



Ἀρτέμιδος περὶ νηὸν Ἐλευθερίῳ ἐνὶ κήπῳ,  
οὔρεϊ οὔτε λίην χθαμαλῷ οὔθ' ὑψόθι πολλῷ. (PH 12.306-13)<sup>2</sup>

Muses, I ask you to tell me precisely, one by one, the names of all who went inside the cavernous horse. For you were the ones who filled my mind with all song even before down was spread across my cheeks, when I was tending my renowned sheep in the land of Smyrna, three times as far as the shouting distance from the Hermus, near Artemis' temple in the garden of Liberty, on a hill that is neither excessively high nor too low.

The programmatic significance of the passage is first suggested by its position in the poem's architecture. Crowned by Conte as 'proems in the middle', such embedded invocations offer a specific declaration of poetics, dealing with the programmatic as opposed to the thematic, the *quale* instead of the *quid*.<sup>3</sup> Recent treatments of Quintus' proem have found this declaration in

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<sup>2</sup> The text of Quintus throughout is that of F. Vian (ed.), *La Suite d'Homère* (Paris, 1963 [vol. 1], 1966 [vol. 2], 1969 [vol. 3]); of the *Iliad* that of A. Murray, revised by W. Wyatt, *Homer Iliad* 1–12 [vol.1] and 13–24 [vol. 2] (Massachusetts and London, 1999<sup>2</sup>); of the *Odyssey* that of A. Murray, revised by G. Dimock, *Homer Odyssey* 1–12 [vol.1] and 13–24 [vol. 2] (Massachusetts and London, 1998<sup>3</sup>); of Callimachus' *Aetia* that of A. Harder (ed.), *Callimachus' Aetia: Introduction, Text and Translation* [vol. 1] and *Commentary* [vol. 2] (Oxford, 2012). Translations of Quintus are adapted from A. James (ed.), *Quintus of Smyrna, The Trojan Epic* (Baltimore and London, 2004); of Homer from Murray and Callimachus from Harder.

<sup>3</sup> G. Conte, 'Proems in the Middle' in F. Dunn and T. Cole (edd.), *Beginnings in Classical Literature* (Cambridge, 1992), 147–59.

its intertextual patterning.<sup>4</sup> As well as echoing the Iliadic address before the catalogue of ships (*Il.*2.484-92), Quintus' image of the inspired poet tending sheep recalls the invocation of Hesiod's *Theogony* (22-8). A further reference affects this relationship with the Homeric and Hesiodic proems: the allusion to the *Somnium* of the *Aetia*, where Callimachus re-presents Hesiod's meeting with the Muses:<sup>5</sup>

ποιμένι μῆλα νέμοντι παρ' ἵχνιον ὀξέος ἵππου

Ἡσιόδῳ Μουσέων ἔσμός ὅτ' ἦντίασεν (. . .) (Fr. 2.1-2)

When a swarm of Muses met the shepherd Hesiod who was tending his sheep by the footprint of the quick horse . . .

Whilst never naming any poets,<sup>6</sup> by alluding to the figures of Homer, Hesiod and Callimachus Quintus finds a coded way to chart his literary inheritance: introducing a catalogue of heroes,

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<sup>4</sup> The most in-depth treatment of the proem's metapoetics is S. Bär, 'Quintus Smyrnaeus und die Tradition des epischen Musenanrufs' in Baumbach and Bär (edd.) (n. 1), 29-64. See also C. Maciver, *Quintus Smyrnaeus' Posthomerica: Engaging Homer in Late Antiquity* (Leiden, 2012), 33-8, and B. Boyten, 'Epic Journeys: Studies in the Reception of the Hero and Heroism in Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica*' (Diss., University College London, 2010), 276-81.

<sup>5</sup> These models have long been noted: cf. Vian (n. 2), 101; M. Campbell, *A Commentary on Quintus Smyrnaeus Posthomerica XII* (Leiden, 1981), 100-5; U. Gärtner, *Quintus Smyrnaeus und die Aeneis: Zur Nachwirkung Virgils in der griechischen Literatur der Kaiserzeit* (Munich, 2005), 23; and Bär (n. 4), 40-52.

<sup>6</sup> Quintus never names poets. Imperial Greek poets tend not to, unlike Late Antique Latin poets. See discussion in C. Maciver, 'Nonnus and Imperial Greek poetry' in D. Accorinti (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis* (Leiden, 2016), 529-48, 530.

he also catalogues the names of his predecessors, or several identities of himself. The proem thus emerges as a programmatic template for the allusive poetics of the poem; each reference functions as part of a well-directed, emulative discourse on the nature and function of its imitation.

This discourse, however, as it is currently understood, focuses on Quintus' integration of Alexandrian poetics into a predominantly Homeric-Hesiodic framework. The presence of Callimachus, it is argued, points to the Alexandrian influences (here Callimachean aesthetics) in the poem, signalling the poet's aim to enrich his traditional epic by including Alexandrian intricacies among the generic Homeric elements.<sup>7</sup> This article will put forward a different interpretation. Rather than demonstrating Alexandrian indebtedness, I shall argue that Quintus signals with his in-proem a provocative redeployment of Callimachean aesthetics. Taking as its starting point a fundamental paradox of the *Posthomeric* – that Quintus both implicitly claims Homeric identity and engages with Alexandrian poetics – the main section of this piece will consider the invocation of Book 12 as a self-conscious commentary on this clashing use of models. By analysing the proem's more systematic engagement with Callimachus' poetic programme I shall demonstrate that Quintus co-opts symbolic imagery from the *Aetia* to make a highly anti-callimachean point about poetic assimilation and integration. Alexandrian techniques are mobilised to defend a defiantly non-Alexandrian poem, and Callimachean tropes transformed into markers of the Homeric.

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<sup>7</sup> For this view see Bär (n. 4), 47–51; Maciver (n. 4), 33–38, and C. Maciver, 'Representative Bees in Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomeric*', *CPh* 107 (1) (2012), 53–69, 64–8. These are currently the most influential readings of the passage.

## I. CLASSIFYING QUINTUS

The epigrammist Pollianus (first/second century C.E.) provides a scathing synthesis of the sorts of charges which could be levied against the imitation of traditional epic by imperial poets. Disparaging Homerising narrative epic as derivative and mundane, he enrolls himself in the freer tradition of elegy, expressing his critique in distinctly Callimachean terms:

Τοὺς κυκλίους τούτους, τοὺς αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα λεγοντας,

μισῶ, λωποδύτας ἀλλοτρίων ἐπέων.

καὶ διὰ τοῦτ' ἐλέγοις προσέχω πλέον· οὐδὲν ἔχω γὰρ

Παρθενίου κλέπτειν ἢ πάλι Καλλιμάχου.

θηρὶ μὲν οὐατόεντι γενοίμην, εἴ ποτε γράψω,

εἵκελος, ἐκ ποταμῶν χλωρὰ χελιδόνια.

οἱ δ' οὕτως τὸν Ὅμηρον ἀναιδῶς λωποδυτοῦσιν,

ὥστε γράφειν ἤδη μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά.

(A.P.11.130)<sup>8</sup>

I hate these cyclic poets who say ‘but nonetheless’, plunderers of the verses of others, and so I pay more attention to elegies, for there is nothing I want to steal from Callimachus or Parthenius. Let me become like an ‘eared beast’ if ever I write ‘from the rivers yellow king-cup.’ But these epic poets plunder Homer so shamelessly that they already write ‘Sing, O Goddess, the wrath.’

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<sup>8</sup> Translation from W. Paton (ed.), *The Greek Anthology* [vol. 4] (London, 1918).

Surviving evidence from the first three centuries C.E. suggests that Pollianus was swimming with the tide: Greek hexameter poets seem mainly to have followed, and fewer to have flouted, Callimachean precepts.<sup>9</sup>

Those who did take on Trojan themes and adopt the Homeric style went to great efforts to disassociate their works with notions of mindless plundering. Triphiodorus, for example, has been read as making his *epyllion*<sup>10</sup> on the sack of Troy sound Homeric without being accused of parroting through an aversion to borrowing more than a half line from the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* and by displaying his interest in lexical innovation.<sup>11</sup> Nonnus' sprawling *Dionysiaca* obsessively thematises rebellion, filiation and (dis)continuity in relation to Homer; appropriating and transforming Homeric style, scenes and skin<sup>12</sup> for its new polymorphic poetics.<sup>13</sup> This appropriation is sealed in Nonnus' own proem in the late-middle (*D.*25.1-270),

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<sup>9</sup> See E. Bowie, 'Poetry and Poets in Asia and Achaia' in Avril Cameron and S. Walker (edd.), *The Greek Renaissance in the Roman Empire* (Bulletin Supplement 55, 1989), 198–205.

