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Lorenzo Vespoli

Unbeknownst to parents: the intertextual models of Val. Fl. 1.179-181 (Hom. *Od*. 2.372-376, Ap. Rh. 3.736-739, and Verg. *Aen*. 9.287-292)*

*I am grateful to Damien Patrick Nelis, Claudio Bevegni, and Biagio Santorelli, who read this paper and supplied me with useful advice.

Abstract: I versi 179-181 del primo libro delle *Argonautiche* di Valerio Flacco descrivono un *topos* già presente in Hom. *Od*. 2.372-376: un personaggio dichiara che prenderà parte a un'impresa pericolosa all'insaputa dei propri genitori. Dopo Omero tale *topos* è stato riproposto in Ap. Rh. 3.736-739 e in Verg. *Aen*. 9.287-292, *loci* che, a mio parere, sono tra loro connessi e che ritengo essere stati tenuti entrambi in conto da Valerio Flacco nella scena delle *Argonautiche* sopra citata.

Abstract: This paper aims to argue that Valerius Flaccus, in writing ll. 179-181 of the first book of the *Argonautica*, was aware that he was describing a type-scene reaching back to Hom. *Od*. 2.372-376. In this perspective, it seems likely to me that these lines are not only related to the Homeric ones but also rework the same type-scene as described by both his primary models: Apollonius Rhodius (3.736-739) and Virgil (*Aen*. 9.287-292).

Parole-chiave: Valerio Flacco, Virgilio, Apollonio Rodio, Omero, intertestualità
Keywords: Valerius Flaccus, Virgil, Apollonius Rhodius, Homer, intertextuality

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In recent years Valerius Flaccus' imitative technique has been the subject of growing scholarly interest, also due to the publication, in the last decades, of some land-mark studies on imitation in Latin poetry[1] and, in particular, in Flavian epic[2]. In this respect, is generally accepted by scholars that Valerius Flaccus' main models are Apollonius Rhodius and Virgil[3], even if also Homer plays an important role[4].

In the first book of Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, Jason decides to convince his young cousin, Acastus, to join the dangerous Argonautic expedition, thus wanting revenge for his uncle Pelias' order to fetch the Golden Fleece[5]. The young prince, in fact, does not know that his father Pelias planned the fetching of the Golden Fleece hoping for the death of Jason in the enterprise[6]. In the last section of the dialogue between Jason and Acastus, the latter reveals that he wants to join the Argonauts unbeknownst to his father, fearing that he would not let him depart (Val. Fl. 1.174-181)[7].

I take here into account the last three lines of Acastus' speech, where he reveals to Jason his decision to leave Pelias in the dark about his plan to depart from Iolcus with the Argonauts (ll. 179-181).

Quin ego, nequa metu nimio me cura parentis
impediat, fallam ignarum subitusque paratis 180
tunc adero, primas linquet cum puppis harenas.

But, lest the concerns of an over-fearful father should stand in the way, I will escape unnoticed and suddenly join you, all at the ready, at the moment when the vessel quits the shore's edge. (Trans. Zissos)

According to Daniela Galli, the model of Val. Fl. 1.179-181 is Verg. *Aen*. 9.287-292; these lines belong to the episode of Nisus and Euryalus[8]:

Hanc ego nunc ignaram huius quodcumque pericli est
inque salutata linquo (*nox et tua testis*

dextera), *quod nequeam lacrimas perferre parentis.*
At tu, oro, solare inopem et succurre relictae. 290
Hanc sine me spem ferre tui, audentior ibo
in casus omnis.

I now leave her without knowledge of this peril, whatever it be, and without word of farewell, because—night and your right hand be witness—I could not bear a mother's tears. But, I pray, comfort her in her helplessness and relieve her desolation. Let me take with me this hope of you; I will meet all hazards more boldly. (Trans. Fairclough, Goold)

In the ninth book of the *Aeneid*, Euryalus and Nisus reveal to the Trojan leaders that they want to go and retrieve Aeneas, who went to Pallanteum where king Evander reigns; Ascanius promises them rich rewards for their courage and Euryalus begs him to take care of his mother since he is about to take part in the dangerous undertaking unbeknownst to her.

