

The Bee Simile: How Vergil Emulated Apollonius in His Use of Homeric Poetry*

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This paper's purpose is to trace the development of the bee similes in Homer's epic poetry, Apollonius' *Argonautica*, and Vergil's *Aeneid*.¹ It will be argued that the common denominator of all three authors in deciding to use the bee in similes was the possibility to advance the narrative in a twofold way: It could serve to describe the present, and to foreshadow the future of a certain situation within the broader context of the epic poem at the same time. There is a considerable increase in the scope of the meaning of the bee similes along these lines from Homer to Apollonius and from Apollonius to Vergil.² Apollonius³ introduces a third function of the bee simile: it could serve as a means to talk about the past of a given situation. Vergil took advantage of this opportunity as well and incorporated it in his even further refined use of the simile as narratological tool. Vergil uses the bee to allude to the future of Rome and the Mediterranean after Aeneas that is in turn the present of the author himself.

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¹ L. Muellner (1990) 61: "An investigation of <a> simile's traditional background provides a context of variants over time that are analogous to mythical variants and that function as yet another guide to understanding".

² Needless to say, some further links between Homer and Vergil might be lost; cf. D. Nelis (2001) 237.

³ For a summary of secondary literature on the function of the Apollonian simile vs. the Homeric simile cf. B. Effe (1996) 292f.

Duckworth,⁴ Rieks,⁵ and Beye,⁶ for example, investigated the technique of similes in Homer,⁷ Apollonius, and Vergil in more general terms. Briggs wrote an interesting comparison of the Homeric, Apollonian, and Vergilian bee similes.⁸ He calls the use of the bee in the *Aeneid* a bee motif that goes far beyond simple similes. This paper, however, will attempt to take the argument even further.

I Homer

In order to see where it all started, we have to look at Homer first. The first bee simile can be found in book 2, verses 86b-94:⁹

ἐπεσεύοντο δὲ λαοί.
 ἥύτε ἔθνεα εἴσι μελισσάων ἀδινάων
 πέτρης ἐκ γλαφυρῆς αἰεὶ νέον ἐρχομενάων,
 βοτρυδὸν δὲ πέτονται ἐπ' ἄωθεσιν εἰαρινοῖσιν,
 αἰ μὲν τ' ἔνθα ἄλις πεποτήαται, αἰ δὲ τε ἔνθα·
 ὡς τῶν ἔθνεα πολλὰ νεῶν ἄπο καὶ κλισιάων
 ἠόνος προπάροιθε βαθείης ἐστιχόωντο
 ἰλαδὸν εἰς ἀγορήν. μετὰ δὲ σφισιν ὄσσα δεδήει
 ὀτρύνουσι ἰέναι, Διὸς ἄγγελος· οἱ δ' ἀγέροντο.

“...and the people the while were hastening on. Even as the tribes of thronging bees go forth from some hollow rock, ever coming on afresh, and in clusters over the flowers of spring fly in throngs, some here, some there; even so from the ships and huts before the low sea-beach marched forth in companies their many tribes to

⁴ G.E. Duckworth (1933) esp. 14ff. The general direction of this study owes much to his discussion of the simile in the context of epic narrative strategies concerning foreshadowing of events and suspenseful writing.

⁵ R. Rieks (1981) *passim*.

⁶ C.R. Beye (1993) esp. 105-109.

⁷ For a discussion of the goal of epic similes in Homer cf. also H. Fränkel (1921) 98f., 104-107.

⁸ W.W. Briggs (1981) 970f.

⁹ The text follows H. van Thiel (1996). Using H. Fränkel's terminology, the form of the simile is: *Stichsatz* (Verse 86b picks up verse 52 and triggers the simile; cf. J. Latacz [2003] 33), *Wiestück* (The *δέ τε* is a strong indicator for the end of the *Wiestück*; cf. J. Latacz [2003] 35), *Sostück*; cf. H. Fränkel (1921) 4. Cf. also Quintilian 8,3,77 for another possible way to analyze similes; cf. W.J. O'Neal (1985) 559f. and also R.O.A.M. Lyne (1989) 66. On ancient theories in regard to similes cf. M.H. McCall (1969).

the place of gathering. And in their midst blazed forth Rumour, messenger of Zeus, urging them to go; and they were gathered.” (transl. A. T. Murray 1924).

The context of the simile is this: Agamemnon in an assembly of the Greek leaders has told them about the dream he had the night before and has put forth his plan to test the army. Nestor has supported Agamemnon by expressing how he himself has overcome his doubts about Agamemnon’s dream. The Greek leaders then start to gather the Greek army. The focus is set on the movement of the masses of soldiers¹⁰ and everything connected with it in the narrative and the similes as well.¹¹ In 86b Homer tells us that the Greek tribes make haste to gather. Then the simile follows. We have to understand that just as bees come forth from their home in a hollow rock,¹² the Greek soldiers pour out of their huts and ships to the assembly place in what seems to be a never-ending line.¹³ Yet, the picture is one of disorder.¹⁴ Just as in spring throngs of bees fly out and dissolve and each bee finally flies in a different direction, the soldiers need someone to gather them and lead them to the assembly place. Rumor, whom Homer calls a messenger from Zeus, is the force that motivates the Greeks to assemble.¹⁵ However, the situation at the assembly place is in disorder again. Nine heralds are needed to call the assembly to order. Then, when order is finally achieved, Agamemnon rises and begins to speak.

There seems to be a slight inconsistency between the two things that are compared.¹⁶ The Greek army is gathering after having come forth “in companies”, as Homer has it. And all the soldiers who are marching from their individual housing places finally gather at one place. The bees, however, seem to start from one hollow rock and fly in throngs at first. But then the swarms dissolve

¹⁰ Cf. W.C. Scott (1974) 35, 74f., 92, and 191.

¹¹ Cf. J. Latacz (2003) 33.

¹² This reference to bees is the first in Greek literature. See E. Crane (1999) 45. Bees indeed build their nests in rocks if the climate of the area allows it; cf. E. Crane (1999) 44f. It is a subject of scholarly debate whether we can assume that early epic poets already knew something beyond honey hunting and were acquainted with beekeeping. See J. Latacz (2003) 34 for further literature.

¹³ Cf. J. Latacz (1977) 254; G.S. Kirk (1985) 125. Quickness may be implied; cf. L. Muellner (1990) 68.

¹⁴ Cf. G.S. Kirk (1985) 125f.

¹⁵ Cf. J. Latacz (2003) 36.

¹⁶ Cf. W.C. Scott (1974) VII: “The simile in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is never so close in its parallels to the narrative nor so related to a consistent theme, and yet it is in its own way highly effective”, and 7f.

and every bee flies on her own, not to the same place as her colleagues. The Greek αἰ μὲν ... αἰ δέ maybe allows for seeing a couple of bees staying together. But the fact that they are not aiming at gathering in one place is certain from the ἔνθα ... ἔνθα.¹⁷ “Apilogically” speaking it is impossible for bees to swarm in throngs and collect honey from flowers at the same time, as commentators of the *Iliad* have noticed.¹⁸ Homer’s lack of knowledge of bees is cited as the reason for the conflation of swarming and collecting honey.¹⁹ But to me this explanation seems to be too easy.

Latacz has shown that a blend of two pictures to one simile is not rare in Homer. The consequence of this is a reinforcement of the overall picture.²⁰ In our case, I think, the point of the massive numbers and the noise is the focus of both swarming and honey collecting bees.²¹ Perhaps we could “blame” the oral nature of Homer’s epic poetry for the blending. For, if we are to criticize Homer for the inconsistency of his simile blend, we also have to note that Homer lets the various groups of soldiers come from various ships and huts and gather at one place. Each of these groups individually represents one swarm of bees (ἔθνεα πολλά). The bees, however, as we have noted above, have just one rock as their home. Several swarms of bees normally do not unite. This is independent of the question of whether bees swarm or collect honey.

When bees are swarming they fly out individually from one beehive and then gather at one other place. It seems to be the case that they indeed follow scouts who look out for suitable landing spots. From the first gathering place, the swarm will move to the place where the bees decide to build a new nest.²² Science apparently does not yet know how the swarm decides which of the

¹⁷ This phrase is used repeatedly in the similes of book 2 of the *Iliad*; cf. J. Latacz (2003) 35. It is a typical phrase used for the movement of the army; cf. C. Moulton (1977) 29 n. 17.

¹⁸ See G.S. Kirk (1985) 125f. Kirk concludes that separate units of soldiers advance “in companies” to the gathering place.

¹⁹ Cf. H. Fränkel (1921) 71; W. Kofler (1992) 316.

²⁰ J. Latacz (2003) 34 has suggested that Homer synthesized swarming and collecting honey to achieve the impression of a great mass of bees, i.e. soldiers.

²¹ Cf. J. Latacz (2003) 34 and 36f. For a different take cf. V. Leinieks (1986) 9: confidence is singled out as the primary meaning of the insect similes as a group of similes. However, Leinieks admits that this meaning is “not immediately evident” from this bee simile in book 2, but needs to be inferred from other insect similes. Leinieks then adds the mass of individual bees and soldiers as point of comparison on page 10 and emphasizes that the simile stresses the question of group organization.

²² The swarm also sends out scouts who will look for a suitable space to build the swarm’s new home.

scouts should be followed.²³ But Homer knows who are the scouts for the Greeks. First of all there is the personified Rumor.²⁴ Just as a swarm of bees is driven forth by some unknown force, something obscure seems to be at work in the Greek army as well. And then there are nine heralds in whom Rumor becomes manifest. However, who instructed the heralds is not explicitly stated. The parallels between the simile and the situation described by it become even more manifest if we consider this: The phrasing of verse 89b seems to me to be an indication of the season when the bees swarm, not necessarily an indication that the swarming bees collect honey. Indeed it is possible that if there is a warm spring and little rain bees swarm relatively early in the year. The picture is that of soldiers who in massive numbers pour out of their homes to march to a gathering place. And just as bees need some time to get their swarm to gather in order again, the Greek soldiers need some time, too.

However, verse 88b (αἰεὶ νέον ἐρχομενάων) and 90 (αἶ μὲν τ' ἔνθα ἄλις πεποτήαται, αἶ δέ τε ἔνθα·) more easily fits the picture of bees collecting honey. But then this contradicts the fact that for the soldiers there is only one gathering place.²⁵ The question therefore is whether Homer had more reasons to blend the two aspects of the life of a beehive than to simply stress the massive numbers of the bees and soldiers. For the movement of the soldiers from various places to one gathering place cannot be described by bees who fly out of their nest. One would need the description of the arrival of bees at their home. But the arrival at a safe home cannot be compared to the situation the Greeks are currently in. In order to make the attempt to solve this question, I would like to suggest some thoughts in regard to what the reader can associate with bees.

As the bees are armed and potentially dangerous,²⁶ the Greeks are armed and dangerous. Ἔθνεα in Homer appears within military contexts only.²⁷ This word now directly refers to bees as well as soldiers. A very similar picture is painted in Aeschylus' *Persians*, verse 126, where all armed men have left the city like a swarm of bees. Swarming bees only rarely make use of their sting,

²³ The role of scent for a swarm of bees as a tool to find its leader seems to have been known to Aristotle (HA 624a) and Pliny (9,17,54) to a certain extent; cf. E. Crane (1999) 567.

²⁴ Aristotle HA 624a assumes that the ruler of the bees flies only with a swarm. Pliny 11,17,54 claims that a swarm never flies without its ruler; cf. E. Crane (1999) 562.

²⁵ Cf. C. Moulton (1977) 39 n. 44.

²⁶ This implication will be more explicit in the second bee simile. On the second bee similes and its choice of bees see B. Hainsworth (1993) 335f. But also cf. below.

²⁷ Cf. J. Latacz (2003) 34. Also cf. C. Moulton (1977) 29 n. 17. This and further parallels to the geese, cranes, and swans simile in *Iliad* 2,459-466 are obvious.

since they do not have to defend their offspring or honey. The behavior of bees which collect honey and live in a hive is quite different in this regard. The ancient reader of this simile must have known that there is the possibility of being stung by bees – the closer one gets to the beehive, the greater the danger and the number of bees which can be involved in the attack.²⁸ On its surface the picture is one of peace.²⁹ Yet the potential of the bees making use of their weapons in case of an attack is implicitly included in the passage. I would not be surprised if Homer is hinting at the fact that the Greeks are fighting for their legitimate interest and that the battle over Helen is happening in defense of Greek rights.³⁰ This consideration, however, has to remain speculative. Of course, Aeschylus is later than Homer, but it could well be that Aeschylus had *Iliad* 2 in mind in connection with the bee simile in *Iliad* 12 when he wrote his *Persians*. Apollonius could also have read Aeschylus' bee simile. At any rate, this pointing our attention to the possibility that bees can make use of their sting is in tune with Agamemnon's intentions in regard to this meeting, but in marked contrast to the immediate result that will be achieved.³¹ In addition, Leinieks suggested that the element of spring hints at the mortality of the Greek soldiers. Indeed, many of them will die in the course of the ensuing battle.³²

Homer puts quite some emphasis on the noise the mass of the soldiers makes (2.95-98)³³ which shows no sign of subsiding and ceasing. This is exactly the case with masses of bees. Masses of bees are either in a beehive or in a swarm. Noise and number of bees are interconnected. The louder the noise, the greater the numbers and vice versa. Homer's ἀδινόϛ³⁴ implies that bees' movements can create a considerable noise that normally instills at least unease within whoever hears it.³⁵ The danger of being attacked is what the hearer of the noise fears. The louder the noise, the greater the danger.

²⁸ Cf. the second bee simile. See below.

²⁹ W.C. Scott (1974) 104.