<sup>10</sup> For this term in antiquity, see S. Bär and M. Baumbach (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Greek and Latin Epyllion and its Reception* (Leiden, 2012); M. Fernandelli, *Catullo e la rinascita dell'epos: dal carme 64 all'Eneide*, (Hildesheim-Zürich-New York, 2012); and the papers in *Aitia 6 Recherches sur l'epyllion à l'époque hellénistique et au-delà* (2016 [online]).

<sup>11</sup> See especially L. Miguélez-Cavero (ed.), *Triphiodorus, The Sack of Troy: A General Study and A Commentary* (Berlin, 2013), 38–87.

<sup>12</sup> Nonnus in his preface asks the Mimallons to leave the rancid seal-skins to Homer for Menelaus (*D.* 1.34-8).

<sup>13</sup> It is a characteristically Nonnian paradox that the very word used in the opening proem to symbolise this poetics is itself emblematically Homeric in origin – the Odyssean πολύτροπος, hijacked at *D.*1.14. On Nonnus' attitude to Homer, N. Hopkinson, 'Nonnus and Homer', in N.

which – exceptionally – explicitly declares this competitive stance towards ‘father Homer’ (D.25.265), whom the poet names, reveres and rivals in one poetic declaration.<sup>14</sup> As Pollianus’ sentiments make clear, despite the unresolved modern debates about the level of ‘anti-epic’ sentiment in Callimachus’ poetic programme,<sup>15</sup> in terms of reception rather than conception his stylistic proclamations could be engaged with *as* critiques of the writing of traditional epic poetry, forming the implicit (and sometimes explicit) backdrop to charges of bland imitation and their responses.

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Hopkinson (ed.), *Studies in the Dionysiaca of Nonnus* (Cambridge, 1994), 9-42 remains indispensable. See also H. Bannert and N. Kröll, ‘Nonnus and the Homeric Poems’, in Accorinti (ed.) (n. 6), 481-507. For Nonnus’ metapoetics, see R. Shorrock, *The Challenge of Epic: Allusive Engagement in the Dionysiaca of Nonnus* (Leiden, 2001).

<sup>14</sup> D.25.8-10: τελέσας δὲ τύπον μιμηλὸν Ὀμήρου/ὔστατον ὑμνήσω πολέμων ἔτος, ἐβδομάτης δὲ /ὑσμίνην ἰσάριθμον ἐμῆς στρουθοῖο χαράξω: I will make my pattern like Homer’s and sing the last year of warfare, I will describe that which has the number of my seventh sparrow; and D.25.257-60: ὑμᾶσειν μὲν ὄφελλε τόσον καὶ τοῖον ἄγῶνα /Μοῦσα τεῖ καὶ Βάκχον ἀκοντιστῆρα Γιγάντων, /ἄλλοις δ’ ὕμνοπόλοισι πόνους Ἀχιλλῆος ἔᾶσαι, /εἰ μὴ τοῦτο Θέτις γέρας ἥρπασεν: Your Muse ought to have hymned so great and mighty a struggle, how Bacchus brought low the Giants, and ought to have left the labours of Achilles to other bards, had not Thetis stolen that glory from you. Cf. also the depiction of Homer as the author of the ‘lying book’ at D.42.181.

<sup>15</sup> Among the most strident arguments against an anti-epic agenda remain G. Hutchinson, *Hellenistic Poetry* (Oxford, 1988) and Alan Cameron, *Callimachus and His Critics* (Princeton, 1995). Relevant discussion for the *Posthomeric* in Maciver (n. 7), 67.

In terms of discerning Quintus' engagement with these principles, a problem arises in the lack of categorisation. Compared to the fundamentally Alexandrian epic of Apollonius, and Nonnus' multifarious redrafting, the *Posthomeric*'s compatibility with the various (and varied) components of Alexandrian aesthetics is difficult to pin down.<sup>16</sup> At fourteen books, the poem could fall into the category of τὸ μέγα βιβλίον against which Callimachus railed, and its subject matter could also be described as 'cyclic' in, potentially, the sense that incurred Callimachus' anger (ἐχθαίρω τὸ ποίημα τὸ κυκλικόν).<sup>17</sup> Vian makes clear where he believes Quintus lies in relation to Callimachus: '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.'<sup>18</sup>

Recent work however has begun to question this conclusion, drawing attention to a number of Alexandrian aspects of the poem: references to Hellenistic authors, self-conscious techniques

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<sup>16</sup> For these two epics as useful poles of comparison for Quintus in chronological terms at least, and on the problems of defining an imperial Greek poetic 'aesthetic' more broadly, see Maciver (n. 7), 67–8, to whose lucid comments this paragraph is particularly indebted. On Nonnus and Alexandrianism, see A. Lasek, 'Nonnus and the Play of Genres', in Accorinti (ed.) (n.6), 402–22, and B. Acosta-Hughes, 'Composing the Masters: An Essay on Nonnus and Hellenistic Poetry' in Accorinti (ed.) (n.6), 507–28.

<sup>17</sup> On the meaning of κυκλικόν in the epigram, see e.g. N. Hopkinson (ed.), *A Hellenistic Anthology* (Cambridge, 1998), 86; S. Goldhill, *The Poet's Voice: Essays on Poetics and Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 1991), 223–34; and Cameron (n. 15), 387–402

<sup>18</sup> Vian (n. 2), xl.



of allusion, and learned intertextual intricacies.<sup>19</sup> One such aspect receiving increasing attention is the *Posthomerica*'s sophisticated reconfiguration of Homeric language.<sup>20</sup> Studies have revealed Quintus' tendency to variegate Homeric formulae, using Homeric elements but very rarely repeating them exactly; and have emphasised his avoidance of common Homeric adjectives in favour of rare ones. πολύτλητος, for instance, occurs only once in Homer, but thirteen times in the *Posthomerica*. πολύτλας occurs forty-two times in Homer, but is avoided altogether by Quintus.<sup>21</sup> This practice, to take Homeric rarities and fill his poem with them, has generally been identified as Alexandrian, associated with the *imitatio cum variatione* and

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<sup>19</sup> Vian himself suggests many Hellenistic models and sources for the poem (F. Vian, *Recherches sur les "Posthomerica" de Quintus de smyrne* [Paris 1959], 101–110). See also Maciver (n. 7) on the use of Apollonian material in Quintus' similes.

<sup>20</sup> This linguistic innovation is in contrast to Quintus' metrical system, which is conservative and largely avoids irregularities: he is not among the later epic poets who show significantly the influence of Callimachus' metrical reforms. See A. Köchly, *Quinti Smyrnaei Posthomericum XIV* (Leiden, 1850); Vian (n. 19), 212–49; and A. James and K. Lee (edd.), *A Commentary on Quintus of Smyrna, Posthomerica V* (Leiden, 2000), 30–1.

<sup>21</sup> The most significant contribution remains that of W. Appel, *Die Homerischen Hapax Legomena in den Posthomerica des Quintus Smyrnaeus* (Toruń, 1994) who calculated that one in ten of Quintus' words is a Homeric *hapax*. See also G. Chrysafis, 'Pedantry and Elegance in Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica*', in *Corolla Londiniensis* 4 (1985), 17–42; James and Lee (n. 20), 21–30; S. Bär, *Quintus Smyrnaeus: "Posthomerica" I: Die Wiedergeburt des Epos aus dem Geiste der Amazonomachie. Mit einem Kommentar zu den Versen 1–219* (Göttingen, 2009); and, most recently, A. Ferreccio, *Commento al libro II dei Posthomerica di Quinto Smirneo* (Rome, 2014).

*Selbstvariation* so prevalent in the philological games of Hellenistic poets. Through the integration of such features, Quintus is seen to put forward his response to the charge of ‘Homeric plundering’: augmenting his hyper-Homeric style and subject matter with elements that can be aligned with the allusive techniques and slender Muse of Callimachus.

