

devoting most of his time to the great project of a translation — for the first time ever — of the whole of Aristotle's *Physics* into Hebrew, with an extensive commentary. In preparing this work, he read widely, not only in ancient philosophy and physics, but also in modern physics. Some of this work was committed to writing, and it is hoped that those portions of Landau's *Nachlass* will see the light of print.

J.G.

Binyamin Shimron (1913-1995)

Professor Binyamin Shimron was born in Vienna in 1913. He joined the Socialist Zionist youth movement while still at high school. He remained faithful to the two ideals of the movement all his life: service to society and service to his country. It was therefore natural that shortly after the Anschluss Shimron immigrated to Palestine, a dream which he had been unable to fulfil earlier. He began his studies at the Hebrew University in history, classics and Jewish studies; at the same time he became active in the student organisation and in the Hagana. During the Second World War, when the leadership of the Yishuv called for volunteers to join the Palestinian units who fought with the Allied forces, Shimron was among the first to interrupt his studies and join up in 1942. In 1945, after service in Egypt and Europe, he returned to Jerusalem to complete his studies and graduated with a master's degree. He was able then to fulfil the other goal of his youthful ideals: with his wife, Martha, also a Viennese, he became a member of Kibbutz Ein Gev, where he also taught at the local and regional schools. After the War of Independence and the establishment of the State of Israel Shimron returned to university in 1953 to resume his studies for the Ph.D. degree; he continued to teach in high school in Rehovoth before joining the Department of Classics in Tel Aviv University shortly after its establishment.

Binyamin Shimron belonged to the second generation of classicists in Israel. In his academic career he followed in the footsteps of his teacher, Professor Moshe Schwabe, who founded the Classics Department at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. It was easy for him to do so, because Prof. Schwabe combined research with dedication to the dissemination of knowledge of all aspects of classical culture.

In his research, Shimron dealt mainly with two topics: the social and economic history of classical and hellenistic Sparta, and Greek historiography. His book, *The Spartan Revolution 243-146 BC* (New York/Buffalo, 1972), and the many articles he published on the subject, were an important contribution to the understanding of the economic and social history of Sparta and of the attempts at reform in the third and second centuries BC. The intricacies of these reforms and the accompanying constitutional changes which aimed at the revival of the power of Sparta were expounded and interpreted against the background of Spartan traditions and the rise of Rome. Shimron then turned to the study of Herodotus. After several articles he published the monograph, *Politics and Belief in Herodotus (Historia Einzelschriften, Heft 58, Wiesbaden 1989)* in which he not only discussed Herodotus' historical methodology and conception of politics but also examined the historian's critical

approach to religion, myths and beliefs; his conclusion is that Herodotus distinguished clearly between religious beliefs and politics. An interesting contribution here is Shimron's discussion of the uses of humour and irony by Herodotus; this sheds light on the nature of the relationship between the historian and his audience. Shimron made a distinction between the first part of Herodotus' history, which mainly tells stories, and the second, which is mainly history; the search for the *aitia* of the war shows that he made an attempt at the writing of history.

A year after the publication of this monograph Shimron published a book in Hebrew, *Herodotus and the Beginnings of Historiography* (Jerusalem, 1990). This is not a mere translation of the monograph into English, but an introduction to Greek historiography and to Herodotus, addressed to the Israeli student with no background in classics. This was another aspect of Shimron's contribution to classics, which had its roots in the conviction that one should not only devote time to research, but also make its results available to the community: the dissemination of the knowledge of Greek culture in a society which traditionally considered that culture alien and even hostile to its own. Shimron, therefore, initiated the foundation of *Thiasos*, the Tel Aviv Society for the Promotion of Classics, and later of the Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies and its annual, *Scripta Classica Israelica*. At the same time he undertook the translation into Hebrew of two other great historians (Thucydides had already been translated): the first six books of Polybius appeared in 1991 and the manuscript of the translation of Herodotus was almost complete at his death. Another notable contribution was his Hebrew book, *Introduction to Classical Civilization, Greece and Rome* (Tel Aviv, 1993). This is the only Hebrew book on the subject, a result of long experience in teaching students who had had no previous instruction in the subject.

Professor Shimron will be remembered by his colleagues and his many students, some of whom now teach in Israeli universities; he was a dedicated teacher always ready to help, encourage and advise.

Shalom Perlman