

# Aristotle and Hellenistic scholarship

Autor(en): **Richardson, Nicholas J.**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique**

Band (Jahr): **40 (1994)**

PDF erstellt am: **25.05.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-660684>

## **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Inhalten der Zeitschriften. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern.

Die auf der Plattform e-periodica veröffentlichten Dokumente stehen für nicht-kommerzielle Zwecke in Lehre und Forschung sowie für die private Nutzung frei zur Verfügung. Einzelne Dateien oder Ausdrucke aus diesem Angebot können zusammen mit diesen Nutzungsbedingungen und den korrekten Herkunftsbezeichnungen weitergegeben werden.

Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Die systematische Speicherung von Teilen des elektronischen Angebots auf anderen Servern bedarf ebenfalls des schriftlichen Einverständnisses der Rechteinhaber.

## **Haftungsausschluss**

Alle Angaben erfolgen ohne Gewähr für Vollständigkeit oder Richtigkeit. Es wird keine Haftung übernommen für Schäden durch die Verwendung von Informationen aus diesem Online-Angebot oder durch das Fehlen von Informationen. Dies gilt auch für Inhalte Dritter, die über dieses Angebot zugänglich sind.

# I

NICHOLAS J. RICHARDSON

## ARISTOTLE AND HELLENISTIC SCHOLARSHIP

"Homer is not a scholar, nor yet Plato, nor even Aristotle. Aristotle has no consciousness of any broad dividing line which estranges him from the great writers whose art he criticises so coldly. No sword has pierced the unity of intellectual development which he envisages. The contrast here with the Alexandrians, with whom, if there are any beginnings, scholarship begins, is real. The line which separates the 'scholarship' of Aristotle from that of Aristarchus is at once broader and deeper than that which divides Aristarchus and Bentley. The Alexandrians are the first Greeks to feel a division between themselves and that mighty order of things which gave birth to the masterpieces of Hellenic art and literature. Between Aristotle and Aristarchus the whole perspective of criticism has changed..."

These words are those of H.W. Garrod, in his Gray Lectures for 1946, *Scholarship: its Meaning and Value* (Cambridge 1946, 16 f.)<sup>1</sup>. They are referred to with approval by Rudolf Pfeiffer in his magisterial *History of Classical Scholarship from the*

---

<sup>1</sup> My study at Merton, where I wrote this paper, was part of Garrod's set of rooms, and is now known as the "Garrod Room".

*Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford 1968, 88 n.2). Pfeiffer disagreed strongly with the more traditional view, expressed already by Dio Chrysostom in his speech on Homer (*Or.* XXXVI 1): "Aristotle, from whom, as they say, criticism and grammar made a beginning." (The word γραμματική here is used in the wider sense of what we should now call literary scholarship or *filología*.) This view, clearly already established before Dio, was echoed by many modern scholars (cf. R. Pfeiffer, *op.cit.*, 67). Pfeiffer however argued that we must see the Hellenistic age as a new beginning: Aristotle marks the intellectual τέλος of the classical period, and with the end of the old political order of Greece, based on the city-state, came a clear break with the past of which "Aristotle and his personal pupils were yet unaware." "The whole perspective of literary criticism was changed", and "a novel conception of poetry, held by the poets themselves, led the way to the revival of poetry as well as to a new treatment of the ancient poetical texts and those of all the other literary monuments" (*op.cit.*, 88 f.).

This view of Pfeiffer's accords with one of the leading themes of his book, expressed on its opening page, that it was the poets themselves who led the way in the cultivation of the new field of classical scholarship in the third century B.C., and that this was in accordance with the older tendency, going back to Homer himself, whereby "poetry itself paved the way to its understanding" (*op.cit.*, 3). Certainly I think that few of us today would wish to quarrel with this emphasis on the essential links between the creative art of poetry and the interpretative skills of scholarship in the early Hellenistic period, and we are greatly indebted to Pfeiffer for his clear and detailed exposition of these links.

The question may, however, still be asked whether both he and Garrod were right to posit so definite a break between this period and Aristotle in the field of scholarship. To some extent,

as so often, this question may prove to be one of terminology, depending on how broadly or narrowly the term "scholarship" is defined. Aristotle never seems to have actually *edited* a classical text: for Pfeiffer was most probably right to argue that there is no basis for the tradition that Aristotle actually produced an "edition" of the *Iliad*, revised or corrected by himself (*op.cit.*, 71 f.); and it has been suggested that even the one "edition" of Homer ascribed in antiquity to a pre-Hellenistic individual with any plausibility, that of Antimachus of Colophon, may possibly have been rather a critical work discussing a series of emendations<sup>2</sup>. But once we move on from this point to wider issues of scholarly research, the picture looks less certain.

At the outset it is essential to confront a problem which bedevils the whole subject of the possible influence of Aristotle on the centuries which followed. We know that Aristotle's works were divided into the "exoteric" dialogues written for circulation to a wider public (but now lost), and the "esoteric" treatises designed for members of his School, which form the bulk of our extant works. But later tradition was divided about the fate of his library after his death. In his account of Scepsis (XIII 1, 54, pp. 608-9) Strabo tells a curious story about Neleus the son of Coriscus of Scepsis, who was a pupil of both Aristotle and Theophrastus, and who inherited the library of Theophrastus, which included that of Aristotle (bequeathed to Theophrastus by the master). Strabo adds at this point that "Aristotle was the first person of whom we know to have made a book-collection and to have taught the kings of Egypt how to organize a library". Neleus (says Strabo) left the books to his heirs, who kept them locked up and not carefully stored. They subsequently hid them underground to protect them from being acquired by the Attalid rulers of Pergamon (in the early second

---

<sup>2</sup> Cf. N.G. WILSON, in *CR* 19 (1969), 369.



c. B.C.), and much later their descendants sold them to the wealthy bibliophile Apellicon of Teos, after they had been damaged by damp and bookworms. Apellicon made new copies, filling the lacunae incorrectly, and published the books full of errors. Consequently, Strabo says, the earlier Peripatetics who followed Theophrastus had no books at all except a few of the exoteric works, and could not engage in any serious philosophical activity, but could only "utter platitudes on conventional topics" (θέσεις ληκυθίζειν), whereas the later school, who were better equipped after the books appeared, were compelled to call most of their statements probabilities, because of the number of errors in the texts! After Apellicon's death, Sulla removed his library to Rome when he had sacked Athens (86 B.C.), and the scholar Tyrannion got hold of it by cultivating the librarian in charge of it, as did some booksellers who used bad copyists and did not collate the texts.

Plutarch echoes much of this story in his *Life of Sulla* (26), adding that Tyrannion worked on (ἐνσκευάσασθαι) many of the books, and gave copies to Andronicus of Rhodes, who published them and made the current catalogues of the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus.

The disturbing thing about this depressing tale is that the first and last parts appear to be true. We know that Neleus inherited the library of Aristotle and Theophrastus, from the latter's will in Diogenes Laertius (D.L. V 62), and we are told by Poseidonius that Apellicon bought up Aristotle's library (Athen. V 214 d). Moreover, there is no doubt about the edition and catalogue made by Andronicus, probably shortly before 60 B.C. (cf. Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 24). But Poseidonius also tells us just how unreliable and disreputable a character Apellicon was: for example he had to leave Athens for a time because he had been caught stealing official archives from the Metroon! If the middle part of the history of Aristotle's library (between Ne-

leus and Apellicon) was due to Apellicon's own testimony, this immediately makes it open to question.

