

# Aristarchus and ‘Everyman’s’ Homer

*Kathleen McNamee*

THE HOMERIC SCHOLAR best known in antiquity was Aristarchus, head of the Library at Alexandria after *ca* 153 B.C.<sup>1</sup> Because his textual and exegetic work was celebrated even in ancient times, we might expect to find it widely disseminated in Egypt in the centuries closest to his lifetime. On the contrary, however, very few Homeric papyri bear witness to his efforts: of approximately five hundred extant papyrus texts of the *Iliad* only seventeen<sup>2</sup> contain Aristarchan critical signs, and not one preserves his commentaries intact or unalloyed. For information about his critical method we must rely primarily on a very late document, the tenth-century manuscript of the *Iliad* known as *Venetus A*, whose marginal sigla and copious scholia, drawn from lost commentaries written by Aristarchus’ followers, are the best existing record of his work.<sup>3</sup>

While the scarcity of Aristarchan material in the papyri has not escaped the notice of scholars, no one has studied the sigla in these

<sup>1</sup> The most convenient accounts of Aristarchus’ contribution to Homeric scholarship are R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship* (Oxford 1968) 210–19, 225–33, and T. W. Allen, ed., *Homeri Ilias* (Oxford 1931) 196–205. A version of this paper was presented to the Wayne State University Liberal Arts Faculty Forum in November 1979. The author would like to thank K. R. Walters for his advice and encouragement.

<sup>2</sup> 2nd cent. B.C.: *P.Tebt.* I 4 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 632). 1st cent. B.C.: *BKT* V.1 18–20 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 962); *P.Ryl.* I 51 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1016); Pack<sup>2</sup> 980. Augustan: *P.Oxy.* IV 687 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 691). 1st cent. A.D.: Pack<sup>2</sup> 955; *BKT* V.1 4 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 735); *P.Lond.Lit.* 27 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 998); *P.Köln.* I 37. 2nd cent. A.D.: *P.Haw.* (Pack<sup>2</sup> 616); Pack<sup>2</sup> 1005; *P.Lund.* I 1 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 781); *P.Oxy.* III 445 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 778). 3rd cent. A.D.: *P.Lond. Lit.* 11 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 697); Pack<sup>2</sup> 810. 4th cent. A.D.: Pack<sup>2</sup> 789 (see *infra* n.16). ‘Roman Empire’: *ZPE* 14 (1974) 89–90. This brings up to date the list of F. Martinazzoli, *Hapax Legomenon* (Rome 1953) 59–60. Four of his papyri are not included here, either because their sigla are not Aristarchan or because they are not used for the purpose intended by Aristarchus.

<sup>3</sup> Venice, *Biblioteca Marciana*, gr. 454; see H. Erbse, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem (Scholia Vetera)* (Berlin 1969–77) I xiiiif, xlfff, and *passim*. For the sigla used by Aristarchus see Pfeiffer (*supra* n.1) 218. They are the *obelus* (–) which marked spurious lines; the *stigma*, a dot which marked lines suspected of being spurious; the dotted *diple* (⋈), placed beside passages where Aristarchus disagreed with the readings of Zenodotus; the *antisigma* (⊕) plus *stigma*, for lines whose order was disturbed; the *asteriscus* (✕), written beside passages that were repeated incorrectly elsewhere in the poem; the *obelus* plus *asteriscus*, placed beside passages which belonged elsewhere in the text; and the *diple* (>), which indicated that some other feature of the text had elicited a comment from Aristarchus.

texts to determine which parts of Aristarchus' work were usually preserved by ancient readers, and which suppressed. This is one object of the present paper; the other is to enquire into reasons for the omissions. Among the published Iliadic papyri<sup>4</sup> containing Aristarchan sigla, non-Aristarchan sigla, and marginal notes, two extensive fragments are especially well endowed with Aristarchan sigla and comments, *P.Hawara* (2nd century A.D.: *Iliad* 2) and *P.Oxy.* VIII 1086 (1st century B.C.: commentary on *Iliad* 2). The former, containing only sporadic marginal additions, is typical of papyri with Aristarchan material. The latter, being a full-scale commentary, is naturally more expansive than marginal notes and sigla; it is also remarkable among papyrus *hypomnemata* on the *Iliad* for its testimony to Aristarchus' learning.<sup>5</sup> By comparing these two papyri and the mediaeval scholia, we may discern the particular kinds of Aristarchan comments that were likely to be passed over by ancient owners of books like *P.Hawara*. The comparison should illuminate the needs and taste of ancient readers and suggest reasons for the sparseness of scholarly material in the papyri.

