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HOSPITALITY AND RHETORIC: THE CIRCE EPISODE IN APOLLONIUS RHODIUS' *ARGONAUTICA*[1]

I. INTRODUCTION

In the final book of the *Argonautica* the Argonauts undergo a series of adventures which are clearly meant to mirror Odysseus' experiences: Circe, the Sirens, Scylla, Charybdis and the Phaeacians are all encountered by both the Argonauts and Odysseus. It is the Circe episode which starts off this Odyssean sequence in the *Argonautica* and this episode is the subject of this article. Including a Circe episode in his epic gave Apollonius the opportunity to play with his reader's knowledge of the Odyssean equivalent, but there were further attractions. A short sketch of the situation prior to this meeting will make this clearer. At the beginning of the fourth book Medea finally leaves her family in order to help Jason obtain the Golden Fleece. With her support the Argonauts soon accomplish this task, but their return home is challenged by the Colchians who pursue them for over half of this book. The first direct encounter between the two groups leads to the death of Medea's brother Apsyrtus at the temple of Artemis (329–489). As a result, Jason and Medea are forced by Zeus to visit Medea's aunt Circe in order to be purified of the murder they have committed (557–61, 580–91). A highly unusual situation is thus created where killer and purifier are related by blood and where a niece has to justify to her aunt her choice of leaving her family.

The Circe episode itself can be divided into three parts: the opening scene on the beach where the Argonauts arrive and find Circe washing her hair and clothing to dispel fears resulting from a prophetic nightmare (659–84); the arrival at the palace and Circe's performance of all the necessary purification rituals (685–717); and the final scene in which Medea and Circe exchange speeches and Jason and Medea are dismissed from the palace (718–52). Scholarship in the main has concentrated either on the relationship of the episode with its Odyssean counterpart and the description of the animals accompanying Circe,[2] or on an analysis of the purification rituals.[3] The

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[2] E.g. C. M. Dufner, *The Odyssey in the Argonautica: Reminiscence, Revision, Reconstruction* (Diss., Princeton University, 1988); V. Knight, *The Renewal of Epic: Responses to Homer in the Argonautica of Apollonius* (Leiden, 1995); M. L. West, '*Odyssey* and *Argonautica*', *CQ* 55 (2005), 39–64. For discussions of the animals see R. L. Hunter, *The Argonautica of Apollonius: Literary Studies* (Cambridge, 1993), 164–5; P. Kyriakou, 'Empedoclean echoes in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*', *Hermes* 122 (1994), 309–19.

[3] E.g. F. T. Griffiths, 'Murder, purification, and cultural transformation in Aeschylus and Apollonius Rhodius', *Helios* 17 (1990), 25–39; C. S. Byre, 'The killing of Apsyrtus in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*', *Phoenix* 50 (1996) , 3–16; J. N. Bremmer, 'Why did Medea kill her brother Apsyrtus?', in J. J. Clauss and S. I. Johnston (edd.), *Medea: Essays on Medea in Myth, Literature, Philosophy and Art* (Princeton, 1997), 83–100; D. Sansone (2000), 'Iphigeneia in Colchis', in M. A. Harder, R. F. Regtuit and G. C. Wakker (edd.), *Apollonius Rhodius*, Hellenistica Groningana 4 (Leuven, 2000), 155–72.

episode has also been discussed briefly in a number of articles which concentrate on the position of Medea in the fourth book.[4] In this article I shall focus on the final part of the episode and especially on the exchange of speeches found there. There are several difficult problems in these lines and both Medea's speech and Circe's response warrant a fuller inspection than we have seen so far.[5] I shall approach this part of the episode in two ways: first I shall analyse it in the light of the hospitality motifs which we find both here and in the rest of the episode; then I shall focus on the two speeches and the literary and rhetorical devices employed there.

II. HOSPITALITY MOTIFS

(a) Type scenes and hospitality motifs

In this part of the discussion I shall use the conventions of the Homeric reception scene to analyse this episode. A reception scene, or description of a visit between host and guest(s), is one of the so-called type scenes an epic poet could use. Other examples of such type scenes are descriptions of a sacrifice, prayer, supplication, arming or battle.[6] Each type scene consists of a number of smaller motifs which can be varied and elaborated depending on the specific needs of such a scene. In his book *The Stranger's Welcome* Reece mentions many possible motifs for hospitality scenes in the *Odyssey*.[7] A more limited number of these form the crucial stages in a hospitality sequence and are present in most hospitality scenes: the arrival and first contact with the host, the seating of the guest, the sharing of a meal, the revealing of the identity of the guest, and the exchange of gifts.[8] In this article I will analyse Apollonius' use of hospitality motifs and focus on three motifs in particular: the seating, the question of identity, and the sharing of the meal. Studying the episode from this perspective will help to discern the underlying pattern of motifs in this episode and to focus with more precision on some of its problems. We shall see this, for example, in the discussion of the use of the knowledge and identity motif. This approach also enables one to recognize Apollonius' manipulation and exploitation of the reader's knowledge. Because of their familiarity with Homer, and thus Homeric type scenes and formulae, readers could be expected to notice changes to these standard sequences. Variations can be noticed at two levels, at both macro and micro level. Changes at macro level where the whole hospitality sequence is changed and certain stages are omitted, altered, or changed around are the most obvious, but change can also be seen at micro level when we find small variations to motifs and to standard Homeric formulas. Although it is commonly mentioned that *variatio* is an

[4] E.g. R. L Hunter, 'Medea's flight: the fourth book of the *Argonautica*', *CQ* 37 (1987), 129–39; A. R. Dyck, 'On the way from Colchis to Corinth: Medea in Book 4 of the *Argonautica*', *Hermes* 117 (1989), 455–70.

[5] Both Hunter (n. 2), 146–7, and Knight (n. 2), 193–4, include a brief analysis of (one of) the speeches.

[6] Knight (n. 2), 49–81, includes a chapter on 'the Homeric recurrent scene' in the *Argonautica* which discusses the sacrifice before the Argonauts set sail (1.402–49), the boxing match in Book 2 (2.1–97), and the storm which finishes this book (2.1097–1121).

[7] S. Reece, *The Stranger's Welcome: Oral Theory and the Aesthetics of the Homeric Hospitality Scene* (Michigan, 1993), 6–7, 12–39. See for a discussion of Homeric type scenes also the work of W. Arend, *Die typische Szenen bei Homer* (Berlin, 1933) and M. W. Edwards, 'Type-scenes and Homeric hospitality', *TAPhA* 105 (1975), 51–72.

[8] For the importance of the seating motif in hospitality scenes see A. F. Garvie, *Homer Odyssey Books VI–VIII* (Cambridge, 1994) on *Od.* 7.170–1 (p. 199).

important principle of Apollonian style,[9] these smaller alterations are mostly ignored by scholars or only discussed in the light of his experimentation with the genre of epic. As I shall demonstrate in this section, changes at both levels are important to consider and can help to illuminate a passage. In my discussion I shall use comparative material from both Homer and Apollonius; some comparison is made with the Odyssean Circe episode, but this is not done systematically as it is not the main aim of this section.

(b) The seating motif

The seating motif is used twice in this episode.[10] As soon as Jason and Medea have entered the palace, Circe invites them to sit down. Her offer is, however, refused and a scene of supplication and purification is started (691–4).

> Τοὺς δ' ἐν λιπαροῖσι κέλευεν
> ἧ γε θρόνοις ἕζεσθαι, ἀμηχανέουσα κιόντων·
> τὼ δ' ἄνεῳ καὶ ἄνανδοι ἐφ' ἑστίῃ ἀίξαντε
> ἵζανον, ἥ τε δίκη λυγροῖς ἱκέτῃσι τέτυκται (691–4)

She bade them sit on gleaming chairs, astonished at their coming, and both of them, speechless and silent, hastened to sit at the hearth, the right of mournful suppliants.[11]

Both parties act here according to our expectations: a host is expected to seat his guests upon arrival (691–2); suppliants, such as Jason and Medea, are expected to lower themselves as a physical symbol of their submission (693–4). Once the purification rituals for the murder of Apsyrtus have all been completed, Circe once again proceeds to seat Jason and Medea (718–20).

> Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ μάλα πάντα πονήσατο, δὴ τότ' ἔπειτα
> εἷσεν ἐπὶ ξεστοῖσιν ἀναστήσασα θρόνοισι,
> καὶ δ' αὐτὴ πέλας ἷζεν ἐνωπαδίς. (718–20)

But when she had done all her work, then she raised them up and sat them upon the polished chairs and she herself sat down nearby, face to face with them.

Seating is successful this time and host and guest are now able to sit at the same level. The act of seating thus acts as a symbol of the restored relationship between the two parties. The contrast between the two stages of the supplication ritual is further emphasized by the epithets added to the chairs on which Circe seats her visitors: their smooth gleam forms a stark contrast with the ashes of the hearth in which Medea and Jason had seated themselves earlier (691 λιπαροῖσι; 719 ξεστοῖσιν). A comparison with Odysseus' visit to the Phaeacians is instructive, as it uses a very similar sequence and shows what the reader would have expected to happen in the Apollonian passage.

[9] E.g. Knight (n. 2), 39–40.

[10] On sitting generally see J. Bremmer, 'Walking, standing, and sitting in ancient Greek culture', in J. Bremmer and H. Roodenburg (edd.), *A Cultural History of Gesture: From Antiquity to the Present Day*, (Cambridge, MA, 1991), 15–35, at 25–6.

