The Mythological World of the Scholia

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Acknowledgements

Overview

When we refer to "The Mythological World of the Scholia," we refer to the scholia that tell a backstory expanding on ideas presented in the Iliad text. Looking at our digital edition of the Venetus A manuscript, we were able to identify these scholia by searching for variants of the noun ἱστορία and the verb ἱστορέω, both of which indicate that a background is being provided for something mentioned in the text. My strategy has been to go through the scholia including these terms and first identify what story is being told, then seeing if it appears in the mythological handbooks of Apollodorus and Hyginus. The differences observed in the scholia backstories compared to more "standard" mythological versions will give us an idea of how mythology was viewed in a scholarly context as opposed to general storytelling. In this case, the stories chosen by the scholiast are meant to help a reader make sense of the Homeric text when it may not be entirely clear. Since my primary objective was to see how ancient scholars interacted with myths, I chose to limit my focus to primary sources: the contents of the Venetus A and the mythological works of Apollodorus and Hyginus.

My focus was also influenced by my work at CANE with Professor Neel Smith, Professor Graeme Bird, and Sophia Sarro as we examined the literary analyses of Diony-

sius Thrax. Dionysius specifically identifies the idea of ἱστορία as a concern to scholars, demonstrating how important it was in the ancient understanding of literary criticism. By examining the sources used by scholars that no longer survive, we can gauge which authors and works were deemed acceptable for scholarly arguments. Also, by searching through different types of ἱστορία scholia, I would be able to see whether or not they always lined up with my preconceived notions of them as mythical retellings.

Other Uses

Although it is tempting to summarize the ἱστορία scholia as simply notes which tell mythological stories at length, once we take a closer look at their corpus significant exceptions become apparent. Along with expanding on a myth alluded to in the Iliad text, the ἱστορία scholia can refer to an authoritative source to defend material in the text as legitimately Homeric. For example, in a scholion commenting on 10.274, we see a potential debate on why Athena sends an ερωδιὸς to Diomedes and Odysseus during their night raid. The scholiast begins with the adverb εἰκότως to emhasize that this action is suitable for the story and gives a description of the lifestyle of an ερωδιὸς to show how its habits of hunting in marshy territory are similar to the heroes' actions. The source cited for this note is none other than Aristotle's Περὶ Ζωΐων, which certainly is not a conventional mythological source and demonstrates how these scholia are not limited to mythological sources when it comes to defending Homeric material. Rather than retelling a myth, this scholion has relied on a work of animal biology to explain potentially confusing content.

The ἱστορία scholia can also be used to defend certain grammatical decisions as befitting the types of story Homer would have known. For example, in a note on 1.396,

the scholiast cites Aristarchus when discussing that the pronoun σεο must be enclicitc to refer to Achilles' father (Peleus) rather than Thetis' (Nereus), with the logic being that Homer never mentions any story of Achilles living in Nereus' halls. Similarly, a scholion for 2.865 refers to Chiron and Diodorus when discussing the origin of Mesthles and Antiphus. These writers apparently read the line as saying these characters were born at the Gygean Lake instead of the Aristachan reading where they are literally the children of the lake personified as a goddess. Chiron and Diodorus' argument is that Homer never discusses stories where lakes have children (μηδέποτε γὰρ Ὅμηρον λημνῶν τέκνα ἱστορεῖν), to which the scholiast claims that they do violence to the text. These examples give insight in how the concept of ἱστορία affects reading of the Iliad text, as ancient scholars were careful to choose words and phrases which belonged to stories that fit in with Homer's mythological corpus.

It also appears that ἱστορία can be used to explain geographic features and names to help the reader understand certain landmarks mentioned in the text. A key example of this is a scholion for 14.299 discussing Mt. Athos as Hera flies over it. Rather than telling a conventional myth, the scholiast actually refers to Herodotus' story of the Persian king Xerxes constructing a canal near this location. This information would apparently be helpful for the reader to understand how the geography would have been different at the time of the Trojan War, or perhaps it simply shows the significance of Mt. Athos by showing how it appears in another popular work.

One of the longest ἱστορία scholia in the Venetus A demonstrates how the scholiast can refer back to a backstory simply to dismiss it as unneeded for the understanding of the Iliad. Commenting on 1.5, the scholion explains what is meant by "The Plan

of Zeus" and gives a marvelous story from Stasinus explaining that Zeus orchestrated the Trojan War to decrease the number of humans who were weighing down on Gaea and causing her pain. However, after telling this story at length, the scholiast then uses a rare first person verb to explain that he agrees with the opinion of Aristarchus and Aristophanes, which is that Zeus' plan simply refers to him fulfilling Thetis' plea as the Iliad itself explains. This is significant because it shows that the idea of ἱστορία can be used to defend the legitimacy of the text not only to link it to established stories, but also to contrast with them and show that Homer's work can stand on its own without relying on other sources.

