convincing” the representation of that particular human being is (considered in terms of gender, age, social status, etc.). Τὸ ὁμοίον instead refers to the relationship between reality outside the work of poetry (i.e., the real life or the mythical tradition in the background) and the characters, in the sense that the audience has to recognize the character as someone similar to and comparable to people from their own experience, whereas the idea of τὸ ὁμαλὸν is an internal criterion to judge the development of the character within the poetical work. Aristotle then summarizes these criteria with the principle of κατὰ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον ἢ τὸ εἰκός: when the poet portrays a character, as when putting the plot together, he has to aim at necessity and probability (Poet.1454a33–36):

χρῆ δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἠθεῖοι ὁμοίως ὁσπερ καὶ ἐν τῇ τῶν πραγμάτων συστάσει ἄει ζητεῖν ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον ἢ τὸ εἰκός, ὡστε τὸν τοιοῦτον τὰ τοιαῦτα λέγειν ἢ πράττειν ἢ ἀναγκαίον ἢ εἰκὸς καὶ τούτῳ μετὰ τούτῳ γίνεσθαι ἢ ἀναγκαίον ἢ εἰκός.

In the characters too, exactly as in the structure of the incidents, [the poet] ought always to seek what is either necessary or probable, so that it is either necessary or probable that a person of such-and-such a sort say or do things of the same sort, and it is either necessary or probable that this [incident] happen after that one. (Trans. Janko 1987)

32. Cf. Janko 1987, 109: “the character should be ‘like,’ literally: but like what? This means either that the type should be recognisable to us as one we know, i.e. lifelike, or that it should be like us. As there is no explanation or example, Aristotle must have regarded the meaning as obvious. . . . Clearly a character who is not lifelike will also be unlike ourselves, so the first explanation brings the second with it.”
The analysis of characters plays a central role in the second book of the *Rhetoric* (*Rh*. 2.12–17.1388b31–1391b6), because the knowledge of different characters is essential for a good orator. Here Aristotle develops these ideas especially in the direction of what is typical of different ages. In three beautiful chapters (*Rh*. 2.12–14), where he is explaining how a good orator should depict various ἡθος in order to be persuasive, Aristotle highlights the main characteristics of young people (rash, optimistic, generous), old people (prone to reflect, pessimistic, selfish) and mature people (a middle way between the two). If one wants to achieve a good mimesis, one cannot depict a character with the characteristic of another age, because this would go against the criterion of τὸ ἀριτότον. In this light the poet must be particularly careful when putting words into the mouths of his characters, because their λέξεις must be ἡθική, consistent with the character that uses it, as Aristotle makes clear in the third book of the *Rhetoric* (1408a10–11):

τὸ δὲ πρέπον ἔξει ἡ λέξεις, ἐὰν ἡ παθητικὴ τε καὶ ἡθικὴ καὶ τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις πράγμασιν ἀνάλογον.

Your language will be appropriate if it expresses emotion and character, and it corresponds to its subject. (Trans. Roberts 1984)

This is because each age and class has its own mode of expression, and a good representation of a character must consider these characteristics (*Rh*. 1408a26–32):

. . . ἀκολουθεῖ ἡ ἀριτότοσσα [i.e., δείξεις] ἐκάστηρ γένει καὶ ἔξεις. λέγω δὲ γένος μὲν καθ’ ἡλικίαν, οἶον παῖς ἢ ἀνήρ ἢ γέρον, καὶ γυνὴ ἢ ἀνήρ, καὶ Λάκκων ἢ Θεττάλως. ἔξεις δὲ, καθ’ ἃς ποιοὶς τῷ βῷοι—οὐ γὰρ καθ’ ἄπασαν ἔξειν οἷος βίοι ποιοὶ τινες, ἐὰν οὖν καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα οἰκεῖα λέγη τῇ ἔξει, ποιήσει τὸ ἱθος· οὐ γὰρ ταῦτα οὐδ’ ὠσιθώς ἀγρόικος ἂν καὶ πεπαιδευμένος ἐπέειν.

Each class of men, each type of disposition, will have its own appropriate way of letting the truth appear. Under “class” I include differences of age, as boy, man, or old man; of sex, as man or woman; of nationality, as Spartan or Thessalian. By “dispositions” I here mean those dispositions only which determine the character of a man’s life, for it is not every disposition that does this. If, then, a speaker uses the very words which are in keeping with a particular disposition, he will reproduce the corresponding character; for a rustic and an educated man will not say the same things nor speak in the same way. (Trans. Roberts 1984)

The interest in characterization in Homer is very well attested for Aris-tarchus too. In *Iliad* 1.117, when Agamemnon, angered by the response of Calchas, agrees to give Chryseis back and says, “I prefer that the army be safe rather than destroyed” (βούλομαι ἐγὼ λαὸν σῶν ἐμειναι ἡ ἀπολέσθαι), Aristarchus rejected the athethesis of Zenodotus (according to whom the line was simplistic) by noticing (schol. *Il*. 1.117a) that ἐν ἡθεὶ γὰρ λέγεται, that is, the line suits the character of Agamemnon (whom Aristarchus, probably, did not hold in great esteem).³³

³³ Cf. also schol. *Il*. 15.505a, where Aristarchus notes that the line is according to Ajax’ character (ἡθικῶς); see also Didymus in schol. *Il*. 16.50α (Ἀρίσταρχος “ἐὰν τινα οἶδα” ἀν τοῖς ἂν, Α’ in (BCE3E4)Τ ἐν’ ἡ ἡθικότερον).
Aristarchus seems to have followed Aristotle in arguing for consistency and credibility of characters. Characters, according to Aristarchus, should behave according to appropriateness (τὸ ἁρμόττον), decorum (τὸ πρέπον), and what is fitting (τὸ οἰκεῖον). In this case, as for Aristotle, ἀπρεπῆς becomes a synonym of οὐχ ἁρμόττον, in the sense of “not convenient,” “unsuitable” to the human type at issue. 34 This criterion actually embraces all the subtle distinctions of the Poetics as well as those of the Rhetoric: characters are ἁρμόττοντες if they behave as their social position, their status, their age, their present situation, or their “mythical model” require. Aristarchus thus denies “unheroic” words to Homeric heroes. It was unacceptable to have Agamemnon dwelling on the pleasure he was going to enjoy from Chryseis back in Argos (schol. II. 1.29–31: ἀθετοῦνται, . . . ἀπρεπές δὲ καὶ τὸ τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα τουταῦτα λέγειν) or showing himself too greedy (schol. II. 1.133–34 ἀθετοῦνται, ὡτε . . . καὶ μὴ ἁρμόζοντες Ἀγαμέμνονι). 35 The last words of Achilles to Patroclus as he is about to go to battle, in which Achilles wishes that every Trojan and every Greek may die so that only the two of them could survive and sack Troy, 36 were athetized by Aristarchus, because in his view they were not in line with Achilles’ character (schol. II. 16.97–100a):

ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι τέσσαρες, διότι κατὰ διασκεδασίαν ἐμφανίσεις γεγραφθαί ὑπὸ τινος τῶν νομιζόντων ἐρὰν τὸν Ἀχιλλέα τῷ Πατρόκλου· τοιοῦτοι γὰρ οἱ λόγοι “πάντες ἀπόλοιπόντο πλὴν ἡμῶν.” καὶ ὁ Ἀχιλλέως οὐ τοιοῦτος, συμπαθῆς δὲ.

Four lines are athetized because in their construction they appear to have been written by one of those who believed that Achilles was in love with Patroclus. For such are the words “[I wish] that all might die but the two of us” [i.e., these words support the idea of an Achilles in love with Patroclus]. But Achilles is not like that, but is instead sympathetic [to the Greeks].

Aristarchus also refuses to accept an Achilles who pettily insults Aeneas (schol. II. 20.180–86a: ἀθετοῦνται . . . καὶ οἱ λόγοι οὐ πρέποντες τῷ τὸν Ἀχιλλέως προσώπῳ). Base insults to Diomedes are denied to Hector too (schol. II. 8.164–66a: ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι τρεῖς . . . ἀνάρμοστα δὲ καὶ τὰ λεγόμενα τοῖς προσώποις), a great hero who moreover, on another occasion, does not “hope,” but rather “boasts,” that is, “vaunts” that he will win (schol. II. 14.366a: ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος γράφει “καὶ ἔλπεται.” ἀριθμός δὲ τῷ προσώπῳ τὸ εὐχέται, καυχάται (“because Zenodotus writes and ἔλπεται, but καὶ εὐχέται, ‘he vaunts,’ is fitting to the character’”). Aristarchus also clearly deplores

34. This does not mean that, with the word ἀπρεπῆς, Aristarchus implied a moral judgment of poetry; however, I would not agree totally with Schenkeveld (1970, 167–68), who maintains that ἀπρεπῆς in Aristarchean scholia is used only to point out a contradiction in the text. When it refers to characters, ἀπρεπῆς implies “contradiction” only in the sense of being contradictory to what a real individual in the same condition would have done; hence ἀπρεπῆς means “unfitting.” On ἀπρεπῆς, see also n. 42 below.

35. See also Didymus in schol. II. 4.345–46a: ἀπρεπός καὶ παρὰ τὰ πρόσωπα εἰς κρεάθιον ὁνείδοντος τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος.

36. II. 16.97–100: οἱ γὰρ Ζεὺς τε πάτερ καὶ Αθηναίη καὶ Ἀπόλλων / μητέ τες οὐ τῶν Τριών θάνατον φύγω οἴσα τάς, / μητέ τες Ἀρίστον, νόμον δ’ ἐκδέχεσθαι ὄλθρον, / ὁδ’ οίος Τριῶν ἵππα κρήπεμαι κλάνειν (“I wish, O Zeus father and Athena and Apollo, that none of the Trojans, as many as they are, could escape death, nor any of the Argives, but that only the two of us could avoid destruction, so that we alone could loose the sacred veils of Troy”).
Ajax’ characterization as a miles gloriosus who brags of his military superiority (schoL. II. 7.195–99: στίχοι πέντε ἢθετοῦνται, ὅτι οὐ κατὰ τὸν Ἀἰαντὰ οἱ λόγοι καὶ ἑαυτῷ ἄνθυποφόρεῖ γελοῖος [“five lines are athetized because this speech is not worthy of Ajax and it is ridiculous that he replies to himself”]). By the same token there are words that may suitably be said to kings and words that may suitably be said to subjects, like those that Odysseus speaks to the soldiers to keep them from going back home (II. 2.203–6: “not all of us Achaeans are to be kings; the rule of many is not a good thing; let there be only one ruler, one king to whom the son of Cronos, crooked of counsel, has given the scepter and the laws in order that he can take counsel for them”). According to Aristarchus these lines should not be employed by Odysseus when Odysseus is addressing the rank and file (II. 2.200–206), but should instead be transferred to a previous point, when he is addressing the other leaders (II. 2.190–97). His point of view is clear from Aristonicus’ remark in schoL. II. 2.192a: εἰσὶ γὰρ πρὸς βασιλέως ἀρμόζοντες, οὐ πρὸς δημότας (“for these lines are suitable to kings, not to rank soldiers”).