³⁰ Bees do not use their stings offensively contrary to what V. Leinieks (1986) 10 claims.

³¹ Cf. J. Latacz (2003) 36: "Die emotionale Verfassung der Anwesenden zeichnet den Verlauf der Versammlung vor ...".

³² V. Leinieks (1986) 17ff. Cf. the comparison of soldiers with leaves and flowers in *Iliad* 2,467f.

³³ See above.

³⁴ Cf. the use of the same word in the fly simile in *Iliad* 2,469; cf. H.G. Liddell, R. Scott (1940) 23.

³⁵ Varro 3,16,29 points to the fact that bees are especially noisy before they get ready to swarm out of their hive. He compares them to soldiers who do the same when breaking camp. There is no indication that the ancient Greeks and Romans knew about the distinction between swarms and afterswarms; cf. E. Crane (1999) 573.

However, a swarm of bees will only temporarily stay at an unsheltered place. The swarm will soon fly into a new home, and the Greeks will be presented with the choice between going home or attacking Troy. But they will not simply go where they came from, just as a swarm of bees does not do that.³⁶ Homer does not explicitly say this, but judging from the “normal” behavior of bees, one can, I think, safely say that Homer’s auditorium was acquainted with this aspect of beelike behavior.³⁷ The bee simile describes the undecided state of affairs in the Greek camp. Suspense is created.³⁸ Furthermore, a swarm of bees that has left its home is unprotected against all kinds of dangers, e.g. the elements. In equal measure is the Greeks’ mission in danger.

When Agamemnon has finished his speech, the dissolution of the gathering of the Greek soldiers is described by Homer by means of two other similes.³⁹ The picture of the bee swarm is left behind, and we should take a look at the only other bee simile in the *Iliad*. This simile continues to describe the Greeks as bees (12.167-172).⁴⁰

οἱ δ’ ὥς τε σφήκες μέσον αἰόλοι ἢ μέλισσαι
οἰκία ποιήσονται ὀδῶ ἐπὶ παπαλοέσση
οὐδ’ ἀπολείπουσιν κοῖλον δόμον, ἀλλὰ μένοντες
ἄνδρας θηρητῆρας ἀμύνονται περὶ τέκνων,
ὥς οἱ γ’ οὐκ ἐθέλουσιν πυλάων καὶ δὴ ἔόντε
χάσσασθαι, πρὶν γ’ ἢ κατακτάμεν ἢ ἀλῶναι.

“But they like wasps of nimble waist, or bees that have made their nest in a rugged path, and leave not their hollow home, but abide, and in defense of their young ward off hunter folk; even so these

³⁶ I would suggest that the bee simile indeed goes beyond illustrating the movement of the soldiers, even if that is its primary function; cf. M. Coffey (1957) 119 and 132.

³⁷ M. Coffey (1957) 116: “In general the bard derived his similes from things within his own and his hearers’ experience ...”.

³⁸ This is very much in keeping with observations made by M. Coffey (1957) 126 on *Iliad* 10,183.

³⁹ On Homeric sequences of similes cf. C. Moulton (1977) 50ff.

⁴⁰ The text follows van Thiel (1996) again. In regard to the form of the simile, *Wiestück* is followed by *Sostück*. As far as the *Stichsatz* is concerned, this case is more difficult than the first simile. *Asius* begins the simile with an *anakolouthon*. We could either call this incomplete sentence a part of the *Sostück*, since the incomplete sentence is picked up in verse 171. Or we could identify this sentence as the – incomplete – *Stichsatz*. For the preceding lines 165f. are at the least no typical *Stichsatz*. Rather, they give the *anakolouthon* in 167 its meaning. On variation in the Homeric simile in general cf. H. Fränkel (1921) 107-109.

men, though they be but two, are not minded to give ground from the gate, till they either slay or be slain" (transl. A. T. Murray 1924).

This simile is told by Asius who accuses Zeus of telling lies.⁴¹ For he would not have thought it possible that two of the Achaeans, Polypoetes and Leonteus,⁴² would be defending the gate of their fortress at the beach like wasps⁴³ or bees⁴⁴ which ward off hunters⁴⁵ in order to defend their offspring.⁴⁶

It is interesting to note that the picture of swarming bees has made room for the comparison of two Greek fighters with bees which guard the beehive and are eager to defend their home.⁴⁷ The Greeks are now defending their camp, even if they do not have children in their hive. Asius' speech, which includes this detail of bees defending the hive for the sake of their offspring, thus gets a little sarcastic touch. Not the Greeks, but the Trojans are defending their city in which there are children. Maybe Asius is asking himself – and the reader – what the Greeks' motivation to fight like this really is. Of course, Asius' comparison sheds some very favorable light on the behavior of two Greek heroes who more than just fulfill their duty to their comrades. But Asius stresses the

⁴¹ J.F. Carspecken (1952) 90 attributes a certain inappropriateness to the simile, because in his view the simile as "product of leisurely, imaginative creation" is not fitting the "heroic warrior". It is interesting to note that Apollonius' second bee simile which appears in the context of a battle will be told in the voice of the author, but not of one of the heroes. This of course may be part of Apollonius' overall avoidance of using similes in speeches; cf. J.F. Carspecken (1952) 90f.

⁴² Cf. W.C. Scott (1974) 104. It is interesting that the swarm aspect of the bees is of no apparent use here; cf. C.M. Bowra (1958) 117. Is it in any way to exaggerate the value of the two fighters on the battlefield?

⁴³ This simile is picked up again in a wasp simile in *Iliad* 16,259-265. Again the Greeks are compared to the insects who defend their offspring after young boys intentionally or wanderers unintentionally have provoked their angry reaction; cf. H. Fränkel (1921) 72.

⁴⁴ Note the alternative subject of the simile; cf. L. Muellner (1990) 68. He assumes that similes can "narrate" through their traditional context which might be only implicit in a certain passage. We will see how Vergil brought this technique to perfection. The technique of alternative similes can be found in a refined version in Apollonius: Cf. J.F. Carspecken (1952) 81f.

⁴⁵ At this point, the bees are the simile's only focus; cf. B. Hainsworth (1993) 336.

⁴⁶ It is interesting to note that J.H. Voß (1793) thinks that this nest is built in a rock as well. Cf. his translation *ad loc.*

⁴⁷ Cf. W.C. Scott (1974) 75 and 195.

defense of the offspring.⁴⁸ Heard from the mouth of a Trojan, this is a clear signal of irony.⁴⁹

The bees' potential to assume the duties of soldiers for the greater good of their community is used to create the simile. This aspect is now put in the foreground. It was only implicitly included in the appearance of the bee as such in the first simile. It also becomes clear that the Trojans apparently do not know how to break the opposition. And this will indeed remain the result of the Trojan attack. Thus the simile describes the present situation and anticipates the immediate future.

Besides the fact that both Homeric similes likened the Greeks to bees, there seems to be no further connection between the similes and the plot of the epic poem as a whole. Both similes describe the immediate situation that the narrative has arrived at and give a short glimpse of what will follow.

II Apollonius of Rhodes

Although Homer discontinues the use of bee similes in the *Odyssey*,⁵⁰ there are also – just as in the *Iliad* – two bee similes that can be found in Apollonius' *Argonautica*. In order to be able to follow the development of the impact of the similes on the narrative of the poems as a whole more closely, we will have to look at Apollonius' second simile first,⁵¹ because the simile of *Iliad* 12 has an inverted parallel in book 2 of the *Argonautica* (130-136).⁵²

⁴⁸ The defensive aspect of almost all similes for the Greeks in *Iliad* 11 and 12 has been noted by C. Moulton (1977) 46f.

⁴⁹ E.g. Achilles is a mother bird for the Greeks in *Iliad* 9,323 even if he has no offspring among the Greeks. Thus the parent-children imagery in itself can be used figuratively. But the context has to be taken into account as well. On similes dealing with the protection of the young see C. Moulton (1977) 101.

⁵⁰ For data in regard to the use of similes in Homer and Apollonius consult C.J. Goodwin (1891) 1-9; J.F. Carspecken (1952) 60-69.

⁵¹ R.J. Clare (2002) 193 thinks that Apollonius wants the reader to compare the two bee similes and their respective contexts.

⁵² For details cf. C. Reitz (1996) 48ff. The text follows Fränkel's 1961 edition. The simile can be analyzed as: *Wiestück, Sostück*. Since a wolf simile immediately precedes the bee simile, there is no typical *Stichsatz*. I would say rather that the bee simile is used to switch the focus from the Argonauts to the Bebrycians. Whereas the wolf simile has a *Stichsatz* (121bf.), the huddling sheep in 127-128a serve as the starting point to compare the Bebrycians to bees as they huddle together in the hive. Apollonius' deviation from the "normal" form of a simile in his second simile (the form of the first Apollonian simile is described below) connects it with Homer's second simile, even if the variation of the form is

ὥς δὲ μελισσάων σμήνος μέγα μηλοβοτῆρες
 ἢ μελισσοκόμοι πέτρῃ ἐνὶ καπνίωσιν,
 αἱ δ' ἦτοι τείως μὲν ἀολλέες ᾧ ἐνὶ σίμβλω
 βομβηδὸν κλονέονται, ἐπιπρὸ δὲ λιγνύοντι
 καπνῶ τυφόμεναι πέτρης ἐκάς αἴσσουσιν·
 ὥς οἴγ' οὐκέτι δὴν μένον ἔμπεδον ἀλλὰ κέδασθεν
 εἴσω Βεβρυκίης, Ἀμύκου μόρον ἀγγελέοντες·

“And as shepherds or beekeepers smoke out an enormous swarm of bees in a rock, and they to begin with buzz around in great confusion inside their hive, but very soon, suffocated by the smudge-black smoke coils, fly out all together, so the Bebrykians no longer held firm, or resisted, but fled in all directions throughout Bebrykia, bringing news of Amykos’s death – ...” (transl. P. Green 1997).

Apollonius uses the bees to describe how the masses of Bebrycians flee in confusion and panic before the Argonauts.⁵³ They do this like bees in a hollow rock which are smoked out by a shepherd or beekeeper.⁵⁴ These bees buzz and cling together in the rock at first. But finally the smoke⁵⁵ makes them burst out of the rock and flee in different directions. In this simile the bees lose their contact between each other: The bee state ceases to exist.⁵⁶

itself a variation. Regarding the absence of the *Stichsatz* also cf. H.-P. Drögemüller (1956) 218. However, there is also a series of shepherd similes triggered by this simile. Cf. C.R. Beye (1982) 108, who quotes H. Fränkel. For an extensive commentary on this simile see also M.P. Cuypers (1997) 158-164.

⁵³ Cf. P. Green (1997) 235. H. Fränkel (1952) 150f. emphasizes that Apollonius wants “to show how quickly the Bebrycians reached the limit of their endurance.” Cf. H. Fränkel (1968) 162f. The aspect of the mass movement is stressed by B. Effe (1996) 305f., who compares the bee simile of *Iliad* 2 with the bee simile in *Argonautica* 2 because of their emphasis on the masses of bees. J.F. Carspecken (1952) 88 focuses on the comparison of the “ineffectual, disorganized, confused movement of the Bebrycians” that is expressed in the simile only, not in the narrative. This aspect of disorder is of course also part of Homer’s bee simile in *Iliad* 2 (see above). For further parallels between this passage and earlier epic poetry cf. M. Campbell (1981) 26.

⁵⁴ This simile is in turn paired with another which immediately precedes the bee simile in book 2; cf. B. Effe (1996) 305f. It compares the Argonauts to wolves who attack sheep. The Argonauts have changed roles. In the bee simile they play the shepherds; cf. A. Sens (2000) 185f. For a list of passages in which bees are smoked out see F. Vian-É. Delage (1974) 182 n. 3. Also cf. B.G. Whitfield (1956) 101.

⁵⁵ R. Riëks (1989) 221 n. 11 calls this simile a *Rauchgleichnis*.

⁵⁶ J.F. Carspecken (1952) 86 interprets this simile as a narratological tool to indicate the climax of the episode at its turning point when it is absolutely clear which side loses and which wins. Also cf. R.J. Clare (2002) 192. The main action of the narrative is advanced

The smoking out of bees does not occur in Homer. Rather, it occurs in Aristophanes' *Wasps* (457 ff.) and Lycophron (293 f.)⁵⁷ and will be picked up by Vergil in his *Georgics* (4.228 ff.).⁵⁸ The passage 1.25.18 in Epictetus suggests the possibility that Stoic influence could be found here as well.⁵⁹ But Homer's second bee simile described a beehive under attack. Nevertheless, the situation was different: The bees managed to defend their state and to maintain its function. However, the simile of the second book of Apollonius just illustrates the fight and flight of the Bebrycians. The irony of the whole Bebrycian episode becomes clear from the fact that the Bebrycian king does not allow the Argonauts to leave the shore at once (2.11-18). He demands that according to Bebrycian rule the best of the Argonauts should fight in boxing against him. The ensuing defeat and death of the Bebrycian king triggers an all-out battle between the Argonauts and the Bebrycians (2.96b-102a). The fight of the Argonauts for the permission to sail away results in the flight of the Bebrycians. The Apollonian inversion of the scene in which Homer had used the bee simile in book 12 of the *Iliad* is marked as such not only by the situation itself, but also by the continuation of Asius' simile. What Asius' Trojan hunters were unable to achieve was accomplished by the Argonautic shepherds or beekeepers. However, the bee simile captures the situation that is at hand. There is no foreshadowing or explanation of the broader context of the episode.

