Les Études classiques 84 (2016), p. 81-104.

FACING ACHILLES IN TWO LESSONS
Heroic characterization in Quintus of Smyrna, *Posthomerica* 1 and 2

Abstract. — The *Posthomerica* of Quintus of Smyrna narrates the end of the Trojan War in 14 books that are generally considered to be episodic. However, the overall plot coherence of the epic is carefully designed to go well beyond a dry succession of individual stories. This article offers a comparative study of the first two books, which treat the heroic deeds of the Amazon queen Penthesilea and Eos' son Memnon, respectively. The remarkably parallel composition of both books is in stark contrast with the strikingly dissimilar characterization of the two protagonists. As such, the beginning of the *Posthomerica* proposes a diptych of two failing attempts to face Achilles. Both performances indirectly refer to each other and reflect on good and bad practices of heroic behaviour. Simultaneously, they introduce the next episode of the Trojan story, Achilles' own death, and hence reinforce the plot coherence of the epic as a whole.

Résumé. — Les *Posthomériques* de Quintus de Smyrne racontent la fin de la Guerre de Troie en quatorze chants souvent considérés comme formant une série d'épisodes distincts. Toutefois, la composition narrative de l'épopée dans son ensemble est soigneusement conçue pour renforcer la cohérence globale de l'histoire. Cet article propose une étude comparative des deux premiers livres de l'épopée, consacrés aux actes héroïques de la reine des Amazones, Penthésilée, et du fils d'Éos, Memnon. La structure parallèle des deux livres est remarquable, au regard d'une caractérisation manifestement différente des deux protagonistes. Ainsi, le début des *Posthomériques* présente un diptyque de deux tentatives infructueuses d'affronter Achille. En dialogue implicite, ces deux épisodes donnent des exemples positifs et négatifs de comportements héroïques. En même temps, ils introduisent le prochain épisode de l'histoire troyenne, c'est-à-dire la mort d'Achille même.

Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica* starts *in medias res* after the burial of Hector and narrates the end of the Trojan war as a sequel to Homer's *Iliad*. Conventionally dated to the 3rd century AD [1], the late antique epic ad-

1. Given the absence of any other than text-internal clues about its origin, the epic is difficult to date. For a detailed overview of the current *communis opinio*, which is mainly based on literary and intertextual analyses, see S. BÄR (2009), p. 14-23. S. Bär has proposed to interpret the *Posthomerica* in the context of the Second Sophistic era (elaborated studies on the subject have been collected in the 2007 volume *Quintus Smyrnaeus: transforming Homer in Second Sophistic Epic*). Although this specific fo-

opts a thoroughly Homeric language and style to tie in with the rich tradition of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and later literary treatments of the Trojan war. Its 14 books chronologically deal with the stories of Penthesilea, Memnon, Achilles' death, the judgement of arms, the rivalry of Eurypylus and Neoptolemus, Philoctetes' return and Paris' death, the ruse of the Trojan horse and eventually the sack of Troy and the departure of the victorious Achaeans. This rather episodic plot structure and the typically Homeric tone of the epic's contents and style have long been interpreted as an uninspired example of *imitatio Homeri*. Whereas this negative claim has generally been contested in more recent studies, the precise narrative composition of the epic as a whole remains a matter of discussion. The chronological order of the *Posthomerica* is in line with its design to fill the gap between the end of the *Iliad* and the beginning of the *Odyssey*, but scholarship has only recently started to pay real attention to the narrative techniques used to unify the episodes within the epic [2]. Even if structural coherence in the *Posthomerica* is nowadays increasingly examined, much work is still to be done on the consistent representation of general themes within the epic narrative, such as the ideological beliefs of the characters and the narrator [3]. C. MACIVER (2007, 2012b) was the first to investigate the moralizing, possibly stoic tendency in the epic in close relation to its intertextual and narrative composition. In this paper, I will investigate Quintus' representation of another ideological aspect of the *Posthomerica*, namely the influence of Homeric heroism [4].

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cus was contested by C. MACIVER (2012a), Quintus scholarship since the beginning of the 21st century has stressed the late antique imperial origin of the *Posthomerica*.

2. In his 1963 text edition, F. Vian occasionally indicates how narrative elements in the individual books create overall thematic structures in the epic. More specific studies have been conducted by P. SCHENK (1997) and E. SCHMIDT (1999). C. MACIVER's monograph is the most recent study to address the matter in any detail (2012b, p. 20-24). In all, W. APPEL's theory that 14 episodic chants have only accidentally been transmitted in this chronological order and that the author had no intention to fit them all into one united epic composition has convincingly been contested (1994). For a more detailed overview of scholarship on the narrative composition of the *Posthomerica*, see S. BÄR (2009), p. 93-94.

3. With 'ideological beliefs', I refer to the beliefs that motivate the characters and the narrator in their (judgment of) daily life, on the battlefield and beyond. Earlier scholarship has revealed two important foci in the *Posthomerica*: on the one hand, the Trojan war story inevitably evokes a context of Homeric heroism (esp. B. BOYTEN [2010] thus far, see also E. KNEEBONE [2007]). On the other hand, the epic shows a rather moralizing tendency, often interpreted as stoic influence (this was observed by F. VIAN [1963], t. I, p. xiv-xviii, and has been studied in more detail by a.o. U. GÄRTNER [2007], M. WENGLINSKY [1999] and [2002] and several contributions of F. García Romero and I. Calero Secall).

4. For an extensive study of Homeric heroism, I refer to F. HORN (2014), who bases his definition of the Homeric heroic code on Sarpedon's words to Glaucus: "Ah friend,

Quintus' characters clearly enter into dialogue with the heroic tradition established by the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and just as in the Homeric epics, each of them applies this code to his own ambitions and preferences. A hero's personal vision determines his words and deeds, which are in turn judged by fellow characters and the narrator. Heroic interpretations may clash with those of others and this creates a multi-coloured web of interests. Quintus explores the complex possibilities of such heroic characterization [5] at the beginning of *Posthomerica*. Books 1 and 2 contain the seemingly autonomous, yet obviously parallel tales of two new Trojan allies, the Amazon queen Penthesilea and Eos' son Memnon, who accept the same challenge, but face it in quite different ways: after Hector's death, they successively arrive in Troy with the ambitious plan to defeat Achilles, but are eventually killed by his hand. The respective descriptions of the arrival, the reception and the battle performances of both heroes show remarkable similarities which, as a consequence, also highlight the clear differences between them. Several studies of *Posthomerica* 1 and 2 are available, but most of them have not sufficiently focussed on the interdependence between both books [6]. Even if their parallel composition is occasionally indicated [7], the interrelation of the representation of Penthesilea and Memnon can be taken one step further. This paper will analyse how their contrastive characterization results in an implicit debate about heroic behaviour. In what fol-

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if once escaped from this battle we were for ever to be ageless and immortal, neither should I fight myself amid the foremost, nor should I send thee into battle where men win glory; but now […]" (*Iliad*, 12, 322-326; translations of Homer are taken from A. MURRAY [1924]).

5. For a full theoretical framework regarding narratological characterization, see K. DE TEMMERMAN (2014), p. 26-45.

6. Before and until F. Vian, *Quellenforschung* has reigned Quintus scholarship. In the case of *Posthomerica* 1 and 2, particularly the assumed – yet unproven – influence of the Epic Cycle (and of the *Aethiopis* in particular) has been investigated (cf. several contributions of A. Taccone, A. Sodano and A. De Wit). Besides F. VIAN's detailed studies on the same topic (1963, 1959), his text edition also makes fundamental observations about the overall narrative composition of the epic, to which modern scholarship is most indebted. In recent times, and besides many shorter studies to which I will refer in due time, books 1 and 2 have particularly benefited from the studies of A. GOȚIA (2007 and 2009) and the detailed commentaries of S. BÄR (2009, on book 1, verses 1-219) and A. FERRECCIO (2014, on book 2).

