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## Ancient variants and exegesis for *Il.* 14.382

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**Abstract:** A detailed analysis of the scholiastic and Eustathian material concerning the variants δόσκειν / δόσκειν / δῶκειν in *Il.* 14.382 is performed. Examination of the manuscripts and an investigation into the history of the modern studies suggests it is more plausible to conclude that the reading attributed to Aristarchus in the scholia was δόσκειν and not δόσκειν. This assessment is congruent with the evidence from Eustathius. The dispute in the critical literature between the evaluation of δῶκειν as a variant or as an explanatory gloss is resolved in favour of the variant, by also considering the recurrent Didymean expression καὶ ἔστιν εὐφραδέστερον.

**Keywords:** Hellenistic scholarship, Homer, Aristarchus, Didymus of Alexandria, Eustathius.

The Iliadic passage that forms the object of this investigation is found in the episode on the distribution of weapons that precedes the counterattack by the Achaeans during the absence of Zeus, who has been thwarted as a result of the deceitful ploy conjured up by Hera with the assistance of Hypnos. Poseidon, informed by the latter that the father of the gods is sunken in deep sleep and will for a while be unable to fend off the Achaeans, urges the Greeks to advance, after they have made sure – he clarifies – that the strongest and most valiant men have the biggest shields, and if this is not the case, then the robust warriors should exchange the smaller shields for those held by the the less vigorous soldiers. The Achaeans listen and then obey these exhortations.

*Il.* 14.379–382

τοὺς δ' αὐτοὶ βασιλῆες ἐκόσμεον οὐτάμενοί περ,  
 Τυδείδης Ὀδυσσεύς τε καὶ Ἄτρείδης Ἀγαμέμνων·  
 οἰχόμενοι δ' ἐπὶ πάντας ἀρήϊα τεύχε' ἄμβιβον·  
 ἔσθλα μὲν ἔσθλός ἔδυνε, χεῖρεια δὲ χεῖροني δόσκειν.

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What is of interest here is the form δόσκειν in the last of the lines cited above. Two variants of this form are known: δόσκειν (thus “they gave” for “he gave”) and δῶκεν. The first of these forms is attested in several medieval codices and in a IV<sup>th</sup> century AD papyrus<sup>1</sup>; it also appears as a lemma in the D-scholia *ad locum*, in which it is glossed with the more prosaic imperfect ἐδίδουν<sup>2</sup>. The second variant, documented in a handful of medieval codices<sup>3</sup>, does not involve anything other than a change in the tense of the verb, simple aorist instead of the iterative form, again without augment, and for the purposes of the arguments I will put forward in this paper, it stands on the same plane as δόσκειν. As has correctly been pointed out by Walter Leaf, “there is little or nothing to choose” between singular and plural: both options are acceptable from the point of view of morphology, syntax, metre and meaning<sup>4</sup>. With the singular (whether δόσκειν or δῶκεν) the meaning is evidently that each warrior hands over his own weapons – on the assumption they are of poor quality – to a soldier who is less sturdy than himself; with δόσκειν, it is the heads of the Achaeans, mentioned just above, who assign the poor quality weapons to the less robust warriors. In the first case, the singular would give a structure symmetric with that of the first part of the line, where mention is made of “the valiant warrior” (ἔσθλός), who wears the most robust weapons and would thus be the understood subject of the verb, whereas there would be a *variatio* as compared to the sentences of the previous lines, in which the verbs (ἐκόσμεον and ἄμειβον) are in the plural and refer to the three kings. In the second case, on the other hand, with δόσκειν, the individual line would have an undeclared change of subject which, however, would be easily interpretable by virtue of the parallelism of the entire pericope.

**1** P.Morgan = P.Amh. inv. G 22 (IV<sup>th</sup> cent. AD; LDAB 2120; MP<sup>3</sup> 00870). Among the medieval mss. that transmit the variant δόσκειν, the following should be mentioned, with West 1998–2000, II 59: Townleianus (Lond. Brit. Lib., Burney 86), Oxon. Bodl. Auct. T.2.7 (R), *post correcturam*, Genavensis 44 (G), equally *post correcturam* (not the Venetus A in the interlinear space, as shown by inspecting the digital photograph of f. 188r: the mention of this ms., with the specification *super lineam* [by means of the abbreviation A<sup>s</sup>] in the apparatus of West must be the result of an oversight): for a more extensive list, see Allen 1931, III 56. The ancient passages that cite this Homeric line (there are four such passages according to the apparatus of West) all quote it with δόσκειν.

**2** Sch. D II. 14.382: δόσκειν: ἐδίδουν. ZYQX

**3** Among these one should note Ambros. gr. A 181 sup. (74), Marc. gr. 841 (olim 458) and Paris. gr. 2766 (M, N and P according to West's *sigla*: see West 1998–2000, II 59). For a more extensive list, see Allen 1931, III 56.

**4** Leaf 1888, p. 78. Cf. Leaf 1900–1902<sup>2</sup>, II p. 93: “There seems little to choose between δόσκειν and δόσκειν. The former of course is logically consistent, but the latter is quite defensible”.

Modern editions overwhelmingly favour δόσκειν<sup>5</sup>. In contrast, the opinion of ancient philologists is less clear-cut. In this regard, let us immediately discard the question of athetesis proposed by Zenodotus and Aristophanes for *Il.* 376–377, containing Poseidon’s incitement to engage in the exchange of weapons and documented in two scholia traceable back to Didymus:

*Sch.* Did. *Il.* 14.376–377a<sup>1</sup>: <ὃς δέ κ’ ἀνήρ—μείζονι δύτω> τοὺς δύο Ζηνόδοτος μὲν οὐδὲ γράφει, Ἀριστοφάνης δὲ ἀθετεῖ. T<sup>11</sup>  
a<sup>2</sup>. Ζηνόδοτος δὲ προηθέτει. A

For it is by no means true, in contrast to the arguments put forward by some scholars, that the logical consequence of this choice would be the expunction of *Il.* 381–382 as well, in which the operation is effectively carried out<sup>6</sup>. The objection against *Il.* 376–377 raised by the Alexandrian scholars, as emerges from two scholia, one of Aristonicus and one of the exegetical class, did not concern a presumed ludicrousness of the manoeuvre described, with the assumption that it should therefore be erased *in toto* from the Homeric text. Rather, what they belittled as ridiculous (γελοῖον) and senseless (ἄτοπον) was the fact that Poseidon exhorted the most valiant men to take up shields not necessarily because the shields in question were more suitable for them and better, but simply because they were “bigger”, – a fact that would merely have had the effect of encumbering them and impeding their action<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Thus in Bekker, Dindorf, Leaf, van Leeuwen (who reconstructs the text χείρον’ ἔδοσκε), Ludwig, Ameis-Hentze, Allen *maior*, Mazon, van Thiel, West. La Roche and Monro-Allen prefer δόσκειν, which in both editions is indicated as the Aristarchean reading.

