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‘The scourges of Homer’. Some remarks on the term *Homeromastiges*

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Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of the occurrences of the nickname Ὁμηρομάστιξ (“Scourge of Homer”) in Greek and Latin literature. In the singular form, the term occurs exclusively in reference to Zoilus of Amphipolis, Homeric critic of the 4th century BC and author of *Against Homer’s Poetry* (Κατὰ τῆς Ὁμήρου ποιήσεως). An apparent exception is the use of the nickname referring to Zenodotus of Ephesus, which seems to be due to a scholiast’s misunderstanding of Luc. *pro Im.* 24. The term occurs in the plural form three times. Among these three occurrences, one (Eust. *Od*. 1.301.29–31 Stallbaum) can be perhaps compared to a fragment of Zoilus’ Homeric exegesis (*schol. Hdn. vel ex. Il*. 1.129a **A**), and as a result, it is possible to suggest that when Eustathius mentioned the anonymous Ὁμηρομάστιγες he had Zoilus in mind as well.

Keywords

Ὁμηρομάστιξ; Ὁμηρομάστιγες; Zoilus of Amphipolis; *Zetemata*-Literature; Eustathius; *Odyssey*; *Iliad*; solecism

It is widely recognized that the ancient literary tradition is based on Homer, and all subsequent Greek and Roman literature was undoubtedly influenced by the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which were perceived as the foundation of the ancient *paideia*. The birth of the great Alexandrian philology was closely linked to the need to safeguard, transmit and interpret especially (but not exclusively) the Homeric texts. Therefore, there are only few detractors of the poet, with the exception of occasional criticisms related to minor inconsistencies and contradictions in his poems.[1] For, as Horace observes, even the great poet was sometimes caught napping, *quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus* (*AP* 359).

The most famous *Homeri obtrectator* is surely Zoilus of Amphipolis, who was a rhetorician, historian and Homeric exegete of the 4th century BC, contemporary of Plato and Aristotle, and author of a Κατὰ τῆς Ὁμήρου ποιήσεως in nine books (*Against Homer's Poetry*), where he raised punctual criticisms on specific passages of the Homeric poems. The context of Zoilus' exegesis is the so-called *Zetemata*-Literature, traces of which are preserved by the Homeric scholia in the form of questions and answers.[2] Zoilus' criticism of Homer condemns the poet's lack of respect for physical and natural phenomena. An example of this is his criticism in *schol. ex. Il.* 23.100 **T** (*FGrHist* 71 F 16), in which he takes issue with Homer's portrayal of the soul's descent into Hades of *Il.* 23.100, as the natural direction of smoke is to rise from the ground upwards. He also criticizes inconsistencies in customs and behaviour, as in *schol. D Il.* 5.20 **ZYQXABUILe** (*FGrHist* 71 F 7), where he ridicules Idaeus' escape without horses and chariot, arguing that he would have been much more likely to save himself if he had used them. Some Homeric images are also the object of Zoilus' hyper-rational criticism, as in *schol. ex. Il.* 22.210b **T** (*FGrHist* 71 F 15), where he mocks the position of the Moirai weighed on Zeus' scales, wondering whether they were sitting or standing.[3]

However, it was not so much Zoilus' exegesis on the texts of Homeric poems (of which very little has been preserved, i.e. 19 fragments) that made him famous, rather the generous set of biographical and anecdotal information that circulated about him within classical literature. There are several anecdotes related to the punishments that were inflicted on him by kings, admirers of Homer, precisely because of his stance as a Homeric detractor.[4] Adhering to a characteristic practice of ancient biographers, these biographical anecdotes were closely associated with the character of his literary output. For instance, various sources convey what was to be the nickname of the grammarian, namely Ὁμηρομάστιξ, "the Scourge of Homer". This nickname is explained in the *Suda*

1 This is also characteristic of Alexandrian philologists: on Aristarchus see Schironi (2018: pp. 453–456).

2 On the *Zetemata*-Literatur, see Gudeman (1927: pp. 2515–2517); Erbse (1960: pp. 60–63); Gärtner (1978: pp. 2511, 2515–2517); Heath (2009: pp. 251–255); Novokhatko (2015: p. 47); Bouchard (2016: pp. 21–25); Schironi (2018: pp. 535–539).

