EMENDATIONS IN VALERIUS FLACCUS, *ARGONAUTICA* BOOK 8*

ABSTRACT

The article makes a case for a thorough reappraisal of the text of Valerius Flaccus' Argonautica *by discussing a number of textual problems in Book 8. It proposes some twenty new conjectures, as well as reviving six old ones that seem to have been undeservedly forgotten.*

Keywords: Valerius Flaccus; Latin poetry; textual criticism; Jason; Medea; N. Heinsius

In the last fifty years or so, the editing of Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* has seen remarkable progress: if Courtney's 1970 edition was based on the assumption that the only manuscript with independent value was V, Ehlers's 1980 edition also recognized the independence of S and L, and finally Liberman's 1997–2002 edition re-established the (mostly) lost codex Carrionis as yet another independent witness.[1] Taylor-Briggs concludes her masterful account of Valerius' manuscript tradition with the following statement: 'The work of Valerian textual critics seems to be drawing to a close: the twentieth century opened with only one manuscript considered to be of any value, but closed, much sweat and ink later, with a much more sophisticated understanding from which to reconstruct an accurate text.'[2] The implication appears to be that, once we have established the paradosis (which more or less equals reconstructing the

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* I should like to thank *CQ*'s editor Bruce Gibson and the anonymous reviewers for their criticisms and suggestions.

[1] E. Courtney, *C. Valeri Flacci Argonauticon libri octo* (Leipzig, 1970); W.-W. Ehlers, *Gai Valeri Flacci Setini Balbi Argonauticon libri octo* (Stuttgart, 1980); G. Liberman, *Valerius Flaccus Argonautiques*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1997–2002). In discussing textual problems, I have also taken into account the following editions and commentaries, though I may not always cite them individually: L. Carrion, *Argonauticon C. Valerii Flacci Setini Balbi libri VIII* (Antwerp, 1565); N. Heinsius, *C. Valerii Flacci Setini Balbi Argonautica* (Utrecht, 1702); P. Burman, *C. Valerii Flacci Setini Balbi Argonauticon libri octo* (Leiden, 1724); G. Thilo, *C. Valeri Flacci Setini Balbi Argonauticon libri octo* (Halle, 1863); E. Baehrens, *C. Valeri Flacci Setini Balbi Argonauticon libri octo* (Leipzig, 1875); P. Langen, *C. Valeri Flacci Setini Balbi Argonauticon libri octo* (Berlin, 1897); C. Giarratano, *C. Valeri Flacci Balbi Setini Argonauticon libri octo* (Milan, 1904); F. Spaltenstein, *Commentaire des* Argonautica *de Valérius Flaccus (livres 6, 7 et 8)* (Brussels, 2005); C. Lazzarini, *L'addio di Medea: Valerio Flacco,* Argonautiche *8,1–287* (Pisa, 2012); T. Pellucchi, *Commento al libro VIII delle* Argonautiche *di Valerio Flacco* (Hildesheim, 2012); J. Mariné Isidro, *Gai Valeri Flac: Argonàutiques*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 2017); C. Castelletti, *Valerius Flaccus:* Argonautica *Book 8* (Oxford, 2022).

[2] P.R. Taylor-Briggs, '*Vtere bono tuo feliciter*: the textual transmission and manuscript history of Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*', in M. Heerink, G. Manuwald (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Valerius Flaccus* (Leiden, 2014), 9–28, at 28. To be accurate, her very last sentence is the next one: 'The task ahead for literary critics remains enshrined in the injunction added early in the tradition to the incipit of Book 5, *utere bono tuo feliciter*: we must use the blessings of our manuscript tradition well'; but it only makes it clearer that, in Taylor-Briggs's view, the job of the textual critic is all but done.

archetype), there is only so much left for us to do. The 2017 edition by Mariné Isidro seems to confirm this impression: while it is based on the same stemma as Liberman's moderately radical edition, it mostly reverts to Ehlers's conservative text, with only a handful of differences.

But is this impression accurate? There is no doubt that the archetype of the *Argonautica* was already gravely corrupt, and although reconstructing it is a necessary task, it does not bring us all the way back to Valerius' autograph. If so, why is it that we might consider our job all but completed? Two answers seem possible, but neither is convincing. First, one could submit that, over the centuries since the 1474 *editio princeps* (and even before) during which Valerius' text was persistently subjected to scrutiny, most errors of the paradosis have already been eliminated. While it is true that many good corrections have been found and universally adopted, it is unlikely that there only remain a few unsolved problems—if for no other reason than that we have only had an accurate idea of the paradosis for less than fifty years. The alternative (or perhaps complementary) answer is that the remaining problems are unlikely to find satisfactory solutions ever at all. Again, one could respond that, with less than fifty years of critical engagement with the paradosis, it is perhaps too early to give up.[3]

In what follows, I propose to discuss about a dozen passages from the eighth book of the *Argonautica*, a selection which in no way is intended to exhaust all of the book's remaining textual difficulties. While I realize that individually some of my proposals may be less successful than others, cumulatively I hope they do show that there is still ample scope for finding new solutions and identifying new problems.[4] At the same time, I do believe that, especially when dealing with a text as uncertain as Valerius', it may be more profitable to ask, before considering textual intervention in any given instance, not whether we can be certain that the paradosis is corrupt, but whether we can be certain that it is intact; and unless one can give a positive answer to the latter question, one should be open to forming a hypothesis as to what Valerius may be likely to have written instead.

