

## THE VOICE OF TRADITION: REPRESENTATIONS OF HOMERIC SINGERS IN ATHENAEUS 1.14a–d

The passage concerning the heroic lifestyle, surviving in the Epitome version of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*, is an area full of controversy. Scholars debate over the source(s) used by Athenaeus here and speculate about the relationship of the summarized version of the text to its original unepitomized form, which is lost to us. These two modern approaches to this part of the first book of the *Deipnosophistae* aim at general clarification of the content and the structure of the discussion of the Homeric lifestyle. I shall instead pay attention to one, relatively short, piece of the text preserved by the epitomator, namely the passage in which the question of the position and functions of archaic singers is addressed (1.14a–d). This passage as a self-contained whole has not yet received serious attention from scholars, although a more detailed analysis of some of its components has occasionally been offered. It seems that a closer examination of individual segments of this text as well as of the linkage between them allows us to elucidate some points of ancient Homeric scholarship and to detect traces of the structural devices used by the author of the *Deipnosophistae*. The topic is, then, worthy of consideration.

The passage is a part of the discussion in which Athenaeus pursues the question of the simplicity of the life of the ancients and shares with other intellectuals an interest in the customs connected with feasting. Drawing illustrations of the ancient way of life from Homer's poems was commonplace in many works written by critics from the Alexandrian age onwards.<sup>1</sup>

After the publication of Malcolm Heath's important article,<sup>2</sup> Isaac Casaubon's assumption<sup>3</sup> (widely accepted by scholars of the nineteenth century<sup>4</sup> and still adhered to by some modern classicists<sup>5</sup>) that the only source for Athenaeus' description of feasting activities of Homeric heroes was Dioscorides,<sup>6</sup> the author of an exclusively

<sup>1</sup> The beginnings can be, however, traced as early as Plato's writings (*Resp.* 3.404B10–C7). On the importance of Homer's poems for ancient considerations of the simplicities of early generations' life see R. Vischer, *Das einfache Leben. Wort und -motivgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu einem Wertbegriff der antiken Literatur* (Göttingen, 1965), 93; M. Schmidt, *Die Erklärungen zum Weltbild Homers und zur Kultur der Heroenzeit in den bT-Scholien zur Ilias* (Munich, 1976), 158–72; A. Roemer, *Die Homerexegese Aristarchs in ihren Grundzügen*, ed. E. Belzner (Paderborn, 1924), 190–9; P. Schmitt Pantel, *La cité au banquet: histoire des repas publics dans les cités grecques* (Paris, 1992), 444–51.

<sup>2</sup> M. Heath, 'Do heroes eat fish? Athenaeus on the Homeric lifestyle', in D. Braund and J. Wilkins (edd.), *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire* (Exeter, 2000), 350; 'In fact, the hypothesis that Athenaeus was drawing his material from any single main source seems to be excluded by the discovery that multiple and conflicting viewpoints are represented in the sequence of Homeric discourses.'

<sup>3</sup> See *Animadversiones in Athenaei Deipnosophistas post Isaacum Casaubonum conscripsit Iohannes Schweighäuser* (Argentorati, 1801), 1.92–3.

<sup>4</sup> See R. Weber, 'De Dioscuridis περί τῶν παρ' Ὀμήρῳ νόμων libello', *Leipziger Studien zur klassischen Philologie* 11 (1888), 87–197.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Jacoby, *FGrH* 3 b1 (Leiden, 1955), 633–4; Schmidt (n. 1), 17–18, 163–4.

<sup>6</sup> Although some scholars took into consideration the additions by other authors, see G. Kaibel, 'Zu Athenaeus', *Hermes* 22 (1887), 326, who pointed out that Dioscorides' work, quoted

moralizing work on the Homeric lifestyle,<sup>7</sup> can no longer be sustained. It seems that Dioscorides' text was one of Athenaeus' sources here. This is implied by the fact that a part of the *Suda* article<sup>8</sup> on Homer, in which the passage from Dioscorides' work is quoted, overlaps (not counting small textual inconsistencies) with the section of Athenaeus' text (8e–9c), the source of which is not explicitly indicated. It is probable that the author of the *Suda* made his extract from the full text (not from the Epitome) of Book One of the *Deipnosophistae*,<sup>9</sup> but, indicating Athenaeus' source, abbreviated the title of Dioscorides' work (οἱ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ νόμοι), while the epitomator of Athenaeus preserved in another place (8e) the genuine version: περὶ τοῦ τῶν ἡρώων καθ' Ὀμηρον βίου, but omitted the name of its author.<sup>10</sup>

It would not be strange if Athenaeus, the author of an antiquarian work,<sup>11</sup> consulted various accounts concerned with sympotic questions. In this practice of quoting a mass of earlier texts he manifested his admirable knowledge and erudition,<sup>12</sup> which made him the equal of the best *pepaideumenoι* of the time. Similarly, inconsistencies and contradictions which are found in the treatment of the same topics should not cause any surprise. They are to be explained by the multitude of materials on which Athenaeus was drawing, as well by the principles of the table-talk, in which the *agon logon* is not only acceptable but necessary. This general principle of Athenaeus' treatment of earlier sources is exemplified, as it seems, by his discussion of the Homeric lifestyle. As has been laid out by Heath,<sup>13</sup> even in the Epitome version of this part of Book 1 some traces of the dialogue form are detectable. Heath identified three discourses presented by different *deipnosophists* who take diverse approaches to the sympotic behaviour of Homeric heroes.

by Athenaeus, is 'durch mancherlei fremde Zusatz erweitert und unterbrochen', and M. L. Gambato, in her commentary on the Epitome, in *Ateneo. I deipnosofisti (I dotti a banchetto)*, Prima traduzione italiana commentata su progetto di Luciano Canfora (Rome, 2001), 28, who thinks that Athenaeus' main source (she cautiously calls it 'uno scritto di autore incerto') is here 'integrato da altri materiali'. See also Schmitt Pantel (n. 1), 449: 'L'essentiel de ce texte semble emprunté à un recueil des coutumes de l'âge héroïque qu'aurait composé un grammairien du nom de Dioscorides au III<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-C., auquel s'ajoutent des citations de divers auteurs.'

<sup>7</sup> He has been variously identified, either with Isocrates' disciple (cf. F. Buffière, *Les mythes d'Homère et la pensée grecque* [Paris, 1956], 324; E. Hiller, 'Über eine angebliche Schrift des Isokrateer Dioskurides', *RhM* 40 (1885), 204–9) or with Dioscurides from Tarsus, living in the first half of the first century B.C. (cf. Jacoby [n. 5], 663–4). Schmidt (n. 1), 18, n. 30 states his *terminus post quem* to be the time after Aristarchus on whom he depends, and the time of Plutarch, who seems to know Dioscurides' work, to be his *terminus ante quem*. Other attempts to date Dioscurides have been presented by Schmidt (n. 1), 18, n. 30.

<sup>8</sup> S.v. Ὀμηρος, ο 151.

<sup>9</sup> See Kaibel (n. 6), 326: 'Der Athenaeusepitomator verhält sich genau so zum Athenaeus wie Suidas: beide haben denselben Text, jeder auf seine Weise, excerptiert, und wenn sie es nicht beide auf dieselbe Weise gethan haben, so wird das keinen wundern.'

