

ACHILLES' INCONSISTENCY IN ARISTOTLE'S LOST *HOMERIC PROBLEMS*: A FRESH LOOK AT FOUR bT-SCHOLIA OF THE *ILIAD*

My aim in this essay is to re-examine four bT-scholium of the *Iliad*.¹ Two of these have long been recognized as fragments from the *Homeric Problems*; but the other two, if my speculations are correct, might be previously unattested Aristotle-fragments. Eustathius plays an important supporting role in understanding these scholia,² as do relevant passages in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and especially his *Poetics*. I begin with this latter.

¹ On the Homeric scholia on the *Iliad*, see Erbse 1969, xi–lxvi, Kirk 1985, 38–43, Janko 1992, 20–28, Nagy 1997, Dickey 2007, 18–23, Nünlist 2011, and Montanari et al. 2017. I am interested in the bT scholia, which Dickey 2007, 19–20 describes as follows:

The bT scholia are so called because they are found in manuscript T [= *Burney MS 86* (British Library)] (eleventh century) and in the descendants of the lost manuscript b (6th century). They contain some Alexandrian material (much of it attributable to Didymus) but seem to come more immediately from a commentary of the late antique period (known as “c”), of which b produced a popular and T a more scholarly version. These scholia are also known as exegetical scholia, because they are concerned primarily with exegesis rather than textual criticism. They include extensive extracts from the Ὀμηρικὰ ζητήματα of Porphyry [3rd c. AD] and the Ὀμηρικὰ προβλήματα of Heraclitus [the Allegorist, 1st c. AD].

Note that manuscript B (*Venetus B* [*Marc. gr. Z. 453*], eleventh century) is the most important extant descendant of the lost manuscript b. It contains two levels of scholia (eleventh century, and twelfth or thirteenth century). Scholars use ‘B*’ to refer to the later scholia, though it is the other type that interests me in this essay. On ms. B and the B-scholia, see Erbse 1969, xvii–xviii.

² Eustathius of Thessalonica (12th c. AD) wrote massive commentaries on each of the Homeric epics. Their value in the present context “consists particularly in the assemblage of material drawn from the old scholia and the lost works of earlier scholars and lexicographers” (*OCD*³ s.v. Eustathius). See Wilson 1983, 196–204, Pontani 2005, 170–178, Cullhed 2016, 1*–33* and Pagani 2017. I have used van der Valk's edition of Eustathius' commentary on the *Iliad* (1971–1987).

1. The *Poetics* on proper and improper inconsistency in characterization

Poetics 15 opens: “Concerning the characters, there are four things [the poet] ought to aim at: first and foremost, that they be good (χρηστά)”³ (1454 a 15–16). Second, he should aim at a character being appropriate (τὸ ἀρμόττοντα), and third, that it be *similar* or *like* (τὸ ὅμοιον: scholars disagree about whether this means *life-like*, *like ourselves*, or *like the traditional character*)⁴ (1454 a 22–24). Last, but most important in this essay: “Fourth, it should be consistent (τὸ ὁμαλόν). For even if the one who is the basis for the imitation is someone inconsistent (ἀνώμαλος) and such a character is assumed, even so it ought to be consistently inconsistent”⁵ (1454 a 26–28). Aristotle provides examples for each of these save the third. For the fourth, he says: “an example of inconsistency is *Iphigeneia in Aulis*; for the supplicating girl is not at all like the later one”⁶ (1454 a 31–33). Late in Euripides’ play, *Iphigeneia* at one point supplicates herself before her father, and passionately begs for her life (1211–1240); but not much later, she defends her father before her mother, and passively accepts her fate, declaring that she should not love her own life too much (καὶ γὰρ οὐδέ τοί τι λίαν ἐμὲ φιλοψυχεῖν χρεών, 1368–1401). So Aristotle thought this rapid change of heart constituted poor characterization on the part of Euripides.

A bit later, towards the end of *Poetics* 15, Aristotle discusses how the flaws in otherwise good characters ought to be presented (1454 b 8–15):

Since tragedy is an imitation of people better than we are, [the tragic poet] ought to imitate good portrait-painters. For in rendering the particular form, while making [people] life-like they in fact paint them more beautiful [than they are]. So too the poet, in imitating [people who are] irascible or lazy or possessing the other such traits, [ought] to make those who are such [sc. irascible, lazy, etc.] decent in their characters; ...⁷

³ περὶ δὲ τὰ ἤθη τέτταρά ἐστιν ὧν δεῖ στοχάζεσθαι, ἐν μὲν καὶ πρῶτον, ὅπως χρηστά ἦ... For the text of the *Poetics*, I use Tarán–Gutas 2012. All translations from the Greek are my own.

⁴ See especially Else 1957, 460–461, as well as Hardison (in Golden and Hardison 1968, 201), Janko 1987, 109 and Halliwell 1987, 142. I have a slight preference for *life-like*.

⁵ τέταρτον δὲ τὸ ὁμαλόν. κἄν γὰρ ἀνώμαλός τις ἦ ὁ τὴν μίμησιν παρέχων καὶ τοιοῦτον ἦθος ὑποτεθῆ, ὅμως ὁμαλῶς ἀνώμαλον δεῖ εἶναι...

⁶ τοῦ δὲ ἀνωμάλου [sc. ἔστιν παράδειγμα] ἡ ἐν Αὐλίδι Ἰφιγένεια· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔοικεν ἡ ἰκετεύουσα τῇ ὑστέρα.

⁷ ἐπεὶ δὲ μίμησις ἐστὶν ἡ τραγωδία βελτιόνων ἢ ἡμεῖς, δεῖ μιμεῖσθαι τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς εἰκονογράφους· καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι ἀποδιδόντες τὴν ἰδίαν μορφήν ὁμοίους ποιοῦντες

What follows is a possibly corrupt line, which has been heavily revised by most editors, and is potentially quite important for my present purposes. The manuscripts give us:⁸

παράδειγμα σκληρότητος οἶον τὸν Ἀχιλλέα ἀγαθὸν / Ἀγάθων καὶ Ὅμηρος.

Now παράδειγμα σκληρότητος has full manuscript support. The primary sources are split between ἀγαθὸν and Ἀγάθων, and one primary source has μὲν after Ἀχιλλέα (though that is neither relevant here nor likely to be correct). I know of five ways in which scholars have dealt with this line (which cover everything from accepting the manuscript tradition to complete excision, and in between those extremes more or less radical conjectures):

1. Try to make sense of the text as is, without emendation. This was the approach of Vahlen 1867, who printed Ἀγάθων.

2. Conclude that the text is so corrupt as to defy emendation. This was the approach of Kassel 1965, who set the entire line between daggers (†).

3. Conclude that the text is corrupt, but conjecture radical changes to fix it. This was the approach of Else 1957, 475–482, who argues for reading: [παράδειγμα σκληρότητος] οἶον τὸν Ἀχιλλέα ἀγαθὸν καὶ <ὅμοιον> Ὅμηρος (“...the way Homer made his Achilles good and <like us>”).

4. Bracket the first two words, and print Ἀγάθων. This was the solution of Ritter 1839, and it was recently defended by Tarán, who regards παράδειγμα σκληρότητος as a marginal gloss (2012, 268–269); cf. Else 1957, 478. One would render the remains as for instance Golden did (in Golden–Hardison 1968): “just as Agathon and Homer portray Achilles.”

