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The Citations of Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* in Angelo Poliziano's Unpublished Hand Notes to Virgil's *Aeneid*

As far as scholars know from the available evidence, Angelo Poliziano's academic activity in the Studium of Florence did not include a course specifically devoted to Apollonius Rhodius. This paper offers a survey of the citations from Apollonius Rhodius' Argonautica in Poliziano's hand notes to the Aeneid, transmitted by the incunabulum Paris, BNF, Rés. G. Yc. 236, to provide new information for further research both on the humanist's interest in the Hellenistic poem and, more generally, on the Apollonian reception in the Renaissance.

Keywords: Poliziano, Virgil, *Aeneid*, Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*, *Fortleben*

1. Introduction

The importance of the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius for Virgil's *Aeneid* has been the subject of scholarly interest in recent decades.¹ However, the focus on the relationship between these poems has an ancient origin and in the 15th century Angelo Poliziano (1454–1494) acknowledged that some *loci* from Apollonius' *Argonautica* had been used by Virgil as a model.²

Poliziano's philological and exegetical activity is linked to his role as a teacher at the *Studium* of Florence (1480–1494) and his interest in Virgil

¹ For the importance of Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* as a model for the *Aeneid* see, e.g., BEYE (1993); HUNTER (1993: 170–189), and NELIS (2001), with further bibliography. For what concerns the Homeric poems as models for the *Aeneid*, see, e.g., KNAUER (1979²) and FARRELL (2021).

² On Virgil's reception in the Renaissance see WILSON-OKAMURA (2010).

is shown by the courses he taught on the *Eclogues* (1482–1483) and the *Georgics* (1483–1484).³ It is known that Poliziano lectured on the *Aeneid* in the academic year 1486–1487,⁴ and both his unpublished hand notes, transmitted by the incunabulum Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Rés. G. Yc. 236,⁵ as well as the *recollectae* of his lessons, handed down by the manuscript Ravenna, Biblioteca Comunale Classense, 237,⁶ bear witness to his exegetical work on the Virgilian poem.

Although Poliziano never wrote – as far as scholars know – a commentary on Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, his interest is shown by the several citations from this poem (and from the *scholia*) that he scattered in his oeuvre.⁷

³ Regarding Poliziano's teaching at the *Studium* of Florence see CESARINI MARTINELLI (1996); MANDOSIO (2008), and VITI (2012). See also DEL LUNGO (1868); DEL LUNGO (1897: 93–132); MAÏER (1966: 423–438); BRANCA (1968); BRANCA (1983).

⁴ BRANCA (1983: 75–76).

⁵ In addition to Poliziano's hand notes to the *Aeneid*, the incunabulum Paris, BNF, Rés. G. Yc. 236 hands down those on the *Georgics*, published by CASTANO MUSICÒ (1990), and those on the *Eclogues* of which I am working on the critical edition. This incunabulum is a copy of the second Virgil's edition printed in Rome in 1471 by Conrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz, with the collaboration of the editor Giovanni Andrea Busi (IGI 10180; ISTC iv00151400). On this incunabulum see e.g., PEROSA (1955: 29–30, nr. 15); MAÏER (1965: 353); CASTANO MUSICÒ (1990: VII–X), and DANELONI (2013: 311, nr. 85).

⁶ The ms. Ravenna, Biblioteca Comunale Classense, 237, hands down the *recollectae* of Poliziano's lessons on the *Georgics* (ff. 3r–22r) and on the *Aeneid* (ff. 23r–88r); on this manuscript and its owners, see PEROSA (1955: 35–36, nr. 22); MAÏER (1965: 258); VERDE (1977: 151), and PAOLINO (2016: 177–179).

