

JOACHIM LATACZ: *Troy and Homer: Towards a Solution of an Old Mystery*. Translated from the German by KEVIN WINDLE and ROSH IRELAND. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2004. XVII, 342 pp., ill. ISBN 0-19-926308-6. GBP 30 (hb).

This is a long-winded but wide-ranging book about the windy city of Troy and the historicity of Homer's Iliad. It has created a furore in Germany. Professor Joachim Latacz is the distinguished Priam in the German-speaking, academic world of classics and archaeology, famous for his recent commentary on the Iliad. At the same time British classicists, brought up on the Cambridge Iliad Commentary undertaken by Kirk, Janko, Edwards and Richardson, will already be familiar with the issues of the historicity of the Homer and the debate over Hisarlık being equated with Troy, whilst American scholars will be immersed in the oral theory of Parry and Lord and their later proponents Ford and Nagy. Morris and Powell's edition *The New Companion to Homer* (1997) sketches out many of the major themes of this book, though to be fair, Latacz himself challenges classical scholars to reach out to Akkadian, Egyptian, Hittite and Luwian. "The days when classics studies meant the study of Greek and Roman antiquity are numbered" (p. 75). Latacz, with his firm belief in a single Homer who actually wrote both Iliad and Odyssey in the eighth century BC, represents the extreme opposite of Nagy who believes in multiple, illiterate bards who were active up till the seventh century BC. In spite of Latacz's impassioned bigotry, his book is deceptively persuasive.

The book is divided into two major parts, the first dealing with Troy (pp. 1–140) and the second with Homer (pp. 141–287), since as Latacz remarks (p. 143) "the case of Homer is different from the case of Troy". For a critical view of the book from the philologist Joshua Katz (December 2005), see <http://www.princeton.edu/~pswpc/papers/author/katz/katz.html> and for a more favourable impression from the archaeologist Ian Morris (November 2005), see <http://www.princeton.edu/~pswpc/papers/author/morris/morris.html>.

The book does indeed link together current research in widely separated areas, from the natural sciences to archaeology to linguistics. The questions involved are so controversial that they sparked off a conference in Montreal, held in January 2006, to deal with Mycenaeans and Anatolians in the Late Bronze Age. The objectives of the workshop were to assess the reinterpretation of the potentially critical Hittite document KUB 26.91 and to reassess perspectives on Mycenaean Greece and the interactions of the Mycenaeans with the Anatolians (Hittites and Luwians) in the Late Bronze Age and in particular to explore the question of the political primacy of Mycenaean Thebes in the thirteenth century BC (<http://modlang-hale.concordia.ca/description.html>).

The introduction outlines the background to the book including mention of the exhibition, entitled "Troy: Dream and Reality" held in Germany in 2001–2002, which led to a mini-Trojan war in Germany between Latacz and Manfred Korfman on the one side and their foes "the Kolbians", led by Professor Frank Kolb who questioned all their assumptions, on the other. The first part of the book examines the fundamental problem as to whether Hisarlık was once really Troia/Ilios. Following Korfman, Latacz sees Troy VI as a typical Anatolian city, with an acropolis and a fortified lower town. External sources (Hittite, Egyptian and Mycenaean) confirm that Achajawa was a major power and clashed with the Hittite Empire around Wilusa. Latacz then explores the nature of

Hisarlık in the Bronze Age. Here he appeals to Hittite and Egyptian texts and evidence. Latacz then describes the discovery of Troy's lower town. After recapping the history of the decipherment of Linear A and B, of Hittite and Luwian languages, Latacz gradually weaves a web of associations to suggest that on historical and geographical grounds, Ahhija/Ahhiyawa was a Mycenaean kingdom, that Wilusa/Wilusiya was in the Troad and inseparable from the Greek Wilios, that Lazpas is Lesbos, Apasas Ephesus and Millawanda Miletus. (So also M. West, *Glotta* 77 (2001) 265). Frank Starke's investigations are also adduced in the elucidation of the Alaksandu Treaty and of significant Hittite documents. Furthermore the names Achaioi, Danaoi and Argeioi in the Homeric epic do not just spring from the poet's imagination but reflect the real historical situation as recorded in external records.

The second part of the book on Homer turns the spotlight on literary criticism and poetic reality and imagination, whether indeed the tale of Troy is a product of Homer's imagination. In his earlier book *Homer, His Art and His World* (1996) Latacz has already introduced Anglophone readers to the current state of German historical and philological scholarship on Homer. This was attacked in an eleven-page review by Erwin Cook (*BMCR* 96.10.3) and defended by the book's translator James Holoka (*BMCR* 97.3.10). The reader experiences a sense of déjà vu in Latacz's recapitulation of Schliemann, Troy, Mycenae and "new" discoveries. He concludes that Homer's Iliad is merely a secondary source of the Trojan War, but also that the tale of Troy was conceived in Mycenaean times and that the names of the attackers and the city attacked as well as their entire world are Mycenaean. On the other hand, the sketch of the post-palatial period (pp. 274–277), based on Deger-Jalkotzy, Hölkeskamp and Weiler, is original and convincing.

