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Tradition and Originality in Nonnus'

*Dionysiaca*

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## Abstract.

The thesis examines the three most comprehensive episodes in the *Dionysiaca* - the Indian war, the sojourn in Lebanon, the return to Thebes - with special attention to Nonnus' use of his predecessors' works. The first shows a striking degree of interaction with the *Iliad*, the third a close dependence on Euripides' *Bacchae*, while the second displays the poet at his most eclectic, drawing on sources as diverse as Philo's *Phoenician History* and Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae*. Nonnus' imitation of Homeric passages is closer than that of other epic poets, involving duplication down to the minutest details and is lacking genuine innovation, though displaying a tendency to expansiveness through the proliferation of characters, incidents and speeches. Homeric themes are often rendered twice and sometimes even three times. The poet is also prone to reusing his own passages but avoids verbatim repetitions in the Homeric manner by almost invariably effecting some minor changes in expression or word order. The influence of technical rhetoric is quite palpable throughout, as is the influence of the Orphic terminology. A parodic streak somewhat reminiscent of Ovid is detectable in a number of passages. Some consideration is given to the vexed question of Nonnus' familiarity with the Latin poets and it has generally been found prudent to err on the side of caution. Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae*, is seen to provide the strongest argument for Latin influence, as Nonnus is observed to have inherited a compositional shortcoming peculiar to that poem.

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## Introduction.

Nonnus of Panopolis is an author little read to-day even by those whose profession is the study of ancient Greek literature. His claims to attention seem to rest solely on his having written the longest poem that has come down to us from antiquity, and in being the first of the ancient poets to systematically take cognisance of stress accent in composing his hexameters. When literary historians comment on Nonnus' good fortune in having his huge *Dionysiaca* transmitted to posterity whole, it is, more often than not, to express their regret that this has come about at the expense of earlier poets, whose works they would rather have seen preserved. Few to-day would be prepared to extol the *Dionysiaca* for literary qualities, though Nonnus did find a champion earlier in the present century in the German poet Stefan George, who confessed to having at one time preferred him to Homer.<sup>1</sup> Among literary critics only Maurice Croiset seems to have discerned the poem's positive features, when he speaks of its ebullient vitality of spirit, a quality that in his view compares favourably with the frigid correctness of Quintus'

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<sup>1</sup>In his article on Mallarmé he says "wie wir in ihrem unterjochten zerquälten stil das pochen und zucken unsrer eigenen seelen mit genugtuung herausfühlten und wie manchmal die schwergeborenen verse des heissblütigen Ägypters die månaden gleich jagen und brausen uns vor denen des alten Homer mit wollust erfüllt." (Werke (1958), p.506)

*Posthomeric*.<sup>2</sup> If Nonnus is largely forgotten to-day as a poet, this has not always been the prevailing attitude, the *Dionysiaca* having encountered a favourable reception in Western Europe for several decades from its first printing in 1569. Its style and subject matter were especially congenial to the baroque literary taste of the time. Giambattista Marino, the most prominent of the Italian baroque poets, is believed to have modelled his *Adone* directly on the *Dionysiaca*.<sup>3</sup> Nonnus' other work, the *Paraphrase* of John's Gospel, enjoyed even greater popularity, with thirteen editions published between the years 1501 and 1623. The ruthless criticism, which Daniel Heinsius in 1627 directed at the *Paraphrase* and at Nonnus' poetic ability in general, led to a quick downturn in popularity, that ended with the poet being consigned to virtual oblivion until the 19th century.<sup>4</sup> Assessed in accordance with Aristotle's criteria for epic poetry, the *Dionysiaca* with its myriad inconsistencies and rambling digressions was judged deficient, an attitude which persisted into the 19th century, when Nonnus came under renewed scrutiny. More sympathetically disposed than Heinsius, nineteenth century critics sought to excuse the *Dionysiaca*'s shortcomings on the assumption that the poet, in the course of revising and expanding the work, had been unable to apply finishing touches to it.<sup>5</sup> The analytic methodology, which over the past hundred years had been applied to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, was now brought to bear on the *Dionysiaca* as well, a development that Nonnus, who boasted of being the new Homer, would undoubtedly have found gratifying. The analytic approach was further refined in the earlier half of the present century by Keydell<sup>6</sup> and Collart,<sup>7</sup> who endeavoured, as far as it was possible, to disentangle the various additions and interpolations, by which they assumed the poet to have expanded and altered what was originally

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2" L'épopée des purs homériques, tels que Quintus de Smyrne, était bien froide dans son élégance timide, et surtout bien incolore. Nonnos, par un instinct de créateur, s'est représenté tout autre chose: une série de tableaux éclatants, une action grande, animée ..." *Histoire de la Littérature Grecque*, Paris, 1901, p.998.

3 Cf. G.F. Damiani "Nuove fonti dell'Adone", *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 32 (1898).

4 Cf. his "Aristarchus Sacer sive ad Nonni in Joannem metaphrasim exercitationes". Lugduni Batavorum, 1627 (reprinted in Migne, *Patr. ser. graeca*, t. 43, col. 941ff.)

5 Cf. for example A. Scheindler "Zu Nonnos von Panopolis", *WS* II (1880) 33-46.

6 Cf. his "Komposition der Bücher 13-40 der Dionysiaka des Nonnos", *Hermes* 62.393-434.

7 In his "Nonnos de Panopolis. Études sur la composition des Dionysiaques." Cairo, 1930.

conceived as a much smaller work. The poem's inconsistencies were seen as stemming from its unfinished state rather than from the vagaries of the manuscript tradition, with Nonnus presumably abandoning work on the project upon his conversion to Christianity, an hypothesis that acquired canonical status with Keydell's celebrated article on Nonnus in the *RE* (XVII, 1936). But as in the case of Homeric criticism, a reaction against the analytical approach subsequently set in. Vian in his introductions to the Budé edition of the *Dionysiaca*, which commenced publication in 1976, has questioned the validity of the analytical hypothesis, pointing out a number of features in the poem that he sees as giving it an underlying unity. The parts of the poem that his predecessors had viewed as mere digressions assume a distinct relevance in his interpretation of the narrative, which he sees as a well-structured unity based on Dionysus' progression toward apotheosis, albeit conceding that some segments (notably book 39) are lacking a final recension. He has in particular endeavoured to explain away many of the conflicting statements in the narrative by claiming that the poet meant them to be understood symbolically rather than literally.<sup>8</sup> Further unifying features in the poem have recently been highlighted by Hopkinson.<sup>9</sup> A variant viewpoint has been expressed by Livrea in his recent edition of book eighteen of the *Paraphrase*,<sup>10</sup> where he contends that the inconsistencies in Nonnus' narrative are merely symptomatic of the general tendency of the late poets to place the achievement of maximum effect in the immediate context before overall narrative consistency. He cites Claudian and Colluthus as parallels. Livrea thus concurs with Keydell and Collart in accepting the *Dionysiaca*'s contradictions at face value, but differs from them in that he makes no attempt to exculpate the poet for his lack of narrative consistency. In the present work I have taken a stance approximating to the latter position. While not denying the validity of Vian's observations, I find that his explanations account for only a fraction of the vast number of inconsistencies that occur with an almost wanton abandon throughout the poem. The idea of Dionysus' progression toward

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<sup>8</sup> See especially his introduction to book 25 in the Budé edition.

<sup>9</sup> See for instance his explanation (introduction to book 24, Budé ed.) of the significance to the poem as a whole of the episode of the weaving of Aphrodite (24.237-326), which earlier commentators had dismissed as a mere digression based on the *moicheia* theme from the *Odyssey*.

<sup>10</sup> "Nonno di Panopoli. Parafraresi del Vangelo di S. Giovanni Canto XVIII". Naples, 1989., p. 22 n.9.

apotheosis, if representative of the poet's purpose, is, in my opinion, obfuscated beyond recognition, seeing that Dionysus is portrayed from the start as possessing those very divine powers that he is meant to acquire only upon his apotheosis.

The present study aims to examine in some detail the three most extended episodes in the *Dionysiaca*, the Indian war, Dionysus' sojourn in Lebanon and his triumphant return to Thebes, with special emphasis on Nonnus' use of the works of his predecessors. The first episode shows overwhelming indebtedness to Homer's *Iliad*, the third to Euripides' *Bacchae*, while the second shows the poet at his most eclectic, drawing on various sources which include Claudian's *De Raptu Proserpinae* and Philo of Byblos' *Phoenician History*. It may be noted that whereas Nonnus' indebtedness to the last two works has been the subject of several specialised studies,<sup>11</sup> his relationship to Homer and Euripides, possibly because of its self-evident nature, does not appear to have engaged the attention of commentators beyond the briefest indication of verbal correspondences.<sup>12</sup> The present work aspires, in a modest way, to remedy this situation, by examining Nonnus' use of Homer, Euripides and the Alexandrian poets in some detail.

The length of the segment chosen for study (books 21-46) dictated certain omissions: the catalogue in book 26 on the ground that it had already been exhaustively examined by Chuvin<sup>13</sup> and Vian,<sup>14</sup> and the story of Phaethon in Book 38 in that it is basically a digression, which is not essential to the narrative sequence. The present study is greatly indebted to the observations of all of the above writers, as well as to those made by the authors of the various monographs and articles dealing with specific aspects and segments of the poem. For the first part it has been possible to utilize the Budé commentary, which has been published up to book 29. While much of that commentary is concerned with language and expression, textual and interpretative problems, the present discussion will be largely confined to examining the literary influences that operated on Nonnus, and the ways in which he accommodated the works of his predecessors to the

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11 For his relationship with Claudian see Braune's "Nonno e Claudiano", *Maia* 1(1948) 176-93, and with Philo, Dostálová-Jeništová's "Tyros a Bejrut v Dionysiakách Nonna z Panopole", *Listy fil.* (1957) 36-54.

12 For which see Keydell's *apparatus* to his 1959 ed. of the *Dionysiaca*.

13 In his "Mythologie et géographie dionysiaques. Recherches sur l'oeuvre de Nonnos de Panopolis." Clermont-Ferrand, 1991.

14 In his Budé edition of the poem, t. 9 "Chants XXV-XXIX". Paris, 1990.

requirements of his own narrative. The Budé introductions for books 20-24 (Hopkinson) and 25-29 (Vian), with their emphasis on literary rather than grammatical and lexicographical features, have been found particularly enlightening in the course of writing the present work. The corresponding Budé notes have been helpful in pointing out Nonnus' sources, especially some of the more unusual kind that have only come to light in recently published papyri. Keydell's references in the *apparatus criticus* of his 1959 edition of the poem, have, needless to say, been indispensable, though they are confined in the main to precise verbal correspondences. Except in the case of the more esoteric sources, I have not acknowledged the very numerous instances in which I have had recourse to his *apparatus*, for reasons of space rather than for want of gratitude. The same policy has been followed with regard to Vian and Hopkinson, acknowledgment being largely confined to those cases where the parallels indicated are with some little read or unexpected author. The great majority of Nonnus' borrowings are of course from extremely well known works (Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Apollonius' *Argonautica*, Callimachus' *Hymns*, and Euripides' *Bacchae*), and are, as such, immediately obvious to the reader. The works of Keydell and Collart referred to above have been especially useful in elucidating the compositional aspects of the *Dionysiaca*. While their hypothesis concerning the previous drafts of the poem may no longer be universally accepted, there is of course no question as to the value and validity of their observations in regard to the irregularities and contradictions in Nonnus' narrative. I must also mention my indebtedness to the works concerned with specific aspects of the poem, such as Gigli-Piccardi's book on Nonnus' metaphors,<sup>15</sup> which is especially commendable for having drawn attention to Nonnus' relationship with the so-called *Chaldean Oracles*, a relationship that seems previously to have been largely overlooked. Chuvin's above mentioned treatise on the geographical aspects of the *Dionysiaca* has been found particularly valuable for the segment of the poem concerned with Lebanon. Failure to mention here the numerous other works referred to in the text should not be seen as a reflection on their degree of usefulness to the present undertaking.

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<sup>15</sup> "Metafora e poetica in Nonno di Panopoli." Florence, 1985.

Citations will henceforth be given in abbreviated form specifying date of work and page number only, the reader being referred to Bibliography at back for full publication details.

## Chapter I: Dionysus' invasion of India.

The conquest of India receives privileged treatment among Dionysus' exploits in Nonnus' poem, being accorded truly epic proportions, embracing books 13 to 40, albeit with lengthy digressions<sup>1</sup>, while other episodes, such as the confrontation with Pentheus on his return to Thebes (books 44-46), do not exceed the dimensions of epyllia. A war of conquest, in that it places Dionysus in the role of slayer of men, may at first sight be a little difficult to reconcile with the personality of a god whom Homer calls a joy to mankind (χάρμα βροτοῖσιν, Ξ325), and whose mission, as Nonnus himself periodically reminds us, is to provide respite from cares and offer consolation to the aggrieved (ἄλκαρ ἀνίης, 7.76). His unflattering portrayal in the *Iliad* as a coward fleeing before Lycurgus (Z135-7) would seem to further emphasise his non-belligose nature, but at the same time there appears to have existed a tradition of long standing concerning his feats on the battlefield. Macrobius speaks of him being frequently identified with Ares and tells us that his statue in Sparta bore a spear in place of the thyrsus: 'plerique Liberum cum Marte coniungunt, unum deum esse monstrantes. unde Bacchus Ἐνυάλιος cognominatur quod est inter propria Martis nomina. colitur etiam apud Lacedaemonios simulacrum Liberi patris hasta insigne, non thyrsos' (*Sat.* 1.19.1). Dionysus' military associations are twice alluded to in Euripides' *Bacchae*, firstly in Dionysus' threat to subdue the Thebans by armed force (cf. συνάψω μαινάσι στρατηλατῶν, 52), should they prove unreceptive to his overtures, and then more explicitly in Tiresias' remark that Dionysus shares a part of Ares' rights (Ἄρεώς τε μοῖραν μεταλαβὼν ἔχει τινά, 302), and the dramatist is undoubtedly reflecting a pre-existing tradition in this regard. When Alexander demanded to be recognised as a god, Dionysus' connexions with the orient together with his military associations would have suggested that he was the

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<sup>1</sup> The stories of Nicaia 15.169-16.405, Lycurgus 20.35-21-298 and Phaethon 38.108-434.

god to whom Alexander bore the greatest affinity. The affinity, if obvious in retrospect, was not immediately apparent at the time that the request was made.<sup>2</sup> It was only belatedly, in Ptolemaic Egypt, that the wine-god and conqueror were brought together, Alexander's conquests providing the foundation for a novel extension of the Dionysus myth, with the god portrayed as the forerunner of the historical conqueror. Nock, in his study of the Alexander-Dionysus relationship, summarises its genesis as follows: 'first Dionysus is given some of the characteristics and achievements of Alexander, then Alexander is represented as following Dionysus'.<sup>3</sup> Alexander's Indian campaigns in particular provided the inspiration for a new and glorious episode in Dionysus' earthly career, one in which the wine-god is portrayed as the conqueror of India, its novelty constituting a challenge to the inventive faculties of poets and mythographers. While the Alexander histories provided them with the general framework on which to pattern their story, they needed for the most part to call on the resources of their own imagination to fill in the details of Dionysus' Indian exploits. The new theme came to overshadow to some extent the god's earlier, more traditional exploits in the poetic consciousness, judging from the prominence given to it by the Roman poets in their references to Dionysus. Thus Vergil for instance, in comparing the achievements of Augustus to Hercules and Bacchus, extols the latter solely on account of his Indian victory (*Aen.* 6.804-5), and Propertius, when he proposes to sing of Bacchus' deeds, places 'Indica Nysaeis arma fugata' (3.17) at the top of his list. Valerius Flaccus, who likes to compare the Argonauts' journey to Colchis with Bacchus' expedition into India, speaks of 'eoo rorantes sanguine thyrsos' (5.76), which could well serve as a caption for some of the middle books of the *Dionysiaca*. By the time Nonnus came to write his version of the Indian war, the topic had been enriched through the collective imagination of generations of poets and mythmakers. The theme seems to have been treated at considerable length in the eighteen-book *Bassarica* of Dionysius (2nd century A.D.), a work whose extant fragments lead us to believe that our poet was heavily indebted to it (cf. the close correspondence between 26.50-9 and frag. 1.1-7, Livrea). It is probable that

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<sup>2</sup> Nock (1928) 21-2 points out that the Athenian Boule, when faced with the prospect of having to recognise Alexander as a god, debated whether to make him a son of Zeus or of Poseidon.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Nock (1928) 25.

Nonnus used the *Bassarica* as his basic model for the Indian war, modifying Dionysius' narrative by additions modelled on episodes in the *Iliad*. All later epic poets went to some lengths to contrive situational parallels with the Homeric poems, but none quite to the same extent as Nonnus. His Indian war encompasses all the standard Iliadic set pieces: the κατάλογος (13.43ff. : B494ff.), the μάχη παραποτάμιος (22-23 : Φ), the όπλοποιία (25.387-562 : Σ483-608), the Διός άπάτη (31.24-32 : Ξ153-361), the θεομαχία (36.1-133 : Υ66 ff.), and the funeral games (άθλα έπ' Όφέλτη (37) : άθλα έπί Πατρόκλω (Ψ)).

The theme of the Indian war is announced at 13.21-34, where Zeus has Rhea convey to Dionysus the terms for his admission to Olympus. Dionysus is to give proof of his eligibility by bringing the impious Indians to heel, the reader being at this point made aware that Dionysus, though persistently called a god by the poet, is merely an aspirant to the status of god, who has yet to show his mettle by fulfilling a task set him by Zeus.<sup>4</sup> The situation thus differs from that in the *Bacchae*, where Dionysus appears as a god and not as a mortal aspiring to godship, though a god who has yet to convince the Thebans of his divine credentials. Nonnus does not adhere to the notion of god in the making with any consistency, portraying Dionysus as one already in possession of the powers and prerogatives of an Olympian, in that, like Hephaistus, he can burn up a river (book 23), excel Zeus himself in the number of giants he slays (25.96-7), or vie with Poseidon on equal terms over the hand of a maiden (book 43). It is only in his confrontations with Hera that Dionysus acts as anything less than a god. Nonnus' portrait of Dionysus as a god in the making is thus noticeably less consistent than the traditional portrayal of that other son of Zeus by a mortal mother to be made a god, Heracles, who was prior to his apotheosis never other than human, albeit one endowed with superhuman qualities. The idea of Dionysus' progression towards apotheosis, which Vian sees as providing the poem with coherence and underlying logic, is obscured and rendered largely irrelevant by a narrative where he regularly

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<sup>4</sup> Zeus reminds Dionysus of his own labours and those of the other Olympians, all of whom had to earn their place in the heavenly abode. We are reminded of a similar passage in Valerius Flaccus, where Jupiter, addressing Hercules and the Tyndaridae, warns them of the travails ahead, at the same time reminding them of those which he himself, Apollo and Bacchus needed to accomplish to merit their places in Olympus (cf. 1.561-7).

has recourse to the very powers which, properly speaking, he is to acquire only after admission to Olympus.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from the catalogues in books 13 and 14, sustained parallels with the *Iliad* commence only with book 22, which marks the beginning of the *Indiad* properly speaking, the narrative being thenceforth continuous (allowing for the story of Phaethon) up to the demise of Deriades and the submission of the Indians half-way through book 40. Dionysus' early encounters with Astraeïs and Orontes correspond schematically to Alexander's battles with Darius' satraps, but they are of a decidedly magical or supernatural cast that bears little resemblance either to the latter or to Homer's battle scenes. It is only when Dionysus and his followers are approaching the Hydaspes that Nonnus eschews the magical and supernatural for battle-depictions of a more conventional kind. In place of nymphs and satyrs, Dionysus' human followers, notably Oiagrus, Erechtheus and Aiacus, who are all cast in a consciously Homeric mould, now take the centre stage.

Books 22 to 24 are a peculiar amalgam of Alexander's battle against the Indian king Porus on the banks of the Hydaspes with Homer's μάχη παραποτάμιος. The segment is characterised on the one hand by the unmistakable parallelism between Dionysus and Alexander, and on the other by the explicit comparison of Aiacus with his grandson Achilles. As Bornmann notes in his study of the parallels between Nonnus and Arrian, Dionysus for the time being puts aside his magical powers to assume the appearance of the historical conqueror.<sup>6</sup> Nonnus shows himself to be not insensitive to the humorous side of this sudden conversion of wine-god into prudent general, when he has Dionysus tell his followers to abstain from wine and drink instead from the river, lest they be overcome through intoxication (cf. 22.128-30), an injunction which goes against the grain of everything that Dionysus represents and at the same time conflicts with Hera's warning to the Indians a little earlier in the narrative, not to drink from the river because Dionysus has turned it into wine (22.80-1).

The sequence of events leading up to the crossing of the Hydaspes may be said to commence from 21.196, when Scelmis brings joyful tidings to Dionysus'

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. , for example Vian (1990) p.33.

<sup>6</sup> Bornmann (1975), p. 56: 'lo stesso Dioniso più di una volta cessa di agire da dio o da eroe e assume gli atteggiamenti del re conquistatore.'

followers of their leader's imminent return from his undersea refuge, where he had fled from Lycurgus. Pherespondus, a satyr, is sent as envoy to Deriades with the demand that the king accept the gift of wine in his land, which the latter, predictably, rejects out of hand. The floppy ears and shaggy tail of the envoy occasion the mirth of Deriades, who would have him wait at his table so that he can fan him with his long ears. Pherespondus had been despatched much earlier by Dionysus, even before the debacle with Lycurgus, but it is only now that he reaches Deriades, bearing the written message: κοίρανε, νοσφί μάχης ἢ δέχνυσο δῶρα Λυαίου, / ἢ Βρομίῳ πολέμιζε καὶ ἔσσειαι ἴσος Ὀρόντη (18.318-9). Deriades' reaction is typical of a θεομάχος, who places the efficacy of his weapons above the gods and their gifts: οἶνος ἐμὸς πέλεν ἔγχος, ὁ δ' αὖ πότος ἐστὶ βοείη (21.259).<sup>7</sup> He recognises no gods apart from Earth and Water (21.264), professing ignorance of the Olympians (a claim that is not borne out by his later speeches, which show him to be well informed concerning them) and in the typical manner of a despot tells the envoy to depart lest he should no longer be able to contain his anger and slay him.<sup>8</sup> His written message to Dionysus is even briefer than that which the latter had sent him: εἰ δύνασαι, Διόνυσε, κορύσσειο Δηριαδῆι (21.277).

Dionysus, who has by now rejoined his followers, reacts to Deriades' reply not, as we would expect him to do, with a frenzied assault of his Bacchantes and Satyrs, but by attending to the contingencies of the impending hostilities like a prudent general. It is from this point that the influence of the Alexander histories begins to manifest itself. In anticipation of a naval engagement with the Indians, he orders the Rhadamans to build a fleet, having been alerted to this course of action by Rheia (21.308), who herself had been told by Zeus (through Iris) that the Indians were to be vanquished in a naval engagement (13.5-6),<sup>9</sup> though it is only much later in the narrative that the prophecy that the final defeat of the Indians shall take place on water is explicitly spelt out: ὅτι τέλος πολέμοιο φανήσεται,

<sup>7</sup> Cf. the remarks of Pentheus later in the poem (44.155ff.) and Idas in Apollonius (1.467ff.)

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Agamemnon's threats to Chryses (A26-32) and Aeetes' address to the Argonauts in Apollonius (3.372-80).

<sup>9</sup> The Rhadamans, descendants of Rhadamanes, who was exiled by his brother Minos from Crete and settled either in Gaza or the eastern littoral of Arabia (cf. Diod. Sic. 5.84.2 and Plin. *N.H.* 6.158).

ὄπποτε Βάκχοι εἰναλίην Ἰνδοῖσιν ἀναστήσωσιν Ἐνωῶ (36.415-6). The idea that the Indians were vanquished by Dionysus in a naval engagement occurs also in Arrian,<sup>10</sup> and may have originated from a wish by the mythmakers to take account of the spectacular naval expeditions carried out under Nearchus for Alexander, though the latter involved no warfare. Deriades posts a detachment of his army on the west bank of the Hydaspes under Thureus to lie in wait for Dionysus in a densely wooded grove, while he himself remains on the east bank with his main force (21.317-25). Bornmann<sup>11</sup> adduces Arrian (*Anab.* 6.2.2) as a possible model for Nonnus in the present instance, while Hopkinson<sup>12</sup> cites 2.8.5, which involves a similar stratagem by Darius on the banks of the Pinarus. It is not certain, however, whether Nonnus acquired these ideas from Arrian or from some other, no longer extant, Alexander historian.

The grove, in which Thureus and his men hide, accords Nonnus the opportunity to compose an ἐκφρασις δῶσους. The grove description had become an essential ingredient of Hellenistic and Roman epic, as we may gather from the Roman satirist Persius, who scoffs at would-be epic poets who, besides other deficiencies, are ‘nec ponere lucum/artifices’ (1.71)<sup>13</sup>. Homer’s depiction of the two intertwining olive trees under which Odysseus sheltered on coming ashore in Scherie, which shut out rain and sun alike (ε476-81<sup>cf. also τ 440-3</sup>), seems to have engendered a copious progeny, beginning with Callimachus’ grove description in the *Hymn to Demeter* (6.24-9). Nonnus has imitated Homer’s depiction and borrowed a feature from that of Callimachus, but his grove resembles in the main the sacred grove of the Druids, as found in Lucan’s *Pharsalia*, which incorporates the sorts of exaggerations we have come to expect in rhetorical declamations. Thus we find that ἦν δέ τις αὐτόθι χῶρος εὐσκίος, ὄπποθι πυκνοῖς / ἔρνεσι παντοίοισιν ἐμιτρώθη ράχισ ὕλης / εὐρυτενῆς (21.326-8) is similar to ‘lucus erat ... / obscurum cingens conexis aera ramis’ (3.399-401). The grove is so dense as to be impenetrable by arrows: ἰπτάμενος δὲ / οὐ ποτε δένδρεα κείνα

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Anab.* 6.3.4: τὸν Διονύσου ἐπ’ Ἰνδοῦς στόλον... γενέσθαι ναυτικόν.