<sup>6</sup> Leaf 1900–1902<sup>2</sup>, II 93: “There is no record of the athetesis of these lines [sc. 381–382] by Ar. or the others, though if 376–77 go, these must necessarily follow”; Wilamowitz 1916, 234 n. 2: “Sie [sc. Zenodot, Aristophanes und Aristarch] hätten dann aber auch 382 auswerfen sollen”; Bolling 1944, 140: “... it is obvious to a modern [...] that they [sc. lines 381–382] stand or fall together with 376–7”, who concluded: “That the Alexandrians dealt only with 376–7 cannot be understood except on the belief that they felt free to attack only badly attested lines”; Valk 1963–1964, II 395 and n. 94, who drew the following conclusion from the alleged incoherence of the Alexandrian philologists: “One sees again that the atheteses of the Alexandrians are subjective and do not give a reliable testimony of the original text”.

<sup>7</sup> Thus correctly Erbse 1974, 635, *adn. ad loc.*: “... fallitur, qui censet grammaticos Alexandrinos, qui versus Ξ 376–7 damnauerunt, etiam v. Ξ 382 proscribere debuisse; neque enim rem ipsam (sc. permutationem armorum) in dubitationem vocauerunt, sed verba vituperauerunt, quibus poeta illic usus est (sc. ὀλίγον et μείζον)”.

*Sch. Ariston. Il. 14.376a:* ὃς δέ κ' ἀνήρ μενέχαρμος, <ἔχη δ' ὀλίγον σάκος ὤμφ>: οὗτος καὶ ὁ ἐξῆς ἀθετοῦνται, ὅτι γελοῖον μὴ τὰ ἀρμόζοντα ἀναλαμβάνειν, ἀλλὰ μείζονα εἰς ἐμποδισμὸν τῆς χρήσεως. **A**

*Sch. ex. Il. 14.376–377b:* ὃς δέ κ' ἀνήρ μενέχαρμος <—μείζονι δύτω>: ἀθετοῦνται· οὐκ ἂν γὰρ ἀνίσους ἐφόρησαν ἀσπίδας. τινὲς δὲ ὀλίγον (376) ἀνάξιον πρὸς τὴν κατασκευὴν, μείζον (cf. 377) δέ, ὃ ἄριστον ἂν εἶπεν· ἄλλως τε ἄτοπον, μὴ τὰς κρείσσους καὶ ἀρμοδίας, ἀλλὰ τὰς μεγάλας ἀναλαβεῖν. [...] **T**

Further confirmation that the Alexandrian scholars had no intention of proposing expunction with regard to l. 382 comes from an annotation *ad locum* traceable back to Aristonicus. This scholion reveals that the line in question was used precisely as an element of proof against the genuineness of ll. 376–377: the *diple* that highlighted the line was explained in relation to the fact that it definitively condemns the previous lines, with which it is shown to be in contradiction, since it invokes equipment that is better and not, as is stated in those preceding lines, bigger<sup>8</sup>.

*Sch. Ariston. Il. 14.382a:* ἐσθλὰ μὲν ἐσθλὸς <ἔδυνε, χέρεια δὲ χείροني δόσκεν>: ὅτι οὗτος ὁ στίχος τοὺς προκειμένους (sc. 14, 376–377) ἀναιρεῖ· βελτίονα μὲν γὰρ τῇ κατασκευῇ ἐνδέχεται ἀναλαμβάνειν, μείζονα δὲ οὐ. **A**

Let us thus clear the field of the – unfounded – hypothesis that l. 382 should or could have been subject to athetesis. Such an eventuality would in any case be immaterial as far as the discussion on ancient variants in the line is concerned: the expression of a preference for a given reading rather than another within passages for which expunction was being proposed was a widespread practice well documented for the Hellenistic philologists<sup>9</sup>.

We will now turn to what is found in the sources in relation to the position of the ancient scholars on how the last word of l. 382 should be read. The witnesses available to us are an annotation traceable to Didymus and reproduced in the manuscript Venetus A and, in a more abridged form, in the Townleianus, and an observation by Eustathius.

*Sch. Did. Il. 14.382d:* <δόσκεν> οὕτως Ἀρίσταρχος δόσκεν. **A**<sup>int</sup> ἔνια δὲ τῶν ὑπομνημάτων “δῶκεν” ἀντὶ τοῦ δόσκεν· καὶ ἔστιν εὐφραδέστερον. **A**

<sup>8</sup> Leaf 1900–1902<sup>2</sup>, II 93 mentions this observation without realising that it allows a crucial judgment as to the asserted need for expunction of ll. 381–382 as a consequence of the expunction of ll. 376–377.

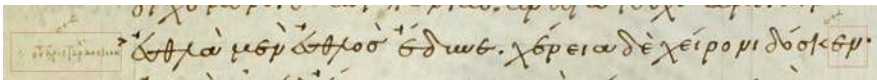
<sup>9</sup> See Montanari 1998, 7–8 and Montanari 2002, 61–63. A specific case is discussed in Pagani 2015, 80–81.

d<sup>2</sup>: δόσκειν: οὕτως Ἀρίσταρχος, ἔν τισι δὲ “δῶκε”. T

Eust. *ad Il.* 14.382 (992.43): τὸ δὲ “χείροινι δόσκει” δόσκον γράφουσιν οἱ ἀκριβέστεροι, τουτέστιν ἐδίδουν οἱ βασιλεῖς.

According to the text of the Iliadic scholia established by Erbse's edition, Didymus reported that the reading championed by Aristarchus was δόσκειν, whereas some of the commentaries consulted by Didymus<sup>10</sup> had δῶκεν, which Didymus himself judged to be a more elegant expression. Eustathius, on the other hand, states that the form adopted by the ἀκριβέστεροι is δόσκον and that the meaning of the sentence is “the kings gave” (the fact that Eustathius resorted to the form ἐδίδουν probably indicates that he used D-scholia for this explanation).

Let us now start from the reading attributed to Aristarchus. The debate, among modern scholars, on how the scholia *ad locum* should be read has led to contrasting results, even though the witnesses present a less controversial picture than might be imagined, as confirmed by checking the digital photographs of the passages in question. As far as Venetus A<sup>11</sup> is concerned, the annotation recording Aristarchus' position forms part of the group of short scholia jotted down in the internal margin of the manuscript; these scholia, together with those inserted between the text of Homer and the main scholia, were labelled collectively by Erbse as “Textscholien” and, recently, as “Kurznoten” by van Thiel (a definition which, in van Thiel's perspective, also included the interlinear scholia). It should be noted straightaway that the Iliadic text of A unequivocally has δόσκειν.