For each passage I consider, I first quote a version of the current 'vulgate', with a minimal apparatus; γ is the common source of V and L (S does not exist in Book 8), ω is the common source of γ and the codex Carrionis (Δ is its surviving fragment).[5]

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[3] Especially as we should probably only count from the publication of Liberman's edition—how much textual scholarship on Valerius has been published since then? Of course, this is not to say that earlier textual work is irrelevant (quite the contrary), but that it is only now that we finally have a firm grasp of the textual evidence, which for the first time can provide a solid basis for systematic reappraisal of Valerius' text.

[4] There is also a case for reviving forgotten proposals: I include in my discussions a number of old conjectures that are unduly neglected in recent editions and commentaries.

[5] γ appears to have been written in insular minuscule in the late eighth century (Taylor-Briggs [n. 2], 14); Liberman (n. 1), 1.xcix, cii–ciii believes that the archetype (ω) originated in Late Antiquity (cf. Taylor-Briggs [n. 2], 23): despite some indications that it may have been written in *scriptio continua*, I see no compelling reason to assume that it was much older than γ (note e.g. that the ninth-century MS Graz, Steiermärkisches Landesarchiv 1814 is written in *scriptio continua*). For the sake of simplicity, in what follows I explain corruptions in terms of minuscule script, although, if the archetype and its exemplar were written in an earlier script, most explanations would still work, especially as misreadings normally involve psychological as well as narrowly palaeographic factors.

ARGONAUTICA 8.20–1

Book 8 opens with Medea deciding to abandon her home and flee to Greece with Jason and the Argonauts. After taking leave of her absent father (10–15), Medea gathers her magical drugs (16–19) and makes haste to meet Jason (20–2):

> inde uelut torto Furiarum erecta flagello
> prosilit, attonito qualis pede prosilit Ino
> in freta nec parui meminit conterrita nati.

> 20 erecta *ed. Bon. 1474*: eiecta ω

One well-known problem concerns ω's *eiecta*: while not absolutely impossible, *eiecta* has too physical a meaning ('thrown out, expelled'), and given the ease of the corruption, modern editors tend to prefer *erecta* from the *editio princeps*. Yet *erecta* is not without weaknesses either: on the one hand, taken literally, it confusingly conveys the wrong sense ('raised': Medea must get up from her bed, but *before* she collects her drugs); on the other, the psychological sense ('roused, excited') seems usually to have more positive connotations (note, for example, 3.631–2 *tali mentem pars maxima flatu | erigit*, of the Argonauts regaining confidence after Jason's admonition). Superior to both is, I believe, *euecta*, cited by Carrion from a Leiden edition but apparently forgotten by modern editors: it has just the right sense (*OLD* s.v. *eueho* 3: '[of an emotion or other impulse] To carry away [to excessive or extreme action]', note especially Sen. *Phaedr.* 1070–1 *quacumque rabidos* [*sc. equos*] *pauidus euexit furor, | hac ire pergunt*), and palaeographically is barely less likely than *erecta*; at the very least it should feature in the apparatus criticus.[6] A second problem, usually unrecognized as such, is the repetition of *prosilit* at line 21, with different subjects (first Medea, then Ino) and in different senses (first 'rushes forth', then 'springs forth'). Liberman finds the repetition effective, but to me it rather seems to destabilize the text, by misleadingly suggesting that Medea may be actually jumping, just like Ino.[7] I suggest that the first *prosilit* may be an error for *proruit* (ru → fil, not without input of course from the following *prosilit*), though the verb is rare in the sense 'to rush forward' (*OLD* s.v. *proruo* 2; cf. *TLL* 10.2.2166.20–32).[8] Alternatively, one might propose *proripit* (in imitation of Virgil's absolute usage, note *Aen.* 5.741 *quo deinde ruis? quo proripis?*).

ARGONAUTICA 8.83–4

Medea takes Jason to the sacred grove in which the golden fleece is guarded by the dragon; after failing to subdue it by invoking Sleep (69–82), she turns to hardcore magic (83–7):

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[6] Carrion (n. 1), 301.
[7] Liberman (n. 1), 2.348 n. 19: 'La répétition de *prosilit* […] n'est pas sans énergie: l'image n'est pas la même selon que ce verbe est appliqué à Médée ou à Ino, mais l'identité du verbe donne au saut de Médée la force et l'importance de celui d'Ino'; cf. also Pellucchi (n. 1), 65: 'la prima volta *prosilit* sia usato assolutamente, mentre la seconda sia costruito, come è più usuale, con il complemento di moto a luogo', with no suggestion that this might be an issue.
[8] Note, however, that the verb is similarly used in enjambement at 7.600, though in the sense 'to collapse'.

> contra Tartareis Colchis spumare uenenis
> cunctaque Lethaei quassare silentia rami
> perstat et aduerso luctantia lumina cantu
> obruit atque omnem linguaque manuque fatigat
> uim Stygiam ardentes donec sopor occupet iras.