<sup>10</sup> See Jacoby (n. 5), 663: 'die epitome gibt den titel Περί τοῦ τῶν ἡρώων καθ' Ὀμηρον βίου, den wir nach den parallelen als den originalen betrachten dürfen, aber kein verfasser; die Suda hat eine banalisierte form des titels und den verfasser Dioskurides.'

<sup>11</sup> For the influence of Athenaeus' antiquarian interest on the composition of the *Deipnosophistae*, see C. Jacob, 'Ateneo o il Dedalo delle parole', in *Ateneo* (n. 6), 81–3.

<sup>12</sup> See Heath (n. 2), 351: 'Athenaeus is less concerned to establish a view of Homer and his heroes than to record what has been said on those topics by earlier writers.'

<sup>13</sup> Heath (n. 2) distinguishes within the passage on Homeric heroes three speeches of the *deipnosophists*: the first spoken by Myrtilus (8c–11b), the second (11b–19a) by a speaker called by Heath 2A (perhaps Masurius), the third by an 'unattributed speaker' (24b–25f.). Heath also takes into consideration the possibility that at 16c a new speaker (2B) is introduced. Heath's opinion concerning the attribution of the parts of the discourse to three *loquents* has been accepted by Gambato (n. 6), 28.

The passage devoted to singers (14a–d) is, as it appears, a statement of one speaker.<sup>14</sup> He is interested in the role of *aoidoi* in the palaces of the earliest rulers. The passage runs as follows:

Ἐχρῶντο δ' ἐν τοῖς συμποσίοις καὶ κιθαρωδοῖς καὶ ὀρχησταῖς, ὡς οἱ μνηστῆρες. καὶ παρὰ Μενελάῳ ἑμέλειτο θεῖος ἀοιδός, δύο δὲ κυβιστητῆρες μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες ἐδίνεον. μολπῆς δὲ ἀντὶ παιδιᾶς. (b) σῶφρον δέ τι ἦν τὸ τῶν ἀοιδῶν γένος καὶ φιλοσόφων διάθεσιν ἐπέχον. Ἀγαμέμνων γοῦν τὸν ἀοιδὸν καταλείπει τῇ Κλυταίμνηστρᾳ φύλακα καὶ παραινετῆρά τινα· ὃς πρῶτον μὲν ἀρετὴν γυναικῶν διερχόμενος ἐνέβαλλέ τινα φιλοτιμίαν εἰς καλοκάγαθίαν, εἶτα διατριβὴν παρέχων ἡδεῖαν ἀπεπλάνα τὴν διάνοιαν φαύλων ἐπινοίων. διὸ Αἰγισθος οὐ πρότερον διέφθειρε τὴν γυναικα πρὶν τὸν ἀοιδὸν ἀποκτείνειν ἐν νήσῳ ἐρήμῃ. τοιοῦτός ἐστι καὶ ὁ παρὰ τοῖς μνηστῆρσιν αἰεῖδων ἀνάγκη, (c) ὃς τοὺς ἐφεδρεῖοντας τῇ Πηνελόπῃ ἐβδελύττετο. Κοινῶς δέ που πάντας τοὺς ἀοιδούς αἰδοίους τοῖς ἀνθρώποις εἶναι φησι·

τοῦνεκ' ἄρα σφέας  
οἴμας Μοῦσ' ἐδίδαξε φίλησέ τε φύλον ἀοιδῶν.

ὁ δὲ παρὰ Φαίαξι Δημόδοκος ἄδει Ἄρεος καὶ Ἀφροδίτης συνουσίαν, οὐ διὰ τὸ ἀποδέχεσθαι τὸ τοιοῦτον πάθος, ἀλλ' ἀποτρέπων αὐτοὺς παρανόμων ὀρέξεων, ἣ εἰδὼς ἐν τρυφερῷ τινι βίῳ τετραμμένους κἀντεῦθεν ὁμοιότατα τοῖς τρόποις αὐτῶν τὰ πρὸς ἀνάπαυσιν προφέρων. (d) καὶ τοῖς μνηστῆρσιν ἄδει πρὸς τὴν αὐτὴν βουλήν ὁ Φῆμιος νόστον Ἀχαιῶν. καὶ αἱ Σειρήνες δὲ ἄδουσι τῷ Ὀδυσσεὶ τὰ μάλιστα αὐτὸν τέρψοντα, καὶ τὰ οἰκεία τῇ φιλοτιμίᾳ αὐτοῦ καὶ πολυμαθείᾳ λέγουσαι. ἴσμεν γάρ, φασί, τὰ τ' ἄλλα καὶ ὅσσα γένηται ἐν χθονὶ πολυβοτείρῃ.

Beginning his deliberations from the general remark on the employment of *kitharodoi* at symposia, and offering an example of such a custom, the speaker advances the thesis that the role of singers was comparable to that assumed later by philosophers, that is, the role of teachers of wisdom and morality (14b). What is said next, slightly moves on from this thought: the speaker partly quotes Homer's words from Book 8 of the *Odyssey*,<sup>15</sup> partly paraphrases them,<sup>16</sup> in order—as it seems—to focus readers' attention on singers themselves and to impart a sense of general statement to Homer's words. The distinctive paronomasia *ἀοιδούς αἰδοίους* in the place of Homer's *ἀοιδοὶ ... ἔμμοροι αἰδοῦς*, and the change of the attribution of the *πάντες* (it is connected with *ἀοιδοί* here whereas in Homer it refers to *ἄνθρωποι*) seem to be intentional here: the author of the text intends to signal his intention to draw attention to the singers and to suggest that what matters is their real effects on hearers, not the reputation they have among people. After his declaration the speaker gives five examples which are directly relevant to the general statements made at the beginning of the passage.

The first example in this series concerns the story about entrusting Clytemnestra to an *aoidos* by Agamemnon, who was departing for Troy. The tale of the singer acting as the queen's guard and overseer refers to Homer's passage from Book 3 of the *Odyssey* (lines 263–77). The thought that in the Homeric world it was the singer who had moral supervision of the ruler and members of a community, and who guarded

<sup>14</sup> But see Heath's (n. 2) reservations where he rightly points out, 345: 'speakers may contradict themselves, and may quote divergent opinions from different sources without being committed to any of them; indications that an opinion is quoted (not asserted) by the speaker may have been elided in the epitome. Conversely, different speakers may have similar or overlapping positions.'

<sup>15</sup> *Od.* 8.478–9: πᾶσι γάρ ἀνθρώποισιν ἐπιχθονίοισιν ἀοιδοὶ τιμῆς ἔμμοροι εἰσι καὶ αἰδοῦς.

<sup>16</sup> It is hard to imagine that we have to do here with *lapsus memoriae* of the author quoting an earlier text from memory. After all Homer's poem belonged to the most popular texts, known to all educated Greeks.

its time-honoured social order<sup>17</sup> must have been deeply ingrained in the Greeks' minds,<sup>18</sup> since the story of Agamemnon's minstrel was a subject of comments made by ancient scholars,<sup>19</sup> and Demetrius of Phalerum<sup>20</sup> seems even to regard the unnamed<sup>21</sup> Homeric *aoidos* and Demodocus, the famous bard of the Phaeacians,<sup>22</sup> as being identical. The idea of presenting the poetry of singers in the courts of kings as one means of reinforcing moral standards and as a power having healing effects on a community<sup>23</sup> early became an important part of Greek sociopolitical thought, in

<sup>17</sup> On this subject see S. P. Scully, 'The bard as the custodian of Homeric society: *Odyssey* 3.263–276', *QUCC* 8 (1981), 67–83.

