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Author(s): Calum A. Maciver

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REPRESENTATIVE BEES IN
QUINTUS SMYRNAEUS' *POSTHOMERICA*

CALUM A. MACIVER

AT QUINTUS SMYRNAEUS' *POSTHOMERICA* 6.324, the epic primary narrator compares the Trojan troops marching behind their leaders to swarms of bees (6.322–27):¹

μάλα δ' ὄκα κίον προπάροιθεν ὀμίλου,
προφρονέως δ' οἴμησαν ἀπ' ἄστεος. ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ
πολλοὶ ἔπονθ', ὡς εἶ τε μελισσάων κλυτὰ φύλα
ἡγεμόνεσσιν εἴοσι διηρέφους σίμβλοιο 325
ἐκχόμεναι καναχηδόν, ὅτ' ἔταρος ἦμαρ ἵκηται
ὡς ἄρα τοῖσιν ἔποντο βροτοὶ ποτὶ δῆριν ἰούσι.

Then the Trojan champions moved very quickly in front of the crowd, and in earnest went from the city. And round them followed many soldiers, as though famous tribes of bees streaming forth with a resounding din from their roofed hive along with their leaders, when the first day of spring arrives. So then the men, on their way to battle, followed their leaders.

This essay will focus on the intertextual dialogue reflected in a series of bee similes, taking as its starting point this simile in *Posthomerica* 6. To write similes in post-Homeric epic is to evoke a series of literary forerunners, starting with Homer. Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica* (third century C.E.) as post-Hellenistic as well as post-Homeric epic is (thus) in an intricate literary nexus with its epic predecessors.² Starting with this simile in *Posthomerica* 6, the main section of this essay will move on to an earlier, related, bee simile in the poem (Book 1) and its relationship with a simile from the Lemnian episode in *Argonautica* 1, in an attempt to assess the function of Apollonian intertextuality within the overwhelmingly Homeric fabric of the poem.

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1. The Greek text of Quintus is that of Vian (1963, 1966); of Homer that of West (1998, 2000), with altered punctuation and orthography; of Apollonius that of Vian (1974); of Vergil that of Mynors (1969); and of Callimachus that of Pfeiffer (1949). All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

2. On the date, see the most up-to-date treatment by Baumbach and Bär (2007a, 2–8). An earlier date than the third century could be possible, however: it is tenuous to posit as a firm terminus post quem the fact that “Quintus is intertextually indebted to” Oppian (Baumbach and Bär 2007a, 3). The intertextuality is based on only three passages, detailed by James and Lee (2000, 6): “Twice in similes and once in a digression on fishermen killed in battle Quintus adapts material that is *germane* to Oppian’s subject, *fishing* . . . so that the *clear indebtedness* is of Quintus to Oppian” (my emphasis).

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I will then analyze the in-proem of Book 12, which similarly demonstrates Alexandrian (this time Callimachean) presence within its dominant Homeric (and Hesiodic) framework. By examining the intertextuality of the bee similes and then of the in-proem, I will demonstrate the nature and function of imitation in the *Posthomeric*, and how Quintus seeks to improve upon the texts incorporated into his own.

1. CHALLENGING EPIC

Similes, given their intrinsic Homeric nature, reflect the need to read the *Posthomeric* against its Homeric template (given their “Homeric” nature). In statistical terms alone, the fact that there are 226 long similes in the *Posthomeric*, while the *Iliad* has only 197 (despite the fact that the *Posthomeric* is about half the length of the *Iliad*) bespeaks Quintus’ emulation of Homeric poetic practice.³ The subject matter and use of these similes are also reflective of this imitation of Homer.⁴ This closeness to Homer in the similes of the *Posthomeric*, as with other elements of the poem, brings an inevitable interpretability when major differences between text and intertext exist. When the reader engages with the *Posthomeric*, his/her own reading of Homer, in its scope and detail, interacts with Quintus’ own reading of Homer, and thus reading Quintus becomes essentially a case of reading Homer through a later poet’s lens. The nature of this act of reading on the part of Quintus can be examined through his use of bee similes, and it is to this bee simile of Book 6 that I now turn. The most important phrase in terms of intertextuality and self-reflection upon this intertextuality is *μελισσάων κλυτὰ φύλα* (324). The first line of the simile compares the Trojan soldiers following behind their leaders with bees. The poem’s Homeric-imitative template is reflected in the adjective *κλυτά*, for which there are two key significances. One of its senses is connected with the idea *κλεῖτος*.⁵ The most recent translator of the *Posthomeric*, Alan James, reflects this meaning by construing as “a splendid swarm.” He thus takes the adjective to specify quality, that is, how the swarm of bees *appeared*, following a sense of the adjective used in the *Iliad* of inanimate objects such as armor.⁶ Neither bees, however, nor tribes (*φύλα*) of bees, are inanimate, and nowhere in either Homer or Quintus is *κλυτά* used of animals or insects, except here. This is still, however, a perfectly acceptable translation: there is also a very similar formulation for bees at Hesiod frag. 33a.16 M–W, *μελισσέων ἀγλαὰ φύλα*, while at Oppian *Cynegetica* 1.13, the sea is described as nourishing *κλυτὰ φύλα*.⁷

3. Cf. Edwards 1991, 24, for the statistics for similes in the *Iliad*.

4. According to James 2004, xxvi, only around 10 percent of the similes in Quintus Smyrnaeus can be termed “thematically original.”

5. Cf. *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos* (hereafter, *LfgRE*), s.v. *κλυτός* (B); and LSJ, s.v. *κλυτός* (2) (“freq. as epithet of gods and heroes”).

6. Cf. LSJ, s.v. *κλυτός* (1). It is used in this sense as an epithet of *τεύχεα* at *Il.* 5.435, 6.504, 11.334, 16.64, 17.70, 17.85, 17.125, 17.191, 17.208, 18.144, 18.147, 18.192, 18.197, 19.10, 22.258, and 22.399; of *δόματα* at *Il.* 2.854, 13.21, and 24.719; of *τεύχεα* at *Il.* 21.295; and of *δῶρα* at *Il.* 24.458.