7. F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 4-5, points at the diptych-like structure of the first two books and also discusses the main contrasts in his text edition (*ibidem,* p. 48-49). He is followed by E. LELLI (2013), p. 701. I. CALERO SECALL (1995) compares the arrival scenes of both books. A. GOȚIA (2007 and 2009) has provided a first comparative study of the characterization of Penthesilea and Memnon, but limits his scope to their representation in terms of colours, light and darkness. A. FERRECCIO's occasional observations about the parallels between Penthesilea and Memnon tend to overlook the more subtle contrasts between both characters (e.g. 2014, p. 70-72).

lows, I will first outline the representation of the Amazon queen Penthesilea in the first book. These findings will then be compared to Memnon's appearance in book two.

Penthesilea

Penthesilea arrives immediately after the introductory verses of the epic, in which the Trojans are still mourning Hector and cowering for Achilles within the city walls. Their lost hope is restored as soon as the Amazons, led by their queen Penthesilea, come into view. From the city walls, the Trojans catch a first glimpse of the new champion (Q. S., 1, 20-73). Penthesilea has come to Troy for two reasons: she has a taste for war (στονόεντος ἐελδομένη πολέμοιο, Q. S., 1, 20) and she seeks purgation for the crime of accidentally killing her sister [8]. She outshines her entourage of twelve splendid Amazons in two similes: as the moon among stars (Q. S., 1, 37-41) and as Eos among her servants, the Horae (Q. S., 1, 48-53). The main reason for this excellence is her splendid appearance (ἀγλαὸν εἶδος, Q. S., 1, 51), words that are literally repeated in the admiring focalization of the onlooking Trojans six verses later (Q. S., 1, 57) [9]. The first impression of Penthesilea therefore fills the hearts of the Trojans with hope: she is like the sight of a rainbow after bad weather (Q. S., 1, 63-72). When Priam first catches sight of her, he in turn is compared to a blind man seeing a glimpse of light for the first time since long (Q. S., 1, 76-83) [10]. He too dares to hope again, albeit only slightly [11]. Penthesilea clearly makes a marvellous impression, but whether or not she will be a great warrior still remains to be seen.

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8. According to older conclusions of *Quellenforschung*, this double motivation could be the result of an eclecticism of sources (cf. A. DE WIT [1951], p. 41-47, for a list of possibilities). However, it also serves a narrative purpose as a strong indicator of Penthesilea's impetuous lust for war, which will be stressed throughout book 1.

9. A. GOŢIA (2009), p. 68-70, discusses the first impression of her beauty in more detail. Other studies on the characterization of Penthesilea that should be mentioned at the beginning of this analysis include I. CALERO SECALL (1992), on female epithets, S. BÄR (2009), on her contradictory identity as a female warrior, and C. MACIVER (2012b), p. 132-153, on characterization through similes.

10. For a more detailed study about this cluster of four similes, see C. MACIVER (2012b), p. 132-140. The simile of Priam as a blind man – and its doubtful undertone – has been the subject of recurrent research: see also F. VIAN (1963), t. II, p. 48, A. JAMES (2004), p. 269, L. OZBEK (2007), p. 177-179, and quite extensively S. BÄR (2009), p. 266-290.

11. This hesitation is repeated three times: μέγ' ἀκηχεμένοιο περὶ φρεσὶ τυτθὸν ἰάνθη (about Priam at the beginning of the simile, Q. S., 1, 75), οὐ μὲν ὅσον τὸ πάροιθεν, ὅμως δ' ἄρα βαιὸν ἰάνθη (about the blind man in the simile, Q. S., 1, 80) and παῦρον μὲν γήθησε (about Priam at the end of the simile, Q. S., 1, 84).

Upon her arrival, the Amazon queen is warmly welcomed with a banquet, during which she makes a big show of boasting about her ambition for the next day:

> Ἣ δ' ἄρ' ὑπέσχετο ἔργον ὃ οὔ ποτε θνητὸς ἐώλπει,
> δηώσειν Ἀχιλῆα καὶ εὐρέα λαὸν ὀλέσσειν
> Ἀργείων, νῆας δὲ πυρὸς καθύπερθε βαλέσθαι,
> **νηπίη· οὐδέ τι ἤδη ἐυμμελίην Ἀχιλῆα,**
> **ὅσσον ὑπέρτατος ἦεν ἐνὶ φθισήνορι χάρμῃ.** (Q. S., 1, 93-97.)
>
> Her promise was a deed for which no mortal had hoped –
> To kill Achilles, destroy the mighty host
> Of Argos and toss their ships upon a fire.
> *The fool!* She did not know *how matchless was Achilles*
> Of the ashwood spear in man-destroying battle [12].

The word νηπίη is well-known from the *Iliad*. As the first word in a Homeric verse, the term is frequently used by the omniscient narrator to describe characters who do, say or believe something foolish, often too optimistic. In this passage, the narrator immediately indicates the foolishness of Penthesilea's audacious claim [13]. His words are followed by the first direct speech of the *Posthomerica*, in which Andromache expresses a similar concern (Q. S., 1, 100-114): even Hector was killed by Achilles and he was far superior to Penthesilea. Andromache's words σέο πολλὸν ὑπέρτερος (Q. S., 1, 105) echo the narrator's warning in verse 97. This passage gives a first clear indication about Penthesilea's worth as a warrior: she is a fool to believe she will slay Achilles [14]. The same word νηπίη is repeated the next morning. During the night, Athena has sent Penthesilea a false dream about

12. All translations of the *Posthomerica* are derived from A. JAMES (2004). For the Greek text, I use the edition of F. VIAN (1963).

13. I. DE JONG (1987), p. 86-87, understands the word νήπιος as a form of internal prolepsis by the primary narrator-focalizer, which implicitly serves as a reminder of the limitations of the human race and their dependency on fate. B. BOYTEN (2010), p. 261-262, gives a short overview of the occurrences of the word in the *Posthomerica* and S. BÄR (2009), p. 315-318, concludes that Quintus' νήπιος can serve the same three functions as in the *Iliad*: prolepsis (see also G. DUCKWORTH [1936], p. 62), characterization and I. DE JONG's vanitas reflection. He draws particular attention to the negative implications for Penthesilea's characterization and her foreshadowed death in this first appearance of the word. A. GOȚIA (2009), p. 77-78, examines its ominous undertone in contrast to Penthesilea's initial splendour.

14. For an analysis of Andromache's argument, see S. BÄR (2009), p. 343. Andromache's words are marked by a strong intertextuality with her speeches in the *Iliad*. This stresses the parallel between Hector and Penthesilea, but also their dissimilarity as characters in the same situation: Andromache reproaches a woman who endorses a typically male battle *hybris* (S. BÄR [2009], p. 324-328). Further references to Penthesilea's paradoxical nature as a female warrior and the ensuing gender debate follow in footnote 23.

her hoped-for victory [15]. Upon awaking, the Amazon queen believes it to be a real prophecy, which leads the narrator to condemn her as a νηπίη once more (Q. S., 1, 134). Ignorant of all this, the new heroine dons her armour and leads the Trojans into battle – her final battle, as the narrator significantly describes it (Q. S., 1, 172). A last, desperate prayer of Priam only evokes a negative omen from Zeus (Q. S., 1, 182-204), sealing Penthesilea's fate: she will not survive today's battle [16].