<sup>18</sup> See D. Page, 'The mystery of the minstrel at the court of Agamemnon', in *Studi classici in onore di Quinto Cataudella*, (Catania, 1972), 1.13, who says with reference to the *Odyssey* 3.263–72: 'We conclude that the source of these lines in the *Odyssey* was to be found in the very distant past, and that the minstrel-guardian of the Queen in this passage perpetuates the memory of a fact about society in a period long before Homer.' T. B. L. Webster, *From Mycenae to Homer* (London, 1958), 139, takes into consideration the possibility that Homeric singers incorporated features of the *aoidoi* singing at Mycenaean courts. One of them might have been 'the singer with whom Agamemnon left Klytemnestra when he went to Troy'. See also M. L. West, 'Greek poetry 2000–700 B.C.', *CQ* 23 (1973), 187, and G. Danek, *Epos und Zitat. Studien zu den Quellen der Odyssee* (Vienna, 1998), 92, whose opinion is that the author of the *Odyssey* inherited the story concerning Atreus' family from the tradition 'vor der Odyssee'. He assumes (93) that this myth was not considerably changed in the *Odyssey*. The opposite view has been taken by D. Panchenko, 'Ἀοιδὸς ἀνὴρ. Aegisthus and Clytemnestra (the *Odyssey* 3.263–272)', *Hyperboreus* 2 (1996), 179, who points out that 'the nameless αοιδὸς ἀνὴρ who left no trace elsewhere in Greek literature, is a Homeric invention'. There is a kind of affinity between Panchenko's proposal and that presented by Ø. Andersen, 'Agamemnon's singer (Od. 3.262–272)', *SO* 67 (1992), 7, who says: 'Agamemnon's singer should be seen a product of the self-reflective poet.'

<sup>19</sup> See Dicaearchus, fr. 93 W.; Strabo, 1.23; Aristoxenus, fr. 123 W.

<sup>20</sup> The text preserved in the scholia ad *Od.* 3.265 (= *FGrH* 228 F32a).

<sup>21</sup> Scully (n. 17), 74, thinks that Homer did not mention the singer's name on purpose in order to stress that performances of *aoidoi* were a very common activity. He says: 'we must presume that the anonymity of the singer at Mycenae suggests that the function of the bard there also be considered generic, that is, characteristic of the singer's craft and appropriate to his art.' See also Scully's remark on p. 75: 'his role ... must in some way be characteristic of all poets'.

<sup>22</sup> See A. Gostoli, 'La figura dell'aedo preomerico nella filologia peripatetica ed ellenistica: Demodoco tra mito e storia', in G. Cerri (ed.), *Scrivere e recitare: modelli di trasmissione del testo poetico nell'antichità e nel medioevo* (Rome, 1986), 105–6: 'L'interpretazione della figura dell'aedo di Clitemnestra (...) come maestro di verità, avanzata da Demetrio doveva essere una radicata acquisizione della scuola peripatetica dal momento che di questo stesso tema si occupano anche Dicearco e Aristosseno. Però più probabilmente il primo, il Falereo, a pari il problema della identificazione del Demodoco, citarodo dalla Laconia, con l'omonimo personaggio omerico nel libro VIII dell'Odissea'; and 106: 'A Demetrio sembrò logico identificare l'anonimo aedo omerico con Demodoco lacone, interpretando il testo omerico nel senso che il cantore, abbandonato a morire sull'isola, fosse stato in qualche modo salvato dai Feaci e da loro portato a Scheria.' The issue has been approached with reserve by F. Montanari, 'Demetrius of Phalerum on literature', in W. W. Fortenbaugh and E. Schütrumpf (edd.), *Demetrius of Phalerum: Text, Translation and Discussion* (New Brunswick–London, 2000), 408: 'Such was the solution Demetrius gave to the problem of identifying the bard mentioned by Homer in *Od.* 3.267, a solution which—to my knowledge—is unparalleled, whether this Demodokos is meant to be the same Demodokos of the Phaeacians or a different and homonymous figure.' See also F. Montanari, 'Gli studi omerici di Demetrio Falereo', *Seminari Romani* 4 (2001), 150–5.

<sup>23</sup> See K. Mathiesen's remarks, in K. Rüter, *Odysseeinterpretationen. Untersuchungen zum ersten Buch und zur Phaiakia*, ed. K. Matthiesen (Göttingen, 1969), 234, n. 12: 'dient der Hof Agamemnons ... als Paradigma des Königshofes, dessen Ordnung am schwersten gestört ist. In dieses Bild fügt sich auch das Schicksal des Sängers ein; er muß seinen Versuch, die Ordnung zu bewahren, mit dem Leben bezahlen.' For the healing effects of poetry cf. testimonies concerning Terpander (test. 21 Gostoli = 7 Campbell and test. 60i Gostoli = 9 Campbell).

which artistic production formed a promising device for citizens' education<sup>24</sup> and the building up of social values.<sup>25</sup> The Agamemnon-singer selected as the custodian of the queen's morality was, however, also expected to give delight and entertainment to his audience (*διατριβὴν* ... *ἡδεῖαν*). Although the author of the text places emphasis on didactic aspects of the singer's role at the royal court (*πρώτον*), pushing into the background (*εἶτα*) the entertainment of the audience, inseparable bonds seem to exist between both kinds of the *aoidos*' influence upon the queen; both features of his poetry contribute to achieve his goal.

The initial anaphoric *τοιούτος* (14b) which introduces the next example highlights the links between the two instances quoted here. Unfortunately, it is by no means possible to state, whether *τοιούτος*, which survives in the Epitome, belonged, in the original text of the *Deipnosophistae*, to the section quoted by Athenaeus from an earlier source or was a part of a comment expressed by a *deipnosophist* within the dialogical framework of Athenaeus' work.<sup>26</sup> Answering this interesting question is, however, of no significance for our present consideration: regardless of who is responsible for such an arrangement of examples, he intentionally stresses far-reaching similarities between the effects which the singers, mentioned within the two examples, had on their audience. Phemius—as he is the person in question in 14b–c—is such (*τοιούτος*)<sup>27</sup> as the *aoidos* left with Clytemnestra; he was given the same task as his Mycenaean colleague. One version of the ancient commentary tradition, which was based on Timolaus, an obscure figure,<sup>28</sup> and his account preserved by Demetrius of Phalerum, even recognized both singers as brothers, and said that Phemius had visited Penelope in Ithaca and acted as her guard there (*ἀκολουθήσαι τῇ Πηνελόπῃ εἰς*

<sup>24</sup> See P. Wilson, 'Athenian strings', in P. Murray and P. Wilson (edd.), *Music and the Muses: The Culture of 'Mousike' in the Classical Athenian City* (Oxford, 2004), 271, who emphasizes that 'Demetrius' commentary has an air of wistful nostalgia, of hankering after cultural and political practices lost', and that (272) 'Demetrius evidently felt that the city of Athens as a whole could do with the kind of musical moral instruction that Agamemnon had tried to organize for his wife.'

