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Homeric Scholarship in the Pulpit: The Case of Eustathios' Sermons

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Introduction

Many classicists are familiar with Eustathios (c. 1115–95) through his huge Homeric commentaries or *Parekbolai*. He is thought to have composed these, along with studies of Pindar, Aristophanes, and Dionysius the Periegete, while working as a teacher in Constantinople, and he continued to revise them later in life while archbishop of Thessalonike.¹ Quite different parts of Eustathios' output, however, have attracted attention from Byzantinists, particularly his formal orations delivered before emperor Manuel I once Eustathios attained the position of Master of the Rhetoricians (c. 1168), his ecclesiastical writings as archbishop from c. 1178, and his history *On the Capture of Thessalonike* (1186).²

Few attempts have been made to bridge this disciplinary divide and to discuss the continuities between the philological and non-philological parts of Eustathios' oeuvre, as noted in the call for such work by the editors of a recent volume dedicated to him.³ Our investigation of twelve texts by Eustathios which have a good claim to be sermons delivered in church identified over 100 plausible connections to Homer, of which only 28 had been catalogued in the apparatus of source-texts provided by Schönauer (2006) and Wirth (1999). We present here some case-studies that illustrate the mutual benefits of reading Eustathios' Homeric scholarship and sermons side by side. The commentaries often elucidate Eustathios' intention when he deploys words or ideas derived from Homer in the sermons. Conversely, the sermons show how Eustathios put into practice the rhetorical advice on alluding to Homer

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¹ On Eustathios' career, the dates of his Homeric *Parekbolai*, and the connotations of that term see Cullhed 2016: 2*–9*; also Schönauer 2006: 3*–24*.

² On Eustathios as an orator, see esp. Stone 2013, with further references. As a bishop: Kazhdan and Franklin 1984: 115–95; Angold 1995: 179–96; Merianos 2008.

³ Katsaros, Pontani and Sarris 2017: 3. Their volume does not, however, focus on responding to that call. Before they wrote, we had identified Eustathios' uses of Homer in his sermons as a fruitful area of collaboration between a scholar interested in the twelfth-century Byzantine church (MP) and one interested in Homeric scholarship (OT). For examples of scholarship which do discuss such continuities, see Ronchey 1991, and briefer comments in Stone 1999; Theodoridis 2001: 232–34; Cullhed 2016: 22*–23*. The most useful study of Eustathios' classical citations is Kolovou 2006: 25*–75*, focusing on the wittier context of his letters.

that is a recurrent feature of his commentaries.⁴ Moreover, divergences between the two sources speak to wider questions about how applicable Eustathios thought certain Homeric values were within the society of his own day.

We skirt here the potential difficulties of identifying which of Eustathios' works count as 'sermons' by concentrating on three secure pre-Lenten homilies edited by Schönauer, which she dates to c. 1176 (no. 1), perhaps to 1185 (no. 5), and to c. 1194 (no. 7).⁵ A less tractable difficulty is the extent to which the surviving written texts reflect what was delivered orally to a congregation. This will affect our view of Eustathios' imagined audience, their likely level of awareness of Homer, and so the likely impact of his Homeric references. Two considerations suggest that the extant texts are broadly representative of the rhetorical strategies of actual preaching. Sermons, including these, were often preserved in anthologies in part because there was a market of priests who wished to borrow ideas for their own homilies.⁶ Secondly, the texts contain markers of oral performance, such as frequent addresses to the audience (often ὦ ἀδελφοί, 'brethren'), which show that Eustathios was concerned to give the flavour of a live sermon, even if he was composing a 'desk-homily' or if he made substantial changes for publication.⁷ Nevertheless, we will be cautious about drawing conclusions about the audience's appreciation of the sermons' Homeric intertextuality, and focus more on the author's practice. This will include features of both technique and purpose – *how* Eustathios alludes to Homeric material in the sermons and *why* he saw fit to do so.

Homeric words out of context

⁴ For this feature see *Comm. Il.* i.3 on readers who wish to make apt παραπλοκαί (Hermogenes' term for weaving in poetic references) in rhetoric, or to imitate Homer's writerly craft; also Nünlist 2012b, Cullhed 2016: 17*–25*. We cite Eustathios' commentaries using the pagination of van der Valk 1971–87 and Stallbaum 1825–26.

⁵ Schönauer 2006: 65*, 72*, 75*. The first would be from Constantinople, the later two from Thessalonike. For introductions to Byzantine homiletics and the vexed questions of the genres of homily and the processes of entextualization, see Cunningham and Allen 1998, Antonopoulou 2013: 188–91, and for the earlier period Mayer 2008: 570–72.

⁶ Many of Eustathios' sermons are preserved in Scorialensis Y.II.10 (Andrés 265), an anthology of 12th-c. rhetoric: Schönauer 2006: 29*–33*. For the uses of homilies at different parts of their lifecycle, see Mayer 2008: 575–77, Antonopoulou 2013: 188–92, Cunningham 2016: 83–98.

⁷ For what it is worth, Eustathios disparages the common practice of revision before publication in his *Epitaphios* for Manuel I, §33. On this text, with a valuable emphasis on the aural pleasures of Eustathios' rhetoric, see Bourbouhakis 2017.

Some of Eustathios' uses of Homeric phrasing in his sermons primarily vary or heighten the register, and add to his rhetorical authority, without drawing on the Homeric context to lend interpretative depth to the point being made. The most influential rhetorical treatises at Eustathios' time were those ascribed to Hermogenes of Tarsus, whom Eustathios cites by name a dozen times in his commentaries. Hermogenes' *Types of Style* discusses at length how an orator can incorporate 'sweetness' (γλυκύτης) into a speech using elements of poetic lexis or quotations. Elsewhere Hermogenes hints more obliquely that poetic diction can confer other qualities, especially grandeur (μέγεθος). The spurious *On the Method of Force* also contains (ch. 30) a discussion of how orators can incorporate epic, focusing not on effect but on technique, namely the contrast between verbatim citation and the seamless adaptation of a reference to a new context.⁸ An example from Eustathios' pre-Lenten sermons where a Hermogenean analysis in terms of stylistic 'sweetness' is apt is 5.627, where the Homeric collocation *πίονες ἀγροί* ('rich fields') decorates a description of the worldly benefits that God can bestow.⁹

However, a striking number of instances do more than bring variety in rhetorically suitable ways. To take one where we catch Eustathios using citations self-consciously, near the start of the same sermon he comments on his struggle to find original ways of discussing the upcoming fast (5.46–50):

πλείονες, οἶμαι, λόγοι τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀγαθὸν ἔτριψαν τὰ νηστευτικὰ παραγγέλλοντες ἥπερ φορτηγοὶ νῆες ἀγαθῶν πλήθουσαι τὴν θάλασσαν ἔτεμον· ὅθεν, νεωτάτης μὲν ἀεὶ φιλουμένης ᾠδῆς, ἀπάσης δὲ τοιαύτης ἐννοίας κἀνταῦθα πολλάκις ἀμαξευθείσης, ὃ δὴ λέγεται, καὶ μηδεμιᾶς ἀτρίπτου περιλειμμένης, ὄκνον ἔλλογον ἔχω λαλεῖν...

More speeches, I think, have worn out this type of good thing by recommending the practice of fasting than cargo ships brimming with goods have carved the sea. Hence, since the newest song is always favoured, and the wagon-journey of this notion, as the saying is, has often been undertaken in its entirety right here, and none of it remains untrodden, my hesitation to preach is fitted with reasoning [...]