By contrast, Athenaeus (I 3 b) says that Neleus inherited the books of Aristotle and Theophrastus, but adds that Ptolemy Philadelphus bought them all, together with those he had acquired at Athens and Rhodes, and transferred them to Alexandria. This information, however, is also suspect: it comes in a list of early book-collectors, which includes Peisistratus and Polycrates, and this in itself is almost certainly largely mythical (R. Pfeiffer, *op.cit.*, 7 f.).

Modern scholars have on the whole viewed Strabo's story with scepticism<sup>3</sup>. The serious question is not so much what became of the books which Neleus inherited, but rather whether other copies of Aristotle's esoteric works were available, and if so to what extent. It is generally believed that the catalogue of Aristotle's writings preserved by Diogenes Laertius (V 22-7) dates from the Hellenistic period, and this includes many (but not all) of the esoteric works, arranged in a way which suggests the work of a member of the Peripatos. Moraux argued that this may have been done by Ariston of Ceos in the third quarter of the third century B.C., whereas Düring and others have ascribed it to Callimachus' pupil Hermippus of Smyrna<sup>4</sup>. In a more

---

<sup>3</sup> Cf. H.B. GOTTSCHALK, in *ANRW* II 36, 2, 1083 ff. and *Hermes* 100 (1972), 335-42; P. MORAUX, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen* I (Berlin 1973), 3-31. But see pp. 51 f. below, where J. Irigoin argues for its truth, and suggests that what Athenaeus refers to could be the purchase by Philadelphus of the "bibliothèque de documentation réunie par Aristote et Théophraste", whereas the esoteric works, i.e. the papers and notes of Aristotle's own lectures, were kept in Scepsis.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. P. MORAUX, *Les listes anciennes des ouvrages d'Aristote* (Louvain 1951), especially 243 f.; I. DÜRING, in *Classica et Medievalia* 17 (1956), 11-21. For a review of other opinions cf. P. MORAUX, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen* I (Berlin 1973), 4 n.2.

recent work Moraux concluded, after a careful review of the evidence, that some at least of the esoteric texts were available and used during the Hellenistic period, but that they were probably not in general circulation<sup>5</sup>. As we shall see, there is indeed evidence to suggest that this is correct, although much of it relates to the documentary and antiquarian areas of Aristotle's scholarship (where, moreover, his work shades most naturally into that of his followers). The situation becomes a good deal less clear when we turn to such a key text for literary studies as the *Poetics*.

Strabo, as I mentioned, claims that Aristotle "taught the kings of Egypt how to organize a library". As it stands this cannot of course be literally true. But it does reflect what is a much stronger tradition linking Alexandria with Aristotle's school. Peter Fraser, in his book on *Ptolemaic Alexandria I* (Oxford 1972, 312 ff.), pointed out the close similarity between the Mouseion of Alexandria and both Plato's Academy and the Lyceum. The latter, as we know from the wills of Aristotle and his successors, was established as a society possessing a cult-centre with buildings. It had a shrine of the Muses, and by the time of Straton, Theophrastus' successor as head, it had clearly acquired an essentially collegiate and communal nature, with residential premises, a cloister and a garden, and also a common table. The evidence for the Alexandrian Mouseion, although mostly later (and in fact based on Strabo's account, XVII 1, 8, pp. 793-4), tells us that it had "a cloister and an arcade and a

---

<sup>5</sup> *Aristotelismus* I 3-31. For further discussion see A. ROSTAGNI (ed.), *Aristotele, Poetica* (Turin <sup>2</sup>1945), pp. lxxxvi-xcii; D.W. LUCAS (ed.), *Aristotle, Poetics* (Oxford 1968), pp. ix-xi, xxii-xxiii; F. GRAYEFF, *Aristotle and his School* (London 1974), 69-85; L. TARÁN, in *Gnomon* 53 (1981), 723ff. (review of Moraux); C. LORD, in *AJP* 107 (1986), 137-61; L. CANFORA, *The Vanished Library: a Wonder of the Ancient World*, transl. M. Ryle (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1990), 173-82; R. JANKO, in *Cronache Ercolanesi* 21 (1991), 7.



large house in which is provided the common meal of the men of learning who share the Mouseion. And this community has common funds, and a priest in charge of the Mouseion...". As Fraser says, the members of the Mouseion were clearly "regarded as forming a society for a religious purpose, a 'synodos', like the Peripatetic establishment".

The other main connection with Alexandria is, of course, Aristotle's own library itself: whatever its fate, it does seem likely that the very considerable collection of books assembled at the Lyceum had a direct influence on the creation of the Alexandrian Library, and that what Strabo says refers to a Peripatetic impetus of this kind<sup>6</sup>. The crucial link here is usually thought to have been Demetrius of Phalerum: while he was tyrant at Athens (317-07 B.C.) he is said to have helped Theophrastus to secure the legal position and property of the Lyceum (D.L. V 39; P.M. Fraser, *op. cit.*, 314 n.67), and when he went to Egypt, after his expulsion from Athens, there was at least a later tradition associating him with the foundation of the Library. Although scholars vary in their assessment of this, both Pfeiffer and Fraser were inclined to think that he did have an influence<sup>7</sup>. There is also a tradition that Ptolemy Soter attempted unsuccessfully to persuade Theophrastus to come to Egypt (D.L. V 37), and in the case of Straton we are explicitly told that he was one of the tutors of Ptolemy Philadelphus, together with Philitas and Zenodotus (D.L. V 58). This link with both Philadelphus and the two major scholars of the earliest Hellenistic period in Alexandria is highly significant.

Under Philadelphus himself, however, Demetrius of Phalerum fell out of favour, was imprisoned by the king, and eventually died from an asp-bite (D.L. V 78). Meanwhile

---

<sup>6</sup> Cf. R. PFEIFFER, *op. cit.*, 99; P.M. FRASER, *op. cit.*, 320.

<sup>7</sup> R. PFEIFFER, *op. cit.*, 99-104; P.M. FRASER, *op. cit.*, 114, 314-5, 689-90.



Straton returned to Athens to take over as head of the Lyceum between 288 and 284 B.C. (D.L. V 58). If this marks the end of the first period of direct connection between Alexandria and the Peripatos, then one must ask which types of Alexandrian research, if any, in the succeeding period seem closest in character and aim to those of Aristotle and his successors.

It is easiest to begin by reviewing briefly those areas where the case seems clearest, that is to say in the fields of antiquarian and documentary studies. It is in these areas that it is often most difficult to separate Aristotle's own work from that of his followers (both members of his own School and others), and we can see clearly how the powerful impetus for research and documentation which he created carried on right through the Hellenistic period. This applies equally to historical, literary and biographical work, and also to such subjects as ethnography, zoology, and especially what can rather loosely be described as paradoxography.

Thus, to consider only some salient examples, Aristotle's pioneering work of systematisation in the areas of historical chronology (the lists of Olympic and Pythian victors) and literary history (the records of dramatic contests) formed a basis for their future refinement by the Alexandrians, in the 'Ὀλυμπιονίκαι and Χρονογραφίαι of Eratosthenes, the "Table and List of Dramatic Poets" of Callimachus, and the later *hypotheses* of Aristophanes of Byzantium. (In terms of his universality and range of interests, incidentally, Eratosthenes comes closest to Aristotle of all the Alexandrians.) Aristotle's work *On Non-Greek Customs* (fr. 604-610 Rose = 696-703 Gigon) was followed by that of Callimachus, which may have supplemented it (fr. 405 Pfeiffer), and Callimachus' *On Games* (fr. 403 Pf.) must also have used the Aristotelian records. The Aristotelian *Politeiai* were certainly also used by Callimachus in his *poetic* work, as a source for some of his *Aitia*, and both share (along with Timaeus) the same particular interest in western societies

and history, for example those of Italy and Sicily (P.M. Fraser, *op. cit.*, 766-9).