<sup>25</sup> Scully (n. 17), 73 calls this power of singers 'moral supervision'.

<sup>26</sup> But one must remember that we are quite often dealing with Athenaeus' (or, from another perspective, Athenaeus' speakers') paraphrases or summaries of the material from earlier sources. Perhaps one should, then, recognize in the *τοιούτος* the tracks of such presentational strategies, adopted in some cases by the author of the *Deipnosophistae*.

<sup>27</sup> Andersen (n. 18), 9, n. 8 treats the word as an important marker of the affinity between the Mycenaean *aoidos* and Phemius: 'Athenaeus sees "the same character" (*τοιούτός ἐστι*) in Phemios.' Andersen understands—as it seems—this word as spoken by Athenaeus' *deipnosophist*.

<sup>28</sup> Ap. Schol. *Od.* 3.267. There are serious problems in identifying Timolaus. Some modern scholars have thought he was Timolaus of Larissa, a pupil of Anaximenes of Lampsacus, attested by the *Suda* (T 626). They discuss whether the scholiast quotes this Timolaus from Demetrius or from another source (on this issue see Montanari [n. 22], 408–9: 'I cannot say whether it was Demetrius himself who cited Timolaos or whether the second citation was added by the source of the scholiastic material, but in any case Timolaos of Larissa was plainly dealing with the same problem of adopting a similar approach.' Gostoli [n. 22], 106 is in favour of the first possibility. Her opinion has also been accepted by Wilson [n. 24], 272, n. 1). But the question of the identification of Timolaus appears to be more problematic than has hitherto been suspected. As A. Cameron, *Greek Mythography in the Roman World* (New York, 2004), 134–159, reasonably assumes, Timolaus of Macedon might be one of the bogus writers invented by Ptolemy, son of Hephaestion, well-known for fabricating his sources. Also Malcolm Heath in his recent study ('Heraclides of Pontus on Homer', forthcoming) has made a good case for treating 'Timolaus of Macedon' as one of the fake sources of Ptolemy, whose *New History* influenced ancient scholarship, including the scholia.

Ἰθάκην πρὸς παραφυλακὴν αὐτῆς). He, like the bard at Mycenae, morally supported the queen during her husband's absence.<sup>29</sup> His songs must include a kind of moral instruction and, at the same time, give delight to the audience. The author of the text becomes aware that some members of Phemius' audience are hostile to the values presented by his songs, and that they do not have any liking for *τινα φιλοτιμίαν εἰς καλοκάγαθίαν*. The singer, compelled by the suitors to sing, had to find a way not to enrage them and, at the same time, not to abstain from carrying out responsible tasks with which he was entrusted. From the fact that Phemius felt a deep aversion to the suitors (the word *ἐβδελύττετο* shows it quite clearly) one must not, however, draw the conclusion—as has been done by some scholars<sup>30</sup>—that, through stories sung at Odysseus' palace, he expresses his disapproval of their impious crime and—in the form of *psogos*—morally rebukes them. The relative clause (*ὅς ... ἐβδελύττετο*) with its strongly concessive shade of meaning can be recognized as corresponding to the Homeric phrase *αἰδῶν ἀνάγκη*.<sup>31</sup> One can assume that only the singer's loyalty towards the queen and his willingness to persevere in guarding her<sup>32</sup> make him able to bear the unpleasant situation of presenting to the audience in song values with which he does not identify himself.<sup>33</sup> On the basis of this passage we learn little of the content of Phemius' song. *Τοιοῦτος*, which the author of the text uses here, is of little help in considering this problem. He apparently omits to mention it in this place, since the content has been discussed in the subsequent example quoted (14d).

After the short bridge-passage that articulates a general reflection on the *aoidos*' role, the author of the text goes on to introduce the third example. It deals with the function of Demodocus' song about Aphrodite's adultery with Ares, sung at the court of Alcinous for the feasting Phaeacians. It is interesting that the author's preoccupation here is neither with the relevance of the song to the whole *Odyssey*,<sup>34</sup> nor with

<sup>29</sup> Scully (n. 17) does not seem even to notice the existence of such a view in the ancient tradition. He opposes the situation of Agamemnon's wife controlled by the bard to that of Penelope, who (71) 'is without external control', and—at least—supported by Mentor, one of Odysseus' *hetairoi*. According to Scully, Mentor's role might in some way be comparable to that of the *aoidos* at Mycenae, see 72: 'Like the *aoidos* at Mycenae, his defence of the estate is only as strong as the power of his voice and, without the force of arms to reinforce his speech, he is ineffective.'

<sup>30</sup> See C. B. Gulick, *Athenaeus: The Deipnosophists I* (Cambridge–London, 1927), 68: 'He spoke out his detestation of the suitors.' Cf. also Schweighäuser (n. 3), 52: *canens ... illos ... execratur*; C. Friedrich, in id. and T. Nothers (edd.), *Athenaios. Das Gelehrtenmahl. Buch I–VI*, pt 1: *Buch I–III* (Stuttgart, 1998), 24: 'seine Mißbilligung zum Ausdruck brachte'.

<sup>31</sup> *Od.* 1.154, 22.331.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. schol. ad *Od.* 8.267 where the scholiast explicitly says that Phemius acted at Ithaca as Penelope's guard.

<sup>33</sup> The similarity between the world of artists' values and that of their audience in the archaic period is emphasized by J. Svenbro, *La parole et le marbre: aux origines de la poésie grecque* (Lund, 1976), 29: 'les aèdes ont su organiser leurs chants conformément aux intérêts des auditeurs'. See also S. Grandolini, *Canti e aedi nei poemi omerici* (Rome, 1996), 125, and S. C. Humphreys, *Anthropology and the Greeks* (London–Henley–Boston, 1978), 215, where one can read about 'the identification [of poets] with the point of view of the noble *oikos*'. See also F. Manakidou, 'Zur Rolle des Zuhörers und des Sängers in der *Odyssee*', *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica* 96 (2003), 93: 'Der epische Poet lebt in enger Symbiose mit seinem jeweiligen Publikum.'

