Georgia E. Kolovou

2017

The Homeric scholia: from the text to hypertext (Presentation of the project on the scholia of the Iliad of the University of Nanterre, Paris X)

Languages in contact: Languages with history
Dr. Pedro Jesús Molina Muñoz (Ed.)

Language Centre – University of Cyprus
pp. 89 - 102
Nicosia (Cyprus)
The Homeric scholia: from the text to hypertext (Presentation of the project on the scholia of the *Iliad* of the University of Nanterre, Paris X)\(^1\)

Georgia E. Kolovou
University of Nanterre, Paris X
Labex “The pasts in the present”

ABSTRACT

The objective of our paper is to present the project on the Homeric Scholia of the Labex ‘The pasts in the Present’ in the University of Nanterre, Paris X. The scholia of the *Iliad* - the marginal and interlinear annotations which accompany Homer’s text in medieval manuscripts - form a gigantic corpus unrivalled in its richness, to which specialists in Antiquity constantly refer. This corpus, which has never been translated, is the one which most lends itself to the invention of a new kind of online publishing, in conformity with its function, which is fundamentally that of the hypertext link. Indeed, it was the Alexandrians, from the third century B.C., who invented the concept of a commentary separate from the text. In the first part of our paper, we will present the philological aspect of this project and in the second part, we will attempt to demonstrate the applicability of XML-TEI on it and how this digital tool can be used practically in relation to the corpus of the Homeric Scholia.

KEYWORDS


The scholia to Homer’s *Iliad*\(^2\) – marginal and interlinear annotations that accompany the text in medieval manuscripts – form a gigantic corpus of unparalleled richness.\(^3\) They preserve significant information on the Homeric text and on its ancient reception and commentary, inherited from the Alexandrians (3rd-2nd cent. BC) and their successors, and they constitute an encyclopedia of ancient knowledge on this most important of texts.

The objective of our paper is to present, in the first part, the philological project on the Homeric scholia of the University of Nanterre, Paris X (Labex ‘The pasts in the present’) and in the second part the digital and more technical aspect of this project, and particularly the applicability of XML TEI on it which could facilitate the research on this enormous corpus of ancient texts.

First of all, concerning the historical context of the project, we could say that the Ancient scholarship on Homer (6th century BC) was extensive and of high quality, for the best scholars of antiquity devoted much of their time and energy to the Homeric poems. Editing the text of Homer was one of the main tasks of the first Alexandrian scholars:\(^4\) Zenodotus (Greek grammarian, and Homeric scholar, who was also the first superintendent of the Library of Alexandria and the first critical editor of Homer) Aristophanes of Byzantium (a
grammarian particularly renowned for his work in Homeric scholarship, but also for his work on other classical authors) and Aristarchus whose critical revision of Homer is responsible for the excellent texts of Homer that survive. All of them produced editions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and Aristarchus wrote extensive commentaries, while Zenodotus and Aristophanes compiled glossaries of primarily Homeric words. None of the very early work on Homer survives in its original form, a surprising amount is preserved in various later compilations, so we often know, for example, the readings of several different Alexandrian scholars for a particular passage. One of the principal source for the ancient scholarship on Homer is the Homeric scholia which is a gigantic work, as we said, filling many volumes in modern editions. Most of the scholia to the *Iliad* fall into three basic groups:

The *A* scholia are termed ‘critical’ and they come from the margins of the most famous *Iliad* manuscript, Venetus A, (10th century). The *A* scholia derive from the so-called "VMK" (Viermännerkommentar, “four-man commentary”), named for the four ancient scholars Aristonicus, Didymus, Herodian, and Nicanor. The main source for the *A* scholia was probably a compilation of their work. At the end of almost every book the scribe added a subscription indicating their source:

«παράκειται τὰ Ἀριστονίκου Σημεία καὶ τὰ Διδύμου Περὶ τῆς Ἀρισταρχείου διορθώσεως, τινὰ δὲ καὶ ἐκ τῆς Ἱλιακῆς προσωδίας Ἡρωδιανοῦ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Νικάνορος Περὶ στιγμῆς»

«Written beside [the text] are Aristonicus ‘Signs’ and Didymus’ ‘On the Aristarchean edition’ and also some extracts from Herodian’s ‘Iliadic prosody’ and from Nicanor’s ‘On punctuation’».