It is also worth mentioning at this point a particularly striking coincidence between Aristotle's work on *Homeric Problems* and an elegiac poem of Callimachus (almost certainly the *Aitia*), which concerns their common interest in ethnography and customs. Achilles' treatment of Hector's corpse was a celebrated ancient problem. Porphyry's discussion of this quotes Aristotle's observation that it was a Thessalian custom to drag the corpse of a murderer around the tomb of his victim (Arist. fr.166 R. = 389 G. = Porph. *ad Il.* I 267, 1 Schrader, *Schol. B ad Il.* XXIV 15), and the same explanation is ascribed to Callimachus (fr. 588 Pfeiffer) by the Scholia (ABD and Gen.) to *Iliad* XXII 397, quoting the elegiac couplet

πάλαι δ'ἔτι Θεσσαλὸς ἀνὴρ  
ρύσταιζει φθιμένων ἀμφὶ τάφον φόνεας.

It seems most probable that Callimachus is echoing Aristotle's solution to the Homeric problem here<sup>8</sup>.

Such antiquarian researches naturally merge into the more indefinite genre of paradoxography, in which Callimachus is usually regarded as the pioneer (R. Pfeiffer, *op.cit.*, 134-5), but here too the Aristotelian impetus seems to be significant (cf. P.M. Fraser, *op.cit.*, 770 ff.). At any rate, the influence on the later paradoxographers of Aristotle's own *History of Animals*, and the post-Aristotelian ninth book of this, as well as the pseudo-Aristotelian *On Miraculous Reports*, seems clear enough, and Callimachus' own *Collection of Marvels* (fr. 407-411 Pf.) draws some of its examples from Aristotle and Theophrastus

---

<sup>8</sup> Cf. H. HINTENLANG, *Untersuchungen zu den Homer-Aporien des Aristoteles* (Diss. Heidelberg 1961), 22.

(Fraser, *op.cit.*, 771 n.387). It is worth remembering that in addition to his literary work Aristophanes of Byzantium compiled a *Περὶ ζώων* based on Aristotle, Theophrastus and the paradoxographers, to which we shall return later (Pfeiffer, *op.cit.*, 173; Fraser, *op.cit.*, 460 n.116).

Another field which is obviously important here is the nascent genre of literary and historical biography. Here Callimachus' own vast and fundamental work, the *Πίνακες* or *Tables of Persons eminent in every branch of learning, together with a list of their writings* (fr. 429-453 Pf.), a kind of universal biography and bibliography, gave rise to the succession of works by later scholars such as his pupil Hermippus, Sotion, and Satyrus: such scholars were sometimes referred to as "Peripatetics" in antiquity<sup>9</sup>. Behind them lies the widely developed Peripatetic tradition of anecdotal and semi-legendary biography popularised by Aristoxenus and many other followers of Aristotle<sup>10</sup>.

Questions of language and grammar were still in Aristotle's time relegated to rhetoric or poetics, or else used by him in his logical works (cf. *De interpretatione*). But his discussions of language in the *Poetics* (chaps. 20-22) and *Rhetoric* (Book III) are actually quite detailed and systematic, building on the work of the Sophists, and they could form a basis for the later development of a separate science of grammar, in the work of the Stoics, and above all in the *Techne* of Dionysius Thrax, who was himself actually a pupil of Aristarchus. It is surely important to recall that Dionysius' *Techne* began with the broad traditional definition of grammar as "the empirical knowledge of what is generally speaking said by poets and prose-writers"

---

<sup>9</sup> Cf. C.O. BRINK, in *CQ* 40 (1946), 11-12; F. LEO, *Die griechisch-römische Biographie* (Leipzig 1901), 118.

<sup>10</sup> The question of the direct influence of Aristotle's own work on this tradition is considered below, in the paper of G. Arrighetti.



(ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεύσιν ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ λεγομένων: R. Pfeiffer, *op. cit.*, 268), and is said to culminate in the art of κρίσις ποιημάτων. This carries on the Aristotelian view of grammar as essentially the handmaid of literary or rhetorical study<sup>11</sup>.

It is a notorious fact (already alluded to *à propos* of Strabo's account of Aristotle's library) that Aristotle's followers in the Hellenistic period from the mid-third century onwards did little to advance his own work in the major fields of abstract philosophy or of physics. It is striking that, apart from the possible early example of the Peripatetic Straton, Alexandria also contributed little in these areas, or for that matter in that of biological theory. By contrast, the Alexandrian achievement in other branches of science such as medicine, mathematics, mechanics and astronomy, was highly important (cf. Fraser, *op. cit.*, 336 ff.). Here they really filled gaps left largely untouched by the Aristotelian tradition (apart from some of the more philosophical aspects of mathematics).

It is now time to move on to the more difficult question of the editorial work of the major Alexandrian scholars, and in particular their Homeric scholarship. To what extent do they show an awareness of the critical principles laid down by Aristotle? We are thinking here first of Aristotle's work on *Homeric Problems* (fr. 142-179 R. = 366-404 G.), which was probably one of the published works, together with the dialogue *On Poets* (fr. 70-77 R. = 14-22 G.) and second of the *Poetics*,

---

<sup>11</sup> See the paper by D.M. Schenkeveld on grammar. Moreover R. Tosi, in his paper on glosses and lexicography, shows how Alexandrian work in this field reflected an Aristotelian approach, in terms of the various attempts at classification of types of expression, interest in ethnic and dialectal peculiarities, and also flexibility over the fundamental question of correctness of diction.



including chapter 25 which summarises his criteria for dealing with problems in poetry in general<sup>12</sup>.

Aristotle's approach (as stated in *Poetics* chapter 25) to the earlier tradition of such problems was extremely flexible, and it was based on the fundamental principle that poetry is not subject to the same criteria as the other arts and sciences (*Poetics* 1460 b 13-15). Thus if it achieves its proper aims as poetry, we should not criticise it on grounds of minor faults of inaccuracy, inconsistency and so on. Equally, many of the criticisms of Homer and other poets for moral reasons raised by Plato and his predecessors could be answered by consideration of the poetic context, or the historical conditions and conventions of the poet's own time. Alternatively, historical inaccuracies or impossibilities may be justified on the grounds of idealisation. Furthermore many difficulties are soluble by careful consideration of the precise words used (*πρὸς τὴν λέξιν*). Aristotle concludes this chapter of the *Poetics*, however, with the characteristic and significant *caveat* that poetry should avoid gratuitous errors of a rational or moral kind, i.e. those which are unnecessary and actually detract from the overall poetic effect (1461 b 19-21).

In the rest of the *Poetics* one of the most striking things is the clear differentiation between the Homeric poems and other early epics, in terms of the unity and coherence of the former, combined with Homer's dramatic qualities and his extraordinary genius as a story-teller or master of fiction. Thus his poetry has

---

<sup>12</sup> For a brief discussion see N.J. RICHARDSON, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, Vol. VI (Cambridge 1993), 31-5. For *On Poets* see G. Arrighetti, in his paper, below, pp.218 ff., and R. JANKO, in *Cronache Ercolanesi* 21 (1991), 5-64. It is highly probable that some at least of the basic principles of criticism laid down in the *Poetics* were anticipated in the published work *On Poets*: consequently Alexandrian scholars do not need to have had direct knowledge of the *Poetics* in order to follow in Aristotle's footsteps.

an emotional impact similar to that of tragedy, and uses similar techniques to achieve this. Moreover epic as a whole actually has certain advantages over tragedy, owing to its greater scale and its narrative mode, allowing for more variety of material, and also a wider range in terms of realism and fantasy. These aspects naturally can be misused to create episodic and implausible stories, and it is again part of Homer's genius that he avoids these pitfalls so skilfully. At the same time, Aristotle notoriously favours a much shorter length for any future epic poem (24, 1459 b 17-22), which shows immediately that he no longer sees Homer as the direct model in all ways for the contemporary poet. In fact, since he saw epic as the historical forerunner of drama, it is questionable how far he would really have envisaged this genre as a desirable vehicle for modern poetry.