<sup>11</sup> (1974) p.63

<sup>12</sup> (1994a) p.56 n.4

<sup>13</sup> For a history of this topos, cf. Curtius (1953) pp. 194-5.

κατέγραφεν ἰὸς ἀλήτης (21.328-9), which echoes Callimachus' ἄλλος ... διὰ κεν μόλις ἦνθεν ὀιστός (6.25-6). Nonnus seems at the same time to have had in mind the passage in the *Odyssey* where the height of Scylla's cave is described as being so great as to be out of reach of an arrow shot from below (μ83-4), a supposition supported by the fact that the grove is, in the previous line, referred to as a κοῖλον ... σπέος (21.328), echoing Homer's κοῖλον σπέος (μ84). It is, furthermore, impervious to the elements: οὐ ποτε μεσσοῦθι θάμνων / ἥελιος πεφόρητο ὄξει παλμῶ / ἐνδομύχοις ἀκτίσιν ὀμόπλοκα φύλλα χαράξας, / οὐ χύσις ἠερόφοιτος ἐδύσατο δάσκιον ὕλην / ἐκ Διὸς ὑετίοιο (21.330-4), a notion found also in Lucan: 'alte summotis solibus (3.401) ... nec ventus in illas / incubuit silvas excussaue nubibus atris / fulgura '(3.408-10). These lines are evidently based on Homer's τοὺς μὲν ἄρ' οὐτ' ἀνέμων διάη μένος ὑγρὸν ἀέντων / οὔτε ποτ' ἥελιος φαέθων ἀκτίσιν ἔβαλλεν, / οὔτ' ὄμβρος περάσκει διαμπερές (ε478-80). The idea of concealing an army in such a place derives, as Bornmann has demonstrated, from Alexander's crossing of the Hydaspes. According to Arrian, Alexander had moved a part of his forces onto a thickly wooded headland in the river, in the hope of making the crossing undetected by Porus' scouts. Arrian describes the place as δασεῖα ἰδη παντοίων δένδρων, which accorded Alexander the opportunity κρύψαι τῆς διαβάσεως τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν (*Anab.* 5.11.1). Hopkinson adduces a similar situation from *Anab.* 2.8.5, where Darius, waiting for Alexander on the Pinarus, dispatches a part of his cavalry to the opposite bank to intercept him. He likewise draws attention to Diodorus Siculus 3.65.4-5, where Lycurgus plans to surprise Dionysus by a nocturnal assault.<sup>14</sup> Nonnus remarks on the composure and self-discipline of the Indians as they lie in ambush in language reminiscent of Idomeneus' speech in the *Iliad*, where those lying in ambush are portrayed as being in a state of anxiety. The Indian troop wait silently, οὐ ποδὸς ὀκλάζοντος ἔχων φόβον, οὐ λάλον ἤχῳ / χεῖλει βامβαίνοντι, καὶ οὐ χλόον ἀμφὶ προσώπῳ (21.241-2). In Idomeneus' speech, it will be recalled, waiting in ambush is the test that sorts out the cowardly from the brave: ἔνθα μάλιστα ἀρετὴ διαείδεται ἀνδρῶν ... τοῦ μὲν γάρ τε

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<sup>14</sup>(1994a) p.56 n.4 and p.57 n.1

κακοῦ τρέπεται χρώς ἄλλυδις ἄλλη ... μετοκλάζει καὶ ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρους  
 πόδας ἴζει, / ἐν δέ τέ οἱ κραδίη μεγάλη στέρνοισι πατάσσει / κήρας  
 ὀιομένω, πάταγος δέ τε γίγνεται ὀδόντων / τοῦ δ' ἀγαθοῦ οὔτ' ἄρ  
 τρέπεται χρώς οὔτε τι λίην / ταρβεῖ (N278-85). The Indians are portrayed  
 (by way of *oppositio in imitando*) as showing none of the signs of timidity listed  
 in the above passage.

Book 22 begins with a virtual quotation of the first line of book 21 of the *Iliad*, inaugurating the extended paraphrase of Homer's μάχη παραποτάμιος, which will take up much of the the next three books. Nonnus does not, however, arrive at this theme immediately, prefacing it with seventy lines devoted to Bacchic revelry and miracles, depictions of which occur intermittently throughout the poem, culminating in the detailed depiction at 45.273 ff.,<sup>15</sup> all of which are, in varying degrees, indebted to Euripides' *Bacchae* 677-768. One of the Indians, resembling the messenger in the *Bacchae*, spies on the festivities and reports to Thureus the marvellous happenings he has just witnessed. His peering through the bushes is compared to a warrior's looking through the eyeholes of his helmet or a tragic actor's staring through the eyepiece of his mask (22.58-63), the latter comparison perhaps underlining the analogy with the Euripidean scene. Overawed, the Indians contemplate submission but are dissuaded from this course of action through Hera's timely intervention. Appearing to Thureus in disguise - Nonnus somewhat uncharacteristically fails to inform us what that disguise is, stating only that she appeared μεταλλάξασα δέμας (22.74, contrast ἐειδομένη δέμας ... Μελαίηι at 14.303-4) - she deceives him by saying that the Hydaspes had been poisoned by Dionysus through Thessalian spells and cautions the Indians against drinking from its stream (22.80-1). As we have already noted, this statement is patently at odds with Dionysus' instruction to his troops to abstain from wine and drink from the river instead, μὴ στρατὸν εὐνήσειε μέθη καὶ κῶμα καὶ ὄρφνη (22.30). This is only the first of a string of contradictory statements regarding the state of the Hydaspes, which is in some instances spoken of as having been turned into wine, but in others only threatened with this

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. also 18.51-61, 24.123-42 and 45.285-322; similar miracles occur in connexion with the birth of Beroe, 41.185-203.

eventuality. Thus, while at 25.280 (cf. also 29.291-2), οἶνω κυματόεντι μέλας κελάρυζεν Ἰδάσπης, at 27.178-80 and at 35.356 Dionysus merely expresses his intent to convert it into wine. Keydell<sup>16</sup> and Collart<sup>17</sup> view the references to the Hydaspes having been converted into wine as remnants of an earlier draft of the poem, where the Hydaspes shared the lot of lake Astacid (14.411-6), a version of events which Nonnus later suppressed, replacing it by one modelled on the twenty-first book of the *Iliad*, where the Hydaspes, like the Scamander, is subdued by fire. With characteristic disregard for narrative consistency, Nonnus has failed to expunge traces of the earlier version, where the Hydaspes, converted into wine, placidly submits to being traversed by Dionysus' followers.

The Indians, encouraged by Hera, are about to burst out of the grove and fall upon the unsuspecting followers of Dionysus, but the latter is opportunely alerted to the danger by an Indian hamadryad. This incident brings to mind the action of Charops in Diodorus Siculus' account of Lycurgus' intended nocturnal assault on Dionysus, referred to above. Dionysus' reaction to the situation is more akin to that of a cautious general than thyrsus-wielding wine god, as he instructs his men τεύχεσι θωρηχθέντας ἀνὰ δρύας εἰλαπινάζειν ... μή σφιν ἐπιβρίσωσιν ἀθώρηκτοισι μαχηταί, / εἰσέτι δαινυμένοισι κατὰ στρατόν (22.121-4), echoing Priam's words to the Trojans during a truce in the fighting νῦν μὲν δόρπον ἔλεσθε κατὰ στρατόν ... καὶ φυλακῆς μνήσασθε, καὶ ἐγρήγορθε ἕκαστος (H370-1). We might note that the κατὰ στρατόν conveys the notion of 'armed and in combat formation', as Homer makes clear a few lines later: δόρπον ἔπειθ' εἶλοντο κατὰ στρατόν ἐν τελέεσσιν (H380). It is thus a self-contradiction to refer to men dining κατὰ στρατόν as ἀθώρηκτοι, but Nonnus is evidently not concerned with observing the precise sense of Homeric terms. The Indian plan is thwarted by Zeus, who brings torrential rain and thunder during the night: Ζεὺς δὲ πατὴρ δολόεντα μετατρέψας νόον Ἰνδῶν / ἔσπερίην ἀνέκοψε μάχην μυκῆτορι βόμβῳ, / ὄμβρου παννυχίοιο χέων ἀπερείσιον ἦχώ (22.133-5). These lines correspond to Zeus' portent to the warring sides in the *Iliad* of hardships to come: παννύχιος δέ σφιν κακὰ μήδετο μητίετα

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<sup>16</sup> (1927) pp. 393-434

<sup>17</sup> (1930) pp.153-4.

Ζεὺς / σμερδαλέα κτυπέων, τοὺς δὲ χλωρὸν δέος ἦρει (H478-9). The idea of a thunderstorm occurring at this point of time appears, again, to come from Alexander's crossing of the Hydaspes. According to Arrian, as Alexander was readying the forces on the wooded headland for the crossing, a thunderstorm broke out, which lasted throughout the night. The thunderstorm, far from being a hindrance in Alexander's case, facilitated his plan by rendering inaudible the sounds of troops on the move (*Anab.* 5.12.3). Nonnus' Indians, like Alexander, attack at dawn when the storm had abated (cf. 136-9 and *Anab.* 5.12.4). The battle description is commenced with a near-quotation from the *Iliad*, the δυσμενέες προύτυψαν ἀολλέες· ἦρχε δὲ Θουρεὺς (22.139), corresponding to Τρῶες δὲ προύτυψαν ἀολλέες, ἦρχε δ' ἄρ' Ἐκτωρ (N136). As the Indians attack, Dionysus, displaying the attributes of a cautious tactician in place his usual impetuosity, draws back in feigned retreat εἰσόκεν Ἴνδοι / ἐς πεδῖον προχέοντο (22.144-5). While the phrase is borrowed from Homer (B465), the idea of a tactical retreat so as to make the enemy fight in a place of his own choosing, recalls Porus' manoeuvre of giving battle to Alexander where he could deploy his cavalry to best advantage (*Anab.* 5.15.5). Echoes from the *Iliad* intermingle here with ideas drawn from Alexander's crossing of the Hydaspes, this segment of the *Dionysiaca* providing a good example of how Nonnus blends poetic with historical sources.

As battle is joined, however, the historic elements give way to stereotyped battle descriptions, based on those in the *Iliad*, but with marked concessions to the taste for the bizarre and macabre that manifested itself in the time of the Empire. The aristeias of Oiagrus, Erechtheus and Aiacus, closely patterned on the aristeias in the *Iliad*, are interspersed with general battle scenes (where the protagonists are anonymous and the emphasis is rather on the various types of wounds inflicted or received) in the style of the rhetorical ἐκφράσεις πεζομαχίας. Nonnus' propensity for the grotesque (e.g. cf. p.14) - a trait which he shares with the Roman poets Lucan and Statius - is, however, less in evidence here than in some of the later books, and the treatment appears on the whole to be more consciously Homeric than anywhere in the poem other than the first half of book 40. Nonnus prefaces the aristeias with brief references to other warriors. Firstly, an unnamed

Lydian is singled out for his golden armour (22.146-53), which is explicitly likened to that which Glaucus gave to Diomedes in exchange for the latter's armour of bronze (Z235-6), a transaction to which earlier reference was made at 15.165-8, where Hymenaios deprives a Lydian of his golden armour. It is not uncommon for Nonnus to imitate any given Homeric passage more than once, as we shall have ample opportunity to point out. Nonnus, in common with other late poets, has a penchant for describing precious objects,<sup>18</sup> proceeding subsequently to the depiction of the silver accoutrements of a chieftain from Alybe. Then follows a picture of Dionysus wreaking havoc amongst the Indians with thyrsus and ivy. This depiction, which never develops into an *aristeia* properly speaking, is perhaps intended to highlight Dionysus' difference from the three Homeric-type heroes, whose *aristeias* follow forthwith. The οὐ γυμνὸν ἔχων ξίφος, οὐ δόρυ πάλλων, / ἀλλὰ ... θύρσον ἀκοντίζων δολιχόσκιον ... ἔγχεϊ κισσήεντι διασχίζων νέφος Ἴνδῶν (22.160-4) serves to remind us of the god's unusual weapons, which were depicted at 14.230-45. The use of *δολιχόσκιον*, the Homeric epithet for the spear, to describe the thyrsus, which is by all accounts a short instrument, does not seem quite apposite, but, as we have just noted regarding the *δαινυμένοισι κατὰ στρατόν*, Nonnus pays little heed to the literal significance of such terms, using them merely for their Homeric associations.

The remainder of book 22 is taken up with the *aristeias* of Oiagrus, Erechtheus and Aiacus, the last overlapping with the beginning of book 23. The *aristeias* of Oiagrus and Aiacus are each divided into two separate segments, while the brief *aristeia* of Erechtheus is presented whole. The overall arrangement is as follows: Oiagrus lines 168-217, general battle description 218-52, Aiacus 253-92, Erechtheus 293-319, Oiagrus again 320-53, Aiacus again 354-89 and 23.11-78 (the latter segment in association with Dionysus). Collart<sup>19</sup> draws attention to the structural similarity between the two segments of Oiagrus' *aristeia*. Both commence with a mention of Calliope (187-90, 320-3), followed by a massacre of

<sup>18</sup> Cf. for example 32.18-26 where the gemstones in Hera's accoutrement are depicted in detail.

<sup>19</sup> (1930) p.158. Collart believes that Nonnus wrote the second segment "le premier ne l'ayant pas satisfait". Keydell, on the other hand, marks the whole of the second segment with the marginal bar, which he uses to designate lines "a Nonno compositi neque cum carmine contexti", that is, he regards it as the less appropriate of the two passages.

the Indians, in the first with sword and spear (191-212), in the second with bow and arrows (324-36). Oiagrus' action is in both instances so devastating as to leave in his wake a field devoid of the enemy: μεσάτην γυμνώσατο χάρμη (22.217) and μεσσατίης δὲ φάλαγγος ἀλευαμένης ... χῶρος ἐγυμνώθη (22.347-8). Oiagrus resembles Aiacus in having a descendant more renowned than himself, being the father of Orpheus, as the latter is the grandfather of Achilles. While Aiacus' martial prowess is understandable in view of his grandson's, heroic attributes being considered hereditary, it is difficult to see why Oiagrus, father of the peace-loving bard, should be portrayed as a slayer. He would function far more appropriately as minstrel, a role which Nonnus indeed assigned to him earlier in the poem, when he had him defeat Erechtheus in the song-competition at the funeral games of Staphylus (19.100-17). It is perhaps in anticipation of the present passage as well as on account of his Thracian antecedents, that Nonnus designates him as the son of Ares in the catalogue (13.429).

The first segment introduces Oiagrus by way of agricultural metaphor, as reaping the black harvest, inexorably mowing down row upon row of attacking Indians (22.168-70). The metaphor is especially apposite, seeing that the poet regards the Indians as earthborn, even if they do not literally spring from the ground, as had the Σπαρτοί, whom Cadmus had mowed down earlier in the narrative (4.441-54). The analogy between slaying on the battlefield and reaping, would of course suggest itself independently of any association with the Σπαρτοί. Homer, indeed, compares in a celebrated passage the mutual slaughter of Greeks and Trojans to the reaping of corn (Λ67-71), and it is from here that Nonnus, in all likelihood, drew his inspiration. The blackness of the Indians is continually emphasised by Nonnus, to the extent that κυάνεος becomes an epithet as inseparable from them as μέλαινα is from ships in Homer.<sup>20</sup> A series of Homeric reminiscences, some of them in the form of similes, of which an unusual concentration is encountered in the present segment, is used to describe the feats of Oiagrus (and later of Aiacus). Oiagrus' onslaught is likened to a torrent rushing down into the plain from the mountains: ὡς δ' ὅτε τις προχέων ποταμὸς

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<sup>20</sup> The ancients deemed the Indians the darkest of all races barring the Ethiopians, cf. Arrian, *Anab.* 5.4.4.: μελαντέρους τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων, πλὴν Αἰθιοπῶν, and *Indica* 6.9. Cf. also Lucan 4.678-9: 'concolor Indo Maurus'.

δυσπέμφελον ὕδωρ / ἄστατος ἐκ σκοπέλοιο χαραδρήεντι ρέεθρῳ / ἔρχεται  
 ἐς πεδίον πεφορημένος, οὐδέ μιν αὐταὶ / ἔρκεσιν ἀρραγέεσσιν  
 ἀναστέλλουσιν ἀλῶαι / λαϊνέης μέσα νῶτα διαξύοντα γεφύρης·/πολλὴ μὲν  
 κεύλιστο πίτυς, πολλὴ δὲ πεσοῦσα / ὑψιφανῆς προθέλυμνος ἐσύρετο  
 χεύματι πεύκη (22.171-7). This simile is a composite of two Homeric similes  
 depicting the onslaughts of Diomedes (E87-92) and Ajax (Λ492-6). From the first,  
 Nonnus has used θῦνε γὰρ ἄμ πεδίον ποταμῶ πλήθοντι ἐοικώς /.../ τὸν δ'  
 οὐτ' ἄρ τε γέφυραι ἑερμέναι ἰσχανόωσιν, / οὐτ' ἄρα ἔρκεα ἴσχει ἀλῶάων  
 ἐριθηλέων / ἐλθόντ' ἑξαπίνης, from the second ὡς δ' ὁπότε πλήθων  
 ποταμὸς πεδίονδε κάτεισι / χειμάρρους κατ' ὄρεσφιν ... / πολλὰς δὲ  
 δρύς ἀζαλέας, πολλὰς δὲ τε πεύκας / ἐσφέρεται. We might note here a  
 typically Nonnian usage, namely the periphrasis νῶτα γεφύρης for γεφύρην,  
 which is one of a number periphrases in the poem consisting of νῶτον or νῶτα  
 followed by the genitive of the object denoted.<sup>21</sup> Oiagrus is alone in the midst of  
 the enemy, who throng around hedging him in with a wall of shields: καὶ μιν  
 ἐκυκλώσαντο, καὶ ἦν καλέουσι μαχηταὶ / μιμηλὴν σακέεσσιν ἐπυργώσαντο  
 χελώνην (22.180-1). The term χελώνη or 'testudo' refers normally to the Roman  
 technique of interlocking shields to protect the crews operating battering rams from  
 missiles thrown from the battlements during sieges, but is used occasionally to  
 denote συνασπισμός in the Homeric sense (cf. Livy 10.29.6). In the present  
 instance the Indians seem to use this technique to protect themselves against  
 Oiagrus striking them from above, the latter being on horseback (ἀερσιλόφοιο  
 καθήμενος ὑψόθεν ἵππου, 22.212), while they, presumably, are on foot.  
 Nonnus mentions it to usher in his own paraphrase of the famous συνασπισμός  
 passage from the *Iliad*: ἔχνεσι μὲν στατὸν ἔχνος ἐρείδεται, κεκλιμένη δὲ /  
 ἀσπίς ἦν προθέλυμνος ἀμοιβαδὶς ἀσπίδι γείτων / στεινομένη, καὶ ἔνευε  
 λόφῳ λόφος, ἀγχιφανῆς δὲ / ἀνδρὸς ἀνήρ ἔψαυεν (22.182-5), echoing  
 φράξαντες δόρυ δουρί, σάκος σάκει προθελύμνω· / ἀσπίς ἄρ' ἀσπίδ'  
 ἔρειδε, κόρυς κόρυιν, ἀνέρα δ' ἀνήρ· / ψαῦον δ' ἵππόκομοι κόρυθες

<sup>21</sup> For other examples, cf. νῶτα χαλάζης (2.246), νῶτα βοείης (4.451). Nonnus' mannerisms recur with an almost formulaic regularity.

λαμπροῖσι φάλοισι / νευόντων (N130-3, Π215-7).<sup>22</sup> Nonnus imitates the passage a second time somewhat less pointedly at 28.29-34. We might note the typically Nonnian expressions ἀσπίδι γείτων and ἀγχιφανής, which the poet appears to introduce quite deliberately, almost as if to leave his signature on the paraphrase.

Another Homeric echo follows in the form of the question: ἔνθα τίνα πρῶτον, τίνα δ' ὕστατον Ἕιδι πέμπων / ... Οἶαγρος ἀπέθρισεν; (22.187-8), echoing ἔνθα τίνα πρῶτον, τίνα δ' ὕστατον ἐξενάριξεν / Ἐκτωρ; (E703-4, repeated at Λ299-300 and Π692-3 (Patroclus)).<sup>23</sup> One would expect a list of the names of the slain to follow as in Homer, but this is not the case, Nonnus opting instead to specify the injuries that Oiagrus inflicts on a number of unnamed Indians (22.191-5). Wifstrand has pointed out the affinity of such passages of anonymous carnage in Nonnus to the rhetorical ἐκφράσεις πεζομαχίας, citing an example from Libanius, which exhibits very similar characteristics.<sup>24</sup> The following excerpt will suffice to demonstrate the similarity: καὶ τοῦ μὲν ἀπεκόπη χεῖρ, τοῦ δὲ ὀφθαλμὸς ἐξεκόπη, ὁ δὲ ἐν τῷ βουβῶνι πληγείς ἔκειτο, τοῦ δέ τις ἀνέρρηξε τὴν γαστέρα (Libanii opera, ed. Foerster, v.8, p.462). Perpetrators and victims remain anonymous in such descriptions (designated by τις, ἄλλος etc., with which we may compare Lucan's nameless 'miles'), though in the present passage only the latter are so, their slayer being named. The physical manifestations of death on the battlefield are conveyed by Nonnus in gory detail verging on the grotesque, his descriptions recalling the exaggerations of Lucan. Nonnus reserves the more extreme instances for book 28, but the present segment gives an adequate foretaste of what is to come. A recurrent theme is that of severed hands continuing to twitch and jump about the battlefield in reptilic fashion. Thus when Oiagrus lops off the hand of an opponent, ἡ δὲ πεσοῦσα / αἰμοβαφῆς ἦσπαιρεν ἐπὶ χθονὸς ἀλλομένη χεῖρ (22.197-8). The severed hand of the

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<sup>22</sup> The passage was often imitated, cf. for example Euripides, *Heracl.* 836-7, Vergil, *Aen.* 10.360-1.

<sup>23</sup> The question appears to have been much imitated. Vergil asks the same of Camilla: 'Quem telo primum, quem postremum, aspera virgo, / deicis?' (*Aen.* 11.664-5).

<sup>24</sup> (1933) pp.153-4.

Athenian in book 28 displays even greater mobility: ἡ δὲ κυβιστήσασα φόνου βητάρμοι παλμῶ / ... / ξανθὰ διαστίζουσα κατάρρυτα ὠτα κονίης (28.128-30). The most extended depiction is found earlier, when one of the many hands of Typhoeus, cut off by Zeus' hail, μάρνατο καὶ πίπτουσα, διαίσσοι δὲ γαίης / ἄλμασιν αὐτοκύλιτος ἐπάλλετο μαινομένη χεῖρ, / οἶα βαλεῖν ἐθέλουσα καὶ εἰσέτι κύκλον Ὀλύμπου (2.433-5). All these examples are based on the incident in the *Iliad*, where Eurypylus cuts off the hand of Hypsenor: ἀπὸ δ' ἔξεσε χεῖρα βαρείαν / αἱματόεσσα δὲ χεῖρ πεδίῳ πέσε (E81-2).<sup>25</sup> The rhetorical exaggerations of Nonnus tend to diminish rather than augment the inherent horror of such scenes. There is, nevertheless, some Homeric precedent for the grotesque, especially in the scenes where a blow to the head results in the victim's eyes popping out and falling to the ground (cf. N616-7, Π741-2), scenes which Nonnus does not imitate directly but which set the tone for the rhetorical reservoir of stock battlefield horrors from which he derives his imagery. Mixed with the grotesque are touches of genuine pathos, such as that of the soul longing for the youthful body it has been forced to leave: ψυχὴ δ' ἠνεμόφοιτος ἀναίξασα θανόντος / συμπλεκέος ποθέεσκεν ἐθήμονα σώματος ἦβην (22.21-2), echoing: ψυχὴ δ' ἐκ ρεθέων παμένη Ἄιδόσδε βεβήκει, / ὄν πότμον γοώσα, λιπούσ' ἀνδροτῆτα καὶ ἦβην, a statement used in the case of both Patroclus (Π856-7) and Hector (X362-3).

Further use of simile follows, with Oiagrus described as clearing the field of Indians in the way that with the onset of spring the cloudy skies of winter are cleared to display unimpeded the glow of the stars: ὡς δ' ὅτε ῥιγαλέου σκιερῆν μετὰ χείματος ὥρην / φαίνεται ἀσκεπέων νεφέων γυμνούμενος ἀήρ / φέγγεος εἰαρινοῖο δεδεγμένος αἴθριον αἴγλην (22.213-5). The notion of wintry clouds being cleared away to reveal the shining stars is used also by Apollonius in his depiction of the emergence of the earthborn warriors (3.1359-63). Nonnus is concerned only with the first half of the simile, that is, the clearing

<sup>25</sup> Lucan has a cut-off tongue perform similar gymnastics: 'exsectaque lingua / palpitat et muto vacuum ferit aera motu' (2.181-2), which scene too, is based on one in the *Iliad*, where Meges' spear severs Pedaius' tongue: ἀντικρὺς δ' ἀν' ὀδόντας ὑπὸ γλῶσσαν τάμε χαλκός (E74).

away of the clouds to leave an open sky, since he is depicting the disappearance as opposed to the appearance of warriors from the field. The reference to the αἴθριον αἴγλην is merely gratuitous, a left-over from the Apollonian simile. We note that as Nonnus uses the simile to describe a situation that is the reverse of that for which it was originally intended, its effectiveness is somewhat diminished.