This line of reading, which pits the poem’s Alexandrian influences against its generic Homeric intertextuality, leaves unresolved one of the most fundamental aspects of the work, an aspect which makes it unique among surviving imperial Greek epic: its implicit claim to Homeric authorship, and self-presentation as the middle part of Homer’s epic canon – Iliadic sequel, Odyssean prequel. The direct continuity with the *Iliad* is announced by the unexpected absence of a Muse invocation at the beginning of Book 1, while the connection to the *Odyssey* is secured by an increase in Odyssean allusions in the final books of the poem, and a direct intertextual gloss of its opening.<sup>22</sup> Quintus also repeats defining Homeric set pieces, most strikingly the shield of Achilles, stressed as being the very same artefact as that in *Iliad* 19.<sup>23</sup> This self-positioning as ‘still Homer’ must affect our interpretation of Quintus’ whole intertextual programmatics; the tone in which we take his engagement with any later literary modes. If all intertextuality is paradoxical, in that an author signals the inclusion of a literary voice that is

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<sup>22</sup> *PH* 1.1 -2: Εὖθ’ ὑπὸ Πηλείωνι δάμη θεοείκελος Ἴκτωρ / καὶ ἐ πυρὴ κατέδαψε καὶ ὀστέα γαῖα κεκεύθει. *PH* 14.628-31: ...αὐτὰρ Ἀθήνη .../...ἄλλοτε δ’ αὖτε/ ἄχνητ’ Ὀδυσσεύος πινυτόφρονος, οὐνεκ’ ἔμελλε / πάσχειν ἄλγεα πολλὰ Ποσειδάωνος ὁμοκλή. This has become more or less the established reading of Quintus’ poetics, stretching as far back at least as Köchly (n. 20). Bibliography is now quite large on this: further reading in Bär (n. 21), 69–78 and Maciver (n. 4), 7–38.

<sup>23</sup> *PH* 5.1–101. See Maciver (n. 4), 39–48, quotation at 40.

within and yet separate from their own, then in Quintus this paradox is all-engulfing, and overwhelming.

The proem of Book 12 represents the most intense locus for this contradictory practice. On the one hand, the passage exhibits multiple ‘Alexandrian’ characteristics. Its very status as an embedded programmatic proem is a reflection of a mode of expressive self-consciousness derived largely from the Alexandrian poets.<sup>24</sup> Its literary nexus – referring to multiple sources, requiring a breadth of reading to unlock a culminating incorporation of texts – also suggests an Alexandrian-style intricacy of intertextual play.<sup>25</sup> And it contains the poem’s most explicit ‘quotation’ of Callimachus, evoking a pre-existing intertextual relationship by alluding to a passage where Callimachus comments on his own place in the chain of literary reception.

Yet this is also the moment where Quintus comes closest to directly claiming Homeric identity. The mention of Smyrna (310) has long been recognised as an allusion to one of Homer’s most celebrated mythological birthplaces.<sup>26</sup> The surrounding details add further intensity to this Homeric self-indexing. The Hermus (311) was a river closely associated in antiquity with

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<sup>24</sup> Conte (n. 3), 157: ‘under the terms of the post-Alexandrian code of literary conduct, poets could no longer ignore their self-reflective consciousness. Whilst striving to stay faithful to that ancient essentiality of stating what would be sung, they felt compelled also, in the fashion of the Alexandrians, to suggest how they were going to sing it.’

<sup>25</sup> So Maciver (n. 7), 67–8.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Pseudo-Herodotus *Vit. Hom.* 19–21; Pseudo-Plutarch *Vit. Hom.* 17–20; *A.P.* 9.672; 11.422; 16.295–298; 16.320. It was also an important culture centre in the ‘Second Sophistic.’ Further discussion in Bär (n. 4), 52–55.

Smyrna.<sup>27</sup> And the reference to the Temple of Artemis (312) could hint at the link between the goddess Artemis and Homer's birthplace on the river Meles, as is established implicitly in archaic poetry in the *Homeric Hymn to Artemis*.<sup>28</sup> Through such sophisticated touches, Quintus signals his engagement with facets of Homer's biographical tradition well-known during his contemporary era, and ascribes them to his own poetic voice.<sup>29</sup> This simultaneous Homeric ventriloquism and Callimachean allusion crystallises for the reader the problems with placing the two influences side by side. As Bär remarks, 'Zu fragen wäre hierbei, was es zu bedeuten hat, dass Quintus auf ein Vorbild rekurriert, welches der traditionellen epischen Dichtung derart kritisch gegenübersteht.'<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Il.* 20.392 and Hesiod *Theogony* 343. For later references to the river in antique geographical writings, see H. Kaletsch, 'Hermos (Ἑρμός) [2]', *DNP* 5 (1998), 452–453.

<sup>28</sup> *Hym. Art.* 9.3–4: ἥθ' ἵππους ἄρσασα βαθυσχοίνοιο Μέλητος/ ῥίμφα διὰ Σμύρνης. Scholars remain divided about Quintus' choice of Artemis here. For biographical speculation about the temple's physical whereabouts, see Vian (n. 19), 131 and (n. 2), x. Bär (n. 4), 55–9 offers a metapoetic interpretation: that the goddess' occasional association with fertility enables Quintus to intimate that the wooden horse is the 'mother of evil', pregnant with soldiers. But Artemis' early connection with Smyrna must surely also affect interpretation of her function in this passage, and has not, to my knowledge, been considered as the explanation for her presence; bar the passing comment in B. Graziosi, *Inventing Homer: The Early Reception of Epic* (Cambridge, 2002), 77; and Boyten (n. 4), 280.

<sup>29</sup> The fact that this allusion to Homeric identity is still cryptic, in that the epic 'I' remains unnamed, is in-keeping with Homer's famous anonymity.

<sup>30</sup> Bär (n. 4), 50.

Harnessing the programmatic potential of the in-proem, Quintus uses his invocation to pose – and answer – this question. In order to access this answer, it must be perceived that the interaction with Callimachus goes beyond the near-quotation of a *Somnium* line. Stephen Hinds, in his seminal work on the art of allusion, writes of a type of literary interplay that he names ‘tendentious annotation’, in which poets forfeit ‘direct’ citation of a source model in favour of more embedded ways of metaphorising their engagement.<sup>31</sup> This phenomenon can be applied to the proem of the *Posthomerica* and its relationship with Callimachus, but with an important difference. Quintus evokes, in a covert manner, a range of recognisable tropes from Callimachus’ poetry, specifically those pertaining to his poetic programme.<sup>32</sup> But rather than merely annotating his engagement, he hijacks and subverts this imagery so as to use it against its originating source. This technique – the most tendentious form of tendentious troping – enables the poet to define and defend his Homerising endeavour using the tools of its most ardent detractor.

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<sup>31</sup> S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of appropriation in Roman Poetry* (Cambridge, 1998), 3–16.

<sup>32</sup> This focus on the programmatic sections of Callimachus’ *oeuvre* – both the stylistic metaphors of the *Aetia* prologue and other passages which can and have been interpreted symbolically – further suggests that Quintus is indeed engaging with Callimachus as a figure of critique for traditional epic poetry, despite such modern reservations about the suitability of this conception to Callimachus’ writings as a whole.

## II. ONE CONTINUOUS SONG

Quintus begins his invocation by asking the Muses for clear and precise information about the identity of each hero, and explains this request by asserting their status as the source of all of his song (12.306–8). The most important phrase in terms of allusion and self-reflection upon this allusion is *πᾶσαν...ᾠοιδήν*. Various interpretations of this verse have been offered. Ambiguity centres on whether to render *πᾶσαν* as ‘all’ or ‘the whole’, and whether *ᾠοιδήν* refers to the *Posthomerica* specifically or the act of poetic composition in general. It has not been considered that this very ambivalence could have a strong interpretative function – that investing the phrase with two systems of meaning allows the reader to unlock a spectrum of symbolic associations.

One such association is with the idea of ‘the whole song’; with *πᾶσαν* a totalising adjective describing the size, coherence and completeness of the present poem under composition. Vian’s translation reflects this meaning: ‘est-ce vous qui avez mis en mon âme tout ce poème’.<sup>33</sup> This is a perfectly sensible rendering: Quintus uses the singular *πᾶς* to mean ‘the whole’ on ten other occasions in his poem, often when describing an area or space, such as the whole river bursting its banks, or the whole of Greece once covered by a flood.<sup>34</sup> In all references to song in the poem’s primary narrative the verb or noun of singing relates to a specific ‘composition’

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<sup>33</sup> Vian (n. 2), 100.