5. Transpose the first two words, and print ἀγαθόν: οἶον τὸν Ἀχιλλέα ἀγαθὸν καὶ παράδειγμα σκληρότητος Ὅμηρος. This was first suggested by Lobel 1929, 78 and has since been widely accepted – for instance by Janko, who translates the result: “E. g. Homer [made] Achilles good as well as an example of stubbornness” (1987, 20; his brackets). Halliwell 1987, Heath 1996, and Kenny 2013 offer similar English translations.⁹

καλλίους γράφουσιν· οὕτω καὶ τὸν ποιητὴν μιμούμενον καὶ ὀργίλους καὶ ῥαθύμους καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ τοιαῦτα ἔχοντας, ἐπὶ τῶν ἡθῶν τοιούτους ὄντας ἐπιεικεῖς ποιεῖν...

⁸ For details, see the *app. crit. ad loc.* in Tarán–Gutas 2012, 190.

⁹ For more examples of scholars who have interpreted this line in these various ways, see Herrick 1945 and Else 1957, 475–482.

Keeping in mind that the *Poetics* is almost certainly a set of lecture notes and not a polished treatise, I think it is possible to make some sense of the paradoxos.¹⁰ As παράδειγμα σκληρότητος has full manuscript support, I prefer retaining it, and in its location in the clause. And although one could make either Ἀγάθων or ἀγαθόν work, I have a slight preference for the former.¹¹ So I would render the line (supplying a past tense form of ποιεῖν, as Janko and others have done): “for instance Agathon and Homer [made] Achilles an example of harshness” (the implication of course being that Achilles is decent in his character as well). In any case, it is clear that Aristotle regards Homer’s Achilles as good but flawed (the flaw being harshness or stubbornness, and no doubt irascibility as well). And although he never in his extant works refers to Homer’s Achilles as inconsistent (in either sense), I expect he would consider him an example of a character that is “consistently inconsistent”.¹²

A passage in *Rhetoric* 2. 22 confirms – or at least supports the possibility – that Aristotle regarded Achilles as essentially good but flawed as well.¹³ There he claims that whatever the subject of a speech, and whether the speaker is advising or evaluating, facts are needed to support one’s case (1396 a 23–30):

It makes no difference whether it is concerning Athenians or Lacedaemonians, a human or a god, [one ought] to do the same thing: for even when advising Achilles, and praising or blaming him, and accusing or defending him, one must grasp the facts or what seem to be the facts, in order that we may say, based on these [facts], whether there is anything noble or shameful, in praising or blaming him; whether there is anything

¹⁰ I am grateful to Christian Wildberg for reminding me – in connection with this line – of the nature of the *Poetics*, and for making the case to me for preserving the manuscript tradition.

¹¹ As David Sider pointed out to me, Aristotle was fonder of Agathon than most, citing him ten times (most often in the *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*). Herrick 1945, 249 writes: “Neither ἀγαθόν nor Ἀγάθων, to be sure, makes any significant difference in *Poetics* 15. 1454 b 14–15; either way the sense of the passage seems tolerably clear”. This is ultimately true of the various ways of interpreting the line generally.

¹² Else 1957, 463 argues that for Aristotle Achilles is consistently inconsistent; and I accept his conclusion but not his argument for it (which involves excursions into the Aristotelian conception of melancholy). See also Hintenlang 1961, 117, quoted below in n. 33.

¹³ In *Rhetoric* 1. 6. 1363 a 17–18 and 3. 16. 1416 b 25–28, Achilles is treated as good, with no suggestion of any flaws. I argue, based on passages in the *Rhetoric*, that Aristotle likely defended, against objections, Homer’s portrayal of the lamentation and anger of Achilles (2019, 76–83). I think it likely that Aristotle regarded that characterization as consistently inconsistent.

just or unjust, in accusing or defending him; and, whether there is anything expedient or harmful, in advising him.¹⁴

A little later, Aristotle distinguishes common (κοινά) facts from particular or special (ἴδια) facts. In the case of praising Achilles, common facts would be those that apply to any great hero (he mentions Diomedes, 1396 b 10–14). He continues (b 14–18):

But particular [facts] are those which belong to no one other than Achilles; for instance, to have killed Hector, the best of the Trojans, and Cycnus, who – being invulnerable – prevented all [the Greeks] from disembarking;¹⁵ and because he [sc. Achilles] was the youngest to have gone to the war and without having taken the oath; and all other such things.¹⁶

Now even though the emphasis is on Achilles' goodness, there is the implication that he was not consistently good, having (possibly) committed shameful or unjust or harmful actions.

Whatever one concludes about Achilles' inconsistency in Aristotle's extant works, there is evidence that he discussed it in his *Homeric Problems*. In what follows, I want to take a look at two sets of scholia, both of which indicate that ancient Homeric scholars raised and discussed problems about Achilles' purported improper inconsistency. In both cases, I believe, Aristotle defends Homer's presentation of Achilles. Now Aristotle is not named in the second set of scholia; but I argue that their source too may well be Aristotle's *Homeric Problems*.

¹⁴ οὐδὲν δὲ διαφέρει περὶ Ἀθηναίων ἢ Λακεδαιμονίων ἢ ἀνθρώπου ἢ θεοῦ ταῦτο τοῦτο δρᾶν· καὶ γὰρ συμβουλευόντα τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ καὶ ἐπαινοῦντα καὶ ψέγοντα καὶ κατηγοροῦντα καὶ ἀπολογούμενον ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ἢ δοκοῦντα ὑπάρχειν ληπτέον, ἴν' ἐκ τούτων λέγωμεν ἐπαινοῦντες ἢ ψέγοντες εἴ τι καλὸν ἢ αἰσχρὸν ὑπάρχει κατηγοροῦντες δ' ἢ ἀπολογούμενοι εἴ τι δίκαιον ἢ ἄδικον, συμβουλευόντες δ' εἴ τι συμφέρον ἢ βλαβερόν. For the text of the *Rhetoric*, I use Kassel 1976. Regarding τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ἢ δοκοῦντα ὑπάρχειν: I follow Reeve 2018, 96 somewhat in translating this. Perhaps more literally, one would render it “the things that exist or seem to exist” (with respect to Achilles); but note LSJ (s.v. ὑπάρχω) B.4.b.: “τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ... , a man's record”, and see Grimaldi 1988, 283.

¹⁵ The story of the death of Cycnus, son of Poseidon and king of the city of Kolonai, does not appear in the *Iliad* or the Epic Cycle. Pindar twice mentions that Achilles killed him (*Ol.* 2. 82, *Isthm.* 5. 39); but for the manner of the killing (i. e. strangulation), given Cycnus' invulnerability to spear and sword, see Ovid. *Met.* 12. 72–144.

¹⁶ ἴδια δὲ ἃ μηδενὶ ἄλλῳ συμβέβηκεν ἢ τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ, οἷον τὸ ἀποκτείνειν τὸν Ἔκτορα τὸν ἄριστον τῶν Τρώων καὶ τὸν Κύκνον, ὃς ἐκόλυσεν ἅπαντας ἀποβαίνειν ἄτρωτος ὢν, καὶ ὅτι νεώτατος καὶ οὐκ ἔνορκος ὢν ἐστράτευσεν, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τοιαῦτα.