3 On Zoilus, see Blass (1874: pp. 344–349); Friedländer (1895: pp. 29–46); Pilch (1924); Pfeiffer (1968: p. 70); Gärtner (1978: pp. 1549–1550); Matthaios (2009); Williams (2013); Regali (2015); Goulet-Cazé (2018: pp. 421–436); Mayhew (2019: pp. 5–6); Pavlova (2019); Novokhatko (2020: pp. 112–120). The analysis of this paper is based on the edition of Zoilus' grammatical fragments, on which I am currently working.

4 On the anecdotes on the Homeric critics, see Fraser (1970); Weiß (2019).

(ζ 130 Adler *s.v.* Ζωΐλος [*FGrHist* 71 T 1] ~ [Zonar.] ζ 936 Tittmann *s.v.* Ζωΐλος [fr. 20 Friedländer]), which states that Zoilus was named Ὁμηρομάστιξ because he mocked Homer (ὅτι ἐπέσκωπτεν Ὅμηρον). From this testimony it can be inferred that it was Zoilus himself, rather than his work, that was termed Ὁμηρομάστιξ, as the relative pronoun ὅς clearly refers to the grammarian. This indicates that the hypothesis, formulated by several scholars in the 19th century,[5] that Ὁμηρομάστιξ was another name for the Κατὰ τῆς Ὁμήρου ποιήσεως, has to be definitely abandoned.

In this paper, the occurrences of the nickname Ὁμηρομάστιξ will be analysed, showing that in the singular form it almost exclusively refers to Zoilus of Amphipolis. The paper will also focus on one of the rare occurrences of the term in the plural, where again it is perhaps possible to see a reference to this grammarian. Several sources ascribe the nickname to Zoilus: in addition to the *Suda* and the Lexicon of Pseudo-Zonaras, see also Vitr. *Ar.* 7 Praef. 8 (*FGrHist* 71 T 3), Gal. *Meth.Med.* 1.3 (fr. 13 Friedländer), *schol. Porph. Il.* 10.274 **BF** (*FGrHist* 71 F 9), Eust. *Il.* 2.3.13–29 Valk (fr. 27 Friedländer), Eust. *Od.* 1.321.44–322.1 Stallbaum (fr. 39 Friedländer), Tzetz. *Exeg.Il.* 3.13 (*FGrHist* 71 T 2). An apparent exception is *schol.* Luc. 50.24 **K**, where the term Ὁμηρομάστιξ explicitly refers to the grammarian Zenodotus of Ephesus, who was called in this way for having marked spurious verses with the diacritical sign of the obelos and having athetized many of the Homeric verses.

> *schol.* Luc. 50.24 ὁ μαστίξαι τολμήσας–ὀβελῶν· Ὁμηρομάστιξ Ζηνόδοτος ἐπεκλήθη ὀβελίσας καὶ ἀθετήσας πολλὰ τῶν Ὁμήρου ἐπῶν. **K**
> 'the one who dares to whip–of the obeloi: Zenodotus is called *Homeromastix* since he placed the obeloi and athetized many of the Homeric verses.'

This is, however, only an apparent exception, as it is derived from the scholiast's misunderstanding of the text being commented upon, namely Lucian's *Pro imaginibus* (24):

> Luc. 50.24 ὁπόταν οὖν τὰ τοιαῦτα λέγῃ, μισεῖς κἀκεῖνον καὶ ἀπορρίπτεις τὸ βιβλίον, ἢ δίδως αὐτῷ ἐλευθεριάζειν ἐν τῷ ἐπαίνῳ; ἀλλὰ κἂν σὺ μὴ δῷς, ὅ γε τοσοῦτος αἰὼν δέδωκεν, οὐδ' ἔστιν ὅστις αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τούτῳ ἠτιάσατο, οὐδὲ ὁ μαστίξαι τολμήσας αὐτοῦ τὴν εἰκόνα οὐδ' ὁ τὰ νόθα ἐπισημηνάμενος τῶν ἐπῶν ἐν τῇ παραγραφῇ τῶν ὀβελῶν.
> 'If that was said, then would you hate even him (*scil.* Homer) and throw his book away, or would you let him speak freely in his praise? But if you did not let him, time itself let him, and there would be nobody who can charge him or dare whip his image, or label the spurious verses with the marginal sign of the obeloi.'