Also *Iliad* 2.87-90 is a partial model for this second Apollonian bee simile.⁶⁰ The bees leave their nests in *Iliad* 2 and *Argonautica* 2. Βομβηδόν (*Argonautica* 2.133) imitates βοτρυδόν (*Iliad* 2.89).⁶¹ It should not come as a surprise if we cannot issue a black-and-white statement about which Homeric simile influenced which Apollonian simile.⁶² However, the simile from *Iliad* 12 seems to have in-

within the simile. H.-P. Drögemüller (1956) 219 therefore calls the structure of the simile "fraktorisch".

⁵⁷ Cf. G.W. Mooney (1912) 161f.; H. Faerber (1932) 41; D.N. Levin (1971) 147 n. 1.

⁵⁸ Cf. P. Green (1997) 235. For further parallels cf. C. Reitz (1996) 47f. Also cf. the scholia *ad loc.*

⁵⁹ Cf. H. Fränkel (1952) 151; H. Fränkel (1968) 163. For a somewhat different opinion see H.-P. Drögemüller (1956) 219 and C. Reitz (1996) 50.

⁶⁰ However, note the beginning of the similes: *Iliad* 2,87 (ἦύτε: archaic: cf. J. Latacz [2003] 34) is not imitated by either of the Apollonian similes. Their ὡς is the introductory particle in *Iliad* 12,167. But the variation of this particle with the demonstrative pronoun as is the case in *Iliad* 12,167 is also not found in Apollonius' bee similes. A change in the use of ἦύτε has already been noted for the *Odyssey*. See D.J.N. Lee (1964) 18-21.

⁶¹ Cf. V.H. Knight (1995) 97. In Homer ἰλαδόν responds to βοτρυδόν; cf. H. Fränkel (1921) 71; J. Latacz (2003) 36.

⁶² Cf. H.-P. Drögemüller (1956) 242, who assumes that all Homeric bee and swarm similes influenced the first Apollonian bee simile.

fluenced the one in *Argonautica* 2 to a greater extent,⁶³ whereas the simile in *Iliad* 2 as well as its context has had the greater impact on the bee simile and the whole Lemnos episode which can be found in *Argonautica* 1.⁶⁴

As far as the placement of the bee similes is concerned, the two similes in Apollonius are treated in the same way. Both appear when the Argonauts are preparing to leave a shore. In regard to the narrative function of the simile, the first bee simile differs from the second. It serves as an explanation of the entire Lemnos episode.⁶⁵

Whereas the simile in book 2 shows bees under attack, the simile in book 1 takes place in a rather peaceful setting.⁶⁶ However, the peace is pervaded by a mood of anxiety on the part of the bees. Heracles has censured his fellow Argonauts⁶⁷ for being distracted from the original task of their journey in an assembly of the Argonauts that he himself had organized in a way so that the Lemnian women did – and probably could – not participate.⁶⁸ Consequently the Argonauts prepare to leave directly from the assembly.⁶⁹ But when the women hear about their decision to leave, they run to the men (1.878b-885).⁷⁰

... ταὶ δὲ σφιν ἐπέδραμον, εὖτ' ἐδάησαν·
 ὡς δ' ὅτε λείρια καλὰ περιβρομέουσι μέλισσαι
 πέτρης ἐκχόμεναι συμβληίδος, ἀμφὶ δὲ λειμών
 ἐρσήεις γάνυται, ταὶ δὲ γλυκὴν ἄλλοτ' ἐπ' ἄλλον
 καρπὸν ἀμέργουσιν πεποτημένοι – ὡς ἄρα ταίγε
 ἐνδυκέες ἀνέρας ἀμφὶ κινυρόμεναι προχέοντο,
 χερσὶ δὲ καὶ μύθοισιν ἐδεικανόωντο ἕκαστον,

⁶³ Cf. V.H. Knight (1995) 97f.

⁶⁴ Cf. J.J. Clauss (1993) 138-141; V.H. Knight (1995) 115.

⁶⁵ For a brief survey and interpretation of the scenes on Lemnos cf. C.R. Beye (1993) 199f. That Apollonius likes to use episodic composition is noted by G. Lawall (1966) 121. On the other hand, the Lemnos episode foreshadows the events surrounding Medea later in the *Argonautica*; cf. M.F. Williams (1991) 161, 280f., 286f., 293f.; L. Nyberg (1992) 121.

⁶⁶ Cf. D.N. Levin (1971) 146f.; V.H. Knight (1995) 97 n. 72; P. Green (1997) 235.

⁶⁷ Interestingly enough, when analyzing the situation that has developed, Heracles speaks about himself and the Argonauts as "we" (1,865-872a); cf. E.-R. Schwinge (1986) 91f. The speech expresses Heracles' anger; cf. R. Ibscher (1939) 17f. and 138.

⁶⁸ The place of the gathering is left open; cf. R. Ibscher (1939) 17.

⁶⁹ For the Argonauts the women are of no further interest. The motion and the sound of the bees are present. The bees cannot influence the flowers, so to speak; cf. E.V. George (1972) 61. Cf. also E.-R. Schwinge (1986) 92.

⁷⁰ The text of the simile is given in Fränkel's 1961 version again. The simile's form is: *Stichsatz*, *Wiestück*, *Sostück*. For similarities between this simile and earlier poets cf. M. Campbell (1981) 16.

εὐχόμεναι μακάρεσσιν ἀπήμονα νόστον ὀπάσσαι

“... and the women, when they learnt it, hurried to them. Just as bees buzz around fine lilies, swarm out from their rocky hive amid a smiling dew-wet meadow, and flying from bloom to bloom suck their sweet harvest; so now with loving greed the women in tears flung their arms around their menfolk, with hands and words bidding each one farewell, and praying to the blessed gods to grant them safe homecoming” (transl. P. Green 1997).

As far as its place is concerned, the simile is again an inversion. The simile is used after, not before, an assembly as in *Iliad* 2,⁷¹ but nevertheless the bee simile in *Iliad* 2 probably was Apollonius’ model here.⁷² The bees are used to portray women in Apollonius’ case, whereas Homer used them to describe men.⁷³ The focus remains on the mass movement.⁷⁴ The military subtext of the simile is reduced if not fully abolished.⁷⁵ This is not the only simile that is used in a military context in Homer, but not in Apollonius.⁷⁶

The only military aspect⁷⁷ is expressed in Polyxo’s speech in 1.675-696. This speech is delivered in an assembly of the Lemnian women when the Lemnian women discuss how they should react to the arrival of the Argonauts on their shore. Polyxo points the attention of her female audience who have killed the male part of their city’s population to the need of children⁷⁸ and of military protection against the Thracian hordes.⁷⁹ Both aspects are consequently ad-

⁷¹ Curiously enough, scholion D thinks that it would have been more apt if the individual women had selected the best heroes when the Argonauts came to Lemnos, not when they were about to leave it; cf. H. Fränkel (1968) 119.

⁷² Cf. J.F. Carspecken (1952) 68; F. Vian-É. Delage (1974) 91 n. 3; M.P. Cuypers (1997) 159.

⁷³ The Lemnian women arm when they first hear about the Argonauts’ arrival (1,635-638). Other versions of the myth show the Lemnian women as they fight against the Argonauts; cf. V.H. Knight (1995) 115f. Compare also 1,635 and 1,883: the verb προχέοντο is used both times; cf. H. Fränkel (1968) 117 and H. Jacobczick-Osipov (2000) 19ff. Also cf. this to the wasp simile in *Iliad* 16,259-260. The wasps ἐξεχέοντο from their nests to attack their enemy; cf. J. Latacz (1977) 252ff.

⁷⁴ Cf. I. Kulesa (1938) 37.

⁷⁵ Nevertheless, there are the following similarities between the bee similes in *Iliad* 2 and *Argonautica* 1 as far as the wording is concerned: genitive πέτρης, form of ποτεῖσθαι, ὥς (ὦς). M. Campbell (1981) 16; H. Jacobczick-Osipov (2000) 94. See W. Kofler (1992) 314.

⁷⁶ See W. Kofler (1992) 315.

⁷⁷ V.H. Knight (1995) 115: “... an intriguing substitution of *militia amoris* for real conflict”.

⁷⁸ Cf. G. Zanker (1979) 54.

⁷⁹ Polyxo’s pragmatism has been noted by S.A. Natzel (1992) 180.

dressed by the Lemnian women. And the Argonauts were easily enough (ῥηδίως 1.850) persuaded to follow the invitation into the city.⁸⁰ The women have seized the initiative.⁸¹ It takes a Heracles to make the men aware of their unbecoming behavior.⁸² When Heracles reprimands them, they do not utter a word and do not even dare to look at him, but stare at the ground and try to depart without telling the Lemnian women what they want to do.⁸³ Heracles does not need a Nestor to make the Greeks follow him.⁸⁴ It is well worth noting that Heracles this time does not use violence,⁸⁵ but rhetoric to “convince” his audience.⁸⁶

One wonders whether Jason is present at the assembly.⁸⁷ For Heracles speaks about him in the third person in 1.872 ff. However, Jason will be among the departing Argonauts when Hypsipyle bids him farewell in 1.886 f. The queen bee, for the Argonauts think that Hypsipyle rules Lemnos (1.717 ff.), does what her subjects do. Due to the ὦς in verse 886, I suspect that Apollonius wants the simile to continue its immediate impact a little further down into the poem. Thus the limits of the simile are not as definitely circumscribed as in Homer.

⁸⁰ Cf. S.A. Natzel (1992) 178.

⁸¹ Cf. D.N. Levin (1971) 63. This is part of the reversal of gender roles; cf. L. Nyberg (1992) 122f. Furthermore cf. W. Kofler (1992) 315. H. Jacobczick-Osipov (2000) 36. For moral judgments on this issued by modern commentators see S.A. Natzel (1992) 178.

⁸² It is curious that after the Bebrycians are defeated the Argonauts think about what Heracles would have done and how this would have abbreviated the entire scene (2,145-153); cf. H. Fränkel (1960) 2f.; P. Green (1997) 235. I take this as an additional indication for Apollonius' intention to connect the two bee similes even if the absence of Heracles will be recalled elsewhere in the *Argonautica*. In addition, this mentioning of Heracles and what he would have done enables Apollonius to essentially tell two stories about one incident. The question has been asked whether this pointing to Heracles is detrimental to Jason's heroism; cf. A. Hübscher (1940) 39; E.-R. Schwinge (1986) 92f.; S.A. Natzel (1992) 188. Heracles is indeed “removed from the stage” (cf. G. Lawall [1966] 131 and C.R. Beye [1969] 47) later on. But he will appear indirectly instead. Be that as it may, in regard to the simile it can be added that whereas in Homer the bees are used to portray the Greeks, in Apollonius the bees stand for the people whom the Argonauts encounter. An interesting additional observation has been made by F. Mehmel (1940) 52: Heracles' words trigger the departure, not an advantageous wind like in many other epic departure scenes.

⁸³ Cf. H. Fränkel (1968) 116f.; E.-R. Schwinge (1986) 92.

⁸⁴ Several more scenes from the Homeric poems are called to mind: see below.

⁸⁵ Βίη is Heracles' first and main characteristic in the Apollonian poem. Cf. 1,122 and A. Hübscher (1940) 38.

⁸⁶ Cf. D.N. Levin (1971) 25. Maybe this inversion of the Heracles of comic tradition is comic in itself.

⁸⁷ Cf. H. Fränkel (1968) 116. A. Hübscher (1940) 40 assumes that Jason is present.

An additional point is the question how the Lemnian women hear about the Argonauts' surprising decision. I guess rumor is giving them a hand here although Apollonius does not explicitly say so. But it is tantalizing to think that Apollonius assumes that his audience is so familiar with Homer that it transfers the role of rumor within the bee simile in book 2 of the *Iliad* into Apollonius' bee simile.

Apollonius elaborates on the acoustic aspect of the movements of bees.⁸⁸ The humming in 1.879 is changed into lament (1.883), words (1.884), and prayer (1.885).⁸⁹ The rock that serves as the home of the bees finds a better counterpart in the city in Apollonius than in the huts and ships of the Greeks in the *Iliad*.⁹⁰ In this context Apollonius replaces the Homeric γλαφυρός, which is probably a reference to the ships of the Greeks, with the rare συμβληίς.⁹¹ Since the Homeric adjective is of no use for Apollonius due to the absence of Lemnian ships from the narrative, this replacement is a significant one.

Apollonius has disentangled the swarming and honey collecting bees of the Homeric bee simile in *Iliad* 2.⁹² He has his bees only collect honey and the Lemnian women their men.⁹³ Rather than view Apollonius as the Alexandrian *poeta doctus* with his knowledge of nature who is aware that Homer needs correction,⁹⁴ I would just say that Apollonius focuses in this episode on the ability of bees to build their state and care for its protection and continuation, whereas in the simile in book 2 Apollonius will focus on the external threat that can easily disrupt the life within such a beehive. Hypsipyle manages to keep her city alive in spite of the fragile condition her state is in. Thus, this simile appears to be very close to Homer's depiction of the Greeks in his second simile.

⁸⁸ E. Norden (1927) 305f. claims that Apollonius concentrated on the noise aspect of the simile rather than the mass movement. According to Norden both aspects are present in the Homeric bee simile in *Iliad* 2. For a different view cf. W. Kofler (1992) 315f.

⁸⁹ K.W. Blumberg (1931) 19f. interprets the women's reaction as a sign of their belief in the Argonauts' return. In his view, only Hypsipyle is more realistic.

⁹⁰ Cf. W. Kofler (1992) 316.

⁹¹ Cf. W. Kofler (1992) 316. This may be a reference to Hesiod's *Theogony* 598: συμβλός.

⁹² Cf. W. Kofler (1992) 316.

⁹³ H. Fränkel (1968) 117 has suggested that Simonides' poet who gets the sweet honey of art and wisdom from the bitter thyme of harsh experiences is in the background of this simile. Also cf. H. Fränkel (1953) 386; H. Fränkel (1957) 11.