The same holds for women, who must behave properly, not give orders to superior beings like gods, as in the case of Helen rebuking Aphrodite at Iliad 3.406–7 (schoL. II. 3.395: καὶ βλάσφημα θεοῦ [add. Friedländer] παρὰ τὸ πρόσωπόν ἐστι τὰ λεγόμενα “⊿ὸς παρ’ αὐτὸν ἱόσα, θεῶν δ’ ἀπώειπε κελεύθους, / μη’ ἐπὶ σοῦσι πόδεσσιν” (II. 3.406–7) [“and it is blasphemous even for the character [i.e., Helen] to say: ‘Go and sit by his side, and give up the way of the gods, and [do not go back to Olympus] with your feet’”]; or, as in the case of Andromache, giving tactical advice to her husband, Hector, during their meeting (schoL. II. 6.433–39: ἢθετοῦνται στίχοι ἐπὶ ζώς τοῦ (439) . . . ὃτι ἀνόικειοι οἱ λόγοι τῇ Ἀνδρομάχῃ ἀντιστρατηγεῖ γὰρ τῷ Ἐκτορὶ [“seven lines are athetized down to line 439, because the arguments are not fitting for Andromache, since she is giving strategic advice instead of Hector”]. A young princess like Nausicaa was not allowed to dwell too much on the gossip people might have made upon seeing her enter the city with Odysseus (schoL. Od. HQ 6.275: ἢθετοῦνται στίχοι ἵνα ὃς ἀνόικειοι τῷ ὑποκείμενῳ προσώπῳ [“fourteen lines are athetized . . . because they are not fitting to the character in question”]). A mother like Thetis cannot give excessively explicit advice to her son (schoL. 24.130–32a: ἢθετοῦνται στίχοι τρεῖς, ὃτι ἄπρεπες μητέρα υἱῷ λέγειν ἀγαθὸν ἐστὶ γυναικὶ μείγματα (cf. lines 130–31) [“three lines are athetized because it is inappropriate for a mother to say to her son: ‘it is good to have intercourse with a woman’”]).

As between men and women, there is a clear distinction between what is allowed to gods and to humans (schoL. II. 1.204b: τούτῳ δὲ τῇ Ἀθηνᾶ ἀρμόζει μᾶλλον διαβεβαιοῦν [“but this sense of certainty about the future is more suitable to Athena [than to Achilles]”]; schoL. II. 2.791: ἢθετοῦνται στίχοι πέντε: . . . Πολιτή ἀνόικειοι, μᾶλλον δὲ Ἰριδί ἀρμόζει ἐπιτάσσειν [“Five

37. Cf. also schoL. II. 9.612b: ὁτί Ζηνόδοτος γράφει “ἀδιορόμενος, κινηρίζον,” οὗ ἡμῖν ἄκρα, ἀκρά δὲ τοι᾽ ὃ ὅμως ήμιττον καὶ παρὰ τὸ πρόσωπόν [i.e., Phoenix].

38. II. 2.203–6: οὐ μὲν παῖς πάντες βασιλεύουσιν ἐνθαδ’ ἄρχοι: / οὐ ἀγαθὸν πολυκομορῆν εἰς κοίραν ζεῖσθαι, / εἰς βασιλείας, ὑ δὲ τὸν Κρόνον παῖς ἀγκυλομῆτως / σκηνάτον τ’ ἥδε θέμιστας, ἵνα σφιν βουλεύση.
The distinction between Greeks and barbarians and what was fitting for a Greek hero to say played an interesting role in the athetesis of *Iliad* 16.237. Here Achilles prays to Zeus and says: “you did me honor, and greatly oppressed the army of the Achaeans” (τιμήσας μὲν ἐμέ, μέγα δέ ἵψαυ λαὸν Ἀχαίων). According to Aristarchus, the line was wrongly repeated from *Iliad* 1.454, where it was at the right place, when Chryses is praying to Apollo. For it was not likely for Achilles to rejoice at the defeat of the Achaeans, like Chryses (schol. *Iliad* 1.454: οὐ γὰρ εἰκότως Ἀχιλλεὺς ἐπιξιάρει τῇ ἑτητὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων. ὁ δὲ Χρύσης βάρβαρος καὶ μισέλλην [“for it is not plausible for Achilles to rejoice at the defeat of the Achaeans, but Chryses is a barbarian and enemy of the Greeks”]).

The words of Aeneas to Achilles suggesting that they should not insult each other like women in the streets were athetized by Aristarchus for the same reasons, because they were more suitable to barbarians than to civilized Greeks (schol. *Iliad* 20.251–55a: ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι πέντε. . . καὶ τὰ λεγόμενα ἀνάξια τῶν προσώπων· καὶ παρὰ βαρβάρους δὲ, ἔστι τὸ τὰς γυναῖκας προερχομένας λοιδορεῖσθαι ὡς παρ’ Αἰγυπτίωις [“five lines are athetized. . . and what is said is unworthy of the characters. Among barbarians it is possible to have women come out and hurl abuse, as among the Egyptians”]).

An important point is that words and actions must be suitable to the age and the social level of the characters. A typical case is *Iliad* 3.156–60, when the old Trojans see Helen arriving on the tower and remark that it is shameful to fight for a woman, no matter how beautiful she is. The scene is introduced as follows (lines 154–55): ὅτε δὲ ὡς οὖν εἰδόθη Ἑλένην ἐπὶ πῦργον ἱούσαν, ἦκα πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἔπεα πτερόεντ’ ἀγόρευον (“and when they saw Helen arriving upon the tower, they softly spoke winged words to one another”). Aristarchus argued against a variant suggested by Zenodotus, ὅκα, “swiftly,” instead of ἦκα, “softly,” “in a low tone,” because that adverb was ἀπρεπές if it referred to Helen (a noble woman cannot come “quickly,” “run”: ἐπὶ πῦργον ἱούσαν ὅκα) and ἀνάρμοστον if it referred to the old Trojans (old men are ἀραθρόλογοι, they cannot speak “swiftly”: ὅκα πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἔπεα πτερόεντ’ ἀγόρευον). Similar to this case is that of *Odyssey* 15.45,

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39. Cf. schol. *Iliad* 8.420–24a.
40. Cf. also schol. *Iliad* 16.237a.
41. Cf. Lührs 1992, 117–20, esp. 119.
42. Schol. *Iliad* 15.355a: ἦκα [πρὸς ἀλλήλους]: ὃτι Ζηνόδοτος γράφει ὅκα.” εἴτε δὲ εἴπε τῆς Ἑλένης ἑστίν, ὅτι ἰδικα ἐπορεύετο, ἀπρεπές ἦσται εἴτε ἐπὶ τῶν ἀδημοσιώντων, ὅτι ἰδίαι διέλεγοτο, ἀνάρμοστον βραθολόγια γάρ εἶσαι οἱ γέροντες. This scholium raises, moreover, the question of a possible distinction between the meaning of ἀπρεπές and ἀνάρμοστον/ὑφί ἄρμοστον: whereas the first seems here to point to a specific appropriate-ness, related to the character Helen (running is not fitting to Helen), the latter seems to hint at a generic
where Telemachus wakes up Pisistratus by touching him with his foot (λαές ποδί κινήσας). According to Aristarchus, this way of waking someone up is more suitable to Nestor, who is old and does it at *Iliad* 10.158 to wake up Diomedes. These comments seem to have behind them the same ideas about old age as we read in the *Rhetoric*, Book 2.13, though, admittedly, Aristotle does not talk about the “slowness” and lack of strength of old people, but focuses on a psychological description. The same idea of old age as measured and never inclined to excess suggests that measured and dignified language is fitting to old kings like Priam and Alcinous. The reverse is true for young people, who should respect the old and restrain themselves from speaking too openly. Also unfitting are references to marriage and family for warriors who are too young for it (schol. *Il.* 15.439a: ἵσα φίλοι σου τικέσσιν: ὅτι Ζηνόδότος γράφει ἵσα φίλοι τέκεσσιν οὐχ ἀρμόζει δέ τούς περὶ τὸν Αἴαντα νέους ὅντας λέγειν τέκεσσιν: πρὶν γὰρ παιδοποιήσαι ἐστρατεύσαντο [“because Zenodotus writes ἵσα φίλοι τέκεσσιν [we honour him] ‘like our sons’ [instead of ἵσα φίλοι σου τικέσσιν, ‘like our parents’]. But it does not fit those around Ajax, who are young, to say ‘like our sons’. They served in the army before begetting children”]).

A case where the contacts between Aristotelian theory and Aristarchus’ practice are particularly strong and interesting is *Odyssey* 4.156–60. Here, Pisistratus speaks to Menelaus and confirms that Telemachus is Odysseus’ son: 

“Ἀτρείδη Μενέλας διοτρεφεὶς, ὀρχαμε λαδόν, κείνου μὲν τοῖς δύο ὑίος ἔττυτους, ὡς ἄγορεύεις· ἄλλα σασφων ἐστί, νεμισσάτω δ’ ἐνι θυμῷ δ’ ἐλλθαν τὸ πρῶτον ἐπεσβολίας ἀναφαίνειν ἄντα σέθεν, τοῦ νοτὶ θεοῦ ὡς τερπόμεθ’ αοῦ,”

Divine Menelaus, son of Atreus, leader of people, he is indeed that man’s son, as you say. But he is prudent and feels shame in his heart that on his first coming he might show himself hasty in speaking in the presence of you, in whose voice we both take delight as in a god’s.

appropriateness, related to the characteristics of the human type depicted (speaking quickly is not fitting to old people in general). However, the evidence from the other scholia, which use the two terms inconsistently, prevents the acceptance of such conclusions.

43. Schol. HVind.133 Od. 15.45: νοθεύεται ὡς διαπελασσόμενος ἕξ ἡμιστιχοῦ τῆς κ’ Ἡλίαδος (line 158) ἔκει γὰρ προσποιήσαντος Νέστωρ κοιμώμενον Διομήδην ἀνίστησαι, κύριας κατοικίας διὰ τὸ γῆς.

44. Schol. *Il.* 2.4556–57: ἐθετούντα, ὅτι ἀνάμισσα τὸ προσέπῃ αἱ εἰρήκα τῇ καὶ ἐπαυτόφορος ἡ ὑπόκρισις. Cf. also Didymus at *Il.* 2.4636: <πανασάμεθα> ὅντος Ἀριστάρχου ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀνάπομοςμέθα ἀπρεπές γὰρ τὸ λέγειν τὸν Πράμομα. ἠρραμάμαθα.

45. Schol. P Od. 7.311: τοῖς ἐξ Ἀριστάρχου διατάσει Ὠμήρου εἶναι, εἰ δὲ καὶ Ὀμηρικοὶ, εἰκότως αὐτοῖς περιαριστηθῆναι φησι, πῶς γὰρ ἠγνοῦν τὸν ἄνδρα μνηστεύεται αὐτῷ τὴν θυγάτερα καὶ οἱ ὁπροσπομένων, ἄλλα λαπαραν. Cf. also schol. *Il.* 9.56–57, about Nestor saying to Diomedes: “You might even be my son”: ὅτι οὐχ ἀρμόζει τῷ τρεῖς γενεᾶς βεβαιωκότι λέγειν ἔμοι ἢν παῖς εἶτι; (cf. line 57) κατὰ τὴν ἡλίκιαν πρὸς ἐπιτύμβου τοῦ πολέμου.

