

THE TEXT OF *ILIAD* 18.603–6 AND THE PRESENCE OF AN *ΑΟΙΔΟΣ* ON THE SHIELD OF ACHILLES

πολλὸς δ' ἡμερόεντα χορὸν περίσταθ' ὄμιλος
τερπόμενοι· δοιὼ δὲ κυβιστητῆρε κατ' αὐτοὺς
μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες ἐδίνεον κατὰ μέσσοις.

This is the text of *Il.* 18.603–6, the final scene on the Shield of Achilles, as presented unanimously by our manuscript tradition, five Vulgate papyri from the first to the sixth century A.D., our scholia, and in a quotation in Dionysius of Halicarnassus.¹ As is well-known, a much discussed and contentious textual problem raised by Wolf² is lurking behind it. It is prompted by a passage in Athenaeus providing an additional line after *τερπόμενοι* which mentions an *αοιδός* and his *φόρμιγξ*: *μετὰ δέ σφιν ἐμέλπετο θεῖος αοιδὸς/φορμιζών*. Discussions of the controversial *Iliad* passage have concentrated on the authenticity of the information given by Athenaeus.³ This focus, I suggest, has been unduly narrow, and has led either to a neglect of other pieces of evidence or to a wrong assessment of their importance. I therefore propose to tackle the problem with a different strategy. Let us erase from our memories the very existence of Athenaeus' information for a while, and reconsider the passage in question accordingly.

I

Of the three scenes on the Shield which involve dancing, lines 590–606 contain the most elaborate one. It is devoted entirely to dance, and is singled out both for its sheer length and the detailed description of the dance floor, the dance participants, and their movements. But there is a remarkable lack of sound. It would perhaps be an exaggeration to call the scene mute, since *μολπῆς* in line 606 means 'dance accompanied by song'. But apart from this blunt and colourless noun there is nothing whatsoever to animate the scene by means of noise. This is surprising. Wherever else there is dance on the Shield, there is much more explicit mention of music and/or song. During the wedding in the city at peace (491–6) there feature boy dancers (*κοῦροι ὀρχηστήρες*) being accompanied by *αὔλοί* and *φόρμιγγες* with a

¹ See M. J. Apthorp, *The Manuscript Evidence for Interpolation in Homer* (Heidelberg, 1980), p. 160; cf. also Apthorp, 'New evidence from the Syriac Palimpsest on the *Numerus Versuum* of the *Iliad*', *ZPE* 110 (1996), 103–14, esp. 110f. on another papyrus (sixth century A.D.) which probably had this text, too.

² F. A. Wolf, *Prolegomena ad Homerum* (Halle, 1795), ch. 49, n. 49.

³ To the discussions quoted by H. Erbse, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem* vol. IV (Berlin, 1975), p. 569 in the apparatus add Zs. Ritoók, 'Anmerkungen zu Homer', *Acta Antiqua* 19 (1971), 201–15, esp. 201–7; O. Andersen, 'Some thoughts on the Shield of Achilles', *SO* 51 (1976), 5–18, esp. 16; O. Taplin, 'The Shield of Achilles within the *Iliad*', *G&R* 27 (1980), 1–21, esp. p. 9, n. 27 (aptly remarking: 'The case for the line must stand or fall without Athenaeus'); Apthorp (n. 1), 160–5; H. van Thiel, *Iliaden und Ilias* (Basel/Stuttgart, 1982), p. 472; M. W. Edwards's note on 604–6 in the *Iliad* commentary (Cambridge, 1991); K. Stanley, *The Shield of Homer. Narrative Structure in the Iliad* (Princeton, 1993), pp. 4 and 13; A. S. Becker, *A Rhetoric and Poetics of Early Greek Ecphrasis. Theory, Philology and the Shield of Achilles* (New York, 1995), p. 146.

crowd of women spectators watching. In the vintage scene (561–72) the group dance of young boys and girls is accompanied by a young boy playing the *φόρμιγξ* and singing.