⁹⁴ It may of course well be that Apollonius' age had a different aesthetic taste than Homer's which allowed a blending of similes as discussed above. Cf. the discussion of the blended simile in *Iliad* 2; see above.

I want to point our attention to book 7 of Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*. In chapters 7.17, 32, 33, and 38 Ischomachos compares the duties of the queen bee with those of a woman.⁹⁵ The organization and sustenance of both raising the offspring and the duties outside of the hive are chief objectives here.⁹⁶

Nota bene: The gender of the leader of a beehive was debated in antiquity. In *Oeconomicus* 7.39 the gender of the hive ruler is male again.⁹⁷ Through Aristotle's work we know that both possible views on this matter were held.⁹⁸ The leader of the bees is male in HA 553a24 f. and 629a3. The possibility that the leader is female is mentioned in 553a29 f. Varro thinks that there is a male ruler of the beehive as does Vergil.⁹⁹ But it has been noted that in *Georgics* 4.210 "*Aegyptus*" could be seen as a hint for Cleopatra in *Aeneid* 8.688 "*Aegyptia coniunx*".¹⁰⁰ The ruler of a beehive is female in e.g. Hesiod, Semonides, Pappus, and Arrian who quotes Epictetus. Xenophon has it both ways as we have seen.¹⁰¹

But Aristotle is right in another respect. In HA 625a14 ff., 626a6 f., and 626b10 f. he tells us that male bees are killed by the female worker bees. Among beekeepers this is known as the battle of the drones, which usually takes place in the fall.¹⁰² The brood of drones is also destroyed by the female bees. This is exactly the case with the Lemnian women. They had killed the male inhabitants of their city, who had withdrawn their attention from their wives. The Lemnian men had been interested in the women who were part of the booty of conquered cities. However, the Lemnian women did include male children in that massacre as well (1.616-619), because they feared their sons would avenge the killing of their fathers. Hypsipyle alone had spared her father and sent him

⁹⁵ The suggestion has been made that ἡγεμών could have been used as some kind of adjective. Cf. *Institutio Cyri* 5,1,24 and *Hellenica* 3,2,28 where the ruler of the hive is male; cf. T. Hudson-Williams (1935) 3. Maybe the female gender in Ischomachus' dialogue with his wife is a rhetorical device; cf. B.G. Whitfield (1956) 104.

⁹⁶ This may be a curious response to Hesiod's *Theogony* 594-602. Hesiod compares lazy drones who – as he says – are fed and still concoct evil to women, whom he believes to be an evil for mortal men; cf. E. Crane (1999) 196.

⁹⁷ For this and the entire discussion of the gender of the leader of a beehive cf. T. Hudson-Williams (1935) 2-4.

⁹⁸ Cf. W. Kofler (1994) 120f.

⁹⁹ *Rex* of bees: Varro RR 3,16,8 and Vergil *Georgics* 4,88-102 and 4,210-218; cf. R.F. Thomas (1988) 185.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. R.F. Thomas (1988) 185. Further parallels between Dido and the king bee of the *Georgics* are to be found in J. Grant (1969) 387f. and W.W. Briggs (1974) 295.

¹⁰¹ Cf. E. Crane (1999) 569 ("... praising bees was a rhetorical device with no implication of the sex of the large bee ...") and 590.

¹⁰² Cf. R.G. Austin (1971) 150; E. Crane (1999) 568.

away (1.620 f.) Aristotle emphasized that the queen bee has a peaceful character and does not use her sting. (HA 553b4-7, 626a22 f.).¹⁰³

At any rate, antiquity had to ask how it was possible that Lemnos was still inhabited by male and female persons. Again we have to turn to Aristotle. That bees had offspring was no question. How that offspring came into being, however, was an open question in antiquity. Aristotle informs us about a suggestion that was floating around in his time. According to this view, bees collected their offspring from flowers (HA 553a, GA 759a8-b).¹⁰⁴ There were people who doubted that view as we learn from Aristotle and Theophrastus (CP 17.9). Vergil himself did not know how the reproduction of bees worked, as is apparent from *Georgics* 4.198 f.¹⁰⁵ Pliny the elder still has no solution for the question (NH 11.46). But Apollonius can be suspected to have – perhaps mockingly – alluded to the flower solution. At any rate, the Argonauts and Jason see to it that Lemnos will continue to be populated.¹⁰⁶ Hypsipyle expresses her hope that she will give birth to a child when she bids farewell to Jason in 1.898.¹⁰⁷ And this rather pastoral and picturesque flower scene with bees fits yet another aspect of the Lemnos episode, for the language used in that scene is at least ambiguous. Dew on a meadow has erotic connotations¹⁰⁸ already in Homer's *Dios-apate* scene. Dew and fertility are strongly connected in Greece from Homer onwards. The joy in connection with fertility and love is yet another *topos* in erotic literature (cf. Apollonius himself: 1.778 ff., 3.1019 ff.). The bees get a "sweet fruit" from the flowers. Love is something sweet in love poetry. And meadows and flowers typically accompany erotic scenes in many cases.¹⁰⁹ All these examples of potentially erotic language point to what has happened since the Argonauts entered the city. Apollonius keeps the *decorum*.¹¹⁰ But Heracles did not.¹¹¹ And the reader is aware of that. Heracles' ex-

¹⁰³ W. Kofler (1992) 317.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. J.J. Clauss (1993) 141f. with n. 48.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. R.F. Thomas (1988) 183f.

¹⁰⁶ J.J. Clauss (1993) 142: "Inasmuch as bees were thought to gather their offspring from flowers, the simile intimates the success that the Lemnian women have had in their plan; ...".

¹⁰⁷ There is a son of Jason and Hypsipyle in *Iliad* 7.468f; cf. S.A. Natzel (1992) 170; R. Gleis – S. Natzel-Gleis (1996) 157. However, Jason's response to this prospect is rather harsh or cold; cf. H. Fränkel (1968) 120; S.A. Natzel (1992) 179f.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. B. Effe (1996) 311.

¹⁰⁹ See Homer's *Dios apate* again. But cf. also Hesiod Th. 278f. and other passages.

¹¹⁰ H.-P. Drögemüller (1956) 243 says: "Im Bild wird gerade das unausgesprochene Geschehen der Lemnosepisode 'summiert' und sehr dezent bedeutet; ...". Cf. S.A. Natzel (1992) 178 with further literature. Also cf. H. Jacubczick-Osipov (2000) 36f.

¹¹¹ Cf. K.W. Blumberg (1931) 19.

pression in 1.867 f. is quite rude. Nevertheless his remark about cutting a fertile field with a plough, aimed specifically at Jason¹¹² and Hypsipyle, underlines what will be pervasive in the bee simile later on, sheds a very ambiguous light on earlier attempts of the Lemnian women to “plough”.¹¹³

Two further questions have to be dealt with. The joyful mood on the meadow¹¹⁴ of the simile is contrasted with the lament of the Lemnian women.¹¹⁵ And one would expect that every Argonaut would say good-bye to his Lemnian girlfriend and vice versa. This does not seem to be the case. The bees fly around and visit several flowers. “Ἄλλοτ’ ἐπ’ ἄλλον in 1.881 seems to be out of place.¹¹⁶ Both questions have been raised and discussed by two scholiasts of Apollonius’ poem. And just like later commentators these scholiasts have engaged in a fight¹¹⁷ over the general principal whether a simile has to be an absolutely complete parallel of the part of the narrative that is described by it.¹¹⁸ Scholiast L is in favor of an affirmative answer to that question. Scholiast P holds that slight inconsistencies are permissible.¹¹⁹ But some of the inconsistencies may disappear if we take into account that sometimes in Apollonius the similes take over the task of advancing the narrative.¹²⁰ Consequently, some details in the simile cannot have direct counterparts in the narrative,

¹¹² Cf. S.A. Natzel (1992) 178f.

¹¹³ 1,627-630, 1,685-688: the vocabulary of these two passages is very dissimilar to Heracles’ words. But in retrospect Heracles’ speech reveals the obscene aspect of the events on Lemnos. Also cf. G. Lawall (1966) 150. F. Vian-É. Delage (1974) 91 n. 1. However, G.W. Mooney (1912) 123 is convinced that *ταμέσθαι* has the meaning of “to divide” or “to mark off”.

¹¹⁴ For a discussion of various views of this consult H. Jacubczick-Osipov (2000) 96.

¹¹⁵ Cf. J.J. Clauss (1993) 141.

¹¹⁶ Aristotle (HA 624b) knows that bees visit several flowers on every flight, but that they do not fly from one sort of flower to another.

¹¹⁷ R.J. Clare (2002) 184 calls this simile “one of the more controversial of Apollonius’ similes”.

¹¹⁸ There is no proof that Apollonius read something, e.g. a Homeric simile, as the scholiasts did or as today’s scholars do; cf. R. Hunter (1993) 129. If we assume that Apollonius read the Homeric poems as the work of one author, we may speculate as to whether he saw any inconsistencies in the Homeric bee similes, what conclusions he drew from that, and whether his own (bee) similes represent any kind of literary judgment on the Homeric (bee) similes. At any rate, even if Homer’s similes have an oral background and tradition, they do not have to be “bad” poetry. On Apollonius as a Homeric scholar see e.g. A. Rengakos (2001) esp. 193-195 and 215f., who also quotes further literature. Generally it can be said that Apollonius’ similes closely resemble the narrative; cf. P.H. Gummert (1992) 114.

¹¹⁹ See C. Wendel (1935) 74f.

¹²⁰ Cf. J.F. Carspecken (1952) 87f. He quotes A. Clausing: *Kritik und Exegese der Homerischen Gleichnisse im Altertum*. Parnum 1913, 46. Also cf. C.R. Beyé (1982) 26.

since they are given in the simile only.¹²¹ Therefore, sometimes the narrative has to be seen in the light of the simile, sometimes it is just the other way around, and sometimes all details in a simile have their direct correspondences in the narrative.¹²² The *explication du texte* has to be aware that all three approaches have to be tried out first, before we are allowed to make any statements as to whether a certain simile fits the context of the narrative.¹²³

Kofler solves the problem like this: Seen from afar, the situations of both the bees and the humans are the same. The details are not clearly visible. Therefore the fact that there is a difference between the bees flying to many flowers and the Lemnian women going to their individual boyfriends is blurred by Apollonius to achieve a joyful picture that can then be contrasted with the sad encounter between Jason and Hypsipyle. And he continues by saying that the joyful aspect of the bees on the meadow harks back to the joy of the Argonauts' stay, but as a reminder points to the sad event of their departure.

I would suggest that we think about the Lemnian episode less from the viewpoint of the morale of monogamous relationships¹²⁴ and consider the possibility that the Lemnian and Argonautic motivations were much more selfish¹²⁵ than we would like to see in a morally exemplary text fit for the education and betterment of especially young people. Polyxo expresses a view that is adopted by the Lemnians. They need the Argonauts for the creation of off-

¹²¹ There is of course the possibility that some details of the simile do not play any role in the narrative; cf. G.W. Williams (1983) 60-64.

¹²² For a discussion of method in this regard cf. D. West (1990) *passim*; G.W. Williams (1983) 60-67.

¹²³ Also cf. R.O.A.M. Lyne (1989) 63-68.

¹²⁴ H. Fränkel (1968) 117ff. tries to interpret the simile in a such a way that every Argonaut is payed a last visit by "his" Lemnian woman. He fears that a picture in which the women fly from man to man would destroy the mood of the farewell scene. On the other hand, Fränkel has to admit the similarity between the Apollonian simile and Pindar's Pythian ode 10,53f. I would not think that similarity to be accidental.

¹²⁵ A very different solution is provided by F. Stoessl (1941) 45ff. I would prefer to interpret the brevity of the farewell scene as an indication of the deliberate difference that Apollonius creates between his scene and the epic model (Calypso in the *Odyssey*) he is alluding to. Also, the danger of repetition might play a role. The farewell scene at Pagasai was quite extensive. Apollonius also uses the simile to narrate the farewell of the Argonauts and Lemnian women in general. The simile is the narrative for a little while; cf. R. Ibscher (1939) 18. For general considerations on the possibilities and limits of the interchangeability of the tasks of narrative and simile see R.O.A.M. Lyne (1989) 68-99. When time came to invent his Dido, Vergil essentially did the same, marked his emulation through distance, and returned to Homer's Calypso whose love is less selfish than that of Apollonius' Hypsipyle.

spring and military defense of their city. This is also expressed by the author himself in the verses that precede the Lemnian episode. He tells his readers that the Lemnian women are by now more ready to do military duty, to herd their cattle, or to perform the work with the plough in the fields than to do the “works of Athene” which earlier they were used to do. However, the Thracian danger is constantly on their mind (1.627-632). The Lemnians are portrayed as a people very much like the Amazons. What is it really that the Lemnians need men for, besides the welcome reinforcement of their own military capacity? Young women surround Jason when he visits Hypsipyle on his way in and out of the city. Thousands of young women follow the manly figure of Jason as he walks through the streets. This is not pure curiosity.¹²⁶ In addition to this atmosphere in the city, Jason’s preparation for the visit includes the famous description of his cloak. It is the eroticized inversion¹²⁷ of Agamemnon’s shield,¹²⁸ a parallel to Helen’s or Odysseus’ cloak¹²⁹ and an interesting conflation with Nausicaa’s¹³⁰ clothes in the *Odyssey*.¹³¹ Nausicaa brings her marriage clothes to the shore to wash them, not to marry Odysseus. Jason will wed Hypsipyle, but only temporarily. And in the end of the Lemnian episode, the meadow rejoices in the arrival of the bees. This indicates the positive mood in the background of the story.¹³² Let us recall that the Argonauts are the flowers and are therefore part of the meadow. The Argonauts indeed may be flattered by the behavior of the women who are not indifferent to their departure, even if they will not overturn their decision to leave. Even if the Lemnian women deplore the departure, their sadness also does not appear to be deeply rooted.

