

should consider: (a) to what effect it is picked up by Nestor (14.344; p. 164, n. 343–4); (b) its dark foreboding that surely evokes Herakles' loaded warning to Neoptolemos (Soph. *Phil.* 1441; cf. Verg. *Aen.* 2.550–3; see B. Boyten, *Epic Journeys* [2010], pp. 193–4, 201–3).

This is an enjoyable, learned and useful contribution to Quintus scholarship. C. displays unusual magnanimity towards her fellow scholars in this excellent addition to commentaries on Quintus (from Bär, *QS 1* [2009]–present offering).¹

Brighton

BELLINI BOYTEN
belliniboyten@yahoo.co.uk

QUINTUS SMYRNAEUS' *POSTHOMERICA*:
SANDWICHED BETWEEN TWO WORLDS – CANTOS,
NEEDLES, RICHES AND KINGDOMS

BÄR (S.), GREENSMITH (E.), OZBEK (L.) (edd.) *Quintus of Smyrna's Posthomerica. Writing Homer Under Rome*. Pp. xii + 436, figs. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022. Cased, £95. ISBN: 978-1-4744-9358-1.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X22001986

This is another excellent contribution to the great flourishing of recent work on Quintus of Smyrna (third century CE). His *Posthomerica* ('*Stories after Homer*') bridges the narrative gap between the end of the *Iliad* and the beginning of the *Odyssey*. The inquisitive reader and the well-fed Muse (armed, initially, with copies of the *Iliad*, *Odyssey* and West's *Greek Epic Fragments*) will be delighted with the classical filling between these extremes. Noteworthy 'episodes' include Achilles fighting Penthesileia (*Post.* 1), his death (3), 'Hoplön Krisis'/Aias' suicide (5), the Trojan Horse (12), Priam's death/Troy's fall (13); ill-fated Greek *nostoi* (14). We have type-scenes (Penthesileia's arming, *Post.* 1), ekphrases (Achilles' shield, *Post.* 5), plus extensive similes/*gnomai*, complex engagement with Homeric heroic characterisations and a *very* high-profile primary narrator.

In brief, this text is a veritable feast, as are these latest contributions. This tome, though I suspect not the *omega*, offers a contemporary take on Bär and M. Baumbach's ground-breaking publication (*Quintus Smyrnaeus* [2007]) from their 2006 Zurich conference, consisting of sixteen papers. This volume now has 20 contributions, episodic, but with unifying themes. Recent monographs include Greensmith (2020; cf. *CR* 71 [2021], 372–4), K. Carvounis (2019) and T. Scheijnen (2018; cf. *CR* 69 [2019], 436–8). The reviewed publication has particular appeal due to its diversity. With a helpful introductory overview by the editors, highlighting the pitfalls of assuming background knowledge of Quintus, a synopsis of scholarship, the Zurich conference and the 2016 one-day Cambridge conference – 'a launchpad for a new book' (p. 8), the contents are outlined for the five parts of the book.

¹(Belated) thanks to my son, Isaac W.H. Boyten, for proofing both this and my last review ('Sandwiched Between Two Worlds', *CR* 73 [2023], 108–11).

In Part 1, 'Contexts and Poetics', S. Goldhill kicks off: 'In antiquity, epic is fundamental to the conceptual shaping of time' (p. 17). Such conceptualisations are foundational, narratological and poetic. Quintus, Goldhill argues, shows how 'epic constructs its temporality' (p. 19), in Quintus' omission of invocation, but recourse to memory. Hellenistic poetics are also explored, with a quotation of Callimachus' *Aitia* and its 'denigration' of "'one continuous song'" (p. 24), leading to Nestor's song at Achilles' funeral games, hence the song within a song (see *Hamlet*) = 'poetics are programmatically on display' (p. 25). Next, Carvounis assesses a scene from these games that diverges from Homer (*Il.* 23; *Post.* 4); the 'prizes' are definitely worth far more exploration in their own right. Carvounis makes important points regarding *divine* inspiration in Demodocus' song (*Od.* 8.43–5; 8.62–4; 8.73), as opposed to Nestor (p. 45). It is always beneficial to consider non-literary material: Carvounis notes the François vase, with Muses present at Thetis/Peleus' wedding. Yet, Quintus' Nestor diverges from his Hera, who had included *Apollo's* song (*Post.* 3.100–5; cf. *Il.* 24); Nestor cuts Apollo in favour of the Muses 'alone', which 'points to his consideration towards the audience of his performance' (*Post.* 4.141; p. 49), namely, Thetis. Similarly, Nestor omits Achilles' *μηνις*. Carvounis's Nestor, then, is an astute editor. Greensmith explores the 'intensely erotic space' of imperial Greek epic (p. 57) and Quintus' place within it, but notes that, if looking for passion in Quintus, readers 'will be left bizarrely cold' (*ibid.*). Perhaps Thersites may disagree (see *Post.* 1). The crux of Greensmith's Quintus is that his 'a-sexual' epic 'presents a profound meditation on closure' (p. 58). Its avoidance of sexual *telos* maps onto this epic that 'refuses and frustrates any sense of completion' (*ibid.*). Greensmith rejects the oversimplification that Quintus simply sanitises Homer. One test case is the Achilles/Penthesileia/Thersites episode – Greensmith concludes that Achilles' necrophilia is a 'form of *telos* that is *not* achieved, and its deflection crystallises the many different forms of delayed ending that the poem is intent upon exploring' (p. 66); so, an epic tease. A.S. Schoess views 'heroic bodies in life and death' (Penthesileia, Memnon, Achilles; p. 75). Quintus' focus on all three (in the opening three books) demands reader familiarity with such narratives, including visual aspects. Essential to Schoess's reading is such appreciation: 'this chapter highlights the narrative importance of visual language and description, and argues that Quintus uses the interplay between visual and literary to reflect on his heroes' visual and epic afterlives' (p. 77).