⁷ With regard to Poliziano's interest in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* (and in the *scholia*) see, e.g., VIAN (2005: 611–613); VIAN (1997: 982–984); DANELONI (2011: 422–423); CATTANEO (2015: 101–104); CATTANEO (2017). In this respect, not only the commentaries written by Poliziano in support of his lectures at the *Studium* of Florence should be considered, but also e.g., the hand notes written in the incunabula's margins, his epistolary, both *Miscellanies* (see the recent edition by DYCK–COTTRELL [2020]), his works in prose and poetry, his notebooks, as the so-called *De poesi et poetis* (i.e., the first part of the manuscript Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Naz. II I 99, in which Poliziano collected informations about poetry and poets of classical antiquity; see CESARINI MARTINELLI [1982] and CESARINI MARTINELLI [1985]), and the manuscript Par. Gr. 3069 (for a description of this notebook, see SILVANO [2010: XLIII–LIX]), in which in

The method I adopted to classify the citations from the *Argonautica* has been defined by Claudio Bevegni in a series of landmark studies on the reception of Greek theatre in Angelo Poliziano's commentaries:⁸ (1) I have taken into account the hand notes where the lines of the *Argonautica* are cited *verbatim* by Poliziano and the notes where the humanist refers to the Hellenistic poem without citing the text;⁹ (2) I quoted the lines of the *Aeneid's* lines that the humanist intended to comment on; (3) I considered the context and the reasons that led Poliziano to cite the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius.

Concerning the transcription of Poliziano's hand notes, I have adopted the following criteria: (1) punctuation and capital letters follow modern usage; (2) I retained Poliziano's spelling of the Latin terms; (3) for what concerns Latin, I have always restored diphthongs; (4) with regard to Greek, I have normalised spirits, accents, and *alia minima*. The following paragraphs provide an analysis of Poliziano's hand notes, fol-

the 1485 the humanist cited several *scholia* to Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, as pointed out by PEROSA (1994: 86) and DANELONI (2011: 422–423).

⁸ BEVEGNI (2016c: 194–196); see also BEVEGNI (2016a) and BEVEGNI (2016b). Claudio Bevegni's research method hinges upon tracing the citations of ancient works scattered throughout Poliziano's oeuvre. All the quotations are catalogued as 'primary citations' (i.e., when Poliziano transcribes a passage from a manuscript of the author he is citing) and 'secondary citations' (when the humanist cites a passage from indirect tradition). I adopted this method in VESPOLI (forthcoming), where I offer a first survey of Poliziano's citations from Sophocles' extant plays.

⁹ Poliziano cited at f. 91r of the incunabulum Paris, BNF, Rés. G. Yc. 236 a *locus* from the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius (5,17,4–6) in which the latter noted that Virgil wrote the fourth book of the *Aeneid* taking as a model the third book of Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*. The hand note is the following one: *Macrobius: 'De Argonauticorum tertio, quorum scriptor est Apollonius, librum Aeneidos suae quartum totum paene formaverit, ad Didonem vel Aenean amatoriam continentiam Medae circa Iasonem transferendo. Quod ita elegantius auctore digessit, ut fabula lascivientis Didonis, quam falsam novit universitas, per tot tamen saecula speciem veritatis obtineat et ita pro vero per ora omnium volitet, ut pictores fictoresque qui figmentis liciorum contextas imitantur effigies, hac materia vel maxime in effigiendis simulacris tamquam unico argumento decoris utantur, nec minus histrionum perpetuis et gestibus et cantibus celebratur. Tantum valuit pulchritudo narrandi ut omnes Phoenissae castitatis conscii, nec ignari manum sibi iniecissem reginam, ne pateretur damnum pudoris, coniveant tamen fabulae, et intra conscientiam veri fidem frementes malint pro vero celebrari quod pectoribus humanis dulcedo fingentis infudit'.*

Ἦ, καὶ ὁ μὲν προτέρωσε δόμων ἐξῶρτο νέεσθαι.
 Οἶος δ' ἐκ νηοῖο θυώδεος εἴσιν Ἀπόλλων
 Δῆλον ἄν' ἠγαθέην ἢ Κλάρον, ἢ ὅ γε Πυθῶ
 ἢ Λυκίην εὐρείαν ἐπὶ Ξάνθοιο ῥοῆσι.

