

book is a welcome addition to that debate. Its focus on the imperial period allows the authors to benefit from each other's work, and the editors have done a fine job in supplying useful cross-references, making the book even more useful to students and scholars alike.

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## QUINTUS SMYRNAEUS' *POSTHOMERICA*: A COMMENTARY ON BOOK 14

CARVOUNIS (K.) *A Commentary on Quintus of Smyrna, Posthomerica 14*. Pp. lxxviii + 327. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. Cased, £105, US\$130. ISBN: 978-0-19-956505-4.

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C. has contributed another gem to recent offerings on the later Greek Epic author of the *Posthomerica*, Quintus Smyrnaeus (c. third century CE). This time, it is a commentary on the last book, *Posthomerica* 14. In its simplest form, the Greek poem can be (and frequently is) said to 'fill the gap' between the end of Homer's *Iliad* and the beginning of the *Odyssey*. In tone and shape the *Posthomerica* is more in line with the *Iliad*, where the usual suspects are doing much the same as their Iliadic selves: Achilles killing, Priam suffering, Odysseus conniving, with the latter emerging again near the end as an anticipatory nod to his central role in the *Odyssey*. Yet, the addition of Epic Cycle heroes (see M. West, *Greek Epic Fragments* [2003]), such as Penthesileia, Memnon, Neoptolemos and Philoktetes, adds further colour.

After Troy has fallen (old Priam killed by Neoptolemos, Astyanax hurled from the parapets, and Menelaos and Helen finally reunited through Aphrodite's mediation, *Post.* 13), Quintus' concluding book closes proceedings: the Trojan women are taken as booty, bards recount the war's events, dead Achilles instructs his son Neoptolemos, amongst other things, to dispatch Polyxena as a sacrificial offering, the Greeks (including Odysseus) begin their ill-fated *nostoi*, Locrian Aias is terminally punished for raping Cassandra inside Athene's temple, and Poseidon levels down Troy, obliterating its memory, at least in concrete terms. In these *Post.* 14 echoes the cyclic epic's *Ilioupersis* and *Nostoi*.

In the preface C. notes that this book 'evolved' from her 2005 doctoral thesis, 'Transformations of Epic: Reading Quintus of Smyrna *Posthomerica* XIV' (p. v). Fourteen years later, C. sets the scene in her introduction, warming us up to Quintus' more positive twenty-first-century reception by quoting Constantine Lascaris, the fifteenth-century Greek scholar: 'Whoever he may be, he became an excellent poet and greatest emulator of Homer' (p. xvii; cf. H. Lloyd-Jones's view, *CR* 19 [1969], 101). C. gives a useful brief summary of Quintus' books (p. xix), and, as a generous chaperon, gently guides readers through the textual intricacies of *Post.* 14. The other aspects covered in C.'s thorough introduction are: 'Q.'s Dates and Context', 'Q.'s Sources and Models', 'The End of the Epic: Contrasts, Continuity, Closure' and 'Note on the Manuscript Tradition'. The introduction, perhaps not surprisingly, covers much the same ground as previous Quintus studies (i.e. S. Bär and M. Baumbach [edd.], *Quintus Smyrnaeus* [2007]: who was Quintus?; criticism and defence; engagement with Homer, Epic Cycle, Latin influence, or not), but then C. veers towards Book 14, in 'Sources and Models',

noting Iliadic and Odyssean ‘representations of Helen’, plus her Euripidean self (*Troades*; pp. xlviii). Yet, C. is very clear, often summarising key points (e.g. ‘The case, then, for Q.’s drawing directly on the poems of the Cycle cannot be pressed’, p. liv). In her penultimate introductory section, ‘The End of the Epic’, C. breaks down Book 14 into three main parts: ‘A. Helen’s return to the Greeks’ (Il. 1–178); ‘B. The sacrifice of Polyxena’ (Il. 179–369); ‘C. The storm in the return journey of the Greeks’ (Il. 370–658); each with sub-divisions, for example ‘A’: ‘1–38. The Trojan Women’; ‘39–70. Helen before the Greek Army’; ‘71–84. The lament of the landscape’. This is extremely helpful, as are C.’s succinct comments, such as on Quintus’ more detailed exploration of certain scenes, including the Greek army’s reception of Helen etc. compared to earlier extant accounts (p. lxxvi). ‘Note on the Manuscript Tradition’ concludes the introduction, with C. noting her use of F. Vian’s text and apparatus (*Quintus de Smyrne*, vol. III, 1963–1969).

