THE PRESENTATION OF THE INNER SELF: EURIPIDES' *MEDEA* 1021-55 AND APOLLONIUS RHODIUS' *ARGONAUTICA* 3, 772-801*)

BY

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"the monologue form excites inquiry and frustrates certainty, so that whatever its generic shape may be, its symbolic shape is that of the question-mark" H. Clews, *The Only Teller*
"dans le texte, seul parle le lecteur" R. Barthes, *S/Z*

Introduction

This paper is divided into two parts, the first of which focuses on Euripides' *Medea* and the second on Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, not in the form of a comparison between these two different literary genres, but as an attempt to examine the parallel use, both in drama and in narrative, of the technique of interior focalization and its culmination in an innovative *interior monologue* (*Medea* 1021-55; *Argonautica* 3, 772-801)[1]).

*) This article was originally written as a M. Phil. paper at Cambridge; I should like to express my sincere thanks to Professor P.E. Easterling for all her insightful advice. I also wish to thank the anonymous referee of Mnemosyne for his/her helpful remarks.

1) The idea for this paper originated in the fact that the reading of this monologue in the *Argonautica* immediately recalled to me the famous speech in Euripides' *Medea*. It is worth noticing that two scholars expressed the same impression while writing about the relevant passage in the *Argonautica*: P. Händel, *Beobachtungen zur epischen Technik des Apollonios Rhodios* (München 1954), 110: "Zweifellos gab der berühmte Monolog der euripideischen *Medea* (1019 ff.) das Vorbild", and F. Vian (ed.), *Apollonios de Rhodes, Argonautiques Chant III* (Paris 1980), 82 n. 7: "Comparer le monologue de Médée, dans Eur., *Médée* 1019ss". Neither of them, however, tries to explain at length what may have suggested the association of the two passages. I believe that the reason why the one text recalls the other is the use of the same technique by both poets and my paper is an examination of this technique in the relevant contexts. In this respect, it is interesting to see that G. Paduano, *Studi su Apollonio Rodio* (Roma 1972), while examining the monologues in the *Argonautica*, tries to find an analogy with the ones in *Medea*; but he associates *Arg.* 3, 772-801 with *Med.* 376 ff. (52), while he finds it difficult to find a parallel for *Med.* 1019 ff.

Firstly, I will begin each part by trying to locate the closest possible precedents, in the extant examples of the relative genre, in order to show the innovative character of the passages under discussion. Secondly, I will examine the technique of the *interior monologue*[2]) more closely in its context to prove its uniqueness. Thirdly, I

(53). An investigation of the relation of Medea's monologues in the *Argonautica* with the ones in the Euripidean play can also be found in R. Ibscher, *Gestalt der Szene und Form der Rede in den Argonautika des Apollonios Rhodios* (diss. München 1939), 168-175; but the relations detected are based on thematic similarities. On Medea's monologue in the *Argonautica* as one of the many phases of her nocturnal agony, examined by means of a discourse analysis method, see J.H. Barkhuizen, *The Psychological Characterization of Medea in Apollonius of Rhodes, Argonautica 3, 744-824*, AClass 22 (1979), 33-48. There it is also stated that Medea's psychological state in *Argonautica* 3, 744-824 is similar to that of Medea throughout the Euripidean play and especially in her conflict whether to kill her children or not; the similarity is traced by Barkhuizen in the "selfsame movement of the pendulum from certainty to doubt and vice versa" (47).

2) To avoid any confusion which might result from the maze of literary terminology, I find it necessary to specify beforehand my choice in the use of some terms both in drama and in epic. The term *interior monologue*, which has been well established in literary criticism, especially since the publication of the book by E. Dujardin, *Le monologue intérieur, son apparition, ses origines, sa place dans l'oeuvre de James Joyce et dans le roman contemporain* (Paris 1931), to indicate the technique I will examine, is usually associated with narrative literature. In this regard, although its use is legitimate for the epic, it might seem awkward for drama. Furthermore, since the term *interior monologue* is normally considered to indicate the mimesis of silent thought or the representation of an unspoken language, its application to two examples of explicitly spoken utterance (the speaking character is, of course, self-evident in the case of a drama, while it is also obvious in Apollonius from the way in which the utterance is both introduced and closed), might seem problematic. However, I believe that it is the most appropriate to describe the technique employed by both Euripides and Apollonius in their elaboration of Medea's utterance in a way which contributes to her characterization; this is a technique which simulates a direct verbalization of Medea's thoughts and an obliteration of the difference between spoken/heard words and words passing through the mind. In this regard, it is important to note that Apollonius has been given the credit for commencing with *Arg.* 3, 772-801 the tradition of the stylized *interior monologue*; see R. Scholes-R. Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (New York 1966), 177-182 and 285, for a discussion of classical monologues, the possibility of a relation between the seemingly incompatible notions of 'interior' and 'spoken' and the unique character of *Arg.* 3, 772-801. Finally, Medea's utterance in Euripides may well be regarded as a dialogue, if we think that it is addressed to the children many times (explicitly so in 1021, 1029, 1040, 1053), and also, though only once, to the Chorus (1043); cf. C. Gill, *Two Monologues of Self-division: Euripides, Medea 1021-80 and Seneca, Medea 893-977*, in: M. Whitby *et al.* (eds.), *Homo Viator: Classical Essays for John Bramble* (Bristol 1987), 25-28. For these reasons, I will be using the 'neutral' terms speech or rhesis for the whole of Medea's utterance in Euripides, and the term "*interior*

will suggest an explanation as to what may have led both poets to the same innovation. Finally, I will try to appreciate the extent of their success.

I.

Aristotle (*Poetics* 1449b24, 1449b36-50a13) defined tragedy as an imitation of action (πράξεως μίμησις) based on the presentation of the habitual character (ἦθος) and the mental activity (διάνοια) of the protagonists. Thus the core of tragedy is action, whether already in progress or still contemplated, justified or condemned, but always generated by the inner life of a principal character in various associations with other actions. The characters' interaction is illuminated by the dialogue and the choral odes, while the inner life which motivates action cannot be better presented than by means of monologue.

Although the inner debate is not absent from Aeschylean tragedy[3]) (e.g. Agamemnon, Orestes, Pelasgus), yet, as the unified trilogy of the Aeschylean type gave way, via Sophocles, to the concentration on a single play and usually on one hero, it was natural that this development would at the same time lead to a further elaboration of the hero's inner life, when confronting tragic dilemmas[4]). In most of his extant plays, Sophocles developed the tragic dilemma as a choice which had to be made by the hero between two decisions, one leading to probable destruction and one to compromise. He also provided his audience with the whole scale of accessibility to his characters' inner life, when he employed interior focalization in

monologue" (in quotation-marks) for its second part. For Medea's utterance in Apollonius, I will be using the term monologue for the whole of it and the term *interior monologue* for a part of it. A concise critical survey of the history and definition of the very controversial term *interior monologue*, part of which outlines my approach in this paper, can be found in M. Kakavoulia, *Interior Monologue and its Discursive Formation in Melpo Axioti's ΔΥΣΚΟΛΕΣ ΝΥΧΤΕΣ* (München 1992), ch. 1.

3) Cf. B. Simon, *Mind and Madness in Ancient Greece: the Classical Roots of Modern Psychiatry* (Ithaca 1978), 94, that in a sense, inner debate is indeed "incorporated into tragic diction" in general.