For our final example, we return to Book I where Achilles begs his mother Thetis to beseech Zeus, and to strengthen his point he reminds her of all the times while he was growing up she told him about saving Zeus from the other gods. However, we see that all it takes is one accent to change the meaning of the line entirely: the scholiast notes that Aristarchus takes the pronoun seo as enclitic without its own accent and therefore refers to Thetis, who is the object of ἄκουσα and so was heard by Achilles in his father's house, meaning Peleus. If, in a different reading, σεο is accented, it would instead describe πατρός and mean Thetis' own father, as in Nereus. The controversy here is that in Greek the verb "to hear" can take an object in the genitive case, which is also used to show possession, so the accent truly affects the whole meaning of the line and Achilles' backstory. The reason Aristarchus does not interpret it as referring to the house of Thetis' father is because Homer does not mention Achilles growing up in Nereus' house. This makes sense since Nereus is a sea god and it would be probably be worth mentioning if Achilles grew up under the sea. Here we see the idea of the backstory being used to justify a certain reading over another so that the scholiast can attempt to create a mythological

world that matches Homer's.

These examples of ἱστορία are evident that this topic of scholarly interest extends beyond elaborating on stories alluded to in the Iliad. The scholiast is focused on defending Homer's work and uses this particular category of scholia to show why certain stories are Homeric or not. While the majority of these scholia are dedicated to elaborating on established myths, they can reach out to even scientific sources like Aristotle to demonstrate why certain events in the Iliad are suitable for the story. Other ἱστορία scholia defend grammatical choices of the scribe since even a slight change may refer to a story that Homer does not refer to. While the general idea of ἱστορία still seems to answer potential questions the reader may have, these are not limited to inquiries about myths, but rather can extend to matters of why the scribe has chosen a particular reading over another.

Scholia vs Iliad Text

As we can see, the primary function of the ἰστορία scholia is to allow the reader to make sense of the story as they read through it. While there is significant overlap with more standard myth retellings found in Apollodorus and Hyginus, the scholiast gears his retellings towards the issue of the text he comments on. These scholia give us valuable insight into what sources the scholiasts used and considered appropriate for supporting their arguments, and as we have seen there does not seem to be a barrier for what kind of work may be cited. While I originally thought that ἰστορία would refer only to mythology, we see that it truly can be about multiple sorts of backstories. While the vast majority of ἰστορία scholia in the manuscripts concern myths, that's likely an inevitable result of the Iliad itself being a work of what we would call mythology.

ἰστορία is an important focus in the manuscript because it is essential for the reader's comprehension of the text. You can imagine how much more convenient it is to just look for a note on the page for background information instead of trying to consult an entirely different work. Notes like these helped keep the Iliad accessible for centuries even after its long history of being passed down orally.

For scholars, ἰστορία is essential for allowing the reader to understand the text.

Perhaps most importantly, linking sections of the Iliad to established mythic narratives helped to prove the correctness of the Homeric text by showing that, in the mind of the scholiast, Homer was referring to legitimate versions of stories that appear elsewhere. Or to contrast those stories with the story of the Iliad, in case of the will of Zeus where we don't seem to need a backstory to help us understand. Thus, the ἱστορία scholia serve to defend the logic of Homer's original story and help the audience understand it.

When I began this project, I hypothesized that the mythological world of the scholia would match up as closely as possible with the mythological world of the Iliad text as part of the scribe's task to prove the veracity of Homer. However, certain scholia such as those regarding Sarpedon and Pegasus contradict this theory by seemingly contradicting the text. For example, Sarpedon in the Iliad is described as the king of Lycia and the son of Laodamia, the scholiast instead gives a backstory citing him as Cretan and the son of Europa. Although the Pegasus scholion does not directly say that the creature belongs in the scholion, its presence indicates that it is strange that the horse has no presence in the Iliad. This indicates to me that, in a sense, the scholiast would be undertaking an impossible task by attempting to create a definite version of mythology. Since these stories by their very nature do not have asingle correct version, it is inevitable that versions present in the scholia will differ from the Iliadic tradition.