The near-silence of the final scene becomes all the more startling considering the palpable effort spent by the poet throughout on animating his description by the indication of sounds and noise. Only two scenes lack any sound, the men ploughing the field (541–9) and the very brief description of a flock of sheep (587–9). Things are slightly different in the reaping scene: when the *βασιλεύς* inspects the reaping (550–60), the absence of noise, i.e. the silence of the *βασιλεύς*, is expressly stated as a hallmark of his approval, joy, and satisfaction (556f.). In all other scenes, noise is an important element of dramatization: the hubbub in the court scene (502), the unsuspecting shepherds playing their *σύριγγες* (526), the noise of them being attacked which calls the other army into action (530), and the various noises during the scene which describes the attack of lions on a herd of cows (575, 576, 580, 586). Why, then, should the poet abandon this strategy of dramatization through noise in a scene which most naturally calls for some? Silence can be effective, and the poet made use of it on the Shield (556f.) and elsewhere in the *Iliad*,⁴ but, surely, there is nothing to be gained from silence here.

Leaving the world of the Shield and surveying the instances of group dance in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, there is always either song or instrumental or rhythmical accompaniment to be found, and in each instance some effort is spent on specifying the sound, the accompanist, or the mode of accompaniment.⁵ A close connection between song and dance is drawn several times (*Od.* 1.151f., 421f., 18.304f.), and is not least evident in the use of *μέλπομαι* covering both.

In the pseudo-Hesiodic *Scutum* the dance-scenes accord with its general tendency to amplify the Homeric model and surpass it in grandeur: the divine *χορός* is accompanied by Apollo playing the *φόρμιγξ* (201–6), and in the wake of the wedding procession and dance *σύριγγες*, *φόρμιγγες*, and an *αὐλός* are employed (277–85). In the *Homeric Hymns*, too, descriptions of dance are lavishly equipped with music (3.189–206: Apollo plays the *φόρμιγξ*; 19.19–27: the nymphs and Pan sing hymns; 27.18–20: during their dance, led by Artemis, the *Μοῦσαι* and *Χάριτες* sing of Leto and her children). Only at the beginning of the *Theogony* is there no accompaniment or song during the Muses' dance (*Theogony.* 5–8). But immediately after, when the Muses leave Helicon, they sing of the gods all night long (*Theogony* 9–21), and this ensuing elaborate description may explain the previous lack of music.

It may be objected that in the passage in question Homer is describing a work of art on which the dancers were depicted without musical accompaniment. It is not a particularly strong counterargument, for it is a commonplace since Lessing that the poet constantly shifts between describing a work of art and narrating a story of his own. But it necessitates surveying the archaeological evidence. Are there depictions of unaccompanied dance in Greek art up to, say, 600 or on any of the Phoenician bowls by which the Homeric description may well have been influenced?

The Greek evidence is quite inconclusive. I have surveyed it as catalogued and

⁴ I. J. F. de Jong, 'Silent characters in the *Iliad*', in J. M. Bremer *et al.* (edd.), *Homer. Beyond Oral Poetry* (Amsterdam, 1987), pp. 105–21.

⁵ *Il.* 1.472–4, 24.719–75 (esp. 720–2); *Od.* 4.15–9 (*μολπήσ ἐξάρχοντες*), 8.261–4 and 370–80 (esp. 379f.), 23.143–7.

discussed in Wegner's still fundamental treatment of the subject.⁶ The more recent studies on related subjects listed in n. 6 do not mention relevant samples other than those of Wegner's catalogue. I therefore may have missed some, but I doubt that they are many, and I am confident that they would not alter the picture significantly. I note 101 relevant geometric and early archaic items as listed in Wegner's catalogue, almost exclusively from mainland Greece and mostly Attic, of which twenty-six are too fragmentary to permit an inference. Fifty-five, among them the earliest samples, are unaccompanied, many of which (twenty-three on my count) clearly feature dirges (*θρήνοι*), as is obvious from the participants' gestures. This is likely, though not certain, to account for the lack of musical accompaniment, as Wegner (U69) suggests.⁷ Yet, the majority of these items depict unaccompanied dance without an obvious sign of a dirge (I note thirty-two, e.g. Tölle no. 15 and pl. 5). On twenty vases there is musical accompaniment, usually a *φόρμιγξ*-player.⁸ Tumblers (Wegner nos 53, 99, and perhaps 51) and men clapping their hands (Wegner nos 99, 114, and 154, Tölle no. 26 and pl. 8) emphasize that the dance is festive and joyful. From about 700 onwards the *φόρμιγξ*-player is more and more replaced by the *αὐλός*-player, who is the standard accompanist by the sixth century.⁹

But the most interesting and important evidence is provided by the Phoenician bronze and silver bowls produced over a period from about 850 to about 625. Their iconography is so similar to that of the Homeric Shield that they are regularly invoked as a model or inspiration for the Homeric description.¹⁰ This sort of evidence is problematic: bowls are not shields. And the Phoenician bowls are chased work whereas the decorations of the Shield must be inlaid work.¹¹ Yet iconography, not everyday use or method of fabrication, is the salient point, and here the correspondences are so great and unique that it is difficult not to see a connection.