*P.Hawara* preserves more sigla of Aristarchus than other papyri, largely because of its more extensive remains. Each of these signs marked, as usual, a problem in the text and indicated that the reader could find that problem discussed in an accompanying commentary by the scholar. For *P.Hawara* this commentary is lost, but it can be reconstructed in general outline from comments preserved in *P.Oxy.* VIII 1086 and the scholia of *Venetus* A. The annotator of *P.Hawara* has passed over a tremendous amount of Aristarchan material, but he has done so with a certain pragmatic intelligence. He has tended to omit sigla leading to comments that treat textual problems,<sup>6</sup> give background information, or take note

<sup>4</sup> *Odyssey* papyri with Aristarchan sigla will not be treated here, since there are no exhaustive Aristarchan scholia on that poem with which they can be compared. The number of texts with Aristarchan signs, moreover, is very small, and in only the first are sigla numerous: 1st cent. A.D.: Pack<sup>2</sup> 1039; *PSI* I 8 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1059). 1st or 2nd cent. A.D.: *P.Mil.Vogl.* VI 259. 3rd cent. A.D.: *P.Oxy.* III 573 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1139); *P.Oxy.* XI 1398 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1147). Texts of the *Odyssey* possibly containing Aristarchan sigla: 2nd cent. B.C.: *Festschrift zum 150-jährigen Bestehen des Berliner Ägyptischen Museums* (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Mitteilungen aus der Ägyptischen Sammlung 8 [1974]) 394. 1st cent. A.D.?: Pack<sup>2</sup> 1127. 2nd cent. A.D.: Pack<sup>2</sup> 1116.

<sup>5</sup> Other commentaries with scholarly pretensions are *P.Oxy.* II 221 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1205: second century A.D., on *Il.* 21) and *P.Oxy.* VIII 1087 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1186: first century A.D., on *Il.* 7), but neither owes much to Aristarchus. In general the other critical work on the *Iliad* found in papyri offers simple exegesis of the poem or lectional help.

<sup>6</sup> Some of the sporadic marginal notes, however, give variant readings of Aristarchus and of others, who are cited as *τινές*.

of the style of the poem; those that he retained usually treat elementary points of grammar and explain potentially confusing features of the text. In fifty selected lines of *Iliad* 2, for example, in addition to a single *obelus* beside a condemned line (*Il.* 2.794), six of Aristarchus' *dipleae* appear.<sup>7</sup> At least three of these led to notes giving basic lectional aid. One explained that the word *ἠγνοίησεν* (*Il.* 2.807), which had a different meaning for Homer than for Hellenistic readers, caused confusion which led to the interpolation of the obelized passage. Another, on *Il.* 2.809, commented on Homer's choice of the plural for emphasis instead of the singular, and pointed out his use of *πάσαι* to mean *ἄλλαι*. The third explained that *τόξον* (*Il.* 2.827) stands by metonymy for 'archery'. The other three drew attention to a point of style and to proper names which Homer elsewhere in the poem applies to other persons or places.

For the same fifty lines the commentary *P.Oxy.* VIII 1086, by contrast, preserves notes on a wide variety of subjects. Some paraphrase the text; the rest, which are acknowledged by neither siglum nor note in *P.Hawara*, treat:

- Il.* 2.763: Homer's use of *deuteron-proteron*. This is claimed to be characteristic of his style, despite the opinion of Praxiphanes, who objected to the inverted order of Anticleia's answers to Odysseus' questions in the Underworld (*Od.* 11.163–203).
- Il.* 2.765: The mechanics of the plumb-line (*σταφύλη*) mentioned in a simile; an etymology is given.
- Il.* 2.766: The common misspelling of Pereia as Pieria. This is said to be due to general ignorance of the location of the two areas in Thessaly and Macedonia respectively.
- Il.* 2.767: The phrase *φόβον ἄρῃος φορεούσας* describing the horses of Eumelos: *φόβον* is not, as some suppose, a mark on the faces of these horses, but refers to the ability of good warhorses to flee from battle when necessary. The use of mares in battle is also mentioned.
- Il.* 2.783: The resting place of the monster Typho *εἰν Ἀρίμοις*: this is a place in Pisidia, whereas later poets (including Pindar, who is quoted) put him under Aetna.
- Il.* 2.788ff: The simultaneity of Iris' visit to Troy and Agamemnon's dream (*Il.* 2.1ff). The narrator, it is explained, could not describe both at once and therefore first told, out of order, the consequences of the dream, *i.e.*, the muster of troops described in the Catalogue of Ships.
- Il.* 2.811: Homer's use of the present tense ("there is a steep hill") which

<sup>7</sup> *Il.* 2.760–65, 782–97, 804–19, 826–41. I have chosen these passages because commentary on them survives in both *P.Oxy.* VIII 1086 and *Venetus* A. Because of the fragmentary condition of *P.Hawara* they are not consecutive. Whether a siglum was written at *Il.* 2.785 is not clear.