4) As C. Segal, *Greek Tragedy: Writing, Truth, and the Representation of the Self*, in: A.D. Evjen (ed.), *Mnemai: Classical Studies in Memory of K. Hulley* (Chico 1984), 46, puts it, "in representing the visually concrete and physical exterior of the mythical character, tragedy heightens the mystery of his interior life".

a speech to depict an inner debate. Thus, to mention two extremes of this scale, his audience had an easy and full access to the inner struggle of the guard in *Antigone* (223-236) but was no doubt perplexed at the struggle which took place within Ajax and devastated him until he reached his final resolution.

Consequently, neither the inner debate nor the dynamics of the inner vision as the most effective means to present it was anything new at the time when Euripides wrote *Medea*. However, Euripides did not use either of these in the same way they had been used up to this time. On the contrary, he simply employed the Sophoclean means, best represented in *Ajax*, to surpass them, by carrying them to their extremes and thus by exploiting their potentialities in the most effective way. In this regard, the closest precedent to Medea's speech may be argued to be *Ajax* 457-480, where a rapid succession of questions indicates Ajax's deep anxiety while deliberating upon the course of action he should follow.

Let us consider the emphasis given by both dramatists to their characters' inner debate. Heraclitus' saying (fr. 119DK) ἦθος ἀνθρώπωι δαίμων, i.e. one's character is one's fate, best characterizes the Sophoclean hero[5]), since this character's motivation forces him/her to adhere to a decision which is bound to lead to destruction. Even in *Ajax*, the Sophoclean play which in terms of the emphasis on the inner struggle is, I think, the closest to Euripides' *Medea*, the hero has to overcome external factors (Tecmessa, Chorus), while his inner debate, although it is hinted at in his speeches (especially in the 'deception speech' [646-692])[6]), yet is left obscure and ambiguous, enigmatic and hardly accessible to the audience.

By contrast with this, Euripides minimizes the importance of Medea's struggle with external forces (Creon, Aegeus, Jason) by allowing his heroine to manipulate them easily, and with great

5) R. Winnington-Ingram, *Tragedy and Greek Archaic Thought*, in: M.J. Anderson (ed.), *Classical Drama and its Influence: Essays presented to H.D.F. Kitto* (London 1965), 31-50, applies it also to the Aeschylean and the Euripidean characters.

6) C. Gill, *Personality in Greek Epic, Tragedy, and Philosophy* (Oxford 1996), 190-226, associates *Il.* 9, 645-648, *Ajax* 646-692 and *Medea* 1021-80, on the basis that they all express "the conflict between a deliberated exemplary gesture, based on reflection about general principles of co-operative living, and the more standard claims of *philia*, the validity of which [is] also recognized by the person concerned" (213).

emphasis he shifts his focus exclusively to Medea's inner debate, thus producing one of his masterpieces in terms of both uniqueness and dramatic effectiveness. This is the fourth of Medea's speeches in the play, in which she fluctuates between her passion for revenge which forces her to kill her children and her maternal love which restrains her.

But first let us see what has happened since the first time Medea actually mentioned the infanticide. Following the episode with Aegeus in which she secured a refuge in Athens, Medea uttered her third speech and revealed to the Chorus her revised plan of revenge (772-773), which contained her resolution to murder her children in order to take full revenge on Jason by killing his offspring. Despite both her maternal grief (φιλτάτων παίδων, 795; ὤιμωξα, 791) and her awareness of the outrage (ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον, 796), she was determined to proceed with her plan (τέκνα γὰρ κατακτενῶ / τἄμ'. οὔτις ἔστιν ὅστις ἐξαιρήσεται, 792-793), because it had to be carried out (ἔργον ἔστ' ἐργαστέον, 791).

Later on, in her second meeting with Jason, she turned away weeping when Jason contemplated the children's future with joy, but this sign of weakness did not change her resolution about her plan. When her plan was already set in motion and the Tutor brought her the news of its successful outcome, i.e. the death of Jason's bride, Medea groaned (αἰαῖ, 1006, 1008) and wept (δακρυρροεῖς, 1012) at the thought that the time for the last part of her revenge, i.e. the infanticide, had come.

It is exactly at this time that she utters her fourth speech, which communicates to us the inner struggle that tears her apart. The closest Euripidean parallel to this rhesis is Phaedra's speech in *Hippolytus* 373-430[7]) in which Phaedra, addressing the Chorus, communicates at length the tormenting course of her thoughts (τῆς ἐμῆς γνώμης ὁδόν, 391). But although Phaedra's speech represents a remarkable internalization of her mental activities and her moral scruples, it does not match the technique of Medea's speech, which among the extant tragedies is a unique example of a fully elaborated "*interior monologue*".

Medea's discourse is characteristic of her deep agitation and it is

7) Both these speeches are discussed in B. Knox, *Second Thoughts in Greek Tragedy*, GRBS 7 (1966), 223-226.

not unfolded in a reasonable sequence but is rather carried along by the currents of her emotions, now to an affirmation and now to a negation of her resolution. The first 19 lines of her speech (1021-39) are deliberately ambiguous, as Medea seems to speculate on her children remaining in Corinth (ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, σφῶιν μὲν ἔστι δὴ πόλις / καὶ δῶμ', ἐν ὦι λιπόντες ἀθλίαν ἐμὲ / οἰκήσετ', 1021-23) while she departs to exile (ἐγὼ δ' ἐς ἄλλην γαῖαν εἶμι δὴ φυγάς, 1024). But this contradicts her earlier statement in the third speech that she would not leave her children behind in a hostile land to be insulted by her enemies (οὐχ ὡς λιποῦσ' ἂν πολεμίας ἐπὶ χθονὸς / ἐχθροῖσι παῖδας τοὺς ἐμοὺς καθυβρίσαι, 781-782). The thought here of the children living in Corinth rather picks up her misleading words in the fourth episode, when she managed to deceive Jason into believing that she would leave the children in his care in Corinth. Thus, the "city" and "home" of the lines 1021-22 presumably also refer to the nether world, and Medea begins her speech by thinking of the implications of the infanticide[8]). This becomes clear in line 1039, when she says that the children will pass into another state of life (ἐς ἄλλο σχῆμ' ἀποστάντες βίου) and in line 1073, where the adverb ἐκεῖ is an obvious allusion to Hades.

Up to line 1039 her maternal love is well illustrated, however suppressed between lines 1021 and 1041, in the contemplation of a life filled with pain and grief which awaits her, bereft as she will be of her children. Despite the explicit expression of maternal love and grief, there is nothing in the poetic diction to suggest that there is any breach in her resolution to kill her children. The austere form of the poetic discourse, with its succession of long and elaborated sentences, fully corresponds to the absolute certainty of her determination so far. In other words, in this part of the speech, both structure and content point to the irrevocability of her infanticide-plan. Her cares and hopes belong to the past and are expressed in past tenses (ἐξεθρεψάμην, 1029; ἐμόχθουν, κατεξάνθην, 1030; εἶχον ἐλπίδας, 1032; until the decisive ὄλωλε δὴ / γλυκεῖα φροντίς, 1035-36

8) On the contrary, S. Ohlander, *Dramatic Suspense in Euripides' and Seneca's Medea* (New York 1989), 134-135, takes lines 1021-22 to refer to Corinth, so that he can go on with his thesis that the audience constantly doubts that Medea will really have the heart to kill her children. But lines 781-782 make the allusion of 1021-22 obvious.

which leaves no space of hope for the children), whereas the certainty of her plan is expressed in futures which encircle and suppress the 'weaknesses' of the maternal love (δῶμ', ἐν ὥι λιπόντες ἀθλίαν ἐμὲ / οἰκήσετ', 1022-23; ἐγὼ δ' ἐς ἄλλην γαῖαν εἶμι δὴ φυγάς, 1024; ὑμεῖς δὲ μητέρ' οὐκέτ' ὄμμασιν φίλοις / ὄψεσθ', 1038-39). In other words, the grief which dominates lines 1025-37 serves as a counterbalance to the certainty of the infanticide.

