

Tautologies and Transpositions: Aristarchus' Less Known Critical Signs

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CRITICAL SIGNS (σημεῖα)¹ are a staple of Alexandrian criticism. Even though they probably first started to be used on Homer, ancient scholars used them for other authors as well, as papyrological evidence and some ancient and medieval sources demonstrate.² I focus here only on the σημεῖα used by Aristarchus to study Homer. Aside from being present in important Iliadic manuscripts, especially the *Venetus A* (*Marc.gr. Z.* 454 = 822, tenth century), they can be found in ancient editions and commentaries on papyrus. In addition, a description of their function is preserved in later compendia of

¹ For an overview on critical signs see A. Gudeman, “Kritische Zeichen,” *RE* 11 (1922) 1916–1927, and M. Stein, “Kritische Zeichen,” *RAC* 22 (2007) 133–163. On signs in papyri and manuscripts see the recent collection by G. Nocchi Macedo and M. C. Scappaticcio (eds.), *Signes dans les textes, textes sur les signes* (Liège 2017).

² Diogenes Laertius (3.65–66) and a second-century papyrus (*PSI XV* 1488 = *CPF* Plato 142 T) list critical signs used on the text of Plato; see V. Bartoletti, “Diogene Laerzio III 65–66 e un papiro della raccolta fiorentina,” in *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant* I (Vatican City 1964) 25–30, and M. Gigante, “Un papiro attribuibile ad Antigono di Caristo? *PSI 1488*, Vite dei Filosofi,” in *Papiri Filosofici. Miscellanea di studi* II (Florence 1998) 111–114. In the short treatise *Περὶ σημεῖων* the grammarian Hephæstion (2nd cent. CE) discusses critical signs used for lyric poetry, comedy, and tragedy. Alexandrian critical signs were famously adapted by Origen for his work on the *Hexapla*; see F. Schironi, “The Ambiguity of Signs: Critical Σημεῖα from Zenodotus to Origen,” in M. R. Niehoff (ed.), *Homer and the Bible in the Eyes of Ancient Interpreters* (Leiden/Boston 2012) 87–112, and “*P.Grenf.* 1.5, Origen, and the Scriptorium of Caesarea,” *BASP* 52 (2015) 181–223.

critical signs such as the so-called *Anecdota Romanum*,³ the *Anecdota Veneta*,⁴ and the *Anecdota Harleiana*.⁵

Aristarchus used these critical signs: the *obelos* (‘spit’), a dash (—) placed next to the lines that he considered suspect but did not want to delete completely from the text, an operation called *athetesis*.⁶ The *asteriskos* (*) indicated a line repeated elsewhere,⁷ and combined with an *obelos* (*—) it marked repeated lines which were athetized because they were unsuitable in that specific passage.⁸ While these signs had been used by Zenodo-

³ Rome, *Bibl.Nat.gr.* 6 (10th cent.), in F. Montanari, *Studi di filologia omerica antica* I (Pisa 1979) 43–49 and 54–55; cf. A. Nauck, *Lexicon Vindobonense* (St. Petersburg 1867) 271–273; W. Dindorf, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem* I (Oxford 1875) xlii–xliv; M. L. West, *Homeric Hymns, Homeric Apocrypha, Lives of Homer* (Cambridge [Mass.] 2003) 450–455. The *Anecdota Romanum* is the most important among the lists of Homeric critical signs. Very close to this list is the one preserved in *Matrit.* 4629, copied by Constantine Lascaris and edited by Montanari 65–71, esp. 69–70.

⁴ Venice, *Marc.gr.* 483 (14th cent.) in Nauck, *Lexicon Vindobonense* 274–276, and Dindorf, *Scholia Graeca* I xliv–xlv.

⁵ London, *Harl.* 5693 (15th cent.) in Nauck, *Lexicon Vindobonense* 277, and Dindorf, *Scholia Graeca* I xlvi. Latin sources, such as the *Anecdota Parisinum* (*Par.lat.* 7530, of 780 CE, in *Gram.Lat.* VII 533–536; Nauck, *Lexicon Vindobonense* 278–282; Dindorf, *Scholia Graeca* I xlvi–xlix) and Isidore of Seville (*Etym.* 1.21), incorporate the old material on Homer with some other critical signs of various meaning.

⁶ *Anec.Rom.* 54.19–20 Montanari: — ὁ δὲ ὀβελὸς πρὸς τὰ ἀθετούμενα ἐπὶ τοῦ ποιητοῦ, ἤγουν νενοθευμένα ἢ ὑποβεβλημένα, “the *obelos* [is used] with reference to athetized [lines] in the poet, that is, [lines] which are spurious or interpolated.”

⁷ *Anec.Rom.* 54.21–22 Montanari: * ὁ δὲ ἀστερίσκος καθ’ ἑαυτὸν ὡς καλῶς εἰρημένων τῶν ἐπῶν ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ τόπῳ ἔνθα ἐστὶν ἀστερίσκος μόνος, “the *asteriskos* by itself [is used] because [in the scholar’s mind] the lines are well said in that place where the *asteriskos* is alone.” On the *asteriskos* in papyri of Homer and other authors see G. Nocchi Macedo, “Formes et fonctions de l’astérisque dans les papyrus littéraires grecs et latines,” *Σ&Τ* 9 (2011) 3–33.

⁸ *Anec.Rom.* 54.23–24 Montanari: *— ὁ δὲ ἀστερίσκος μετὰ ὀβελοῦ ὡς ὄντα μὲν τὰ ἔπη τοῦ ποιητοῦ, μὴ καλῶς δὲ κείμενα ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ τόπῳ, ἀλλ’ ἐν ἄλλῳ, “the *asteriskos* with the *obelos* [is used] because [in the scholar’s

tus and Aristophanes of Byzantium before him, Aristarchus introduced the *diple* (>) to mark lines which were interesting and in need of exegesis of various kinds (regarding language, content, myth, style, etc.);⁹ the explanations for the *diplai* were to be found in the commentary that Aristarchus prepared in connection with his edition. He also introduced the so-called *diple periestigmene*, the ‘dotted *diple*’ (>:), to mark passages where he argued against his predecessor Zenodotus and perhaps against his Pergamene contemporary Crates of Mallos.¹⁰

These were the most common signs used by Aristarchus, and their description in the compendia match their use in the *Venetus A* and in the Aristarchean scholia transmitted by Aristonicus.¹¹ The compendia and the scholia mention other signs as well, but their function is not clear. On the one hand, they are very rarely used and, on the other, their function and meaning, as reported in the compendia, in the scholia, and in manuscripts, are inconsistent. In particular, with the exception of the *Anecdota Harleiana*, all the other compendia list two other

mind] the lines are by the poet but they are not well placed in that passage, but elsewhere.”

⁹ *Anc. Rom.* 54.11–15 Montanari: > ἡ μὲν οὖν διπλῆ ἀπερίστικτος παρατίθεται πρὸς τοὺς γλωσσογράφους ἢ ἑτεροδόξως ἐκδεξαμένους τὰ τοῦ ποιητοῦ καὶ μὴ καλῶς· ἢ πρὸς τὰς ἀπαξ εἰρημένους λέξεις ἢ πρὸς τὰ ἐναντία καὶ μαχόμενα, καὶ ἕτερα σχήματα πάμπολλα καὶ ζητήματα, “the *diple* without dots is used with reference to the glossographers or those who maintain odd and unsound views regarding the poet’s work; or with reference to words occurring only once, or to what is inconsistent and contradictory, and to many other figures and questions.”