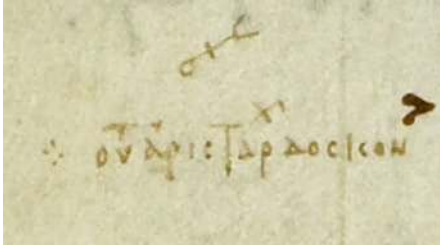


**Fig. 1:** Ms. Venezia, Biblioteca Marciana, Gr. Z. 454 (= 822) (Venetus A), f. 188r: *Il.* 14.382 and the relevant scholion in the inner margin.

By contrast, an examination of the scholion in question points to the conclusion that while the δόσκον defended there (as we will see) by a part of the tradition of studies may not be altogether incontestable, it does appear to be more plausible than the δόσκειν printed by Erbse.

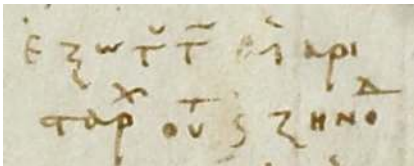
<sup>10</sup> See West 2001, 73–75.

<sup>11</sup> The images of Venetus A are obtained from the site of the Center for Hellenic Studies of the University of Harvard, which, in the framework of the “Homer Multitext” project, published online the high resolution photographs of some Homeric mss. So far, the following have been made available: Venetus A, Venetus B, Marc. 841, Escor. Y.1.1, Escor. Ω.1.12, Genav. 44 ([www.homer-multitext.org](http://www.homer-multitext.org)). The line in question is in f. 188r of Venetus A.



**Fig. 2:** Ms. Venezia, Biblioteca Marciana, Gr. Z. 454 (= 822) (Venetus A), f. 188r: the scholion *ad Il.* 14.382 in the inner margin.

A comparison with another “Textscholie” written on the same sheet of the codex, which contains both of the letters, *omicron* and *epsilon*, in competition with each other, merely reinforces this impression (*Sch. Did. Il.* 14.400b).



**Fig. 3:** Ms. Venezia, Biblioteca Marciana, Gr. Z. 454 (= 822) (Venetus A), f. 188r: the scholion *ad Il.* 14.400 in the inner margin.

We will turn now to the Townleianus manuscript<sup>12</sup> which, unlike A, has the reading δόσκον in the Iliadic text and presents the lemma in the corresponding scholion. The final part of the lemma has undergone abbreviation, but the mark of suspension here utilized is the one that generally indicates the -ov ending. Thus the lemma of T likewise seems to document δόσκον as the Aristarchean reading.

<sup>12</sup> The Townleianus images are taken from the “Digitised manuscripts” section of the British Library website ([www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Burney\\_MS\\_86](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Burney_MS_86)): the line in question is in f. 154r.

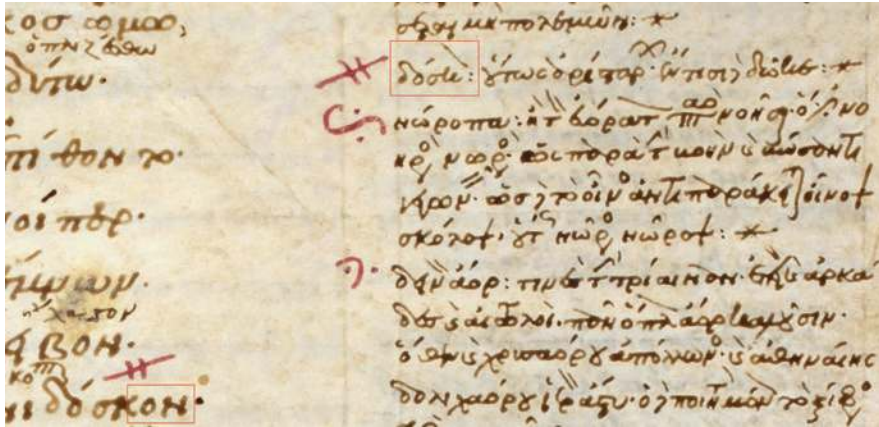


Fig. 4: Ms. London, British Library, Burney 86 (Townleianus), f. 154r: the end of the line *Il.* 14.382 and the relevant scholion in the outer margin.

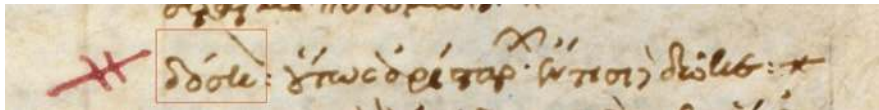


Fig. 5: Ms. London, British Library, Burney 86 (Townleianus), f. 154r: the scholion *ad Il.* 14.382 in the outer margin.

The ambiguity in the restitution of the scholiastic text has roots that date back a considerable length of time in the history of the studies on this subject. When Arthur Ludwich set about reconstructing Aristarchus' textual criticism starting from the collection of variants gathered by Didymus (1884–1885), he expressed his position in polemical terms, even in those early years. The reading he assigned to Aristarchus on the basis of his interpretation of the scholia in A and in an apograph of T, which we will mention again below (Monacensis 16 [Victorianus], 16<sup>th</sup> cent.: V), was δόσκον, but this was in contrast with an opinion put forward by his predecessors – from Villoison to Bekker, Dindorf and Nauck –, who read δόσκειν. The latter reading was however, in Ludwich's view, "eine reine Willkür", an act of arbitrary decision-making which, he surmised, could conceivably be attributed to an interference of the Iliadic text of Venetus A, given that, as we have seen, the latter effectively has the reading δόσκειν<sup>13</sup>. The reading of the variant defended by

<sup>13</sup> Ludwich 1884, esp. 378. Villoison 1788, 346; Bekker 1825, 403; Dindorf 1875, 54; Nauck 1879,

Aristarchus as δόσκειν was shared, both before and after Ludwich, by La Roche, Leaf and Monro-Allen<sup>14</sup>.