<sup>34</sup> Although this problem was examined by ancient critics, e. g. by Aristarchus who deleted lines 266–366 of Book 8 on the grounds that they are not directly linked with the main story of the poem. Modern scholars stress, however, their importance for the development of the *Odyssey*'s action. On this issue see B. K. Braswell, 'The song of Ares and Aphrodite: theme and relevance to *Odyssey* 8', *Hermes* 110 (1982), 129–37 and T. Krischer, 'Phäaken und *Odyssee*', *Hermes* 113 (1985), 9–21.

its influence upon Odysseus,<sup>35</sup> but with reactions to be provoked by it in the Phaeacians.<sup>36</sup> We read: ὁ δὲ παρὰ Φαίαξι Δημόδοκος ᾄδει Ἄρεος καὶ Ἀφροδίτης συνουσίαν, οὐ διὰ τὸ ἀποδέχεσθαι τὸ τοιοῦτον πάθος, ἀλλ' ἀποτρέπων αὐτοὺς παρανόμων ὀρέξεων,<sup>37</sup> ἥ<sup>38</sup> εἰδὼς ἐν τρυφερῷ τινι βίῳ τεθραμμένους κἀντεῦθεν ὁμοιότατα τοῖς τρόποις αὐτῶν τὰ πρὸς ἀνάπαυσιν προφέρων. The prevailing opinion is that the song carries strong moralizing,<sup>39</sup> and that this 'song within the song'<sup>40</sup> is no more than a condemnation of the luxury and moral standards spread over the whole Phaeacian society. It seems, however, that the text, which initiates a new series of examples here, emphasizes—as other examples within this series—the importance of the amusing qualities of an artistic performance embedded in a sympotic setting.<sup>41</sup> The preceding sequence of examples exhibited first of all a moralizing reading of archaic singers' productions, whereas the examples building the second series expose the pleasure found by the audience in listening to the song. One can assume that this delight might have generated didactic effects on the mind and emotions of the audience.<sup>42</sup> The importance of the meaning of the phrase τὰ πρὸς ἀνάπαυσιν προφέρων for proper understanding of the whole passage is paramount. There is a long tradition—beginning with Schweighäuser<sup>43</sup> and extending to contem-

<sup>35</sup> The role of Demodocus' song for Odysseus' conduct has been discussed by W. Schütz, 'Die drei Lieder des Demodokos. Mythen als Lebenshilfe in der homerischen Odyssee', *Gymnasium* 105 (1998), 385–408.

<sup>36</sup> C. Diano, 'La poetica dei Feaci', *Belfagor* 18 (1963), 403–24, assumes that Demodocus' songs, which refer to values admired by the Phaeacians, are intended to emphasize the dissimilarity between them and the values to which the Greeks adhered.

<sup>37</sup> Schweighäuser's conjecture. MSS have ὀρέων. Other proposals are Kaibel's ἔργων, and Lumb's ὁάρων, 'Notes on Athenaeus', *CR* 37 (1923), 114.

<sup>38</sup> Wilamowitz's addition. His proposal is accepted by Gulick.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. J. B. Hainsworth, in A. Heubeck, S. West and J. B. Hainsworth (edd.), *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey* (Oxford, 1998), 1.363, and G. Dietz, *Menschenwürde bei Homer. Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Heidelberg, 2000), 189: 'Vor allem diese Liebe soll ... durch das Lied des Sängers auf die Menschen beispielhaft wirken.'

<sup>40</sup> This structural device enables the singer to distance himself from the main subject of the poem, cf. Hainsworth (n. 39), 363. See also W. Burkert, 'Das Lied von Ares und Aphrodite. Zum Verhältnis von Odyssee und Ilias', *RhM* 103 (1960), 143: 'Wie die märchenhaften Abenteuer des Odysseus durch den Kunstgriff der Ich-Erzählung in die Distanz gerückt sind, ist auch das Lied von Ares und Aphrodite gleichsam in Anführungszeichen gesetzt und damit unschädlich gemacht.' This distance has also been—in a special way—noticed by the scholiast (ad *Od.* 8.267) who says: 'Ὁμηρος οὐδὲ οἶδεν ... Ἀφροδίτη συνουκεῖν ... Δημόδοκος δὲ τῇ ἰδίᾳ μυθοποιεῖ, and in another place: ἀλλ' οὐχ' Ὀμήρου τὸ ἐγκλημα.'

<sup>41</sup> Listening to the songs is, then, an important factor of sympotic entertainment. Cf. H. van Wees, 'Princes at dinner: social event and social structure in Homer', in J. P. Crielaard (ed.), *Homeric Questions* (Amsterdam, 1995), 147: 'heroes want to have fun, and to them nothing is more fun than feasting. Most often the heroes meet ... simply to enjoy food, drink, and companionship', and 177: 'Homeric heroes feast because it is fun ... they also feast because the company in which they have their fun is a crucial determinant of social status.' See also A. Ford, 'Odysseus after dinner: *Od.* 9.2–11 and the tradition of sympotic song', in J. N. Kazazis and A. Rengakos (edd.), *Euphrosyne: Studies in Ancient Epic and its Legacy in Honor of Dimitris N. Maronitis* (Stuttgart, 1999), 112, who underlines the aspect of leisure in the Homeric feast and later symposia. See also G. Anderson's remarks, *Fairytale in the Ancient World* (London–New York, 2000), 131, who classifies Demodocus' song as 'tale ... inset in a court entertainment containing a sequence of stories', and compares it with Egyptian stories about adultery.

<sup>42</sup> Grandolini (n. 33), 129–30, treats Demodocus' song as *geloion* with the paideutic function. She says (130): 'l'insegnamento è impartito non con argomentazioni che possono risultare noiose, ma attraverso la forma dello *φύγος* più piacevole per l'ascoltatore: il *γελοῖον*.'

<sup>43</sup> Schweighäuser (n. 3), 123: 'πρὸς ἀνάπαυσιν intelligence τῶν παρανόμων ὀρέξεων'; see *ibid.*, 53: *vitia eorum reprimeret*.

porary scholars and translators—which explains it as a reference to the idea of the poet as teacher.<sup>44</sup> Most scholars seem, however, unaware that this very aspect of the relationship between the poet and his listeners was expressed by the ἀποτρέπων αὐτοὺς παρανόμων ὀρέξεων.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, it seems significant that ancient critics and scholiasts suggestively tend to posit that there is a very close connection between the didactic power and the delight-causing qualities of Demodocus' song. When the scholiast discusses Demodocus' performance, he observes: οὐκ ἀτόπως ἐπὶ ἡδυπαθῶν ἄδει τοιαῦτα ὁ κιθαρωδός. He represents, then, the singer as a person intentionally entertaining his audience. Eustathius (ad *Od.* 8.266) makes this point even more clear. He writes:

‘Ὅτι καιροῦ λαβόμενος ὁ ποιητὴς καὶ πρόσωπα εὐρὼν τρυφῶντα ἐν τῇ τῶν Φαίακων, γελᾷ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐνταῦθα εἰς ἀστεισμόν ἐλθὼν διὰ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν Ἄρην καὶ τὴν Ἀφροδίτην διηγήματος, ἐρωτικοῦ ὄντος καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τεταγμένον εἰς γλυκεῖαν ἔννοιαν. οὐκ ἀπεικὸς δὲ πάντως τοὺς ὡς πολλαχοῦ φαίνεται τρυφήτας Φαίακας καὶ ἀκούσμασι χαίρειν ἐρωτικοῖς, ἅπερ οἱ πρὸς ἀρετὴν ζῶντες ἀποτροπιάζονται, λέγοντες καὶ αὐτοὶ, ὅτι τροφή ψυχῆς λόγοι καλοὶ. καὶ ὅτι ἐν κειῇ γαστρὶ τῶν καλῶν ἔρωσ οὐκ ἔστιν ... , πεινώσι γὰρ ἡ Κύπρις πικρά.