2. Three Aristotle-fragments on *Iliad* 24. 559–570

The context for the first set of texts is a scene in *Iliad* 24 that Aristotle, in the *Historia animalium*, calls the Expedition of Priam (8[9]. 32. 618 b 26: ἐν τῇ τοῦ Πριάμου ἐξόδῳ).¹⁷ Priam – prompted by Iris (with a message from Zeus) and escorted by Hermes (who promises him safe passage to Achilles’ dwelling) – leaves Troy and goes directly to Achilles to request the return of Hector’s body. As instructed by Hermes, Priam immediately supplicates Achilles. He offers him a large ransom, and asks him to feel pity and to think of his own father. Both men begin to weep – Priam for the loss of Hector and many other sons, Achilles for his absent father and for Patroclus. Achilles does feel pity for Priam, invites him to sit down, and in a relatively long speech describes how Zeus allots portions of good and bad fortune to each man.¹⁸ But Priam is impatient (553–556):

μή πω μ’ ἐς θρόνον ἴζε διοτρεφὲς ὄφρα κεν Ἔκτωρ
κεῖται ἐνὶ κλισίησιν ἀκηδής, ἀλλὰ τάχιστα
λῦσον ἴν’ ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδω· σὺ δὲ δέξαι ἄποινα
πολλά, τά τοι φέρομεν· κτλ.¹⁹

Do not seat me in a chair, O fostered of Zeus, so long as Hector lies among the shelters uncared for; but with all speed release him, so that I see him with my own eyes; and accept the great ransom that we bring you. [Etc.]

This angers Achilles (559–561; 568–572):

τὸν δ’ ἄρ’ ὑπόδρα ἰδὼν προσέφη πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς·
μηκέτι νῦν μ’ ἐρέθιζε γέρον; νοέω δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς
Ἔκτορά τοι λῦσαι, Διόθεν δέ μοι ἄγγελος ἦλθε

.....

τὼ νῦν μή μοι μάλλον ἐν ἄλγεσι θυμὸν ὀρίνης,
μή σε γέρον οὐδ’ αὐτὸν ἐνὶ κλισίησιν ἐάσω
καὶ ἰκέτην περ ἔοντα, Διὸς δ’ ἀλίτωμαι ἐφετμάς.
ὧς ἔφατ’, ἔδεισεν δ’ ὁ γέρον καὶ ἐπείθετο μύθῳ.
Πηλεΐδης δ’ οἴκοιο λέων ὧς ἄλτο θύραζε....

¹⁷ Aristotle is there interested in the eagle that Zeus sends as an omen to Priam (24. 308–319). See Mayhew 2019, 66–68 for a discussion of this eagle.

¹⁸ What I describe occurs within verses 159–551.

¹⁹ For the text of the *Iliad*, I have used West 2000.

Then looking darkly at him, swift-footed Achilles spoke: "Provoke me no more, old man; I am even myself minded to release Hector to you, though a messenger from Zeus came to me [sc. directing me to do so]²⁰...

Therefore, stir up my spirit no more in my sufferings, old man, lest I not allow you [to remain alive] – not even yourself – within my shelters,²¹ though you are a suppliant, and so transgress the commands of Zeus". So he spoke, and the old man was frightened and persuaded by his speech. And Peleus' son sprang like a lion toward the door...

Once out the door, however, Achilles immediately sees to the ransom, and then has his servants respectfully prepare Hector's corpse for its return to Troy – giving them orders to keep the corpse out of sight, so that Priam is not moved to anger, which would in turn provoke Achilles into killing Priam, against the wishes of the gods (573–586).

We are now in a position to better understand the following three texts on this part of *Iliad* 24: a B-scholium, a T-scholium, and a comment from Eustathius. I present all three first, before discussing them.

(a) *schol. B Il. 24. 569 (fol. 333v)*²²

There is no lemma, merely a Γ' indicating that this is the third comment on the folio (the first two, at the top of the folio, are marked α' and Β'; the other two, at the bottom, are marked Δ' and ε'). So ours is the sole scholium in the margins – placed where it is, either because that is the middle of the folio, or because it was intended to be close to line 559:

²⁰ Regarding νοέω ... καὶ αὐτὸς κτλ.: Achilles is saying that, independent of the command from Zeus, he is inclined to release Hector's body.

²¹ I think the clear implication of μή σε . . . ἐνὶ κλισίῃσιν ἔἴσω is "lest I not allow you *to live* within my shelters". See schol. D *Il.* 24. 569 (van Thiel), which takes ἔἴσω ('allow') to mean λείπω ζῶντα ('leave/release [you] living'). Compare the rendering of *Il.* 24. 569 in the superb translation of Alexander 2015: "lest, old man, I do not spare even yourself within my shelter". And note Richardson 1993, 336: "οὐδ' αὐτόν here is emphatic, 'not even yourself'".

²² This scholium (which Erbse labels *Il.* 24. 569 b²) can be accessed here: <http://www.homermultitext.org/hmt-image-archive/VenetusB/>. In addition to Erbse, previous editions of this text are in Villoison 1788, 529 and Schrader 1880, 277. It is also found in the following collections of Aristotle's fragments (presented in chronological order; see the bibliography for details): fr. 149. 2 Rose¹, 194. 1 Heitz, 160 Rose², 168 Rose³, 391. 1 Gigon. It was not included in Dindorf 1877 or MacPhail 2011. I think it important to go back to the manuscripts when possible, in dealing with this material, and I have done so. But in the present case, and punctuation aside, the editions of Villoison, Schrader, and Erbse are identical and accurate.

τὸν δ' ἄρ' ὑπόδρα ἰδὼν προσέφη πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς (“Then looking darkly at him, swift-footed Achilles spoke”). In any case, I have assumed the former (not a strong conviction, but in any case unimportant), and have followed Erbse and labeled this schol. B *Il.* 24. 569 (fol. 333 v). Here is the Greek text with my translation:

Ἀριστοτέλης φησὶν ἀνώμαλον εἶναι τὸ Ἀχιλλέως ἦθος. οἱ δὲ φασιν ὅτι ἵνα ἀποστήσῃ αὐτὸν τοῦ ἔφ' Ἑκτορι θρήνου, διὰ τοῦτο δεδίσσει : ~

Aristotle says that the character of Achilles is inconsistent. But others say that [this is] in order that he [sc. Priam] might be kept from the lamentation for Hector, for which reason [Achilles] frightens [him] : ~

(b) *schol. T Il. 24.569 (fol. 277r)*²³

Although I present two scholia here, which follow each other in the margins of the manuscript one after the other and refer to the same line (note the overlapping lemmata), my interest is in the second. I present the first (which indicates that σέ should be pronounced without an acute accent) merely to illustrate the T-scholiast's use of ἄλλως (which will become relevant in analyzing the next set of texts, in § 3 below). Usually, ἄλλως (‘alternatively’) is “used in scholia to introduce a second or subsequent note on a single lemma” (Dickey 2007, 221).²⁴ In Homeric πρόβλημα/ζήτημα literature, however, ἄλλως is often used to indicate an alternative solution to the same problem. Yet both here and in § 3, the T-scholiast does not use ἄλλως to indicate an alternative solution to a problem, but to indicate another note on the same or similar (but not a single) lemma. In the second scholium, the lemma provided is μή σε γέρον οὐδ' αὐτὸν; but I believe this is, as is often the case, meant to indicate the entire line: μή σε γέρον οὐδ' αὐτὸν ἐνὶ κλισίῃσιν ἐάσω (“old man, lest I not allow you – not even yourself – within my shelters”). Here is the text with my translation:

²³ These two scholia (which Erbse labels *Il.* 24. 569 a² and 569 b¹) can be accessed here: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=burney_ms_86_fs001r. The text I present is identical to that in Erbse (and in Maas 1888, 476 as well), and the second scholium (the one that mentions Aristotle) was included (among the collections of fragments) in Gigon alone (fr. 391. 2). This pair of scholia was not included in Dindorf 1877 or MacPhail 2011.