⁶ M. Wegner, *Musik und Tanz. Archaeologia Homerica* vol. III (Göttingen, 1968; catalogue finished in 1966), ch. U. Also R. Tölle, *Frühgriechische Reigentänze* (Waldsassen, 1964), pp. 54–73, esp. pp. 62–5; R. Crowhurst, *Representations of Performance of Choral Lyric on the Greek Monuments, 800–350 B.C.* (Ph.D. thesis, London, 1963), pp. 1–86, 226–38; T. B. L. Webster, *The Greek Chorus* (London, 1970), pp. 1–11; K. Fittschen, *Der Schild des Achilleus. Archaeologia Homerica* vol. II (Göttingen, 1973), ch. N, part 1; M. Maas and J. M. Snyder, *Stringed Instruments of Ancient Greece* (New Haven/London, 1989), pp. 2f. and 11f.; M. L. West, *Ancient Greek Music* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 328f.; S. H. Lonsdale, *Ritual Play in Greek Religion* (Baltimore, 1993); W. D. Anderson, *Music and Musicians in Ancient Greece* (Ithaca, 1994), pp. 20–6.

⁷ At a time when the *αὐλός* was not yet common (West [n. 6], pp. 81f.), dirges may have been mostly unaccompanied. Note that during the *θρήνος* for Hector (*Il.* 24.719–76) *ἀοιδοί* are present, but there is no mention of instruments (cf. also *Od.* 24.60f.). Nevertheless, there are a couple of late seventh-century items which show ritual lament with *αὐλός*-accompaniment (West [n. 6], p. 23). In the fifth century, the absence of the festive lyre is a commonplace in tragedy (*A. Ag.* 990f., *Eum.* 330–3; *S. O.C.* 1221f.; *E. I.T.* 145f., *Alc.* 447 (with Dale's note), *Phoen.* 1028, *Hel.* 185; cf. also Alexis *fr.* 167,6f. K.-A. [paratragic]). But expressions like *ἄλυρος* or similar are ambiguous, implying either *αὐλός*-accompaniment or lack of any instrument, and *Ar. Av.* 209–14 strongly suggests that by now dirges were commonly accompanied by the *αὐλός*.

⁸ The finest examples are Wegner no. 99 (pl. U VI a.b), 72 (Tölle [n. 6], pl. 18), 53 (pl. U VI d) and, above all, no. 156, an attic-geometric jug from Tübingen (pl. U1b and Tölle pll. 1 and 2), as well as an attic-geometric amphora (Tölle no. 26 and pl. 8). On both, young men and women are dancing.

⁹ E.g. Lonsdale (n. 6), figg. 4 and 25.

¹⁰ Most recently by Crielaard, 'Homer, history and archaeology', in J. P. Crielaard (ed.), *Homeric Questions* (Amsterdam, 1995), pp. 217–24 and M. L. West, 'The date of the *Iliad*', *MH* 52 (1995), 203–19, at 210.

¹¹ Both objections are raised by E. Simon, 'Der Schild des Achilleus', in G. Boehm and H. Pfotenhauer (edd.), *Beschreibungskunst-Kunstbeschreibung* (Munich, 1995), pp. 129f.

On these bowls a votive procession of women towards an enthroned goddess is a standard iconographic element and to be found, in one form or another, on twelve bowls. Three of these (Cy3, Cr 7, and G8 in Markoe's classification¹²) show dance, up to seven female dancers with their hands joined. On Cy 3 there are three female musicians (double-flute, lyre, and tambourine), on G8 four (three lyre-players and one tambourine-player). There are no musicians on the fragmentary bowl Cr 7, but more than half of the pictorial frieze is missing. Markoe assigns these bowls to his periods I and II, that is between 850 and 700, and I am inclined to put some emphasis on their testimony.