Despite these bad prospects, her only fighting day makes a flying start and she immediately demonstrates her warrior vigour. Penthesilea is compared to a lioness (Q. S., 1, 315-318) and a sea wave (Q. S., 1, 319-325) and, as it turns out that the major Achaean heroes Diomedes, Achilles and Aiax are nowhere to be found, she makes an audacious speech to challenge them in their absence:

> "Πῇ νῦν Τυδείδαο βίη, πῇ δ' Αἰακίδαο,
> ποῦ δὲ καὶ Αἴαντος; Τοὺς γὰρ φάτις ἔμμεν ἀρίστους·
> ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ οὐ τλήσονται ἐναντία δηριάασθαι
> μή σφιν ἀπὸ μελέων ψυχὰς φθιμένοισι πελάσσω." (Penthesilea, Q. S., 1, 331-334.)

> "Where now is the might of Tydeus' son, where that of Achilles
> Or of Ajax? They are famed as your best,
> Yet they will not dare to face me in combat,
> For fear I take souls from bodies and send them to the dead."

Penthesilea's challenge simultaneously acknowledges the supreme status of Diomedes, Aiax and Achilles and claims their defeat *in absentia*, in her favour. Her scornful words are inspired by the heroic code in which she and her Achaean opponents are united: the top-class heroes are engaged in a never-ending competition to be 'the best' [17]. Champions who pride them-

15. On dreaming scenes in the *Posthomerica*, see J.-P. GUEZ (1999) [p. 82-85 for his discussion on this dream]. I do not agree, however, that this particular dream serves no dramatic purpose in the narrative (cf. also M. WENGLINSKY [2002], p. 297). Although it does not provide us with unknown information or instigate new action, it contributes significantly to the dramatic irony of Penthesilea's character. Moreover, rather than being "a clumsy insertion of Homerizing episodes, or, alternatively, as indication of his close dependence on the traditional story" (M. WENGLINSKY [2002], p. 294), this scene can be understood as a skilful adaptation of Agamemnon's false dream in *Iliad* 2 (cf. S. BÄR [2009], p. 362-366, for an extended intertextual analysis).

16. Thus, Penthesilea's doom has been foreshadowed by both the narrator and several characters' speech and focalization (for a complete list, see F. VIAN [1963], t. I, p. 5, n. 1). S. BÄR (2009), p. 460-461, provides a narratological overview of the different techniques of foreshadowing in the *Posthomerica* (inspired by G. DUCKWORTH [1936]).

17. The words ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν are an important subject of discussion and competition in the *Iliad* (particularly between Achilles and Agamemnon in book 1). This matter is studied in more detail by G. NAGY (1979), p. 26-41, and F. HORN (2014), p. 53-54.

selves on holding that title must constantly defend it. This dynamic 'battlefield hierarchy' is an important heroic motivation throughout the epic, established by the narrator and further confirmed or contested by several characters, both on the battlefield and beyond. In book 1, this competition revolves around Penthesilea's belief that she can keep up with Achilles' kind. From the very beginning, however, this is recurrently and quite firmly contested. At this point in the narrative, the reader has understood that she will not stand a chance. The dramatic irony is therefore only increased by the temporary absence of Achilles and Aiax at the beginning of the day's battle [18]. As Penthesilea sees her assumed superiority confirmed, her battle spirit is roused to its climax. At this point, the Trojan warriors believe in her future victory as much as the Amazon queen herself and they praise her female vigour in a hopeful tis-speech (Q. S., 1, 358-372). Again, however, the narrator scorns such great expectations about the new female champion. He calls the Trojan 'someone' νήπιος (Q. S., 1, 374) and repeats that, as long as Achilles and Aiax are not joining the fight, nothing can be sure. This is the third and last time the word νήπιος is used in book 1. All three occurrences condemn those who believe in Penthesilea's success. Doubtful exchanges between the narrator and the reader hence mark the climax of Penthesilea's fighting. This implicit foreshadowing of doom is taken another step further in the next simile.

> Ὡς δ' ὀπόθ' ἑρσήεντος ἔσω κήποιο θοροῦσα
> ποίης ἐλδομένη θυμηδέος εἴαρι πόρτις,
> ἀνέρος οὐ παρεόντος, ἐπέσσυται ἄλλοθεν ἄλλῃ
> σινομένη φυτὰ πάντα νέον μάλα τηλεθόωντα,
> καὶ τὰ μὲν ἂρ κατέδαψε, τὰ δ' ἐν ποσὶν ἠμάλδυνεν·
> ὣς ἄρ' Ἀχαιῶν υἷας ἐπεσσυμένη καθ' ὅμιλον
> κούρη Ἐνυαλίη τοὺς μὲν κτάνε, τοὺς δ' ἐφόβησε. (Q. S., 1, 396-402.)
>
> As a heifer in springtime leaps into a garden
> Eager for the pleasure of its dewy grass,
> When no one is present; it rushes in all directions
> And ruins the plants that before were all so flourishing,
> Devouring some and trampling others under foot;
> So that warrior maiden went rushing through the throng
> Of Achaians, killing some and putting others to flight.

The setting in which this powerful and destructive calf is depicted encourages an ambiguous interpretation of Penthesilea's battle vigour. The choice of the calf image is a significant start. It recurs in another simile in book 1 (262-266) to portray the death of two Amazons. Cows, oxen and bulls are frequently found in Iliadic battle similes, but Quintus is the first to

18. Yet, the absence of both Achaean champions is strongly emphasized, so as never to forget that they are still to be expected (F. VIAN [1963], t. I, p. 5).

replace the cow by a calf in a similar context [19]. This change has significant implications for the warrior characterization of the dying Amazons. Similarly, the reuse of this image for Penthesilea during her *aristeia* could imply doubts about her self-proclaimed invincibility. The fact that the calf is only able to destroy the garden in absence of the gardener is yet another indication of the narrator's pessimist view since the banquet: Achilles and Aiax, once they appear, will be her undoing [20].

The Achaean champions will join the fight soon afterwards [21]. Achilles, still grieving for Patroclus, is convinced by Aiax to defend his honour (Q. S., 1, 494-508) and takes up arms again. As they rush to the battlefield, their fury is illustrated by several vigorous similes and comparisons which leave no doubt about their superiority: the tide is about to turn [22]. Penthesilea does not linger to confront them. In a challenging speech she repeats her former boasts (see Q. S., 1, 326-334) and claims that her Amazon

19. In the *Iliad*, bulls and cows occasionally occur in the background of a simile (*Iliad*, 10, 351-354; 23, 844-847 and 24, 480-483), but more often are prominent players. Sometimes their force is stressed (2, 480-483; 13, 703-708; 20, 495-499 and 21, 237), but most often the animal is prey to some stronger attacker, a lion or human (5, 161-164; 11, 172-178 and 548-557; 12, 293; 13, 571-573; 15, 323-327, 586-590 and 630-638; 16, 487-491; 17, 61-69, 389-395, 520-524, 542 and 657-666; 20, 403-406). Calf images, however, are strikingly scarce, also in later traditions. In *Iliad*, 17, 4-6, a mother protects her calf. In *Odyssey*, 10, 410-415, calves race back towards their mothers whom they had feared lost. Both images, however, show little affinity with Quintus' simile. In his *Georgics*, 4, 10-12, Vergil refers to a calf trampling grass in a field (F. VIAN [1963], t. I, p. 28, n. 1) and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (174-175) uses the same image in a simile, but only to illustrate female swiftness (A. JAMES [2004], p. 271).

20. I would not go as far as H. LOVATT (2013), p. 247, 306, who interprets the two calf similes as a mere mockery of the supposed heroism of warrior maidens. Rather, the narrator's choice of imagery seems to suggest that Penthesilea engages in the world of warrior heroism, but cannot reach the standards of her (male) counterparts. Hence, the replacement of the cow by a calf indicates the Amazon queen's place on the ladder of Homeric heroism.