In the second segment of the aristeia Oiagrus reappears as an archer, fighting with bow and arrows in place of spear and sword. With unerring marksmanship he despatches nine arrows, killing an Indian with each: ἐννέα μὲν προέηκε τανυγλώχινας ὀιστούς, / ἐννέα δ' ἄνδρας ἔπεφνεν (22.324-5), one more than Teucer in the *Iliad*, who ὀκτὼ δὴ προέηκε τανυγλώχινας ὀιστούς, / πάντες δ' ἐν χροῖ' πῆχθεν ἀρηιθῶν αἰζηῶν (Θ297-8). The μνηστηροφονία in the *Odyssey* also has a bearing on the Nonnus passage in that Oiagrus' deadly use of archery in one concentrated bout of shooting resembles that of Odysseus. The speed of the action is exaggerated by Nonnus, displaying his usual propensity to hyperbole: ἐκ δὲ φαρέτρης / ἄλλου πεμπομένοιο κατέδραμεν ἄλλος ἐπ' ἄλλω / ἠερίη στροφάλιγγι κατάσσυτος ὄμβρος ὀιστῶν (22.334-6). This statement leads to yet another simile, with the arrows from Oiagrus' bow compared to sparks flying from a piece of copper that the blacksmith pounds on his anvil: ὡς δ' ὅτε χαλκείῳ τις ἐπ' ἄκμοι χαλκὸν ἐλαύνων / ἀκαμάτῳ ραιστῆρι πυρίβρομον ἦχον ἰάλλει, / τύπτων γείτονα μύδρον, ἀποθρῶσκουσι δὲ πολλοὶ / ἀλλόμενοι σπιυθῆρες ἀρασσομένοιο σιδήρου, ἠέρα θερμαίνοντες (22.337-41). Hollis<sup>26</sup> has adduced a fragment of Euphorion, in which the imagery of the forge is employed to describe the eyes of Cerberus: ἠ που θερμάστραις ἢ που Μελιγουνίδι τοῖαι / μαρμαρυγαί αἴρησιν ὅτε ῥήσσοιτο σίδηρος, / ἠέρ' ἀναθρῶσκουσι (βοᾶ δ' εὐήλατος ἄκμων), / ἠ Αἴτην ψολόεσαν, ἐναύλιον Ἀστερόποιο (fr. 51,8-11). The image of sparks flying through the air is, however, borrowed from Homer's description of Athena's descent from Olympus: οἶον δ' ἀστέρ' ἔηκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω ...

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26 (1976) p.148

λαμπρόν, τοῦ δέ τε πολλοὶ ἀπὸ σπινθῆρες ἰενται (Δ75-7).<sup>27</sup> Oiaerus is as effective in clearing the field with his arrows as he had been previously with spear and sword: χῶρος ἐγυμνώθη, κεραῆς Ἰνδαλμα Σελήνης, / ἀμφιφαῆς ὅτε βαιὸν ἀποστίλβουσα κεραίης / ἄκρα διαπλήσασα δῶυ νεοφεγγέος αἴγλης / κεκλιμέναις ἀκτίσι μέσον κύκλοιο χαράσσει, / δίζυγι κεκριμένῳ μαλακῶ πυρί, μεσσατίης δὲ / γυμνὰ χαρασσομένης ἔτι φαίνεται κύκλα Σελήνης (22.348-53). As in the first segment the space cleared is likened to some happening in the sky, whether it be the clearing of clouds or the filling out of the moon. The line-ending κεραῆς Ἰνδαλμα Σελήνης has been imitated from Moschus' κεραῆς ἄτε κύκλα Σελήνης (2.88), a poet of whom Nonnus has made considerable use in composing his own version of the abduction of Europa. The horns of the moon was a topos which lent itself to a variety of uses. Moschus in the above instance compares the horns of Zeus masquerading as a bull to those of the new moon. In Nonnus the bull which Typhoeus hurls at the moon is described as ἰσοφυῆς μίμημα Σελήνης (1.215). Apollonius likens the curving fins of Triton's cleft tail to the moon's horns: αἶτε σκολιοῖς ἐπινειόθι κέντροις / μήνης ὡς κεράεσσιν εἰδόμεναι διχόωντο (4.1614-6).

The aristeia of Erechtheus (22.293-319) is confined to a single incident, which takes the form of a confrontation between horseman and infantryman, with Erechtheus on horseback engaging an unnamed Indian fighting on foot. Erechtheus slays his opponent, but not before meeting unexpectedly obdurate resistance. As Hopkinson points out, Nonnus was, in this instance, quite likely to have been influenced by iconography, in which the horseman-infantryman confrontation appears to have been a popular theme.<sup>28</sup> We note that Nonnus returns to the theme a second time at 36.221-36, where both adversaries are anonymous and the outcome is the opposite, with the infantryman emerging as the winner. The theme derives ultimately from the *Iliad*, where confrontations between one warrior on foot and the other in a chariot accompanied by his charioteer are of common

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<sup>27</sup> Nonnus uses the image of sparks issuing from the eyes at 18.261-2 (Campe), 29.195-6 (the Cabeirs), and *Par.* 5.135 (John the Baptist). For sparks flying from Eurymedon's shield, cf. 29.210.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Hopkinson (1994a) p.90 n.3.

occurrence, as for instance, Diomedes' encounter with Phegeus and Idaius: τὼ μὲν ἀφ' ἵπποιν, ὁ δ' ἀπὸ χθονὸς ὠρνυτο πεζός (E13). The Indian possesses a shield like that of Ajax: Ἰνδικὸν ἑπταβόειον ἔχων σάκος, εἰκόνα πύργου (22.305), recalling: Αἶας δ' ἐγγύθεν ἦλθε φέρων σάκος ἤυτε πύργον / χάλκεον ἑπταβόειον (H219-20). Transfixed by Erechtheus' spear, he is likened to a tumbler as he falls headlong to the ground: ὁ δὲ στροφάδεσσιν ἐρωαῖς / ἠερόθεν προκάρηνος ἐπωλίσθησε κοίη / κράτα κυβιστητῆρα φέρων βητάρμονι παλμῶ (22.315-7). Nonnus has imitated Homer's description of the death of Mydon: ὁ γ' ἀσθμαίνων εὐεργέος ἐκπεσε δίφρου / κύμβαχος ἐν κοίησιν (E585-6), but the imitation is not altogether appropriate to the present context, seeing that the Indian is not falling from a horse or chariot, having fought from the ground. We note that Nonnus imitates the same Homeric passage again at 28.216-20 to describe Deriades' fall from his chariot on being struck by a rock thrown by Halimedes.

The aristeia of Aiacus is remarkable in that its latter half is almost entirely patterned on Achilles' μάχη παραποτάμιος in *Iliad* 21. Aiacus is not only endowed with the the same pre-eminently heroic virtues as Achilles, which is understandable seeing that such qualities were considered hereditary, but partakes as well of his grandson's inexorable μῆνις. Aiacus' anger is difficult for the reader to comprehend in the absence of any indication on the poet's part as to what might have given rise to it. Achilles' fury was the direct result of the slaying of Patroclus, prior to which he entertained no special hatred of the Trojans (cf. A152-3, Φ100-2). Aiacus has no score to settle with the Indians, but in spite of this, his fury is described as exceeding that of Achilles: οὐχ ἓνα μῦνον ἐπεφνε Λυκάονα ... καὶ πολὺν Ἀστεροπαῖον ἐδέξατο νεκρὸν Ὑδάσπης (22.380-3). It may be noted, by way of comparison, that Statius, in his version of the μάχη παραποτάμιος, has Hippomedon display similar fury on the banks of the Ismenus, but, like Achilles, he has good cause to vent his hatred on the Thebans, who have just slain Tydeus (*Theb.* 9.299). The feats of Aiacus are described by the poet as presaging those of Achilles: οἶα προθεσπίζων ποταμοῦ παρὰ χεῦμα Καμάνδρου / φύλοπιν ἡμιτέλεστον ἐπεσομένην Ἀχιλῆι· / καὶ μόθον

ύϊωνοίο μόθος μαντεύσατο πάππου (22.387-9). Achilles' achievement is described as incomplete, the poet obviously thinking of the ruse whereby Apollo, in the shape of Agenor, distracts him at the end of *Iliad* 21, enabling many of the Trojans to reach the safety of their walls. In the *Dionysiaca*, on the other hand, all the enemy contingent on the near side of the river are slain, Thureus alone being spared, so that he could convey the news to Deriades (23.116).

The aristeia begins with Aiacus pictured in a precarious situation, surrounded on all sides by the enemy. His armour is not adequate to guarantee his safety and he is indeed only saved by the intervention of Athena, who shelters him with her father's unbreakable clouds, clouds that had formerly slaked the thirst of his parched fields. Throughout the aristeia Aiacus' present deeds are juxtaposed by way of antithesis with those he had previously effected in Aegina. Clouds are normally assembled by gods to render their proteges invisible (cf. η14-7, ν189-90 and Apollonius 3.210-2), but here it seems as if Athena is according Aiacus the protection of her aegis. Divine intervention of a direct physical kind is not common in the *Dionysiaca*. Beside the present case there are six instances in books 28 to 30 and one in book 40.<sup>29</sup> In the *Iliad*, on the other hand, there are some forty instances such intervention. Commenting on the negative perception that the modern reader would have of divinely assisted victories, James, in his study on divine intervention in the *Iliad*, has emphasised the difference between Homeric and modern value judgments in this respect. Referring to the two divinely assisted slayings of Patroclus and Hector, he observes that "we naturally see this as detracting from the achievement first of Hector and then of Achilles. The poet's intention, on the other hand, seems to be precisely the opposite, to underline the significance of those achievements with the seal of divine support".<sup>30</sup> The divine assistance rendered to Aiacus is thus to be understood as enhancing rather than

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<sup>29</sup> Viz. 28.212-3 Hydraspes on behalf of Deriades, 29.76 / Zeus o.b.o. Dionysus, 29.82/ Aphrodite o.b.o. Hymenaios, 30.76ff./ Hephaistos o.b.o. Alcon and Cabeiros, 30.87/ Hydraspes o.b.o. Morrheus, 30.320ff. / Hera o.b.o. Melanios, and 40.70ff. Athena o.b.o. Dionysus.

<sup>30</sup> (1993) p.10. Libanius in his syncretism of Achilles and Ajax seems inclined to the modern value judgment, when he rates Ajax' victory over Hector above Achilles' on the grounds that Ajax had to do without divine help, which in his case was accorded to his opponent Hector: ὁ δ' αὐτὸς οὗτος μνησθένος τῆς Ἑκτορος τελευτῆς τὴν Ἀθηναίαν ἔδωκεν Ἀχιλλεῖ σύμμαχον. οὐκοῦν Αἴας μὲν ἐκράτησαν Ἑκτορος θεοῦ παρόντος Ἑκτορι, τοῦ δ' αὐτοῦ πάλιν Ἀχιλλεὺς θεοῦ βλάπτοντος Ἑκτορα (Foerster v.8, p.342).

diminishing his stature, and indeed, as a confirmation of his greatness as warrior. Protected by Athena's cloud, he proceeds to slay the Indians all and sundry, with spear, sword or rocks, using whatever best serves his purpose in any instance: καὶ μέσος ἀντιβίων κυκλούμενος ἔνθεος ἀνὴρ / τοὺς μὲν ἀπηλοίησε θοῶν δορί, τοὺς δὲ μαχαίρῃ, τοὺς δὲ λίθοις κραναοῖσι· πέδον δ' ἐρυθθαίνετο λύθρῳ / Ἴνδῶν κτεινομένων (22.263-6). Aiacus' exploits bear a resemblance to those of a warrior in the *Blemyomachy*, who wreaks similar havoc among the Blemyes: ἔρρεε δ' ἡχὴ / τῶν μὲν ἀπολλυμένων, τῶν δ' αὖ φεύγοντας ὀπίσσω / θειόντων ξίφεσιν τε καὶ ἔγχεσιν. ἔκτυπε δ' αἰθήρ / καὶ χθῶν ἔβραχε πᾶσα, πέδον δ' ἐρυθθαίνετο λύθρῳ / πολλῶν νωλεμέως κταμένων πληγῆσι σιδήρου / αἰεὶ δ' ἀντιάχῃσ' ὕμνου τερπνὸν μέλος ἡχώ (frag.4.10-5). Wifstrand's supposition<sup>31</sup> that the *Blemyomachy* was too insignificant a poem to have warranted Nonnus' attention is hard to sustain in view of the obvious correspondences between this portion of Aiacus' aristeia and the the above quoted lines. Beside the phrase πέδον δ' ἐρυθθαίνετο λύθρῳ, common to both poems, we should also note the μέλος ἡχώ, which is used by Nonnus in two line endings in the general battle description preceding Aiacus' aristeia: μέλος πολεμήμιον Ἠχώ (22.231) and ἐγερσιμόθου μέλος ἡχοῦς (22.248). We might also note that the second segment of Aiacus' aristeia begins with the words οὐδὲ μάχης ἀπέληγε (22.354), which echo Homer's ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὡς ἀπέληγε μάχης (Λ255), words which are also imitated in the *Blemyomachy* (frag. 5, 1). These coincidences and the fact that Nonnus earlier devotes twelve lines to the story of Blemys (17.385-97), whom he calls Βλεμίεσσι προώνυμον ἡγεμονῆα (397), suggest that he was familiar with the *Blemyomachy*. It is indeed tempting to ask whether Nonnus did not derive his woolly-haired black image of the Indians from that of the Abyssinian Blemyes. Even if the poem and the campaign were, as Wifstrand believes, of local interest only, they were surely pertinent to Nonnus as a native of Panopolis, a city on the Abyssinian frontier.

The Earth, out of pity for her Indian sons, chides Aiacus, addressing him as ζεῖδωρε μαιφόνε (22.276). The attributes are mutually contradictory, the first

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<sup>31</sup> (1933) p.185

indicative of Aiacus' previous role as life-giver, the second, which is an epithet traditionally reserved for Ares, corresponding to his present role as slayer. Nonnus is rather fond of using oxymoron for effect (cf. for example, *υἷὲ πάτερ* 30.167 and *σιγῆ ... βοόων* 36.380-1). The appeal falls on deaf ears, as Zeus spurs Aiacus to even greater bloodshed (22.285-6). Aiacus is subsequently wounded by an Indian's arrow, but his wound, owing to Athena's intervention (the second time in the course of this *aristeia*) turns out to be merely superficial: *καὶ τις ἐν ἀντιβίοισιν ἐς Αἰακὸν ὄμμα τανύσσας / πέμπε βέλος, καὶ βαιόν, ὅσον χροῶς ἄκρον ἀμύξαι, / μηρὸν ἐπιγράψαντα παρέτραπεν ἰδὼν Ἀθήνη* (22.287-9). The incident is inspired by the wounding of Menelaus by Pandarus in the *Iliad* (Δ112-40). In both cases Athena deflects the arrow with the result that the intended victim receives a mere scratch, cf. *βέλος ἤπτετο μηροῦ / λεπτὸς ὄνυξ ἄτε φωτός, ὅτε χροῶς ἄκρα χαράξῃ* ( 22.291-2) and *ἀκρότατον δ' ἄρ' οἰστὸς ἐπέγραψε χροῶ φωτός* (Δ139). Nonnus imitates Homer's passage for a second time and at greater length at 29.68ff. (wounding of Hymenaius), where the Iliadic parallels are spelt out even more explicitly.

The second part of Aiacus' *aristeia* corresponds closely to Achilles' slaughter of the Trojans in *Iliad* 21. Aiacus drives the Indians from the plain in the direction of the river: *καὶ ἐκ πεδίοιο διώκων / εἰς προχοῶς ποταμοῖο μετήγαγε λαὸν ἀλήτην* (22.356-7), corresponding to *τοὺς μὲν πεδίουδ' ἐδίωκε / πρὸς πόλιν ... ἡμίσεες δὲ ἐς ποταμὸν εἰλεῦντο βαθύρροον ἀργυροδίην* (Φ3-8). Nonnus cannot of course follow Homer to the letter and split the fleeing Indians into two groups, seeing that here the river and city do not constitute alternative destinations, being both in the same direction in relation to the action, the river needing to be crossed before the city is reached. Geographical considerations aside, Nonnus is bent on duplicating the situation in *Iliad* 21, a further echo of the same occurring at 29.295-7: *ἀσταθῆες δὲ / ξανθὸν ἀλυσκάζοντες ἐπὶ ῥόον ὠκλασαν Ἴνδοί / ἄλλοι δ' ἐν πεδίῳ*, where the geography is closer to that in the *Iliad*, as the fighting takes place between the river and the city. As at the beginning of the first segment of his *aristeia*, Aiacus is encircled by the enemy (22.358), but unlike then, when he needed Athena's intervention to save him, he is now in-

vincible. The Indians strike him with everything at their disposal, but to no avail, as he slays them all. The imagery of harvesting is used again, Aiacus described as mowing down the Indians: ἐπασσυτέρησι δὲ ῥιπαῖς / κυανέης ἤμησε σιδήρεα λήια χάρμης / κραιπνὸς ἀνὴρ καὶ πᾶσιν ἐμάρνατο, τοὺς μὲν ἐπ' ὄχθαις, / τοὺς δὲ κάτω ποταμοῖο μαχήμονι χειρὶ δαΐζων (22.360-3). Homer is rather more fastidious in descriptions of this kind, stating that Achilles left his spear on the bank, as he proceeded to slay the Trojans in the water φάσγανον οἶον ἔχων (Φ19), the spear being clearly deemed unsuitable for fighting at close quarters in the water. Nonnus, on the other hand, pays scant regard to technicalities of this sort. The river is filled with the slain and reddened by their blood: καὶ νεκύων ἐπλησεν ὄλον ῥόον· ὄλλυμένων δέ <sup>μορμύρων</sup> αἵματι ἐρυθθαίνετο λευκὸς Ὑδάσπης (22.364-5), reflecting ἐρυθθαίνετο δ' αἵματι ὕδωρ (Φ21), πλήθει γὰρ δὴ μοι νεκύων ἐρατεινὰ ῥέεθρα (Φ218) and μορμύρων ἀφρῶ τε καὶ αἵματι καὶ νεκύεσσιν (Φ325). Aiacus ἀντιβίοισιν ἀκαμπέα μῆνιν ἀέξων, (22.378) is as inexorable as Achilles and will not accept surrender, rejecting mercilessly the entreaties of those attempting to do so. The book ends with one of the sea-nymphs appealing to Aiacus, as kinsman of the river and the Naiads (in that he is a son of Zeus, nourisher of rivers, and of Aigina, daughter of a river) to cease defiling the Hydaspes with blood. The emphasis on kinship recurs in Hydaspes' entreaty to Dionysus in book 24 (cf. 22.392-3 and 24.10). Nonnus is rather fond of giving expression to complaints by nymphs and hamadryads (cf. 2.92ff. and 37.20-1). The present appeal is paralleled later in the poem by Psamathe's plea to Zeus to prevent Poseidon's defeat by Dionysus (43.361-71). The nymph's entreaty, like that previously made by the Earth, goes unanswered as Aiacus (soon to be joined by Dionysus) continues the slaughter unabated. Many of the Indians take to the water, but their inability to swim precludes their escape: καὶ πολλὸς ... ἤθελε πότμον ἀλύξαι / χερσὶν ἀπειρήτοις ποταμήια χεύματα τέμνων· / ἀλλὰ ῥῶω κεκάλυπτο (23.7-9). The notion of the orientals' inability to swim is clearly borrowed from Herodotus (cf. 8.89) and recurs in the naumachy, where the Indians are described as χεῖρας ἐρετμώσαντες ἀήθεας (39.366). Dionysus' participation in the slaughter (23.11ff.) appears to conflict somewhat with his role

as redeemer and consoler of mankind. It is difficult to see why he should be so merciless here, when in the earlier battle at lake Astacid, where he, in conformity with this role, ἀντιβίους δ' ὤκτειρε ... φιλοπαίγμωνι θυμῷ (14.411). Now Thureus alone is spared and only in order that he could inform Deriades of the extent of Dionysus' victory (23.116). A further reminiscence from Homer's μάχη παραποτάμιος follows. An Indian wielding a spear in each hand takes aim simultaneously at Aiacus and Dionysus: ὦν ὁ μὲν αὐτῶν / ὄρθιος ἰλυόεντι πόδας σφηκώσατο πηλῷ ... καὶ Βρομίῳ πολέμιξεν ἐν ὕδασι μᾶλλον ἀρούρης, / ἀμφοτέραις παλάμαϊς διδυμάονα δούρατα πάλλων / καὶ τὸ μὲν αἰχμάζεσκεν ἐς ἦονας ὑπόσε πέμπων / Αἰακὸν ἀντικέλευθον ἔχων σκοπόν, ἄλλο δὲ σείσας / ἔγχος ἀνουτήτιοιο κατηκόντιζε Λυαίου (23.28-36). We are not told of the outcome of this ambidextrous effort, but may assume it ended the same way as Asteropaius' confrontation with Achilles. Asteropaius too, it will be recalled, fought from the river: τῷ ῥ' Ἀχιλεὺς ἐπόρουσεν, ὁ δ' ἀντίος ἐκ ποταμοῖο / ἔστη ἔχων δύο δούρε (Φ144-5), and threw two spears at once (missing with both): ὁ δ' ἀμαρτῆι δούρασιν ἀμφίς / ... ἐπεὶ περιδέξιός ἦεν (Φ162-3). Another Indian, distraught at the slaughter of his countrymen, commits suicide, μιμούμενος Ἴνδον Ὀρόντην (23.59) and shows himself to be another (albeit sane) Ajax or Menoiceus. Nonnus intimates that committing suicide in the manner of Orontes is a barbarian characteristic (cf. 23.60: βάρβαρον αἶμα φέρων καὶ βάρβαρον ἦθος ἀέξων), a notion that may have been inspired by the suicide of Boges, Persian governor of Eion, who preferred this course of action to returning to Asia, when the city was about to fall to the Athenians (Herod. 7.107). The comparisons with Ajax and Menoiceus suggested by the poet are not entirely apposite owing to the difference of circumstances, Ajax being mad and Menoiceus needing to immolate himself in order to save Thebes. The Indian, like Orontes, takes his own life from a sense of shame at being worsted through the θήλει' θύρσῳ (23.68) of an unworthy foe. A third Indian now addresses the Hydaspes, upbraiding the river for its passivity in the face of the enemy and even accusing it of complicity in the deaths of the Indians, who are drowning in its waters. The speech (as often in Nonnus) assumes the form of a

rhetorical syncrisis, in which the Hydaspes is compared unfavourably to a number of other rivers. Events and customs associated with each of the latter are delineated, as for instance the role of the Rhine in determining the legitimacy of offspring, a theme presented at greater length in Dionysus' speech to Pentheus (46.54-62). The Indian ends with an outright accusation: σείο ρόος Βρομίλιο κακώτερος, ὅττι με θύρσοις / οὐ κλονέει Διόνυσος, ὅσον κλονέεις με ρεέθροις (23.102-3). The *Iliad* provides no pretext for such recriminations, as the Scamander is presented actively abetting the Trojan cause, firstly setting Asteropaius on Achilles out of pity for those the latter had slain (Φ145-7), and when that fails rebuking Achilles directly (Φ211ff.). Hippomedon's μάχη παραποτάμιος in Statius' *Thebaid* does, however, accord a parallel, when the Ismenus is chided by its daughter Ismenis for having allowed the slaying of Creneus in its waters (9.376-98). The Ismenus, like the Hydaspes in Nonnus, is accused of passivity and of helping the enemy: 'tu piger, et trucibus facilis servire Pelasgis' (9.396). The Ismenus in its turn, chides Zeus for permitting the slaughter to take place in its waters, reminding him of the services it had rendered him in the past, and adducing the names of a number of rivers, including the Hydaspes, which though less deserving, had been spared such profanation. Bearing in mind the rhetorical influences which operated on both poets, the similarities of treatment are to be expected.

The carnage in the water, as depicted in Nonnus, exhibits further parallels with Statius. Both supply a detailed list of the weapons to be seen floating on the water, whereas Homer is content with a general statement (Φ301-2). Both Nonnus and Statius display a lack of concern for verisimilitude, depicting the weapons and bodies as floating on the water, while the river is yet placid. Homer, with greater realism, speaks of them of as being churned up when the Scamander attacks Achilles. The following parallels between Nonnus' and Statius' descriptions merit quoting: ἡμιφανῆς πλωτῆρι λόφῳ πορθμεύετο πήληξ / δυομένη κατὰ βαιόν (23.107-8) / galeasque vetant descendere cristae (9.262), ἐφελκόμεναι δὲ ρεέθροις ... νηχομένους τελαμῶνας ἐναυτίλλοντο βοεῖαι (23.108-10) / clypeosque leves ... / unda vehit (9.261-2), and βαρυνόμενον δὲ σιδήρῳ / εἰς βυθὸν ὑγροχίτωνα κατέσπασεν ἀνέρα θώρηξ (23.111-2) / madidus deducit

pectora thorax (9.241). Nonnus will reuse these details in the naumachy in book 39.

With the Indian detachment wiped out, Dionysus' cohorts can cross the river unimpeded. The narrative now resumes the distinctly magical character associated with scenes of Bacchic revelry. Dionysus drives his chariot, drawn by a team of panthers, unwetted across the stream. Pan simply runs across, skimming the surface: αἰγείοις δὲ πόδεσσι διέτρεχε Παρράσιος Πάν / ἄκρα γαληναίοιο διαστείχων ποταμοῖο (23.151-2), a description that may have been inspired by Apollonius' description of Euphemus, who possessed the same ability: ἄκροισι / ἔχνεσι τεγγόμενος διερῆ πεφόρητο κελεύθῳ (1.183-4). Lycus and Scelmis, like Dionysus, drive their chariots across with unwetted wheels, feats which a little later elicit from Hydaspes the complaint: ὅτι στρατὸς ὑγρὸς ὀδίτης / ἄρμασι χερσαίοισι βατὸν ποίησεν Ὑδάσπην (23.172-3). We may note that Nonnus reuses the above passages in describing Christ's walk on water in the *Paraphrase*: Χριστὸν ἐθήσαντο διαστείχοντα θαλάσσης / ἄβροχον ἔχνος ἔχοντα, βατῆς ἀλὸς ὄξυν ὀδίτην (6.75-6). Another of Dionysus' followers rides across on the back of a bull: ἄλλος ὑπὲρ νώτοιο θορῶν ... / εἰς πλόον ἠμιόχευε καλαύροπι ταῦρον ὀδίτην (23.157-8), recalling Europa's journey earlier in the poem, where Eros Κυπριδίη ποίμαινε καλαύροπι νυμφίον Ἑρῆς (1.82). Nonnus is, as we have noted, often inclined to reuse his own imagery and expressions in both the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrase* when depicting analogous situations. Unlike Homer, however, he studiously avoids precise repetition, invariably effecting some change (albeit at times quite minor) in the such cases.

