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The most scholarly and controversial section is the appendix on prime matter. After examining the various passages which are thought to support the traditional view of prime matter, i.e. prime matter as "a single, eternal, and completely indeterminate substrate to all physical change" (p. 129), Charlton declares this interpretation at best unproven. The traditional characterization of prime matter, he argues, has more in common with *Timaeus* 49A-52B and the Stoic and Christian analysis of the ultimate substrate than with Aristotle's notion.

This laudable reprint provides a readable translation and a stimulating discussion, a continuing asset for those who teach a serious introduction to the thought of Aristotle.

*The Catholic University of America*  
C<sup>W</sup> 80.3 (1987)

LAWRENCE P. SCHRENK

G. S. Kirk. *The Iliad: A Commentary, Vol. I: Books 1-4*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985. Pp. xxv, 409. \$59.50 (hb.), \$19.95 (pb.).

In this first volume of a new six-volume commentary, G. S. Kirk, general editor, states that "subsequent volumes should appear at close intervals in some four years' time." Kirk will produce Volume II (Books 5-8), J. B. Hainsworth, R. Janko, M. W. Edwards, and N. J. Richardson the others. Since the editors intend the commentary to replace the two-volume 1900-2 edition by Walter Leaf, I will distinguish scope, content, and critical orientation by comparing the newer work with the older.

The six volumes by Kirk et al. will run ca. 2,000 pages, *without* text. Leaf's two volumes run less than 1,000 pages, *with* text. In addition, Leaf concentrates on individual words and phrases, with particular attention to accident, grammar, syntax, and lexical or etymological questions. Kirk stresses the expressive (poetic and metrical) force of formulas, lines and half-lines, metrical cola, groups of lines, and extended passages, especially as regards the peculiarities of orally evolved verse.

To cite particulars: in 1.152-162, in an important speech by Akhilleus, Leaf comments only on *skioenta* ("expressive of the importance of shade in a sunburnt land") in 157, *khairêis* (an only seemingly anomalous subjunctive in secondary sequence in a purpose clause) in 158, the conative present participle *arnumenoî* and the concrete force of *timên* ("ransom or material recompense") in 159. Kirk remarks at 154-156 on the distinct oversimplification of motives for fighting. On the sense and colon-structure of verses 156-159, he refers the reader to a section of his introduction on "word-groups and rhythmical cola." Line 157 he calls "a fluid and emotive verse, with its pattern of long, short, and long vowel-sounds." Of 158-160, he says, "the style becomes breathless, with a sporadic interjection of pure abuse." At 161, which alludes to Agamemnon's problematic threat (137) to act in person (*autos*), Kirk refers to line 185, where he discusses the issue in a page-long note detecting "a degree of oral inconsistency and imprecision." At 162, he finds that the two separate points made by Akhilleus are part of a careful argument and not "a mere accident of the paratactic style."

Leaf, an ardent Analyst packed his commentary with the petty antiquarianism typical of the nineteenth-century scholars who replaced literary criticism with diligent investigation of linguistic minutiae and, especially, of the

peculiar circumstances of composition, viz. multiple authorship. Kirk, aesthetic in orientation, assumes that the *Iliad* evolved from a matrix of orally composed poetry, whatever the role of writing and literacy in fixing the poem in its ultimate form, yet surpasses Leaf in his conscientious attention to the scholia. Kirk's eminently sensible presuppositions regarding date, authorship, composition, etc. (familiar from his *Songs of Homer*) are briefly justified in a valuable series introduction.

This book initiates a welcome new contribution to Homer studies: a major critical commentary on the *Iliad* that judiciously reflects the progress of Homeric scholarship in the twentieth century.

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JAMES P. HOLOKA

George A. Kennedy. *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*. Studies in Religion. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984. Pp. x, 171. \$14.00 (hb.), \$6.95 (pb.).

George Kennedy offers a clear and readable example of how the universally applicable concepts of Greco-Roman rhetoric can be used as a contemporary device "to provide readers of the New Testament with an additional tool of interpretation to complement form criticism, redaction criticism, historical and literary criticism, and other approaches being used in the twentieth century." This essay, without footnotes, but rich in references to ancient rhetorical texts, is aimed primarily at students of Bible. New Testament passages are referred to but not quoted in full, so that the reader must be familiar with the texts under consideration or read with the New Testament at hand.

In chapter one, Kennedy surveys ancient rhetorical theory for those unfamiliar with its basic precepts and sources. Then, he sets out a general procedure for considering New Testament texts from the rhetorical point of view. Here the search for meaning is an attempt to discover the persuasive intent of a given *rhetorical unit* in a specific *rhetorical situation* (what?), to find the solution of the *rhetorical problem* (who?) of the given passage through its *arrangement of material* and *devices of style* (how?).

Chapters two through seven provide abundant applications of Kennedy's method through analyses of such passages as the "Sermon on the Mount", Matthew 5:2-7:28; the "Sermon on the Plain", Luke 6:20-7:1; and twenty-five speeches in Acts of the Apostles. Further examples of New Testament rhetoric are drawn from Thessalonians, Galatians, and Romans. The final chapter is a brief conclusion arguing for the usefulness of the rhetorical method of criticism.

For the general reader, this short book shows how an ancient method of criticism can be revived as a powerful tool for contemporary analysis. For the student of New Testament, it serves as an introduction to a well-tried method of understanding the power of his texts. For the teacher of Greek who uses the New Testament as the basis of an introductory course, this short book could be used to orient his classes toward one of the dominant intellectual forces of Greco-Roman antiquity, rhetoric.

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