Because all of these scholars worked on the Aristarchean edition of the Homeric text, much of the *A* scholia can be traced back to Aristarchus himself. For this reason, this group of scholia constitutes a major source of information about the opinions of Aristarchus, and they are very important for our knowledge of the Homeric text, the methods of Alexandrian scholarship, the ancient systems of accentuation, punctuation, the critical signs, the textual variants, etc.

The critical signs which are attested near to the verses of the Homeric text in the manuscript Venetus A are the following:

i) The plain diple (>) which indicates some significant use of language in the line, such as an interesting use of diction, or a word of disputed meaning.

ii) The obelus (÷ ou —) which demonstrates that Aristarchus athetized the line.

iii) The dotted (or pointed) diple (>) which indicates that Zenodotus’s text of the line in question differed from that of Aristarchus.
iv) The asterisk (*) which is used to indicate that the same verse occurs elsewhere.

v) The plain anstisigma (Ϙ) indicates that a verse is in wrong place and should be moved to a different location in the text.

vi) The pointed anstisigma (Ϙ) indicates that a line or group of lines is repeating something already said, consequently it is judged by Aristarchus to be redundant.

vii) The point (.) is used to indicate that Aristarchus felt uneasy about the lines in question, but was not prepared to athetize them with the obelus.

These critical signs in the Homeric manuscript are very important for the correct comprehension of the Homeric text in relation to the Homeric scholia and consequently in relation to the modern translation, as we can confirm it in the following example:

Examples:

{ἔσκεν} ύφηνίοχος: ὅτι παρέλκει ἡ πρόθεσις ὡς ἐν τῷ ‘Ποσειδάωνος ύποδμώς’ (δ 386) Ἄ (Erbse 134, 14-15).

The first phrase of this extract is a part of the Homeric verse ‘{ἔσκεν} ύφηνίοχος= he was a charioteer’ and the scholion starts with the conjunction ‘ὅτι’ which means ‘because’. Consequently, if we translate the scholion by saying: ‘he was a charioteer because the preposition is redundant as in the [verse] ‘the servant of Poseidon’ we understand that there is not any correlation between the Homeric verse and its annotation. However, if we consult the manuscript, we see that near to this Homeric verse there is the critical sign of obelus, so we can translate it by saying: he was a charioteer: [the obelus is found] because the preposition is redundant as in [the verse] ‘the servant of Poseidon’. For this reason, for this special group of the Homeric scholia, it is important to consult systematically the manuscript in order to understand and translate correctly the text.

Then, we have the bT scholia.15 They are so named because they are found in the manuscript T (11th century) and in the descendants of the lost manuscript b (6th century). These scholia are also known as the exegetical scholia, because they are concerned primarily with the interpretation of the Homeric verses rather than textual criticism, as we can confirm it in the two following examples which explain the content of the Homeric verses.

Examples:

ἀνδρὸς ἐπειτ’ ὑφελλόν ἀμείμονος: διδάσκει ὁ ποιητὴς τὰς ἐπιγαμίας πρὸς συνετούς ποιεῖσθαι. ἢ γοῦν Ἐλένη πλούσιον ἀνδρὰ ἔχουσα τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον καὶ υἱὸν βασιλέως εὑχεται συνετού γεγενήσθαι γυνὴ bT (Erbse 191, 88-91).
Finally, we have the D scholia which have been recently edited by Helmut van Thiel. The D scholia, which are erroneously named after Didymus, are also known as ‘scholia minora’ or ‘scholia vulgata’. They are the largest group of the Homeric scholia and our earliest manuscript evidence for them is older than that for the other types. Our sources are the manuscripts Z and Q, which date to the ninth and eleventh century respectively. The major component of the D scholia is lexicographical, consisting of short definitions or explanations of obscure words, mythological and allegorical explanations, plot summaries and paraphrases. This material can provide important evidence for the interpretation of Homeric language, and they give us an insight into some of the ways Homer was read and understood in antiquity, providing an essential avenue to an understanding of education systems in the ancient world and the history and evolution of scholarship.