46. In this sense, one could quote the case of *Od*. 2.316–17, lines probably atethisied by Aristarchus on the grounds that Telemachus here is threatening the suitors too strongly (schol. *EM* Od. 2.325: ἢ μᾶλα βεβαιωτικα ταῦτα τὸ ἔπει τὸν μὴ εἶρησά ὑπὸ Τηλέμαχον τοὺς προσπομένους στήξον (lines 316–17) “περιήγησα ὡς κἀ’ ἤμιθα κακός ὃπερ καθαρὰ ὑπὸ Πείλονθ ’ελθὼν ἢ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἔνο ἔναι ὑλῆ,” ἀποκλίνεις γὰρ λέγοντας ἢ μᾶλα Τηλέμαχος, “οὐκ ἢ ἀποκλίνεις ποιεῖσθαι οἱ προσκυμίασθε."
Lines 158–60 were atethized by Aristarchus because they were considered contrary to the traditional usage (τὰ πάτρια) and not appropriate for the character of Pisistratus; moreover, they were superfluous and utterly unsuitable to be spoken by a young man (παρὰ τὰ πάτρια καὶ οὐχ ἀρμότοντα τῷ Πεισιστράτου προσώπῳ...περιττοί καὶ ὑπὸ νέου παντάπασι λέγεσθαι ἀπρεπές). This comment by Aristarchus finds a striking overlap with what Aristotle had stated in the *Rhetoric* (1395a2–6 and 1404b15–16):

> ἀρμότει δὲ γνωμολογεῖν ἡλικία μὲν πρεσβυτέρων, περὶ δὲ τούτων ἄν ἐμπειρός τίς ἔστιν, ὥστε τὸ μὲν μή τηλικοῦτον ὄντα γνωμολογεῖν ἀπρεπές ὀστερ καὶ τὸ μυθολογεῖν, περὶ δὲ ἄν ἀπειρος, ἡλιθίων καὶ ἀπαλέων.

The use of maxims is appropriate only to elderly men, and in handling subjects in which the speaker is experienced. For a young man to use them is—like telling stories—unbecoming; to use them in handling things in which one has no experience is silly and ill-bred. (Trans. Roberts 1984)

> ἐπι καὶ ἑνταῦθα [i.e., in poetry], εἰ δοῦλος καλλεποῖτο ἡ λίαν νέος, ἀπρεπέστερον, ἡ περὶ λιαν μικρόν.

For even in poetry, it is not quite appropriate that fine language should be used by a slave or a very young man, or about very trivial subjects. (Trans. Roberts 1984)

> A young man cannot speak in γνώμαι either for Aristotle or for Aristarchus. 47

5. ARISTOTELIAN THEORY AND ARISTARCHEAN PRACTICE: DIANOIA

Aristotle defines διάνοια as the thought-element, everything transmitted and expressed with words (*Poet.* 1450a6–7 and 1456a36–1456b2):

> διάνοιαν δὲ [λέγω], ἐν ὁσαίς λέγοντες ἀποδεικνύοσιν τι ἢ καὶ ἀποφαίνοντας γνώμην.

By “reasoning,” I mean the way in which they use speech to demonstrate something or indeed to make some general statement. (Trans. Janko 1987)

> ἔστι δὲ κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν ταύτα, ὦσα ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου δεῖ παρασκευασθῆναι. μέρη δὲ τούτων το τε ἀποδεικνύει καὶ τὸ λύειν καὶ τὸ πᾶθη παρασκευάζειν (οἶνον ἔλεον ἢ φόβον ἢ ὀργὴν καὶ ὦσα τουαῦτα) καὶ ἤτι μέγεθος καὶ μικρότητας.

All [the effects] that have to be produced by speech fall under reasoning. The types of these are demonstration and refutation, the production of emotions (e.g., pity, terror, anger, etc.), and again [arguments about things'] importance or unimportance. (Trans. Janko 1987)

Thus, with διάνοια we are dealing with the content of speeches, either uttered by characters or by the poet himself when he intervenes in the narrative. In this sense it is opposed to λέξεις, which is the form in which the thought takes shape. In particular, Aristotle states that the two main parts of the διάνοια are τὸ τε ἀποδεικνύει καὶ τὸ λύειν (“demonstration and refutation”) and καὶ τὸ πάθη παρασκευάζειν καὶ ἤτι μέγεθος καὶ μικρότητας (“the

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47. The attention toward characterization and what is fitting for each character is also used in the so-called λόσεις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου, which are typical of Aristarchus’ exegesis; on this principle, see Dachs 1913.
production of emotions, and again importance or unimportance”). Aristotle in the *Poetics* does not treat διάνοια extensively, but refers his readers to the *Rhetoric*, where the opposition between the thought-element versus the formal element in speeches is well stated (Rh. 1404a18–19):

οἱ γὰρ γραφόμενοι λόγου μείζον εἰσχύουσι διὰ τὴν λέξιν ἡ διὰ τὴν διάνοιαν.

Speeches of the written kind owe more of their effect to their language than to their thought. (Trans. Roberts 1984) 48

The thought expressed by the characters or by the poet must thus reflect the general “ethos” of a poetic work. In particular, the διάνοια of tragedy and epic must be in keeping with the “solemnity” (σεμινότης) and seriousness that characterize both genres. Therefore, anything that is γελοῖον, “ridiculous,” must be avoided, because this is typical of comedy and low genres and extraneous to tragedy and epic (*Poet*. 1449a32–37):

ἡ δὲ κυμφωδία ἐστὶν ὅσπερ ἐπομεν μὴνς φαυλότερον μὲν, οὐ μέντοι κατὰ πᾶσαν κακίαν, ἀλλὰ τὸ αἰσχρόου ἐστι τὸ γελοῖον μάριον. τὸ γὰρ γελοῖον ἐστιν ἀμαρτημα τι καὶ αἰσχος ἀνώδυνον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν, οἴον εὖθος τὸ γελοῖον πρὸς ὁποιον ἀἰσχρὸν τι καὶ διεστραμμένον ἀνεῦ δότης.

Comedy is, as we have said, a representation of people who are rather inferior—not, however, with respect to every [kind of] vice, but the laughable is [only] a part of what is ugly. For the laughable is a sort of error or ugliness that is not painful and destructive, just as, evidently, a laughable mask is something ugly and distorted without pain. (Trans. Janko 1987) 49

Aristarchus certainly shared the idea that epic is mainly concerned with “serious” content, for he often rejects lines expressing a ridiculous thought. In particular, there are some interesting cases where Aristarchus argues against Homer himself. At *Iliad* 12.176, describing the battle at the Achaean wall, the poet says: “it would be too much toil for me, as if I were a god, to tell all this” (ἀργάλεόν δὲ με ταῦτα θεόν ὃς πάντ’ ἀγορεύσαι), a statement

48. A correspondence with this dichotomy between form (λέξεως) and thought (διάνοια) can be found in the three books of the *Rhetoric*, where the first two deal with the thought, whereas Book 3 deals with the style. In particular, Book 1, where Aristotle analyzes the different kind of speeches and arguments, seems to correspond to the first part of διάνοια (“proof and refutation”), while Book 2, dedicated to the analysis of the different emotions and characters that the good orator must imitate in order to persuade, reflects the second and third parts (“the arousing of feelings and then again exaggeration and depreciation”). Book 3, instead, is about the πεζία λέξεως, the prose style, extraneous to poetry. This is probably why in the *Poetics* Aristotle refers his readers to the *Rhetoric* as far as διάνοια is concerned (the thought-element obeys the same rules both for prose and for poetry); whereas he needs to have a proper section on style in the *Poetics* (τοιητική λέξεως is not the same as πεζία λέξεως). That this dichotomy of form vs. content is operating in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* is shown by the end of Book 2 (1403a34–1403b3): ἐπεὶ δὲ τρία ἐστὶν ἡ δεῖ πραγματευθέναι περὶ τὸν λόγον, ὑπὲρ μὲν παραδειγμάτων καὶ γνώμων καὶ εὐθυμημάτων καὶ ὅλων περὶ τὴν διάνοιαν, ἄθεν τε εὐπορισμένοι καὶ ὡς αὐτὰ λάσομεν, εἰρήσθο ἡμῖν τοσάτα, λοιπὸν δὲ διελθένει περὶ λέξεως καὶ τάξεως (“Three points must be studied in making a speech and now we have completed the account of examples, maxims, enthemes, and in general the thought-element—the way to invent and refute arguments. We have next to discuss language and arrangement,” trans. Roberts 1984).

49. On the opposition between γελοῖον (typical of comedy) and σεμινόν (typical of tragedy), cf. Rh. 1406b6–8: εἰσὶν γὰρ καὶ μεταφοράι ἀπαρέπειαί, αἱ μὲν διὰ τὸ γελοῖον (χρονίται γὰρ καὶ οἱ κυμφωδοίς μεταφορές), αἱ δὲ διὰ τὸ σεμινόν ἄγαν καὶ τραχίκον (“Metaphors like other things may be inappropriate. Some are so because they are ridiculous (they are indeed used by comic poets too). Others are too grand and tragic,” trans. Roberts 1984, modified).
that Aristarchus rejected as γελοιόν. For the same reason he found fault in the concluding line of the long catalogue of the Nereids mourning Patroclus (II. 18.38–49). Here, after giving a list of thirty-three Nereids, the poet concludes: “and all the other Nereids that were in the depth of the sea” (ἀλλαὶ θ’ α’ κατὰ βένθος άλλος Νηρη’δες ἤσαν)—as if, Aristarchus commented, Homer first intended to list them all by name, but then got tired (schol. II. 18.39–49: γελοιόν τε ἐξ ὅνωματος προθέμενον εἰπεῖν πάσας, ὦστερ ἀποκαμόντα εἰπεῖν “ἀλλαὶ δ’α’ κλ.”). Also, the consoling example of Niobe that Achilles tells to Priam is considered ridiculous, because a straightforward paraphrase of the exemplum would give: “eat, because Niobe too ate and then was turned into stone” (schol. II. 24.614–17a: καὶ η παραμυθία γελοία· φάγε, ἔπει καὶ ἦ Νιόβῃ ἔφαγε καὶ ἀπελθόθη)—indeed a rather poor encouragement.51

Aristarchus found fault also with the words uttered by the characters. For example, at Iliad 8.189 Hector talking to his horses and inviting them to drink was ridiculous: γελοιόστατος ἐπὶ ὑπνόν ὁ στίχος, ὅτι οἶνον ὑπνοῖ οὐ πίνουσιν. καὶ ὁ τὸν γαμήσῃ εἰς μέθην γελοίον.52 Other atheteses by Aristarchus due to a γελοίον thought in the words of characters are attested at Iliad 10.409–11 (Odysseus to Dolon);53 Iliad 14.376–77 (Poseidon to the Greeks); Odyssey 4.158–60 (Pisistratus to Menelaus); Odyssey 4.553 (Menelaus to Proteus); Odyssey 11.157–59 (Anticlea to Odysseus); Odyssey 14.495 (Odysseus to the Greeks at Troy). Alternatively, Aristarchus notes something γελοίον in the readings of predecessors (Zenodotus in particular), which are therefore to be rejected, at Iliad 3.74 (Paris to Hector) and Iliad 23.94 (Achilles to Patroclus’ ghost).54

The simile comparing Achilles and Hector running around Troy to a dream in which the pursuer cannot reach the one who runs away at Iliad 22.199–201 (ὡς δ’ ἐν ὑδέρα φοι γύναις διόκειν· / οὔτ’ ἀρ’ δ’ τὸν δύναται ὑποφέρειν οὐθ’ δ’ διόκειν· / ὡς δ’ τὸν οὐ δύνατο μᾶργαλι σοῖν, οὐδ’ ὡς ἀλύξαι) was athetized by Aristarchus, as he found the lines “cheap” both in style and in thought (schol. II. 22.199–201α: καὶ τῇ κατασκεύῃ καὶ τῷ νοῆμα τοῦ ἐν τελεῖ.55 Ἐντελῆς, “cheap,” “of no value,” is thus used as a synonym of γελοίον in the scholia of Aristonicus to convey the idea that the content or the style of a passage are not consonant with the serious content of the epos. Aristotle likewise employs the adjective ἐντελῆς when comparing two

