Aristotle on Helios' 'Omniscience' in *Iliad* 3 and *Odyssey* 12: On Schol. B* *Iliad* 3.277

Robert Mayhew

I N MY RECENT BOOK on Aristotle's lost *Homeric Problems*, I briefly discuss schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a (*Marc.gr.* Ζ. 453 [= 821] fol. 47ʳ) in the context of whether Aristotle ever interprets Homer allegorically.[1] I there remarked in passing that I hoped "to write further about this fascinating scholium (and related texts) in more detail at some other time." That is what I am doing here: discussing this scholium at length, not confined to that narrow context and having now examined the textual evidence firsthand.[2]

1. *Schol. B* Iliad 3.277a*

In *Iliad* 3, as part of his oath affirming that the Greeks will abide by the outcome of the duel between Menelaus and Paris, Agamemnon swears first to Zeus, and then to Helios (the Sun),[3] "you who oversee all things and overhear all things," Ἠέλιός θ', ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷς καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούεις (277).[4] In *Odyssey* 12,

---

[1] *Aristotle's Lost Homeric Problems: Textual Studies* (Oxford 2019) 191–193.

[2] Unless indicated otherwise, the numbering of the scholia is my own. See nn.12–13 below for the source of this scholium and for information on MS. B and the difference between the B- and B*-scholia.

[3] For a brief but useful account of the nature of Helios in the Homeric epics see R. Friedrich, "Helios (Ἥλιος)," in M. Finkelberg (ed.), *The Homer Encyclopedia* II (London 2011) 337–338.

[4] The poet's meaning may simply be "see all things and hear all things" (though "oversee" is one meaning of ἐφοράω and "overhear" one meaning of ἐπακούω). But I want to capture the ἐπ- prefix in ἐφορᾷς and ἐπακούεις. Note M. Krieter-Spiro, *Homer's Iliad: The Basel Commentary. Book III* (Berlin 2015)

however, in describing his adventures, and specifically the killing of the Cattle of Helios by his comrades on the island Thrinakia, Odysseus says (374–375): "Swift to Hyperion Helios came a messenger, Lampetia[5] of the long robe, [proclaiming] that *we/the companions killed* his cattle," ὠκέα δ' Ἠελίῳ Ὑπερίονι ἄγγελος ἦλθε Λαμπετίη τανύπεπλος, ὅ οἱ βόας ἔκταμεν ἡμεῖς/ἔκταν ἑταῖροι.[6] One or more ancient Homeric scholars suspected a contradiction here,[7] which gave rise to a Homeric problem: Why would a god who sees and hears all need a messenger?[8]

109: "ἐφορᾶν with the connotation 'to monitor, and punish if the need arise' also at *Od.* 13.214 (Zeus), 17.487 (gods)." In addition to "hear" and "overhear," ἐπακούω can also mean "hear about" (which is arguably its meaning in this verse).

[5] Lampetia and Phaethousa (meaning something like "Shining" and "Radiance") are divine daughters of Helios and the nymph Neaera (they are referred to as θεαί and νύμφαι). They were made herdswomen (ἐπιποιμένες) tasked with guarding (φυλασσέμεναι) their father's cattle and sheep: *Od.* 12.131–136. Earlier in *Odyssey* 12, Odysseus referred to Helios, who oversees everything and overhears everything (Ἠελίου, ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούει, 323). More on this below. He claims he later learned about Lampetia going to Helios from Calypso, who heard it from Hermes (389–390).

[6] M. L. West, *Homerus Odyssea* (Berlin 2017) 269, prints ἔκταμεν ἡμεῖς, and in his apparatus writes: "ἔκταμεν ἡμεῖς Ar^ab F H : ἔκταν ἑταῖροι (nov. Did) 28 t Ω* fere." The scholium that is the focus of this essay has ἔκταν ἑταῖροι. Note schol. H *Od.* 12.375 (*Harl.* 5674, fol. 77^v): "ὅ οἱ βόας ἔκταμεν ἡμεῖς": οὕτως αἱ Ἀριστάρχου. (More on the H-scholia in §4 below.) Heubeck comments (in A. Heubeck and A. Hoekstra, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey* II [Oxford 1990] 139): "It is not easy to choose between ἔκταμεν ἡμεῖς … and ἔκταν ἑταῖροι … It is possible that the Vulgate attempted to 'correct' an expression which strangely implies an element of guilt in Odysseus." On Odysseus' claims of innocence, see n.41 below.

[7] For a post-Aristotle example, consider the second part of schol. A *Il.* 3.277 (*Venetus* A, fol. 47^v) = schol. A *Il.* 3.277a^1 Ariston. (Erbse): καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀθέτησιν τῶν ἐν Ὀδυσσείᾳ "ὠκέα δ' Ἠελίῳ Ὑπερίονι ἄγγελος ἦλθεν" περὶ τῆς ἀπωλείας τῶν βοῶν τῷ πάντα ἐφορῶντι, "And [the *diplê*] is regarding the athetesis of these [words] in the *Odyssey*, 'Swift to Hyperion Helios came a messenger', concerning the destruction of the cattle to the one who oversees all things." On the first part of this scholium see the following note.

[8] Another issue surrounding *Il.* 3.277, which will not concern me, is why

According to schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a, Aristotle offered three solutions to this problem.[9] My aim here is to take a fresh look at this scholium, which has properly been considered a fragment of the lost *Homeric Problems*.[10] For this purpose, I have consulted an excellent digital copy of the relevant *Iliad*-manuscript: *Venetus* B (*Marc.gr. Ƶ.* 453 [= 821]), eleventh century, which contains two levels of scholia (eleventh century, and twelfth or thirteenth cen-

(or whether) Homer uses the nominative Ἥλιος rather than the vocative Ἥλιε. Consider the first part of schol. A *Il.* 3.277: "Ἥλιος θ'"· ὅτι ἀντὶ τοῦ Ἥλιε, ὡς κἀκεῖ "δός, φίλος" [*Od.* 17.415]· καὶ "ἀλλά, φίλος, θάνε καὶ σύ" [*Il.* 21.106]. Schol. T *Il.* 3.277 (*Burney* 86, fol. 25ʳ) (= 3.277a² Erbse) and schol. Ge *Il.* 3.277 (*Genav.gr.* 44, p.130) claim that this form of the vocative is Attic (as does Eust. *Il.* 3.277 [I 652.16–17 van der Valk]). Modern scholars disagree about this. For instance, G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary* I (Cambridge 1985) 304, claims that "Ἥλιος is a vocative here, cf. 21.106," whereas Krieter-Spiro, *Homer's Iliad* 109, comments on Ἥλιός θ': "nom. instead of voc. in the second address, which is connected to the first, vocative address via θ'." As for *Od.* 12.374–375, there are a couple of minor issues involving variant readings: for one of these, see n.6 above; for the other, note the first part of schol. H *Od.* 12.374c: ἐν πολλοῖς, ὠκὺς δ' Ἡελίῳ, ἵν' ᾖ ὠκὺς ἄγγελος (the whole of which is quoted in n.59 below).

⁹ This is not the only case of Aristotle offering multiple solutions. See e.g. schol. B* *Il.* 2.649 (= fr.146 Rose³/370 Gigon), on an apparent contradiction: in the *Iliad* Crete is called "hundred-city Crete" (2.649), in the *Odyssey* it is said to have ninety cities (19.173). Aristotle offers two or three solutions (depending on how one interprets the scholium).