Two difficult moments here. First, *spumare* at line 83: foaming is a typical effect of *uenena* (cf., for example, 6.447 *Atracio lunam spumare ueneno*), but it is difficult to see how 'foaming with poison' can plausibly be construed to refer to *employing* magical drugs.[9] Heinsius's *cumulare* and *sputare* may be mentioned as diagnostic conjectures, but much likelier would be *spirare*, 'to blow drugs (at)', which can especially be supported with 6.157 *paribus spirans Medea uenenis*, as well as with 7.327 *magicis spirantia tecta uenenis* and Luc. 9.679–80 *quanto spirare ueneno | ora rear* (of the Gorgon): evidently in our context *spirare* will imply a manner of spreading magical substances with one's breath.[10] The corruption would be quite easy in minuscule script (*spirare → spūare*), and can in fact be paralleled, in the opposite direction, at Claud. *Rapt. Pros.* 1.283 *aegra soporatis spumant* [*spirant*] *obliuia linguis*; scribal reminiscence of 6.447 may have been an additional factor. The second weak point is *cuncta* at line 84: it is rather vague (what are these 'all silences'?), while its positioning makes it unlikely that it can have a predicative force ('to the last drop'), which would also run contrary to the imperfective aspect of the construction with *perstat*. Liberman's *tincta*, however, is hard to construe.[11] I suggest *muta*: it is a fitting epithet for *silentia* (cf. Ov. *Met.* 4.433, 7.184, 10.53, but especially Stat. *Theb.* 10.92–3 *pressisque Silentia pennis | muta sedent*), and the corruption, perhaps by way of *multa*, would be fairly easy (for *muta → multa*, cf., for example, Lucr. 4.1057; for *multa → cuncta*, for example *Anth. Lat.* 286.83; cf. also *muti → cunctis* at Juvencus, *Evang.* 1.111; one may also suspect influence from *contra* right above it).

ARGONAUTICA 8.89

Finally the dragon succumbs (88–91):

> iamque altae cecidere iubae nutatque coactum
> iam caput atque ingens extra sua uellera ceruix
> ceu refluens Padus aut septem proiectus in amnes
> Nilus et Hesperium ueniens Alpheos in orbem.

Line 89 hosts a well-known (if underestimated) problem: on the one hand, *ceruix* lacks an expressed predicate; on the other, *extra sua uellera* is an odd and imprecise expression (what exactly does it mean that the dragon's neck is—goes?—'beyond' the fleece?). Liberman's *itque* for *atque* addresses the first issue but not the second.[12]

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[9] *Pace* Liberman (n. 1), 2.356 n. 56, Pellucchi (n. 1), 150–1, Castelletti (n. 1), 101–2.

[10] In the corresponding passage, Apollonius does not refer to Medea's 'breathing out drugs', but he does suggest that it is their fragrance that has a soporific effect: 4.157–9 ἀκήρατα φάρμακ' ἀοιδαῖς | ῥαῖνε κατ' ὀφθαλμῶν, περί τ' ἀμφί τε νήριτος ὀδμὴ | φαρμάκου ὕπνον ἔβαλλε; on a later occasion Medea is said to spread drugs in the air, though the manner is not specified: 4.442–3 θελκτήρια φάρμακ' ἔπασσεν | αἰθέρι καὶ πνοιῇσι; note also that medical writers recognize ἐμφυσώμενα φάρμακα as a class.

[11] Liberman (n. 1), 2.356–7 n. 57.

[12] Liberman (n. 1), 2.357 n. 61.

It seems natural to suspect that *extra* conceals the missing verb, and Löhbach's *laxat*—not even mentioned in any of the editions and commentaries from the last hundred years or so—is exactly what we need: the dragon's neck lets go of the fleece (*OLD* s.v. *laxo* 4).[13] The corruption may not be the most straightforward one, but it is not difficult to imagine *laxat* losing its initial *l* after the final *f* of *ingens*, following which *axat* would have a fair chance of being interpreted as an error for *extra* (or perhaps for an abbreviation thereof, such as *ext̄*).

ARGONAUTICA 8.127

Jason returns, with Medea and the fleece, and joins the rest of the Argonauts at a pre-appointed place (127–9):

> ut uero sociis, qui tunc praedicta tenebant
> ostia, per longas apparuit aureus umbras,
> clamor ab Haemonio surgit grege.

The deixis of *tunc* seems awkward (there is no need to specify that the action was taking place 'then', as there is no reason to assume that the context may refer to some other time), and I fail to see why Valerius would not have written *iam*; the confusion is, of course, quite easy (cf., for example, *tunc* for *iam*: Ov. *Met.* 6.52; *tum* for *iam*: Verg. *Aen.* 3.531, 12.239; *dum* for *iam*: Ov. *Met.* 6.467; *iam* for *tum*: Verg. *Aen.* 5.382; *iam* for *cum*: *Ciris* 513, Ov. *Am.* 2.11.25).