[11] The text of Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* is cited from F. Vian (ed.), *Apollonios de Rhodes*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1976–96). All translations of the *Argonautica* are by B. H. Fowler, *Hellenistic Poetry: An Anthology* (Madison, WI, 1990) and from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* by R. Lattimore, *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago, 1951) and R. Lattimore, *The Odyssey of Homer* (New York, 1965). All references are to *Argonautica* Book 4 unless otherwise specified. Full references are kept in some footnotes where otherwise confusion would have been possible.

In *Odyssey* 7 Odysseus places himself at the hearth of the Phaeacians when he arrives at their palace, and he is raised and seated on a chair afterwards as a sign of the acceptance of his supplication (*Od.* 7.153–4, 159–60, 168–71). The parallels between the two passages are clear, but it is easy to leave it at that and miss some of the differences. In the Odyssean passage, for example, Odysseus is not offered a seat first but immediately assumes his position at the hearth. Apollonius in comparison thus emphasizes the seating motif far more by incorporating it twice in the episode. Two reasons can be given for this. First of all, Circe's immediate offer of seating to her visitors portrays her as a good host; it will prove to be important to remember this in the discussion of her refusal to offer any further hospitality to Jason and Medea at the end of this episode. In addition, the double use of the seating motif also highlights Apollonius' constant play with reader's expectations in this episode, whether these are raised by a specific Homeric model or the generic type scene. With regard to the seating motif the poet adheres to what is expected, but this is in strong contrast to what will happen immediately afterwards. Another difference between the two passages is the emphasis in the Circe episode on eye movements, a motif which, despite its similar supplication context, is not used at all in the Odyssean passage. Other Homeric models will be needed to explain Apollonius' usage of this motif and I will come back to this shortly. There are two further reasons why comparison with *Odyssey* 7 is so interesting: after Odysseus' successful supplication Echeneus, one of the Phaeacian elders, urges king Alcinous not only to seat Odysseus but also to provide him with a meal (*Od.* 7.159–66). The fact that Alcinous needs to be reminded of the correct way of proceeding adds further weight to the argument that inclusion of the seating motif at the very beginning of the Circe episode strengthens Circe's portrayal as the good host. The second reason concerns the sequence specified here: seating is commonly followed by a meal in hospitality scenes, and Echeneus' words in the *Odyssey* thus reflect the necessity of starting a proper hospitality sequence once a supplication has been completed. At the same time, his speech also shows that the ritual of supplication creates a strong reciprocal bond between suppliant and supplicated, which is then extended to that of host and guest.[12] The reader is thus led to expect a similar sequence in the Apollonian passage: our expectations are that Circe will proceed to offer a meal to Jason and Medea and that the episode will now revert to an ordinary reception scene.[13] As we shall see, these expectations will not be met. This is partly the result of the one crucial difference between the Odyssean and Apollonian scene: Odysseus adopts the position of a suppliant because he has been ship-wrecked and is in such a dire position that this is the only way in which he can obtain hospitality. Jason and Medea are, however, suppliants who need to be purified of the murder of Apsyrtus, and it is supplication, and not hospitality, which is the main aim of their visit. But before I discuss this in more detail it is worth paying more attention to the way in which Circe seats her guests.

Guests in epic are usually seated next to their host,[14] but Circe here sits Jason and Medea facing her (720 *ἐνωπαδίς*). In addition, the sheer contrast with the previous

[12] See J. B. Hainsworth (ed.), *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, *Volume 1* (Oxford, 1988) on *Od.* 6.110–250 (p. 300). A reciprocal relationship would have been established by the act of supplication itself. See J. Gould, 'Hiketeia', *JHS* 93 (1973), 74–103.

[13] As a good and proper host, Menelaus emphasizes that the all-important question of identity should not be addressed until after the guest has been honoured with a dinner and a welcome (*Od.* 3.69–70).

[14] E.g. *Il.* 24.100; *Od.* 3.37–9; *Od.* 4.51; *Od.* 7.169–71.

lack of close contact is striking (692, 697–8): Circe seats herself 'nearby' (720 πέλας). In the Homeric epics, there are several instances where the two parties are seated opposite each other. In these cases the situation is either formal,[15] or intimate and potentially sexually laden.[16] At first, the choice of seating arrangement here with its emphasis on closeness and eye contact seems to hint at a return to the Odyssean intimacy which Circe had vainly tried to establish in 687.[17] There, Circe beckoned the Argonauts to come and follow her to her palace, using a gesture which implied an intimacy beyond that of the host–guest relationship (687 χειρὶ καταρρέξασα).[18] This approach came to nothing and, although not impossible, it does not seem very likely that Circe would attempt another sexual approach after this initial failure, especially when faced with a couple rather than a single male like Odysseus (*Od.* 10.333–4). The seating arrangement thus needs to be explained differently, and I suggest a combination of three strong reasons.

The first set of reasons is provided by two further Homeric parallels. Jason's and Medea's position opposite Circe reminds us not so much of the Odyssean Circe episode or even the Phaeacian episode quoted above, but of the recognition scene between Odysseus and Penelope in *Odyssey* 23 and of Priam's supplication of Achilles for the body of his son Hector in *Iliad* 24.[19] In both Homeric scenes we find seating arrangements similar to that in the Apollonian text, with the two parties seated opposite each other. There is, however, one crucial difference from these Homeric scenes: in both *Il.* 24 and *Od.* 23 the distance between the two parties is emphasized as both Penelope and Achilles are seated 'by the opposite wall' (*Il.* 24.598 ~ *Od.* 23.90; τοίχου τοῦ ἑτέρου). The reason for the closeness of the seating arrangement in the Apollonian passage will then still need to be explained. What is important is that both Homeric passages have a strong emphasis on visual perception.[20] This is what we find here as well, and the close similarities between all three passages demonstrate that this particular, and more unusual, seating arrangement is chosen deliberately because of its opportunities for eye contact. In the Circe episode, the central importance of eye contact is emphasized immediately through the addition of ἐνωπαδίς, 'face to face' (720), an adverb echoing the Homeric *hapax legomenon* ἐνωπαδίως (*Od.* 23.94). The verbal echo provides additional proof that the recognition scene between Odysseus and Penelope is one of the models for Apollonius' Circe episode. Visual perception is closely connected with identification and *Od.* 23 will prove to be particularly important in the light of Apollonius' use of the

[15] *Il.* 9.218–19; *Il.* 24.596–8. For the formality implied by such a seating arrangement see B. Hainsworth (ed.), *The Iliad: A Commentary, Volume III: Books 9–12* (Cambridge, 1993) on *Il.* 9.218–19 (p. 92) and N. Richardson, *The Iliad: A Commentary, Volume VI: Books 21–24* (Cambridge, 1993) on *Il.* 24.596–8 (p. 339). As we shall see shortly, the main reason that this seating arrangement is chosen in *Il.* 24 is, however, to facilitate and emphasize eye contact (cf. *Il.* 24.629–33).

[16] E.g. 1.790; *Il.* 3.425; *Od.* 23.89–90. Cf. also 3.1008–10, 3.1066–7.

[17] The echo in 687 (δολοφροσύνῃσιν) of *Od.* 10.339 (δολοφρονέουσα) further raises the reader's expectations of a return to an Odyssean sequence of events.

[18] The verb καταρρέζω, which is not found elsewhere in the *Argonautica*, is in Homer often used where there is a close relationship between both parties, such as that between parent and child or husband and wife. See *Il.* 1.361, 5.372, 6.485, 24.127; *Od.* 4.610–11, 5.181.

[19] In *Od.* 10.366–7 Odysseus is seated by Circe but it is not specified how guest and host are positioned towards each other. In *Od.* 7.170–1 Odysseus is seated next to his host, replacing in a gesture of honour one of Alcinous' sons.

[20] E.g. *Il.* 24.482–4, 24.628–33; *Od.* 23.89–94, 23.107.

recognition motif, which I will analyse in the next section.[21] In addition, eye contact can also be used to visualize the tensions present in a scene and herein lies the significance of the *Iliad* 24 parallel, which shares a very similar situation to what we find in the *Argonautica*. In *Il*. 24 Homer fully exploits the tensions inherent in a meeting of killer (Achilles) and family-member of the victim (Priam).[22] Apollonius uses the same technique and in fact even takes it one step further by making killer (Medea), victim (Apsyrtus) and family-member (Circe) all closely related.

But there are further parallels between *Iliad* 24 and the Circe episode as both share the same supplication context and it is this context that provides the second reason for the seating arrangement chosen. As we have seen, a suppliant usually lowers himself physically prior to his supplication and only raises himself afterwards. Eye movements are used in a similar way in a supplication context to indicate its different stages: the lowering of the eyes signifies self-abasement and is a sign of αἰδώς, the subsequent lifting usually acceptance and success.[23] These two stages are also present in the Circe episode. At the beginning of the supplication, Medea 'puts her face in both hands' and Jason and Medea are explicitly said to avoid any eye contact with Circe (695 ἡ μὲν ἀμφοτέραις θεμένη χείρεσσι μέτωπα; 697–8 οὐδέ ποτ' ὄσσε / ἰθὺς ἐνὶ βλεφάροισιν ἀνέσχεθον). I will come back to this gesture of Medea in my discussion of 749–50 when I consider the significance of Medea's use of her veil at the very end of this episode. As soon as the rituals have been completed, Medea lifts up her eyes (726 αὐτίχ' ὅπως ἐνόησεν ἀπ' οὔδεος ὄσσε βαλοῦσαν). Seating Jason and Medea opposite Circe in a position which involves eye contact thus strengthens and continues the symbolism inherent in the very act of raising and seating itself. But there is a third factor which influences this choice of seating: eyes are also a means of identification. This is especially true in the case of the descendants of the Helios family whose eyes are their defining characteristic (727–9).[24]

In fact, the Argonauts recognize Circe immediately, as soon as they see her eyes, at the beginning of the hospitality sequence (683).