⁸ 'Sweetness': Rabe 1913: 330–39; Wooten 1987: 75–81. 'Grandeur': Rabe 1913: 326, 386–90, 408. See also the 11th-c. commentators John of Sicily and Gregory of Corinth in Walz 1832–36: vi.399–402, vii(2).1320. For Hermogenean principles in Eustathios' panegyrics see Stone 2001; Karla 2007: esp. 89. For Hermogenes and the *Parekbolai* see Lindberg 1977.

⁹ *Il.* 23.832, *Od.* 4.757, 8.560. The formula is also represented in early elegy (Tyrt. fr. 10.3, Phoc. fr. 7.1) and borrowed by later hexameter (Ps.-Theoc. 25.96, *Or. Sib.* 3.580).

Schönauer overlooks the allusion to *Odyssey* 1.351–52 (ἄοιδὴν μᾶλλον ἐπικλείουσ’ ἄνθρωποι | ἢ τις ... νεωτάτη ἀμφιπέληται), where Telemachus defends Phemius’ choice to sing of the Greek returns from Troy on the grounds that people talk about the newest song in circulation; nor does she connect the idea of finding an ‘untrodden’ area for the ‘wagon’ of speech to the advice given to Callimachus to choose an ‘untrodden’ path for his chariot of poetry (*Aet.* fr. 1.28, also with ἄτριπτος).¹⁰ These allusions, the explicit reference to a source-base for the rare verb ἀμαξεύω (‘to travel by wagon’), the trite poeticism of ships ‘cutting’ the sea, and the usage of πλήθω (‘to be full’) outside the few idioms in which it was admitted into prose, present the listener with a tissue of pre-existing literary language. This supports the main idea: as a preacher, Eustathios struggles to find an original way to discuss fasting; similarly, as a scholar, though he can take us beyond the usual register of Byzantine prose, he can only find tried and tested phrases to describe the difficulty of being original, whether he turns towards Homer for inspiration or towards the un-Homeric path of Callimachus.¹¹

While in that passage it is helpful to recognize that the literary quality of Eustathios’ language supports his point, little is gained if an audience-member can identify the allusion to a precise scene in *Odyssey* 1. Nor does Eustathios’ reference betray anything distinctive about his interpretation of that scene.¹² The situation is different in many other passages. We will return to sermon 5 later, but first we discuss a trio of passages from sermon 1, where the interplay with Eustathios’ commentaries is more straightforward.

Three interactions between sermon 1 and the commentaries

Sermon 1 contains a central section devoted to the importance of the purity of one’s mouth, in terms of what comes out of it as well as what goes into it. Eustathios urges that especially during Lent one should watch one’s language (1.431–37):

¹⁰ Eustathios cites *Aet.* fr. 1.26 at *Proem on Pindar* 23. Pindar himself preceded Callimachus in receiving advice to steer clear of the ‘trodden wagon-road’ of Homer (fr. 52g.11 μὴ τριπτόν κατ’ ἀμαξιτόν), but it seems unlikely that Eustathios had access to this poem, or to the similar idea of Choerilus fr. 2.

¹¹ This paradox of erudition leads to another: Eustathios’ hesitation to speak is ἔλλογος, it ‘contains *logos*’, *i.e.* is reasoned. But *logos* is also the word for ‘speaking’.

¹² In *Comm. Od.* i.66 = Cullhed 2016: 292–95, Eustathios focuses on listing parallels, mainly culled from his beloved Athenaeus (1.25f, 3.122c, 14.623e).

χρεία τοίνυν ἡμῖν ἐν ταῖς νηστείαις [...] παρατηρεῖσθαι [...] ὅσα πηγάζει μὲν ἐκ
βαθέων καρδίας, ἐκβλύζει δὲ διὰ στόματος, ὅποιόν τι καὶ τὸ βλάσφημον καὶ
ὑβριστικὸν καὶ λοιδορον, [...] μὴ [...] τὸ καθαρὸν τῶν ὑμνητηρίων ἐπιταράττωμεν
ἐπεσβολῶν ἀχρειότητι.

Hence during fasts we must watch out for all that wells up from the depths of the
heart and gushes out through the mouth, things such as profanity, effrontery and
insults, [...] lest [...] we perturb the purity of our hymns with the unsuitability of
verbal outbursts.

The word translated ‘verbal outburst’ here, ἐπεσβολία, occurs once in Homer, where it is
used of Telemachus trying to avoid an outburst in front of his superior Menelaus (*Od.* 4.159);
the cognate adjective ἐπεσβόλος is used once of Thersites (*Il.* 2.275). Thereafter the stem
remains very rare.¹³ The formation of both words, with the archaic way of compounding an s-
stem noun (ἔπος > ἐπεσ- not ἐπο-) and the use of that noun’s poetic sense (‘word’, rather than
‘verse, epic’) mark them as drawn from the registers of archaic poetry.¹⁴

Eustathios’ word-choice needs to be viewed within the context of the Homeric
scholarship that existed in his day. The *Odyssey* gives no reason to tie ἐπεσβολία directly to
insults; Telemachus is more likely to fear an over-emotional outpouring of grief for the
breakdown of his home. However, the application of ἐπεσβόλος to Thersites, in a description
of how he used to insult his superiors, dominated the imagination of readers, to the point
where ἐπεσβολία was not taken as a term for word-slinging (with or without insults) but as a
term for aggressive language. Telemachus’ avoidance of ἐπεσβολία was interpreted
accordingly: on the scholia’s reading, the point was not that he wanted to avoid uttering
insults himself, but that he thought it inappropriate to repeat the language of Penelope’s
suitors in front of Menelaus. Eustathios includes this interpretation in his commentary, but
critically.¹⁵ He emphasizes instead what he sees as the etymological coherence of three words
combined in the sermon: ἐπεσβολία, βλασφημία, and λοιδορία. He took ἐπεσβολία

¹³ *TLG* offers just three other occurrences from the 12th century outside Eustathios and lexicography. Tzetzes
Carm. Il. 1.340 clearly reflects *Iliad* 2, but has been flipped to refer to Odysseus attacking Palamedes.
Anacharsis or Ananias uses ἐπεσβολία and (separately) mentions Thersites. The other instance is from
Eustathios’ pupil Michael Choniates (*Carm.* 1.280, Moses praying amid his detractors).

¹⁴ Σ_{BT} *Hrd.*(?) 2.275b correctly compares ἐγγέσ-παλος, ‘spear-brandishing’. Eust. *Comm. Il.* iii.770 takes that to
have an additional sigma, and probably thought ἐπεσ- was based on the dative plural ἔπεσι.

¹⁵ Σ *Od.* 4.159b1, which also suggests the sense ‘initiating words’, from ἔπος + εἰσβολή. Both ideas are repeated
but set aside at *Comm. Od.* i.156.41–44.

(correctly) to derive from ἔπος + βάλλω, a ‘volley of words’; βλασφημία (incorrectly) from βάλλω + φῆμις, another ‘volley of words’; and λοιδορία (again incorrectly) from λόγος + δόρυ, a ‘verbal spear’.¹⁶ This implicit etymological connection helps to explain why Eustathios thought of ἐπεσβολία in his denunciation of insults and the kind of profanity that falls within the Christian conception of ‘blasphemy’.

There is some benefit here for a listener who can identify the Homeric antecedents, with or without the scholia’s forced interpretation of Telemachus’ ἐπεσβολία. Both passages suggest that ‘outbursts’ betray a lack of the self-control proper to an adult male – whether that is a sign more of temporary immaturity (as in Telemachus’ case) or of a more deep-rooted character-fault (as with Thersites and the suitors). However, one might wonder whether Eustathios expected many in his congregation to appreciate the etymological connection of the different words he used, whose main effect is to reiterate the message to ensure comprehensibility.

