



# Greek and Roman Mythology

## Ch6 The Quest of the Golden Fleece

授課老師：簡士捷 副教授

Chien, Shih-Chieh Associate Professor  
Taipei Medical University

# Origin:

Greek King Athamas got married with Ino. Nephele, the first wife, “was afraid for her two children, especially the boy, Phrixus.”

Hermes heard Nephele’s prayer and sent **a ram with a fleece of pure gold** to take Phrixus and Helle away.



Source: Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes (p.123)

Author: Edith Hamilton / Publisher: 書林出版有限公司 (Bookman Books Co.)



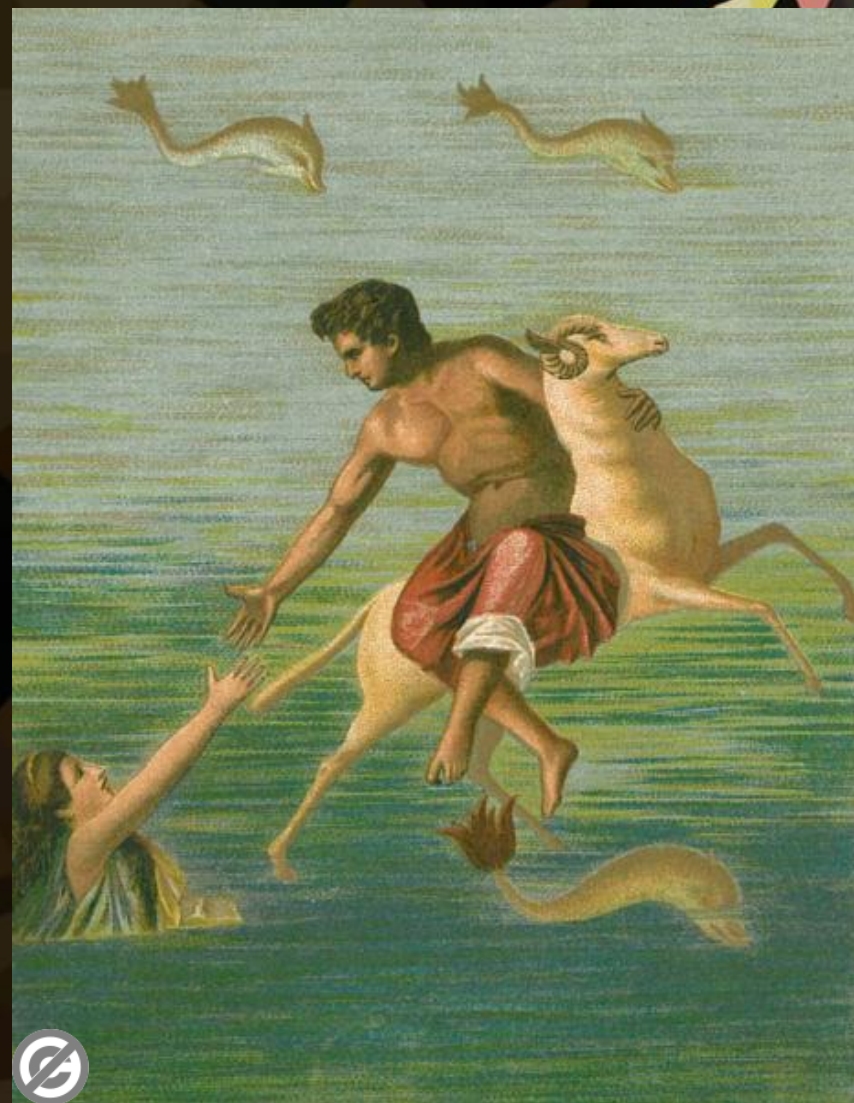
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While Helle fell into the sea and was drowned dead, Phrixus came to the country Colchis and was welcomed by the king.

Phrixus killed the ram and gifted the golden fleece to the King.





Jason came back to claim the throne of his father's kingdom which was taken away by his own cousin Pelias.

Pelias was told by an oracle saying that he would die at the hands of a kinsmen whom shod only a single sandal.





Wikipedia commons Jastrow

Pelias agreed to return his throne to Jason as long as he could find the golden fleece back.