50. Γελοίον is surely part of the Aristarchean vocabulary since it appears in a direct quotation of Aristarchus by Didymus in schol. II. 2.420a.4
51. Cf. also the first part of schol. II. 24.614–17a: ἄθετοίται στίχοι τέσσαρες, ὅτι οὐκ ἀκολουθοῦ τῷ “ἢ δ’ ἄρα σίτοι μνήσατο; ἔπει καίμε δικρον γέλουσα” (II. 24.613): εἰ γὰρ ἀπελθόθη, πᾶς σιτία προσπιθογόνατο;
52. Cf. Lührs 1992, 46 n. 92.
53. On this athetesis, see Lührs 1992, 226–28.
54. A rather close synonym of γελοίον is εὔθης, “foolish.” Aristarchus athetized lines because of their “foolishness” in the thought expressed by the character: at II. 1.139 (Agamemnon to Achilles); II. 2.80–81 (in schol. II. 2.76a, Nestor commenting on Agamemnon’s dream); II. 8.185 (ἡ προσφονήσις, i.e., the address of Hector to his own horses, εὔθης). This criterion was also at the basis of an athetesis by Zenodotus in schol. II. 1.117a (a scholium already mentioned): βοιάλοι ἔργα λαοῦ σοίν: ὅτι Ζηνόδωτος αὐτόν ἠθέτηκεν ὡς τῆς δύνασης εὔθηως σοίνς, οὐ δεὶ δε αὐτὸν ἑαυτόν προσφέρεσθαι, ἀλλὰ συνέπεται τοῖς δι’ ἐν ἤμα γὰρ λέγεται.
55. Though for different reasons, the διώξεις of Hector by Achilles in II. 22 was problematic for Aristotle too (cf. Poet. 1460a11–18).
contrasting types of authors: the σεμνοί who will write tragedies and the εὐτελεῖς who will prefer comedies (Poet. 1448b25–27):

οἱ μὲν γὰρ σεμνὸτεροί τὰς καλὰς ἐμμοῦντο πράξεις καὶ τὰς τῶν τοιούτων, οἱ δὲ εὐτελέστεροι τὰς τῶν φαλάν, πρῶτον φύσεις ποιοῦντες ὀσπερ ἔτεροι ἤμνους καὶ ἐγκόμια.

The grander people represented fine actions, i.e., those of fine persons, the more ordinary people represented those of inferior ones, at first composing invectives, just as the others composed hymns and praise-poems. (Trans. Janko 1987)

Therefore, in Homer we must avoid everything that is εὐτελεῖς. And indeed, we find many Aristarchean atheteses on the basis that some lines are εὐτελεῖς τῇ συνθέσει καὶ τῇ διάνοιᾳ (schol. Il. 1.133–34, Agamemnon to Achilles; schol. Il. 15.212a, Poseidon to Iris; schol. Il. 16.93a, Achilles to Patroclus; schol. HP Od. 5.94–95, probably referring to lines 97–98, Hermes to Calypso), some εὐτελεῖς κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν (schol. Il. 3.395 on Il. 3.414, Aphrodite to Helen), some εὐτελεῖς τῇ κατασκευῇ καὶ τοῖς νοήμαισι (schol. Il. 20.180–86a, Achilles to Aeneas).

On the other hand, the Aristotelian principle that epic διάνοια is concerned with or must express importance (μέγεθος; cf. Poet. 1456a36–1456b2 quoted above) seems to be at the basis of Aristarchean practice too. Arguing against an athetesis of Zenodotus in IIiad 17.260, Aristarchus maintained that those lines containing a comment by the poet himself (τῶν δ’ ἄλλων τίς κεν ἦσεν φρεσὶν οὐνοματ’ εὗρο, ἢ ὀσοὶ δὲ μετόπισθε μάχην ἤγειραν Ἀχαῖων; [“But of the rest, what man of his own wit could name the names of all that came after these and aroused the battle of the Achaean?”] were actually increasing the importance (τὸ μέγεθος) of the battle for Patroclus’ corpse (schol. Il. 17.260a: τὸ μέγεθος τῆς ὑπὲρ Πατρόκλου μάχης).

6. ARISTOTELIAN THEORY AND ARISTARCHAEO PRACTICE: ΛΕΞΙΣ

The analysis of ποιητική λέξεις is carried out by Aristotle (Poet. 1457b1–3) with reference to the ὄνομα: each word can be normal (κύριον), a gloss (γλῶττα), metaphorical (μεταφορά), ornamental (κόσμος), invented (πεποιημένον), lengthened (ἐπεκτεταμένον), truncated (ὑφηρμένον), or altered (ἐξήλασμενον). Moreover, whereas the κύριον usage is typical of the prose style, the other schemata are characteristic of poetic style. In particular, at Poetics 1459a9–10, glossai are said to be the most apt to epic; this, as already mentioned, is one of the points of contact between Aristotle and the work done at Alexandria, where collections of glossai were widely produced. However, poetic style cannot be reduced only to figures of speech; to be a good poet one has also to be clear (Poet. 1458a18–34):

λέξεως δὲ ἄρετὴ σαφῆ καὶ μὴ ταπεινή εἶναι, σαφεστάτη μὲν οὖν ἐστιν ἢ ἐκ τῶν κυρίων ὄνοματων, ἄλλα ταπεινή... σεμνὴ δὲ καὶ ἐξαλλάττουσα τὸ ἱδιωτικὸν ἢ τοῖς ἕξενικοῖς κεχρημμένην ἕξενικὸν δὲ λέγω γλῶτταν καὶ μεταφορὰν καὶ ἑπέκτασιν καὶ πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τὸ κύριον. ἄλλ᾽ ἂν τὶς ἀπαντᾷ τοιῶτα ποιήσῃ, ἢ αἷνηγα ἔσται ἢ βαρβαρισμός; ἢ μὲν οὖν ἐκ μεταφορῶν, αἰνίγμα, ἐὰν ἐκ ἔκ γλωττῶν, βαρβαρισμὸς... δεῖ θὰ κεκράσσαί πως τούτοις, τὸ μὲν γὰρ τὸ μὴ ἱδιωτικὸν ποιησῆ μὴ ταπεινῶν, οἷον ἢ γλῶττα καὶ η ἐπαφόρα καὶ ὁ κόσμος καὶ τὰλλὰ τὰ εἰρημένα εἶδη, τὸ δὲ κύριον τὴν σαφήνειαν.

56. On this athetesis, see Lührs 1992, 191 n. 153.
The virtue of diction is to be clear and not commonplace. Diction made up of standard names is the clearest, but it is commonplace. . . . Diction that uses unfamiliar names is grand and altered from the everyday. By “unfamiliar,” I mean the exotic [name], metaphor, lengthening and everything that is contrary to what is standard. But if someone makes all [the names] of this sort, [his poem] will be either a riddle or gibberish. If [it is composed] of metaphors, it will be a riddle; if of exotic [names], gibberish. . . . [The poet], then, should mix these [two kinds] in some way. The first (i.e. the exotic name, metaphor, ornament and the other kinds we mentioned) will produce that which is not everyday and commonplace, and the standard name will produce clarity. (Trans. Janko 1987)

To achieve clarity one must use “normal” words (κύρια); however, this can lead to ταπεινότης, “meanness of style,” which must be avoided in poetic style. Therefore poets also use words that get away from common language (ἐξαλλάττουσα τὸ ἱδιωτικὸν ἢ τοῖς ἐξενικοῖς κεχρημένη), for example, glossai and metaphors. However, they must not be excessive, otherwise the result will be an αἰνέμα (if there are too many metaphors) or a βορβαρισμός (if there are too many glossai).57 The aim is thus to achieve an equilibrium between norm and novelty, where the true poet is able to mix the two and thus be at the same time both clear and striking.

Attention to both form and style is evident in Aristarchus; in particular, the definition of what is Homeric style and what is not seems to be the coherent development of the Aristotelian distinction between poetic and prosaic λέξεις.58 As for Aristotle, for Aristarchus too language must first be σαφῆ, “clear,” and Homer is a champion of σαφῆνεα: he always builds his sentences in the clearest way, ἕνεκα σαφῆνειας (cf. schol. Il. 15.8a). For this very reason, Aristarchus argued against Zenodotus at Iliad 14.169: ἕνθ’ ἢ γ’ εἰσελθοῦσα θύρας ἐπέθηκε φαεινάς (“And she [Hera] entered there [the chamber], closed the bright doors”), where Zenodotus changed the finite verb ἐπέθηκε into a participle ἐπεθεῖσα (so that the main verb was to be found in line 171, κάθησεν). Homer—Aristarchus argued—prefers to have another main clause with a finite verb at line 169 and thus to be clear and avoid a postponed principal clause.59

Aristotle in particular maintained that σαφῆνεα was due to the usage of κύρια ὑνόματα, “standard names.” It is interesting how many times Aristarchus notes that a term in Homer is used κυρίως, that is, according to the normal usage, hence “clear.”60 On the other hand, Aristarchus seems to be well aware of the characteristic of poetic language, which is allowed to depart from κύριον usage. Schol. II. 5.266b describes as ἰδίως, that is, proper to Homer, the usage of the word ποινή in this passage (in the sense of “price paid,”

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57. For a similar analysis of prose style, see Rh. 1404b1–1408b20.
58. In this case, an important change in terminology happened, since for Aristarchus λέξεις meant “word” and not “diction,” “utterance,” “style,” as in Aristotle; cf. Matthaios 1999, 198–200; 1996, 68–69. To mean “diction,” “composition of words” in Aristonicus’ scholia we find συνθέσις and κατασκευή.
59. Schol. II. 1.14.169a: θύρας ἐπέθηκε φαεινάς: ὅτι Ζηνοδότος γράφει ἑνθ’ ἐπέθηκε φαεινάς,” ἵνα συναφής ἐν λόγος γένηται. ἢ ἰδιός ὄμηρος ἄλλας ἀρχές λαμβάνει, ἵνα μὴ ἄσφαλς ἐκ περίος ἐγένηται ἢ ἵνα ἐστηποπεριλαῦθος. On the concept of σαφῆνεα in Homer, cf. also Didymus in schol. II. 6.76b1 and schol. II. 8.349a1.
60. Cf. schol. II. 4.141a, 7.146b, 7.255a, 10.75b, 11.523, 22.31, 22.319a, 22.489b. Aristarchus could not adopt the very word of Aristotle, κύριον ὄνομα, which, by that time, meant something different, denoting the grammatical category of “proper names” (or just “names”), as opposed to that of epithets; see Matthaios 1996, esp. 69–70; 1999, 218–25.
“recompense”) and opposes it to the standard usage (κυρίως) of the word, as
at Iliad 9.636 (in the sense of a “fine paid by the slayer to the kinsmen of
the slain”).61 Sometimes when a word is used oo κυρίως the purpose is to give
a deeper meaning, as at Iliad 2.670 where the image of Zeus pouring gold
is said to be κυρίως in Pindar (Ol. 7.34) and metaphoric in Homer to suggest
the aboundance of gold (πρὸς ἐμφασιν τοῦ πλούτου). Or the epithets ἀργυ-
ρότηλον “with silver nails,” at Iliad 2.45, and χρυσότηλον, “with golden
nails,” at Iliad 11.29–30—both referring to the sword of Agamemnon—are
not to be taken in the standard way (κυρίως). Otherwise, Homer would con-
tradict himself and depict Agamemnon’s sword once as silver nailed, once
as golden nailed. Rather, they are used ornamentally as a poetical device.62
Aristarchus is also keen to note metaphorical usages in Homer, as in schol.
II. 1.37e (κατὰ μεταφορὰν ἐκ τῶν τετραπόδων); schol. II. 11.632b (κατὰ μετα-
φορὰν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐμψύχων); schol. II. 22.356a (ἀπὸ τῶν ὄσσων ἢ μεταφορὰ).63

