

Odysseus is somewhat lost at sea. That will, unfortunately, limit the book's usefulness to classicists and classical receptionists.

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SCHEIN (S.) **Homer: *Iliad*, Book I.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. Pp. xiii + 242. £19.99. 9781108412964. doi:[10.1017/S0075426923000599](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075426923000599)

This is an admirable addition to the 'Green and Yellow' series. The 60 introductory pages cover a range of 'Homeric Questions' with great breadth and yet economy. We get a clear discussion of the combination of Bronze and Iron Age features, the arguments for an eighth-century date (though not all those for the seventh are discussed), the relationships of the poem to *Gilgamesh* and of its structure to contemporary art. The centrality to the *Iliad* of the major themes of Book 1, mortality and honour, is made clear. The 'Plan of Zeus' is best understood as 'several complementary plans with overlapping goals' (13): fulfilling his promise to Thetis, relieving Earth of its excessive population and the destruction of Troy. Such ambiguity is a sensible reading, though one wonders about the destruction of Troy, given Zeus's reluctance about it (4.43, etc.). The main characters are neatly summarized: notable are the sensitive characterizations of Thetis, as one once with cosmic power but now almost human in her sadness, and of Briseis, who illustrates the realities of war for female captives through the slaughter of her family and the sympathy of Patroclus. The relationships between gods and humans are well handled, though more might have been said about the conflicts between deities announced in this book.

The section on metre is more taxing, but the positioning of words in the line and the significance of unusual positioning and enjambement are important features of the commentary. Also notable is the close relationship shown between colometry (the differing views well explained), language and style. The section on dialect is admirably clear, and the list of morphological features and syntax is crisp and digestible. Good too is the section on Milman Parry's theories about formulae and their subsequent revisions, though those who earlier developed the connection between formulae and orality, like G. Hermann, J.E. Ellendt and H. Düntzer, might have been mentioned.

The commentary is very well focused, economically presented and full of perceptive readings. Translation, interpretation, colometry and discussion of textual questions are all well blended. Students might, however, have wished for translation of more of the illustrative passages. Much emphasis is placed on the positioning of formulaic and other phrases, though one sometimes wonders whether audiences would have picked up (at least consciously) some of the unusual ones, as say in 74–75n., where 'for the first time in the poem, a verb at the end of one line has the first word of the next line as its direct object', or 89n. where 'the distinctive location of *κοίλησι* ('hollow') here and *κοίλησι* in line 26 suggests that Achilles, in reassuring one priest, may allude specifically to Agamemnon's threat against another'. Such cases are not common, however. Much help is given on unfamiliar morphology and syntax, but when syntactical points are explained it is not just for their own sake but to indicate what they contribute to the passage, so a good sense of Homeric style results as well as grammatical knowledge.

In so judicious and meticulous a commentary there is little to quibble at: 68: the suggestion that ἦ in ἦ τοι is from ἡμί ('say') is strange. 169–71: κορωνίσιν ('curved'): the suggestions about the significance of this word seem rather overdone; see also 365, 388, 505nn. 370–71: would audiences have realized this is the only place where θοῶς ... νῆας ('swift ships') occurs at the B¹ caesura? 188–89: in what sense is not killing Agamemnon 'not necessarily to the hero's advantage'? 201, 202–05, 539: it would have been interesting to have had more on the controversies concerning the meaning of ἔπεα πτερόεντα ('winged words'), and especially of αἰγιόχοιο and κερτομίοισι, where several interpretations exist. 238–39: 'In Ionic Greek, the ν of the third person plural ending -νται or -ντο sometimes drops out after ι, ο, or υ and is vocalised as α': rather -νται and -νται result from different treatments of vocalic *n*. 283: Ἀχιλλῆϊ μεθέμεν χόλον ('to relax your anger in favour of/against Achilles'): the dative could be of advantage, but *Il.* 14.50 ἐν θυμῷ βάλλονται ἐμοῦ χόλον ('they cast anger in their hearts against me') would support one of disadvantage, which seems more natural here; cf. also *Od.* 21.377? 315: 'The sacrifice ... is marked as a failure' because there is no reaction from Apollo: but Homer does not always fill in such gaps, and the presumption would be that Apollo is happy now the matter is resolved; also, τελήεσσας ('completed, perfect') suggests the opposite? 396–406: is binding really the equivalent of death for gods? Ares and Zeus are freed? Whatever the origin of this story of Briareus, one might notice its importance in making clear early on the limits to Zeus's powers. 537: no reason is given how Hera knew Zeus and Thetis had been together: it depends how one takes ἰδοῦσ' ('because she had seen', 'when she saw')?

Altogether a valuable addition to Homeric scholarship.

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SELLS (D.) **Parody, Politics and the Populace in Greek Old Comedy**. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. Pp. 291. £85. 9781350060517.
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The aim of the book is: 'a study of Old Comedy's parody and literary appropriation of the prestige genres of fifth-century performance culture – tragedy, satyr play and lyric – as a means of raising the public profile of the individual poet and the genre as a whole' (1). Donald Sells is open from the start; this is not a comprehensive study of parody in Old Comedy, but rather the monograph focuses on parody and literary appropriation as a means to a particular end: the self-promotion of the dramatist and his dramatic genre.

The chapters offer fresh interpretations of several Aristophanic comedies, as well as employing evidence from pottery, satyr drama and a smattering of fragments, presented in the following structure: Chapter 1 explores *Acharnians* and Aristophanic 'branding'; Chapter 2 considers how the visual evidence of pots 'develops the visual and narrative terms of appropriation' (18); Chapter 3 devotes attention to *Peace* and parasatyrism; chapters 4 and 6 offer rereadings of *Peace* and *Thesmophoriazusae*, respectively; Chapter 5 turns to parody in the lyrics of *Frogs* and *Thesmophoriazusae*, while incorporating familiar suspects from the comic fragments, including Cratinus' *Dionysalexandros* and Pherecrates' *Cheiron*. I found the application of marketing theory and Aristophanic 'branding' particularly stimulating to think with for reading *Acharnians*, while the attention given to *Thesmophoriazusae* throughout the book is notable.