5 Blass (1874: p. 345); Lehrs (1882: p. 208); Jacoby (1926: p. 103) lent support to this hypothesis by considering similar compounds found in titles of polemical works, such as the *Ciceromastix* by Licinius (Gell. 17.1.1) or the *Aeneidomastix* by Carvilius (Ael.Don. *Vit. Verg.* 10), but the most recent critics have rejected it. See Apfel (1938: p. 250); Gärtner (1975: p. 1549; 1978: p. 1543); Matthaios (2009: p. 825); Williams (2013); Regali (2015); Goulet-Cazé (2018: p. 423).

In this text, Panthea accuses Licinius of being a blasphemous flatterer because he compared her to goddesses like Hera and Aphrodite. The man defends his own behaviour by recalling Homer himself and especially *Il.* 19.282–286 – verses in which Briseis, a barbarian woman and slave, was compared to the golden Aphrodite and other goddesses. None of the ancient exegetes condemned (ἠτιάσατο) these verses, which is why not even Panthea could condemn them. Here, Lucian mentions two different approaches to the Homeric text, the first exegetical and the second philological and strictly linked to the Alexandrian criticism of the text. These approaches are exemplified through two significant figures, who are not explicitly named but only mentioned *via* periphrases: ὁ μαστίξαι τολμήσας αὐτοῦ τὴν εἰκόνα ('the one who dared to whip Homer's image') and ὁ τὰ νόθα ἐπισημηνάμενος τῶν ἐπῶν ἐν τῇ παραγραφῇ τῶν ὀβελῶν ('the one who marked the spurious verses through the obeloi'). Undoubtedly, these two periphrases respectively refer to Zoilus' Homeric criticism and to the Aristarchaean philology, which generalized the practice of athetesis (and the diacritical sign of the obelos) at the risk of expunction. However, the scholiast misunderstood and combined the two clearly distinct (οὐδέ... οὐδέ) figures, erroneously interpreting them as referring to Zenodotus alone – the first Homeric διορθωτής according to the *Suda* (ζ 74 Adler *s.v.* Ζηνόδοτος).[6] More into details, the scholium identifies in the Alexandrian practice of the athetesis the very 'whipping' of the poet, perhaps as it was influenced by Lucian's condemnation of such practice in the *True History* (2.20). In this passage, Homer, on the Island of the Blessed, was asked by the protagonist whether the verses athetized by the grammarians were original or not, and he replied that all the verses of his poems were authentic, defining the Alexandrian philology as nonsense (not a φιλολογία but a ψυχρολογία). Further proof that in Lucian's text ὁ μαστίξαι τολμήσας αὐτοῦ τὴν εἰκόνα must refer to Zoilus comes from the comparison with another passage from Galen's *Methodus Medendi* (1.3 = fr. 13 Friedländer).

> Gal. *Meth.Med* 1.3 ἀλλ' οὕτω γε καὶ Ζωΐλος ἔνδοξος τὴν Ὁμήρου μαστίζων εἰκόνα καὶ Σαλμωνεὺς τὸν Δία μιμούμενος καὶ ἄλλο πλῆθος οὐκ ὀλίγον ἐπιτρίπτων ἀνθρώπων, ἢ τοὺς βελτίονας οὐκ αἰδουμένων, ἢ καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς αὐτοῖς λοιδορουμένων.
> 'In fact, Zoilus also became famous by whipping the image of Homer and Salmoneus, by imitating Zeus, and a not small number of scoundrels, who either do not honour the best, or slandered the gods themselves.'

In this passage, Galen speaks about sacrilege and ingratitude and compares the mythical figure of Salmoneus with Zoilus, who is famous for having whipped an image of Homer. Perhaps, these two testimonies allow us to hypothesize that in the 2nd century AD, an anecdote about the effective whipping of a Homeric image or statue by Zoilus flourished from the decomposition of the two components of the nickname Ὁμηρομάστιξ, which must be older since it is first attested to in our sources by Vitruvius.