7. Cf. Alc. frag. 89.4 Campbell: *γένοσ μελισσῶν*.

The fact that *φῦλα* is most regularly applied in Greek poetry to people or gods, and the fact that the unit *κλυτὰ φῦλ' ἀνθρώπων* occurs at *Iliad* 14.361,⁸ suggest that the poet is here personifying the bees, pointing to an extraliteral sense for this phrase. The rendering by James is thus only part of its significance. The root meaning of *κλυτός* is “heard about,” “bekannt,” from the verb *κλύειν*.⁹ The tribes of bees are heard about because Quintus, as a reader, has read and heard of them from other texts, and has signposted this fact: the bees are both in tribes (*φῦλα*), and heard about (*κλυτά*), because of literary precedence. A bee simile in an epic poem directs the reader to what was considered the first simile of the *Iliad* (*Il.* 2.87–93).¹⁰ It compares the hastening of the Greek troops to assembly to swarms of close-packed bees that issue continually from a rock (*Il.* 2.84–93):

ὡς ἄρα φωνήσας βουλῆς ἐξῆρχε νέεσθαι,
 οἱ δ' ἐπανεστήσαν πείθοντό τε ποιμένι λαῶν 85
 σκηπτούχοι βασιλῆες ἐπεσεύοντο δὲ λαοί.
 ἦύτε ἔθνεα εἴσι μελισσάων ἀδινάων
 πέτρης ἐκ γλαφυρῆς αἰεὶ νέον ἐρχομενάων,
 βοτρυδὸν δὲ πέτονται ἐπ' ἄνθεσιν εἰαρινοῖσιν·
 αἱ μὲν τ' ἔνθα ἄλλις πεποτήταται, αἱ δὲ τε ἔνθα 90
 ὡς τῶν ἔθνεα πολλὰ νεῶν ἄπο καὶ κλισιάων
 ἦῖόνος προπάροιθε βαθείης ἐστιχόωντο
 ἰλαδὸν εἰς ἀγορήν·

After Nestor finished speaking he led the way from the council, and the scepter-bearing kings stood up and obeyed the shepherd of the people; and the people hurried behind. Just as swarms of darting bees stream one after another from a hollow rock, and fly in clusters onto spring flowers: some fly together in this direction, others in that direction. So the many nations of men marched in order from the ships and huts before the deep shore into the assembly.

The Greek leaders leave the council after hearing Agamemnon relate the dream he received from Zeus. Nestor leads the way, who gave the divinely sent dream (that the Greeks would now take Troy, *Il.* 2.29, 66) his approval. We find a similar set of circumstances preceding the bee simile in *Posthomerica* 6. Heracles' grandson Eurypylus, newly arrived in Troy, gives new hope to the Trojans (Τρῶες δ' ἐπὶ μακρὰ χάροντο, 6.315). He selects Trojan champions to accompany him into battle (6.316–22), and then leads the way from the city, with the Trojans streaming behind. Textual similarities further tie the two passages together: the bees repeated in the same metrical *sedes* and morphological form (*μελισσάων*, *Il.* 2.87, and Quint. Smyrn. 6.324) are described as *ἔθνεα* (*Il.* 2.87) and *φῦλα* (Quint. Smyrn. 6.324).¹¹ The fact that

8. Cf. *Hymn. Hom. Ap.* 537: *περικλυτὰ φῦλ' ἀνθρώπων*; and *Orphica Argon.* 751: *Κόλχων κλυτὰ φῦλα*. Cf. also *Il.* 19.30–31, where Thetis promises Achilles that she will try to keep off the flies (*ἄγρια φῦλα/μύιας*) from Patroclus' body.

9. *Lfgre*, s.v. *κλυτός* (A). The range of the French translation “tribus fameuses” by Vian (1966, ad loc.) comes closer both to this primary meaning and to the quality James ascribes (2004, ad loc.).

10. Σ bT (Erbse) on the first extended simile of the *Iliad*.

11. *ἔθνεα* is used frequently of animals and insects, as well as of people. Cf. LSJ, s.v. *ἔθνος*. Cf. Kirk 1985, 125: “In the simile itself the races, *ἔθνεα*, of bees are particularly apt to the various tribal contingents.”

the Iliadic bees fly onto spring flowers (ἐπ' ἀνθεσιν εἰαρινοῖσιν, 2.89) is expanded in the *Posthomerica* into the idea that the bees proceed from their hive when/because spring has come (ὅτ' εἶαρος ἦμαρ ἴκηται, Quint. Smyrn. 6.326).

This famous first simile of the *Iliad* is heard of by Quintus and heard of by the reader who identifies it and brings its meaning to bear on the Posthomeric simile. The famous φύλα of bees refer primarily to the ἔθνεα of bees in the Iliadic simile, and then by correspondence to the Greeks who streamed from their ships and tents (*Il.* 2.91): Quintus' Trojans are aligned with Homer's Greeks. κλυτός is thus a chronological marker: the events of the *Posthomerica* may be very close in narrative time to the events of the *Iliad*, but in reality the Greeks who were legendary to Homer have become even more so to Quintus and his *Posthomerica*, written more than a thousand years later.¹² The belated Homeric tales recast and continued in the *Posthomerica* are inscribed as post-Homeric: they are "heard of," and appreciated.¹³

The Iliadic simile itself has traditionally been interpreted as emphasising the multitude and movement of the troops.¹⁴ It has also been noted that the simile lacks appropriate relevance for the narrative with which it is compared. The identical correspondence between the ἔθνεα of bees in the simile (2.87) and the ἔθνεα of men in the narrative (2.91) leads the reader to expect further parallelism and explication of the narrative. Instead, we read apparent contradictions, first between the strictly ordered movement of the troops (ἔστιχόωντο, 2.92) and the unusual movement of the bees (βοτρυδόν, 2.89, "like a bunch of grapes"),¹⁵ and then between the troops that leave from their ships and huts (νεῶν ἄπο καὶ κλισιάων, 2.91) and the bees that exit from a single place (πέτρης ἐκ γλαφυρῆς, 2.88), incongruities noted in ancient Homeric criticism.¹⁶ In Quintus, we read no such problematic relations between simile and narrative, a fact that reflects the tight correspondence between simile and narrative text throughout the *Posthomerica*. The simile is framed by the explicit information that the soldiers followed their leaders: ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ πολλοὶ ἔποντο (6.323–24) and τοῖσιν ἔποντο βροτοὶ (6.327). In the simile, the main verb ἔποντο (324) is carried over, with the detail that the bees too followed their leaders (ἡγεμόνεσσιν εἴοσι, 325). Similarly, the covered hive (διηρηφῆος σίμβλοιο, 325) fits easily with the single point of departure, the city, from which the Trojans leave (οἰμησαν ἀπ' ἄστεος, 323). The noise made by the bees is described as καναχηδόν (326), and fits well with the description of the

12. Cf. Goldhill 1991, 188, on "the distance of the figures of the [*Argonautica*] from the narrator's present."

13. Cf. *Argon.* 1.1 (παλάγγενέων κλέα φωτῶν) and the comments of Goldhill (1991, 288–91) and Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004, 92–93).

14. Cf. Fränkel 1921, 71; Moulton 1977, 38–39 (on this and the other comparable similes in *Iliad* 2); and Kirk 1985, ad loc.

15. See both LSJ and *LfggrE*, s.v. στιχάομαι; and Kirk 1985, 125: "[It] strictly means 'went in columns (or ranks),' and 126: "The separate companies are envisaged as advancing in companies to the assembly in a more or less purposeful way." Cf. *Il.* 2.464–65 (with Moulton 1977, 29 n. 17), and cf. specifically 2.264 with 2.91.