The merely human followers of Dionysus have of necessity to improvise more mundane ways of making the crossing. Some commandeer Indian rafts and boats, others build their own craft: ὦν ὁ μὲν Ἰνδῶν σχεδίην πολύδεσμον ἐρέσσω/ ... ὁ δέ ... ἐνδάπιον σκάφος εἶχε λινορραφέων ἀλιήων / ἀρπάξας ἕτερος δὲ νόθῳ ναυτίλλετο θεσμῷ / καὶ ξύλον αὐτόπρεμνον ὁμοίον ὀλκάδι τεύχων, / ἔκτοθι πηδαλίου, δίχα λαίφeos, ἐκτὸς ἐρετμῶν ... εἰς βυθίους κενεῶνας ὑποβρύχιον <sup>ἔργον</sup> πέμπων, / Ἄρεος ὑγροπόροιο δορυσσοῦς ἔπλεε ναύτης (23.129-38). Nonnus has an obvious fascination with the raft-building

scene in the *Odyssey* (ε 247-55), which he imitates in more detail at 36.403-11 and 40.446-54. He has, at the same time, made use of the Alexander historians. Thus when he describes the foot-soldiers crossing on inflated wine-skins (23.128-38), he could well be thinking of the skin-rafts employed by Alexander's troops in traversing the Hydaspes (Arrian, *Anab.* 5.12.3). Another crosses using his shield for a boat: καὶ πλωτῆς ἀδίαντος ἐπ' ἀσπίδος οἶδματα τέμνων / ... σακέσπαλον εἶχε πορείην, / ξείνην ναυτιλίην ψευδήμοι νηὶ χαράσσων (23.139-41). This idea is not as outlandish as it might seem, since Arrian reports an actual instance where the Milesian mercenaries of Darius employed such a means of crossing: ἐπὶ τῶν ἀσπίδων ὑπτίων διενήχοντο (*Anab.* 1.19.4).

The narrative at this stage leaves a distinct impression that the crossing has now been accomplished, that Dionysus and his followers have negotiated a placid stream without incident. This turns out, however, not to be the case, for the poet now informs us that the Hydaspes, offended by the way in which Dionysus and his followers are treating it, addresses an unnamed fellow river, to voice its resentment: σοὶ καὶ ἐμοὶ πέλεν αἴσχος, ὅτε Βρομίωιο μαχηταὶ / ἀβρέκτοις ἐμὸν οἶδμα διασχίζουσι πεδίλοις (23.168-9). In Homer, owing to different circumstances (the river not being trampled upon), the question of shame does not arise at all. If anything, it is Achilles who feels shame at the prospect of dying an unheroic death by drowning like some swineherd (Φ279-82). The Hydaspes forthwith assails Dionysus and his followers, who, it appears, have been caught midstream. It is remarkable that Hydaspes later gives Dionysus somewhat different reasons for its behaviour, stating that it had acted out of loyalty to Deriades and was moved by the plight of the Indians dying in its waters: Δηριάδη γὰρ / υἱεὶ πιστὰ φέρων ῥοθίων ἐλέλιζον ἀπειλήν, / Ἴνδοῖς κτεινομένοισι βοηθῶν οἶδμα κυλίνδων (24.15-17) and feared that its bloodied stream would give offence to the sea and Poseidon (cf. 24.18-20). The latter reason conforms more or less to Scamander's complaint to Achilles, that it cannot pour its stream, choked with the bodies of the slain, into the sea (Φ219-20).

Homer's μάχη παραποτάμιος consists of two segments: first we have Achilles' desperate struggle with the Scamander, which is then followed by the

scorching of the river by Hephaistus at Hera's behest. Statius and Nonnus have imitated different halves of Homer's account, Statius duplicating the struggle and dispensing with the scorching, Nonnus concentrating on the scorching and all but omitting the struggle. Statius' Hippomedon thus corresponds to Achilles, while Nonnus' Dionysus parallels Hephaistus. The element of suspense associated with the hero's desperate fight for survival against a river bent on drowning him is thus completely absent from Nonnus' account. At no time is Dionysus imperilled by the river's attack but goes on the offensive immediately upon seeing that the latter has ignored his speech, and proceeds to burn it up with his *νάρθηξ*. The Hydaspes, unlike the Scamander, launches its attack without any prior address to Dionysus, there being no dramatic exchange of words between the two as in Homer. There are other differences as well: unlike the Scamander, who calls the Simoeis to its aid only after Hera has given Achilles the strength to withstand its initial onslaught (Φ304), the Hydaspes calls on its unnamed brother to assist it prior to launching the attack. A similar situation obtains in Statius, where the Asopus comes to Ismenus' aid before the commencement of the attack (9.449-50). The Hydaspes forthwith rushes upon Dionysus: *ἄλτο δὲ Βάκχῳ / αἰχμάζων ῥοθίοισιν· ἀελλή-  
εσσα δὲ πολλή / μαρναμένων ὑδάτων διερῆ μικήσατο σάλπιγξ* (23.192-4). The *μικήσατο σάλπιγξ* may have been inspired by *μεμυκῶς ἤυτε ταῦρος* (Φ237), used of the Scamander, and by *σάλπιγξεν μέγας οὐρανός* (Φ387-8), which occurs in the context of the theomachy, but it should be noted that the metaphoric use of *σάλπιγξ* is commonplace in Nonnus (cf., for example, 2.635 and 43.288-9).<sup>32</sup> The effect of the river's attack on Dionysus' followers is described in farcical terms: drunken Maron is merely parted from his wine-flask<sup>and</sup>, Pan from his flute (206-13), while Dionysus himself does not appear to suffer any inconvenience at all. The feeling of mortal danger that we find in Homer is conspicuously (and perhaps intentionally) absent here. Dionysus, like Orpheus in the Orphic *Argonautica*, is portrayed by Nonnus as one who is always in control of the circumstances (except when facing Hera) and immune to worldly dangers.

The river's attack is described in rather hyperbolic language: *καὶ ῥόος ἐγρεκύδοιμος ἔχων ἀντίπνοον αὖρην / ἀγχινεφῆς ἰψοῦτο, διάβροχον*

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. Gigli -Piccardi (1985) pp.138-9, for further examples.

ἡέρα ραίνων, / οἶδατι παφλάζοντι καταθρόσκων Διονύσου (23.218-20).

Hopkinson views these lines as another manifestation of Nonnus' desire to give Dionysus' engagements a cosmic dimension.<sup>33</sup> The exaggeration could, just as likely, be deemed merely a stylistic trait of the late, so-called baroque poets. Statius describes the Ismenus' attack on Hippomedon in similarly inflated language: 'avidus tollens ad sidera vultus / humentes nebulas exhaurit' (9.453-4). In another direct reference to the *Iliad* the poet tells us that Hydaspes' attack far surpassed that of the Simoeis and Scamander in ferocity (23.221-4). At this point the reader, anticipating a tremendous conflict, if not exactly as in the *Iliad*, then something on the lines of the Zeus-Typhoeus battle earlier in Nonnus' own poem, will find himself cheated of his expectations. Dionysus responds to the attack firstly with a measured piece of school rhetoric, and when that fails to have the desired effect, lights up his torch and proceeds to burn up the river. The address takes the form of a disquisition on the superiority of fire to water and of Dionysus' superiority to the Hydaspes, the son of Zeus being mightier than the son of Oceanus. A similar line of reasoning is found in Dionysus' challenge to Deriades at 29.304-6, where he considers himself as much superior to the latter, as his father Zeus is superior to the latter's father Hydaspes. The fire-water opposition is a leitmotiv in the poem, and comparison of himself to his adversaries a common element in the speeches of Dionysus (and in those of his principal opponents). In speaking of the superiority of his lineage to that of the Hydaspes, Dionysus' address resembles Achilles' remarks in the same vein to Asteropaius (cf. 23.226-9 and Φ184ff.). Achilles, we may recall, tells Asteropaius that it is futile for him, son of a river though he be, to fight one descended from Zeus, adding that not even the might of Oceanus could stand up to Zeus.

With the Hydaspes taking no notice of Dionysus' speech (we note that hardly any of the speeches in the *Dionysiaca* elicit a response, verbal or otherwise, there being, in contrast to the *Iliad*, very little of dialogue in the poem), the latter brings the power of his *νάρθηξ* to bear. Dionysus uses the sun's heat to light it up, then places it in the stream making it boil. Nonnus, though generally indifferent to verisimilitude, does appear to have a penchant for advancing scientific explan-

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<sup>33</sup> (1994a) pp. 120-1, 257.

ations, an interest that he may have derived from didactic poetry (cf., for example, 2.482-507, 25.178-9, 518-9 and 37.56-69). The present passage evinces the same tendency. At the same time echoes from the *Iliad* abound (cf. 23.259 and Φ349, 23.260 and Φ356, 361, 23.262-3 and Φ351, 23.267-8 and Φ353, 23.269 and Φ365). Nonnus makes no attempt to duplicate Homer's simile of the boiling cauldron, but adds a comment of his own about the river-nymphs, who are forced to leave their boiling abode (23.274ff.). The poet has referred to the discomfiture of the nymphs on two preceding occasions, firstly at the end of book 22, when one of them decides to leave the river as it was becoming polluted with blood (22.392-402), and then through the mouth of Hydaspes, who describes their anguish as they hear the sound of horses' hooves overhead (24.24-30). The theme of the displacement of deities from their habitat is a recurrent one in Nonnus, the hamadryads suffering a similar fate at the hands of Typhoeus (2.92ff.) and as a result of the inroads of the woodcutters (37.20-1). Nonnus is fascinated by the thought of the established cosmic order being turned on its head, a notion first set out in Typhoeus' speech at 2.258ff. and subsequently repeated in various guises throughout the poem.

Oceanus, dismayed at the treatment meted out to the Hydaspes, delivers a long menacing speech, similar in tone and intent to the speech of Typhoeus to which we have just referred. Oceanus' manner of speaking is conveyed through effective use of metaphor: Ὠκεανὸς δ' ἰάχησεν ἀπειλείων Διονύσω, / ὕδατόεν μύκημα χέων πολυπίδακι λαιμῶ, / καὶ ῥόον ἀενάων στομάτων κρουνηδὸν ἰάλλων / ἦμόνας κόσμοιο κατέκλυσε χεύμασι μύθων (23.280-3). The notion of 'flowing' had for long been used to describe the voice (cf. the mellifluous speech of Nestor, A249). Here Nonnus uses it simultaneously in its primary (flow of water) and secondary (flow of speech) sense, seeing that the speaker is a body of water. The expression is used again of Oceanus at 43.287-8: καὶ ἀενάων ἀπὸ λαιμῶν / ὕδατόεν μύκημα κεχηνότος Ὠκεανοῖο, and is partially echoed at 36.138-9 (used of Deriades): ἀπειλῆν / βάρβαρον ἔσμαράγησε βαρυφθόγγων ἀπὸ λαιμῶν. As mentioned previously, reuse of expressions and ideas, always in slightly altered form, is a regular feature of the poet's compositional technique. Oceanus, like Typhoeus earlier, threatens a cosmic cataclysm, to swamp the

constellations with its waves (cf., for instance, 23.294-5 and 2.279-80). Oceanus' threats, like those of Typhoeus, are directed at Zeus himself rather than at Dionysus, elevating what was up to now a local conflict onto a universal plane. Book 23 ends with Oceanus' speech, Zeus' response being described at the beginning of book 24. Zeus accedes to the demand, signalling to Dionysus with thunderclaps to desist (24.1-2), an action in which he is joined by Hera (24.5-6). We note that in Nonnus Zeus shows himself rather compliant in face of threats or pleas: he backs down over Beroe at being threatened by Poseidon (41.247-9), he answers Psamathe's plea to stop Dionysus, when the latter is about to defeat Poseidon in their war over the maiden (43.378-80, where Zeus again signals his intent with thunderclaps).

The Hydaspes now supplicates Dionysus in a way reminiscent of the Scamander's pleas to Hephaistus and Hera. In Nonnus' context Hydaspes' pleas are gratuitous, seeing that Zeus has just stopped Dionysus (24.3-4), but our poet is oblivious of such points of logic. Hydaspes, as we have already mentioned, adduces his paternal loyalty to Deriades and pity for the Indians, as well as the fear of defiling the sea and offending Poseidon, as reasons for his attack. This is followed by the argument that Dionysus, by burning the reeds on its banks, is depriving his followers of the source of panpipes. Dionysus is also reminded by Hydaspes that it was in its waters that the baby Zagreus had been washed (24.43-6). We note that in Statius the Asopus reminds Dionysus of the same service it had provided him as an infant (9.439-41).

Dionysus forthwith withdraws his torch (24.62), and the crossing can commence anew. The first attempt to cross was presumably aborted with the river's attack and subsequent scorching, but we are not told so. Indeed, lines 24.109-11 seem to continue quite naturally from 23.161, at which point the Hydaspes decided to launch its attack. It is highly probable accordingly, that the whole episode of the river's attack was intercalated into a previous version of events, where (as Keydell and Collart suggest), the river had been converted to wine and the crossing was unimpeded. This previous version need not have necessarily been contained in a draft composed by the poet himself but may have come from one of Nonnus' now lost sources, perhaps even from Dionysius' *Bassarica*.<sup>34</sup> Nonnus shows overall a

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Collart (1930) pp. 49ff., Keydell (1936) col. 908.

remarkable indifference towards coordinating his sources so as to create a logically consistent narrative. The μάχη παραποτάμιος, which with its merciless slaughter ill befits Dionysus' role as redeemer of mankind, appears to be one of a series of adaptations from the *Iliad*, whereby the poet strove to give a distinctly Homeric colouring to a purely magical account of the crossing derived from Dionysius' *Bassarica* or from some other now lost poem. The second markedly "Homeric" duel between Dionysus and Deriades in book 40, which the poet has appended to a decidedly magical first encounter, is another example of his intercalation of Iliadic parallels into the narrative.

Deriades readies his forces for combat as Dionysus' followers approach the shore (24.68-72), the situation recalling Porus' moves at Alexander's approach (Arrian, *Anab.* 5.14.3). Deriades cannot conceal his preparations from Zeus' ὄμμα πανόψιον, and his plan is circumvented by the gods, who convey Dionysus and his cohorts safely behind the Indian lines (24.73ff.). Each god sees to the needs of his particular protégé. The idea derives ultimately from the *Iliad*, where Aphrodite whisks Paris, Apollo Hector and Agenor away from the battle (Γ380-2, Υ443-4 and Φ596-8 resp.). Thus Zeus in the form of an eagle carries Aiacus across in his talons, that is, in a way normally associated with the rape of Ganymede; Apollo transports Aristaius in his chariot, Hermes carries his son Pan, and Urania Hymenaius because he is her son's namesake. Calliope carries Oiagrus on her shoulders: Καλλιόπη δ' Οἶαγρον ἑοῖς ἀνεκούφισεν ὤμοις (24.92), recalling Jason's carrying of Hera across the Anaurus in Apollonius: καί μ' ἀναείρας / αὐτὸς ἑοῖς ὤμοισι διέκ προαλῆς φέρειν ὕδωρ (3.72-3). The Cabeirs are conveyed by their father Hephaistus, Erechtheus by Athena, the hamadryads by Apollo and Leto, and the Bassarids by the daughters of Cydnus. The poet somewhat puzzlingly adds that the latter had been schooled in warfare by Typhoeus (24.107-8), there being no previous mention in the poem of any naiads having been allied with the monster. The rest of the troop are led across by Dionysus riding in his chariot with unwetted wheels.

The followers of Dionysus mark their arrival by engaging in their usual revelries. Thureus, reporting to his king, informs him of the disaster and cautions him against making a nocturnal assault on Dionysus' camp, suggesting instead that

he consult the Brahmins regarding the true nature of Dionysus. Thureus' cautious advice resembles that of Polydamas in the *Iliad* (Σ254-83), but Deriades, unlike Hector, does heed it, even if grudgingly, and withdraws to the safety of his battlements. In contradistinction to the festivities in Dionysus' camp, the Indian city is given to mourning their slain kin. The same contrast is found in book 40, when Dionysus' troops celebrate their final victory and the Indians mourn the death of their king. The scenes of mourning depicted in the present book indeed foreshadow the more extensive treatment in book 40. In both instances the scenes are depicted with a compassion and pathos unusual for the *Dionysiaca* (of which the lament of Eerie for her father Tectaphus in book 30 is perhaps the only other genuine example), manifesting the strong influence of the mourning scenes in *Iliad* 22 and 24. Nonnus gives a rather moving account of a woman soon to give birth, who learns of her husband's death. The scene is a variant of those based on the death of Protesilaus in the *Iliad* (B697-702) such as Ovid, *Heroides* 13. The woman asks to whom shall she point when her child is old enough to ask for its father (24.212), recalling Andromache's lament about Astynax' sorrowful fatherless future (Χ484ff.). Another mourns her bridegroom to be and the wedding denied to her: ἀλλη δ' ἔστενάχιζεν ἀνυμφεύτους ὑμεναίους / ὄλλυμένου μνηστήρος, ὃν οὐκ ἔδεν εὐγάμος ὥρη / στέμματι νυμφιδίῳ πεπυκασμένον (24.214-6), lines which have been inspired by Homer's comment on the death of Iphidamas: ὦς ὁ μὲν αὐθι πεσὼν κοιμήσατο χάλκεον ὑπνον / οἰκτρὸς, ἀπὸ μνηστής ἀλόχου ... / κουριδίης, ἧς οὐ τι χάριν ἶδε (Λ244-6). The tragic story of Cyzicus and Cleite in Apollonius (1.961ff.) may be cited as a further example of this theme.

The followers of Dionysus in the meantime are treated to ballad recitations by the singers Leucus and Lapethus. Leucus, who is referred to as αὐτοδίδακτος (24.231) in imitation of Phemius in the *Odyssey* (χ346), sings of the war between the gods and Titans, the contents being conveyed by Nonnus only in passing, as Apollonius does in the case of Orpheus' cosmogony (1.496-511). Nonnus' interest is plainly in the second ballad, recited by Lapethus, which is a delightful variation on the *moicheia* of Ares and Aphrodite sung by Demodocus in the *Odyssey*. Nonnus appears fond of the episode, proceeding to compose a further variant at the

end of book 29. In both adaptations he endeavours to turn the original story on its head in the manner of rhetorical exercises. In book 29 Ares, now the husband of Aphrodite, is informed (falsely) by Rheia of his wife's adultery with her former husband, Hephaistus, in order to lure him away from the battlefield. In the present episode Aphrodite takes up Athena's spindle, attempting to weave a tapestry, but does a botched job. As in the *Odyssey* episode, she draws on herself the ridicule of the others, this time not on account of excessive sexual zeal but for the lack of it. Nonnus is rather fond of the notion of the reversal of roles and abandonment of habitual duties. We note that later in the narrative the Bassarids taken captive by Deriades abandon Dionysus' thyrsus for Athena's loom (34.352-6), precisely the reverse of what happens in Thebes, where the womenfolk dispose of Athena's tools to take up the thyrsus (45.48-9), a theme derived from Euripides' *Bacchae* (117-9, 514, 1236-7). Lapethus' recitation is introduced by virtually the same phrase as that of Demodocus in the *Odyssey* (cf. 24.242 and 0266). Hopkinson lists further verbal echos of the Homeric passage: 24.256 / 0307, 24.292 / 0321, 24.314 / 0342, 24.321 / 0326 and perhaps 24.273 / 0275.<sup>35</sup> Two recurrent motifs of the poem are observed in the tale. Firstly, when Hermes asks Aphrodite not to weave a shield in her tapestry, saying that she has no need for such things, implying of course that her charms are a far more effective weapon. This is an allusion to the theme of the superiority of Aphrodite's weapons over those of Ares, a leitmotiv in the poem. Secondly, the idea that Aphrodite's dereliction of her normal duties is upsetting the cosmic order: ἀρχέγονος γὰρ / πλάζεται εἰσέτι κόσμος, ἔως ἔτι πέπλον ὑφαίνεις (24.319-20). Similar sentiments are conveyed by Hera in her address to Zeus, when she affects concern at the consequences of Eros' supposed dereliction of duty: καὶ ἔπλετο κόσμος ἀλήτης, / καὶ βίος ἀχρήστος ἀποιχομένων ὑμεναίων (32.54-5, cf. also 2.220-4). Nonnus is influenced by the Orphic concept of Eros as the life-force of the universe (cf. the Orphic *Argonautica*, 12-6).

We may now briefly recapitulate the observations made in the course of this chapter. The poet has, generally speaking, not assimilated the divergent sources he has used into the texture of his narrative. The source materials remain largely

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undigested and visible. Thus, when he uses the Alexander histories, his Dionysus acts like a prudent general seeing to all the contingencies, in other words, like Alexander himself. When he uses the *Iliad* the scene becomes consciously Homeric, and when he turns to Euripides' *Bacchae*, ritual frenzy and magic take the stage. His use of rhetorical set-pieces (as we shall observe more fully in the next chapter) is likewise, quite undisguised, the speeches often being little more than versified forms of the rhetorical exercises that we find in Libanius. One encounters also a palpable measure of narrative inconsistency, though not to the extent that it occurs in some of the later books. The problem of the interrupted crossing and the remarks about the Hydaspes having been turned into wine seem to be well accounted for by Keydell's and Collart's hypothesis that the whole μάχη παραποτάμιος is a later addition. The poet in intercalating it has simply not modified the original version to an extent adequate to obviate the resulting inconsistencies.

## Chapter II: book 25, a statement of the poet's objectives.

Book 25 presents the second major exordium of the *Dionysiaca* in two segments (1-30, 253-70), which are separated by a lengthy tripartite syncrisis of Dionysus with Perseus, Minos and Heracles. Whereas the first exordium (1.1-44) was concerned with the enunciation of Nonnus' poetic principles (notably the idea of ποικιλία in composition), the second elucidates his relationship specifically with Homer. Midway between the two major exordia at 13.43-52 is a shorter proem to mark the beginning of the Indian war, in which the poet asks for Homer's assistance in the task ahead. Further calls for assistance occur at 32.184, where Homer's Muses are asked (Ὅμηρίδες εἴπατε Μοῦσαι) to help him list the victims of Deriades, and at 41.10-2, where he similarly enjoins the Lebanese Muses (Λιβανηίδες εἴπατε Μοῦσαι) to help him relate the story of Beroe. The exordium at the beginning of book 25 rather abruptly breaks off the series of events that commenced with the unceremonious rejection of Dionysus' embassy in book 21 and reached a critical point with the crossing of the Hydaspes in book 24. The reader, led by the obvious parallels with Alexander's crossing the Hydaspes to expect an imminent showdown between Dionysus and Deriades, on the lines of that which took place between Alexander and Porus, is told, somewhat to his surprise, at the beginning of book 25 that the war in India has now been in progress for six years and that the poet, following Homer's lead, will undertake to sing only of the events pertaining to its seventh and final year. Half-way through book 25, though, the narrative as the poet left it at the end of book 24 is fleetingly resumed, when the festivities in Dionysus' camp and the scenes of grief in Deriades' capital are recalled (25.271-6). We are subsequently informed of Deriades' consternation at reports that the Hydaspes had been turned into wine and of the terror of his subjects in the face of strange portents, as a result of which they no longer dare venture outside their walls. The anticipated battle with Dionysus, whom Deriades had wanted to attack on the night the latter was celebrating his successful crossing of the Hydaspes, but had (on Thureus' advice) reluctantly agreed not to attack till sunrise (24.166-9), seems now to be put off indefinitely. From this point the narrative

becomes rather attenuated, with the poet conceding only scattered glimpses of what transpired in the first six years of the war in India. The repeated mentions of Dionysus' frustration at not being able to bring the campaign to a head (25.305-10, 332-3, 342-6) suggest that the intervening period was largely one of inactivity, something which the poet himself later confirms when he speaks of Dionysus' shield gathering cobwebs for six years (38.12-4).<sup>1</sup> In contrast to the preceding books, which depicted an army on the move reminiscent of Alexander's on his way to India, the situation is from now on more akin to that in the *Iliad*, with Dionysus laying siege to the enemy, who are largely confined to making sorties from behind the impregnable fortifications of a city, to which they are always able<sup>to</sup> withdraw in adverse circumstances.

Nonnus thus deems it appropriate to open this second, Iliadic, phase of the war with a new exordium in which he voices his intention to pattern his narrative on Homer's. His attitude to Homer is remarkable for the streak of irreverence with which he tempers his otherwise extreme deference towards his predecessor. While on the one hand he addresses Homer as if he were more god than human, he does not hesitate, on the other, to rate his hero and topic above Homer's. Influenced perhaps by an overly favourable perception of his own abilities as a poet, he sees himself as both Homer's successor and his rival. The syncrises of Dionysus with Perseus, Minos and Heracles are inserted to demonstrate his protagonist's superiority to these traditionally accepted exponents of ἀρετή and, by implication, to Homer's heroes. We recall that in the preceding μάχη παραποτάμιος segment the poet noted with some insistence the extent to which the challenges confronting Dionysus and Aiacus exceeded those facing Achilles.