<sup>34</sup> *PH* 2.641, 3.602, 9.266, 11.125 (the whole ground or plain); *PH* 12.97 (the whole of Dardania); 12.181 (the whole of lofty Ida); 13.437 (the whole city); 14.406 (the whole Dardanian coast).

being performed – Nestor’s song at the funeral of Achilles, the bards’ tune after the sack of Troy, and the Achaeans’ victory ode as they return from razing the city.<sup>35</sup>

On the level of tendentious allusion, taken in this sense Quintus’ ‘whole song’ triggers associations with the *Aetia*’s famous and frequently-quoted<sup>36</sup> ἐν ᾧσιν αἰσῶν διηγερέας (*Fr.*1.3); the one continuous poem which Callimachus declined to write. Beyond the αἰσῶν/ᾠσῶν similarity, stemming from the same verbal root, the use of the surprisingly flat verb θήκατ’, where we might expect a stronger notion such as ‘breathed’ or ‘filled’, given the inspiratory context,<sup>37</sup> could nod to the more literal handover of Callimachus’ first initiation, when Apollo ‘placed the tablet on (his) knees’ (πρώτιστον ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα/γούνασιν, *Aetia Fr.* 1.21-2), with Callimachean ἔθηκα and Quintan θήκατ’ in the same metrical *sedes*.

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<sup>35</sup> *PH* 4.117–70; 14.121–42 and 14.85–93 respectively. A possible exception is the nightingale’s song (*PH* 12.489–96), which could refer to the act of singing in general.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Cameron (n. 15), 104–32.

<sup>37</sup> A useful comparison can perhaps be made with the *Vision of Dorotheos*, a Greek Christian poem of 360 hexameters by an author who names himself ‘the son of Quintus’. Editors have noted similarities in poetic diction with the *Posthomerica*, including a potential conscious echo of *PH* 12.308 in Dorotheos’ statement of his poetic inspiration (340-1: καὶ ἐν στήθεσσι αἰσῶν / παντοίην ἐνέηκε). The echo is admittedly contentious – see recently G. Agosti, *La poesia greca nella Biblioteca Bodmer: aspetti letterari e socioculturali* and A. Camplani, *Per un profilo storico-religioso degli ambienti di produzione e fruizione dei Papiri Bodmer: contaminazione dei linguaggi e dialettica delle idee nel contesto del dibattito su dualismo e origenismo*, in A. Camplani and A. Cacciari (edd.), *Adamantius* 21 (2015) – but remains possible. If we accept it, we may note particularly the difference in verb choice: for ‘son’ the more emotive ἐνίημι; for ‘father’, the more generalising τίθημι.

The meaning of ἐν ᾅεισμα διηγεκές has itself been the subject of great debate.<sup>38</sup> The most relevant potential definitions for our purposes are those which relate specifically to epic. Callimachus could be interpreted as speaking of a long (ἐν πολλαῖς ἤνυσσιν χιλιάσιν, *Fr.*1.4) continuous narrative, an uninterrupted epic poem, with ἐν signifying the unity for which Aristotle admired Homer, and Callimachus rejected imitation of him.<sup>39</sup> It has however been pointed out that not all epics do consist of uninterrupted, continuous narrative – most conspicuously the two longest and most famous of them all, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.<sup>40</sup> But in fact, with Quintus' αἰοιδή, they do. Taken as an embedded antithesis of ἐν ᾅεισμα διηγεκές as Quintus reads it, πᾶσαν...αἰοιδήν presents a vision of exactly what the *Posthomeric* is doing; creating one unified narrative which joins the Homeric poems. But the conceit stretches further. Within the frame of the poem's claim to Homeric identity, the μοι of this line refers to Homer himself. In the comment that the Muses inspired this poet with one 'entire' song,

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<sup>38</sup> Detailed discussion of the possible definitions by Cameron (n. 15), 342–45.

<sup>39</sup> E.g. R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship from the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford, 1968), 13: 'the new poetical school of Callimachus and his followers was ostentatiously anti-Aristotelean. Rejecting unity, completeness and magnitude, it consciously aimed at a discontinuous form.' To traditional readings of Callimachus' ἐν should be added the excellent discussion by Harder (n. 2 [vol. 2]), 18–22), who argues that whilst ἐν for Aristotle signified a unity of plot, and for Callimachus is probably numerical ('one single'), the *Aetia* phrase engages with the Aristotelean definition in that it presents a means by which the poet circumvents its charge.

<sup>40</sup> See Cameron (n. 15), 342, who thus argues against an application of the phrase to epic.



Quintus thus performs a preposterous restructuring of the original Homeric corpus,<sup>41</sup> turning it *into* one continuous poem – moving still further away from Callimachean concepts of disunity and affirming the structural cohesiveness of the Homeric epic narrative by creating it.<sup>42</sup>

And yet this rendering of πᾶσαν ἀοιδὴν is only part of its possible significance. πᾶς can also, of course, mean ‘all’ or ‘every’; and although singing in the *Posthomerica* usually has a context-specific application, the particular choice of ἀοιδὴν (the only occurrence of the noun in the poem), in the accusative, at the end of its line, also points to the Theogonic invocation (*Theogony* 22), where it refers more unequivocally to the art of song in general.<sup>43</sup> Under this system of meaning the phrase insinuates that ‘all song’ was originally placed in Homer’s breast: πᾶσαν underscores the notion of each and every song that he has written – the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the current poem-in-the-middle – and also encompasses everything in between.

This notion is in itself no polemical rallying cry. A number of works and traditions in Late Antiquity cite Homer as the container for all subsequent cultural and intellectual production.

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<sup>41</sup> I was led to ‘preposterous’ by P. Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies. Gender, Rhetoric, Property* (London, 1987) and, most pertinently, S. Goldhill, ‘Preposterous Poetics and the Erotics of Death’, *Eugesta* 5 (2015), 154–77.

<sup>42</sup> In contrast to creating this structural cohesion, it should be noted that the *Posthomerica* maintains (and therefore continues) the other sense in which Homeric epic could be considered non-unitary – the episodic nature of the *Iliad* and particularly the *Odyssey*, which is reinforced by the episodic nature of the Quintan poem. That it is possible to have both a unified *and* episodic Homeric ‘trilogy’ seems to be the message here.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Hesiod *Theogony* 32: τὰ τ’ἑσσόμενα πρό τ’έόντα. Hence the translation of the Quintan phrase by Campbell (n. 5), 103 ‘all song’, accepted by Maciver (n. 4), 34 n. 124.

Pseudo-Plutarch's *Essay on the Life and Poetry of Homer* presents the poet as ἡ ἀρχή of all things, from politics to philosophy, medicine, drama and literature. The writers of Neoplatonist allegoresis sought to reconcile the views of their two heroes by conceiving of Homer as a divine sage privy to the most fundamental forms of knowledge and truth.<sup>44</sup> Callimachus himself, whose poetics is based on the premise that it is artistic death to attempt direct imitation of Homer precisely because of his insurmountable authority, would have been unperturbed by this presentation of him as figurehead of all later song. It is Quintus' combination of these claims – the two senses of πᾶσαν ἀοιδήν – that contains his sting. Acknowledging Homer as the benefactor of all subsequent poetry, he does not deviate deferentially from this almighty source: rather, he mobilises this concept into the act of writing traditional epic itself; presenting an all-encompassing vision of Homer's poetry at the same time as composing a work which claims to be continuing it. It is apposite that the very word ἀοιδήν combines all three alluded-to poets: taken from the Hesiodic proem, also found in Callimachus' prologue (*Fr.*1.19-20: μηδ' ἀπ' ἐμεῦ διφᾶτε μέγα ψοφέουσιν ἀοιδήν/τίκτεσθαι...) all encompassed into this Homeric-Quintan song.

A further hint in these lines could encourage this image of the poetic whole. The adjective πολυχανδής (12.307), an Alexandrian neologism, is used with unprecedented frequency in

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<sup>44</sup> For Pseudo-Plutarch, see J. Keaney and R. Lamberton (edd.), *Essay on the life and poetry of Homer (Plutarch)* (Atlanta, 1996). For the Neoplatonist Homer, see R. Lamberton, *Homer the Theologian: Neoplatonist Allegorical Reading and the Growth of the Epic Tradition* (Berkeley, 1986) and F. Pontani, *Sguardi su Ulisse. La tradizione esegetica greca all'Odissea* (Rome, 2005).

the *Posthomerica*,<sup>45</sup> often to describe a huge space containing smaller composite parts: lions' stomach crammed with pray (1.527); the coffin containing the scorched bones of Achilles (3.731); the cave housing the amassed gore of Philoctetes' seeping wound (9.390), and twice the hollow stomach of the wooden horse ready to be filled with heroes (also at 13.138).<sup>46</sup> This sense of πολυχανδής is stressed and stretched in the present horse-description. The separateness of 306 gives way to an image of conglomeration; as καθ' ἕκαστον yields to ὅσοι, and the preposition κατά, which in 306 stressed the individuality of each hero, is redeployed as a prefix to a verb which they perform all together (κατέβησαν).