¹⁰ *Anc. Rom.* 54.16–18 Montanari: >: ἡ δὲ περιεστιγμένη διπλῆ πρὸς τὰς γραφὰς τὰς Ζηνοδοτείου καὶ Κράτητος καὶ αὐτοῦ Ἀριστάρχου καὶ τὰς διορθώσεις αὐτοῦ, “the dotted *diple* [is used] with reference to the readings of Zenodotus and of Crates, as well as to those of Aristarchus himself and to his emendations.” It is however doubtful whether the *diple periestigmene* was indeed used for Crates; see F. Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians: Aristarchus of Samothrace on the Iliad* (Ann Arbor forthcoming) ch. 4 §4.1.

¹¹ On Aristarchus’ use of these critical signs see Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians* ch. 2.1.

signs used by Aristarchus: the *antisigma* (⊙), to indicate lines whose order was transposed and did not fit the context,¹² and the *antisigma periestigmenon*, the ‘dotted’ *antisigma* (·⊙·), for passages which contained tautologies.¹³ The scholia, on the other hand, also mention another sign: the *stigma*, the ‘dot’ (·). These signs or variations of them are also preserved in the *Venetus A*:¹⁴ three *antisigma*¹⁵ at *Il.* 8.535–537 and three *stigmai* at 8.538–540 (folio 111^r); two *antisigma periestigmenon* at *Il.* 2.188, 192; and three *sigma periestigmenon* at 2.203–205 (folio 28^r). As is clear, all these signs concern only two passages, *Il.* 2.188–205 and 8.535–540, where they are variously combined.¹⁶

¹² *Anc. Rom.* 54.25–26 Montanari: ⊙ τὸ δὲ ἀντίσιγμα καθ’ ἑαυτὸ πρὸς τοὺς ἐνηλλαγμένους τόπους καὶ ἀπάδοντας, “the *antisigma* by itself [is used] with reference to passages which have been transposed and are at variance [with the context].” See also *Anc. Ven.* 276.3–4 Nauck; *Anc. Par.* 280.20–21 Nauck; *Isid. Etym.* 1.21.11.

¹³ *Anc. Rom.* 54.27–28 Montanari: ·⊙· τὸ δὲ ἀντίσιγμα περιεστιγμένον παρατίθεται ὅταν ταυτολογῆ καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν διάνοιαν δεύτερον λέγῃ, “the dotted *antisigma* is used when [the poet] repeats himself and says the same concept twice.” A similar note occurs also in the second set of critical signs listed in *Anc. Rom.* 55.41–44 Montanari. See also *Anc. Ven.* 276.5–6 Nauck; *Anc. Par.* 280.22–281.2 Nauck; *Isid. Etym.* 1.21.12

¹⁴ Images of all of the *Venetus A* are now available through the Homer Multitext Project, Center for Hellenic Studies: www.homermultitext.org/manuscripts-papyri/venetusA.html.

¹⁵ The letter names such as *sigma* are indeclinable, as clarified by Aelius Dionysius in his Atticist Lexicon (H. Erbse, *Untersuchungen zu den attizistischen Lexika* [Berlin 1950] 95–151): σ 15, τὰ σίγμα δεῖ λέγειν, ἀλλ’ οὐχὶ τὰ σίγματα, καὶ γὰρ ἄκλιτα τῶν στοιχείων τὰ ὀνόματα; thus I will use *antisigma* as an indeclinable word.

¹⁶ There are only three other *antisigma* in the *Venetus A*: at *Il.* 17.219 (folio 227^v), 20.447 (268^v), 24.558 (322^r). An inspection of the images of the *Venetus A* shows that these three lines are indeed marked with a similar sign, which may be a very small and rather triangular *antisigma*. These *antisigma*, however, are very different from the rounded *antisigma* of 8.535–537 (111^r) and cannot be by the same hand. The triangular *antisigma* at 17.219, 20.447, and 24.558 are thus probably a later addition and have nothing to do with Aristarchus. Indeed, no Aristarchean scholia are preserved at these lines (see H. Erbse, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem (scholia vetera)* I–VII [Berlin 1969–

The analysis of these passages and their signs unveils a rather complex question about the meaning and function of those signs, for which only hypothetical solutions are possible. In this article I propose one such possible solution for the meaning of these signs by combining the testimony of the compendia with the signs found in the *Venetus A* as well as with the scholia reporting Aristarchus' comments on those lines.

Tautologies in Iliad 8

It is best to begin with the second passage, which is easier to analyze. The *Venetus A* has three *antisigma* at *Il.* 8.535–537 and three *stigmai* at 8.538–540 (folio 111^r). These signs coincide with the explanation given by the Aristonicus scholium:

Schol. *Il.* 8.535–537 (Ariston.) αὔριον ἦν ἀρετὴν <—ἐταῖροι>: ὅτι ἢ τοῦτους δεῖ τοὺς τρεῖς στίχους μένειν, οἷς τὸ ἀντίσιγμα παράκειται, ἢ τοὺς ἐξῆς τρεῖς, οἷς αἱ στιγμαὶ παράκεινται· εἰς γὰρ τὴν αὐτὴν γεγραμμένοι εἰσὶ διάνοιαν. ἐγκρίνει δὲ μᾶλλον ὁ Ἀρίσταρχος τοὺς δευτέρους διὰ τὸ καυχηματικώτερος εἶναι τοὺς λόγους. ὁ δὲ Ζηνόδοτος τοὺς πρώτους τρεῖς οὐδὲ ἔγραφεν.

“Tomorrow his valor – companions”: because either these three lines to which the *antisigma* is apposed must remain, or the following three [sc. 8.538–540] to which the *stigmai* are apposed [must remain]. For they are written to express the same content. Aristarchus approves more of the second [three] ones because the words are more boastful.¹⁷ And Zenodotus did not even write the first three.

[1988], apparatus ad locc.); these three lines are formulaic and in fact missing in some manuscripts (so M. L. West, *Homeri Ilias* II [Stuttgart/Munich 2000], omits them). My data about *sigma*, *antisigma*, and *stigmai* in the *Venetus A* correspond to those of G. Bird, “Critical Signs – Drawing Attention to ‘Special’ Lines of Homer’s *Iliad* in the Manuscript *Venetus A*,” in C. Dué (ed.), *Recapturing a Homeric Legacy* (Washington 2009) 93–94, with the exception of the *antisigma* at *Il.* 20.447, as Bird follows T. W. Allen, *Homeri Ilias* (Oxford 1931); the latter, who reports all these signs in the margins of his edition, omits the *antisigma* at 20.447, but mentions it in the apparatus.

¹⁷ On the need for boastfulness in these words, which are spoken by Hector, see also schol. *Il.* 8.526a and discussion in Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians* ch. 5.4 §5.