¹²⁶ D. Wray (2000) 259 identifies pleasure and desire as the overall mood of this passage.

¹²⁷ *Oppositio in imitando* is a feature characteristic of Alexandrian poetry according to G. Giangrande (1967) 85.

¹²⁸ G. Lawall (1966) 158; G. Zanker (1979) 54; H. Jacobczick-Osipov (2000) 41-49. Cf. also P. Green (1997) 216. In his view, the use of Achilles’ shield in Jason’s cloak shifts the emphasis from military to sexual power. Cf. the further bibliographical references for this view listed by S.A. Natzel (1992) 177. On the other hand, there is the parallel of Odysseus’ cloak in *Odyssey* 19,225-235; cf. R. Hunter (1993) 52f. For further parallels between the narratives surrounding Jason’s cloak and Achilles’ shield cf. B. Effe (1996) 309f. Apollo-nius uses garments for literary games. Cf. S. Jackson (1992) 158 on Hypsipyle’s gift to Jason (4,423-434).

¹²⁹ *Iliad* 3,125-128; *Odyssey* 19,225-235. There are further allusions to various models; cf. R. Hunter (1993) 52-59.

¹³⁰ In the end of the Lemnos episode Hypsipyle harks back to Nausicaa again. See J.J. Clauss (1993) 142ff.

¹³¹ Also, parallels with the Odyssean catalogue of women in book 11 have been noted; cf. L. Nyberg (1992) 121.

¹³² The Apollonian simile catches the atmosphere of the entire episode. Homer’s bee similes referred to the situation at hand. Thus Apollonius exceeds Homer’s use of the simile; cf. B. Effe (1996) 298f. and 311.

Of course, it would be very nice if the Argonauts would extend their stay. The joy of the past that is now rather suddenly disturbed¹³³ would be continued.¹³⁴ On the other hand, the women have achieved what they initially sought. Bees can and will visit other flowers if necessary.¹³⁵ This also holds true for Hypsipyle.¹³⁶ Equally, Jason is the first to board the Argo again even if his final encounter with Hypsipyle receives more attention. Jason emphasized earlier that he would not be able to stay in Lemnos for long because of his mission (1.836-841). Jason is still not interested in Hypsipyle's offer of the kingship of Lemnos.¹³⁷ This is in keeping with what he said at their first encounter (1.840 f.). Jason even goes so far as to tell Hypsipyle to send their child to his parents in case she gives birth so that the grandchildren can care for their grandparents and replace Jason in this regard.¹³⁸ Jason admires Hypsipyle,¹³⁹ but he does not love her in our terms. So, the Lemnian episode is driven by practical considerations¹⁴⁰ on the side of the leading Lemnian women, which are also recognized by Heracles in 1.872 ff., and by a certain desire for pleasure on the side of the Argonauts and Jason as well as on the side of the Lemnian women. Both sides got what they to a greater or lesser extent want. In addition, the gods have a certain interest in creating new generations of Lemnians (1.850-852 and 1.858-860).¹⁴¹ Effe has pointed out that thus the Apollonian bee simile is an eroticized version of the bee simile in *Iliad* 2.¹⁴²

¹³³ Cf. R.J. Clare (2002) 184.

¹³⁴ Cf. B. Effe (1996) 311 and (2001) 168.

¹³⁵ It is not necessary to contrast the joy of the masses and the sorrow of Hypsipyle or the like. For the contrary view cf. W. Kofler (1992) 310-312.

¹³⁶ Her cool farewell to Jason can be understood from this point of view. For a different view cf. D.N. Levin (1971) 80. He recommends not to ask for too much romanticism from an ancient author.

¹³⁷ The contrast between Jason's indifference in regard to Hypsipyle's feelings, especially later on, and his sense of duty that is expressed in 1,836-841, but appears to wither until Heracles makes a pertinent statement has been noted by S.A. Natzel (1992) 187. With an eye on the relationship between Dido and Aeneas, it is interesting to note that Jason is hinting at his future duties which will hinder him from taking advantage of Hypsipyle's offer. The connection between Hypsipyle's and Dido's offers has long been noted; cf. G.W. Mooney (1912) 124.

¹³⁸ Jason indeed does not entertain the thought that he could return and settle down in Lemnos at a later date; cf. K.W. Blumberg (1931) 20.

¹³⁹ 1,899.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. G. Lawall (1966) 151: "Love at Lemnos is an affair of convenience".

¹⁴¹ Cf. G. Zanker (1979) 54f.

¹⁴² B. Effe (1996) 311 and (2001) 167f. He refers to remarks on the dewy meadow by W. Kofler (1992) 312f., and C. Reitz (1996) 21. To turn a traditional theme into something non-traditional, to innovate tradition, and thereby to cross the boundaries of literary genres is typically Alexandrian; cf. e.g. G. Zanker (1979) 74f. and B. Effe (1996) 290. Of course, this simile is part of the discussion of the idea that there is something like "love-heroism" in

The bees visit the lilies as we have said. Because the meadow is introduced into the picture almost as a third party besides lilies and bees, the smile of the meadow may be an indicator of the joy that Apollonius expects to create in his reader with his Lemnian episode.¹⁴³ This would be the humorous end to what had a curious trace of humoristic details.¹⁴⁴

Utterly forgotten is the task for which the Argonauts gathered and undertook their voyage. This is pointed out by Heracles in a very interesting way: "Let him (sc. Jason) stay all day in the beds of Hypsipyle until he has populated Lemnos with male children and earned himself great glory." Whether Jason, please excuse my bluntness, could ever achieve by monogamous behavior what Heracles – certainly by overstating the matter¹⁴⁵ – suspects him to have in mind only is a valid question.¹⁴⁶ The plural for "beds" is probably telling. The answer to this question reveals Heracles' sharp tongue and his rather curious character, and it also contains a moral rebuke for every one of the Argonauts who has participated in Jason's deeds. As a result, the Argonauts feel ashamed. They would not need to feel ashamed if they did not feel – and were not – guilty of what they are accused. However, as far as we can infer from Hypsipyle's words, she does not accuse him of "adultery" or vice versa. But does Heracles' statement have to be an overstatement only – especially in regard to the Argonauts who feel ashamed? Consider this as well: Would the number of sailors on one ancient ship be sufficient to provide every woman in Carthage with a husband?¹⁴⁷ We do not have to blame Apollonius for a simile that does not describe the reality of the narrative if we bend the truth of that reality first.¹⁴⁸ Heracles blows a horn whose tune has been heard earlier. This

Apollonius' work. See e.g. C.R. Beye (1969) esp. 43ff., 47-54 and (1982) 93; T.M. Klein (1983) 116f.; R. Hunter (1988) 436 n. 4; S. Jackson (1992) 155.

¹⁴³ The meadow is the viewer of the scene just like various gods in *Argonautica* 4,953-960; cf. E. Phinney (1967) 146. Apollonius' narrative focus starts in the middle and zooms out; cf. M. Hügi (1952) 28.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. on Heracles' sarcastic and ironic speech R. Ibscher (1939) 18.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. C. Pietsch (1999) 107 n. 40.

¹⁴⁶ This is, of course, also true in regard to the Argonauts who do not stay with Heracles. Their number probably does not match that of the Lemnian women; cf. H. Jacobczick-Osipov (2000) 95 n. 408.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. H. Fränkel (1968) 115 *ad* 1,853f.

¹⁴⁸ There is therefore no need to accept Fränkel's ([1968] 118) emendation of the text in 1,881. Cf. also the *apparatus criticus* in his Oxford edition of the text; cf. G.W. Mooney (1912) 124. Also cf. Fränkel's discussion of the pertinent scholia. In contrast to Fränkel, I would say that it would be tantalizing to see an allusion to a passage from Isocrates (*ad Demonicum* 52) behind this simile as well. Of course, this would be more amorous ribaldry.

portrait of Jason harks back to Hector who accuses Paris of being a γυναιμανής in *Iliad* 3.39.¹⁴⁹

This is then the solution I would suggest to solve the problems raised by the scholiasts: The picture of the simile is deliberately blurred just as Heracles deliberately overstates the matter in order to keep things ambiguous, and thus to increase the contrast between the deeds of Jason and his fellow Argonauts on the one hand, and Heracles and the small crowd of his followers on the other hand. Yet it seems as if Apollonius saves the day for the commentators of the 19th and 20th century. The morally sound behavior is to be found with the few, not the many.¹⁵⁰ But it is very curious to see Heracles in the role of a teacher of morals.¹⁵¹ Therefore we can conclude the following: The question of who is morally good or bad is not the issue. Heracles' objective is to get the Argonauts back in the Argo again. He uses moral arguments because they suit his purpose.¹⁵² We should not forget that Hylas, Heracles' favorite, was among the Argonauts during the Lemnos episode, even if Apollonius does not grant him an explicit appearance on the stage at this point.¹⁵³ Anyway, Heracles' stern and strict moral preaching will be ridiculed in the Hylas episode shortly afterwards. On the other hand, Heracles was also known for his own sexual adventures with women.¹⁵⁴ And Heracles himself will be the "victim" of love shortly afterwards.¹⁵⁵ The tone of Heracles' statement is phony from that point of view and therefore funny.¹⁵⁶

Let us briefly summarize Apollonius' use of the Homeric bee simile:¹⁵⁷ To judge from its position within the text and from the broadness of its meaning,

¹⁴⁹ Cf. H. Jacobczick-Osipov (2000) 92.

¹⁵⁰ 1,855f. and 1,861f; cf. H. Jacobczick-Osipov (2000) 88f.

¹⁵¹ H. Faerber (1932) 94 says that Heracles did reject his fellow Argonauts' behavior because of patriotic reasons (1,866f.). Cf. also A. Hübscher (1940) 41. Anyway, Heracles' patriotism in this regard is rather ephemeral. The irony is that Heracles' words actually describe the behavior of the Lemnian men who are now dead for what they did.

¹⁵² Cf. G.K. Galinsky (1972) 113.

¹⁵³ I owe this thought to R. Glei.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. D.A. van Krevelen (1956) 4f.; C.R. Beye (1969) 46f.; R. Hunter (1993) 33ff.; P. Green (1997) 221. A slightly different view is offered by A. Hübscher (1940) 41.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. G. Zanker (1979) 55.

¹⁵⁶ Indeed Apollonius wants to contrast Jason and Heracles (cf. H. Jacobczick-Osipov [2000] 89f.). But the Heracles of the Lemnos episode cannot be disconnected from other stories, e.g. the Hylas episode, in Apollonius and other authors; cf. C.R. Beye (1982) 93; C. Pietsch (1999) 133-137. Also cf. F. Vian-É. Delage (1974) 259; R. Glei (2001) 6-13.

¹⁵⁷ Pointing our attention to Ps.-Plutarch's *de vit. Hom.* 2,85, C. Reitz (1996) 23f. has suggested that Apollonius is trying to defend Homer against the criticism that existed back then in regard to the bee simile in *Iliad* 2.

the Apollonian bee simile is designed as a summary not only of what is happening at the moment of the departure of the Argonauts, but also as an explanation of what happened in Lemnos and why.¹⁵⁸ As we have seen, the introductory remarks by Apollonius at the beginning of the Lemnian episode and Polyxo's remarks make clear what is the main purpose of the Argonauts for the Lemnian women. They need and get the Argonauts just as bees need and visit the flowers in one or the other Aristotelian way.¹⁵⁹ The Argonauts are portrayed almost as if they are only reacting to what is offered to them. But Heracles at last puts the behavior of his fellow Argonauts back into perspective,¹⁶⁰ ends the delay¹⁶¹ of the main plot, and deflects the danger of a failed beginning.¹⁶²

III Vergil

Aeneas, accompanied by Achates, has just encountered his mother who has sent him on his way to Troy. And just when they try to climb a hill from which they can overlook Carthage, Aeneas cannot help but marvel at the city that is in the process of being built, and at the Tyrians who are most eager to complete their work. That work is then described in some detail. Some of the Tyrians are building city-walls, some are building a citadel, some are marking sites for new buildings, some are choosing laws, magistrates, and a senate. Others are excavating a harbor. And again others are building a theater for the staging of plays. Particularly this latter activity has been taken as a metaliterary remark. In fact, *Aeneid* 4.469 and 4.470 f. include allusions to Euripides' *Bacchae*

¹⁵⁸ Cf. W. Kofler (1992) 313f.; B. Effe (2001) 149.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. E.V. George (1972) 62.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. H. Fränkel (1968) 114 *ad* 1,849.

¹⁶¹ Cf. F. Stoessl (1941) 44f.; E.-R. Schwinge (1986) 91. 1,861f. has to be seen in connection with 1,324f. The Argonauts had been very keen on setting out on the journey just five days before they reached Lemnos. And now they apparently lacked the desire to depart from Lemnos; cf. H. Fränkel (1968) 116.