Et non multo post:

Οἱ δ', ὡς τ' ἠίθειοι Φοῖβω χορὸν ἢ ἐνὶ Πυθοῖ
 ἢ πού ἐν Ὀρτυγίῃ ἢ ἐφ' ὕδασι νῆσσοισιν
 στησάμενοι, φόρμιγγος ὑπαὶ περὶ βωμὸν ὁμαρτῆ
 ἐμμελέως κραιπνοῖσι πέδον ῥήσσωσι πόδεσσιν.

Κτλ.

Angelo. Maro seems to have drawn from two similes of Apollonius, which are found in the first book of the *Argonautica*:

He spoke and went forth from his home to make his departure. And as Apollo goes from his fragrant temple through holy Delos or Claros, or through Pytho or broad Lycia by the streams of Xanthus. (Trans. RACE)

And not much further:

And they, as when young men form a chorus to honor Phoebus either in Pytho, or perhaps in Ortygia, or by the waters of Ismenus, and around the altar to the lyre's accompaniment with swift feet they beat the ground all together in rhythm. (Trans. RACE)

Etc.

Poliziano compares Verg. *Aen.* 4, 143–150 with two similes from the first book of Apollonius' *Argonautica* related to Apollo.¹²

In the first simile cited by Poliziano (*AR* 1, 306–309) Jason's walk through the crowd on his way to the harbour of Pagasae is compared to

¹² For what concerns the use of the similes by Apollonius Rhodius see EFFE (2008), with further bibliography.

that of Apollo when he walks around his temples.¹³ Virgil virtually cites the Apollonian text: *hibernam Lyciam Xanthique fluenta* of Verg. *Aen.* 4, 143 reworks Λυκίην εὐρεῖαν ἐπὶ Ξάνθοιο ῥοῆσι of AR 1, 309, where only the term *hibernam* varies from εὐρεῖαν of the Hellenistic model.¹⁴ The second simile cited by Poliziano (AR 1, 536–539) is described by Apollonius Rhodius in the scene of Argo's departure from Pagasae: the Argonauts beating the waves with their oars are compared to youths stamping their feet on the ground while dancing in honour of Apollo at Pytho.

As pointed out by Damien P. Nelis, the simile described in AR 1, 536–539 recalls that in AR 1, 306–309;¹⁵ it is likely that Virgil decided to use both the similes described in the first book of the *Argonautica* as a model for *Aen.* 4, 143–150 because he was aware of the relationship between them. From this perspective the expression *instauratque chorus* of Verg. *Aen.* 4, 145 is the citation of χορὸν ... στησάμενοι of AR 1, 536–538, as well as *altaria circum* of Verg. *Aen.* 4, 145 is parallel to περιβωμὸν of AR 1, 538.

3. AR 1, 1182–1184 *ad* Verg. *Aen.* 6, 5b–8 (f. 112v, m.s.)

In the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas lands at Cumae for visiting Apollo's temple in order to seek a prophecy from the Sibyl. In *Aen.* 6, 5b–8 the Trojans, who have just landed, are described as in the search for water supplies and fuel:

¹³ The comparison between Verg. *Aen.* 4, 143–150 and AR 1, 306–309 was already suggested by modern scholars: see e.g. JAHN (1912: 157 *ad loc.*); NELIS (2001: 135), and WEBER (2002: 322–333).

¹⁴ WEBER (2002: 323), commenting on the use of *hibernam* in Verg. *Aen.* 4, 143, points out that Lycia is not described as Apollo's 'winter home' but, on the contrary, 'is the place in Asia that in winter the god *leaves behind* for Greece'; according to this reading, Aeneas' leaving from Carthage in winter mirrors Apollo's abandoning Lycia in the same season of the year (see p. 324, n. 9).

¹⁵ See NELIS (2001: 135), who also surmises a memory of AR 2, 674–675 (τοιῖσι δὲ Λητοῦς υἱός, ἀνερχόμενος Λυκίηθεν / τῆλ' ἐπ' ἀπειρόνα δῆμον Ὑπερβορέων ἀνθρώπων) in this Virgilian simile: 'Virgil subtly alludes to the god's Apollonian destination (i.e., the land of the Hyperboreans), however, when he describes the *Agathyrsi* (4, 146) dancing in his honour' (cit. *ibid.*).