Given the fluidity of the Homeric text during the classical period, it is not so surprising that Zenodotus, the pioneer of Homeric textual work, should have exercised such a free hand in preparing his edition of the poems. If Zenodotus actually knew Aristotle's work on Homer and his *Poetics*, one might suggest that in attempting to purify the text of supposed additions, inconsistencies, repetitions and other faults, he was really trying to bring the poems closer to the Aristotelian ideal of unity and completeness, as opposed to the shapelessness of the cyclic epics. But it is questionable whether Zenodotus fully appreciated the difference between these and Homer, since we sometimes find Aristarchus explicitly combating Zenodotus' use of cyclic evidence in interpreting Homer<sup>13</sup>.

Klaus Nickau, however, has suggested that in his attempts to deal with inconsistencies of action and character and factual inaccuracies Zenodotus may indeed be working within the

---

<sup>13</sup> A. SEVERYNS, *Le cycle épique dans l'école d'Aristarque* (Liège 1928), 98 f.

tradition of Aristotle's *Homeric Problems* and chapter 25 of the *Poetics*, and that he may be aware of Aristotle's principles, even if he does not always apply them in detail<sup>14</sup>. But it must be admitted that, if so, he seems often to fall far short of Aristotle in his perception of what a poet may be allowed to do. For example, he omitted three verses of a Homeric simile because they described a male lion rather than a lioness leading its cubs (*Il.* XVII 134-136), a minor zoological fault; and (more notoriously) he altered a verse of Anacreon which described a hind with antlers (fr. 408 *PMG*), a case actually mentioned as a trivial fault in *Poetics* chapter 25 (1460 b 29-32)! He shows the kind of pedantry which Aristotle condemns as short-sighted in attempting to eliminate minor contradictions or improbabilities, and above all he is influenced by the kind of moral criticism which had been levelled at Homer by Plato and others: in fact, one often has the impression that where Plato argued that Homer *ought* not to have portrayed his gods or heroes acting as they did, Zenodotus held that he *cannot* have done so: either he was applying censorship to the poems, or else he was trying to *save* Homer from Plato's attacks. Thus for instance he athetised the verses in which Achilles insults Agamemnon as a shameless drunkard and coward (*Il.* I 225-233) which Plato had condemned (*Rep.* III 389 e), or the story of the quarrel of Zeus with Hera, Poseidon and Athene (*Il.* I 396-406), which belonged to a pattern censured by Plato (*Rep.* II 378 b ff.)<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> *Untersuchungen zur textkritischen Methode des Zenodotos von Ephesos* (Berlin 1977), 134 ff.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. also R. JANKO, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, Vol. IV (Cambridge 1992), 22-25. H. van THIEL argues, in *ZPE* 90 (1992), 1-32, that many supposed variant readings of the Alexandrian editors were originally intended simply as marginal citations of parallel passages. This is a bold and ingenious suggestion, but I find it hard to believe.



Given this apparent blindness to Aristotle, it is hardly surprising that Zenodotus wished to abbreviate the passage about Nireus in the *Catalogue of Ships* (*Il.* II 671-675), with its unique triple anaphora of Nireus' name, although this was actually cited with approval in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (III 12, 1414 a 2-4).

We know less than we should like of Aristophanes of Byzantium's views on the Homeric text, since these have been overlaid by those of Aristarchus, with whom he often coincides<sup>16</sup>. Evidently he was more judicious and conservative than Zenodotus, but he seems to have applied similar criteria, condemning or altering examples of inconsistency, repetition, unfamiliar expressions, and above all impropriety: such suspicion of impropriety especially affected the *Odyssey*, with its portrayal of an unashamedly materialist and semi-peasant society, so akin to the Alexandrians<sup>17</sup>. His dislike of such unromantic themes, coupled with his preference for a tidy and well-rounded narrative, might have contributed to his celebrated view, echoed by Aristarchus, that the verses (*Od.* XXIII 295-296) describing Odysseus' reunion with his wife (οἱ μὲν ἔπειτα / ἀσπάσιοι λέκτροιο παλαιοῦ θεσμὸν ἔκοντο) marked "the end" (τέλος or πέρας) of the *Odyssey*. This suggests that he was not interested in the point that the suitors' death left open the question of their relatives' desire for vengeance or satisfaction. But Erbse may be right to argue here that he was more directly following the view of Aristotle in his *Poetics* (17, 1455 b 16-23), when he ends his summary of the poem's plot with the suitors' death, and says that the rest consists of episodes. On this view, τέλος would be the word used by the Alexandrian

<sup>16</sup> Cf. W.J. SLATER (ed.), *Aristophanis Byzantii Fragmenta* (Berlin 1986), and CQ 32 (1982), 336-49; R. JANKO, *op. cit.*, 25.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. C.G. COBET, *Miscellanea Critica* (Leiden 1876), 225 ff. for a collection of examples from the Alexandrian critics.



critics (rather than πέρας), and they meant that the main plot of the poem reached its goal at this point<sup>18</sup>. If so, then we should have a definite example here of use of the *Poetics* itself.

As we have seen, Aristophanes wrote a work based on Aristotle's *History of Animals* and other zoological treatises (cf. fr. 377 Slater), and this raises an interesting question. Aristophanes is said to have abused Zenodotus because he altered Anacreon's poem about the "antlered hind" (which, as we have seen, Aristotle mentioned as a trivial fault in the *Poetics*), and he quoted many poetic parallels to support the original reading (Ar.Byz. fr. 378 Slater). He seems actually to have thought that the hind *could* have horns. But Aristotle categorically states in the *History of Animals* (IV 11, 538 b 18) and *Parts of Animals* (III 1, 662 a 1) that female deer are *not* horned. Slater has argued that Aristophanes actually altered the text of the *History of Animals* (IX 5, 611 a 25 ff.) in his *Epitome*, in such a way as to say that hinds *do* have horns!<sup>19</sup> It is questionable, however, whether he did this deliberately, in order to "correct" Aristotle<sup>20</sup>. But at any rate it does look as if he did not follow the line of reasoning taken in the *Poetics* on this point.

It is perhaps worth adding before we leave Aristophanes that in his work on drama, at any rate, he does seem to have made extensive use of Aristotelian ideas and terminology, and that these are reflected in the Scholia to tragedy<sup>21</sup>. Thus one

<sup>18</sup> H. ERBSE, *Beiträge zum Verständnis der Odyssee* (Berlin 1972), 166-77; cf. also C. GALLAVOTTI, in *Maia* 21 (1969), 208-14.

<sup>19</sup> *CQ* 32 (1982), 341-2.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. D.L. BLANK, A.R. DYCK, in *ZPE* 56 (1984), 19.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. A. TRENDELENBURG, *Grammaticorum graecorum de arte tragica iudiciorum reliquiae* (Bonn 1867); R. MEIJERING, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories in Greek Scholia* (Groningen 1987).

naturally expects him to have done the same in the case of Homer, even if here it is less easy to demonstrate in detail.