List of Authors

Source	URN	Genre	Time
Stasinus (Cypria)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers20	Epic	600s BCE (?)
οἱ νεώτεροι	Unavailable	???	???
Theopompus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers51	Historian	300s BCE
Polemon	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers58	Philosopher	200s BCE
Apollodorus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers49	Mythographer	100s BCE
Dictys	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers90	???	???
Ptolemy	Unclear	Unclear	Unclear
οἱ ἀρχαῖοι	Unavailable	Epic	700s BCE
Aristarchus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers16	Homeric Scholar	220-143 BCE
Didymus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers75	Homeric Scholar	00s BCE
Hellanicus (Ἀργονικοῖς)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers303	Logographer	400s BCE
Philostephanus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers319	Historian	200s BCE
Callimachus (Aetia)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers86	Elegy	200s BCE
Euphorion	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers354	Grammarian	200s BCE
Quintus Smyrnaeus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers330	Epic	300s CE

Source	URN	Genre	Time
Hesiod (Catalogue)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers4	Epic	750 to 650 BCE
Stesichorus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers228	Lyric	500s BCE
Herodian	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers493	Grammarian	100s CE
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255	Mythographer	400s BCE
Homer	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers17	Epic	???
Porphyry (Homeric Questions)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers77		Philosopher
Nicias	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers247	Homeric Scholar	???
Pindar	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers5	Lyric	400s BCE
Demetrius	Unclear	??? & Epic	???
Asclepiades	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1256	Mythographer	300s BCE
Dicaearchus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255	Philosopher	300s BCE
Anticleides	Unavailable	Historian	200s BCE
Philostephanus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers319	Historian	200s BCE
Apollonius	Unclear	???	???
Harpocration	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1278	Grammarian	100s CE
Ascalonites	Unavailable	???	???
Aristotle	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers300	Philosopher	300s BCE
Crates	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers667	Grammarian	100s BCE
Dionysius	Unclear	???	???
Bacchylides	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers579		Lyric
Aristodemus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1276		Grammarian

Source	URN	Genre	Time
Marsyas	urn:cite2:hmt:pers892	Historian	300s BCE
Herodotus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers896	Historian	400s BCE
Euripides	urn:cite2:hmt:pers897	Tragedian	400s BCE
Lycophron	urn:cite2:hmt:pers109	Grammarian	200s BCE
Thrasybulus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers1153	Historian	???
Acestodorus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers1154	Historian	???
The poets of the Epic Cycle	Unavailable	Epic	600s BCE
Arrian	Unavailable	Historian	100s CE
Demetrius of Scepsis	urn:cite2:hmt:pers669	Grammarian	100s BCE
Acusilaus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers1223	Mythographer	500s BCE
Cleitophon	Unknown	???	???
Eratosthenes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers533	Polymath	200s BCE

Occurences

Source	URN	Parsing Term	Genre	Time	Reference
Stasinus	urn:cite2:chronopers.v1:pers20		Epic	600s BCE (?)	1.11
οἱ νεώτεροι	Unavailable	ἱστορέω	???	???	1.11
Theopompus	urn:cite2:chronopers.v1:pers51		Historian	300s BCE	1.37
Polemon	urn:cite2:chronopers.v1:pers58		Philosopher	200s BCE	1.39
Apollodorus	urn:cite2:chronopers.v1:pers69		Mythographer	100s BCE	1.42
οἱ νεώτεροι	Unavailable	ἱστορέω	???	???	1.67
οἱ νεώτεροι	Unavailable	ἱστορέω	???	???	1.120
Dictys	urn:cite2:chronopers.v1:pers90		???	???	1.120

Source	URN	Parsing Term	Genre	Time	Reference
Apollodorus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers69	ἱστορέω	Mythographer	100s BCE	1.560
Ptolemy	Unclear	ἱστορέω	Unclear	Unclear	1.931
οἱ ἀρχαῖοι	Unavailable	ἱστορέω	Epic	700s BCE	1.1034
Aristarchus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers16	ἱστορέω	Homeric Scholar	220-143 BCE	1.1036
Didymus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers175	ἱστορέω	Homeric Scholar	00s BCE	1.1041
Apollodorus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers69	ἱστορέω	Mythographer	100s BCE	2.128
Hellanicus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers303	ἱστορέω	Logographer	400s BCE	2.130
Philostephanus & Callimachus (Aetia)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers319 & urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers86	ἱστορέω	History & Elegy	200s BCE	2.227
Euphorion	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers354	ἱστορέω	Grammarian	200s BCE	2.237
Euphorion	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers354	ἱστορέω	Grammarian	200s BCE	2.320