¹⁰ For discussion of this fragment see H. Hintenlang, *Untersuchungen zu den Homer-Aporien des Aristoteles* (diss. Heidelberg 1961) 84–89; A. R. Sodano, "Gli ἄλογα omerici nell'esegesi di Porfirio: La metodologia filologico-estetica di Aristotele," *AAP* 25 (1966) 205–239, at 216–218; B. Breitenberger, "Aporemata Homerica," in H. Flashar et al. (eds.), *Aristoteles: Fragmente zu Philosophie, Rhetorik, Poetik, Dichtung* (Berlin 2006) 369–430, at 386–388; E. Bouchard, *Du Lycée au Musée: théorie poétique et critique littéraire à l'époque hellénistique* (Paris 2016) 62–65. In the editions of the fragments of Aristotle, some version or part of schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a, or a scholium like it in *Lips.gr.* 32 (see n.12 below), has been given the following fragment numbers (in chronological order): fr.132.1 Rose¹, 173.1 Heitz, 144 Rose², 149 Rose³, and 373 Gigon. See V. Rose, *Aristoteles Pseudepigraphus* I (Leipzig 1863); E. Heitz, *Fragmenta Aristotelis* (Paris 1865); V. Rose, *Aristoteles opera* V (Berlin 1870); V. Rose, *Aristotelis qui ferebantur librorum fragmenta* (Leipzig 1886); O. Gigon, *Aristotelis Opera* III (Berlin 1987).

tury).[11] I follow Erbse and others in using B* to refer to the later scholia, which is the type that interests me here.[12]

What follows is my transcription and translation of schol. B* *Il*. 3.277a (fol. 47ʳ).[13] Ἀριστοτέλης is found written in the

---

[11] Image at http://www.homermultitext.org/iipsrv?IIIF=/project/homer/pyramidal/deepzoom/hmt/vbbifolio/v1/vb_46v_47r.tif/full/2000,/0/default.jpg (last accessed 17 Dec. 2019). This image was derived from an original ©2007, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venezia, Italia; the derivative image is ©2010, Center for Hellenic Studies. Original and derivative are licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 License. The CHS/ Marciana Imaging Project was directed by David Jacobs of the British Library.

[12] On *Venet*. B, and the difference between the B- and B*-scholia, see H. Erbse, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem* I (Berlin 1969) xvii–xviii. The scholiast responsible for the material labeled B* is credited with the addition of (*inter alia*) the excerpts from Porphyry, in the spaces of the page that were empty. *Lips.gr*. 32, fourteenth century, contains a version of schol. B* *Il*. 3.277a (see L. Bachmann, *Scholia in Homeri Iliadem quae in codice bibl. Paull. Acad. Lips. legentur* [Leipzig 1835] 173–174). It has been used by editors (e.g. Rose¹ p.159) to correct what they see as errors or an inferior text in B*, but it will not concern me. On *Lips.gr*. 32 see Erbse xxiii–xxiv. Note that there are in fact two B* scholia on fol. 47ʳ concerning *Iliad* 3.277 (which I distinguish by the designations 'a' and 'b'), in two different locations: The 'b' scholium is written to the right of the text of the *Iliad*; the 'a' scholium runs along the bottom and is followed directly by another scholium on a different verse (*Il*. 3.457). (See H. Schrader, *Porphyrii Quaestionum Homericarum ad Iliadem pertinentium reliquiae* [Leipzig 1880] 66–67.) This fact is important in assessing schol. B* *Il*. 3.277b, which I discuss in §4.

[13] That I could transcribe this scholium myself does not diminish my gratitude to earlier editors, whose own transcriptions I have relied upon. I have added capitalization and quotation marks and have added or altered much of the punctuation. For versions of this text in earlier editions of scholia or the fragments of Porphyry's *Homeric Questions* see J. B. G. d'Ansse de Villoison, *Homeri Ilias ad veteris codicis Veneti fidem recensita* (Venice 1788) 99; W. Dindorf, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem* III (Berlin 1877) 178–179; Schrader *Porphyrii Quaestionum Homericarum* 113–114. This text was not included among Erbse's presentation of the scholia on *Il*. 3.277, because his aim was to produce an edition of the *Viermännerscholia*/A-scholia and the exegetic/bT-scholia, and these texts belong to a different tradition than the scholia taken from Porphyry, the D-scholia, etc. Schol. B* *Il*. 3.277a was, however, re-

---

margin,[14] as is an ἀστερίσκος (※) indicating that this is a comment on *Il.* 3.277 (and specifically on πάντ' ἐφορᾷς):

Διὰ τί τὸν ἥλιον πάντα ἐφορᾶν καὶ πάντα ἐπακούειν εἰπών, ἐπὶ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ βοῶν ἀγγέλου δεόμενον ἐποίησεν· "ὠκέα δ' Ἠελίῳ Ὑπερίονι ἄγγελος ἦλθε | Λαμπετίη τανύπεπλος, ὅ οἱ βόας ἔκταν ἑταῖροι." λύων δὲ Ἀριστοτέλης φησίν· ἤτοι ὅτι πάντα μὲν ὁρᾷ ἥλιος ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ἅμα· ἢ ὅτι τοῦ ἡλίου ἦν τὸ ἐξαγγεῖλαν[15] ἡ Λαμπετία, ὥσπερ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἡ ὄψις. ἢ ὅτι φησὶν ἁρμόττον ἦν εἰπεῖν οὕτως τόν τε Ἀγαμέμνονα ὁρκίζοντα ἐν τῇ μονομαχίᾳ, ὅτι "Ἤέλιος,[16] ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷς καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούεις·" καὶ τὸν Ὀδυσσέα πρὸς τοὺς ἑταίρους λέγοντα. (*lacuna?*)[17] οὐ γὰρ δὴ καὶ τὰ ἐν Ἅιδη[18] ὁρᾷ.[19] καὶ ὅλως ὁ ποιητὴς ὅπου πάρεστιν ἐκεῖνά φησιν ὁρᾶν πάντως ἐν μὲν τῇ ἀνατολῇ ὄντα τὰ ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ, ἐν δὲ τῇ μεσημβρίᾳ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ, καὶ πάλιν ἐπὶ δυσμῶν, τὰ κατ' αὐτὰς ἐπιβλέπειν. εἰκὸς οὖν ἐστι κατ' ἄλλο κλίμα τῆς κινή-

---

[14] Villoison and Heitz print Πορφυρίου at the outset of their presentations of this scholium. Bachmann does not, however, so I assume Πορφυρίου is not present in *Lips.gr.* 32 (but I have not studied this manuscript).

[15] The MS. reads ἢ ὅτι τοῦ ἡλίου ἦν τὸ ἐξαγγεῖλαν, though it is possible that -αν is a correction of -αι. Villoison printed ἤτοι ὅτι τῷ ἡλίῳ ἦν τὸ ἐξαγγεῖλαι, and was followed by Rose[1] and Heitz. Rose[2] is the same, except in restoring ἐξαγγεῖλαν. Rose[3] and Schrader follow the MS. in everything but τῷ ἡλίῳ. Gigon enigmatically prints ἢ ὅτι τῷ ἡλίῳ ἔδει ἐξαγγεῖλαι, and unfortunately (though typically) provides no information about his text.

[16] Regarding ὅτι Ἤέλιος of the MS., Villoison, Bachmann, and every compiler of fragments add θ' after Ἤέλιος (from *Il.* 3.277) and omit ὅτι— presumably to make the verse better fit syntactically into the passage. The addition of θ' is unnecessary. The presence of ὅτι is harder to make sense of, but not impossible, so I have retained it.

[17] Schrader marks a lacuna here, which may well be right, see below.

[18] The MS. has ἅδη. I capitalize this and add the iota subscripts (which are absent, as usual). Villoison, Bachmann, and every compiler of fragments print ἅδου (some of them indicating that this is a correction of the MS. reading). Schrader follows the MS.

[19] Fr.132.1 Rose[1], 173.1 Heitz, 144 Rose[2], and 149 Rose[3] all end the fragment here. They are likely right that the Aristotle material ends here. Nevertheless, I think it is better for an editor to include the entire scholium, as Gigon has done.