In Part 2, 'Religion, Gods and Destiny', C.A. Maciver considers non-Homeric Fate. Challenging U. Gärtner (*Philologus* 58 [2014]) that only non-Homeric expressions of Fate are in the reported/speeches of characters, Maciver explores select episodes to support his idea ('Fate': Zeus's jars, i.e. *Il.* 16, 22, 24; *Post.* 2, 7, 14; pp. 109–17). Maciver commends Gärtner on her contribution to double determinism/Fate, but concludes that Gärtner argues for 'equal setting' between Fate and Zeus's will (*Post.* 10.329–31; p. 115). Yet, Maciver regards this as 'Nestor's recasting of the Iliadic jars of Zeus' (*ibid.*). K. Barbaresco, in 'Disempowering the Gods', sees two factors colouring authorial 'behaviour': when tradition does not constrain, Quintus reduces divine influence over mortals, yet when bound, he, unsurprisingly, retains it. Equally, in such an allusive poem, Barbaresco notes that Quintus' 'peculiar' use of 'if *not*-situations' enables the audience to import the Olympians, as Quintus 'modifies the Homeric *Götterapparat*' ('apparatus'; p. 137). J.N. Bremmer surveys animal/human sacrifices, highlighting the lack of studies focusing on the Roman period and in particular on Quintus. Regarding Achillean sacrifices, Bremmer notes that the unusual use of 'lovely' (sacrifices) may distinguish those for gods (now Achilles) and mere heroes; the latter offered less lovely 'holocausts' (p. 141); this could also evoke his Iliadic *menis*. Penthesileia's rather different sacrifice (for accidentally killing Hippolyta) serves to appease the Erinyes, but Bremmer

reads *θυέεσσι* (*Post.* 1.27) as rather ‘with sacrifices of cakes’, or Quintus may have simply followed Homer. Another mystery. This interesting study concludes that sacrifice, though minor in Quintus, represents much: attention to Greek sacrificial elements etc. can help illuminate this ‘obscure and underestimated poet’ (p. 158).

In Part 3, ‘Between Narratology and Lexicology’, E. Argyrouli focuses on the narratological use of Fates, noting that Fate’s presence affects time in Quintus, the special placement of Fates in the space where the action unfolds, and how focalisation functions where Fates are involved in the action (p. 162). Argyrouli uses I.J.F. de Jong’s (*Narrators and Focalizers* [1987]) framework, concluding that Quintus is fruitful for such rare approaches. Next, Scheijnen explores Neoptolemos as a ‘speaker of words’ (*Il.* 9; p. 174; see Boyten, in: *Quintus Smyrnaeus* [2007] and *Epic Journeys* [2010]). Scheijnen’s statistical chart (p. 177) indicates that Neoptolemos is concise. She also shows that after *Post.* 5 (interestingly, Penthesileia, Memnon, Achilles and Aias are now dead) the use of superlatives and comparatives dramatically diminishes. Neoptolemos’ restraint reflects his ‘modernness’ and immaturity (cf. Boyten, *ibid.*). *Σχέτλιος* forms the focus for J. Maly-Preuss, which conveys ‘restraint’ (p. 194); its use by characters and extradiegetic narrators targets those who deviate from more universal norms. Though engaging with Iliadic usage, Maly-Preuss’s Quintus employs *schellios* speakers to convey ‘correct social roles’ (p. 213). Following the linguistic theme, A. Ferreccio explores Quintus’ use of epithets, as they are a ‘useful method for accessing the poetic universe of Quintus’ (p. 215). Quintus’ epithets are signifiers of Homer although collective *variationes* convey the image of a *poeta doctus* (p. 228), a poet who avoids slavish copying, preferring, instead *ζήλος*, ‘competitive emulation’. V. Tomasso rounds off this section, looking at polychronic intertextuality. Beginning with the film *Django* (2012), Tomasso cites the harmony and dissonance of its soundtrack as symbolic of Quintus: both evoking and challenging its context. Quintus heavily relies on Homer’s lexicon (Paschal’s 80%), but in the remaining 20% Tomasso sees a poet archaic, classical, Hellenistic and imperial.