²⁴ This is from the relevant entry in Dickey's “Glossary of Grammatical Terms”. See also her somewhat lengthier discussion of ἄλλως in ch. 4: “Introduction to Scholarly Greek” (2007, 108–109).

“μή σε γέρον”: ἐγκλιτέον τὴν “σέ” : –
 ἄλλως: “μή σε γέρον οὐδ’ αὐτόν”: Ἀριστοτέλης φησὶν ἀνώμαλον εἶναι τὸ
 ἦθος Ἀχιλλέως. οἱ δὲ ὡς ἀποστήσαι τοῦ οἴκτου τῇ καταπλήξει αὐτὸν
 θέλει, μὴ ἰδὼν Ἴκτορα θρηνησῆ ἀκωλύτως καὶ ταράξῃ αὐτόν : –

“lest you old man”: one must treat σέ [‘you’] as an enclitic : –
 alternatively: “lest you old man ... not even yourself”: Aristotle says that
 the character of Achilles is inconsistent. But others [say] that [Achilles]
 wants him [sc. Priam] to avoid wailing, through terror, lest seeing Hector
 he mourns uncontrollably and it troubles him [sc. Achilles]²⁵ : –

(c) *Eustathius ad Il. 24. 559–572*
 (vol. 4, p. 956.1–6 van der Valk)²⁶

In Eustathius, οἱ παλαιοί (the ancients) usually refers directly to the
 scholia, indirectly to their sources.

σημείωσαι δὲ ὅτι Ἀριστοτέλης, ὡς φασιν οἱ παλαιοί, ἀνώμαλον εἶναι τὸ
 τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως ἦθος συνάγει, ὃς τὰ πρῶτα μειλίχοις δεξιωσάμενος τὸν
 ἰκέτην Πρίαμον, εἶτα λεοντωθεὶς οἶον, ὡς δηλοῖ τὸ “λέων ὡς ἄλτο
 θύραζε” – διὸ καὶ νῦν “ἔδδεισεν ὁ γέρον καὶ ἐπέιθετο μύθῳ” – ἀγριοῦται
 καὶ ἀπειλεῖται τὰ προρρηθέντα.²⁷ καὶ δοκεῖ μὲν ἐπίτηδες οὕτω ποιεῖν, ὡς
 ἂν ἐκπλήξῃ τὸν γέροντα καὶ ἀποστήσῃ τοῦ οἴκτου, τὸ δ’ ἔστιν οὐ
 τοιοῦτον.

Note that Aristotle, as the ancients say, concludes that the character of
 Achilles is inconsistent, who at first welcoming the suppliant Priam with
 gentle [words], then becomes a lion so to speak, as “like a lion he leaps
 to the door” [572] makes clear – and this is why at this time “the old man
 was frightened and persuaded by his speech” [571] – the things [Achilles]
 said becoming wild and threatening. In fact he seems to act in this way
 deliberately, as if striking panic in the old man and keeping him away
 from the wailing, whereas such is not the case.²⁸

²⁵ See Breitenberger 2006, 316 and Cullyer 2008, 543.

²⁶ This text (in an earlier edition) is found in two collections of Aristotle's
 fragments: fr. 149. 2 Rose¹ and 194. 2 Heitz.

²⁷ van der Valk claims in his apparatus (*ad loc.*) that this clause (from ὃς τὰ πρῶτα
 to τὰ προρρηθέντα) is Eustathius' addition to his ancient sources.

²⁸ Hintenlang 1961, 116 goes on (after an ellipsis) to quote as well a line which
 appears a little later (at 956. 16): συνάγεται δὲ τὸ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως ἄστατον καὶ ἐν τῇ
 α' ῥαψῳδίᾳ καὶ ἐν ταῖς Λιταῖς (“And the instability [ἄστατον] of Achilles can be
 ascertained both in [*Iliad*] Rhapsody 1 and in the *Entreaties* [i. e. *Iliad* 9]”). But there
 is no reason to think this comes from Aristotle.

I think it probable that all three texts ultimately have the same source, namely Aristotle's *Homeric Problems*, though an intermediate and indirect source was likely Porphyry. None of them provides anything like the entire text, as found in Porphyry (if he was the source), which likely would have included the statement of the problem, and at the very least two solutions.²⁹ I think it possible that the original Homeric problem can be reconstructed from Eustathius, who is perhaps indicating that Aristotle aimed to provide a solution to it: Why did Homer portray Achilles at first being gentle with Priam, but shortly thereafter being lion-like? Another possibility is that the statement of the problem had the same form as that found in the two scholia discussed in the next section: Why did Homer portray Achilles inconsistent in this way, at first being gentle with Priam, but shortly thereafter being lion-like?

Both of our scholia present two solutions: a terse version of Aristotle's solution first (in nearly identical Greek, which is also quite close to what Eustathius reproduces): "Aristotle says that the character of Achilles is inconsistent". The second solution, from other (unnamed) scholars (οἱ δέ), defends Achilles' character by claiming that he intentionally acted as if he were angry in order to prevent Priam from lamenting over the body of Hector.³⁰ (The T-scholium is more informative than the B-scholium.³¹) So this solution seems to aim to defend Achilles against the charge that he is not in control of his emotions. Cullyer 2008, 542–544 argues that these scholars could be Chrysippus and other Stoics.³² I find her interpretation quite plausible (and such a defense of Achilles' character less plausible, at least as Homeric scholarship). If the Homeric problem specifically referred to inconsistency, then I assume the second solution would originally have included the claim that Achilles is not inconsistent in any sense.

But what more can we say about Aristotle's reply? If I am right that our three texts are the remains of a single Homeric problem, of the sort preserved and presented by Porphyry, then it is highly likely that Aristotle was solving the Homeric problem by claiming that Achilles' character

²⁹ In what follows, I am assuming that these texts originally came from a Homeric problem with solutions. On the possibility that they were originally part of a criticism of Homer, see below n. 34.

³⁰ I think it likely that Eustathius is referring to (and even accepting) this solution, when he writes at the end of the text: "In fact he seems to act in this way deliberately", etc. (καὶ δοκεῖ μὲν ἐπίτηδες οὕτω ποιεῖν, κτλ.).

³¹ See above, note 1, on the T-scholia being more scholarly than the b-scholia.

³² See also Plutarch, *How the Young Should Listen to Poetry* 11 (*Moralia* 31 A–C), with Hunter–Russell 2011, 173–175.

is inconsistent – but consistently inconsistent, which is perfectly proper esthetically.³³ In the language of *Poetics* 15, Homer made Achilles good generally, but also with a character flaw: harshness. So I think it much more likely that Aristotle was defending Homer, in this way, than that he was criticizing Homer.³⁴

But can we describe this defense of Homer in the terms Aristotle describes in *Poetics* 25, the topic of which is Homeric problems and how to solve them? As with many Homeric problems, this one likely involved what some critic erroneously objected or worried was a contradiction (in the portrayal of Achilles). And there are plenty of examples of Aristotle replying that what is thought to be a contradiction is in fact merely apparently so.³⁵ There is no contradiction, because Achilles is consistently inconsistent.