When we turn to Aristarchus it is again difficult to prove detailed correspondence with Aristotle's work on Homer, and there is (apparently) no direct mention of Aristotle by name in the Scholia explicitly ascribed to Aristarchus. But here it is (I believe) possible to make out a better case for believing that Aristarchus was aware of Aristotle's general poetic principles and often followed them<sup>22</sup>.

Aristarchus saw Homer above all as a poet, rather than as a source of moral or other forms of instruction<sup>23</sup>. He accepted the Aristotelian view (echoed also by Eratosthenes: Strabo I 1, 10, p. 7 and I 2, 3, p. 15) that the chief aim of poetry was to give pleasure, and realised that poets invent, adapt and shape their material by art to produce their desired effects<sup>24</sup>. He allowed that Homer drew on tradition, but saw that many stories could be invented *ad hoc*, for a particular poetic purpose. Hence inconsistencies could arise, although where possible these should still be accounted for, or sometimes removed. Above all he constantly distinguished Homer from the cyclic poets and later

---

<sup>22</sup> For recent discussion cf. J.I. PORTER, in *Homer's Ancient Readers*, ed. R. LAMBERTON and J.J. KEANEY (Princeton 1992), 70-80, who argues for this view; also D. LÜHRS, *Untersuchungen zu den Athetesen Aristarchs in der Ilias und zu ihrer Behandlung im Corpus der exegetischen Scholien* (Hildesheim 1992), 13-17, who is a good deal more cautious, but inclines in this direction.

<sup>23</sup> Aristarchus and Aristotle may have agreed in a tendency to avoid allegorical interpretations, although we do have one definite example ascribed to Aristotle (fr. 175 R. = 398 G.), of the Cattle of the Sun in the *Odyssey*. Cf. H. HINTENLANG, *Untersuchungen zu den Homer-Aporien des Aristoteles* (Diss. Heidelberg 1961), 140 ff.

<sup>24</sup> For Aristarchus' concern for the questions of internal consistency and poetic function cf. also D. M. SCHENKEVELD, "Aristarchus and \*Ὅμηρος φιλότεχνος", in *Mnemosyne* 23 (1970), 162-78.

authors, warning against reading into him versions of stories current later, and condemning what did not agree with normal Homeric practice. Behind this lay his close and detailed study of Homeric usage, which still impresses by its sharp-eyed perceptiveness.

This careful observation led to many discoveries in the field of poetic technique: for example, on the poet's use of conventional or formulaic epithets, the device of *hysteron proteron*, the use of vivid and realistic similes to enhance the epic narrative, and the contrast between the world of the similes and that of the narrative, the treatment of time and the interweaving of narrative sequences (a point anticipated by Aristotle in the *Poetics*: 24, 1459 b 22-31), the principle of τὸ σιωπώμενον and what the poet passes over in silence or does not elaborate, the use of ἀπαξ λεγόμενα (in contrast to formulaic practice), the essential structural principles of preparation and anticipation, and more generally the dramatic qualities of the narrative, the use of surprise and climax, and the postponement of an important theme to the point of maximum effect. Linked to all this are the Aristotelian issues of narrative plausibility and credibility, and the techniques by which these are achieved, together with questions of characterisation (consistency, propriety, and so on).

Aristarchus was also closely interested, as was Aristotle, in the essential differences between heroic society and *mores* and those of later Greece, and equally in possible parallels between the heroic age and the customs of other peoples or periods. Consequently he was able to avoid many of the pitfalls of interpretation into which his predecessors had fallen. At the same time he does still seem to show in a more moderate way some of the same limitations as they do in his judgments on individual passages. There is a certain lack of breadth of imagination at times which goes with his very precise and technical approach. Precision, clarity and "point" are the virtues which he most prizes, and verses which fail to meet these



criteria are often condemned or dubbed as "banal" (εὐτελής) in thought, expression or construction.

But behind such shortcomings, as with those of the other Alexandrian critics, lies the fundamental view, which they certainly share with Aristotle, that Homer is far superior to other poets. The differences of opinion concern the question of how to explain the apparent imperfections which remain, after the text has been purged of the more obvious accretions due to "rhapsodic" expansion, a task of purgation which (it is generally assumed) we owe chiefly to the work of Aristarchus himself.

I do not intend to discuss the tradition of Homeric commentaries commonly referred to nowadays as the "bT Scholia", since I have done so already in some detail elsewhere: suffice it to say that they are clearly influenced by Aristotelian principles of literary criticism, even if we cannot be sure exactly through what channels this influence was working<sup>25</sup>. Moreover they do actually quote Aristotle's *Homeric Problems* on a number of occasions.

It is, however, appropriate to say a few words in conclusion about the vexed question of Aristotle and the early Hellenistic poets, because Hellenistic scholarship and poetry are so inextricably interwoven, and because Pfeiffer stated so categorically that "the new poetical school of Callimachus and his followers was ostentatiously anti-Aristotelian", on account of its rejection of unity, completeness, and magnitude, in favour of discontinuity, variety and refinement on the smaller scale<sup>26</sup>. Pfeiffer had been anticipated by Brink, in his influential article on Callimachus and Aristotle<sup>27</sup>, which argued that Praxiphanes' opposition to Callimachus was due to the poet's anti-Aristotelian literary

---

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *CQ* 30 (1980), 265-87, and R. MEIJERING, *op. cit.*

<sup>26</sup> *Op. cit.*, 137; cf. also 95.

<sup>27</sup> *CQ* 40 (1946), 11-26.



principles. Brink, however, had conceded the Peripatetic character of Callimachus' scholarly work, a concession which Pfeiffer also makes, albeit with some reluctance<sup>28</sup>.

This is at first sight a somewhat paradoxical view, if we accept that poetry and scholarship were so closely linked for Callimachus, and also that in antiquity we cannot really distinguish the branch of study loosely described nowadays as "literary criticism" from that of scholarship in general. And in fact it is surely clear that Callimachus shared with Aristotle his admiration for Homer's poetic supremacy, just as he shared his poor view of "cyclic" poetry. Aristotle himself did not advocate direct imitation of Homer's scale in his *Poetics*, but rather a shorter form of epic poem, like that adopted by Apollonius Rhodius (*Poet.* 24, 1459 b 18-22). As we have seen, however, it is questionable whether Aristotle would really have regarded epic as the most desirable medium for modern poetry, given that he viewed it historically as the forerunner of tragedy, which in turn appears to be seen by him as having reached a peak of development before his own time (cf. *Poet.* 4, 1448 b 34-1449 a 15). Consequently he might well have accepted that new forms of poetry were desirable, or perhaps one should rather say new developments of older forms, such as Callimachus pioneered.

It remains true, however, that in the *Poetics* Aristotle pays remarkably little attention to any forms of "non-mimetic" poetry, even stating at the outset that Empedocles ought to be described as a physicist rather than a poet (1, 1447 a 16-20), whereas Callimachus clearly admires and imitates (for example) the earlier didactic, elegiac, iambic and lyric poets. But this seems to be tied up with the fact that Aristotle in the *Poetics*, perhaps

---

<sup>28</sup> "The learned collections and also the *Pinakes* may give the impression of being rather Aristotelian in subject-matter, despite their new purpose", *op. cit.*, 136.

because of Plato's influence, is so preoccupied with the question of *mimesis* (or representation) in poetry, and hence focuses specifically on epic and drama.

