Sentiment Analysis of Homeric Text: The 1st Book of Iliad

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Introduction

- Sentiment annotations for ancient Greek: limited.
- Released sentiment annotations for the 1st Book of Iliad.
- Investigated annotating the sentiment of the reader VS. that of the author.
- Provided a list of emotions suggested by the annotators.
- Experimented with (modern) GreekBERT.

The dataset

- 92 verses were given to 14 annotators.
- Half annotated the sentiment Homer aimed to provoke to the reader.
- The rest annotated their sentiment while reading.
- The latter group yielded a higher agreement (20+ units).
- Free-text emotions were recorded during the annotation.

Empirical analysis

- Greek-BERT (Koutsikakis et al., 2020) fine-tuned for sentiment estimation:
  - The annotators % that classified a verse as positive, negative, neutral, or narrator.
  - Gold score or class? Opted for score, to handle instance ambiguity (Fornaciari et al., 2021).
  - Split at random or based on time? Opted for a time-based split, to follow human reading and annotation.

Conclusions

- New dataset released based on the 1st Iliad Book.
- Perceived sentiment has been annotated by native (modern) Greek speakers.
- Verses with polarised and unanimous sentiment annotations presented.
- Low error by a mechanical sentiment annotator.

In future work, we will expand the dataset with the help of human/machine annotators, and we will compare our sentiment annotations with those from ancient Greek scholars.