ARGONAUTICA 8.158

Having heard of Medea's elopement, her mother breaks out in an exasperated monologue, first blaming Jason and then her daughter (158–9):

> sed quid ego quemquam immeritis incuso querellis?
> ipsa fugit tantoque (nefas) ipsa ardet amore.

The most obvious problem here is metrical: in classical Latin poetry *ego* never forms an iambus; the easiest solution is Müller's *o* added after *ego*, which, of course, is but a metrical filler. The second problem, insufficiently appreciated, is the indefinite *quemquam*: it could mean something like 'why am I ready to blame anyone (but my daughter) with random accusations', but Jason is surely not just 'anybody'.[14] The old correction by Columbus—*sed quid ago quemue* (*quemque* Habenicht)[15]—solves both these problems, but brings out a third one: it is rather magnanimous of Medea's mother, and not quite in tune with her preceding words, to claim that Jason does not really deserve her reproaches (*immeritis*). Courtney seems generally right about the expected sense: 'this

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[13] The last editor to cite Löhbach's *laxat* appears to be Giarratano (n. 1), 76; I was unable to access a copy of R. Löhbach, *Studien zu Valerius Flaccus* (Neuwied, 1872).

[14] Contrast T. Gärtner, 'Kritische Bemerkungen zu den *Argonautica* des Valerius Flaccus', *Emerita* 78 (2010), 211–29, at 228, embracing *quemquam*.

[15] *quemque* is usually attributed to E. Courtney, 'On Valerius Flaccus', *CR* 11 (1961), 106–7, at 107, but it was already proposed by R. Habenicht, *Probeblätter aus meinem Gradus ad Parnassum* (Zittau, 1859), 7 n. 2.

is the line by which Medea's mother turns from accusation of Jason to accusation of her daughter, and what we want is something meaning "I am blaming the wrong person"'.[16] I propose to make three minor changes and read: *sed quid ego hunc, quamquam meritis, incuso querellis?* 'but why am I blaming him, even if he deserves my reproaches?'—implying that, though Jason is far from innocent, Medea should be held no less accountable for her own actions (*ipsa fugit*). The omission of *hunc* would be quite easy, especially in elision (for a part of *hic* after *quid ego*, cf., for example, Verg. *Aen.* 2.101 *sed quid ego haec autem nequiquam ingrata reuoluo?*); the misreading of *quamquam* as *quemquam* can hardly surprise; the negative prefix in *immeritis* is no doubt just a reinterpretation of the last letter of *quamquam*, read twice (*m → ın*).

ARGONAUTICA 8.165, 167–8

Medea's mother continues (165–9):

> cur tanta mihi non prodita pestis?
> aut gener Aesonides nostra consideret aula
> nec talem paterere fugam, commune fuisset
> aut certe nunc omne nefas iremus et ambae
> in quascumque uias.

> 166 *aut Koestlin*: ut γ | 167 *nec ed. Bon. 1474*: ne γ

First, I am worried by *prodita*: the verb seems normally to emphasize the role of one revealing, rather than that of one learning, a secret, and I find it odd that Medea's mother should be complaining that no one told her of Medea's infatuation rather than that she failed to recognize it herself; *cognita* would be much more natural.[17] A much more serious problem is, of course, the articulation of the whole passage: I think Liberman is right to adopt Koestlin's *aut* at line 166 and treat *consideret* and *fuisset* as two coordinated alternatives (had she known, she would either make Jason stay or follow him together with Medea).[18] I find, however, the placement of the second *aut* at the beginning of line 168 suspicious (a postponed conjunction should as a rule be prosodically attached to the fronted phrase): the sentence structure will become much clearer if we read *aut* in front of *commune* instead, while replacing *aut* at line 168 with *hoc* (*omne nefas* might more naturally mean 'all kind of disaster', whereas the demonstrative adds desired specificity: 'all this disaster').[19] Monosyllables are generally

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[16] Courtney (n. 15), 107.

[17] For the corruption, cf. Ov. *Met.* 7.843 *uox est ubi cognita*, where P. Burman, *Publii Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoseon libri XV*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam, 1727), 542 reports the variant *prodita* from a 'Medic[eus] unus'; this is no doubt a simple case of synonym substitution.

[18] Liberman (n. 1), 2.366 n. 105.

[19] In line 108 *iamque omne nefas, iam, credo, peregi*, the meaning is, I think, 'whatever crime I could do, I've committed it' rather than 'I have completed all the crimes I had to do'. For *certe* split from *aut*, cf. e.g. Cic. *Off.* 2.50 *semel igitur aut non saepe certe*, Livy 27.40.9 *aut ex hoste egregiam gloriam, inquit, aut ex ciuibus uictis gaudium meritum certe*, Ov. *Met.* 7.13 *aut aliquid certe simile huic*, *Am.* 3.3.48 *aut oculis certe parce, puella, meis*. For *hoc omne*, cf. e.g. Prop. 4.6.40 *et fauet ex umeris hoc onus omne meis*; for *hoc certe*, cf. Ov. *Met.* 2.423 *hoc certe furtum coniunx mea nesciet*.

mercurial, but in this case one might speculate that the first *aut* was omitted (in line 167), then written in the margins, and finally restored in the wrong place, ousting *hoc* in line 168.