6 For more on another confusion between Zoilus and Zenodotus, see *schol. D Il.* 5.4 **ZYQAUIGeLe** and Eust. *Il.* 2.3.13 Valk (*FGrHist* 71 F 7), where Zoilus is called "of Ephesus" (as Zenodotus). On the issue, see Friedländer (1895: p. 27, n. 6); Gärtner (1978: p. 1532); Regali (2015); Goulet-Cazé (2018: p. 422).

In the plural, the term Ὁμηρομάστιγες is found three times in ancient literature, specifically in two passages from Eustathius and Pliny (Eust. *Od*. 1.301.29–31 Stallbaum, *Od*. 1.439.41–440.2 Stallbaum, Plin. *NH* 1 Praef. 28). Whereas in the *Naturalis Historia*, *Homeromastiges* is not associated with any polemical observation of Homeric passages and seems to allude generically to potential critics of Pliny's grammatical books,[7] the other two passages from Eustathius' *Commentaries on Homer's Odyssey* seem to refer to precise criticisms of the Homeric text, under which specific personalities of grammarians are to be recognized. In both cases, however, no names of grammarians are explicitly mentioned. Considering that Ὁμηρομάστιξ in the singular form is found exclusively in reference to Zoilus, it is legitimate to investigate whether it is possible to discern behind Eustathius' reference to the Ὁμηρομάστιγες an allusion to the Ὁμηρομάστιξ *par excellence*, *viz.* Zoilus, or whether this epithet was used to allude generally to otherwise unidentified Homeric critics. The second passage was ascribed to Zoilus by Gärtner (1978: p. 1548), although Petzl (1969: p. 28, n. 2) claimed that here Ὁμηρομάστιγες was used to indicate Homeric critics in general. The passage contains several points of criticism of the dialogue between Odysseus and Heracles in the *Nekyia* of *Odyssey* 11, which can be traced back to different periods and different grammarians (among whom also Aristarchus, see Schironi 2018: pp. 646, 677) – for the analysis of which see Petzl (1969: pp. 28–43).[8] The object of the present analysis will be, instead, the first passage, from which we might draw interesting conclusions concerning the issue of the identification of the Ὁμηρομάστιγες and the relationship between this nickname and the figure of Zoilus.

Eust. *Od*. 1.301.29–31 Stallbaum ἰστέον δὲ ὡς τῶν τινες Ὁμηρομαστίγων, ἔφασαν πρὸς τὸ, οὐκ ἀρετᾶ κακὰ ἔργα, ὅτι καί τις οὐκ οἶδεν ὡς ἡ ἀρέτη οὐκ ἔστι κακία. πρὸς οὓς δίχα τῶν ἀνωτέρω ῥηθέντων ἔστιν εἰπεῖν καὶ ὅτι τὸ λεγόμενόν ἐστιν, ὡς οὐκ ἀρετᾷ ὅ ἐστιν οὐκ εὐδαιμονίζει τινὰ τὰ κακὰ ἔργα.

'You should know that some *Homeromastiges* say about οὐκ ἀρετᾶ κακὰ ἔργα that there is someone

7 Plin. *NH* 1 Praef. 28 *Ego plane meis adici posse multa confiteor, nec his solis, sed et omnibus quos edidi, ut obiter caveam istos Homeromastigas (ita enim verius dixerim), quoniam audio et Stoicos et dialecticos Epicureos que – nam de grammaticis semper expectavi – parturire adversus libellos, quos de grammatica edidi, et subinde abortus facere iam decem annis, cum celerius etiam elephanti pariant.* 'For my own part I frankly confess that my works would admit a great deal of amplification, and not only those now in question but also all my publications, so that in passing I may insure myself against your "Scourges of Homer" (that would be the more correct term), as I am informed that both the Stoics and the Academy, and also the Epicureans – as for the philologists, I always expected it from them – are in travail with a reply to my publications on Philology, and for the last ten years have been having a series of miscarriages – for not even elephants take so long to bring their offspring to birth!' Translation from Rackham (1949: p. 19).