Jason agreed as well. Hera helped Jason to summon great heroes to accompany him taking and accomplishing the adventure.

(Jason and Argonauts: <http://www.historylink102.com/greece2/jason.htm>)



## Adventure Began....

Lemnos was their first stop. A strange island where only women lived.

Then the Argonauts lost Hercules.

Hylas was loved by a water nymph and then drawn into the water.

The Argonauts fought with Harpies and saved Phineus.

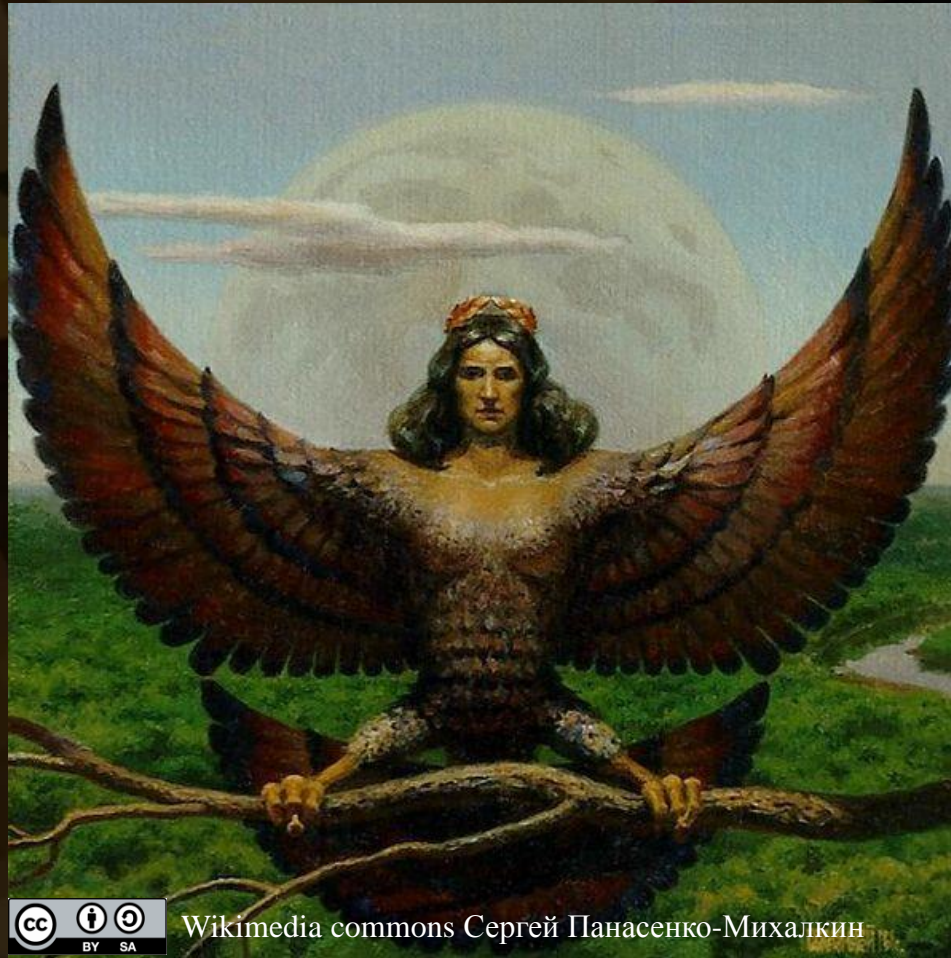


# Hylas and nymphs





# Harpy



Wikimedia commons Сергей Панасенко-Михалкин



# Adventure continued...



As Phineus was saved, he gave wise advice to the Argonauts on how to pass the dangers to come.

At Sunset, they reached Colchis, the country of golden fleece.



# In order to get the golden fleece, trials started....

In order to help Jason, Hera begged Aphrodite to urge Cupid making the King's daughter, Madea, fall in love with Jason.

Madea knew how to use charm and helped Jason pass many of his tests.







In the end, she even eloped with Jason.

Medea helped Jason to get the golden fleece. In return, Jason promised to marry Medea when returning to Greece.