16. Eustathius notes the incongruity in the simile (177.17.8 and 177.21 Van der Valk). He does not reflect the consensus of the Homeric scholia in favor of the simile's merits (Σ A BT Erbse). Cf. Moulton 1977, 39 n. 44.

terrible din of the Trojans and their horses as they move (328–29).¹⁷ The root meaning of the adverb is suited to the field of battle just as much as its more generalized, later signification for sound.¹⁸ There are also points not echoed in the narrative, but from which we can infer information. ἐκχύμεναι (326) suggests the zeal with which the soldiers left the city, while the fact that spring has come (εἶαρος ἤμαρ ἵκηται, 326) suggests that the Trojans would rather be out in battle than remain in the city, given that Eurypylus has now arrived.¹⁹

While it is the swarms of the bees (~ Greeks) in the *Iliad* that are the literary benchmark, Quintus' bee simile implicitly directs the reader to the *Iliad* through intertextual inscription (or "Alexandrian footnote") and praise of the epic archetype,²⁰ and then presents an improved version of that Homeric simile, this time with no redundant detail. The famous, heard-about, bees are a new and improved version, as the new "Homer" signposts appreciation, and the reader examines and interprets the differences to the bees of the "old" Homer.

2. APOLLONIAN ALLUSION: RECEIVING HOMER FROM LEMNOS

The bee simile in *Iliad* 2 is not the only text inscribed in the Posthomeric simile. Apollonius is also alluded to. The participle used of the bees in the simile, ἐκχύμεναι (6.326), occurs in only one other place before Quintus (in this form), at *Argonautica* 1.880.²¹ The participle there describes the action of bees in a simile that compares the Lemnian women rushing down to the Argonauts who are on the point of departure from Lemnos (*Argon.* 1.875–85):²²

ὣς νεΐκεσσαν ὄμιλον· ἐναντία δ' οὐ νύ τις ἔτλη ὄμματ' ἀνασχεθέειν οὐδὲ προτιμυθήσασθαι, ἀλλ' αὐτως ἀγορῆθεν ἐπαρτίζοντο νέεσθαι σπερχόμενοι. ταὶ δὲ σφιν ἐπέδραμον, εὔτ' ἐδάησαν. ὡς δ' ὅτε λείρια καλὰ περιβρομέουσι μέλισσαι πέτρης ἐκχύμεναι σιμβληΐδος, ἀμφὶ δὲ λειμών ἐρσήεις γάνυται, ταὶ δὲ γλυκὺν ἄλλοτε ἄλλον καρπὸν ἀμέργουσιν πεποτημένα· ὥς ἄρα ταὶ γε ἐνδυκὲς ἀνέρας ἀμφὶ κινυρόμεναι προχέοντο, χερσὶ δὲ καὶ μύθοισιν ἐδεικνόνωντο ἕκαστον, εὐχόμενα μακάρεσσιν ἀπήμονα νόστον ὀπάσσαι.	875 880 885
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So Heracles upbraided the company. But no one dared to lift up his eyes in opposition or to utter a word in retort. But, just as they were, they made ready to leave the assembly in haste. And the [Lemnian] women ran down to them when they found out. As when bees,

17. τῶν δ' ἄρα νισομένων πολλὸς αἰθέρα δοῦπος ὀρώρει/αὐτῶν ἠδ' ἵππων, περὶ δ' ἔβρεμεν ἄσπετα τεύχη ("and a great din arose to the sky from them and their horses as they went, and their armor resounded greatly about them").

18. See the range of meanings listed in LSJ and *Lfgre*, s.v. *καναχέω*.

19. Cf. the description of Penthesileia and the effect her appearance has on the Trojans at Quint. Smyrn. 1.63–73.

20. On the term "Alexandrian footnote," and its function and significance, see Hinds 1998, 1–16.

21. The form potentially occurs at Aesch. *Pers.* 876 (conj. Broadhead for the εὐχόμεναι of the MSS): cf. M. L. West 1990, ad loc.

22. Cf. Vian 1974, 91 n. 3.

pouring out from their home in a rock, buzz around lovely lilies, and the dewy meadow is gladdened, and they pull at the sweet fruit in turn, flitting from one to the other; so then the women greedily poured out, lamenting around the men, and pledged each man with hands and words, praying to the gods to grant them a painless journey home.

Both the Apollonian and Quintean similes describe bees, find an echo in ἐκχόμεναι, and both describe a group of people leaving a city. What ties these similes together, beyond these details, is that they both draw upon the same bee simile in *Iliad* 2.²³ The context of the bee simile in *Posthomerica* 6 fits the martial details of the Iliadic passage to which it alludes. The Apollonian passage, however, is quite different. It relates the nonthreatening, nonmartial farewell scene of the Lemnian women and the Argonauts: instead of soldiers pouring out like bees, we have women. The clearest aspects compared are sound and movement. Just as the women ran from the city and poured around the men (ταῖ δέ σφιν ἐπέδραμον, 1.878; ἀνέρας ἀμφὶ . . . προχέοντο, 1.883), so the bees poured out from their hive (πέτρης ἐκχόμεναι συμβληίδος, 880) and flew from one flower to the next (ταῖ δὲ γλυκὺν ἄλλοτε ἄλλον/καρπὸν ἀμέργουσιν πεποτημένα, 881–82). The women make plaintive sounds as they bid farewell to the men (ἐνδुकὲς ἀνέρας ἀμφὶ κινυρόμεναι . . . / . . . μύθοισιν ἐδεικνόνωντο ἕκαστον, 883–84),²⁴ just as the bees buzz around the lilies (λείρια καλὰ περιβρομέουσαι μέλισσαι, 879).²⁵

The importance of this Apollonian simile, for the purposes of this article, lies less with the bee simile in *Posthomerica* 6 than with another, in *Posthomerica* 1, where the Trojan women desire to rush out of Troy and fight the Greeks, like the Trojan men. *Posthomerica* 1 has as its focus the arrival, exploits, and death of Penthesileia.²⁶ Her successes together with her Amazonian followers against the Greeks prompt the Trojan women, stuck within Troy, to question their own status (1.403–35). Hippodameia (409–35) urges her companions inside Troy to join the fighting, arguing that men have no advantage over women, as Penthesileia and the Amazons prove in battle. The women are stirred up for war, and are then compared in this simile to bees swarming from a hive (*Posthomerica* 1.436–46).²⁷

23. Of verbal parallels with the Iliadic simile, the clearest are the echo of πέτρης ἐκ γλαφυρῆς (*Il.* 2.87) in πέτρης ἐκχόμεναι συμβληίδος (*Argon.* 1.880, itself a scholarly explication of the meaning of the Iliadic words; cf. Kofler 1992, 316), and the echo of πεποτημένοι (90) in πεποτημένα (882).

