This is the sixth and final volume of the major Commentary on Homer’s *Iliad* issued under the General Editorship of Professor G. S. Kirk. It consists of introductory chapters dealing with the structure and main themes of the poem, book division, the end of the *Iliad* in relation to the *Odyssey*, and the criticism and interpretation of the Homeric poems in antiquity. The commentary follows. (The Greek text is not included.) This volume contains a consolidated index of Greek words in all six volumes. This project is the first large-scale commentary in English on the *Iliad* for nearly one hundred years, and takes special account of language, style, thematic structure and narrative technique, as well as of the cultural and social background to the work.

The Commentary is an essential reference work for all students of Greek literature, and archaeologists and historians will also find that it contains matters of relevance to them.
The Iliad: a commentary

Volume vi: books 21–24
This volume
is dedicated to
Jenny, Alexis, Penelope, Andrew and Catherine

and to the memory of
H. C. A. Gaunt, T. E. B. Howarth, F. W. King, J. G. Stow
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PREFACE

It is just over a century since Walter Leaf published the first edition of his great commentary on the Iliad (1886–8), in which he set out ‘to offer a guide to students anxious to know more of Homer than they can learn from elementary school-books’. It is a mark of the difference between the Victorian age and ours that what a business man and banker could then accomplish in his spare time should now require the sustained energies and varied expertise of five classical scholars. One of the advantages, however, of this collaboration has been the range of different approaches adopted throughout these six volumes, for it is as true today as in Leaf’s time that ‘when once the strict limits of a verbal commentary are passed, it is hard to know which path to choose from the many which open into the world revealed to us by the Homeric poems’.

That this venture has indeed been a genuine work of collaboration is largely due to the careful guidance and painstaking labours of its general editor Geoffrey Kirk, to whom I wish to pay the warmest tribute of thanks, not only for his original invitation to take part, but also for his sharp-eyed diligence and determination in seeing the project through to its completion.

It is a rare privilege to join a group of scholars in studying one of the Homeric poems at such a detailed level over a prolonged period of time, and in the process the Commentary itself has come to resemble an old and familiar friend, much-loved in all its singularities, even if tiresome at times, and to which one is ultimately reluctant to bid farewell. For this opportunity I am profoundly grateful.

Some particular biases and shortcomings should be mentioned here. Had I attempted a more comprehensive review of modern secondary literature, this work would have been scarcely begun, let alone finished. I tried as a rule to approach the text with a fresh mind and to analyse my own response to it, before considering the views of others. I have also attempted to keep in mind the needs of a varied audience: despite its technicalities I should like this volume to be accessible (for example) to undergraduates as well as to the increasingly select company of specialists. Professional scholars may feel that at times too subjective a note is sounded, whereas students may sometimes find the style too compressed and technical. It has not proved entirely easy to strike the right balance, and it was only as the work progressed that a more natural and leisurely style of commentary seemed to develop of its own accord.

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In the last volume of this series cross-references are inevitably numerous, and I hope that this will be regarded as a useful aid, rather than as a deterrent to reading. I have also paid particular attention to what struck me as the individuality of Homer’s language, as an antidote to excessive concern for its formal quality (cf. M. W. Edwards, vol. v, pp. 53–5 and Richardson in Bremer, HBOP (65–84)), and I hope that the frequency of references to unusual words will not irritate the reader. It must be admitted that I have relied mainly on LSJ and concordances in doing this, and have only checked a sample of words with the data base of the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (including nearly all ‘absolute hapaxae’). It would certainly be interesting to make more extensive searches, but I do not think that the overall picture would be substantially altered by doing so.

The first part of the Introduction, on structure and themes, is not intended as a dogmatic or canonical statement of received opinions (which would be impossible), but rather as an exploration of some of the possibilities. In the section on structure a good deal of space has been given to theories of ring composition, if only in order to draw attention to what seemed a rather neglected approach. The discussion of themes is inevitably somewhat impressionistic, given the allowances of space.

The roll-call of those who have contributed to the making of this volume is long, and even then I am conscious that some names must have been omitted. Love of Homer (and of Greek literature) dates from my school days at Winchester, where besides those masters named in the dedication I am grateful for the teaching of J. B. Poynton and Colin Badcock. It was fostered at Oxford by many, including my tutor Colin Hardie and supervisor Martin West, and by the encouragement of Hugh Lloyd-Jones. As a tutor myself, I owe a great deal to the work and inspiration of my colleagues, especially Jasper Griffin, Colin Macleod, Richard Rutherford and Oliver Taplin. I have also gained immeasurably from the constant contact with Homer and the stimulus of fresh responses provided by teaching pupils over 23 years at Merton. In 1962 I had the good fortune to work at Mycenae with the late Lord William Taylour, Barbara Craig, Lisa French and others. Enthusiasm for the archaeology of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages, encouraged also by the teaching of the late Dorothea Gray, has remained strong ever since.