¹⁶² Cf. D. Wray (2000) 259f; cf. J.J. Clauss (1993) 144. Heracles will be the expedition's safeguard again in the Cyzicus episode; cf. G. Lawall (1966) 149. Apollonius' Lemnos episode is also a reworking of the Homeric Calypso of book 5, Circe of book 10, and Anticleia of book 11 of the *Odyssey*, Thersites in *Iliad* 2,236ff., and Eurylochus in 10,469-474 of the *Odyssey* as well as further Homeric passages; cf. F. Vian-É. Delage (1974) 91 n. 2; cf. J.J. Clauss (1993) ch. 6, esp. 144ff.; R. Hunter (1993) 34f., 47ff.; P. Green (1997) 220f. It is interesting to note that Eurylochus apparently is the only one who does not want to go (in his case: return) to Circe. Odysseus is the leader of all but one of the members of his crew. Heracles has a group of followers. Jason's standing among his men is not as strong as Odysseus' position was.

and Aeschylus' *Oresteia* – or maybe even other plays with the same content.¹⁶³ Dido dreams that she is “acting” like Pentheus or Orestes. And indeed the activity of the Tyrians to build their city will continue to be a reflection of what will happen to their queen. All work will stop when Dido has set her mind solely on her affair with Aeneas (4.86-89).¹⁶⁴ In 4.468 Dido dreams that she is looking for her people in an empty land, i.e. in a land where there are no Tyrian people building a city. And still it is of no use for Dido to call her sexual encounter with Aeneas a “marriage” (4.172 and 316).¹⁶⁵ Hypsipyle¹⁶⁶ had been more realistic in her view and goal.

At any rate, within this context of a hard working people and their queen,¹⁶⁷ Vergil inserts his bee simile into book 1 of the *Aeneid* (423-436). We quote its nucleus, verses 430-436:¹⁶⁸

*qualis apes aestate nova per florea rura
exercet sub sole labor, cum gentis adultos
educunt fetus, aut cum liquentia mella
stipant et dulci distendunt nectare cellas,
aut onera accipiunt venientum, aut agmine facto
ignavum fucos pecus a praesepibus arcent;
fervet opus redolentque thymo fraglantia mella.*

¹⁶³ In regard to the allusions in these verses cf. R.G. Austin (1955) 139f.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. W.W. Briggs (1981) 970: Vergil “wants Aeneas’ first view of Carthage to be happy, but he injects an Apollonian irony in the fact that the characters have not yet learned the lesson of the ‘Georgics’, that this harmony precludes the indulgence in *amor*”; (cf. J. Grant [1969] 390f.; W.W. Briggs [1974] 296; T. Schmit-Neuerburg [1999] 74). However, the happy sight of Carthage in book 1 and the ceasing of the construction of the city already gives a taste of the future building of Lavinium (cf. H. Dessau [1914] 537 n. 1) and ultimately Rome. On the passage 4,86-89 as a description of the effect of Dido’s passion cf. R.G. Austin (1955) 49f. This happiness in Carthage naturally contrasts the sea storm which Aeneas and the Trojans just escaped; cf. T. Schmit-Neuerburg (1999) 71f.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. R.G. Austin (1955) 70 and 101f. Cf. 4,99. 126. 213 as well (dialogue between Juno and Venus/Iarbas’ prayer).

¹⁶⁶ On the correspondences between Hypsipyle and Dido see D. Nelis (2001) 180ff., 160.

¹⁶⁷ Aristotle HA 625b and 627a knows that different bees perform different tasks within the hive; cf. E. Crane (1999) 562f.

¹⁶⁸ The text of the cited passage from Vergil follows Mynors’ 1969 edition. The form of the simile is: *Stichsatz* (1,423a), *Sostück* (1,423b-429), *Wiestück* (1,430-436). The inversion of *Wiestück* and *Sostück* is an innovation in comparison to Homer and Apollonius as far as bee similes are concerned. For a structural analysis of this simile in comparison to Homer cf. W.W. Briggs (1974) 292.

“They were like bees at the beginning of summer, busy in the sunshine all through the flowery meadows, bringing out the young of the race, just come of age, or treading the oozing honey and swelling the cells with sweet nectar, or taking the loads as they come in or mounting guard to keep the herds of idle drones out of their farmstead. The hive seethes with activity and the fragrance of honey flavored with thyme is everywhere” (transl. D. West 1990).

These verses follow the description of how Carthage was taking shape. But, just as this description does not cease to have an impact on the story that unfolds after the simile is narrated, we have to confront the fact that the simile that is used to describe that activity has some implications beyond the immediate context.

First of all, in regard to the dissimilarities between Vergil, Homer,¹⁶⁹ and Apollonius, we have to note that Vergil inverts what his predecessors did as far as the placement of the similes (*Iliad* 2,¹⁷⁰ *Argonautica* 1¹⁷¹) is concerned.¹⁷² In Apollonius the running of the Lemnian women out of their city towards the Argonauts inspires him to use his bee simile. And afterwards he explains the details of how the bees can be compared to the Lemnian women. The same is true for Homer. The marching of the Greeks to the assembly place triggers the simile. The simile is then applied to the activity of the gathering of the assembly. In Vergil the simile simultaneously introduces the situation and describes it. This setting is then used as the stage for future events.

¹⁶⁹ Note the *aut ... aut* (cf. R.G. Austin [1971] 149) which resembles *αὐτὸ μὲν ... αὐτὸ δέ* (*Iliad* 2,90).

¹⁷⁰ G.N. Knauer (1979) 375 thinks that there is a parallel between Homer and Vergil.

¹⁷¹ H. Fränkel (1953) 385 agrees with M. Hügi (1952) 28 that *Argonautica* 1,879-885 was not Vergil's model for this simile in *Aeneid* 1,430-436. Hügi rejects the assumption that the quoted similes are the Vergilian model in spite of Macrobius 5,11. Cf. also *loc. cit.* 42ff. and T. Schmit-Neuerburg (1999) 72f. Hügi's claim is founded upon the observation that Vergil stresses the industriousness of the Carthaginians (also cf. B. Grassmann-Fischer [1966] 66) whereas Apollonius and Homer focus on the movement of people out of the city or the camp. Fränkel adds that Homer's bee similes lack “die Wendung auf methodisch vorsorgliche Tätigkeit”. D. Nelis (2001) 456 however, thinks it possible that there is some connection between the similes.

¹⁷² Cf. D. Nelis (2000) 89: “From the first line of his epic to the last Vergil creates a complex pattern of allusion as he reads Apollonius with close attention to his Homeric imitations, and reads Homer with a constant eye on Apollonius' use of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*”; cf. H. Fränkel (1957) 1.

It is very interesting to see that Vergil dates the simile for us. The setting is early summer,¹⁷³ just as Homer locates his simile in (late) spring.¹⁷⁴ Apollonius' simile is less explicit in regard to what season he chooses for his simile.¹⁷⁵ I think that we could say that due to the lament of the Lemnian women who take advantage of their last chance to fly to their flowers, Apollonius selects the time just before the flowers wither. If we accept this, the simile may pick up the theme of mortality that was implicit in *Iliad* 2. Nevertheless, the date of the bees' action described in the Apollonian simile remains elusive.

While the rural setting of the simile proper is not the same in Homer, Apollonius, and Vergil, we clearly see that the rock as home of the bees is missing in Vergil. But, on the other hand, the Carthaginian bees are building a hive out of stone, i.e. a city. The work they are doing under the summer sun is stressed. Maybe this points to the unceasing industriousness of the bees even in the hot climate of early summer in North Africa. At any rate, this aspect is missing in both Apollonius and Homer, just as the description of the activities of the bees that follows in *Aeneid* 1.431-435 is a new addition to the picture. It reminds us of a similar description of the bees' work in and around their beehive in Xenophon and even quotes a passage from the fourth book of Vergil's *Georgics*.¹⁷⁶

Vergil wraps up his version of the Homeric simile by saying that work is done everywhere and evokes an image of a beehive full of activity.¹⁷⁷ This brings in the audible aspect of Homers' and Apollonius' simile in a very direct way. And the fragrance that surrounds a beehive is also taken into account in 436 in contrast to his predecessors.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷³ Cf. R.G. Austin (1971) 149.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. E. Paratore (1978) 192f.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. M. Hügi (1952) 43.

¹⁷⁶ The narrative of *Aeneid* 8,449-453 turns what is a simile in *Georgics* 4,176ff. into a narrative. For details see e.g. E. Paratore (1978) 192f. With the bee simile it is just the other way round; cf. R.G. Austin (1971) 149. Note already the humanization of bees in the *Georgics*; cf. W.W. Briggs (1974) 286ff. Is this "parallel" between the Cyclopes and the bees mock-heroic? There is also a similarity between the making of Aeneas' armor in the *Aeneid* and the scene in the *Odyssey* in which Polyphemus is blinded; cf. R.F. Thomas (1988) 179. *Georgics* 4,156-168 is based on Aristotle's HA 9,623-625. Also cf. R. Niehl (2002) 22 and 188. Niehl points our attention to the absence of guards in the *Aeneid* vs. the *Georgics* and suggests that this is due to Mercury's intervention or a sign for the future destruction of Carthage. I would add that this also foreshadows Dido's skidding into the love affair with Aeneas and all the subsequent troubles. Dido's and Carthage's fate are, needless to say, interconnected.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. R.G. Austin (1971) 149 on verse 431.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. T.E. Page (1898) 347 on *Georgics* 4,112: Attic honey is considered best because of the sort of thyme that was growing in the area of Athens. Cf. also Columella 9,4,6 who says

Before Aeneas, surrounded by the veil of the cloud that was given to him by his mother, plunges into the midst of the beehive of Carthage (this is quite different from Jason's entrance into Hypsipyle's home town), he is given the chance to express his feelings about this seething Carthage, and in a very emotional outburst he indicates his envy.¹⁷⁹ Carthage is beginning to rise; Rome does not yet exist, and Troy is destroyed. Of particular interest in this regard is that the simile is closely connected with the Aristaeus episode. The connection between bees and human beings is made explicit in the *Aeneid*. This connection was only implicit in the *Georgics*.¹⁸⁰ Therefore, I guess, one can safely use the two Vergilian *opera* as commenting on each other.

Aeneas would prefer not having to continue his toils until the foundations of Rome are laid. The interesting contrast that Vergil includes here is the difference between Aeneas', let's say, inclination to become lazy in his task, and the Carthaginians' effort to keep the lazy drones away. This of course serves as a mirror of what will happen to the Carthaginian efforts to build their city when Dido's affair with Aeneas comes to a close.¹⁸¹

Yet another aspect of the Homeric simile is not lost in Vergil: Rumor appears in the midst of the bees, i.e. in the city after Dido's and Aeneas' "marriage" in the cave. This can be seen as recalling Rumor who marched in the middle of

that the best flavor of honey is achieved with thyme; cf. E. Crane (1999) 503. On the use of thyme-honey in ancient medicine cf. R.G. Austin (1971) 150. The scenes that are described by bee similes in Apollonius' and Homer's works are not apt to allow a look at the bees' peaceful work at home.

¹⁷⁹ *Aeneid* 1,437. It has been suggested that the bee simile is – as far as tone and atmosphere are concerned – a representation of Aeneas' feelings during his looking at Carthage. Maybe Aeneas links himself and his Trojans with these drones that are kept away by the Carthaginians; cf. J. Grant (1969) 384 and 386.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. D. Nelis (1992) 16.

¹⁸¹ The bee simile which describes the Carthaginians of book 1 is then mirrored in the ant simile in book 4,402-407 which portrays the departing Trojans; cf. J. Grant (1969) 384ff. The image is this: ungrateful, ant-like Trojans plunder the land of the bee-like Carthaginians who were quite hospitable; (cf. W.W. Briggs [1974] 260ff.). Again, there are parallels in the *Georgics* (1,185f.) and the Apollonian *Argonautica* (4,1452ff.). The Apollonian ants are greedy (cf. I. Kulesa [1938] 38). They are the only other known instance of an ant simile in ancient epic poetry. While writing his ant simile, Vergil also followed Apollonius more closely than his own *Georgics*; cf. R. Niehl (2002) 188ff. On the other hand, there is also a link to Mercury's mission to Carthage and Venus' reason to hide Aeneas and Achates in a cloud in book 1 of the *Aeneid*. Cf. J. Grant (1969) 383: There is the need to prevent Dido from sending the Trojans away.

the Greek companies in book 2 of the *Iliad*.¹⁸² Vergil has separated this feature from the simile and given it more prominence.

On the other hand, as we have said, the Homeric simile seems to be rather restricted in its scope and impact on the narrative that surrounds it. Apollonius opens the meaning of the simile to encompass the entire Lemnian episode. In his *Argonautica* the simile summarizes what had happened up to that point¹⁸³ and also helps to explain why it happened. Vergil does something similar and different at the same time. In Vergil's *Aeneid*, the simile appears at the start of the Carthage episode. But there are further links between this and the Lemnian episode in Apollonius. There is for example the fact that the queen of Lemnos is made more ready to welcome the strangers by the son of Hermes, Aithalides. This is recalled by Zeus' sending of Mercury to Dido in *Aeneid* 1.297-304. So we do not only have to see Dido as a reworking of the Apollonian Medea. As Nelis has pointed out, the encounter and relationship of Hypsipyle and Jason is another model for Vergil's Dido and Aeneas.¹⁸⁴ Take for example Polyxo and Anna.¹⁸⁵ This example shows as well that the Carthaginian episode is a reversal of the Lemnian episode. Polyxo gives good advice; Anna's counsel will yield disastrous results. In parenthesis, I mean to say that Chalciope serves as Medea's counselor in book 3 of the *Argonautica*. Just as the Argonauts seem to react rather than act in Lemnos, Aeneas reacts to Dido's advances. While Jason is just the leading figure of a majority of the Argonauts, Aeneas apparently is the only one who mingles beyond a crucial point with a Carthaginian woman. Mercury, a god, calls on Aeneas personally to end the visit to Carthage.¹⁸⁶ Heracles, a crewmember, addresses everybody but Jason to achieve the same result.¹⁸⁷ Hypsipyle in the end hopes that she will give birth to a child, Dido is devastated by the lack of any such hope (4.328).¹⁸⁸ But we can clearly see that the connection between the beehive and the rise of the Carthaginians is present in books 1 and 4. Last not least we have to note that Aeneas is *fundans arces ac tecta novans* (4.260) when Mercury visits him in Carthage and thus doing what he marveled at in book 1 just before the bee simile sets in. Thus the simile performs an overarching and thereby unifying func-

¹⁸² Cf. G.N. Knauer (1979) 386 and D. Nelis (2001) 153f.