Just as Aristotle allows poetic diction to depart from common language
in order to avoid ταπεινότης, “meanness,” so Aristarchus athetizes lines
or rejects readings because the words (λέξεις), the style (κατασκευή), or
the composition (σύνθεσις) 64 are ευτελεῖς, as happens in schol. II. 2.314b
(εὔτελης δὲ ἢ λέξεις); schol. II. 8.164–66a (εὐτελεῖς εἰς τῇ κατασκευῇ);
schol. II. 10.497a (τῇ συνθέσει εὐτελής); schol. II. 11.130a (εὐτελεῖς τῇ
κατασκευῇ); schol. II. 11.413a (εὐτελεῖς γίνεται ἡ σύνθεσις); schol. II. 11.767a1
(εὐτελῆς δὲ ἡ σύνθεσις); schol. II. 15.56a (κατὰ τὴν συνθέσιν εἰσὶν εὐτελεῖς).65

However, notwithstanding this shift from common language, Homer never
βαρβαρίζει. Hence, anything against grammatical correctness must be rejected,
as in schol. II. 12.34 (ὅτι Ζηνόδοτος γράφει “ὡς ἦμελλων ὑπισθε.” ἦστι δὲ
βάρβαρον) and in schol. II. 15.716 (ὡστε βαρβαρίζειν τὸν “Ὁμηρον), both
against Zenodotus’ readings.

Finally, some interesting parallels with the Rhetoric. For prose, one of the
most serious vices is to be ψυχρόν, “frigid,” and this can arise from four
causes: the usage of glossai, of excessive epithets, of strange compounds,
and of improper metaphors, all devices that pertain to poetry rather than
prose (Rh. 1405b35–1406a13):

61. Schol. II. 5.266b: ποινὴν (≠οίνηκ´): ὅτι ἰδίως τὸ ποινὴ κέχρησι: κυρίως γὰρ ἐπὶ φῶνον, "ποινὴν
dεξαμένη" (II. 9.636). . . . Similarly, the distinction between a usage κυρίως and a usage that is not standard
is noted by Aristarchus in schol. II. 8.439a and schol. II. 10.528b.

62. Cf. schol. II. 2.45a.

63. Cf. also schol. II. 1.51c, 2.49b, 4.521a, 5.21b, 5.299a, 11.390a, 13.147a, 13.317, 13.420, 13.745–46a,
23.226c, 23.273a. On the expressions κυρίως, ἀκρός, and μεταφοράκις, cf. Matthaios 1996, 66, with n. 44.
64. In particular, on σύνθεσις as a technical term, see Schironi, in Bottai and Schironi 1997, 1058–62.
65. On the athesesis of II. 15.56, see Lübke 1992, 129–32. The word εὐτελής is used by Aristotle
(Poet. 1458b19–22) as a negative term to compare two different results in composing iambi: a good one by
Aeschylus and a bad one by Euripides.

Frigidities in language may take any four forms: the misuse of compound words, . . .
The way all these words are compounded makes them, we feel, fit for verse only. This,
then, is one form in which bad taste is shown. Another is the employment of strange
words. . . A third form is the use of long, unseasonable, or frequent epithets. It is appropriate enough for a poet to talk of “white milk,” but in prose such epithets are sometimes lacking in appropriateness. (Trans. Roberts 1984)

In Aristarchus, we find the same principle applied to poetry, which must avoid too many prose elements: some atheteses are due to the style, which is πεζός, “prosaic” (schol. Il. 2.252a: ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι πέντε, ὅτι πεζότεροι τῇ συνθέσει). 66

On the other hand, Aristarchus, like Aristotle, takes exception to epithets “out of place” (ἐπίθετα ἄκαιρα). 67 In this case, he seems to have applied Aristotle’s principles to poetic style, because sometimes he rejects a line because the epithet there is ἄκαιρος. This happens at Iliad 21.331, when Hera, addressing her son Hephaestus, calls him κυκλοπόδιων, “club-footed” (schol. Il. 21.331a: ἄκαιρον τὸ ἐπίθετον ἢ γὰρ φιλανθρωπευμένη καὶ λέγουσα ἔμοιν τέκνος ὦκ ὤφειλεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐλαστόματος προσφονεῖν (“the epithet is out of place. For since she regularly shows kindness and says ‘my child,’ she ought not to have addressed him by mentioning his defect”)), or at Iliad 21.218, when the Scamander, talking to Achilles, calls his streams ἐρετεινά, “pleasant” (schol. Il. 21.218a: ὅτι ἄκαιρον τὸ ἐπίθετον πεφοινκτα γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀύματος (“because the epithet is out of place: for [the river] is red with blood”)). 68 Iliad 23.581 was athetized because Menelaus, angry with Antilochus, address him as διστρεφὲς (schol. Il. 23.581a: ἀθετεῖται, ὅτι ἄκαιρος λέγει διστρεφὲς, ὀργιζόμενος αὐτῷ (“it is athetized because he says ‘fostered of Zeus’ inappropriately, since he is angry with him”)). Often Aristarchus finds that the epithet διος, “divine,” is used ἄκαιρως: for example, when Menelaus addresses his enemy Paris (schol. Il. 3.352a: ἀθετεῖται, ὅτι . . . καὶ διος ἄκαιρως ὁ Μενέλαος τὸν ἐχθρὸν λέγει (“The line is athetized because . . . and Menelaus calls his enemy ‘divine’ inappropriately”)), or for the voluptuous Anteia (schol. Il. 6.160a), or for Hector when he is talking to himself (schol. Il. 7.75a1). Aristarchus’ principle is that epithets must be ἄρμοττοντα, “fitting,” to the names and contexts to which they refer, just as Aristotle explains (Rh. 1405a10–13):

dεῖ δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐπίθετα καὶ τὰς μεταφορὰς ἀρμοτούσας λέγειν. τοῦτο δὲ ἦστα σὲ τὸν ἄναλογον εἰ δὲ μὴ ἄπρεπες φανεταί διὰ τὸ παρ’ ἀλλῆλα τὰ ἔναντια μάλιστα φαίνεσθαι.

Metaphors, like epithets, must be fitting, which means that they must fairly correspond to the thing signified: failing this, their inappropriateness will be conspicuous: the want of harmony between two things is emphasized by their being placed side by side. (Trans. Roberts 1984)

If instead ἐπίθετα are not ἄρμοττοντα the result is ἄπρεπες; this leads Aristarchus to an athetesis. 68

66. Cf. also schol. Il. 3.432 (ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι πέντε, ὅτι πεζότεροι εἰσί καὶ τοῖς νοήμασι ψυχροί καὶ ἀκατάλληλοι); schol. Il. 9.688–92a (ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι πέντε . . . ὅτι . . . τοῖς νοήμασι καὶ τῇ συνθέσει πεζότεροι); schol. Il. 11.767a1 (ἀθετοῦνται δὲ ἀπὸ τούτων στίχοι ἐννεακαίδεκα, . . . ὅτι ἢ σύνθεσει αὐτῶν πεζί). 67. Cf. also Rh. 1408b1–2: τὸ δ’ εὐκαίρος ἢ μὴ εὐκαίρος χρήσθη κοινὸν ἀπάντων τῶν εἰδῶν ἑστιν (“all the variations of oratorical style are capable of being used in season or out of season,” trans. Roberts 1984).

68. Cf. Matthaios 1999, 237–38.
Aristotle, Aristarchus, and the Hellenistic Literary Criticism

The parallels between Aristotle’s theoretical statements in the Poetics and in the Rhetoric and Aristarchus’ practice in his έξοδος of Homer must not be taken, however, as evidence of a “direct” dependence of Aristarchus on Aristotle. Aristarchus is not a Peripatetic, or, better, is only a Peripatetic to the extent that the other scholars and scientists working at the Museum or in Alexandria were Peripatetic. Aristotle seems to have shaped their rigorous and systematic approach to knowledge, also providing them with a set of methodological tools to proceed in their studies, such as the principle of cause and effect, analogical reasoning, the combination of teleological and mechanistic views of natural phenomena, and the analysis of concrete data in order to offer a systematic view of the kosmos.69 This is what, mutatis mutandis, we find in Aristarchus, who, among the “philologists” of his own time, such as Crates of Mallos and the so-called κριτικοί, is certainly the most concrete, systematic, and anti-speculative. This is an important point, because all of these similarities between Aristotle, Aristarchus and, in general, the Alexandrian philological school70 in the field of literary criticism are not particularly meaningful if it cannot be demonstrated at the same time that this is a unique case and that the majority of the other contemporary grammarians, philologists, and critics were adopting other views. It is thus necessary to focus on Aristarchus’ colleagues.

One of the most important sources for Hellenistic poetic theories is On Poems by Philodemus of Gadara. In Books 1 and 2, Philodemus, using Crates’ work surveying the literary views of the “critics” and of the “philosophers,” attacks the views of the so-called κριτικοί.71 Then in Book 5 (cols. 29–39 Mangoni), based on the previous work of his teacher Zeno of Sidon, he surveys thirteen different views of poetry.72 Unfortunately, these two accounts are not completely consistent with each other and, moreover, it is not always easy to judge who held particular views. However, some general points and a certain degree of detail for some of these critics and literary theorists can be reached. A brief review of them will show how Aristarchus’ approach to poetry is different from (and more Aristotelian than) all these other theories.

7.1 The κριτικοί (Heracleodorus, Pausimachus, and the Others) and Crates

The term κριτικός, as Janko has pointed out, is in itself very ambiguous because by the time of Philodemus it meant generically “literary critic.”73 How-

69. The same relationship with Aristotle can be envisaged for Erasistratus; cf. von Staden 1997.
70. I am focusing on Aristarchus because among the Alexandrians he is the one about whom we know most and also he is considered the acme of Alexandrian philological activity. However, Zenodotus, Eratosthenes, and Aristophanes of Byzantium share, at least in part, the same Aristotelian approach with Aristarchus. On Zenodotus, see Nickau 1977, 132–83; on Eratosthenes, see p. 309 below. The contrast thus is between the Alexandrian school (with Aristarchus as the main and final representative of it) and the other schools flourishing in other parts of the Hellenistic world, like Pergamum and Athens.
71. The best survey of these views is that by Janko (2000, 120–89).
72. For an analysis of these columns, see Asmis 1992b.
73. Cf. Janko 2000, 126.
ever, we tend to use this name to label a group of scholars that considered sounds and composition the primary (if not sole) criterion for judging poetry,\(^\text{74}\) as Philodemus explains in *PHerc.* 1676, col. 6, 2–9 (from *On Poems*, Book 2):

καὶ τὸ “τὴν μὲν ἡμ [ἐπικοφῳ]γομένην [ἐξοφωνίαν ἔδων [ἐνία τά δὲ νοηθαμα καὶ τὰ [τὰς λέξεις ἐκτός ἔτι καὶ κοινὰ συνάγεσθαι δεὶν,” παρά πάσι μὲν ὡς ἐγ [στήλη ἡ μὲν]ξει τοῖς κριτικοῖς.[c].

that “the supervenient euphony is particular [to poetry], but the contents and the words are external [to it] and must be considered common [to all]” is fixed as if in stone among all the critics. (Trans. Janko 2000, 124–25)\(^\text{75}\)

According to these critics, then, the content, the thought-element, and the words, were something outside poetry, and the poets must only take care of the form and verbal composition. The extraneousness of thoughts and diction from the τέχνη ποιητική was thus the common ground and the shared basic principle of all the κριτικοί. There were, however, some differences in the details. Heracleodorus (late third century B.C.E.)\(^\text{76}\) maintained that only euphony that supervenes upon word-order (σύνθεσις) mattered, whereas genre, style, and meter had nothing to do with poetry.\(^\text{77}\) In fact, according to him, even content was superfluous; if the line sounded good, it did not matter if the verse was unintelligible.\(^\text{78}\) Similar but more extreme views were held by Pausimachus of Miletus (c. 200 B.C.E.),\(^\text{79}\) who considered sound the only source of poetic pleasure (that is, the sounds of vowels in particular), and denied a role to content, genre, and even to the choice (ἐκλογή) of words.