Lines 1024-37 can be heard as a typical lamentation uttered by any mother who mourns over the corpses of her children. In this regard, the only connection with Medea's case, since her children are of course still alive, is that in her mind and at the time that she utters these words the children are already dead (this of course reinforces our impression that she is determined to go on with her plan). To go one step further, this part, owing both to its elaborated form and its typical content, seems essentially to be a variation on two common and interrelated motifs, usually referred to as *mors immatura*, i.e. the untimely death of children, which means a violation of the natural sequence, and *mater dolorosa*, i.e. the distressed mother who mourns their death. In this regard, the first part of Medea's speech acquires a general character which surpasses the individuality and privacy of her personal case.

Medea's words are not associated with only her feelings but can also be used, owing to their common character, by other people. A simple comparison, for example, of Medea's 'lamentation' here with Hecuba's mourning over her dead grandson in *Troades* (1167-88) shows, I think, that Euripides did not need to change much, because in both cases he elaborated a common motif. We do not have the impression of access to Medea's innermost mental and emotional currents; the real "*interior monologue*" has not begun yet. So far Euripides has not provided us with anything new in the sense that he (like Sophocles even in his *Ajax*) has not allowed us either to pierce below the surface of the mind or to see the workings of the inner self.

His innovation starts suddenly in line 1040. From this line, the tension of Medea's psychological state reaches its extremes and can hardly be kept under control. This is reflected in the rapid succession of her thoughts, each of which is hardly articulated before it is vehemently suppressed to give way to the rise of the opposite

thought, which is almost simultaneously denied, and so on. This vicious circle of her course of thinking depicts in the most effective way the inexorable torture of her inner struggle at a time when her inner self is about to explode.

Line 1040 (φεῦ φεῦ. τί προσδέρκεσθέ μ' ὄμμασιν, τέκνα) marks a sudden shift of mood, in which her maternal affection overwhelms her. Overcome by her children's disarming glances (ὄμμασιν, 1040) and smiles (γέλων, 1041) she is cast into the most tormenting dilemma (τί δράσω;, 1042), which immediately forces her to renounce her former plan not only once but twice (χαιρέτω βουλεύματα / τὰ πρόσθεν, 1044-45; χαιρέτω βουλεύματα, 1048), because her new resolution is so sudden and unexpected that it needs to be uttered and heard twice so that it can be forced into her conscience and acquire the proper reinforcement to stand up to the mighty certainty of her former plan.

Her deep agitation and intense perplexity, which represent the sudden breach in her previous determination, are elaborately expressed in the structure of the poetic discourse, which is now correspondingly broken into short units. If in the first part of her speech the certainty of her resolution was reflected in the full elaboration of her diction, now the anguish which tears her inner self apart breaks, at the same time, the sequence of her speech (notice the rapid succession of short sentences, mainly in interrogative form). The same spasmodic structure will continue in the last part (1049-55)[9]), which marks another shift of feeling and restores the certainty of her former plan. In both parts, as in the first one, structure and content interact and reflect each other, but this time Euripides exploits their interdependence to the utmost degree to produce a unique result, i.e. the impression of a sudden and complete unveiling of the innermost workings of the mind, when the primary thoughts, hardly yet shaped in words, are just about to be articulated.

9) I stop the examination of the monologue in line 1055, following J. Diggle's Oxford edition. Of course, ever since T. Bergk, *Griechische Literaturgeschichte* iii (Berlin 1884), 512 n. 14, excised the twenty-five lines following, there have been numerous and various attempts to deal with these lines. E.g. H. Lloyd-Jones, *Euripides, Medea 1056-80*, WJA 6 (1980), 51-59, deletes 1059-63, D. Kovacs, *On Medea's great monologue (Eur. Medea 1021-80)*, CQ 36 (1986), 343-352, deletes 1056-64. See also G. Rickert, *Akrasia and Euripides' Medea*, HSPh 91 (1987), 92 and note 3.

I say unveiling and not illuminating, because Euripides gives the impression of a complete absence of elaboration on his part at the point when his dramatic technique reaches the peak of its elaboration. The impression of a non-rational flow of thought turns out to be the product of the poet's highly conscious use of language. Euripides does not shed light on his heroine's thoughts but he seems to provide us with a full access to her very process of thinking. In other words, we as audience suddenly have the impression that we are privileged to witness Medea's random mental currents. Medea no longer speaks her mind to us; we are transferred into her mind and her words seem to come to our consciousness no later than they come to hers.

Such a portrayal of the inner self and such an impression of direct accessibility to a character's mind has no precedent in the extant tragic corpus and is surely a Euripidean innovation. This innovation in his tragedy prompts me to think that if he had written a narrative in a genre other than drama, then this part of the "*interior monologue*" carried to its extremes would have turned into the equivalent extreme of the verbalization of a mental activity in narrative, i.e. the *stream-of-consciousness* narration, a transcription of the "random ordering of thoughts and impressions"[10]). But, however attractive this thought may be, Euripides did not of course write a narrative. Nevertheless, his innovation in drama found its equivalent in a part of Apollonius' *Argonautica*, which also presents one of Medea's monologues and in a correspondingly unique way.

But before passing from drama to narrative, let us think what might be the purpose of Euripides' innovation. Why wasn't it enough for him to produce a speech of the common type, which would be familiar to his audience? Why did he find it necessary to 'unveil' Medea's innermost mental and emotional processes? I believe that his innovative dramatic technique was here correspondingly imposed by his first innovation, i.e. his different approach and treatment of the myth of Medea. If from 431 B.C. (date of Euripides' *Medea*) onwards the most typically characterizing element of Medea as a mythic character is the infanticide and if this ultimate act is the first and inseparable association with her name, yet

10) S. Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca 1978), 188.

this was not so for the first audience of this play. The fact that the only identification of Medea has been up to nowadays that of the deliberate murderess of her own children is in fact the result of Euripides' innovative and powerful presentation of her in this role[11]).

This means that Euripides drastically and unexpectedly violated his audience's *Erwartungshorizont*, according to which the Corinthians would most likely be the slayers of Medea's children. Because of the inconceivable outrage of the act of the infanticide, it would be impossible for Euripides to make his audience sympathize with Medea if he constantly stressed throughout the play her inflexible determination. This will be done by Seneca in his *Medea*, where the character of his heroine does not develop but remains inexorably wild and beyond the human level[12]). On the contrary, Euripides emphasizes Medea's human side; she may be clever and recourceful, she may be able to manipulate her external enemies and sound determined, but at the same time she is vulnerable to her inner struggle, the outcome of which is dexterously left by Euripides unpredictable, to keep his audience constantly on edge.