σεως ὄντα, μὴ ἑωρακέναι τὰ κατὰ τὴν Θρινακίαν πραττόμενα· πάντα μὲν γὰρ ἐφορᾷ, οὐ κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ καιρὸν πάντα ἐποπτεύει :—

Why, having said that Helios oversees all things and overhears all things, did [Homer] portray [him] needing a messenger in the case of his own cattle: "Swift to Hyperion Helios came a messenger, Lampetia of the long robe, [proclaiming] that the companions [sc. of Odysseus] killed his cattle"? Now Aristotle, solving [the problem], says: either it is (1) because Helios does see all things but not simultaneously; or (2) because Lampetia was the messenger[20] for Helios just as sight is for a human. Or (3) because, he says, it was appropriate that Agamemnon spoke in this way when administering an oath in single combat—namely, "O Helios, you who oversee all things and overhear all things"—and that Odysseus [spoke in this way] when speaking to his companions. (*lacuna*?) For [Helios] surely does not see things in Hades as well. And in general, the poet says that [Helios] sees those things absolutely, where he is present—when in the East, the things in the East; in the South, the things there, and, again, in the case of its settings [i.e. in the West] to observe the things there. Therefore, it is reasonable that, being in a different region of his path, he did not see what was happening in Thrinakia; for he oversees all things, but he does not look upon all things at the same exact time :—

2. *Aristotle's solutions*

I want to look closely at each of Aristotle's solutions. But before doing so, it is important to make explicit two points about Helios. First, 'Helios' is not simply the name of the Sun, a celestial object; he is in Homer an anthropomorphic god. This is true of Helios in the Homeric epics, and (apart from the views of some philosophers and scientists) he continued to be envisioned this way in Aristotle's own time (see *fig.* 1 for an image of Helios so conceived).[21]

[20] Or more literally, "what delivers the message" (τὸ ἐξαγγεῖλαν).

[21] I should add, as Mor Segev has reminded me, that Aristotle too regarded celestial objects (and so the Sun) as living things that fit his definition of 'god', and—I am less sure about this part—that it is possible that he attributed visual perception to them. See M. Segev, *Aristotle on Religion* (Cambridge 2017) 91–101.

Figure 1: Helios, the North-West pediment of the temple of Athena in Ilion. Fourth century B.C. Pergamum Museum, Berlin.[22]

———

Second, Helios shining his light is the equivalent of, or implies, his seeing (and knowing). A sequence in *Iliad* 14 makes this clear. Hera seduces Zeus (as part of a plan to help the Greeks), and when they are about to have sex on Mt. Ida, she expresses a concern for privacy (her actual reason being to distract Zeus). He responds (342–345):

Ἥρη, μήτε θεῶν τό γε δείδιθι μήτέ τιν' ἀνδρῶν
ὄψεσθαι· τοῖόν τοι ἐγὼ νέφος ἀμφικαλύψω
χρύσεον· οὐδ' ἂν νῶϊ διαδράκοι Ἠέλιός περ,
οὗ τε καὶ ὀξύτατον πέλεται φάος εἰσοράασθαι.
Hera, fear not this, that any god or man
will see; such is the golden cloud I shall enfold us in:
not even Helios would see the two of us through it,
and his light is the sharpest for seeing.

As R. Janko comments: "φάος has a twin significance, 'light' and 'sight', derived from the ancient idea of vision; we see with rays of light coming from the eye, and darkness is a mist through which such rays cannot pass … The Sun, the greatest eye in the

———

———

cosmos, sees all…"[23]

2.1. To understand and evaluate Aristotle's first solution, we need to consider the Homeric conception of Helios and his travels across the sky and over the Earth. In the epics, the Earth is a circular flat disk surrounded by the 'river' Okeanos. The sky or heavens (οὐρανός) is a hemispherical dome covering the Earth, supported in some way by pillars and Atlas. Helios travels along the sky from east to west during the day.[24] At night—according to other early sources, though this is not mentioned in Homer—Helios returns east floating in a vessel on Okeanos.[25] (In any case, during this time he is neither shining on Earth nor therefore seeing anything happening there.) Since the Earth is flat, one might well assume that Helios—once he has risen—would shine on and so see everything on Earth at the same time

---

[23] *The Iliad: A Commentary* III (Cambridge 1994) 206. See also his comment (148) on *Il.* 13.837. A description in the *Homeric Hymn to Helios* (31.8–11) is noteworthy (text and transl. M. L. West):

ὃς φαίνει θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν
ἵπποις ἐμβεβαώς· σμερδνὸν δ᾽ ὅ γε δέρκεται ὄσσοις
χρυσέης ἐκ κόρυθος, λαμπραὶ δ᾽ ἀκτῖνες ἀπ᾽ αὐτοῦ
αἰγλῆεν στίλβουσι

He [sc. Helios] shines for mortals and immortals, mounted on his chariot; his eyes gaze fearsomely out of his golden helm, the bright rays from him gleam brilliant

Note that in some texts (e.g. *Mete.* 3.2, 372a29–33), Aristotle speaks as if vision travels from the eye to the object seen, which would seem to contradict his conception of sight as presented in *De anima* (e.g. 2.7, 418a31–b2, 419a9–11) and *De sensu* (3, 440a18–20). See the long footnote in D. Lindberg, *Theories of Vision from Al-Kindi to Kepler* (Chicago 1976) 217–218 n.39. I cannot here comment on why Aristotle presented these two different (extramission and intromission) conceptions of vision. Lindberg believes it can be explained chronologically, the *Meteorologica*-conception being earlier (and closer to Plato's).

[24] For details see D. R. Dicks, *Early Greek Astronomy to Aristotle* (Ithaca 1970) ch. 2, and E. Theodossiou, V. N. Manimanis, P. Mantarakis, and M. S. Dimitrijevic, "Astronomy and Constellations in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*," *Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage* 14 (2011) 22–30.

[25] Mimnermus fr.12 West (perhaps the earliest extant version of this account of Helios) and other ancient sources quoted in Ath. 469C–470D.

---

during the day. I imagine that such an assumption in part gave rise to the present problem.

What then should we make of Aristotle's first solution: that Helios does see all things, but not simultaneously? One possibility is that Aristotle is anachronistically reading into these verses his own scientific conception of the shape of the Earth and the movement of the Sun.[26] On his view, the Sun orbits the Earth, and as the Earth is a sphere, the Sun shines on only part of the Earth at any given time.[27] Interpreted in this way, Helios can be said to see all things, but not simultaneously.

Another possibility is that even accepting the Homeric conception of the shape of the Earth and the movements of Helios around it, Aristotle not unreasonably assumed that, as the day can be divided into parts,[28] Helios most clearly or fully sees everything only in those parts of the Earth where he is shining directly at that time of day (morning, noon, and afternoon). Though not a perfect fit with this speculation, a passage from *Odyssey* 12 in any case might seem to imply that Helios sees his cattle only at certain times during the day; he complains to Zeus about what Odysseus' companions have done (379–381):

οἵ μευ βοῦς ἔκτειναν ὑπέρβιον, ᾗσιν ἐγώ γε
χαίρεσκον μὲν ἰὼν εἰς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα,
ἠδ᾽ ὁπότ᾽ ἂψ ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἀπ᾽ οὐρανόθεν προτραποίμην.

---

[26] Cf. Breitenberger, in *Aristoteles* 387: "In dieser Lösung legt Aristoteles als Naturwissenschaftler—entgegen der traditionellen Auffassung von Helios als einem mythischen Wesen—das Konzept des Gottes als Personifikation bzw. Allegorie der Sonne zugrunde." If my speculations in what follows are correct, then I would agree with the "Aristoteles als Naturwissenschaftler" part of this comment, but not that this implies an allegorical interpretation.

[27] See Arist. *Cael.* 2.12–14, especially 297a8–298a20, and L. Judson, "Aristotle's Astrophysics," *OSAPh* 49 (2015) 151–192, at 157–158. In *Theophrastus of Eresus: On Winds* (Leiden 2018) 106, I describe Aristotle's view as follows: "The celestial sphere of the sun moves daily around the Earth (itself a sphere, which is fixed and at the center of the cosmos), while the sun itself moves along the ecliptic (across its sphere) during the course of the year, such that its daily motions about the Earth are at one extreme the summer tropical circle, and at another the winter tropical circle."

[28] See especially *Il.* 21.111, as well as *Il.* 16.777–779 and *Od.* 7.288–289.

they insolently killed my cattle, in which I
took delight going to the starry heavens,
and when I turned back again from heaven to earth.

It is most natural to take this to be saying that Helios delights in seeing his cattle when he is rising and setting—the implication being that he does not see them otherwise, because he cannot see anything where he is not present or because he is not focused on them at other times.