To sum up: as the text stands, the final group dance on the Shield of Achilles is not only unaccompanied but, apart from the mention of *μολπή*, even silent. The near-silence and the absence of any form of accompaniment are unparalleled on the Shield, in the Homeric epics as a whole, in Ps.-Hesiod, and in the *Homeric Hymns*. Of the geometric and early archaic vase-paintings in Wegner's catalogue which represent dance or group movement, slightly less than 30% do not permit an inference owing to their fragmentary state, whereas more than 50% clearly have no musical accompaniment. Many of these apparently depict *θρήνοι*, which may be why they lack accompaniment. The remaining 20% do show accompaniment—usually, but not exclusively, a *φόρμιγξ*-player. Some of these vases unambiguously show joyful dance. Interestingly, two of the three dance scenes on the Phoenician bronze and silver bowls have several musicians, and the third one is very fragmentary.

I conclude that the description of a festive *ἡμερόεις χορός* of young men and women on the Shield, the most elaborate scene of its kind in the Homeric epics, is incomplete without more noise and an explicit mention of instruments and/or instrumentalists. Thus, a *lacuna* of uncertain length is to be postulated. Mention ought to be made of at least a *φόρμιγξ*. Other instruments, such as the *αὐλός* or tambourines, could supplement it, especially in view of the elaborateness of the scene. The instrumentalist(s) could be singled out, and there could be an *αἰοιδός*. But it is important to realize that nothing renders either of these features necessary. Note that during the wedding scene only the instruments are mentioned (18.494f.). That these instruments are played by some people who are visible on the Shield goes without saying. The *lacuna* can be placed with equal plausibility either after *τερπόμενοι* or after the mention of the tumblers, namely:

603 πολλὸς δ' ἡμερόεντα χορὸν περίσταθ' ὄμιλος
604/5 τέρπομενοι.

*

δοῖω δὲ κυβιστητῆρε κατ' αὐτοὺς
606 μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες ἐδίνεον κατὰ μέσους.

or

603 πολλὸς δ' ἡμερόεντα χορὸν περίσταθ' ὄμιλος
604/5 τερπόμενοι· δοῖω δὲ κυβιστητῆρε κατ' αὐτοὺς
 μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες ἐδίνεον κατὰ μέσους.

*

607 'Εν δ' ἐτίθει κ.τ.λ.

¹² G. Markoe, *Phoenician Bronze and Silver Bowls from Cyprus and the Mediterranean* (Berkeley, 1985), esp. pp. 56–9 on iconography.

II

Is it possible to fill the gap? The non-Vulgate tradition provides two candidates.

(i) There is Allen's \P^{51} (P. Berolinensis 9774), as presented and discussed in S. West's fundamental treatment of the Ptolemaic papyri of the *Iliad*.¹³ This 'wild' papyrus of unknown provenance dates from the first century B.C. Its two remarkable features are the abundance of plus-verses and the extent to which critical signs are used (apparently lacking an overall system). In view of the influence which Aristarchus' work appears to have had on the standardization of the *numerus versuum*,¹⁴ the sheer number of plus-verses allows for the possibility that the papyrus, despite its late date, may represent a pre-Aristarchean tradition. But, surely, this point cannot be pressed.

There must have been an interpolation of some lines in its very poorly preserved first column, and there are four plus-verses (608a-d) condensing Ps.-Hes. *Sc.* 207-13. Further plus-verses must have occurred in the next column. In addition, the papyrus equips the dance scene with music, after the mention of the tumblers (606a as restored by S. West):

—ἐν δ' ἔσ[αν σ]ύριγγε[s, ἔσ]αυ κίθαρίς τ[ε] καὶ αὐλοί.