It seems likely to me that Valerius Flaccus was aware, in writing ll. 179-181, not only of reworking Verg. *Aen*. 9.287-292, but also that the scene he was describing is a type-scene reaching back to Homeric epic. The motif of a young character who reveals to an older trusted character that she/he is going to accomplish a dangerous undertaking, in fact, is present in two of his main Greek models: Homer's *Odyssey* (2.372-376) and Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* (3.736-739), that have been used as models not only for Val. Fl. 1.179-181, but also for Verg. *Aen*. 9.287-292.

In the third book of the *Argonautica*, Apollonius describes the night before the deadly challenges imposed on Jason by Aeetes. While Chalciope is frightened that Aeetes would kill her sons, Jason sends to her Argus as a messenger asking for help. Chalciope reaches nighttime Medea and finds the younger sister crying because of her secret love for Jason. However, Chalciope misunderstands Medea's thoughts and thinks that she is crying because she knows something about Aeetes' intentions concerning her sons; due to that,

Chalciope asks her sister to help Jason in the dangerous challenges of the following day[9]. In the following lines, Medea replies to her sister that she will bring help to Jason unbeknownst to their parents (3.736-739):

Ἀλλ᾽ ἴθι, κεῦθε δ᾽ ἐμὴν σιγῇ χάριν, ὄφρα τοκῆας 736
λήσομαι ἐντύνουσα ὑπόσχεσιν· ἦρι δὲ νηὸν
εἴσομαι εἰς Ἑκάτης θελκτήρια φάρμακα ταύρων
οἰσομένη ξείνῳ, ὑπὲρ οὗ τόδε νεῖκος ὄρωρεν.

But come, hide my kindness in silence, so that I can fulfill my promise without our parents' knowledge. At dawn I shall go to the temple of Hecate, in order to take the drugs for charming the oxen to the stranger on whose account this strife arose. (Trans. Race)

If we compare the three texts cited above, relevant similarities can be found. In Valerius Flaccus' lines, as well as in Virgil's ones, the young character says that he is leaving one of his parents in the dark about the upcoming expedition; Valerius and Virgil use similar phrasing in order to express this decision: *ego… / …fallam ignarum* in Val. Fl. 1.179-180 and *ego… ignaram… / …linquo* in *Aen*. 9.287-288; it should also be noted that *ego* occupies the same metrical position in both cases.

Moreover, in Verg. *Aen*. 9.289 the explanation of the reason for Euryalus' decision not to talk to his mother about the dangerous undertaking he will take part in is expressed by a causal proposition (*quod nequeam lacrimas perferre parentis*); on the other hand, in Val. Fl. 1.179-180 (*nequa metu nimio me cura parentis / impediat*), as well as in Ap. Rh. 3.736-737 (ὄφρα τοκῆας / λήσομαι ἐντύνουσα ὑπόσχεσιν), the reason of the decision of Acastus and Medea is explained by a final proposition. Furthermore, if we compare Val. Fl. 1.180-181 (*subitusque paratis / tunc adero*, *primas linquet cum puppis harenas*), *Aen*. 9.291-292 (*audentior ibo / in casus omnis*), and Ap. Rh. 3.737-739 (ἦρι δὲ νηὸν / εἴσομαι εἰς Ἑκάτης θελκτήρια φάρμακα ταύρων / οἰσομένη ξείνῳ), it should be noted that, on a verbal level, a future

introduces the upcoming undertaking: *adero* in Val. Fl. 1.181, *ibo* in *Aen*. 9.291 and εἴσομαι in Ap. Rh. 3.738, and that only in the lines of Apollonius (ἦρι in Ap. Rh. 3.737) and of Valerius Flaccus (*primas linquet cum puppis harenas* in Val. Fl. 1.181) is specified when the action will take place.

