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A NEW COMMENTARY ON THE *ILIAD*

J. LATACZ (ed.): *Homers Ilias: Gesamtkommentar, auf der Grundlage der Ausgabe von Ameis-Hentze-Cauer. Prolegomena; I. Book 1, fasc. 1. Text und Übersetzung; fasc. 2. Kommentar.* Pp. xii + 256, xx + 39, xvi + 213. Munich and Leipzig: K. G. Saur, 2000. Cased, DM 98, 58, 118 (or 156 for the two fascicles). ISBN: 3-598-74300-9, 3-598-74302-5, 3-598-74303-3.

There were numerous commentaries on the *Iliad* in the nineteenth century, especially in Germany, the home of Homeric scholarship, pride of place going to that of Ameis, continued and revised by Hentze. This began in 1868 and went through various editions up to 1913, the last of them revised by Cauer. In English the parallel was Leaf (first published 1886–8), who acknowledged his debt to Ameis–Hentze. Both commentaries reflect their age in showing adherence to the 'analytical' viewpoint, i.e. they present arguments against unity of authorship. In spite of the fact that radically new discoveries were made about the Homeric poems in the twentieth century, particularly by Milman Parry and W. Schadewaldt, they were not superseded in either language until G. S. Kirk put together a team for an English language commentary that was published by Cambridge University Press in six volumes without the Greek text between 1985 and 1993. Kirk was the general editor and the particular editor of Books 1–8, other scholars (J. B. Hainsworth, R. C. M. Janko, M. W. Edwards and N. J. Richardson) taking four books each.

That commentary is of the highest quality, but inevitably a little uneven. A striking feature of Kirk's first volume was that he explicitly minimized reference to what he called 'secondary literature', which seemed to include the whole of German scholarship, including Ameis–Hentze. He defined the project simply as a replacement for Leaf. Later volumes either explicitly or in practice rejected this limitation, but first impressions are strong, and to a German-speaking scholar the effect must have been of an extraordinarily chauvinistic approach.

In the same decade that saw the publication of the final volumes of the Cambridge commentary, Professor Joachim Latacz of the University of Basel instituted an even bigger enterprise, advertised as 'Der neue Ameis/Hentze'. The planning was meticulous. It was discussed at a conference held at Basel in November 1996; a detailed statement of intention was issued in *WJA* 21 (1996–7), 7–37, the essence of which was repeated in English translation by J. P. Holoka in *BMCR* 9 (1998), 82–97; the first three parts, reviewed here, were published in 2000. They consist of *Prolegomena* and Book 1 of the *Iliad* in two parts, text/translation and commentary.

Careful decisions have been taken. The *Prolegomena* deal in depth with major

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topics, to avoid constant repetition in the commentary. The text is that of M. L. West, recently published in the Teubner series, to which Latacz himself has composed a new translation. The commentary distinguishes between four classes of reader. Its main body uses three sizes of print: normal size for non-linguistic explanations for the many who study this great work in translation, in which such Greek words as appear are mostly transliterated into the Latin alphabet; slightly smaller print for the sort of notes found in traditional editions of classical texts, aimed at students of Greek; and smallest print (rather rare) for material of interest mainly to scholars. At the bottom of each page are elementary clarifications of linguistic features for the benefit of beginners or those whose Greek is rusty. These are repeated at intervals. For this category of reader also a set of twenty-four 'Rules of Homeric language' is provided at the beginning of the commentary volume, to which they are directed rather than to the more advanced Grammar section of the *Prolegomena.*

Latacz, like Kirk, has gathered together a team. There is a central core at the University of Basel, consisting of himself, René Nünlist, Magdalene Stoevesandt, and Claude Brügger, who cooperated on the drafting of the commentary. A wider group are specialists in particular fields, some being colleagues at Basel (Fritz Graf, Rolf Stucky, Jürgen v. Ungern-Sternberg, Edzard Visser, Rudolph Wachter), others from other lands (Rudolph Führer, Irene de Jong, Michael Meier-Brügger, Sebastiaan van der Mije, Martin West). In addition, there is contact with the Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos at Hamburg, Manfred Korfmann at Tübingen, and Françoise Létoublon at Grenoble. Such a list excites wonder and admiration.