Source	URN	Parsing Term	Genre	Time	Reference
Quintus Smyrnaeus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers330		Epic	300s CE	2.377
Hesiod (Catalogue)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers4		Epic	750 to 650 BCE	2.477
Stesichorus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers228		Lyric	500s BCE	2.485
Hellanicus (Βοιωτιακοῖς) & & Apollodorus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers303 & urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers69		Logographer & Mythographer	400s BCE & 100s BCE	2.589
Herodian	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers493		Grammarian	100s CE	2.594
Callimachus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers86		Elegy	200s BCE	2.630
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255		Mythographer	400s BCE	2.645
Callimachus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers86		Elegy	200s BCE	2.667
Homer	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers17		Epic	???	2.800
Hellanicus (Αργονικοῖς)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers303		Logographer	400s BCE	3.142

Source	URN	Parsing Term	Genre	Time	Reference
Hellanicus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers303		Logographer	400s BCE	3.233
Hellanicus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers303		Logographer	400s BCE	3.245
Porphyry (Homeric Questions)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers77		Philosopher	200s CE	3.285
Nicias	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers247		Homeric Scholar	???	3.375
Polemon	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers58		Philosopher	200s BCE	3.379
Pindar	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers5		Lyric	400s BCE	3.724
Porphyry	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers77		Philosopher	200s CE	3.477
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255		Mythographer	400s BCE	5.1036
Demetrius & Hesiod	Unclear ἱστορία & urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers4		??? & Epic	750 to 650 BCE	6.15
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255		Mythographer	400s BCE	6.49

Source	URN	Parsing Term	Genre	Time	Reference
Asclepiades	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1256	ἱστορεῖ	Mythographer	300s BCE	6.54
Dicaearchus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1255	ἱστορεῖ	Philosopher	300s BCE	6.117
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255	ἱστορεῖ	Mythographer	400s BCE	7.6
Anticleides	Unavailable	ἱστορία	Historian	200s BCE	7.106
Philostephanus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers319	ἱστορεῖ	History	200s BCE	7.306
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255	ἱστορίαν	Mythographer	400s BCE	7.1007
Asclepiades	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1256	ἱστορεῖ	Mythographer	300s BCE	7.3010
Apollonius	Unclear	ἱστορία	???	???	8.197
Homer	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers17	ἱστορεῖ	Epic	???	9.411
Harpocration	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1278	ἱστορέω	Grammarian	100s CE	9.413
Ascalonites	Unavailable	ἱστορία	???	???	10.2508
Aristotle	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers300	ἱστορέω	Philosopher	300s BCE	10.2512
Pindar	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers5	ἱστορεῖ	Lyric	400s BCE	10.4513

Source	URN	Parsing Term	Genre	Time	Reference
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255	ἱστορέω	Mythographer	400s BCE	11.249
Callimachus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers86	ἱστορέω	Elegy	200s BCE	11.252
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255	ἱστορέω	Mythographer	400s BCE	11.267
Crates	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers667	ἱστορέω	Grammarian	100s BCE	11.280
Hellanicus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers303	ἱστορέω	Logographer	400s BCE	12.A2
Dionysius	Unclear	ἱστορέω	???	???	12.A10
Lycastus	Unavailable	ἱστορέω	???	???	12.A10
Hesiod & Bac- chylides	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers4 & urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers579	ἱστορέω	Epic & Lyric	700s and 400s BCE	12.D8
Aristodemus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1276	ἱστορέω	Grammarian	100s BCE	13.164r1
Aristarchus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers16	ἱστορέω	Homeric Scholar- ship	220- 143 BCE	13.164r6bis

Source	URN	Parsing Term	Genre	Time	Reference
Aristarchus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers16		Homeric Scholarship	220-143 BCE	13.164r9
Euphorion	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers354		Grammarian	200s BCE	13.164r14
Callimachus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers86		Elegy	200s BCE	13.165r8
Apollodorus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers69		Mythographer	100s BCE	13.5
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255		Mythographer	400s BCE	13.6
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255		Mythographer	400s BCE	14.E19
Marsyas	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers892		Historian	300s BCE	14.C18
Herodotus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers896		Historian	400s BCE	14.C19
Euphorion	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers354		Grammarian	200s BCE	14.H17
Euripides	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers97		Tragedian	400s BCE	14.H30

