

NOTICES

M. HAMMOND (trans.): *Homer, The Odyssey* (with an Introduction by J. Griffin). Pp. xxviii + 290. London: Duckworth, 2000. Paper, £9.99. ISBN: 0-7156-2958-1.

Hammond's admirable translation of the *Odyssey* complements his translation of the *Iliad*, which appeared in 1987. He is remarkably successful in combining accuracy with a lively and highly readable style. 'Perhaps', he says (p. viii), 'the greatest "treason" is to make the *Odyssey* sound as if it was written by an Anglophone novelist (or poet) of the late twentieth century'. So he rightly makes no attempt to disguise the features of Homeric style and manner which might seem alien to the modern reader. Repeated lines and passages are usually repeated word for word (at 23.276 he even includes from 11.129 the formulaic epithet which in the later passage has actually been replaced by Homer with the verb which the context now requires), but there are very occasional variations: at 12.152 (cf. 14.256) 'held her on course' is a better translation of *ἴθυνε* than 'held her sails taut' (11.10). Almost all of the formulaic epithets are reproduced (an exception is *φίλον* with *κῆρ* or *ῆτορ*), though with such words as *δαίμονιος*, *δαΐφρων*, *διοτρεφής*, and *σχέτλιος* H. allows himself greater flexibility in translation. I counted no fewer than eleven different renderings of *ἀμύμων*, but never, I think, 'blameless'. One might quibble about the omission of the occasional word, and some of the meanings are inevitably debatable: for example, an *ἀμφικύπελλον* cup is probably 'double' rather than 'two-handled'.

The translation is hardly ever awkward: perhaps at 7.208 'that should not be any thought in your mind', at 18.33 'roughened their quarrel', and at 22.165–6 'that appalling man who we thought it was is on his way'. It is perhaps a little too colloquial at 1.209 'ever so much' and at 9.414 'my splendid know-how'. The 'town parliament' comes as something of a surprise at 15.468. Far more often one is struck by a simple but felicitous turn of phrase: 4.103 'a man soon tires of chilling tears', 8.185 'your words have stung my heart, and I rise to your challenge', 9.459–60 'my heart would feel some relief from the pain which that nobody of a Noman has caused me', 10.273 'But I am going—hard though it is, I have no choice'. H. attempts bravely to reproduce the pun on Odysseus' name at 1.62 and 19.407, 'at odds and issue with', but not at 5.340, 423, or 19.275. The alliteration (see p. ix) is slightly overdone at 2.276, 9.71, and 13.85–6, better at 14.267–8 = 17.436–7.

Jasper Griffin contributes an introduction which ranges widely but concisely over such matters as oral poetry, the relationship between *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the two different kinds of hero represented by Achilles and Odysseus, the structure and unity of the poem, Odysseus' lying tales, and the rôle of the female characters—with many sensitive comments along the way. An astonishingly full index of proper names concludes this excellent book. It is indeed much more than an index, and will be invaluable for anyone who, for instance, wishes to see at a glance a list of all Odysseus' lying tales and the names of their recipients, or the various forms which Athene takes in the poem.

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W. G. THALMANN: *The Swineherd and the Bow. Representations of Class in the 'Odyssey'*. Pp. xiii + 330. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998. Cased, £37.50. ISBN: 0-8014-3479-3.

This book seeks to present an account of class discourse in the *Odyssey*, by examining 'vertical' class relations in the society of the poem, through the representation of slaves within a fundamentally aristocratic system, and 'horizontal', through the relations of the members of the élite with each other: the swineherd thus refers to the former, and the bow to the culture of competition which characterizes the latter. Without attempting to locate the poem(s) in any specific period of Greek society, Thalmann's contention is that they were 'centrally involved in the debates and struggles that attended the birth of the *polis*—as seeking to persuade their