8 Eust. *Od*. 1.439.41–44 Stallbaum διαβάλλουσι δὲ καὶ τὸν τοιοῦτον τόπον οἱ Ὁμηρομάστιγες διὰ τὸ εἰπεῖν τὸν ποιητὴν ὅτι τε τὴν Ἥβην ἔχει τὸν Διὸς καὶ Ἥρας θυγατέρα κατὰ τὸν μῦθον, καὶ ὅτι εἴδωλον μὲν αὐτοῦ ἐν Ἅιδου, αὐτὸς δὲ σὺν θεοῖς ἄνω τέρπεται, καὶ ὅτι ὁπλοφορεῖ, ὡς ἐῤῥέθη, καὶ ὅτι αὐτίκα ἰδὼν τὸν Ὀδυσσέα λαλεῖ πρινὴ πιεῖν αἵματος. 'The *Homeromastiges* also condemn this passage, because the poet claims that he (*scil*. Heracles) married Hebe, the daughter of Zeus and Hera according to the myth, that his ghost is in Hades, but he lives blessed in heaven among the gods, that he wears weapons, as has been said, and that, as soon as he sees Odysseus, he starts talking without having first drunk the blood.' See also *schol. Od.* 11.568 **TV** (for which, see Petzl 1969: pp. 41–43), which refers anonymously to the *zetemata*, attributed by Eustathius to the *Homeromastiges*.

> who does not know that virtue does not correspond to vice. Against those, in addition to what has been said before, we have to say that this saying means that, namely that οὐκ ἀρετᾷ is equivalent to "none of the bad habits brings happiness".'

Eustathius' passage comments on Demodocus' account of the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite. The gods comment on the vision of the chained lovers, Ares and Aphrodite, caught red-handed by Hephaestus, the betrayed husband. Two gnomic sentences open their reflections in *Od*. 8.329 οὐκ ἀρετᾷ κακὰ ἔργα· κιχάνει τοι βραδὺς ὠκύν. While the meaning of the second *gnome* is clear, "the slow catches the swift", referring to the capture of Ares by crippled Hephaestus, the meaning of the first is widely discussed in the scholiographic and scholarly tradition. The term ἀρετᾷ is now interpreted as a singular third person of the indicative present of ἀρετάω, in the meaning of "evil actions do not succeed",[9] now as a singular dative of ἀρετά/ἀρετή, in the meaning of "evil actions do not bring (lead) to virtue (to virtuous behavior)/are not found in virtue".[10] Eustathius himself quotes lines from this debate, adding the position of the anonymous Ὁμηρομάστιγες, according to which there was someone who did not know that virtue did not correspond to vice (τῶν τινες Ὁμηρομαστίγων, ἔφασαν πρὸς τὸ, οὐκ ἀρετᾶ κακὰ ἔργα, ὅτι καί τις οὐκ οἶδεν ὡς ἡ ἀρετὴ οὐκ ἔστι κακία). However, this sentence makes sense only if understood as a (rhetorical) question and not as an affirmative one (ὅτι καί τις οὐκ οἶδεν ὡς ἡ ἀρέτη οὐκ ἔστι κακία; "is there anyone who does not know that virtue does not correspond to vice?"), as its parallel in *schol. ex. Od*. 8.329e **H** seems to confirm: καὶ τίς οὐκ ἐπίσταται ὅτι ἡ κακία οὐκ ἔστιν ἀρετή; "and who does not know that virtue does not correspond to vice?" (answer: nobody). In this case, the Ὁμηρομάστιγες would then condemn this *gnome* as obvious and self-evident. The prerequisite for such an interpretation, however, is the reading οὐκ ἀρετὰ (or ἀρετὴ) κακὰ ἔργα, with ἀρετά without iota subscript and understood as a nominative – Doric perhaps – even though such a form never recurs in Homeric poetry. This *varia lectio* is, nevertheless, also attested to by the codex **U** (Monacensis Augustanus 519B) of the *Odyssey*, according to the apparatus of the Ludwich edition (1889: p. 179) and perhaps by the *schol. ex. Od.* 8.329g[1] **EHX**, as Buttman (1821: p. 295 and *ap*. Dindorf [1855: p. 385] "*manifesta altera lectio* ἀρετά pro ἀρετᾷ") seems to claim: καὶ εἴποι ὡς οὐκ εἰσὶν ἀρετὰ καὶ ἰσχυροποιοῦντα τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς τὰ κακὰ ἔργα. According to the same scholar, this variant could have also been transmitted by *schol. ex. Od.* 8.329e **H**, as can be inferred under the corruption τὸ λεγόμενον οὖν τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν· εἰ δὴ οἱ ἀρετῇ λεγόμενοι κρείττω τῶν ἄλλων καλοῦσι τὰ οὐκ ἀρετά, οἷον οὐ κρατεῖ οὖν καὶ τὰ κακὰ ἔργα. However, Pontani (2020: p. 162), the most recent editor of these scholia, suggests an emendation for both *schol. ex. Od.* 8.329g[1] **EHX** and *schol. ex. Od.* 8.329e **H**, in order to eliminate