Iuvenum manus emicat ardens 5

litus in Hesperium; quaerit pars semina flammae
abstrusa in venis silicis, pars densa ferarum
tecta rapit silvas, inventaque flumina monstrat.

In hot haste the youthful band leaps forth on the Hesperian shore;
some seek the seeds of flame hidden in veins of flint, some despoil the
woods, the thick coverts of game, and point to new-found streams.
(Trans. FAIRCLOUGH–GOOLD)

Alongside this Virgilian description, in the left margin of f. 112v,
Poliziano cites AR 1, 1182–1184 as follows:

Angelus. Apollonius, libro primo:

Ἐνθα δ' ἔπειθ' οἱ μὲν ξύλα κάγχανα, τοὶ δὲ λεχαίην
φυλλάδα λειμώνων φέρον ἄσπετον ἀμήσαντες
στόρνυσθαι τοὶ δ' ἀμφὶ πυρήια δινεύεσκον.

Angelo. Apollonius in the first book:

Thereupon some of the crew were bringing dry wood, while others
were bringing leaves that they had gathered in abundance from the
meadows to spread for beds; some were twirling sticks to make fire.
(Trans. RACE)

1182 κάγχανα Polit. : κάγκανα *recte*

The Argonauts land in Cianides, a region of Misia where they are peacefully welcomed by locals. After the landing, Apollonius describes the Argonauts collecting wood and leaves for use as bedding and fuel (AR 1, 1182–1184): this description is similar to that in Verg. *Aen.* 6, 5–8.¹⁶

A comparison between these two *loci* shows that *quaerit pars semina flammae* of Verg. *Aen.* 6, 6 corresponds to τοὶ δ' ἀμφὶ πυρήια δινεύεσκον of AR 1, 1184 and *pars densa ferarum / tecta rapit silvas* of Verg. *Aen.* 6, 7–8

¹⁶ Concerning the similarity between AR 1, 1182–1184 and Verg. *Aen.* 6, 5–8 see AUSTIN (1977: 33) and NELIS (2001: 469).

reworks οί μὲν ξύλα κάγκανα, τοὶ δὲ λεχαίην / φυλλάδα λειμώνων φέρον of AR 1, 1182–1183.

4. AR 3, 291–295 ad Verg. *Aen.* 8, 407–415 (141r, m.d.)

In the eighth book of the *Aeneid*, Venus asks Vulcan to forge weapons for Aeneas, and the god, overcome by love, agrees. In Verg. *Aen.* 8, 407–415 Vulcan preparing nighttime to forge the weapons is compared to a spinner who wakes up in the middle of the night to spin wool:¹⁷

Inde ubi prima quies medio iam noctis abactae
 curriculo expulerat somnum, cum femina primum,
 cui tolerare colo vitam tenuique Minerva
 impositum, cinerem et sopitos suscitatur ignis 410
 noctem addens operi, famulasque ad lumina longo
 exercet penso, castum ut servare cubile
 coniugis et possit parvos educere natos:
 haud secus ignipotens nec tempore segnior illo
 mollibus e stratis opera ad fabrilia surgit. 415

Then, just as when first rest had expelled sleep in the mid-circuit of driven-off night, a woman, who has been given the task of bearing the burden of her life by the distaff and by delicate Minerva, first stirs up ashes and wakes the slumbering fires, adding night to her daily task, and in the light of the lamp keeps her maidservants busy with the endless weighing out of wool, that she may be able to keep her husband's bed chaste and bring up her little sons. By no means otherwise or more sluggishly late than at that time does the ruler of fire rise from his soft beddings to his forger's tasks. (Trans. FRATANTUONO, ALDEN SMITH)

In commenting on this simile, Poliziano writes in the right margin of f. 141r the following note, where AR 3, 291–295 is cited:

Apollonius in III Argonauticon:

Ὡς δὲ γυνὴ μαλερῶ πυρὶ κάρφεια χεύετο δαλῶ
 χερσῆτις, τῇ πέρ τε ταλασήια ἔργα μέμηλεν,

¹⁷ On this Virgil's simile see FRATANTUONO–ALDEN SMITH (2018: 501–507) with further bibliography.

