Pelias, Aeetes, and Jupiter: The Paranoid Tyrant

in Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica*

118th CAMWS Meeting: March 23-26, 2022

Eighth Paper Session: Section C

Nicholas Rudman ([nrudman2@illinois.edu](mailto:nrudman2@illinois.edu))

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. A: Sed non ulla quies animo fratrisque **paventi** progeniem divumque minas: Val. Flac. 1.26-27   B: **Urit** et antiquae memorem vox praescia sortis: Val. Flac. 5.528 | A: There was no rest for [Pelias’] mind, since **he feared** the son of his brother and the threats of the gods.[[1]](#footnote-1)  B: A voice with foreknowledge of an ancient oracle **burns** [Aeetes] as he remembers it.[[2]](#footnote-2) |
| 1. A: Talibus hortatus iuvenem propiorque iubenti conticuit, **certus** Scythico concurrere ponto Cyaneas, tantoque silet possessa dracone vellera: Val. Flac. 1:58-61   B: [Medea] contremuitque metu ne nescius audeat hospes: Val. Flac. 7.80 | A: Having encouraged the youth with such words and acted more like a man giving orders, he fell silent, **certain** that the Cyanean Rocks crashed together in the Scythian Sea, and he kept quiet about the fact that the fleece was held by so great a serpent.  B: And [Medea] trembled with fear that the ignorant guest might attempt [the task].[[3]](#footnote-3) |
| 1. A: Non iuvenem in casus eademque pericula Acastum abripiam? Invisae Pelias freta tuta carinae optet et exoret nostris cum matribus undas: Val. Flac. 153-155   B: negat procedere virgo. Contra saevus amor, contra **periturus Iason** urget: Val. Flacc. 7.306-308. | A: Should I not snatch Acastus off to these misfortunes and these same dangers? Let Pelias wish for safe seas for the ship he hates, and let him beg the waves together with our mothers.  B: The maiden refuses to move forward. But on the other hand, savage love and **destined-to-die Jason** urge her on. |
| 1. Peleos in thalamos vehitur Thetis […] nec Iove maiorem nasci suspirat Achillem: Val. Flac. 1.131; 133 | Thetis being carried to the wedding chamber of Peleus […] and she sighs that Achilles will not be born greater than Jupiter. |
| 1. Ergo, ne quicquam mundus Iove maius haberet, quamvis haut tepidos sub pectore senserat ignes, Iuppiter aequoreae Thetidis conubia **fugit**, in suaque Aeaciden succedere vota nepotem iussit et amplexus in virginis ire marinae: Ov. Met. 11.224-228 | Therefore, so that the universe would have nothing greater than Jupiter, although he had felt not at all moderate fires of passion within his own chest, Jupiter **fled** from the marriage of marine Thetis and ordered the descendant of Aeacus to follow up on his own wishes and to come to the embraces of the watery maiden.[[4]](#footnote-4) |
| 1. Occupat, et quoniam precibus temptata repugnas, vim parat. Ov. Met. 11.239-240 | [Peleus] seizes you, Thetis, and since you fight back after he tested you with entreaties, he prepares an act of violence. |

Bibliography:

Bernstein, N. W. 2014. “*Romanas veluti saevissima cum legiones Tisiphone regesque movet*: Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica* and the Flavian Era.” In M. Heerink and G. Manuwald, eds. *Brill’s Companion to Valerius Flaccus*. Leiden: Brill. pp. 154-169

Cowan, R. 2014. “My Family and Other Enemies: Argonautic Antagonists and Valerian Villains.” In M. Heerink and G. Manuwald, eds. *Brill’s Companion to Valerius Flaccus*. Leiden: Brill. pp. 229-248.

Ganiban, R. T. 2014. “Virgilian Prophecy and the Reign of Jupiter in Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica*.” In M. Heerink and G. Manuwald, eds. *Brill’s Companion to Valerius Flaccus*. Leiden: Brill. pp. 251-268.

Heerink, M. 2014. “Valerius Flaccus, Virgil and the Poetics of Ekphrasis.” In M. Heerink and G. Manuwald, eds., *Brill’s Companion to Valerius Flaccus*. Leiden: Brill. pp. 72-95.

Hershkowitz, D. 1998. *Valerius Flaccus’* Argonautica*: Abbreviated Voyages in Silver Latin Epic*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Landrey, L. 2018. “Embroidered Histories: Lemnos and Rome in Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica*.” In L. Donovan Ginsberg and D. Krasne, eds., *After 69 CE – Writing Civil War in Flavian Rome*. Berlin: De Gruyter. pp. 69-85.

McGuire, D. T. 1997. *Acts of Silence: Civil War, Tyranny, and Suicide in the Flavian Epics*. Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann.

Spaltenstein, F. 2005. *Commentaire des* Argonautica *de Valérius Flaccus (Livres 6, 7, et 8*). Brussels: Latomus.

Stover, T. 2012. *Epic and Empire in Vespasianic Rome: A New Reading of Valerius Flaccus’* Argonautica. Oxford: Oxford University Press.Top of FormBottom of Form

Tarrant, R. J. 2004. *P. Ovidi Nasonis Metamorphoses*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Timonen, Asko. 1998. “Fear and violence in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*.” In I. Tar, ed. *Epik durch die Jahrhunderte: internationale Konferenz Szeged 2.-4. Oktober 1997.* pp. 152-168.

Wijsman, H. J. W. 1996. *Valerius Flaccus,* Argonautica*, Book V: A Commentary*. Leiden: Brill.

Zissos, A. 2003. “Spectacle and Elite in the *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus.” In A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik, eds. *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text*. Leiden: Brill. pp. 659-684.

Zissos, A. 2008. *Valerius Flaccus’* Argonautica *Book 1: A Commentary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zissos, A. 2009. “Navigating Power: The *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus.” In W. J. Dominik, J. Garthwaite, and P. A. Roche, eds. *Writing Politics in Imperial Rome*. Leiden: Brill. pp. 351-366.

1. All translations are my own. For this paper, I have used the text of *Argonautica* I printed in Zissos 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Text of *Argonautica* V as printed in Wijsman 1996 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Text of *Argonautica* VII as printed in Spaltenstein 2005. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Text of *Metamorphoses* XI as printed in Tarrant 2004. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)