If Praxiphanes really did attack Callimachus for failing to write large-scale epic, and if there really was a difference of opinion over epic between Callimachus and Apollonius, these arguments may have turned not so much on whether Aristotle's views on epic were correct, but on the extent to which it was legitimate to see Aristotle as laying down precepts for the poets of the future, rather than analysing the poetry of the past. If the latter was his main objective, then Callimachus was quite justified in his search for new forms of expression. At any rate, I do not see how one can necessarily regard him as an anti-Aristotelian poet or critic.

Let us now return to the question from which we began. Were Garrod and Pfeiffer right to see true scholarship as beginning in Alexandria? The answer might well be "yes and no": "yes", if you confine scholarship to the meticulous editing of classical texts, "no" if you define it more broadly. What then of Aristotle's influence? How important was this? As we have seen, in many fields it can be regarded as crucial. When it comes to the major textual scholars of Alexandria the picture is less clear, and especially in the area of Homeric scholarship: but whatever the truth about Zenodotus and Aristophanes, at least it looks as if Aristarchus was working broadly in accordance with Aristotelian principles of poetic criticism and analysis. Whether or not he knew or used the *Poetics*, it seems likely that he had access to Aristotle's views in some form, and he very probably knew at least the *Homeric Problems* and *On Poets*.

In conclusion then I am only too happy to echo the words of Franco Montanari in his recent essay on Alexandrian scholarship<sup>29</sup>:

"Il ruolo di Aristotele e dei Peripatetici, con i loro interessi storico-letterari per le persone dei poeti e le loro opere... deve essere sottolineato come quello dei veri predecessori e ispiratori della filologia alessandrina. Il fermento decisivo fu quello aristotelico e peripatetico."

---

<sup>29</sup> *Lo spazio letterario della Grecia antica*, edd. G. CAMBIANO, L. CANFORA, D. LANZA, Vol. I, Tomo II (Roma 1993), 262.



## DISCUSSION

F. Montanari: Uno degli aspetti della *Storia della filologia* di Pfeiffer che sono stati più discussi, e spesso criticati, è il ridimensionamento che egli ha operato del ruolo di Aristotele e della sua scuola come portatori degli impulsi decisivi sulla nascita della filologia in Alessandria e sul formarsi dell'attività erudita di età ellenistica. Pfeiffer ha decisamente criticato la visione, già antica e ripresa tradizionalmente negli studi moderni, che indicava in Aristotele il padre o il fondatore della filologia alessandrina ed ha con questo aperto un problema e un dibattito che non sono ancora spenti e stimolano continue ricerche e approfondimenti. E' una questione ineludibile in questo settore e quindi sarà toccata più volte per diversi temi: a me pare che non soltanto a proposito della filologia in quanto esegesi dei testi, ma anche di lessicografia e paremiografia, biografia, grammatica, retorica, il ruolo di Aristotele e del Peripato emerga in modo innegabile. Richardson ha dato perciò avvio a uno dei temi portanti di questi *Entretiens*.

Mi pare da rilevare ancora una volta come in Pfeiffer gli elementi di legame fra Aristotele/Peripato e Alessandria ci siano in buona parte e vengano anche esplicitati: voglio dire che Pfeiffer non trascura affatto di menzionare Aristotele e il lavoro dei Peripatetici quando l'argomento lo porta a farlo, ma poi svaluta la connessione più profonda, Aristotele non fu il maestro dei primi filologi, i filologi alessandrini non erano aristotelici, Aristotele non fu il fondatore o il padre della filologia, e così via. Forse questi termini, il fondatore o il padre, non sono l'ideale: a me piace dire (come Richardson ha cortesemente ricordato) che Aristotele e il Peripato promossero la nascita della filologia, furono il "fermento decisivo". Credo ormai assodato che l'orientamento di Pfeiffer derivi dall'aver privilegiato in

modo eccessivo e per così dire isolato il rapporto poesia/filologia rispetto a un contesto molto più complesso e articolato che è quello di tutta la sfera dell'attività erudita intorno alla letteratura e la lingua. In effetti, penso che se mettiamo insieme tutti gli elementi che inducono a vedere relazioni concrete e profonde fra Aristotele/Peripato e il lavoro degli eruditi di età ellenistica — elementi che via via emergono con evidenza — saremo condotti piuttosto a sottolineare e chiarire sempre meglio che fu quella linea a fornire appunto i fermenti decisivi. In questo contesto, trovo importante che Richardson abbia ricordato anche il campo della cronologia e della storia letteraria. Si trovano nell'erudizione alessandrina spunti riportabili al "fare storia della letteratura", qualche esempio: la distinzione aristarchea fra ciò che è omerico e ciò che è ciclico e neoterico, il catalogo/classificazione di Callimaco, l'inserimento di dati letterari nelle opere cronologiche, probabilmente anche considerazioni di storia dello stile e della lingua poetica (per qualche cenno su elementi diversi da questi, vd. F. Montanari, *Introduzione a Omero* [Firenze 1992], 15 sgg.).

Io credo che si debba tenere ben presente anche il campo delle riflessioni sulla poetica, che non erano mai state assenti dal pensiero di poeti e filosofi: anche qui mi pare difficile eliminare Aristotele. Contrapporre la poetica classica, al centro dello studio aristotelico, a quella alessandrina da una parte è troppo ovvio, dall'altra può rivelarsi anche sbagliato, come ha mostrato Richardson; ma non è questa la prospettiva centrale in questa sede. Bisognerà invece osservare che la *Poetica* aristotelica rifletteva proprio su quella poesia che gli alessandrini studiarono con profusione di sforzi e di mezzi; e aggiungere che i filologi alessandrini, e non solo quelli di loro che erano anche poeti, non potevano trascurare il pensiero teorico sulla poesia: mi pare assurdo pensare che Aristarco non avesse idee proprie sulla poetica. Dobbiamo considerare bene quali sono le fonti che abbiamo a disposizione: è troppo ovvio trovare scarsi indizi su questioni teoriche ed epistemologiche nei frammenti filologico-esegetici conservati, nei resti di *hypomnemata* o nella scoliografia; che la *Poetica* di Aristotele non sia citata negli scolii è un'ovvietà che non dimostra niente: perché dovrebbe esserlo, a commento di quale passo (soprattutto considerando la riduzione del materiale)? Fornì invece strumenti e orientamenti di

pensiero, posizioni teoriche e atteggiamenti intellettuali: e naturalmente non è importante trovare che i filologi alessandrini erano in disaccordo con Aristotele su certi punti specifici o su qualche singolo problema. E' con Aristotele che la grande letteratura arcaica e classica comincia a venire guardata come il tesoro di civiltà di un passato, l'insieme della *paideia* della Grecia da capire, interpretare e conservare: questo atteggiamento "riflessivo" e "scientifico" è alla base di un'attività filologica estesa e profonda, che riprende elementi di tradizioni anche molto precedenti ma produce un cambiamento con novità significative.

Ancora una osservazione su un punto specifico. Io non credo che Aristotele rifiutasse l'interpretazione allegorica, almeno in una qualche forma: il fr. 175 Rose (= *schol. ad Od.* μ 128 e 129) dei *Problemi omerici* è un esempio che difficilmente si può pensare isolato. Probabilmente Aristotele ammetteva l'uso dell'allegoresi, anche se non incluse questo strumento fra i criteri esegetici del cap. 25 della *Poetica*. Penso che sia un punto su cui riflettere maggiormente.

*N. Richardson:* Pfeiffer's emphasis on the poetic impulse behind Alexandrian scholarship does seem to be the main reason for his undervaluing the more mundane or prosaic rôle of Aristotle and the Peripatetics. Was this somewhat "romantic" approach to scholarship perhaps at least partly due to his long devotion to the poetry of Callimachus? Otherwise it is not easy to see why he took this line.

