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HOMER
ODYSSEY
BOOKS XIII AND XIV

EDITED BY
A. M. BOWIE
The Queen's College, Oxford



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*For
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PREFACE

When considering which books of the *Odyssey* I might offer a commentary on, I discovered that all the most popular books were already spoken for, so it seemed a good idea to investigate the merits of the less popular second half of the epic. Books 13–14 were chosen, in part because they contain the hinge between the account of Odysseus' wanderings and the return to the 'real' world, but more because they are the ones which in the past have received the least complimentary criticism, as being too leisurely and devoid of incident. Episodes like that in Eumaeus' farmstead had considerable influence on later literature, but the magical world of the wanderings has long been of greater fascination. There is a slow revaluation of the second part taking place, and this commentary attempts to add to that. I set myself the task of rescuing the reputation of these books, by seeking where their merits lie and gaining a sense of what it is that the poet is here doing with the epic genre. My particular interest has been in the way this part of the *Odyssey* seems to take a radically new direction for epic, by giving major roles to 'lower status' figures and the facts of everyday life, with some aristocratic figures acting as the arch-villains of the piece. This goes along with a critical view of what was achieved by the Trojan War.

It will soon be seen that this is a resolutely 'unitarian' edition. This is not just a personal predilection. The fact that the 'Analysts' have never succeeded in creating an account of the text that most can agree on does not necessarily invalidate the method, but the second part of the *Odyssey* in particular reveals itself as very tightly constructed, and though there are indeed problems in the narrative they are not such as lead me to think that there is a basic inconsistency in the episodes. Many traditions of oral literature – and whether our *Odyssey* was composed orally or with the help of writing, it is still heavily marked by oral tradition – are characterised by inconsistencies which could be condemned in a written text, but which are and were tolerated by the societies which produced the works. I have therefore given little space to discussion of the various deletions which have been proposed for these books.

Beside the literary analyses, the Introduction and notes provide a good deal of help with the Homeric language, especially from a historical perspective. This is not the result of a desire to deluge the reader with philological erudition, but of a conviction that, if one has an idea of how linguistic forms and constructions came about, they are more comprehensible and so easier to learn and retain.

As with my edition *Herodotus VIII*, I have again to thank pupils at the JACT Summer School for being guinea pigs for the commentary on book XIII. Philomen Probert very kindly read the account of the Homeric dialect

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and improved it in no small measure; the final decisions and the errors are mine and mine alone. By her acuity as copy-editor, Dr Iveta Adams improved the work greatly in terms of presentation, consistency and accuracy. I am grateful too to Queen's College and the Faculty of Classics for the granting of sabbatical leave. Finally, as all contributors to this series have found, the Editors are remarkably unstinting in their willingness to read, encourage, advise and, perhaps most important of all, where a submission fails to meet the well-conceived conventions and aims of the series, criticise. One cannot but be deeply grateful. Furthermore, Pat Easterling has provided me with guidance of all kinds from my undergraduate days onwards, and it is to her that this volume is humbly dedicated.

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ABBREVIATIONS

I ANCIENT AUTHORS AND WORKS

Abbreviations of ancient authors and inscriptional collections are largely those of LSJ, of journals those of *L'année philologique*.

Eustathius is quoted from G. Stallbaum, *Eustathii archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam*, 2 vols. in 1, Leipzig 1825–6 (repr. Hildesheim, 1970), conveniently available on the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*.

II MODERN WORKS

- A–H–C Ameis, F. A., Hentze, K. and Cauer, P. (eds.), *Homers Odyssee: für den Schulgebrauch erklärt*, Leipzig 1868–1922.
- Beekes Beekes, R., *Etymological dictionary of Greek*, 2 vols., Leiden 2009.
- CHO *A commentary on Homer's Odyssey* (1–8 ed. A. Heubeck, S. R. West and J. B. Hainsworth; 9–16 ed. A. Heubeck and A. Hoekstra; 17–24 ed. J. Russo, M. Fernández-Galiano and A. Heubeck), Oxford 1985–93.
- DCPP Lipiński, E. (ed.), *Dictionnaire de la civilisation phénicienne et punique*, Turnhout 1992.
- EA Moran, W. L. (ed.), *The Amarna Letters*, Baltimore and London 1992.
- Ebeling Ebeling, H. (ed.), *Lexicon Homericum*, 2 vols., Leipzig 1885.
- EM Gaisford, T. (ed.), *Etymologicum magnum*, Oxford 1848.
- GEF M. L. West (ed.), *Greek epic fragments from the seventh to the fifth centuries B.C.*, Cambridge, MA 2003.
- GH Chantraine, P., *Grammaire homérique*, 2 vols., Paris 1948–53.
- GP Denniston, J. D., *The Greek particles*, 2nd edn, Oxford 1954.
- K–G Kühner, R. and Gerth, B., *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*, 2 vols., 3rd edn, Hannover 1890–1904.
- LfgRE *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos*, Göttingen 1955–2010.
- OCD Hornblower, S., Spawforth, A. and Eidinow, E. (eds.), *Oxford classical dictionary*, 4th edn, Oxford 2012.
- Smyth Smyth, H. W., *Greek grammar* (rev. by G. M. Messing), Harvard 1956.
- Stanford Stanford, W. B., *The Odyssey of Homer*, 2 vols., London 1947–8.

Epic fragments are quoted from *GEF*. See now also M. L. West 2013.