21. This will happen after a brief digression in the narrative: upon seeing Penthesilea as a champion on the battlefield, the Trojan women in the city discuss whether they should join the fight to protect their homes. After a debate involving two speeches, they decide not to do so (Q. S., 1, 403-476). Further research on this passage, which is often seen as the pivotal point of book 1, is conducted by S. BÄR (2009), p. 115-117 (followed by B. BOYTEN [2010], p. 57-63), and C. MACIVER (2012c), p. 62-64. For the chiastic structure of book 1 as a whole, see R. SCHMIEL (1986) and S. BÄR (2009), p. 94-103.

22. They are compared to Ares (Q. S., 1, 512-514), to the sons of Aloas (516-521), to voracious lions (524-528) and to fire (530-537). For the representation of Achilles and Aiax as a deadly duo in this passage, see F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 9.

race and her divine origin make her superior to all (Q. S., 1, 553-562) [23]. The reaction of both Achaean champions is one of utter disdain. Not only do they burst into laughter, Aiax also abandons Achilles to fight elsewhere:

> Αἴας δ' οὐκ ἀλέγιζεν Ἀμαζόνος, ἀλλ' ἄρα Τρώων
> ἐς πληθὺν ἀνόρουσε· λίπεν δ' ἄρα Πηλείωνι
> οἷῳ Πενθεσίλειαν, ἐπεί ῥά οἱ ἐν φρεσὶ θυμὸς
> ᾔδεεν ὡς Ἀχιλῆι καὶ ἰφθίμῃ περ ἐοῦσα
> ῥηίδιος πόνος ἔσσεθ' ὅπως ἴρηκι πέλεια.
> (Q. S., 1, 568-572.)

> Ajax just ignored the amazon and leapt
> Among the mass of Trojans, leaving Penthesileia
> For Peleus' son alone, since well he knew in his heart
> That for Achilles, in spite of all her prowess,
> *She would be as easy a task as a dove for a hawk*.

This rejection is remarkably explicit: Penthesilea is not worth the effort. The denigratory comparison in Aiax' focalization is mirrored in Achilles' own response to Penthesilea's challenge (Q. S., 1, 575-591). First, the hero extensively describes his own superiority (and that of Aiax) and calls Penthesilea out of her wits to confront them. Then, instead of properly challenging her, Achilles simply states that he will kill her as a lion would kill a fawn (Q. S., 1, 586-587). Hence, two comparisons in this short passage have illustrated that Penthesilea will be a helpless prey for Achilles. He immediately acts accordingly and mortally wounds her with his first blow. Badly hurt, she doubts whether she will proceed to fight or rather beg her foe's mercy (Q. S., 1, 599-609). Achilles, however, leaves her no room for debate and kills her, as a hunter would pierce a deer (Q. S., 1, 615-621). This image recalls the threat in Achilles' previous speech and proves it to be true (see also B. SPINOULA [2008], p. 203-208). In the entire confrontation, Penthesilea could not hope to match Achilles (F. VIAN [1963], t. I, p. 5-6). As Penthesilea falls down, the narrator describes this in an interesting way:

> Ἣ δ' ὦκα μίγη κονίῃ καὶ ὀλέθρῳ
> εὐσταλέως ἐριποῦσα κατ' οὔδεος· οὐδέ οἱ αἰδὼς

23. Many have studied the particularities of the characterization of Penthesilea as an Amazon and her subsequent representation as an uncommon warrior. Among the most prominent are S. BÄR (2009, see also footnote 14), who analyses the existential tension evoked by the (barbarian) concept of 'a woman on the battlefield' in the light of the Second Sophistic, and B. BOYTEN (2010). Other studies include F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 4, R. SCHMIEL (1986), I. CALERO SECALL (who has published widely on the particularities of Penthesilea in contrast to other women in the *Posthomerica*). An up to date summary of this discussion can be found in E. LELLI (2013), p. 675, 683. H. LOVATT includes Quintus' Penthesilea in her study of *Vision, Gender and Narrative in Ancient Epic* (2013). I will not go deeper into the gender debate myself.

ἦ σ χ υ ν ε ν δ έ μ α ς ἠ ύ · τάθη δ’ ἐπὶ νηδύα μακρὴ
δουρὶ περισπαίρουσα, θοῷ δ’ ἐπεκέκλιτο ἵππῳ. (Q. S., 1, 622-624.)

Both dust and death received her at once,
As she fell to the ground preserving her grace. *For nothing shameful*
Dishonoured her fair form. Full length and facing down,
She quivered still on the spear, her speedy steed as her couch.

Penthesilea’s female side becomes more prominent after her death. The narrator stresses that her body is not shamefully [24] exposed and Achilles scorns her in a particular way:

“[…] μέγα φέρτατοί εἰμεν
ἡρώων, Δαναοῖσι φάος μέγα, Τρωσὶ δὲ πῆμα
ἠδὲ σοὶ αἰνομόρῳ, ἐπεὶ <ἦ> νύ σε Κῆρες ἐρεμναὶ
καὶ νόος ἐξορόθυνε γ υ ν α ι κ ῶ ν ἔ ρ γ α λ ι π ο ῦ σ α ν
β ή μ ε ν α ι ἐ ς π ό λ ε μ ο ν τ ό ν π ε ρ τ ρ ο μ έ ο υ σ ι κ α ὶ ἄ ν δ ρ ε ς.”
(Achilles, Q. S., 1, 649-653.)

“[…] We are far the greatest
Warriors, great light of Danaans, but the bane of Trojans
And of you, ill-starred indeed, since blackest Fates
And your heart [25] have goaded you *to abandon women’s work*
And go to war. War causes even men to tremble.”

Achilles explicitly contrasts Penthesilea’s female nature with the battlefield on which she never really belonged. As it turns out, the narrator was right all along: Penthesilea did not stand a chance against Achilles in battle. After her death, however, the situation changes. As Achilles removes her helmet in order to take her spoils, her beauty is revealed and it immediately conquers the Achaean hearts, and Achilles’ in particular. Penthesilea’s outer appearance (μέγεθός τε καὶ εἶδος, Q. S., 1, 673) is compared to the gods three times [26]. The narrator specifies that Aphrodite has posthumously preserved her beauty to punish Achilles for killing Ares’ daughter.

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24. Shame (αἰδώς) is a multi-facetted aspect of Homeric heroism that applies to both men and women, in different ways (D. CAIRNS [1993] discusses this at length). The nature of Penthesilea’s αἰδώς is characterized by her virginity, and as such is opposed to Helen’s shame (C. MACIVER [2012b], p. 146-147).

25. I have slightly adapted A. JAMES’ translation (2004) to stress Penthesilea’s double motivation: both the Keres and her νόος are the subject of the Greek sentence.

26. She is compared to the gods twice in the focalization of the Achaean soldiers: first to the gods in general (Q. S., 1, 662) and then to Artemis after a hunt in particular (Q. S., 1, 663-665). Finally, her appearance is focalized as that of a goddess by Achilles himself, as he regrets not having wed her (ἐπεὶ μέγεθός τε καὶ εἶδος / ἔπλετ’ ἀμώμητός τε καὶ ἀθανάτῃσιν ὁμοίη, Q. S., 1, 673-674). C. MACIVER (2012b), p. 143-144, discusses the Artemis simile in more detail. A. GOŢIA (2009), p. 77-79, stresses how Penthesilea’s beauty, overruling her warrior ambitions in her final confrontation with Achilles, is all that is left to her after death.

Αὐτὴ γάρ μιν ἔτευξε καὶ ἐν φθιμένοισιν ἀγητὴν
Κύπρις ἐυστέφανος κρατεροῦ παράκοιτις Ἄρηος,
ὄφρά τι καὶ Πηλῆος ἀμύμονος υἷ' ἀκαχήσῃ.
(Q. S., 1, 666-668.)