Now, πολυχανδής does not have a rich metaphorical tradition: in the majority of its uses in imperial poetry,<sup>47</sup> and in Theocritus and Nicander, the only two Hellenistic occurrences,<sup>48</sup> it is employed in a very literal sense, not to convey statements of poetics. And yet in this instance in Quintus, it is attached to an object which is steeped in just such a history of double meaning. The inherent duplicity of the wooden horse – benign offering and hidden disaster, artificial yet seemingly alive –<sup>49</sup> lends it great symbolic potency, and it often seems to stand for the art of

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. Bär (n. 4), 57–58.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. the similar 'pregnant' connotations of the adjective in Oppian *Halieutica* 5.331–2, describing the cavernous belly of the whale; and Triphiodorus 412 (δέμας πολυχανδέος ἵππου) and 536.

<sup>47</sup> See especially the discussions by E. Livrea, *Nonno di Panopoli, Parafrasi del Vangelo di S. Giovanni, Canto B* (Bologna, 2000), *ad Nonn. Par.* 18.77 and R. Franchi, *Nonno di Panopoli. Parafrasi del Vangelo di S. Giovanni: Canto Sesto* (Bologna, 2013), *ad Nonn. Par.* 6.51.

<sup>48</sup> κρωσσός Theoc.13.46; ὄλμος Nic.Th.951.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. the ekphrasis at *PH*.12.122–56. Triphiodorus' version of this ekphrasis (57–98) is even more playful with the competing claims of artifice and *enargeia*.

heroic storytelling itself. When Menelaus recalls in the *Odyssey* how Helen circled the horse and named each of the Greeks hiding inside, through this act Helen becomes a creative participant in the Trojan War tradition; ‘describing’ the horse, and moulding our judgements on the chieftains within it (*Od.*4.274-8).<sup>50</sup> By merging the usually ‘concrete’ πολυχανδής with this slippery and multidimensional horse, Quintus may be seen to be negotiating a metaphorical reading for the term; his πολυχανδής ἵππος can symbolise his chosen method of (re)telling this heroic tale.<sup>51</sup> If so, then as a picture of his poetry, the gaping stomach of the horse to be filled with individual soldiers provides a fitting visualisation of the πᾶσα ἀοιδή that the *Posthomerica* seeks to create – one amassed work which contains within it many different aspects and influences; so that an Alexandrian neologism is made to contribute to this defence of large-scale, incorporative epic.

### III. MUSES AND KNOWLEDGE

The symbolic weight of πᾶσαν ἀοιδήν also vitalises the meaning of the lines which precede it: the allusion to Callimachus heightens expectation of further Callimachean allusion. In Quintus’ instructions to the Muses (12.306-7), beyond the similarities to the Iliadic call<sup>52</sup> lies a significant difference in tone; a shift of emphasis away from the Muses and their power onto

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<sup>50</sup> See N. Worman, ‘This Voice Which Is Not One: Helen’s Verbal Guises in Homeric Epic’ in A. Lardinois and L. McClure (edd.), *Making Silence Speak: Women’s Voices in Greek Literature and Society* (Princeton, 2001), 19-37.

<sup>51</sup> This potential thus also applies to Triphiodorus, who uses the adjective for the wooden horse (412).

<sup>52</sup> Detailed discussion of these echoes in Bär (n. 4), 41–5.

the poet's own desire for knowledge and the clarity of information he wishes to receive. This deviation has been read as a nod to the Hesiodic influence on these lines.<sup>53</sup> And yet the infiltration of the archaic concept of the Muses with the personal curiosity of the narrator is a notable aspect of many imperial *Musenanrufen*. Triphiodorus' bossy demand for his Muse to hurry up (1–5) is a far cry from Homeric-Hesiodic demurral and wonder. An interesting *êthopoiia* fragment from third/fourth century Egypt (*P.Oxy.* 3537) – 'What Hesiod would have said when inspired by the Muses' – even rewrites the original Hesiodic call to emphasise such narrator-centric elements: here Hesiod speaks, feels the presence of the Muse, and asks her in person to inspire him with the *Theogony* and the *Catalogues*; and bidding farewell to the rustic verse and bucolic pipe – both of which were the hallowed gifts of the Muses –<sup>54</sup> he presents himself not as humbled peasant enraptured by his inspirers, but a grand poet unfolding the facts of his own song.<sup>55</sup> This shift can be understood as the influence of a distinctive feature of Callimachean poetics. Fragments of the dialogue which frames *Aetia* 1-2, though scanty, show how in extending the single question and answer into a two-way conversation, the *Aetia* challenges the convention of the Muses as the source of all knowledge, as the goddesses encounter an eager and erudite human interlocutor who adds his own insight into the mix.<sup>56</sup>

Quintus' invocation reveals a close affinity with this Callimachean brand of curiosity. ἀνειρομένῳ hints at a dialogue. The construction μοι ἀνειρομένῳ usually occurs during the inquiry section of a two-way exchange – to refer reflexively to the questioner who expects

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<sup>53</sup> Campbell (n. 5), 103–4 and Bär (n. 4), 43 and 45–7.

<sup>54</sup> As is shown in the Latin tradition, cf. Vergil *Ecl.* 6.69f.

<sup>55</sup> The author also resolutely refuses the Augustan *recusatio* at 25ff, and in its hexameter techniques shows close familiarity with Callimachean practices.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. e.g. *Fr.* 7c; *Fr.* 43.18ff.

answers from his informant.<sup>57</sup> That such an exchange is only faintly implied in Quintus' invocation may make a direct association with the extended conversations of the *Aetia* seem unlikely. And yet such a possibility may be strengthened by the striking similarity to an epigram describing these discussions:

ἄ μέγα Βαττιάδαο σοφοῦ περίπυστον ὄνειαρ,  
ἧ ῥ' ἔτεδ' ὀν κεράων οὐδ' ἐλέφαντος ἔης·  
τοῖα γὰρ ἄμιν ἔφηνας, ἅτ' οὐ πάρος ἀνέρες ἴδμεν,  
ἀμφί τε ἀθανάτους ἀμφί τε ἡμιθέους,  
εὔτε μιν ἐκ Λιβύης ἀναείρας εἰς Ἑλικῶνα  
ἤγαγες ἐν μέσσαις Πιερίδεσσι φέρων·  
αἱ δέ οἱ εἰρομένωι ἀμφ' ὠγυγίων ἡρώων  
Αἴτια καὶ μακάρων εἶρον ἀμειβόμεναι.

(Adesp. A.P. 7. 42)<sup>58</sup>

O great and widely known dream of the clever Battiad, truly you were of horn and not of ivory, for such things you showed us, which we men did not know before, about the immortals and about half-gods, when you lifted him up from Libya and brought him to Mt. Helicon, placing him in the middle of the Pierian Muses; and they told him in answer to his questions the *Aetia* about the ancient heroes and blessed gods.

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<sup>57</sup> Particularly in Homer, e.g. *Od.* 15.293. Cf. LSJ s.v. ἀνείρομαι.

<sup>58</sup> Harder T 6 = *test.* 27 et 1, p.11 Pfeiffer.

If, as Harder suggests, these lines owe something to Callimachus himself,<sup>59</sup> then Quintus' phrasing may recall such sections of the *Aetia*, imparting a specifically Callimachean flavour to the announcement of his request. The sense of awe at the Muses and their power – a defining notion in the Iliadic and Theogonic invocations – is also eroded and replaced by a more 'secular' search for knowledge. The Μοῦσαι are deprived of any elaborating formula (such as the *Iliad*'s Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι, or Hesiod's laudations at the opening of the *Theogony*) and in the place of such archaic complements is a strident emphasis on the manner in which they should convey their information: immediately (νῦν), specifically (καθ' ἑκάστων) and clearly (σάφα).<sup>60</sup>

This use of Callimachus' techniques, however, refuses to be read as a reflection of his aesthetics. For Quintus embeds this confident emphasis on inquiry into the lines which, as we have seen, most closely repeat the second Iliadic call to the Muses (*Il.*2.484-7), with matching imperative (ἔσπεθ'), immediacy (νῦν) and catalogue-style subject (ᾧσοι for the Homeric οἵτινες): the invocation is at its least Homeric whilst at its most. The Iliadic catalogue is also the site of the rare narratorial 'ego' in Homer, who famously could not name the mass of men 'even if I had ten tongues and ten mouths, an unbreakable voice and a heart of bronze' (*Il.*2.488-90). So in imitating *this* Iliadic invocation (thematically relevant, of course, because he is doing a

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<sup>59</sup> Harder (n. 2 [vol. 2]), 4–5 and 93 and H. Beckby (ed.), *Anthologia Graeca* (Munich, 1965) [vol 2] support Pfeiffer's suggestion of a Byzantine date for the epigram. The epigram entered also The Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams (DBBE), compiled at the Universiteit Gent, (<http://www.dbbe.ugent.be/type/view/id/2604/9>).

