

263 Πρὸς τούτοις ἐπεὶ τῶν ἱστορουμένων τὸ μὲν
 ἔστιν ἱστορία τὸ δὲ μῦθος τὸ δὲ πλάσμα, ὧν ἡ μὲν
 ἱστορία ἀληθῶν τινῶν ἔστι καὶ γεγονότων ἔκθεσις,
 ὡς ὅτι Ἀλέξανδρος ἐν Βαβυλῶνι δι' ἐπιβούλων
 φαρμακευθεὶς ἐτελεύτα, πλάσμα δὲ πραγμάτων
 μὴ γενομένων μὲν ὁμοίως δὲ τοῖς γενομένοις
 λεγομένων, ὡς αἱ κωμικαὶ ὑποθέσεις καὶ οἱ μῖμοι,
 264 μῦθος δὲ πραγμάτων ἀγενήτων καὶ ψευδῶν
 ἔκθεσις, ὡς ὅτι τὸ μὲν τῶν φαλαγγίων καὶ ὄφειν
 γένος Τιτήνων ἐνέπουσιν ἀφ' αἵματος ἐζωγονῆσθαι,
 τὸν δὲ Πήγασον λαμοτομηθείσης τῆς Γοργόνης
 ἀπὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἐκθορεῖν, καὶ οἱ μὲν Διομήδους
 ἑταῖροι εἰς θαλασσίους μετέβαλον ὄρνις, ὁ δὲ
 265 Ὀδυσσεὺς εἰς ἵππον, ἡ δὲ Ἑκάβη εἰς κύναν,—τοι-
 αῦτης δὲ οὔσης τῶν ἱστοριῶν διαφορᾶς, ἐπεὶ οὐκ
 ἔστι τέχνη τις περὶ τὰ ψευδῆ καὶ ἀνύπαρκτα,

^a An epic poet, of Halicarnassus, *circa* 480 B.C.

^b A Boeotian hunter, slain by Artemis; and placed, after death, among the stars.

Moreover, since of the subjects of history one part 263
 is history, another legend, another fiction,—and of
 these history is the recording of certain things which
 are true and have happened, as that Alexander died
 at Babylon through having been poisoned by plotters;
 and fiction is the narrating things which are not real
 events but are similar to real events in the telling,
 such as the hypothetical situations in comedies and
 mimes; and legend is the narrating of events which 264
 have never happened and are false, like the story that
 the species of venomous spiders and snakes were
 born alive from the blood of the Titans, and that
 Pegasus sprang from the head of the Gorgon when
 her throat was cut,^c and that the companions of
 Diomedes were changed into sea-birds, Odysseus into
 a horse, and Hecuba into a dog,—such then being 265
 the variety in histories, since there exists no art
 which deals with things false and unreal, and the

^c Cf. Hesiod, *Theog.* 280.