Illustrative of his intention to imitate Homer by confining his narrative to the events of the final year of the war, Nonnus has chosen to paraphrase from the *Iliad* Odysseus' description of the sparrow and its nine chicks, devoured by a snake, which foretold the fall of Troy in the tenth year of the war (B308-17). The paraphrase is purely a literary reference and does not represent an actual event in Nonnus' story: δρακοντείοιο τεθηπότες ἄκρα γενείου / Ἰνδῶης πλατάνοιο

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<sup>1</sup> These lines do not fit the context in which they occur (cf. Collart (1930) pp.167-8), but there can be no doubt that they refer to the first six years of the war, seeing that they are followed by the antithesis: ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ πολέμων ἔτος ἑβδομον ἤγαγον ὄραι (38.15).

πάλιν κλάζουσι νεοσσοί / Βακχείου πολέμοιο προμάντιες (25.4-6), the πάλιν 'a second time' excluding it from the context of a narrative of events that took place two generations before those in the *Iliad*. The Indian war is assigned a seven-year duration to accord with the seven gates of Thebes, the birthplace of Dionysus. Mythographic sources are not agreed as to the duration, Diodorus Siculus, for instance, assigning a time-span of only three years for the conquest (3.65). Thebes and Cithaeron are personified, the one depicted grieving at the remembrance of Pentheus, the other pleading with the poet not to sing of Oedipus. The mention of Thebes, Cithaeron and Pentheus is appropriate, seeing that Nonnus will devote three later books to that topic. In association with Thebes Pindar is made the subject of a brief tribute, being besides Homer the only poet to be mentioned by name in the *Dionysiaca*: τίς πάλιν Ἀμφίων λίθον ἄπνοον εἰς δρόμον ἔλκει ; / οἶδα πόθεν κτύπος οὔτος· ἀειδομένης τάχα Θήβης / Πινδαρέης φόρμιγγος ἐπέκτυπε Δώριος ἦχώ (25.19-21), which contains a recollection of a well-known line from the first Olympian ode: ἀλλὰ Δωρίαν ἀπὸ φόρμιγγα πασσάλου λάμβανε (1.17). The modern reader may be puzzled as to why Pindar should be accorded this distinction and not Euripides, whose *Bacchae* has had a more palpable influence on the composition of the *Dionysiaca* (books 44-45 being a virtual paraphrase of the play). The answer is most likely to be found in the Theban poet's high standing among the Orphics, who ascribed to his verse the same magical power<sup>2</sup> that they did to Homer's, and in Nonnus' admiration for his 'variegated song' or ποικίλος ὕμνος (the term is Pindar's own, *Nem.* 5.41-2). It was that ποικιλία which he aspired to reproduce in his own work, as it tended in a way to symbolize Dionysus' many-faceted and changeable nature. Pindar's influence manifests itself in other ways as well: in Nonnus' rather un-epic habit of making explicit references to Homer and his work (something that Pindar does frequently in his odes) and in his use of "narrative truncation", remarkable instances of which, as Hopkinson points out, are the brief anticlimactic account of the demise of Deriades and again in the mere five lines accorded the apotheosis of Dionysus at the end of the poem.<sup>2</sup> In Pindar this type of truncated anticlimactic ending is perhaps most conspicuously apparent in the story of the Argonautic

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2 (1994b) p.27

expedition in the fourth Pythian ode.

It is, however, principally from the supernatural powers of Homer's utterance that Nonnus seeks sustenance for the task ahead. Homer is addressed, like the Muse, as an immortal ('Αχαιίδος ἀφθίτε κῆρυξ, 25.253), and his book declared to be eternal (ὁμόχρονος ἠριγενείη, 'coaeval with the dawn', 25.254). He pleads with Homer to transmit his divine inspiration to him: πνεῦσον ἐμοὶ τεὸν ἄσθμα θεόσσυτον (25.261). Such deference to Homer, if remarkable, is by no means exceptional. As Brink points out, divine status had been conferred on Homer in Hellenistic times, if not earlier, and temples dedicated to him (Homerea) had been erected in at least five locations, including Alexandria.<sup>3</sup> Brink cites several instances where divine inspiration is sought by poets directly from Homer. Antipater of Sidon (1st century B.C.) uses language similar to that of Nonnus, referring to Homer as ἠρώων κάρυκ' ἀρετᾶς and ἀγήραντον στόμα κόσμου (A.P. 7.6), and the author of a papyrus dated to the next century speaks of his ἀφθίτον αὐδήν.<sup>4</sup> Ennius' mystic vision of himself as inheritor of Homer's mantle (*Ann.* frag. 6) may be seen as a variant of the same tradition. A comparable example, where a predecessor other than Homer is so addressed, is provided by Lucretius' addresses to Epicurus, who is also called god ('deus ille fuit, deus', 5.8) and provider of intellectual sustenance (3.9-12). Nonnus' address to Homer is couched in the technical vocabulary of Orphism, which imparts to it an unmistakably religious colouring. Thus he calls on the Muse to lend him the ἔμπνοον ἔγχος ... καὶ ἀσπίδα πατρὸς Ὀμήρου (25.265), undertaking at the same time to listen attentively to the κτύπον οὐ λήγοντα σοφῆς σάλπιγγος Ὀμήρου (25.269), so that he may kill off νοερῶ δορὶ the remainder of the Indians. The use of mental attributes to qualify inanimate objects could be said to be a hallmark of Orphic writings. With the latter expression of Nonnus we may compare Proclus' νοεροῖσιν ... βελέμοις (*Hym.* 2.4) and the Chaldean Oracles' νοερῶ πυρὶ (375). Orphic terminology is employed frequently throughout the *Dionysiaca* and

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Brink (1972) p.530. In an interesting article, strangely overlooked by Vian, Brink traces the evolution of Hellenistic Homer-worship with reference, among other things, to contemporary papyrological evidence.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted by Brink op.cit. 554.

*Paraphrase.* The fact that Nonnus employs it as well in his rendering of the Christian text has led Vian to assume that the poet attached no religious significance to it, using it in a purely ornamental capacity.<sup>5</sup> Its use in passages like this, nevertheless, cannot simply be dismissed as a mere literary affectation, since Nonnus' remarks appear to manifest a genuine religious zeal. The present passage attributes the same magical powers to Homer's words that had earlier been attributed to the utterance of the Lydian priest, who, as we recall, ties down Typhoeus σοφῶ ... δεσμῶ (13.486) and overcomes him ἔμφρονι λόγῃ (13.487) merely through the act of speaking. In the *Paraphrase* Jesus' speech exhibits the same magical power when Caiaphas' retainers, coming to arrest him in the garden of Gethsemane, are bowled over λαίλαπι φωνῆς (18.6), as he inquires the purpose of their mission. The common feature in all three cases is the supernatural power of the word that certain humans, who are privileged to partake of divinity, have at their disposal. Nonnus is asking Homer to grant him that power to enable him to sing worthily of Dionysus' conquest of India.

The devotional character of Nonnus' address is, nevertheless, sullied by an almost hybristic boastfulness: he asserts that his own chosen hero and topic are superior to Homer's and chides the latter for not having taken upon himself to sing of Dionysus' conquest of India in place of the Trojan war. The assertions οὐδὲ τόσος στρατὸς ἦλθεν ἐς Ἴλιον, οὐ στόλος ἀνδρῶν / τηλικός (25.26-7) and οὐ γὰρ εἶσκω / Αἰακίδη Διόνυσον ἢ Ἐκτορι Δηριαδῆα (25.256) echo his earlier intimations about Aiacus' and Dionysus' superiority to Achilles (22.380, 383; 23.221-4). While undertaking to fashion his account after Homer's (τελέσας δὲ τύπον μιμηλὸν Ὀμήρου, 25.8), Nonnus says at the same time that he intends to go about his task νέοισι καὶ ἀρχεγόνοισιν ἐρίζων (25.27), hinting that his stance in relation to Homer - the ἀρχεγόνοισιν may be taken to include Homer - will not be one of unquestioning servility. Lucretius, in contrast, disavows any intention of competing with his model: 'non ita certandi cupidus quam propter amorem / quod te imitari aveo' (3.5-6). In a later passage Nonnus goes so far as to make an imputation of mendacity against his model, claiming that ἐφύσατο βίβλος Ὀμήρου (42.180-1) by telling πάντων μὲν κόρος ἐστί, καὶ ὕπνου

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<sup>5</sup> (1988) pp. 406-7.

καὶ φιλότητος / μολπῆς τε γλυκερῆς καὶ ἀμύμονος ὀρχηθμοῖο (N636-7), whereas in truth a philanderer knows no satiety of desire. This obviously good-humoured rebuke is, however, used for effect only, to emphasise the extent of Dionysus' passion for Beroe, and is surely not intended as a rebuke to Homer.

The three syncrises of Dionysus with Perseus, Minos and Heracles (25.31-252) are a visible example of the influence of school rhetoric on poetry. The use of rhetorical set-pieces is a common enough phenomenon in imperial epic, but while his predecessors (eg. Lucan, Statius) make some effort assimilate them to the tenor of their narrative, Nonnus does little more than convert them into his own brand of hexameters, retaining even phrases such as ἀλλά φίλοι, κρίνωμεν (25.98), which belong properly to the school-room debate, used by the speaker whenever he wished the audience to join him in adjudging a point at issue. In the present instance, Lucretius again furnishes a parallel with his tripartite syncrisis of Epicurus with Ceres, Bacchus and Hercules (5.13-54), but his comparisons are much shorter and focus on a single issue, namely the benefits that each has brought to mankind. The rhetorical exercises composed by the fourth century rhetorician Libanius to serve as models for the elucidation of his students contain a number of syncrises of Homeric characters that may profitably be compared with those of Nonnus. Such exercises obviously are not meant to arrive at impartial assessments, but are designed to test the student's ingenuity in reversing accepted notions about the individuals compared, of which the earliest extant examples are the *Helen* and *Palamedes* of Gorgias. Thus Achilles, the ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν by universal consent, is shown in the syncrises with Diomedes and Ajax, to be a lesser man than they. These conclusions are reached through use of evidence from the Homeric poems selected in such a way as to favour the speaker's contention. Nonnus goes one step further in that he not only manipulates the evidence, but quite obviously invents some of it as well. The vague, poorly detailed nature of Dionysus' exploits in fighting the giants accords an author considerable freedom to use his own imagination in depicting them, whereas the well-defined deeds of Perseus and Heracles, fixed by long-standing mythographic tradition, obviously do not. Nonnus exploits this situation by invariably inflating Dionysus' adversaries to cosmic dimensions and then compares these products of his own fantasy with the

traditional foes of Perseus and Heracles, arguing that as Dionysus needed to overcome more formidable opponents than the other two, he must be superior to them. Thus Geryon, the three-headed adversary of Heracles is compared to the giant Alpus, to whom Nonnus generously assigns a hundred heads to demonstrate his superiority to Geryon, something he appears to have forgotten when he comes to describing Dionysus' actual fight with Alpus later in the poem, where the latter seems endowed but with one head (45.205-7). As Heracles had only to deal with an opponent who had three heads compared to the hundred with which Alpus menaced Dionysus, his achievement is necessarily inferior to that of Dionysus. Not only are the monsters confronting Dionysus more formidable than those with whom Perseus and Heracles had to contend, but Dionysus, unlike the other two, who often enjoyed the benefit of outside help, invariably slew his foes single-handedly. What is more, Perseus and Heracles faced one foe at a time, but Dionysus fought a multitude. While their foes were often female, Dionysus had always to contend with males. In other words, Dionysus' tasks were on all counts more arduous than those of his rivals. On top of all this, Nonnus tries to foist Dionysus' inherently effeminate personality traits on his rivals, at the same time making him out to be the embodiment of traditional male ἀρετή. Overall, the arguments are so vacuous and the logic so flippant as to make it impossible to believe that Nonnus meant the syncrisis to be viewed in anything but a humorous light.

The syncrisis with Perseus (117 lines) is longer than those with Minos (27 lines) and Heracles (79 lines), and the prominence given to it is understandable in view of Perseus having an actual role to play later in the narrative (book 47), whereas the other two are introduced merely by way of example. The present syncrisis, which self-evidently favours Dionysus, is counterbalanced by another, placed in the mouth of an Argive citizen (47.498-532), extolling Perseus over Dionysus. Nonnus displays his rhetorical versatility in turning the present encomium of Dionysus into a veritable *psogos* in the later book. By way of comparison we may adduce Libanius' encomium and *psogos* of Achilles (Foerster, *op. cit.* . pp. 235-43, 283-90), where the unquestioning praise levied on the hero in the first instance is cancelled out by the relentless vituperation to which he is subjected in the second. Perseus' slaying of Medusa and rescue of Andromeda,

had, as Gigli-Piccardi notes, long been a favourite theme for pantomime.<sup>6</sup> That such performances often verged on parody may be gathered from pictorial representations showing a little timid-looking Perseus cautiously tiptoeing towards his adversary. This impression is supported by the obviously parodic light in which Ovid treats the episode (*Met.* 4.662-802). Nonnus avails himself of this long-standing tradition of parody to ridicule Perseus' feats in the present syncretism. Perseus is depicted, not as he is represented in legend<sup>7</sup>, but as a dancer would portray him on the stage: Περσεὺς μὲν ταχύγουνος, εὐπτερον ἴχνος ἐλίσσων, / ἀγγινεφῆ δρόμον εἶχεν ἐν ἡέρι πεζὸς ὀδίτης / εἰ ἔτεδὸν πεπότῃτο. τί δὲ πλεόν, εἰ σφυρὰ πάλλων / ξείνην εἰρεσίην ἀνεμῶδει νήχετο ταρσῶ ... ἀφοφον ἀκροπόρων πεφυλαγμένος ἄλμα πεδίλων (25.31-7). The dancer simulates flight by leaps and bounds and his performance is convincing enough to give the impression that he is actually flying. Those witnessing the performance question the veracity of that impression and seek an explanation (such as the action of some concealed piece of stage machinery) for what they imagine they have seen, hence the rejoinder εἰ ἔτεδὸν πεπότῃτο. The words πάλλειν, παλμός, ἐλίσσων, ταρσός are elsewhere used by the poet to depict dancers in action (cf., for example ἴχνος ἐλίσσειν 5.111, used with reference to Nike's dance). The parodic depiction is extended to Dionysus as well, when the two finally confront one another in book 47, with Perseus taking to the air to attack Dionysus from above, the latter foiling the stratagem by inflating himself to cosmic dimensions: ὑψώσας δ' Ἴοβακχος ἐὼν δέμας, αἰθέρι γείτων / ... ἀείρετο ... ἵπταμένου Περσῆος ὑπέρτερος (47.657-9). The echo from the *Batrachomyomachy*, βάτραχος ὑψώσας ὠχρὸν δέμας (40), indicated in Keydell's apparatus, appears to be quite deliberate and effectively underlines the comic nature of this confrontation. One can visualise Perseus in the air flapping his wings, while Dionysus puffs himself up like a frog to outreach him. Nonnus appears, at the same time, to parody his own depiction of the second Dionysus-Derriades duel (where Dionysus likewise expands himself, 40.82-3).

Nonnus proceeds to depreciate Perseus' slaying of Medusa by drawing

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<sup>6</sup> (1981) p.183

<sup>7</sup> For a conventional representation cf. the Ἄσπις Ἡρακλέους, 216ff.

attention to her female sex and to the fact that she is alone (he conveniently ignores for the moment her sisters Sthenno and Euryale): ὄγμον ἐχιδνήεντα μῆς ἤμησε Μεδούσης (25.38). The petrification of Ariadne is cited as a parallel: οὐκ ἄγαμαι Περσῆα μίαν κτείναντα γυναῖκα (25.111), foreshadowing the actual event in book 47. Medusa is made out to be a defenceless female, pregnant (25.40) and unarmed (ἀθώρηκτος, 25.65), just as Ariadne is harmless and unarmed (οὐτιδανή, ἀσίδηρος, 25.110). Dionysus, on the other hand, δρακοντοκόμων καλάμην ἤμησε Γιγάντων (25.87), outdoing Zeus himself: καὶ οὐ πυρόεντι κεραυνῶ / τηλίκος ἔσμος ἐπιπτεν, ὅσος ῥηξήνορι θύρσω (25.96-7). As Pegasus (and Chrysaor) emerge from the severed neck of Medusa, Perseus becomes in effect a mid-wife: ἔγκυον αὐξένα νύμφης / Γοργόνος Εἰλείθια μογοστόκος ἔθρισεν ἄρπη (25.40-1), a description, as Keydell indicates, modelled on Nicander's αὐξέν' ἀπο<sup>τ</sup>μήξας ἄρπη γούοντα Μεδούσης (Alex.101). In short, Perseus is no fighter of men: οὐ στίχεν ἄρσενι χάρμη (25.41). His task accomplished, Perseus makes an undignified exit, terrified of the Gorgons, despite enjoying the benefit of Hades' cap, Athena's sickle, Hermes' wings and Zeus as a father (cf. 25.53-7). It is quite probable, as Vian suggests, that Nonnus composed this segment thinking of the famous passage in the Ἄσπις Ἡρακλέους depicting the slaying of Medusa.<sup>8</sup>

Nonnus reiterates the substance of his remarks on Medusa's decapitation through a series of negative comparisons for which, as we have observed previously, he shows such a liking: ἀλλ' οὐ τοῖος ἔην Βρομίιο μόθος· οὐ ποσὶν ἔρπων / Βάκχος ἐθωρήχθη δολόεις πρόμος, οὐδὲ λοχήσας / ... κύκλον ὀπωπῆς / Φορκίδος ... ἤνυσε θῆλυν ἀεθλον ἀθωρήκτοιο Μεδούσης (25.61-5). This must surely be said with a touch of irony, for it is in precisely the same manner and using very similar language that Nonnus describes Dionysus himself sneaking up on Nicea and Aura. In Nicea's case, δολόεις Διόνυσος ἀδουπήτοισι κοθόρνοις / εἰς γάμον ἄψοφος εἶρπε ποδῶν τεχνήμονι παλμῶ (16.265-6), and in Aura's he approaches ἄψοφος ἀκροτάτοισιν ἀσάμβalos ἔχνεσιν ἔρπων (48.623). The fact that Dionysus had on those occasions amatory rather than

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<sup>8</sup> (1990) p. 242

military conquest on his mind is irrelevant. Not only does Nonnus foist Dionysus' conduct on Perseus, but he conveys it with a denial, by saying that Dionysus would not behave in such a way (note the contradiction οὐ .. ἔρπων Βάκχος and Διόνυσος ... εἶρπε). The epithet δολόεις is quite deftly transferred from Dionysus to Perseus. We note that the Argive's speech in book 47 redresses the anomaly by restoring to Dionysus his customary deceitfulness and effeminacy. The Argive tells Perseus (in language that seems deliberately intended to recall both 25.61-5 and 16.265-6) not to sully his sickle and arm fighting such an effeminate opponent, but rather to let Andromeda fight him: Γοργοφόνω δρεπάνη μὴ μάρναο θήλει' κισσῶ / μὴ σέο χεῖρα μίαινε γυναικείοισι κοθόρνοις ... / Ἀνδρομέδην θώρηξον ἀθωρήκτω Διονύσῳ (47.522-6).

Perseus' second feat, the rescue of Andromeda, is dealt with in a more cursory fashion. In Nonnus' version Perseus does not kill the sea-monster with the weapons he had been given to slay Medusa (as in earlier accounts, cf. for instance Ovid, *Met.* 4.711-2) but petrifies it by displaying Medusa's visage (as in Lucian's *Ἐνάλιοι Διάλογοι* 14.3). Nonnus has chosen the latter version to make the point that Perseus, with such a formidable weapon at his disposal, slays but one sea-monster, while Dionysus mows a whole crop of giants down with his meagre thyrsus (ὀλίγῳ ... θύρσῳ, 25.88). He would have us believe that compared to Perseus, Dionysus was at a great disadvantage, conveniently forgetting the miraculous powers that he elsewhere assigns to his thyrsus. Nonnus also questions the efficacy of Andromeda's rescue, pointing out that, even as a constellation in the heavens, she is still being menaced by the sea-monster. He has Andromeda reproach Perseus to that effect: Κῆτος ἔτι κλονέει με καὶ ἐνθάδε ... εἰσέτι δεσμὸν ἔχω καὶ ἐν ἀστρασίῳ (25.128-30), the idea deriving from Aratus' ἀλλ' ἔμπης κάκειθι διωλενίη τετάνυσται / δεσμὰ δέ οἱ κείται καὶ ἐν οὐρανῷ (202-3). In book 47 the matter is taken a step further, when he has Dionysus refer sarcastically to Andromeda's celestial chains as Perseus' wedding gift to her (47.449-51).

Not content to assess the feats of both on the basis of intrinsic merit, Nonnus brings circumstantial factors into play as well. The locations at which the feats were performed are taken by the poet to be indicative of their relative importance. This is

demonstrated by seemingly rigorous application of syllogistic argument: as Dionysus' feats were performed in the east and those of Perseus in the west, the former were witnessed by the sun and the latter by the moon. Therefore Perseus' feats pale by those of Dionysus, as the moon pales by the sun. The premise is dubious and the deductions preposterous in what is clearly a parody of sophistic argument. Nonnus, like Ovid, is rather fond of capricious associations. Thus in a later segment Night, Sleep and the Indians are made out to be victimised by Dionysus on account of their shared attribute of darkness (cf. Iris' argument to co-opt the services of Hypnus at 31.140ff.: just as his torches offend black Night and his revels banish black Sleep, so his thyrsus now wreaks havoc among the black Indians). The other circumstance to be considered is birth and parentage. As Zeus is the father of both, Nonnus will concentrate his attention on the mothers, Danae and Semele. The way each was treated by Zeus is taken to signify the relative merit of their sons. As Danae does not gain admission into Olympus while Semele does, Perseus must be less important than Dionysus (25.113-7). We note that a similar argument is used in the Argive's speech, who belittles the golden shower that greeted Danae in comparison with the thunderbolt that incinerated Semele (47.516-9).

The syncrisis with Minos (25.148-74) concerns the issue of outside help: Minos captures Megara only with the help of Aphrodite, but Dionysus captures the Indian capital unaided (Nonnus conveniently overlooking the service Aphrodite renders Dionysus' forces, when she removes Morrheus from the field during his bout of madness, 33.216ff.). The syncrisis of Minos and Dionysus provides the poet with the opportunity at the same time to tell the story of Scylla and illustrate the theme of Aphrodite's superiority to Ares in war, a leitmotiv in the *Dionysiaca*, which he has borrowed from Claudian's Greek *Gigantomachy* (43-52), as the close imitations at 35.39-43 and 35.168-73 demonstrate. The story of Scylla, cited in antiquity as an example of reprehensible female conduct, is told at some length in the pseudo-Vergilian *Ciris* (possibly an adaptation of an Hellenistic original), and in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (8.14-151). Scylla, beholding Minos' naked beauty from the walls, infatuated cuts off the pink city-saving lock from her father's head, bringing about the capture of Megara: Μίνως μὲν πτολίπορθος ἔῳ ποτε κάλλει γυμνῷ / ὑσμίνης τέλος εὔρε, καὶ οὐ νίκησε σιδήρῳ, ἀλλὰ πόθῳ καὶ ἔρωτι

(25.165-7). Dionysus attains his objective without this kind of help, and does not rely on δόλος ἱμερόεις (25.172) as does Minos. As in the case of Perseus, the notion of δόλος is transferred to Minos, Dionysus being left to shine forth as the exemplar of unsullied ἀρετή.

The syncretism with Heracles (25.174-252) is left till last by both Nonnus and Lucretius, and with good reason, for comparison with one who was unquestioningly deemed ἄριστος ἀνδρῶν would be seen to provide the ultimate measure of one's virtue.<sup>9</sup> Heracles nevertheless had his detractors, both in myth and among the interpreters of myth. In Euripides' Ἡρακλῆς Μαινόμενος Lycus accuses him of misrepresentation for claiming that he killed the Nemean lion with his bare hands, alleging that he had actually disposed of it by snaring it in a trap (144ff). Lycus points out that Heracles is wont to use bow and arrows, a coward's weapon. Nonnus puts forth similar claims, accusing Heracles of usurping sole credit for the slaying of the Hydra by failing to acknowledge the assistance he had received from Iolaus. But overall he is more inclined to minimise Heracles' achievements than to question their authenticity. He presents Heracles' feats in as pedestrian a way as possible, while elevating those of Dionysus onto a cosmic plane. Lucretius, it may be noted, while not questioning the spectacular nature of Heracles' feats, emphasises their irrelevance to mankind as a whole, stating that they were mostly performed in remote places 'quo neque noster adit nec barbarus audet' (5.36). Nonnus more pejoratively refers to the deeds as the useless labour of a backwoodsman: ἄθλα μὲν Ἡρακλῆος ... οὐτιδανὸς πόνος ἦεν ὀρίτροφος (25.242-4). Only six of Heracles' twelve labours are dealt with descriptively, the remainder being mentioned merely in passing. Several short descriptions corresponding to ... Nonnus' presentation of the last six labours are found in the *Anthology* (e.g. 16.9<sup>A</sup> and 92), attesting to the stereotyped nature of the theme. Nonnus' longer descriptions may be contrasted with those of Quintus, who presents Heracles' labours in the form of engravings on the shield of Eurypylus (6.260-93). While Quintus' descriptions are of a dignified nature consonant with the heroic tradition, those of Nonnus reflect the banality of the *Anthology* pieces,

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Aristophanes, *Nub.* 1048-50, where a character, asked who is the best of Zeus' sons replies: ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδέν' Ἡρακλέους βελτίον' ἀνδρα κρίνω.

which if not openly derogatory, do seem to reduce Heracles to a mere fairground strongman. Thus while Quintus' description (6.208-11) of the strangling of the Nemean lion recalls the style of the *Shield of Heracles*, Nonnus portrays the event using the language of the wrestling ring. Indeed, his description (25.176-9) of how Heracles strangled the lion is quite similar<sup>τα</sup> that which he uses to depict Aiacus' attempt to throttle Aristaius in the wrestling match at the funeral games for Opheltes (37.570-3). The anatomical description of the lion's windpipe (25.178-9) adds further to the sense of the prosaic and commonplace. Nonnus depreciates Heracles' feat even further by juxtaposing it with that of a woman, Cyrene, who likewise subdued a lion, a male one with her female hands (25.183). Dionysus, while still a child, had gone one better, having captured a lion alive and dragged it playfully (ἀθύρων, 25.184) by the throat with one hand (χειρὶ μιῇ, 25.185), to give it to Rheia to include in the team harnessed to her chariot. In other words, Heracles had accomplished with difficulty a feat that was mere child's play to the infant Dionysus. The Erymanthian boar, which Heracles captured alive (cf. Apollonius, 1.126-7), is merely mentioned without further elaboration other than the comment that to young Dionysus boars and lions were no more than playthings (25.194-5). To the slaying of the hydra at Lerna, properly the second labour, Nonnus devotes considerably more attention. It was this feat that Eurystheus had refused to recognise on account of help received from Iolaus (cf. Apollodorus, *Bibl.* 2.5.2.). Nonnus turns to Iolaus directly, as if to apologise for Heracles' failure to acknowledge his role in the slaying of the hydra: ἰλήκοις, Ἴολαε· σὺ γὰρ δέμας ἔφλεγες ὕδρης, / καὶ μόνος Ἡρακλῆς, μόνος ἤρπασεν οὐνομα νίκης (25.211-2). Heracles' integrity is implicitly called into question for his claiming sole credit for a feat which he could not have accomplished without help from Iolaus. The feat is of little account, as it takes two to kill a single harmless female: ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ οἶδα γεραίρειν / οὐτιδανῆ δύο φώτας ἐριδμαίνοντας<sup>ἐχέδοντι</sup> (25.203-4). The result too is insignificant: ὀλίγην ὀφιώδεα λύσατο Λέρνην (25.197), while Dionysus μόνος ἀποτμήξας ὀφιώδεας υἱας ἀρούρης / ... ἔχραε πᾶσι (25.206-7). The snakes on the giants' heads alone are ὕδρης Ἴναλῆς πολὺ μείζονες, ἀντὶ δὲ Λέρνης / ἀσταθέες σύριζον ἐν αἰθέρι γείτονες ἀστρων (25.209-10). The hydra shrinks into insignificance beside the cosmic monsters slain

by Dionysus.