Both the *Venetus A* and the scholium associate the signs with two sets of lines: *Il.* 8.535–537 (with *antisigma*) and 538–540 (with *stigma*), which are taken from Hector’s address to the assembly of the Trojans. The scholium claims that they are repetitive, but it is difficult to see how 535–537 could be a duplication of 538–540.¹⁸ Many suggestions have been made,¹⁹ but the most persuasive is, in my view, that of Wecklein,²⁰ according to whom the lines at stake are actually 532–534 and 535–537, which are indeed repetitive. In this case, the signs would be applied as follows:

- εἴσομαι εἴ κέ μ’ ὁ Τυδεΐδης κρατερὸς Διομήδης
 ○ πὰρ νηῶν πρὸς τεῖχος ἀπώσεται, ἢ κεν ἐγὼ τὸν
 ○ χαλκῷ δηώσας ἔναρα βροτόεντα φέρωμαι.
 535 • αὔριον ἦν ἀρετὴν διαείσεται, εἴ κ’ ἐμὸν ἔγχος
 • μείνη ἐπερχόμενον· ἀλλ’ ἐν πρώτοισιν οἴω
 • κείσεται οὐτηθεῖς, πολέες δ’ ἄμφ’ αὐτὸν ἑταῖροι

I will know whether the son of Tydeus, strong Diomedes
 Will drive me away from the ships to the wall or whether I will
 slay him with my bronze and carry away his bloody spoils.
 Tomorrow he will know his valor, if he can stand still
 while my spear approaches him; but I think among the men
 in the first ranks
 he will lie wounded, and around him there will be many of his
 companions

¹⁸ *Il.* 8.535–537, αὔριον ἦν ἀρετὴν διαείσεται, εἴ κ’ ἐμὸν ἔγχος / μείνη ἐπερχόμενον· ἀλλ’ ἐν πρώτοισιν οἴω / κείσεται οὐτηθεῖς, πολέες δ’ ἄμφ’ αὐτὸν ἑταῖροι, “Tomorrow he [Diomedes] will know his valor, if he can stand still while my spear approaches him; but I think among the men in the first ranks he will lie wounded, and around him there will be many of his companions,” and 538–540, ἡελίου ἀνιόντος ἐς αὔριον· εἰ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὡς / εἶην ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρωσ ἦματα πάντα, / τιοίμην δ’ ὡς τίετ’ Ἀθηναίη καὶ Ἀπόλλων, “at tomorrow’s sunrise. For I wish I could be immortal and ageless forever, and that I were honored as are Athena and Apollo.”

¹⁹ For surveys of the various solutions proposed see G. M. Bolling, *The External Evidence for Interpolation in Homer* (Oxford 1925) 112–114; Erbse, *Scholia Graeca*, apparatus ad schol. *Il.* 8.535–841; G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary* (Cambridge 1985–1990) II 338–339.

²⁰ N. Wecklein, *Über Zusätze und Auslassung von Versen im Homerischen Text* (Munich 1918) 52–53.

According to this evidence, *antisigma* and *stigmai* mark repetitions or tautologies. In the compendia there is only one sign for tautologies: the *antisigma periestigmenon*, the ‘dotted’ *antisigma* (·⊙· or ·⊙).²¹ This sign can be interpreted as a combination of the individual signs mentioned by the scholia and present in the *Venetus A*: the *antisigma* (⊙) and the *stigma* (·). One possible solution to this inconsistency is to assume a corruption in the compendia, where these two different σημεῖα, which originally were separated and used to mark the two sets of lines that made up a tautology, were combined. In fact, one compendium, the *Anecdota Harleiana*, confirms the use of the signs as shown in the *Venetus A* and in the scholia (277.14–16 Nauck):

τὸ δὲ ἀντίσιγμα καὶ αἱ δύο στιγμαὶ ὅταν κατὰ τὸ ἐξῆς δις ᾗ τὸ αὐτὸ νόημα κείμενον. καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ προτέρου τίθεται τὸ ἀντίσιγμα, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ δευτέρου αἱ δύο στιγμαί.

The *antisigma* and the two *stigmai* [are used] when in the phrase the same idea is presented twice; and in the first occurrence [of that idea] the *antisigma* is placed; in the second, the two *stigmai*.²²

²¹ For example, *Anec.Rom.* 54.27 Montanari has ·⊙· but *Anec.Rom.* 55.41 Montanari has ·⊙ with only one dot (so also *Anec.Ven.* 275.15 Nauck and Isid. *Ety.* 1.21.12). A different solution is offered by *Anec.Par.* 280.22 Nauck, which has the dot on top of the *antisigma*.

²² That this might be the original note seems to be suggested also by the second set of critical signs listed in the *Anecdota Romanum*, which does not speak of *antisigma* alone but has only this note (55.41–44 Montanari): τῷ δὲ ἀντίσιγμα καὶ τῇ στιγμαί ὅταν δύο ὡσι διάνοιαι τὸ αὐτὸ σημαίνουσαι, τοῦ ποιητοῦ γεγραφότος ἀμφοτέρως, ὅπως τὴν ἑτέραν ἔληται. τῷ δὲ χρόνῳ καὶ αἱ δύο εὐρέθησαν οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἔχουσαι, “[one uses] the *antisigma* and the dot when there are two thoughts expressed in the text and they mean the same, the poet having written them both to then choose one of the two. However, then both were found [in the text], not correctly.” The note is less clear than the one of the *Anecdota Harleiana* cited above; yet *antisigma* and dot are still kept separate in it (even if the sign added to the same note combines them: ·⊙), since the note does not speak of *antisigma periestigmenon* as do *Anec.Rom.* 54.27–28 Montanari and *Anec.Ven.* 276.5–6 Nauck; on the other hand, *Anec.Par.* 280.22–281.2 Nauck and Isid. *Ety.* 1.21.12 speak of *antisigma cum puncto*.

The question how Aristarchus marked tautologies seems settled: he used two separate signs, the *antisigma* and the *stigma* (or two *stigmai*, as is suggested by the *Anecdota Harleiana*?); the *antisigma* marked the first part of the tautology and the *stigma*/*stigmai* marked the second, which was the real repetition. In fact, the combination of two different signs is a better indicator than having a dotted *antisigma* in both parts of the tautology, as two different signs more clearly indicate where the repetition occurs.

Transpositions in Iliad 2

The evidence for the uncommon $\sigma\eta\mu\epsilon\iota\alpha$ in Book 2 is more difficult to assess. The passage includes the two speeches that Odysseus addresses to the Greek lords and soldiers after Agamemnon has told them to go home to test their loyalty (2.110–141). As the Greeks obey Agamemnon’s command and are preparing to leave (142–154), at Hera’s invitation Athena orders Odysseus to restrain them (155–181); Odysseus obeys (182–187) and speaks to them, addressing first the lords (188–197) and then the common soldiers (198–205). This is how the two speeches appear in the *Venetus A* (folio 28^r) and according to the indications in the relevant scholia derived from Aristonicus:

Ven. Ariston.