In one of the two trials which Medea's father gave to Jason, he had to tame the horrifying bull. (see P.129 for the descriptions of these two trials)



A terrible serpent guarded the fleece, Medea sang a magical song and charmed it to sleep. Jason thus got the golden fleece successfully.



# After getting the golden fleece, the story became even more brutal...

To save Jason from being captured by her father, Medea killed her own brother, Apsyrtus.



**Death of Apsyrtus by Herbert Draper**  
(about 1900)



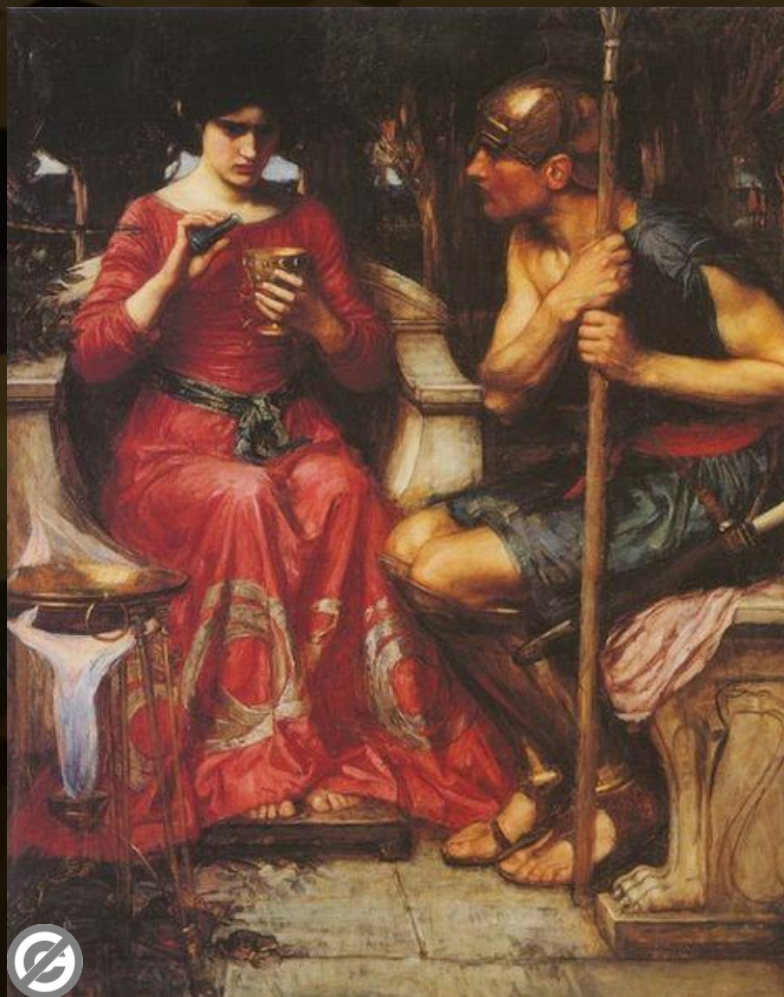
# (Argonautenfahrt - Teilkarte des Mittelmeeres)

Ovid. Met. VII, 1

Argo號的航海冒險航線







Returning to Greece, Jason and Medea found that Pelias had forced Jason's father to commit suicide.

To revenge, Medea once again helped Jason by making Pelias' daughters kill Pelias.

Jason discussed with Medea on how to take revenge on Pelias.

# Hero became traitor?



After revenge, Jason engaged himself to marry the daughter of the King of Corinth, betraying the promise with Medea.

Medea and her two sons were forced to be banished.

Medea and her two sons.





In the end, Medea planned to kill Jason's new bride. The plan worked.

For fear that her two sons would fall preys to Jason's revenge, Medea killed them.

Medea thought, "I will not let them (her two sons) live for strangers to ill-use."



Source: Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes (p.135)

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When Jason came full of fury and determined to kill Medea, she rode away on a chariot drawn by dragons.



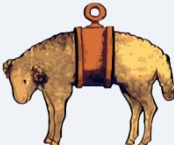












## Q & A

- ① The great adventure was turned into a tragic love story in the end. Can you come up with any other examples of heroes becoming traitors (英雄變負心漢/壞人)?
  
- ② What did you learn from the story The Quest of the Golden Fleece?

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