ARGONAUTICA 8.176

The Argonauts sail away (175–7):

> inde diem noctemque uolant. redeuntibus aura
> gratior et notae Minyis transcurrere terrae,
> cum subito Erginus puppi sic fatur ab alta.

I fail to see how line 176 can possibly be correct (*pace OLD* s.v. *transcurro* 2b, among others): even if *transcurrere* could be taken as a historic infinitive, it is difficult to imagine across what it could be said that lands are moving, even from the perspective of the Argonauts.[20] I think it necessary that *transcurrere* should have the Argonauts as its subject, which means that *notae … terrae* should be converted to the accusative (*notas … terras*), and I think it likely that *Minyis* has ousted a finite verb. The sense should continue the idea of the previous clause: the wind that propels the Argonauts homewards is more welcome (than the one that carried them away), and they are glad—*gaudent*—to be sailing past the lands they had already seen (that is, to be sailing back).[21] *Minyis* could be an interpolated gloss, originally intended to clarify *redeuntibus* (or perhaps *notas*?); the change of *notas … terras* to the nominative would be a subsequent development, probably meant to harmonize the phrase with *aura*.

ARGONAUTICA 8.212

The landscape the Argonauts are passing by even seems sympathetic to Medea's plight (209–12):

> nulla palus, nullus Scythiae non maeret euntem
> amnis. Hyperboreas mouit conspecta pruinas
> tot modo regna tenens; ipsi quoque murmura ponunt
> iam Minyae, iam ferre uolunt.

> 211 ipsi *cod. Vat. Reg. 1869*: ipse γ | murmura *cod. Vat. Reg. 1869*: -e γ | ponunt
> *V*: ponti *L*

As the apparatus criticus shows, the second half of line 211 is textually unstable, and the construal of the clause is uncertain. The usual approach is to accept V's *ponunt*, but it is open to two objections: first, it is odd that the Argonauts should take the climactic place, accentuated by *quoque*, in a list of natural features that (by implication) would be unlikely to be sympathetic to Medea; second, it is not clear what should be understood as the direct object of *ferre*.[22] Castelletti favours L's *ponti*, which addresses the second objection, but the first remains in force.[23] Assuming the corruption is not more serious,

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[20] Commentators do not seem to appreciate that there is any difficulty at all, besides the tense of the verb.

[21] Cf. in a way *Ciris* 384–5 *reuehi quod moenia Cretae | gaudeat.*

[22] Cf. the overview in Pellucchi (n. 1), 247–8.

[23] Castelletti (n. 1), 161.

I suggest we should take *ipsi quoque murmura ponti*—which would be a fitting climax to the list of natural features—as the subject of *uolunt*, while writing *Minyas* to be construed as the object of *ferre*: even the rumbling sea is now willing to carry the Argo (out of compassion for Medea); for *murmura ponti* used as a metonymic periphrasis for the sea as endowed with moral agency, compare Lucr. 3.1032 *et contempsit equis insultans murmura ponti* [*sc.* Xerxes].[24]

ARGONAUTICA 8.230–1, 233

Landed at the island of Peuce and, for the time being, safely out of reach of the pursuing Colchians, Jason decides to marry Medea (228–33):

> qualis sanguineo uictor Gradiuus ab Hebro
> Idalium furto subit aut dilecta Cythera,
> seu cum caelestes Alcidae inuisere mensas
> iam uacat et fessum Iunonia sustinet Hebe.
> adnuit unanimis Venus hortatorque Cupido
> suscitat affixam maestis Aeetida curis.

> 232 adnuit unanimis *Meyncke*: adsunt unanimes γ

In the simile comparing Jason to Hercules the central, well-known, problem is *sustinet*, which implies a Hercules who can barely stand on his feet and needs to be supported by his new wife—not a very flattering comparison for Jason. Baehrens's solution—*fessum Iuno iam destinet Hebae*—may indeed be too drastic, but Liberman's defence of *sustinet* fails to convince: in a context like this, the verb can only mean 'to support (physically)', not 'to invigorate'.[25] Heinsius's long-forgotten *suscipit*—'receives into her home, welcomes' (cf. *OLD* s.v. *suscipio* 5b)—seems exactly the right word, especially as the previous line refers to Hercules' joining the gods' banquets.[26] That line does not seem to have attracted critical attention before, but I wonder if Valerius would not have avoided the unnecessary elision by writing *uisere* instead of *inuisere*.[27] The second nexus of problems affects lines 232–3, the key difficulty here being that, if one accepts the transmitted *adsunt* at line 232, *suscitat* at line 233 lacks a subject; I agree with Liberman that Meyncke's *adnuit unanimis* is an attractive solution, though it is mostly irrelevant for the present argument whether or not it is the right one.[28] What seems not to have worried editors and commentators much is that *affixus* 'intent on, absorbed in

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[24] Cf. E.J. Kenney, *Lucretius De rerum natura: Book III* (Cambridge, 2014²), 220: 'the language emphasizes hybristic defiance of the *murmura ponti*, Poseidon's indignant protest'. Though if the metonymy of *murmura ponti* is deemed harsh, Heinsius's *marmora*—which he conjectured for both Lucretius and Valerius—is an easy solution (for the corruption, in the opposite direction, cf. e.g. Cic. *Arat*. fr. 34.71 *nec metuunt canos minitanti murmure* [*marmore*] *fluctus*).