Examples:

\[\text{ἀτυζόμενοι: ταρασσόμενοι D (Van Thiel 257, Z 41/Zs). φοβέοντο: \text{δρεπα} θυγον D (Van Thiel 257, Z 41/Ys), \text{εκ δίφροιο: εκ τού \text{άρματος} D (Van Thiel 257, Z 42/Zs).} \]

A 611/Zs χρυσόθρονος: \text{χρυσοῦν \text{θρόνον} έχουσα, βασιλέως, \text{μάλλον δε} \text{έπειδή τα πρός τοι αιθέρι του \text{άματος} \text{γειτονία} τοι \text{ηλίων} \text{πυρώδη} \text{εστίν. ο γάρ ποιητής \text{άλληλοι} \text{τού \text{πυρός} ZYQX(A)R}}

Finally, the project on the Homeric scholia is completed with the Byzantine scholia of Eustathios of Thessalonica and particularly with the rewriting of the Homeric scholia by the most important scholar of the 12th century. In this text, Eustathios rewrites the Homeric scholia and other passages and he transforms them in a ‘commentary’ to which he gives the title Parekbolai. Eustathios’ Parekbolai consist of extracts from commentaries on Homer. On the one hand, he analyzes and explains the Homeric text based on the collections of the ancient scholia, on the other hand, he constantly enriches these Homeric scholia which always constitute his starting point, with extracts, quotations, or notes of other authors- such as poets, lexicographers, grammarians, historians, geographers, philosophers and rhetoricians, but also with personal and critical remarks which are innumerable in his work and do not always refer directly to the text of Homer itself. It is a selection and a compilation of extracts of commentaries on Homer which constitute a kind of anthology and compose an autonomous, personal and independent commentary on the Homeric text. In other words, for Eustathios, the Homeric text can be taught and explained only by the accumulation of different information, that’s why his
commentary is considered as a mine of information on Homer. He has also in mind that *Iliad* belongs to a remote past, words have changed their meaning since Homer’s time, and according to him, the reader must be alert to these semantic changes. For this reason, he attempts to modernize constantly the Homeric text in the 12th century by giving synonyms, antonyms and contemporary examples of his era. We work on the monumental edition of Marchinus van der Valk. This Byzantine commentary is found in the Codex Laurentianus Plut. LIX 2 et 3 -and according to M. van der Valk and Wilson it is considered as the autograph manuscript of Eustathius but we are always waiting for the article of the paleographer in Paris, Brigitte Mondrain, which can probably reject this supposition. Consequently, the interest in these scholia is two-fold. Firstly, in terms of content, they preserve significant information on the Homeric text and on its commentary, inherited from the Alexandrians and their successors, and they constitute an encyclopedia of ancient knowledge. Secondly, in terms of functionality, they provide the departure point for a larger and more ambitious investigation since these scholia are the forefather of our contemporary footnotes and hypertext links. For this reason, the object of this project is double:

The first consists of making this essential corpus available to the international scholarly community in an appropriate digital environment (open source web site).

The second is subdivided in two: a study of the functioning of scholia, heretofore only studied for their contents even though they are the first identifiable historic milestone in the implementation of hypertextual logic for transmitting significant information on the Greeks’ fundamental text; and a reflection on the invention of a new form of online publishing conforming to this hypertextual logic.