³³ So Hintenlang 1961, 117: “Wenn Aristoteles in Fr. 168 R. sagt, der Charakter Achills sei ungleichmäßig, so ist dies nicht als Vorwurf gegen die Darstellung Homers zu verstehen, sondern soll bedeuten, daß Homer ihn konsequent ungleichmäßig zeichnet”. Hintenlang 1961, 118, followed by Breitenberger 2006, 414, quite plausibly suggests the possibility that Aristotle’s target is Plato (citing *Rep.* 3. 390 e – 391 c and *Hipp. min.* 369 e – 371 d). Hintenlang 1961, 116–117, again followed by Breitenberger 2006, 413–414, also discusses, in this connection, *EE* 3. 1. 1229 a 20–27 (and I would extend the reference to a 29), where Aristotle describes states that seem to be courage but are not. Relevant here is the kind that arises “from irrational passion, for instance from eros or anger” (διὰ πάθος ἀλόγιστον, οἷον δι’ ἔρωτα καὶ θυμόν). (Cf. *EN* 3. 8. 1116 b 23–30, a parallel discussion which in fact quotes three Homeric passages.) Aristotle says that people who are beside themselves with rage, like wild boars, are ἀνώμαλοι, ‘inconsistent’ – though in the context of *EE* 3. 1 we might rather render it ‘capricious’ or ‘fickle’ (Breitenberger: ‘unbeständig’). Aristotle goes on to say that young people, who often have this trait, make the best fighters. Hintenlang’s speculation that Aristotle would characterize Achilles in this way is intriguing.

³⁴ We cannot, however, rule out entirely the possibility that Aristotle was levelling an objection against Homer, as he is capable of doing this, though such instances are rare. (On Aristotle’s possible criticism of *Od.* 21. 217–221, involving Odysseus’ scar, see Mayhew 2019, 40–45.) If this were the case here, then the texts discussed in this section would be a remnant of Aristotle claiming that in the Expedition of Priam in *Iliad* 24, Achilles is like Iphigeneia in Euripides’ *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, i.e. improperly inconsistent. In close proximity, Achilles goes from treating Priam respectfully, to threatening his life, to immediately thereafter respectfully preparing Hector’s corpse to be handed over to Priam. One might have grounds for leveling this criticism against Homer, though I doubt Aristotle did so.

³⁵ See *Poetics* 25. 1461 a 31 – b 9, and Mayhew 2019, 20–22.

3. Three possible unattested Aristotle-fragments on *Iliad* 18. 98

Like many Homeric προβλήματα, the one I turn to next concerns an apparent or purported contradiction between something in the *Iliad* and something in the *Odyssey*.³⁶

At the opening of *Iliad* 18, Antilochus goes to Achilles to tell him that Patroclus is dead, the armour Achilles lent him has been stripped from his body and is in Hector's possession, and the fighting continues over Patroclus' corpse. Achilles' mother (Thetis) hears his lamentations, and visits him. Achilles explains that he has no wish to live, except to avenge Patroclus by killing Hector. Thetis replies (95–96):

ὠκύμορος δὴ μοι τέκος ἔσσειαι, οἷ' ἀγορεύεις·
αὐτίκα γάρ τοι ἔπειτα μεθ' Ἑκτορα πότμος ἐτοῖμος.

Then you are doomed to a swift death, my child, from what you are saying, for straightaway after Hector [sc. dies], then evil-destiny [i. e. an early death] awaits.

Achilles recognizes that he is making this choice (98–99):

αὐτίκα τεθναίην, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἄρ' ἔμελλον ἐταίρω
κτεινομένῳ ἐπαμῦναι· ...

Straightaway may I die, since I was not fated my companion to defend when he was slain...

So Achilles is choosing to avenge Patroclus, at the cost of his own life.

In *Odyssey* 11, in his trip through Hades, Odysseus encounters the soul (ψυχή) of Achilles, which is weeping (ὀλοφυρομένη, 471–472). Odysseus, trying to console Achilles, points out that he was blessed in life – so highly was he honored – and now in death as well he seems to be blessed, as he has great authority over the dead (484–486). Achilles famously replies (488–491):

μη δὴ μοι θάνατόν γε παραύδα, φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ.
βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος εἶων θητευέμεν ἄλλω,
ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίωτος πολὺς εἶη,
ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.³⁷

³⁶ These are not uncommon. For instance, a passage in the *Odyssey* (12. 374–375) seems to contradict a description in the *Iliad* (3. 277–278) of the Sun's 'omniscience'. "Why, having said that Helios [i. e. the Sun] beholds all things and hears all things [*Il.* 3. 277], did [Homer] portray him needing a messenger in the case of his own cattle [*Od.* 12. 374]?" Etc. Aristotle proposed three solutions. See schol. B* *Il.* 3. 277 (= fr. 149 Rose³/373 Gigon).

³⁷ For the text of the *Odyssey*, I have used West 2017.

Do not speak soothingly to me of death, illustrious Odysseus.
I would choose to be bound to the soil, the servant of another –
a man with no allotted land, whose livelihood is nothing much –
than to be lord over all the dead who have perished.

Achilles then asks for news of his son Neoptolemos and his father Peleus. Odysseus has no news about his father. Achilles replies that were his father being oppressed owing to his absence, he would want to return to life to protect him (500–503):

εἰ τοῖόςδ' ἔλθοιμι μίνυνθά περ ἐς πατέρος δῶ,
τῶ κέ τεφ στύζαιμι μένος καὶ χεῖρας ἀάπτους,
οἳ κείνον βίωωνται ἐέργουσιν τ' ἀπὸ τιμῆς.

If I could go as such a man [sc. as I was formerly] for a short time to my father's house, I would in this way make hateful my power and invincible hands to many a one – those who do violence to him and keep him from honor.

In the *Iliad*, though he is alive he chooses death; and in the *Odyssey*, though he is dead, he wishes he could come back to life. We are now in a position to better understand the following texts on *Iliad* 18. 98: a B-scholium and a T-scholium,³⁸ and a related comment from Eustathius. I present all three before discussing them.

(a) *schol. B Il. 18. 98 (fol. 249 r)*³⁹

There is no lemma. Instead this text begins with what seems to be a number (ι'ε),⁴⁰ which is also written above the words on which the

³⁸ As will become clear, each of these scholia consists of (or can naturally be divided into) three parts. Erbse combines the B and T scholia in his presentation of this material, labeling the three parts *Il. 18. 98 b*, *98 c*, and *98 d*. I think this is problematic, and so in what follows present my transcription of these scholia separately.

³⁹ This scholium can be accessed here: <http://www.homermultitext.org/hmt-image-archive/VenetusB/>. In addition to Erbse (see the previous note), earlier editions of this text are Villoison 1788, 415 and Schrader 1880, 220–221 – though the latter includes only the portion I have labeled [1]. It was not included in MacPhail 2011, though note that Erbse inserts “Porph. (?)” prior to his schol. *Il. 18. 98 b*. Virtually identical to, and dependent on, this B-scholium is a scholium in *Leidensis Vossianus* 64 (fol. 394r) – on which, see the relevant information in Erbse's *apparatus criticus*.