But still, wasn't it enough for him to secure the audience's support of Medea by using a common means, i.e. by making the Chorus sympathize with his heroine? He indeed exploits this means fully when he makes Medea have the support of a Chorus which is composed of Corinthian women, who have no ties of blood with her, nor anything to gain; after all, it would be more natural if they supported their king, who is Medea's enemy. The fact that they sympathize with her, as women, but also because they believe in the justice of her case, would be enough to make the audience feel the same. But how far could Euripides go with making the Chorus support Medea? The limits in this will provide, I think, a reason for his innovation in the use of the "*interior monologue*".

Until lines 790 ff., the Chorus (and the audience) has no explicit reason to believe that Medea will kill her children (Medea, 791 ff.: ὥιμωξα δ' οἷον ἔργον ἔστ' ἐργαστέον / τοὐντεῦθεν ἡμῖν. τέκνα γὰρ κατακτενῶ / τἄμ' , and the Chorus, 813: δρᾶν σ' ἀπεννέπω τάδε). Me-

11) Cf. S. Ohlander, op.cit. (note 8), 19-32; E. McDermott, *Euripides' Medea: The Incarnation of Disorder* (Pennsylvania 1989), 9-24.

12) See C. Costa (ed.), *Seneca: Medea* (Oxford 1973), 9.

dea is not presented as a deliberate child-murderess before Euripides (there was of course one version, which stems from Eumelos and which is attested in the scholia to Pindar *Ol.* 13, 74 and in Pausanias 2, 3, 10-11, that Medea killed her children while trying to effect their immortality. But this was an involuntary killing, a φόνος ἀκούσιος, not a deliberate murder). In the third stasimon, the famous ode in praise of Athens, the Chorus wonders how she will go to Athens after having committed such an outrage. The ode finishes with the conclusion that she will not have the heart to kill her children (οὐ δυνάσηι, 862).

But the fourth stasimon, following the encounter between Jason and Medea, reflects the change in the Chorus' (and thus also in the audience's) minds; it is the first time that the children are inevitably doomed and the Chorus explicitly addresses Medea as the future murderess of her children (997-998). In the fifth stasimon, when the women of the Chorus are sure that Medea will kill her children, they express all their disapprobation, which culminates in lines 1280-81: τάλαιν', ὡς ἄρ' ἦσθα πέτρος ἢ σίδαρος, ἅτις τέκνων / ὃν ἔτεκες ἄροτον αὐτόχειρι μοίραι κτενεῖς. Their reaction is normal as they prepare to witness the horrible deed, but does this really mean that they no longer sympathize with Medea? Although their characterization of her as a stone or piece of iron would incline us to believe so, Euripides makes them compare Medea's infanticide to that of Ino. But Ino was a victim, forced by the gods to murder her children[13]). This makes us think of Medea as also a victim, not of the gods but of her own self. Her δαίμων was her own ἦθος, which tore her inner self apart. A mere comparison between the vindictive Medea of the prologue and the devastated mother of the fourth speech shows Euripides' elaboration in the development of his heroine's character. Medea loved her children, she hesitated to kill them and this could not be better proved than by presenting the innermost workings of her mind which seem unable to lie.

In order to retain his audience's support of Medea even at the time when the Chorus (and the audience) could not but be repelled by horror and by doubt about her motives Euripides had to use the "interior monologue", which 'proves' her dilemma and totally

13) Cf. S. Mills, *The Sorrows of Medea*, CPh 75 (1980), 289-296; R. Newton, *Ino in Euripides' Medea*, AJPh 106 (1985), 501-502.

restores her human side. If we as audience wonder why we still sympathize with Medea, then this monologue, which emphasizes her human feelings, provides, I believe, the answer and proves Euripides' success. When Euripides chose to treat the myth of Medea in a totally different way, he knew that to achieve a favourable appreciation of his heroine by the audience was a challenge. But he also knew how to succeed, by using the most appropriate technique.

Talking about Medea's motives and the audience's reaction to the presentation of Medea, we must never forget that there is no fixed answer to a character's real motivation, because a character is, as Barthes says, a 'figure' and not a 'person'[14]). The audience/reader is invited to 'construct the character'[15]), to furnish answers, to make meaning (dans le texte, seul parle le lecteur, and when it comes to the stage, one might add, seul parle le spectateur). Most of the scholars who have written about Medea's speech in Euripides have argued for or against the 'truth' of her inner conflict, i.e. whether Medea 'really' thinks of renouncing her revenge or simulates renunciation[16]). Although such an answer is impossible, Medea's speech,

14) S. Goldhill, *Character and Action, Representation and Reading: Greek Tragedy and its Critics*, in: C. Pelling (ed.), *Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature* (Oxford 1990), 112 ff., discusses Barthes' views about character and motivation in fiction and the dangers of "treating characters as if they were real people off the page, really and absolutely endowed with motivation, which, if only we could discover them, would give us 'the truth' of a character"; cf. P.E. Easterling, *Constructing Character in Greek Tragedy*, in: C. Pelling (ed.), op.cit., 88: "there is never any way of checking our construction against some absolute 'truth'".

15) I use the phrase of P.E. Easterling, op.cit. (note 14).

16) E.g. H. Lloyd-Jones, op.cit. (note 9), 59: "some exaggerate the importance of the conflict that they imagine that there is a real possibility of Medea's renouncing her revenge. But the fate of the children has long since been decided. Medea has never seriously contemplated renouncing her revenge, for if she did so, she would not be Medea". However, this view seems to take for granted that Medea is some sort of a wild figure with no human feelings. But such a representation should be followed only by poets who composed according to Horace's rules (*A.P.* 123: *sit Medea ferox invictaque*). On the contrary, although Euripides presents Medea's wild character at its peak (after all, the deliberate infanticide was his innovation), yet he emphasizes her human side in the presentation of her inner struggle, the very existence of which brings out Medea's human feelings and the complexity of the character that Euripides chose to develop. (For an account of the different views about Medea, see N. Rabinowitz, *Anxiety Veiled: Euripides and the Traffic in Women* [Ithaca 1993], 133 n. 25). D. Kovacs, op.cit. (note 9), 346, still argues that Medea is fully determined to kill her children and simply contemplates the cost of a decision already taken, while C. Alford, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Greek Tragedy*

by being presented as the 'dramatization' of her mind can help to manipulate the audience's sympathy[17]).