Like lexicographers, all commentators are shameless plagiarists. I have found Leaf invaluable, and have gained much from Malcolm Willcock’s concise but perceptive commentary. Améis–Hentze I have not used systematically but from time to time. For book 23 Chantrenne and Goube are useful, and for book 24 Colin Macleod has set a standard I could not hope to equal. I also owe much to the new series of commentaries on the Odyssey, edited by Alfred Heubeck and others, and to Martin West’s work on Hesiod.

Work on the book itself was made possible above all by four terms of
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sabbatical leave granted by my College between 1985 and 1991. At all stages I have received many detailed comments on my drafts and constant encouragement from my collaborators, and it has been a great pleasure to share the work with them all. In addition, Richard Rutherford read through and commented on the whole work. I am especially grateful to him, and also to Jasper Griffin, for discussion of the Introduction. My debt to Oliver Taplin is long-standing: he lent me his own commentary on Iliad 22.1–120 (including some notes by Colin Macleod), and more recently the opening chapter of his new book Homeric Soundings, and I have enjoyed our stimulating discussions of Homer over many years. John Boardman, Vassos Karageorghis and Mervyn Popham have all seen the commentary on book 23, and I have benefited greatly from their detailed observations on some of the archaeological issues in that Book.

Many others have helped with specific questions, by sending me their own works, and in various other ways, and it is impossible to list them all. I am aware of debts of thanks to my colleague at Merton Tom Braun, Jan Bremer, Hector Catling, Joost Crouwel, Malcolm Davies, Vincenzo di Benedetto, Garth Fowden, Oliver Gurney, Irene de Jong, James Hooker, Gregory Hutchinson, Peter Jones, Robert Lamberton, Françoise Létoublon, Edmond Lévy, Franco Montanari, Judith Mossman, Roger Mooney, Peter Parsons, Simon Pembroke, Angeliki Petropoulou, Walter Potscher, Maurice Pope, James Porter, Simon Pulleyn, Christopher Smith, Maro Theodosiadis and Stephanie West.

My greatest practical debt is to Rachel Chapman, who (as Rachel Woodrow) produced three successive and virtually impeccable drafts of the whole work from my execrable script over a period of six years. Her immeasurable patience and astounding accuracy must be my only excuse for failing to carry out this long and tedious labour myself, and I cannot thank her adequately for all that she has done over such a long period. Like the other authors in this series, I have very much appreciated the care taken by the staff of the Press in the production of these volumes, and wish to thank Pauline Hire for her diplomatic and patient assistance throughout, and Susan Moore for her highly skilful and sensitive copy-editing.

Finally I am immensely grateful to my wife Jenny and our children for their tolerance of much scholarly eccentricity and for rescuing me from excessive absorption in the past. To them I dedicate this book, and also to the memory of four of my teachers at Winchester,

ἳδα με το πρῶτον λυγυρής ἑπίθησαν ἀοίδης.

Merton College, Oxford N. J. R.
July 1991

A.M.D.G.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Books

Ameis–Hentze K. F. Ameis and C. Hentze, Homers Ilias (Leipzig 1913; repr. Amsterdam 1965)
Apthorp, MS Evidence M. J. Athorp, The Manuscript Evidence for Interpolation in Homer (Heidelberg 1986)
Arend, Scenen W. Arend, Die typischen Szenen bei Homer (Berlin 1933)
Beazley, ABV J. D. Beazley, Attic Black-figure Vase-painters (Oxford 1956)
Beck, Stellung G. Beck, Die Stellung des 24 Buches der Ilias in der alten Epentradition (diss. Tübingen 1964)
Bolling, External Evidence G. M. Bolling, The External Evidence for Interpolation in Homer (Oxford 1925)
Cassola, Imini Omerici F. Cassola, Imini Omerici (Rome 1975)
Chantraine, Dict. P. Chantraine, Dictionnaire typologique de la langue grecque (Paris 1968–80)
Chantraine, GH P. Chantraine, Grammaire homérique t–t (Paris 1958–63)
Chantraine and Goube P. Chantraine and H. Goube, Homère, Iliade XXIII (Paris 1972)
Coldstream, Geometric Greece J. N. Coldstream, Geometric Greece (London 1977)

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Abbreviations

Crouwel, Chariots  J. H. Crouwel, Chariots and Other Means of Land Transport in Bronze Age Greece (Amsterdam 1981)

Davies, EGF  M. Davies, Epicorum Graecorum Fragmenta (Göttingen 1988)


de Jong, Narrators  I. J. F. de Jong, Narrators and Focalizers: the Presentation of the Story in the Iliad (Amsterdam 1987)

Delebecque, Cheval  E. Delebecque, Le Cheval dans l’Iliade (Paris 1951)