The poet declines to speak of Heracles' capture of the hind of Ceryneia: σιγήσω κεμάδος χρύσειον κέρας, ὅττι καλέσσω / τηλικόν Ἑρακλῆα μιῆς ἐλάφοιο φονῆα (25.223-4). Nonnus misrepresents the feat, which consisted in catching rather than killing the swift animal.<sup>10</sup> He scoffs at Heracles' deed, saying that hunting deer was but a trifling diversion (βαϊὸν δῆυρμα) for Dionysus' Bacchantes (25.225-6). The fire-breathing bull of Crete is disposed of next, with the remark that any Bacchante could be expected as a matter of course to slay a whole herd of bulls (25.230-1). Both here and in the case of the Ceryneian hind Nonnus chooses to ignore the fact that the animals which Heracles overcame possessed supernatural qualities, while those killed by the Bacchantes were quite ordinary. The fight with Geryon is not described, Nonnus presenting instead a comparison of Geryon and Alpus, based on their number of heads. As Geryon had only three, compared to Alpus' hundred, Dionysus' feat of slaying Alpus was far greater than Heracles' slaying of Geryon. As we noted earlier, Nonnus' assignation of a hundred heads to Alpus is quite arbitrary, to suit the present occasion, there being no mention of the hundred heads when the poet comes to depict Dionysus' confrontation with him in book 45. Nonnus concludes the syncrisis, as he had done previously in the case of Perseus, by differentiating Dionysus' exploits from those of Heracles through a disclaimer: ἔργα δὲ Βάκχου / ἢ ἔ Γίγας πολύπηχυς ἢ ἰψιλόφων πρόμος Ἰνδῶν, / οὐ κεμάς, οὐ βοῆς ἀγέλης στίχες, οὐ λάσιος σῦς, / οὐδὲ κύων, ἢ ταῦρος, ἢ αὐτόπρεμνος ὀπώρη / χρυσοφαῆς, ἢ κόπρος, ἢ ἀστατος ὄρνις ἀλήτης ... ἢ γένυς ἰππεΐη ξεινοκτόνος, οὐ μία μίτρη / Ἰππολύτης ἐλάχεια (25.244-51). This synopsis of Heracles' labours is similar <sup>to</sup> those in the *Anthology* (cf., for instance, 16.91).

On completing the syncrisis Nonnus continues the exordium, as we have already noted. After that, he briefly resumes the narrative that he left off at the end of book 24. He subsequently confirms Hera's warning to the Indians (22.80-1) that

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Anth.* 16.92, which though mistaken with regard to the Erymanthian boar (saying that Heracles' Ερυμάνθιον ἔκτανε κάπρον (923) in contrast to Apollonius' ζῶν φέρε κάπριον, 1.126), correctly states in the case of the Ceryneian hind that Heracles caught it alive (ἴγρευσε, 92.4). Yet Euripides too says that he killed it: τάν τε χρυσοκάρανον δόρκαν ... κτείνας, θηροφόνον θεῶν ... ἀγάλλει (*Her.* 374-8).

the Hydaspes had been turned into wine: θέσκελον εἶδος ἀμείψας / οἶνω  
κυματόεντι μέλας κελάρυζεν Ἰδάσπης (25.279-80). The conversion of water  
into wine is one of a number <sup>of</sup> instances in which Dionysus' exploits parallel the  
miracles performed by Christ. Nonnus seems acutely aware of these parallels and  
uses similar language in depicting the actions of Dionysus and Christ. Thus his  
earlier depiction of the conversion of lake Astacid into wine, χιονέην ἤμειψε  
φυήν ξανθόχροον ὕδωρ (14.413), is closely mirrored in his depiction of water  
changing into wine at the wedding feast at Capharnaum: χιονέην ἤμειψε χρόην  
ἑτερόχροον ὕδωρ (*Par.* 2.46). We may note, by way of comparison, that the  
similarities between Dionysus and Christ were not lost on the author of the  
dramatised version of Christ's passion, entitled Χριστὸς πάσχων, who shows no  
hesitation in exploiting situational parallels with Euripides' *Bacchae*. A further  
Christian parallel follows forthwith. A blind old man, sprinkling his eyes with the  
wine from the river, miraculously regains his sight, recalling Christ's bestowing  
sight on a man blind from birth by rubbing spittle in his eyes. The depiction of the  
old man proceeding along the river bank ἐὼν πόδα κωθρόν ἐλίσσων (25.281) is  
identical with that which the poet later gives of Tiresias (45.60). As noted earlier,  
ἔχνος/πόδα ἐλίσσειν is a phrase more or less synonymous with χορεύειν,  
which is appropriate in Tiresias' case, seeing that both he and Cadmus have been  
caught up in Bacchic fervour and are on their way to Cithaeron in the wake of the  
womenfolk of Thebes. The description is less apposite in the present instance, as  
the old man has no reason to dance (afterwards he does indeed have cause to do so,  
25.286-7). The poet appears to have somewhat mechanically reused here the  
description intended in the first place for Tiresias. The fact that this scene occurs  
later in the narrative sequence is not necessarily indicative of later composition. It is  
indeed reasonable to assume that book 25, by virtue of its being the cornerstone of  
the whole work, wherein the poet explains his intentions, was one of the latest parts  
to be composed. The correspondences between the present scene and that  
describing Jesus' action in the *Paraphrase* may be briefly noted. The man's  
blindness is indicated by the phrase ἔχων ἀλαωπὸν ὀμίχλην (25.282), with which  
we may compare ἐλάσας ἀλαωπὸν ὀμίχλην (*Par.* 9.72). The old man's sight is

restored through the λυσίπινος μέθη (25.283), the curative power of which is emphasised sporadically throughout the *Dionysiaca* (cf., for example, 17.82 and 47.42). In the *Paraphrase* Jesus' λυσίπινος ἀφρός ὀδόντων (9.26) serves the same purpose. On regaining his sight the old man sings the praises of the ἀλεξικάκου ποταμοῖο (25.287), which is echoed by ἀλεξικάκῳ δὲ ῥέεθρῳ in the *Paraphrase* (9.63). The old man fills skins with the sweet-smelling liquid and erects an altar to Zeus and Dionysus: χερσὶ δὲ γηραλέησι ῥόον νεφελῆδόν ἀφύσσω / πορφυρέης ἔπλησε μέθης εὐώδεις ἀσκούς, / καὶ Διὶ βωμὸν ἀνήψε καὶ οἰνοχύτῳ Διονύσῳ / ἀθρήσας Φαέθοντος ἀήθεος ὄψιμον αἴγλην (25.288-91). The first and last parts of this description are echoed by the *Paraphrase*: τυφλὸς ... χερσὶ βαθυνομένησι φαεσφόρον ἤφυσεν ὕδωρ (9.39), the ἀθρήσας κ.τ.λ. being repeated verbatim at 9.43. It is remarkable that Nonnus should in the *Paraphrase* refer to the river as ἀλεξικάκος and its water as φαεσφόρον, seeing that the river there has no function other than to provide the means of washing off the φαεσφόρος πηλός (9.28) that Jesus' makes from his ἀφρός ὀδόντων (9.26). It is in the latter and not in the river that the curative power resides. In extending that power to the river as well Nonnus is mechanically duplicating details from the *Dionysiaca* passage where the Hydaspes, converted into wine, does indeed possess it. In reworking the evangelist's rather basic narrative, Nonnus makes use of passages in the *Dionysiaca* which describe analogous events, using his own epic in much the same way as the author of *Χριστὸς πάσχω* uses the *Bacchae* of Euripides. Thus when he speaks of Christ turning water into wine, he employs the phrase φύσιν χιονωτὸν ἀμείψας (4.46) to describe the transmutation, which echoes that used to describe Dionysus' conversion of the Astacid lake to wine: χιονέην ἤμειψε φυὴν ξανθόχροον ὕδωρ (14.413). As we shall observe below, his depiction of the resurrection of Lazarus echoes some of the details from his account of the resuscitation of the snake and Tylus at the end of the present book. The erection of an altar to Zeus and Dionysus, an improbable event in the circumstances, since the old man being Indian could have known neither (cf. Deriades' earlier declaration of his ignorance of the Olympian gods, 21.254-6), anticipates Morrheus' promise to erect an altar to

Aphrodite and Dionysus (33.243-5) and Cadmus' erection of an altar to Zeus and the Hadryads (44.100-1). The present reference to altar-building is likely to have been prompted by the these latter passages, even though it precedes them in the narrative sequence. The news of Hydaspes' conversion into wine is brought to Deriades by a hunter, whose dogs have become intoxicated lapping from the stream (25.292-6). Nonnus seems rather fond of the notion of man learning from animals. In book 12 the secret of making wine from grapes is revealed to Dionysus through the actions of a snake (12.321ff.), in book 40 a dog staining its jaws purple as it eats a shell-fish reveals the secret of the purple dye (40.306-10), the founders of Tyre learn the art of navigation by observing a nautilus fish (40.506-12) and obtain the idea of ballast-stones from cranes, who carry stones in their beaks to steady their flight (40.513-8). Later in the present book Moria revives her brother Tylus with a life-restoring herb that shortly before she saw a snake use in reviving its mate.

As Deriades withdraws to the safety of his lofty fortifications, Dionysus voices his frustration, not, as we might have expected, at Deriades placing himself beyond reach, but rather surprisingly on account of winds sent by Hera, which took away any prospect of victory for the next ten months (25.305-7). Bornmann sees a recollection here of Arrian's ἐτήσιοι ἄνεμοι (*Anab.* 6.21.1), which rendered Indian coastal waters unnavigable for ten months of the year and delayed Nearchus at Patalene for the summer and autumn of 325 B.C.<sup>11</sup> How these winds could delay a campaign on land defies comprehension. Nonnus, with characteristic disregard for verisimilitude, has transposed Arrian's observation into a context to which it is entirely unsuited. Vian draws attention to the parallels this segment of book 25 exhibits with the beginning of Triphiodorus' Ἄλωσις Ἰλίου, which contains a number of references to the frustration of the Greeks at their inability to bring the long drawn-out conflict to a head. The similarities of thought are reinforced by verbal correspondences. Thus when Nonnus speaks of Dionysus' army standing idle ἀμβολίη πολέμοιο (25.273) and of Dionysus accusing Hera of having engineered the delays, ἀσχαλῶν Διόνυσος ἐμέμφετο πολ λάκις Ἴηρη (25.303), he seems to have in mind Triphiodorus' statement, ἀμβολίη δ' ἴσχαλλε

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<sup>11</sup> (1975) p.66

δυσασχθεί λαὸς Ἀχαιῶν (42). More telling still is the correspondence between λέοντας ἀεργηλῆ παρὰ φάτνη (25.306) and Triphiodorus' ἵπποι ... ἀεργηλῆς ἐπὶ φάτναις (14). Attis' complaint to Dionysus, κυδοιμοῦ ... ἀενάων ἐτέων στροφάλιγγα κυλίνδεις, and the later echo of the same phrase, τόσων μετὰ κύκλα κυλινδομένων ἐναιυτῶν (36.395), have some affinity with Triphiodorus' ἦδη μὲν δεκάτοιο κυλινδομένου λυκάβαντος / γηραλέη τετάνυστο ... Ἐνυῶ / Τρωσί τε καὶ Δαναοῖσιν (6-7).

Attis, the messenger of Rhea, chides Dionysus for his dilatory attitude and for not having lived up to her expectations. Dionysus' reply, beginning with a near quotation of Calypso's words from the *Odyssey*: σχέτλιοί εἰσι θεοὶ ζηλήμονες (25.340 = ε118, with εἰσι for ἔστε), is a catalogue of complaints, not directed only at Hera but at Zeus as well: ἀλλά με νίκης / μητρειῆς ἀέκοντα παραπλάζει φθόνος Ἥρης ... ἀπειλήσας δὲ Κροῦίων / βρονταίοις πατάγοισιν ἐμὴν ἀνεσεύρασεν ὀρμήν (25.343-7). Zeus has intervened twice previously with thunderclaps, both times on Dionysus' behalf (14.406-7 and 22.133-50); later he intervenes in like manner to save Poseidon from defeat by Dionysus in their battle over Beroe (43.374-80). While Zeus' defence of his brother in the latter instance is understandable by virtue of his previous undertaking to grant Beroe to him, his opposition to Dionysus in the present passage is difficult to comprehend, especially in view of his statement at 27.314-6 that his support for Dionysus in the Indian war had, unlike that of the other gods, never wavered. Bornmann seeks to explain the present statement as a purely meteorological reference, a recollection of the monsoonal storms described in Arrian (*Anab.* 5.9.4-10)<sup>12</sup>. Seeing that Dionysus speaks of the thunder as persisting over an extended period, claiming that he could defeat Deriades if it subsided even for one day, Bornmann's explanation appears quite plausible.

Attis' reply to Dionysus encompasses a prophecy: ἔσσομένω δὲ / ἐβδομάτῳ λυκάβαντι διαρραίσεις πόλιν Ἰνδῶν (25.366-7), which corresponds to Helenus' prophecy in Triphiodorus, the Trojan who ὄψιτέλεστον ὄλεθρον ἐῆ μαντεύσατο πάτρη (48). As Vian observes, the prophecy in both cases comes at a

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<sup>12</sup> (1975) p. 64

time of despondency, renewing the will of the addressee to persevere with the campaign to what he is now assured will be a felicitous outcome. The main purpose of Attis' visit is, however, to deliver to Dionysus a magnificent shield, which Rheia has commissioned from Hephaistus as gift for her grandson. As to why Dionysus, who, as the poet was earlier at pains to point out, spurned conventional armour, wielding instead his thyrsus and nebris (14.230-2), should now be presented with a piece of this armour is, to say the least, a little puzzling. Vian sees the presentation of the shield as a purely symbolic act, like the later gift of the ἀστραῖος χιτῶν from the Tyrian Heracles (40.575ff.), regarding the two presents as signs of divine recognition and as important milestones on Dionysus' road to apotheosis. The shield is according to Vian "a talisman intended to guard Dionysus against his divine adversaries Hera and Ares, as well as against his human enemies"<sup>13</sup>. If this is indeed the purpose of the shield, then it does not fulfil it at all effectively, for no sooner has the war with Deriades got underway than Dionysus is so frightened by the sight of Deriades invigorated by Hera as to contemplate flight, being only prevented from doing so by the timely intervention of Athena (30.247ff.). The shield has no effect, nor will it protect him from the Fury that Hera sets on him (32.98ff.). The most compelling reason for the presentation of the shield, which incidentally is almost entirely forgotten in the ensuing narrative (being mentioned only once, and even then in a none too glorious context, as gathering cobwebs: ἔκειτο δὲ τηλόθι χάρμης / Βακχιάς ἑξαέτηρος ἀράχης ὡσαυτοῦ βοείη, 38.13-4), is undoubtedly of the literary kind: no epic depicting warfare from the *Iliad* onwards was deemed complete without a shield description, and Nonnus was not one to let the opportunity to indulge in such an exercise pass him by.

Nonnus does not appear to have made any discernible use of the shield descriptions of his predecessors apart from Homer's. He does, however, borrow a scene from Jason's cloak as described by Apollonius, and has supplemented Homer's astronomical details by adapting a passage from Aratus. Nonnus has gone to some lengths to ensure that the scenes depicted on the shield have some relevance to the person of Dionysus, though the connexion is at times tenuous. His personal predilections are reflected in the attention bestowed on astronomical features and in

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<sup>13</sup> (1994) p. 91, cf. also (1990) p. 33.

the inclusion of a myth, which would be incapable of pictorial representation on an object of limited size such as a shield (it would require a veritable Bayeux tapestry to do it justice). The first seven lines (25.388-95) are a virtual paraphrase of Σ483-5. Nonnus supplements Homer's brief listing of the heavenly bodies represented on the shield (Σ486-9) by paraphrasing Aratus 26-9 at 25.398-401. The exposition of the seasonal variations in terms of the relative positions of the constellations is of little relevance to the theme at hand, but, as usual, Nonnus' fascination with astronomy has the better of him. We note further that 25.402-4 correspond to 45-8 in Aratus, and 25.410-3 seem to have been inspired by 56-7. From this astronomical excursion the poet proceeds to the segment depicting the building of Thebes, this time making use of another Hellenistic poet, Apollonius. The scene, which appears on Jason's cloak (a present to him from Athena), is understandably congenial to Nonnus, since it exemplifies the magical power of Amphion's lyre over both animate and inanimate nature. Nonnus is rather taken by the Orphic notion of the mind being able, by means of utterance or some kindred means, such as musical expression, to exercise control over the physical forces of nature. We recall that Typhoeus was checked both by the playing of Cadmus (1.409ff.) and by the Lydian priest (13.474ff.). While Zethus toils with the building blocks, Amphion plays the lyre, his playing making a hill dance, seemingly bewitched even in effigy: καὶ Ζῆθος ἔην περὶ πατρίδι κάμνων, / θλιβομένη πετραῖον ἐπωμίδι φόρτον αἰείρων· / Ἀμφίων δ' ἐλίγαινε λυροκτύπος· ἀμφὶ δὲ μολπῆ / εἰς δρόμον αὐτοκύλιστον ἔλιξ ἐχόρευε κολώνη, / οἶα τε θελγομένη καὶ ἐν ἀσπίδι (25.417-21). Nonnus' rendering dilutes the contrast that is so well brought out in Apollonius, namely that the playing of Amphion is twice as effective as the physical toil of Zethus: Ζῆθος μὲν ἐπωμαδὸν ἠέρταζεν/ οὔρεος ἠλιβάτοιο κάρη, μογέοντι ἐοικώς· / Ἀμφίων δ' ἐπὶ οἷ χρυσέῃ φόρμιγγι λιγαίνων / ἦε, δις τόσση δὲ μετ' ἵχλια νίσσετο πέτρῃ (1.738-41). Apollonius rounds off the final scene represented on the cloak, Phrixus and the ram, with the observation, that one beholding it would tarry a long while beside it, expecting to hear their voices (1.765-7). Nonnus has aptly transposed this touch to the Theban scene, saying that one would tarry long by the shield in the hope of hearing Amphion's lyre (25.424-8).

The next segment comprises two distinct scenes, the rape of Ganymede and a celestial banquet, with Ganymede serving at the table of the gods in place of Hebe, whose role he has usurped. The Hebe:Ganymede and nectar:wine antitheses are recurrent themes in the poem (cf. for example, 19.225-62, 31.235-48 and 39.64-8). Hera's hatred of both Ganymede and Dionysus is well documented in the poem, mostly in the form of recriminations against Zeus for having entrusted the dispensing of nectar to a Phrygian shepherd, and for promising residence in Olympus to the purveyor of that noxious beverage, wine, which (she fears) will, on his being admitted, supplant nectar at divine banquets. Ganymede and Dionysus are directly compared in Deriades' speech at 39.64-8, Ganymede being deemed the better on two counts, firstly because he dispenses nectar which is superior to wine,<sup>14</sup> secondly because he dines in the company of the gods, while Dionysus has to content himself with that of satyrs. The Ganymede scenes are as a result of the above associations entitled to their place on the shield. The first scene conveys the anxiety of Zeus, who in the form of an eagle holds Ganymede in his talons as he crosses the Hellespont, lest he drop his charge and deprive Helle of the honour of having it named after her (γέρας πεφυλαγμένον Ἑλλῆ, 25.441). The latter concern may appear flippant, but Zeus is, along with the other Olympians, the guardian of the pre-ordained sequence of events which the world must experience in the course of its existence. Zeus will not permit any departure from the set path: we note that in book 43 Dionysus is compelled by Zeus to relinquish his claim to Beroe, because the nymph had from time immemorial been promised to Poseidon (διεροῖσιν ὀφειλομένην ὑμεναίους, 41.247). The same idea is found in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, where Jupiter, on being asked by the Sun to divert the Argonauts from Colchis, refuses, pointing to the fixed order of things, of which he is the author and guardian: 'vetera haec nobis et condita pergunt / ordine cuncta suo rerumque a principe cursu / fixa manent' (1.531-3). Subversion of the established order, as threatened by the earthborn giants, of the universe being turned upside down, is a favourite theme of Nonnus (cf. Typhoeus' bluster at 2.258ff. and similar boasts by Pentheus at 44.174ff.). The concern expressed over Aphrodite's and Eros' dereliction of duty (24.319-20 and 32.54-5 resp.) is yet another reflection of the Olympian preoccupation with maintaining the established order. In the second

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<sup>14</sup> Wine is earlier described as νέκταρος οὐραίου χθόμιος τύπος (14.158)

scene Hera's anger is depicted, as she points out to Athena that βουκόλος Ganymede (25.449, cf. also 8.95 and 39.64)<sup>15</sup> is engaged in the tasks that are rightly Hebe's.

We now come to the least conventional part of the shield description, consisting of a narrative of over a hundred lines (25.451-552) inserted into the framework of the ecphrasis. The story itself, which is about the death and subsequent resurrection of Tylus by means of a magical herb, has no ostensible connexion with Dionysus other than that the events take place Maeonia, where Dionysus had spent his boyhood. We note that Dionysus too is a magical healer, restoring the sight of the old man earlier in the present book and bringing his favourite Hymenaius back seemingly from the verge of death by healing his λóιγιον ἔλκος (29.150). A scene depicting resurrection is thus not entirely out of place on Dionysus' shield. Tylus is attacked and killed by an enormous snake, an event witnessed by his sister Moria, who calls in the giant Damasen to save her brother from being devoured. Damasen kills the snake with an uprooted tree after a protracted struggle, but it is shortly afterwards revived by a magical herb fetched by its mate. Moria, taking note, revives her brother with the same herb as soon as the snakes have gone. The notion of man learning from animals is commonplace in folklore and is, as we have noted, congenial to Nonnus. The only specifically Maeonian or Lydian element in the story is the giant Damasen, alternatively referred to in ancient sources by his Lydian name Masdnes (of which the Hellenised form Damasen, built on the root of δαμάω, like Damastor and Hoplodamas, is almost an anagram, cf. Vian *ad. loc.*). Numismatic evidence indicates that this Masdnes was commonly identified with Heracles.<sup>15</sup> Nonnus does not mention Heracles in the present instance, though, interestingly enough, he later refers to another Lydian strongman, Sandes, as Σάνδης Ἡρακλέης, identifying him at the same time with Morrheus (34.192). The earliest description of the resuscitation of Tylus is found in the elder Pliny, who cites Xanthus as his source: 'Xanthus, historiarum auctor, in prima earum tradit occisum draconis catulum revocatum ad vitam a parente herba, quam balin nominat,

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<sup>15</sup> Vian (1990) p. 36 draws attention to coins minted in Sardis during the reigns of Alexander Severus (222-235) and Gordian III (238-244), that display a Heracles-like figure, with subscript "Masdnes" killing a snake. He notes also that Hyginus (*Astr.* 2.14.2) attributes to Heracles the killing of a snake which had ravaged Lydia. It is to Nonnus' credit that he distinguishes the two.

eademque Thylonem, quem draco occiderat, restitutum saluti' (*N.H.* 25.5). Aeneas of Gaza, who seems to identify Masdnes with Heracles, names a certain Tymon the Lydian as one of a list of individuals whom Heracles had retrieved from Hades: ὡς τὴν Ἄλκηστιν Ἡρακλῆς, καὶ τὸν Θησέα, καὶ Τύμωνα (τὸν) Λυδὸν, καὶ Τιμοσθένην τὸν Ἀθηναῖον, Εὐδόξῳ τὰ τοιαῦτα συγγράφοντι πείθεσθε (*Migne*, v.85 col.993). Clearly, Pliny's Thylo, Nonnus' Τύλος and Aeneas' Τύμων refer to the same individual, who as it seems may also be identified with Tyllus, the eponymous founder of the Lydian and Etruscan nations (cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 1.27). Nonnus' tendency to proliferation through the introduction of characters additional to those in the original story, a tendency that is very much in evidence in his reworking of Homer's Διὸς ἀπάτη (31.4ff.), is encountered as well in the present episode. Two additional players appear in his version: an unnamed Naiad, who is merely a passive witness to the killing of Tylus, and the victim's sister Moria, who seeing the attack from further away, seeks Damasen's help. Nonnus dwells on the previous ravages of the snake, a killer of men and animals and uprooter of many trees (25.472-7). Its actions resemble those of the snake described in the Homeric hymn to Apollo (302-4) and also those of the Boar of Calydon in the *Iliad* (1540-2). Uprooting of trees is unlikely for a snake, but, as usual, Nonnus is concerned with effect rather than verisimilitude. Depictions of monstrous snakes became a set-piece in later poetry, perhaps the most famous being that which guarded the golden fleece in Apollonius (4.127ff.). Even the snake which attacked the shepherd in the pseudo-Vergilian poem *Culex* is described as 'immanis' (161ff.) in spite of the fact that the shepherd was able to dispose of it with a tree-trunk (190). The *Culex*, in that it features a fight between a man and a snake, anticipates in outline the attack on Tylus and the killing of the snake by Damasen. Nonnus supplies us with some particulars regarding that giant: he is described as emerging from mother earth bearded and armed, resembling in this respect the Σπαρτοί, but differing from them in that he emerges from the soil not as an adult but as an infant (despite bearing his arms and sporting a beard). Like the infant Heracles (cf. the *Anth.* 16.90) he exhibits his warlike prowess when still in swaddling clothes: ἔγχεα δ' αὐτῷ / μαζὸς ἔην καὶ χύτλα φόνου καὶ σπάργανα θώρηξ, / καὶ δολιχῶν μελέων βεβαρημένος εὐρεί φόρτῳ / νήπιος

αἰχμάζων, βρέφος ἄλκιμον, αἰθέρι γείτων / ἐκ γενετῆς δόρυ πάλλεν  
 ὁμόγυιον, ἀρτιφανῆ δὲ / ὤπλισεν Εἰλείθια λεχώιον ἀσπιδιώτην (25.489-  
 94). This is yet another adaptation of the depiction of the weapons of Aphrodite in  
 Claudian's *Gigantomachy*, whose superiority to the arms of Ares Nonnus has  
 made a leitmotiv in his poem (cf. for example 35.21-6, 171-9, 42.234-7). In the  
 present instance the imitation pertains purely to expression, involving the  
 substitution of the unusual for the conventional: εἶχε γὰρ αὐτὴ / πλέγμα κόρυν,  
 δόρυ μαζόν, ὄφρῦν βέλος, ἀσπίδα κάλλος, / ὄπλα μέλη (*Gig.* 51-2). For  
 similar use of substitution cf. the depiction of Dionysus' weapons at 14.230-45,  
 22.161-4 and the accoutrements of the boxer Eurymedon at 37.508-10. The infant  
 is already colossal (αἰθέρι γείτων) and wields the spear with which he was born,  
 resembling in this respect Athena (cf. 25.493 and 27.290).