F. Middleton opens Part 4, ‘The Struggle with the Literary Past’. Middleton looks at the dissolution of Troy and Homeric narratology in Quintus, arguing that Quintus ‘does not adopt the narrative drives of Homeric epic so straightforwardly’ (p. 248); though suspending the invocation to the Muse, Quintus initially *appears* to hold the ‘fall’ as endgame. However, as Middleton thoughtfully shows: regarding Philoktetes’ suffering and Porphyry’s *Cave*, the imperial audience may read ‘moments of λύσις’ (‘release’) as ‘moments of reflection . . . rather than moments of urgency’ (p. 266). A. Bärtschi explores the ambivalence of joy and laughter in Homer (*Iliad* and *Odyssey*) and Quintus, to show how vocabulary, emotions and ‘specific functionalism of joy and laughter’ (p. 268) inform the reading of each and in relation to each other. Bärtschi provides tables with statistics on ‘emotion/term’ and ‘expression/term’. Again, we find Quintus reconfiguring Homer, but, as Quintus’ gods and heroes are ‘excessively prone to *Schadenfreude* and derision’, the poem’s tone is more serious. L. Ozbek picks up these heroes writing on the heroic nature of Heracles, Philoktetes and their Bow (*Post.* 9). As a window into Quintus’ relationship with myth, Ozbek looks at Philoktetes’ arrival, at Lemnos and the gift-exchange (Heracles to Philoktetes). Certainly, objects provide fruitful material for observers of Quintus, and Ozbek skilfully weaves Heracleian *kudos* into the previously wounded characterisation of Philoktetes, also via Homeric prisms. G. Scafoglio rounds off this section with the fascinating, and rather under-explored/appreciated?, phenomenon of the Epic Cycle. Following a brief survey of scholarship, covering possibilities of Quintus’ access/lack of access to the Cycle (in various forms), Scafoglio asserts, ‘My analysis confirms the (partial

and relative) dependence of the *Posthomeric* on the Epic Cycle', whilst warning that the problem of direct imitation may be 'unsolvable' (p. 318).

Part 5, 'Re-Readings and Re-Workings', proves the most novel (no pun intended) section. T. Gärtner gives a brief biography of the sixteenth-century scholar Lorenz Rhodoman, 'philological editor and protestant pedagogue'. Rhodoman seems to demote Quintus, whilst using the *Posthomeric* to glorify himself: *Once in the past, Neander [Rhodoman's teacher] at the foot of the Harz communicated this clever imitator (Q.S.) ... to his flocks* (p. 330), obviously evoking *Post.* 12. Similarly, V.F. Lovato provides an entertaining look at John Tzetzes' reception of Quintus, who features in his twelfth-century *Carmina Iliaca*, a piece to 'showcase' his marketable talents. What emerges is a shameless self-publicist, who inserts himself in the narrative to his subject's detriment, i.e. complaining that Quintus' Nestor could not have conversed with Memnon due to battle noise and the language barrier, whilst Quintus listened in (*Carm. Il.* 3.280–6; 290; pp. 359–60). S. Renker ends with a modern and original, postmodern reading of Quintus and 'fan fiction'. Renker maps onto Quintus consideration of the scholastic challenges faced when defining, historically, what type of literature fan fiction is. Renker finds J. Derrida complementary for re-reading Quintus and his interaction with Homer in a postmodern light.

An appetising offering for all tastes, showing still much fertile ground to sow, on which a brief apology to the contributors, as the task of reviewing is like condensing small attractive haystacks into the tip of one sharp needle.

Brighton

BELLINI BOYTEN
belliniboyten@yahoo.co.uk

A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF PROCLUS

CALMA (D.) (ed.) *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes, Volume 1. Western Scholarly Networks and Debates.* (Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic Tradition 22.) Pp. x + 495, b/w & colour ills. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019. Cased, €168, US\$202. ISBN: 978-90-04-34510-2.

CALMA (D.) (ed.) *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes, Volume 2. Translations and Acculturations.* (Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic Tradition 26.) Pp. viii + 492, colour ill. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2021. Cased, €159, US\$191. ISBN: 978-90-04-34511-9.

CALMA (D.) (ed.) *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes, Volume 3. On Causes and the Noetic Triad.* (Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic Tradition 28.) Pp. viii + 649, b/w & colour ills. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2022. Cased, €194, US\$233. ISBN: 978-90-04-50132-4.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X22002955