These similarities become more striking if we acknowledge that – as I believe – the Virgilian episode of Nisus and Euryalus could also have the scene of Apollonius as one of its models[10]. In fact, the influence of Apollonius' episode of the dialogue between Chalciope and Medea could also be found in another part of the episode of Euryalus and Nisus in Virgil's *Aeneid*, *i.e.*, the description of Euryalus' reaction to Nisus' revelation of his desire to accomplish an extraordinary undertaking by going to retrieve Aeneas (9.197-198):

Obstipuit magno laudum percussus amore 197
Euryalus, simul his ardentem adfatur amicum:

Euryalus was dazed, smitten with mighty love of praise, and at once speaks thus to his ardent friend: (Trans. Fairclough, Goold)

The type-scene is the same in both cases: a young character is offered the chance to perform an extraordinary feat by an older and trusted character. I believe that these two lines hide a reference to Ap. Rh. 3.724-726, where Medea's reaction to Chalciope's request of bringing help to Jason is described:

Ὥς φάτο· τῇ δ᾽ ἔντοσθεν ἀνέπτατο χάρματι θυμός·
φοινίχθε δ᾽ ἄμυδις καλὸν χρόα, κὰδ δέ μιν ἀχλὺς 725
εἷλεν ἰαινομένην. Τοῖον δ᾽ ἐπὶ μῦθον ἔειπεν·

Thus she spoke, and Medea's heart within her leapt for joy. At the same time her lovely skin turned red, and a mist covered her eyes as she warmed with pleasure. She replied with these words: (Trans. Race)

If we take into account the lines of Virgil and of Apollonius Rhodius cited above, on the verbal level, the terms used by both authors are similar to those usually adopted to describe the symptoms of love. In fact, even if in *Aen*. 9.197-198 Virgil is talking about Euryalus' sake of glory[11], he uses terms related to the erotic sphere[12]. In this respect, I believe that the wording *obstipuit magno… percussus amore*[13] and *ardentem… amicum* of Verg. *Aen*. 9.197-198 are at the same time a choice consistent with the type of relationship between the two characters, and with his model: Ap. Rh. 3.724-726, where Medea's reaction is described by expressions related to the symptomatology of love; Medea's enthusiasm, in fact, manifests itself by three common symptoms of love: leaping *thumos* (l. 724: τῇ δ᾽ ἔντοσθεν ἀνέπτατο χάρματι θυμός), hot blush (l. 725: φοινίχθε δ᾽ ἄμυδις καλὸν χρόα), and mist in the eyes (ll. 725-726: κὰδ δέ μιν ἀχλὺς / εἷλεν ἰαινομένην)[14].

If we acknowledge that Valerius Flaccus reworked at the same time Apollonius Rhodius and Virgil and that he was aware that also the latter had in mind the Argonautic model in writing *Aen*. 9.287-292, we can link these passages to the shared Homeric model: *Od*. 2.372-376. Telemachus reveals to Eurycleia that he will leave Ithaca in search of news about Odysseus[15]:

Θάρσει, μαῖ᾽, ἐπεὶ οὔ τοι ἄνευ θεοῦ ἥδε γε βουλή.
Ἀλλ᾽ ὄμοσον μὴ μητρὶ φίλῃ τάδε μυθήσασθαι,
πρίν γ᾽ ὅτ᾽ ἂν ἑνδεκάτη τε δυωδεκάτη τε γένηται,
ἤ αὐτὴν ποθέσαι καὶ ἀφορμηθέντος ἀκοῦσαι, 375
ὡς ἄν μὴ κλαίουσα κατὰ χρόα καλὸν ἰάπτῃ.