> Τὼς οἵ γε φυὴν ἀίδηλοι ἔποντο,
> ἤρωας δ' ἕλε θάμβος ἀπείριτον. Αἶψα δ' ἕκαστος,
> Κίρκης εἶς τε φυὴν εἶς τ' ὄμματα παπταίνοντες,
> ῥεῖα κασιγνήτην φάσαν ἔμμεναι Αἰήταο. (681–4)

So these creatures, formless of nature, followed her. Enormous wonder seized the heroes. At once as each gazed at the form and face of Circe, they easily guessed that she was Aeetes' sister.

Their recognition of Circe comes immediately after a description of the remarkable animals following her and we would have expected the Argonauts to be wondering

[21] Knight (n. 2), 191, n. 221, also notes this parallel but reaches a rather different conclusion when she states that 'the situation here is similar since the two parties do not both admit to recognising the other, a member of their family'.

[22] Cf. especially *Il*. 24.477–84, 505–12.

[23] See Gould (n. 12), 88, n. 74 and Bremmer (n. 10), 25–6. Conversely, Amycus' lack of αἰδώς towards Polydeuces is visible from his aggressive use of eye contact. See on this also D. L. Cairns, *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford, 1993), 98–9, n. 151. Similarly, when Medea confronts Jason about the breaking of his oaths, she does so ἐνωπαδίς, 'face to face'(354).

[24] See 1.172–73, 3.886, 4.683–4, 4.1651–88.

about the exact identity of these;[25] instead, and rather unexpectedly, the focus is on Circe herself, a surprise which is emphasized by the repetition of *φυὴν* in 681 and 683. It is worth noting that the eye contact is apparently one-sided: often, in a hospitality scene, the visitors catch sight of their host first, but the related motif, in which the host is explicitly said to see his guests, is omitted in this episode.[26] Circe must have seen the Argonauts in order to beckon them to follow her (687), but no indication of this is given in the text and the first reference to visual perception on Circe's part comes only in 726 (*ἐνόησεν*). As a result of this and of the Argonauts' early recognition of their host, suspense is certainly built up: the reader is made to think about Circe's inevitable recognition of Medea and her reaction once she realizes that she is confronted with a killer from within her own family. Circe is tellingly called '*Aeetes*' sister' (684 *κασιγνήτην . . . Αἰήταο*), a designation which emphasizes the close links between brother and sister, and predicts where Circe's loyalties will lie. It also foreshadows the nature of Circe's response: throughout the *Argonautica* the king's fury is stressed (e.g. 3.371–2, 607; 4.8–9, 234–5).

(c) The identity motif

The Argonauts' early recognition of Circe leads us to the next section and a further analysis of Apollonius' use of the identity motif in this episode. The question of identity is of crucial importance in most hospitality scenes and this passage is no exception. Apollonius employs a number of different methods to highlight the significance of this motif. First of all, the number of times the recognition motif is repeated throughout the episode is in itself indicative of its importance. As we have just seen, the motif's significance is highlighted immediately by the contrast between the Argonauts' eye contact and their subsequent early identification of their host, and by the lack of information regarding Circe in this respect. In addition, the motif's significance is obvious from the close link between the seating and identity motif: seating Medea opposite her aunt leads to eye contact and recognition, even if this is, as I believe, only partial. Finally, the departure of the expected order of events in 720 once again highlights this motif: instead of first offering her guests a meal as a good host would do and only then asking for information concerning the guest's identity, Circe omits to offer a meal and immediately proceeds to question Medea.[27]

> *Αἶψα δὲ μύθῳ*
> *χρειὼ ναυτιλίην τε διακριδὸν ἐξερέεινεν,*
> *ἠδ' ὁπόθεν μετὰ γαῖαν ἐὴν καὶ δώματ' ἰόντες*
> *αὖτως ἱδρύθησαν ἐφέστιοι. ˚Η γὰρ ὀνείρων*
> *μνῆστις ἀεικελίη δῦνεν φρένας ὁρμαίνουσαν·*

[25] The reader is certainly made to wonder about what kind of creatures follow the goddess, and the fact that their identification is problematic is shown by the use of a large number of similes and negatives in the description of the animals (672–84).

[26] For the use of these motifs in Homer see Reece (n. 7), 14 and 17. It is interesting to consider the first motif ('the guest catching sight of the host') in more detail. As in the majority of the Homeric examples of this motif, Argonauts are said to 'find' their host engaged in certain activities (663 *εὗρον*; cf. *Od.* 1.106, 4.3, 7.136, 10.113, 14.5). However, in all the Odyssean examples quoted, no specific verb of seeing is used, and comparison thus shows how much more eye contact is emphasized in the *Argonautica*.

[27] E.g. *Il.* 9.199–222, 11.642–3; *Od.* 1.123–52, 3.65–8, 7.167–85. Cf. Knight (n. 2), 191, who in contrast highlights how at this point 'the scene conforms more closely to the conventions of a welcoming scene'.

ἵετο δ' αὖ κούρης ἐμφύλιον ἴδμεναι ὀμφήν,
αὐτίχ' ὅπως ἐνόησεν ἀπ' οὔδεος ὄσσε βαλοῦσαν.
Πᾶσα γὰρ Ἠελίου γενεὴ ἀρίδηλος ἰδέσθαι
ἦεν, ἐπεὶ βλεφάρων ἀποτηλόθι μαρμαρυγῇσιν
οἷόν τε χρυσέην ἀντώπιον ἴεσαν αἴγλην. (720–9)

At once she asked them precisely about their quest and their voyage and then from where they had come to her land and palace to sit like this at her hearth, for the memory of her unseemly deeds entered in her mind as she pondered, and she longed to know the kindred voice of the girl as soon as she saw her lift her eyes from the ground. For all the race of Helios was conspicuous to see, since by the sparkle from afar of their eyes they cast a beam of gold, as it were opposite them.

The change in the expected sequence of hospitality motifs is also stressed by the treatment of time in these lines. The chronological order is interrupted, and what happens in 723–9 comes strictly speaking before the asking of the questions in 720–1. Explanations are given in 723–9 for Circe's unexpected questioning, but, despite these, it is still not entirely clear why Circe did not want to give her visitors a meal or why she would immediately want to know their identity. Usually these two questions are taken as one, but it will prove to be important to try to answer each question separately.

To start with the latter question, scholars usually suggest that Circe immediately recognizes Medea and, consumed by homesickness, wants to talk to her niece as soon as possible.[28] Nostalgia on the part of Circe is, however, only assumed and relies solely on what is said in line 725 (*ἵετο δ' αὖ κούρης ἐμφύλιον ἴδμεναι ὀμφήν*); Circe herself does not explain anything about her feelings or background nor does Aeetes give a reason why Circe lives so far away from Colchis when he boasts about his journey with Circe in book three (3.309–13).

But there are further difficulties with this interpretation: if we assume that Circe immediately identifies her niece, then the interpretation of *ὁπόθεν* (722), *ὁρμαίνουσαν* (724) and *ἴδμεναι* (725) becomes problematic. Vian denies nostalgia as a motif and states that Circe simply wants to know the identity of the stranger, translating 725 as 'en outre, elle désirait savoir si la jeune fille parlait la langue de sa race'.[29] Perhaps we could formulate it more sharply: the crucial question seems to be whether Circe recognizes the girl as her niece Medea or simply as someone related to Helios' *γενεή*.[30] The extra and more general information given in 727–9, which stresses the special radiance of the eyes of *all* members of Helios' family in general, supports the latter option (727 *πᾶσα*). This point is further strengthened by the fact that even in the *Argonautica* itself not all descendants of Helios come from Colchis: Augeias, the ruler of the Eleans, is mentioned in the epic's opening catalogue as one of the Argonauts and a son of Helios (1.172–5).

Favouring only a partial recognition of the girl as a family member but not specifically as Medea solves the problems I mentioned above. It clarifies why Circe would want 'to know' rather than simply hear the girl's voice (725 *ἴδμεναι*). The use of this verb only makes sense if we assume that the knowledge she has acquired through visual perception (726 *ἐνόησεν*; 727 *ἰδέσθαι*) needs to be supplemented with further aural information to come to a full identification.[31] Homeric parallels once again

[28] Knight (n. 2) 193.
[29] F. Vian, *Apollonios de Rhodes: Argonautiques, Chant IV* (Paris 1996), on 725 (p. 174).
[30] Cf. 717 *ἐμφύλῳ*; 725 *ἐμφύλιον*.
[31] Cf. 4.72–3, where Medea's voice is also used as a means of identification.

support this argument. In *Il*. 20, Aeneas and Achilles meet on the battlefield and exchange the traditional round of speeches before the fighting starts (*Il*. 20.176–259). In this case, recognition between the two warriors is not a problem, but it is interesting that with respect to the identity of their ancestry Aeneas makes a similar distinction between knowledge based on aural (203 *ἴδμεν*; 204 *ἀκούοντες*) and visual perception (205 *ὄψει . . . ἴδες*).

> *ἴδμεν δ' ἀλλήλων γενεήν, ἴδμεν δὲ τοκῆας,*
> *πρόκλυτ' ἀκούοντες ἔπεα θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων·*
> *ὄψει δ' οὔτ' ἄρ πω σὺ ἐμοὺς ἴδες οὔτ' ἄρ' ἐγὼ σούς.* (*Il*. 20.203–5)

You and I know each other's birth, we both know our parents since we have heard the lines of their fame from mortal men; only I have never with my eyes seen your parents, nor have you seen mine.