⁴⁰ This is not the number 15 (ιε'). The 'numbering' on this folio is odd. The first scholium is marked θ', the second ι', the third ι'α, the fourth ι'β, the fifth ι'γ, the sixth ι'δ, the seventh (our text) ι'ε. They continued to be marked ι'ζ, ι'ζ, ι'η, ι'θ, κ', and finally κ'α. By contrast, the nine scholia on the previous folio (fol. 248v) are marked as one would expect: α', β', γ', δ', ε', ζ', ζ', η', and θ'. The scholia

scholium is a comment (in this case, above the second alpha in αὐτίκα in 18. 98, so it is clearly a comment on αὐτίκα τεθναίην, “Straightaway may I die”). Note that nineteen words were originally omitted owing to parablepsy: the scribe’s eye jumped from the first ζῆν to the second. There is in effect a scholium to our scholium (I think from a second hand [B*]), which adds the missing material (marked with the symbol ‘/’). Shortly thereafter, there is also a superlinear addition of the word διὰ between ἀλλὰ and μόνα (I assume by the same hand responsible for the other addition). I have used italics in my transcription and translation to indicate these additions. I have also inserted numbers in brackets, because although this scholium is presented as one unified text, the nearly identical material in schol. T II. 18. 98 is presented as three different scholia roughly corresponding to the material that I have marked with these bracketed numbers.

ίε [1] διὰ τί τὸν Ἀχιλλέα οὕτως ἀνώμαλον πεποίηκεν, ὅς γε ὅτε ἔζη τεθνάναι ἐβούλετο, τεθνεὼς δὲ ζῆν δουλεύων μᾶλλον ἢ ἔχειν τὴν τοῦ Αἴδου βασιλείαν; ἢ οὔτε τὸ τεθνάναι δι’ αὐτὸ αἰρεῖσθαι φαίνεται οὔτε τὸ ζῆν, ἀλλὰ διὰ μόνα τὰ καλὰ ἔργα καὶ ὅπως πράττη ταῦτα;⁴¹ ἵνα μὲν γὰρ βοήθησιν τῷ Πατρόκλῳ, “τεθναίην” φησίν, ἵνα δὲ τῷ πατρὶ, ζῆν ἐθέλει. ὥστε καλῶν ἔργων προκειμένων ὁ φιλόκαλος καὶ ζῶν τεθνάναι αἰρήσεται, εἰ μέλλοι καλὸν τι πράξαι ἀποθανών, καὶ ἀναβιώσασθαι πάλιν, εἰ μέλλοι τῶν κατ’ ἀρετὴν τι πράξαι ἀναζήσας. [2] ὄρα δὲ πῶς τῷ “αὐτίκα” χρησάμενος, ᾧ καὶ ἡ Θέτις, τὸν δι’ ἀρετὴν καταφρονούντα θανάτου ἐνέφηγε. [3] καλὸν δὲ πρὸς φιλειταιρίαν παράδειγμα, εἶγε τοῖς τοσοῦτοις μὴ πεισθεῖς δάροις δίχα τούτων καὶ θάνατον αἰρεῖται ὑπὲρ φίλου : –

ίε [= “Straightaway may I die”]: [1] Why did [Homer] portray Achilles inconsistent in this way, who when he was living wanted to die, but having died [wanted] to live *being a slave more than [he wanted] to have the kingdom of Hades? Or does he appear to choose neither dying for its own sake nor living, but for the sake of noble deeds alone* and so that he can perform these? For in order to help Patroclus, he said “may I die”, but in order [to help] his father, he wanted to live. Therefore, when noble deeds present themselves, the one who is nobility-loving and living will choose to die, if in dying he is going to do something noble; and he will choose to return to life again, if in returning to life he is going to do

on the two other nearby folios that I checked at random are similarly numbered as one would expect. This oddity, however, does not affect the interpretation of this scholium in the least.

⁴¹ Unlike other editors, I have punctuated this sentence with a question mark (not used in our manuscript), which I believe makes the most sense.

something according to virtue. [2] And note how using 'straightaway', which Thetis did as well (18. 95), [Homer] displayed the disregarding of death for the sake of virtue. [3] And [this is] a noble example regarding love of a comrade, if not persuaded by these many offerings apart from them in fact he chooses death on behalf of a friend.

(b) *schol. T Il. 18. 98 (fol. 202v)*⁴²

This text has roughly the same content as the previous one, but presented as three scholia (the second and third indicated by ἄλλως, and in the opposite order). The statement of the πρόβλημα is in a sense quite different than in the previous text, in that it includes a (possibly incomplete) quotation⁴³ and (I suspect) a lacuna; but conceptually, they are the same. Here are my transcription and translation:

“αὐτίκα τεθναίην”: [1] διὰ τί⁴⁴ τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖα οὕτως ἀνώμαλον πεποίηκεν, ὅς γε ὅτε ἔζη τεθνάναι ἐβούλετο, τεθνεῶς δὲ ζῆν <...>⁴⁵ “βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐών”; ἢ οὔτε τὸ τεθνάναι δι' αὐτὸ αἰρεῖσθαι φαίνεται οὔτε <τὸ> ζῆν, ἀλλὰ <διὰ>⁴⁶ μόνα τὰ καλὰ ἔργα καὶ ὅπως πράττει ταῦτα;⁴⁷ ἵνα μὲν γὰρ βοηθήσῃ Πατρόκλω, “αὐτίκα τεθναίην” φησίν, ἵνα δὲ τῷ πατρὶ, ζῆν ἐθέλει. ὥστε καλῶν ἔργων προκειμένων ὁ φιλόκαλος καὶ ζῶν τεθνάναι αἰρήσεται, εἰ μέλλοι καλὸν τι πράξει ἀποθανών, ἢ βεβαίως ἀναβιώσεσθαι, εἰ μέλλοι τῶν κατ' ἀρετὴν τι πράξει ἀναζήσας : –

[3] ἄλλως “αὐτίκα τεθναίην”: καλὸν πρὸς φιλευταιρίαν εἶγε τοσοῦτοις μὴ πεισθεὶς δώροις δίχα τούτων καὶ θάνατον αἰρεῖται ὑπὲρ φίλου : –

[2] ἄλλως “αὐτίκα τεθναίην”: τῷ αὐτῷ ὀνόματι χρησάμενος, ᾧ καὶ ἡ Θέτις, τὸν δι' ἀρετὴν καταφρονοῦντα θανάτου ἐνέφηνεν : –

“Straightaway may I die”: [1] Why did [Homer] portray Achilles inconsistent in this way, who when he was living wanted to die; [but having died wanted to live, saying] “I would choose to be bound to the

⁴² This scholium can be accessed here: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=burney_ms_86_fs001r. Previous editions of this text are Maas 1888, 247 and Erbse (see above n. 38).

⁴³ Or the scholiast was counting on his audience's vast knowledge of the Homeric epics, so that he needed only to quote the opening words of the verse(s) that he had in mind.

⁴⁴ This τί, obviously correct, is a superlinear addition by a second hand.

⁴⁵ I mark a lacuna here. See the translation.

⁴⁶ I have added these two words (in pointed brackets) from the parallel line in the B-scholium.