A few minutes later in the same sermon comes a second point of contact with the commentaries, this time showing Eustathios putting into practice his suggestions about how Homer can be used in public speaking (1.477–78):

εἰ δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ πλέον αἱ κακίαι αὗται συντείνονται καὶ διὰ πασῶν, ὃ φασιν, ἢ τάσις γίνοιτο, ὅπλων με **βαρυγδούπων ἀμφὶ κτύπος οὔατα βάλλει** προορώμενον οἷα τὰ ἐντεῦθεν κακά.

If these vices [*i.e.* those cognate with bad-mouthing each other] should intensify even further and ‘stretch the full octave’, as they say, ‘the beat’ of thunderous arms ‘strikes around my ears’ as I foresee what kind of troubles will follow.

The language slips into clearly poetic forms, without any apology or attempt to gloss.¹⁷ The rare poetic adjective βαρύγδουπος (‘thunderous’) is used by two authors about whom Eustathios wrote – Pindar (*Ol.* 6.81, 8.44; *Pyth.* 4.210) and Dionysius the Periegete (l. 770).

¹⁶ *Comm. Od.* i.156, repeated in *Comm. Il.* i.334. The derivation of βλασφημία is shared with *Et. Gen.* β132, that of λοιδορία with *Et. Gud.* p.373.

¹⁷ Note in particular the γ in βαρύγδουπος, tmesis of ἀμφιβάλλει, and οὔατα for ὄτα. ‘As they say’ points to a written source for the musical metaphor of a stringed instrument tuned over an octave. As Schönauer notes, this could be from Plato *Rep.* 432a, where ‘stretching across the octave’ of society relates to the creation of civic harmony rather than discord.

ἀμφὶ κτύπος οὔατα βάλλει ('strikes around my ears') is drawn from *Iliad* 10.535, where the return of Odysseus and Diomedes from their night-raid is heralded by the footsteps of Rhesus' stolen horses.¹⁸ In his commentary, Eustathios had noted the utility of the phrase in the context of anticipated battle-preparations (*Comm. Il.* iii.125 ὅπερ χρήσιμον ῥηθῆναι εἰς ἐλπίζομένην μάχης διασκευήν). Just so in the sermon he is warning of the dangers of civil strife if slander gets out of hand.

Just before this, Eustathios describes derogatory language as a family of wrongs (1.464–70):

εἴ που θηρίον ἦν πιστευθῆναι κατὰ τοὺς πάλαι λόγους κακὸν πολυσύνθετον, οὗ λέων μὲν τὸ πρόσθεν, τὸ δὲ κατόπιν δράκων, τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν χίμαιρα πνέουσά τε καὶ ἐκπέμπουσα πῦρ, ἦν ἂν τοιοῦτόν τι καὶ τοῦτο, προάγοντος μὲν φθόνου, ὄν καὶ θετέον εἰς λέοντα διὰ τὸ ἐνεδρευτικὸν καὶ δραστήριον, ἐφεπομένης δὲ διαβολῆς ὡσεὶ καὶ δράκοντος διὰ τὸ ὑφέρπον καὶ ἐν τῷ λεληθότι δακνηρόν, τῆς δὲ συκοφαντίας ἤδη καὶ εἰς ἐμφανὲς ἀνακαιούσης τὸ τῆς ἔχθρας ἔμπυρον.

If there was, if ancient stories are to be believed, a vicious composite beast, whose front part was a lion, the rear a snake, and the rest a goat breathing and emitting fire, this would be the same kind of thing, with envy leading the way (one should assign this the lion's part, because of its qualities of ambushing and taking action), slander following (like a snake, because it creeps up and bites one unawares), and false accusation now fanning into the open the fiery heart of enmity.

Here the paraphrase of *Iliad* 6.181–82 (πρόσθε λέων, ὄπιθεν δὲ δράκων, μέσση δὲ χίμαιρα, | δεινὸν ἀποπνείουσα πυρὸς μένος αἰθομένοιο) simplifies several of the more obscure lexical items: ὄπιθεν ('in the rear') becomes τὸ δὲ κατόπιν, the compound verb ἀποπνείουσα with its metrical lengthening is simplified to πνέουσα, and the poetic word μένος ('force') is avoided. Again there is a direct connection to Eustathios' advice about how to interpret and reuse the lines, which in this case is extensive. One interpretation is that the Chimera is an allegory of what he calls 'composite' spiritual vices, such as hedonism mixed with a quick temper, and it

¹⁸ In adapting the line Eustathios has changed the source of noise from the tramp of 'swift-footed horses' (ἵππων ὠκυπόδων) to armour. He may have been inspired by the similarity of ὄπλων ('armour') and ὄπλων ('hooves'), as well as by the partial assonance of ὠκυπόδων and βαρυγδούπων.

can hardly be coincidence that the same unusual adjective (πολυσύνθετος) occurs in the passage quoted above.¹⁹ In contrast with the example of sound beating around the ears, Eustathios' application of the Chimera in the sermon slightly extends the advice of the commentary, to vices not explicitly mentioned there.

We have seen that in this allusion to the Chimera Eustathios used a simplifying paraphrase, and applied the image in a way similar but not identical to his earlier rhetorical advice. How recognisable was the allusion among Eustathios' congregation, and how might it have contributed to his wider rhetorical purposes? He vividly maps the dangers of bad-mouthing onto a monster that was still occasionally being portrayed in Byzantine art.²⁰ Some of his audience would probably have known, from the continued circulation of such myths through iconography and in wider society, or specifically from their schooldays, the narrative trajectory within which the Chimera occurs: she is the dragon which Bellerophon must slay in an archetypal quest-narrative. The implication is therefore that the Christian must set out to slay slander; thus, pagan mythology is put into a relationship of exemplarity with the Christian present. This implicit attribution of warrior-like qualities to the congregation fits a widespread pattern in Christian authors of using the images of the soldier and athlete of Christ to describe the struggle of the faithful against evil.²¹

These three references to Homer within a short passage of sermon 1 raise several points about the relationship between Eustathios' Homeric scholarship in his commentaries and his homiletic uses of Homeric language. The commentaries help us understand the connection of thought when Eustathios discusses ἐπεσβολία in the context of insults, while the sermon gives examples of what Eustathios intended when he gave advice on how to quote and adapt Homer, with the example of the Chimera showing the versatility of those recommendations. The three examples present different approaches to making the allusions 'accessible' to an audience: the point about ἐπεσβολία is also reiterated in simpler terms, the

¹⁹ *Comm. Il.* ii.281–84, at 282.5; Eustathios also comments on how the lines can be quoted against a short-tempered speaker. In his encomium of Michael Hagiotheodorites he took the Chimera as an image of the composite ills of poverty (*Or.* η.271, Wirth 1999: 150). Σ *D* 6.182, faced with the problem of understanding the Chimera's physiology, already mentions the solution that the three species are symbolic, but with each representing one aspect of a single monster's character. In Ps.-Palaephatus *Incr.* 28 the Chimera is 'really' a mountain where different animals live.

²⁰ For two manuscript illuminations on this theme from the period 1050–1150, see Weitzmann 1951: 24–26, figs. 23–24. For earlier examples in other media, see Weitzmann 1979: 165–66 with further references.