(Yale 1992), 122, seems to repeat Lloyd-Jones and Kovacs when he writes that Medea "chooses without choice (...) she is reflecting what she might have done, had she been another type of woman, that is, had her daimon been otherwise. But she is not otherwise". On the other hand, S. Barlow, *Stereotype and Reversal in Euripides' Medea*, G&R 36 (1989), 167, notes that "this speech shows an honesty of feeling we have not seen in her [Medea] before" (the possibility of such a 'reading' of Medea's character, of course, suggests the strong impact that the speech conveys). H. Foley, *Medea's Divided Self*, ClAnt 8 (1989), although she thinks that there is no possibility that Medea will choose to save her children, argues that "to interpret the monologue simply as displaying the divided Medea's struggle to confront the costs of a predetermined revenge (see, for example, Lloyd-Jones) is to play down the moments of genuine hesitation" (85 n.83); but, if the prevalent idea is that Medea's decision is fixed, then what is the meaning of such "moments of genuine hesitation"? I think that the implication is that the speech invites the audience to think that there is a "genuine hesitation". If this is a possible 'making of meaning' by the audience, then it shouldn't be played down. Cf. also C. Gill, op.cit. (note 6), 221 n.167: "the conflict of 1042-55 is a real one (i.e. based on competing ethical claims, the validity of which Medea recognizes) even if Medea's long-term plan entails that preference be given to one position rather than another". At this point, I would like to add two other views, which seem to point in a direction that I wish to emphasize in my paper, i.e. the role of Medea's speech in the audience's 'construction' of her character: P. Pucci, *The Violence of Pity in Euripides' Medea* (Ithaca 1980), 136-148, although he tries to substantiate his view that Medea simulates the inner debate, yet admits (141) that "the text creates, to be sure, an enormous rhetorical effect on the audience"; there is no effect on Medea, he says, but there is an effect which "hits the audience". Also, C. Gill, *The Character-Personality Distinction*, in: C. Pelling (ed.), op.cit. (note 14), 28: "it is so far as we share Medea's view of herself as trapped in her situation, and as a psychological victim, that we feel most keenly a sense of special access to her, and sympathy with her".

17) While reading *Medea* one might well remember Praxithea's speech in *Erechtheus* (quoted by Lycurgus). The issue there is the sacrifice of the children for the sake of the city and the outburst of patriotism leaves no room for any inner struggle. Of course the full context of the speech is not known but one can easily think of the crucial role of Medea's inner debate and of the technique by which it is presented in making Medea sympathetic to the audience. Similarly, in modern fiction, much has been written about the presentation of Dostojevsky's criminals, for which W. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago 1961), 135, said that they remain sympathetic because the author "makes us know why they are criminals and why they are still sympathetic. Not genuine ambiguity, but rather complexity with clarity seems to be his secret". And of course what serves to clarify the complexity for us is the famous use of monologues in his works. Cf. H. Clews, *The Only Teller: Readings in the Monologue Novel* (Columbia 1985), 40.

II.

Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* is the first known epic to treat the love-theme[18]) at such length and more particularly to depict the pathology-of-love[19]), by the presentation of Medea's attempts first to understand and then to rationalize her feelings, until she finally succumbs to them. This radical change of theme could not but influence the narrative technique. When the inner self is to be presented, then the omniscient narration, traditional in epic, gives way to an interior focalization, which is indeed abundant in the third book. Due to it, we have access to the whole of Medea's mental and emotional process, whereas in the Homeric epic, even though the narrator had this access through his omniscience, yet he did not 'unveil' the process but simply summarized it[20]). However, it may be argued that a quasi-*interior monologue* may be found in some Homeric passages, addressed to one's θυμός, which seem to record the character's mind[21]). In this respect, the closest Homeric example in terms of the intensity of the interior focalization in the case of an inner struggle may be suggested to be *Il.* 22, 98-130, where Hector, while awaiting the approaching Achilles, speaks to his θυμός[22]).

18) But cf. B. Pavlock, *Eros, Imitation, and the Epic Tradition* (Ithaca 1990), 22: "the love-theme is well recognized as Apollonius's major contribution to epic, but there has been no systematic study of the literary sources that most significantly influenced the poet's use of the erotic".

19) For an association with Sappho, see L. Rissman, *Love as War: Homeric Allusion in the Poetry of Sappho* (Meisenheim 1983), 81-82.

20) See S. Richardson, *The Homeric Narrator* (Vanderbilt 1990), 129.

21) Cf. S. Richardson, op.cit. (note 20), 131-132: "Homer, of course, never tries to imitate verbally the thought processes in the manner of Joyce or Woolf, yet he does quite frequently disclose mental operations in his own way. His own way is to portray the workings of the mind in the form of an address to oneself or of a dialogue, usually with a god (...). Homer sees into the workings of his characters' mental life with no less clarity than a modern narrator who makes frequent use of the interior monologue or stream of consciousness; his knowledge is simply presented in a different form (...) to present an extensive picture of what is going on in a character's mind, he externalizes the thought processes in ways alien to most other narrative—the thinking is cast as a conversation with an extension of the self (the nearest modern equivalent is the dramatic soliloquy)".

22) G. Paduano, op.cit. (note 1), 46, suggests that the closest Homeric precedent, although not a very satisfactory one, is *Od.* 5, 408 ff. Still, and although Medea's monologue in the *Argonautica* is much more elaborate, Hector's monologue

Because of the abundance of the interior focalization, which means an emphasis on thought rather than action, the plot of the third book seems to slow down, compared to the rapid succession of actions which is characteristic of the other books, as of an epic in general. In this regard, Medea's dilemma is regarded as having been developed far beyond the needs of the plot, which further suggests a lack of symmetry in the structure of the epic[23]). To consider this as a 'fault' which might be expected to arise from the nature of Apollonius' work, which consists in the combination of a traditional form (epic) and a non-traditional theme (love)[24]) would be an easy, though not quite satisfactory solution.

An answer to this will come up after the examination of Medea's third monologue (772-801), which marks the culmination of her inner struggle. The narrative process leading to it is the most typical and most successful example of the shifts of the focalization in this book. The omniscient narration of lines 743-751 turns to an internalized one (752-770), which should be divided into two parts in terms of the intensity of the internalization: 752-765, which culminates in the comparison of her perplexed heart with a sunbeam thrown from the water as it is poured from a pail (Virgil will use

provides, I believe, a better precedent than the one suggested by Paduano, due to a number of characteristics which bring it close to Medea's monologue: e.g., it is placed at a crucial moment in the narrative; it is unusually extended; the inner debate depicted is complex and fully dramatized; the shifts in mood are remarkable (in Medea's monologue the greater intensity of such shifts shows with what psychological insight her conflict is depicted); the composition is subtle; Hector imagines the future reactions of his fellow-citizens against him (Medea imagines the mockery from her people); the outcome of Hector's inner debate, i.e. to stand firm against Achilles' attack, is not put into action, since he loses courage and runs (the outcome of Medea's conflict, i.e. her decision to die, is similarly not followed in practice). For Hector's monologue in relation with other deliberative monologues in Homer, see S. Scully, *The Language of Achilles: The ΟΧΘΗΣΑΣ Formulas*, TAPhA 114 (1984), 11-27 and C. Gill, op.cit. (note 6), 29-93.

23) Cf. e.g. B. Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford 1963), 90, that Medea's affair has a "superficial and extrinsic" connection with the plot; J. Carspecken, *Apollonius Rhodius and the Homeric Epic*, YClS 13 (1952), 128 and 138, that the lack of unity is due to the romantic character of this epic. On different views about the unity of the epic, see e.g. E. Phinney, *Narrative Unity in the Argonautica, the Medea-Jason romance*, TAPhA 98 (1967), 327-341; G. Zanker, *The Love Theme in Apollonius Rhodius' Argonautica*, WS 92 (1979), 52-75; G. Hutchinson, *Hellenistic Poetry* (Oxford 1988), 96-142.