Erbse, on the other hand, consistently expressed himself in favour of δόσκειν, as early as in his study on the manuscript tradition of the *Iliad* that appeared in 1953, as well as in the research he carried out shortly later on the Iliadic editions of Aristarchus, and finally in his edition of the scholia<sup>15</sup>. The origin of his idea can perhaps be sought in a conviction that grew in his mind during his studies on the “Textscholien” of A, and which he did not reconsider thereafter. These scholia, as is known, have sparked a lively debate on the subject of their nature, their genesis and their relation with the corpus of main scholia: they have either been regarded as the work of a distinct redactor not to be identified with the one who was responsible for the main scholia or, alternatively, they have been explained as the product of a single critic who put everything together in the margins of Venetus A<sup>16</sup>. According to Erbse, the “Textscholien” represented a sort of critical apparatus that recorded cases of agreement or disagreement of readings in the *Viermännerkommentar* as compared to those in the *vulgata*<sup>17</sup>. A certain number of

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51. In his edition of the *Iliad*, Ludwich (1907, 91) wrote: “δόσκειν Aristarchus teste T, ut ἔνια τῶν [Ἀριστάρχειον] ὑπομνημάτων habuisse videntur”. On his interpretation of the expression δῶκεν ἀντὶ τοῦ δόσκειν which was connected to “some of the commentaries” by the scholion in the ms. A, see below, 95–96. On the authorship of these commentaries, see below, 99–100.

14 La Roche 1876, 58; Leaf 1888, 78; Leaf 1900–1902<sup>2</sup>, II 93, according to whom “A gives δόσκειν as the reading of Ar., but must be corrected from T”; Monro-Allen 1920, *ad loc.*

15 Erbse 1953, 32; Erbse 1959, 278 and n. 2; Erbse 1974, 655.

16 For the first position: Ludwich 1884, 98–102; Erbse 1953, 34 and 37; Erbse 1960, 127–128; Erbse 1969, XIV; for the second: Valk 1963–1964, I 42, 70–76. In the first case, a problem of precedence also arises, because the A<sup>1</sup> scholia seem in some respects to allow the explanation that they were written earlier than the main scholia, while sometimes they contain references specifically to the latter. The two groups of scholia display no substantial differences with regard to the provenance of their content (cf. Valk 1963–1964, I esp. 72): readers are referred to Pagani 2014, 50–51 for considerations regarding the relevance of this argument on the proposal put forward by Mazzucchi 2012, who argues that the A<sup>1</sup> scholia constituted the entire scholiastic corpus of one of the two antigraphs he believed to be the ancestors of Venetus A, namely the one endowed with the subscriptions declaring that the exegetical material accompanying the Iliadic text derived from the *Viermännerkommentar*.

17 According to the position recently put forward by van Thiel (2014, I 8, 28–29; IV 125–128), this material should be seen as a complex that frequently maintains Aristarchus’ formulation; more generally, van Thiel argues that it can be traced back to the textual work of the first philologists (Zenodotus, Aristophanes, Aristarchus himself), thus representing the original starting material on which the later commentators based their analyses. The circumstance, often found in the “Kurznoten”, whereby some of the ancient erudites are mentioned by name (as in the case under examination here) is believed by van Thiel to be the result of additions introduced by the gram-



these notes open, as in the case examined here, with the adverb οὕτως; however, this is not a sufficient guarantee of the meaning to be assigned to the immediately following textual elements. Erbse shows that οὕτως sometimes serves to confirm the reading found in the Iliadic text of A, while on other occasions it may be a reference to the variant that is mentioned in the scholion and which contrasts with the text of A. As an example of the first eventuality – οὕτως as a confirmation of the Homeric text of A – Erbse cites precisely the scholion under discussion here<sup>18</sup>, which should thus be read as: “this is the way (sc. as in the text) Aristarchus said it too”. But there is no reference to the possibility that the form on the manuscript should conceivably be read as δόσκον and not δόσκειν. On the other hand, Erbse does address this problem in his study on the Iliadic editions of Aristarchus dating from 1959, where he awards due consideration to Ludwich’s reading but rejects it in favour of δόσκειν (“schwerlich δόσκον, wie Ludwich referiert” he says), stating that his own version is confirmed by the lemma of T (which, however, is not the case, as we have seen).

A few years later, van der Valk, in his work concerning the text and the scholia of the *Iliad* (1963–1964), also considered the testimony of Eustathius, who assigned the reading δόσκον to “the more precise ones” (οἱ ἀκριβέστεροι).

Eust. *ad Il.* 14.382 (992.43): τὸ δὲ “χείρονι δόσκε” δόσκον γράφουσιν οἱ ἀκριβέστεροι, τουτέστιν ἐδίδουν οἱ βασιλεῖς.

The first question that needs to be addressed is who or what Eustathius had in mind when he used the label ἀκριβέστεροι. Van der Valk believed that this expression of praise was used by Eustathius substantially as an equivalent of the designation “Apion and Herodorus”, another problematic formulation that occurs about sixty times in the Eustathian *Commentary*<sup>19</sup>. I will provide a more

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marians of later generations: by Aristarchus in the case of Zenodotus and Aristophanes and, in the case of Aristarchus himself, by his “editor” (a figure hypothetically identified as Dionysius Thrax only in the explanation of “Zeichen und Abkürzungen” [I 37]).

18 Erbse 1953, 32.

19 See Valk 1963–1964, I 11, who says: “Thus he refers by this term (sc. οἱ ἀκριβέστεροι) to VMK or at least to the *Commentary* which contained it” (my italics): there is a notable difference between talking about VMK material and making a reference to the commentary in which Eustathius read the material in question, i.e., apparently, “Apion and Herodorus” (ApH): if, as will be stated immediately *infra* in the text, ApH was probably a cognate of Venetus A, the exegetical material it contained was unlikely to have been only of the VMK type. While it is obvious that Eustathius could have been referring to the commentary he was consulting, as a material object, it is certainly hard to believe he was able to distinguish (or that he had any interest in so doing) which class of scholia each of the annotations he utilised actually belonged to.

detailed analysis of this problem elsewhere<sup>20</sup>: what is important here is to note that the commentary by Apion and Herodotus invoked by Eustathius (ApH) has been interpreted as a close cognate of Venetus A<sup>21</sup>, although the precise connection between the two manuscripts has not been conclusively determined. Equally uncertain is the exegetical typology of the work utilized by Eustathius (a continuous commentary or marginal scholia), as well as the identity of the mysterious pair to whom he attributes it. But what is clear is that it was a source in which Eustathius found, among other things, the material we generally classify as dating back to the *Viermännerkommentar*<sup>22</sup> (VMK), that is to say the compilatory work which acted as the catchment basin by means of which a portion of the body of acquisitions built up by the erudite scholars of the Hellenistic age – Aristarchus *in primis* – found its way into the margins of Venetus A<sup>23</sup>. I have shown elsewhere that an identification *tout-court* either of the Eustathian phrase οἱ ἀκριβέστεροι with the commentary he calls “Apion and Herodorus”, or of the latter with the VMK material, can prove to be problematic and that, more generally, Eustathius’ terminology does not seem to be sufficiently reliable to guarantee univocal identifications<sup>24</sup>. Thus it would be hazardous to take the Eustathian remark that δόσκειν belongs to the usage preferred by “the more precise ones” as constituting definitive evidence in favour of attributing this reading to Aristarchus. However, van der Valk based his argument first and foremost on the manuscript documentation, and it was only at a subsidiary stage that he invoked the Eustathian remark

**20** An updated picture, with an appraisal of the associated bibliography, can be found in Pagani forthcoming.

**21** According to Valk 1963–1964, I 1–69 (cf. Valk 1971, LXI), it was in fact a descendant of an ancestor that was shared by Venetus A as well; thus already in Erbse 1960, 121–173. On the other hand, in the view of Mazzucchi 2012, 442–447, the work of Apion and Herodorus was one of the two antigraphs used by the copyist of Venetus A.