Denniston, Particles  J. D. Denniston, The Greek Particles (2nd edn, Oxford 1951)

Edwards, HPI  M. W. Edwards, Homer, Post of the Iliad (Baltimore and London 1987)

Elliger, Darstellung der Landschaft  W. Elliger, Die Darstellung der Landschaft in der griechischen Dichtung (Berlin 1975)


Fenik, TBS  B. C. Fenik, Typical Battle Scenes in the Iliad (Hermes Einzelschriften 21, Wiesbaden 1968)

Fenik, Tradition  B. C. Fenik, ed., Homer: Tradition and Invention (Leiden 1978)

Fitttschen, Sagendarstellungen  K. Fitttschen, Untersuchungen Zum Beginn der Sagendarstellungen bei den Griechen (Berlin 1969)

Fränkel, Gleichnisse  H. Fränkel, Die homerischen Gleichnisse (Göttingen 1921)

Friedrich, Verwundung  W. H. Friedrich, Verwundung und Tod in der Ilias (Göttingen 1956)

Frisk, Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch (Heidelberg 1954–73)

Gardiner, Sports  E. N. Gardiner, Greek Athletic Sports and Festivals (London 1910)

Gordesian, Kriterien der Schriftlichkeit  R. Gordesian, Kriterien der Schriftlichkeit und Mündlichkeit im homerischen Epos (Frankfurt 1986)

Griffin, HLD  J. Griffin, Homer on Life and Death (Oxford 1980)

Grube, Greek and Roman Crises  G. M. A. Grube, The Greek and Roman Crisis (London 1965)

Hainsworth, Od.  Alfred Heubeck, Stephanie West and J. B. Hainsworth, A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey vol. 1 (Oxford 1988)

Hall, Barbarian  E. Hall, Inventing the Barbarian (Oxford 1989)

Hardie, Cosmos and Imperium  P. R. Hardie, Virgil’s Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium (Oxford 1986)

Harris, Athletics  H. A. Harris, Greek Athletes and Athletics (London 1964)

Helbig, Homerische Epos  W. Helbig, Das homerische Epos aus den Denkmälern erläutert: archäologische Untersuchungen (2nd edn, Leipzig 1887)

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Abbreviations

Heubeck, Od. Alfred Heubeck and Arie Hoekstra, A Commentary on Homer’s Odyssey vol. ii (Oxford 1989)

Higbie, Measure and Music C. Higbie, Measure and Music: Enjambement and Sentence Structure in the Iliad (Oxford 1990)

Hoekstra, Od. Alfred Heubeck and Arie Hoekstra, A Commentary on Homer’s Odyssey vol. ii (Oxford 1989)

HyDem, HyAp, HyHerm, HyAph Homerica Hymnorum to Demeter, Apollo, Hermes, Aphrodite

Johansen, Iliad in Early Greek Art K. F. Johansen, The Iliad in Early Greek Art (Copenhagen 1967)

Kakridis, Homer Revisited J. T. Kakridis, Homer Revisited (Lund 1971)

Kakridis, Researches J. T. Kakridis, Homeric Researches (Lund 1949)


Krischer, Konventionen T. Krischer, Formale Konventionen der homerischen Epos (München 1971)

Kullmann, Quellen W. Kullmann, Die Quellen der Ilias (Wiesbaden 1960)

Kurtz and Boardman, Burial Customs D. C. Kurtz and J. Boardman, Greek Burial Customs (London 1971)

Lamberton, Homer the Theologian R. W. Lamberton, Homer the Theologian: Neoplatonist Allegorical Reading and the Growth of the Epic Tradition (Berkeley 1986)


Leaf W. Leaf, The Iliad i–ii (2nd edn, London 1900–2)

Leaf, Troy W. Leaf, Troy (London 1912)


Leumann, HW M. Leumann, Homerische Wörter (Basel 1950)

LfgE Lexicon des frühgriechischen Epos, edd. B. Snell and H. Erbse (Göttingen 1955–)

LIMC Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae 1.1– (Zürich 1981–)

Lohmann, Andromache-Szenen D. Lohmann, Die Andromache-Szenen in der Ilias (Hildesheim 1988)

Lohmann, Reden D. Lohmann, Die Komposition der Reden in der Ilias (Berlin 1970)

Lorimer, HM H. L. Lorimer, Homer and the Monuments (London 1950)