Source	URN	Parsing Term	Genre	Time	Reference
Philostephanus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers319	χρονικά	Historian	200s BCE	16.A5
Lycophron	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers109	χρονικά	Grammarian	200s BCE	16.B7
Stasinus (Cypria)	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers20	χρονικά	Epic	600s BCE(?)	16.208v4
Thrasybulus & Acestodorus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1153 & urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1154	χρονικά	Historian & Historian	??? & ???	16.210v1
The poets of the Epic Cycle	Unavailable	ἱστορία	Epic	600s BCE	18.164
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255	χρονικά	Mythographer	400s BCE	18.166
Euphorion	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers354	χρονικά	Grammarian	200s BCE	18.168
Callimachus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers86	χρονικά	Elegy	200s BCE	18.171
Arrian	Unavailable	ἱστορία	Historian	100s CE	19.2015
Demetrius of Scepsis	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers669	χρονικά	Grammarian	100s BCE	20.10

Source	URN	Parsing Term	Genre	Time	Reference
Hellanicus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers303	χρονικά	Logographer	400s BCE	20.9_12
Acusilaus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers1223	χρονικά	Mythographer	500s BCE	20.266
Cleitophon	Unknown	ἱστορία	???	???	20.267
Eratosthenes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers533	χρονικά	Polymath	200s BCE	22.7
Didymus	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers175	χρονικά	Homeric Scholarship	00s BCE	22.36
The poets of the Epic Cycle	Unavailable	ἱστορία	Epic	600s BCE	23.2802
Eratosthenes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers533	χρονικά	Polymath	200s BCE	24.A11
Lycophron	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers109	χρονικά	Grammarian	200s BCE	24.29
Euphorion	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers354	χρονικά	Grammarian	200s BCE	24.91
Pherecydes	urn:cite2:hmt:pers.v1:pers255	γενεαλογία	Mythographer	400s BCE	23.510

Myth Occurences

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Zeus unburdens Gaea	Yes	No	No	1.5-6	Stasinus cited
Pelops	Yes	Yes	Yes	1.37	Theopompus cited
Epithet: Apollo Smintheus	Yes	No	Yes	1.39	Polemonion cited
Apollo and Crinis	Yes	No	No	1.39	Polemonion cited
Belus and Danaus	Yes	Yes	Yes	1.42	Apollodorus cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Telephus	Yes	Yes	Yes	1.59	νεώτεροι cited
Iphigenia	Yes	Yes	Yes	1.106	νεώτεροι and Didymus cited
Birth of Athena	Yes	Yes	No	1.194-195	Apollodorus cited
Character Pandrosus	Yes	Yes	Yes	1.334	Ptolemy cited
Pandrosus and Hermes	Yes	No	No	1.334	Ptolemy cited
Alternate names of Briseis	Yes	No	No	1.392	ἀρχαῖοι cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Conspiracy against Zeus	Yes	No	No	1.399	Didymus cited
Io and Argus	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.103	Apollodorus cited
Chrysippus	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.105	Hellanicus cited
Daedalus and Icarus	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.145	Philostephanus and Calli- machus cited
Object: Aegis	Yes	Yes	No	2.157	Euphorion cited
Origin of the Aegis	Yes	No	No	2.157	Euphorion cited
Meleager	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.157	Euphorion cited
Penthesilea	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.220	Quintus cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Heracles vs. Neleus and his sons	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.336	Hesiod cited
Helen	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.339	Stesichorus cited
Cadmus	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.494	Hellanicus and Apollodorus cited
Erechtheus	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.547	Callimachus cited
Augeas and his son	Yes	Yes	No	2.629	Callimachus cited
Sons of Triops	Yes	No	Yes	3.75	Hellanicus cited
Aethra	Yes	Yes	Yes	3.144	Hellanicus cited
Tithonus	Yes	Yes	Yes	3.151	Hellanicus cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Sons of Helen and Menelaus	Yes	No	No	3.175	Porphyry cited
Abduction of Helen by Paris	Yes	Yes	Yes	3.242	Polemonion, the Cyclic poets, and Alcman cited
Abduction of Helen by Theseus	Yes	Yes	Yes	3.242	Polemonion, the Cyclic poets, and Alcman cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Castor and Polydeuces vs. Idas and Lyceus	Yes	Yes	Yes	3.243	Pindar cited
Childhood of Paris	Yes	Yes	Yes	3.325	Porphyry cited
Ereuthalion	Yes	No	No	4.319	Aristarchus cited
Death of Tydeus	Yes	Yes	No	5.126	Pherecydes cited
Achilles at Pedasus	Yes	No	No	6.35	Demetrius and Hesiod cited
Dionysos and Lycurgus	Yes	Yes	Yes	6.130	Eumelus cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Sisphyus	Yes	Yes	Yes	6.153	Pherecydes cited
Bellerophon	Yes	Yes	Yes	6.155	Asclepiades cited
Pegasus	Yes	Yes	Yes	6.183	No author cited, character not present in Iliad text
Heracles founding Thebe Hypoplakia	Yes	No	No	6.396	Dicaearchus cited
Areithous	Yes	No	No	7.8	Pherecydes cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Helenus and Cassandra	Yes	Yes	Yes	7.8	Anticledes cited
Athamas	Yes	Yes	Yes	7.86	Philostephanus cited
Euneus	Yes	Yes	Yes	7.467	Asclepiades cited
Telamon	Yes	Yes	Yes	8.284	Apollonius cited
Phoenix (son of Amyntor)	Yes	Yes	Yes	9.448	Homer cited
Athena and the Heron	Yes	No	No	10.274	Aristotle cited
Rhesus	Yes	Yes	Yes	10.435	Pindar cited
Neleus	Yes	Yes	Yes	11.672-11.674	Pherecydes cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Heracles founding the Olympian Games	Yes	Yes	Yes	11.700	Callimachus cited
Heracles vs Augeas	Yes	Yes	No	11.709	Pherecydes cited
Medea in Athens	Yes	Yes	Yes	11.741	Crates cited
Patroclus' childhood	Yes	Yes	No	12.1	Hellanicus cited
Europa	Yes	Yes	Yes	12.307	Hesiod and Bacchylides cited
Death of Locrian Ajax	Yes	Yes	Yes	13.66	Callimachus cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Ephyra/Corinth	Yes	Yes	Yes	13.301	Apollodorus cited
Amphion and Zethus	Yes	Yes	Yes	13.302	Pherecydes cited
Tydeus and Deipyle	Yes	Yes	Yes	14.120	Pherecydes cited
Pierus and Am-athus	Yes	Yes	Yes	14.226	Marsyas cited
Heracles vs. Eu-rypy-lus	Yes	Yes	No	14.226	Pherecydes cited
Hera moth-ering Prometheus	Yes	No	No	14.295	Euphorion cited
Semele	Yes	Yes	Yes	14.323	Euripides cited

