

BOOK REVIEW

Homer: Iliad Book XXII. Edited by IRENE J. F. DE JONG. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. x + 210. Hardcover, £47.50/\$90.00. ISBN 978-0-521-88332-0. Paper, £19.99/\$36.99. ISBN 978-0-521-70977-4.

De Jong's commentary will enable advanced undergraduates and graduate students to work confidently through *Iliad* 22. It will also prepare students to read other books of the Homeric epics without the support it offers—the ultimate service a commentary of this sort can provide. I stress below the utility of the book in the classroom, but I hasten to add that those whose scholarship brings them to Book 22 will also want to consult this commentary.

An introductory essay precedes the lemma-based commentary. De Jong first surveys the possible range of dates for an actual Homer, “the oral background of his poems,” and strategies for interpreting the epics as literature. After summarizing the *Iliad's* plot, she then elucidates the intersections between Books 6, 22, and 24 and between the deaths of Sarpedon, Patroklos, and Hektor. This second section concludes with a discussion of Achilles's characterization. The next section, entitled “Narrative Art and Oral Style,” comprises introductions to the narratologist's narrator and narratees, to comparisons and similes, and to epithets. Few teachers will start a Homer course with Book 22, but they may wish to direct their students early on to de Jong's judicious summaries of these complex issues in Homeric scholarship. The final section covers features of Homer's art language and of the dactylic hexameter and ends with a brief treatment of the transmission of the Homeric text. Especially valuable here are the twenty-three points concerning Homeric “Language”—that is, phonology, morphology, and syntax. (Readers will want to familiarize themselves with this section on “Language” because de Jong references it in the lemma-based commentary: e.g., “anaphoric pronoun [L 17]” (*ad* 18) or “third person thematic subjunctive with athematic ending [L 13]” (*ad* 93).)

There are now several Cambridge commentaries on books of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and we can ask the following questions when evaluating the lemma-based portion. First, does the author provide what any competent Homericist

should be able to provide? Second, are we in the hands of a seasoned pro, one deeply familiar with the structural and thematic mechanisms of Homeric poetry? Third, do distinctive attributes show the commentary to be the work of a particular individual? In the present case, the answer to each question is, “Yes.”

First, de Jong’s comments on lexical, morphological, and syntactical matters are always helpful. The note on verse 329’s ὄφρα clause is alone worth the price of admission (it shows result, not purpose) (*ad* 328–9). Occasionally, a teacher may need to give a fuller explanation on a point of grammar. For instance, about the phrase οἶον εἶπες at verse 178, de Jong writes, “exclamatory, ‘what a thing to say,’” but a student may not understand what is “exclamatory” here. The note on verse 321’s εἶξε speaks of “an oblique optative” and the note on 431’s βείομαι of “a dubitative subjunctive” (*ad* 431–2); few students (especially in the US) will know either phrase. De Jong orients the reader well when it comes to bibliography. On only a handful of topics would I direct students to additional scholarship. Daniel Turkeltaub’s “Perceiving Iliadic Gods” (*HSCP* 103 (2007) 51–81) should appear in a discussion of Achilles’s recognition of Apollo (see *ad* 15–16; cf. *ad* 214–25), Egbert J. Bakker’s “Discourse and Performance: Involvement, Visualization, and ‘Presence’ in Homeric Poetry” (*CA* 12 (1993) 1–29) in a discussion of the particle ἄρα (see *ad* 98), and Deborah Beck’s *Homeric Conversation* (Washington, DC (2005), e.g. 29–43) in a discussion of formulae that introduce speeches (see *ad* 33–7).

Second, the commentary abounds with incisive observations on various words, phrases, and verses and on various aspects of Homeric presentation. I give a representative sample. The verb ἦ (he/she spoke) rounds off a speech “when words are immediately followed by action, usually by the same subject” (*ad* 77). Athene’s vocatives addressed to Zeus at verse 178 contrast with Hera’s at *Il.* 16.440 (*ad* 178–81). In Athene’s disguise as Deiphobos, the poet links “two motifs: (1) two heroes joining forces against a stronger opponent ... and (2) two brothers fighting together” (*ad* 226–47). The particle combination ἦ μάλα δῆ “presents what is said as an objective truth ..., shared by speaker and addressee alike” (*ad* 229). Hektor describes the gods as ἐπίσκοποι (guardians) because they ensure that men adhere to their oaths “in the future” (*ad* 255, emphasis in original). “Laments are addressed to same-sex audiences” (*ad* 430). Throughout, de Jong keeps us informed about the typicality or atypicality of what we are reading, essential information for the student of Homer.

Third, as is to be expected in a work by one of the leading scholars of Homeric narratology, numerous comments have a narratological bent. Again, a few

examples suffice. The scene in which Zeus ponders sparing Hektor but finds Athene adamantly opposed to the idea instantiates “the ‘fill-in’ technique” (*ad* 166–87). In using a phrase deployed elsewhere only by characters, the narrator “shows his emotions at this high point of the story” (*ad* 203). The perplexing ἀεικέα ... ἔργα at verse 395 “form part of the focalisation of Achilles,” a fact that bolsters the notion that “this line is best taken as not implying moral criticism.” Indeed, matters of focalization receive frequent illumination, as do issues of narrative pacing.

In 2001, de Jong published her masterful *A Narratological Commentary on the Odyssey* (Cambridge). We are grateful that she has continued her efforts in this genre.

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