The new translation is, however, likely to be the reason why most readers are drawn to this book, particularly if they are students. While it is always possible to find points of disagreement in a work of this length, Litwa has produced a very clear piece of English prose overall, bringing out the sense of the Greek text fluently without departing too far from the original sentence structure. He also provides extensive notes, focusing particularly on identifying quotations, allusions and parallel passages in other ancient texts, as well as supplying a number of references to relevant scholarship on individual concepts and terms. There are also explanations of a number of the text's diverse topics including figures from Greek myth, Pythagorean numerology and astronomical distances, although at times there could have been a bit more help in interpreting the meaning of difficult and obscure passages, such as the account of the anatomy of the brain at 4.51.10–13, especially for those unfamiliar with some of the concepts involved. Nonetheless, this impressive piece of scholarship is certainly successful in making an easily accessible and up-to-date version of this fascinating text available to a wide readership. There has recently been an upsurge of interest in heresiology itself as a form of literature, rather than merely a medium for the transmission of (often highly dubious) information about heretical sects. As Litwa states in his preface, it is hoped that this new edition and translation will help to advance this trend and make this treatise more of an object of study in its own right.

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BYZANTINE AND MODERN GREEK STUDIES

KALDELLIS (A.) **Byzantine Readings of Ancient Historians: Texts in Translation, with Introductions and Notes**. London and New York: Routledge, 2015. Pp. vi + 188. $120. 9780415732321.

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In this book Kaldellis provides translations, along with introductions and notes, of a broad variety of ninth- to 15th-century Byzantine texts (scholia, commentaries, poems, epigrams, essays) that engage with Greek historians. The seven chapters demonstrate an impressive array of ways in which Byzantine intellectuals read, used, engaged in a dialogue with and reacted and responded to ancient historiography.

In chapter 1 Kaldellis discusses the manifold levels of meaning of references to Xenophon and his work in a poem dedicated to the emperor Leon VI. The complex composition of the poem and use of Xenophon 'called on the reader to go beyond the text, recombining its terms so as to grasp a nuanced contemporary message' (32). Chapter 2 looks at classical allusions in the poem following the preface of the *Excerpta Historica* of Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos – a monumental collection of passages from around 30 historians divided in 53 thematically arranged volumes and an invaluable resource for ancient and late antique historians now lost. Chapter 3 focuses on the scholia on the manuscript of Zosimos' *New History*, an anti-Christian work that was preserved in order to be refuted, because Zosimos' arguments for paganism were so weak and could help the Byzantines defend Christianity. Tzetzes' scholia on Thucydides (chapter 4) – including calling his style obscure and 'wooden' – stand out because it was quite unusual to attack Thucydides, when he was widely considered as a model of Attic style in Byzantium.

The particular interests and tastes of the Byzantines decided what would survive of Diodoros' *Bibliotheke* (chapter 5). Kaldellis' selection of scholia shows that different aspects of Diodoros' work appealed to different readers. One scholiast in particular, who is very likely the historian Niketas Choniates, saw resonances between Diodoros' narrative and his contemporary world, and used Diodoros' work to comment on contemporary reality, to show the decline of Byzantium in his own times and to sharpen his often ironic take on events – a practice also seen in Choniates' use of classical

models in his *History*. Theodoros Metochites (chapter 6) emerges as a most exciting Byzantine intellectual whose works, which Kaldellis calls 'Essays', 'are similar in tone and structure to early modern collections such as those of Montaigne and Bacon' (99). The three essays Kaldellis focuses on here 'illustrate different aspects of the Byzantine engagement with the ancient historians' (99) as they span from criticism on the Hellenocentrism of Greek histories to a reworking of Thucydides' *Archaeology* and a paraphrase of a passage from Plutarch.

The last and longest chapter deals with Ioannes Kanaboutzes' *Commentary on the Roman Antiquities of Dionysios of Halikarnassos* (15th century). For Kanaboutzes, Dionysios' ideas are closely related to contemporary concerns and views of history. Ideological affinities prompted Kanaboutzes to select this particular text; Dionysios' argument for the cultural identity and common genealogy of the ancient Greeks and Romans suited Kanaboutzes' purpose as '[h]e too was looking for ways to reconcile ideologically modern "Romans" and "Greeks", and his commentary is an exercise in this direction' (114). In his effort at reconciliation, and despite being an Orthodox Christian scholar himself, Kanaboutzes even uses a pagan cult to create links between Greeks and Romans.

Kaldellis' translations are praiseworthy. He helpfully contextualizes all the texts he translates and links their contexts to the process of reception taking place in each case. His discussion is stimulating and thought-provoking, offering a fresh window into the manifold and inventive ways the Byzantines interacted with Greek historiography, proposing a sensible guide to approach systematically Byzantine texts ('A field guide to the Byzantine reception of ancient historiography', 5–19) and pointing to areas where more analysis would be fruitful. In the introduction to the book, Kaldellis crucially underlines that reception is a complex process whose study can yield important insights on the reasons why the Byzantines chose to preserve the Greek historiographical works that we have today based on their own historical views and preoccupations, and also on the ways in which Byzantine historical thinking was influenced by these works. This book is yet another valuable contribution to the field of Byzantine studies by Kaldellis, and an excellent addition to the ongoing discussion about the significance of Byzantium in the transmission and reception of ancient texts.

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RECEPTION AND HISTORY OF SCHOLARSHIP

FAULKNER (A.), VERGADOS (A.) and SCHWAB (A.) (eds) **The Reception of the *Homeric Hymns***. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. Pp. 432. £90. 9780198728788.
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This volume of essays confronts a gap in scholarship, at last – indeed after 80 years – assembling a collection of broad evidence countering T.W. Allen, W.R. Halliday and E.E. Sykes' claimed 'impression of neglect' of the *Homeric Hymns* in antiquity (*The Homeric Hymns*, Oxford 1936, lixxxix). It is not only antiquity's reception of the *Hymns* which is addressed, however, as the volume ends with a section on 'Renaissance and modern literature', which includes Nicholas Richardson's chapter on the *Hymns* and English poets, particularly Chapman, Congreve, and Shelley (325–44), and closes with Andreas Schwab's chapter on the rediscovery of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* in 1777 (345–66). The book's other five sections are titled 'Narrative and art', 'Latin literature', 'Imperial and late antique literature' and 'Byzantine literature'. The lack of a section on Hellenistic literature seems surprising, at first, but there has already been much attention devoted to Hellenistic poets' use and reworking of the *Hymns*. This includes Andrew Faulkner's contribution in his 2011 edited volume, *The Homeric Hymns* (Oxford), to which this book serves in many ways as a follow-up or companion. Hellenistic reception is also addressed in this volume's solid introduction, which, among other topics, gives an overview of Classical and Hellenistic reception of the hymns, even covering less-canonical Hellenistic poets like Sotades and Nicander. For some topics that might be expected in the introduction, such as an overview of the *Homeric Hymns*, as well as their performance, function and genre, however, one must consult the 2011 volume mentioned above.

The 17 chapters (not including the introduction) are divided into six sections, which are quite uneven in length, with only one chapter in 'Narrative and art' (Jenny Strauss Clay gives a synoptic view of the representation of the *Hymns* on Greek vases: 29–51) and five chapters each in 'Latin literature' and 'Imperial and late antique literature'. The Latin literature section could just as easily have been called 'Augustan literature', as only Augustan authors are discussed, mostly