Eustathius, when emphasizing the suitability (καιροῦ) of Demodocus' song for the occasion of its presentation, and at the same time describing the *aoidos*' production as entertaining (γελᾷ, εἰς ἀστεισμόν ἐλθὼν), suggests that the song might serve its purpose towards rich listeners, devoted to enjoyment, sensual pleasures, and luxury, but not towards those who, oppressed by misery, suffer privation and are not able to revel in Aphrodite's gifts. The word ἀνάπανσις occurs in a similar context in the scholia vetera ad *Od.* 3.267, where the scholiast writes of early singers as an authority in the community in terms of leisure and relaxation. He summarises: ἔν τε ταῖς ἐορταῖς ἐν τε ταῖς ἀναπαύσεσι ἐπὶ πολλὰς ἡμέρας συλλεγόμενοι τούτων ἡκουον εἴ που γέγονεν ἐπιφανές ἢ καλὸν ἔργον. And, although the text of the scholium directly refers to the presentation of songs by *aoidoi* not at symposia, but at public festivals, it seems highly probable that the nature and the function of these songs were, at some level, consonant with those in a sympotic context.<sup>46</sup> It is, moreover, tempting to suggest that in another place (ad *Od.* 8.267) the scholiast may have been implying the same sort of references as in the case of Eustathius' words. He says: δι' ὧν ἡδονται σωφρονίζειν. It means that Demodocus calls for moderation through referring to the things for which his hearers have a liking.<sup>47</sup> The use of the adultery narrative appears to be a means of delivering criticism from a distance and giving a moral lesson through a negative example. That is exactly what the scholiast (ad *Od.* 8.332) intended

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Gambato (n. 6), 47: 'per porvi un freno'; A. M. Desrousseaux, *Athénée de Naucratis: les Deipnosophistes Livres I et II* (Paris, 1956), 31: 'ce qui peut les faire cesser'. Friedrich's translation (n. 30), 25, is ambiguous: 'um ihnen das, was ihnen Verhalten ... gleicht, vor Augen zu führen'.

<sup>45</sup> Such a meaning for this phrase has been proved by the scholiast (ad *Od.* 8.267): *περὶ κοινωνίας Ἄρεος καὶ Ἀφροδίτης μακρόθεν παιδεύει αὐτοὺς μὴ ἀσελγαίνειν*.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Humphreys (n. 33), 215: 'It is possible that by the second half of the eight century, the date usually assigned to the Homeric epics, poets were also performing in competitions held during funeral celebrations or public religious festivals.'

<sup>47</sup> Let us add at this point that music's power to delight its listeners was, according to Platonizing thinkers and critics, its most important quality, essential for its efficiency to stimulate emotions and have moral impact on men. Cf. Aristoxenus, fr. 83 W. (ap. ps.-Plut. *Mus.*, ch. 11) concerning Olympus' invention of the diatonic genus. On this subject see K. Bartol, 'Measure of pleasure: conception of artistic delight in Philodemus' and pseudo-Plutarch's treatises on music', *Classica Cracoviensia* 5 (2000), 161–7, esp. 164–5.

to emphasize, when explaining why Demodocus used what the Phaeacians enjoy for their moral improvement: *δέσμιον γὰρ εἰσάγει τὸν μοιχόν, καὶ τοὺς θεοὺς λέγοντας 'οὐκ ἄρετᾷ κακὰ ἔργα'*. Delivering a moralizing message by applying the 'spoonful of sugar' strategy<sup>48</sup> may—in a sense—be compared with the homeopathic therapy<sup>49</sup> which uses remedies causing symptoms similar to those of the disease itself. One can say that Demodocus combines in his song the presentation of 'immoral deeds', which the luxurious Phaeacians enjoy, with an attempt to eliminate them from the Phaeacian society, just as doctors combine in their treatment sympathetic therapy with antipathetic results.<sup>50</sup>

The next example quoted by the author of the text (14d) for the relationship of *aoidoi* and their audience deals with Phemius and his song of the Achaeans' homecomings after the sack of Troy, presented at the banquet in the suitors' presence. The initial *καί* which builds the linkage between the passage and the preceding example describing Demodocus' song, clearly points to a kind of affinity between these two statements. Exactly the same is the link connecting the example of Phemius with the succeeding passage concerning the Sirens' song. We are dealing here, as it seems, with the sequence of three examples illustrating a similar phenomenon. If so, Wilamowitz's emendation<sup>51</sup> of the text appears of crucial importance: his proposal to read *πρὸς τὴν αὐτὴν βουλὴν* in this place restores the idea of the identical character of both singers' intentions. Although the situations in which they find themselves are quite different,<sup>52</sup> Phemius' intention remains the same as that of Demodocus.<sup>53</sup> The song of the return of the Greeks is intended to amuse the suitors just as Demodocus' song of the adulterous love-affair between Ares and Aphrodite pleases the Phaeacians.<sup>54</sup> The suitors' response to the song is silence (cf. *Od.* 1.325–6), which shows that they—normally rowdy and arrogant—are enthralled by its charm.<sup>55</sup> The mention of the

<sup>48</sup> As M. Heath, 'Demodocus: his posthumous life and works' (paper presented at the meeting of Classical Association Conference, April 2004, unpublished), calls moralizing the tactics employed by Demodocus here.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Gambato (n. 6), 47.

<sup>50</sup> We are not, then, faced here with the choice suggested by G. Most, 'Canon fathers: literacy, morality, power', *Arion* 1 (1990), 42, 'between a moralizing and a ribald interpretation of the tale'. On the nature of sympathetic remedies see H. E. Sigerist, *A History of Medicine*, vol. 1: *Primitive and Archaic Medicine* (Oxford, 1951), 132 and O. Temkin and E. L. Temkin (edd.), *Ancient Medicine: Selected Papers of Ludwig Edelstein* (Baltimore–London, 1967), 232–4.

<sup>51</sup> We accept here Wilamowitz's *αὐτὴν* in the place of MSS version *αὐτῶν*, although—according to some editors—the MSS *lectio* might directly refer to the *Odyssey* 1.154, where we read that Phemius sang compelled by the suitors. Schweighäuser (n. 3) suggests *συμβουλὴν*—*ipsorum admonendorum causa*.

<sup>52</sup> This issue has been discussed by Rütter (n. 23), 233–4; see also Svenbro (n. 33), 21 and Grandolini (n. 33), 176.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Gulick (n. 30), 68: 'with the same intent', Friedrich (n. 30), 25: 'in derselben Absicht'. Gambato (n. 6), 47, takes into consideration the meaning 'mossi dallo stesso intento', but prefers the *αὐτῶν* and translates: 'assecondando il volere dei Pretendenti'.