Whatever one thinks of the merits of this solution, if either of the above two interpretations is correct, then it fits Aristotle's discussion of the various ways of solving Homeric problems sketched in *Poetics* 25. There he writes that some problems should be solved by looking at diction (τὰ δὲ πρὸς τὴν λέξιν ὁρῶντα δεῖ διαλύειν, 1461a9–10), and one way of doing this is to point out that some word at the center of an objection to Homer is ambiguous (τὰ δὲ ἀμφιβολίᾳ, 1461a25–26). In the present case, there is an ambiguity in πάντ' ἐφορᾷς. One could take this to mean—and clearly those who detected a contradiction here *did* take this to mean—that Helios "sees" (i.e. knows) everything on earth completely and virtually instantaneously (perhaps like the god of Plato's *Laws*,[29] if not anachronistically like the omniscient God of the Abrahamic religions). But that is not the only, nor even in Aristotle's context the most obvious, way of taking it. For one could also interpret the claim that Helios sees all things to mean that (as Aristotle puts it in this scholium) he "does see all things but not simultaneously."[30] That is, he over-sees everything in that part of the world where he is present (i.e. on which the Sun is shining, or shining directly). This is, so to

[29] *Leg.* 899D–905D, with R. Mayhew, *Plato: Laws 10* (Oxford 2008) 155–184.

[30] It is worth noting in this connection Aristotle's principle of non-contra-diction, discussed in *Metaphysics* Γ.3–6: "It is impossible for the same thing to belong and not to belong to the same thing *simultaneously* and in the same respect" (τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ ἅμα ὑπάρχειν τε καὶ μὴ ὑπάρχειν ἀδύνατον τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ κατὰ τὸ αὐτό, 1005b19–20). See also 1005b23–30, and note the formulation at 1011b13–20: "that opposite assertions cannot be true *simultaneously*" (τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἀληθεῖς ἅμα τὰς ἀντικειμένας φάσεις).

speak, a contextual omniscience, and it solves our Homeric problem: Lampetia had to get the message to Helios because he was not shining on this part of the world when his cattle were killed and eaten, nor when the crime was discovered (presumably by Lampetia).

2.2. Aristotle's second solution is to claim that Lampetia is the messenger for Helios just as sight is for humans. This solution has received a fair amount of attention, as it is sometimes considered evidence that Aristotle was open to allegorical solutions to Homeric problems.[31] I argue against this interpretation in *Aristotle's Lost Homeric Problems* (192–193), but do not discuss it here.[32]

Putting aside allegorical interpretations, this solution is usually (and plausibly) taken to be an instance of solving a problem via metaphor, which again fits what Aristotle says in *Poetics* 25: that some problems should be solved by looking at diction, and another way of doing this is to point out that some word at the center of an objection to Homer is in fact a metaphor (μεταφορά) (1461a16–21). And of the four kinds of metaphor described by Aristotle, the one closest to our sense of the word and relevant in the present case is metaphor by analogy.[33] If this is what Aristotle

---

[31] See e.g. R. Lamberton, "Introduction," in R. Lamberton and J. Keaney (eds.), *Homer's Ancient Readers: The Hermeneutics of Greek Epic's Earliest Exegetes* (Princeton 1992) vii–xxiv, at xiv–xv.

[32] I shall merely add that I agree with R. Janko, *Philodemus On Poems, Books 3–4, with fragments of Aristotle On Poets* (Oxford 2011) 328 n.3, who writes (of the fragments concerning *inter alia* the Cattle of Helios): "Aristotle is explaining why Homer said what he did, not positing (as do true allegorists like the author of the Derveni papyrus) that Homer is giving an encoded account of reality."

[33] In *Poetics* 21 Aristotle says that "a metaphor [or transference] is an application of an alien name either (1) from genus to species, or (2) from species to genus, or (3) from species to species, or (4) by analogy" (μεταφορὰ δέ ἐστιν ὀνόματος ἀλλοτρίου ἐπιφορὰ ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους ἐπὶ εἶδος ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ εἴδους ἐπὶ τὸ γένος ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ εἴδους ἐπὶ εἶδος ἢ κατὰ τὸ ἀνάλογον, 1457b6–9). Cf. Bouchard, *Du Lycée au Musée* 64: "À strictement parler, il s'agit d'une métaphore obtenue

---

had in mind, however, it is quite different from the examples of Homeric metaphor by analogy that he provides in the *Rhetoric*. In *Rhetoric* 3.11 (1411b30–1412a10) he discusses Homer's use of metaphor by analogy:[34] "Homer has also employed the making of inanimate things animate through metaphor." He gives five examples (the metaphorical words are in italics):

"Then once again the *shameless* stone rolled to the ground below" (*Od.* 11.598)

"the arrow *flew*" (*Il.* 5.99, 13.587, 13.592)

the arrow "*longing* to fly" (*Il.* 4.126)

the spears "were stuck in the earth, *anxious* to feed on flesh" (*Il.* 11.574)

"the spear-point, *being eager*, darted through his chest" (*Il.* 15.542)

Aristotle makes it clear that these are analogical metaphors: "And [Homer] attached these [animate attributes to inanimate things] through analogous metaphor: for as the stone is to Sisyphus, so is the one being shameless to the one being shamed."

Analogies have the form A is to B as C is to D (see *Poet.* 21, 1457b16–19). So if Aristotle's second solution was meant to be a metaphor by analogy, I take him to be saying: Lampetia (A) is a messenger to Helios (B) just as sight or visual perception (C) is a 'messenger' to a human (D). I think it likely that what Aristotle is claiming is this: seeing in humans requires a (virtually instantaneous) interaction between the faculty of sight and what is seen, and this in no way undercuts or contradicts the fact that a human sees (and knows) what he sees. In the same way, Helios' seeing all requires a (swift) interaction between Helios and what

par analogie telle que la définit Aristote." Her conception of the analogy involved here (cf. 65) is more complex than mine.

[34] ἐν πᾶσι δὲ τῷ ἐνέργειαν ποιεῖν εὐδοκιμεῖ, οἷον ἐν τοῖσδε, "αὗτις ἐπὶ δάπεδόνδε κυλίνδετο λᾶας ἀναιδής" καὶ "ἔπτατ' ὀϊστός" καὶ "ἐπιπτέσθαι μενεαίνων" καὶ "ἐν γαίῃ ἵσταντο λιλαιόμενα χροὸς ἆσαι" καὶ "αἰχμὴ δὲ στέρνοιο διέσσυτο μαιμώωσα." ἐν πᾶσι γὰρ τούτοις διὰ τὸ ἔμψυχα εἶναι ἐνεργοῦντα φαίνεται· τὸ ἀναισχυντεῖν γὰρ καὶ μαιμᾶν καὶ τἆλλα ἐνέργεια. ταῦτα δὲ προσῆψε διὰ τῆς κατ' ἀναλογίαν μεταφορᾶς· ὡς γὰρ ὁ λίθος πρὸς τὸν Σίσυφον, ὁ ἀναισχυντῶν πρὸς τὸν ἀναισχυντούμενον. ποιεῖ δὲ καὶ ἐν ταῖς εὐδοκιμούσαις εἰκόσιν ἐπὶ τῶν ἀψύχων ταυτά· "κυρτά, φαληριόωντα· πρὸ μέν τ' ἄλλ', αὐτὰρ ἐπ' ἄλλα"· κινούμενα γὰρ καὶ ζῶντα ποιεῖ πάντα, ἡ δ' ἐνέργεια κίνησις.

———————

he sees (Lampetia swiftly delivering a message); and here too, this in no way undercuts or contradicts the fact that Helios sees (and knows) what he sees—which is all things. The second solution to this problem, then, is that far from contradicting each other, the *Iliad* passage and the *Odyssey* passage in effect say the same thing: the former says that Helios sees all things, the latter says that Lampetia delivering messages to Helios is the means by which he sees all things.