This beauty even among the dead was the personal work
Of the fair-crowned Kyprian goddess, the mighty war god's spouse,
To inflict some suffering also on noble Peleus' son.

In his regret, Achilles now also suffers and he starts mourning his victim [27]. It will take Thersites' scorning speech (Q. S., 1, 722-740) to remind him of his heroic duties and to take up arms once more [28]. Hence, Penthesilea's posthumous beauty accomplishes what she could not do alive: to hurt Achilles and gain the respect of her foes. Throughout her attempt to follow the heroic ideal, she has been doubted and eventually reproached for her femininity. It turns out that she is stronger in her female beauty than in the warrior ambitions she cherished [29]. In admiration, the Atreids endow Penthesilea with great honour: her body and armour are returned to the Trojans for a solemn burial [30].

Parallel compositions

At the beginning of the second book, the Trojans are back where they started a book earlier: their most recent champion slain, they stay within the city walls and desperately wonder if Achilles will ever be defeated. They call an assembly in which they express their fear for Achilles and their disappointment in Penthesilea and contemplate whether they should fight, flee

27. The impact of his grief is huge: no less than how he mourned for Patroclus (Q. S., 1, 721).

28. Despite Thersites' reputation as the vilest of Achaeans, his argument in this speech makes sense: he condemns Achilles' *gynomania* and states that a hero should not allow a woman to make him forget about war, for only on the battlefield can a man gain honour. This ties in with the heroic code hailed by the heroes so far (see C. MACIVER [2012b], p. 75-78 for an extensive study on Thersites' rebuke as an appeal to *Arete*, Iliadic ideals and the rejection of lust). It is puzzling, therefore, that, albeit in accord with tradition, Achilles kills Thersites for his words and – even more so – that this murder is approved of by both the narrator and nearly all characters. Scholars have interpreted Thersites as an anti-hero in contrast with Penthesilea (P. SCHUBERT [1996]) or a focalizer of supposed Achilles' feminization (B. BOYTEN [2010], p. 53) and F. VIAN (1963, t. I, p. 11) points at the chaste, moralizing tone of the entire passage, but a satisfactory answer for this ambiguity in Thersites' characterization, which seems paradoxical in the existing tradition about his character, has thus far not been provided.

29. S. BÄR (2009), p. 113, states that death eliminates her warrior nature and makes her 'properly female' again. B. BOYTEN (2010), p. 52, concludes that Penthesilea seeks glory on the battlefield, but wins it through her beauty.

30. Not to bereave a defeated foe of his (or her) spoils is a gesture of exceptional tribute in the *Iliad* (F. HORN [2014], p. 104).

or return Helen to the enemy. Priam encourages his subjects to keep faith, as he expects Memnon to come to their aid any time soon (Q. S., 2, 27-40). Although Priam clearly has high hopes for this new hero, the ever careful Polydamas doubts the newcomer's success (Q. S., 2, 43-48). From the arrival of the Aethiopian king in verse 100 onwards, the development of the plot is very similar to that of book 1, as indicated in the table below.

	PENTHESILEA			**MEMNON**		
		830 v.	**100%**		**666 v.**	**100%**
INTRODUCTION	**1-17**	**17 v.**	**2.05%**	**1-99**	**99 v.**	**14.86%**
ARRIVAL *Subdivision*	**18-221**	**204 v.**	**24.58%** *= 100%*	**100-214**	**115 v.**	**17.27%** *= 100%*
Arrival of the new hero	*18-85*	*68 v.*	*33.33%*	*100-110*	*11 v.*	*9.57%*
Banquet	*85-137*	*53 v.*	*25.98%*	*111-163*	*53 v.*	*46.09%*
The morning of battle	*138-221* [31]	*84 v.*	*41.18%*	*164-214* [32]	*51 v.*	*44.35%*
BATTLE *Subdivision*	**222-674**	**453 v.**	**54.58%** *= 100%*	**215-548**	**334 v.**	**50.15%** *= 100%*
Smaller battle scenes	*222-402*	*181 v.*	*39.96%*	*215-242*	*28 v.*	*8.38%*
Trojan women / Antilochus	*403-476*	*74 v.*	*16.34%*	*243-344*	*102 v.*	*30.54%*
Smaller battle scenes	*476-537* [33]	*62 v.*	*13.69%*	*345-387*	*43 v.*	*12.87%*
Achilles	*538-674*	*137 v.*	*30.24%*	*388-548*	*161 v.*	*48.20%*
MOURNING	**675-830**	**156 v.**	**18.80%**	**549-666**	**118 v.**	**17.72%**

After a different type of introduction (the introductory verses of book 1 and the Trojan assembly of book 2), the plot of both books takes a very similar turn. First, the arrival of the hero is outlined in three parts. This includes a first impression of the new hero, mainly focalized through the eyes of the Trojans, then a banquet and finally the preparations for battle the next morning. Next, the battle is described. This part comprises approximately half of each book's verses and alternately consists of episodes that provide a general overview of the battlefield, in which all kinds of fights and heroes are

31. This includes Priam's prayer and the Achaeans' first impression of Penthesilea.

32. A small digression to Olympus is included, where the gods have their own banquet and Zeus forbids everyone to take part in the fighting (Q. S., 2, 165-182); the other morning preparations mainly consist of descriptions and focalizations of the armies (and Achilles) as they rush out to meet each other, before the actual clash.

33. This also contains a smaller digression to the ships, where Aiax rouses Achilles to battle.

briefly highlighted [34], and two larger episodes. The first of these more detailed passages is different for both books (i.e. the Trojan women's debate in book 1, and Antilochus and Memnon's duel in book 2). The second and final major battle episode describes the confrontation of the new hero with Achilles. In the last part of each book, the slain champion is mourned [35].

The battles in both books cover – more or less – an equal percentage of verses (54.58% and 50.15%). The mourning episodes are even more similar in relative length. In contrast, the arrival scene is remarkably longer for Penthesilea and there are substantial differences in the subdivision of this episode: Memnon's banquet is longer, but Penthesilea's first appearance is more extensively described. The same dissimilarity can be found in the description of the battle day. Memnon's duel with Achilles is far longer than Penthesilea's (about half of the description of that day's fight: 48.20% compared to only 30.24% in book 1) [36]. Moreover, both confrontations with Achilles have a substantially different focus. The description of Penthesilea's body is extended after her actual death (11.92% of the verses included in the 30.24%) [37], whereas Achilles immediately abandons Memnon as he drops dead. Hence, Memnon fights Achilles much longer than Penthesilea did. In addition, Memnon is engaged in two major duels, which even augments his time of prominent battle (nearly 80% of the total battle, compared to Penthesilea's 18.32%) [38]. The remarkable similarities and equally significant differences in this table reveal the parallel composition of books 1 and 2 and the dissimilar characterization of their main char-

34. The performances of Penthesilea and Menmon in these sections are not differentiated from the rest. See footnote 38 for further analysis.

35. In the description that follows, I leave out the introductory parts which cannot be compared, as they are radically different in nature.

36. In fact, Quintus gives an exceptionally long description of Memnon's duel with Achilles, compared to other accounts in the literary tradition (J. BURGESS [2009], p. 33-34).

37. The description of her death starts in verse 621, but we only leave the battlefield in verse 674, when, after Achilles has taken off her helmet and revealed her beauty, Penthesilea's father Ares is struck with grief.