A much more elaborate use of identification motifs can be found in *Od*. 23. In this protracted recognition scene, which forms the climax of a whole series of such episodes in the *Odyssey*, merely seeing or talking to her husband is not enough for Penelope, who insists on additional proof of Odysseus' identity.

> *ὄψει δ' ἄλλοτε μέν μιν ἐνωπαδίως ἐσίδεσκεν,*
> *ἄλλοτε δ' ἀγνώσασκε κακὰ χροὶ εἵματ' ἔχοντα.* (*Od*. 23.94–5)

Sometimes she [Penelope] would look at him [Odysseus], with her eyes full upon him, and again would fail to know him in the foul clothing he wore.

> *οὐδέ τι προσφάσθαι δύναμαι ἔπος οὐδ' ἐρέεσθαι*
> *οὐδ' εἰς ὦπα ἰδέσθαι ἐναντίον. εἰ δ' ἐτεὸν δὴ*
> *ἔστ' Ὀδυσεὺς καὶ οἶκον ἱκάνεται, ἦ μάλα νῶϊ*
> *γνωσόμεθ' ἀλλήλων καὶ λώϊον· ἔστι γὰρ ἡμῖν*
> *σήματ', ἃ δὴ καὶ νῶϊ κεκρυμμένα ἴδμεν ἀπ' ἄλλων.* (*Od*. 23.106–10)

and I cannot find anything to say to him, nor question him, nor look him straight in the face. But if he is truly Odysseus, and he has come home, then we shall find other ways, and better, to recognize each other, for we have signs that we know of between the two of us only, but they are secret from others.

Both passages from *Od*. 23 show the link between recognition and knowledge, but whereas the first passage shows how, contrary to what may have been expected, 'seeing' does not lead to recognition (*Od*. 23.94 *ἐσίδεσκεν*; *Od*. 23.95 *ἀγνώσασκε*), the second passage stresses how aural information, as suggested by Telemachus (*Od*. 23.98–9), is also not enough (*Od*. 23.106–7) and additional proof is needed (*Od*. 23.109 *γνωσόμεθ'*; *Od*. 23.110 *ἴδμεν*).

In the Circe episode, attention is similarly drawn to the central importance of the recognition motif by the number of different identification elements used. This time, however, its significance is marked not by the addition of further, separate signs, but by attaching a unique feature to both visual and aural perception. We have already seen how the poet mentions the characteristic eyes of the race of Helios as soon as there is eye contact (683–4, 726–9). Now the narrator specifies that Medea's response to Circe's questioning is in Colchian (731 *Κολχίδα γῆρυν ἱεῖσα*). The addition of such information is unusual and further reinforces my argument for a mere partial recognition: the language spoken forms an important part of the identification process. It is for this very reason that *ἴδμεναι* rather than a general verb of 'hearing' is used in 725 (*ἴετο δ' αὖ κούρης ἐμφύλιον ἴδμεναι ὀμφήν*). *Οἶδα*, a verb used to

describe 'knowledge gained through eye witness or direct observation',[32] is often particularly associated with visual perception;[33] here, on the other hand, it is linked with aural perception, a form of cognition 'the Greeks thought immeasurably inferior to seeing, since the latter sense yielded incomparably more certain knowledge'.[34] In view of this, it may seem odd that in this Circe episode especially, where both protagonists are renowned for their extraordinary vision, aural perception plays such a crucial role. Further comparison with the Odyssean examples quoted above, however, demonstrates the crucial difference between these passages and the Apollonian situation: in the latter case we encounter aural perception of a very special kind, as it is not so much hearsay, or even the information given directly by the person interviewed, but the language spoken which completes Circe's identification. I will come back to Apollonius' use of a foreign language reference in the next section, in which I analyse the exchange of speeches and line 731 in particular.

This reading of 720–9 also explains the closeness of the seating arrangement and solves the difficulties concerning the translation of ὁπόθεν in 722. If, like Vian and Hunter, we assume that Circe knows who Medea is, then ὁπόθεν is indeed problematic.[35] Both therefore translate ὁπόθεν as 'why' rather than 'from where'. However, if Circe does not know where exactly Medea or indeed the Argonauts have come from, then there is no need to force the translation of the interrogative and disregard the much more obvious translation of ὁπόθεν as 'from where'. Finally, it is not very likely that Circe would be portrayed as 'pondering anxiously' her dream (724 ὁρμαίνουσαν) if she had full knowledge of the situation. The facts that no words of knowledge are used in or directly following Circe's dream and that it is not mentioned whether or not she has understood its prophetic message strengthen this interpretation. Circe's portrayal is rather ambiguous in this respect: although she displays knowledge at some points,[36] it is her lack of understanding that catches the eye. When she first invites Jason and Medea to sit down, she is said to be ἀμηχανέουσα κιόντων (692).[37] Her ignorance is contrasted with the ease (684 ῥεῖα) with which every single Argonaut is able to identify her (682 ἕκαστος).

Apollonius' portrayal of Circe is ironic in view of the prophetic knowledge she displays in the Odyssean Circe episode. There, Circe tells Odysseus all about his visit to the Underworld and adventures afterwards.[38] In this episode, Circe wrongly predicts Aeetes' attack on Greece (740–2). Circe is clearly not the prophetic goddess we know from the *Odyssey* and some of the confusion described above is caused by our expectations of her Odyssean behaviour. Apollonius indeed plays with his reader's expectations concerning Circe's knowledge when he uses the juxtaposition of ἴδμεναι and ὀμφήν in 725. The great prophetess is in need of knowledge, whereas the girl's voice is described as an ὀμφή (725), a noun which, in Homer and Apollonius, is associated above all with prophetic utterances.[39] It is, however, the human voice of the

[32] J. S. Clay, *The Wrath of Athena: Gods and Men in the Odyssey* (Princeton, 1983), 12.
[33] E.g. 2.777, 2.1047–8; *Od.* 16.470.
[34] Clay (n. 32), 12.
[35] R. L. Hunter, *Apollonius of Rhodes: Jason and the Golden Fleece (Argonautica)* (Oxford, 1993), 115; Vian (n. 29), 102.
[36] 698 αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω; 726 ἐνόησεν; 737 τὴν δ' οὔ τι νόῳ λάθεν.
[37] Vian (n. 29), 100, n. 5.
[38] *Od.* 10.330–2, 10.488–540, 12.37–141.
[39] Although ὀμφή is used later in tragedy of voice and sound in general, in Homer it is always used of the gods (*Il.* 2.41, 20.129; *Od.* 3.215) and elsewhere in Ap. Rhod. of a 'prophetic voice' (3.939, 4.1382). This usage is noted but not explained by Vian (n. 29), on 725 (p. 174). Ἐμφύλιον

girl that will provide clarity and show Circe how to interpret the situation. Apollonius once again thwarts our expectations, this time by emphasising a different, and distinctly mortal, side of Circe's character.[40]

(d) The sharing of the meal

We could conclude, then, that it is mere eagerness on the part of Circe which is responsible for this deviation from the normal hospitality pattern: Circe has partially recognized the girl and now wants to complete the identification process as soon as possible. But a further, and far more important, reason could be given, and this is where I return to the first question I asked: why would Circe want to avoid giving them a meal? From the reception scenes that we have, it is clear that the sharing of a meal marks a particularly important stage in the hospitality procedures. In Homer, for example, Odysseus does not want to share a meal with Circe till he has achieved the goal he has come for (*Od.* 10.375–87); in *Iliad* 24, it is the sharing of the meal and the eating itself which symbolizes Priam's return from mourning and Achilles' return to humanity (*Il.* 24.601–28). The most important example for our interpretation of Apollonius' Circe episode, however, comes from the *Argonautica* itself when Aeetes admits that he is not able to do anything against the Argonauts now that they have shared a meal (3.377–80). By not offering her visitors a meal first Circe is thus shown to be concerned to leave her options open and, crucially, not to enter further into a relationship of reciprocity.[41] In fact, there is yet another departure from convention in these lines: the natural and expected progression from lowly suppliant to honoured guest, as seen earlier in the Phaeacian episode (*Od.* 7.162–6), is also abandoned. Because of the highly unusual circumstances, Circe appears to be able to make the offer of hospitality conditional on the knowledge of her guest's identity. I shall come back to this in my discussion of Circe's speech.

III. THE EXCHANGE OF SPEECHES

(a) Speech modes and introductions

Before I discuss first Medea's speech (730–6) and then Circe's reaction (737–49), it is worth spending some time on the form of both speeches and their speech introductions.

(725) echoes ἐμφύλῳ in 717 and reminds the reader once more of the crime committed by Medea. As a result, suspense is raised for the inevitable encounter.

[40] On the stress on the human side of Circe's character see also Knight (n. 2), 195. This portrayal of Circe coincides with the minimal role of the gods in this episode. Although it is highly likely that Circe's prophetic dream has been god-sent, this is not stated explicitly, and there is no evidence that the gods are actively involved in the episode itself. Hera's actions, for example, only frame the episode (646–8, 753–6), Zeus's reaction to the rituals is not recorded, and Iris, Hera's messenger, is merely watching the palace to see when Jason and Medea leave Circe's abode. After the initial involvement of the two supreme gods to bring Jason and Medea to Circe's palace, everything is left in Circe's hands.

[41] This provides again a set of parallels and contrasts with the Circe episode in the *Odyssey* where hospitality is also problematic. There, it is Odysseus who refuses a meal until an agreement has been reached. In the *Odyssey*, Circe wants to make her visitors forgetful of their own country (*Od.* 10.236), in the *Argonautica* she refuses even to receive them.