Now I think the point Aristotle is making is arguably more naturalistic or scientific than this metaphor might suggest. He does not treat Helios as a god whose perception of all is simple, automatic, and eternal, requiring no means or method or processing.[35] That is, I think it is likely that Aristotle is saying that just as a human automatically sees what is in front of him (and only what is within the range of his vision), but that this requires a process—a specific kind of interaction between the faculty of sight and the object of sight, and of course some form of illumination[36]—so it is with the all that Helios, an anthropomorphic god, sees.[37]

It is worth noting that these first two solutions are, as far as I can tell, incompatible: the first implies that Helios sees all things where he is present, but otherwise he requires Lampetia to deliver him messages (which constitutes an indirect source of

[35] Cf. e.g. the conception of divine omniscience in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles* 1.44–71 (esp. 55–58). The knowledge possessed by the god of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* Λ may be simple, automatic, and eternal as well; however, that god is far from omniscient: the prime mover arguably does not know anything but itself (being thought that is thinking of thought [ἡ νόησις νοήσεως νόησις], Λ.9, 1074b34–35), and it certainly does not know particulars (1074b15–30).

[36] For details see *De an.* 2.7 and *Sens.* 2–3.

[37] In *Poetics* 25, discussing how to respond to the charge that what is portrayed in Homer is false, Aristotle says that one may respond that even so, it is not a legitimate aesthetic criticism if people *believe* that it is true. Aristotle gives as an example the traditional gods that populate Homeric epic: even if Xenophanes is right and no such gods exist, this is not grounds for criticizing the poets, as most people *do* believe in such gods (1460b35–1461a1).

knowledge): she tells him what he missed. The second seems to imply that Lampetia delivering a message to Helios is or represents his means of acquiring knowledge *per se*. She *is* the shining or illumination that constitutes Helios' vision.[38] This is why I find the second solution problematic: for it is more natural to take our passage in the *Odyssey* to be saying or implying that Helios sees all where he is present, but that if he misses something (significant) on account of not being present, he will in any case hear about it from Lampetia—and that, one assumes, is how he found out about the killing of his cattle. But to take Lampetia delivering a message as a metaphor for Helios' vision would imply (or seem to) that she does not actually deliver messages to him concerning what he has missed.[39]

2.3. The third solution seeks to eliminate the apparent contradiction by considering the different contexts in which *Il*. 3.277 and *Od*. 12.374–375 appear, focusing on the former context, which is a special one. This arguably falls under one of the standard Aristotelian strategies for solving Homeric problems: in *Poetics* 25, he says that sometimes the problem is the result of a false assumption on the part of the critic of Homer (1461b1–9). That is, an apparent contradiction is generated by someone's false preconception, and so the problem turns out to be the preconception and not anything in Homer. The actual contradiction is between what a critic (incorrectly) believes, and what, according to Homer, is in fact the case. Here the false assumption is that there is no difference between swearing an oath (what

---

[38] Cf. Eust. *Od*. 12.132 (II 18.27–28 Stallbaum): "Phaethousa and Lampetia, who are the powers relating to Helios" (Φαέθουσα δὲ καὶ Λαμπετία, αἱ κατὰ τὸν Ἥλιον δυνάμεις).

[39] See Breitenberger, in *Aristoteles* 387: "Als Nymphe und Tochter des Helios (*Od*. XII 132 f.) agiert Lampetie (λαμπετάω: "scheinen," "strahlen") nach mythischer Vorstellung als seine individualisierte und personifizierte Botin, die die Geschehnisse durch ihren Bericht gleichermaßen 'sichtbar' macht. Verhält sie sich aber zu Helios wie der Sehsinn zum Menschen (Lampetie : Helios; Sehsinn : Mensch), dann fungiert sie nicht als externe Vermittlerin, sondern bezeichnet die Sehfähigkeit des Sonnengottes selbst."

Agamemnon is doing at *Il.* 3.277) and describing one's adventures (what Odysseus is doing at *Od.* 12.374–375). But swearing an oath is a special, arguably ritualistic, context, and so the words of the oath need not be taken as an accurate or precise description of Helios' cognitive powers.[40] Swearing to Helios, who sees all (in some sense), was a traditional way of swearing an oath. G. S. Kirk (*The Iliad* 304) notes: "The Sun … is concerned with oaths … because he sees and hears all and so cannot be deceived." Odysseus, however, in telling his tale later, has no need to stress the fact that Helios sees all (in any sense). On the contrary, it would do him no good to emphasize that his companions committed this crime after having been warned that Helios sees all—though such an oath did feature a little earlier in his tale (and I turn to that oath now).[41]

Recall that Aristotle's third solution refers to two oaths: "it was appropriate that Agamemnon spoke in this way when administering an oath in single combat . . . and that Odysseus [spoke in this way] when speaking to his companions." The latter is a reference to Odysseus getting his companions to swear to leave these cattle alone (*Od.* 12.322–323):

δεινοῦ γὰρ θεοῦ αἵδε βόες καὶ ἴφια μῆλα,
Ἠελίου, ὃς πάντ᾽ ἐφορᾷ καὶ πάντ᾽ ἐπακούει.

for these are the cattle and fat sheep of a dread god:
Helios, who oversees all things and overhears all things.

Again, it was fitting in one context for Odysseus to describe

---

[40] Again, note the principle of non-contradiction, this time focusing on κατὰ τὸ αὐτό rather than ἅμα: "It is impossible for the same thing to belong and not to belong to the same thing simultaneously and *in the same respect*" (τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ ἅμα ὑπάρχειν τε καὶ μὴ ὑπάρχειν ἀδύνατον τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ κατὰ τὸ αὐτό, *Metaph.* Γ.3, 1005b19–20).

[41] Cf. Bouchard, *Du Lycée au Musée* 63: "il est normal qu'Agamemnon, dans le cadre d'un serment, prenne solennellement Hélios à témoin et en appelle à la puissance de son regard, tandis que le récit d'Ulysse à propos du massacre du troupeau d'Hélios implique une certaine ignorance de ce dernier." Note that Odysseus claims he was sleeping while the cattle were being killed (*Od.* 12.335–338, 366–373).

Lampetia delivering a message to Helios, and in another to refer (ritualistically) to Helios seeing and hearing all things.

That Aristotle has in mind the oath taken by Odysseus' companions is made clear by the last line of the third solution, which (as indicated earlier) seems disconnected from the rest of the solution (which prompted Schrader to insert a lacuna): "For [Helios] surely does not see things in Hades as well." Hintenlang agrees with Schrader that something is missing, and argues that it is some claim to the effect that Odysseus made his companions swear this oath in order to strike fear in them (for Helios does *not* see things in Hades as well—that is, he does not literally see all things).[42] This approach may well be right. In any case, I think Aristotle is likely alluding to an upcoming passage in *Odyssey* 12, where Helios addresses Zeus, after the killing of his cattle, with the following threat (382–383):

εἰ δέ μοι οὐ τίσουσι βοῶν ἐπιεικέ᾽ ἀμοιβήν,
δύσομαι εἰς Ἀίδαο καὶ ἐν νεκύεσσι φαείνω.

If they do not pay me fitting recompense for my cattle,
I shall sink into the house of Hades and shine among the dead.[43]

3. *Porphyry and the second part of the scholium*

I turn now to the remainder of our text (a little over a third of the scholium):

And in general (καὶ ὅλως), the poet says that [Helios] sees those things absolutely, where he is present—in the East, the things in the East; in the South, the things there; and, again, in the case of its settings to observe the things there. Therefore, it is likely that,

[42] Hintenlang, *Untersuchungen* 85: "Er wollte aber mit diesen Worten nur Furcht erwecken, denn Helios sieht ja nicht auch die Dinge in der Unterwelt." See also Sodano, *AAP* 25 (1966) 217, and Breitenberger, in *Aristoteles* 387–388. M. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge 2011) 44, takes this approach in translating the passage: "and also Odysseus spoke thus to his friends [*Od*. 12.323], [but he only wished to arouse fear] for surely he does not see things in Hades" (her brackets).

[43] Heubeck, *Commentary on Odyssey* 139: "The threat is that Helios may descend (fut.) to Hades and shine (φαείνω subj.) on the dead rather than the living."

being in a different region of his path, he did not see what was happening in Thrinakia; for he oversees all things, but he does not look upon all things at the same exact time (κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ καιρόν).