²¹ Both of these themes appear in another of Eustathios' pre-Lenten homilies (5.115–75). Eustathios explicitly drew the inference from an allegorical reading of the Chimera as a multiform vice to Bellerophon as a παθοκτόνος 'killer of passions' (*Comm. Il.* ii.283); for that word's Christian implications in this context see Kolovou 2017: 106–07. The extent to which Bellerophon's conquest of a dragon was Christianized needs further work, but see Hanfmann 1980: 85–87.

lines about the Chimera are tailored to suit formal prose, while the half-verse from *Iliad* 10 is complicated by the addition of another poetic word, βαρύγδουπος. Finally, the whole narrative trajectory of the Chimera myth has a relevance which Eustathios leaves implicit – one which invites his congregation to accept the conquering role of Bellerophon.

Combining Homeric passages in sermon 5

For our next case-study we return to sermon 5, whose latter part is devoted to one of Eustathios' favourite topics, an attack on the money-lenders of Thessalonike.²² Again, the *Iliad* provides a model for the Christian battle, the commentaries elucidate some apparently strange connections in the sermon, and the sermon shows some rhetorical advice from the commentaries in action. But this case goes beyond what we have seen previously in terms of the coherence with which Eustathios applies his understanding of the connections between Iliadic passages.

The implications of the Homeric references will come out most clearly if we start with 5.932–37:

εὐλαβοῦμαι μή ποτε δυσκόλως ταῖς ἡμετέραις εὐχαῖς ἀντιβήσονται, εἰ καὶ μή τινες ἄλλοι πτωχοί, ἀλλ' οὖν οἱ χρεωκοπούμενοι, οὓς **ὄξεῖται ὀδύνας δύνουσι**, ὃ δὴ λέγεται, κατὰ τὰς ἱερῶς εἰπεῖν **ὠδινούσας** καὶ ἐγγιζούσας τοῦ τεκεῖν, διὰ τὸν ἀλιτήριον τόκον, τὸν ἔκφυλον, τὸν θεομισῆ, τὸν παρὰ φύσιν, τὸ κάκιστον θηρίον τὸ παμφάγον, οὗ μυριάκις μὲν καθυλακτήσαμεν ὅσα καὶ **λυσσητῆρες** κύνες, οὐκ ἔσχομεν δὲ οὕτω τοῦ φωλεοῦ ἐκσπάσαι εἰς ὃν κρύπτεται.

I am cautious in case our prayers may be met with anger, if not by any other paupers then at least by lenders facing defaults. 'Sharp pains enter' them, as the phrase is, like women who, to use sacred language, 'feel labour-pangs' as they near birth. This is because of their sinful form of increase, wild, God-hated, unnatural – the most evil, omnivorous beast, against which we ten thousand times have barked like rabid dogs, but have been unable even so to pluck it from the lair in which it hides.

²² On Eustathios' attitude towards money-lending, see Merianos 2008: 185–99. For a wider twelfth-century perspective, see Laiou 1991: 261–300.

The passage contains two striking comparisons: lenders who miss out on repayments resemble women in labour, and Eustathios himself resembles a rabid dog. The former rests on a pun on τόκος, ‘increase’ as both ‘birth’ and ‘interest’, and draws on a fusion of two pre-existing comparisons. Eustathios references the ‘sacred’ language with which Isaiah compares past suffering to labour-pangs (Is. 26:17, ὡς ἡ ὠδίνουσα ἐγγίζει τοῦ τεκεῖν), while ὄξειαι δ’ ὀδύναι δύνων recalls *Iliad* 11.268–72, where Agamemnon is compared to a woman in labour after he has suffered a spear-wound; the ‘sharp pains entered’ him, and he is forced to retire from the battlefield.²³ The Homeric words are not being used merely as a patch of striking language. Listeners who could identify the source would appreciate that its context underlines Eustathios’ desire to battle the usurers and force them into retreat. However, the pain felt by the lenders is more paradoxical than that of Agamemnon: it resembles that of a woman approaching natural τόκος, but arises when they lose out on their unnatural τόκος.

Eustathios amplifies this idea of him replicating the Trojans’ momentum during the central part of the *Iliad* by means of the second image, where he casts himself as a pack of ‘rabid’ dogs, using the poetic form λυσσητήρ. This can be traced to *Iliad* 8.299, where the Greek chieftain Teucer, speaking to Agamemnon, describes Hector as a wild dog (κύνα λυσσητήρα), shortly before being hit by him and forced to retire.²⁴ The image of Eustathios foaming at the mouth may seem absurdly counter-productive, and to precede a jarring shift in the following clause to a different image of hunting dogs trying to extract prey from a lair. But the tone and flow are clarified by Eustathios’ reading of *Iliad* 8 in his commentary (ii.591, on *Il.* 8.338–42):

ὅτι κἀνταῦθα κυνὶ παραβάλλει τὸν Ἔκτορα, οὐ λυσσητήρι δέ, ἀλλ’ ὃς τεχνίτης ὦν
θηριομαχεῖν ποιεῖ ἃ ἐκτίθεται ὁ ποιητὴς εἰπὼν οὕτως·
ὡς δ’ ὅτε τίς τε κύων συδὸς ἀγρίου ἢ ἐλέοντος
ἄπτηται κατόπισθεν ποσὶ ταχέεσσι πεποιθώς,

²³ *Comm. Il.* iii.193–94 focuses on the etymological and sonic wordplays on ὀδύνη, δύνω, ὠδίνες.

²⁴ Eustathios also uses λυσσητήρ κύων at 4.34, 10.37, 11.16 in Tafel 1832, explicitly thinking of Homer in the last case. The hapax λυσσητήρ attained a limited purchase in prose from Late Antiquity on, especially in combination with ‘dog’. Prodrōmus *Carm. Hist.* 15.11 applied the phrase to the ‘Persian’ (*i.e.* Seljuk) enemy, preserving the Iliadic setup of Eastern rabid dog vs Greek army. Manasses flipped the geography by applying the term to Diocletian and Maximian raging against Christianity (*Brev.* 2269). Niketas Choniates alleges that during the humiliation of Andronikos Komnenos in 1185 the mob called him a λυσσητήρ κύων as they stoned him (*Hist.* 350), which if taken literally would demonstrate the phrase’s currency.

ἰσχία τε γλουτούς τε, ἐλισσόμενον τε δοκεύει,
ὥς Ἴκτωρ ὄπαζε καρηκομόωντας Ἀχαιοῦς,
αἰὲν ἀποκτείνων τὸν ὀπίστατον, οἳ δ' ἐφέβοντο.

Here too he compares Hector to a dog, though not to a ‘rabid’ one, but one which is expert in fighting wild animals and does what the poet describes in the following words: ‘As when a dog, confident in its swift feet, grasps from behind at the haunches and rear of a wild boar or lion, and watches out as it whirls round, so Hector pursued the long-haired Achaeans, constantly killing the hindmost, and they were in flight.’

Eustathios rightly notes that Teucer’s comparison of Hector to a rabid dog (8.299) is the highly tendentious description of an enemy, undermined by the primary narrator in the epic’s next simile (8.338), where Hector is compared to a trained hunting dog.²⁵ The implication for Eustathios’ sermon, which must have been clearer in oral delivery, is that he is merely focalizing the lenders’ insults about him when he says ‘rabid’, whereas the subsequent image of a brave hunting pack is the one he endorses.

This is not the first point of contact with the rivalry of Hector and Teucer in this sermon. Previously, Eustathios had acknowledged our natural proneness to anxiety (5.765–66):

φόβου δέ τι πάντως ἡμῖν ἐγγίνεται, πλὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸ οὔτι πρόδηλον, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ
ἀρίγνωτον.