Take heart, nurse, for not without a god's warrant is this my plan. But swear to tell naught of this to my dear mother until the eleventh or twelfth day shall come, or until she shall herself miss me and hear that I am gone, that she may not mar her fair flesh with weeping. (Trans. Murray, Dimock)

On a verbal level, Hom. *Od*. 2.373 (ἀλλ᾽ ὄμοσον μὴ μητρὶ φίλῃ

τάδε μυθήσασθαι) has similar contents as Ap. Rh. 3.736-737 (ἀλλ᾽ ἴθι, κεῦθε δ᾽ ἐμὴν σιγῇ χάριν, ὄφρα τοκῆας / λήσομαι ἐντύνουσα ὑπόσχεσιν): the younger character asks the older one to say nothing to his mother / her parents; furthermore, Verg. *Aen*. 9.289 (*quod nequeam lacrimas perferre parentis*) draws upon Hom. *Od*. 2.376 (ὡς ἄν μὴ κλαίουσα κατὰ χρόα καλὸν ἰάπτῃ).

Each author's narrative, however, shows some variation compared to the Homeric model: (i) in Homer, as in Valerius Flaccus, the undertaking is a long journey by sea, while in Apollonius and Virgil is a sortie that has to be accomplished as soon as possible and quickly[16]. (ii) In Homer's *Odyssey* and in Apollonius' *Argonautica*, the reasons that drive Telemachus and Medea to undertake their challenges are similar to each other, but at the same time differ from those that urge Euryalus in the *Aeneid* and Acastus in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*[17]. (iii) Regarding Homer's *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*, in the dialogues following which Telemachus (1.158-318) and Euryalus (9.184-221) are induced to undertake the expedition, both young characters have a different interlocutor – respectively Athena and Nisus – than the one they speak to – respectively Eurycleia (see in particular *Od*. 2.349-376) and Ascanius (see in particular *Aen*. 9.257-302) – in the dialogues in which they reveal their decision to join the dangerous enterprise while leaving their mothers in the dark about it. On the other hand, the different functions assumed by these dialogues are combined in the same narrative sequence in Apollonius' *Argonautica* (3.674-739), as well as in Valerius Flaccus' one (1.164-181), and thus the interlocutor of the young character is the same for both scenes (respectively Chalciope and Jason). (iv) In the narratives of Homer, Apollonius, and Virgil, there is an oath: (a) in *Od*. 2.373, Telemachus asks Eurycleia to swear to say nothing to Penelope about his departure from Ithaca (ἀλλ᾽ ὄμοσον μὴ μητρὶ φίλῃ τάδε μυθήσασθαι), and she swears: ὣς ἄρ᾽ ἔφη, γρηὺς δὲ θεῶν μέγαν ὅρκον ἀπώμνυ / αὐτὰρ ἐπεί ῥ᾽ ὄμοσέν τε τελεύτησέν τε τὸν ὅρκον (377-378); (b) in Ap. Rh. 3.699-700 Chalciope asks Medea to swear to help her and her sons (ἀλλ᾽ ὄμοσον Γαῖάν τε καὶ Οὐρανόν, ὅττί τοι εἴπω / σχήσειν ἐν θυμῷ σύν τε δρήστειρα πέλεσθαι), and

Medea swears a solemn oath (ll. 714-717): ἴστω Κόλχων ὅρκος ὑπέρβιος, ὅν τιν᾽ ὀμόσσαι / αὐτὴ ἐποτρύνεις, μέγας Οὐρανὸς ἠδ᾽ ὑπένερθεν / Γαῖα, θεῶν μήτηρ, ὅσσον σθένος ἐστὶν ἐμεῖο, / μή σ᾽ ἐπιδευήσεσθαι, ἀνυστά περ ἀντιόωσαν; (c) in *Aen*. 9.290 (*at tu*, *oro*, *solare inopem et succurre relictae*) Euryalus asks Ascanius to take care of his mother and Ascanius swears to do it (l. 300): *per caput hoc iuro*, *per quod pater ante solebat*; (d) Valerius Flaccus varies from the models not describing an official oath in the dialogue, even if what Acastus says to Jason in Val. Fl. 1.174-181 sounds to the latter as an official promise (Val. Fl. 1.182-183: *Ille animos promissaque talia laetus* / *accipit*) [18].