ὥς κεν ὑπωρόφιον νύκτωρ σέλας ἐντύναιτο,
 ἄγχι μάλ' ἐγρομένη· τὸ δ' ἀθέσφατον ἐξ ὀλίγοιο
 δαλοῦ ἀνεγρόμενον σὺν κάρφεια πάντ' ἀμαθύνει. 295

291 πὺρὶ Polit. : περὶ edd. | 292 τῆ πέρ τε Polit. : τῆπερ edd.

And as when a woman *throws twigs on the glowing embers of a fire-brand*, a working woman whose task is *also* wool-spinning, so as to furnish light under her roof at night *when she awakes very early*, and the flame rises prodigiously from the small brand and consumes all the twigs together. (Trans. RACE, slightly modified)

In these lines, Eros hidden in Medea's heart is compared by Apollonius to the glowing embers of a fire-brand that a spinner feeds nighttime throwing twigs on it.¹⁸ The correspondences between the two similes are the following ones: (1) *inde ubi prima quies medio iam noctis abactae / curriculo expulerat somnum* of Verg. *Aen.* 8, 407–408 is an expansion of ἄγχι μάλ' ἐγρομένη of AR 3, 294; (2) *cum femina primum* of Verg. *Aen.* 8, 408 is a citation of ὡς δὲ γυνῆ of AR 3, 291; (3) *cui tolerare colo vitam tenuique Minerva / impositum* of Verg. *Aen.* 8, 409–410 expresses the same content of τῆπερ [τῆ πέρ τε Polit.]¹⁹ ταλασῆια ἔργα μέμηλεν of AR 3, 292; (4) *cinerem et sopitos suscitatur ignis* of Verg. *Aen.* 8, 410 recalls μαλερῶ περὶ [πὺρὶ Polit.] κάρφεια χεύετο δαλω̄ of AR 3, 291; (5) *noctem addens operi* of Verg. *Aen.* 8, 411 could be a reminiscence of AR 3, 293: ὥς κεν ὑπωρόφιον νύκτωρ σέλας ἐντύναιτο.²⁰

Poliziano acknowledged the striking similarities between AR 3, 291–295 and Verg. *Aen.* 8, 407–415 and therefore transcribed in the incunabulum Paris, BNF, Rés. G. Yc. 236 the simile described by Apollonius Rhodius to comment on the scene of the *Aeneid*. The first published work in which – as far as I know – the similarities between these two similes

¹⁸ On this simile see CLACK (1973: 310–311); CAMPBELL (1994: 266–271); EFFE (2008: 206), and MOREAU (2003: 252–253).

¹⁹ It should be noted that Poliziano's reading τῆ πέρ τε in AR 3, 292 produces a hypermeter line.

²⁰ Concerning all these similarities see NELIS (2001: 341–343; 476).

have been acknowledged is Fulvio Orsini's *Virgilius collatione scriptorum Graecorum illustratus*, published in 1567.²¹

5. Final observations

As I pointed out above, the aim of this research is to collect the citations from Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* in Poliziano's unpublished hand notes on the *Aeneid* in order to understand why the humanist cited the Hellenistic poem to comment on Virgil's masterpiece and to identify the manuscripts he used to read it.