- Θ ○ ὄν τινα μὲν βασιλῆα καὶ ἕξοχον ἄνδρα κιχείη
 τὸν δ’ ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσιν ἐρητύσασκε παραστάς.²³
 190 “δαιμόνι’ οὐ σε ἕοικε κακὸν ὡς δειδίσεσθαι,
 ἀλλ’ αὐτός τε κάθησο καὶ ἄλλους ἴδρνε λαούς·
 Θ ○ οὐ γάρ πω σάφα οἶσθ’ οἷος νόος Ἀτρείωνος·
 — — νῦν μὲν πειρᾶται, τάχα δ’ ἕψεται υἱας Ἀχαιῶν.
 — — ἐν βουλῇ δ’ οὐ πάντες ἀκούσαμεν οἷον ἔειπε.
 195 — — μή τι χολωσάμενος ῥέξῃ κακὸν υἱας Ἀχαιῶν·
 — — θυμὸς δὲ μέγας ἐστὶ διοτρεφέων βασιλῆων,²⁴

²³ Line 189 has a *diple* in the *Venetus A* because Aristarchus maintained that τὸν δ’(έ) had to be written as two words, and not τόνδε, as common in *koine* (see Aristonicus in schol. *Il.* 2.189b¹⁻²).

²⁴ Line 196 also has a *diple periestigmene* in the *Venetus A* because Aristarchus

- — τιμὴ δ' ἐκ Διὸς ἐστὶ, φιλεῖ δέ ἐ μητίετα Ζεύς.”
 ὄν δ' αὖ δῆμου τ' ἄνδρα ἴδοι βοόωντά τ' ἐφεύροι,
 τὸν σκῆπτρῳ ἐλάσασκεν ὁμοκλήσασκέ τε μύθῳ·
 200 “δαιμόνι' ἀτρέμας ἦσο καὶ ἄλλων μῦθον ἄκουε,
 οἱ σέο φέρτεροί εἰσι, σὺ δ' ἀπτόλεμος καὶ ἀναλκις
 οὔτέ ποτ' ἐν πολέμῳ ἐναρίθμιος οὔτ' ἐνὶ βουλῇ·
 © • οὐ μὲν πως πάντες βασιλεύσομεν ἐνθάδ' Ἀχαιοί·
 © • οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη· εἰς κοίρανος ἔστω,
 205 © • εἰς βασιλεύς, ᾧ δῶκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω.”²⁵

Whatever king and noble man he met,
 Standing close, he would restrain him with gentle words:
 “It is not fitting to frighten you, sir, as if you were a coward,
 but please sit down and make the rest of your men sit down too.
 For you do not yet know clearly what the intention of Atreus’
 son is;
 [now he is tempting the sons of the Achaeans but soon he will
 oppress them.
 Didn’t we all hear what he said in the council?
 May he not do anything bad against the sons of the Achaeans
 in his anger!
 The heart of the kings born from Zeus is proud;
 their honor comes from Zeus, and wise Zeus loves them.”]
 But whatever man from the simple ranks he saw and caught
 shouting,
 he would drive him with his staff and would threaten him saying:
 “Sit quiet, man, and listen to the words of others
 who are better than you; you are unwarlike and without strength,
 and you are not to be taken into account in war or in council;

argued against a reading by Zenodotus (see Aristonicus in schol. *Il.* 2.196b). The signs at line 189 and 196 do not concern the issue of the *antisigma* here, so I have not reported them here.

²⁵ Most likely, line 206 (σκῆπτρόν τ' ἠδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνά σφισι βουλευῆσι), sometimes present in modern editions (e.g. Allen), was not read by Aristarchus, because it is missing from the vulgate (including the *Venetus A*) and from papyri (only some manuscripts and Dio Chrysostom preserve it); see apparatus of West, who omits the line. H. van Thiel, *Homeri Ilias*² (Hildesheim 2010), on the other hand, keeps the line but encloses it in brackets.

in no way will the Achaeans all be kings here;
the rule of many is not good; let there be one ruler,
one king, to whom the son of Cronus of crooked counsel
 gave (it).”

According to Aristonicus, Aristarchus had problems with the content of these two speeches and signaled his reservations by placing an *antisigma* at line 188 at the very beginning of the passage “because of the ordering of the lines” (schol. *Il.* 2.188a, πρὸς τὴν τάξιν τῶν ἐξῆς τὸ ἀντίσιγμα). In particular, Aristarchus took exception to the end of the second speech, when Odysseus says that it is not good to have many rulers and that they should let Agamemnon take the lead (203–205): for him, these lines were unfitting when addressed to soldiers of lower rank; rather, they would be appropriate when addressed to the other Greek leaders, who would probably want more power. For this reason, Aristarchus marked these lines with *stigmai* and proposed to transpose them after line 192, where he put another *antisigma* (schol. *Il.* 2.192a, τὸ ἀντίσιγμα, ὅτι ὑπὸ τοῦτον ἔδει τετάχθαι τοὺς ἐξῆς παρεστιγμένους τρεῖς στίχους [sc. 2.203–205]· εἰσὶ γὰρ πρὸς βασιλεῖς ἀρμόζοντες, οὐ πρὸς δημότας).

Aristarchus also athetized lines 193–197, as they were not suitable (ἀπεικότες) to the situation and not conducive to submission (schol. *Il.* 2.193a¹, ἀπεικότες οἱ λόγοι καὶ οὐ προτρεπτικοὶ εἰς καταστολήν).²⁶ Indeed, in these lines, Odysseus might seem rather to urge the other Greek lords to get away from Agamemnon before it is too late. After the transposition and the *athetesis*, Aristarchus’ final text becomes (omitting the athetized lines and with lines 203–205 transposed and underlined):

ὄν τινα μὲν βασιλῆα καὶ ἕξοχον ἄνδρα κιχείη
 τὸν δ’ ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσιν ἐρητύσασκε παραστάς·
 “δαιμόνι’ οὐ σε ἔοικε κακὸν ὡς δειδίσεσθαι,
 ἄλλ’ αὐτός τε κάθησο καὶ ἄλλους ἴδρυε λαούς·

²⁶ See also schol. *Il.* 2.193a².

οὐ γάρ πω σάφα οἶσθ' οἷος νόος Ἀτρείωνος·
οὐ μὲν πῶς πάντες βασιλεύσομεν ἐνθάδ' Ἀχαιοί·
οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη· εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω,
εἷς βασιλεύς, ᾧ δῶκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω.”
 ὃν δ' αὖ δῆμον τ' ἄνδρα ἴδοι βοόωντά τ' ἐφεύροι,
 τὸν σκήπτρῳ ἐλάσασκεν ὁμοκλήσασκέ τε μῦθῳ·
 “δαίμονι' ἀτρέμας ἦσο καὶ ἄλλων μῦθον ἄκουε,
 οἷ σέο φέρτεροί εἰσι, σὺ δ' ἀπτόλεμος καὶ ἄναλκις
 οὔτε ποτ' ἐν πολέμῳ ἐναρίθμιος οὔτ' ἐνὶ βουλήῃ.”

Whatever king and noble man he met,
 Standing close, he would restrain him with gentle words:
 “It is not fitting to frighten you, sir, as if you were a coward,
 but please sit down and make the rest of your men sit down too.
 For you do not yet know clearly what the intention of Atreus’
 son is;

in no way will the Achaeans all be kings here;
the rule of many is not good; let there be one ruler,
one king, to whom the son of Cronus of crooked counsel gave (it).”
 But whatever man from the simple ranks he saw and
 caught shouting,
 he would drive him with his staff and would threaten him saying:
 “Sit quiet, man, and listen to the words of others
 who are better than you; you are unwarlike and without strength,
 and you are not to be taken into account in war or in council.”