This new form of online publishing conforming to this hypertextual logic is appeared basically in the first version of our website with the main thematic lists of our project. In this first version of the site, we explain briefly the definition of the Homeric scholia, we demonstrate some Homeric manuscripts and particularly the form of the scholia attested in these manuscripts and we give the Greek text edited by H. Erbse and our French translation for the Homeric scholia of the first book of *Iliad*. Moreover, we have classified in four different lists the basic groups of the scholia (A, bT, D and Byzantine scholia) that we have already presented and this classification is based on the goals of the electronic edition of this enormous text.

Since we mention the goal of the electronic edition of our text, we pass now to the applicability of XML-TEI on the project. This digital tool contributes to a better understanding of the scholia surviving in the manuscripts and can make the information widely available to scholars and students. Precisely, it offers the possibility to students and researchers to search and consult
all the Homeric scholia classified in one file, to define the criteria of their research by choosing firstly only one category of the Homeric scholia (A, bT, D, or Byz.), and secondly the Homeric quotations, or the quotations of other poets, historians, lexicographers, geographers, philosophers etc. attested in the corpus of the scholia. Moreover, there are a lot of proper names (for persons or places) that can be searched directly in the Greek text or in the translated text and generally, this digital format is searchable in a better and more effective way than the printed volumes.

The XML is an extensive markup language (=language) and the TEI is a Text Encoding Initiative (=code). As the title mentions it, everything depends on our initiative for text encoding. In other words, everything depends on the textual elements that we want to encode and on the goals of our electronic edition.

The methodological applicability of XML-TEI on the texts is explained clearly in the website with the Guidelines of XML-TEI\textsuperscript{31} which is addressed to anyone who works with any kind of textual resource in digital form. This site of Guidelines is very useful because it contains the 24 chapters of the text body\textsuperscript{32} that explain clearly the stages of the electronic text encoding and interchange.

Concerning the applicability of this digital tool in relation to the corpus of the Homeric Scholia, we present simply some textual elements that can be encoded in order to permit to the researchers and students not only a better understanding of the \textit{Iliad’s} scholia in relation to the poetic text but also a better understanding of the Homeric scholia in relation to the scholia, commentaries and lexica of the posterior literary and scholarly works.

Following the anatomy of the XML-TEI, we always use one opening angle bracket and one closing angle bracket (or only one closing angle bracket) in order to encode the textual elements in relation to the goals of the electronic edition. In other words, each textual element has one start tag and one end tag and the data are always in the middle. In the following examples, we have chosen to encode three basic textual elements which can facilitate the research on this enormous corpus of the Homeric scholia.

Firstly, we encode some proper names repeated frequently in the text in different locations, secondly we translate in French the scholion on the first verse of \textit{Iliad} and we encode the three poetic quotations (Hesiod, Pindar, Antimachus of Colophonius) in relation to this Homeric verse. In the third example, we encode also the French translation of the Greek quotation.
Example 1

<name type="person"> Achille</name>
<name type="person"> Hector</name>
<name type="person"> Andromaque </name>
<name type="place"> Troie</name>
<name type="place"> Thèbes</name>
<name type="place"> Ilion </name>

Example 2

ἄειδε «chante»: à savoir ici: assurément, c’est selon la licence poétique ou l’usage qu’il prend les formes impératives à la place des formes optatives; de fait, Hésiode dit (opp. 2)
<quote> venez et dites </quote>,
et Pindare (fr. 150 Sn.)
<quote> devine, Muse </quote>
AT et Antimaque de Colophon (fr. 1 W)
<quote> dites, filles du Grand Zeus, fils de Cronos </quote> A

Example 3

ἄειδε «chante»: à savoir ici: assurément, c’est selon la licence poétique ou l’usage qu’il prend les formes impératives à la place des formes optatives; de fait, Hésiode dit (opp. 2)
<quote> δεῦτε δὴ ἐννέπετε </quote>
<quote> venez et dites </quote>
<quote> μαντεύεο Μοῦσα </quote>
<quote> dites, filles du Grand Zeus, fils de Cronos </quote> A

Progressively, the official site of the project is created, since this digital format is variable, updatable and searchable in a way that a printed volume is not. Students and researchers can define the criteria of their research on this enormous text, examine separately some textual
elements of the scholia which are frequently incomprehensible in a simple lecture, and consult simultaneously the translation of the corpus of the Homeric scholia. There are innumerable textual elements that can be encoded and everything depends on the time that we have in our disposition and on the goal of the electronic edition that we prepare.