The number of instruments is not objectionable, nor is the use of the word κίθαρίς, which in Homer is the rarer term for the box-lyre usually called φόρμιγγξ.¹⁵ One would, however, expect a percussion instrument rather than the lowly panpipe in connection with αὐλός and box-lyre, and there seems to be an endeavour to supply as many manifold sounds as possible, similarly to Ps.-Hes. *Sc.* 277-85, in as little space as possible. The verse is not found elsewhere in the Homeric poems and therefore cannot be branded a concordance-interpolation. It is, however, strikingly similar to a previous passage of the *Shield*, 18.494f.: ἐν δ' ἄρα τοῖσιν / αὐλοὶ φόρμιγγές τε βοὴν ἔχον, and condenses the instrumental accompaniment of Ps.-Hes. *Sc.* 277-85. The form ἔσαν (ἔσσαν is unhomeric and would not suit the space available so well) is unmetrical. The use of ἐν is peculiar. Elsewhere on the *Shield* it introduces a new topic rather than concluding one, and the clash with the (introductory) ἐν in the very next line is odd. The overall impression is that the verse is awkwardly squeezed in to supplement what is felt to be lacking. The way in which the papyrus elsewhere indulges in what are unmistakably interpolations shatters its trustworthiness as a whole, and clinches the question of the authenticity of 606a.

Whoever, in the last resort, is responsible for the δβελός (—) in the margin of 606a apparently held the same opinion. For although the meaning and use of the critical signs in this papyrus is not entirely clear (and may not have been to the person who put them so liberally on this papyrus or its ancestor), it is most likely that the δβελός here, as usually, denotes athetesis. It appears that someone compared this papyrus or its ancestor with a Vulgate text, did not find this line or found it obelized, and put the critical sign in the margin. It is likely that this Vulgate text was already influenced by the authority of Aristarchus. This would gain strong support if our papyrus had two obeli before lines 597-8 which Aristarchus had athetized (Σ on *Il.* 18.597-8).

¹³ S. West, *The Ptolemaic Papyri of Homer* (Köln, 1967), pp. 132-6 and pl. 4. See also the important contribution by M. Haslam, 'Homeric papyri and transmission of the text', in I. Morris and B. Powell (edd.), *A New Companion to Homer* (Leiden, 1997), pp. 55-100, esp. pp. 64-9 with n. 20.

¹⁴ S. West in the introduction to vol. 1 of the *Odyssey* commentary (Oxford, 1988), pp. 47f., Apthorp (n. 1), pp. xiii-xix. A more sceptical account: Haslam (n. 13), pp. 84f.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. *Il.* 3.54, West (n. 6), p. 50 and S. West (n. 13) on *Od.* 1.153.

Unfortunately, the margins of these lines are not preserved in the papyrus.

In all, whereas this papyrus bears intriguing testimony to the sort of textual fluctuation which this passage in particular was exposed to (see III below), it can confidently be stated that it is not fit to fill the *lacuna*.

(ii) It is now time to recall the existence of Athenaeus' testimony (V p. 180c–d, 181a–d). Athenaeus—or his source, perhaps Diodorus of Tarsus (180e) or Seleucus (180c)—claims that the genuine text was

- 1 πολλὸς δ' ἡμερόεντα χορὸν περίσταθ' ὄμιλος
- 2 τερπόμενος [sic]· μετὰ δέ σφιν ἐμέλλετο θεῖος ἀοιδὸς
- 3 φορμίζων. δοῖά δέ κυβιστητῆρε κατ' αὐτοὺς
- 4 μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντος ἐδίνεον κατὰ μέσσους.

Aristarchus, according to Athenaeus, removed (ἐξείλεν) the section mentioning the ἀοιδός (i.e. from μετὰ to φορμίζων) and thus deprived himself of the chance to replace ἐξάρχοντες with ἐξάρχοντος (sc. τοῦ ἀοιδοῦ), which Athenaeus believes to be correct (180d: τὸ γὰρ ἐξάρχειν τῆς φόρμιγγος ἴδιον). At the same time, Aristarchus—wrongly, as Athenaeus thinks—inserted lines 2–4 into the description of the wedding at Menelaus' palace (= *Od.* 4.17–9, which, one is led to infer, were absent from earlier texts).

Thus Athenaeus provides another possibility for filling the gap, this time in the first of the two possible spots. In the wake of Wolf, several nineteenth-century editors put the ἀοιδός-line in their texts, but it has been banned from the text of all critical editions to have appeared since the first edition of Leaf's text and commentary (London, 1888), including that by van Thiel.¹⁶

The problem has received extensive treatment, the best by Ritoók (in favour of authenticity) and Apthorp (against it).¹⁷ What should be wrong with this line? The first objection is the weak attestation in Athenaeus only. The line is notably absent from P⁵¹ too, and even Athenaeus omits the ἀοιδός-line when he quotes the passage in a slightly different context at V p.181a–b.¹⁸ But this objection can be countered by pointing to *Il.* 9.458–61. This passage—Phoenix is considering patricide—is similarly known from a single quotation only (Plutarch, *De aud. poet.* 26F) and was, allegedly, removed by Aristarchus on grounds of its impious content (τὰ ἔπη φοβηθεῖς). But it may well be genuine.¹⁹ The second objection, the difficult syntax of the genitive absolute ἐξάρχοντος (sc. τοῦ ἀοιδοῦ) (elsewhere in the Homeric poems at *Il.* 11.458 only) can easily be discarded by sticking to ἐξάρχοντες.