- indicates, in the view of the commentator, that the poet had first-hand knowledge of the terrain around Troy.
- Il.* 2.812: The unusual use of *ἀπάνευθε* to mean *χωρίς*. A parallel at *Il.* 20.41 is cited.
- Il.* 2.813–14: The 'tomb of Myrine'. Two theories are offered concerning her identity.
- Il.* 2.816: Homer's use of the dative instead of the genitive with *ἡγεμόνευε*. A parallel at *Il.* 3.16 is cited.
- Il.* 2.816: Two possible etymologies for *κορυθαίαλος*, one supported by a quotation from Alcaeus.
- Il.* 2.819: Homer's habit of distinguishing between the Trojans and their allies the Dardanians.

The variety of subjects treated here is representative of Aristarchus' learning and reflects not only his intimate knowledge of Homeric language and usage but also his acquaintance with classical Greek literature, together with the variant interpretations offered by other Homeric critics and the geographic and ethnographic researches of Peripatetic and Alexandrian scholars. His knowledge was encyclopaedic and suited to his objective, which emerges clearly from a reading of the commentary from Oxyrhynchus or the scholia surviving in *Venetus A*: it was to illuminate the text of Homer, particularly problematic passages, not only by adducing the discoveries of other scholars but especially by demonstrating, by extensive cross-references in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, what is typically Homeric.

Surely, though, what the majority of ancient readers needed was not a dissertation on the quintessential Homer but rather clarification of his idiosyncratic language and usage. A commentary that enabled them to understand the flow of the narrative would have filled their most essential need; philological niceties could be left to scholars. Only a small percentage of Aristarchus' commentary was utilitarian enough to fill such a need, and it is primarily these portions whose traces survive in papyri.

This is true not just of *P.Hawara* but also of most other Homer papyri with Aristarchan sigla, most notably the three of which the most extensive fragments survive.<sup>8</sup> (1) In *P.Lond.Lit.* 27, seven or eight *diplae* (at *Il.* 23.486, 551, 574, 850, 863, 872; 24.544; also 23.680, for 679?) lead to notes explaining the meaning or refer-

<sup>8</sup> Only *P.Tebt.* I 4, written in the mid-second century B.C. and therefore practically contemporary with Aristarchus, is an exception. Its six sigla (an *asteriscus*, an *antisigma*, a dotted *diple* and three *obeli*) indicate Aristarchus' dissatisfaction with the state of the text and do not refer to purely exegetical notes.

ence of words. Others make note of a redundancy (*Il.* 24.232) and either an odd usage or a *hapax legomenon* (*Il.* 24.228).<sup>9</sup> (2) Pack<sup>2</sup> 980 contains eight *diplae*. Four indicate notes on the meanings of words (*Il.* 21.394, 495; 22.497, 505). Others explain other features in the text which might cause readers momentary confusion: an anachronism, an odd usage, and a case of metonymy (*Il.* 21.388, 485, 502). One *diple* (*Il.* 22.468) refers to a note offering either a variant from the *koine* or a ‘better’ arrangement of details than Homer’s. *Obeli* are also used to mark two passages deemed spurious (*Il.* 21.475–77, 570). (3) The annotator of *P.Oxy.* III 445 was interested not only in lectional problems but also in the mythological content of the poem. Four or five of his *diplae* lead to notes on figures of speech, word meanings, or technical matters (*Il.* 6.174,<sup>10</sup> 198, 507, 510, and possibly 518). Almost as many, however, indicate notes treating the mythological and cultural background of the poem (*Il.* 6.176, 178, 181 [?: > papyrus], 199). A *diple* with dot at *Il.* 6.186 is unique and has no scholia attached to it. *Asterisci* also appear (*Il.* 6.490–92).<sup>11</sup>

These scholia probably reflect the modest wants of most readers, for whom Aristarchus’ scholarly writings were largely superfluous.

