

readers were most of all learned members of a Greek literary elite under the Roman Empire who wanted to preserve their Greek identity.

Hopkinson offers a general but not exhaustive bibliography (xii–xvi) and a complete list of surviving testimonies for Quintus and his epic up to the 12th century (2–9). The latter is published for the first time in a *Posthomerica* edition and makes a welcome addition. Each book is accompanied by a short summary of the narrative. The text follows Francis Vian's three-volume edition (Paris 1963–1969) with an *apparatus criticus* limited only to those conjectures and readings accepted by Hopkinson. When needed, short explanatory notes are provided.

Compared to Way's stilted translation, Hopkinson's prose reads smoothly. It is a very close translation which aims to make the original comprehensible. Vividness in the narrative can be detected in many parts of the English text, especially in battle scenes (*cf.* also the Achaeans' dispersal by the storm in 14.488–628). In short, this translation is preferable both to Way's archaizing and also to James' rhythmic but occasionally free prose translation. In any case, we cannot ignore Combellack's English prose translation, which, though at times rather lifeless and stiff, is not inferior to Hopkinson's new translation. The volume is completed with a registry of frequently occurring characters and places (in selection).

Hopkinson's new volume on Quintus Smyrnaeus stands out with its coherent and comprehensible translation, which renders most successfully the poet's language and style. It is a very welcome contribution to the re-evaluation of Quintus' work, and it will be useful not only to philologists (scholars and students alike) but also to readers interested in Greek epic poetry.

GEORGIOS P. TSOMIS
Democritus University of Thrace
 gtsomis@helit.duth.gr

SCHEIJNEN (T.) **Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica: A Study of Heroic Characterization and Heroism***. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018. Pp. 393. €138. 9789004373433.

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Quintus Smyrnaeus is certainly (and rightly) enjoying time in the spotlight. For a long time relegated to the hinterland of the classical canon, since the turn of the century the *Posthomerica* has attracted copious scholarly interest: monographs, commentaries on virtually every book, international conferences. A central and challenging text in the corpus of Imperial Greek epic, Quintus' 'poem in the Homeric middle' is increasingly recognized as an important articulation of literary and cultural identity in the Graeco-Roman world.

Tine Scheijnen situates her study firmly within this Quintan critical (re)turn. A revised version of her PhD dissertation, her book bears the fruits of the author's long-standing and passionate immersion in the world of Quintus. Her thorough knowledge of and enthusiasm for the poem is palpable on every page. Taking the reader through a series of character case studies, Scheijnen provides a linear account of the poem, with heroism as the driving, linking theme.

Scheijnen is remarkably clear about these goals of her study: the book rebounds with reiterations of what it does and does not seek to do. So, she begins by stating: 'My first and basic aim [is] to present a reading of the *Posthomerica* itself, focused on the linear progress of the narrative ... as a coherent, independent literary text. The word "independent" does not imply that I shun the study of literary sources ... but means that I will not allow such a study to steer my entire reading' (xii). Whilst one cannot deny the consistency of this stance, the resultant scope is narrow. In a poem so richly and elusively engaged in redrafting the inherited literary tradition, why 'steer' away from the non-Homeric strands of its patchwork? In a discussion of heroism in an Imperial, philosophically inflected work, can one seriously avoid political and cultural context? Given the topic and the text in question, the choice self-consciously to forgo the opportunity to discuss literary and cultural implications is problematic and puzzling. It risks restricting Quintus' poetics into an internal and circular framework that has already held it back for too long.

Scheijnen starts with a thorough introduction, outlining her position on the usual controversies surrounding the *Posthomerica*: its dating, sources and influences, particularly Quintus' knowledge of the Epic Cycle and Latin poetry. Scheijnen offers no new evidence, but sensibly synthesizes the available scholarship, and follows the *communis opinio* in dating the *Posthomerica* to the third century AD. She then further delineates her focus: within the vast, multifarious nexus of 'ancient heroism', she will focus on 'Homeric heroism': a choice which, again, is 'deliberately quite specific', precisely because it allows for 'other major notions of antique heroism (tragic, Apollonian, Vergilian)' not to be taken into account (17).

There follows, as promised, a linear reading of the epic's 14 books, with each chapter focusing on a different hero who arrives, fights, dies or triumphs at Troy. Individually, these chapters contain sensible observations and close readings. Scheijnen commendably focuses on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as equally central, and divergent, models for Quintus (usually the *Iliad* is prioritized). Her discussion, for instance, of Neoptolemus' arrival and battle exploits as

responding to the lacuna opened by *Odyssey* 11 (157–65) is engaging and persuasive. However, in aggregate, the significance of the conclusions is marred by the consistent refusal to engage with wider questions. So the chapter on Penthesilea, who offers for Scheijnen a ‘third possible way of life ... that does not force her only to be male on the battlefield or beautiful in her appearance’ (70), needs more thorough embedding in late antique debates about sexuality and gender: how does Achilles’ response to her death, for example, rewrite the tradition of a more sexualized, necrophiliac version of events?

