

Jason and *Homonoia*

Past scholarship on the character of Jason in Apollonius' *Argonautica* for the most part centered primarily on his lack of heroic qualities: to most readers he appeared as passive or even weak. More recently Anatole Mori (2005) mounted a defense of Jason's character, praising his calm and careful nature, and his ability to reconcile differences between his comrades. Her portrayal of Jason as a new kind of moral or philosophical hero sought to embed Jason in his Hellenistic and Apollonian context. It is to this conversation that my paper will contribute, focusing on the community of free-thinking and free-speaking comrades that Jason fosters on his way to Colchis in the spirit of Hellenistic *homonoia*.

The concept of *homonoia* foregrounded by Alexander the Great and his successors stressed cooperation aimed at communal identity; De Mauriac defined the concept as "unity and concord, a being of one mind together" (1949). Jason and his Argonauts embody this notion of unity as they make their outward journey. They build a temple to Concord (2.714-719) and Jason continually calls upon his *hetairoi* to give him advice. Words for this type of cooperative effort appear throughout the poem: *philoï*, *hetairoi*, *homophrosune*, and of course *homonoia*. It is the Argonauts' united efforts that succeed in getting the crew to Colchis.

This paper will trace the presence of *homonoia* throughout the first two books of the *Argonautica* and will elucidate the type of community that Jason fosters around himself in them. In this way Jason's status as a new kind of hero, a Hellenistic hero out of a different mold from Achilles or Odysseus, will be further illustrated.

Bibliography

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