<sup>9</sup> The meaning of an eleventh *diple* (*Il.* 24.115) is unknown, for it occurs uniquely here and scholia do not survive on this line. An *asteriscus* at *Il.* 23.657 is also unique to this papyrus.

<sup>10</sup> An *antisigma* is used here too, uniquely, but not with the meaning attached to it by Aristarchus. Grenfell and Hunt, citing an ancient grammarian, associate it with the anaphora in the line.

<sup>11</sup> The sigla in other papyri with Aristarchan signs generally serve the same ends as those already discussed, but they are less numerous and can be summarized here: *BKT* V.1 18–20: *diple* refers to a note on the agreement of *δμιλος τερπόμενοι* (*Il.* 18.603–04). *P.Ryl.* I 51: *diplae* refer to notes explaining unusual or difficult words (*Il.* 24.394 and probably 367) and commenting on the gender of *Ἰλιον* (*Il.* 24.383, *Ἰλιον ἰρήν*). *P.Oxy.* IV 687: one *diple* marks a pleonasm at *Il.* 3.207; the other, at *Il.* 3.211, was perhaps mistakenly written instead of > and denoted Aristarchus’ disagreement with Zenodotus. Pack<sup>2</sup> 955: *diple* indicates a note on an unmetrical reading of Zenodotus (*Il.* 18.222). *BKT* V.1 4: one *diple* refers to a note on the barbaric nature of polygamy (*Il.* 5.70), another to one on the repetition of a name mentioned three lines earlier (*Il.* 5.79). For the *diple* at *Il.* 5.71, there is no surviving scholium, but it may have been linked to a note on the prosody of *πόσει* (cf. schol. *ad* 1.30, *ἄργει*). *P.Köln.* I 37: *obeli* at *Il.* 24.45–46, 71–73; *diplai* at 24.74 and 77 probably were linked to notes on Iris’ role in the poem; one at 24.78 led to a note identifying Samos with Samothrace; that at line 92 is unique. *P.Lund.* I 1: one *diple* connected with a note on an example of *deuteron-proteron* (*Il.* 6.198). *P.Lond.Lit.* 11: *diple* refers to a note on Aristarchus’ preference of *ἐνθεο* (*Il.* 4.410) over the Attic *ἐνθου*. Pack<sup>2</sup> 810: *diplae* lead to notes on an archaism, an Aristarchan variant (or punctuation?), and an explanation that the plural is used for the singular (*Il.* 7.328, 336, 339); for 7.318, 337, and 341, where *diplae* also occur, no scholia survive in *Venetus* A. Pack<sup>2</sup> 789: one *diple* indicates a note giving an Aristarchan variant (*Il.* 9.350). In *ZPE* 14 (1974) 89–90 the siglum was recorded wrongly; and in Pack<sup>2</sup> 1005 the *diple* at *Il.* 23.445 is unique.

But more specific factors were no doubt also at work in shaping the scholia. In general we should not expect to find many works of deep learning in the papyri, which do not come to us from the ruins of ambitious libraries. Private libraries stocked with scholarly commentaries and critical editions will have been rare, for the learned portion of any populace is small. Nor, of course, do we have many papyri from Alexandria, the center of learning.

The scholia reflect as well the tendency to consolidate and condense subliterate writings. Even as early as the Augustan period there was such a profusion of commentaries on Homer and other authors that epitomators (most notably Didymus, who is one of the four sources of Aristarchan material in the scholia of *Venetus A*<sup>12</sup>) made it their special task to consolidate their contents and thus reduce their bulk. The effect of such reduction is obvious if we compare the commentary in *P.Oxy.* VIII 1086, which probably antedates Didymus, with the scholia of *Venetus A*. The earlier text is prolix and repetitious and could be drastically curtailed without distorting the writer's point. The scholia are concise. There is no reason to assume that they are directly descended from *P.Oxy.* VIII 1086, but the consolidation of material that is obvious as we move chronologically from one to the other is typical of the treatment given in antiquity to subliterate works.