Furthermore, it should also be noted that the decision of the young character to undertake the expedition is developed through different scenes in the *Odyssey* (Athena encourages Telemachus to depart from Ithaca in search of news about his father; then, he discloses his decision about the sea travel to the suitors, and at last reveals to Eurycleia that he will leave in the dark Penelope about the expedition) and in the *Aeneid* (during on-call time, Nisus reveals his desire to go and retrieve Aeneas to Euryalus and the latter decides to join the expedition; Nisus explains to the Trojan leaders their plan and at last Euryalus asks Ascanius to take care of his mother because he is going to accomplish the undertaking unbeknownst to her); on the other hand, in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* and in the poem of Valerius Flaccus, the revelation of an enterprise to be accomplished and the young character's decision to leave parents in the dark about it are described in the same scene, that is structured as a dialogue with an older, trusted character.

Before concluding, it is worth making a few remarks on the imitative technique of Valerius Flaccus. If, on one hand, Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* is clearly the main model for Valerius Flaccus' poem as far as narrative content is concerned, on the other hand, the latter usually deviates and/or reworks, on structural and verbal levels, other sources[19]. For what concerns the scene of Acastus, it is relevant to consider the possible reasons that led Valerius to rework the detected scenes of Homer, Apollonius Rhodius, and Virgil. First

of all, on a narrative level, the scene of the dialogue between Jason and Acastus is not present in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*. It follows that when Valerius Flaccus decided to compose this dialogue he had to choose another model other than Apollonius, and it is plausible that he looked at the *Aeneid*'s episode of Euryalus and Nisus. Furthermore, Valerius Flaccus was aware that the overall motif of the young character who decides to leave her/his parents in the dark in accomplishing a dangerous undertaking was a topical description used also by Homer and Apollonius, and for this reason, it is possible that he took into account also their detected lines.

It is relevant to note that, even if the guidelines of the detected type-scene described by the considered authors are the same (*e.g.*, there is a dialogue between two characters about a dangerous undertaking, the young character wants to accomplish it unbeknownst to parents, *etc.*), each author plays on different elements of the narrative structure, for example, changing their function in the context or removing them altogether (*e.g.*, the oath is present in Homer, Apollonius, and Virgil, but the way in which a character asks to another one to swear, the content of the oath and the type of the oath are different; on the other hand, in Valerius Flaccus, there is not an oath), without compromising the recognisability of the overall scene. For this reason, it is not to be expected a perfect correspondence of each detail in the scenes considered.

To sum up, looking at the striking similarity of action between the four scenes taken into account and the details that I have underlined, it seems likely to me that Valerius Flaccus was aware, in writing his scene, that Acastus' response to Jason (1.174-181) mirrors a topical scene already described by his models. If on a narrative level – as said above – the description of Acastus is remarkably similar to the Virgilian Euryalus (both want to imitate their older model and want to undertake their challenges due to their desire for glory), I believe that Valerius Flaccus reworked at the same time the scenes of Homer and Apollonius Rhodius, aware that also Virgil wrote in turn his narrative having in mind both the Greek models.

Note

1 See, *e.g.*, West, Woodman 1979, Conte 1985², Edmunds 2001, Feeney 1991, Hinds 1998, Thomas 1999, and Baraz, van den Berg 2013.