Finally, this project should be considered as a part of an eco-system in the fields of Classical Studies whose aim is to publish online ancient texts, translations and commentaries. The first project which is based on XML-TEI is the text of the scholia of Euripides edited by Donald Mastronard. The goal of this project is to gain a better understanding of the scholia surviving in medieval manuscripts of Euripides and make the information widely available to scholars and students. Following the same method of encoding the scholia with XML-TEI, the editor divides the text in: scholia vetera, scholia vetera with translation and apparatus criticus, scholia of Manuel Moschopoulos, and Thomas Magister, Triclinian scholia, Triclinian Prefatory texts etc. The second project is the HyperDonat. It is a collection of digital editions of ancient commentaries with a translation and apparatus criticus. The next project is the Historia Apostolica of Arator, and then the Homer Multitext Project of Christopher Blackwell and Neel Smith. This project seeks to present the Homeric Iliad and Odyssey in a critical framework. The last one is the EPIdoc (Epigraphic Documents). It is an international, collaborative effort that provides guidelines and tools for encoding scholarly and educational editions of ancient documents.

Consequently, as a part of this eco system, the website of the Homeric scholia gives already access to the corpus of the scholia which is augmented progressively, their manuscripts, their translation, their commentary, the study of their functioning and their metamorphosis till their last stage: the hypertextual link.

Bibliography


Notes

1. The scientific responsible of this project is Ch. Bréchet (Assistant Professor, University of Nanterre, Paris X).


3. The scholia to the Odyssey are much fewer and less well preserved than those to the Iliad (Filippomaria Pontani is now working on a new edition of the scholia on the Odyssey); see E. Dickey (2007).


5. ibid.18.

6. Most of the A scholia and bT scholia are found in the edition of H. Erbse (1969-1983). The seven volumes of this edition omit many scholia from important traditions. This omitted material includes the D scholia and the bT scholia derived from Porphyry (ed. 1882) and Heraclitus (ed. 1910). The D scholia omitted by Erbse can be found in Van Thiel’s edition Scholia in Iliadem: http://www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/ifa/klassphil/vanthiel/index.html). However these editions do not cover all the Iliad scholia, for this reason, one must consult
the older editions which cover the most important manuscripts separately: L.Bachmann (1835); G.Dindorf (1875-1877); E. Maass (1887-1888); J. Nicole (1891).

7. Marcianus Graecus Z.454(= 822), Venetus A.

8. The A scholia (Venetus 454) are discovered in 1779 by Villoison; for this manuscript, see P. Mazon (1967: 10-14).


11. According to P. Mazon, at the end of the books XVII and XXIV this subscription is not indicated because the end of the book XVII is written by a second hand and the scholia of the book XXIV are completed to the verse 795, see : P. Mazon (1967: 75, n. 3.).


14. For the critical signs in the manuscript Venetus A, see B. Graeme (2009: 98-115).

15. ibid., p.19.


20. Q=Vaticanus Graecus 33 (s.IX).

21. For a completed presentation on the manuscripts of the scholia D, see H. Van Thiel (2000: 8-13).

22. For a detailed presentation on the mythological scholia D, see M. van der Valk (1963: 303-413).


34. http://hyperdonat.huma-num.fr/

35. http://beta.biblissima.fr/fr/ark:/43093/oedatacb122461935


37. https://sourceforge.net/p/epidoc/wiki/Home/