Αἶψα δὲ μύθῳ
χρειὼ ναυτιλίην τε διακριδὸν ἐξερέεινεν,
ἠδ' ὁπόθεν μετὰ γαῖαν ἐὴν καὶ δώματ' ἰόντες
αὖτως ἱδρύθησαν ἐφέστιοι. (720–3)

At once she asked them precisely about their quest and their voyage and then from where they had come to her land and palace to sit like this at her hearth.

The wording of Circe's questions has no direct parallels in Homer, but it does echo parts of the Homeric formulae used to introduce such a request for information. The narrator first of all emphasizes Circe's desire for accuracy. This can be seen in the combination of διακριδὸν ἐξερέεινεν in line 721, which echoes Circe's questioning of Odysseus (*Od.* 12.34 ἐξερέεινεν ἕκαστα). Instead of the Odyssean ἕκαστα, which, rather misleadingly, is used to introduce Medea's response in 730, Apollonius uses διακριδόν, 'in detail' (721). In 730, διειρομένῃ, 'question closely', once again stresses the precision demanded by Circe. Although the need for a detailed, and therefore truthful, answer is a standard motif in such questions,[42] its repetition not only underlines Medea's subsequent attempt at deception, but it also supports my hypothesis of a lack of knowledge on Circe's part. Ὁπόθεν (722), which, as we shall see, is problematic in itself, is used in the two formulas which Homer often uses in these instances (for example, ὦ ξεῖνοι, τίνες ἐστέ; πόθεν πλεῖθ' ὑγρὰ κέλευθα and τίς πόθεν εἶς ἀνδρῶν; πόθι τοι πόλις ἠδὲ τοκῆες).[43] The echo of this interrogative shows how different Apollonius' phrasing is and highlights the omission of the first part of the question, the explicit asking for the identity of the speaker. This is remarkable: that both parts would have been expected can be seen in the opening scene of Book 2, where the narrator aptly characterizes king Amycus' lack of civilisation by his scorning of both these questions (2.8–9 καὶ δὲ τότε, προτὶ νῆα κιών, χρειὼ μὲν ἐρέσθαι / ναυτιλίης οἵ τ' εἶεν ὑπερβασίῃσιν ἄτισσε). It is, however, not the case that both questions are always present: in Book 3, Argus is explicitly asked for the identity of the Argonauts accompanying him and his brothers, but rather pointedly not for the purpose of their visit (3.315–6 εἶπατ' ἀριφραδέως, ἠδ' οἵ τινες οἵδ' ἐφέπονται / ἀνέρες, ὅππῃ τε γλαφυρῆς ἐκ νηὸς ἔβητε). In the Circe episode, the situation is, of course, more complicated with the already partial recognition of Medea. As said before, Circe merely needs to hear Medea's voice to come to a full identification, and so there is no need to ask this question in Medea's case. What is perhaps more surprising is Circe's omission to enquire after the names of the Argonauts. A request for this may well be implied through the more general questions she poses and its absence certainly does not portray Circe as a bad host.

Most scholars note that a different speech mode is chosen for each of the two speeches: Medea's response to Circe's questioning is only given in indirect discourse (732–6), whereas Circe's subsequent reply (739–48) is given in *oratio recta*.[44] Circe's words are thus as it were 'spotlighted'.[45] It is important, however, to look further back and note to what extent her speech is the dramatic climax of the entire episode, which is carefully constructed with silence (693), gesture (686–7 and, possibly, 719), the mere mention of speech acts (684, 691, 708, 713), and indirect speech (720–3, 730–8),

[42] E.g. *Od.* 1.169, 8.572 ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι τόδε εἰπὲ καὶ ἀτρεκέως κατάλεξον. Cf. also 3.315.
[43] E.g. *Od.* 3.71, 9.252, 1.170, 10.325, 14.187.
[44] E.g. Hunter (n. 2), 146–7.
[45] A. Laird, *Powers of Expression, Expressions of Power: Speech Representations in Latin Literature* (Oxford, 1999), 101.

finally giving way to the first, and only, direct speech of the episode.[46] This list also makes it clear that, although there are many opportunities for the narrator to include direct speech, he deliberately chooses not to do so until the very end of the episode.[47] Three reasons can be given for the use of *oratio recta* for Circe's speech: it is first of all an indication of the importance of her words, but, at the same time, there is also a close connection between the choice of speech mode and her position of authority and power. A third, additional, and more prosaic reason for the choice of this particular combination of speeches is the fact that Medea's information is not new for the reader. Within a hospitality context, speeches from guests to hosts which consist of a recapitulation of events already known to the reader or audience are often given as a summary in either indirect or direct speech in order to avoid unnecessary repetition.[48] Indirect speech is, of course, by its very nature extremely suitable for such summaries. Within this indirect speech both a summary in the first part (732–3) and something much more akin to direct speech in the second are used (734–6).[49] There is a clear difference in detail between the two parts, and the emotive vocabulary in the latter, for us more interesting, section in which Medea seeks to defend her choices and actions, echoes that used by her on earlier occasions, thus reinforcing the impression that we are given here her own words.[50] These are also the sentences on which Circe will concentrate in her reply. We cannot say, however, that 'Circe does not show an interest in hearing about their previous adventures'.[51] The goddess explicitly asks for an account of these in her initial question, but then hardly comes back to this in her speech. This is in itself more an indication of her deliberate rejection of the Argonauts than of her lack of interest in their adventures. But, as we shall see, there are also very good reasons for Circe's focus on the arguments used by Medea in 734–6.

The speech mode chosen for Medea's speech itself and the summary form chosen for its content ensure that the reader is kept ignorant concerning the exact content of her speech. This lack of knowledge is shared by Jason, as the exchange is said to be conducted in the Colchian language. In the myths surrounding Medea, she is usually the outsider; here, Jason is cast in this role.

> *Ἡ δ' ἄρα τῇ τὰ ἕκαστα διειρομένη κατέλεξε,*
> *Κολχίδα γῆρυν ἱεῖσα, βαρύφρονος Αἰήταο*
> *κούρη μειλιχίως* (730–2)

Medea recounted all that she asked, gently, in the Colchian tongue, the daughter of melancholy Aeetes.

[46] On the experimentation with means of communication see also Knight (n. 2), 192–3, who rather emphasizes Apollonius' use of non-verbal communication in this episode.

[47] For example, the use of *μύθῳ* (720) seems at first sight rather superfluous, but serves a definite purpose in that it once again thwarts the reader's expectations of a direct speech and simultaneously highlights its omission. Medea's and Jason's initial supplication is also highly unusual in that it uses only gesture and no speech. See on this M. G. Plantinga, 'The supplication motif in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*', in M. A. Harder, R. F. Regtuit and G. C. Wakker (edd.), *Apollonius Rhodius*, Hellenistica Groningana 4 (Leuven, 2000), 105–28, at 119.

[48] E.g. *Od.* 12.35, 23.306–41.

[49] Laird (n. 45), 95, calls this mimetic indirect discourse.

[50] E.g. *ἤλιτε* (734) ~ *παρήλιτον* (3.891). *Ἄλυξεν* (735) is a strong, emotive word, often associated with a flight from destruction (cf. *Il.* 10.371; *Od.* 12.335). On indirect questions rendering the imagined original see also Hunter (n. 2), 147, and Laird (n. 45), 100.

[51] Knight (n. 2), 193.

This is the only time in the *Argonautica* that a reference to a foreign language is added to a speech introduction (731 *Κολχίδα γῆρυν ἱεῖσα*), although the reader has been prepared for this by the earlier reference to Circe's desire to hear her niece speaking in her own language (725 *ἐμφύλιον . . . ὀμφήν*). In my discussion of 725 above, I stressed the importance of this line for the poet's development of the identification motif. Here, I would like to return to the language issue and develop my analysis slightly further. The first point worth noting is that, since the reference to Medea's speaking in the Colchian tongue is followed by a speech in *oratio obliqua*, technically speaking, no practical problems are created for the poet; already in the next speech, when Circe is speaking herself, the more usual pattern in epic and tragedy of ignoring the problem of the existence of different languages is followed again.[52] This is indeed the normal pattern in the *Argonautica*: language is, for example, not mentioned as a defining characteristic of the Colchians when they are introduced in Book 3, where such information may have been expected by the reader.[53] In the Circe episode itself there have so far not been any references to the foreign character of the Colchians: the issue was, for example, not raised in relation to the purification ceremony (700–18). Unlike Herodotus, who explicitly states that the purification rituals adopted by king Croesus are identical to those used in Greece, and unlike Euripides, who in *IT* 1337–8, in a similar Black Sea setting, chooses to emphasize the difference in ritual by reference to language, Apollonius chooses to ignore the problem altogether.[54]

A closer look at the wording of the introduction to Medea's speech confirms once again how unusual such foreign language references are in epic, as the word used to describe her speech is *γῆρυν* (731), a Homeric *hapax legomenon* used in *Il*. 4.437 to refer to the different languages spoken by those fighting on the Trojan side. There, the emphasis was on both the sound and incomprehensibility resulting from the mixing of a large number of foreign languages (*Il*. 4.433–8). The verbal echo thus further reinforces the idea that there is a 'linguistic barrier' in front of Jason.[55] As we have seen, the reference to the language spoken forms an important part of the formal identification process, but, as a result, it also serves to stress the natural bond between aunt and niece, and thus emphasizes the enormity of Medea's decision to help Jason. The fact that Circe interrogates Medea rather than Jason illustrates that at this point the meeting turns out to be primarily an encounter between aunt and niece. What started as a meeting between all the Argonauts and Circe (661–89), quickly becomes an encounter between Jason, Medea and Circe (689–724), and eventually just between

[52] On references to foreign language in the Homeric epics see O. Taplin, *Homeric Soundings: The Shaping of the Iliad* (Oxford, 1992), 113; in tragedy see E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford, 1989), 19–21; in Herodotus T. Harrison, 'Herodotus' conception of foreign languages', *Histos* (1988), 1–32, esp. at 7. As Apollonius' practice does not differ in essence from that adopted by his literary predecessors, it seems rather naive to consider this reference merely as a sign of his interest in realism, a concern often mentioned as typically Hellenistic.