**22** The term is now universally accepted, even though Erbse himself (1969, XII) defined it as “*verbum haud satis memorabile*”. In addition to *excerpta* from VMK, the ApH of Eustathius was likely to have contained, according to Erbse 1953, 21–22, a good quantity of D-scholia, but probably had no (or only a very small number of) exegetical scholia.

**23** The philological-grammatical works, all dating back to the first imperial age, excerpted in VMK are: Aristonicus’ *On signs*, Didymus’ *On the diorthosis of Aristarchus*, Herodian’s *Prosody of the Iliad* and Nicanor’s *On Punctuation*. Nothing more is known about VMK than the information supplied by the subscriptions of Venetus A; it is not clear who assembled it and when. According to Lehrs 1882<sup>3</sup>, 31–32, followed by Ludwich 1884, 78–82, a period considerably later than the life of Herodian cannot be proposed; a datation within the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. has been advocated by van der Valk 1963–1964, I 107, followed recently by Dickey 2007, 19, while Erbse 1969, XLV–XLVIII went as far as extreme Late Antiquity (5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> cent.). For further details, readers are referred to Pagani 2014, esp. 46–47.

**24** Pagani forthcoming.

for confirmation (as Ludwich had done, before him<sup>25</sup>). Thus it was by invoking not only the authority of Ludwich but also his personal inspection of the text that van der Valk substantiated his view that Venetus A had δόσκον, in contrast with the text established by Dindorf. As far as T was concerned, van der Valk believed that the lemma found in this manuscript was δόσκειν; he explained the difference as compared to A by noting that incorrect lemmas were a habitual occurrence in T, although, as we have seen, such an explanation is probably quite unnecessary since there would appear to be no reason to construe the abbreviation of T as anything other than -ov. Having thus established the documentary framework, van der Valk drew the conclusion that the text of the scholia was *supported* by Eustathius' annotation, which had presumably come from the same scholiastic material<sup>26</sup>.

Erbse's edition of the scholia, which as far as book Ξ is concerned dates back to 1974, opts to print δόσκειν, both in A and in T, as noted above. In the apparatus of the *testimonia* he rejects the contrary view held by Ludwich and van der Valk, presenting the positions of both these scholars as if they were based exclusively on the Eustathian parallel. Erbse then proceeds to dismiss the parallel itself on the basis of the fact that the δόσκον recorded by Eustathius could derive from other sources and not from the scholia: "*Hinc profectus (i.e. from the passage of Eustathius, which Erbse cites immediately prior to this point) Ludwich [...] Aristarcho variam lectionem δόσκον attribuit (vide Valk II 151). Quod probari nequit. Ne scimus quidem, num Eustathius δόσκον, quae lectio et in papyro Morgan [...] et in compluribus codicibus Homeri occurrit, in scholiis invenerit. Certe non est, cur hanc formam pro lectione Aristarchea ducamus*"<sup>27</sup>. The reading δόσκον in A is relegated to the apparatus, where the judgment passed on the arguments put forward by van der Valk is: "probabilitate carent", while Ludwich's position is accompanied by an "improbabiliter". As far as the scholion in T is concerned, Erbse's apparatus confirms the lemma that appears in the printed text (δόσκειν) and records a variant δόσκον in V, the apograph of T already invoked by Ludwich.

<sup>25</sup> Ludwich 1884, 378.

<sup>26</sup> Valk 1963–1964, II 151 n. 307: "Dindf. wrongly gives δόσκειν. However, the Ven. A, as Ludwich (AT I, 378 f.) rightly observes, has δόσκον (I checked the text). T says δόσκειν] οὕτως Ἀρίσταρχος. We know, however, that the lemmata of T are often incorrect. Eust. who says that δόσκον was given by the 'akribesteroi', no doubt follows A' [...] and so confirms the latter's reading". On the other hand, elsewhere in the same book (Valk 1963–1964, I 10 n. 40), he argues that the Aristarchean reading was effectively δόσκειν and that Eustathius attributed δόσκειν (and not δόσκειν) to the ἀκριβέστεροι, on the assumption that this was a more *recherché* reading (clearly he failed to make his text uniform).

<sup>27</sup> Erbse 1974, 655 (*test. ad loc.*) (my italics).

And although Erbse himself (while admitting that this codex was “imperfectum et mendosum”) maintained that it could be of some value in certain cases “praesertim cum multa lemmata recte addita sint”<sup>28</sup>, nevertheless this did not induce him to reconsider the problem.

As a result of the authoritative prestige Erbse’s editorial work enjoyed, when van der Valk – upon publishing the text of Eustathius’s Iliadic *Commentary* (1979) – had to consider the issue again, he maintained that in our scholia “lectio δόσκον non commemoratur” (!): as a consequence, he fell back on the hypothesis that the archbishop could have come across this reading in scholia that have since been lost, or alternatively that he could have found δόσκον in the copy of the *Iliad* that he used as his reference manuscript and mistakenly assigned this reading to Aristarchus on account of a hasty reading of the text of the scholia (it is worth bearing in mind that the difference actually involves a change in only one letter)<sup>29</sup>.

In van Thiel’s very recent edition of the Aristarchean fragments involving the *Iliad*<sup>30</sup>, one finds that the form printed in the A<sup>im</sup> scholion is δόσκειν. This is supposedly designed to ensure δόσκειν against the δῶκειν of the commentaries (which we will turn to shortly) and not against the variant δόσκον, while the lemma of T is correctly restored as δόσκον. The latter, however, is explained as a secondary insertion, whose form is seen as due exclusively to the influence of the Iliadic text of T, which effectively has δόσκον.