<sup>60</sup> Maciver (n. 4), 34 astutely suggests that this desire for precision indicates rivalry with previous catalogues on this topic – Quintus wants *this* version to be the right one.

catalogue of his own), Quintus also echoes the moment where Homer himself comes closest to voicing a ‘Hesiodic’ and ‘Callimachean’ poetic I. As a symbol for the tradition of poetic initiation, Quintus’ call thus eradicates the divide between the archaic and Alexandrian approaches; taking their contrasting facets of distance and closeness, knowledge and authority and transforming them into a composite whole.

#### IV. YOUTH

Quintus then describes the timing of his inspiration, which occurred during his youth (309). Youth and childhood have long been recognised as running themes in the *Aetia*.<sup>61</sup> The Telchines accuse Callimachus of writing παῖς ἄτε (*Fr.*1.6), and he refutes them with the claim that ‘whomsoever the Muses did not look askance at as a child they will not reject as a friend when he is old’ (Μοῦσαι γὰρ ὅσους ἴδον ὄθματι παῖδας/ μὴ λοξῶ, πολιοὺς οὐκ ἀπέθεντο φίλους, *Fr.*1.37-8). The old poet then falls asleep<sup>62</sup> and his young counterpart meets the Muses in a dream, where, a scholion relates, he is ἀρτιγένειος, ‘sprouting his first beard.’<sup>63</sup> This

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<sup>61</sup> Cf. e.g. Cameron (n. 15), 129–32.

<sup>62</sup> For this intervening narrative see A. Kerkhecker, ‘Ein Musenanruf am Anfang der *Aitia* des Kallimachos’ *ZPE* 71 (1988), 16–24; A. Harder, R. Regtuit, and G. Wakker (edd.), *Callimachus* (Hellenistica Groninga 1, 1993), 96; and Cameron (n. 15), 129–31.

<sup>63</sup> *Fr.*2d = Σ *Flor.*15-20. For further discussion of this adjective and its subsequent imitation – suggesting that the scholion phrasing may owe something to the text of Callimachus – see e.g. Cameron (n. 15), 131 and Harder (n. 2 [vol. 2]), 144. Harder’s translation, however, ‘while he was still a young man’ (n. 2 [vol. 1], 128) does not capture the specificity of the word.



imagery has often been thematically connected to the innovating intentions of Callimachus' poetry; to traverse paths yet untrodden and create something fresh and new.<sup>64</sup>

In Quintus' image of down spreading on the young shepherd's cheeks, there can be little doubt of the presence of Callimachus' youthful inspiration.<sup>65</sup> Again, however, as soon as we notice the Callimachean intensity of this line, it is simultaneously re-asserted that Homer is supposedly speaking it; here through the use of a phrase distinctively Homeric in origin. In Book 11 of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus describes his sighting in the underworld of Otus and Ephialtes, who were slain by Apollo 'before down covered their cheeks with a beard' (...πρίν σφωιν ὑπὸ κροτάφοισιν ἰούλους/ἀνθῆσαι πυκάσαι τε γένυς ἐνανθεί λάχνη, *Od.* 11.319-20). This verse was well-known in antiquity and gave rise to a host of imitations.<sup>66</sup> By evoking it, Quintus again collides Homeric quotation and Callimachean thematics, and suggestively connects the latter to Homer's poetic voice; imagined as using elements from his formulaic repertoire to describe his initial inspiration.

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<sup>64</sup> Cf. Bär (n. 4), 48 n. 66.

<sup>65</sup> The connection has been noted: Campbell (n. 5), 104; Bär (n. 4), 48; Boyten (n. 4), 278; and K. Carvounis, 'Landscape Markers and Time in Quintus' *Posthomerica*' in M. Skempis and I. Ziogas (edd.), *Geography, Topography, Landscape: Configurations of Space in Greek and Roman Epic* (Berlin, 2014), 183. It is how Quintus uses this image that requires reconsideration.

<sup>66</sup> Extensive examples listed by Campbell (n. 5), 104.

But Quintus does not just reclaim a Callimachean *topos*; he competes with his youthful reminiscence. Whereas the poet of the *Aetia* is old as he dreams of his inspiration,<sup>67</sup> Homer here is no such geriatric. Although Quintus states that he was young when he received his first initiation, he does not specify how old he is now.<sup>68</sup> This ambiguity is particularly pointed if read against the ancient tradition that the *Odyssey* was the work of Homer's old age, as evinced most spiritedly by Pseudo-Longinus, who compares that poem to the setting sun, since it shows how 'as great inspiration fades away (μεγάλης φύσεως ὑποφερομένης), old age naturally leans towards the fabulous' (*De. Sub.* 9. 11-13).<sup>69</sup> Quintus' self-portrayal as no longer young, but not specifically old, thus reflects the position of his composition in the Homeric *oeuvre* – an active post-Iliadic, pre-Odyssean, middle age. His stage of beardedness is also one phase earlier than Callimachus' ἀρτιγένειος (πρὶν ἔτ'...κατασκίδνασθαι) – Homer gains literal as well as literary earliness. Youth is thus not merely evoked as a Callimachean nod. It is transformed into a Homeric-competitive symbol; a reminder that in Quintus' hands, this founding source of the whole poetic tradition is also revitalised and ever-new.

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<sup>67</sup> A contrast to be drawn, however, with the caution advised by Cameron (n. 15), 174–84 in his discussion of the flexibility of ancient ideas about age and ageing.

<sup>68</sup> Boyten's suggestion (n. 4, 277), that by implying that he is not beardless anymore, Quintus insinuates that he is an old man, is not supported by the text, and neglects the possibility of this connection with Homer's supposed stages of composition.

<sup>69</sup> Translation adapted from H. Havell (ed.), *Longinus On the Sublime* (London and New York, 1890).

## V. TOPOGRAPHY AND GRANDEUR

The final section of the proem depicts where this youthful inspiration took place (12.310-13). As we have seen, the impression of locational precision anchors this description to Homeric (auto)biography. Yet in a passage so charged with self-consciousness, the specific place choices also have a role to play in the proem's symbolic system.

Quintus describes his location as τρις τόσον Ἑρμοῦ ἄπωθεν, ὅσον βοόωντος ἀκοῦσαι (311). Wherever this formula-type is found in Homeric epic, it stresses one or both of two points: a greatness of distance, and a loud volume and amplitude.<sup>70</sup> Quintus activates both senses of the expression. The adverb ἄπωθεν – not found in the Homeric examples – intensifies the sense of vast expanse. The Hermus provides another distance marker. Achilles names the river in the *Iliad* as he kills Iphition, citing his birthplace 'by the eddying Hermus' to emphasise sneeringly how far away from his homeland he will perish (*Il.*20.392). The juxtaposition of βοόωντος ἀκοῦσαι and the substitution of γέγωνε in the Homeric formula for a more explicit verb of hearing also throw simultaneous emphasis on noise and clamour.

In *Fr.*1.19-20 of the *Aetia* Callimachus advances his aesthetic statements using the imagery of noisy thunder:

...μηδ' ἀπ' ἐμεῦ διφᾶτε μέγα ψοφέουσιν αἰοιδὴν  
τίκτεσθαι βροντᾶν οὐκ ἐμόν, ἀλλὰ Διός.

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<sup>70</sup> To take two examples from the *Odyssey*, *Od.*5.400-3: ἀλλ' ὅτε τόσσον ἀπῆν ὅσσον τε γέγωνε βοήσας/καὶ δὴ δοῦπον ἄκουσε ποτὶ σπιλάδεσσι θαλάσσης.../ρόχθαι γὰρ μέγα κῦμα); and *Od.* 6.293-4: ἔνθα δὲ πατρὸς ἐμοῦ τέμενος τεθαλυῖά τ' ἀλώη/τόσσον ἀπὸ πτόλιος, ὅσσον τε γέγωνε βοήσας.