38. The smaller battle scenes, however, also feature both heroes. Penthesilea appears in 227-229, 238-246, 314-402 (the climax of her battle success, but also the narrator's second thoughts about it) and 476-493: good for an extra 119 verses or 26.27% of battle prominence for Penthesilea. Yet, Memnon appears in the first general part from verse 235 onwards and contiguously attacks Antilochus (from 243 onwards). The second general battle overview in book 2, situated between Antilochus and Achilles (345-387), is consecrated entirely to Memnon's own 'more general' battle *aristeia*. This adds another 51 verses or 15.27% to Memnon's active time on the battlefield. If we add all this to their major duels, Penthesilea gets 56.51% (26.27% + 30.24%) of all the battle time in book 1 and Memnon 94.01% (15.27% + 30.54% + 48.20%) of that in book 2. This confirms the point previously made about their major duels.

acters. In what follows, the analysis of Memnon's representation will be considered in the light of Penthesilea's former characterization.

Memnon

When Memnon arrives in Troy, his first appearance is less marvellous than Penthesilea's. As can be noted in the above diagram, this first description only takes 11 verses instead of 68. The onlooking Trojans clearly see something different than they did in the previous book.

> Τοῖσι δ' ἄρ' οὐ μετὰ δηρὸν ἀρήιος ἦλυθε Μέμνων,
> Μέμνων κυανέοισι μετ' Αἰθιόπεσσιν ἀνάσσων,
> ὃς κίε λαὸν ἄγων ἀπερείσιον. Ἀμφὶ δὲ Τρῶες
> γηθόσυνοί μιν ἴδοντο κατὰ πτόλιν, ἠύτε ναῦται
> χείματος ἐξ ὀλοοῖο δι' αἰθέρος ἀθρήσωσιν
> ἤδη τειρόμενοι Ἑλίκης περιηγέος αἴγλην·
> ὣς λαοὶ κεχάροντο περισταδόν, ἔ ξ ο χ α δ ' ἄ λ λ ω ν
> Λ α ο μ ε δ ο ν τ ι ά δ η ς · μάλα γάρ νύ οἱ ἦτορ ἐώλπει
> δῃώσειν πυρὶ νῆας ὑπ' ἀνδράσιν Αἰθιόπεσσιν,
> οὕνεκ' ἔχον βασιλῆα πελώριον ἠδὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ
> πολλοὶ ἔσαν καὶ πάντες ἐς Ἄρεα μαιμώωντες. (Q. S., 2, 100-110.)

> Not long after that the warlike Memnon arrived,
> Memnon king of the dark-skinned Aithiopians,
> Leading an army that couldn't be counted. Round him the Trojans
> Rejoiced to see him in their city. Just as sailors,
> Exhausted after a destructive storm, catch sight
> Of the Great Bear's brilliant light that wheels in the sky,
> Such was the joy of the people crowding round *and greatest*
> *Was that of Laomedon's son*. For now he truly hoped
> To see the Aithiopians destroy the ships with fire,
> Led as they were by a giant king, so great
> In number and every one of them eager for war.

Memnon turns out to be the chief of a huge army, which causes the Trojans and their king to take courage again. The newly arrived allies make a vigorous impression [39]. Despite its brevity, this small scene can be put next to its counterpart in the first book. The parallel composition reveals clear differences concerning both heroes' motivations, entourage and impact on the despairing Trojans. Whereas Penthesilea had to come to Troy because she killed her sister in bellicose fury, Memnon simply responded to Priam's cry for help. He brings along his army, which is described in a dry account of two verses. Penthesilea's entourage was far smaller, but the extended description (68 verses) of her splendid appearance among them left no doubt

39. A. GOŢIA (2009), p. 80-81, indicates the emphasis on Memnon's leadership in the Greek text (e.g. the repetition of his name in verses 100-101) and understands his arrival as a hopeful climax after the initial doubts at the opening of this book.

about her beauty. Both heroes can equally stimulate the Trojans (A. FERRECCIO [2014], p. 70), but Priam's expectations vary significantly: with Penthesilea, he only dared hope a bit, but in book 2 his hope even surpasses that of his subjects (ἔξοχα δ' ἄλλων, Q. S., 2, 106) [40]. Hence, in this small passage, a first and important difference is marked: contrary to Penthesilea, Memnon is immediately portrayed as a fierce warrior with the potential to save Troy.

Priam expresses his optimism during the banquet in book 2, which is remarkably longer than in book 1. During Penthesilea's feast, only Andromache's warning was rendered in direct speech, which clearly underlined its importance. This time, however, Memnon and Priam have a conversation of three direct speeches. Priam first gives an extended characterization of Memnon which reflects his high hopes and states that he will defeat the Achaeans (Q. S., 2, 127-135). Memnon's answer is remarkable:

> "Οὐ μὲν χρὴ παρὰ δαιτὶ πελώριον εὐχετάασθαι
> οὐδ' ἄρ' ὑποσχεσίην κατανευσέμεν, ἀλλὰ ἔκηλον
> δαίνυσθ' ἐν μεγάροισι καὶ ἄρτια μηχανάασθαι·
> εἴ τε γὰρ ἐσθλός τ' εἰμὶ καὶ ἄλκιμος εἴ τε καὶ οὐκί,
> γνώσῃ ἐνὶ πτολέμῳ, ὁπότ' ἀνέρος εἴδεται ἀλκή."
>
> (Memnon, Q. S., 2, 148-152.)

> "A feast is not the place to make enormous boasts,
> *Nor yet to commit oneself to a promise*, but quietly
> To dine in the hall and make appropriate plans.
> Whether or not I am brave and strong you soon shall learn
> In battle; that is where the strength of a man is seen."

Memnon's careful reaction can be read as an indirect refutation of Penthesilea's behaviour during her banquet in book 1 [41]. Instead of making audacious promises, as his predecessor did, Memnon sticks to the matter of dinner and states that his warrior vigour will be proven on the battlefield the next day. He takes his leave of the table and goes to bed early. This moderate and balanced behaviour is clearly contrasted with Penthesilea's overconfidence in the previous book [42] and is also reflected in the absence of the

40. This is one of the contrasts marked by F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 48.

41. The explicitly different engagement which both heroes express during their banquet is noted by F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 48, CALERO SECALL (1995) and A. FERRECCIO (2014), p. 72. Intriguingly, F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 48, n. 1, points out that during the Trojan assembly, Priam quotes a promise of Memnon quite similar to Penthesilea's in book 1 (Q. S., 2, 36-37). Given Priam's enthusiastic welcome of Memnon, however, it seems plausible that the king's report to the assembly is coloured by the high hopes he cherishes.

42. For further comments on Memnon's moderation in contrast to Penthesilea's *hybris*, see resp. A. FERRECCIO (2014), p. xix, 96-97, and F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 5, 49.

word νήπιος, which never occurs in book 2. This marks a significant difference in the narrator's appreciation of both heroes, which is in line with Priam's new hope. Even if this hope evaporates when the narrator anticipates Memnon's defeat at the end of the banquet [43], this new hero will most certainly meet his fate in another way than the Amazon queen did.

The next morning, the approaching armies are described in a sequence of similes evoking a particular atmosphere, programmatic for this day's battle (Q. S., 2, 196-214). First, the Trojans arrive on the battlefield as a swarm of locusts (Q. S., 2, 196-201). Next, Achilles appears. Today, he will take part in the battle from the very beginning. He is compared to the Titans (Q. S., 2, 204-206), his armour looks like the stars (Q. S., 2, 206-207) and his entire appearance is reminiscent of the dawning sun (Q. S., 2, 208-211) [44]. On the other side, Memnon seems to be Ares himself (Q. S., 2, 212-213). These similes and comparisons remind the reader of a series of images in *Iliad* 18 to 22. Seeking revenge for Patroclus in his furious attacks on the Trojans, Achilles is repeatedly described with similes referring to light [45]. The *Posthomerica* refers to three of these images or clusters of images in particular. First, in *Iliad* 19 no less than six (mainly shorter) light comparisons are used to describe Achilles' armour. The same type of imagery is used in Q. S., 2, 206-207. More specifically, Achilles' comparison to dawn recalls a similar simile in *Iliad*, 22, 134-135 [46]. Finally and most importantly, the

43. Memnon is said to go to his last sleep (Q. S., 2, 161-162) and to awake for the last time the next morning (Q. S., 2.187). However, G. DUCKWORTH (1936), p. 73-74, points out that the anticipations to Memnon's death are less frequent and less definite than those in book 1 for Penthesilea.