In sum, the deciphering of the witnesses leads to the constitution of a coherent text, which, furthermore, seems to have a possible confirmation in the Eustathian parallel, albeit taking into account the limitations of this parallel, as mentioned earlier. I would therefore read οὕτως Ἀρίσταρχος δόσκον in A and δόσκον· οὕτως Ἀρίσταρχος in T. There remains the possibility that the tradition has handed down to us – unanimously – a corrupt text, but there do not seem to be any cogent reasons to suggest such an eventuality.

If we then raise the question of what reasons Aristarchus may have had for preferring δόσκον as opposed to δόσκειν, we stray into the field of mere speculation since, as we showed in the opening section of this paper, both variants are fully legitimate. Likewise, no well-grounded motivations can be found for the question as to whether in this circumstance the philologist was basing his arguments on documentary evidence or upon a mere conjecture. Van der Valk believed that Aristarchus changed δόσκειν into δόσκον on account of an implac-

<sup>28</sup> Erbse 1969, XXIX.

<sup>29</sup> Valk 1979, 663, *ad Eust. ad Il.* 992, 43.

<sup>30</sup> Thiel 2014, II 504.

ble rationalism applied to the Homeric text: the version with δόσκειν would have allowed readers to draw the conclusion that every valiant soldier had a weapon of poor quality to be handed over to a bungling warrior, whereas with δῶσκειν, which entrusts the army leaders rather than each of the valiant warriors with the task of assigning lower-quality weapons to the less skilled warriors, the afore-mentioned implausible situation would be averted<sup>31</sup>. However, there appears to be nothing to support this argument in the witnesses available to us.

We will now turn to the assertion contained in the main scholion of Venetus A and, in a highly condensed form, in the second part of the scholion of the Townleianus: “some of the commentaries” (further below we will examine the meaning that can be attributed to this expression) had δῶκειν ἀντὶ τοῦ δόσκειν. Here too, opinions in modern criticism are divided on the interpretation of the scholiastic note, first and foremost due to the polysemy of the technical expression ἀντὶ τοῦ: on the basis of the generic meaning “instead of”, formulations such as “x ἀντὶ τοῦ y” may indicate that “x is an alternative reading for y”, but also that “x in a certain passage means y” or that “y is what one would expect in the place of x”<sup>32</sup>.

According to Ludwich, the Didymean *usus* of the expression ἀντὶ τοῦ should lead to excluding the possibility that the phrase recorded a variant, and should instead tip the scales in favour of an interpretive gloss. However, in this manner the text of the scholion would effectively mean that “δῶκειν in the Iliadic passage in question signifies δόσκειν”, i.e. that “δόσκειν is what one would expect rather than δῶκειν”, which is exactly the opposite of what one would reasonably assume. For this reason, Ludwich found himself constrained to modify the scholiastic statement by inverting the two terms, thus reading: δόσκειν ἀντὶ τοῦ δῶκειν<sup>33</sup>. However, the data derivable from an examination of the scholiastic passages collected by Ludwich simply show a minority presence of ἀντὶ τοῦ as a signal of the introduction of a variant, as compared to the ἀντὶ τοῦ that introduces a gloss in Didymus, but not its total absence, which would have been more problematic. Furthermore, a certain number of scholia regarded by Ludwich as examples of ἀντὶ τοῦ introducing a gloss should actually not be counted, because they were subsequently assigned not to Didymus but to different sources (exegetical scholia, Aristonicus,

<sup>31</sup> Valk 1963–1964, II 151.

<sup>32</sup> Dickey 2007, 224; cf. Slater 1989, 53–54, who, in a study on “the many ways in which an interpretation can become a variant” (54), seeks to demonstrate how ambiguous expressions such as this one, the verb γράφω, and the words τινές / ἔνιοι can have been the source of pseudo-variants in the ancient erudite tradition.

<sup>33</sup> Ludwich 1884, 378–379, followed by Leeuwen 1895<sup>2</sup>, 386, *app. ad loc.*

Nicanor)<sup>34</sup>, so that the proportion between the two uses is destined to become more balanced.

The opposite proposal, namely that δῶκεν was recorded as a variant, has been put forward by Erbse<sup>35</sup>, who rejected Ludwig's version by pointing out that δῶκεν is *indeed* documented by the manuscript tradition as a *varia lectio*<sup>36</sup>. However, I fear that an objection of this kind is likely to prove weak, as it is exposed to the objection – pre-emptively advanced by Ludwig himself – that what was originally a gloss then penetrated into the text and established itself as an alternative to the term which, previously, the putative gloss had simply been intended to explain<sup>37</sup>. Such a phenomenon is perfectly normal in the process of text transmission. Rather the claim that δῶκεν of the commentaries was intended as a variant could, instead, be substantiated more satisfactorily by assessing the plausibility of the two competing interpretations. In this case, the hypothesis of the gloss seems to lose ground in favour of the variant: if we have to explain δόσκεν in common terms, what we can expect is, for instance, the form that one finds in the D-scholia (ἐδίδου, an imperfect, with the regular augment), rather than a form without the augment, which is attested elsewhere in Homer and – quite by chance? – represents a perfect substitute, from the metrical point of view, for δόσκεν. Besides, that the meaning of our scholion is the recording of a variant is also something that West takes as already fully established, without even awarding any consideration at all to the alternative, in his discussion on the *hypomnemata* used by Didymus<sup>38</sup>.

The position espoused by van Thiel is more complex. In his edition of the *Iliad*, he introduces a specific *siglum* in the apparatus *ad loc.*, to call attention to

**34** Ludwig 1884, 379 and n. 1. On the basis of Ludwig's repertory (which cannot be considered as exhaustive, given that it closes with "u. s. w."), the expression ἀντὶ τοῦ can be recognized as a means of introducing an interpretive gloss in: *Sch. Did. Il.* 1.423b; 2.111b; 3.10b; 3.18a; 5.249a; 7.238c<sup>1</sup>; 16.313; 17.149b<sup>1</sup>; 19.386a; 21.363a (Did. + ex.); 21.558a; 21.611b; 23.120a; 23.198b; 23.244c (ex. [Ariston. vel Did.]); 24.192b<sup>1</sup>; 24.636a. The following cases should however be eliminated from the list, as they can probably be traced to sources other than Didymus: *Sch. ex. Il.* 1.535a; *Sch. ex. (?) Il.* 2.35a; *Sch. Ariston. Il.* 3.11b (which, additionally, has textual problems); *Sch. ex. Il.* 4.18; *Sch. Nic. Il.* 14.499c; *Sch. ex. Il.* 23.317a<sup>1</sup>. The expression ἀντὶ τοῦ definitely introduces a variant in: *Sch. Did. Il.* 8.23a<sup>1</sup>; 14.40b; 20.308; 22.93c<sup>2</sup>. I believe that a systematic investigation designed to assess the meaning of ἀντὶ τοῦ in an extensive manner over the entire range of Didymean scholia is not of crucial value for the purposes of the present research.