I believe this is likely someone else's elaboration on the one solution of Aristotle that this scholar prefers, namely the first one. And the best candidate is Porphyry. I am not the first to think so;[44] but it is worth repeating, not only because Rose merely asserts this, but especially given that there has been scholarly disagreement about whether Porphyry is the indirect source of schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a.[45]

I think the most likely source is Porphyry for three reasons. First, there are a great many B*-scholia, beginning διὰ τί, which scholars tend to agree come from Porphyry.[46] But as διὰ τί is quite common in *problêmata* literature, this alone cannot count for much. Second, there is a similar καὶ ὅλως at the beginning of the concluding line of schol. B* *Il.* 4.343 (fol. 60ʳ), the source of which is Porphyry (see MacPhail 88). Third, Porphyry sometimes refers to and perhaps favored a category of solution (not found in *Poetics* 25, at least not in this form or under this name) according to *kairos* (ἡ λύσις ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ *vel sim.*).[47]

---

[44] See e.g. Rose[1] (p.159): "καὶ ὅλως ὁ ποιητὴς etc. quae sunt verba Porphyrii."

[45] Schrader included this text in his edition of Porphyry's *Homeric Questions on the Iliad*, MacPhail did not.

[46] Here are eight examples, just from *Iliad* 1–2 and included in MacPhail (who includes far fewer than Schrader): schol. B* on *Il.* 1.138–139 (fol. 6ᵛ) (MacPhail p.18); on 1.225 (9ᵛ) (p.20); on 1.524 (16ᵛ) (p.28); on 2.73 (20ᵛ) (p.34) = Arist. fr.142 Rose³/366 Gigon; on 2.257–277 (25ᵛ) (p.42); on 2.370–374 (28ʳ) (p.50); on 2.478 (31ʳ) (p.66); on 2.649 (35ʳ) (p.68) = Arist fr.146 Rose³/370 Gigon.

[47] Five examples: λύεται δὲ ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ (schol. B* on *Il.* 1.420 [fol. 14r], MacPhail p.275); λύοιτο δ' ἂν τῷ καιρῷ (on 2.844 [40ʳ], p.70); ἡ δὲ λύσις ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ (on 3.315 [48ʳ], p.278); λύεται δὲ ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ (on 4.226 [49ʳ], p.279); λύεται δ' ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ (on 9.186 [118ʳ], p.148). (There are many more instances among the texts included in Schrader but not in MacPhail.) Apart from Porphyry's *Homeric Questions* (and a few scholia that may well go back to him) I know of no evidence of ancient scholars employing the solution

Solving a Homeric problem from *kairos* requires some explanation. As far as I can tell, this solution comes in three different forms (based on different meanings of καιρός).[48] One concerns the context or occasion or circumstances[49]—as for example swearing an oath versus telling a story—though that is not what

according to *kairos*—at least not under that name. It is possible (but I think unlikely) that this was Porphyry's name for Aristotle's sixth type of solution (*Poet.* 25, 1461a4–9), or for the part of it referring to *when* (ὅτε) something was done: "Concerning whether what is said or done by someone [is said or done] beautifully or not beautifully, one must not only consider whether it is excellent or low by looking into what was done or said in itself, but also into the one doing or saying it, or to whom, or when, or by what means, or for the sake of what—for instance, to bring about a greater good, or to avoid a greater evil" (περὶ δὲ τοῦ καλῶς ἢ μὴ καλῶς εἰ εἴρηταί τινι ἢ πέπρακται, οὐ μόνον σκεπτέον εἰς αὐτὸ τὸ πεπραγμένον ἢ εἰρημένον βλέποντα εἰ σπουδαῖον ἢ φαῦλον, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὸν πράττοντα ἢ λέγοντα, ἢ πρὸς ὃν ἢ ὅτε ἢ ὅτῳ ἢ οὗ ἕνεκεν, οἷον εἰ μείζονος ἀγαθοῦ, ἵνα γένηται, ἢ μείζονος κακοῦ, ἵνα ἀπογένηται). I doubt this because Porphyry's *kairos*-solution is broader in scope than solutions meant to solve problems concerning "whether what is said or done by someone is said or done beautifully (or 'nobly', καλῶς) or not."

[48] LSJ s.v. καιρός: "A. *due measure, proportion, fitness*" … "III. more freq. of Time, *exact* or *critical time, season, opportunity*." The *BDAG* s.v. also lists "circumstances" and "what is opportune." R. Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia* (Cambridge 2009) 376, in his Glossary of Greek Terms (s.v. καιρός), has "*(critical, decisive) moment, time*"; and in his one discussion of the term (323) he translates it "current circumstances."

[49] For instance: in *Iliad* 1, Thetis tells Achilles that she will go to Zeus on Mt. Olympus on his behalf, but that this will have to wait till Zeus and the other gods return from Aithiopia, where they are feasting (419–427). This gave rise to a problem: "Why did Thetis not go to Zeus when he was in Aithiopia? For Aithiopia was not further away than Olympus" (διὰ τί ἡ Θέτις οὐκ ᾤχετο πρὸς τὸν Δία ἐν Αἰθιοπίᾳ ὄντα; οὐ γὰρ δὴ πόρρω Αἰθιοπία ἦν τοῦ Ὀλύμπου), schol. B* *Il.* 1.423 (fol. 14ʳ), on Αἰθιοπῆας. On the same folio there is a brief paraphrase or restatement of this problem, and a solution ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ: "It is unreasonable not to go straightaway to Aithiopia; but it is solved [by reasoning] from the *kairos*; for it would be strange to trouble the gods while they are feasting" (ἄλογον τὸ μὴ πορεύεσθαι εὐθὺς εἰς τὴν Αἰθιοπίαν. λύεται δὲ ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ· τοῖς γὰρ θεοῖς εὐωχουμένοις ἄτοπον ἐνοχλεῖν), 1.420 (14ʳ), on εἶμ' αὐτὴ πρὸς Ὄλυμπον. Schrader includes both scholia, MacPhail only the latter.

is meant by *kairos* at the end of schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a. James Porter refers to a "rare species" of this kind of solution: "ἀπὸ τοῦ καιροῦ, meaning a solution based on considerations of the moment—the relevant factor here being Homer's own sudden narrative urgency."[50] Here is the key text, which begins with an abridged version of the problem (schol. B* *Il.* 12.25 [fol. 159ᵛ]):

> It is unreasonable that men [built] the wall in one day, but the gods demolished it in nine days … Some solve this [by reasoning] from the *kairos*, because then (τότε), wanting to abolish completely the wall invented by him [sc. Homer], he made the time [i.e. duration] of the demolition [last] this long (τοσοῦτον χρόνον).[51]

The point is that Homer chose a long demolition period of nine days (even though *gods* were demolishing the wall) to emphasize its total obliteration. This type of *kairos*-solution is not relevant in the context of Helios seeing all things.

Finally, ἡ λύσις ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ can refer to a solution based on the exact time. Take for example schol. F* *Il.* 9.186 (fol. 77ʳ), which concerns the activity that Achilles was engaged in when, in *Iliad* 9, he is visited by Odysseus and the rest of the 'embassy' from Agamemnon: "It seems inappropriate [for Achilles] to be found on arrival playing the *kithara*. But this is solved [by reasoning] from the *kairos*; for by night he was not found more appropriately otherwise. For it was not the time (τότε) to train the

---

[50] "Making and Unmaking: The Achaean Wall and the Limits of Fictionality in Homeric Criticism," *TAPA* 141 (2011) 1–36, at 7.