A kind of fear always arises in us, but even that is not at all clear, nor indeed very distinct.

²⁵ Eustathios calls Teucer’s comment a *σκῶμμα* (‘taunt’; *Comm. Il.* ii.584). Kelly 2007: 301–02 explains the unusual features of this simile compared with other dog-imagery in the *Iliad*, and infers (in contrast to Eustathios’ interpretation) that it connotes a certain delusion in Hector’s short-lived aggression.

He goes on to claim, with further Homeric language, that his preaching prompts the congregation to discover prayer and faith as a steadfast source of consolation in the face of these doubts.²⁶ As a result (5.790–92):

κυριεύομεν δὲ ἐν λύπαις τοιαύταις καὶ φόβοις ἐπικειμένοις ἀμηχάνοις τοῦ δέεσθαι·
δέεσθαι δὲ οὐ τοῦ τυγχάνοντος ἀμύντορος, ἀλλὰ τοῦ δυνατωτάτου.

We have the power, during such griefs and the intractable fears which hang over us, of making requests – requests not from any defender, but from the most capable one of all.

The epicism ἀμύντωρ (‘defender’) is used of Hector’s divine support from Zeus in *Iliad* 15.610–11. Eustathios’ commentary indeed advises that a Christian can adapt the phrasing there to speak of God’s support (*Comm. Il.* iii.771). The lines follow immediately from a description where Hector is said to ‘go berserk’ (μαίνεται) on the battle-field, with blazing eyes and a foaming mouth. Eustathios had suggested that these details align Hector with a wild boar more delicately than a simile would, but the appearance of the ‘rabid dog’ shortly afterwards in his sermon suggests that a different idea of Hector’s foaming mouth was in his mind on this occasion.²⁷ The basic sign of Zeus’ support in this sequence of *Iliad* 15 is the snapping of none other than Teucer’s new bowstring as he aimed at Hector; the fresh string was motivated by Hector having smashed Teucer’s last one the previous afternoon (*Il.* 8.324–34). The snapped string causes Hector to claim that Zeus’ support for the Trojans is ἀρίγνωτος (‘very distinct’, 15.490), the rare poetic adjective which Eustathios used to make the converse assertion that a Christian’s fears when their trust in God’s help wavers are *not* ‘very distinct’ (ἀρίγνωτον).²⁸

²⁶ The idea of consolation is itself expressed by two Homerisms which it had become standard to pair: τὸ λαθικηδέες (‘the wiper-away of cares’), used in *Il.* 22.83 of Hecuba’s breast as a comforter to the baby Hector, and κακῶν ἐπιλήθον ἀπάντων φάρμακον (‘drug which makes one forget all one woes’), from *Od.* 4.220–21; already in Σ *D Il.* 22.83 the gloss on λαθικηδέης includes κακῶν ἀπάντων. In the commentaries the drug from *Od.* 4 was interpreted as a symbol of friendly conversation and companionship (*Comm. Il.* iv.578, *Comm. Od.* i.160; cf. Plu. *Q.Conv.* 1.1 614c). The Christian twist in the sermon takes it even further away from Egyptian magic.

²⁷ *Comm. Il.* iii.770–1. Σ_{BT} *ex.* 11.606*b* refers to a generic ‘wild animal’.

²⁸ Eustathios comments on the gnomic (*i.e.* reusable) quality of Hector’s claim, tacitly replacing ‘Zeus’ with ‘god’ (*Comm. Il.* iii.759, an addendum to the material in Kolovou 2017); on the other Iliadic use of ἀρίγνωτος

These references, two to *Iliad* 8, one to *Iliad* 11, and two to *Iliad* 15, therefore reveal a sensitivity to the possibilities of connecting the Trojans' successes, and of adopting their viewpoint rather than the more natural Greek one; at a more detailed level Eustathios, as in his commentary, connects the two scenes of Hector and Teucer, and the juxtaposed dog-similes in book 8. Together, these references are combined into a coherent picture of Eustathios leading the Christians of Thessalonike to fight with prayer against both fear and usury, as Hector led the Trojans against the Greeks, confident of support from Zeus.²⁹ The usurers will, like Agamemnon, be wounded and retreat, and like Teucer will be able only to denigrate their opponent's bravery as a sign of madness, in the face of overwhelming divine support. It is unlikely that many in Eustathios' congregation made these connections in real time. But the example still shows that his sermons rest in part on nuanced readings of Homer, involving a combination of multiple passages which is notoriously difficult to fit into the commentary format.³⁰

Negotiating social values: Squints in sermons 5 and 7

The examples so far have little to say about one important question: how do Eustathios' uses of Homer in his sermons show him navigating between two starkly different sets of social values – those of the heroic world and those of his own time? We came closest to this question in observing that certain types of Iliadic heroism are reconfigured to suit the struggles of Eustathios and his congregation against various vices as construed by the Church. Our final example is a case-study of one such value, namely the contrasting attitudes to impairment expressed in the commentaries and the pre-Lenten sermons, with an emphasis on squints in sermons 5 and 7.³¹ These both feature the Homeric word παραβλῶψ, 'having a squint, looking aside'.

(13.72) he observes that it can be adapted and quoted when there is a small indication of a significant divine intervention (iii.441). At iii.756 he notes how the two Hector–Teucer scenes are connected by the detail of Teucer's new bowstring; the point is derived from Aristonicus (Σ_{ABT} 15.470a).

²⁹ This is not to claim that such coherence extends across the whole sermon. At 5.131 Eustathios asserts that his preaching can endow a Christian 'soldier' only with much thinner armour than the Bible itself can. This thin armour would leave him 'spiritually linen-corseleted', λινοθώραξ, a reference to *Iliad* 2.529 where Oilean Ajax is more lightly armed than his namesake. The congregation thus have potentially Iliadic heroism, but this time stay on the Greek side.

³⁰ For a comparable combination of Homeric sea-similes in Eust. *Ep.* 28, see Kolovou 2006: 45*–46*.

³¹ Impairments are certainly not the only such issue available for discussion. We merely sketch here a more theological one. At 5.964–65 (shortly after the passage cited above about τόκος), Eustathios emphasizes the cruelty of keeping people in a cycle of debt by adapting Eurylochus' arguments for eating the cattle of the Sun:

Eustathios had a special interest in the eyes, both as a classicist and as a bishop. He told his students that rhetorical principles call for a description of a person to start from the head and especially from the eyes, its ‘most honourable’ part (*Comm. Il.* i.315); Homer followed this both in the praise of Agamemnon’s physique and in the mockery of Thersites (*Il.* 2.478, 217). On the other hand many preachers, ever since John Chrysostom, had focused on the eyes as a gateway to sin.³² As Eustathios himself put it, a temperate man averts his eyes from certain things, ‘lest his vision, clutching at them, should pull down the whole man from the godly height, like a violent rope, and lower him to the Tartarus of perdition’ (sermon 5.343–45).