**35** Erbse 1959, 278: "eine von der Vulgata und von Aristarchs Text abweichende Variante".

**36** Erbse 1974, 655, *app. ad loc.*: "δόσκεν ἀντὶ τοῦ δῶκεν propos. Ldw. (vix recte; nam in codd. Homeri etiam v.l. δῶκε occurrit)".

**37** Ludwig 1884, 379.

**38** West 2001, 75.

the fact that δῶκεν should be understood as an interpretive or corrective element, since presumed variants recorded by the scholia as deriving from a commentary or from a monograph must, for this very reason, have been observations representing a comment or conjectures<sup>39</sup>. Analogously, in the recent edition of the Aristarchean fragments on the *Iliad*, van Thiel speaks at this point of “interpretierendes (oder korrigierendes) δῶκεν der Kommentare”<sup>40</sup>. This conviction is, in my view, easily contestable, in its excessive (and unrealistic) schematism: that a commentary or a treatise may include a mention of a variant, for the most disparate reasons (to discuss it, defend it, criticise it, use it as a parallel) is perfectly natural. Precisely by starting out from an idea of this kind, Erbse formulated the proposal that Aristarchus’ commentaries could in some sense be considered as including his *ekdosis*, given that they must presumably have contained all the ideas which, as a grammarian, he had developed on the constitution of the text<sup>41</sup>. The conviction that it was feasible to turn to material originating from a *hypomnema* or a treatise as a source for information of an ecdotic nature was shared by Didymus: it has in fact been demonstrated that although Didymus did have access, in some form, to the Aristarchean *diorthosis*, as emerges from several of his statements<sup>42</sup>, he appears to have more generally awarded priority to use of the documentation offered by commentaries and treatises, *also in relation to textual questions*<sup>43</sup>. One can briefly recall the case of the scholion on *Il.* 2.111b, where Didymus asserts that “if we were to prefer the *syngammata* rather than the *hypomnemata*, specifically

39 Thiel 1996: the abbreviation in question is “comm.” (*app. ad loc.* 274 [= Thiel 2010<sup>2</sup>]) and the associated explanation (XVIII [= Thiel 2010<sup>2</sup>, XXII]): “Das A-Scholion nennt selbständige Werke wie Kommentare und Monographien (ὑπομνήματα, συγγράμματα, verkürzt ἔνια, ἐν ἐνίοις, ἐν τισι) als Quelle der Varianten, *die demnach sicher Kommentarbemerkungen oder Konjekturen sind*” (my italics). Something similar can be found in Slater 1989, whose research on the ways in which ancient learned observations may have been misunderstood as variants is in other respects sensible, but it goes too far by completely excluding that variants could be mentioned in a commentary (“[i]t came from a monograph or commentary, and was *therefore* a learned proposal only”, 55, my italics). Cf. above, n. 32.

40 Thiel 2014, II 504.

41 Erbse 1959, 276–277.

42 *Sch. Did. Il.* 2.131a<sup>1</sup> (ἐν τῇ ἐτέρῃ τῶν Ἀριστάρχου εὐρομεν), 2.517a (τὰ τοιαῦτα διχῶς ἐν ταῖς Ἀριστάρχου εὐρίσκομεν), 4.3a (ἐν ... ταῖς ἐκδόσει χωρὶς τοῦ ν εὐραμεν): cf. West 2001, 63.

43 The most widely known passages which document such an attitude (in addition to the one mentioned immediately *infra*, in the text), are: *Sch. Did. Il.* 4.345–346a; 19.365–368; 21.130–135a<sup>1</sup>. West, following Ludwig, argues that this reluctance was due to Didymus’ awareness of having access to Homeric texts that were no longer the original ones of Aristarchus; Didymus may therefore have regarded them as less reliable than other sources. More generally, on Didymus’ uncertainty in the reconstruction of the Aristarchean text, see Ludwig 1884, 38 ff.; Pfeiffer 1968, 216–217; Montanari 2000, 481; West 2001, 66–67; Montanari 2003, 36; cf. Nagy 2004, 86.

on account of their precision, we would write that Ζεύς με μέγας Κρονίδης (an expression that had a rival reading in the form of Ζεύς με μέγα Κρονίδης) is the text according to Aristarchus” and, immediately afterwards, that “in the treatise *Against Philitas* he (Aristarchus) did indeed adopt this reading (τῆ γραφῆ κέχρηται)”<sup>44</sup>. However, according to van Thiel, Didymus had already been the victim of the misunderstanding which, in van Thiel’s view, has persisted through to modern times, also affecting the most recent studies. It is a misunderstanding that becomes even more serious in van Thiel’s broader vision, which holds that the concept of the variant should be excluded *in toto* from erudite Hellenistic practice, not only – as already mentioned – with regard to commentaries and treatises but also in reference to annotations jotted down by grammarians in their own copies of the literary texts. What van Thiel believes is that such jottings merely represent references inserted for the sake of comparison, or alternatives included with the aim of adding a comment, rather than variants handed down by the tradition or textual proposals<sup>45</sup>. I have discussed elsewhere<sup>46</sup> this interpretation, which I find difficult to demonstrate; therefore I will not go into further details here.

That Didymus’ aim, in this case too, was to record the existence of a variant – contrary to Ludwich’s assumption – seems to be confirmed by the fact that he passed a judgment of comparative quality on δῶκεν, as documented in the closing part of the scholion: καὶ ἔστιν εὐφραδέστερον, “and it is said better / is an expression belonging to a more elegant type of language”. This evaluative observation is found in another three Didymeian scholia:

*Sch. Did. Il. 2.435a*<sup>1</sup>: μηκέτι νῦν δευτέρῳ λεγόμεθα: αἱ μὲν Ἀριστάρχου. [...] Ζηνόδοτος δὲ ποιεῖ “μηκέτι νῦν ταῦτα λεγόμεθα”. Καλλίστρατος δὲ ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ Περὶ Ἰλιάδος οὕτως προφέρεται “μηκέτι δὴ νῦν αὐθι λεγόμεθα”. καὶ ἔστιν εὐφραδέης μᾶλλον, ἀλλ’ οὐκ Ἀριστάρχειος. ταῦτα ὁ Δίδυμος. **A**

*Sch. Did. Il. 3.227a*: κεφαλὴν τε καὶ εὐρέας ὤμους: οὕτως σὺν τῷ τέ ἢ Ἀριστάρχου καὶ ἢ Ἀριστοφάνους. καὶ ἔστιν εὐφραδέστερον. **A**<sup>im</sup>

*Sch. Did. Il. 15.49b*<sup>1</sup>: <βοῶπι> Ἀριστοφάνης μετὰ τοῦ σ “βοῶπις”. καὶ ἔστιν εὐφραδέστερον. **A**<sup>im</sup>

b<sup>2</sup>: βοῶπις: οἱ μὲν “βοῶπι”, Ἀριστοφάνης δὲ “βοῶπις”. καὶ ἔστιν εὐφραδέστερον. **T**

<sup>44</sup> For a study on this scholion, see Pagani 2015, with bibliography.