The first three views quoted in Zeno’s list of Book 5 are along these lines: the first group calls for a “composition that delights the hearing or moves along beautifully and expresses the thought powerfully”; the second for a “verbal composition that signifies the underlying thought vividly and suggestively,” and the third for a “composition that makes clear the underlying thought clearly and concisely along with preserving a poetic style.”\(^\text{80}\) All these views focus on the verbal composition (σύνθεσις), which is presented as the main task of a poet. The thought (διάνοια) is indeed there but its role is secondary; it is necessary only in the sense that poetry, qua poetry, must express something.

A particular case is represented by Crates, quoted by Philodemus among the κριτικοί and considered the rival of Aristarchus in Homeric criticism. The assessment of the real nature of this opposition is still under debate. If, on the one hand, it is undeniable that Crates was in many respects pursuing a different kind of scholarship, more interested in the philosophical aspects of the text and in its allegorical meaning (especially in the light of Stoic cosmology), on the other hand the methodology he uses (etymology, attention to Homeric style, grammatical analysis, and even analogy) is largely shared

\(^{74}\) On the κριτικοί, see Porter 1995.

\(^{75}\) Cf. also Asmis 1992a, 142.

\(^{76}\) On Heracleodorus, see Janko 2000, 155–65.

\(^{77}\) Janko 2000, 162, frag. 29.

\(^{78}\) Janko 2000, 161, frag. 22.

\(^{79}\) On Pausimachus, see Janko 2000, 165–89.

\(^{80}\) Asmis (1992b, 397–99) thinks that the first opinion is Crates’ (on Crates, see below).
with the Alexandrians. Yet the similarity of methods used by these two schools highlights better their fundamentally different approaches to the topic, for there are frequent cases where Crates and Aristarchus use the same procedure (etymological analysis or even analogy) to reach opposite results. 81 This fundamental difference between Aristarchus (a γραμματικός, dealing mostly if not only with the text) and Crates (a κριτικός, with a pronounced “philosophical” approach to Homer) was already recognized by Crates himself, who proudly maintained that he was able to “judge” a poem, unlike the grammarians concerned only with the limited analysis of words, syntax, and questions of authenticity (Sext. Emp. Math. 1.79):

καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος [i.e., Κράτης] ἔλεγε διαφέρειν τὸν κριτικὸν τοῦ γραμματικοῦ, καὶ τὸν μὲν κριτικὸν πάσης, φησί, δὲι λογικής ἐπιστήμης ἐξειπορεύνεται, τὸν δὲ γραμματικὸν ἀπλῶς γλωσσῶν ἐξηγητικὸν καὶ προσωπικῶν ἀποδοτικὸν καὶ τὸν τούτος παραπληκτικὸν εἰδήμονα· παρὸ καὶ έλεικνὲν εκεῖνον μὲν ἄρχιτεκτονι, τὸν δὲ γραμματικὸν ὑπηρέτῃ.

[Crates] said that the “critic” was better than the grammarian and that while the critic was experienced in all of logical science, the grammarian was simply an interpreter of rare words (γλώσσαι), establisher of accents, and knower of things like these; hence the critic was like an architect and the grammarian like his servant. (Trans. Blank 1998) 82

Further evidence of non-Aristotelian elements in Crates comes from Philodemus, On Poems, Book 5, cols. 24.25–29.18 Mangoni = frag. 101 Broggiato, where Philodemus dwells on Crates’ view, and in particular from the following excerpts:

τὸδ’ ἐξέρχομαι ἐτέρει ἔτερε, τὸ μ[ή] μπαθῶν εἶναι τὴν διάλογον ἐπαινεῖν, ἀτέλειν γε δὴ τοῦ τοιοῦτον ἕντος. (Col. 27.3–7 Mangoni)

For he also said that it is not plausible to praise the thought, since this sort of thing is non-technical. (Trans. Asmis 1992a, 151)

διὰ τὸ ἡ φάσκειν δι[α][η][ν][ν][ω][σκεσθαι] τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν ἐν ἑν τοῖς ποιήμασι[μ][ι][μ][ι][μ][ι] φυσικὴν διαφορὰν τῇ[ν] [ά][κ][β][δ][ε][ε]. (Col. 27.17–21 Mangoni)

Because he claims that the natural difference that exists in poems is discerned by the hearing. (Trans. Asmis 1992a, 153)

καὶ τόδε Ἰ[μ][η][τ][ε][τ][ς][η][ς][ε][π][ί][τ][ε][ρ][ν] μητε τὴν διάλογον δέιν τοίνυν τὸ[ν][ν][ποϊ][μ][α][τ][ό][ν][ν][α][λ][λ][α] τὸ λογικὰ θεωρήματα τὸ φάσκει ὑπάρχοντα δ’ αἰσθήσεως κρῖναιν, καὶ οὕτω ἀνέμετε τῶν [νοο[μ][έ][ν][ο][ν] ὑπὲρ τοῦ νοούμενου . . . (Col. 28.19–29 Mangoni)

As to the claim that one must judge neither what is delightful to perception nor the thought of poems, but [one must] judge through perception the rational theorems that exist by nature, not without thoughts—not, however, the thoughts, . . . (Trans. Asmis 1992a, 155)

From these fragments, a major point in Crates’ literary views emerges clearly. 83 As for the κριτικοὶ, for Crates too hearing alone can judge whether a poem is good or not. However, for Crates the judgment of euphony is not

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81. On Crates and Stoicism, cf. Broggiato 2001, xxxi–xxxiii, lii, lvii–lvi, lx–lxii, lxiv–lxv; and Asmis 1992a, 139–40, 156–57, 161.
82. Cf. Blank 1998, 140–41; see also Broggiato 2001, 249–50 (on frag. 94).
83. See also Janko 2000, 122–23, esp. V 7, V 8, V 11.
subjective, but happens on the basis of objective criteria that are recognized by the hearing. Also, whereas Heracleodorus and Pausimachus did not take the content into consideration at all, Crates allows for it, in the sense that content is embedded in poetry. However content (διάνοια, τὰ νοοῦμενα) is not the object of judgment. \(^{84}\) For διάνοια is a nontechnical (ἀτεχνον) part of poetry. \(^{85}\)

In sum, the constant and sole focus on σύνθεσις and εὖφωνία \(^{86}\) as the only criteria to judge poetry, on the one hand, and the firm point that content and argument are outside the art, on the other, mark all these views as not Aristotelian \(^{87}\) and also not Aristarchean. As we have seen, Aristarchus very often opposes (or couples) form (σύνθεσις or κατασκευή) and thought (διάνοια or νόμα), as if they were the constitutive and polar parts of poetry, especially when giving reasons for an athetesis. If one decides on a line on the basis of the form or the thought-element (or both), obviously he considers these two elements as fundamental (and also technical) parts of the poetry, as did Aristotle. This is exactly what Crates and the κριτικοί were arguing against.

It is moreover interesting to note that the vocabulary adopted by the κριτικοί and Crates is identical to that we find in Aristonicus’ scholia, with terms like διάνοια, νοήματα, and σύνθεσις. \(^{88}\) This means that we are dealing with technical terminology that indeed started first with the Peripatos and was fully developed during Hellenistic times and still used in the first century B.C.E. However, within this common terminology, the principles are radically different: for the critics and Crates, διάνοια is not part of poetry, and sound alone (either as verbal composition, σύνθεσις, or as pure euphony) is the sole criterion by which to judge poetry. For Aristotle and Aristarchus the thought (διάνοια)—but we could speak more generally of content, including thus also the μῦθος and the ἥθη—is at the core of poetry.

7.2 Zeno’s List: Theories on Diction (σύνθεσις)

There is, however, more. In the list of Zeno, a second group of critics maintains that (Book 5, col. 30.6–10 Mangoni) the main point of a poem is a σύνθεσις λέξεως ἑναργώς καὶ ἐμφατικῶς τῇ ὑποτεταμένῃ διάνοιᾳ σημαίνουσα (“a composition expressing the underlying thought vividly [ἑναργώς] and suggestively [ἐμφατικῶς].” \(^{89}\) In rhetorical handbooks, ἑνάργεια and

\(^{84}\) Cf. Asmis 1992a, 160: “Crates does not take the extremely radical position that what makes a poem good is simply the sound, considered apart from any meaning. . . . His point, which is radical enough, is that what makes a poem good is the sound in relation to the meaning, regardless of what the meaning is.”

\(^{85}\) Cf. Porter 1995, 93–99.

\(^{86}\) The theory of euphony stemmed from Pythagoras and the atomists and then was developed by the Stoics. Aristotle and the Alexandrians, however, rejected it; see Janko 2000, 173–82, 189.

\(^{87}\) Similar views are argued by Arrighetti (2001, 138–46).

\(^{88}\) For a full list of this technical terminology, overlapping with the Aristotelian one, see Mangoni 1993, 79–103.

\(^{89}\) On this opinion, see Asmis 1992b, 401–3. Ἐμφατικῶς is translated here with “suggestively,” because ἐμφάσις in ancient literary criticisms does not correspond to the modern “emphasis,” but is a technical term that indicates the ability that a poet has to express something that is not clearly stated, as Asmis (1992b, 402) explains: “There is no good English equivalent; ‘suggestive’ comes close in meaning. Although the term can mean ‘expressive’ and this sense can slide off into ‘forceful,’ it is misleading to translate ἐμφατικῶς as ‘emphatic’ or ‘forceful,’ as it is often done.” I have thus preferred to leave the Greek term ἐμφάσις instead of translating it into “suggestion,” which may be equally confusing.
ειμφασις are considered among the best qualities of style;α this is in contrast with Aristotle, who maintains that the major virtue of style (both in prose and in poetry) is σαφηνεια.β We have seen that Aristarchus most highly praises σαφηνεια while also esteeming συντομια.γ True, Aristarchus pays some attention to Homer’s ability to achieve αυξησις and ειμφασις,δ but this is something that Aristotle as well admires in Homer (Rh. 1413b32–1414a7):

ο γαρ συνδεσιμος εν ποιει τα πολλα, οτιε ενε εξαιρεθη, δηλων οτι τουαντον ισται το εν πολλα, εξει ουν αυξησιν . . . τουτο δε δειλεται ποιειν κα ομηρος εν το “Νιρεις αυ Συμηθην,” “Νιρεις Αγλαιος,” “Νιρεις ος καλλιστος,” περι ου γαρ πολλα λεγεται, αναγκη και πολλας ειρηθαι ει ουν [και] πολλας, και πολλα δοκει, οτιε ηυξηκεν, ηπας μνησεις, δια τον παραλογισμον, και μηνην πεποηκεν, ονδαιμοι υστερον αυτου λογον ποιειμανοι.