⁴⁷ Unlike other editors, I have punctuated this sentence with a question mark (never used in our manuscript), which I believe makes the most sense.

soil” [etc.] (*Od.* 11. 489)? Or does he appear to choose neither dying for its own sake nor living, but for the sake of noble deeds alone and so that he can perform these? For in order to help Patroclus, he said “Straightaway may I die”, but in order [to help] his father, he wanted to live. Therefore, when noble deeds present themselves, the one who is nobility-loving and living will choose to die, if in dying he is about to do something noble; or he will steadfastly choose to come back to life, if when coming back to life he is about to do something according to virtue : –

[3] Alternatively: “Straightaway may I die”: [this is] noble regarding love of a comrade, if not persuaded by these many offerings apart from them in fact he chooses death on behalf of a friend : –

[2] Alternatively: “Straightaway may I die”: using the same word [i. e. ‘Straightaway’], which Thetis did as well (18. 95), [Homer] displayed the disregarding of death for the sake of virtue : –

(c) *Eustathius ad Il.* 18. 98–100

(vol. 4, p. 141. 12–17 van der Valk)

As in the previous pair of scholia, there is a comment from Eustathius, which was based on these two scholia or shares with them a common source.

εἰ δὲ νῦν μὲν ἵνα βοηθήσῃ τῷ Πατρόκλῳ “τεθναίνην” φησίν, ἐν Ὀδυσσεΐα δὲ τεθνεὼς ἀναζῆσαι θέλει, ἵνα τῷ πατρὶ ἐπαμύνοιτο, οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνωμαλία ἤθους τὸ τοιοῦτον. κατὰ γὰρ τοὺς παλαιοὺς οὔτε τὸ τεθνάναι δι’ αὐτὸν αἰρεῖται οὔτε τὸ ζῆν, ἀλλὰ διὰ ἔργα, ὧν προκειμένων ὁ φιλόκαλος ζῶν μὲν τεθνάναι αἰρήσεται, εἰ καλόν τι ἔσται θανόντος, τεθνεὼς δὲ ἀναβιώσεσθαι, εἰ τῶν κατ’ ἀρετὴν τι πράξει.

If here, in order to help Patroclus, he says “may I die”, whereas in the *Odyssey*, having died, he wants to come back to life, in order to aid his father, such a state is not inconsistency with respect to character. For according to the ancients, he chooses neither to die for his own sake nor to live, but for the sake of deeds, for which having presented themselves the nobility-loving one who is living will choose to die, if dying will be something noble, whereas having died, [he will choose] to come back to life, if [in coming back to life] he will do something according to virtue.

The first point to make is that I think it relatively clear that the T-scholium is correct, and that what I have labeled [2] and [3] are separate (however related) comments on *Il.* 18. 98. It is less natural to take them as support for the solution in [1]. So I will be focusing on the versions of [1] in both

scholia. Next, I think the B-scholium likely has a more accurate statement of the Homeric problem: Why did Homer portray Achilles inconsistent in this way, who when he was living wanted to die, but having died wanted to live being a slave more than he wanted to have the kingdom of Hades? I suspect that in the original text, there may have been a quote from Homer representing each side of the supposed contradiction: the verse(s) in the *Iliad* beginning “straightaway may I die” (18. 98), and the passage from the *Odyssey* containing the statement: “I would choose to be bound to the soil, the servant of another | ... | than to be lord over all the dead who have perished” (11. 489 & 491). When this material was used for or transformed into a marginal comment on the *Iliad*, the first quote became the lemma, and the second was eventually either paraphrased (as in the B-scholium) or became mangled (as in the T-scholium). The follow up question (which suggests the solution) is identical in both texts: “Or does he appear to choose neither dying for its own sake nor living, but for the sake of noble deeds alone and so that he can perform these?” The remainder in both scholia – with some minor variations – briefly demonstrates how the solution implied in the follow-up question is correct, i. e. that there is in fact no contradiction on the part of Homer or even inconsistency in the character of Achilles in the relevant Homeric passages. And in this connection we have what might be the one contribution from the Eustathius-passage (which has a decidedly Aristotelian ring to it): “such a state is not inconsistency with respect to character” (οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνωμαλία ἤθους τὸ τοιοῦτον). This may well have been the language of the original solution to our πρόβλημα.

The purported problem is why Homer presents Achilles as inconsistent in the way indicated. The solution is that Achilles is not inconsistent in either of the senses indicated earlier (proper or improper). He is not, because of harshness or irascibility or some other character flaw, portrayed by Homer as wishing he was dead (when he is alive), but pining for life in the afterlife. Rather, according to the author of this solution, whatever his flaws Homer's character is consistent in being nobility-loving (φιλόκαλος); and so, whether he is alive on earth or a shade in Hades, he wants to do what is noble (even if, in the former case, it costs him his life). I do think there is a certain lack of symmetry here, in that if he could, Achilles would choose not to remain in Hades, whether or not a noble deed was waiting for him. One might reply, however, that although he has, in a sense, resigned himself to his fate in Hades, his desire to come back to life (*per impossibile*) is intensified when he thinks of his father and the possible need to defend him, and that this is owing to his remaining nobility-loving, even as a shade in Hades.

I believe the most likely source for these texts is Aristotle. First, as in so many of the fragments of the *Homeric Problems*, the likely intermediate source of our two scholia is Porphyry.⁴⁸

Second, as we have seen (in the previous sections), Aristotle was very interested in the character of Achilles (in a literary context), and particularly with his purported inconsistency (which is mentioned in the statement of the problem under consideration). Here is a further indication of an interest in Achilles' behavior: After the funeral games, still unable to overcome his grief for the loss of Patroclus, Achilles drags the corpse of Hector from the back of his chariot three times around Patroclus' tomb (*Il.* 24. 14–18). This gave rise to a Homeric problem, for which Aristotle offered a solution (schol. B* *Il.* 24. 15 [fol. 322r] = fr. 166 Rose / 389 Gigon):

Why was Achilles dragging Hector around the tomb of Patroclus, acting contrary to established custom with respect to the corpse? ... It is possible to solve [this], Aristotle says, also by referring to the fact that the existing customs were like that, since even nowadays in Thessaly they drag [corpses] around tombs.⁴⁹

Third, there is at least one (other) text whose source is the *Homeric Problems*, in which Aristotle is not named.⁵⁰ In *Poetics* 25. 1461 a 9–16, Aristotle writes: “Some [problems] should be solved by looking at diction”. Aristotle's third example is: “And ‘mix purer [wine]’ [*Il.* 9. 203] refers not to unmixed [wine], as if for winos, but to [wine mixed] more quickly”.⁵¹ *Poetics* 25 is a summary of how to deal with objections to Homer, and much of what he says there almost certainly appeared in the *Homeric Problems* as well. In this case, Aristotle was likely responding

⁴⁸ As is often the case, I side with Schrader (and by implication Erbse, see above n. 39), against MacPhail, in regarding Porphyry as the source of far more of these Aristotle-fragments. In any case, however one counts them, a great many of the fragments of the *Homeric Problems* come from Porphyry.

⁴⁹ διὰ τί ὁ Ἀχιλλεύς τὸν Ἑκτορα εἴλκε περὶ τὸν τάφον τοῦ Πατρόκλου, παρὰ τὰ νονομισμένα ποιῶν εἰς τὸν νεκρὸν; ... ἔστι δὲ λύειν, φησὶν Ἀριστοτέλης, καὶ εἰς τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ἀνάγοντ' ἔθη ὅτι τοιαῦτα ἦν, ἐπεὶ καὶ νῦν ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ περιέλκουσι περὶ τοὺς τάφους. Aristotle is referring specifically to the corpses of murderers, which are dragged around the graves of their victims. (We know this from Callimachus, via schol. B* *Il.* 22. 397 [fol. 300v]. See Schrader 1880, 268.)