Likewise, Scheijnen’s interpretation of Quintus’ ambiguous position on anger and conciliation, violence and ruse, as represented by the success of Neoptolemus (chapter 4), would have increased tenfold in power if considered against the epic’s ethical fabric and Stoic significations. The account of the *hoplōn krisis* (‘judgement of the arms’) requires situating within Imperial declamation culture. And the analysis of the sack of Troy (chapter 6) cries out for contextualization within Greek conceptions of Roman rule, subjectivity and self-positioning.

The book is generally clearly written and presented, although there are occasional grammatical slips and moments of clunky phraseology. Scheijnen tends to rely on long footnotes (on page 29 there are only four lines of text) into which she crams too much argumentation, which hinders the reader from working through her own book in a linear way.

This study, for all its merits, represents a missed opportunity. Homeric heroism in a third-century epic is a cultural-political topic, and Scheijnen’s analysis is strongest when she allows herself to move beyond the ‘intratextual’ confines imposed. Quintus’ poem may narratively reside ‘inside’ Homer’s boundaries, but to capture its agenda, allusivity and ambitions, we as readers must venture much more boldly outside of them.

EMMA GREENSMITH

St John’s College, University of Oxford
emma.greensmith@classics.ox.ac.uk

ACCORINTI (D.) (ed.) **Brill’s Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis** (Brill’s Companions in Classical Studies 32). Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016. Pp. 872. €231. 9789004310117.
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Nonnus has been experiencing a renaissance in recent years, and, with the publication of the present volume, he is the first late Greek poet to receive a volume in the Brill’s Companions in Classical Studies series. As the editor, Domenico Accorinti, states in his introduction (aptly entitled ‘Becoming a classic’), the primary purpose of the

volume is to provide a ‘wide-ranging ... reference handbook’ for students and scholars interested in Nonnus’ poetry (5). Particularly commendable is Accorinti’s assembling of scholars who have been associated with Nonnian scholarship over the last 50 years, and who have contributed greatly to the poet’s present resurgence (such as Pierre Chuvin and Gennaro D’Ippolito), and early career researchers who have recently completed doctoral or other research projects on Nonnus (such as Camille Geisz, Berenice Verhelst and Fabian Sieber). This initiative to bridge the older and newer generations is one of the volume’s triumphs.

Between the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrase of the Gospel of John*, Nonnus’ colossal poetic output demands an equally weighty *Companion*, which is divided into 32 chapters organized into seven sections. Given the brief nature of this review, it would be impossible to review many of the individual contributions, so I shall instead give an overview of the volume’s overarching structure, noting the aspects that best exemplify its strengths and weaknesses.

Part 1 (‘Author, context, and religion’) introduces the (often obscure) figure of Nonnus. Accorinti’s biography of the poet is particularly admirable for its succinct yet comprehensive sketch of what can and cannot be reconstructed regarding the biography of the poet, including Nonnus’ name, date and his disputed identifications (for example, with Nonnus, bishop of Edessa). Part 1 as a whole perfectly orientates the reader and lays ample groundwork for the contextual debates ahead.

Part 2 (‘The *Dionysiaca*’) contains essays that range from narratology (‘Narrative and digression’ by Verhelst), to the religious aspects of the poem (Dionysiac-Orphic religion by Alberto Bernabé and Rosa García-Gasco) and its psychology (Ronald F. Newbold). Fotini Hadjittofi’s contribution, ‘Major themes and motifs’, is, as she admits, necessarily brief and by no means comprehensive, but is to be commended for condensing some of the *Dionysiaca*’s major themes and motifs into one chapter, an unenviable task. Part 3 (‘The *Paraphrase of St John’s Gospel*’) focuses on the shorter of Nonnus’ two poems, with six chapters on Nonnus’ compositional, allusive or exegetical technique: the relationship between Nonnus and Biblical epic (Mary Whitby), his exegesis of John (Roberta Franchi), his paraphrastic technique (Scott Fitzgerald Johnson), connections with Christian literature (Christos Simelidis), Christology (Sieber) and mystery terminology (Filip Doroszewski).

Part 4 (‘Metre, style, poetry, and visual arts’) focuses on Nonnus’ poetic style, ranging from metrical analyses of Nonnian hexameter (Enrico Magnelli), through Nonnus’ formulaic style (D’Ippolito), generic models (Anna Maria Lasek),