[53] F. Graf, 'Medea, the enchantress from afar: remarks on a well-known myth', in J. J. Clauss and S. I. Johnston (edd.), *Medea: Essays on Medea in Myth, Literature, Philosophy and Art* (Princeton, 1997), 21–43, at 27–8.

[54] Hdt. 1.35 *παρελθὼν δὲ οὗτος ἐς τὰ Κροίσου οἰκία κατὰ νόμους τοὺς ἐπιχωρίους καθαρσίου ἐδέετο κυρῆσαι, Κροῖσος δέ μιν ἐκάθηρε. ἔστι δὲ παραπλησίη ἡ κάθαρσις τοῖσι Λυδοῖσι καὶ τοῖσι Ἕλλησι*. Eur. *IT* 1337–8 *ἀνωλόλυξε καὶ κατῇδε βάρβαρα / μέλη μαγεύουσ', ὡς φόνον νίζουσα δή*.

[55] See on Apollonius' use of foreign language in general also Hunter (n. 2), 146–7, and Knight (n. 2), 193.

Medea and Circe (725–50). This is further confirmed by the episode's references to Medea's origins and to the various family connections: Medea is called the Colchian maid (689), Circe Aeetes' sister (684), Apsyrtus Aeetes' son (697). Finally, even though Jason is in this episode the 'foreigner', Medea's use of her native tongue finally also underlines her 'otherness' at a moment when once again the ties with her family are severed and the doomed bond between Jason and Medea is emphasized.[56]

(b) Medea's speech (730–8)

In this section, I will concentrate on Apollonius' use of the adverb μειλιχίως (732), the supplicatory form of Medea's speech, and the purpose of its various components. As said, the speech falls into two parts: only giving the standard, conventionally phrased information concerning the heroes' journey, Medea first emphasizes in her speech the 'swift struggles' the heroes have gone through (733 ὅσα τ' ἀμφὶ θοοῖς ἐμόγησαν ἀέθλοις) before she concentrates on her own precarious position and blames both herself (734 ἤλιτε) and her father and sister (734 βουλαῖς).[57]

Ἡ δ' ἄρα τῇ τὰ ἕκαστα διειρομένῃ κατέλεξε,
Κολχίδα γῆρυν ἱεῖσα, βαρύφρονος Αἰήταο
κούρη μειλιχίως, ἠμὲν στόλον ἠδὲ κελεύθους
ἡρώων, ὅσα τ' ἀμφὶ θοοῖς ἐμόγησαν ἀέθλοις,
ὥς τε κασιγνήτης πολυκηδέος ἤλιτε βουλαῖς,
ὥς τ' ἀπονόσφιν ἄλυξεν ὑπέρβια δείματα πατρὸς
σὺν παισὶν Φρίξοιο. Φόνον δ' ἀλέεινεν ἐνισπεῖν
Ἀψύρτου, τὴν δ' οὔ τι νόῳ λάθεν· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπης
μυρομένην ἐλέαιρεν, ἔπος δ' ἐπὶ τοῖον ἔειπε· (730–8)

Medea recounted all that she asked, gently, in the Colchian tongue, the daughter of melancholy Aeetes: the heroes' quest, their journey's path, and all that they laboured in the quick contests and how she had sinned in her counsels with her sorrowing sister and how she had fled with the sons of Phrixus the frightening force of her father, but she shunned speaking of the murder of Apsyrtus, but she did not deceive Circe, who nevertheless pitied the grieving girl and spoke to her with words like these.

Not much detail is given about the Argonauts' adventures. It is important, however, to keep in mind that Medea only *seems* to give a rather sketchy account of the adventures of the Argonauts; as a result of the form chosen, the reader cannot check this. What is clear, however, is the function of this part of her speech: within a hospitality scene the information given during the traditional exchange of speeches is designed to bestow honour upon the hero or group of heroes.[58] That Medea's account serves this function becomes clear from the fact that she calls their struggles 'swift' (733: θοοῖς), which emphasizes the Argonauts' ease in overcoming their labours. At the same time, the epithet is also especially appropriate in a summary and, as a result, its use draws the reader's attention once again to the form chosen for the speech.

[56] See also Bremmer (n. 3), 100, on Medea's severing of all her family ties by the killing of her brother Apsyrtus (421–81).

[57] Ἁλιταίνω belongs to the language of transgression and error, and refers to acts of 'deliberate malice' (cf. *Il.* 24.157–8), often in the sight of the gods or with regards to the transgression of principles (such as those of hospitality or supplication) which are protected by the gods (cf. 3.891–3, 4.1023, 4.1057). See also N. R. E. Fisher, *Hybris* (London, 1992), 153–4.

[58] E.g. 2.762–71.

To try to win κλέος for the Argonauts is only one of the aims of her speech; a second, and far more important, purpose is to try to 'soften' her aunt towards her. This is already indicated in the speech introduction by μειλιχίως, 'gently', 'in a winning way' (732); her speech will constitute an appeal for pity and is interpreted as such by Circe (748).[59] Medea evidently hopes, as Nestor already remarked, that 'soft answers will turn away wrath' (*Il.* 9.113). The omens are not good: in 3.319 Argus' speech to Aeetes introducing the Argonauts was also said to be spoken μειλιχίως. Despite this, Argus does not manage to avoid Aeetes' anger and the tyrant's fury as a result of Argus' speech is described at length (3.367–71). Jason's own attempt at using his famed μειλιχίη on the king also meets with very limited success (3.385). These precedents give a rather worrying prediction of the reaction of Circe, who is, after all, Aeetes' sister. The verbal echo of μειλιχίως makes it clear that the reader is meant to be reminded here of Aeetes' reaction to similar mollifying attempts, and this is further reinforced through the reference to βαρύφρονος Αἰήταο in 731, immediately preceding the adverb. There is some discussion about this epithet among scholars, but their debate focuses on focalization rather than on allusion. Vian, for example, thinks that this epithet reflects Medea's opinion of Aeetes, whereas Hunter considers this to be unlikely in view of the adverb μειλιχίως accompanying the speech introduction.[60] As Hunter points out, Homeric practice for deciding whether or not there is focalization here is difficult because of the much higher percentage of emotive words in the narrator's text.[61] The presence of an emotionally coloured adjective in the narrator's text in the *Argonautica* therefore does not automatically mean that a character's focalization is present. I think that we have to accept that the position of the epithet in the narrator's text is ambiguous, and believe that looking at the same line from the perspective of allusion offers an alternative, and perhaps more solid, way of interpreting it.

There is one further aspect of the use of μειλιχίως that should be considered: the use of the adverb, as indeed the medium of indirect speech itself, can also be seen to foreshadow Medea's attempt at deception (cf. 3.982–3 μηδέ με τερπνοῖς / φηλώσῃς ἐπέεσσιν).[62] In this case even the reader is initially deceived: although Medea is said to tell Circe everything in detail (730 τὰ ἕκαστα . . . κατέλεξε),[63] in reality, in a vain attempt to gloss over the past and to conceal the murder of Apsyrtus, she does not tell why they have come to visit Circe (722–3).[64]

Because of its appeal for pity, Medea's speech can be classified as a supplication. It is interesting that, so soon after the successful completion of the first supplication, a second supplication is needed. It will be important to explore the reasons for this in

[59] For the use of this verb in relation to supplications see also 1012 and 1026.

[60] Vian (n. 29), 102, n. 4; Hunter (n. 2), 147.

[61] Hunter (n. 2), 109.

[62] In the *Argonautica* the connection between indirect speech and deceit and secrecy is particularly strong. See on this also Hunter (n. 2), 145.

[63] Completeness is further feigned by the use of ὅσα (733), ὥς (734) and ὥς (735) (cf. *Od.* 23.309).

[64] Because of the indirect speech, we, as the readers, need to be informed that she indeed did not speak about this. It seems clear from the summary, but we could not have been sure because of the medium chosen. Contrary to what Knight says (n. 2), 193, we do not know the content of the speeches. The nature of indirect speech is also responsible for the confusion about ἀέθλοις in 733: does this just refer to the task imposed by Aeetes (Vian [n. 29], 102, n. 4) or, more generally, to the adventures of the entire voyage (e.g. E. Livrea [ed.], *Apollonii Rhodii Argonauticon liber quartus* [Florence, 1973] on 733 [pp. 221–2]).

detail. More generally, supplications are characterized by the inequality of the two parties involved. As said, Medea's subordinate position towards Circe is reflected by the form chosen for both speeches, but this can also be inferred from the episode's constant emphasis on Medea's youth (κούρη, 689, 725, 732). But Medea's age is stressed for a further reason: for young girls like Medea their reputation in both their own eyes and in those of others is extremely important.[65] 'What will the people say' is constantly on their mind. Usually these are only the 'hypothetical judgements of a fantasy audience',[66] but here, in a confrontation with her aunt, Medea's worst fears are to be confirmed.[67] As we shall see, Medea is guilty of a lack of αἰδώς herself as a result of her actions, but the condemnatory epithet she uses of her father in her speech is cleverly associated with ὕβρις (735 ὑπέρβια δείματα), the opposite of αἰδώς.[68] By attributing ὕβρις to her father and the planning behind everything to her sister, and by naming the sons of Phrixus as her fellow-escapees, she vainly attempts to justify and mitigate her own decision.[69] Medea stresses what she escaped *from* rather than whom or what she is fleeing *to*.