24. The participle κινυρόμεναι, which Clare (2002, 184) calls the “crux of the entire comparison” (in that it forms a problematic contrast with the joyful meadow) echoes a Homeric hapax at *Iliad* 17.5, which describes a mother standing over her first-born calf: ὡς τις περὶ πόρτακι μήτηρ/πρωτοτόκος κινυρῆ οὐ πρὶν εἰδῆτα τόκοιο (17.4–5). The protective mother/birth image of the Iliadic simile suits the context in Apollonius. The Lemnian women wanted children by the Argonauts (1.684), and the bee simile suggests, following the belief among the ancients that bees collected their young from flowers, that the Lemnian women have “acquired” what they wanted from the Argonauts. In fact, in one tradition Hypsipyle had two children by Jason, Euneus and Thoas; cf. *Der Neue Pauly*, s.v. Hypsipyle.

25. The scholia stated that the simile did not fit the narrative, giving as a specific example the fact that the meadow rejoices (λειμών/ἔρσηται γάνυται, 880–81) even though the city is in grief, as the participle κινυρόμεναι (883) suggests: Σ L (Wendel) on *Argon.* 1.879–83. For a recent attempt to reconcile the two ideas, see Clare 2002, 184. The gentle image for the Lemnian women contrasts with the episode earlier in Book 1 when the women rush in fear to the shore based on an assumption that the Thracians (and not the Argonauts) had arrived to wreak vengeance on them (ὅταν γάρ που ἰκάνειν/Θρήκας, 1.636–37). Cf. Fränkel 1968, 117.

26. On Penthesileia and the Amazons in Book 1, see Vian 1963, 3–11.

27. Spinoula (2000, 76–80) also provides some discussion of this simile. It should be noted here that there are two other bee similes in the *Posthomerica*, at 3.220–26 (the Trojans attack Ajax like bees as he defends

ὡς ἄρ' ἔφη, πάσῃσι δ' ἔρωσ στυγεροῖο μόθοιο
 ἔμπεσεν ἔσσυμένως δὲ πρὸ τείχεος ὀρμαίνεσκον
 βήμεναι ἐν τεύχεσσι, ἀρηγέμεναι μεμαῖται
 ἄσθει καὶ λαοῖσιν ὀρίνετο δέ σφισι θυμός,
 ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἔσω σίμβλοιο μέγ' ἰύζωσι μέλισσαι 440
 χειματος οὐκέτ' ἐόντος, ὅτ' ἐς νομὸν ἐντύνονται
 ἐλθέμεν, οὐδ' ἄρα τῆσι φίλον πέλει ἔνδοθι μίμναιν,
 ἄλλη δ' αὖθ' ἑτέρην προκαλίζεται ἐκτὸς ἄγεσθαι
 ὡς ἄρα Τρωιάδες ποτὶ φύλοπιν ἐγκονέουσαι
 ἀλλήλας ὄτρυνον ἀπόπροθι δ' εἶρα θέντο 445
 καὶ ταλάρους, ἀλεγεινὰ δ' ἐπ' ἔντεα χεῖρας ἴαλλον.

When Hippodameia finished speaking, desire for loathsome battle fell on all the women. Quickly they stirred themselves up to go armor-clad in front of the wall, desiring to lend aid both to city and people; their spirit in them was roused. As when, inside a hive, bees begin to buzz now that winter is past, when they prepare to go out to the meadow and it is not their inclination to remain inside, and one after another in turn summons another to come outside; so then the Trojan women eagerly stirred up one another for battle. They put aside their wool and baskets, and stretched their hands to grievous armor.

The primary point of the comparison itself is clear: the bees connote the multitude of women in excited activity, leaving at last a hive that denotes Troy. The σίμβλος (440) denotes an apiary, that is, it is manmade and therefore designed to keep bees, and by transference, women inside the enclosure that has kept them back while war has been raging outside.²⁸ On closer examination a patterned parallelism with the narrative is evident: μέλισσαι (440) echoes πάσῃσι (436) and Τρωιάδες (444) in the narrative; ἐς νομὸν ἐντύνονται ἐλθέμεν (441–42) echoes ἔσσυμένως δὲ πρὸ τείχεος ὀρμαίνεσκον βήμεναι (437–38); and ἄλλη δ' αὖθ' ἑτέρην προκαλίζεται ἐκτὸς ἄγεσθαι (443) echoes Τρωιάδες ποτὶ φύλοπιν ἐγκονέουσαι ἀλλήλας ὄτρυνον (444–45). There is implicit meaning in the simile for the narrative:²⁹ the hive (σίμβλοιο, 440) stands for Troy, and the end of winter (χειματος οὐκέτ' ἐόντος, 441) and the desire of the bees not to remain inside any longer (οὐδ' ἄρα τῆσι φίλον πέλει ἔνδοθι μίμναιν, 442) transfers easily to the desire the Trojan women have felt and feel to join in combat (ἔρωσ στυγεροῖο μόθοιο, 436). Even the pasture or meadow (ἐς νομὸν, 441) can signify the battle plain outside the city. Thus every piece of information in the simile has relevance for the situation of the Trojan women in the narrative. The superfluity often found in Homeric similes is replaced by a mannered attention to narrative correspondence and relevancy with the later poetic modes of Alexandrian and Imperial Greek poetry.³⁰ Homeric similes traditionally illuminate the narrative by moving onto an image plane that depicts vivid worlds partly independent from the narrative they illuminate.³¹

the corpse of Achilles) and 11.382–83 (the sound of the Greeks is like bees buzzing). The former simile in Quint. Smyrn. 3 emphasizes the persistence of the Trojans in the face of Ajax's prowess. Both similes are less relevant for discussion in this essay, but are treated by Spinoula 2000, 80–86.

28. Cf. LSJ, s.v. σίμβλος.

29. On secondary significances of a simile for the narrative in Homer, cf. primarily Fränkel 1921, 16.

30. Cf. Hunter 1993, 129–31 (but note his caution at 129). Edwards (1991, 30–34) illustrates cogently, however, that Homeric similes have many more complex interactions with the narrative than are normally granted for them.

31. Cf. Edwards 1991, 35; Fränkel 1921, 99.

Here the narrative overwhelms the imagerial level, demoting it to a poetic servitude for the sake of a strict parallelism. Further example of post-Homeric innovation can be seen in the blurring of the distinction between narrative and a simile as nonnarrative. The bees exhibit personified traits: ἰύζωσι (440) is used only in the *Posthomeric* of bees, whereas in all other instances of the verb it is used in connection to the cries of people. The *Suda* associates the verb with shouting, while Hesychius defines it with κρᾶνγάζει (and therefore more approximate with the sound of dogs).³² The bees also call one another to leave the hive and come outside: προκαλίζεται (443) is never used elsewhere of animals or insects, and its original Homeric significance is of challenging someone to combat in battle.³³

This episode in the middle of Book 1 is unprecedented in the surviving narratives about the Trojan War:³⁴ the Trojan women are on the point of storming out of Troy and of breaking the traditional boundaries that prevent their participation in battle. This threat to the social order of the “Homeric” world described by Quintus is cogently symbolized by the women taking up weapons, and laying aside the items that stand for their domestic role in life: ἀπόπροθι δ’ εἴρια θέντο/καὶ τάλάρους, ἀλεγεινὰ δ’ ἐπ’ ἔντεα χεῖρας ἰαλλον (1.445–46). The simile invokes literary antecedents that affect reading of the women-into-warrior theme, not only Homeric situations but especially the Apollonian bee simile that compares the Lemnian women.