In fact in sermon 5 Eustathios has an extensive discussion of what constitutes ‘straight’, *i.e.* divinely sanctioned, use of the senses, with sight in pride of place.³³ He begins with an argument from nature, explaining that if God has given us two eyes, it is for us to see without hindrance, and not for sideways glances. However, looking ‘straight’ does not mean staring ahead. Indeed, we were given eyelids in part as a symbol of the need for gates to guard this entrance of the soul, lest a ‘thieving line of thought’ should sneak in and rob us of our ‘soul’s God-given treasure’ (5.320–29). In the passage cited above, latching one’s gaze onto objects of desire may lead to sin; shutting the eyes would be better.³⁴ Later in the section, Eustathios gives examples of avaricious looks, and includes the word παραβλώψ (5.517–23):

κέκραγέ τις ἐπὶ ἀμπελῶνι, βοῶν ἕτερος ἐπὶ οἰκίας ἀφαιρέσει, ἄλλος, ὅτι ὀρογλυφεῖται τὸ κατ’ αὐτὸν γῆδιον· πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἕτερα τοιαῦτα ὀφθαλμῶν ἀδικήματα. καὶ οὕτω μὲν ὀξυωπέστατοι ποιούμεθα ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐφετοῖς ἡμῖν, ἔνθα δὲ ὁ μὲν ὀρθὸς λόγος προκαλεῖται βλέπειν, ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις ἀναστέλλει τὸ ὀπτικὸν ἢ κατὰ ἔχθραν ἢ φόβῳ

‘Grant us to reason that it is better to let one’s gaping brother die once and for all than to let him starve at length in desperate hunger’ ~ *Od.* 12.350–51 ‘I would rather gape once at the sea-swell and lose my spirit than be starved at length on a desert island.’ In appearing to endorse Eurylochus’ disastrous advice, Eustathios aligns the inhumanity of the money-lenders with that of the gods in the *Odyssey*, who strand Odysseus and his men on Thrinakia until their supplies run out, then demand the death of the crew despite their efforts to appease Helios. (On this episode and the question of divine justice see e.g. Bakker 2013: 114–34.) Hence the reference rests on disapproval of the un-Christian conceptions of justice and mercy among Homeric gods.

³² Leyerle 1993: 159–74; Hatlie 1999: 67–74.

³³ 5.319–442. After discussing sight, Eustathios adds smell, hearing, taste and touch to the list of bodily experiences which require a guarded response from good Christians, especially during Lent when fasting meant not only abstaining from food, but also from a variety of pleasures and temptations that could assail one’s senses.

³⁴ For a broader discussion of how restricting the physical senses was thought to aid spiritual sensitivity, see Plested 2017.

ζημίας ἢ ἀλλὰ δαπάνης μετρίας· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ καὶ τὴν ἐκ γενετῆς τύφλωσιν, εἴπερ οἶόν τέ ἐστὶν εἰπεῖν, ὑπερπαίομεν ἀρετὴν οὐ μικρὰν κρίναντες, εἰ καὶ **παραβλώπες** προσενεχθῶμεν·

One man is yelling over a vineyard, a second shouts about the loss of a house, another that his plot is having its boundaries fiddled. There are many other such optical wrongdoings. And so we make ourselves very sharp-sighted about things we desire. However, where correct reason calls on us to look, but our will retracts the power of vision – from enmity, or fear of punishment or even of a moderate cost – there we surpass even congenital blindness, if one can put it so, when we judge our virtue to be no little thing, even though we are carried along ‘looking aside’.

Already near the start of the section, Eustathios said of the ‘straight’ aim of spiritual progress (5.338–40):

... ὁποῖαν οὐ μόνον ὀφθαλμὸς ἔχειν ἀπαιτεῖται, οὐ δὲ ποῦς, ὃς ἐπαινεῖται ἰστάμενος ἐν τῇ κατὰ θεὸν εὐθύτητι (cf. Ps. 25:12), οὐ δὲ καρδία, ἣν τοῖς ἔχουσιν ἀγαθύνει ὁ κύριος κατὰ τὸν ἱερῶς ψάλλοντα (Ps. 125.4), ἀλλὰ πρὸ πάντων καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ὁ τοῖς τοιοῦτοις ἐπιστατῶν νοῦς καὶ προβαλλόμενος τὸν εὐθύφρονα, ὃς οὔτε παραβλέπει στραβίζων, οὐ μὴν οὐ δ' ἄλλον τινὰ τρόπον, καθ' ὃν λέγοιτο ἂν **παραβλώψ**.³⁵ χρὴ γάρ τινα ἴλεων ἐνορᾶν μετὰ διακρίσεως θείας...

It is not only the eye that is required to maintain such [progress], not only the foot, which is praised for standing in God’s straightness, not only the heart, which the Lord makes good for those who have such straightness, according to the holy psalmist; but, first and foremost, the mind, which supervises these body-parts and sets up as its example the straight-thinking man, who does not look aside by having a squint, nor indeed in any other way that might cause him to be called ‘sideways-looking’. For one should be cheerful when having insight with divine discernment.

³⁵ In a late addition to his comments on *Il.* 9.503, Eustathios provides a list of these ways: supplication, a squint, and looking down one’s nose haughtily (*Comm. Il.* ii.774).

Both these passages connect the Homeric word παραβλώψ to a moral failing to control one's eyes. The word is drawn from *Iliad* 9.503 *χολαί τε ῥυσαί τε παραβλῶπές τ' ὀφθαλμῶ*, where the personifications of supplication, the Litai, are 'hobbling, wrinkled, and παραβλῶπες in their eyes' (understood by Eustathios as 'having a squint'); these daughters of Zeus follow in the footsteps of Ate, the personification of delusion and ruin. Outside Eustathios, παραβλώψ was a rare word in twelfth-century Byzantium, and where it does occur, the Homeric source is generally evident through an association with the Litai or with Thersites, whose relevance is explained below.³⁶ In the Homeric scholia and in Eustathios, παραβλώψ appears only in association with the Litai.

The scholia give us three different ways in which to understand why, symbolically, the Litai are παραβλῶπες:

- (1) suppliants have, long before the moment of contrition, 'overlooked' something important for which they later ask to be forgiven (Σ_{bT} *ex.* 9.502–03; similarly Cornutus *ND* p.12);
- (2) suppliants adopt a look designed to incite those they have wronged to pity ($\Sigma_A D$ 9.503; similarly Heracl. *QH* 37.3);
- (3) suppliants, because of their inner contrition, cannot look one straight in the eye (Σ_{bT} *ex.* 9.503*b*; similarly Heracl. *QH* 37.2).

In his commentary, Eustathios prefers the last option (*Comm. Il.* ii.774), which he also relates to the wrinkles and limp of the Litai. Homer gives them a squint

... διά τε τὴν τῆς ὄψεως τῶν δυσωπουμένων παρατροπὴν καὶ οἷον διαστροφὴν, καὶ διότι οὐχ' ἰλαρὸν τὸ βλέμμα τοῖς λιταζομένοις ἀλλ', ὡς εἶπεῖν, δυσβλεπτοῦσιν ἐκεῖνοι, ὅθεν καὶ ἡ δυσωπία τὴν κλῆσιν ἔλαχεν.³⁷

... because of the aversion and, as it were, twisting aside, of the gaze of the shamefaced, and because the look of those who supplicate is not cheerful, but they

³⁶ It appears on *TLG* only on 11 other occasions in the 12th century. The Homeric verse is quoted in Prodrornos (*Carm. Hist.* 56b.26) and Tzetzes (*Carm. Il.* 2.139), and lightly modified in *Anacharsis or Ananias*. παραβλώψ is associated with Thersites being φορκός in Balsamon (*Epiq.* 37.25) and Tzetzes (*Alleg.* pr.651, 2.50, *Th.* 678, *Chil.* 7.884). The other author to use the word is Niketas Choniates (x3, once associating it with Irus).

³⁷ Recall that in the sermon the 'straight-thinking' man uses his divine insight 'cheerfully' (ἰλεον), in contrast to the παραβλώψ. That contrast relates to this passage, where the Litai being παραβλῶπες symbolize the suppliant's inability to look cheerful (ἰλαρόν). Eustathios also uses παραβλώψ in terms of embarrassment twice in *Or.* 10 Tafel.