Another factor is the particular nature of Aristarchus' sigla. Six of his seven signs have specific intrinsic meanings that are obvious, with or without the help of a commentary, to anyone who knows their code. The *diple*, however, had no meaning of its own but simply directed readers to the *hypomnema* where a note could be found treating any of a wide variety of subjects. In papyri it is by far the commonest of Aristarchus' signs, as the summaries above show. It was useless except to those who had access to Aristarchus' commentaries. Such readers cannot have been numerous, for commentaries on literature in any language do not have wide appeal. Even some of those readers with pretensions to learning may have been put off by the inconvenience of using the *hypomnemata* of Aristarchus or other scholars, since commentaries circulated until late antiquity in book rolls independent of the texts they treated. To consult them was awkward. It is scarcely remarkable, in fact, that neither sigla nor *hypomnemata* are found in abundance in ancient papyri. What may be puzzling in these condi-

<sup>12</sup> Pfeiffer (*supra* n.1) 213–18, 274–79.

tions is rather that certain Aristarchan material *was* selectively recorded and preserved in a few texts.

Reasons of literary taste and interpretation may also have contributed to the infrequency of Aristarchus' sigla and comments in papyri. It is possible, for example, that some sigla were added only for the sake of appearance, because the book owner fancied himself one of the *cognoscenti* familiar with Aristarchus' work, or because Aristarchan texts were fashionable in certain circles.<sup>13</sup> In deluxe editions like *P.Hawara* especially we might suspect this motive, in part because it may explain how so many Aristarchan sigla came to be carelessly misplaced in papyri.<sup>14</sup> Scribal negligence is not unusual even in carefully written texts; but it arouses suspicion when slips occur in the recording of signs that conveyed the opinions of an exacting textual critic like Aristarchus.

Aristarchus, moreover, did not monopolize the field of Homeric scholarship. His work was more exhaustive than any before his time, but its critics and rivals multiplied with the passing years, and the adherence of students to other Homericists must account in part for the rarity of his sigla and notes in papyri. Aristarchus' tendency to base his arguments on plausibility is particularly fallible and subject to censure. To be sure they derive from a thorough knowledge of the text of Homer and a sure understanding of his idiom; but they are ultimately subjective and are bound to be contaminated by the critic's own restrictive ideas about what is plausible.<sup>15</sup> Several papyri with sigla not used by Aristarchus in fact illustrate that he did not monopolize Homeric studies for readers in Egypt.<sup>16</sup> They indicate, moreover, that his influence

<sup>13</sup> It is fashion-consciousness that P. Collart (*RevPhil* SER. III 7 [1933] 52) has suggested gave impetus to the establishment of the Homeric vulgate: book sellers, responding to demand from a reading public which had a dim awareness of the work of Aristarchus and other scholars, may have eliminated from copies they sold the passages rejected by critics, but otherwise left the text alone.

<sup>14</sup> In *P.Hawara* the *obelus* is written mistakenly at *Il.* 2.794 instead of 791–95, and at 2.875–76 instead of at 874–75; *diplae* are given instead of dotted *diplae* at *Il.* 2.727 and 839, and dotted *diplae* instead of *diplae* occur at *Il.* 2.801 and 856. In five of the other papyri with Aristarchan sigla—*P.Lond.Lit.* 27, *P.Köln.* I 37, *ZPE* 14 (1974) 89–90, *P.Oxy.* III 445, and *P.Oxy.* IV 687—critical marks are also misplaced.

<sup>15</sup> For examples see L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford 1974) 11–12, 271. See also Aristarchus' censure of *ἐναίπειν* at *Il.* 21.485 and his pedantic criticism of Hera's seduction of Zeus in Book 14: better interpretations can be offered. For a survey of ancient critical opinion that owes little to Aristarchus see N. J. Richardson, "Literary Criticism in the Exegetical Scholia to the *Iliad*: a Sketch," *CQ* N.S. 30 (1980) 265–87.

<sup>16</sup> It is possible, of course, that some of these sigla were the casual marks of a reader and

waned with time: only about 25% of the papyri with his symbols date from later than A.D. 200, but more than half those with non-Aristarchan sigla. The impression received is that which common sense would predict: that Aristarchus' criticism had its greatest effect on books and readers in the years closest to his own period.

It should be observed, finally, that marginal notes in Homeric papyri, like the sigla there, support the theory that most readers sought only the most basic understanding of Homer's poems. The quality of these notes may be compared to those in books in the library at Nabokov's Waindell College, where "earnest freshmen inscribed such helpful glosses as 'Description of nature', or 'Irony'; and in a pretty edition of Mallarmé's poems an especially able scholiast . . . underlined in violet ink the difficult word *oiseaux* and scrawled above it 'birds'."<sup>17</sup> Papyri of the *Iliad* rarely have even so much. Only fourteen ancient fragments—about three per cent of all *Iliad* texts on papyrus—have marginalia at all. None of their notes is lengthy; papyrus rolls were not designed to receive long marginal commentaries. In eight of these texts the notes are illegible but very brief; three contain only glosses and elementary lectional help; three had annotators with scholarly leanings, and the phrasing of their notes indicates that they derived them from learned commentaries.<sup>18</sup> References are made in these three texts to Aristarchus, the editions of Aristarchus,<sup>19</sup> the vulgate text of the poem, and, simply, *τινές*, indicating that the note came from a compilation of two or more commentaries.

