

einigermaßen im Umfeld der deutschen Altertumswissenschaft jener Zeit vertraut ist, wird nicht ohne weiteres alle in der Korrespondenz enthaltenen Daten verstehen. Der Herausgeber hätte gut getan, wenn er wenigstens hie und da weitergeholfen hätte. Die knappen biographischen Notizen von Gelehrten werden in den Anmerkungen zuweilen nur einmal gegeben, und zwar allein bei der ersten Erwähnung mit Angabe der damaligen Stellung. So erfährt der Leser nichts von den restlichen Dienstorten. Z. B. wird Wilamowitz auf S. 23 als Göttinger Lehrstuhlinhaber eingeführt, aber bei seinen späteren Erwähnungen wird seine damalige, zentrale Wirkungsstätte, die Berliner Universität, nicht eigens notiert und muß vom Leser aus den Briefen selbst erschlossen werden; ähnlich steht von Ernst von Stern S. 194 Anm. 1, daß er Ordinarius in Odessa war; daß er später nach Halle kam, wo er auch Rektor wurde, kann man zwar aus dem Text der Briefe erschließen, in einer Anm. wird das nicht eigens angegeben (dagegen wird u. a. von Eduard Norden, S. 180 als Ordinarius in Breslau eingeführt, S. 252 Anm. 2 mitgeteilt, er war 1906 nach Berlin berufen worden). – S. 406 Anm. 6, 460 Anm. 6, 491 Anm. 6 wird auf eine Veröffentlichung "Meyer - Ehrenberg" hingewiesen, ich habe aber eine Erklärung der Abkürzung nirgends gefunden. – Auf S. 198 Anm. 3 wird behauptet, Eugen Bormann sei "seit 1867 vor allem mit den griechischen Inschriften Italiens befaßt". Das stimmt nun so nicht; Bormanns große Leistung war die Herausgabe des elften Bandes des *lateinischen* Inschriftenwerkes.

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IRENE DE JONG: *A narratological commentary on the Odyssey*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2001. ISBN 0-521-46844-2 (pb). 627 pp. GBP 27.95.

Before reading this book, I was not sure whether there was actually a need for another commentary on Homer. Having finished reading, I can certainly state that there indeed is room for this book. It is not difficult to summarize the benefits of de Jong's book, but at this point, it is sufficient to say that this is a most satisfactory work characterized by clarity of thought and diction, an attractive feature of this "meta-commentary."

In her brief, yet informative, preface, De J. introduces the motifs and methods of her study, and she openly confesses to being an "eclectic" concerning previous Homeric literary studies. For her the problems (if one can call them so) between the unitarians, analysts, oralists and non-oralists are not of great importance, the main focus of the study being the narrative entirety of the *Odyssey*.

As her starting point, De J. states Richard Heinze's *Virgils' epische Technik* (1915<sup>3</sup>), a work whose approach she has applied to the study of the *Odyssey*. As a result, we have a book which, as the author herself puts it, does not directly help someone trying to make sense of the Greek text, but contributes to the understanding of it, this leading the book being referred to as a "meta-commentary."

The author briefly defines the term "narratological" which she has used in the title of the study. She makes a difference between traditional commentaries, which focus mainly on the textual "micro level" parts of the text thought to be problematic, e.g. linguistically or historically. A narratological commentary, on the other hand, looks at the text as a whole. It works on the "meso" and "macro" levels of the text as well (macro

should, I think, in this context be understood as meaning overall length, not as an opposite of "*micros*," as happens sometimes in modern discussions). In practice, this "narratological commenting" means, for example, highlighting the motifs and themes of the story as well as the ways of describing the characters and the action.

De J., as all those writing about Homer, has had to cope with a vast amount of earlier literature. The solution has been to refer only to a limited number of publications published before 1997. I have no objection to this, but in places, the reader would like to have more extensive references to modern literature in order to get an overview of the existing discussion and guidance on the passages in question.

Before the actual commentary there is a most informative and useful glossary of literary terms. They are, of course, mostly referred to in their English forms, but often German or/and the ancient Greek equivalents are also included. This glossary greatly facilitates the use of this book.

The commentary has been written in a way that it can be read as an independent work, as well as a supporting guide along with the *Odyssey*. Processing the text of the *Odyssey*, the book proceeds from larger units towards smaller ones: first, a general introduction to the whole book in question, then an overview of those passages which form a whole and finally comments on single lines. The reader gets the maximum benefit from the book if she or he checks all three levels concerning a certain subject.

Special attention is accorded to the speeches embedded in the text; their construction, function and rhythm have been analyzed with care. The literary terms explained in the glossary are referred to by a crux (†), and recurring topics, found in the index, are marked with an asterisk (\*). (Finding an explanation for the latter mark was a little bit difficult (it can be found on p. ix); this is practically my only complaint about the book).

At the end of the book, there are some interesting appendices. The first of them (Appendix A) presents a chronological table of 'Odysseus' storyline' (beginning from his departure to Troy until the reunion with Laertes) and of what happens to whom at the same time in different places. It becomes clear, for example, that Orestes kills Aegisthus in the same year when the suitors' siege begins in Ithaca. This may be self-evident to those who are truly familiar with the *Odyssey*, but the table greatly helps an average reader to see the "big picture" in the epic world. Another Appendix (E) which I found especially intriguing was the one summarizing the elements of Odysseus' "lying tales."

Some of the ideas and theories in this study surely can be found in other works on Homer. It is, however, the strength of De J's book that they are directly linked with the entirety of the "Odyssey". To summarize the merits of this commentary, it can be said that any fan of Homer will find it most entertaining and suitable even for bedside reading. On the other hand, in its intelligent, modern and common sense approach to the *Odyssey*, it also offers much of use to those privileged enough to be able to teach and study Homer in the original language.

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