The language of the book is a unique hybrid: an Australian translation of a text by an East German fugitive, now resident in Switzerland. This Swiss-Australian axis cuts strangely across the traditional Anglo-American Homeric debate. Matters familiar to Anglo-American and Nordic scholars crop up in tiresome repetition in this Basel-Canberra text that is a revised, updated and expanded translated of a German popular best-seller. As Latacz himself admits (p. 250), "Some readers may indeed find that the argument has been altogether too long!" He explains at painful length what constitutes a hexameter (pp. 134–136 and 259–269), a digamma (pp. 160–164 and 217–218, referred to as "w" throughout) or a formula (pp. 252–259), with examples from Russian poetry and quoting Bowra's outdated *Heroic Poetry* (1952) instead of Lauri Honko's more up-to-date edition called *Thick Corpus, Organic Variation and Textuality in Oral Tradition* (2000). Reference only to living traditions of epic in Serbia and Croatia (p. 259) is at least fifty years out of date, since living traditions have now been studied from India, Africa, Russia and Mongolia, to name but a few examples.

The book does, however, establish dialogue between German and English scholarship with extensive discussion of Page (pp. 235–237), with references to the neo-analysts on p. 204 and narrative technique (pp. 199–203). The maps, sketches, tables and figures are well drawn up. Latacz has had the support of his research assistant Andreas Külling and enjoyed the full collaboration of the excavator of Troy, Manfred Korfman, whose untimely death on 11th August 2005 is a great setback to scholarship. The text is teeming with linguistic dingoes, eg "scientific" for "scholarly" or "academic", and with erratic use of the definite article causing kangaroo petrol throughout the book. The worst

example can be found on p. 287: "The earlier uncertainty dissolves and the solution seems nearer than ever: It would not be surprising if, in the near future, the outcome states: Homer is to be taken seriously." In my opinion, "outcomes" do not state anything.

Many Nordic scholars will have difficulty with Latacz's model of the transition from orality to literacy in Greece, and of Homer's role in that process. More worrying are the claims that Homer's literacy is an accepted fact, that Greek culture was transformed from orality to literacy in the space of twenty years, and that Homer was largely responsible for the transformation. Others, myself included, would prefer to think of an initial formative stage in the eighth century followed by an extended period of oral transmission. Whether or not a 'monumental composer' stood at the beginning of this process will be more important to some than to others (for discussion, see most recently G. Nagy, *Homeric Questions* [Austin, 1996]). At any event, it cannot be said that Latacz represents a consensus opinion among Homeric experts in America, or indeed in much of Europe. On the other hand, Latacz may well in fact be fully aware of the main tenets of the Anglo-American consensus (to the extent that one exists) and realizes that his opinions, like those of most other German-speaking scholars, diverges from them. The translation of this book into English is intended precisely to give wider currency to an alternative conception of Homeric composition.

Stephen Evans

EURIPIDES: *Selected Fragmentary Plays*. Volume II. Edited with Introductions, Translations and Commentaries by C. COLLARD, M. J. CROPP and J. GIBERT. Aris & Phillips Classical Texts. Oxbow Books, Oxford 2004. ISBN 0-85668-620-4 (hb), 0-85668-621-2 (pb). XVI, 384 pp. GBP 40.00 (hb), 19.50 (pb).

Euripides, *Selected Fragmentary Plays*, Volume II (hereafter *SFP II*) is dedicated to the memory of Kevin Hargreaves Lee, co-author of Euripides, *Selected Fragmentary Plays*, Volume I (hereafter *SFP I*) and "a fine Euripidean and an even finer colleague and friend" (Preface, p. x). The three editors of this book are Christopher Collard (C.C.), Martin Cropp (M.C.) and John Gibert (J.G.). The plays included in *SFP II* are *Philoctetes* (by C.C.), *Alexandros* (by M.C.) with *Palamedes* and *Sisyphus* (by C.C.), *Oedipus* (by C.C.), *Andromeda* (by J.G.), *Hypsipyle* (by M.C.), *Antiope* (by C.C.) and *Archelaus* (by J.G.). In accordance with *SFP I*, all plays are presented with: 1. a summary Bibliography (arranged under Texts and Testimonia; Myth; Illustrations; and Main Scholarly Discussions); 2. an Introduction (dealing with Reconstruction; Myth; Illustrations; Themes and characters; Staging; Date; Other dramatizations; and Later influence); 3. Greek text with a critical apparatus and an English prose translation; and 4. a Commentary. All the fragmentary plays which are included in *SFP II* are extremely interesting ones. In addition, one would also have welcomed with joy *Meleager*, whose story, according to Aristotle (*Poet.* 1453a18–22), was one of the favorite subjects of tragic poets.

Before Euripides' *Philoctetes*, Aeschylus had already written a tragedy of the same name. Sophocles, on the other hand, wrote his extant *Philoctetes* after Euripides' play. Luckily we have two orations (nos. 52 and 59) of Dio of Prusa in which Dio