The volume *of Prolegomena* has the following chapters: (1) 'On Homeric Commentaries', by Latacz; (2) 'History of the Text', by West; (3) 'Formulas and Oral Poetry', by Latacz; (4) 'Homeric Grammar', by Wachter; (5) 'Metre', by Nünlist; (6) 'The "Figures" [i.e. Characters]: Gods', by Graf; 'Humans', by Stoevesandt; (7) 'The Structure of the Iliad', by Latacz; (8) 'The Poetics of the Iliad', presented through the analysis of certain literary terms by Nünlist and de Jong; (9) an index of all occurrences of personal names, by Stoevesandt and others; and (10) a word index showing the contacts between Homeric and Mycenaean Greek, by Wachter. It is expected that these *Prolegomena* will be revised as the commentary proceeds, and that a section about the scholia may be added.

West reproduces his Teubner text, with a modified apparatus criticus. The text of the *Iliad* has of course been pretty secure since the days of the Alexandrians, and not much change might be expected other than the omission of doubtfully attested lines; but West introduced into the Teubner a great deal that was new, which some reviewers have found difficult to stomach; most of us can only wonder at the extraordinary breadth of his learning. It is one of the great scholarly achievements of our days. He indeed makes judgements about the status of doubtfully attested lines, but he also makes numerous changes in accentuation, breathings, and word-forms, which must drive all open-minded Greek scholars to reconsider their traditional lore. Many of these novelties are explained under the heading *Orthographisches* on pp. x–xv in the introduction to the volume of text and translation, but not all; others the reader will find in the *Praefatio* to the Teubner. A novelty in presentation, owing perhaps more to de Jong than to West, is that speeches are shown visually, by both indentation and printing in italic Greek. This is to make it easier for the reader to appreciate their different vocabulary and the effects of what is called secondary focalization.

Latacz's line-by-line translation is based on the principle that there should be a repeated rhythm as in the original, but that for a modern European language this should be iambic, not dactylic. Most lines are similar to catalectic iambic tetrameters

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(in Latin, iambic septenarii), and sequences of them seem to this reader to run very well, e.g. ll. 324–5 (in Agamemnon's instructions to the heralds)

> Gibt er sie aber nicht heraus, möcht' ich sie selbst wohl holen,
> Gekommen mit noch grössrer Zahl: für ihn nur um so schlimmer!

L. is not, however, committed to a strictly regular length of line, and accepts expansion if there is more content to include. An interesting feature is that he preserves his own judgement to the extent of occasionally translating a different text from that printed on the opposite page, for example at ll. 5, 91, 97. The different readings are, of course, always to be found in the apparatus criticus to the Greek text, and in principle always discussed in the commentary, but the practice may confuse the inexperienced reader.

The commentary discusses issues consistently, conscientiously, and intelligently, taking full account of the views of predecessors. The division of material has been mentioned above. There is no room here to enter into discussion. There are 173 pages on Book 1, compared with sixty-four in Kirk's first volume.

The accuracy of printing is phenomenal. Later volumes (each in two parts—text/translation and commentary) will no longer contain just one book of the *Iliad*. The actual number is not yet decided, nor is the expected date of completion, although 2010 has been mentioned. Homerists can only feel the deepest gratitude, particularly to Latacz and his publisher, and anticipate what is to come.

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ILIADIC BATTLE SCENES

O. Hellmann: *Die Schlachtszenen der Ilias. Das Bild des Dichters vom Kampf in der Heroenzeit.* (*Hermes* Einzelschriften 83.) Pp. 218. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000. Paper, DM 86. ISBN: 3-515-07463-5.

In this new account of battle scenes in the *Iliad*, Oliver Hellmann steers a middle course between those who would see the hoplite phalanx already reflected in Homer (perhaps most prominently exemplified by Joachim Latacz) and those who (like Hans van Wees) see a mode of warfare preceding hoplite tactics, in which small groups of warriors fight in open formation. But unlike most other writers on Homeric battles, H. is not primarily interested in military history. Indeed, one of the strengths of this book is its healthy skepticism about the notion of reading actual historical practices or conditions directly out of the *Iliad*. Opposing armies march into battle, he says, in ranks that do resemble hoplite formation, but once the fighting starts the poetic descriptions take three forms: a massed battle involving much or all of both armies, fighting between smaller groups of warriors around prominent heroes (to whom they have personal relations but are subordinated), and individual duels between pairs of major heroes. Sometimes the duels and the small-group fighting are simply a microcosm for the battle raging between the whole armies (as Latacz argues), but more often they have independent importance and critically affect the outcome of the fighting. These different modes of description do not cohere into a unified account of

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