44. Cf. A. FERRECCIO (2014), p. 121-122, for the ominous climax in the imagery about Achilles' appearance.

45. The light similes used to describe Achilles are the following: his head is like city torches (*Iliad*, 18, 207-214), his cuirass shines like fire (18, 610), his eyes are compared to flames twice (19, 16-17 and 366), his shield resembles a beam of moonlight (19, 374) or a fire signal for sailors (19, 375-380), his helmet looks like a star (19, 381-382), his complete armour brings Hyperion to mind (19, 398), Hector compares his hands to fire (20, 371), Achilles is furious like a forest fire (20, 490-493), *he kills Trojans as a fire destroying locusts* (21, 12-16) and is like the smoke of a burning town in the process (21, 522-525), in full armour he appears as the burning star Orion (22, 26-32) and his weapons shine like fire or *the dawning sun* (22, 134-135), and finally, as he meets Hector, his spear flashes as the evening star (22, 317-320). Nowhere else in the *Iliad* is light imagery used for Achilles so frequently (this observation is interpreted in the light of Achilles' heroic code by S. SCHEIN [1984], p. 151). A. GOȚIA (2009), p. 84, compares the light imagery used for several characters in the *Posthomerica* to their respective performances on the battlefield. Of the three main heroes in books 1 and 2, only Achilles seems to meet the created expectations in the end.

46. Strikingly, Achilles is compared to Dawn, but Memnon is her son (A. GOȚIA [2009], p. 82-83). For further discussion on this simile and its inter- and intratextual

image of the locusts recurs. In *Iliad*, 21, Achilles was a fire that killed the insects, whereas in *Posthomerica*, 2, the Trojans set out as a swarm of locusts to confront him [47]. The use of these images in *Posthomerica*, 2 evokes the context of the central series of battles in the *Iliad*: Hector who slays Patroclus and Achilles who intends to kill him in return.

This parallel is extended in the first major confrontation in *Posthomerica*, 2. Nestor's son Antilochus stands up against Memnon to protect his father. The ensuing battle is illustrated by three extended similes, each of which has a counterpart in the *Iliad*. First, Memnon attacks Antilochus as a lion attacking a swine (Q. S., 2, 247-250). In *Iliad*, 16 (823-826), Hector is the lion attacking Patroclus, who is also compared to a swine [48]. After Antilochus is killed, Nestor stirs his other son to avenge his brother. Hence, Thrasymedes and his companion set out as hunters to kill a swine or a bear (Q. S., 2, 282-285). In *Iliad*, 17 (281-284), Aiax takes the defence of Patroclus' dead body as a swine confronting huntsmen [49]. The image is inverted, but the similarity of the confrontation remains [50]. Finally, Memnon proves too strong for these two opponents and Nestor makes a last attempt himself. Memnon, however, refuses to fight him, as it would not be decent for a youth to defeat an old man (Q. S., 2, 309-318). Nestor answers with a speech in which he regrets his old age. He compares himself to an old lion that is easily chased away from the stables by dogs. It seems as if Nestor recalls and adapts a simile from *Iliad*, 17 (108-113), where Menelaus has to withdraw before the Trojans fighting over Patroclus' body as a lion who is chased away from the stables by dogs. Thus, each of the three extended similes describing Antilochus' death reminds us of Patroclus' defeat and

references, see F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 63, n. 3, A. JAMES (2004), p. 277, C. MACIVER (2012b), p. 185-186, and A. FERRECCIO (2014), p. 121-122.

47. See F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 63, n. 1, and A. FERRECCIO (2014), p. 115-116, for further research on Homeric intertextuality. This reference to the Iliad could be read as a careful anticipation to the outcome of that day's new battle. B. SPINOULA (2008), p. 141-147, indeed interprets the dark swarm of insects as a symbol of Trojan doom, in contrast to Achilles' simile of the dawning sun.

48. The word used for 'swine' in the *Iliad* is σῦν, instead of καπρίῳ in the *Posthomerica*. See also F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 65, n. 2, and A. JAMES (2004), p. 278.

49. This time, the *Iliad* uses the word καπρίῳ, whereas the *Posthomerica* mentions συὸς.

50. F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 66, n. 5, and A. JAMES (2004), p. 278, put forward another intertextual reference to this simile, namely *Iliad*, 12, 41-48, where hunters (Achaeans) anxiously face a boar or a lion (Hector). Although the image does not refer to the Patroclus episode, it strengthens the image of Memnon as a Hector-like figure against the weaker Achaeans.

the battle over his body in the *Iliad* [51]. This parallel will prove crucial in the final developments of this book.

As Achilles and Memnon finally meet, their mutual flyting speeches take an interesting turn [52]. First, Memnon, who is the son of Eos, challenges Achilles by stating that his mother is superior to Thetis (Q. S., 2, 412-429). In return, Achilles angrily underlines his own superiority and divine descent. He finishes his speech with a revealing threat:

> "Γνώσῃ δ' ὡς θεός ἐστιν , ἐπὴν δόρυ χάλκεον εἴσω
> ἐς τεὸν ἦπαρ ἵκηται ἐμῇ βεβλημένον ἀλκῇ·
> Ἕκτορα γὰρ Πατρόκλοιο, σὲ δ' Ἀντιλόχοιο χολωθεὶς
> τίσομαι· οὐ γὰρ ὄλεσσας ἀνάλκιδος ἀνδρὸς ἑταῖρον.
> Ἀλλὰ τί νηπιάχοισιν ἐοικότες ἀφραδέεσσιν
> ἕσταμεν ἡμετέρων μυθεύμενοι ἔργα τοκήων
> ἠδ' αὐτῶν; Ἐγγὺς γὰρ Ἄρης, ἐγγὺς <δὲ> καὶ ἀλκή."
>
> (Achilles, Q. S., 2, 445-451.)

> "You'll know her for a goddess when my brazen spear
> By the strength of my arm is driven into your liver.
> *As Hektor for Patroclos so you for Antilochos*
> *I'll punish*, because no weakling's comrade have you killed.
> But why are we standing her like silly children,
> Prattling about what we and our parents have achieved?
> Now is the time for warfare, now is the time for prowess."

With these words, Achilles makes explicit what intertextuality had already suggested during Memnon's fight with Antilochus: the parallel of Antilochus and Patroclus, on the one hand, and Memnon and Hector, on the other, is meaningful for the further development of Achilles' storyline in the *Posthomerica* and, more specifically, his death in the next book [53].

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51. A. FERRECCIO (2014) points at the Iliadic intertextuality of these three similes individually throughout her commentary (resp., p. 139-140, 157, 177).

52. Flyting speeches form an important part of Iliadic battle: two heroes about to engage in a duel try to bring each other off balance by boasting about their own prowess. C. MACIVER (2012a), p. 611-612, discusses Quintus' use of this Homeric feature in more detail. In this case, the speeches take an encomiastic turn as the heroes discuss the superiority of their own mothers (A. FERRECCIO [2014], p. 217-218).