24) This *Kreuzung der Gattungen* was, after all, typical of the whole Alexandrian Age. See also Hutchinson, op.cit. (note 23), 15 n.29.

the same simile for Aeneas' turbulent feelings in *Aeneid* 8, 18-25) and 765-770, which start to externalize her thoughts and no longer describe her feelings. This internalization will reach its peak in the third monologue, which surpasses the two previous ones (464-470, 636-644).

These two monologues, although they are 'interior' in the sense that they constitute the verbalization of the inner thought, yet do not break the structural boundaries of their type because their content, i.e. the inner debate, does not fully devastate Medea yet. But in the third monologue, the inner struggle reaches its peak and tears both Medea and the structure apart. Structure and content now interact to produce a masterpiece, i.e. the best representative in Greek epic of *interior monologue*[25]).

Given the unbridgeable chasm between even the most extreme cases of interior focalization in Homer and in Apollonius, Campbell, despite his judgement of this monologue as "one of the great showpieces of the poem"[26]) does not seem to appreciate its unique character when he compares it with the Homeric monologues, to reach the conclusion that "Homer's monologues are in general rather less indirect". But Apollonius' innovation at this point has hardly any precedent to be compared with.

The opening of the monologue (Δειλὴ ἐγώ, νῦν ἔνθα κακῶν ἢ ἔνθα γένωμαι;) recalls the two previous ones: Δειλὴ ἐγών, οἷόν με βαρεῖς ἐφόβησαν ὄνειροι, 636 and Τίπτε με δειλαίην τόδ' ἔχει ἄχος;, 464).The first monologue, the narrator tells us, is uttered while Medea is weeping (ἦκα δὲ μυρομένη λιγέως ἀνενείκατο μῦθον, 463). She addresses herself (με, 464) at the moment when she feels the grief come upon her but she has not lost control over her feelings. The monologue itself and not Apollonius' narrator, who is of course absent during the monologue, invites us to believe this.

25) Cf. R. Scholes-R. Kellogg, op.cit. (note 2). Given the uniqueness of the third monologue, C. Beye, *Epic and Romance in the Argonautica of Apollonius* (Carbondale 1982), 28 f., and A. Grillo, *Tra Filologia e Narratologia: dai poemi Omerici ad Apollonio Rodio, Ilias Latina, Ditti-Settimio, Darete Frigio, Draconzio* (Roma 1988), 13 n. 14, are rather mistaken in suggesting that all of the three monologues are of exactly the same type of *interior monologue*.

26) M. Campbell, *A Commentary on Apollonius Rhodius' Argonautica III 1-471* (Leiden 1994), 376.

Later on the narrator confirms our belief, quite unconsciously for us but not on the part of Apollonius, who knows how to manipulate our reception of the text; for, just before the narrator disappears to give way to Medea's second monologue, he intervenes by making a comment on her emotional state at that moment. But he adds two words which compare Medea's states during her first and second monologues. For now, he tells us, she gathered her spirit within her with great difficulty, as before (ὡς πάρος, 635). So, during both her first and her second monologue Medea does not lose control over her feelings, and this can be also deduced by the very fact that she rationally talks about them (περί μοι ξείνωι φρένες ἠερέθονται, 638; θεμένη κύνεον κέαρ, 641; λυγρὸν ἐνὶ κραδίηι σβέσαι ἄλγος, 644). When we return to the third monologue, we realize that the first line is not the only one to suggest a similarity with the previous ones, because Medea is still able to talk about her state (πάντηι μοι φρένες εἰσὶν ἀμήχανοι, 773), and until half way through line 779 she does nothing but communicate her thoughts.

But from this line until the end of her monologue, the rapid succession of her thoughts seems to be completely unveiled to us. She wonders how she will be able to face her parents, and immediately how she will face Jason; she thinks that Jason may die, and she is cast into despair; she considers it better to help him win the contest and then commit suicide but a sudden projection of her thought into the future and the imagined taunts[27]) against her restrain her.

As in Euripides, so in Apollonius, the last monologue of Medea, despite its normal beginning, is then carried to the extremes of internalization, to provide us with access to what might seem inaccessible, i.e. the very first formulation of the thoughts, before the intervention of any elaboration, thus at a time when a person cannot lie even to him/herself.

After having seen Apollonius' innovative *interior monologue*, which

27) This fear of being mocked by others recalls Medea's fear of being laughed at by her enemies in Euripides, on which see R. Rehm, *Medea and the Λόγος of the Heroic*, Eranos 87 (1989), 97 and nn. 2-3. In the *Argonautica* the taunts are associated with Medea's dilemma between shame and desire, which R. Hunter (ed.), *Apollonius of Rhodes, Argonautica Book III* (Cambridge 1989), 29, describes as a polarity between a "Penelope model" and a "Helen model". On *aidos* see D. Cairns, *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford 1993), who calls it (87) the "cement" of Homeric society.

constitutes the peak of his interior focalization, we can now try to answer the question why he used this technique at such length, when the structural symmetry of his epic is thus put into danger. In book 3 of the *Argonautica*, the focus of attention shifts from Jason to Medea, whose role becomes the most important for the development of the plot, as the successful outcome of the Argonautic expedition is secured by her agency. The very emphasis on her characterization seems to suggest that Apollonius tried to achieve a favourable presentation of Medea as a heroine[28]). But we have to notice that to do this Apollonius had to alter drastically the previous literary tradition about the love between Medea and Jason and treat this theme in a different way.

In Pindar (*Pyth.* 4, 213-23), it is love which makes Medea help Jason in his deed, and nothing suggests that she fears her father's reaction while taking her decision. Thus, in the Pindaric treatment of the myth Medea faces no dilemma and acts according to her own will, which means that she is responsible for her decision[29]) (in so far, of course, as a person in love can be said to have will power).

This version is to be found also in Euripides' *Medea* in the three relevant references to his heroine's past. Firstly, the Nurse says in the prologue that it was passion that brought Medea to Iolcus: ἔρωτι θυμὸν ἐκπλαγεῖσ' Ἰάσονος, 8. Secondly, the Chorus says in the first stasimon that Medea sailed from her father's home with a love-maddened heart (μαινομέναι κραδίαι, 434). Thirdly, Medea herself (and who can know better than she?) does not deny her passion

28) But I do not agree with M. Margolies-DeForest, *Apollonius' Argonautica: A Callimachean Epic* (Leiden 1994), that Medea becomes the central character (107, 123) of the epic because Jason lacks "heroic qualities" (54, 124). This view (cf. also J. Hainsworth, *The Idea of Epic* (Berkeley 1991), 72), touches upon the major issue of 'the conception of heroism' in epic. On epic 'heroism' see R. Hunter, *The Argonautica of Apollonius: Literary Studies* (Cambridge 1993), ch. 2. A failure to understand the change in this conception from Homeric times to the Hellenistic period, has led many scholars to consider Jason as not a real hero (for a summary of these views, see R. Hunter, "*Short on Heroics": Jason in the Argonautica*, CQ 38 (1988), 436 f.). For a redefinition of the old Homeric hero and a restoration of Jason as the central character of the epic, see J. Clauss, *The Best of the Argonauts: The Redefinition of the Epic Hero in Book 1 of Apollonius's Argonautica* (Berkeley 1993).

