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In the third century CE, a poet named Quintus wrote an epic poem in Greek titled τὰ μεθ' Ὀμηρον, “The Things After Homer,” now commonly referred to as the *Posthomerica*. Often called “Quintus Smyrnaeus” or “Quintus of Smyrna” because the *Posthomerica*’s narrator claims to be from Smyrna, Quintus arranged the contents of his epic into 14 books that span the events of the Trojan War between the funeral of Hector at the end of the *Iliad* through the returns of the Achaeans to Greece just prior to the *Odyssey*. Arthur S. Way translated Quintus’ epic for the Loeb Classical Library series in 1913, which was replaced in 2018 by the current book under review. Neil Hopkinson’s translation addresses two often complementary, though sometimes contrasting, reasons modern readers engage with the *Posthomerica*: to gain a more complete understanding of the Homeric epics and the wider Trojan war tradition, and to appreciate Quintus’ artistry in the context of imperial Greek culture.

Although the events of the Trojan War were depicted in the poems of the so-called Epic Cycle (the *Aethiopis*, *Little Iliad*, *Sack of Troy*, and *Returns*), those epics were lost sometime before or during the fifth century C.E., and, since it happened to deal with the same material, the *Posthomerica* quickly became the go-to text. For instance, Book 2 depicts the arrival and failure of the Aethiopian king Memnon and his forces to help the Trojans (events that were portrayed in the *Aethiopis*), and in Book 9 Odysseus and Diomedes bring Philoctetes from the island of Lemnos (an episode in the *Little Iliad*). It is still debated whether Quintus’ purpose was to replace the Epic Cycle poems (as opposed to creating something independently), but certainly many have felt that the *Posthomerica* is useful primarily because it helps us better understand the Homeric epics. This likely motivated Way’s 1913 translation only a few years into the Loeb series’ existence as well as its inclusion into the Barnes & Noble Library of Essential Reading series.

On this count, Hopkinson’s translation is certainly an improvement on Way. In general, Hopkinson has chosen to make his rendering more accessible to readers of the early twenty-first century by using prose (Way employed a much-ridiculed blank verse) and by translating into smooth English that is not overly showy (whereas Way’s translation often ascends to heights of over-the-top archaism; see below). Because of the *Posthomerica*’s narrative, Quintus’ epic is ideal reading in courses on myth and/or classical culture, but Hopkinson’s translation falls a bit short there. When I taught a course on versions of the Trojan War, I assigned Alan James’ 2004 translation (*The Trojan Epic*, Johns Hopkins University Press), in part because it is reasonably priced for student budgets, and his translation is more clearly aimed at a general audience, with a good introduction

and commentary. On the other hand, Hopkinson 2018 has, as usual in the Loeb series, facing Greek text and a small apparatus criticus--ideal for Greek courses on Homer and/or imperial literature (Quintus' Greek is not substantially different from Homer's).

Recent decades have seen a revival of scholars' interest in the *Posthomerica*, largely due to a wider awakening of interest in Greek literature produced in the Roman Empire. Hopkinson, who included several passages from the *Posthomerica* in his *Greek Poetry of the Imperial Period: An Anthology* (Cambridge 1994), is himself one of these scholars. This scholarly perspective is addressed in this Loeb with ancient testimonia on Quintus and the *Posthomerica* prefacing the translation, as well as Hopkinson's use of Greek text edited by Francis Vian in the 1960s (Way's translation had made use of an 1850 edition). Whereas Way's 1913 translation used words that were archaic, even by turn-of-the-century standards, Hopkinson has used archaisms sparingly and with a view to approximating an element of Quintus' artistry: "English archaisms can help to produce an appropriate distancing effect, and the present translation has a tincture of these" (xi). Balancing archaism with the contemporary is no easy task for a translator of the *Posthomerica*, since about 80% of Quintus' lexicon can be found in the Homeric poems. Hopkinson's Loeb also provides a decent (if brief) general introduction to Quintus' work in addition to a listing a selection of scholarship.

A comparison of Hopkinson and Way's translations of the same passage from the *Posthomerica* is a good encapsulation of the issues that I have raised in this review. The passage is a simile, which is a signature element of Homeric poetry and a very-frequently (some would say too-frequently) imitated element of Quintus' poetry. Quintus is, of course, imitating Homer here, but he is also purposefully allowing his audience's cultural context to seep through his heroic-age narrative:

*Posthomerica* 6.527-37:

Καὶ τότε ἄρ' οἰώθησαν ἀγακλειτοὶ βασιλῆες  
Ἀτρεΐδαι· περὶ δέ σφιν ὀλέθριος ἴσταθ' ὄμιλος  
βαλλόντων ἐκάτερθεν ὃ τι σθένε χερσὶν ἐλέσθαι·  
οἱ μὲν γὰρ στονόοντα βέλη χέον, οἱ δὲ νυ λῆας,  
ἄλλοι δ' αἰγανέας. Τοῖ δ' ἐν μέσσοισιν ἐόντες  
στρωφῶντ', εὖτε σύες μέσῳ ἔρκει ἢ λέοντες  
ἥματι τῷ ὄτ' ἄνακτες ἀολίσσως ἄνθρώπους,  
ἀργαλέως δ' εἰλῶσι κακὸν τεύχοντες ὄλεθρον  
θηρῶν ὑπὸ κρατεροῖς, οἱ δ' ἔρκεος ἐντὸς ἐόντες  
δμῶας δαρδάπτουσιν, ὃ τίς σφισιν ἐγγυὸς ἴκηται·  
ὧς οἱ γ' ἐν μέσσοισιν ἐπεσσομένους ἐδάϊζον.

Way 1913:

And now the Atreid kings, the war-renowned,  
Were left alone, and murder-breathing foes  
Encompassed them, and hurled from every side  
Whate'er their hands might find—the deadly shaft  
Some showered, some the stone, the javelin some.  
They in the midst aye turned this way and that,  
As boars or lions compassed round with pales  
On that day when kings gather to the sport  
The people, and have penned the mighty beasts  
Within the toils of death; but these, although  
With walls ringed round, yet tear with tusk and fang  
What luckless thrall soever draweth near.  
So these death-compassed heroes slew their foes  
Ever as they pressed on.

Hopkinson 2018:

Then those renowned kings, the Atridae, were all alone and surrounded on every side by a murderous crowd throwing whatever missiles came to hand: some rained down grievous arrows, others rocks or javelins. There they stood in their midst, turning now this way now that, like boars or lions penned in on those occasions when rulers round up human beings in a confined space and devise for them a horrible death from powerful wild beasts which in that arena rip and mangle any of those slaves who come near them: just so they set about slaying the enemy who charged at them from every side.

Comparison of these two translations demonstrates how, first of all, Way's archaism is unnecessarily obscure (e.g., "compassed round with pales," "thrall") as compared to Hopkinson's carefully calculated translation ("penned in" and "slave" vs. "set about slaying") and, second, Way tends to hew closer to the Greek than Hopkinson (e.g., ἔρκος, which Way renders as "a confined space" and Hopkinson as "arena," is a word found in both Homeric poems that means "enclosure"--Quintus could have used other words specifically meaning "arena"--so Hopkinson's "arena" misses an important aspect of what Quintus is up to, even as it makes the meaning clearer to non-specialist readers).

In sum, then, Hopkinson 2018 is a welcome update to Way 1913, and I commend him for this effort in increasing the visibility and accessibility of the *Posthomerica*. However, for general readers and students, I recommend James 2004.

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