As to Aristotelian use of allegory, it is certainly possible that he employed this type of interpretation more frequently in his *Homeric Problems*, but it remains true that we only know of one example for certain.

*H. Maehler:* Sie haben vollkommen mit Recht gesagt, dass Strabons Bemerkung, Aristoteles habe die Ptolemäer gelehrt, eine Bibliothek zu organisieren, natürlich nicht wörtlich zu nehmen ist. Andererseits war es sicher im Geiste des Aristoteles, historische, geographische, linguistische und viele andere Informationen möglichst umfassend zu sammeln, und dass Demetrios von Phaleron, sozusagen ein "Enkelschüler" des Aristoteles, beim Aufbau des Museions und der Bibliothek in Alexandria eine Vermittlerrolle gespielt hat, steht ausser



Zweifel. Deshalb darf man, ganz unabhängig davon, ob ausser den "exoterischen" Dialogen auch ἐσωτερικοὶ λόγοι, wie etwa die *Poetik*, damals nach Alexandria gelangt sind, davon ausgehen, dass jedenfalls Prinzipien und Methoden der Forschung des Peripatos durch mündliche Lehre dort verbreitet waren. Wie Sokrates und die Sophisten und überhaupt alle griechischen Intellektuellen, haben sicher auch Zenodot, Kallimachos und Eratosthenes viel mehr geredet als geschrieben, und auf diesem Weg Gedanken des Peripatos (wie Theophrast und Demetrios) weitergegeben.

Daneben hat aber wohl noch ein anderer Impuls gewirkt, den wir nicht unterschätzen sollten und der besonders die geographischen und ethnographischen Forschungen in Alexandria angeregt hat; ich meine die Fülle von Informationen, die durch Alexanders Zug nach Persien, Baktrien und dem Pandjab erstmals zugänglich wurden. (Sie haben ja auch zur Entstehung des hellenistischen Romans ganz wesentlich beigetragen.)

Dem gegenüber fällt auf, dass weite Teile des aristotelischen Werkes in Alexandria anscheinend keine Rolle gespielt haben: seine Physik, die Metaphysik, die Ethik, und die Politik. Der Grund dafür, zumindest was die *Politik* betrifft, dürfte gewesen sein, dass das Mouseion unter dem Patronat der Ptolemäer stand; das böse Wort Timons vom "goldenen Musenkäfig" traf ja zu! Alexandria war keine Polis wie Athen, es hatte nicht einmal eine *boulè*, es war die Hauptstadt einer absoluten Monarchie, und zwar — das scheint mir wesentlich — in einem fremden Land, konfrontiert mit einer sehr fremden Zivilisation. Das Bemühen, die grossen Leistungen der klassischen griechischen Kultur zu bewahren, erklärt sich z.T. aus der besonderen Situation der Griechen in Alexandria unter den ersten Ptolemäern, die mit der viel älteren und in vieler Hinsicht überlegenen Kultur Ägyptens konfrontiert waren.

*N. Richardson:* What you say about oral transmission is surely very important. I find your other suggestions very interesting, but cannot comment on them further here.

*C. J. Classen:* Following up what H. Maehler said, I would like to stress that when speaking of Aristotle's influence one should distinguish between his books and his teaching and bear in mind that, even if the story of the disappearance of Aristotle's library was true, both what Aristotle had taught and what his pupils had read and absorbed may well have survived in some people's minds; one must not forget that in antiquity it was less common (than today) to rely on books.

This leads me to another question: what exactly is meant by Aristotle's "library" in Strabo's story; does it imply that this collection of books included all esoteric works of Aristotle and that no other copies were available? This seems most unlikely; we have to ask further when, where and why were the works written which were later attributed to Aristotle, but which are now regarded as spurious (whether whole works or additional books added to genuine works)? If Aristotle's works were not available they could not serve as models for later writers from about 280 or 270 till 70 B.C.

*N. Richardson:* The point you make about what is meant by Aristotle's "library" is quite correct. There is a good deal of uncertainty and debate about what exactly this refers to (cf. P. Moraux, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen* I [Berlin 1973]). The question of works falsely attributed to Aristotle is a further complication, about which I do not at present have a clear view.

*D. M. Schenkeveld:* The centre part of Strabo's story looks like an attempt to explain why the Peripatos was not an influential school any more.

As to the knowledge of Aristotle's *Poetics* in the Hellenistic period, one should distinguish between knowledge of the *Poetics* itself and that of Aristotle's ideas on poetry. A strong case can be made, — as is done by R. Janko (in *CronErc* 21 [1991]) — that in his περὶ ποιητῶν Aristotle has discussed much the same topics as he did in *Poetics*; π. ποιητῶν (one of the exoteric works) was known. Apart from this, *Homeric Problems* is known to the scholars of the exegetical scholia, *a priori* one may say, the early Alexandrian scholars had a copy of this text in their library.

*J. Irigoin:* Je suis d'accord avec N. Richardson pour reconnaître l'influence capitale qu'Aristote et ses disciples ont exercée sur l'organisation de la bibliothèque du Musée et sur les méthodes mises en œuvre par les grammairiens alexandrins. Mais je ne partage pas toujours son avis sur les voies par lesquelles cette influence a cheminé jusqu'au Musée: malgré les rapprochements qu'il a proposés avec des traités ésotériques, il me semble que la tradition orale des premiers péripatéticiens a joué un rôle important, probablement même exclusif.

A propos d'Homère, N. Richardson nous a montré, dans des analyses très fines dont je schématise les résultats, que Zénodote ne partage pas les jugements d'Aristote, qu'Aristophane de Byzance y serait plus sensible et qu'Aristarque s'y conforme souvent. Cette évolution à rebours surprend. Ne serait-elle pas plutôt due à une réflexion critique qui s'approfondit d'une génération de grammairiens à l'autre (plus d'un siècle sépare Aristarque de Zénodote)? On aurait alors affaire non plus à une influence croissante à mesure que la source s'éloigne, mais à un phénomène de convergence.

Sur le problème, difficile et disputé, du sort de la bibliothèque d'Aristote je reviendrai demain dans mon exposé. Mais je voudrais dès maintenant soumettre à votre réflexion quelques remarques sur la forme que pouvaient avoir, un peu avant la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle, les ouvrages d'Aristote. Il ne faut pas tout ramener au rouleau de papyrus. Les *Didascalies dramatiques*, les *Listes de vainqueurs aux Jeux Olympiques* et aux *Jeux Pythiques* se présentaient comme des inscriptions gravées dans la pierre ou le marbre. Pour les traités ésotériques, on peut penser que les autographes du Maître étaient tracés sur des tablettes de bois enduites de cire; c'est sous cette forme qu'à la mort de Platon on a trouvé le manuscrit des *Lois*, dont la publication posthume a été assurée par Philippe d'Oponte. A la différence d'une copie sur rouleau de papyrus, l'emploi de tablettes de cire permettait à Aristote, d'une année à l'autre, d'apporter aisément à ses notes de cours les modifications ou additions qu'il souhaitait.

*N. Richardson:* The fact that Aristophanes and Aristarchus are more judicious than Zenodotus is usually seen as due to the growth of critical experience over this period, as you suggest. I agree that this



may pose a problem, if one wishes to argue for the influence of Aristotle on these scholars.