Do not look for a loud sounding song to be born from me;  
Thundering is not my job but Zeus’.

In his double articulation of vastness and volume, Quintus appears to re-harness this ‘connection between length and bombastic style’<sup>71</sup> in order to assert that this is precisely the type of ᾠοιδή that he will write: as a poet composing in the style, subject and *persona* of Homer, his work will be vast, and it will be loud and booming.

We then zoom in further on his inspiration-setting – near the Temple of Artemis, in the Garden of Liberty (312).<sup>72</sup> Elsewhere in the literary tradition the garden is frequently employed as a metaphor for poetic art.<sup>73</sup> Quintus’ κῆπος of Liberty – of free spirit, free speaking, or free thinking – <sup>74</sup> builds upon and refines this symbolic potential, serenely accommodating both the terrestrial and the lofty (by virtue of its proximity to the temple) and advocating freedom from

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<sup>71</sup> Harder (n. 2 [vol. 2]), 53–4 demonstrates how Callimachus evokes the literary-critical connotations of ψόφος, and makes μέγα mean both ‘loudly’ and echo the μεγάλη γυνή of *Fr.* 1.12.

<sup>72</sup> Many attempts have been made to identify these features geographically. See Vian (n. 2), x and (n. 19), 131. West’s conjecture for the garden “Ἐλευθερίος (*sc.* Δίος)’ is recorded in Vian’s apparatus (n. 2) and discussed by Carvounis (n. 65), 182 n.11. Such speculation has proven inconclusive, encouraging a reading based on their metaphorical rather than factual interpretative function.

<sup>73</sup> E.g. Pindar *Olympian* 9.27; Plato *Ion* 534a.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. LSJ s.v. ἐλευθέριος.

rigidity or restraint.<sup>75</sup> But set within these stylistic sites of size and grandeur – the noise and distance and temple – the garden asserts that for Quintus, this is a freedom not to deviate from Homeric epic, but to continue it.

The hill with which the proem concludes, ‘neither excessively high nor too low’ (313) has already been interpreted as an aesthetic comment. Neil Hopkinson has taken it as a programmatic reference to the middle style of the *Posthomerica* within the *genera dicendi*.<sup>76</sup> It has however been countered that the type of traditional heroic epic that Quintus is writing belongs by nature to the *genus grande*, precluding a reading of humble self-deprecation.<sup>77</sup> If we read this symbolism within the poem’s framing conceit, its claims become more reconcilable. If the hill is a comment on poetic style, then it is a comment on Homer’s poetic style, which Quintus seeks to appropriate.

In ancient discussions of poetic aesthetics, the concept of the middle style was often evoked in relation to Homer’s mode of expression. Quintilian pits the Homeric style – which represents a model for language, characterisation, organisation and speech techniques – against that of Hesiod, who by contrast is a model for the middle style, with ‘a well-structured composition (*compositione aptus*) and sweetness of *sententiae*; like a gentle river translucent but shaded on both sides by verdant river banks’ (*Institutio Oratoria* 12.10.60).<sup>78</sup> Dionysius of Halicarnassus also contrasts Homer to Hesiod in stylistic terms; but for him, it is Homer who is crowned with

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<sup>75</sup> Bär (n. 4), 61 also considers the garden as a symbol for poetic art, but not in relation to Quintus’ Homeric imitation.

<sup>76</sup> N. Hopkinson (ed.), *Greek Poetry of the Imperial Period. An Anthology* (Cambridge, 1994), 106. Related discussion by Bär (n. 4), 59–61 and Maciver (n. 4), 36.

<sup>77</sup> James (n. 2), xviii.

<sup>78</sup> Translation from H. Butler (ed.), *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian* (London, 1921).

holding the middle or ‘mixed’ ground (εὔκρατος), in that his epics lie somewhere in between the ‘austere’ style (αὐστηρά) and the ‘smooth’ style (γλαφυρὰ σύνθεσις) modelled by Hesiod (*De Compositione Verborum* 23.2–7).<sup>79</sup>

Quintus’ portrait of the hill has much in common with these rhetorical configurations. He shares in the metaphorical language of Quintilian, in which a feature of nature functions as an image of style. And by crowning this style neither excessively high nor low, he concurs with Dionysius that Homer occupies the privileged middle ground. But whilst these treatises pit Homer against the aesthetic traditions which came after him, Homer’s style as presented by Quintus avoids such diachronic dichotomies. Not conforming to a rigid set of criteria, it blends within it a number of different parts – including the Hesiodic, and even the Alexandrian – perfectly represented by a hill which defies precise categorisation.<sup>80</sup>

Whilst ὕψος was a common metaphor for the grand style in antiquity,<sup>81</sup> χαμαλός was not its usual conceptual antithesis.<sup>82</sup> Why then should Quintus use it, forfeiting the more recognisable

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<sup>79</sup> Translation adapted from W. Roberts (ed.), *Dionysius of Halicarnassus on Literary Composition*. (London, 1910). As Hunter notes, this category has much in common with Quintilian’s version of the ‘middle style’ (R. Hunter, *Hesiodic Voices. Studies in the Ancient Reception of Hesiod’s Works and Days* [Cambridge, 2014], 286).

<sup>80</sup> In contrast to the specificity of the rest of the proem, the hill’s lack of name and pin-pointed location heightens its ability to stand for something which precludes rigid compartmentalisation.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. LSJ s.v. τό ὕψος, (4); and the Περὶ ὕψους of Pseudo-Longinus. Further discussion by Bär (n. 4), 59.

<sup>82</sup> The more common metaphorical terminology for the *genus humile* was ἰσχνότης. Cf. LSJ s.v. ἰσχνός, (5).

doublet?<sup>83</sup> The answer may lie in the frequent associations of χθαμαλός in the *Odyssey* with Ithaca.<sup>84</sup> When Odysseus describes his homeland to the Phaeacians, the adjective creates a difficult juxtaposition:

αὐτὴ δὲ χθαμαλὴ πανυπερτάτῃ εἰν ἀλὶ κεῖται

πρὸς ζόφον...

(*Od.*9.25-6)

‘Ithaca itself lies low in the sea, highest of all towards the dark...’

Ithaca’s simultaneous status as χθαμαλή and πανυπερτάτῃ perplexed ancient commentators.<sup>85</sup> Employing the word in his own description of a space that is at once high and low, Quintus could be inviting an association with the simultaneous height and lowliness of Ithaca – and, by transferal, the stylistic highs and lows within the *Odyssey* itself. ὕψος, conversely, in its adverbial and compound forms, is often used in the *Iliad* to describe that epic’s spatial setting and subject matter: the lofty towers of Troy, and the fighting that takes place beneath them.<sup>86</sup> It is a word connected to Iliadic heights. Read against these precedents,

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<sup>83</sup> Bär’s suggestion (n. 4, 59 n.122), that with χθαμαλός Quintus aims at a translation of the Latin *humilis* is possible, but would be an unusual move for Quintus; and seems less likely to me than his interaction with the Odyssean connotations of the word, and at any rate does not preclude it.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. *Od.* 10.96; Strabo 10.2.12.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Σ *Odyssey* ad loc., which asks ‘πῶς χθαμαλή; πῶς πανυπερτάτῃ;’ and lists various attempts to reconcile the two concepts. For the persistence of this uncertainty, Cf. LSJ s.v. χθαμαλός, (2).

<sup>86</sup> ὑψίπυλος is twice used as an epithet for Troy (*Il.*21.544 and 16.698); and after the *Teichoscopia* Aphrodite finds Helen πύργῳ ἐφ’ ὕψηλῳ (*Il.*3.384). The related adverbs ὕψι

Quintus' doublet allows the literal, thematic and stylistic possibilities of the words to combine into a reading of the Homeric canon itself. Subtly evoking both its highs and lows, he thereby suggests the inaccuracy of attributing any excessive loftiness to the Homeric epics, even as he is still composing them.