<sup>54</sup> E. Brann, *Homer's Moments: Clues to Delight in Reading the Odyssey and the Iliad* (Philadelphia, 2002), 225, calls the song sung by Demodocus 'a hilariously uncensored story'.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Rütter (n. 23), 205: 'im Schweigen der Zuhörer wird der Zauber des Gesangs spürbar'. See also P. Jones, *Homer: The Odyssey 1 & 2* (Warminster, 1991), 128: 'Homer compliments a fellow-bard on keeping even the rowdy suitors enthralled', and S. West, in A. Heubeck, S. West, J. B. Hainsworth (n. 39), 116: 'In view of the suitors' general rowdiness ... their continued silence is to be construed as a remarkable tribute to the power of song and the fascination of Phemius' theme.' See also I. De Jong, *A Narratological Commentary on the Odyssey* (Cambridge, 2001), 36: 'Suitors listen in silent enjoyment to Phemius' song'; Manakidou (n. 33), 94: 'die Freier hören schweigsam zu und hiermit zeigen sie ihre Interessen beim Hören'.

suitors' enjoyment is of course a part of the narrator's irony, but not because the suitors are not aware that their fate is at the hands of one of the returning Achaeans,<sup>56</sup> but because they do not know that the goddess Athena—who brought bad luck and disasters on the Achaeans coming home—is now (in the form of Menes) close to them and getting ready to bring bad luck on them.<sup>57</sup> The scene from the *Odyssey* which the author quoted by Athenaeus refers to must have been well known to the readers of his work, just as the themes of the *Nostoi* must have been widely known to the audiences of epic performances in the archaic period. The pleasure produced by Phemius' song among the suitors might have had not only an aesthetic basis (the song enchants them by its poetic mastery), but might have been caused also by the fact that listening to a song, very popular among the ruling elites with their close-knit bonds to court life, ennobles the suitors.<sup>58</sup> Singing such stories for them at feasts legitimizes, in their opinion, their affiliation with the esteemed and honoured class of the society.<sup>59</sup> It seems, however, that the author of the text used by Athenaeus (or Athenaeus himself?) suggests—as in the case of the examples quoted above—the link between the content of the song and the situation of the listeners:<sup>60</sup> the suitors, when listening to the song of pain and disasters suffered by the Achaeans during their journey home, strengthen their hopes of a parallel disaster for Odysseus. Phemius' song lets them believe that the master of the *oikos*, which they occupy, would not return. It puts them in an understandably cheerful mood.<sup>61</sup> Phemius' choice of repertoire is not accidental. Poems in the Cycle – as we can assume from brief quotations survived and from Proclus' summary<sup>62</sup> – give the stories about *nostoi* with a strong emphasis on the idea that the Achaeans' disasters were due to Athena's wrath and her revenge for their crimes.<sup>63</sup> They show that guilt will not escape punishment. Phemius, delivering in front of the suitors the song which gladdens their hearts with the hope of Odysseus' death, does not, however, forget that the main task of *aoidoi* is giving moral advice

<sup>56</sup> Gambato (n. 6), 47 seems to simplify the matter when maintains: 'i Pretendenti ascoltano compiaciuti il canto dei Ritorni, ignari del fatto che la loro sorte è legata anch'essa ad un ritorno, anzi all'ultimo dei ritorni, quello di Odisseo'.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. West (n. 55), 116: 'Phemius' song reinforces the effect of Athena's visit'. See also A. F. Dekker's remarks in *Ironie in de Odyssee* (Leiden, 1965), 64.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. West (n. 55), 116; J. S. Burgess, *The Tradition of the Trojan War in Homer and the Epic Cycle* (Baltimore–London, 2001), 147 and Danek (n. 18), 59.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Humphreys (n. 33), 214 and G. Lanata's remarks, 'Omero e i suoi doppi', *Seminari Romani* 4 (2001), 175, on the suitors listening to Phemius' words: 'L'ascolto della *performance* aedica in un silenzio rispettoso e partecipe ... era forse più un'aspirazione che una realtà garantita comunque e sempre dal costume'.

<sup>60</sup> Svenbro's interpretation (n. 33), 20–1, of this passage does not seem to be convincing. He assumes that Phemius in his song must have been talking about Odysseus' death ('le héros meurt avant d'avoir regagné son île') and because of this must have delighted the suitors. As the proof of his hypothesis Svenbro quotes Telemachus' words (*Od.* 1.354); they are, however, aimed at Telemachus' mother's consolation and become a part of the topos: others also experience disasters. Cf. De Jong (n. 55), 37. But see Danek (n. 18), 59: 'scheint inkludiert, daß Phemios auch etwas über das Verschwinden des Odysseus zu berichten weiß'.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Most (n. 50), 40: 'and his [i.e. Phemius] choice of the *Nostoi* ... is a theme likely to gladden their hearts. For, notoriously, many of the Greeks who had finally achieved success at Troy were destroyed during the journey home or after they had arrived: the suitors, who do not know what happened to Odysseus, would obviously like to believe that he has suffered the same fate, and so the recitation of what they trust are parallel disasters buoys them with optimism and strengthens their hopes.' See also Rütter (n. 23), 205.

<sup>62</sup> *Chrest.* 277 Severyns.

<sup>63</sup> See M. Davies, *The Greek Epic Cycle* (Bristol, 1989), 77–83.

and precepts.<sup>64</sup> He demonstrates to all people who are able to read between the lines the results of certain wicked deeds.

The power of songs to persuade and to delight has been revealed also in the last example quoted by the author of the passage presented in the *Deipnosophistae* (14d). It deals with the Sirens' song<sup>65</sup> and its effect on Odysseus' mind. This part of the text, linked with the preceding example by the copulative conjunction *καί*, emphasizes that the Sirens' song provides delight to Odysseus and enchants him;<sup>66</sup> it offers him at the same time omniscience, which lures him and appeals to his ambition and knowledge. We can detect in this passage the same idea of the twin powers of the song, which was developed in the preceding examples dealing with *aidoi* and their performances. Odysseus is enchanted by the song, the content of which evokes his own past deeds and feelings (at *Od.* 12.189–90 the Sirens say: ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ' ὅσ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρέϊη Ἀργεῖοι Τρῳέες τε θεῶν ἰότητι μόγησαν). Simultaneously he is being educated<sup>67</sup> (the author of the passage alludes here to the *Odyssey* 12.191: ἴσμεν<sup>68</sup> γάρ, φασί, τά τ' ἄλλα καὶ ὅσα γένηται ἐν χθονὶ πολυβοτείρῃ). Although, in the case of Odysseus, the song is treated as the source not so much of moralizing as of education, it is an undisputed fact that this example illustrates the same concept of the effect of poetry on the hearers as do the previous four examples.

The whole passage concerning the role of the archaic singers, surviving in the Epitome version of the *Deipnosophistae*, invokes examples from the *Odyssey*, a text well known and appreciated throughout antiquity. Since the ancient Greeks of all periods paraded their knowledge of Homeric poems, it is no surprise that Athenaeus also—sharing with his contemporaries of the Second Sophistic<sup>69</sup> the same special kind of reverence for the past—used texts of his predecessors who cited Homer as an authority on various problems.

At first glance the passage appears to be a collection of material illustrating a certain problem rather than a comment aimed at solving a certain question.<sup>70</sup> Such an

<sup>64</sup> I do not discuss here the effect of Phemius' song on Telemachus and Penelope, since this issue is not the object of interest of the author(s) quoted by Athenaeus. For this subject see Most (n. 50), 41 and West (n. 55).

<sup>65</sup> The Sirens are the representation of an archetypal *aidos*, cf. G. B. Walsh, *The Varieties of Enchantment: Early Views of the Nature and Function of Poetry* (Chapel Hill–London, 1984), 6: 'The Sirens, who represent a perfect, divine type of the singer'; see also A. Heubeck, in A. Heubeck, S. West, J. B. Hainsworth (n. 59), 128: 'their knowledge is comparable to that of the Muses', Lanata (n. 59), 175: 'un effetto potente che ... viene descritto in termini analoghi a quello delle Sirene'. Cf. also P. Pucci, 'The song of the Sirens', *Arethusa* 12 (1979), 127–8: 'the Sirens present themselves ... as singers who possess the same attributes (power of memory, omniscience and pleasure) that the epic Muses possess'. See also De Jong (n. 55), 298: 'The Sirens' song may be seen as a supreme ... variant of the heroic song of singers'.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Walsh (n. 65), 15: 'The death one suffers in hearing the Sirens' song exaggerates but also typifies the charmed state enjoyed by the human singer's audience.'