In order to clarify the reasons that led Poliziano to cite lines from the *Argonautica*, it is worth saying something about the nature of the hand notes in which Apollonius Rhodius' poem is cited. Firstly, the lines of the *Argonautica* are not cited for the purpose of exegesis of the text of the *Aeneid* (e.g., to clarify terms or expressions),²² but to point out the intertextual relationship between the text of Apollonius Rhodius and that of Virgil: the Hellenistic poem is always cited as a model for the text of the *Aeneid* on which Poliziano is commenting. A clear example is the hand note wherewith Poliziano acknowledges that the similes described in *AR* 1, 306–309 and *AR* 1, 536–539 of the first book of Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* have been used as a model by Virgil in writing *Aen.* 4, 143–150: *Videtur Maro duas Apollonii comparationes decerpisse, quae in primo Argonauticon libro sunt.*

With regard to the manuscripts of the *Argonautica* used by Poliziano, scholars have identified two witnesses: the manuscript of 13th century Laur. 32, 16 (= S) and the manuscript of 10th century Laur. 32, 9 (= L).²³ My examination of these manuscripts yielded the following results:

²¹ ORSINI (1567: 371–372). It is worth noting that the incunabulum Paris, BNF, Rés. G. Yc. 236 was purchased by Fulvio Orsini, see CASTANO MUSICÒ (1990: VII).

²² In this respect, it is worth noting that Poliziano never cited the *scholia* to the *Argonautica* in the hand notes under consideration; the combination text + *scholium* is frequently found in Poliziano's commentaries.

²³ Regarding Poliziano's use of these manuscripts, see RESTA (1978: 1081); PEROSA (1994: 86); VIAN (2005: 611–613); VIAN (1997: 982–984); DANELONI (2011: 422–423); SPERANZI (2016: 58), and CATTANEO (2017: 238–240). A detailed description of the well-known manuscript Laur. 32, 9 is in ORSINI (2005: 305–310).

1, 306–309 Ἡ, καὶ ὁ μὲν προτέρωσε δόμων ἐξῶρτο νέεσθαι. / Οἶος δ' ἐκ νηϊοῦ θυώδεος εἴσιν Ἀπόλλων / Δῆλον ἄν' ἠγαθέην ἠὲ Κλάρον, ἢ ὅ γε Πυθῶ / ἢ Λυκίην εὐρεῖαν ἐπὶ Ξάνθοιο ῥοῆσι.

306 ἐξῶρτο Polit. L (f. 194r) : ἄρα ᾠρτο S (f. 192v)

1, 536–539 Οἶ δ', ὥς τ' ἠίθει Φοῖβω χορὸν ἠὲ ἐνὶ Πυθοῖ / ἢ που ἐν Ὀρτυγίῃ ἢ ἐφ' ὕδασιν Ἰσμηνοῖο / στησάμενοι, φόρμιγγος ὑπαὶ περὶ βωμῶν ὁμαρτῆ / ἐμμελέως κραιπνοῖσι πέδον ῥήσσωσι πόδεσσιν.

537 ὕδασιν Polit. L (f. 197r) : ὕδασ' S (f. 194r)

1, 1182–1184 Ἐνθα δ' ἔπειθ' οἶ μὲν ξύλα κάγκανα, τοὶ δὲ λεχαῖην / φυλλάδα λειμώνων φέρον ἄσπετον ἀμήσαντες / στόρνυσθαι· τοὶ δ' ἀμφὶ πυρήια διενέεσκον.

1182 ἔπειθ' Polit. S (f. 199r) : ἔπειτ' L (f. 205r) κάγκανα Polit. : κάγκανα L (f. 205r) P (f. 199r)

3, 291–295 Ὡς δὲ γυνὴ μαλερῶ πυρὶ κάρφεια χεύετο δαλῶ / χερνῆτις, τῆ πέρο τε ταλασῆια ἔργα μέμηλεν, / ὥς κεν ὑπωρόφιον νύκτωρ σέλας ἐντύναιτο, / ἄγχι μάλ' ἐγρομένη· τὸ δ' ἀθέσφατον ἐξ ὀλίγοιο / δαλοῦ ἀνεγρόμενον σὺν κάρφεια πάντ' ἀμαθύνει.

291 χεύετο Polit. L (f. 227v) : δεύετο S (f. 212r) 292 τῆ πέρο τε Polit. L (f. 228r) : τῆπερο S (f. 212r)

The comparison between the text of the *Argonautica* cited by Poliziano in his hand notes and that transmitted by the manuscripts L and S shows that the humanist read L instead of S.²⁴ The only exception is AR 1, 1182–1184, which seems to have been cited from the manuscript S: Poliziano, in fact, cite 1, 1182 with the reading ἔπειθ' of S instead of ἔπειτ' of L.²⁵ On the other hand, it is likely to me that Poliziano's error

²⁴ However, it should be noted that when in L there is an iota *adscriptum* in Poliziano's notes it is usually *subscriptum*.