Just as the use of conjunctions makes many statements into a single one, so the omission of conjunctions acts in the reverse way and makes a single one into many. It thus makes everything more important. . . . This is the effect which Homer seeks when he writes “Nireus likewise from Syme, Nireus the son of Aglaia, Nireus, the comeliest man.” If many things are said about a man, his name must be mentioned many times; and therefore people think that, if his name is mentioned many times, many things have been said about him. So that Homer, by means of this illusion, has made a great deal of Nireus, though he has mentioned him only in this one passage, and he has preserved his memory, though he nowhere says a word about him afterwards. (Trans. Roberts 1984)

It is interesting to note that the criterion of the εναργεια seems to be absent from the scholia by Aristonicus.α Moreover, the fact that those critics praised only the “excessive” qualities leading to amplification and ειμφασις and did not pay any attention to clarity separates them from Aristotle and Aristarchus.γ The third opinion, instead, demands only clarity and conciseness (Book 5, col. 31.7–8b Mangoni: συνδεσις σαφος και συντομος την υποτεσσερινη διανοιαν διασφαλισσω); this too is not in line with Aristarchus, who recognized that Homer had a particular poetic manner of expression, for example with glossai, metaphors, and other figures of speech.

90. Cf. Dion. Hal. Lys. 7 (εναργεια); Quint. Inst. 6.2.32 and 8.3.61 (εναργεια), 8.3.83 and 9.2.3 (ειμφασις); Rhet. Her. 4.67 (significatio = ειμφασις), 4.68 (demonstratio = εναργεια).

91. On Aristotle’s virtues of diction, see Ax (1993, esp. 27–31), who outlines the virtues of diction among Peripatetics and Stoics as follows: for Aristotle they are σαφες, ελληνιζειν, πρεσον; for Theophrastus: Έλληνιζειν, σαφεια, πρεσον, κατασκευα; and for the Stoics: Έλληνιζειν, σαφεια, συντομια, πρεσον, κατασκευα (see Diog. Laert. 7.59).

92. Cf. schol. Il. 1.110a, 3.352a, 8.108a, 8.528.

93. Cf. schol. Il. 2.299b, 6.169a, 8.108a, 9.44a, 15.470a, 15.622, 16.161a, 17.172, 23.16a, 24.6–9a1, 24.205b; cf. also Didymus in schol. Il. 19.386a. In another instance (schol. Il. 9.14b) Aristarchus was arguing that lines 15–16 of Book 9 of the Iliad, where Agamemnon is weeping “like a fountain of dark water that pours down murky water from a steep cliff” and that Zenodotus rejected, were instead θαναγκαια δ . . . εις αυξησιν, i.e., for the amplification of the tragic character of the moment.

94. Out of forty-nine occurrences in the Iliad and Odyssey scholia of the words εναργεια, εναργης, and εναργητας, none goes back to Aristarchus. See also Zanker (1981, 307–8), who maintains that εναργεια is never used by Aristarchus, but that he uses εναργητας in Poet. 1455a24 and so does Theophrastus. However, this is an Epicurean concept (ibid., 309–10).

95. According to Asmis (1992b, 405–6), the recognition that ειμφασις is the most important constituent of poetry leads to the adoption by Hellenistic scholars of allegorical reading, a way of reading poetry that was totally rejected by Aristarchus.
7.3 Zeno’s List: Theories on Thought (διάνοια), Imitation (μίμησις), and More

Of course, other Hellenistic theorists gave great importance to the thought of poetry. For example, the διάνοια is central to the fourth, fifth, and sixth theories listed by Philodemus (himself a great supporter of the importance of the thought versus sound) in Book 5 of On Poems.\(^6\) Some (col. 31.33–34 Mangoni) demanded wise thought (σοφή διάνοια) and some (col. 32.3 Mangoni) useful thought (ὁφέλιμος διάνοια). All these definitions are equally extraneous to Aristarchus, who never defines Homeric poetry as “useful” or remarks on the σοφία of the poet. This can be seen in conjunction with the idea that Homer does not aim at διάσκαλία but at ψυχαγωγία, a statement ascribed to Eratosthenes, who maintained that in Homer one should not look for any technical knowledge, geography in primis.\(^7\) This idea was shared by Aristarchus as well, and many are the scholia where, commenting on Homeric geography, Aristarchus claims that we do not have to seek for accuracy, or a true depiction of the cosmos.\(^8\)

Then (col. 33.1–3 Mangoni) Philodemus mentions the opinion of those who call for a composition able to teach “something more” (σύνθεσιν λέξεων προσδιάσκαλουσάν τι περίπτώσεων διά ποιήματος). This statement is very interesting when compared with Aristarchean evidence, and not only because again it calls for a didactic aim in poetry. More importantly, περίσσος and its derivatives are some of the most typical expressions to be found in the scholia of Aristonicus, but they are always used in a negative sense, meaning “superfluous.” Everything that is περίσσος is rejected in Homer. Often this criterion is the deciding ground for an athetesis.\(^9\) This is a very interesting point because the negative sense for περίσσος (in itself a vox media, signifying “extraordinary” but also “superfluous,” “useless”) is shared with

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\(^6\) See Asmis 1992b, 406–8.

\(^7\) Strabo 1.1.10.31–35: οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂληθῆς ἥστατον, δὴ φησιν Ἔρατοσθένης, ὅτι ποιητὴς πᾶς στοιχάζεται ψυχαγωγίας, οὐ διάσκαλίας· τάναυτα γὰρ οἱ φρονιμωται τοι ἐπὶ ποιητικής τι φυγαμεύμαι. πρὸς τινὰ λέγουσιν ψυχοσοφίαν τῆς ποιητικῆς (“For Eratosthenes is wrong in his contention that the aim of every poet is to entertain, not to instruct; indeed the wisest of the writers on poetry say, on the contrary, that poetry is a kind of elementary philosophy,” trans. Jones 1969). And also Strabo 1.2.3, in particular 1.2.3.37–42: ο δ’ ἐπήγγεξεν ὅτι ψυχαγωγίας μόνον, διάσκαλίας δ’ οὐ. καὶ προσεξεργάζεται γε, πνευματικὸς τι συμβάλλεται πρὸς ἀρετὴν ποιητοῦ πολλῶν ὑπάρχῃ τῶν ἐμπειρων ἡ στρατηγίας ἡ γεωργίας ἡ ῥήτορικής ἡ οἰα ἢ περιπέπευν αὐτῶ τινες ἐξουλιθήσαν; (‘but his [of Eratosthenes] words were ’mere entertainment and not instruction.’ And Eratosthenes gives himself quite unnecessary pains when he asks how it contributes to the excellence of the poet for him to be an expert in geography, or in generalship, or in agriculture, or in rhetoric, or in any kind of special knowledge with which some people have wished to ’invest’ him,” trans. Jones 1969).

\(^8\) Cf., for example, Aristarchus’ criticism of those (like Crates; cf. Strabo 3.4.4.1–15 (= frag. 75 Broggio) who interpreted the voyages of Odysseus as a true geographical decription of the οἰκουμένη (schol. P Q Od. 5.55: πρὸς τά περί τῆς πλανῆς, ὅτι ποῦρο ποῦ ἐν ἐκτεκτοποιμένων τόποσι διάφοροι λόγοι . . . , schol. BQT Od. 10.189: ἐκ τούτων δὲ ἐκτεκτοποιμένη φαίνεται ἡ πλανῆ τοῦ ὀδοσώσεως). Cf. Lehrs 1882, 241–46; Buonaguro 1996. The link between ψυχαγωγία and poetry is present in Aristotle too (Poet. 1450a33–35): πρὸς δὲ τούτοις τὰ μέγιστα οἷς ψυχαγωγεῖ ἡ τραγῳδία τοῦ μισθοῦ μέρη ἐστὶν, αἱ τε περιπέτειαι καὶ ἀναγνωρίσεις (“In addition, the most important things with which a tragedy enthralls [us] are parts of plot—reversals and recognitions,” trans. Janko 1987). Here however the point is not so much about the goals of poetry but rather about the means by which the ψυχαγωγία is achieved. Hence, the parallel between Aristotle and the two Alexandrians is not so close.

\(^9\) On this topic, see Lührs 1992.
Aristotle. The philosopher, especially in his works on biology, sees nature as purposive (i.e., with a τέλος) and not doing anything in vain, περιττόν. The same is, according to Aristarchus, the φύσις of Homer. Instead, these theorists quoted by Philodemus demand a poet who teaches us something περιττότερον, where the adjective is obviously used in a positive meaning, incompatible with the meaning that this key concept has for Aristarchus throughout our sources.

The seventh view in Zeno’s list calls for the mimesis of other poets. This is one of the bases of Roman literature, and we have no earlier evidence for it apart from this hint in Philodemus. To present Homer as a model that must be imitated can indeed be seen as a development of Aristotle’s view of Homer as a master of the craft and of Aristarchus’ distinction between Homer and the later poets (οἱ νεώτεροι). However, the exceptionality of Homer compared to all other poets is so deep according to Aristarchus that a mimesis is virtually impossible: the νεώτεροι can only try to imitate “the poet” but their results are so openly inferior that Aristarchus cannot but notice their bad outcome. In the Aristarchean scholia the νεώτεροί’s attempts to imitate Homer are often commented on with remarks like ἐπλανήθη/ἐπλανήθησαν, “he was/they were misled,” that is, he/they missed the point, he/they got it wrong.

The other opinions (8–13) are extremely generic, and therefore they cannot be referred back to any particular school. The opinions, which judge poetry according to whether it has a λέξις πρέπουσα τοῖς ἐξαγομένοις προσώποις (eighth opinion), or on the basis of its effects on the audience (ninth and tenth opinions), of its beauty (eleventh opinion), of its goodness (twelfth opinion), or of πρέπον (thirteenth opinion) are not comprehensive theories of the τέχνη ποιητική, as are those of Aristotle and of Aristarchus. For those about whom we know more, however, the κριτικοὶ and Crates, the points of discrepancy are so many that the affinity between Aristarchus and Aristotle becomes even more evident.