¹⁸³ Cf. H.-P. Drögemüller (1956) 243.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. D. Nelis (2001) 112-117, 165f., 180-182.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. D. Nelis (2001) 138f., 180f.

¹⁸⁶ 4,265. The Homeric model for Mercury's speech in 4,265-276 is to some extent *Od.* 5,97-115; cf. G.N. Knauer (1979) 387.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. D.N. Levin (1971) 83 n. 4. Also cf. D. Nelis (2001) 155-158.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. D. Nelis (2001) 161f.

tion.¹⁸⁹ In the *Aeneid* this simile has its position at the beginning of the episode. In Apollonius the simile helps to close the chapter.

However, this bee simile is also linked to the Homeric bee simile in *Iliad* 12. The bees fight and work for their offspring. This aspect is far from being anywhere near the center of Apollonius' bee similes. As in the *Georgics* (4.208 f.), future generations are intended to enjoy the fruit of their labor.¹⁹⁰ Greeks, Trojans, Carthaginians, and future Romans are the same in this regard. Yet the future wars are in the back of the reader's mind already.¹⁹¹

On the other hand, Vergil does not stop here. He uses the bee in two more similes and in one prodigy.¹⁹² In book 7, 64-67 the swarm of bees that clings to a laurel tree in Latinus' palace yard is seen as a sign.¹⁹³ This prodigy is almost a simile due to the interpretation that is given immediately thereafter.¹⁹⁴

*huius apes summum densae (mirabile dictu)
stridore ingenti liquidum trans aethera vectae
obsedere apicem, et pedibus per mutua nexis
examen subitum ramo frondente pependit.*¹⁹⁵

"To this tree there came by some miracle a cloud of bees, buzzing loudly as they floated through the liquid air till suddenly they

¹⁸⁹ Cf. J. Grant (1992) 389.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. J. Grant (1992) 386.

¹⁹¹ See e.g. *Aeneid* 1,17f.; Cf. J. Grant (1969) 386f.

¹⁹² W.W. Briggs (1981) 970 talks about a "bee-motif" in the *Aeneid* that changes "with the progress of the narrative ...". Briggs draws parallels between the four appearances of bees in the *Aeneid*. "The bees of Books 1 and 12 have an established dwelling, a hive or cave, while in 6 and 7 they are preparing for a new home. In 1 and 6, they reflect desirable and harmonious conditions of man perceived by Aeneas; they are described more objectively in 7 and 12". As much as I agree with what he says, I would also suggest, that there is even more to it. On the other hand, there is no corresponding bee prodigy in Homer; cf. G.N. Knauer (1979) 399. The same is true for the *Argonautica*; cf. D. Nelis (2001) 471.

¹⁹³ For the language used here see C.J. Fordyce (1977) 71f. The text of the similes follows Mynors again. The simile is followed by its interpretation (7,68-70). In a way, the *Wiestück* is followed by the *Sostück*. It is interesting to note that Lavinia is appearing in the narrative immediately after this (7,72). In book 1 the bee simile preceded Dido's entering of the stage as well.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. B. Grassmann-Fischer (1966) 64.

¹⁹⁵ Verse 65 alludes to *Georgics* 1,404 and 6,202. See R. Niehl (2002) 67. Also cf. on the relation of the prodigy to the *Georgics* E. Paratore (1981) 141.

formed a swarm and settled on its very top, hanging there from a leafy branch with their feet intertwined” (transl. D. West 1990).

The swarm is interpreted as an indication that a foreign people will come and take over the reign of Latium.¹⁹⁶ One can clearly see how the metaphor of the bee foreshadows the future of Aeneas, of Rome, and ultimately of Augustus.¹⁹⁷ At the same time there is a dire aspect in the omen. And indeed some bad consequences will follow suit for Latinus, his people, Turnus, and Amata.¹⁹⁸ At the moment, the bees have come from afar¹⁹⁹ and are homeless, just as the bees in the second bee simile in book 6 of the *Aeneid* are without a home.²⁰⁰ This identification of the Trojans with bees follows the second bee simile in the *Aeneid* in which the bees represent future Trojan offspring as well.

The bee prodigy is charged with additional meaning, since Vergil’s second bee simile has preceded it.²⁰¹ In *Aeneid* 6.706-709,²⁰² Aeneas sees souls drink from the river Lethe. These are compared to bees on meadows on a clear summer day²⁰³ as they sit on various flowers.²⁰⁴

*hunc circum innumerae gentes populique volabant:
ac veluti in pratis ubi apes aestate serena
floribus insidunt variis et candida circum
lilia funduntur, strepit omnis murmure campus.*

“Around it fluttered numberless races and tribes of men, like bees in a meadow on a clear summer day, settling on all the many-coloured flowers and crowding round the gleaming white lilies while the whole plain is loud with their buzzing” (transl. D. West 1990).

¹⁹⁶ Of course, this is also a sign for the reader: Aeneas will have the opportunity to build his city after the destruction of Troy, Dido, and Carthage; cf. W.W. Briggs (1981) 971.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. E. u. G. Binder (2001) 143f.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. N. Horsfall (2000) 87f. Thus, Vergil has managed to combine a good and bad aspect in this simile. There is no need to negate the existence of bad implications of this omen in Vergil’s times (for this view cf. B. Grassmann-Fischer [1966] 64f.).

¹⁹⁹ In fact, they almost seem to return home: cf. B. Grassmann-Fischer (1966) 65f.

²⁰⁰ In books 1 and 12 the bees have homes; cf. W.W. Briggs (1974) 289.

²⁰¹ Cf. B. Grassmann-Fischer (1966) 66f.

²⁰² The simile is part of the description of the place; cf. E. Norden (1927) 305.

²⁰³ Cf. R.G. Austin (1977) 218. This expression refers to *Georgics* 1,430 and 4,58f.

²⁰⁴ The text is given according to Mynors’ edition. The simile shows the regular form: *Stichsatz, Wiestück, Sostück*.

White lilies are singled out among the flowers. Vergil is thereby closer to Apollonius 1.879 than to the bee simile in *Iliad* 2.²⁰⁵ And he stresses the noise²⁰⁶ the bees make. The similarities to the first bee simile are evident. Knauer has interpreted this simile as modeled on the bee simile in book 2 of the *Iliad*.²⁰⁷ Hügi points our attention to the bee simile in book 1 of the *Argonautica* as the mediator between Homer and Vergil.²⁰⁸ But I think that Vergil is at the same time referring to Homer and Apollonius and transforming his own first simile.²⁰⁹ Aeneas is frightened²¹⁰ by this sight²¹¹ as opposed to the jealous tone²¹² of his reaction to the sight of Carthage.²¹³ It is left open whether the souls of the dead or their beelike behavior are causing Aeneas' fear.²¹⁴ Anchises then tells Aeneas that he wants to show him the future generations of Romans, who are among those souls. Therefore, the bee image is transferred from the Carthaginians who have ceased to behave like bees in book 4 to the Trojans (or Romans) in book 6. Book 7 is a continuation of that. Yet, just as in *Iliad* 2, the bee swarm in book 7 will have to find its final home. Indeed, Latinus' city will not be the final future home for the Trojans. However, by the end of Aeneas' journey the Trojans have changed. They are no longer the plundering ants of book 4.²¹⁵

²⁰⁵ Cf. D.N. Levin (1971) 80 n. 3; R.G. Austin (1977) 217; E. Paratore (1988) 323. Also cf. W.W. Briggs (1981) 970 for a slightly different take on this simile and its meaning. I cannot agree with him portraying the bees of book 6 as "obstacles to Aeneas' mission". P. Green (1997) 221 sees *Iliad* 2,87-90, Apollonius 1,886-897, and the bee simile in book 6 of the *Aeneid* as one line of development; cf. H. Fränkel (1953) 386. D. Nelis (2001) 471 puts this simile into his second category of parallels between Apollonius and Vergil.

²⁰⁶ Cf. W.W. Briggs (1974) 297: He assumes that the bees are quiet, idle, and slow. I do not think that this interpretation is correct.

²⁰⁷ G.N. Knauer (1979) 398.

²⁰⁸ Cf. M. Hügi (1952) 28. The humming noise, the singling out of flowers, and the mass movement are Hügi's main points of comparison. Also cf. G.W. Mooney (1912) 123; H.-P. Drögemüller (1956) 243 n. 72.

²⁰⁹ In this context a look at Apollonius 4,1452-1456 is fascinating. The Minyans are very thirsty in the desert. When Aigle shows them a spring that was created by Heracles, the Minyans gather around it to avidly drink from it. They are compared to ants and flies. Vergil chooses a different subject for his simile to describe a situation that is much like this scene from Apollonius. The Trojans are not likened to ants any more as they were in book 4 of the *Aeneid*.

²¹⁰ Cf. E. Paratore (1988) 324 for a slightly different take on the meaning of *horrescit*. He tones it down a little.

²¹¹ E. Norden (1927) 307 detects Ennian influence in the beginning of 6,710.

²¹² Cf. already Servius. See also R.G. Austin (1971) 150f.

²¹³ Donatus gives *cum stupore miratur* as the meaning of *horrescit*. Pacuvius fr. 294 R translates *horrescit* as if it would mean a thrill of joy. See R.G. Austin (1977) 218.

²¹⁴ Norden has assumed that the high frequency of 's' and 'u' imitates the sound the bees are making; cf. 6,709 and E. Norden (1927) 305.

²¹⁵ Cf. J. Grant (1969) 391.

The third bee simile will follow in book 12.584-592.²¹⁶ This simile is used to describe the *trepidus inter discordia civis* (12.583) that arises in Latinus' city when it is besieged by the Trojans and the situation becomes more and more dangerous for the inhabitants of the city.²¹⁷ Some of the citizens want to give up and open the city to the enemy, some want to do the opposite.²¹⁸

*urbem alii reserare iubent et pandere portas
Dardanidis ipsumque trahunt in moenia regem;
arma ferunt alii et pergunt defendere muros,
inclusas ut cum latebroso in pumice pastor
vestigavit apes fumoque implevit amaro;
illae intus trepidae rerum per cerea castra
discurrunt magnisque acuunt stridoribus iras;
volvitur ater odor tectis, tum murmure caeco
intus saxa sonant, vacuas it fumus ad auras.*

“Some wanted the city to be opened up and the gates thrown wide to receive the Trojans and they even dragged the king himself on to the ramparts; others caught up their weapons and rushed to defend the walls: just as when a shepherd tracks some bees to their home, shut well away inside a porous rock and fills it with acrid smoke; the bees, alarmed for their safety, rush in all directions through their wax-built camp, sharpening their wrath and buzzing fiercely; then as the black stench rolls through their chambers, the inside of the rock booms with their blind complaints and the smoke flies to the empty winds” (transl. D. West 1990).

Apart from the change of the smell from thyme to bitter smoke, this simile equates the situation in Latinus' city to two scenes at Troy. Firstly, it recalls the situation after the Greeks have left the shore and the Trojans debate about whether they should open their city for the wooden horse (*Aeneid* 2.39 and be-

²¹⁶ *Aeneid* 12,587 harks back to 5,214, 12,590 reminds us of 9,464, and 12,592 points to 5,740 as well as to *Georgics* 4,499f.; cf. R. Niehl (2002) 115. 12,591 briefly recalls the plague in Lucretius' *De rerum natura*; cf. 6,1154: *volvitur ater odor*.

²¹⁷ Cf. M. Hügi (1952) 49; B. Grassmann-Fischer (1966) 66.

²¹⁸ The following text of the simile follows Mynors once more. *Stichsatz* is followed by *Wiestück*. The *Stichsatz* is identical with the *Sostück*, however. The form of the simile experiences a variation again. This formal aspect brings this simile together with the second Homeric and the second Apollonian as well as with the first Vergilian bee simile.

fore). Secondly, the simile recalls the bee simile in *Iliad* 12.167-170.²¹⁹ Asius used the picture of bees under attack in their hive to portray how the Achaeans defended the gate of their fortress at the beach.²²⁰ This simile is in one respect incorrect. There are no children in the Greek camp. But there is also an allusion to the simile in book 2 of Apollonius' poem.²²¹ In Vergil, the simile is a blend of what his two predecessors did with it. The Latins maintain the defense of their city as the Greeks did in Homer and ultimately do not flee unlike the Bebrycians in Apollonius.²²² They are indeed fighting for their city and the young children that supposedly are in it even if Vergil does not explicitly say as much anywhere in the proximity of the simile itself.²²³ However, the comparison between the beehive in a rock and the city which has walls built out of stone is manifest again. The city is on the brink of destruction, the Latin bees on the brink of fleeing the beekeeper's smoke. The disaster is avoided by the fact that the Latins and their allies urge Turnus into direct combat with Aeneas. The Trojans have indeed figuratively smoked him out. There is fire in 12.573, 576, and 596. In 12.672 ff. a tower that Turnus had built himself is on fire.²²⁴

²¹⁹ G.N. Knauer (1979) 429 thinks that Vergil's changes of the bee simile in regard to its equivalents in books 2 and 12 of the *Iliad* are quite significant. M. Hügi (1952) 49f.; 105 n. 3, claims that Apollonius' second bee simile and Vergil's third bee simile have no Homeric precedent; cf. H. Faerber (1932) 40f. The opposite view is held by H.-P. Drögemüller (1956) 219.

