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REVIEWS

Fred C. Mench

Publishers are invited to submit new publications to be reviewed in this column. Submissions should be sent to Fred C. Mench, Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, Pomona, NJ 08240.

Bryan Hainsworth. *The Iliad: A Commentary, Volume III: Books 9–12*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Pp. xxi, 380. \$89.95 (hb.); \$29.95 (pb.). ISBN 0-521-23711-4; -28173-3.

Nicholas Richardson. *The Iliad: A Commentary, Volume VI: Books 21–24*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Pp. xx, 387. \$89.95 (hb.); \$29.95 (pb.). ISBN 0-521-30960-3; -31209-4.

Hainsworth is perhaps best known (along with A. Hoekstra) for his vital demonstrations of the flexibility of Homer's formulaic diction. On the level of the syntactic and metrical interstices of the specialized language of oral poetry, he disclosed a much greater subtlety of compositional technique than had seemed plausible on the "hard Parryist" view of Homer's art. A collateral benefit of his work has been an increase in the cogency of critical discussions of the literary refinements and complexities possible in a "traditional" genre. Hainsworth's commentary on *Iliad* 9–12 reflects this earlier work and also a more recent (in published form) interest in comparative epic.

The introduction is in two parts: the first, on "Formulas," contains crisp and reliable treatments of word and formula positions, types of formulas, extension and economy, modification, ornamental epithets, *hapax legomena*, etc. It is the best brief presentation of these issues now available. The second part of the introduction, "The *Iliad* as Heroic Poetry," discusses the singer, the tradition, the hero, and the *Iliad* in Greek epic tradition. The commentary proper is quite consistent in its emphases with the previously published volumes in the set: it attends closely to metrical and formulaic effects as well as to explication of the narrative line and of the literary artistry evident on all levels; again, the evidence of the scholia is adroitly incorporated.

Richardson's contribution is a worthy final installment to the Cambridge commentary. The author of an exemplary edition of the *Hymn to Demeter* (1974), he shares the literary theoretical viewpoint of the other editors and matches their balance of coverage and clarity of expression very nicely. The first part of Richardson's introduction treats "Structure and Themes," and is especially good on ring composition. The second part offers interesting information about "Book Division" and "The End of the *Iliad* in Relation to the *Odyssey*." The third part, a compact survey of "Homer and His Ancient Critics," is a model of concision and dependable evaluation. The commentary itself shares the concerns evident in the other volumes, with a somewhat greater stress on archaeology, especially in Book 23.

The publication of these two volumes completes the "Cambridge *Iliad*." The whole is a striking example of smooth coordination among five experienced scholars. The general editor, G. S. Kirk, is to be congratulated for assembling such a distinguished team and for harmonizing critical perspective and ideology as well as the types and degree of detail in the running commentary. In this regard, the Cambridge *Iliad* is much superior to the Mondadori/Oxford *Odyssey*.

While the commentary is expressly designed for and will benefit most the reader with at least a basic reading knowledge of Homeric Greek, the introductions collectively provide a superb handbook to the poet, accessible both to beginning students and to professionals. Put another way, they constitute a much needed literary complement and (in part) replacement for the Wace-Stubbings *Companion to Homer* (1962).

While the basically oralist approach of the commentators will not please all users, particularly in Europe, the Cambridge volumes furnish astute and helpful analyses of the *Iliad* and accurately resonate current literary theory.

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JAMES P. HOLOKA

Bernard Williams (ed.). *Plato: Theaetetus*. Indianapolis & Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Co., 1992. Pp. xxvii, 93. \$4.95 (pb.). ISBN 0-87220-158-9.

Translated by M.J. Levett and revised by Myles Burnyeat.*

This translation with notes is reprinted from Burnyeat's 1990 revision, done for the same publisher, of Levett's 1928 translation. Burnyeat's 241-page introduction has here been replaced by a 21-page introduction by Bernard Williams. The result is well suited to undergraduates in an introductory philosophy course or to the general reader, and for such an audience, this is on balance the best of the English translations that have been published in the last twenty years. Robin Waterfield's Penguin version makes for a more fluid read, but Levett-Burnyeat preserve the Greek more closely. On the other hand, Levett-Burnyeat translate a bit more freely than does John McDowell (Clarendon) without sacrificing accuracy. The small size and low price of Levett-Burnyeat are additional reasons why it is better for introductory courses than are Waterfield or McDowell, which like the 1990 Levett-Burnyeat contain extensive commentaries and bibliographies.

Burnyeat's changes in Levett's translation bring the version slightly closer to the Greek, although his search for greater fidelity can create wooden English like this at 161a6, where Burnyeat renders ἢ ἂν οὐχ οὕτως ἔχει as "in what way it is not as it should be," against Levett's original "what's wrong with this now?" Levett-Burnyeat translate key Greek words consistently: e.g. *epistemē* is "knowledge," *aisthēsis* is "perception," *doxa* is "judgement." For *kinēsis*, I prefer "change" to "motion," but the issue is faced in a footnote. The notes explain rare deviations from Burnet's text as well as clarify *Tht.*'s cultural obscurities, although there are gaps: a note on *skutalē*, for example, is needed at 209d10.

Williams' introduction gives the beginning reader of Plato a sense of how dialectical method works, as well as explains the seminal importance of *Tht.* for epistemological inquiry. Williams expounds the dialogue's arguments, identifies its most important discoveries, and points out how these have influenced later philosophers. Levett's section-by-section outline helps the beginner navigate the arguments' many twists. Advanced students and scholars, however, should tackle Burnyeat's 1990 commentary.

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*This review first appeared in CW 89.3 with errors in the Greek. We apologize and are reprinting it here with corrections.