²⁵ In this respect, it cannot be excluded that Poliziano exchanged *suo Marte* ἔπειτ' of L with ἔπειθ'.

κάγκανα in AR 1, 1182 against the correct reading κάγκανα of both L and S, has been caused by a humanist's *lapsus calami*.

**6. Appendix. Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*: AR 3, 744–754 (?)
ad Verg. *Aen.* 4, 522–532 (98r, m.d.)**

In *Aen.* 4, 522–532, Virgil describes firstly a quiet night (Verg. *Aen.* 4, 522–527) and then Dido's suffering due to Aeneas' decision to depart from Carthage (Verg. *Aen.* 4, 529–532):

Nox erat, et placidum carpebant fessa soporem
 corpora per terras, silvaeque et saeva quierant
 aequora, cum medio volvuntur sidera lapsu,
 cum tacet omnis ager, pecudes pictaeque volucres, 525
 quaeque lacus late liquidos, quaeque aspera dumis
 rura tenent, somno positae sub nocte silenti.
 Lenibant curas et corda oblita laborum.²⁶

At non infelix animi Phoenissa, neque umquam
 solvitur in somnos, oculisque aut pectore noctem 530
 accipit; ingeminant curae rursusque resurgens
 saevit amor, magnoque irarum fluctuat aestu.

It was night, and over, and over the earth weary creatures were tasting the peace of slumber, the woods and wild seas had sunk to rest—the hour when stars roll midway in their gliding course, when all the land is still, and beasts and coloured birds, both those that far and near haunt the limpid lakes, and those that dwell in the thorny thickets of the countryside, are couched in sleep beneath the silent night. They were soothing their cares, their hearts oblivious of sorrows. But not so the soul-racked Phoenician queen; she never sinks into sleep, nor draws darkness into eyes or heart. Her pangs redouble, and her love, swelling up, surges afresh, as she heaves with a mighty tide of passion. (Trans. FAIRCLOUGH–GOOLD)

Poliziano, in order to comment on this scene, penned near Verg. *Aen.* 4, 522 the following short note (f. 98r, m.d.):

²⁶ This line is generally omitted by editors, see CONTE (2019²: 103 *ad loc.*); see also pp. IX–XXXVIII with regard to the manuscript tradition of the *Aeneid* and pp. XLVIII–LI for the *conspectus codicum*.

Angelus. Haec descriptio ex Apollonii 3^o.

Angelo. This description has been taken from the third book of Apollonius.

It seems likely to me that Poliziano's hand note refers to *AR* 3, 744–754.²⁷

Νύξ μὲν ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἄγεν κνέφας· οἱ δ' ἐνὶ πόντῳ
 ναυτίλοι εἰς Ἑλίκην τε καὶ ἀστέρας Ὠρίωνος 745
 ἔδρακον ἐκ νηῶν, ὕπνοιο δὲ καὶ τις ὀδίτης
 ἦδη καὶ πυλαῶρος ἐέλδετο, καὶ τινα παίδων
 μητέρα τεθνεώτων ἀδινὸν περὶ κῶμ' ἐκάλυπτεν·
 οὐδὲ κυνῶν ὑλακὴ ἔτ' ἀνὰ πτόλιν, οὐ θρόος ἦεν
 ἠχήεις· σιγὴ δὲ μελαινομένην ἔχεν ὄρφνην. 750
 Ἀλλὰ μάλ' οὐ Μήδειαν ἐπὶ γλυκερὸς λάβεν ὕπνος·
 πολλὰ γὰρ Αἰσονίδαο πόθῳ μελεδήματ' ἔγειρεν
 δειδυῖαν ταύρων κρατερόν μένος, οἷσιν ἔμελλεν
 φθειῖσθαι ἀεικελίῃ μοίρῃ κατὰ νειὸν Ἄρης.