2 See, *e.g.*, Hardie 1990, id. 1993, Dewar 1991, and Smolenaars 1994.

3 For the importance of Apollonius and Virgil as models for Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* see *e.g.*, Nordera 1969 (= 2016), Lieberman 1997, XXXII-XLVI, Hershkowitz 1998, 35-37, Hutchinson 2013, 170-176, Deremetz 2014, 53-55, and van der Schuur 2014. Recently Damien P. Nelis has published several studies aimed to show how Valerius Flaccus' narrative reworks (on the verbal level as well as on the structural one) both Apollonius Rhodius and Virgil as interconnected models, Nelis 2019, 65: «Valerius read the *Aeneid* with a sharp eye for reference to Apollonius and he also read Apollonius in full awareness of the importance of that poem as a key model for the *Aeneid*»; see Nelis 2019, id. (forthcoming), and Galli Milić, Nelis 2020. For a similar methodology applied to the interpretation of Flavian poetry see Cowan 2014. A recent methodological discussion on allusiveness in Statius' epic (but generally useful for the Flavian poetry) is in Bessone 2019.

4 Regarding the Homeric influence on Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* see *e.g.*, Schenk 1999, 135-138 and Zissos 2002.

5 On Jason's *dolus* scene (Val. Fl. 1, 149-183) see Zissos 2008, 167 and Castelletti 2014, 176-177 (with further bibliography). For a recent study on collective speeches in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* see Finkmann 2014.

6 The Argonautic voyage is presented as the first sea travel, see *e.g.*, Jackson 1997, Ripoll 2014, and Mac Góráin 2015.

7 As argued by Scaffai 1986, 250, Valerius Flaccus seems to add the dialogue between Jason and Acastus in order to clarify a conundrum of Apollonius' *Argonautica*, that is the reason of Pelias' son participation to the Argonauts' expedition: «L'antinomia di fondo, per cui il figlio di Pelia si unisce ad una spedizione destinata ad essere senza ritorno (almeno nelle intenzioni del tiranno), non viene risolta. L'aporia era avvertita anche dallo scoliasta di Apollonio, il quale, con spiegazione razionalistica, osserva che Acasto parte contro la volontà paterna, per aggiungere poi particolari più eccentrici sulle connessure della nave, rinforzate all'ultimo momento perché il viaggio potesse essere più sicuro per il regale passeggero». Cf. *Sch. AR* 1.224-226a, Wendel 1935, 28, 7-11: εἰ δὲ κίνδυνον αὐτοὺς ἔπεμπεν ὁ Πελίας, διὰ τί ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἐξήρχετο; καὶ οὗτος μέν φησιν, ἄκοντος τοῦ πατρός· Δημάγητος δέ, ὅτι ἐκέλευσεν ὁ Πελίας τὴν Ἀργὼ ἀραιοῖς γόμφοις παγῆναι, ἵνα ταχέως ἀπολέσῃ αὐτούς· ὁ δὲ Ἄργος τοὐναντίον πεποίηκεν, καὶ πιστὸν ἔκων τὸν τέκτονα Ἄκαστος ἐπέβη.

8 Galli 2005, 144 n. 70: «È possibile riscontrare alcuni precisi parallelismi tra le due situazioni: p. es. Acasto non intende rivelare al padre la sua partecipazione all'impresa argonautica (cf. 1, 179-80 […]) come l'Eurialo virgiliano tace alla madre l'intenzione di compiere il pericoloso assalto nel campo nemico: cf. Verg. *Aen*. 9.287-9 […]». The similarity of action between the detected lines of

Valerius Flaccus and Virgil is also acknowledged in Galli 2007, 131; the other recent commentaries seem not to point it out, see *ad loc*. Spaltenstein 2002, 96-97; Kleywegt 2005, 116-117 and Zissos 2008, 179.

9 It should also be noted that in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* there is not a dialogue between Medea and Chalciope with the same narrative purpose (*i.e.*, inducing Medea to help Jason). The only dialogue between the two sisters – that, however, is between Medea and Juno disguised as Chalciope – takes place in Valerius' *Argonautica* in a different context (cf. Val. Fl. 6.477-494 *et passim*); on this scene see Wijsman 2000, 189. On the other hand, the narrative function of the dialogue between Medea and Chalciope in the third book of Apollonius' *Argonautica* is the same of that between Medea and Venus disguised as Circe in Val. Fl. 7.210-349, a scene that, as underlined by Stover 2011, 174, is an innovation of Valerius Flaccus. On this dialogue see *e.g.*, Stover 2011, 173-187 and Perutelli 1997, 270-336.