Aristarchus’ solution makes sense and fits both types of audience: the lords are reminded that they cannot be peers with Agamemnon and that he is the one who should give orders, while the common soldiers are simply scolded and told to obey their superiors. Odysseus’ words might not sound very democratic, but this new version is much more consistent with his rhetoric and the heroic ethos. Aristarchus had a point here.²⁷

In this case, however, the *Venetus A* and the scholia provide conflicting evidence on the critical signs, aside from the *obeloi* at lines 193–197. As was discussed above, the scholia, all derived from Aristonicus, report that at 2.188 and 192 there was an

²⁷ Notwithstanding the criticism by Kirk, *The Iliad* I 135–136.

antisigma, while for 203–205 they mention either “dotted lines” (schol. *Il.* 2.192a, τοὺς ἐξῆς παρεστιγμένους τρεῖς στίχους) or a *stigma*, i.e. a ‘dot’ (schol. *Il.* 2.203a, ἡ στιγμὴ παρῶκεται). Thus, if we follow Aristonicus, there was an *antisigma* to mark the starting point of the passage in which there were problems of transposition (at 188) and another *antisigma* to signal the exact point where the transposed lines should be inserted (at 192). Correspondingly, the lines that needed to be moved were marked with *stigmai* (at 203–205). In contrast, the *Venetus A* (folio 28^r) shows a dotted *antisigma* (⊖) at 188 and 192, and a dotted *sigma* (©) at 203–205, and no *stigmai* at all.

The *Anecdotum Romanum*, *Anecdotum Venetum*, *Anecdotum Parisinum*, and Isidore do not record the *stigma* alone, but list the *antisigma* (⊖) alone for lines whose order is transposed and that are unfitting for the context.²⁸ This evidence in part confirms the scholia mentioning the *antisigma* at 2.188 and 192. The *Venetus A*’s ‘dotted’ *antisigma* (⊖) at 188 and 192 is probably due to a mistake. As was discussed above in reference to the dotted *antisigma* for tautologies as transmitted in the compendia, this sign may have been born out of a confusion of two separate signs, the *antisigma* and the *stigmai*.

The dotted *sigma* (©) at 2.203–205 in the *Venetus A* is also suspect. Aside from these three lines, it is not attested elsewhere in the *Venetus A*.²⁹ Furthermore, the compendia never mention the *sigma* (alone or with *stigmai*) among the Aristarchean σημεῖα, and the scholia only once mention the *sigma* as a sign used by Aristophanes to mark tautologies in combination with the *antisigma*.³⁰

²⁸ See n.12 above.

²⁹ Cf. Bird, in *Recapturing a Homeric Legacy* 94.

³⁰ Schol. *Od.* 5.247a Pontani: τέτρηνεν δ’ ἄρα πάντα – καὶ ἀρμονιῆσιν ἄρασεν (248): Ἀριστοφάνης τὸ αὐτὸ ᾗετο περιέχειν ἄμφω. διὸ τῷ μὲν σίγμα, τῷ δὲ ἀντίσιγμα ἐπιτίθησιν, “‘he pierced all [the pieces] ... and fitted them with joints’: Aristophanes thought that both lines [*Od.* 5.247–248] had the same content; therefore he adds a *sigma* to one and an *antisigma* to the other.”

In conclusion, the Aristonicus scholia seem to find partial confirmation in the compendia (for the *antisigma* at lines 2.188 and 192), while the signs in the *Venetus A* seem questionable.³¹ Thus, the *sigma* (alone or with *stigmai*) should be excluded, and at lines 188 and 192 the *antisigma* is probably correct. The question to discuss is which sign was placed at lines 203–205: whether it was another *antisigma* (as the compendia suggest) or a *stigma* (as the scholia testify).

I would tentatively accept the latter solution, and not only because the Aristonicus scholia have an older and more respectable pedigree than the anonymous compendia.³² In fact, one possible hypothesis about the σημεῖα for transpositions is that Aristarchus used *antisigma* (⊖) and *stigma* (·) for tautologies and for transposed lines. The fact that these signs were used for two types of issues should not be regarded as a problem. After all, Aristarchus used the *diple* for a variety of purposes. Compared to the *diple*, the paired *antisigma* and *stigma* were much less ambiguous, since they had only two possible meanings, which could easily be clarified in the commentary. Moreover, this set of two signs was particularly appropriate for the issues it was supposed to indicate, because, in the case both of transposed lines and of tautologies, Aristarchus needed to highlight two different portions of the text: (1) in the case of tautologies, the two sets of lines ('passage A' and 'passage B') having the same content; (2) in the case of transpositions, the lines that should be transposed and the place where they should be inserted.

Using only one sign for both tautologies and transpositions, as all but one of the compendia seem to suggest,³³ would be

³¹ A. Ludwich, *Aristarchs homerische Textkritik nach den Fragmenten des Didymos I* (Leipzig 1884) 209 (following Pluygers, quoted ad loc.), reached the same conclusion about the signs in the *Venetus A*.

³² On the value of Aristonicus scholia for reconstructing Aristarchus' activity see Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians* ch. 1.1, with further bibliography.

³³ As seen above, the *Anecdota Harleiana* lists two signs (*antisigma* and *stigmai*) for tautologies.

confusing. The fact that even Aristophanes used a set of two signs for tautologies (*sigma* and *antisigma*, in his case) confirms that, for this type of textual issue, the Alexandrians adopted a two-fold marking system. The same combination could also be employed for transpositions, as Aristonicus confirms. According to him, the original marking of *Il.* 2.188–205 would be: *antisigma* at 188 and 192 and *stigmai* at 203–205. The *stigmai* would mark the lines to be moved and the *antisigma* would mark the exact place where they should be inserted (at 192), as well as the beginning of the problematic passage (at 188). This reconstruction is in fact confirmed by another mention of *stigmai* in schol. *Il.* 10.397–9b:

<ἦ ἤδη χεیرهσιν – ἀδηκότες αἰνῶ:> ... Ἀμμώνιος δὲ ὁ Ἀριστάρχειος πρῶτον μὲν στιγμαῖς φησι τὸν Ἀρίσταρχον παρασημειώσασθαι αὐτούς, εἶτα δὲ καὶ τελέως ἐξελεῖν, τάχα διὰ τὸ ἐπὶ δευτέρου προσώπου τὸ σφίσι τετάχθαι, καὶ ἄνωθεν μετενηνέχθαι.

“Or whether, [destroyed] at our hands – oppressed by terrible [toil]”: ... Ammonius, the pupil of Aristarchus, says that first Aristarchus marked them with *stigmai*, but then completely eliminated them, probably because σφίσι [398] was used for the second person and because they were transposed here from above [sc. 10.310–312].