The very small number of ancient papyri with comments and critical marks suggests that most copies of Homer were produced

---

belong to no particular system. The texts in question are: 3rd cent. B.C.: *P.Heid.* I 2 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 979). 2nd cent. B.C.: *P.Ryl.* III 539 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 575). 1st cent. B.C.: *P.Köln.* II 76. 1st cent. A.D.: *P.Ryl.* III 541 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 652). 1st/2nd cent. A.D. *ArchP* 24/25 (1976) 8–12. 2nd cent. A.D.: *P.Oxy.* III 550 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 880); Pack<sup>2</sup> 919; ?*PSI* VII 745 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 590). 2nd/3rd cent. A.D.: *Aegyptus* 47 (1967) 191–94 (F. Uebel, *ArchP* 24/25 [1976] 202f no. 1311); *P.Ross.Georg.* I 2 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 663). 3rd cent. A.D.: Pack<sup>2</sup> 810; *P.Oxy.* II 223 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 733); *P.Ross.Georg.* I 4 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 941); *PSI* X 1169 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 917). 3rd/4th cent. A.D.: *BKT* V.1 4 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 842). 4th cent. A.D.: *PSI* I 10 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 833); perhaps also Pack<sup>2</sup> 789, since only one of its sigla can be related to an Aristarchan note. 5th cent. A.D.: *P.Rein.* II 69 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 873); *PSI* II 113 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 608).

<sup>17</sup> V. Nabokov, *Pnin* (Garden City 1957) 137.

<sup>18</sup> Texts with illegible, brief notes: *P.Tebt.* I 4 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 632); *P.Par.* 3 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 900); Pack<sup>2</sup> 1017; *P.Mil.Vogl.* I 2 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 638); Pack<sup>2</sup> 602; Pack<sup>2</sup> 748; *PSI* II 140 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 1000); *PSI* I 11 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 709). Texts with notes offering lectional help: *PSI* VII 745 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 590); *P.Ross.Georg.* I 4 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 941); *BKT* V.1 5 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 925). Texts with scholarly notes: *P.Hawara*, *P.Oxy.* IV 685 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 950), *P.Oxy.* III 445 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 778).

<sup>19</sup> For the reading *ai* (*scil. ἐκδόσεις*) Ἀρι(στάρ)χ(ου) in *P.Oxy.* III 445, see K. McNamee, *Abbreviations in Greek Literary Papyri* (BASP Suppl. 3, forthcoming), *s.v.* Ἀρίσταρχος.

for the general reading public, not for serious students. Although most copies of the *Iliad* written after 150 B.C. contained a text that probably owed its form to the work of the Alexandrian critics,<sup>20</sup> there was no need for the ordinary reader's copy of Homer to contain sigla or studied commentary. If any symbols or notes were added in the margins, they usually dealt with a small number of the most elementary problems in reading and may have been added for show. Scholars' reasons for proposing variant readings and elaborate interpretations appear to have been of little interest to most readers, and indeed many were probably suppressed eventually, as commentaries were repeatedly epitomized and compiled, and their contents restated in more general terms. In only one tradition, that which produced *Venetus A*, did Aristarchus' research survive *in extenso*, and even there it appears in reduced and reorganized form. Only there and in a few papyrus commentaries and marginalia are ancient controversies over textual and interpretational problems still detectable in fair number. For the ordinary person the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* had a place of honor as national monuments and masterpieces of literature, studied in school and quoted as we quote Shakespeare. Scholars could quibble over interpretations and variants and scribble on papyrus in the birdcage of the Muses at Alexandria.<sup>21</sup> But the vulgate text, without critical apparatus, was sufficient for most readers and that, and no more, is the text that most papyri offer.

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

June, 1981

<sup>20</sup> S. West, *The Ptolemaic Papyri of Homer* (Pap.Colon. 3, 1967) 11–16; see also P. Collart (*supra* n.13).

<sup>21</sup> The phrase is from Timon of Phlius, quoted by Pfeiffer (*supra* n.1) 97–98.