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Walsh (n. 65), 6: 'the listener's pleasure seems almost to merge, as if in hendiadys, with the knowledge he acquires'. See also Grandolini (n. 33), 151: 'Con tale episodio il poeta manifesta la sua concezione della poesia, i cui punti centrali, "sapere" e "piacere", emergono dalla caratterizzazione che le Sirene fanno del proprio canto.'

<sup>68</sup> Athenaeus usually changes the majority of non-Attic forms into Attic, see R. Cherubina in his commentary on Athenaeus, in *Ateneo* (n. 6), 3.1137.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. G. Anderson, *The Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (London–New York, 1993), 75–7.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. G. W. Most, 'Preface', in G. W. Most (ed.), *Commentaries-Kommentare* (Göttingen, 1999), xiii, who says about such a type of commentary: 'Not all commentaries seem to try to solve problems in the texts they deal with. Some simply accumulate illustrative material—although it would be worth investigating awareness of problems and solutions.'

attitude towards literary sources, that is quoting texts in a display of erudition, permeates the *Deipnosophistae*, independently of whether a set of quotations is drawn up by Athenaeus himself or is adopted from an earlier author. The passage discussed here shows that the texts quoted from the *Odyssey* were treated by the ancient writer as a historical source: Homeric epics were believed to have mirrored the true manner in which early bards engaged in their vocation.<sup>71</sup> It is, however, also evidence for the awareness of the ancients of the strong connection between the two functions of poetry, which formed very important principles of ancient literary criticism, namely, the didactic and the entertaining values of literature.

Five examples illustrating the effect of archaic singers' songs on their hearers are introduced by the general statement about feasting providing the occasions for the creation and transmission of poems (14a). The information concerning the sympotic setting of artistic performances is supplemented by the comment laying an emphasis on the entertaining aspects of such performances: it is expressed in the form of an introductory example (with reference to Homer's words, *Od.* 4.17) that at Menelaus' palace the *aoidos* ἐμέλετο, and that the dancers were μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες. Next, the author of the text adds his comment on the meaning of the *molpe* saying: μολπῆς ... ἀντὶ τοῦ παιδιᾶς. The use of the word *molpe* by the author of the comment seems to allude to its general meaning: 'leisure', 'fun', 'pleasure',<sup>72</sup> and not to its limited quasi-technical significance 'dance with accompaniment of song'<sup>73</sup> (which we can safely attribute to Homer, whose line the author of the text refers to here).<sup>74</sup> Describing the *molpe* as a *paidia*, the author of the text is drawing attention to the entertaining qualities of the feast and its components, including artistic production presented there. The aspect of earnestness or seriousness (*spoude*) of Greek feasting, which together with entertaining elements played a central role in creating the essence of Greek commensality,<sup>75</sup> is mentioned in the next sentence, introduced with the adversative δέ, which here balances two opposed ideas rather than contrasts them.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>71</sup> The author of the text assumes that Homeric bards represent all features of real *aoidoi* of early periods. This way of thinking about the characters presented by Homer is also accepted by contemporary scholars, cf. I. J. F. De Jong, 'Homer', in I. J. F. De Jong, R. Nünlist and A. Bowie (edd.), *Narrators, Narratees, and Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature: Studies in Ancient Greek Narrative* (Leiden–Boston, 2004), 1.22: 'The figures of singers Demodocus and Phemius can be considered narratorial alter egos, in that they are a mirror of a primary narrator, who ... himself is a professional singer.' But see E. Stehle's opinion, *Performance and Gender in Ancient Greece: Nondramatic Poetry and its Setting* (Princeton, 1994), 171, who underlines that singers in the *Odyssey* are untypical in that all are strongly attached to one place: 'The *Odyssey* depicts a local bard performing at banquets ... and refers to a resident bard', whereas (171–2) 'all our other information from the archaic age is about bards ... who traveled widely'. For the general problem of the credibility of Homer's information concerning feasting and customs connected with banquets, see S. Sherratt, 'Feasting in Homeric epic', in J. C. Wright (ed.), *The Mycenaean Feast* (Princeton, 2004), 188.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. B. Marzullo, *Il problema omerico* (Milan–Naples, 1970), 252: 'Μολπή dunque è termine generico per il divertirsi'.

<sup>73</sup> The meaning of the *molpe* in Homer has been examined by K. Bielhovek, 'Μέλπεισθαι und μολπή', *WS* 44 (1924–5), 1–18; *ibid.* 45 (1926–7), 1–11; M. Wegner, 'Musik und Tanz', *Archaeologia Homerica* 3 (Göttingen, 1968), 43.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Gambato (n. 6), 46.

<sup>75</sup> Παιδιά and σπουδή were traditional termini describing two aspects of a feast. For the meaning of παιδιά in this context see F. Frazier, 'Théorie et pratique de la παιδιά simposiaque dans les *Propos de table* de Plutarque', in M. Trède, P. Hoffman and C. Auvray-Assayas (edd.), *Le rire des anciens* (Paris, 1998), 281–92.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford, 1950), 162, 165.

The idea of the effect of songs on the audience has been structurally elaborated as follows: *Aoidoi* provided entertainment to feasting listeners (introductory example of Menelaus' court), but their role was also comparable to that assumed by philosophers. Two examples (the *aoidoi* at Mycenae and Ithaca) prove the status of the *aoidoi* as entertainers and teachers (the didactic influence on the audience seems to be primary here). Next, the general remark that *aoidoi* are respected by men because the Muses taught them songs is made, and two further examples (Demodocus and Phemius) are quoted (the entertaining influence on the audience seems to be primary here). The last example (the Sirens' song) depicts both the didactic and the entertaining aspects of bards' songs in perfect balance.

The material within the passage has been arranged symmetrically. It forms a kind of a *tricolon crescendo* pattern:

general statement + example,  
 general statement + example + example,  
 general statement + example + example + example.

The whole passage discussed here consists, then, of the general statements alternating with examples ordered according to the principle of amplification (1+2+3), and constitutes a clearly shaped and cogently composed treatment of one of the essential points of ancient literary criticism. It is aimed at illuminating the close connection between the entertaining and the educative or moral function of poetry of the early stage of Greek culture. The author of the passage tends to value both functions as equally important, but seems to proclaim that every single song, targeted at a specific audience, each time brings one of them to the fore.

At this point in our considerations we must return from archaic singers to Athenaeus and his *Deipnosophistae*. To conclude, it would probably be true to say that he—when putting at the beginning of his work, which embodies aesthetic conceptions of the literary symposium, the remarks on the role of early artists at feast—ingeniously implied the adaptation of the traditional views on literature to the artistic assumptions of his own text: in this way he announces the symbiosis between aesthetic and didactic qualities which permeates the *Deipnosophistae* itself.<sup>77</sup>

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