Myth	Scholia	Apollodorus	Hyginus	Location	Notes
Flights of Peleus and Tela- mon	Yes	Yes	No	16.14	Philostephanus cited
Childhood of Achilles	Yes	Yes	No	16.37	Lycophron cited
Achilles' spear	Yes	Yes	Yes	16.140	Stasinus cited

Early Sources Cited

To look at the earliest available sources using ἱστορία and ἱστορέω, I focused on scholia attributed to Hesiod, Stasinus, and the authors of the epic cycles.

Some scholia from these early authors explain a word or phrase that may be not be elaborated on in the text. For example, a scholion commenting on 2.336 explains why Nestor is referred to as Geranian despite ruling Pylos: he was raised in Gerenia while his father Neleus lived in Pylos with his other sons. However, Nestor's whole family was killed when Heracles sacked the city. This scholion also includes the fascinating detail that Neleus' son Periclymenus managed to actually battle Heracles in the form of a bee, though his efforts were futile. Another scholion attributed to Stasinus, the alleged author of the Cypria, comments on 1.5 and attempts to explain the words "Διὸς βουλὴν" in the opening lines of the Iliad. The scholion recounts how there were so many people roaming the earth it actually caused Gaea pain, so to ease her suffering Zeus engineered the Trojan War to kill off a substantial number of the human race; in this respect, the events of the Iliad do indeed happen according to the will of Zeus. Lastly, a scholion from 23.660 attributed to the poets of the Epic Cycle clarifies why Apollo is cited as the god who grants strength to boxers: Phorbas was an arrogant boxer who forced passersby to

fight him to the death, until Apollo himself killed him in a boxing match and became known as the god of boxing.

Other scholia simply provide more mythological details on stories not fully explained in the text. A scholion commenting on 6.35 credits Hesiod along with Demetrius for a story involving Achilles' capture of the city Pedasus. The Achaeans attacked the city since it was an ally of Troy, but during the conflict a young girl who lived in the city fell in love with Achilles and threw an apple towards him inscribed with a message declaring her feelings. She also provided the Achaeans with water, which was apparently scarce in the area. A scholion from 18.486 credits the poets of the Epic Cycle as a whole and is a general guide for the origins of the constellations: the Pleiades as the daughters of Atlas, Orion as a mighty hunter and companion of Artemis, and Ursa Major and Ursa Minor as two people who prayed to the gods to be saved from danger (no direct mention of the popular story of Callisto).