²²⁰ It is interesting to note that J.H. Voß (1997) thinks that this nest is built in a rock as well; cf. his translation *ad loc.*

²²¹ Cf. M. von Albrecht (1966) 567; W.W. Briggs (1974) 302f.; E. Paratore (1983) 246; D. Nelis (2001) 481. M. Hügi (1952) 29 (cf. *loc. cit.* 49) claims that Vergil transfers human emotions to bees and thereby does something that was not done by Apollonius. I would tone this down a little bit and say that Vergil refines what was begun in Homer (*Iliad* 12) and further developed in Apollonius (*Argonautica* 2). One must also take into account that the similes serve different purposes. The Bebrycians flee quickly, while the Latins are split on how to handle the situation and finally send out Turnus and survive; cf. M. Hügi (1952) 49f. Also cf. on the Homeric simile M. Coofey (1957) 132: "The simile also illustrates temporary and permanent psychological traits".

²²² This has been recognized as fundamental difference between these two Apollonian and Vergilian similes by D. West (1970) 267.

²²³ W.W. Briggs (1981) 971 points to the difference between the Bebrycians and the Latins. The latter are trapped, the former flee.

²²⁴ In contrast to the *Aeneid* there is no fire during the battle between the Argonauts and Bebrycians in Apollonius that would create smoke and therefore make the simile correspond more closely to the narrative. Vergil has picked up a detail of the Apollonian simile and incorporated it into his narrative. Thus, Vergil proceeds with the Apollonian model just as with Homeric similes; cf. D. West (1970) 264 and 267. However, there is also the Homeric model behind the Apollonian simile even if Apollonius altered it considerably more than Vergil changed what he found in Apollonius.

The focus has changed. The Trojans no longer envy a beelike nation. They are not even like bees any more. Now they smoke out an alien people instead of being smoked out of Troy.²²⁵ The Trojans have assumed a better position than that of the Homeric hunters who encounter the heavy opposition of the bees directly. The Trojans look more like the Apollonian herders or beekeepers who know how to make use of bees and how to get rid of bees if necessary. And the Trojans under Aeneas indeed stop their attack on the Latins as soon as they get what they want – even if it is not honey. Their goal is not the destruction of the bees. It is almost as if Turnus represents the drones of the first bee simile, but I have to admit that this view has no direct correspondence in the text. I just want to show how the further aspects of bees and beekeeping would fit the picture of the *Aeneid*. And maybe ancient readers or Vergil himself might have had similar ideas.

There is actually one more observation that has to be made. It is very interesting to see that Vergil in his use of the harbor of book 13 in the *Odyssey* at Ithaca where sleeping Odysseus is left by the Phaeacians leaves out the fact that the cave on the beach is used by bees as storage space.²²⁶ Odysseus stores the gifts that he received from Alcinous in that cave as well and therefore uses the cave for the exact same purpose as the bees in *Odyssey* 13.106. This is, as far as I can see, the only instance in which bees appear in the *Odyssey*. When the Trojans get to the shore after the seastorm in book 1, they are in no need to store anything. This metaphor of somebody storing something in a safe place like bees store their honey is never used anywhere in the *Aeneid* even if the coast of Latium is the final destination of the Trojans and they were presented with gifts along the way from Sicily to Latium.²²⁷

²²⁵ Cf. W.W. Briggs (1981) 971.

²²⁶ W.W. Briggs (1974) 297 connects this passage from the *Odyssey* with *Iliad* 2,97-90 and *Argonautica* 1,879ff. E. Crane (1999) 45 assumes that the bowls and jars in the cave that are used by the bees were more or less accidentally left in the cave. However, it may well be that Homer is referring to the method of keeping bees in clay vessels. Such vessels have been found in mainland Greece as well as on the Greek islands. Homer seems to predate them; cf. E. Crane (1999) 184-202. But scholars consider the presence of beehives in Crete in Minoan times at least possible; cf. E. Crane (1999) 202. Beekeeping, however, was known around the Mediterranean. In addition to what we know about the Egyptians, the Hittites for example knew beehives at least as early as around 1500 BC. See. E. Crane (1999) 173f. Also cf. J. Latacz (2003) 34.

²²⁷ Cacus stores his booty in his cave-home. But it is more or less as if he is smoking himself out. Therefore a bee simile probably was not chosen to describe that situation. However, it is curious to note that the bad monster Cacus is not connected with bees. Do we have to infer that bees are good animals?

IV Vergil, the Bee, and Contemporary Interests

Besides these obvious allusions to the epic poems of Homer and Apollonius there are various reasons why the bee was indeed a very useful subject for the kind of similes Vergil used it for. The Aristaeus episode in the fourth book of the *Georgics* that is about the loss and the regaining of beehives has been seen as an attempt to parallel the Augustan renewal of the Roman people after the long period of civil wars. This passage which, as I have said, underlies the first book of the *Aeneid* has also been seen as a direct allegory of Cleopatra, Marc Antony, Octavian, and Actium.²²⁸ There are two observations which can make this view even a little bit more probable.

The bee is the hieroglyph for “King” or “Queen of lower Egypt”.²²⁹ Even if there seems to be no known inscription connecting Cleopatra VII directly with that title, it is tempting to think that Vergil knew about it.

In addition, the noise of the souls in the underworld that is compared to the sound bees make in *Aeneid* 6.707-712 recalls a passage from Egyptian literature. When the sun god goes through the underworld at night, the talking and movement of the people down there is also likened to the noise of bees.²³⁰ Since we saw that this second bee simile has no immediate Homeric or Apollonian predecessor, maybe Vergil got the idea for this simile from Egypt. The connection of the bee with Egypt would be an additional way to explain why Vergil gave much more prominence to the bees in his work than other epic poets did. Of course we have also to note Sophocles fr. 794 N and 69 N. Fr. 69 N, in which we are informed that in earlier times souls about to be born again were called bees. Souls in the underworld are compared with bees in these fragments. Norden has suggested that Sophocles’ source was Vergil’s source as well and came from Orphic or Pythagorean contexts.²³¹ Furthermore, the bee and honey have a prominent place in the realm of burial in antiquity.²³² There seems to be even more to this Vergilian simile than we can see from our limited knowledge of ancient literature today.

²²⁸ Cf. D. Nelis (1992) 3f. and 15-18. According to this view, Aeneas is modeled on Aristaeus.

²²⁹ Cf. A. Gardiner (1988) 477: L2. For beekeeping in ancient Egypt in general also see E. Crane (1999) 161-171.

²³⁰ Amduat, 8th hour, upper register, first cave: see E. Hornung (1984) 141; cf. F. Hoffmann (1994) 9.

²³¹ Cf. E. Norden (1927) 306.

²³² Cf. E. Norden (1927) 306f.

The title of priestesses in many cults of the time has something to do with bees. A prime example is the Artemis cult at Ephesus. Especially because sexual continence and ceremonial ablutions were part of Artemis' cult, possible links with the Carthage episode are obvious.²³³

On the other hand, we have to note, of course, that in Vergil's time probably the most prominent books on beekeeping in Greek antiquity had been written by Aristomachus and Philiscus. These books are dated between 330 and 30 BC. Although these books are lost today, Pliny and Columella could refer to them.²³⁴ In addition, Mago wrote a multivolume work on agriculture in Phoenician. Its author lived in Carthage between 250 and 150 BC. The Roman senate ordered the translation of Mago's books into Latin. Varro, Vergil, Columella, and Pliny quote from this translation.²³⁵ Therefore, besides the high popularity of beekeeping among the Roman society and its desire to read and write books about this activity, for the Romans the bee probably was not only linked to Greece, Asia Minor, or Egypt. It also had a clear Carthaginian ring to it.²³⁶

It is once more Carthage where the foundation of a new city and the bee coincide again. After Caesar's initiative to found Carthage again in 44 BC, it was Augustus' decision in 29 BC to send 3000 colonists to *Colonia Iulia Carthago*. This ensured the success of the new city in later times.²³⁷

In sum, Vergil had a lot of contemporary reasons to incorporate the bee as a symbol for nations eager to build and maintain their state into his epic poem. Thus his audience probably knew as well what the importance of the bee was in terms of current and past political events and in regard to previous literature, most notably Vergil's epic predecessors Homer and Apollonius.

²³³ Cf. J. Grant (1969) 389f.

²³⁴ Pliny 9,9,19. See E. Crane (1999) 197. Also Nicander wrote a piece about bees: *melissourgika*. See E. Crane (1999) 197f.

²³⁵ Cf. E. Crane (1999) 180. She writes: "Carthage was renowned for the quality of its honey, and for beeswax known as Punic wax ...".

²³⁶ On ancient apiculture in Vergil's times and beyond also consult B.G. Whitfield (1956). Whitfield's suggestion that the *bugonia* of bees could have originated in Africa or especially Egypt (117) can be paired with the bees in the skull in the Book of Judges (14,8) or in Herodotus 5,114. In the dry and hot climate of that area carcasses might well lure swarming bees to set up their new home within them.

²³⁷ Cf. W. Huß (1999) 296.

V Conclusion

Bernd Effe²³⁸ has characterized the way Apollonius used Homeric similes as an attempt to make new epic poetry possible by evoking Homer and keeping him at a distance by means of innovation.²³⁹ If we look at it from that perspective, Vergil is clearly continuing what Apollonius did.

It is worth noting that similes in Homer are particularly numerous in fighting scenes.²⁴⁰ Whereas the second Homeric bee simile indeed is incorporated into a battle scene, that is not the case with the first simile even if there is the military context of an assembly of the troops. In Apollonius we can see the same distribution: one simile is clearly narrated in a fighting scene, the other, however, lacks the military aspect. In Vergil, the bee as a symbol stands for the statehood of a people. The first bee simile describes a state at peace. The second and third instances of the bee's appearance in Vergil's *Aeneid* hint at the future. The Trojans, i.e. the Romans, will have the chance to form a state. In book 12 the bees return more closely to Homer's and Apollonius' second bee similes. The Latins are like bees under attack. But this time the bees' defense is not tested to the utmost, since Turnus' readiness to finally face Aeneas prevents the siege of their state from being continued. The Latins are not destroyed as the Bebrycians were in Apollonius. On the other hand, it does not become quite clear whether the Latins' efforts would have been as successful as the Greeks' in Homer.

As far as the erotic context of the bee simile in book 1 of Apollonius' *Argonautica* is concerned, in book 1 of the *Aeneid* Vergil plays exactly with this Apollonian innovation. In the build-up to the first encounter between Aeneas and Dido the simile serves to call in the support of the mirroring Apollonian scene of the Lemnian women, Polyxo, and Hypsipyle as a subtext for the entire Carthage episode.

Apart from the fact that Vergil once more uses the so-called "window reference" technique,²⁴¹ in the case of the bee simile Vergil even goes so far as to make the bees more than just a simile, even more than just a motif or symbol.²⁴² In the *Aeneid* they accompany and elucidate the whole narrative of the

²³⁸ B. Effe (2001) 169.

²³⁹ Cf. also V.H. Knight (1995) 20.

²⁴⁰ D.J.N. Lee (1964) 5.

²⁴¹ Cf. D. Nelis (2001) 247f. on its use.

²⁴² One could see the bee as a "sustained metaphor" very similar to the serpent in book 2. Cf. the pertinent article by B.M.W. Knox (1950) 399f. The only difference would be that this

laborious struggle for Rome in more than one way.²⁴³ Thus the *Aeneid* as a universal epic poem encompasses the entirety of the Mediterranean through the ages.²⁴⁴ To make this even clearer, the rise of Rome is mirrored, reflected and accompanied by the bees. One should never forget that Carthage's urban features, enumerated just before the first Vergilian bee simile, already describe Rome as it was in Vergil's time.²⁴⁵ Troy, Carthage, and Rome are fused. Time and space coincide.

Imitative quotation and innovative transcendence of the Homeric model were Apollonius' chosen techniques in dealing with Homer and writing his own poem at the same time.²⁴⁶ Vergil applied just this very technique to Homer's and Apollonius' work at the same time and refined it further.²⁴⁷ What was a simile fairly isolated from the greater narrative has become a device which continually²⁴⁸ mirrors the entire action described and alluded to within the epic poem while it also connects Aeneas' time not only with past heroic ages, but also with the author's and the reader's own contemporary world.

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bee metaphor is scattered throughout the *Aeneid*. However, books 1, 6, 7, and 12 are commonly seen as the opening and closing books of the Vergilian *Odyssey* and *Iliad*. So, Vergil positioned his similes within very prominent parts of his work; cf. W.W. Briggs (1974) 289f. Cf. N.M. Horsfall (1995) 85 on the bees in the *Georgics*: "Bees, after all, are not 'just' insects: ...".

²⁴³ Maybe Vergil knew that Apollonius knew the myth of Aristaeus (Arg. 2,506 and 4,1132, Verg. *Georgics* 4,282ff.); cf. G.W. Mooney (1912) 183 and 365. In contrast to Vergil, Lucretius uses the bee in similes only twice (3,11 and 4,679) and has different aspects of bee life in mind.

²⁴⁴ Cf. J. Grant (1969) 389: "In Virgil's similes, however, the geographical setting can do more than this: it can widen a simile's sphere of reference beyond the immediate person or event described".

²⁴⁵ Cf. the stone theater of Pompey; cf. R.G. Austin (1971) 148.

²⁴⁶ Cf. B. Effe (1996) 312.

²⁴⁷ Cf. Hunter's more general remarks on that (R. Hunter [1988] 452f.).

²⁴⁸ The bees are a "chorus" which "certifies the major events of the poem" (see W.W. Briggs [1974] 305 for this view) and they are even more than that.

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