[25] Liberman (n. 1), 2.372 n. 138 glosses over the difficulty: 'son épouse Hébé *sustinet* Hercule, en lui prêtant son appui (cf. 1,349) et en le revigorant'; 1.348–9 *ille suo collapsam pectore matrem* | *sustinuit* (of Jason supporting his fainting mother) can in fact only illustrate how inapposite the verb is in our context.

[26] In Burman (n. 1), 665; Giarratano (n. 1), 78 misprints the conjecture as *suspicit*, and subsequent editors seem to ignore it altogether.

[27] The two verbs seem to be used more or less interchangeably in this sense, cf. already Catull. 64.384–6 *praesentes namque ante domos inuisere castas* | *heroum et sese mortali ostendere coetu* | *caelicolae nondum spreta pietate solebant* and 407 *quare nec talis dignantur uisere coetus*.

[28] Liberman (n. 1), 2.373 n. 139.

(a study, occupation, or the like)' (*OLD* s.v. *affigo* 5b), having as it does no negative connotations, is not a suitable term to pair with *curis* in a description of emotional distress: Medea is not analysing, but simply suffering from, her 'worries'. The expected term is of course *afflictam*, 'cast down', which will be nicely matched by *suscitat*, 'arouses, reinvigorates'.[29]

ARGONAUTICA 8.251

Yet the wedding celebration is not unclouded—Mopsus has a presentiment about Medea's future (250–1):

> odit utrumque simul, simul et miseratur utrumque
> et tibi tum nullos optauit, barbara, natos.

The passage does not seem to have troubled editors and commentators, but there are two conspicuous features. One oddity is the unmotivated intrusion of a perfect form (*optauit*) in a sequence of historic presents; the other, the pointless *tum*.[30] There may be more than one way to eliminate these oddities, so what I offer here is intended more or less *exempli gratia*. The second issue can easily be solved by writing *non ullos*: *non ullus → nullus* is a frequent error, usually caused by *non* being abbreviated as *n̄*, and *tum* may simply be a metrical filler.[31] The first problem may involve a more complex course of corruption: I suspect *optauit* is a distortion, one way or another, of *optattibi* (perhaps *bi* was omitted before *ba*, after which *tti* was read as *ui*, though other scenarios may also be possible), while the transmitted *tibi* is a misplaced correction, ousting *fore*; in sum: *et fore non ullos optat tibi, barbara, natos*.[32] For *tibi* immediately preceding vocative *barbara*, compare especially 8.148 *quis locus Inachias inter tibi, barbara, natas?*[33] For *optare*

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[29] For a similar contrast, cf. e.g. Cic. *De or.* 1.169 *laborantibus succurrat, aegris medeatur, afflictos excitet, Leg. Man.* 23 *afflictum erexit perditumque recreauit, Att.* 3.15.7 *erige afflictos*, 12.50.1 *ut me leuarat tuus aduentus sic discessus afflixit*. Although *afflictus* seems unparalleled with *cura* (at least until Ven. Fort. *Carm. app.* 24.1 *anxius, afflictus curarum pondere curuor*), cf. e.g. Cic. *Cat.* 2.2.5 *quanto tandem illum maerore esse afflictum et profligatum putatis?* But one might also consider *affectam*, cf. *CLE* 1829.6 *affectus curis miseris necdum memor Orchi*.

[30] It could perhaps be argued that *tum* is emphatic ('not even then—at her own wedding—does Mopsus wish her children'), but in order to bear this emphasis it ought to be accompanied by a focussing particle, such as *quoque*. While this could be achieved by writing e.g. *tum quoque* at the beginning of the line, I think it would make the wrong point: Valerius is not saying that Mopsus is so overwhelmed with conflicting feelings about their marriage that he forgets to wish them children, but that, dreading the future he can foresee, he wishes that Medea were to have no children.

[31] Note e.g. Probus' *nulla* for *non ulla* at Verg. *G.* 2.420 or *nullique* for *non ulli* (*animum*) in some mediaeval manuscripts at *G.* 4.516.

[32] A simpler alternative might be to replace *optauit* with *exoptat* (it will have lost its prefix, after which the perfect suffix will have been inserted to fix the metre); for the simple accusative, cf. e.g. Cic. *Pis.* 96 *te oderunt, tibi pestem exoptant*, Sen. *Contr.* 7.6.2 *opto tibi perpetuam sterilitatem*, [Quint.] *Decl. Min.* 367.5 *uxorem tibi opto*. My reason, admittedly subjective, for preferring the accusative-and-infinitive construction is that it puts more emphasis on the future: what is at issue is not that Mopsus fails to wish Medea children at a moment when this could be expected (to convey such a sense one could write e.g. *tum quoque non ullos optans tibi, barbara, natos*), but that he foresees how events will unfold and, in the light of that knowledge, wishes that Medea would have no children to kill (cf. n. 30 above).