The reanimation of corpses, whether temporary or permanent, is a topic that  
 engaged the attention of a number of ancient writers. Thessalian witches were  
 credited with the ability to resurrect the dead with their spells (cf. Lucan 6.750-60  
 and Apuleius, *Met.* 2.40). Nonnus' portrayal of the resurrection of Tylos resembles  
 the scene in Lucan in that the revivification is made out to be a gradual and drawn  
 out process, even though in his case the magical ritual is replaced by a magical herb.  
 We note that the resurrection of Lazarus in the *Paraphrase* is likewise made into a  
 protracted affair, indicating a fascination on Nonnus' part with such procedures.  
 After the snake has killed Tylos, it is confronted by Damasen, who uproots a tree to  
 use as a weapon, something that we would perhaps not expect from one born with a  
 full complement of hoplite armour. The snake, despite spitting πίδακας ἰοῦ  
 (25.510) in Damasen's face, at length succumbs to the giant's superior power, its  
 neck broken by a blow with the tree-trunk. Damasen, like a good conservationist,  
 replants the tree (25.520). Straightway a female snake, seeing its mate dead, rushes  
 off to pluck a life-restoring plant. The plant is placed in the dry nostril of the dead  
 snake: νέκυος δασπλήτος ἀλεξήτειραν ὀλέθρου / ἀζαλέω μυκτῆρι  
 συνήρμοσεν (25.529-39). The revivification takes effect in stages: καὶ νέκυος  
 αὐτοέλικτος ἐπάλλετο· καὶ τὸ μὲν αὐτοῦ / ἄπνοον ἦν, ἕτερον δὲ  
 διέστιχεν, ἄλλο δὲ σείων / ἡμιτελῆς νέκυος ἦεν ἔχων αὐτόσσυτον ὀρμήν /  
 καὶ ψυχραῖς γενύεσσι παλίμπνοον ἄσθμα τιταίνων / οἰγομένω κατὰ βαιὸν

έθήμονι βόμβεε λαιμῷ (25.529-36)<sup>16</sup>. Moria subsequently administers the plant to her brother following the same procedure: ζωτόκω μυκτῆρι φερέσβιον ἦρμοσε ποίην (25.540). As in the snake's case, the revival takes place in stages: ἐνδομύχῳ δὲ / ψυχρὸν ἀοσσητῆρι δέμας θερμαίνεται πυρσῷ / καὶ νέκυς ἀμφιέπων βιοτῆς παλινάγρετον ἀρχὴν, / δεξιτεροῦ μὲν ἐπαλλε ποδὸς θέναρ, ἀμφὶ δὲ λαιῷ / ὀρθώσας στατὸν ἔχνος ὄλω στηρίζετο ταρσῷ, / ... καὶ πάλιν ἔξεεν αἷμα· νεοπνεύστοιο δὲ νεκροῦ / χεῖρες ἐλαφρίζοντο· καὶ ἀρμονίη πέλε μορφῆ, / ποσσὶν ὀδοιπορίη, φάος ὄμμασι, χεῖλεσι φωνή (25.543-52). In Lucan the process is similar: 'protinus astrictus caluit cruor atraque fovit / volnera et in venas extremaeque membra cucurrit /... tunc omnes palpitat artus / tenduntur nervi' (6.750-5), but the corpse jumps up suddenly: 'nec se tellure cadaver / paulatim per membra levat, terraque repulsum est / erectumque semel ... nondum facies viventis in illo ... remanet pallorque rigorque' (6.755-9). The same elements are found in the Lazarus scene in the *Paraphrase*. Lazarus marches out from Hades still corpse-like: τυφλὴν ἰθυκέλευθον ἔχων ἀντώπιον ὀρμήν / αὐδήεις νέκυς ἔσκε (11.168-9), which corresponds to ἡμιτελής νέκυς ἦεν ἔχων αὐτόσσυτον ὀρμήν (25.534f). Nonnus has, as often, reused his own expression, the αὐδήεις being merely a metrical substitution for ἡμιτελής. We note that whereas ἡμιτελής is functional in the context in which it appears, referring to the parts of the snake in various stages of revivification (viz. τὸ μὲν ... ἕτερον δὲ ... ἄλλο δὲ), the αὐδήεις is gratuitous, even inappropriate in its context, as we can hardly imagine Lazarus to have been talkative, seeing that he was bound like an Egyptian mummy from head to foot in strips of linen (11.169-70). The ἔχων ἀντώπιον ὀρμήν is, likewise, a somewhat strained substitution for ἔχων αὐτόσσυτον ὀρμήν. Whereas the ὀρμή in the first instance refers to the setting in motion of the snake, in the second it does not appear to pertain to Lazarus at all, but on the contrary, to the linen wrappings obstructing his vision as he walks. The *Paraphrase* contains two further echoes of the Tylus episode, the first being used in relation to Lazarus, the second in an entirely different context: thus while the ἐμπνοον ἐψύχωσε (25.542 and 41.57) is used to refer to the latter at 12.41, the

<sup>16</sup> A distich on Lazarus in the *Anthology* contains two echoes of this passage: ἔλασε Λάζαρος ἄδην / αὐαλέφ μυκτῆρι πάλιν σόον ἄσθμα κομίζων (1.49).

line ψυχρὸν ἀοσσητήρι δέμας θερμαίνεται πυρσῶ (25.544) is transferred to a new context, to describe Simon keeping himself warm by a fire in the courtyard as Jesus is being interrogated by Annas: ψυχρὸν ἐπ' ἀνθρακίοντι δέμας θερμαίνεται πυρσῶ (18.117). We may note that the shared phrases are more contextually relevant to the *Dionysiaca* passages than they are to those of the *Paraphrase* where their use tends to be merely ornamental, even otiose, which suggests they were originally coined for the *Dionysiaca* passages and later reused in the *Paraphrase*. Vian, it should be noted, takes the contrary view, arguing that as the *Paraphrase* passages are the more elaborate ('plus développé'), they are original and those in the *Dionysiaca* merely condensed adaptations.<sup>17</sup> This is in line with his contention that the *Paraphrase* was a juvenile work, in which Nonnus' particular talents had not yet come into full bloom.<sup>18</sup> And yet, in commenting on 25.544, he holds *Par.* 18.117 to be a 'réminiscence' of that line, auguring a possible turnaround in his position.

The last scene to be depicted on the shield is that of Cronus being fed a rock in place of baby Zeus by Rhea (25.553-62), a theme to which Nonnus returns later in connexion with the foundation of Beirut by Cronus (41.67-76). The story is based on Hesiod (*Theog.* 485-502) but differs from it in two respects. In the *Theogony* Rhea does not come upon the idea herself but is advised to do so by Gaia, and the stone does not cause Cronus to regurgitate the offspring whom he had previously swallowed, the regurgitation being forced on him much later by a grown-up and now powerful Zeus, aided by Gaia (493-6). The stone was the first to be disgorged and was placed by Zeus at Pytho (497-500). In Nonnus and later tradition in general the stone itself acts as an instant emetic: καὶ λίθον ἐν λαγόνεσσι μογοστόκον ἔνδον αἰείρων / θλιβομένην πολύτεκνον ἀνηκόντιζε γενέθλην, / φόρτον ἀποπτύων ἐγκύμονος ἀνθρεῶνος (25.560-2, cf. also 41.70-4). The ἐγκύμονος ἀνθρεῶνος recalls the ἔγκυον αὐχένα at 25.40, which, as indicated earlier, is imitated from Nicander. We may note that whereas in Hesiod the credit for the feat is shared by Gaia and Zeus, with Rhea playing a somewhat ancillary role, in Nonnus Rhea is made both author of the plan and sole saviour of her

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<sup>17</sup> (1990) p.30

<sup>18</sup> (1976) p. xiii

children. We note that Rhea is eulogised along with Dionysus throughout the poem, being referred to as θεομήτωρ (25.334), a 'mother' who first communicates to him Zeus' orders to conquer the Indians (13.19-34), and to whom he subsequently sees himself accountable for his progress. The epithet recalls θεητόκος, which is applied to Mary in the *Paraphrase* (2.9, 66; 19.135). As the evangelists offer no precedent for the epithet, it is reasonable to assume that it was co-opted into the Christian lexicon from the mother goddess cults of Cybele-Rhea and Isis along with the quasi-deification of Mary herself in the fifth century.<sup>19</sup> Likewise the epithet ταχυεργός, used of Christ in the *Paraphrase* (13.18), is borrowed from Isis worship, where it is applied to her son, Horus.<sup>20</sup> The depiction of Rhea on the shield is quite relevant in view of the special relationship between Dionysus and her.

We may conclude by saying that book 25 is indispensable for understanding the *Dionysiaca* as a whole. In it the poet clarifies his objectives by telling us that his task is similar to Homer's but his theme even nobler. Dionysus' superiority to the recognised paragons of traditional ἀρετή is forthwith demonstrated by means of three formal syncrises, but the argumentation employed is capricious in the extreme, which deprives the comparisons of any validity. There is a mock-serious Ovidian tone about it all, leaving at times the impression that the poet is making fun of his hero. The sexually ambivalent nature and cowardly disposition of Dionysus at once set him apart from the traditional representatives of ἀρετή, and the very incongruousness of portraying him as one of them contains in itself the seeds of parody. It is this parodic streak that distinguishes Nonnus' portrayal of Dionysus from that of Euripides, but this is not to say that his treatment is irreligious, for Dionysus is after all the god among whose tasks it is to replace grief and despondency with jollity and laughter. A light-hearted Ovidian treatment is thus

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Livrea, p. 25 of his ed. of *Paraphrase* 18. The term θεοτόκος was officially sanctioned by the Council of Ephesus in 431 at the prompting of Cyril of Alexandria, whose commentary on John's gospel, dating from 425-8 has been shown by Livrea to have had a decided influence on Nonnus' *Paraphrase*. Livrea notes at the same time that Nonnus is careful to avoid the notion of 'filioque', which was accepted by Cyril but repudiated by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. This has the effect of putting Nonnus' poems somewhere in the middle or latter half of the 5th century, but still within the timeframe proposed by Keydell and Vian.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.* n.16.

consonant with that aspect of the manifold character of Dionysus. There is clearly a more serious side to the poem as well, manifested in reiterated pronouncements drawn from Orphic hymns. Nonnus' earnestness in voicing Orphic beliefs recalls that of Lucretius in expounding the tenets of Epicureanism. In view of this it is difficult to concur with Vian's opinion that Nonnus' attitude to Orphism and Dionysiac ritual is merely that of a dispassionate antiquarian.<sup>21</sup> Livrea takes quite the opposite viewpoint when he speaks of 'il sincero sforzo sincretistico' (*op. cit.*, p.27) that pervades and unites the two works of our poet. Book 25 is not only important in the context of the *Dionysiaca*, where it serves as compendium or précis of Dionysus' feats (all of which are adumbrated in the three syncrises), but it serves also as a bridge to the *Paraphrase*. We saw how the poet adapts passages describing the miracles performed by Dionysus to describe the miracles performed by Christ. It is not surprising that he should have elected to paraphrase John's gospel in preference to the others, as it is the one which has most visibly been influenced by Orphic notions, beginning as it does with an exposition of the λόγος, and being hence the one most capable of being subsumed by the Orphic syncretism to which he so plainly subscribes in the *Dionysiaca*. Nonnus' relation to Orphism and Christianity is admirably summed up by Livrea, who says that the poet "tende ad un'ardita ed eroica sintesi culturale sincretistica che lo vede paladino entusiasta allo stesso tempo di un dionisismo misterico e soteriologico ... e di un cristianesimo intriso di elementi neoplatonici e profondamente affascinato dalla divinità miracolosa e polimorfa del Logos-Cristo" (*op. cit.*, p.31). Nonnus makes John's gospel more Orphic still, by often dressing Christ's pronouncements in a distinctly Orphic garb. If, as seems likely, his object was to accommodate Christianity to the wider context of Orphic pantheism by reducing it to a manifestation of the latter, then no one reading his two works could deny that he was at least partially successful in this endeavour.

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<sup>21</sup> (1988) pp. 406-7. Vian argues that since Nonnus uses the same Orphic terminology in the *Paraphrase* as he does in the *Dionysiaca*, its use is purely ornamental and 'banal', devoid of all original meaning.

### Chapter 3: books 27-30.

The 341 lines of book 27 are taken up for the most part by the speeches of Deriades (114 lines), Dionysus (54 lines) and Zeus (79 lines). Books 26 and 27 belong together in so far as both are concerned with preliminaries to the battle proper that commences in book 28. Zeus announces the imminent carnage of the Indians<sup>4</sup> with a shower of blood: ἀμφὶ δὲ γαίῃ / αἱμαλέης ξένον ὄμβρον ἀπ' ἰκμάδος ὑέτιος Ζεὺς / οὐρανόθεν κατέχευε, φόνου πρωτάγγελον Ἴνδῶν (27.12-4), which echoes Zeus' portent in the *Iliad*, as Patroclus is about to confront Sarpedon: αἱματοέσσας δὲ ψιάδας κατέχευεν ἔραζε / παῖδα φίλον τιμῶν (Π459-60, cf. also Λ52-5, where the shower of blood presages heavy casualties in the forthcoming battle).

Deriades, oriental tyrant as he is, addresses his followers as δμῶες ἐμοί (27.22, but cf. 45.220 where Pentheus, though a Greek ruler, does likewise), asking them to put their faith in the victory that is customarily theirs (ἠθάδι Νίκη, 27.22). The speech with its series of boasts alternating with threats, followed by a syncrisis of the speaker and his adversary, is similar in tone to Typhoeus' address to Zeus (2.258-356), Pentheus' speech (44.134-83), and Deriades' other speeches at 21.216-26, 241-73, 34.199-220, 36.140-60 and 39.33-74. Dionysus' speeches follow much the same pattern and display the same features, even if his emphasis is more hortative and his utterance a trifle less vituperative than those of his opponent. Unlike the speeches that Nonnus puts in the mouth of Hera in his two imitations of Homer's Διὸς ἀπάτη (14.153-360, 31.24-32.101), which are sophisticated exercises in the rhetoric of persuasion, the speeches of Dionysus and his foes are purely of an iterative nature and display little rhetorical complexity. The repetitiveness of the speeches, if not unexpected in an author for whom repetition,

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<sup>4</sup> Indians alone are mentioned though the slain include a number <sup>of</sup> noteworthy followers of Dionysus as well. For similarly conflicting statements cf. 35.225-7 (many slain on both sides) and 35.235-7 (the dead are all Indians).

ranging from the briefest of motifs to entire episodes, seems to be a principle of composition, is particularly palpable and becomes a little tedious after a while. The present speech begins with Deriades' boast of making Dionysus his servant (27.23-4), a boast that is repeated at 34.205-6 and 36.140. The same threat was previously issued by Orontes, who promised to make Dionysus a lackey of Deriades (17.182-4). A little later in the same speech he states that he shall kill Dionysus (27.131), a threat repeated at 39.39, but we note that Dionysus is hardly more accommodating, threatening to fix Deriades' horned head on his Lydian porch (27.219-200). Dionysus, who is ostensibly on a civilizing mission, exhibits the same barbaric savagery in his speeches as does Deriades (who enjoins his followers to nail the horned heads of satyrs on their thresholds, 36.147-50; cf. the similar actions of Lycurgus, 20.171-5). The failure to distinguish the behaviour of Dionysus from that of his barbaric opponents must be ranked among the many compositional shortcomings of the poem. How different the situation is in Apollonius, where Jason's balanced and conciliatory address (3.387-95) stands in such sharp contrast with the furious brutality of Aetes' outburst that precedes it (3.372-81)! Deriades continues, declaring that the Pans too are to become his servants. The idea of making the adversary's followers one's own servants is another recurrent feature of the speeches, which is given special prominence in the addresses of Dionysus and Poseidon in book 43 (70-142, 145-91). Many a follower of Dionysus will exchange the Sangarios for the Hydaspes, an idea which recurs in a different context, when Chalcomeda falsely promises to Morrheus to do the same (35.128-38). Dionysus' ignominious flight from Lycurgus is next recalled, with Dionysus advised to seek refuge this time in the Indian sea, where he will, however, find no Indian Thetis to welcome him. In the syncrisis that follows, Deriades compares his chthonian ancestry with the uranian ancestry of Dionysus. The speech presently assumes the character of a debate, with Deriades addressing Dionysus as if engaged in an argument with him: ἀλλ' ἐρέεις· 'Κρονίωνος Ὀλύμπιον αἶμα κομίζω.' / Αἰθέρα Γαῖα λόχευσε ... / Οὐρανόθεν γένος ἔσχες· ἐμὴ δέ σε Γαῖα καλύψει (27.49-51).<sup>2</sup> Speaking now as one of the race of giants, Deriades threatens to break off cliffs and bloody Athena's head with a rock or his bold spear.

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<sup>2</sup> We note that Typhoeus in his speech calls Uranos a brother, a fellow offspring of Gaia (2.235-6).

Dionysus he will wound in the thigh with an arrow (μηρὸν ... ὀστεύσω Διονύσου, 27.67), a threat repeated later by Pentheus with sexual overtones (ἐτύψω / ἔγχει χαλκείω τετορημένον εἰς πτύχα μηροῦ, 44.160-1). The threats are meant to mock the modes of Athena's and Dionysus' birth from the head and thigh respectively of Zeus. Deriades, like Typhoeus and Pentheus, displays a remarkable degree of hybris, declaring his intention to subvert the cosmic order and reduce the Olympians to subservience. Hephaistus he will press into his service, as he will the Cyclopes (71-2, 89--99). His aspiration to be the equal of Zeus is similar to that of Typhoeus (2.344-9). The idea of Zeus' thunderbolts being wielded by someone else - whether it be Typhoeus, Deriades or the Cyclopes - holds an obvious fascination for Nonnus.<sup>3</sup> The enemies of Deriades are not exclusively heavenly progeny, the Cyclopes being, as he is himself, of chthonian origin (Γηγενέας Κύκλωπας, 27.86), and two Olympians, Hera and Ares, are steadfastly by his side, though as an Indian worshipping earth and water, he never appeals to them and indeed seems to be unaware of their presence. Aiacus he promises to dispatch to Hades, where, if he so wish, he can sit in judgment over the dead (a role more usually associated with Minos, 27.82, cf. also 7.361). The Cyclopes, too, are mentioned by name and shall be put to work manufacturing imitation thunderbolts which will make him, Deriades, an earthly Zeus (Ζεὺς χθόνιος, 27.93), an idea which surfaces in a different guise in the next book, when the Indians are likened to Salmoneus (28.184). Deriades, by virtue of the Sun being his maternal grandfather, feels justified in fighting with fire as well as water (27.99-101), a possibility that Dionysus likewise takes into consideration, when he says that should the Sun attack him, he will call on Poseidon to help him quench its flames (27.189-94). He next enjoins the Indians to cut down the Telchines and bring their chariot and horses as<sup>2</sup> trophy to him. Let them slay Erechtheus as well, and send him (i.e. his ashes) in a box to Athena, this being a reference to the box in which Athena had hidden the first Erechtheus (i.e. Erichthonius) as an infant (27.110-7). The story of Erichthonius, whom Nonnus appears to confuse with Erechtheus, and the way in which he was begotten through Hephaistus' unsuccessful attempt at sexual union with Athena, is a recurrent theme

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<sup>3</sup> Beside Zeus, only Hera and Athena are privileged to use the thunderbolt, cf. 22.346-8 where Hera frightens Dionysus with thunder; for a Homeric precedent cf. Λ45-6.

in the poem (cf. 13.171-9, 27.317-23, 29.334-9, 41.63-4). The Corybants are to be taken captive, but the Cabeiroi are to be slain, enslavement or death being the alternatives that both Deriades and Dionysus present to their opponents. Let Hephaistus behold him, Deriades, riding in the chariot of his sons. Aristaius is left to be slain by Morrheus, while he himself, the horned son of a river, will take care of Dionysus, the horned son of Zeus.

The Indians march into battle forthwith, some on elephants, others on horseback, followed by a great number of infantry. The description, employing the anonymous τις, ὁ, ἄλλος κ.τ.λ., is reminiscent of the technique of the rhetorical ἐκφράσεις πεζομαχίας used previously at 22.191-5 and then intermittently throughout the battle scenes. Dionysus divides his army into four parts: καὶ πισύρων ἀνέμων + φλογερῆς ἀντώπιον Ἡοῦς +, / τέτραχα τεμνομένην στρατιὴν ἐστήσατο Βάκχων (27.148-9). The disposition of Dionysus' army (27.150-63) is subsequently outlined in relation<sup>to</sup> the four geographical features that, according to Dionysius Periegetes, define the sub-continent of India: the Caucasus (meaning the Himalayas), the Indus, the Erythrian Sea (Indian Ocean) and the Ganges (1130-4). We note that Nonnus' knowledge of India appears to be entirely derivative, based on Dionysius Periegetes and whatever he may have gleaned from the Alexander histories. His vague depiction of the capital of Deriades, which corresponds schematically to Homer's Troy in that the battle is being fought in front of its walls, contrasts markedly with his detailed and accurate descriptions of Tyre and Beirut (40.311-580 and 41.14-154), that are undoubtedly based on personal acquaintance. The number four is much used in Nonnus on account of its special significance in the Orphic cosmology (cf. his description of Harmonia's residence at 41.278ff. and our discussion thereon). Vian understands the four-fold division to symbolise Dionysus' taking possession of India in its entirety.<sup>4</sup> Whatever the case, Nonnus is clearly exploiting the opportune coincidence between the four geographical features depicted in Dionysius and the Orphic symbolism of the number four. We note that the naumachy too, is fought between four pairs of opposing squadrons: καὶ στόλος ἀμφοτέρων τετράζυγον εἶχεν ἐνωῶ (39.348), but in the war with Poseidon, the four-part division is replaced by a five-

<sup>4</sup> (1990) p.127: 'Quand Dionysos dispose ses quatre corps d'armée aux quatre points cardinaux, il prend symboliquement possession de l'Inde entière de Dériade'.

part one: καὶ στρατιῆς Διόνυσος ἐκόσμεεν ἡγεμονίᾳς, / στήσας πέντε φάλαγγας ἐς ὑδατόεσσαν ἐνώ (43.52-3). The change is not merely fortuitous, as the number five was, likewise, held to be of special significance in the Orphic religion (particularly in relation to the cult of Aion). The poet does seem to attach considerable importance to such numbers.<sup>5</sup> But with typical disregard for consistency, no sooner has he outlined the disposition of Dionysus' forces than he forgets about it. In book 30 he speaks as if the army had been divided into two, Dionysus commanding the right wing and Aristaius the left (30.10-2). A similar arrangement holds for the Indians, with the command shared between Deriades and Morrheus, with Deriades fighting against the women and Deriades against the men, implying that Dionysus' army is divided on gender lines (34.269-72). It is futile to seek a connecting logic between these statements, as the poet has quite clearly made them with a view solely to his immediate context.