Yet there remain two objections which, in combination, weigh heavily against authenticity. In Athenaeus' account Aristarchus is reported to have done most peculiar things: he regarded the ἀοιδός-line as spurious in the *Iliad* but genuine in the *Odyssey*; he inserted a passage from one poem into the other; and, in the last resort, he assumed that the ἀοιδός-line in the *Iliad* is due to some sort of cross-interpolation from the *Odyssey*. How else could he have explained why the ἀοιδός-line intruded into the *Iliad*-text in the first place? None of this is very plausible. Thus, the quality of

¹⁶ H. van Thiel, *Homeri Ilias* (Hildesheim, 1996).

¹⁷ Ritoók and Apthorp (n. 3).

¹⁸ It can, however, not wholly be excluded that, although Athenaeus quoted the ἀοιδός-line, it was later excised by someone who compared the quotation with his Vulgate text(s), and thus did not find its way into our manuscripts. Kaibel therefore supplements the ἀοιδός-line.

¹⁹ A point on which Wolf (n. 2) already insisted. On the possible authenticity of this line see Janko (n. 25), pp. 28f., Apthorp (n. 1), pp. 91–9, J. B. Hainsworth and J. Griffin in their commentaries on *Iliad* 9 (Cambridge, 1993 and Oxford, 1995), ad loc., Haslam (n. 13), pp. 78f.

Athenaeus' testimony becomes more than dubious. The verse quoted, then, is on a footing with those afforded by the 'wild' papyri: Athenaeus, or his source, may have found the verse in some 'wild' text and judged it genuine against the Vulgate tradition influenced by Aristarchus. In a wholly subjective attempt to give a rational explanation for the discrepancy and following the widespread tendency to use a scholar's name as a label,²⁰ he, or his source, polemicized against the authority in the field, Aristarchus, who was thought to be primarily responsible for the *numerus versuum*.

Secondly, the notion of the *θεῖος ἀοιδός* in an Iliadic context prompts suspicion. It is remarkable that, even though the singer is certainly at the will of the Muses,²¹ the explicit notion of the *θεῖος ἀοιδός*, while extremely prominent in the *Odyssey*, is absent from the *Iliad*. Here, *κλέα ἀνδρῶν* are sung not, as one might expect with the *Odyssey* in mind, by professional singers in the camp, but by the heroes themselves, Achilles and, perhaps,²² Patroclus (9.186–91, cf. also Paris at 3.54). And the apparently professional *ἀοιδοί* who are called in for the *θρῆνος* over Hector's body (24.720–2, cf. also Thamyris at 2.594–600) are not qualified as 'divine', but treated more like rather inconspicuous craftsmen at hand.²³ The *θεῖος ἀοιδός* is thus strikingly at odds with the Iliadic picture. One might defend him by pointing to the ecphrasis-nature of the Shield. But I am more inclined to regard him as a conceptual intrusion in the spirit of the *Odyssey* (esp. *Od.* 4.17f. and 13.27f.). As will be argued below (III), he may originate in rhapsodic intervention.

To summarize: as \P ⁵¹ and Athenaeus illustrate, some in antiquity already felt that the passage lacked indication of musical accompaniment. But the solutions which they offer are unsatisfactory. The *lacuna* must remain.

III

Up to this point I state all my arguments with confidence. But when trying to explain how the lack of sound and of any musical accompaniment in the post-Aristarchean tradition came about, the nature of the evidence necessitates speculation. The question, however, is not essential for the point that I have been trying to make in the preceding paragraphs: internal and, less compellingly, archaeological evidence suggest that the text is defective. Once the lack of music and noise is established as a mistake, it is comforting, but not essential, to be in a position to explain how the mistake occurred and proliferated.