ὑπόθι is also frequently applied in poetry to Zeus and the gods; as in the Homeric phrase ὑπόθ' ἑόντι Δί,<sup>87</sup> and Callimachus' own *Hymn to Zeus* (εἶπε καὶ ἀντανύσασα θεῇ μέγαν ὑπόθι πῆχυν πλῆξεν ὄρος σκίπτρω..., 'so spoke the goddess, and lifting her great arm aloft she struck the mountain with her staff' [30]).<sup>88</sup> If, by leaving thundering to Zeus, Callimachus links his rejection of the high, grand style to a prudent avoidance of *hubris*, then by juxtaposing such loftiness with tokens of Homeric lowliness, Quintus removes the sting of such an association. Homeric epic itself, as Quintus reads and presents it, successfully incorporates both the high and the low; and thus to imitate, or better still to continue this epic is not an arrogant attempt at greatness, but the logical harnessing of a style which will always best encapsulate the middle way.

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and ὑποῶ are most frequently employed in the *Iliad* to describe battle tactics, positions or situations: the striking of a blow (e.g. *Il.*13.140), the mooring of Achaean ships (*Il.*1.486; *Il.*14.77), a dust cloud rising from the battlefield (*Il.*16.374) or the Achaeans lifting the corpse of Patroclus (*Il.*17.723).

<sup>87</sup> E.g. *Il.*10.16.

<sup>88</sup> Translation adapted from A. Mair, *Hymns and Epigrams: Callimachus and Lycophron* (London, 1955<sup>2</sup>).



## VI. TENDING FAMOUS SHEEP

In our final self-reflexive marker, set within these topographical details, Quintus depicts his former self tending περικλυτὰ μῆλα (310). Through its double allusion to Hesiod's *Theogony* and Callimachus' Hesiod in the *Somnium*, this phrase more than any other in the proem marks its intertextuality. Calum Maciver has shown how the adjective κλυτὰ, which has a double meaning 'excellent/of quality' and 'famous/ renowned',<sup>89</sup> is elsewhere used by Quintus to comment on his poetry and its place in the chain of literary forerunners; a 'footnote' suggesting the sort of subtle and learned use of his models akin to Alexandrian poets.<sup>90</sup> The proem's περικλυτὰ replays this significance on a more intensive level, pointing to a perceived superiority in comparison:

‘The shepherd of the passage has sheep which are of superior quality to other sheep. Quintus’ poetry is of eminently superior quality to other poetry, and, by implication, the poetry of the three he embeds in this passage: Homer, Hesiod and Callimachus.’<sup>91</sup>

However, another flock of sheep – of κλυτὰ μῆλα – neglected in Maciver's discussion significantly affect the symbolism of this image. During his *Apologoi*, Odysseus describes the rams of Polyphemus, under whose fleeces he and his crew make their escape:

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<sup>89</sup> Cf. *Lexikon des Frühgriechischen Epos* s.v. κλυτός (A) and (B); and LSJ s.v. κλυτός (1) and (2).

<sup>90</sup> Maciver (n. 4), 35–8, and (n. 7), 54–5 and 66.

<sup>91</sup> Maciver (n. 4), 37.

ἦμος δ' ἠριγένεια φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἥως,  
καὶ τότε πῦρ ἀνέκαιε καὶ ἤμελγε κλυτὰ μῆλα,  
πάντα κατὰ μοῖραν, καὶ ὑπ' ἔμβρυον ἦκεν ἑκάστη. (Od.9.307-9)

‘As soon as early Dawn appeared, the rosy-fingered, he rekindled the fire and milked his fine flocks all in turn, and beneath each dam placed her young.’

It is generally considered that of the two possible meanings of κλυτός, fine or famous, the former is being employed here: the Cyclops’ sheep are splendid and fine-looking in appearance, a miniature focalisation of Polyphemus’ admiration for them.<sup>92</sup> And yet this visual sense of the adjective is usually restricted in Homer to inanimate objects like armour or houses;<sup>93</sup> and nowhere else is κλυτά used of animals except here.<sup>94</sup> This all suggests that ‘fine-looking’ is only part of the meaning in Odysseus’ words.

Polyphemus is surrounded by his sheep during his daily routine, and is particularly fond of his large ram, to whom he will later affectionately speak, unaware that Odysseus is hiding beneath (Od. 9.447–60). The sheep are thus ‘fine’ at Od.9.308 from an internal perspective, but they are *famous* from an external one, thanks to their role in the very adventure being narrated; their true significance unfolds as the tale progresses, revealed in the spectacular exit. Odysseus

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<sup>92</sup> Cf. the translations by Campbell (n. 5), 104 ‘of outstanding quality,’ and Murray (n. 2) ‘goodly.’

<sup>93</sup> References collated by Maciver (n. 7), 54 n.6.

<sup>94</sup> When Maciver (n. 7, 54) states that ‘nowhere in either Homer or Quintus is κλυτά used of animals or insects, except at Q.S.6.324 [μελισσάων κλυτὰ φύλα]’ he omits this important instance.

mobilises the second meaning of the polyvalent κλυτά as a nod to his retroactive self-awareness as a narrator; an ironic marker of his privileged knowledge and position as the teller of this epic tale.<sup>95</sup>

This doubleness of the *Odyssey*'s sheep has important implications for Quintus' allusion. Referring to an Odyssean episode so centred on identity, anonymity and self-articulation ('Οὔτις ἐμοί γ' ὄνομα', 'φάσθαι Ὀδυσσῆα πτολιπόρθιον ἐξαλαῶσαι'<sup>96</sup>) Quintus' phrase does indeed inscribe his own poetics of 'naming', defining his epic voice in light of its literary predecessors. But by taking up Odysseus' expression, and harnessing its ironic double meaning, he acknowledges the fame of the poetry he is writing from a *Homeric* perspective. In a dizzying proleptic game, Quintus' sheep are actually Homer's sheep: they are the sheep in the *Odyssey*, which, within the conceit of the poem, has not yet been written, described in same way as Homer's most double-speaking character will 'later' depict them. By transference, as a symbol for his poetry, these sheep are very famous not because Quintus has improved on Homeric epic, but because he is imitating it. The subsequent poetic traditions acknowledged by the intertextuality of this line are not evoked to diminish the importance of the Homeric original. Rather, Quintus employs the same retroactive foresight as Odysseus to write them into this superlative fame. It is thanks to the efforts of these later poets that Homer's 'sheep' (his poetry) have been able to become κλυτά, even περικλυτά.<sup>97</sup> And by the act of continuing

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<sup>95</sup> κλυτός is frequently used in the *Odyssey* as an epithet of a bard: cf. *Od.* 1.325, 8.83, 8.367, and 8.521 (so Bär [n. 4], 51), strengthening the possibility that its use here is indicative of Odysseus' status as internal teller of this tale.

<sup>96</sup> *Od.* 9.366 and 9.504.

<sup>97</sup> The prefix περι-, which may have been selected by the poet for more metrical reasons than Maciver suggests, could nonetheless also carry connotations of a 'perceived superiority' in this

this poetry, Quintus himself is now able to tend this most celebrated flock; posing as Homer grants him access to material of the highest quality and renown.

#### CODA: DECLASSIFYING QUINTUS

In these duplicitous sheep, we find encapsulated the approach to Alexandrian poetics in the proem's encoded statements. Claiming – or better, reclaiming – the retrojecting anachronistic moves so typical of Alexandrian poetry for Homeric epic, Quintus adopts the games of Callimachus to validate the Homeric poetics of his undertaking; his own literary game. The *Posthomeric* thus establishes its Homeric-ness both against, but also by means of, Alexandrian, Callimachean poetics.

I began by suggesting that the proem functions a map for the imitative strategies of the poem. The next step will be now to use this map, and apply its directions to the other elements of the *Posthomeric*: the formulaic switches, the source combinations, the range of narrative and literary interactions, which are still too often polarised in discussions of this author, read as either Homeric or un-Homeric, Alexandrian or non-Alexandrian, in the persistent desire to categorise Quintus. The programmatic system of the in-proem as this article has understood it provides perhaps the strongest ammunition to rethink this current mode of rethinking. Acutely aware of the literary manoeuvres available to him and the innovative pressures of his time, Quintus advocates an alternative answer to charges of bland imitation, which declares the value of a poetic endeavour not in terms of deviation from traditional epic, but through explicit

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spectrum of poets; but what is crucial is that the superiority belongs to Homer, it is not set against him.

dependence upon it. Confronting his Homeric affiliation proudly and without apology, he finds a way to redefine it as a discrete epic agenda – a *post* post-Homeric poetics, in which the polarising statements of the *Aetia* become the new Telchines, against whose charges the voices of Homer, and Hesiod, and Callimachus can chime in the polyphony of the Quintan song.

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