10 According to Meban 2009, 239 (with bibliography): «Homer and the Homeric scholia, Greek tragedy, and lyric poetry provide just a few of the many models Virgil incorporates into his account of the exploits of Nisus and Euryalus». Pavlock 1985, for example, detected in the Virgilian episode some influences of the night-ride of Odysseus and Diomedes in Homeric Doloneia (*Iliad*, book 10), and of the Greek tragic play *Rhesus*. Regarding the influence of Homer and Apollonius Rhodius on Virgil's *Aeneid* see Nelis 2001, 1-21.

11 In this respect, see Duckworth 1967, 131.

12 According to Makowski 1989, 4 the relationship between Nisus and Euryalus is not only a friendship, but they are respectively *erastes* and *eromenos*; furthermore, about Euryalus' reaction, Makowski writes: «Nisus's meaning is not lost upon his young protege, whose immediate reaction is consonant with his role of malleable *eromenos*: *obstipuit* (197). He is filled with excitement at the prospect of being part of the venture as well as with admiration for his lover and leader in the expedition. Accordingly, the lines which narrate his reply are tinged with the same subtle eroticism as those introducing the speech of Nisus. We are told that he was *magno laudum percussus amore* (197), and when he addresses his friend, Vergil applies to Nisus the adjective *ardentem*, "passionate"» (cit. p. 9).

13 It should be noted that *obstipuit* is used by Virgil opening the hexameter to describe Dido's love at first sight for Aeneas in *Aen*. 1.613: *obstipuit primo aspectu Sidonia Dido*.

14 The canon of erotic phenomenology occurs in the well-known Sapph. fr. 31 Voigt. For an overview of the erotic sphere in Greek literature, see at least Sanders, Thumiger, Carey *et al*. 2013 (with further bibliography).

15 The parallelism between Verg. *Aen*. 9.287-292 and Hom. *Od*. 2.373-376 has been already acknowledged by scholars: see *e.g.*, Knauer 1979[2], 408 and Hardie 1994, 125.

16 Two other striking similarities between the episode of Chalciope and Medea in Apollonius' *Argonautica* and that of Nisus and Euryalus in the *Aeneid* are: (i) the enthusiastic reaction of a young character (*i.e.*, Medea and Euryalus)

to an unexpected revelation of an older one (*i.e.*, Chalciope's request for helping Jason and Nisus' desire to accomplish an extraordinary undertaking); (ii) the young character wants to accomplish the dangerous undertaking, but she/he also wants to leave parents in the dark about her/his decision (both parents in Apollonius' narrative and Euryalus' mother in Virgil's one).

17 On one hand, the desire to emulate the older character and the sake of glory urge Euryalus and Acastus to take part in the dangerous undertaking; on the other hand, Telemachus is driven by filial love towards his father Odysseus (even if this is not the only one cause) and Medea is urged by love for Jason.

18 About Hom. *Od*. 377-378 see the comment of Stanford 1959[2], 246 *ad loc*. The oath is relevant in order to connect the passages of Homer, Apollonius, and Virgil: in Valerius Flaccus' scene, in fact, it is not present. While in the *Odyssey* Telemachus asks Eurycleia to swear for silence, in the parallel topical section of Apollonius Rhodius Medea asks Chalciope only not to reveal her plan. In fact, in Apollonius' narrative, Chalciope demands her sister to swear the sacred oath when she asks her for help (AR 3.699-700 and 714-717). In Euryalus and Nisus episode too, as we have just seen, there is a sacred oath: Euryalus asks Ascanius to take care of his mother and the son of Aeneas swears on his own head (cf. *Aen*. 9.300 and see Hardie 1994, 127-128 *ad loc*.).

19 Concerning Valerius Flaccus' deviations from Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* see *e.g.*, the several examples collected in Hershkowitz 1998, 190-241.

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