First, the bee simile in *Posthomeric* 1, like its counterpart in Book 6, evokes the bee simile in *Iliad* 2, and shares many of the implications that that intertext brings. The martial gathering of great Greek warriors in *Iliad* 2 emphasizes the place that the Trojan women want to occupy. There is another bee simile in the *Iliad*, however, that has more of a direct relevance. At *Iliad* 12.167–72, Asius complains to Zeus that the two Greeks Polypoetes and Leonteus tenaciously hold out against him at the wall like wasps or bees:³⁵

οἳ δ’ ὡς τε σφήκες μέσον αἰόλοι ἢε μέλισσαι
οἰκία ποιήσονται ὀδῶ ἔπι παιπαλοέσση,
οὐδ’ ἀπολείπουσιν κοῖλον δόμον, ἀλλὰ μένοντες
ἄνδρας θρητηῆρας ἀμύνονται περὶ τέκνων, 170
ὡς οἳ γ’ οὐκ ἐθέλουσι πυλάων καὶ δυ’ ἐόντε
χάσασθαι πρὶν γ’ ἢε κατατάμεν ἢε ἄλῶναι.

And so they, like wasps quick-bending in the middle or like bees that make their habitat in a rocky place, and do not leave their hollow home, but by remaining defend their children from men out to destroy their nest, so they do not wish to back away from the gates, even

32. Cf. *Il.* 17.66 (with scholion AT [Erbse] ascribing the verb to the βομηες in the text) and *Od.* 15.162. *Lfgre* assigns a meaning of *lärm*, *schreien*, *heulen*, an early significance not followed in this instance by Quintus. The verb is more prevalent in tragedy: cf. Aesch. *Pers.* 280, 1042, *Supp.* 808, 872, 875; Soph. *Trach.* 787 (of Heracles crying out in pain), and *Phil.* 11. Eustathius explains the sound as like a σάλπιγξ, thus perhaps reflecting the later usage in the *Posthomeric*.

33. For this sense of the verb, cf. *Il.* 3.19, 4.389, 5.807, and 7.150, and esp. *Od.* 8.228, and see also Spinoula 2000, 79. The Homeric value is reflected at Oppian *Halieutica* 2.325 (cf. scholion, ad loc.), but there the simile involves a warrior issuing a battle challenge, illuminating the narrative description of the crayfish.

34. For one possible (but unlikely) tragic fragment as a source of this episode, see Vian 1963, 28–29.

35. On this simile, see Hainsworth 1993, 335–37. See also the simile at Quint. Smyrn. 3.220–26, which is relevant as far as it concerns the persistence of the Trojans like persistent bees.

though they are just two, until either they have killed or are captured.

The opposite image to bees gladly fleeing their nest is conjured up here. Asius compares the two Greek warriors to wasps or bees because of their tenacity, their reluctance to give up their post.³⁶ Whereas the other bee simile in the *Iliad*, in Book 2, emphasizes multitude and scattered activity, this bee simile focuses rather on the refusal of the bees to surrender their hive (οὐδ' ἀπολείπουσιν κοῖλον δόμον, 12.169), as they fight for their children (ἀμύνονται περὶ τέκνων, 12.170). The Greeks are compared here in a simile that is one of only three in the *Iliad* to describe parents defending their young.³⁷ What is noteworthy in connection with the bee simile in *Posthomerica* 1 is the contrast drawn through this intertext. The Trojan women believe that by rushing out to fight they will defend their city and families, but in fact the simile in *Iliad* 12 demonstrates that their logic is flawed. A hierarchy of readings is created: there is the gathering of the Greeks to assembly in the famous simile in *Iliad* 2, to which the *Posthomerica* advertises its allusion. The bee simile of *Iliad* 12 suggests that there is another, more suitable, way for the Trojan women to behave.

In Apollonius, the Lemnian women are a female-only society, a symbol of threat to male order and ancient societal rules. They slaughter their men-folk,³⁸ and, according to Apollonius' primary narrator, very quickly find that they can undertake with ease the roles attributed traditionally only to men.³⁹ In the *Posthomerica*, Hippodameia makes a case to the Trojan women that women are not far off from being men's equal (οὐ ἀπὸπροθεν, 414), and in fact have just as much strength (μένος, 415) as men have. She bases her case on Penthesileia's success against the Greeks (420–25), and concludes with the *gnome* that it is better to die in the fighting than to suffer slavery with their children (432–35).⁴⁰ Hippodameia's arguments are built into a context of reversal of epic norms: women can leave Troy and fight successfully, as is evidenced by Penthesileia in *Posthomerica* 1 and by the Lemnian women in the *Argonautica*.

As the Lemnian episode in *Argonautica* 1 proceeds, the women gradually relinquish their threatening role that first marked their appearance in the narrative and revert to epic type: they welcome the men and seek to have children by them. When the time comes for the Argonauts to leave, there is a reversal from their previous Bacchic, frenzied charge when they first mistook the Argonauts for Thracians coming to exact revenge:⁴¹ they progress from an uncontrollable and irrational force to a group of lamenting female figures

36. For the occurrence of similes in speeches in the *Iliad*, see Edwards 1991, 39, and for their significance, see Moulton 1977, 100–101.

37. At *Il.* 16.259–65, interestingly the other wasp simile in the poem, and 17.133–37: cf. Hainsworth 1993, 336.

38. The story of the Lemnian women's slaughter of their cheating husbands and the rest of the Lemnian male population is related at *Argon.* 1.609–32, and at Quint. Smyrn. 9.338–52.

39. They find tending cattle, donning armor, and applying the plow easier than the work of Athena to which they were more accustomed (*Argon.* 1.627–30).

40. On *gnomai* in the *Posthomerica*, see Maciver 2007, 269–77.

41. At *Argon.* 1.636, the Lemnian women are compared to flesh-eating Bacchantes: Θυάστιν ὠμοβόρους ἕκτα. On the significance of this description, see Fränkel 1968, 92–93.

of Homeric epic. They revert from breaking out from the bondage imposed by social custom to fitting into norms reflected in literary tradition: Homeric women lament their dead and their own *kleos* is inextricably tied up with the fate of their husbands. In the *Posthomerica*, we read a similar progression. Like the Lemnian women when they mistake the Argonauts for Thracians, the Trojan women are filled with passion for war (πάσῃσι δ' ἔρωσ στυγεροῖο μόθοιο, 1.436). When the Lemnian women rush out they are described as at a loss and speechless (ἄμηχανίη, 1.638; ἄφθογγοι, 639). In *Posthomerica* 1, Theano describes the Trojan women as not thinking (ἄφραδέως, 1.454).