The most fascinating mythological scholia to me are those that appear to outright contradict information given in the text. A brief scholion attributed to "οἱ ἀρχαῖοι" from 1.392 mentions that the name Briseis is actually her patronymic; her real name is either Astynome or Hippodamia. A scholion from 12.307 credited to Hesiod and Bacchylides tells the famous abduction of Europa by Zeus in the form of a bull. The main function of this scholion is to explain that Sarpedon is described as ἀντίθεον since he is the son of Zeus. However, this scholion appears to identify the character Sarpedon in the Iliad as the Cretan son of Zeus Europa despite the poem itself making him the Lycian son of Zeus and Laodamia. It is unclear whether the scholiast is trying to connect different narratives or simply confused two characters with the same name and divine parent.

Another potential disagreement with the text comes from a scholion crediting Stasinus appearing at 16.140. At first glance, it simply provides a backstory for Achilles' spear as a wedding gift to Peleus at his wedding to Thetis. While the poem itself identifies it as a gift from the centaur Chiron, the scholion mentions Athena and Hephaistos as other possible creators.

All of these scholia are meant to clarify potential questions or at least offer more backstory on aspects of the Iliad which may be confusing without outside knowledge. Seeing which stories appear in scholia may indicate which ones are less likely to have been common knowledge to the average reader (the stories of Phorbas and Achilles' conquest of Pedasus were certainly new to me). I am intrigued that, while scholists typically strive to prove the veracity of Homer, some of these scholia seem to contradict what the poem tells us (Briseis' name, Sarpedon's backstory, who made Achilles' spear). This just seems to prove that, even in this more specific scholiastic view of myth, these stories still exist in countless forms and do not have one "official" version. However, by referencing works as early as these, perhaps the scholiasts believe they are adding more legitimacy to their notes by reaching back to the possible roots of various stories.

Sarpedon

The character of Sarpedon is particularly interesting because of the differing sources for his parentage. While all agree that he is the son of Zeus, the Iliad itself states that his mother is Laodamia, the daughter of Bellerophon. However, a scholion to Iliad V of the Venetus A (citing non-extant works of Hesiod and Bacchylides) makes a rare contradiction to the text by instead claiming that he is the son of Europa, thereby making him the brother of Minos and Rhadymanthus as well. Apollodorus cites both versions while also mentioning that Zeus allowed Sarpedon to live for three mortal generations, solving possible chronological issues. Hyginus only refers to Sarpedon as the son of Europa (who he calls the daughter of Argiope and Agenor). All three sources mention that Zeus turned into a bull to carry Europa away to Crete; Apollodorus states that Sarpedon helped his uncle Cilix battle the Lycians and became their king after conquering them, thereby explaining how a Cretan prince could be the king of Lycia in the Iliad. As far as the scholion is concerned, the main point of interest is why Sarpedon has the epithet ἀντίθεος, which is explained by his descent from Zeus.

Scholion Text

Εὐρώπην τὴν Φοίνικος Ζεὺς θεασάμενος ἔν τινι λειμῶνι μετὰ νυμφῶν ἄνθη ἀναλέγουσαν ἠράσθη καὶ κατελθὼν ἤλλαξεν ἑαυτὸν εἰς ταυρὸν καὶ ἀπο τοῦ στόματος κρόπον ἔπνει οὕτως τὲ τὴν Εὑπωπην ἀπατήσας ἐβάστασε καὶ διαπορθμεύσασ . εἰς Κρήτην ἐμίγη. εἰ θ’ οὕτως συνῴκησεν αὐτῇ Ἀστερίωνι τῷ Κρητων βασιλεῖ γενομένη δὲ ἔγκυος ἐκείνη. τρεῖς παῖδας ἐγέννησε Μίνωνα Σαρπηδόνα καὶ Ῥαδάμανθυν . ἡ ἱστορία παρ’ Ἡσιόδῳ καὶ Βακχυλίδη.

Apollodorus Text

τινὲς δὲ Εὐρώπην οὐκ Ἀγήνορος ἀλλὰ Φοίνικος λέγουσι. ταύτης Ζεὺς ἐρασθείς, ταῦρος χειροήθης γενόμενος, ἐπιβιβασθεῖσαν διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης ἐκόμισεν εἰς Κρήτην. ἡ δέ, ἐκεῖ συνευνασθέντος αὐτῇ Διός, ἐγέννησε Μίνωα Σαρπηδόνα Ῥαδάμανθυν: καθ᾽ Ὅμηρον δὲ Σαρπηδὼν ἐκ Διὸς καὶ Λαοδαμείας τῆς Βελλεροφόντου.....Σαρπηδὼν δὲ συμμαχήσας Κίλικι πρὸς Λυκίους ἔχοντι πόλεμον, ἐπὶ μέρει τῆς χώρας, Λυκίας ἐβασίλευσε. καὶ αὐτῷ δίδωσι Ζεὺς ἐπὶ τρεῖς γενεὰς ζῆν.