<sup>45</sup> Van Thiel 2014, I 13: “Es handelt sich nicht um Überlieferungsvarianten und nicht in erster Linie um Textvorschläge der Gelehrten, sondern um Kommentare und Alternativen zum Text in ihren Handtexten”; I 14: “Auch bei ihm [sc. Aristarch] ist das meiste, was wie Bemerkungen zum Text aussieht, aber nicht durch Papyri oder Handschriften gestützt wird, Vergleich oder kommentierende Alternative”; cf. previously Thiel 1992 and Thiel 1996, III and n. 1, V–VI (= Thiel 2010<sup>3</sup>), with the reply by Schmidt 1997.

<sup>46</sup> Pagani 2015.



In all three of these passages, the remark is incontrovertibly used to describe a particular reading, evidently the form that Didymus favoured, in comparison to other variants; in one case (2.435a<sup>1</sup>) Didymus goes so far as to specify that the variant he considers to be more appropriate does not coincide with the Aristarchean textual choice. Now if, in the passage we have been examining, Didymus had considered δῶκεν as an explanatory gloss of δόσκειν, the annotation in question would undeniably have made no sense at all. Given this realisation, any arguments to the contrary that could be deduced from the different Didymean *usus* of ἀντὶ τοῦ invoked by Ludwich will inevitably be weakened (and in any case the Didymean *usus* clashes with the sequence of terms handed down according to the scholastic text). In the light of these considerations, it becomes plausible to assert that Didymus' intention in mentioning δῶκεν was to record a further variant pertaining to the line in question, which also happened to be the variant he preferred. Despite the reservations expressed by van Thiel, who feels that the ancient scholars had already misunderstood what were intended to be erudite explanations, taking them to be variants or conjectures<sup>47</sup>, there seems to be no well founded reason for denying that the scholion under consideration here documents the existence of the variant δῶκεν in *Il.* 14.382 in antiquity as well.

The final piece of the mosaic to be dealt with here is the issue of the source from which Didymus obtained information concerning the existence of this variant. He identifies this source by giving it the generic label of ἔνια τῶν ὑπομνημάτων. While Ludwich<sup>48</sup> assigned these commentaries to Aristarchus without discussing the question at all, Erbse believed them to be anonymous pieces of writing<sup>49</sup>. The hypothesis of an Aristarchean authorship has recently been taken into consideration by Martin West, who extensively debated the relevant problems. He has considered the possibility that indefinite expressions of this type, which are recurrent in Didymus, could be linked to the *hypomnemata* “par excellence” to which Didymus had recourse, namely those of Aristarchus. West rightly cautions against overconfidence in this regard, as we have positive documentation that Didymus did have knowledge of *hypomnemata* by *at least* one other author (an otherwise unknown Diogenes<sup>50</sup>). Nevertheless, he shows that here too there

47 Thiel 2014, II 504: “εὐφραδέστερον (Qualitätsurteil): Didymos behandelt gelehrte Erklärungen wie Varianten oder Konjekturen”. See above in the text.

48 Ludwich 1907, 91: cf. above, n. 13.

49 Erbse 1959, 278: “[...], da der Berichterstatter augenscheinlich nicht an aristarchische Schriften denkt. [...] Didymos erfuhr eine von der Vulgata und von Aristarchs Text abweichende Variante aus ungenannten Erklärungsschriften” (my italics).

50 On this figure see Pagani 2016.

would be no serious drawbacks associated with the Aristarchean hypothesis<sup>51</sup>. Admittedly, it would result in a contradiction with the statements contained in the “Textscholie” of A and in the first part of the scholion of T (where, irrespectively of whether one wishes to maintain the reading δόσκειν or give preference, as I believe is more appropriate, to the version δόσκειν, what is documented is something other than δῶκειν). However, this is not sufficient reason for ruling out the possibility that the commentaries in question may have been those of Aristarchus, since the different reading could have been found in one of the *ekdoseis* of Aristarchus, and second thoughts by this grammarian have been widely and reliably demonstrated in the scholiastic documentation<sup>52</sup>.

In conclusion, I believe it is more plausible that Didymus ascribed to Aristarchus the reading δόσκειν, as seems to emerge clearly from the manuscript tradition of the two scholia *ad locum*, and that he also recorded the variant δῶκειν, which he had found in some of the *hypomnemata* he had at hand and which he appreciated as more correct. That δῶκειν could also be traced back to Aristarchus is conceivable, but cannot be proven. As far as the pattern of debate among the scholars is concerned (it is a debate that unfolds in part at a distance, since it spans a good two hundred years of philology), I have dared to add my voice to an already congested chorus: I hope that I have not hereby committed an act of *hybris*, but that I have succeeded, at least, in unravelling the terms of the question.

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51 West 2001, 74–75: “Aristarchus may be understood as the subject in other places where we find just ἐν τοῖς ὑπομνήμασι [...] or διὰ τῶν ὑπομνημάτων. [...] Didymus does name one other author of ὑπομνήματα [...]: an otherwise unknown Diogenes [...]. That should warn us not to assume too readily that all references to ὑπομνήματα must be those of Aristarchus. [...] Didymus several times uses the vague expression ἐν τισι or κατ’ἕνια τῶν ὑπομνημάτων. Are these Aristarchus’? That is not inconsistent with their being set in opposition to αἱ ἐκδόσεις [...]. Even at Ξ 382d<sup>1</sup>, where a scholion in the inner margin of A, οὕτως Ἀρίσταρχος, “δόσκειν”, is complemented by one in the outer, ἕνια δὲ τῶν ὑπομνημάτων “δῶκειν” ἀντὶ τοῦ “δόσκειν”, the ὑπομνήματα may be Aristarchean, as ‘Aristarchus’ in the first note may well stand for αἱ Ἀριστάρχου, i.e. the ἐκδόσεις”.

52 See for ex. Montanari 2000, Montanari 2003, Pagani 2015; on the form of the *ekdosis*, see Montanari 2015, with previous bibliography.

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