29) Cf. B. Braswell, *A Commentary on the Fourth Pythian Ode of Pindar* (Berlin 1988), 28 and 296, who draws attention to the lack of Medea's psychological aspect in Pindar.

when she tells Jason that she followed him to Iolcus showing more love than prudence: πρόθυμος μᾶλλον ἢ σοφωτέρα, 485.

Euripides, like Pindar, does not suggest that Medea faced any dilemma before she decided to help her father's enemy, because this is not necessary for the plot of his play. What he wants to emphasize is Medea's dilemma with regard to another crucial and painful decision, that of the infanticide. As we have seen, his technique turned out to be of the greatest dramatic effectiveness, as it secured the audience's sympathetic interest in his heroine until the very end. If Apollonius, like Euripides, wanted to present his Medea favourably (as his emphasis on her presentation invites us to assume), then the best way to achieve this was, I believe, to follow the Euripidean pattern of the inner struggle and to make the best of the potential of its representation, by means of an interior focalization which culminated in Medea's third monologue.

At this point, I would like to examine the contribution of this monologue to the question of Medea's responsibility, the answer to which is crucial to the final reception of Medea's character by the reader. It is important to notice that this question is deliberately left puzzling by Apollonius, as the text offers various and even contradictory answers, according to the different point of view adopted each time (Jason, Circe, the narrator). After considering these different points of view, we will realize that the third monologue is the only one to provide a favourable answer.

When Jason and Medea meet and talk to each other, Jason knows that some heaven-sent calamity has come upon Medea, but we learn this not by his words but by the narrator's comment: γνῶ δέ μιν Αἰσονίδης ἄτηι ἐνιπεπτηυῖαν / θευμορίηι (3, 973-974). For the narrator has informed us at length that Hera and Athena after consultation visited Cypris to ask the aid of her son Eros on behalf of Jason (3, 6-110) and also that Eros promised to pierce Medea with an arrow[30]) (111-166) and fulfilled his promise (275-287).

But Jason is totally ignorant of this divine plan. The only justification for the narrator's comment is that Jason has been assured about Cypris' help by the seer Mopsus (τύνη μὲν νηόνδε θεᾶς ἴθι, τῶι ἔνι κούρην / δήεις, Αἰσονίδη. μάλα δ' ἠπίηι ἀντιβολήσεις /

30) The motif of darts or arrows as a weapon of love appears in Euripides' *Medea*, 530 ff. On this see C. Osborne, *Eros Unveiled: Plato and the God of Love* (Oxford 1994), 71 n.35.

Κύπριδος ἐννεσίης, ἥ τοι συνέριθος ἀέθλων / ἔσσεται, 3, 940-943), who referred back to Phineus' prophecy (ἀλλά, φίλοι, φράζεσθε θεᾶς δολόεσσαν ἀρωγὴν / Κύπριδος, 2, 423-424, repeated also in 3, 549-550). But although Jason must be aware of the role of Cypris in some sense, he will attribute Medea's decision to follow him entirely to her own free will, when later on he says, talking to his companions: τὴν μὲν ἐγὼν ἐθέλουσαν ἀνάξομαι οἴκαδ' ἄκοιτιν/ κουριδίην, 4, 194-195. Consequently, for Jason Medea is responsible for her decision. This seems to be also the opinion of Circe, who although she sympathizes with Medea, yet considers her responsible (Σχετλίη, ἦ ῥα κακὸν καὶ ἀεικέα μήσαο νόστον, 4, 739) for the intolerable deeds she has done (ὅτ' ἄσχετα ἔργ' ἐτέλεσσας, 742).

But then, what is Medea's opinion? Does she herself feel responsible[31])? Judging from the scarce references to her view, she seems rather perplexed. When fearing that Jason plans to desert her she confronts him, she describes her decision to follow him as a folly (ὕστατον αὖ καὶ κῶας, ἐπεί τ' ἐπαϊστὸν ἐτύχθη, / εἶλες ἐμῇι ματίηι, 4, 366-367) and blames her mad passion (μαργοσύνηισιν, 4, 375). Thus, she considers herself responsible because of her passion. As their confrontation continues, she repeats the idea of her error but she suddenly adds that there must have been some divine intervention to carry her evil desires to a fulfilment (ἐπεὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἀάσθην / ἀμπλακίηι, θεόθεν δὲ κακὰς ἤνυσσα μενοινάς, 412-413). Medea, of course, has no idea about the divine plan, and what she says here seems to imply that she considers herself guilty for her thoughts but innocent of her deeds; if the gods had not interfered, she might have overcome her desires. But, of course, what she says might well be read as an excuse[32]).

31) Again, there is no such thing as a 'real motivation'. Medea is a character, a 'paper' person (on fictional characters as "paper people", see M. Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, transl. by C. van Boheemen [Toronto 1985], 80). As I was interested in the audience's 'making' of Medea's character in Euripides, I am similarly interested in the reader's 'reading' of Medea's character in Apollonius. My discussion of Medea's responsibility is based on the fact that in developing the personality of a character, an author usually exploits three factors: a) what a character says and does, b) what other characters say about him/her, c) narrative descriptions and comments. The further exploitation of a fourth one, i.e. a (simulation of a) "direct quotation of the mind" (to use Bowling's phrase: L. Bowling, *What is the Stream-of-Consciousness Technique?*, PMLA 65 [1950], 345), as I argue that Apollonius attempts here, broadens the scope for the readers but manipulates, at the same time, their 'reading' of the character.

32) Cf. *Troades* 929 ff., where Helen claims to have been the victim of Cypris,

In this regard, the sudden intervention of the omniscient narrator exactly at the end of the confrontation in the form of an invocation to Eros (4, 445-451) makes perfect sense; for he reminds us of the divine plan of the third book and thus he gives justification to Medea, who is regarded as a victim (δυσμενέων ἐπὶ παισὶ κορύσσεο, δαῖμον, ἀερθείς, / οἷος Μηδείηι στυγερὴν φρεσὶν ἔμβαλες ἄτην, 448-449).

Later on, when Medea implores queen Arete, she totally renounces any idea of wantonness (οὐ μὲν ἔκητι / μαργοσύνης, 4, 1018-19) and she emphasizes that she followed Jason not according to her free will (μὴ μὲν ἐγὼν ἐθέλουσα, 4, 1021, exactly the opposite of what Jason said in 3, 194-195), but due to a horrible fear (στυγερὸν δέ με τάρβος ἔπεισεν, 4, 1022). Indeed, early in the fourth book the narrator said that Hera sent Medea a grievous fear and forced her to leave (Τῆι δ' ἀλεγεινότατον κραδίηι φόβον ἔμβαλεν Ἥρη, 4, 11) (but note the puzzling question posed by the narrator, 4, 1-5, with regard to the motivation of Medea's flight).