As mechanical causes for the omission can be excluded, a possible explanation must be sought elsewhere. My starting point is the observation that whereas neither \P ⁵¹ nor the Athenaeus passage provides a satisfactory supplement, both (i) go back to a non-Aristarchean (possibly even pre-Aristarchean) 'wild' tradition, thus yielding intriguing insight into the textual discrepancies over one and the same passage, (ii) supply musical accompaniment, and (iii) supply it in a different manner and at different places.

²⁰ van Thiel (n. 16), pp. XIIff.; see also G. M. Bolling, *The External Evidence for Interpolation in Homer* (Oxford, 1925), pp. 47f.

²¹ Note the several invocations of the Muse(s) and the fact that the Muses deprive Thamyris of his *ἀοιδή* (2.594f.).

²² This hinges on the interpretation of 9.191: *δέγμενος* (sc. *Πάτροκλος*) *Αἰακίδην, ὅποτε λήξειεν ἀείδων*. It is not clear whether this implies that Patroclus will take over after Achilles has finished singing.

²³ On the differences between the poems in this respect see S. West (n. 14) on *Od.* 1.153–4.

It therefore seems legitimate to assume that the passage was subject to textual fluctuation, and I am inclined to infer from the severe discrepancies between the extant versions that this fluctuation was considerable. Different texts provided different modes of accompaniment at different places. Two questions arise: (i) how did the fluctuation come about? and (ii) how did Aristarchus handle the problem?

To take the latter first, we know that Aristarchus did not have any mention of music in his *ἐκδοσεις*. Otherwise, mention of music should appear in at least parts of the Vulgate tradition, and thus in our direct transmission of the text. As regards Aristarchus' reasons and methods, we should certainly not rely on the information provided by Athenaeus, which, as I suggested above, is far too peculiar to be trustworthy. Aristarchus is generally assumed to have collated manuscripts and established a text of his own as a result of this *recensio*. We are ignorant as to the number and quality of the manuscripts which he used, or his criteria for selection.²⁴ Thus, there are the possibilities that either (a) none of the manuscripts used by Aristarchus offered any musical accompaniment (on which see below) or (b) Aristarchus was confronted with the textual fluctuation to which, as I suggested, this passage in particular was exposed, and deleted whichever sort of musical accompaniment he found. In this latter case, there can only be speculation as to why he resorted to deletion as the most radical tool of textual criticism, although he apparently never objected to accompanied dance and/or phorminx-playing *ἀοιδοί* elsewhere.²⁵ I think it possible that the textual fluctuation itself, i.e. the very fact that Aristarchus was confronted with several different versions of musical accompaniment, led him to assume that any mention of music was bound to be spurious.

Yet, on the basis of the slim and difficult evidence, other views of the nature of Aristarchus' activities have been taken, most recently and vigorously by van Thiel.²⁶ On his account, Aristarchus did not collate manuscripts at all, but based his work on a received and commonly accepted text which van Thiel brands 'den herrschenden Text' ('the dominant text'). In its margin annotations and comments were made. In this case, 'the dominant text' probably did not contain any accompaniment, and the situation with which Aristarchus was confronted would be identical with that described above as (a). The omission of musical accompaniment would then have occurred significantly earlier, when the 'dominant text' was created (before Antimachus, as van Thiel believes). Again, I would speculate that the omission was prompted by the textual fluctuation which surrounded this particular passage owing to rhapsodic intervention. But this anticipates the answer to the more interesting question (i) raised above.

²⁴ See S. West's important review of Apthorp (n. 1) in *CR* 32 (1982), 1f.

²⁵ The quest for Aristarchus' principles of textual criticism is a notorious *Grundfrage der Homerkritik*. As regards athetesis, they are to some extent recoverable. See e.g. R. Janko, in the *Iliad* commentary vol. IV (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 27f. and R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship* vol. 1 (Oxford, 1968), pp. 225–31. Nevertheless, each instance needs particular scrutiny, as is shown for two frequent types of athetesis by D. Lührs, *Untersuchungen zu den Athetesen Aristarchs in der Ilias und zu ihrer Behandlung im Corpus der exegetischen Scholien* (Hildesheim, 1992), passim. Aristarchus' principles for deletion are the main problem. The view that he exclusively followed external evidence (= his manuscripts) seems to prevail nowadays (Apthorp, largely followed by Janko). Against this, however, S. West (n. 24) has raised fundamental and, it seems, irrefutable objections.