7.4 The Peripatetics: Neoptolemus of Parium, Heraclides of Pontus, Andromenides, and Megaclides of Athens

Among Hellenistic scholars dealing with poetry, Neoptolemus of Parium shows an interesting overlap with the views we have found in Aristotle and Aristarchus. Neoptolemus was a Peripatetic living in the third century B.C.E., whose work is entirely lost and can be recovered mainly (again) through Philodemus On Poems 5 (cols. 13.32–16.28 Mangoni). As is well known, Neoptolemus divided the art of poetry into three parts: the poet

100. See von Staden 1997.
101. See Asmis 1992b, 408–10.
102. Cf. schol. Il. 2.659, 4.439–40, 14.500, 15.119. On the neoteroi, cf. Severyns 1928. For an example, see Aristarchus’ criticism of Antimachus in Schironi 1999.
103. See Asmis 1992b, 410–14.
104. This is from Andromenides (see p. 312 below); cf. Janko 2000, 147, F 8.
105. Cf. Asmis 1992c.
106. Cf. Brink (1963, 145–49), who calls Neoptolemus’ approach a “revised Aristotelianism”; and Janko 2000, 152. The fragments of Neoptolemus are collected by Mette (1980).
(ποητής), the poem (ποίημα), and poesy (ποίησις). The second and third parts correspond to form (σύνθεσις or ποίημα) and content (υπόθεσις or ποίησις). This opposition σύνθεσις/υπόθεσις as outlined by Neoptolemus (he himself seems to have used these terms together with ποίημα and ποίησις) is stated in Book 5 (col. 14.26–28 Mangoni):

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θ[α]μα[στό]ν δ' αύλοι καὶ [τῷ] τῆ[ς] ποίη[σις] ἑτερο ἤν υπόθεσιν μιᾷν [. . .] (col. 15.1–3 Mangoni) καὶ τὸ ποιήματος μο[ῖ]νον τῆ[ν] [σύνθεσιν τῆς] λέξεως μπ[ετέχειν . . .
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It is astonishing of him to claim that only theme belongs to poiesis . . . Also, it is astonishing] that only verbal composition [participates] in a “poem.” . . . (Trans. Asmis 1992c, 210)

The technical terminology is the usual one; however, a link between Neoptolemus and the Alexandrians can be seen in the opposition between form and content as expressed with σύνθεσις/υπόθεσις. We have already mentioned the vast usage of the term σύνθεσις to indicate “composition,” “style,” among the Alexandrians. This terminology is actually missing in Aristotle who, as was observed, used instead λέξεις to indicate “form” and “style.” It seems as if the usage of σύνθεσις for “form” (in opposition, even from a morphological point of view, to υπόθεσις for the “content”) is a later development, which might have been due to Neoptolemus himself.

This Peripatetic scholar, like Aristotle and Demetrius of Phalerum before him, was known at Alexandria and exercised some sort of influence among the γραμματικοί there. While in the scholia derived from Aristarchus there seems to be no trace of the opposition σύνθεσις/υπόθεσις as formulated by Neoptolemus, the use of the word υπόθεσις to indicate the “content” of a literary work comes from Aristophanes of Byzantium, who used the term to refer to the summaries of the “content” of the dramas. However, apart from this idea of poetry as based on form and content, the tripartite division of poetry as devised by Neoptolemus is absent in Aristarchus as well as in Aristotle. Also different is the idea that the poets, according to Neoptolemus, should both delight and benefit, a criterion that seems closer to Plato than to Aristotle. The importance of διδασκαλία as the goal of poetry had already been advocated by Heraclides of Pontus (fourth century B.C.E.), a pupil of Plato and Aristotle, who, besides writing “grammatical” treatises on Homer and other poets in the best Aristotelian tradition, maintained, more in line with the euphonistic school, that ἐμμέλεια, “musicality” and λαυρότης, “sonority,” were primary virtues for poets.

Andromenides (third century B.C.E.?) is perhaps the closest to Aristotle and Aristarchus. His case, like that of Heraclides, is interesting evidence of how the Hellenistic critics were influenced by many different doctrines.

107. See Schironi, in Bottai and Schironi 1997, 1058–62.
108. He was quoted by Aristophanes of Byzantium in his glossographical works. This, however, does not mean that Neoptolemus was indeed working at Alexandria, a hypothesis supported by Mette (1935, esp. 2467). For a more cautious view on the relationship between Neoptolemus and the Alexandrian scholars, see Brink 1963, 135–50.
109. See Asmis 1992c, where she tries to find other traces of this theory in rhetorical treatises.
110. See Asmis 1992c, 218.
111. On Heraclides, see Janko 2000, 134–38.
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Philodemus in Book 1 quotes him among the κριτικοῖ;\textsuperscript{112} however, he has many views in common with Neoptolemus of Parium. Like Neoptolemus and the Peripatetic tradition, he collected glosses. Moreover, he seems to follow the same division of poetics into poet (ποιητής), poem (ποίημα), and poesy (ποίησις). He is more Aristotelian than Neoptolemus, however, when he maintains that poetry aims to please (and not to impart truth like prose) and when he holds the view that each genre has its own subject matter and appropriate style (τὸ πρέπον) and that each character has a distinctive diction. On the other hand, Andromenides, like Crates, maintained that the ear was the ultimate judge of poetry (and this is why he is considered a κριτικός by Philodemus), and also that diction and word choice (ἐκλογή) were paramount. This emphasis on phonetic beauty, not so prominent in Aristotle, is at the core of Theophrastus’ theory of style\textsuperscript{113} and can be seen as a later development of the Peripatetic school.

The case of Megaclides (early third century B.C.E.) is similar; he, while quoted by Philodemus in Book 1 among the κριτικοῖ, is defined as a Peripatetic in other sources.\textsuperscript{114} His work on Homer (he wrote a περὶ Ὅμηρου) and on his language (he believed that Homeric dialect was Attic, like Aristarchus) is purely in line with Alexandrian interests. Moreover, his distinction, especially in terms of mythological tradition, between Homer and Hesiod, on the one hand, and post-Homeric and post-Hesiodic poets, on the other, makes him an Aristotelian with ideas very close to those of Aristarchus. However, he was listed by Crates among the advocates of the ear (and not the intellect) as the best judge for poetry. And even if his precise poetical theories are still under debate, due to the fragmentary state of the evidence from On Poems 1, he seems to be close to Heraclides of Pontus and Andromenides, as Janko has concluded.\textsuperscript{115} The euphonistic approach to literature shared by all these Peripatetic scholars makes them pupils more of Theophrastus, with his theory of style and of word choice (ἐκλογή), than of Aristotle, with his content-based approach to texts.

Conclusion

As I hope to have shown, Aristarchus seems to have been aware of Aristotelian reflections on poetry. In his work on Homer, he uses Aristotelian categories and critical concepts. This is particularly evident when Aristarchus has to deal with atheteses or argues against Zenodotus’ readings. Interesting similarities between Aristotle and Aristarchus are to be found in the handling of the plot (it can contain “impossible elements,” but they must be “according to necessity or probability”), of the characters (they are of necessity “serious” and their behavior must be according to what is considered “proper”), of the thought-element (epos is a serious genre, hence all the comic elements must

\textsuperscript{112} On Andromenides, see Janko 2000, 143–54.
\textsuperscript{113} Cf. Dion. Hal. Isoc. 3.1; and Ardizzoni 1953, 70–72.
\textsuperscript{114} Frag. 2 Janko. On Megaclides, see Janko 2000, 138–43.
\textsuperscript{115} Cf. Janko 2000, 143.
be avoided) and of style (which must be clear, but also poetic, i.e. rich in glosses and metaphors).

The affinity between Aristotle and Aristarchus is further proved by a comparison with other Hellenistic views on poetry. Here, while the technical vocabulary is almost identical, the views held by Crates or the other Hellenistic κριτικοί are opposite or, at best, far in spirit from what was expressed by Aristotle. In particular, their continuous focus on the sound-element and euphony against content are in striking opposition to Aristotle’s theory and Aristarchus’ practice.\textsuperscript{116}

There is, however, a fundamental distinction between Aristotle and Aristarchus: whereas the philosopher theorizes these principles, the philologist applies them. In this, Aristarchus is different from colleagues like Crates and the κριτικοί as well. The latter had an “active” philosophical background; they claimed to be critics because they aimed to give prescriptive views on how one should write a poem. Aristarchus does not claim anything like that, but tries to make a better text of Homer by editing and commenting on it. In this sense, Aristarchus (and his Alexandrian predecessors) are different from all the other scholars who were taken into account, who like Crates (and, in this view, Aristotle too) wanted to develop theories out of the study of Homer. For Aristarchus, Aristotelian philosophy, like grammatical categories, is, instead, just a tool to use in his job: working on texts, preparing editions and writing commentaries. The contrast could not be greater: on the one hand, literary critics like Crates and the other κριτικοί, having a particular agenda, or, as in the case of Crates, influenced by Hellenistic philosophy, versus grammarians like Aristarchus, on the other. The latter had a “scientific approach” to the text, looking at the bare data on the basis of a very clear account: that of Aristotle, the founder of scientific inquiry.

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\textsuperscript{116} I am not arguing that Aristotelian concepts are present only in Aristarchean scholia. As Richardson (1980) has demonstrated, they are abundantly present in the exegetical scholia. For example, in schol. QV Od. 23.310–43 (ο ακαλός ήθετριεν Αρίσταρχος τοις τρεῖς καὶ τριάκοντα ἕρτορικήν γάρ πεποίηκεν ἀνακεφαλαίωσιν καὶ ἔπιτομήν τῆς Ὀδυσσείας), the scholiast argues against Aristarchus for his atheesis of Od. 23.310–43 with arguments that recall Arist., Rh. 1417a12–15 (ἐτι πεπραγμένα δεὶ λέγειν ὅσα μὴ πραττόμενα ἢ οίκτον ἢ δείκνουν φέρει· παράδειγμα ὁ Ἀλκείνου ἀπολογος, ὡς πρὸς τὴν Πηνελόπην ἐν ἐξήκοντα ἐπεσοφικόται), where the philosopher praises the story Odysseus tells Penelope as a good way of narrating a story cutting off all the most terrifying details. However, my claim here is that, even if we find more Aristotelian concepts in the exegetical scholia (which are a product of later scholarship), we do find Aristotelian concepts even in Aristarchus, and in opposition to the other Hellenistic theorists.
## Appendix

### Aristotle and Aristarchus on the Four Parts of Epic Poetry

|        | Aristotle                                                                 | Aristarchus                                                                 |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Μύθος  | plot must be κατά τὸ εἰκός ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον                              | poetic licence for τὸ θαυμαστόν → but πιθανότης is necessary               |
|        | ἀδύνατα are allowed in poetry for the sake of τὸ θαυμαστόν             | lines πιθανοὶ → to be kept                                                  |
|        | ἀδύνατα εἰκότα preferable to δυνατά ἀπίθανα                               | lines ἀπίθανοι → athetesis                                                  |
|        | κατά τὸ εἰκός = πιθανόν                                                | what is ἀσυμφορώνος or μάχεται with the rest is rejected                  |
|        | against internal inconsistencies (ὑπεναντία)                             |                                                                             |
| ᾿Ηθη   | characters must be κατὰ τὸ εἰκός ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον → they must behave and speak according to the criterion of appropriateness (τὸ πρέπον) | lines ἀπρεπεῖς, μὴ ἀρμόζοντες, οὐ πρέποντες, ἀνάφροστοι, παρὰ τὸ πρόσωπον, ἀνοίκειοι with reference to the characters → athetesis |
|        | character differences include age, sex, nationality, etc.                 | behavior codes for heroes, women, old and young people, Greeks, and barbarians, et al. |
| Διάνοια | thought-element → in tragedy and epic                                    | lines γέλοιοι, εὔτελείς τῇ διανοίᾳ → athetesis                           |
|        | it is serious and not ridiculous (φαύλος, γελοῖος, εὐτελῆς)              |                                                                             |
| Λέξεις  | poetic diction must be clear and not commonplace                         |                                                                             |
|        | σαφήνεια is achieved through the use of κύρια ὄνοματα                   | σαφήνεια and κυρίως usages in Homer                                       |
|        | τὸ πάρα τὸ κύριον to avoid commonplace                                  | οὐ κυρίως usages in Homer                                                  |
|        | *Rhetoric:* language must not be “poetical” in prose                    | language must not be prosaic in poetry                                      |
|        | *Rhetoric:* against ἐπίθετα ἄκαρα                                       | ἐπίθετα ἄκαρα → athetesis                                                  |
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