Without discussing the specific issue at the core of this scholium,³⁴ we see that Ammonius deals with Aristarchus’ change of mind: he first marked the lines with *stigmai*, and then completely removed them from his text. Here the *stigma* seems to indicate lines which were for some reason problematic; yet the scholium explicitly says that lines 397–399 were “transposed from above,” as these formulaic lines recur identically at 10.310–312. The function of the *stigma* is indeed marking the transposition of 2.203–205. Hence the testimony of schol. *Il.*

³⁴ This is a very famous and debated scholium; I have discussed it elsewhere, “Aristarchus’ Work in Progress: What Did Aristonicus and Didymus Read of Aristarchus?” *CQ* 65 (2015) 617–621, with further bibliography.

10.397–9b further proves the reconstruction proposed above about the use of critical signs at 2.188–205.

Confusing sigla in Homeric manuscripts

The information of the compendia thus seems to be wrong, because they assume only one sign for both operations, tautologies (dotted *antisigma*) and transpositions (simple *antisigma*). Rather, their entries on the *antisigma* alone (⊖) for transposed lines and the dotted *antisigma* (⊙) for tautologies could be the result of scribal confusion for what was originally ‘*antisigma* + dot (*stigma*)’ for transposed lines *and* tautologies. This confusion is also reflected in the *Venetus A*, at least at *Il.* 2.188–205 with the dotted *antisigma* (⊙) and the dotted *sigma* (⊙), while at 8.535–540 the combination ‘*antisigma* + *stigma*’ is preserved correctly. Such a false duplication of signs may have been favored by the circumstance that *sigma* and *antisigma* can be easily confused. As for the *stigma*, it was a very tiny sign, a dot, and easy to miss. More importantly, Aristarchus also used the *stigma* in combination with the *diple*, in the *diple periestigmene*, the ‘dotted’ *diple*; it is not unlikely, then, that the new *antisigma periestigmenon* could easily have been ‘created’ by later scholars and scribes on the model of the *diple periestigmene*: just as Aristarchus used the *diple* and the ‘dotted’ *diple*, so too could he have used the *antisigma* and the ‘dotted’ *antisigma*. A further element of confusion, which probably generated the ‘dotted’ *sigma* in the *Venetus A*, is the fact that Aristophanes of Byzantium used the *sigma* (⊙) and the *antisigma* (⊖) to mark two consecutive lines of identical content. This set of two signs for tautologies is never attested in manuscripts but only in a scholium.³⁵ Yet the scribe of the *Venetus A*, who used the set ‘dotted’ *sigma* and ‘dotted’ *antisigma* in the passage in Book 2, might have recalled Aristophanes’ signs when he added them.

Indeed, the *Venetus A* is not the only manuscript showing an

³⁵ See 618 and n.30 above.

erratic use of these signs. As McNamee observed,³⁶ the use of *antisigma* in papyri does not conform to the Aristarchean practice. She lists only six Homeric papyri with *antisigma*: *P.PisaLit.* 2, *P.Oxy.* III 445, *P.Oxy.* XV 1818, *P.Tebt.* I 4 among the papyri with ‘Aristarchean sigla’,³⁷ and the Hawara Homer and the Morgan Homer among papyri with ‘utilitarian sigla’, of unclear meaning.³⁸ These examples, in fact, offer a quite diverse picture, so it is necessary to review them individually. I will start with the manuscripts with ‘utilitarian sigla’ and then pass to those with ‘Aristarchean sigla’; I will review them in reverse chronological order, from the most recent to the most ancient.

In their detailed description of the manuscript, the editors of the Morgan Homer (Morgan Library G 202, third-fourth cent. CE) do not mention any *antisigma* but only a *chi* (✕), which is used to mark omission of lines;³⁹ however, in the list of new readings offered by the manuscript they report the presence of the following combined signs: ✕), which can be interpreted as a *chi* followed by *antisigma*, in the margin to mark omission of *Il.* 11.535 (p.16 of the codex) and 11.560 (p.17).⁴⁰ A direct check of the manuscript at the Morgan Library has shown that at p.16 the two signs appear on the left margin in the interlinear space between 11.534 and 536, to alert the reader that line 535 has been omitted (and later added in the upper margin between the page number, ις' = 16, and the first line of the page, 11.513). The supposed *antisigma*, however, is a very small half-circle (◌), much shallower than a ‘real’ fully-rounded *antisigma* (◌). The set of signs on p.17 is more difficult to detect.

³⁶ K. McNamee, *Sigla and Select Marginalia in Greek Literary Papyri* (Brussels 1992) 14–15.

³⁷ McNamee, *Sigla and Select Marginalia* Table 1.

³⁸ McNamee, *Sigla and Select Marginalia* Table 2.B; cf. 15 with nn.32 and 33 (where however she does not mention the Morgan Homer).

³⁹ See U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff and G. Plaumann, “Iliaspapyrus P. Morgan,” *SBBerl* 53 (1912) 1205.

⁴⁰ See Wilamowitz-Moellendorff and Plaumann, *SBBerl* 53 (1912) 1212 and 1213.

They are still placed in the interlinear space between 11.559 and 561 to mark the omission of 560 (then added in the upper margin, above the first line of the page, which is 11.552). Yet the papyrus is very dark; while the *chi*-shape (slanting on the right, just like the one on p.16) is quite clear, the *antisigma*-shape is difficult to discern because the area where it is supposed to be is particularly dark. What can be detected with the naked eye and the light available at the Morgan Library seems to suggest a more rounded sign, and so something more similar to a ‘real’ *antisigma*. Still, even though the signs in the Morgan Homer might have indeed originally been conceived as the union of a chi-sign (×) and an *antisigma* (⊖), their combined use to alert the reader of a missing line added in another place in the page has little to do with the Aristarchean use of *antisigma*. Yet the *antisigma* in the Morgan Homer (if it is indeed an *antisigma*) can recall the function of the Aristarchean *antisigma* at 2.192, where the sign was used to signal the exact place where one or more lines had to be inserted.

P.Hawara (Bodleian Library *Gr.class.* a. 1 (P)), on the other hand, is a luxury edition of Book 2 of the *Iliad*, dated to the second half of the second century CE, and with quite a few Aristarchean critical signs.⁴¹ According to Sayce⁴² *antisigma* and *stigmai* were present in this manuscript and used in a non-Aristarchean fashion to introduce textual variants and scholia in the margins. Study of the digital image of the papyrus, now available online,⁴³ suggests that what Sayce considered *stigmai*

⁴¹ As reported by K. McNamee, *Annotations in Greek and Latin Texts from Egypt* (New Haven 2007) 269: *obelos* at *Il.* 2.737, 794, 860–861, 875–876; *diple* at 2.481, 659, 701, 722, 727, 730, 741 (followed by a single dot), 742, 802, 807, 809, 827, 830, 838, 839, 856, 858, 863, 872; *diple periestigmene* at 2.484, 634, 658, 674–675, 697, 724, 746, 801.

⁴² A. H. Sayce, “The Greek Papyri,” in W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Hawara, Biahmu, and Arsinoe* (London 1889) 24, who listed *stigmai* placed at the end of lines 763, 767, 775, 803, 807, 815, 819, 848, 856, 860, 864.