‘have bad vision’, so to speak – the idea from which shamefacedness [δυσωπία, lit. ‘bad sight’] got its name.

Eustathios’ *Litai* are shamefaced, but overall he stresses their role in healing or mending injuries (*Il.* 9.507 ἐξακέονται, *Comm. Il.* ii.777). They are daughters of Zeus, who in one allegorical reading symbolizes the divine intellect that brings help to the injured (ii.775). So although the pitiful external appearance of the *Litai* represents the shame of those begging forgiveness, they also represent how those people aspire to rectify their wrongdoing.

This contrasts with the sermon where the term παραβλώψ was a characteristic of those looking aside from the correct path, more along the lines of interpretation (1) above. Why did Eustathios choose a Homeric word while setting aside his stated views on its original import? This is unlikely to have been a casual choice. Not only are there overlaps with wording from his commentary (see footnotes 35, 37), there is also a marked fit between the general handling of the body in the two works: the commentary emphasizes that Homer has created a rounded image of the suppliant’s body in the *Litai*; the sermon creates a complementary holistic image of the person who fails to be ‘straight-thinking’, extending the lack of straightness to the different senses, the tongue, the feet, the heart, and so on.

We will return to the question of the tone and connotations of παραβλώψ in sermon 5, after considering the questions raised by the word’s use in sermon 7. In sermon 5 the references to squints are largely metaphorical. But in sermon 7 a literal squint features in the context of the difference between mockery (σκῶμμα) and the preacher’s reproof (ἔλεγχος).³⁸ Eustathios emphasizes that good Christians should heed constructive criticism and not confuse it with ridicule (7.589–94):

ὁ στραβίζων ἐμφανῶς, ἐὰν ἀκούσῃ εὐωπὸς εἶναι, γελᾶσθαι κρίνει καὶ τὸν ἐπαινεῖν δοκοῦντα μέμφεται, οὕτω δὲ καὶ ὁ **κυλλοποδίων**, εἴπερ ὀρθὰ βαδίζειν λέγοιτο· τὸ δ’ αὐτὸ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων κατὰ σῶμα πηρώσεων· ἡμεῖς δέ, ὧν πρῶτος ἐγώ, ἀμαρτίαις ἐξοφωμένοι καὶ μανθάνοντες φῶς εἶναι καὶ ἠλιῶδες ἀπαστράπτειν, διατὶ οὐ νοοῦμεν, ὅτι γελώμεθα, ἐθέλομεν δὲ συνεχῶς αὐτὸ ἀκούειν εἰς ἔπαινον;

³⁸ For Eustathios’ frequent conflicts with his flock see Magdalino 1996.

If someone with an obvious squint is told that he has fine eyes, he judges that he is being ridiculed and faults the person who is apparently praising him. So too the ‘club-footed man’, were he to be said to have an upright gait, and the same with other bodily impairments. But why do we, and I first among us, when in the murk of our sins we are informed that there is light and that it is flashing like the sun – why do we not think that we are being ridiculed, but are eager to be told it continually as praise?

Eustathios uses the examples of people with physical impairments to emphasize the absurdity of not recognising one’s spiritual defects. In doing so, he employs another Homeric word, *κυλλοποδίων* (‘club-footed’), to which we will return. He then urges his congregation not to dismiss his admonitions as insults or mockery (7.594–99):

εἰ δὲ ὁ **παραβλῶψ καὶ χωλὸς** καὶ ὅσοις ἄλλοις ἢ κατὰ σῶμα ἡμάρτηται πλάσις, θυμὸν ἀναλαμβάνουσιν, ὅτε ποτὲ σκώπτονται, καὶ τις οἶεται διαταῦτα καὶ τὸν ἐλεγχόμενον καὶ οὕτω χολούμενον δεόντως ἀγανακτεῖν ὡς οἷα περιωβριζόμενον, γινωσκέτω οὐ καλῶς οἶεσθαι· οὐ γὰρ ταυτὸν σκώπτεσθαι καὶ ἐλέγχεσθαι· τὸ μὲν γὰρ σκῶμμα παίζει κυριολεκτούμενον, ὁ δὲ ἔλεγχος σπουδάζει καὶ διορθοῖ.

But if the ‘squint-eyed’, the lame, and all others whose bodily formation contains a fault, get annoyed whenever they are mocked, and somebody thinks for this reason that one subjected to reproof and angered thereby is rightfully indignant, on the grounds of his being affronted, that person should recognize that the thought is incorrect. After all, being mocked and being reproofed are not the same. Mockery, properly speaking, is in jest, whereas reproof is serious and corrective.

Eustathios reveals an assumption that in Byzantine society those with a physical impairment (described using *παραβλῶψ καὶ χωλός*, two of the physical characteristics of the *Litai*) might well be subjected to mockery. In saying that they are justified in getting angry about it, he distances himself from engaging in such mockery. Indeed, as a bishop Eustathios frequently expressed his firm adherence to canon law, and canon 57 of the Apostles had decreed: ‘If a cleric mocks someone who is lame, deaf, blind, or paralysed in the legs, let him be excommunicated. The same for the laity.’ This canon was still valid and the subject of legal

commentary in the twelfth century.³⁹ Eustathios' attitude to impairments also comes across in a memorandum to Patriarch Michael III (in office 1170–78), in which he defended the rights of clerics who were lame or blind to receive support from the Church.⁴⁰

These sources throw into relief a feature of Eustathios' commentaries, namely the repeated suggestions that Homeric words and phrases could be adapted for scopic purposes against people with a squint. He makes such suggestions about *πάλιν τρέπεν ὅσσε φαεινώ* ('turned his bright eyes back') and *ἐτέρωσε βάλ' ὄμματα* ('cast his eyes elsewhere').⁴¹ Even the word *νῶροψ* ('dazzling') can serve this purpose: it normally describes bronze which is too bright to look at, so visually impaired people could be called *νῶροψ* in that they have lost the full use of their sight. Eustathios categorizes this as a *σκωπτικὴ παράχρησις* ('jesting derived use') and as *βλασφημία*, 'derogatory language'.⁴² Finally, he repeats the scholiasts' endorsement of Homer's skill at writing *silloi* (roughly 'lampoons') in the description of Thersites' body at *Iliad* 2.217–19.⁴³

Among Thersites' features, the first two to be mentioned are of particular relevance for us. He is *φολκός*, which Eustathios interprets, following the tradition, as 'having a squint', derived from *φάη* + *ἔλκω*: Thersites either has his own 'eyes dragged aside' or 'attracts the eyes' of others with his squint; this elicits laughter, or potentially pity.⁴⁴ Secondly, Thersites is 'lame in one leg', and Eustathios again follows the scholia in saying that this detail is more risible than lameness in both legs would be (*Comm. Il.* i.315; *Σ_{ABT} ex.* 2.217*c*). In a later addition, he dissociates Thersites from the club-footed (*κυλλοποδίων*) Hephaestus, whose

³⁹ Ioannes Zonaras added that individuals with physical impairments should be treated with compassion, assisted and guided. Since the canon imposes such a severe punishment on laymen, Zonaras believed that clerics had a greater responsibility to give a good example. Theodoros Balsamon emphasized God's opposition to the mockery of the impaired. See Rhalles and Potles 1852: 74.

⁴⁰ *Or.* p.425, Wirth 1999: 306. The extent to which Byzantine attitudes were anchored in beliefs such as impairment being a punishment for sin requires a good deal of further study. For the moment, see Efthymiadis 2017: 396.