[33] There is a tendency for vocatives to attract second-person pronouns, which might favour reading *tibi* right before *barbara* as in 8.148, but it does not amount to a strict rule. In the *Argonautica*, I count

with *fore*, compare Cic. *Fam*. 1.7.11 *speroque et opto nobis hanc coniunctionem uoluptati fore*.

ARGONAUTICA 8.264

In the meantime, Absyrtus exhorts the Colchians to pursue the Argonauts (261–6):

> Apsyrtus subita praeceps cum classe parentis
> aduehitur profugis infestam lampada Grais
> concutiens diroque premens clamore sororem
> atque 'hanc, o siquis uobis dolor iraque, Colchi,
> accelerate uiam, neque enim fugit aequore raptor
> Iuppiter aut falsi sequimur uestigia tauri'.

> diroque *Baehrens*: -amque γ

The central difficulty here is that bare *atque* cannot adequately introduce a direct speech. One line of approach has been to supply a *uerbum dicendi* at the beginning of line 246 by writing either *atque ait* (Watt) or *hanc ait* (Liberman).[34] The alternative is to take the direct speech as dependent on *clamore*, as for instance Baehrens did (*heia agite*).[35] I think the second approach is to be preferred: *clamor*—'war-cry, battle-cry' (*OLD* s.v. 3)—is precisely what Absyrtus' speech is. Although a decisive solution may be difficult to obtain, I suggest that we should read *hanc, hanc*: *atque* could easily be either a mechanical corruption of *hanc* (perhaps by way of *ac*), or a metrical filler remedying the omission of one *hanc* by haplography. If I am right, I believe that the repeated *hanc* is intended to evoke Hypsipyle's invective against Medea at Ov. *Her*. 6.129–34:[36]

> spargere quae fratris potuit lacerata per agros
>   corpora, pignoribus parceret illa meis?
> hanc, hanc, a demens Colchisque ablate uenenis,
>   diceris Hypsipyles praeposuisse toro.
> turpiter illa uirum cognouit adultera uirgo;
>   me tibi teque mihi taeda pudica dedit.

some twenty-one examples of *tibi* accompanied by a vocative in the same line; in ten cases, *tibi* immediately precedes the vocative (1.188 *tibi, rector aquarum*, 291 *tibi, Phrixe*, 649 *tibi, Tiphy*, 5.102 *tibi, Tiphy*, 204 *tibi, fecundi proles Iouis*, 644 *tibi, magne pater*, 6.605 *tibi, Perse*, 606 *tibi, uirgo*, 8.142 *tibi, Medea*, 148 *tibi, barbara*), and in four cases, follows (1.546 *Bellona, tibi*, 2.468 *uirgo, tibi*, 3.711 *ductor, tibi*; I put 1.477 *Arge, tuae tibi cura ratis* in this category, as *tibi* is only split here from the vocative by another second-person pronoun, *tuae*); but in the remaining seven cases *tibi* occurs at some distance from the vocative (1.220 *unde haec tibi uulnera, Pollux*, 4.538 *uota, senex, perfecta tibi*, 5.246 *est tibi fatorum, genitor, tutela meorum*, 8.277 *nec tibi digna, soror, desum ad conubia frater*), including three lines that are formally similar to 8.251 in its transmitted shape, with *tibi* and the vocative taking the second and the penultimate position in the line respectively (1.457 *at tibi Palladia pinu, Polypheme, reuecto*, 3.173 *nec tibi Thessalicos tunc profuit, Ornyte, reges*, 8.312 *at tibi quae scelerum facies, Medea, tuorum*).

[34] Liberman (n. 1), 2.149, 379 n. 160.

[35] For *clamor* introducing direct speech without an explicit *uerbum dicendi*, cf. especially Verg. *Aen*. 9.597 *ibat et ingentem sese clamore ferebat*, followed by a speech.

[36] For geminated demonstrative pronouns as allusive signposts, see J. Wills, *Repetition in Latin Poetry: Figures of Allusion* (Oxford, 1996), 76–9.

The passage has three points of contact with the immediate context of the Valerian line: Colchis; Absyrtus; Jason and Medea's union. Now, Ovid's text at the beginning of line 131 is likewise uncertain: *hanc, hanc* is a conjecture by Palmer for what is transmitted as either *hanc* or *hanc tamen*; in other words, we evidently have the same kind of corruption here: first the omission of *hanc*, then an attempt at conjectural supplement (*tamen*).