9 See Apoll.Soph. α 43.9–11 Bekker *s.v.* ἀρετᾷ, Hesych. α 7138 Latte–Cunningham *s.v.* ἀρετᾷ, *schol. ex. Od*. 8.329a[2] **B**, *schol. ex. Od.* 8.329b[1] **EX**, *schol. ex. Od*. 8.329b[2] **EXs**, *schol. ex. Od*. 8.329c **T**, *schol. Hrd. Od*. 8.329d[1] **H**, *schol. Hrd. Od*. 8.329d[2] **EMaX**, *schol. V (Hrd.) Od*. 8.329d[3] **HMaVYy**, *schol. V (Hdr.) Od*. 8.329d[4] **X**, *Et.M*. 138.44–49 Gaisford *s.v.* ἀρετᾷ, [Zonar.] ο 1485.23–27 Tittmann *s.v.* οὐκ ἀρετᾷ, Eust. *Od*. 1599.29, 1.301.24 Stallbaum.

10 See Apoll.Soph. α 43.9–11 Bekker *s.v.* ἀρετᾷ, *schol. ex. Od.* 8.329a[1] **HP**, *schol. ex. Od*. 8.329a[2] **BD**, *schol. ex. Od*. 8.329c **T**.

the *vox nihili* ἀρετά: καὶ εἴποι ὡς οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐνάρετα[11] καὶ ἰσχυροποιοῦντα τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς τὰ κακὰ ἔργα and εἰ δὴ οἱ ἀρετῇ λεγόμενοι κρείττονες τῶν ἄλλων κρατοῦνται, οὐκ ἀρετᾷ, οἷον οὐκ ἀρετοῦνται τὰ κακὰ ἔργα. To hypothesize a (post-Homeric) variant ἀρετά is, however, not impossible: one of the two ancient interpretations of the form ἀρετᾷ, as has been already seen, actually implies a Doric form of dative, not found in Homer. In Eustathius' autographs (the Parisinus Graecus 2702 and the Marcianus Graecus 460) the reading is ἀρετᾶ, with the circumflex and without the iota subscript: this form could be due to a confusion between the original form ἀρετᾷ and the variant ἀρετά. The misunderstanding of the Ὁμηρομάστιγες would then have stemmed from a reading of a text that omitted the iota in the improper diphthongs.

This condemnation is close to that of *Il.* 1.129, which was transmitted by the *schol. Hdn. vel ex. Il.* 1.129a **A** (*FGrHist* 71 F 6) and ascribed to Zoilus of Amphipolis (and the Stoic Chrysippus, who probably got it from Zoilus). Zoilus identified a solecism, or a syntactical incongruity, in the verb δῷσι – a form that he understood as a plural, but referred to the subject in the singular, Ζεύς (σολοικίζειν οἴονται τὸν ποιητήν, ἀντὶ ἑνικοῦ πληθυντικῷ χρησάμενον ῥήματι).