C.’s three-part precis of Book 14 forms the overall structure of her excellent and thorough commentary. Rather than a compressed summary, I have chosen particular episodes of interests to explore both Quintus’ and C.’s qualities.

In each section, A, B or C, C. begins with a helpful overview of the select lines from her sub-divisions, followed by the commentary proper; for instance, ‘A. Helen’s Return to the Greeks, 14.1–38. The Trojan Women’ discusses key aspects from *Post.* 13 that prepare readers for Book 14. C. also provides intertextual links, such as Hektor’s concerns about the enslavement of the Trojan women and about Andromache after his demise (Il. 6.454–9), before spotlighting Quintus’ Hippodameia’s thoughts on slavery for the Trojan women (*Post.* 1.433–5; C.’s p. 26).

‘A: 14.121–42. Victory Songs’: as C. notes, this is mainly in honour of Achilles, citing accounts of his conquests (*Post.* 14.128–9; Il. 9.328–9), similarly Nestor’s song at his funeral (*Post.* 4.148–62). We also learn of Diomedes’ and Odysseus’ summaries of Achilles’ heroic exploits as they take Neoptolemos from Skyros to Troy (7.379–81; p. 76), and C. provides rich references for further consideration of encomia, i.e. p. 76 n. 46, Hermogenes, *Progymn.* VII (D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson, *Menander* [1981], pp. xxvii–xxviii). ‘As it stands near the end of the *PH* and recapitulates in linear style key events from the beginning to the end of the Trojan War until this very moment on the celebrations (*PH.* 14.140–1 ...), the present song gives a closural effect to the epic as a whole’ (p. 78). At Il. 125–41 (p. 80) C. draws our attention to this summary of events that cover the Iliadic war from inception to end, noting that Telephus, Eëtion and Cynus feature early in the war, with their fates relayed in the *Cypria* and the *Iliad*; at 131 (p. 81) she expands on Κύκνον ... ὑπέβριον, referencing Proclus’ precis of the *Cypria* (*PEG*<sup>2</sup> I.42), where, following Penthesileia’s death, Achilles kills Cynus, with elaboration in Apollodorus (*Epit.* 3.31) that Achilles stoned Cynus, whilst Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1396b) notes the latter’s invulnerability etc.

‘B: The Sacrifice of Polyxena – 14.179–227. Achilles and Neoptolemos’: a wonderful episode, with C. giving a useful summary and contextual notes regarding Achilles’ ghostly address to his son, Neoptolemos, including a helpful precis of Achilles’ speech, i.e. part 1 (185–209), Achilles’ discussion of emotional restraint (185–8), the tree of Arete (195–200); part 2 (209–22), demand for Polyxena’s sacrifice (209–15), threat of raising a storm that will trap the Greeks in Troy (215–22). C. sets this within the context of *Aethiopsis* (*PEG*<sup>2</sup> I.69), *Andromache* (1260–2) and *Apollod. Epit.* 5.5 (p. 98). In fact, this introduction is relatively extensive (pp. 98–103) and saturated with useful scholarship referred to in the main body and footnotes. Though informatively discussed, I would like to have seen more on p. 116, n. 209 τοῦνεκα μείλιχος ἔσσο, Achilles’ advice to his son to be ‘gentle’. C. rightly highlights this most Patroklean adjective (Il. 17.671; 19.300), but

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).<sup>1</sup>

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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.

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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.

<sup>1</sup>(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).