Greek overlap

ἔραμαι

Ταῦρος

βαστάζω/ἐπιβιβάζω

εἰς Κρήτην

γεννάω

Μίνωνα/Μίνωα

Hyginus

Europa Argiopes et Agenoris filia Sidonia. Hanc Iuppiter in taurum conversus a Sidone Cretam transportavit et ex ea procreavit Minoem Sarpedonem Rhadamanthum.

γενόμενος = conversus

εἰς Κρήτην = Cretam transportavit

ἐγέννησε Μίνωα Σαρπηδόνα Ῥαδάμανθυν = procreavit Minoem Sarpedonem Rhadamanthum

Pegasus

The scholion on 6.183 is fascinating in the sense that, rather than justifying the content of the text, it instead simply states that Pegasus (a staple of the Bellerophon story in other accounts) is not present. The line is marked with a critical sign ὅτι to indicate that it will provide some sort of explanation, yet there does not seem to be one. The scribe seems to predict that the reader will find Pegasus' absence odd and makes note of it.

The will of Zeus

The comparison of Zeus' plan for the Trojan War between Apollodorus' Βιβλιοθήκη and the scholia reveals the different intent of the writers towards explaining the cause for the war. Apollodorus states that Zeus simply either wanted his daughter Helen to become famous throughout Europe and Asia, or for the race of demigods as a whole to be glorified through such an immense conflict. The scholiast, however, recounts a story from Stasinus stating that Gaea was burdened with the sheer overwhelming weight of humanity and requested that Zeus lighten her load by killing off a substantial number of people. This focus on death likely stems from the scholiasts' goal to make sense of the Iliad text, where Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή is preceded by the idea of mighty heroes being sent to Hades and their corpses eaten by dogs and vultures. Apollodorus' goal, on the other hand, is to make sense of the Trojan War throughout the overall corpus of mythology, and seeing its place as a sort of climax of his work, it seems logical that he would focus more on its overall fame rather than the destruction it wrought.

Thoughts on ἱστορία

When examining the authors who are referenced in these scholia, it is noticeable that while a wide array of genres (epic, lyric, history) appear amongst those who date before Aristarchus, those who come after tend to be chiefly scholarly (Herodian, Harpocration) or mythological (Apollodorus, Quintus Smyrnaeus) in nature. This may indicate that the older authors form a kind of larger canon of sources to choose from, while the scribes preferred to draw from closely related sources for more recnet authors.

It is also interesting to note that the characters and stories who appear form a diverse group that cannot be easily generalized. While they of course need some connection to the Iliad text to appear in the scholia, it can be rather loose such as a genealogy or place name. In general, characters who appear in many myths of Apollodorus and Hyginus will appear in more scholia, so a character like Heracles is featured often despite not physically appearing in the Iliad. While most of these stories are found in mythology handbooks, the version presented in the scholia will often be more focused to explain the particular aspect of the text it's commenting on.

Although ἱστορία/ἱστορέω scholia appear throughout the entirety of the Iliad, they are most heavily clustered together in Books I and II. This seems to make sense from

a narrative level: the story begins in media res and the scribe must have thought some general backstory on the plot and characters would be helpful. However, these scholia less frequently as the story progresses, indicating either less of a need to elaborate on backstories or perhaps simple scribal fatigue. The scholia that do appear for the rest of the manuscript are generally geared towards explaining confusing epithets or phrases as well as recounting myths concerning specific people and places. This would reflect different functions of these scholia, with those that appear early on telling general backstory for the events of the story while those in the following sections are more geared towards explaining broadly confusing aspects of the text. Interestingly, while a great deal is made to give the reader insight on what events happened before the poem, there are no scholia at the end to describe what happens afterwards (i.e. the death of Achilles, the fall of Troy, etc.) This may indicate that while the scholarly tradition thought the beginning of the story was too confusing without elaboration in the notes, the ending of the poem was seen as a complete ending without lingering questions. Another possibility is that scholia describing events after the story do indeed occur in the manuscript, but were not part of our data because they do not include ἱστορία/ἱστορέω since these technically would not be backstories to the Iliad.