> *schol. Hdn. vel ex. Il.* 1.129a δῷσι πόλιν Τροΐην· ... Ζωΐλος δὲ ὁ Ἀμφιπολίτης καὶ Χρύσιππος ὁ Στωϊκὸς (*SVF* 3 769 = *FDS* 601d) σολοικίζειν οἴονται τὸν ποιητήν, ἀντὶ ἑνικοῦ πληθυντικῷ χρησάμενον ῥήματι· τὸ γὰρ δῶσι φασὶ πληθυντικόν. ἀγνοοῦσι δέ· ἔστι γὰρ τὸ δῷ ἑνικὸν ἐκτεταμένον, ὡς τὸ λέγῃ λέγῃσι, φέρῃ φέρῃσι. τοιοῦτόν ἐστι καὶ τὸ ἐν Ὀδυσσείᾳ (*Od.* 1.168), τὸ 'φῇσιν ἐλεύσεσθαι' καὶ τὸ 'εἰσόκε μοι μάλα πάντα πατὴρ ἀποδῷσιν ἕεδνα' (*Od.* 8.318)· κἀνταῦθα γὰρ ἀποδῷ· διὸ καὶ τὸ ι ἔχει προσκείμενον. **A**
>
> 'δῷσι πόλιν Τροΐην: ... Zoilus of Amphipolis and Chrysippus the Stoic think that the Poet committed solecism since he uses the verb in the plural and not in the singular. They understand then δῶσι as plural. But they were wrong. The singular δῷ is lengthened, as λέγῃ becomes λέγῃσι, φέρῃ becomes φέρῃσι. This can be found also in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 1.168), 'φῇσιν ἐλεύσεσθαι' and 'εἰσόκε μοι μάλα πάντα πατὴρ ἀποδῷσιν ἕεδνα' (*Od.* 8.318). There would have been ἀποδῷ: for that reason a ι is added.'

The context is that of *Il.* 1.127–129, where Achilles promises Agamemnon, who is forced to give back Chryseis, a compensation three or four times greater from the Achaeans if Zeus would allow them to conquer the city of Troy (αἴ κέ ποθι Ζεὺς δῷσι / πόλιν Τροίην ἐυτείχεον ἐξαλαπάξαι). Zoilus condemned the poet for what in his eyes was actually a solecism, because a subject in the singular form (Ζεύς) was followed by a verb in the plural, as the scholium itself explains (τὸ γὰρ δῶσι φασὶ πληθυντικόν).[12] A similar observation about a solecism in the Homeric poems can be found in a fragment by Protagoras

11 ἐνάρετον is attested to in *schol. ex. Od.* 8.329b[1] **EX** and in Elias in *Arist. categ.* (*CAG* XVIII/1) 225.9 Busse.

12 This confusion is also attested to elsewhere, specifically in a lemma of the *Lexicon* by Apollonius the Sophist (61.15 Bekker *s.v.* δῶσι) from the manuscript Coislinianus 345 (*codex unicus* for the lexicon), where δῶσι is glossed with δῷ and where also *Il.* 1.129 is quoted (δῶσι· ὅταν ἐν κοινῇ ἀντὶ τοῦ δῷ· "αί κέ ποθι Ζεὺς δῳσι").

(80 A 28 *VS*).[13] However, in this fragment Protagoras merely observes that an apparently grammatically correct expression is in fact a solecism (μῆνιν...οὐλομένην in *Il.* 1.1–2) and that, on the contrary, an apparently incorrect expression is not a solecism (μῆνιν... οὐλόμενον). For Homer's readers, therefore, μῆνιν...οὐλομένην would not have been an error (οὐ φαίνεται δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις), and, for this reason, perhaps the poet would have opted for this solution. If we hypothesize that Zoilus followed in the footsteps of Protagoras, it is possible to read Zoilus' remark in *schol. Hdn. vel ex. Il.* 1.129a **A** as a simple observation (and not a condemnation) about the apparent correctness of the expression Ζεὺς δῷσι. The form δῷσι, however, is correctly a singular third person of the subjunctive aorist of δίδωμι referring to Zeus, an epic form with a double ending.[14] If, thus, we do not wish to admit that Zoilus failed to recognize this epic form (which occurs quite frequently in the text of the Homeric poems), we must assume that Zoilus read δῶσι without the iota subscript, that is a third plural person as most of the recent critics and many scholars seem to claim.[15] Whether δῶσι was a true *varia lectio*,[16] or a (wrong) form generated by confusion, it was the reading of the Homeric text consulted by Zoilus ‑ that with which he took issue.