*G. Arrighetti:* Desidero aggiungere qualche considerazione riguardo alla biblioteca di Aristotele e, in particolare, riguardo all'ipotesi avanzata da J. Irigoin che le opere di cui parla la tradizione straboniana fossero conservate su tavolette cerate. L'ipotesi è del tutto plausibile: oltre al precedente costituito dalle *Leggi* platoniche, è da tener presente che, dal momento che sarebbe inverosimile che tutte le copie disponibili delle opere esoteriche aristoteliche fossero state occultate, è anche possibile pensare che la famosa biblioteca del Peripato fosse costituita da autografi e appunti di Aristotele stesso o dei suoi scolari (cfr. I. Düring, in *RE Suppl.*-Bd. XI [1968], coll. 190-200). Che l'occultamento delle opere aristoteliche non potesse significare che nessun esemplare era in circolazione può esser comprovato da molti fatti; fra gli altri c'è la circostanza che un frammento di lettera di Epicuro (n. [127] Arr.<sup>2</sup>) conservato nel *PHerc.* 1005 risalente agli anni 270 circa testimonia che Epicuro scriveva a qualcuno riguardo alla *Fisica* e gli *Analitici*: ciò vuol dire che queste opere, anche se non facili a reperirsi, non erano ignote (cfr. le documentate e sensate osservazioni di A. Angeli in *Filodemo. Agli amici di scuola* (*PHerc.* 1005), "La scuola di Epicuro" 7 [Napoli 1988], 233-240).

*N. Richardson:* It has indeed been suggested that the story in Strabo could refer only to the autograph copies of Aristotle's (and Theophrastus's) own works.

The evidence about Epicurus is clearly important for knowledge of some of the esoteric works in the first part of the third century B.C. (before 270): cf. also P. Moraux, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen* I, 3 n.l., 11. It does not, however, on its own, take us very far down into this century, in relation to the story of Neleus' heirs.

*F. Montanari:* Il fatto che i primi filologi siano anche poeti di mestiere è senz'altro vero, però è anche vero che il pioniere Zenodoto non rientra bene in questo quadro e la sua figura creava imbarazzo anche a Pfeiffer.

Ma voglio tornare sulla questione dell'aristotelismo, che andrebbe crescendo da Zenodoto a Aristarco. Credo che bisognerebbe riconsiderare un poco l'idea che Zenodoto e Aristofane di Bisanzio sono meno aristotelici di Aristarco, e soprattutto chiarire cosa si intende per "aristotelico" e "aristotelismo": bisogna tenere ben conto della varietà di interessi e di sviluppi dei diversi Peripatetici della scuola dopo Aristotele. A me non sembra di vedere molto di antiaristotelico nemmeno in Zenodoto, anche i criteri ritenuti morali non sempre lo sono: il *πρέπον* è spesso un concetto estetico, utilizzato ad esempio per la coerenza nella costruzione dell'*ethos* del personaggio. E per Aristofane, bisogna considerare tutto l'insieme della sua opera, non soltanto la critica omerica: pensiamo alle *Λέξεις*, all'epitome del *Περὶ ζώων*, eccetera. Consideriamo anche quanto sono limitate le nostre conoscenze delle fasi prearistarchee, ritagliate in misura considerevole sulla base di quello su cui Aristarco dissentiva.

G. Arrighetti: A proposito del principio del *πρέπον* nella critica alessandrina è opportuno tener presente che già Platone ne aveva trattato come conoscenza propria dei rapsodi (*Ione* 540 b 3 ss.). Sulla base di questo criterio Aristarco condannava *Il. II* 791-795, come testimonia il frammento di *hypomnema* di *POxy.* 1086, 60-73.

D. M. Schenkeveld: Fraser's point about the close similarity between the Mouseion and both the Academy and the Lyceum can be made stronger when taking into account A. Dihle's observation that the members of the Museum were called *φιλόσοφοι* (in *Entretiens Hardt* 32 [1986], 201).

I have some difficulty in accepting your view on the attitudes of Zenodotus and Aristophanes towards Homer. Cobet's article is a product of Romanticism but, as I argued in *Mnem.* 1970, 166-8, he misunderstands the meaning of *τὸ πρέπον* and *ἀπρεπές* in the scholia. These words do not look at (im)propriety and such notions, but at the internal (in)consistency in Homer's epics. Zenodotus may well have thought that Achilles' insults against Agamemnon are inconsistent with Achilles' conduct in the *Ilias* (see also K. Nickau, *Untersuchungen*,

218-21), in much the same way as, at another occasion, Aristarchus saves the Homeric picture of Achilles.

When Aristotle says that the occurrence of "a hind with antlers" is a trivial fault, Zenodotus will have disagreed. Aristotle was not yet the only authority.

The traditional views on the use of allegorism in the Hellenistic period have been challenged by A. A. Long, in *Homer's Ancient Readers*, ed. R. Lamberton & J.J. Keaney (Princeton 1992), 41-66, and some revision is necessary.

*N. Richardson:* I agree that Cobet may have gone too far in his assessment of τὸ πρέπον, and there is much to be said for the point which you and Nickau have both made. At the same time, I am not persuaded that internal consistency is the sole relevant criterion here.

As you said yourself in *Mnemosyne* 1970, even Aristarchus was to some extent governed by the assumptions of his own time, and there surely are many occasions where Zenodotus or Aristophanes argued for example that "a Homeric hero or god *cannot* behave in this way", because their concept of Homeric ethics was too limited.

*R. Tosi:* Se la *Poetica* è essenzialmente una riflessione sulla poesia del passato, l'influenza sulla cultura alessandrina delle idee in essa esposte appare vasta. La "glossa", ad es., in essa è vista anche come una marca stilistica del linguaggio poetico ed in particolare epico (cf. ad es. 22, 1459 a 10): non pensa che la glossografia e lessicografia alessandrine presuppongano questa concettualizzazione?

Può essere di un qualche interesse per il suo discorso sull'influenza della *Poetica* la figura di Neottolema di Pario (futura fonte d'Orazio), legato ad Aristotele ma che per certi versi sembra avere collegamento con la cultura alessandrina?

*N. Richardson:* I agree that Alexandrian interest in lexicography and proverbs fits in with Aristotle's ideas (as you say in your paper).

The point about Neoptolemus of Parium is extremely interesting, especially since he was also a glossographer, and so shows an unusual combination of interests in poetic theory and linguistic practice.



A. Hurst: On peut se demander s'il n'y aurait pas des indices d'une relation entre la *Poétique* d'Aristote et Lycophron:

— tout d'abord, auteur d'un *περὶ κωμῳδίας*, Lycophron pourrait avoir eu sous les yeux la fameuse partie de la *Poétique* que nous avons perdue. Mais cela est purement spéculatif, car ce qui nous reste par Athénée ne permet pas de se prononcer sur ce point. On concédera cependant que si le texte d'Aristote se trouvait à la bibliothèque d'Alexandrie, il serait surprenant que Lycophron n'en ait pas eu connaissance.

— en revanche, on notera que, dans l'*Alexandra*, Lycophron prend soin de préciser par la bouche du serviteur que la prophétie de Cassandre commence à l'aube (v. 16). Il fait même de cette aube un moment crucial en ceci que le jour se lève simultanément sur le paysage troyen et sur le texte: c'est par l'aube qu'est introduite l'énigme dont la solution permet à l'auditeur de comprendre que depuis le début du texte, le serviteur s'adresse à Priam, qu'on se trouve par conséquent à Troie, etc.: se pourrait-il que nous tenions ici une allusion à l'observation de la *Poétique* sur la "journée" tragique (1449 b 8) ?

N. Richardson: That is an ingenious idea, and one might compare the suggestion that the last verse of the *Argonautica* echoes *Od.* XXIII 296 (cf. Ed. Meyer, in *Hermes* 29 [1894], 478, L.E. Rossi, in *RFIC* 96 [1968], 155).