[51] ἄλογον τοὺς μὲν ἀνθρώπους μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ τὸ τεῖχος, τοὺς δὲ θεοὺς ἐννέα ἡμέραις καθελεῖν … οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ καιροῦ, ὅτι τότε βουλόμενος παντάπασιν ἐξαλεῖψαι τὸ τεῖχος πλασθὲν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοσοῦτον χρόνον ἐποίησε τῆς καθαιρέσεως. This scholium is found at the top of fol. 159ᵛ. Another longer and separate B* scholium, on the same verse, is found at the bottom of fol. 159ᵛ. It begins: "Why did the Achaeans make the wall in one day, whereas Apollo and Poseidon overthrew it in nine days?" (διὰ τί τὸ τεῖχος οἱ μὲν Ἀχαιοὶ μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ ἐποίησαν, ὁ δὲ Ἀπόλλων καὶ ὁ Ποσειδῶν ἐννέα ἡμέραις κατέβαλον;). The *kairos*-solution is not included in what follows. Schrader presents both of these scholia together, whereas MacPhail (194 and 286) separates them (consigning the briefer one to his appendix of *epitomai*).

body."[52] I think this is clearly the version of the *kairos*-solution intended in our text. (Of course, solving a problem by reference to the precise time is a narrow version of solving a problem by reference to the context or occasion or circumstances.) If I am right, it is how Porphyry characterized the *first* solution to the problem that is the focus of this essay: differences in where Helios is in the sky are specifically differences in time.

So I think Schrader was right to include schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a in his edition of the fragments of Porphyry's *Homeric Questions on the Iliad*, and MacPhail was wrong to omit it from his. And it was good that Villoison and Dindorf included it in their editions of the *Iliad*-scholia, and unfortunate that Erbse did not.[53] One would hope that any new edition of the *Iliad*-scholia would include this material.[54]

4. *Two other solutions*

One may wonder why Aristotle and Porphyry did not provide a better version of the solution according to which Helios sees all things *where he is present*, and one that is more in line with the Homeric conception of Helios' travels over and around the Earth: namely, that Helios sees all things where he is present, but that he is not present *at night*. As it turns out, there are three related scholia, each of which presents or includes two other solutions, this 'at night' solution being one of them. The first two seem to be more and less condensed versions of some common

---

[52] ἀπρεπὲς δοκεῖ καταλαμβάνεσθαι κιθαρίζοντα. λύεται δ' ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ· ἐν γὰρ νυκτὶ οὐκ ἀπρεπέστερον [F: εὐπρεπέστερον Schrader] ἄλλως κατελαμβάνετο. γυμνάζεσθαι μὲν γὰρ τῷ σώματι οὐκ ἦν τότε. Porphyry is referred to in the manuscript. See Schrader 134 and MacPhail 283. My thanks to the journal's anonymous referee for help in understanding καταλαμβάνεσθαι and κατελαμβάνετο here. See LSJ s.v. καταλαμβάνω II.2, "*find on arrival*, c. part."

[53] But see n.13 above.

[54] A new, more expansive, edition of the *Iliad*-scholia is in the works: see F. Montanari, F. Montana, D. Muratore, and L. Pagani, "Towards a New Critical Edition of the Scholia to the *Iliad*: A Specimen," *Trends in Classics* 9 (2017) 1–21.

source. Their relationship to the third scholium is more complex (and will not concern me).

Schol. B* *Il.* 3.277b (fol. 47ʳ) is on the right side of the text of the *Iliad*, on the same folio as the one that has been the focus of this essay, though it does not immediately follow that scholium.[55] It is preceded by a symbol (𝕀𝕀) indicating that it is a comment on *Il.* 3.277 (and specifically on πάντ' ἐφορᾷς); it lacks, however, an indication of the problem to which it is clearly offering a couple of solutions. Given this lack, one might speculate that it had once been a continuation of schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a:[56]

ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐχρῆν ἐγνωκέναι τὸν πάντ' ἐφορῶντα. λύοιτο δ' ἂν τῇ λέξει· τὸ γὰρ πάντα δηλοῖ τὰ πλεῖστα. λύοιτο δὲ καὶ τῷ καιρῷ, νυκτὸς γὰρ εἰκὸς ἐπιθέσθαι τοῖς βουσὶ[57] τοὺς Ἰθακησίους.

The one who sees everything should know [everything] by himself. Now [this objection] could be solved by [an appeal to] diction: for "all" could mean "the most." And it could also be solved by [an appeal to] the exact time (*kairos*), for it is likely the Ithacans attacked the cattle at night.

Schol. H *Od.* 12.374a (fol. 77ᵛ), found in *Harl.* 5674, a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century manuscript of the *Odyssey*,[58] is more expansive:

"ὠκέα δ' Ἡελίῳ": ἐναντίον τοῦτο τῷ "Ἥλιος θ', ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷς καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούεις"· ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ γὰρ ἐχρῆν ἐγνωκέναι τὸν πάντα ἐφορῶντα. λύοιτο δ' ἂν ἢ τῇ λέξει· τὸ γὰρ πάντα δηλοῖ τὰ πλεῖστα· ἄλλως τε οὐκ ἠγνόει τὸ πεπραγμένον ὁ Ἥλιος, ἀλλ' ἔδει ὡς ποιμαίνουσαν καὶ ταύτην ἀπαγγεῖλαι. ἢ τῷ καιρῷ λύεται, ὡς νυκτὸς ἐπιθεμένων ταῖς βουσὶ τῶν ἑταίρων :—[59]

---

[55] See n.12 above.

[56] For versions of this text in earlier editions see Villoison and Dindorf.

[57] This should be ταῖς βουσί, as these are cows (see e.g. αἵδε βόες, *Od.* 12.322,). Cf. schol. H *Od.* 12.374a (fol. 77ᵛ), which has ταῖς.

[58] On ms. H see F. Pontani, *Sguardi su Ulisse. La tradizione esegetica greca all'Odissea* (Rome 2005) 208–217.

[59] This scholium is followed directly by two others: on *Od.* 12.374b: "ὠκέα δ' Ἡελίοιο (*sic*)"· πῶς οὖν ὁ πάντα ἐφορῶν οὐκ οἶδε πάντα; ὁρᾷ ἀλλ' οὐχ ὑπὸ τὸ αὐτό :— (the text should have Ἡελίῳ); and on 12.375: "ὅ οἱ βόας ἔκταμεν

"Swift to Helios": this is contrary to "and Helios, you who oversee all things and overhear all things"; for the one who sees everything should know [everything] by himself. But [this objection] could be solved either by [an appeal to] diction: for "all" could mean "the most"; and besides, Helios was not ignorant of what had been done, but it was fitting for her also to report this because she was tending the herds. Or it is solved by [an appeal to] the exact time, as the companions attacked the cattle at night.

Schol. X *Od.* 12.374 (fol. 57ᵛ), in *Vindobon.phil.gr.* 133 (thirteenth or fourteenth century),[60] seems to consist of two parts: (1) the exact equivalent of schol. H *Od.* 12.374a, except that its lemma is longer: ὠκέα δ' Ἡλίῳ Ὑπερίονι;[61] (2) the near equivalent of the bulk of schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a—lacking the statement of the problem and the reference to Aristotle, and beginning with the solution involving Lampetia delivering a message to Helios just as sight does to a human. In other words, in this text, the scholiast (or his source) has, in place of Aristotle's first solution, the one referring to the companions attacking Helios' cattle at night. Clearly, there is no need to present a full transcription and translation of this text.[62]

ἡμεῖς"· οὕτως αἱ Ἀριστάρχου. Further, there is another scholium on the other (i.e. right) side of the text of the *Odyssey*, on 12.374c: ἐν πολλοῖς, ὠκὺς δ' Ἡλίῳ, ἵν' ᾖ ὠκὺς ἄγγελος· καὶ πῶς "πάντ' ἐφορᾷς" ὁ Ἥλιος; πάντα μὲν οὐκ ἅμα δέ.

[60] On MS. X see Pontani, *Sguardi su Ulisse* 285–293. I am grateful to Filippomaria Pontani for providing me with a beautiful digital photograph of fol. 57ᵛ, for answering my questions about this scholium, and for preventing me from going astray in my understanding of it. (See the following note. If I nevertheless failed to hit the mark in some way, please blame me.) Schrader includes the entire text. Dindorf, relying on the inferior *Ambrosianus* Q. 88 sup. (fifteenth century), includes only the first part. (Dindorf claims to have relied on *Ambrosianus* B. 99 sup. as well, but Pontani informs me that this manuscript does not contain our text.) Note that Dindorf's edition was the basis for fr. 132.2 Rose¹ and 173.2 Heitz.