⁴³ At <http://ipap.csad.ox.ac.uk/4DLink4/4D ACTION/IPAPwebquery?vPub=Pack&vVol=&vNum=616>

are simply specks of ink or raised dots at the end of a line, with no obvious function—certainly none of them is clearly connected with marginal annotations. On the other hand, there are indeed *antisigma* placed to the left of variant readings which are added in the margin on the right of the lines they refer to (and concerning lines 397, 665, 682, 694, 707, 769, 865).⁴⁴ Yet introducing marginal variants is not the function of the Aristarchean *antisigma*.⁴⁵ In addition, the $\sigma\eta\mu\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$ is placed next to the variant readings in the intercolumnium but is not repeated next to the line to which the variant reading belongs (as is clear from the cases where the line beginning is preserved: lines 682, 707, and 769). So even the way the *antisigma* is positioned in this manuscript is different from the Aristarchean practice, according to which critical signs are placed in the left margin of the line they refer to (incidentally, this is what happens in this papyrus for the other Aristarchean signs, the *obelos*, the *diple*, and the *diple periestigmene*, which are all correctly placed to the left of the line they refer to). In fact, in the only place of Book 2 where Aristarchus had probably used the pair *antisigma* + *stigmai* (2.188–205, as we concluded above), and which is partly preserved by the papyrus (2.200–205; the rest of the episode is lost), the margins are missing, and so it is impossible to know whether *antisigma* or *stigmai* were present. *P.Hawara* thus does not offer any evidence that *antisigma* and *stigmai* were recopied in this luxury edition, at least with the Aristarchean function and in their physical placement in the text.

Even the papyri with ‘Aristarchean signs’ are quite disappointing. The most recent is *P.Oxy.* XV 1818, a codex dating to the fifth-sixth centuries CE and with fragments of *Iliad* 22 and 23.⁴⁶ At fol. 2^r the scribe had copied lines 283–294 of Book 22 just after line 202, omitting 81 lines. The following pages, fol.

⁴⁴ See McNamee, *Annotations* 269–271.

⁴⁵ Cf. McNamee, *Annotations* 269. In *Sigla and Select Marginalia* 14 she notes how often *antisigma* introduces variants in other non-Homeric papyri.

⁴⁶ See W. Lameere, *Aperçus de paléographie homérique* (Paris/Brussels/Anvers/Amsterdam 1960) 148–174.

2^v with the remainder of 22.217–242, and 3^v with the remainder of 22.255–278, show that he recopied the lines which he had omitted; additionally he marked all the lines between 283 and 294 in fol. 2^r with a small comma-shaped mark, one at the end of each line. Yet fol. 3^r, which follows after 2^v and 3^v and contains 22.291–314 with no gaps, proves that the scribe simply rewrote the rest of *Iliad* 22, starting from line 203, all over again. Thus in fol. 2^r lines 283–294 are simply canceled, not transposed,⁴⁷ and so the comma-shaped marks at the end of those lines do not have the meaning of an Aristarchean *antisigma*. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that the mark is placed at the end of the line, not before it, as always happens with Aristarchus' sigla. In addition, the small comma-shaped mark does not look like an *antisigma*, as it is much smaller than the latter. In this case too, then, we are not dealing with *antisigma*, at least as defined and used by Aristarchus.

The only cases which show what looks like a 'real' *antisigma* in shape and position are *P.PisaLit.* 2 and *P.Oxy.* III 445. *P.PisaLit.* 2 (Geneva, *Bibliothèque P. Gr.* 249, first-second cent. CE) contains portions of *Odyssey* 2 (127–140, 152–166) and has only one critical sign: an *antisigma* at 2.156. Indeed we have a scholium by Aristonicus to that line (schol. *Od.* 2.156e¹ Pontani): it discusses the Homeric usage of the plural ἔμελλον in agreement with a neuter plural subject (the relative pronoun ὃ in this case)⁴⁸—so the Aristarchean note implies a *diple*, which is absent in the papyrus. The meaning of the *antisigma* is mysterious, even more so because this text is probably a writing exercise in which a non-professional hand has recopied some lines of Homer. Thus, whatever the *antisigma* might mean, it is

⁴⁷ This was also the opinion of the first editors, Grenfell and Hunt, who stated that the mark at the end of lines 283–293 (sic—indeed line 294 is barely visible) implied “that the verses, which were rewritten in the proper place (cf. Fol. 3), were to be cancelled” (*P.Oxy.* XV [London 1922] p.223).

⁴⁸ On this usage and Aristarchus' analysis of it see S. Matthaios, *Untersuchungen zur Grammatik Aristarchs* (Göttingen 1999) 382–384 (fr.81); Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians* ch. 3.2.B §4.2.

probably not used in the technical manner of an Aristarchean sign.⁴⁹

P.Oxy. III 445 (= *P.Lond.Lit.* 14, second-early third cent. CE), with portions of *Iliad* 6, on the other hand, seems to have a better scholarly pedigree: it has marginal variants and several Aristarchean critical signs, which correspond to the same signs in the *Venetus A*, also discussed in the Aristonicus scholia. At *Il.* 6.174, together with a *diple*, which definitely goes back to Aristarchus, there is also what looks like an *antisigma*.⁵⁰ Aristonicus says only that there was a *diple* to explain the adverb ἐννῆμαρ, ‘for nine days’, as due to Homer’s fondness for the number nine (schol. *Il.* 6.174a, ἡ διπλῆ, ὅτι ἐπίφορός ἐστι πρὸς τὸν ἐννέα ἀριθμόν). The *antisigma* in this papyrus has no support either in the Aristarchean sources or in the *Venetus A* (folio 83^v) and it probably does not originate with Aristarchus. No doubt, this is not a tautology; it is also hard to understand how this could be a line to transpose.

Much more interesting is the case of *P.Tebt.* I 4 which dates back to the second century BCE and is thus almost contemporary with Aristarchus. According to the first editors,⁵¹ this papyrus included fragments of five columns covering *Il.* 2.95–210 and had many Aristarchean signs: *obeloi* at 2.124, 133, and 197, a *diple periestigmene* at 156, an *asteriskos* with an *obelos* on the right of 141 (probably referring to 164),⁵² and an

⁴⁹ Cf. F. Montanari, “P. Genav. Inv. 249: Homerus β 127–40; 152–66,” *SCO* 22 (1973) 41–42.

⁵⁰ See the image in Erbse, *Scholia Graeca* II, Pap. IV. Cf. McNamee, *Annotations* 272–273.

⁵¹ B. P. Grenfell, A. S. Hunt, and J. G. Smyly, *P.Tebt.* I (London 1902) pp.12–17. On this papyrus see also E. G. Turner and P. J. Parsons, *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World*² (London 1987) 38–39, no. 12; I. Bonati, “Note testuali a *P.Tebt.* I 4 (Hom. B 95–201),” *ZPE* 176 (2011) 1–6.