²⁶ In the prefaces to his *Odyssey* edition (Hildesheim, 1991), pp. IX–XIII and *Iliad* edition (n. 16), pp. Vf., but above all in his article 'Zenodot, Aristarch und andere', *ZPE* 90 (1992), 1–32. See also Haslam (n. 13), pp. 84f.. Responses from specialists in the field are mixed; see most recently M. Schmidt's article and van Thiel's reply in *ZPE* 115 (1997), 1–36.

How did the textual fluctuation come about in the first place? Several explanations are feasible, but to me the most plausible one is to charge the rhapsodes with it. Ritoók (n. 3), p. 207, has already done so by suggesting that the rhapsodes of the fifth century felt ashamed of their colleague surrounded by tumblers hopping about, and consequently ceased to mention him. But apart from the fact that in this case it would have been more reasonable for the rhapsodes to do away with the tumblers in the first place, professional vanity suggests that they would be prone to doing just the opposite of Ritoók's suggestion. The elaborate and prominently placed scene required at least a *φόρμιγξ* as accompaniment. This, I suggest, made the passage highly attractive for rhapsodic intervention. In the whole of the *Iliad* this is the best—though not the only (the boy at 18.569–73 may be considered)—place where they could either find or create someone with whom they could identify as an ancestor of their profession, as they arguably could with Phemius or Demodocus in the *Odyssey*. Neither Apollo (1.603f.) nor Achilles (9.186–91) nor the *αοιδοί* of 24.720–2 were similarly enticing. In addition, it should be noted that the description of the Shield could easily be isolated. Since the times of the Alexandrian scholars at the latest, the term *Ὀπλοποιία* is common for it.²⁷ As such, it would be ideal for separate recitation, as an *encore* for example. This, I would argue, increased the temptation to tamper with the text, by creating an *αοιδός* or amplifying his description, or, somewhat less spectacularly, by adding instruments and various noises. The version given by Athenaeus may originate in rhapsodic intervention of such a kind. And similarly the text of \P ⁵¹ with its peculiar interpolation of a condensed version of Ps.-Hes. *Scutum* 207–13 and its several other plus-verses may ultimately derive from rhapsodic intervention and amplification.²⁸

IV

If the considerations put forward in this paper are correct, they point to the peculiarities of the transmission of the Homeric poems. Performance and written versions co-exist at least up to the fifth century, and performances continue to leave their imprint on the texts. The ending of the description of Achilles' Shield was particularly liable to fluctuations owing both to the attraction which the dancing-scene climax exerted on the performers and to the fact that the ecphrasis as a whole was perceived as a self-contained unit, presumably one of the jewels of any performance of the *Iliad*.

This result may bring to mind the theory of transmission of the Homeric poems advocated by Nagy,²⁹ especially his notion of 'fluidity' and 'rigidity'. I nevertheless disagree with most aspects and implications of this theory, in particular the attempt to identify different stages of 'fluid' transmission in a 'multitext edition' of the Homeric poems. The passage at the end of Shield description on which I concentrated is an isolated and special case, in which the evidence from a 'wild' papyrus and the secondary transmission allows for a glance at the 'fluidity' to which the text could be exposed. But beyond noting the 'fluidity', the overall result is, alas, negative. Comparison with the relevant textual and archaeological evidence available suggests

²⁷ Σ 10.13a and b; 11.798, 22.117b; Athen. V 180d and 181a; Strabo 1.1.7.

²⁸ Thus G. Murray, *The Rise of the Greek Epic*, 4th edn (Oxford, 1934), pp. 287–9.

²⁹ G. Nagy, *Poetry as Performance. Homer and Beyond* (Cambridge, 1996), esp. part II, and idem, *Homeric Questions* (Austin, 1996), esp. ch. 3. Reviews of the former: S. West, *TLS* 2.8 (1996), 27 and M. Heath, *CR* 47 (1997), 241f..

that our tradition of a particular passage of this ecphrasis is lacunose. There are, however, no means of recovering the 'genuine version' of this passage. In fact, the quest for it would be misguided in principle.³⁰

Corpus Christi College, Oxford

MARTIN REVERMANN

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