⁴¹ *πάλιν τρέπεν ὅσσε φαεινώ*: *Il.* 13.3, 21.415; Eustathios makes his suggestion on both passages (*Comm. Il.* iv.531 *σκώπτων δέ τις καὶ εἰς ὀφθαλμικὴν στραβότητα τὸ τοιοῦτον αἰνίξεται*, iii.424). *ἐτέρωσε βάλ' ὄμματα*: *Od.* 17.179 with *Comm. Od.* ii.120.

⁴² *Comm. Il.* iii.138. His idea rests on an analysis of *νῶροψ* from *n-* 'not' + *ὄρ-* 'to see' + *ὄπτ-* 'visual' (as in *Σ_H Od.* 24.467). The commentaries also take several opportunities to list terms for visual impairment: *στράβος*, *διεστραμμένος τὰς ὄψεις*, *ἰλλός*, *πλαγιόμματος*, *ἀλαός*, *μυλλός*, and *φολκός*. This is a much wider set of terms than is used in the sermons.

⁴³ See esp. i.314 *οὐκ ἂν τις αἰσχίονα τούτου διαγράψοι ἀνθρώπων. καὶ ἴδε τὴν τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἀρετὴν οὐ μόνον εἰς τὸ ἐγκωμιάζειν ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὸ, ὡς ἐρρέθη, σιλλαίνειν καὶ ψέγειν, ἐάνπερ ἠβούλετο*, 'one could not describe a person uglier than this man. Behold the poet's skill not only at praise but also at lampooning (as mentioned) and finding fault, if ever he wanted.' Similarly *Σ_{BT} ex.* 2.212*b* on Homer as the first writer of *silloi*.

⁴⁴ *Comm. Il.* i.314. The etymology from *φάη* + *ἔλκω* is found in *Ap.S.* p.164, *Σ_A Epim.* 2.217*a*, and has long since been abandoned. For Thersites *παραβλώψ* see already *Luc. Adv. Ind.* 7; *Pollux* 2.51 juxtaposes the two words.

condition is congenital and allegedly less severe than having an acquired limp (*Comm. Il.* i.315). Elsewhere he emphasizes that Hephaestus' club-footedness is not mocking or a feature of a *sillos*, two aspects of Homer's poetic activity emphasized in his discussion of Thersites: rather, it may be a lesson that the condition is no obstacle to outstanding craftsmanship such as Achilles' shield (*Comm. Il.* iv.193). That comment also mentions the lameness of the Litai as a parallel, just as ii.775 on the Litai cited Hephaestus as a parallel. As with their sideways looks, Eustathios gives a positive inflection to Hephaestus' divine physical impairment, and he refrains from including either *παραβλώψ* or *κυλλοποδίων* among his suggestions about using Homer for mockery.

Why then did Eustathios choose the Homeric *παραβλώψ* and *κυλλοποδίων* in these contexts in sermons 5 and 7? There is a wider framework of social norms governing the terminology appropriate for describing physical impairments in given situations. This framework left room for Eustathios to include ways of making fun of squints within the didacticism of his commentaries: his students would face various situations where such jibes were acceptable, including for example, assigning them to a character, self-deprecation about one's own physical condition, or the more audacious jokes typical of epistolography.⁴⁵ However, the same framework, backed up by canon law, was more restrictive about what one could include in the didacticism of a sermon. There Eustathios speaks of such mockery as a social phenomenon that existed, but one whose own vision of the human condition of sin was in urgent need of correction, and one which is opposed to the preacher's task of reproof and correction. It therefore makes sense that in sermon 7 he toned down the negative social connotations of impairment as far as possible by drawing on these two Homeric words, which in the commentaries he had separated from a mocking tone while arguing that they were either compatible with great achievements (*κυλλοποδίων*) or a morally positive symbol of contrition (*παραβλώψ*). In sermon 5, where being *παραβλώψ* was a metaphorical state opposed to 'seeing straight', the mild and elevated tone may still be operative, and the Litai may import a further relevant positive connotation that, despite the fallibility of the congregation, they still have the possibility of successful repentance through prayer.

Conclusion

⁴⁵ For Eustathios' views on candour, mockery and Homeric humour, see Van den Berg (forthcoming). For humour in epistolography see Bernard 2015, including (185–86) an example from Psellos where a joke on his addressee's physical appearance seems to have been misunderstood; Kolovou 2006: esp. 17*–21*, 73*–75*.

Since Late Antiquity, Byzantine Christianity had maintained a delicate relationship with the classical heritage. In the 11th and early 12th centuries attempts to fuse the two, particularly through the application of pagan philosophy to theological topics, had sometimes met with accusations of, and trials for, heresy.⁴⁶ But by the latter half of the 12th century, changes in the values of the elite had led to several significant developments in attitudes to classical texts, including a rise in philological study, changes in curriculum, greater diversity in terms of the classical genres being imitated, and an intellectual culture which esteemed intensive quotation of the classics as a rhetorical feature.⁴⁷ This is evidently the context within which Eustathios operated in his commentaries.

The relevance of this intellectual milieu for Eustathios' sermons has generally been neglected in scholarship, and the points of contact with Homer are many times more frequent than even Schönauer supposed. Moreover, we hope to have illustrated the intellectual depth, interpretative potential, and coherence of many of the Homeric references, and the benefits of interpreting Eustathios' sermons and commentaries together. The sermons bear many imprints of his wider thinking about the Homeric poems, often in the form of creative reuse and recombination of passages which takes us beyond the commentaries. And some parts of the sermons would be difficult to interpret correctly without having recourse to the Homeric source and scholarly traditions surrounding it.

As studies of Homeric intertextuality go, this has been an author-centred affair. As we observed in the introduction, there is room to doubt the extent to which our texts match what Eustathios delivered in church, and this limits the scope for conjectures about how many listeners in Constantinople or Thessalonike would have unpicked the intertexts in detail, or for inferences about the level of Homeric knowledge in wider society. We might expect the circulated versions to have had some influence on subsequent practices, such as the late sermons of Eustathios' student Michael Choniates.⁴⁸ However, any such influence was subject to many wider historical factors, such as the cultural change following the sack of Constantinople in 1204. This remains the subject for another study, as does the question of

⁴⁶ See *e.g.* Ševčenko 1980: 53–73; Agapitos 1998. On the trials, see Trizio 2017.

⁴⁷ On philological scholarship: Pontani 2015: 355–93. Kaldellis 2007: esp. 225–316, interprets the historical changes underlying these developments. On citation-culture, see Kolovou 2006: 25*–28*; also Reinsch 1998, with examples from the *Alexiad*.

⁴⁸ Compare also the argument of Saxey 2009 that Niketas Choniates paid attention to the contexts of his Homeric sources in presenting Andronikos as like Odysseus.

how Eustathios combined citations from multiple authors to work together to further the themes of his sermons.

Many of Eustathios' Homeric references are not just for stylistic elevation, but are integrated into fundamental homiletic ideas such as the articulation of the preacher's relationship with the congregation, and the latter's relationship with God. Several Iliadic presentations of war are repurposed for the Christian's spiritual fight, but with other issues it required more careful adaptation to bring out points of contact. In the case of the words *παραβλώψ* and *κυλλοποδίων*, we identified a degree of restraint that Eustathios exercised in the sermons, which led him to modify his previous handling of these and related words to suit the requirements of genre and occasion. Exploring this dynamic for other cases that are similarly embedded in complex social and religious values will be another fruitful avenue for research on the practical rhetorical uses of classical scholarship in the period.

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