They would have been slain in battle, the primary narrator informs the reader, had not Theano, *thinking wise thoughts* (πύκα φρονέουσα), prevented them, persuading them with *prudent words* (πινυτοῖσι ἐπέεσσι) (1.447–50). What is needed is for the older, wiser authority figure to instill some sense into the women. She tells them (451–74) that they are stirred up without thinking right (ἄρνησθ' ἀφραδέως, 454). Penthesileia and the Amazons are not good examples for them, she says, since such women have been trained from youth in the things of war (456–61). Everyone has a particular place in the working order of society (464–66), and she states that a woman's place is at the loom, while a man's is in battle (467–69),⁴² echoing the concluding words of Hector to Andromache at *Iliad* 6.490–93. She advocates a return to Iliadic (and, therefore, not Posthomeric) ideals. The women immediately obey her, respecting her age (ταῖ δ' ἐπίθοντο παλαιότερῃ περ ἑούση, 475). Another wise old woman, Polyxo in *Argonautica* 1, advises the Lemnian women on the nonviolent possibilities offered by welcoming the Argonauts (*Argon.* 1.685–96).

Wisdom (and age), as in the *Iliad*, is something to be revered, and as in the *Argonautica*, violent threatening women are thoughtless, but gentle when they revert to their traditional role. Gender reversal in roles and possible threat to male-dominated order, as in the case of the Lemnian women in the *Argonautica*, is offered briefly in *Posthomerica* 1, but is quickly quashed. In the “Homeric” realm, only Penthesileia and the Amazons, by rights of special training, are permitted to join in the male arena.

3. CAMILLA: VERGILIAN CONSTRUCTS

Quintus thus receives Homeric bee similes both directly into the text and via Apollonius' manipulation of the Homeric example: bees come through chronological and generic filters. The intertextual story by no means ends there, however. Heroic warriors from the *Iliad* and the once ruthlessly violent Lemnian women perhaps provide faintly ironical parallels for the Trojan women, who quickly give in to the persuasions of Theano (Quint. Smyrn. 1.475–76).⁴³ A very similar situation to the Trojan women, and in some ways a more realistic parallel, exists at *Aeneid* 11.891–95. There we do not read a

42. τούνεκα δημοτῆτος ἀποσχόμενοι κελαιδαινῆς/ιστὸν ἐπεντύνεσθε ἑὼν ἔντοσθε μελᾶθρων/ἀνδράσι δ' ἡμετέροισι περὶ πολέμοιο μελήσει.

43. Cf. Bär 2007, 50 n. 73.

bee simile, but rather the reaction of the women on the walls of Latium to the example of Camilla, who died fighting against the invaders (*Aen.* 11.891–95):

ipsae de muris summo certamine matres
 (monstrat amor verus patriae, ut uidere Camillam)
 tela manu trepidae iaciunt ac robore duro
 stipitibus ferrum sudibusque imitantur obustis
 praecipites, primaeque mori pro moenibus ardent.

Even the mothers strove their utmost—the true love of their native land showed them the way and Camilla was their example. Wildly they hurled missiles from the walls and rushed to do the work of steel with stumps and stakes of oak wood hardened in the fire, longing to be first to die in defense of the walls of their city.⁴⁴

With the successes of Camilla against the Trojans and their allies at an end now that she herself is dead, the Latin women seek to follow her example (*monstrat amor verus patriae, ut uidere Camillam*, 11.892). They throw whatever comes to hand as they burn with patriotic zeal. This example of “domestic” women in the *Aeneid* fighting from the walls has been noted by many commentators as a possible parallel for the Trojan women in *Posthomerica* 1.⁴⁵ The possibility of Latin intertexts as well as Greek in the *Posthomerica* is inevitably contentious, and hitherto has been neither proven nor disproven. It is not within the scope of this paper to continue the debate, as the arguments for and against Latin influence have been made, thoroughly, elsewhere. The presence of Vergilian influence could be ruled out with the traditional “lost common source” argument (propounded principally by Francis Vian) that held sway for most of the twentieth century, that is, that Quintus and Vergil both made use of a common source (now lost), and that there may exist no direct use of Vergil by Quintus. Hence, in this instance, one must accept the possibility that any resemblances to the *Aeneid* may be simply due to accidental confluences derived from the one single source, possibly the Lemnian women in Apollonius, possibly another lost source. Scholars such as Rudolf Keydell have argued convincingly, however, in response to this theory that it is entirely legitimate to make full use of Latin intertexts, given the lack of concrete evidence to rule out altogether the direct influence of Latin intertexts in discussion of the *Posthomerica*.⁴⁶

Ursula Gärtner has already highlighted the key textual similarities between the passages:⁴⁷ especially closely aligned in both texts is the women’s zeal for battle in defense of their homeland.⁴⁸ Camilla is herself, in *Aeneid* 11, set up as a Penthesileia figure:⁴⁹ her actions are to be read against the earlier

44. Translation of D. A. West 1990.

45. In Posthomerica scholarship noted by Vian (1963, 28) and Gärtner (2005, 58–62), the last of whom provides fullest discussion.

46. Listed and summarized in terms of pro- and anti-Latin influence in Gärtner 2005, 30–37. The scholarly battle over Latin influence, waged especially by Vian (1959) and Keydell (1954), and the arguments behind the dispute, are summarized and referenced by James 2007.

47. See Gärtner 2005, 58–62.

48. Gärtner 2005, 58: “Ähnlich sind die Formulierungen πολέμοιο δ’ ἔρωσ (404) bzw. ἔρωσ στυγεροῖο μόθοιο (436) und amor verus patriae (892), wo jeweils die Liebe als treibende Kraft genannt wird.”

49. On other similarities between Camilla and the Penthesileia of *Posthomerica* 1, see Vian 1959, 24.

mythical action of the Amazons at Troy.⁵⁰ The similarity between the two situations in the texts possibly supplies, on the one hand, the inspiration behind the episode in *Posthomerica* 1, and, on the other hand, exemplifies the use Quintus makes of epic episodes to construct his own text.⁵¹ In the *Aeneid*, Camilla is a woman who has come to help allies in defense of their city, has successes against the enemy, but inevitably succumbs to death in battle.⁵² The women watch these successes and feel spurred on to follow her example. In the *Posthomerica*, Penthesileia, who unlike Camilla is part of the fabric of the Trojan War, also excites the Trojan women to follow her example, on the basis of her successes.⁵³ Through comparison of the Trojan women to bees, Quintus summons up the famous literary examples of the past of heroic (Iliadic) and threatening (Apollonian) figures. The women compared to bees also follow in thematic and narrative structure the Vergilian women on the walls of Latium who witness what a woman like Camilla can do in battle: the narrative focus shifts momentarily in both texts from heroic feminine exploits to unheroic women desiring to follow suit. In the *Aeneid*, the women desperately and without debate help their war effort from the walls, as their defeat becomes more inevitable; in the *Posthomerica*, the women are made to look impetuous and foolish through the wise warnings of Theano, since there is apparently no need for them on a battlefield where the Trojans have the upper hand.