Like the misunderstanding of the *gnome* οὐκ ἀρετᾷ κακὰ ἔργα of *Od.* 8.329 from the anonymous Ὁμηρομάστιγες, Zoilus' criticism of *Il.* 1.129 could also be due to a pre-Alexandrian copy that omitted the ι in the improper diphthongs.[17] The two condemnations are, however, only apparently similar: in the case of *Od.* 8.329, a logical criticism (a tautology) is raised, whereas in the case of *Il.* 1.129 the culprit is a grammatical (or syntactical) error (a solecism). The affinity of the exegeses is likely not accidental, and, thus, it is possible to imagine that behind Eustathius' generic τινὲς τῶν Ὁμηρομαστίγων was implied the most famous *Homeromastix*, Zoilus of Amphipolis. Zoilus was mentioned many times by Eustathius (*Il.* 2.3.13–29 Valk [fr. 27 Friedländer], *Il.* 4.970.3–15 Valk [*FGrHist* 71 F 17], *Od.* 1.321.44–322.1 Stallbaum [fr. 39 Friedländer]), who referred to him twice by his nickname (*Il.* 2.3.13–29 Valk, *Od.* 1.321.44–322.1 Stallbaum). It is, however, possible that here Eustathius not only hinted at Zoilus but also at other Homeric exegetes; this hypothesis would also explain the untypical plural. Nevertheless, the comparison between Eust. *Od.* 1.301.29–31 Stallbaum and *schol. Hdn. vel ex. Il.* 1.129a[1] **A** is interesting, because even if it does not attest to an excerpt of Zoilus' Homeric exegesis (which must have been larger than what the sparse evidence of the scholiographic tradition reveals to

13 For more on the concept of solecism, see Flobert (1986); Pagani (2015: p. 804); Sandri (2020: pp. 15–49). Regarding the solecism in Protagoras, see Lougovaya & Ast (2004).

14 Or lengthening (ἐπέκτασις), as Herodian observes and as testified to in other scholia or *Etymologica*: see *schol. Hdn. Il.* 1.129b **bT**, *schol. D Il.* 1.129 **ZYQ**, *schol. Il.* 1.129 **Ge**, *Et.Gud.* δ 387.9–15 de Stefani *s.v.* δῷσι, *Et.M.* 294.14–18 Gaisford *s.v.* δῷσι, *Et.Sym.* δ 421 Baldi *s.v.* δῷσι, Eust. *Il.* 1.105.5–8 Valk.

15 See Cobet (1876: pp. 261, 339); Ludwich (1884: p. 181); Friedländer (1895: p. 14); Leaf (1900: p. 14); Jacoby (1926: p. 111); Williams (2013).

16 Perhaps an older equivalent of δῷσι, as West (1998: p. XXXI) thinks.

17 According to Cobet (1876: pp. 258–263, 339–342), this omission was common in pre-Alexandrine texts, as several indications in the Homeric scholia derived directly from the Aristarchaean exegesis seem to attest (μετὰ τοῦ ι, σὺν τῷ ι, χωρὶς τοῦ ι, ἄνευ τοῦ ι); this would appear to demonstrate the presence or omission of this grapheme in the copies available to the Alexandrian philologists.

us), it does testify to a noteworthy similarity between the two exegeses, made even more interesting by the use of the rare nickname Ὁμηρομάστιγες to indicate the anonymous authors of the criticism of *Od.* 8.329. In conclusion, at least one of the three occurrences of the term Ὁμηρομάστιξ in the plural has strong points of contact with Zoilus' Homeric exegesis. Furthermore, as seen in the first part of the paper, the nickname in the singular form occurs exclusively referred to Zoilus. This analysis allows us to conclude that Zoilus has been seen as the Homeric detractor *par excellence* since antiquity. As a matter of fact, every criticism of Homer (or of other famous poets) after the 4th century BC as transmitted by the scholarly tradition (including the Homeric reworks of the imperial age, such as the *Troikos* of Dio Chrysostom) necessarily had to deal with Zoilus' work.[18]

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18 On the influence of Zoilus on detractors of Homer and of other poets, see Bishop (2015). Even among the modern critics, if the author of an ancient criticism against Homer has to be imagined, Zoilus himself is taken as a fictitious example: see Mayhew (2019: p. 57 «one can image Zoilus (or someone like him) criticizing Homer for...», see also *o.c.* pp. 81, 128).

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