To sum up, although Medea is considered by the others as responsible for her deeds, she claims that she may be guilty for her thoughts but not for her deeds, while the narrator lets us deduce that he favours her claim. But still, nothing could be more effective than to present neither Medea's words nor the narrator's comments but to 'unveil'[33]) her inner thoughts and let them establish by their seemingly unquestionable truth a justification of Medea. And the only technique to secure this result was the *interior monologue* on the verge of a *stream-of-consciousness* narration, which Apollonius exploited to the utmost degree.

and Hecuba confronts her by saying (989) that "τὰ μῶρα γὰρ πάντ' ἐστὶν Ἀφροδίτη βροτοῖς". In examining *Argonautica* 4, R. Hunter, *Medea's flight: the Fourth Book of the Argonautica*, CQ 37 (1987), 135 f., discusses the theme of the causation of human activities and the role of the gods, when the constant question is "are we responsible or are the gods?". Cf. B. Williams, *Shame and Necessity* (Berkeley 1993), 141: "things are arranged in a way that what you do will make no difference to the eventual outcome, or will even help to bring about what you try to prevent". For Hera's role in the *Argonautica*, see M. Campbell, *Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius' Argonautica* (New York 1983), 53-55; D. Feeney, *The Gods in Epic: Poets and Critics of the Classical Tradition* (Oxford 1991), 62-64 and 81-85.

33) Of course, an author can only simulate such a process of 'unveiling', as an examination of what we know about consciousness and language indicates; cf. E. Steinberg, *The Stream of Consciousness and Beyond in Ulysses* (Pittsburgh 1973), ch. 2.

After all, the result of Medea's inner struggle was totally different to what she later on did, as she decided to die (3, 802-809) and Hera had to intervene at the last moment (817-818) to make her suddenly change her decision (note also how this change is at first presented as originating from Medea's free will (809-816) until the narrator surprises us by mentioning Hera's intervention: Ἥρης ἐννεσίηισι μετάτροπος, 818).

But still, it is important to notice that during her monologue Medea admits her passion, when she contemplates how she will be reviled with mockery[34]), after her suicide, as the maid who yielded to a mad passion: μαργοσύνηι εἴξασα, 797. She also refers to her ἄτη: ὤι μοι ἐμῆς ἄτης, 798. But ἄτη is a term which combines human responsibility and divine agency. Thus, despite the outcome of the inner debate, which was a decision for suicide, her passion remains indisputable and this leaves the question of her responsibility open. I believe that this is done deliberately by Apollonius, who does not want to offer a staightforward answer in the text.

In this respect, it is important to notice that even Apollonius' 'omniscient' narrator purports[35]) a complete lack of knowledge on his part of the real motive, either the lovesick grief of passion (ἄτης πῆμα δυσίμερον, 4, 4) or a panic flight (φύζαν ἀεικελίην, 4, 5), that made Medea follow Jason. Both the rarity of such a self-referential comment by an omniscient narrator on his wavering (ἦ γὰρ ἔμοιγε / ἀμφασίηι νόος ἔνδον ἐλίσσεται ὁρμαίνοντι, 4, 2-3), which recalls the uncertainty of the Pindaric narrator in *Pyth.* 11[36]) and its striking

34) P. Kyriakou, *Homeric Hapax Legomena in the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius* (Stuttgart 1995), 173, shows how the echo of the Homeric verb μωμάομαι (*Il.* 3, 412, referring to Helen's dilemma) in Medea's monologue "not only aims at evoking the comparable dilemma of a famous literary figure but it also foreshadows the outcome of Medea's deliberations. As Helen's refusal comes to nothing at the end and the woman is immediately scared to submission by Aphrodite (*Il.* 3.413-420), Medea will succumb to the impulses of Eros".

35) On this "mask of uncertainty", see R. Hunter, op.cit. (note 32), 134-138 and S. Goldhill, *The Poet's Voice: Essays on Poetics and Greek Literature* (Cambridge 1991), 293.

36) See R. Hunter, op.cit. (note 32), 134. Pindar, however, does not ask the Muse to give a decisive answer, whereas Apollonius' narrator does. Still, it should be noted that no clear answer is given to the dilemma 'love vs fear' eventually. *Contra* the view that the verses 4, 6-53 contain the answer of the Muse that fear motivated Medea's flight, A. Dyck, *On the way from Colchis to Corinth: Medea in Book 4 of the Argonautica*, Hermes 117 (1989), 458, remarks: "although the fear of her

position in the proem suggest, I think, the careful design, as also in the monologue, to leave the question of Medea's responsibility open[37]).

To this I will also add Medea's dream in 3, 616-632, which precedes her second monologue. In it Medea dreams that Jason has come not for the Golden Fleece but to take her for his wife. The narrator begins by calling the dream deceitful, and one is tempted here to think that Hera may well have sent it to her. But there is no reference to any divine intervention. The emphasis on the dream and the internalized tone of its description may well suggest then the appreciation of it as the expression of a wish[38]); Medea dreams what she wants to see fulfilled. In other words, she turns away into a private world of her own, as Heraclitus (cf. fr. 89 DK) would say.

I think that both the proem in the fourth book and the dream in the third book have the same function as the third monologue with regard to the question of Medea's responsibility. In all of them, both human responsibility and divine will are open to consideration. Apollonius leaves his reader to draw his own conclusions. In this regard, the particular significance of the monologue is, I think, the fact that it conveys Medea's inner struggle and her power to resist the impulses of her own self. She admits her passion and tries to overcome it, but she is defeated by the divine will. Even if we

father's wrath is the *causa efficiens* (4, 11 ff.), Medea bids farewell to her maidenhood in a series of gestures which indicate clearly that a liaison with Jason is contemplated (4, 26-29). Likewise, Selene's comment on her flight points to the second interpretation [fear] (4, 57-65). Apollonius surely intended to leave a certain ambiguity or mixture of motives". See also next note.

37) S. Goldhill, in: C. Pelling (ed.), op.cit. (note 14), referring to *Hippolytus*, *Antigone*, *Ajax* and *Bacchae*, draws attention to the degree in which what he calls "the discourse of character", "the focus on (the norms and transgression of) human attitudes; on the relation between expression, belief, and behaviour; on the necessity and problems of evaluating a figure's attitudes—is affected by the character of the discourse of the play in which it plays a part" (115). Similarly in the *Argonautica*, the discourse of Medea may well have been affected by the discourse of the epic, which has to do with the heroic element and with eros, as a power and as a theme of epic. As M. Margolies-DeForest, op.cit. (note 28), 107, puts it, "Medea's heart, when opened to the reader, reflects the larger conflict of the book. She struggles between *aidos*, 'respect for the opinion of others', which the poem defines as a Homeric force, and *eros*, 'passion', which is defined as Callimachean".

38) On this dream, see R. Hunter, op.cit. (note 27), 163-164; C. Beye, op. cit. (note 25), 136, provides a Freudian commentary on the desire of the dream.

believe that she is defeated by her passion (this is the open question of her responsibility), still we must admit her power to face a dilemma. Such a presentation of her cannot but contribute to her favourable appreciation by the reader.

Conclusions

I hope that now the points that I made in the Introduction have been clarified. Firstly, as to the closest possible precedents to the monologues under discussion, I have suggested Sophocles' *Ajax* 457-480 for Euripides' *Medea* 1021-55 and *Iliad* 22, 98-130 for Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* 3, 772-801. The comparison has suggested the innovative character of the monologues in both Euripides and Apollonius.

Secondly, the examination of the technique of the *interior monologues* in their contexts has illustrated, I hope, its unique character. Thirdly, the explanation I have suggested as to what may have led both poets to the same innovation is that this was the necessary result of their innovative approach to the myth they treated. I have argued that both poets tried to achieve a favourable presentation of their heroine and that their innovation offered them the best means for their purpose. Finally, the examination of the effectiveness of their innovation has proved, I believe, the extent of their success.

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