

*The Iliad: A Commentary.* General editor G.S. Kirk. Volume I: books 1–4. Cambridge University Press, 1985. XXV, 409 p. £ 35.00.

One of the most prominent Homeric scholars of our age, G.S. Kirk, has undertaken a project which will excite great expectations and undoubtedly much praise: a six-volume commentary on the Iliad. The first volume, which also includes introductory essays on the Homeric question, verse technique, scholia, etc., is written by the editor; as will the second volume. The writers announced for the subsequent volumes are J.B. Hainsworth, R. Janko, M.W. Edwards, and N.J. Richardson. All six volumes are expected to be published during the 1980s.

The need for a medium-size up-to-date commentary on the Homeric poems is more than obvious. And the combined scholarship of the five writers, who will probably contribute to all the six volumes (this is not expressively stated), should be regarded as a further guarantee of quality. Of course users of a commentary of this kind will always disagree about various points of emphasis, inclusion and exclusion. It would be futile to enumerate such points. On the whole, in the opinion of the present reviewer, there is a good and sufficiently complex balance obtained between the linguistic, verse-technical, literary, religious, geographical, archaeological, etc., aspects. The mass of information and suggestions that the first volume contains is very impressive. My only complaint of a more general kind is this: would it not have been possible to give a few more references to earlier discussions (especially non-English ones) and alternative interpretations? As it is, the commentary is admirably useful for university teaching; but using approximately the same number of pages it could have been made even more helpful for scholarly work. A few more references on each page would have made a great deal of difference in this respect. Yet, even this complaint is perhaps unfair in view of the editor's achievement.

Regarding the Homeric question, Kirk's own position is now somewhat more conservative and 'unitarian' than it used to be. This is understandable in a reference work. However, he is certainly on the modern side of the 'Milman Parry revolution' (p. XXIII).

The Commentary will evidently be of very great service to different types of readers all over the world.

H. Thesleff

*Carmina Anacreontea.* Edidit M.L. West. Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana BSB B.G. Teubner Verlagsgesellschaft, Leipzig 1984. XXVI, 65 S. M 28.50.

Martin West has applied his inexhaustible energy on producing a full-scale scholarly edition of the 60 Palatine Anacreontea. The work follows the new B.T. heavy-apparatus pattern. Since these curious poems have been rather neglected in modern times, and all previous editions, including Preisendanz (1912), have been in various ways defective, one has to be very grateful indeed for West's work. His eminent knowledge of Greek poetry

has enabled him to improve on the text very much by making the right choice among earlier suggestions and adding emendations and conjectures of his own; but there remain of course a fair amount of cruxes and asterisks.

*H. Thesleff*

*Pindari Carmina cum fragmentis. Pars I: Epinicia. Post Brunonem Snell edidit Hervicus Maehler. Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana. BSB B.G. Teubner Verlagsgesellschaft, Leipzig 1984. XI, 192 S. M 24.—.*

This volume is a reprint of the 4th edition of the Epinicia part of Snell's Pindar (1964, the 1st edition 1953), with a few Addenda et Corrigenda attached (p. 191–192). It is good to have Maehler's competent confirmation of the reliability of this classical edition.

*H. Thesleff*

*Simon Goldhill: Language, sexuality, narrative: the Oresteia. Cambridge University Press, 1984. X, 315 p. £ 30.00.*

The astounding richness of the Oresteia and the deep relevance of its themes even to our age are reflected in the number of books and articles – often of great interest and good quality – that have been inspired by the trilogy of Aeschylus over the last few years. Broadly speaking, we can categorize them into two groups: those concentrating to the aspect of stagecraft and performance, and those investigating the text, the way the language works. Both aspects, with their many varieties and intertwinings, are essential to our quest of understanding the Oresteia. Simon Goldhill undoubtedly belongs to the second group – although he would, I think, be the first to protest against the ascribing of labels. In his Introduction, he describes his work as a departure, apparently from the usual paths well trodden by classical scholars. In spite of the fact that he has been inspired by his wide reading in fields outside classical studies (if one takes those studies in a narrow sense), for instance modern literary theory, semiotics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, I do not see his work as a revolution in the sphere of classical studies. The best interpreters of Aeschylus among the classicists have often reached results of equal (or even superior) broadness of vision.

This is, however, an interesting, stimulating and intelligent book. Its central idea (nowhere clearly formulated, but echoing and reverberating everywhere – which, by the way, is typical of the method of presentation of the author) is the realization of the importance of language and word in the Greek culture – not only in its political functions in the service of the state and the law but in its function as a vehicle for power and domination in human relations and as a ritual force. Not in vain does the author emphasize such expressions as e.g. Cho. 720-1 στομάτων. . . ἰσχύον (p. 169). The author offers