⁵⁰ I owe this example to Verhasselt (forthcoming), whose discussion of it is characteristically clear and succinct.

⁵¹ τὰ δὲ πρὸς τὴν λέξιν ὀρῶντα δεῖ διαλύειν ... καὶ τὸ “ζωρότερον δὲ κέραε” οὐ τὸ ἄκρατον ὡς οἰνόφλυξιν ἀλλὰ τὸ θᾶπτον.

to a criticism of Zoilus.⁵² Now consider the following section of a text from Porphyry, in schol. F *Il.* 9. 203 (fol. 77v):⁵³

Porphyry. “mix [it] ζωρότερον, and prepare a cup for each man”: Inappropriate: for he is being commanded to provide [wine] more unmixed, as if they were at a party. Some solve [the problem] from diction, for [they say] ζωρότερον is ‘more quickly’...⁵⁴

Finally, there is evidence from *Rhetoric* 1. 3 that Aristotle may have had this view of Achilles' dying for the sake of avenging Patroclus.⁵⁵ The context is a discussion of the three kinds of rhetoric (deliberative, judicial, and epideictic) and specifically of how the end or aim (τέλος) of a deliberative speech can differ. In some cases, the orator will grant certain things, and even issues of justice and injustice will be of no concern;⁵⁶ but he would never admit that he is recommending to his audience what is inexpedient (ἄσύμφορος) or steering them away from what is advantageous (ὠφέλιμος, 1358 b 33–37). He then says (1358 b 38–1359 a 5):

⁵² See Plutarch *Table Talk* 5. 4 (*Mor.* 677 E), which has the title *Περὶ τοῦ “ζωρότερον δὲ κέραιε”*: ἀλλὰ μειρακιώδη τὴν φιλοτιμίαν αὐτῶν ἀπέφαινον, δεδιότων ὁμολογεῖν ἀκρατότερον εἰρησθαι τὸ ζωρότερον, ὡς ἐν ἀτόπῳ τινὶ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως ἐσομένου, καθάπερ ὁ Ἀμφιπολίτης Ζωῖλος ὑπελάμβανεν... – “But I [sc. Plutarch] pointed out that their [sc. his interlocutors'] noble effort was immature, because they were afraid to concede that ζωρότερον means ‘more unmixed’, as if this would put Achilles in an absurd position, just as Zoilus of Amphipolis supposed...”

⁵³ This scholium can be accessed here: <http://www.homermultitext.org/hmt-image-archive/E4/E4-Pages/077v-168.jpg>. On ms. F (*Escorialensis* Ω 1.12), see Dué 2014. *Schol.* B *Il.* 9. 203 (fol. 118v) seems to me to be a mixed up version of this text, though the ‘Aristotle’ line is identical in any case. See MacPhail 2011, 283 for an edition based on these two scholia.

⁵⁴ Πορφορίου· “ζωρότερον δὲ κέραιε, δέπας δ’ ἔντωνν ἐκάστῳ” [*Il.* 9. 203]· ἀπρεπές· ὡς γὰρ ἐπὶ κῶμον ἤκουσιν ἀκρατότερον διδόναι παρακελεύεται. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς λέξεως λύουσι· τὸ γὰρ ζωρότερον εἶναι τάχιον· This is followed by two or three solutions from other people, which do not concern me here.

⁵⁵ One might argue that the value of this evidence is undercut somewhat by the fact that Achilles' willingness to die for the sake of avenging Patroclus was something of a commonplace for the willingness to die for what is noble: see e.g. Plato, *Apology* 28 c–d and *Symposium* 179 e – 180 a. But I think it matters that Aristotle mentions both praising and blaming Achilles.

⁵⁶ Aristotle says (1358 b 36–37): ὡς δ’ οὐκ ἄδικον τοὺς ἀστυγεῖτονας καταδουλοῦσθαι καὶ τοὺς μηδὲν ἀδικούντας, πολλάκις οὐδὲν φροντίζουσιν – “but they are often not concerned about whether it is not unjust to enslave one's neighbors and those who have done nothing unjust”. Most scholars note here an implied criticism of the Athenian delegation to Melos, as presented by Thucydides (5. 84–116). See e.g. Grimaldi 1980, 84.

Similarly, both those who are praising and those who are assigning blame do not consider whether [the one they are evaluating] has done what is expedient or harmful, but in fact in praise they often put it down that disregarding what is profitable to himself he does what is noble. For instance, they praise Achilles because he came to the aid of his comrade Patroclus, knowing that he must die, though it was possible to live. But to him, such a death was nobler, whereas living was expedient.⁵⁷

There is of course no indication that Aristotle thought Achilles was being inconsistent.

Once again, this Homeric problem is really no problem at all, but in fact arises owing not to Homer's characterization of Achilles, but to what some critic erroneously objected or worried was a contradiction (in the portrayal of Achilles). In this case, however, the solution is not that Achilles is consistently inconsistent (which is proper), but that he is not inconsistent at all: rather, he is consistently φιλόκαλος.

My suggestion that Aristotle is the ultimate source of these three texts on *Iliad* 18. 98 is – and short of further evidence coming to light, must remain – speculative. But I do believe I have made a good case for Aristotle being the likely source. And that the problem and solution presented in these three texts fits so well with the rest of the evidence concerning Aristotle on Achilles' inconsistency is I believe one more reason for taking seriously my speculations about their Aristotelian authorship.⁵⁸

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⁵⁷ ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ οἱ ἐπαινοῦντες καὶ οἱ ψέγοντες οὐ σκοποῦσιν εἰ συμφέροντα ἔπραξεν ἢ βλαβερά, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ἐπαίνῳ πολλακίς τιθέασιν ὅτι ὀλιγορήσας τοῦ αὐτῷ λυσιτελοῦντος ἔπραξεν ὅτι καλόν, οἷον Ἀχιλλεῖα ἐπαινοῦσιν ὅτι ἐβοήθησε τῷ ἐταίρῳ Πατρόκλῳ εἰδὼς ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν ἀποθανεῖν, ἐξόν ζῆν. τούτῳ δὲ ὁ μὲν τοιοῦτος θάνατος κάλλιον, τὸ δὲ ζῆν συμφέρον.

⁵⁸ If I were preparing an edition of the fragments of Aristotle's *Homeric Problems*, I doubt I would include these, though I would mention them (perhaps in connection with the three Aristotle-fragments on *Iliad* 24. 559–570, discussed in § 2). I would like to thank the editors of this journal for comments that improved this essay.

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My aim in this essay is to re-examine four bT-scholia of the *Iliad*, concerning the purported inconsistency of Achilles. Two of these have long been recognized as fragments from the *Homeric Problems*; but the other two, if my speculations are correct, might be previously unattested Aristotle-fragments. Eustathius plays an important supporting role in understanding these scholia, as do relevant passages in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and especially *Poetics*.

В статье подвергаются новому рассмотрению 4 схолия бТ к *Илиаде* о предполагаемом непостоянстве Ахилл. Два из них уже давно были признаны фрагментами *Гомеровских вопросов*; два других, если мои рассуждения верны, возможно, также являются фрагментами Аристотеля. Важную роль для понимания и атрибуции этих схолиев играют комментарий Евстафия, а также соответствующие пассажи из *Реторики* и особенно *Поэтики* Аристотеля.