⁵² Cf. *P.Tebt.* I p.16. This seems confirmed by schol. *Il.* 2.164a¹ (Ariston.): σοῖς δ’ ἀγανοῖς: ... ἀθετεῖται δὲ καὶ ἀστερίσκος παράκειται, ὅτι καὶ οὗτος πρὸς Ἀθηνᾶς οἰκείως πρὸς Ὀδυσσεῖα λέγεται, καὶ ψεῦδος περιέχει νῦν· οὐ γὰρ ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ παρίσταται ἐκάστω, ἀλλ’ ὁ Ὀδυσσεύς, “‘with your gentle [words restrain every man]’: ... the line is athetized and there is an asterisk

antisigma at 204. When I inspected the papyrus in Berkeley in September 2015, I was able to see only the *obeloi* at lines 124 and 197 and indeed the *antisigma* at line 204, while the other signs are lost together with fragments of the original manuscript.⁵³ However, if we follow the original edition, all the signs mentioned by the editors correspond to the same critical signs used by Aristarchus and they match the Aristonicus scholia reporting Aristarchus' choices and comments on these lines. This suggests that this text might have indeed been an (abridged) copy of Aristarchus' *ekdosis*.⁵⁴ As for the *antisigma* at 2.204, it does look like a 'real' *antisigma*, even though this is not the sign we would expect following the Aristonicus scholium (and our reconstruction above), as there should be a *stigma* here (as at lines 203 and 205), while the *antisigma* should be at 188 and 192. Unfortunately, lines 188, 192, and 203 were not preserved even at the time of the first edition, so we cannot tell whether there were sigla and which ones they were; as for 205, it is partly preserved but its beginning with its margin is mostly lost; perhaps a speck of ink might indicate the presence of an *antisigma*, but this is far from secure.⁵⁵ Hence, the evidence of

because this very line is suitably said for Athena [speaking] to Odysseus [sc. 2.180] and now it contains something false: for it is not Athena but Odysseus who urges each [of the soldiers].”

⁵³ The poor state of the manuscript was already noted by Bonati, *ZPE* 176 (2011) 1.

⁵⁴ See discussion in F. Schironi, “Saving the Ivory Tower from Oblivion: The Role of Scribes in Preserving Alexandrian Scholarship,” in M. Choat et al. (eds.), *Observing the Scribe at Work: Scribal Practice in the Ancient World* (Louvain forthcoming).

⁵⁵ Todd Hickey, who kindly rechecked the papyrus for me, does not think this is an *antisigma*; yet he agrees that the trace is definitely in the margin of the papyrus (that is, it does not belong to the beginning of line 205, which is almost entirely lost except for some bottom traces). A further check with a microscope image of this portion does not reveal much more, except to confirm the presence, in the margin, of a slightly curving horizontal stroke. It might be the upper arc of a round letter/sign which also seems to be open on the right; this is hardly compatible with an *antisigma* (but, if anything,

P.Tebt. I 4 is quite slim. The use of the *antisigma* in the papyrus corresponds to what the compendia say when they claim that the *antisigma* alone is used to indicate lines whose order was transposed and did not fit the context. Yet at 203–205 Aristonicus explicitly says that *stigmai* were used, while the *antisigma* was placed above, at 188 and 192. The erratic use of the *antisigma* (placed instead of the *stigma* at 204) in *P.Tebt.* I 4 is in striking contrast to the agreement that the rest of the signs in the same papyrus exhibit with Aristonicus scholia commenting on the same lines. This circumstance could perhaps be seen as additional proof that, from the very beginning, the use and function of *antisigma* (and the *stigma*) were not fixed, and that the *antisigma* was used in lieu of the *stigma* for transpositions very soon after Aristarchus. This probably facilitated the confusion in the compendia and in the *Venetus A*, which here shows an *antisigma periestigmenon*.

Conclusions

The *antisigma* and the *stigma* used by Aristarchus to signal sets of lines which were either tautological or needed to be transposed does not seem to have enjoyed great success in antiquity. One wonders whether this happened because these signs were quite complicated to use in tandem and also were created for textual problems that were less pressing than others in Homeric scholarship. Tautologies, in the end, are quite typical of oral poetry and so they might have been seen as unproblematic to many scholars; transpositions, on the other hand, might have been simply signaled with *obeloi* for the lines to be eliminated, while at the place where they had to be (re-)inserted a *diple* could have been placed. Both signs would have referred the reader to the commentary, where the transposition would have been discussed. Furthermore, these were probably not such common problems that they needed to be marked with

with a *sigma*). There might also be traces of ink underneath the tape on the left, next to this trace. To conclude, there is something in the margin of line 205, but it is hard to see what it might be.

dedicated signs, unlike *atheteseis* (marked with *obeloi*) or generic exegetical issues (marked with *diplai*), which were at the core of Homeric scholarship throughout the Hellenistic and Imperial periods. In addition, whereas the *antisigma* was quite a specific sign that could be used unambiguously, the *stigma* was definitely not specific enough; *stigmai* were typical punctuation marks, which became increasingly common in scribal practice;⁵⁶ hence using ‘dots’ as critical *sigla* would have been quite impractical once punctuation became widespread.

All these issues would explain why, unlike the other critical signs, *antisigma* and *stigma* did not survive very long and why, already early on, their use was inconsistent (*P.Tebt.* I 4). Later on, Aristarchus-inspired editions use the *antisigma* but not in the Aristarchean manner. They employ it to introduce variants in the intercolumnium, but in this case there is no sign placed in the left margin, next to the ‘affected’ text (*P.Hawara*). Otherwise, when the $\sigma\mu\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$ is recognizable as an *antisigma* in the left margin of the Homeric text, its meaning is obscure, since it refers to lines which are neither transposed nor tautological (*P.Oxy.* III 445, *P.PisaLit.* 2). In neither of these two cases is there any correspondence between the sign in the manuscripts and the Aristonicus scholia discussing those lines. In addition, in the case of *P.PisaLit.* 2, we are not even dealing with a ‘real’ Homeric edition but rather with a scribal exercise, where an Aristarchean critical sign would be out of place. The late *P.Oxy.* XV 1818, on the contrary, uses what most likely is not even an *antisigma* but a small comma-like sign and places it at the end, rather than in front, of lines to indicate that they must be deleted. Only the Morgan Homer seems to use a sign that might recall the original *antisigma* in that it alerts the reader that a line must be inserted at a specific point in the manuscript; yet in this manuscript it is paired with a chi-shaped sign, in a combination of $\sigma\mu\epsilon\iota\chi$ which is foreign to the Aristarchean use. Finally, the scribes of the *Venetus* A might have tried to re-

⁵⁶ See Turner and Parsons, *Greek Manuscripts* 9–10.

produce the original signs used by Aristarchus. Perhaps they followed lists and explanations of signs available at their time, which, however, might have been unreliable, as suggested by the compendia that have reached us.

The manuscript evidence for these signs thus is rather disappointing. In fact, perhaps it is valuable exactly because it is disappointing. Unlike the situation with the other critical signs, which were popular enough to be used and reused by scribes in different times, the *antisigma* + *stigmai* system never really took off. Perhaps this was so because the system felt cumbersome (the signs had to be used in tandem) and confusing (one of them, the ‘dot’, was very common as well as tiny and hard to recognize). So scribes, who are the ones who transmitted Alexandrian scholarship, never bought into them.

To conclude, while many Aristarchean *sigla* became a staple in Homeric scholarship and then were used for other authors (even for the Bible by Origen), the use of *antisigma* + *stigmai* for transpositions and tautologies never enjoyed much success. In the end, the signs introduced by Aristarchus, the most famous Alexandrian grammarian, had to stand the test of the market: the approval of the consumers of Homer, the readers and scribes, who saved most of Aristarchus’ scholarship—but not all of it.⁵⁷

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