Abbreviations

Ruijgh, τε ἐπίκες  C. J. Ruijgh, Autour de τε ἐπίκες: études sur la syntaxe grecque (Amsterdam 1971)
Schadewaldt, Aufbau  W. Schadewaldt, Der Aufbau der Ilias (Frankfurt am Main 1975)
Schadewaldt, Iliasstudien  W. Schadewaldt, Iliasstudien (Leipzig 1938)
Schadewaldt, VHHW  W. Schadewaldt, Von Homers Welt und Werk (3rd edn, Stuttgart 1959)
Schebner, Aufbau  G. Schebner, Der Aufbau des 20 und 21 Buches der Ilias (Leipzig 1939)
Schulze, Quaestiones Epicae  W. Schulze, Quaestiones Epicae (Gütersloh 1892)
Segal, Mutilation of the Corpse  C. Segal, The Theme of the Mutilation of the Corpse in the Iliad (Leiden 1971)
Silk, Iliad  M. S. Silk, The Iliad (Cambridge 1987)
Stanford, Ulysses Theme  W. B. Stanford, The Ulysses Theme (Oxford 1968)
Stengel, ὄρεξες ὕμηρα  P. Stengel, ὄρεξες ὕμηρα der Griechen (Leipzig 1910)
Strasburger, Kleinen Kämpfer  G. Strasburger, Die kleinen Kämpfer der Ilias (diss. Frankfurt 1954)
Thornton, Suppikation  Agathe Thornton, Homer’s Iliad: its Composition and the Moti of Supplication (Göttingen 1984)
Usener, Verhältnis der Odyssee zur Ilias  K. Usener, Beobachtungen zum Verhältnis der Odyssee zur Ilias (Tübingen 1990)
Ventriss and Chadwick, Documents  M. Ventriss and J. Chadwick, Documents in Mycenaean Greek (2nd edn, Cambridge 1973)
von Kamptz, Personennamen  Hans von Kamptz, Homeriche Personennamen (Göttingen 1982)
von der Mühll, ἀγαμῆς  P. von der Mühll, Kritisches Hypomnema zur Ilias (Basel 1952)
Wackernagel, Kleine Schriften  J. Wackernagel, Kleine Schriften (Göttingen 1953–79)
Wackernagel, Sprachliche Untersuchungen  J. Wackernagel, Sprachliche Untersuchungen zu Homer (Göttingen 1916)
Wade-Gery, Poet of Iliad  H. T. Wade-Gery, Poet of the Iliad (Cambridge 1952)
Wehrli, Allegorischen Deutung  F. Wehrli, Zur Geschichte der allegorischen Deutung Homers im Altertum (Leipzig 1928)
Abbreviations

West, Greek Metre M. L. West, Greek Metre (Oxford 1982)
West, Od. Alfred Heubeck, Stephanie West and J. B. Hainsworth, A
Commentary on Homer’s Odyssey vol. 1 (Oxford 1988)
West, Ptolemaic Papyri S. West, The Ptolemaic Papyri of Homer (Köln and
Opladen 1967)
West, Theogony M. L. West, Hesiod, Theogony (Oxford 1966)
West, Works and Days M. L. West, Hesiod, Works and Days (Oxford 1978)
Whitman, HHT C. H. Whitman, Homer and the Heroic Tradition (Cam-
bridge, Mass. 1958)
Wilamowitz, ΙυΗ U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, Die Ilias und Homer
(Berlin 1916)
Wilamowitz, Untersuchungen U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, Hom-
erische Untersuchungen (Berlin 1884)

Journals

AJA American Journal of Archaeology
AJP American Journal of Philology
AR Archaeological Reports
BICS Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies
BSA Annual of the British School at Athens
CJ Classical Journal
CP Classical Philology
CQ Classical Quarterly
CR Classical Review
G&R Greece and Rome
HSCP Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
JHS Journal of Hellenic Studies
MDAI(A) Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Athen. Abt)
MDAI(R) Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Röm. Abt.)
MH Museum Helveticum
PCPS Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society
REA Revue des études anciennes
TAPA Transactions of the American Philological Association
TCS Yale Classical Studies
ZPE Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

NOTE

The text used is the OCT (see Abbreviations). As in previous volumes ‘Il.’
means ‘the Iliad’, ‘Od.’ ‘the Odyssey’. Early epic fragments are cited from
both the OCT and Davies.

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Abbreviations

| marks the beginning or end of a verse. The abbreviation ‘(etc.)’ after a Greek word means that the total includes all relevant terminations. Greek names are transliterated according to the rules laid down in vol. i, x. References to the scholia follow the system set out in vol. i pp. 41ff., i.e. ‘Arn/A’ means ‘Aristonicus in MS A’, etc. ‘Schol. Ge’ means the ‘scholia in codex Genavenstis 44′. Papyri of Homer are cited as in the OCT, except that ‘schol. pap. xii (Erbse)’ refers to the commentary (probably by Ammonius) in P.Oxy. 221, printed in Erbse vol. v, pp. 78–121, and ‘pap. 249 and 271 (Mazon)’ in the notes on 21.513 and 22.255 refer to the numbering in Mazon’s Budé edition. ‘MSS’ refers to manuscripts after c. A.D. 600.