Quintus enlarges upon what lies latent in the *Aeneid*, namely, that women are inspired by a woman to do what men traditionally undertake alone, fighting in battle.⁵⁴ The *Aeneid* provides epic authority for the break in battle narrative with a shift of the spotlight to women who have never experienced battle. The death of Camilla and the frantic activity of the Latin women form a contrast with the buoyant Penthesileia and the hopeful Trojans, the seeming naiveté of the women as they seek to emulate the Amazon when there is no need; more importantly, however, Camilla's death foreshadows a similar fate for Penthesileia, with whom she is closely associated in the *Aeneid*, and the fateful battle around the walls of Latium signals a similar outcome for the Trojan women.⁵⁵ In Book 1 they appear naïve to seek to join in battle, but not so against the reflection of the closing events of the epic.

4. THE POET'S VOICE?

I began this article by focusing on the implications of the adjective κλυτά (324). Quintus, I argued, signals his allusion to, and his appreciation of, the

50. Cf. *Aen.* 11.468, and particularly 659–62.

51. Gärtner (2005, 60) provides something approaching a decisive statement on this intertext, writing that it is unlikely that the two passages developed without some relationship existing between them.

52. Camilla is first mentioned in the *Aeneid* at 7.803–17 in the catalogue of Italian forces.

53. Gärtner (2005, 59–60) notes the differences in dramatic moment between the passages: in the *Aeneid*, the women have witnessed the death of Camilla, and desperately do what they can to prevent the coming onslaught, whereas the Trojan women witness the continuing successes of Penthesileia and seek to join battle while it is still going in their favor (cf. esp. Quint. Smyrn. 1.470–74).

54. Unlike the Posthomeric Trojan women, who seem ready, like the Lemnian women, to rush from their city, the women of the *Aeneid* remain within the city, and still keeping within their traditional domestic roles, fight from afar.

55. Penthesileia is slain by Achilles at *Posthomerica* 1.621–29. The Trojans then flee in disarray towards Troy, lamenting her death, just as the Latins flee in disorder after the death of Camilla (*Aen.* 11.868–90).

monuments of the past. With this intertextual marker he inscribes his own text into this literary tradition of excellence both by using the model text for construction of meaning, and by then improving upon the very passage(s) labeled in this way. I then moved on to another bee simile, in *Posthomeric* 1, and showed how it too incorporates multiple texts, all of which contribute varying significances for the interpretation of the simile and its context. I have discussed Homeric, Apollonian, and Vergilian intertexts and illustrated that in each case Quintus manipulated the reader's knowledge of these texts by presenting a clearly similar, allusive version, but one that improved upon the imitated texts in content, function, and presentation: differences because of the similarities.

Richard Thomas, in a seminal article on the art of reference, writes of a type of intertextual interplay that he names "window reference."⁵⁶ This phenomenon, "the very close adaptation of a model, noticeably interrupted in order to allow reference back to the source of that model,"⁵⁷ can be applied to the bee similes in the *Posthomeric*, but with one important difference. Rather than a window to the source model for the dominant intertext, through the strong (signposted) Homeric intertextuality there is a window to the *Argonautica* (which we read via Homer, and vice versa). The nature of allusion here gives a programmatic template of the poetics of allusion throughout the *Posthomeric*. Within the pervasive Homeric presence in the poem the poet signals Alexandrian indebtedness, which in turn points to how he receives and uses Homer, namely, in an Apollonian way. This mapping of how to read the poem can be seen perhaps more emphatically in the in-proem of Book 12, where there is a window allusion to Callimachus embedded within the stronger Hesiodic and Homeric intertextuality.

Callimachean aesthetics can be invoked on the basis of the careful allusion to Callimachus in the programmatic in-proem in *Posthomeric* 12. What is noticeable in the in-proem is the vocabulary that leads the reader to earlier Muse invocations and poetological agenda (12.306–13):

τούς μοι νῦν καθ' ἕκαστον ἀνειρομένῳ σάφα, Μοῦσαι,
 ἔσπεθ' ὅσοι κατέβησαν ἔσω πολυχανδέος ἵππου·
 ὑμεῖς γὰρ πᾶσάν μοι ἐνὶ φρεσὶ θήκατ' ἀοιδίην,
 πρὶν μοι <ἔτ' > ἀμφὶ παρειὰ κατασκίδνασθαι ἴουλον,
 Σμύρνης ἐν δαπέδοισι περικλυτὰ μῆλα νέμοντι 310
 τρὶς τόσον Ἐρμου ἄπαθεν ὅσον βοῶντος ἀκούσαι,
 Ἀρτέμιδος περὶ νηὸν Ἐλευθερίῳ ἐνὶ κήπῳ,
 οὔρεϊ οὔτε λίην χαμαλαῶ οὔθ' ὑψόθι πολλαῶ.

Tell me who asks, Muses, clearly, one by one now, who were the ones who went inside the capacious horse. For you provided me in mind with all my song, even before the soft down darkened my cheeks, as I tended my renowned sheep on the plains of Smyrna, three times as far from the Hermos as one can hear a shout, near the temple of Artemis in the garden of Freedom, on a mountain neither too low nor too high.

56. Thomas 1986, 188. Unlike Thomas, I see no difficulty in the use of the word "allusion" (where he instead uses "reference"). Allusion in its etymological root does convey the idea of play, but this is precisely the type of scholarly interaction established by the alluding text. The term also has many other significances beyond this more simplistic level; cf. Hinds 1998, 23.

57. Thomas 1986, 188.

This call upon the Muses to assist in the naming of the Greek heroes as they enter the wooden horse comes at a dramatic point in the narrative. The destruction of Troy is at hand (to be narrated in Book 13), the moment anticipated in the *Iliad* and throughout the earlier portion of the *Posthomerica*. What is of particular relevance is the description of the sheep. The narrator states that he tended sheep that were renowned, or of excellent quality: περικλυτὰ μῆλα νέμοντι (12.310). The adjective περικλυτά, like that used to describe the bees in *Posthomerica* 6, has a double significance. Like κλυτός, it can have a meaning “excellent,” of quality.⁵⁸ On the other hand, it has a meaning, like κλυτός, of “famous, renowned,” only on a more intensive level: “exceedingly heard of.”⁵⁹ Thus it behaves similarly to its counterpart adjective in the bee simile, and in fact goes further: the poet figure’s “sheep” are extremely well-known.⁶⁰

It is the intertextual weight of these words that is particularly important. While the in-proem evokes Muse invocations in both Homer and Hesiod, it is the highlighted allusion to Callimachus here that vitalizes meaning in the adjective περικλυτά (*Aet.* 1 frag. 2.1–2):

ποιμένι μῆλα νέμοντι παρ’ ἴχθινον ὄξεος ἵππου 1
 Ἡσιόδῳ Μουσέων ἐσμὸς ὅτ’ ἦντίασεν (. . .)