53. From the beginning, the confrontation of Memnon and Achilles is inspired by the death of Antilochus. In Q. S., 2, 390-394, Nestor asks Achilles to save his son's body from the Trojans. As Achilles hears of Antilochus' death, he is struck by grief and seeks out Memnon (Q. S., 2, 395-401): ἤλυθέ οἱ κατέναντα χολούμενος Ἀντιλόχοιο (Q. S., 2, 400). Not only is the storyline of this cycle of revenge quite similar to Homer's Patroclus episode, the entire passage of Memnon, Antilochus and Achilles is also marked by specific intertextual references to the *Iliad* (listed by a.o. A. SODANO [1952], p. 180-181, A. JAMES [2004], p. 278, B. BOYTEN [2010], p. 106-107, and A. FERRECCIO [2014], p. xix-xx, 139-140, 210). In turn, the Iliadic story of Hector and Patroclus could well be inspired by the oral tradition concerning Menmon and Antilochus (cf. J. BURGESS' 'vengeance theory', [2009], p. 72-73, 79-80, 90; see

The end of Achilles' speech marks another clear difference with book 1. Whereas he disdainfully scorned Penthesilea's challenge (Q. S., 1, 586-587), he accepts this one and seems to estimate Memnon a worthy opponent. This is confirmed by the way Zeus looks upon the duel:

> Ζεὺς δὲ μέγ' ἀ μ φ ο τ έ ρ ο ι σ ι φίλα φρονέων βάλε κάρτος,
> τεῦξε δ' ἄρ' ἀκαμάτους καὶ μείζονας, οὐδὲν ὁμοίους
> ἀνδράσιν, ἀλλὰ θεοῖσιν· Ἔρις δ' ἐπεγήθεεν ἄ μ φ ω . (Q. S., 2, 458-460)
>
> Zeus favored *both* and gave to *both* enormous strength.
> Tireless he made them and increased their size until
> They looked like gods, not men, delighting the heart of Strife.

The two heroes seem well matched, and this leads to a remarkably long duel that is extensively described by the narrator. He uses several digressions to prolong the apparent duration of the duel. Twice, he leaves the warriors to their fight while he gives a panoramic overview of the battlefield. He also describes part of the fight from the point of view of the gods, who start quarrelling until the Fates seal the outcome. This divine focalization allows the narrator to confirm the supernatural descent of both heroes, which was an important starting point of the duel. Again, it stresses the equality of Achilles and Memnon, in contrast with Penthesilea [54]. In the next detail of the duel, two comparisons stress the similar strength of both heroes [55]. The narrator thus makes explicit efforts to extend the fight, in order to stress Memnon's capacity to face Achilles (A. FERRECCIO 2014, p. 272). Compared to this, Penthesilea's short but fatal meeting with Achilles seems to be

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also S. SCHEIN [1984], p. 24-29). Quintus could then have inversed the situation again, by portraying Antilochus as 'the new Patroclus'. This was first noted by C. SAINT-BEUVE (1857), p. 392: [*Antiloque*] *c'est un Patrocle immolé par ce nouvel Hector, et qui, en périssant, va également susciter la douleur et la vengeance d'Achille*. Despite the centrality of the Memnon story in the oral tradition and its possible influence on Hector's contest in the *Iliad*, Quintus clearly looks back to the *Iliad*, both in implicit intertextual references and in this specific passage, by explicitly naming Hector and Patroclus as parallels. Hence, it seems plausible that Quintus has inversed the roles of model and imitation again: in itself (possibly) inspired by stories about Memnon in the oral tradition, the *Iliad* now in turn forms the explicit source material for Quintus' retelling of the traditional Memnon episode.

54. Although she is a daughter of Ares, Achilles only mocks Penthesilea's divine descent, which she calls upon in her flyting speech ("Not even your father Ares will save you now from me", Achilles, Q. S., 1, 585-586). Contrary to his flyting speech to Memnon (Q. S., 2, 431-451), which mainly consists of an extended argumentation about why Thetis is better than Eos (see also A. FERRECCIO [2014], p. 133), Achilles confidently assumes that Ares will not be able to stop him in book 1.

55. They are like Titans or Giants (Q. S., 2, 517-519) and like two headlands, each unmoved by the other (Q. S., 2, 522-523).

a poor attempt to engage in the heroic war game [56]. When Memnon is finally struck by the deadly blow, Achilles quickly disappears in the turmoil to chase the Trojans. In her mourning, Eos has no choice but to recognize Thetis' triumph (Q. S., 2, 609-622) [57]. As a sign of grief and wrath, she wraps the world in darkness, until Zeus' messenger forces her to take up her duty again. Memnon's body is transported back to his homeland and his companions are transformed into birds in his honour.

Conclusion

A clear parallelism in narrative composition goes along with a strikingly dissimilar characterization of Penthesilea and Memnon in *Posthomerica*, 1 and 2. Both heroes come to the aid of the Trojans, rouse temporary – but false – hopes and eventually perish by the hand of Achilles. Other than that, their representation as heroic warriors is essentially different. Penthesilea's outer appearance causes general awe, but mismatches her audacious warrior ambitions from the very beginning. Clear doubts about her vigour are evoked by the narrator, several Trojans and – importantly – the Achaean champions she hoped to defeat. The warrior maiden is scorned for her *hybris* and cannot match the heroic expectations. After her death, her female beauty seems to have more power than ever her spear had. Memnon meets the same challenge with more moderation, rises higher hopes and wins greater victories. In fact, his battle achievements evoke some of the greatest duels in the *Iliad* and Achilles feels he has met an opponent worthy of Hector at least. In general, both Trojan champions have dealt with the battle code quite differently and are appreciated or depreciated accordingly by the narrator and the characters they encounter (most prominently Priam and

56. The totality of her fight with Achilles (and Aiax) consists of four blows: first, Penthesilea throws two spears, both in vain: the first one bounces off Achilles' shield (Q. S., 1, 547-549) and the second one, sent with a threatening speech, is stopped by Aiax' greave and he simply ignores it (Q. S., 1, 562-568). The next two blows are Achilles': with the first, he badly injures her (Q. S., 1, 592-597) and with the second one he finishes the job (Q. S., 1, 611-624). Interestingly, the confrontation of Achilles and Memnon also starts with a first, shorter attack. Memnon hurls a rock in vain, but in the subsequent blows both heroes manage to wound the other (Q. S., 2, 401-409). It is clear that, from the very beginning, Memnon is a more equal match for Achilles than Penthesilea was. For the equally matched forces of Achilles and Memnon, see also F. VIAN (1963), t. I, p. 49, I. CALERO SECALL (1995), B. BOYTEN (2010), p. 115-119, and A. FERRECCIO (2014), p. 242.

57. A. FERRECCIO (2014), p. xxvii-xxviii, points out the mother's loss as a key theme in *Posthomerica*, 2. Indeed, the rivalry between the goddesses Eos and Thetis is emphasized on several occasions throughout the book. It seems a bit far-fetched, however, to indicate this maternal sadness as the one central issue of the book, especially given the complex narrative relationship between books 1 and 2 and the dialogue in characterization between both of its protagonists.

Achilles). In this way, the disparity in the individual characterization of Penthesilea and Memnon encourages a reflection on the dominant ideological values thematized in the *Posthomerica*. Even if the eventual outcome of their confrontation with Achilles is inevitably the same, the personal honour that each hero obtains for it clearly differs.

With Achilles, books 1 and 2 have one important character in common. Penthesilea and Memnon are the last ones to face him before he meets his own doom in book 3. As such, their stories also serve as an indirect introduction to this new episode. The clear references to Patroclus' death and Achilles' revenge on Hector in *Posthomerica* 2 are implicit reminders of Achilles' life choice. His last victories are designed as a final tribute and confirm the outstanding position of the famous Iliadic hero, before he will meet his doom.

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