

Off the Beaten Path Raymond Marks
Off the Beaten Path *Raymond Marks*

in the argonautica valerius flaccus not only recounts a voyage that of the argonauts in their quest for the golden fleece but takes a journey himself a poetic one during which he explores new unconventional paths in the epic genre the present volume examines this aspect of valerius poetic program locating its primary source of inspiration in the works of ovid especially his epic the metamorphoses and his exile poetry it argues that the metamorphoses influences not only discrete often digressive episodes in the argonautica but valerius view of his poem as a secondary form of epic which broadly deviates from the generic norms of his day echoes of the tristia and epistulae ex ponto complement this approach by identifying many of valerius characters who are similarly displaced to the edges of the civilized world with the exiled ovid and even valerius himself who at the end of the epic finds his own ship the epic itself stranded roughly where ovid lived out his days in exile from this study readers will gain a greater appreciation for the importance of ovid to valerius conception and execution of his epic program and one of its central themes the journey

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