ARGONAUTICA 8.357, 360–1

To help the Argonauts, Juno creates a storm, but Styrus—Medea's former fiancé—is no less eager to go after them (356–62):

> dixit et intortis socio cum milite remis
> prosilit. at fluctu puppis labefacta reuerso
> soluitur effunditque uiros ipsumque minantem
> tum quoque et elata quaerentem litora dextra.
> ibat et arma ferens et strictum naufragus ensem
> incipit et remos et quaerere transtra solutae
> sparsa ratis …

Having suggested that *prosilit* is corrupt at line 21, I cannot avoid the suspicion that it may be corrupt here as well.[37] Spaltenstein cites *Aen.* 5.139–40 *inde ubi clara dedit sonitum tuba, finibus omnes,* | *haud mora, prosiluere suis* (describing the start of a ship race) as a parallel, but it may not be a perfect equivalent;[38] as Fratantuono and Smith comment, 'V[irgil']s choice of words makes the ships seem like horses, as the verb is normally used to describe a horse, other animal, or a person capable of leaping forth'.[39] Since the verb is naturally used of a live being, it is rather confusing in the Valerian context: its usage suggests that it should be taken literally ('leaps forth'), of Styrus as an individual (especially as it is coordinate with *dixit*), rather than by metonymy of the ship he is commanding, but that, of course, cannot be the intended sense. I suspect that, again, *proruit*—probably in the transitive sense of *OLD* s.v. *proruo* 1 'To impel violently forward' (with *nauem* as the implied object)—may be the original reading, though, again, *proripit* might be an option too. A more clear-cut case is *ibat*. Commentators claim that *ire* can be used of swimming or sailing, but that claim is misleading: the verb can denote movement as such (even in water) but not the *manner* of movement (at least, not in reference to swimming); the point here, however, is not that Styrus kept moving even after he fell in the water, but that he was floating, and still would not let go of his shield and sword.[40] Heinsius's *nabat* is, I think, as necessary as it is easy (line-initial *N* could easily be omitted, after which *abat* had a high chance of being misinterpreted as *ibat*).[41] Yet this is not the only difficulty here: another,

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[37] It might be argued that one 'abnormal' use of a word can support another, but the problems of these two occurrences of *prosilit* are different, and it is known that a scribe may be prone to commit the same error again and again.

[38] Spaltenstein (n. 1), 460.

[39] L.M. Fratantuono, R.A. Smith, *Virgil, Aeneid 5: Text, Translation and Commentary* (Leiden, 2015), 245.

[40] Line 359 *elata quaerentem litora dextra* might suggest that Styrus is swimming towards the shore, which could be the point of *ibat*, but the following lines make it clear that he is not, and line 359 must refer to the moment when his ship is just being destroyed.

[41] Heinsius (n. 1), 408; not mentioned since Giarratano (n. 1), 80. Note also that *naufragus natare* is idiomatic (∼ 'to float in the water after shipwreck'), cf. e.g. Cic. *Inv. rhet.* 2.153 *naufragum*

apparently unnoticed, concerns the relation of imperfect *nabat* (*ibat*) to the historic presents surrounding it. A further conspicuous feature is the double *et* construction repeated in two consecutive lines (60–1). Both these issues can be eliminated by writing (*nabat*) *ut*: as he was floating in the water, Styrus begins to—what?[42] In and of itself, *et remos et quaerere transtra*—'to search for oars and thwarts'—seems unobjectionable, but it is rather striking that the same word is used, likewise of Styrus, a mere two lines above but with a different object: the repetition ought to be pointed, but the point can only be bathetic (Styrus gives up his ambition to reach the shore for the ambition of reaching a piece of wreckage that could support him, as it were), which would undermine the tragedy of the moment. Heinsius's *prendere* deserves serious consideration (a tired eye could easily mistake *prēdere* for *querere*, especially when the latter verb was fresh in the scribe's mind from line 359).[43]

ARGONAUTICA 8.374

After Styrus drowns, Absyrtus gives up (374):

> abscessit tandem uanaque recedit ab ira.

The line has a twofold problem: on the one hand, it is inelegant to have two verbs of the same root; on the other, their difference in tense is unmotivated. The usual solution is to adopt Caussin's *resedit* in place of *recedit*, but it has two weaknesses: first, it is not clear if *residere* can be construed with *ab* (contrast Verg. *Aen.* 6.407 *tumida ex ira tum corda resident*); second, the predominant narrative tense in the context is the historic present, so the two perfects would appear unjustified. Far superior is Löhbach's *absistit* for *abscessit*, completely ignored in recent editions and commentaries; the corruption may have been facilitated by scribal reminiscence of line 368 *tandem … cessit*.[44]

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quendam natantem et manus ad se tendentem, Livy 42.61.6 *naufragorum trepidatione passim natantium*, Luc. 4.87–8 *iam naufraga campo | Caesaris arma natant*, [Sen.] *Epigr.* 18.19–20 *naufragus hac cogente natat per foeda procellis | aequora*.

[42] For *incipit* preceded by an *ut* clause in a historic tense, cf. Verg. *Aen.* 6.102–3 *ut primum cessit furor et rabida ora quierunt, | incipit Aeneas heros*, Ov. 3.627–8 *utque domum intrauit Tyrios induta paratus, | incipit Aeneas* (though admittedly it is a slightly different use of *incipere*); for *ut* with the imperfect, see *OLD* s.v. 25.

[43] Heinsius (n. 1), 408; likewise not mentioned since Giarratano (n. 1), 80. Cf. Verg. *Aen.* 9.557–8 *altaque certat | prendere tecta manu sociumque attingere dextras*, Ov. *Pont.* 2.6.13 *bracchia da lasso potius prendenda natanti*.

[44] Again, Giarratano (n. 1), 80 seems to be the last editor to cite Löhbach's conjecture.