ψευδῆ δέ ἐστι καὶ ἀνύπαρκτα τὰ περὶ τοὺς μύθους
 καὶ τὰ πλάσματα, περὶ ἃ μάλιστα τοῦ ἱστορικοῦ
 μέρους ἢ γραμματικῆ καταγίνεται, οὐκ ἂν εἴη
 τις τέχνη περὶ τὸ ἱστορικὸν μέρος τῆς γραμμα-
 266 τικῆς. ὅθεν καταγελᾶν ἄξιον τῶν λεγόντων ὅτι
 εἰ καὶ ἡ ὕλη τῆς ἱστορίας ἐστὶν ἀμέθοδος, ἢ μέντοι
 κρίσις ταύτης γενήσεται τεχνικῆ, δι' ἧς γινώσκομεν
 267 τί τε ψευδῶς ἱστοροῦνται καὶ τί ἀληθῶς. πρῶτον
 μὲν γὰρ οὐ παραδεδώκασι ἡμῖν οἱ γραμματικοὶ
 τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἱστορίας κριτήριον, ἵνα καὶ ἐξετά-
 ζωμεν πότε ἀληθῆς ἐστὶν αὐτὴ καὶ πότε ψευδῆς.
 εἶτα καὶ μηδεμιᾶς οὐσης ἀληθοῦς ἱστορίας παρὰ
 τοῖς γραμματικοῖς οὐδὲ τὸ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς κριτήριον
 ὑποστατὸν ἐστίν, ἐπεὶ πῶς οὐκ ἔργον, τινὸς μὲν
 λέγοντος ὅτι Ὀδυσσεὺς ὑπὸ Τηλεγόνου παιδὸς
 κατὰ ἄγνοιαν ἀνήρηται, τινὸς δὲ ὅτι λάρου κέντρον
 θαλασσίας τρυγόνος ἀφέντος αὐτοῦ τῇ κεφαλῇ
 διεφώνησεν, ἄλλου δὲ ὅτι εἰς ἵππον μετέβαλε τὴν
 μορφὴν, θέλειν ἐν οὕτως ἀπερρωγῶσι πράγμασι
 εὐρεῖν τάληθές; πρότερον γὰρ δεῖ ὑποστῆναι ἐν
 τοῖς διαφωνοῦσι τὸν ἀληθεύοντα, καὶ τότε ζητεῖν
 268 τί ἐστὶν πάντων δὲ ἀπίθανα καὶ ψευδῆ λεγόντων
 οὐδὲ τεχνικῶ τινὶ κριτηρίῳ δίδοται πάροδος.

Καὶ μὴν οὐδὲ δι' ὧν ἂν ἱστορία καλῶς γραφεῖη
 διδάσκουσιν οἱ γραμματικοί, ἵνα κατ' ἀναφορὰν
 τὴν ὡς ἐπὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα θεωρήματα λέγωμεν
 τεχνικὸν τι μέρος ὑπάρχειν παρ' αὐτοῖς τὸ ἱστο-
 269 ρικόν τοῦτο γὰρ ῥητορικῶν ἐστὶ τὸ ἔργον. ὥστε
 εἰ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐξομολογοῦνται ἀμέθοδον τὴν εἶναι
 παράπηγμα τὴν ἱστορίαν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐπελογοισάμεθα,
 καὶ ἄλλως οὐδὲν τεχνικὸν θεωρήμα πρὸς τὴν
 γνῶσιν αὐτῆς ἢ σύστασιν παραδεδώκασι, ῥητέον
 150

legends and fictions, which form the main subjects of
 the historical part with which grammar is concerned,
 are false and unreal, it will follow that there exists no
 art which deals with the historical part of grammar.
 Hence they deserve to be laughed at who assert that 266
 even if the subject-matter of history lacks method,
 yet the judging of it will be a matter of art, by means
 of which we ascertain what is falsely related and
 what truly. For, firstly, the Grammarians have not 267
 furnished us with a criterion of true history, so that
 we might determine when it is true and when false.
 In the next place, as the Grammarians have no history
 that is true, the criterion of truth is also non-existent;
 for when one man says that Odysseus was killed in
 ignorance by his son Telegonus,^a and another that he
 breathed his last when a sea-gull^b dropped on his
 head the spike of a roach, and yet another that he was
 transformed into a horse, surely it is a hard task to
 try to discover the truth in such incoherent accounts.
 For we must establish first which of these dissentient
 narrators is telling the truth, and then inquire as
 to the facts; but when all relate what is improb- 268
 able and false no opening is given for a technical
 criterion.

Nor yet do the Grammarians instruct us as to how
 history should rightly be written, so that by a refer-
 ence to such rules we might declare that with them
 the historical part is a technical one; for this is the
 task of the Rhetoricians. So that, if even they them- 269
 selves confess that history is a chronicle without
 method and we have confirmed this by logic, and if,
 moreover, they have provided no technical rule for
 understanding or constructing it, we must declare

^a His son by Circè.

^b Cf. Hom. *Od.* xi. 134.

SEXTUS EMPIRICUS

*καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἱστορικὸν μέρος ἀσύστατον εἶναι τὴν
γραμματικὴν.*

AGAINST THE PROFESSORS, I. 269-271

that as regards its historical part also the **Art of Grammar** is without foundation.