(c) Circe's speech (739–49)

As a result of her speech Medea herself is in tears.[70] Circe's reaction is far more difficult to read. In a reception scene, the standard reaction to a speech during the exchange of speeches would either be delight or sorrow on the part of the listeners as a result of the emotions stirred up by the speech.[71] But this time Medea's words poignantly do not result in the standard θέλξις, 'enchantment': Circe is not as easily bewitched by the power of Medea's words as Apsyrtus was prior to his murder (442 θελκτήρια φάρμακ'). The emotion of pity felt by Circe confirms our reading of Medea's speech as a supplicatory one, as this emotion is part of the standard reaction to such speeches (737–8 ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπης / μυρομένην ἐλέαιρεν). This interpretation is further reinforced by Circe's forestalling of any future supplications in the course of her sarcastic reprimand (747).

> «Σχετλίη, ἦ ῥα κακὸν καὶ ἀεικέα μήσαο νόστον.
> Ἔλπομαι οὐκ ἐπὶ δήν σε βαρὺν χόλον Αἰήταο
> ἐκφυγέειν· τάχα δ' εἶσι καὶ Ἑλλάδος ἤθεα γαίης
> τισόμενος φόνον υἷος, ὅτ' ἄσχετα ἔργα τέλεσσας.
> Ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ οὖν ἱκέτις καὶ ὁμόγνιος ἔπλευ ἐμεῖο,
> ἄλλο μὲν οὔ τι κακὸν μητίσομαι ἐνθάδ' ἰούσῃ·

[65] See Cairns (n. 23), 15.

[66] Cairns (n. 23), 17.

[67] There is a play with two passages: both Nausicaa's and Medea's anxieties are meant to be remembered (3.791–801 ~ *Od.* 6.273–84).

[68] Αἰδώς was expected of women in general in the form of respect towards parents, a virgin's shyness or wife's faithfulness towards her husband. Medea bitterly fails in this respect. When at the end of book three Medea finally yields to shameless love (3.92 ἀναιδήτῳ), αἰδώς is said to have left her eyes (3.785 ἐρρέτω αἰδώς; 3.1068 δὴ γάρ οἱ ἀπ' ὀφθαλμοὺς λίπεν αἰδώς). Her lust and desire are repeatedly linked with τὸ αἰσχρόν (3.796 ᾔσχυνε τοκῆας; 4.360 ἀναιδήτῳ ἰότητι; 4.367 οὐλοὸν αἶσχος).

[69] On the close relationship between ὕβρις and injustice see Fisher (n. 57), 173, 265. See also D. L. Cairns, 'Hybris, dishonour, and thinking big', *JHS* 116 (1996), 1–32, at 10.

[70] Knight (n. 2), 194, argues that the tears shed by Medea recall those of Odysseus' men as they depart for Hades (*Od.* 10.566–8), but I think that the supplicatory context and its conventions are far more important here.

[71] E.g. delight: *Od.* 11.333–4; sorrow: *Od.* 4.113–6; *Od.* 8.521–34.

ἔρχεο δ' ἐκ μεγάρων, ξείνῳ συνοπηδὸς ἐοῦσα
ὅν τινα τοῦτον ἄιστον ἀείραο πατρὸς ἄνευθεν.
Μηδέ με γουνάσσηαι ἐφέστιος· οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγε
αἰνήσω βουλάς τε σέθεν καὶ ἀεικέα φύξιν.»
Ὣς φάτο· τὴν δ' ἀμέγαρτον ἄχος λάβεν· ἀμφὶ δὲ πέπλον
ὀφθαλμοῖσι βαλοῦσα γόον χέεν, ὄφρα μιν ἥρως
χειρὸς ἐπισχόμενος μεγάρων ἐξῆγε θύραζε
δείματι παλλομένην· λεῖπον δ' ἀπὸ δώματα Κίρκης. (739–52)

'Poor girl, it is an evil and unseemly voyage home that you have contrived, for I do not expect that you will escape the heavy wrath of Aeetes, for soon he will go even to the haunts of Hellas to avenge his son's murder, for intolerable are the deeds that you have done. But since you are a suppliant and kinswoman to me, no further evil shall I devise for your coming here, but go from my halls in company with this stranger, whoever he may be, this unknown man whom you have chosen without your father's consent. But do not kneel to me as a suppliant at my hearth, for I shall not approve the counsel that you gave nor your disgraceful flight.' She spoke, and dire anguish overtook the girl. She cast her robe over her eyes and moaned until the hero took her by the hand and led her through the door and out of the halls, quivering with fear, and they left the palace of Circe.

Circe's reaction is so ambiguous because of the complexity of the situation. As a result of both supplications and Medea's identity, Circe is bound to Medea by both kinship and supplication, and in her speech she acknowledges both these bonds (743). But, interestingly, despite these, she is able to refuse to give them hospitality or help them any further. Because of the strength of these ties, Circe does, however, still need to justify her decision to send them away in order to avoid a loss of *τιμή*, 'honour', 'prestige', for herself.[72] A close analysis of her speech will show how Circe carefully refutes both claims.[73]

Circe's dismissal of any kinship ties is the most obvious: she argues strongly that the mutual obligations required by kinship can be forgotten since, as a result of her actions, Medea has permanently severed the bonds with her family; it is with a mere *ξεῖνος* (745) rather than her own family that Medea is now associated.[74] Positioned at the beginning and end of the sentence, *ξείνῳ* (745) and *πατρός* (746) represent the stark choice faced by Medea. Medea's mistake in choosing Jason is stressed in two ways: while Jason is dismissed as *ἄιστον* (746), Medea's crucial lack of any official status is emphasized by Circe through her denomination with the neutral, and rather unusual, *συνοπηδός* (745). Medea's fate is completely identified with that of Jason to the extent that not just the Argonauts' but her journey also is called a *νόστον* (739). The fact that Circe uses *ξεῖνος* and especially *ἄιστον* (746), 'unknown', to refer to Jason causes Knight to conclude that 'the climax of a Homeric scene of welcome, the revelation of the guest's identity, is never reached, and Circe does not find out who Jason is'.[75] This could well be the reason, but we have to remember that Medea's

[72] Her preoccupation with this is betrayed by her focus on Aeetes' loss of *τιμή* (742 *τισόμενος*).

[73] See Fisher (n. 57), 163–4, on the dishonour associated with the failure to protect one's suppliant and on 173 for the relationship between *δίκη* and the right treatment of strangers. On the *miasma* resulting from any harm done to those who supplicate at an altar see R. Parker, *Miasma: Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion* (Oxford, 1983), 182–6, esp. 185. D. Feeney, *The Gods in Epic: Poets and Critics of the Classical Tradition* (Oxford, 1991), 69, emphasizes the terrible consequences of not obeying Zeus' moral laws in the *Argonautica*.

[74] *Τέλεσσας* (742), which emphasizes the completion of the *ἄσχετα ἔργα*, stresses the irreversibility of Medea's deeds.

[75] Knight (n. 2), 192–3.

words are embedded in indirect speech and that therefore we cannot be sure that Circe has not been told Jason's name. In the light of the purpose of Medea's speech, it would, however, seem strange if Medea would or could have avoided mentioning any names while discussing the *στόλον ἠδὲ κελεύθους* / *ἥρώων* (732–3). I believe that Circe's words show more her contempt for Jason than her ignorance of his name:[76] throughout her speech, she studiously avoids speaking to him, addressing him, or using his name.[77] More importantly, Circe's use of *ὅν τινα τοῦτον ἄιστον* in 746 confirms the failure of the first part of Medea's speech: it has not fulfilled the traditional role of such a speech in that it has not succeeded in conveying any *κλέος* upon Jason. This time, the hero will not be 'known' as far as his host is concerned and his name will not be remembered.

Medea's rhetorical strategy in the second part of her speech has also clearly not worked, as Circe focuses exclusively on *Medea's* mistakes and responsibilities.[78] But apart from a verbal scolding nothing happens. This is surprising and worth exploring in further detail, as it is usually expected that the supplicated will either actively help or hinder the suppliant. Circe, on the other hand, states her passivity: she will do nothing for them, but neither will she do anything against them.[79] It is very interesting that Circe is able to adopt this position.[80] Although it is true that murderers cannot share someone's hospitality out of fear of polluting the host, once they have been purified, they are usually admitted to society again.[81] As Parker concludes, 'purification without reception is quite untypical'.[82] The two alternatives found in all the other evidence suggests that purification is either followed by reception or refused to the suppliant altogether. The situation here is so complex for several reasons: Medea has not committed one, but two offences; and while she has in fact been purified from one crime, the other, leaving and dishonouring her parents, is still very much present and explains the emphasis placed by Medea on this in her speech. The dilemma also arises here because the purification is done by a relative. Kin-killing was a particularly horrific deed and naturally strained the relationships between members of the same family. Purification was therefore done in another, new country reached by the exiled murderer.[83]

There are some clues in the text that foreshadow Circe's highly unusual stance. Usually, there is a close affinity between suppliants and guests, which is shown by the fact that in such a context Zeus is often mentioned as protector of suppliants and strangers alike.[84] In this case, however, it will be essential for Circe to keep these two functions of Zeus apart: she invokes him as the god of suppliants (700 *Ζηνὸς θέμιν Ἱκεσίοιο*) and, during the ceremony, in his role as purifier of murder, but makes no explicit mention of him as protector of strangers.

