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THE ARGONAUTS AT BANQUET

In *Minerva* VIII, 1994, pp. 159 ff. I have explained in every possible detail that, in Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* II, 467

μελιχίως ἐρέτησιν ὀμηγερέεσσι μετηύδα

the plural substantive ἐρέτησιν denotes the Argonauts who are in the act of rowing not in the sea, but, metaphorically, *on terra firma*, i.e. are drinking as συμπόται.

The heroes are in Phineus' house, where they are enjoying a very long symposium which consists of two dinners, held on two successive evenings and separated by what my very dear friend and eminent colleague M. Brioso calls (*Minerva* XI, 1997, p. 31) a «velada» (i.e. a party) an «etapa intermedia» of the sympotic proceedings: such «etapa» lasts until after the dawn which follows the first dinner (*Argon.* II, 450 Ἡριγενής). Line 467 refers to the said «etapa intermedia». After the second dinner, the long symposium is over: the Argonauts abandon the scene of the symposium, i.e. Phineus's house, and go to sleep aboard their ship (*Argon.* II, 493-497).

Brioso accepts the objection made by Ardizzoni to my explanation of the passage. According to Ardizzoni, since the Argonauts have, as I myself underline, satisfied their hunger and their thirst «en el estadio inicial del festín» (*Minerva* VIII, 1994, p. 161: *Argon.* II, 307), that is to say, during the first dinner, they cannot be still drinking during the «velada» or «etapa intermedia», whence it follows that it would be «una progresión semántica abusiva» (*Minerva* XI, 1997, p. 29) to ascribe to ἐρέτησιν in *Argon.* II, 467 the sense «those who were in the act of drinking as συμπόται»: that is, the plural ἐρέται can mean, in Greek, either «those, who are in the act of rowing in the sea» (*Argon.* II, 540, 573, IV, 226) or «those who are drinking as συμπόται», but the latter meaning is believed by Ardizzoni to be impossible at *Argon.* II, 467, because the Argonauts, so Ardizzoni contends, cannot go on drinking during the «velada». Ardizzoni's objection is refuted by ancient sympotic conventions, which

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I mentioned in *Entr. Hardt XIV*, Genève 1969, p. 95, where I explicitly quote, in note 2, Bielohlawek, and p. 131, 158, where I quote Hedyllus, *Hellen. Epigr.* 1857 f. Ardizzoni is ignorant of the fact that, according to Greek custom (cf. Bielohlawek, *Wien. Stud.* 1940, 58, p. 13), after «der erste Abschnitt des Mahls» (i.e., after what I call «el estadio inicial del festin»), «der für die Befriedigung des ershen Hungers und Durstes bestimmt ist», there follows a second «Abschnitt» (which Brioso calls a «velada»), during which the συμπόται not only talk («Beratung und Unterhaltung», Bielohlawek, *loc. cit.*; «protracti sunt sermones ad auro-ram usque», *Minerva VIII*, 1994, p. 16) but also, indeed especially, go on drinking («hauptsächlich getrunken wird»). The sympotic custom described by Bielohlawek and accurately alluded to by Apollonius in *Argon.* II, 467 is also alluded to by Hedyllus, *Hellen Epigr.* 1857 f.:

ἐξ ἡοῦς εἰς νύκτα καὶ ἐκ νυκτὸς πάλι Σωκλῆς
εἰς ἡοῦν πίνει τετραχόοισι κάδοις.

Conclusion: Ardizzoni's objection is mistaken.