[61] The only other difference worth mentioning is that the scribe erroneously punctuates the text at one point (πλεῖστα: ~ ἄλλως τε·), treating ἄλλως τε as if it were ἄλλως and thus the beginning of a new scholium. (I made the same mistake initially.)

[62] There are some variations in the material overlapping schol. B* *Iliad*

I think it more likely that schol. X *Od.* 12.374 is a composite than that schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a is. Nevertheless, it is certainly possible that both are composites and/or are otherwise incomplete. Moreover, that schol. X *Od.* 12.374 begins with the two solutions presented in schol. H *Od.* 12.374a, and follows them, without interruption, with the bulk of schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a, including two of Aristotle's solutions, strongly suggests the possibility that all these texts have the same source (most likely Porphyry),[63] but that they have become divided up and dispersed based on the needs and convictions of the various Homeric scholars responsible for the extant scholia.

Before turning to the 'at night' solution, a word is in order regarding the first solution in these scholia—that the problem is solved by taking "all" to mean "the most."[64] This is certainly Aristotelian, whether or not Aristotle or someone influenced by him is the ultimate source of these scholia.[65] In the *Poetics* 25 account of metaphor as a solution by appealing to diction, discussing a "verse" of the *Iliad* that is likely a mistake on Aristotle's part (πάντες … θεοί τε καὶ ἀνέρες), he writes: "For 'all' has been said metaphorically instead of 'many', since 'all' is a kind of 'much'" (1461a16–20).[66] This is a 'species-to-species' metaphor,

---

3.277a, though they are not significant.

[63] Note the reference to the problem being solved by an appeal to the *kairos*.

[64] Breitenberger, in *Aristoteles* 387, mentions this solution in connection with Aristotle's first solution.

[65] See Sodano, *AAP* 25 (1966) 217.

[66] τὸ δὲ κατὰ μεταφορὰν εἴρηται, οἷον "πάντες μέν ῥα θεοί τε καὶ ἀνέρες ἱπποκορυσταὶ εὗδον παννύχιοι"· ἅμα δέ φησιν "ἦ τοι ὅτ' ἐς πεδίον τὸ Τρωικὸν ἀθρήσειεν, αὐλῶν συρίγγων τε ὅμαδον"· τὸ γὰρ πάντες ἀντὶ τοῦ πολλοί κατὰ μεταφορὰν εἴρηται, τὸ γὰρ πᾶν πολύ τι ("Some things are said metaphorically, for instance, [Agamemnon says] 'Now all the gods, and the men who were chariot-lords, slept the whole night'; but at the same time [he says] 'but when he gazed at the Trojan plain, [he wondered at] the sound of their *auloi* and pipes'. For 'all' is said metaphorically, instead of 'many', for 'all' is a kind of 'much'"). Tarán comments, in L. Tarán and D. Gutas, *Aristotle: Poetics* (Leiden 2012) 299: "There is no question that Aristotle meant to quote *Iliad* 10, 1–2 (ἄλλοι μὲν παρὰ νηυσὶν ἀριστῆρες Παναχαιῶν / εὗδον παννύχιοι), since he

as "all" and "many" are both species of "much" (see *Poet.* 21, 1457b6–13). The present case is similar, as "all" and "the most" are both species of "many."[67] So, according to this solution Helios does not literally see every single thing and action as he travels above and shines down on the earth, but he does see most of them. And this does not in the end matter or undercut his vast knowledge, for anything of importance that he does not see he hears about from Lampetia—who delivers such messages whether or not Helios requires it.

The same could be said with respect to the other solution in these scholia. Why, having said that Helios sees all things and hears all things, did Homer portray him as needing a messenger in the case of his own cattle? This is "solved by [an appeal to] the exact time, for it is likely the Ithacans attacked the cattle at night." Helios does see all things—where he is present, i.e. during the day. And again, this limitation does not in the end undercut his vast knowledge, for anything of importance that happens at night he hears about from Lampetia. This would seem to be a better (more precise, less ambiguous) solution to the problem than that Helios does see all things but not simultaneously—so much so, that one may wonder how Aristotle and Porphyry could have missed it.

Perhaps they didn't. I have already mentioned the possibility that the three texts discussed in this section may have had the same source but were later divided up and dispersed. I think that source may well have been Aristotle (via Porphyry). What follows is speculation, but it is not groundless speculation. The first solution in schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a—Helios does see all things but

---

immediately relates this passage (ἅμα δέ φησιν) to *Iliad* 10, 11 and part of 13 (ἤτοι ὅτ᾽ ἐς πεδίον τὸ Τρωϊκὸν ἀθρήσειε / … / αὐλῶν συρίγγων τ᾽ ἐνοπὴν ὅμαδον). But, as Bywater says, he seems to have mixed up 10, 1–2 with 2, 1–2: ἄλλοι μέν ῥα θεοί τε καὶ ἀνέρες ἱπποκορυσταὶ / εὗδον παννύχιοι."

[67] Unless "all" is here supposed to be a species of "most," in which case this is a 'species-to-genus' metaphor. For another example of Aristotle using species-to-species metaphor to solve a Homeric problem (coming from Porphyry, via the scholia), see Mayhew, *Aristotle's Lost Homeric Problems* 97–98.

not simultaneously—has been abridged and emended to the point of inaccuracy,[68] as it was originally part of a lengthier solution based on what Helios sees when: during the day, he does not see everything simultaneously (but only the part of the earth where he is shining directly), and at night he does not see anything on earth at all. If this speculation is on the right track, then it is possible that there were four Aristotelian solutions to this Homeric problem: (1) involving the ambiguity of Helios seeing all things, according to the exact time; (2) according to analogical metaphor, Lampetia delivering messages to Helios as sight does to humans; (3) according to species-to-species metaphor, where 'seeing all' actually means 'seeing most'; and (4) an apparent contradiction is generated by someone's false preconception, namely that the contexts of the two statements are the same.[69]

This study of schol. B* *Il.* 3.277a (fol. 47ʳ) and related texts confirms something I argued for at greater length in *Aristotle's Lost Homeric Problems*: that the fragmentary evidence for this work reveals that Aristotle there followed the methodology he outlined in *Poetics* 25. And it further suggests (if I am right that his first two solutions in the scholium are inconsistent) that, according to Aristotle, the solutions a scholar comes up with in response to a Homeric problem need not be integrated into one, consistent interpretation of the relevant verse(s).

I hope this study has also demonstrated (or illustrated) the need, in reassessing the fragments of the *Homeric Problems*, to go back to the manuscripts themselves. However valuable are the editions of the fragments of Aristotle, the fragments of Porphyry, and the Homeric scholia—and however much one depends on this excellent scholarship, as I have done—in the end, at least given their present state, one can never be quite certain that

[68] For an instance of this occurring in scholia involving Aristotle see R. Mayhew, "Aristotle on the Eagle in *Iliad* 21.252: On Five Mistaken Homeric Scholia," *JHS* 137 (2017) 1–7.

[69] There may be other possibilities, involving combinations of these four, e.g. that (3) and (4) originally went together: "seeing all" is a metaphor for "seeing most," but it is an especially useful one in the context of oaths, where what Helios sees is emphasized.

what is found therein (in the texts and, where they exist, in the critical apparatuses) reflects accurately what exists in the margins of the Homeric manuscripts. Some relevant information is lost in the editions: for instance, where precisely a scholium is found on the folio, and how that relates to the location of other relevant scholia. And as we have seen, scholia have been presented in these editions incomplete and/or divided up and recombined with similar texts from other manuscripts. This is often legitimate, but not always, and in the end, a scholar ought to try to decide for oneself. The same is true in coming to conclusions about whether a text should be considered Porphyrian. Fortunately, the relevant manuscripts are increasingly becoming more readily available to scholars in electronic form.[70]

September, 2019   Department of Philosophy
                                     Seton Hall University
                                     South Orange, NJ 07079
                                     robert.mayhew@shu.edu