When the band of Muses met the shepherd Hesiod tending his sheep by the footprint of the fiery horse . . .

The real meaning of the famous dream of Callimachus has been subject to much debate.⁶¹ What is clear from the fragmentary remains is that Callimachus alludes to the initiation of Hesiod at *Theogony* 22–28, which is part of the wider framework of the in-proem in *Posthomerica* 12.⁶² For a poet to receive inspiration from the Muses, he must be a great epic poet, in the tradition of Homer and Hesiod. This is something the persona in the Posthomerica in-proem assumes: mine is an epic poem like Homer’s, my in-proem and my inspiration pay homage to both these figures, and my extremely excellent sheep are extremely excellent both because my poetry is great and because I write in the tradition of Homer (and Hesiod). By including Callimachus in the group of literary figures alluded to, Quintus highlights the route by which he receives Archaic epic.⁶³ Within the broader Homeric intertextuality, there is something Callimachean inserted into the most programmatic part of the *Posthomerica*. The reader should therefore expect Alexandrian intricacies among the generic Homeric epic elements. How Quintus uses his models seems to point to something more subtle, a particular learnedness. The *Posthomerica* is not Alexandrian, but a later Imperial text that shares traits expected of Alexandrian texts.

58. So LSJ, s.v. περικλυτός 2.

59. This is the primary meaning given in *LfgreE*.

60. It has been noted that the adjective is used in the *Odyssey* frequently as an epithet of a bard: cf. *Od.* 1.325, 8.83, 8.367, and 8.521: so Bär 2007, 51 and n. 77.

61. See Cameron 1995, 366–73, for discussion and references.

62. Cf. Bär 2007, 45–47.

63. Cf. Bär 2007, 50.

What is particularly problematic, however, in discussing the nature of imitation in the *Posthomerica* is lack of categorization. Can we apply an aesthetic label to Greek Imperial poetry similar to that associated with Alexandrian poetry? Quintus' *Posthomerica* comes between the fundamentally Alexandrian *new* epic of Apollonius, and the bizarre (ποικίλα, or multifaceted), baroque forty-eight-book epic of Nonnus.⁶⁴ At first sight, the *Posthomerica* seems to fit into the category of those mythological oversized epics against which Callimachus railed: at fourteen books, the *Posthomerica* falls easily into the category of "big book" (τὸ μέγα βιβλίον), and perhaps therefore, "big evil" (τῷ μεγάλῳ κακῷ).⁶⁵ Its subject matter could also be described as falling under the category "cyclic" (and therefore inferior), in (potentially) the sense that incurred Callimachus' wrath (ἐχθαίρω τὸ ποίημα τὸ κυκλικόν).⁶⁶ Vian makes clear where Quintus lies in relation to Callimachus: "Quintus s'inspire d'une longue tradition scolaire. On a dit qu'il ne goûte pas la poésie savante et artiste de l'école callimachéene; sa conception de l'épopée est celle-là même que combattait Callimaque."⁶⁷ I do not want to categorize the *Posthomerica* as a Callimachean work: that it is clearly not. Nor do I want to associate every hint of clever or allusive play in the text categorically with Callimachean influence. However, the readiness of scholars to criticize the poetic abilities of Quintus on account of the (hyper-) Homeric style and subject matter of the poem has led them to overlook the intertextual intricacies in the text, aspects that can be aligned with the "slender muse" (τὴν Μοῦσαν . . . λεπταλήν) that Callimachus advocates in the prologue to his *Aetia*.⁶⁸

It is of the nature of an invocatory section of an epic like this to hold a key for the wider text. The echo of Callimachus' re-presentation of Hesiod's initiation by the Muses points to the poet figure projected by Quintus. He is thus both a Homer writing a very Homeric epic, and a Hesiod figure of Archaic epic as read by Callimachus. The reader is encouraged, in part, to approach his text through the interpretative lenses of Alexandrian innovation and criticism. The *nugae* of intertextual play highlight something beyond the code model of Homer, something intricate and Alexandrian. The *Posthomerica*, therefore, labels itself as a text that requires a breadth of reading to unlock the cumulative incorporation of many texts and their implications,

64. The aesthetics of poetry in Nonnus are inscribed in the poem itself: see *Dionysiaca* 1.13–15, and especially 15; for discussion see, principally, Shorrock 2001, 17, 34, and 189–205. There is no broad-ranging study of the nature of Greek Imperial poetic aesthetics. There are problems of diversity and chronological range in "Imperial" Greek poetry, of course, which makes it difficult to pin down the works within a broad categorization, unlike the connotations of the term "Alexandrian" for Alexandrian poetry.

65. Callim. frag. 465 Pfeiffer.

66. *Anth. Pal.* 12.43 (28 Pfeiffer); I take the adjective as referring to the commonly produced poems (in Callimachus' time) that treat the Trojan War myth and reflect (but are not themselves) the post-Homeric Cyclic epics. Cf. Hopkinson 1988, 86: "In this epigram Callimachus expresses his dislike of 'cyclic epic,' i.e. neo-Homeric epic on traditional mythological themes." There are unresolved debates, however, on the exact meaning conveyed in this adjective: cf. Goldhill 1991, 223–34; and Cameron 1995, 387–402 (see, however, 396).

67. Vian 1963, xl. This assessment of the *Posthomerica*'s poetic *conception* is surely to an extent influenced by, and influences, the negative appraisal of the *Posthomerica* in most of the secondary literature (for which see Baumbach and Bär 2007a, 23–25).

68. *Aet.* 1.24 Pfeiffer; on the idea of Alexandrian poetry as something learned (bookish, even), see the excellent discussion by Cameron 1995, 24–70; on the influence of the *Aetia* prologue, see Hopkinson 1988, 98–101.

Greek and Latin, lying latent in it, not only in similes, and bee similes, but throughout the text as a whole. In particular terms, in the bee similes (and elsewhere) Quintus highlights Apollonius' use of the Homeric texts; in the in-proem (and elsewhere) Quintus highlights Callimachus' use of previous texts. As a manipulation of the Homeric model, Quintus' text is (to be) read as an epic like Apollonius' *Argonautica*, but a particular kind of *Argonautica*: an *Argonautica* that is Callimachean in its allusive practice.⁶⁹

University of Edinburgh

69. There is extensive scholarship on Apollonius' *Argonautica* as an epic with Callimachean aesthetic principles: see, e.g., the excellent article by Kahane (1994), esp. 125–28 (with bibliography).

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