[76] As Hunter (n. 4), 137.

[77] It is interesting that this is mirrored even in the narrator text, as after 688 Jason's name is avoided altogether (689 *ὁ δ'*; 750 *ἥρως*).

[78] See the plethora of second-person singular forms and the use of *σέθεν* in 748.

[79] See for this also Plantinga (n. 47), 121.

[80] On Circe's complex reaction see also Knight (n. 2), 193–4.

[81] In Eur. *IT* 943–52 it is interesting that despite the pity felt for the murderer, the perpetrator is kept separate from the others prior to the ceremony.

[82] See Parker (n. 73), 374.

[83] Hdt. 1.35 gives an excellent example. See also 4.539–41.

[84] See 2.1131–3 *ἀλλ' ἱκέτας ξείνους Διὸς εἵνεκεν αἰδέσσασθε* / *Ξεινίου Ἱκεσίου τε· Διὸς δ' ἄμφω ἱκέται τε* / *καὶ ξεῖνοι, ὅ δέ που καὶ ἐπόψιος ἄμμι τέτυκται* ('Respect strangers and suppliants. To Zeus belong strangers and suppliants, and he beholds even us.'). On suppliants and strangers see also Cairns (n. 23), 113–4.

αὖτις δὲ καὶ ἄλλοις
μείλισσεν χύτλοισι, Καθάρσιον ἀγκαλέουσα
Ζῆνα, Παλαμναῖον, Τιμήορον ἱκεσιάων. (707–9)

with other libations she made propitiation, invoking Zeus who purifies in response to murderers' prayers.

To return to Circe's complex reaction and the ties resulting from the supplicatory context, the fact that Circe is said to feel pity for the maiden (738 ἐλέαιρεν), a response traditionally sought by suppliants for their fate, seems at first to foreshadow the success of Medea's strategy. Her ability to feel pity also, of course, confirms her position of authority.[85] Usually in a supplicatory context, αἰδώς and ἔλεος are found in combination with each other.[86] Here, unusually, one emotion is present but not the other: Circe's compassion is apparently not enough and it soon becomes clear that Medea has forfeited her right to the αἰδώς that should be rightfully hers as a suppliant. The uncertainty about Circe's exact response is continued in her address of Medea as σχετλίη (739),[87] which exactly combines her two contrasting emotions of contempt and pity, and leaves Medea and the reader for a moment uncertain about the exact tone of her speech. However, Circe then turns the tables completely and in 743 accuses Medea herself of *hybris*. By deliberately echoing the characterization of Medea's deed in 744 (οὔ τι κακὸν μητίσομαι ~ 739 κακὸν . . . μήσαο), Circe explicitly justifies her own decision and shows that *she* has been acting justly. Furthermore, μῆτις, 'plotting', is associated with rational decision, and Circe can thus be seen to hold Medea fully responsible for her decisions.[88] But, of course, both women are not as dissimilar from each other as is presented by Circe: in the Odyssean episode the goddess is associated with exactly the same qualities as Medea, namely θέλξις, δόλος, and μῆτις.[89] At the beginning of this episode Circe is even associated with θέλξις and δόλος by the poet himself (667 θέλγ'; 687 δολοφροσύνῃσιν). In order not to devalue the impact of her message Circe clearly does not want to be seen to debase herself to the level of Medea and hence explicitly denies the use of μῆτις (744). To strengthen this point Circe uses the echoing device again and answers Medea's κασιγνήτης . . . βουλαῖς (734) with βουλάς . . . σέθεν (748). Throughout her speech Circe uses strongly condemnatory language which stresses the crucial absence of αἰδώς; she makes abundantly clear that she does not and will never respect Medea's decision to leave her family for a stranger (739; 742 and 748–9 οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγε / αἰνήσω). Ἀεικής, 'unseemly' (739), for example, is used of dishonourable acts, especially those of which other people would disapprove, and implies moral judgement.[90] Medea's deeds are called ἄσχετα (742), 'insufferable and deserving dire

[85] See K. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Berkeley, CA, 1974), 196.

[86] E.g. *Il.* 21.74, 22.123–4; *Od.* 3.96, 22.312/344.

[87] This echoes the narrator's condemnation of Eros in 445–9.

[88] Μῆτις is a quality strongly associated with Medea. See on this D. M. O'Higgins, 'Medea as muse: Pindar's *Pythian* 4', in J. J. Clauss and S. I. Johnston (edd.), *Medea: Essays on Medea in Myth, Literature, Philosophy and Art* (Princeton, 1997), 103–26, at 107. It is interesting that Medea also chooses to discuss her responsibility in exclusively human terms.

[89] Circe: *Od.* 10.213 ἐπεὶ κακὰ φάρμακ' ἔδωκεν; *Od.* 10.317 κακὰ φρονέουσ' ἐν θυμῷ; *Od.* 10.339 δολοφρονέουσα; *Od.* 10.380 δόλον; 4.667 θέλγ'. Medea: 4.411 ἀεικελίοισιν ἐπ' ἔργοις; 4.421 μέγαν δόλον; 4.438 δόλον; 4.442 θελκτήρια φάρμακ'; 4.450 κακῷ . . . ὀλέθρῳ; 4.456 δολωθείς; 4.462 εἴ κε δόλον ξείνουσιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσι τεχνήσαιτο; 4.479 ἣ θεμίς αὐθέντῃσι δολοκτασίας ἱλάεσθαι.

[90] 3.794, 4.90–1; *Od.* 4.553, 11.429. For a discussion of the use of this epithet in Homer see also Cairns (n. 23), 62.

punishment'.[91] We see that a suppliant's right to αἰδώς can be in conflict with other standards of honour. The fact that Circe does not offer hospitality can thus be explained in terms of a conflict of αἰδώς.[92]

IV. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the hospitality motifs and use of rhetoric in this episode demonstrates Apollonius' love of experimentation with the genre of epic and reveals some of his narrative techniques. Throughout Apollonius creates ambiguity in the minds of the readers about the expected sequence of events and reactions of the protagonists. A central theme of this article has been Apollonius' use of the identity motif and here in particular my analysis suggests a new way of reading the episode. In this final part of this paper I would like to discuss briefly two instances from the end of the episode which bring together the various strands of my analysis.

In my discussion of the identity motif I showed how Circe's divine aspects are played down in favour of the human side of her character. But this neglect of her divine side does not lead to a weakening of her authority,[93] based as it is on the difference in age and, above all, on her moral superiority. Her power is clearly visible in her speech dismissing Medea and Jason, and in the lack of a reply to this speech. The episode thus forms a clear exception to Laird's assertion that in the *Argonautica* 'there is no clearly discernible relationship between speech and power in the poem.'[94]

Second, Circe's dismissal of Jason and Medea and their reaction signify a return to the silence and fear dominating the beginning of the episode (664 ~ 752). Medea covers her eyes in shame, in a gesture reminiscent of the beginning of the episode (749–750 ~ 695). The gesture symbolizes rejection and failure, especially after the initial hope raised immediately after the purification. This is further reinforced by Jason's taking of Medea's hand, a powerful symbol of the bond between them.[95] But Medea's covering of her eyes should also been considered in the context of the epic as a whole and in relation to a number of other instances at which Medea employs this gesture. These form a distinctive pattern within the *Argonautica* and underline important moments within the epic.[96] Medea also veils herself when she first falls in love (3.444),[97] when she leaves her parental home (44), and when Jason murders her brother (465).[98] In Book 4, the difficulty of Medea's position and futility of her strategy is stressed by the fact that she is seen on each occasion: the Moon sees her

[91] The plural used here shows that not only the murder but also the desertion of family and fatherland are meant.

[92] Exploration of such conflicting claims is paralleled in tragedy. See, for example, Hecuba's appeals to Odysseus in Eur. *Hec.* (285–6) and also Soph. *OC* 254–7, where there is a rejection of a supplication by chorus despite the pity which they feel.

[93] Cf. Knight (n. 2), 195.

[94] Laird (n. 45), 184–92, for a discussion of the dramatic effect of speech and silence in the *Aeneid*.

[95] Cf. 3.1067–8.

[96] On eye movements in the *Argonautica* see R. Buxton, 'Les yeux de Medée: le regard et la magie dans les Argonautiques d' Apollonios de Rhodes', in A. Moreau and J.-C. Turpin (edd.), *La Magie: la magie dans l'antiquité grecque tardive les myths* (Montpellier, 2000), 265–73.

[97] On the erotic aspects of veiling in the *Argonautica* see L. Llewellyn-Jones, *Aphrodite's Tortoise: The Veiled Woman of Ancient Greece* (Swansea, 2003), 261, 289.

[98] In the Talos episode, the final episode of the epic in which Medea appears and in which she finally displays the power of her eyes, the emphasis is on the unveiling rather than veiling (1662–3). Cf. her use of herbs and chants when she charms the dragon guarding the Golden Fleece (146–7, 150, 157).

flight from the Colchian palace (54–6), the Fury witnesses Apsyrtus' murder (475–6), and Iris watches Medea's and Jason's hasty departure from Circe's house (753–4). The echoes in the Circe episode of the earlier occurrences of Medea's veiling in the *Argonautica* connect this episode with the other occasions on which Medea severs the ties with her family as a result of the love conceived in Book 3. In addition, the primary allusion to Medea's veiling at the murder scene itself (473–4) shows that, even though Jason and Medea have been purified from the murder of Apsyrtus, they have failed.

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