Then night was drawing darkness over the earth, and the sailors on the sea looked towards Helice and the stars of Orion from their ships, and by now the traveler and gate-keeper were longing for sleep, and deep slumber was enfolding the mother whose children had died; and no longer was there barking of dogs through the city nor echoing sounds, but silence gripped the darkening night. But by no means had sweet sleep overtaken Medea, because in her longing for Jason many anxieties kept her awake, as she dreaded the great strength of the oxen that were going to make him die a horrid death in the field of Ares. (Trans. RACE)

As well as in Verg. *Aen.* 4, 522–532, where the description of the quiet night is followed by that of the restless Dido, in *AR* 3, 744–754 the description of the night (*AR* 3, 748–751) is followed by that of Medea, sleepless because she is worried about the dangerous undertaking imposed on Jason by Aeetes (*AR* 3, 752–754).

²⁷ The similarity between these scenes has been already acknowledged by SCALIGER (1561: 251); see also NELIS (2001: 166; 179–180; 333; 465).

The verbal similarities between Verg. *Aen.* 4, 522–527 and AR 3, 748–751 have been already pointed out:²⁸ (1) Verg. *Aen.* 4, 522a (*nox erat*) corresponds to AR 3, 744a (νύξ μὲν ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἄγεν κνέφας); (2) Verg. *Aen.* 4, 522–523 (*et placidum carpebant fessa soporem / corpora per terras*) is similar to AR 3, 746–748 (ὑπνοιο δὲ καὶ τις ὀδίτης / ἦδη καὶ πυλαωρὸς ἐέλδετο, καὶ τινα παίδων / μητέρα τεθνεώτων ἀδινὸν περὶ κῶμ' ἐκάλυπτεν); (3) Verg. *Aen.* 4, 524a (*aequora*) is a citation of AR 3, 744 (ἐνὶ πόντῳ); (4) Verg. *Aen.* 4, 524 (*cum medio voluntur sidera lapsu*) mirrors AR 3, 745–746 (καὶ ἀστέρας Ὠρίωνος / ἔδρακον ἐκ νηῶν); (5) the description of nature's silence in Verg. *Aen.* 4, 525–527 (*pecudes pictaeque volucres, / quaeque lacus late liquidos, quaeque aspera dumis / rura tenent, somno positae sub nocte silenti*) is similar to that in AR 3, 749–750 (οὐδὲ κυνῶν ὑλακὴ ἔτ' ἀνὰ πτόλιν, οὐ θρόος ἦεν / ἠχήεις· σιγὴ δὲ μελαινομένην ἔχεν ὄρφνην).

In both scenes the description of the quiet night clashes with that of the tormented feelings of a woman: Dido in Verg. *Aen.* 4, 529–532 and Medea in AR 3, 751–754. The similarities are the following ones: (1) Verg. *Aen.* 4, 529–531 (*at non infelix animi Phoenissa, neque umquam / solvitur in somnos, oculisve aut pectore noctem / accipit*) reworks AR 3, 751 (ἀλλὰ μάλ' οὐ Μήδειαν ἐπὶ γλυκερὸς λάβεν ὕπνος); (2) in Verg. *Aen.* 4, 531–532 (*ingeminant curae rursusque resurgens / saevit amor, magnoque irarum fluctuat aestu*) the description of Dido's distraught state of mind is similar to that of Medea's feelings in AR 3, 752 (πολλὰ γὰρ Αἰσονίδαο πόθῳ μελεδήματ' ἔγειρεν).

In conclusion, the striking similarities between AR 3, 744–754 and Verg. *Aen.* 4, 522–532 suggest that Poliziano had in mind Apollonius Rhodius' lines in commenting on the Virgilian scene.²⁹

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²⁸ See e.g., NELIS (2001: 179–180; 333).

²⁹ Regarding Poliziano's interest in Greek texts with the aim of shedding light on Latin ones, see e.g., VESPOLI (2021a); see also VESPOLI (2021b).

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