Dionysus' speech, which now follows, is similar in tone and content to that of Deriades, the poet's failure to distinguish the civilizer from the barbarian being, as mentioned earlier, a shortcoming. He begins by urging the Bassarids to pit their thyrsos against the spears and swords of the enemy: καὶ ἔγχεσι μίξατε θύρσους, / μίξατε καὶ ξιφέεσσι (27.168-9). He next turns to the Hydaspes, telling the river that if it remains submissive and does not mobilise its waters for the Indian cause, he will convert them into wine, but should it persist in its recalcitrance, he will dam it up and march across its dusty bed. We note that conversion into wine is proffered to the river as reward rather than as means of bringing about its submission, in contrast to Dionysus' later speech at 35.353-6, where the submission of India is equated to an Hydaspes flowing <sup>with</sup> wine instead of water and a suppliant Deriades. Neither of these statements seems to take in consideration that the Hydaspes had already been turned to wine at 25.279-80. Vian has cautioned against attaching a too literal a meaning to the statements about the Hydaspes turned

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<sup>5</sup> Stegemann in his generally discredited astrological interpretation of the *Dionysiaca*, has gone as far as to suggest that the 48 books were meant by the poet to be viewed as combinations of the numbers one, four and five, viz. 5 (bks 1-5) - 1 (bk 6) - 5 (bks 7-11) - 1 (bk 12) - 4+4+4=12 (=no. of the signs of the Zodiac) (bks 13-24) - 1 (bk 25) - 4+4+4=12 (bks 26-37) - 1 (bk 38) - 5 (39-43) - 5 (bks 44-8). Stegemann tried to force the poem into this numerical Procrustean bed much in the same way that he endeavoured to fit the narrative into the framework of a rhetorical encomium as defined by Menander. His overtly sensationalist theories were rejected out of hand by Keydell and Collart, cf. D'Ippolito (1964) pp. 24-6.

into wine, claiming that they are meant either to demonstrate Dionysus' ability to cause hallucinations (presumably as at 25.279-80) or else are purely symbolic, a sort of metaphor for the submission of India (as at 35.353-6).<sup>6</sup> Whatever the case, one thing appears certain, namely that the poet in making each statement is concerned solely with its relevance to and effectiveness in its immediate context and quite unconcerned with what he may have said previously in another context. As we shall have ample opportunity to observe in the course of this discussion, Nonnus' striving for effect invariably takes precedence over narrative consistency. The injunction to dam up a refractory Hydaspes, if he should assume a human form and come to the aid of Deriades and the Indians (27.181-8), is not acted upon, however, even when the river, ταυροφυῆς νόθον εἶδος ἔχων βροτοειδέι μορφῇ (30.89), does precisely this and succours Morrheus, who has been beset by Hephaistus. The poet could not have failed to notice the contradiction, seeing that 27.184 and 30.89 have, clearly, been composed in parallel. We note that some of the phraseology of Dionysus' injunction is reused in Deriades' speech, when in horror at the Hydaspes having been turned into wine he declares that he would fill it with earth, were it not his own father: καί κεν ἐγὼ τόδε χεῦμα χυτῆς ἐπλησα κούης / ... προχοὴν μεθύουσαν ἐμοῦ γενετῆρος ὀδεύων / ποσσὶ κοινομένοισι διέτρεχον ἄβροχον ὕδωρ, / ... ὡς Ἐνοσίχθων / ξηρὸν ὕδωρ ποίησε, καὶ αὐσταλέου ποταμοῖο / Ἴναχίην ἵππειος ὄνυξ ἐχάραξε κούην (39.46-53). The two passages, as the verbal similarities indicate, have obviously been composed in parallel. Nonnus is not only aware of the frequent repetitions in his poem, but has composed them intentionally, always ensuring that the repeated

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. (1990) 29ff. Vian, responding in part to Keydell and Collart, who took Nonnus' inconsistencies to indicate the unfinished state of the *Dionysiaca* has sought to iron out many of the contradictions in the poem, by ascribing a metaphoric rather than literal meaning to the contradictory statements and generally interpreting them in such a way as to render them mutually compatible. But, like his two predecessors, he is exculpating the poet, only in a different way; while they excused Nonnus for his inconsistencies on the grounds that he did not have the opportunity to put the finishing touches to his work, Vian attributes them rather to our failure as readers to grasp the symbolic meaning of his statements. Livrea, (1989) p. 23 n. 9, takes a totally different view by accepting the contradictions as they stand, saying that they are simply representative of compositional practice at the time, citing Colluthus' Ἀρπαγὴ τῆς Ἑλένης and Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae* as other examples of this tendency. Indeed, as we shall note later in our discussion on the Beroe episode, Nonnus seems to have duplicated the very inconsistencies found in Claudian's poem, a circumstance which Braune has used to demonstrate Nonnus' acquaintance with the Latin poet.

passages differ in some details.

Dionysus next calls on his followers to fight fire with water in a reversal of the usual roles, to which we have already referred in relation to Deriades' speech. On their defeat the Indians will be obliged to whiten their black faces with chalk, implying initiation into the Bacchic rites, but at the same time deriding the blackness of the Indians. Remarks of a racial nature abound in the *Dionysiaca*, and there can be little doubt that they represent the poet's personal prejudices in this regard. But the chalking of faces is used to deride Dionysus' followers as well: in book 30 Morrheus taunts the fallen Phlogius with the comment that he has no need to chalk his face when he goes to dance for Persephone, seeing that it is well enough covered with dust as it is (30.121-5). Deriades, bending a submissive knee, shall exchange his armour for Bacchic apparel, though a little later he promises to attach Deriades' horns to his Lydian porch: παρά προπύλαια δὲ Λυδῶν / πήξω μαινομένοιο κεράατα Δηριαδῆος (27.219-20). Vian interprets those statements as foreshadowing the fate of Pentheus later in the narrative: like Pentheus, Deriades is first injected with Bacchic frenzy and then killed.<sup>7</sup> He may, however, be reading too much into the passage, seeing that bondage and death are touted fairly interchangeably in the mutual rantings of Dionysus and Deriades. In book 36 Deriades enjoins his followers to affix the horned heads of the Sileni and Satyrs on their houses: στέψατε πάντα μέλαθρα βουκραίοισι καρήνοισι (36.150), but then almost with the same breath promises to make them, along with Dionysus, his slaves.

Dionysus' speech predictably charges his followers with Bacchic frenzy. Testifying to his excited state, a glow shines forth from the brow of Silenus: Σιληνοῦ δὲ γέροντος ἀπ' εὐκεράιοιο μετώπου / μαρμαρυγὴ σελάγιζεν (27.234-5), recalling the glow that issued from the infant Dionysus, lighting up his dark hiding place: καὶ Διὸς αὐτοβόητος ἀπαγγέλλουσα λοχείην / μαρμαρυγὴ σελάγιζε, καταυγάζουσα προσώπου (9.103-4). A similar glow, indicative of the presence of Dionysus, facilitates the Bacchantes' escape from Pentheus' prison: καὶ δόμον ἀχλυόεντα θεόσσυτος ἔστεφεν ἀγλή / Βασσαρίδων ζοφεροῖο καταυγάζουσα μελάθρου / καὶ σκοτίου πυλεῶνες ἀνεπτύσσοντο βερέθρου /

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<sup>7</sup> (1990) p.131

αυτόματοι (45.280-3). The same language is employed to render the evangelist's καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν in the *Paraphrase*: ἐν ἀχλύεσσι δὲ κόσμῳ, / οὐρανίαις σελάγιζε βολαῖς γαιήοχος αἴγλη, / καὶ ζόφος οὗ μιν ἔμαρψε (1.11-3). Nonnus is quite obsessed with magical glows and fires, owing to the importance of the light-darkness and fire-water oppositions in the Orphic writings, and the obvious connexion with Dionysus' fiery birth. In book 29, when Dionysus' followers are again filled with Bacchic ardour, a flame plays around a Bassarid's head and neck but does not burn her: ἀπὸ πλοκάμοιο δὲ Βάκχης / ἀφλεγέος σελάγιζε κατ' αὐχένος αὐτόματον πῦρ (29.280-1), a phenomenon which is observed again during the battle between Dionysus and Poseidon: ἀπὸ πλοκάμοιο δὲ νύμφης / ἀφλεγέος σελάγιζε κατ' αὐχένος αὐτόματον πῦρ (43.356-7). These images appear to derive from Euripides' *Bacchae*, where the Bassarids in Dionysiac frenzy sport on their hair a fire that does not burn them: ἐπὶ δὲ βοστρύχοις / πῦρ ἔφερον, οὐδ' ἔκαιεν (757-8), but the same imagery is found in other writers in a non-Bacchic context. Thus in Vergil's *Aeneid* a similar flame plays about the head of Iulus by way of a divine portent: 'ecce levis summo de vertice Iuli / fundere lumen apex, tactu<sup>que</sup> innoxia mollis / lambere flamma comas et circum tempora pasci' (2.682-4). Nonnus has other magical fires that are unrelated to Bacchic ecstasy. The flames which Hera makes issue from Deriades' shield and helmet 30.234-6 are imitated from E1-4 and Σ203-6, where Athena performs the same service for Diomedes and Achilles respectively. Other unrelated instances are the γάμιον σέλας (27.319) that watched over the infant Erichthonius, and the emblematic burning tree of Tyre (40.473-5), derived from Phoenician mythology. There are also magical fires of a baleful sort, as that with which Hephaistus scorches Morrheus at 30.78-85 and Dionysus Deriades at 40.323-8.

The Satyrs make war with whitened faces and masks: καὶ Σάτυροι πολέμιζον· ἐλευκαίνοντο δὲ γύψῳ / μυστιπόλῳ, καὶ φρικτὸν ἐπηώρητο παρειαῖς / ψευδομένου νόθον εἶδος ἀφωνήτοιο προσώπου (27.228-30). Vian adduces a parallel from Herodotus, who refers to the Ethiopians smearing their bodies with chalk and ochre, as they go to war: τοῦ δὲ σώματος τὸ μὲν ἡμῖσιν

ἐξηλείφοντο γύψῳ ἰόντες ἐς μάχην, τὸ δ' ἕτερον ἡμῖσιν μίλτω (7.69). As to the use of disguises in war, the only other occurrence of it seems to be that in Valerius Flaccus, where Armes, a Scythian, takes to the battlefield disguised as Pan to strike terror into the enemy: 'frontem cum cornibus auxit / hispidus inque dei latuit terrore Lycaei. / hac tunc attonitos facie defixerat hostes' (6.532-4). Nonnus shares with Flaccus (and other post-Augustan Latin poets) a penchant for the bizarre and theatrical in battle-depiction, as the ensuing books will demonstrate. The poet leaves the battle scene for now, returning to it at the start of book 28, and devotes the rest of the present book to an assembly of the gods, called by Zeus to canvass greater support for Dionysus in his war with the Indians. Apollo, Athena and Hephaestus are upbraided for their indifference, and Hera and Ares for siding with the Indians. Zeus sees himself as having up to now been the only one to help Dionysus (27.314-6), and intends to broaden the basis of support for him by calling on the first three to come to the party. In the case of Apollo and Athena, their kinship with Dionysus is emphasized. Apollo is reminded of his shared tenancy of Parnassus with Dionysus, and of the revels held there for them both. The argument is grossly anachronistic in the context of the narrative, as Dionysus is yet to return to Greece to establish his cult. Here we have an example of an inconsistency which quite obviously cannot be attributed to the unfinished state of the text or explained away and rationalized on the basis of symbolic meaning. Nonnus is, quite clearly, concerned with the effectiveness of Zeus' speech in its immediate context and will not sacrifice what seems to him a telling point in the argument for considerations of narrative consistency. Another such deliberate anachronism occurs at 42.142-4, where the poet in an authorial comment expresses surprise that Dionysus, ὄν ἔτρεμε φῶλα Γιγάντων, should fear Beroe, even though the confrontation with the giants does not take place until book 48. Nonnus simply will not permit chronological exigencies to restrain him from making an effective point. Zeus reminds Apollo of the tribulations endured by Leto at Hera's connivance, when she was about to give birth to him and Artemis (27.269-77). This passage is a free, much abbreviated paraphrase of Callimachus' depiction of Leto's woes in his Hymn to Apollo, 55ff. Intimidated by Hera, all shirked from helping, until finally Leto takes pity on her: ὀππότε Πηρειοῖο φυγὰς ῥόος, ὀππότε Δίρκη / μητέρα σὴν

ἀπέειπεν, ὅτε δρόμον εἶχε καὶ αὐτὸς / Ἴσωπος βαρύγουνος ὀπίστερον  
 ἴχνος ἐλίσσων, / εἰσόκε Δῆλος ἄμυνε μογοστόκος, εἰσόκε Λητῶ /  
 οὔτιδανοῖς πετάλοισι γέρων μαιώσατο φοῖνιξ (27.273-77). The anaphora  
 ὀππότε ... φυγὰς ... ὀππότε corresponds to the φεῦγε ... φεῦγε in  
 Callimachus: φεῦγεν δ' ὁ γέρων μετόπισθε Φενειός (71) ... φεῦγε καὶ  
 Ἄουίη τὸν ἓνα δρόμον, αἱ δ' ἐφέποντο / Δίρκη τε Στροφίη τε ... / ...ὁ δ'  
 εἶπετο πολλὸν ὀπισθεν / Ἴσωπος βαρύγουνος (75-8) ... φεῦγε δὲ καὶ  
 Πηνειὸς ἐλίσσόμεμος διὰ Τεμπέων (105). The φοῖνιξ echoes ὁ Δῆλος ...  
 φοῖνιξ (4), and the γέρων is possibly a recollection of v.71 above, but, as Vian  
 notes, the γέρων ... φοῖνιξ is, at the same time, a comic inversion of the φοῖνικος  
 νέον ἔρνος that Odysseus saw on Delos (ζ162-3). We note the considerable  
 caricatural seam in the *Dionysiaca*, which in the books that follow manifests itself  
 most perceptibly in puns on names. Zeus, turning to Athena, asks her - unfairly  
 perhaps seeing that she had shielded Aiacus, when the latter was beset by the  
 Indians from all sides (22.257-8) - not to stand idly by while the sons of Attica die.  
 The analogy between her manner of birth from Zeus' head and that of Dionysus  
 from Zeus' thigh is emphasized: this is seen as forming a special bond between the  
 two (cf. also 27.67). A debt of gratitude is owed to Pan as well, for tending the  
 goat Amaltheia and on account of his help in the struggle with the Titans.<sup>8</sup>

Dionysus' role in securing the victory of the Athenian Melanthius over the Boeotian  
 Xanthus - another gross anachronism but excusable, perhaps, on the ground that it  
 is Zeus, who knows the future equally with the past and present, that is speaking -  
 is adduced as a further reason why Athena should be helping him now. Hephaistus  
 is, likewise, obliged to lend assistance. He, the father of Erichthonius, should  
 protect his Athenian progeny as well as his sons the Cabeiroi. Hephaistus is  
 reminded of his attempted sexual union with Athena, of the goddess's  
 breastfeeding of Erichthonius ἄρσεν μαζῶ (27.323), of the γάμιον σέλας  
 (27.325) that watched over the infant, and of the axe with which he opened Zeus'  
 head to give birth to Athena.

In the books that follow, Athena and Hephaistus will be seen to be actively

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<sup>8</sup> Vian (1990) p.309 believes that Nonnus is referring to an alternative version of the Typhonomachy, where Pan played the part assigned to Cadmus in his own account.

involved on behalf of Dionysus and his followers, though Hephaistus' contribution is confined to helping the Cabeiroi. Hera and Ares will, in defiance of Zeus, continue to help the Indians. Apollo appears to play no role, but Aphrodite, after helping Hera, will lend some succour to Dionysus' beleaguered followers by effectively removing Morrheus from the battlefield, and Hermes will rescue the Bacchantes from Indian captivity in the absence of Dionysus. The definitive splitting of the gods into two opposing camps is seen by Vian as forming a prelude to the theomachy in book 36, but the latter is, like Homer's, a detached tabloid with little bearing on the course of events on the ground. More importantly, the present episode prepares us for the frequent instances of divine intervention in books 28-30. The instances of direct physical intervention in the Homeric sense are, apart from Athena's shielding of Aiacus at 22.257-8 and her standing by Dionysus at 40.74-5, all confined to books 28-30.

Books 28-30 resemble 22-24 in being almost entirely devoted to warfare (except for the Dionysus-Hymenaius episode in 29). The pathos of the Tectaphus scene in book 30 recalls the pathos of the mourning scenes in book 24. But whereas the fighting in 22-24 was directed towards a definite objective, the crossing (or, from the Indian viewpoint, its prevention) of the Hydaspes, that in 28-30 does not seem to be channelled toward the attainment of any specific goal. It is rather the sort of literary gladiatorial show that we find in the post-Augustan Roman poets Lucan, Statius and Valerius Flaccus (cf. especially the latter's gratuitous book 6), replete with gruesome and often bizarre descriptions of death on the battlefield, that bear so little resemblance to reality as to be wholly devoid of credibility. Such descriptions, nurtured in the schools of rhetoric, had long been stereotyped. Nonnus, however, outdoes his predecessors' already exaggerated descriptions to such an extent as to leave the unavoidable impression that he is (like Ovid) parodying this mode of writing. Mixed in with these rhetorical bizarreries are certain gigantomachy elements, scenes of Bacchic frenzy and conventional Homeric battle depictions.

Book 28 begins with Phaunus, Aristaius and Aiacus marching into battle, the last having slung from his shoulder a πολυδαίδαλος ἄσπίς, which had been fashioned on the Lemnian anvil (presumably, like Achilles' shield, by Hephaistus). From this the reader might infer that the three will play a prominent part in the

forthcoming battle, an expectation that is, however, not realized. The aristeia of Aiacus has already been presented (books 22-3), and he will have no further part to play until 32.281-3, where he is described as the only one to withstand the Indian onslaught during Dionysus' madness. Aristaius, though, will be the subject of a short aristeia in the impending battle (29.179-92), but Phaunus misses out altogether, his sole claim to distinction being to lead the woodchopping party for Opheltes' funeral pyre in book 37. Leaving the three conventional warriors aside, Nonnus proceeds to describe Dionysus' contingent of Satyrs and Bassarids as they make their way to the battlefield in chariots drawn by lions or panthers, or riding on the backs of bears and bulls, armed with clusters of vine and ivy, and wearing the nebris for breastplate. The poet is bent on giving us a paraphrase of the famous Homeric passage at N128-33 as at he did previously at 22.182-5, only this time arraying Bacchic against conventional weaponry: *στέμματα μὲν κορύθεσσιν, ἐπέκτυπε δ' αἰγίδι θώρηξ, / ἔγχεσι θύρσος ἔθυσσε, καὶ ἰσάζοντο κοθόρνοις / ἀντίτυποι κνημίδες. ὁμοζυγέων δὲ φορήων / στοιχάδες ἀλλήλησιν ἐπηρείδοντο βοεῖαι, / καὶ πρυλέες πρυλέεσσιν, ἀερσιλόφῳ δὲ καρήνῳ / Μυγδονίην πῆληκα Πελασγιάς ὥθεε πῆληξ* (28.29-34). It is puzzling why the Mygdonians and Pelasgians should be arrayed one against the other, as neither could conceivably be understood to fight for Deriades and the Indians, with whom they have no connexion. Vian believes the whole segment (28.29-34) was originally composed for the Dionysus-Perseus confrontation in book 47, but then for some reason was transposed to its present location.<sup>9</sup> A segment of generalised fighting follows, introduced by the phrase *καὶ κλόνος ἦν προμάχων ἑτερότροπος* (27.35), a statement which is used again (in expanded form) at 36.206-7: *καὶ πολὺς ἐγρεκύδοιμος ἔην κτύπος, ἀντιβίων δὲ / ὠτειλὴ κταμένων ἑτερότροπος*, to introduce a similar battle scene involving multiple anonymous participants. The contrasting modes of fighting between the Bacchantes and Indians are highlighted: *καὶ τελετῇ Βρομίῳο συνεσμαράγησεν Ἐνυώ, / εὖδα δ' ἔαχε ρόπτρα, καὶ ἠγήτειρα κυδοιμοῦ / λαὸν ἀολλίζουσα συνέκτυπε*

<sup>9</sup> (1990) p.170. Vian thinks it plausible that Nonnus worked simultaneously on various parts of the *Dionysiaca*. This is apparent from the reuse, always in slightly altered form, of expressions in the depiction of thematically analogous situations. The present passage seems to have found its way into the wrong pigeon-hole.

πηκτίδι σάλπιγξ, / σπονδῆ λύθρον ἔμιξε, φόνον δ' ἐκέρασε χορείη  
(28.41-4). These lines are in a way a fitting synopsis of all the battle scenes in the  
*Dionysiaca* with their blend of <sup>the</sup> magical and conventional.

Nonnus, though he views the Indians with contempt, bestows considerable attention on deeds of valor<sup>u</sup> performed by their champions. Corymbasus, whom the poet describes as ἔξοχος Ἴνδῶν, / ἔξοχος ἠνορέην μετὰ Μορρέα καὶ βασιλῆα (28.97-8), is made the subject of an aristeia, the first of several assigned to Indians. As in the aristeias of Oiagrus and Aiacus depicted earlier, the fighting assumes a conventional Homeric character with numerous echoes from the *Iliad*. The aristeia is introduced gradually in the midst of a number of shorter encounters, the first of which is Phaleneus' attack on Deriades: εἴθα πολὺ πρῶτιστος, ἐῶ ποδὶ κοῦφος ὀρούσας, / ἀντία Δηριάδαο κατηκόντιζε Φαληνεὺς (28.45-6), the description being patterned on εἴθα πολὺ πρῶτιστος Ὀιλῆος ταχὺς Αἴας / Σάτιον οὐτάσε (Ξ442-3). Phaleneus misses: οὐ δὲ τιταινομένη χροὸς ἦψατο λοίγιος αἰχμῆ, / ἀλλὰ παραίξασα πάγη χθονί (28.48-9), which is patterned on expressions such as ἦ δ' ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ / γαίῃ ἐνεστήρικτο, λιλαιομένη χροὸς ἄσαι (Φ167-8), where the spear is anthropomorphically endowed with the power of volition. The echoes appear to be randomly selected from the *Iliad* without any contextual parallel in mind. Phaleneus is then slain by Corymbasus, who cuts off his head (28.53-4). A number of other Homeric vignettes follow. Dexiochus attacks Phlogius, who retreats, taking shelter behind his brother's great shield: αὐτὰρ ὁ ταρβήσας, ὀλίγον γόνυ γουνὸς ἀμείβων, / μηκεδανῆ κεκάλυπτο κασιγνήτοιο βοείῃ, / Δαρδανίης ἄτε Τεῦκρον ὀιστευτῆρα γενέθλης / εἰς σάκος ἑπταβόειον ἐδέχυντο σύγγονος Αἴας, / πατρῷη συνάεθλον ἀδελφεὸν ἀσπίδι κεύθων (28.58-9,61-2). Here we have a conflation of two Homeric recollections. The ὀλίγον γόνυ γουνὸς ἀμείβων (which Nonnus, incidentally, imitates again at 32.265-6 and 42.55-9) is taken from the depiction of Ajax' slow retreat before the Trojan onslaught at Λ546-7, whence comes also the σάκος ἑπταβόειον. The passage, as the poet himself indicates, is essentially an evocation of the scenes where Teucer takes shelter behind Ajax' shield while shooting at the enemy: Τεῦκρος δ' εἵνατος ἦλθε πάλιντονα τόξα

τιταίνων, / στῆ δ' ἄρ' ὑπ' Αἴαντος σάκει Τελαμωνιάδαο (Θ266-7) and after he has been struck by a stone from Hector: Αἴας δ' οὐκ ἀμέλησε κασιγνήτοιο πεσόντος, / ἀλλὰ θεῶν περίβη καί οἱ σάκος ἀμφεκάλυψεν (Θ330-1). The Indians, far from being presented as earthborn monsters, are here likened to some of the greatest of the Greek heroes. The explicit reference to another literary work, especially in the middle of the narrative, is quite astounding, seeing that other epic poets, though imitating Homer at every turn, did not actually refer to him by name even in their proems. As already noted, Nonnus appears to have derived this practice from Pindar, who cites Homer by name six times in his odes (cf. for example, *Nem.* 7.29-31). Corymbasus lays Dexiochus low with his sword (28.64). Clytius rushes upon Deriades, but Hera turns his spear aside in what is the first of a series of direct interventions by the gods on the battlefield (28.68-72). The spear, missing Deriades, kills his elephant instead, an idea borrowed from the Sarpedon-Patroclus confrontation in the *Iliad*, where Sarpedon, missing Patroclus, kills the latter's outrunner (παρήγορος), Pegasus. The driver quickly cuts the straps by which the car was attached to the elephant's neck: ἀλλὰ πολυκλήιστον ὑπὸ ζυγὸν ἄορι κάμπας / αὐχενίων ἀνέκοψε ὁμόζυγον ὄλκον <sup>ἐκάνεον</sup> / ἠνίοχος ταχυεργός (28.77-9), recalling the action of Automedon, who σπασσάμενος τανύηκες ἄορ παχέος παρὰ μηροῦ, / αἴξας ἀπέκοψε παρήγορον (Π473-4). Clytius calls out to Corymbasus in consciously Iliadic language: στῆθι, κύων, μὴ φεῦ· Κορύμβασε, καὶ σε διδάξω, / οἴοι ἀκοντιστῆρες ὁπάονές εἰσι Λυαίου (28.84-5), promising to make Deriades a servant of Dionysus. He is described as speaking ὕβριστῆρι ... ἀνθερεῶνι (28.83), the imputation of hybris to someone fighting on Dionysus' side being somewhat unusual. He resembles Idas, who displays similar character traits in Apollonius' *Argonautica* (cf. his speech at 1.463-71, which earns Idmon's rebuke). Clytius' head is shorn off by Corymbasus while still speaking (φθεγγομένου Κλυτίοιο, 28.92), recalling the death of Dolon at the hands of Diomedes (φθεγγομένου δ' ἄρα τοῦ γε κάρη κονίησιν ἐμίχθη, K457). The headless body rolls on the ground, an ὄρχηστήρ παλιδίνητος (28.96). Nonnus is fascinated by the idea of the dance of death (for other instances cf. 17.213-4, Centaur slain by Orontes; 22.315-7, Indian slain by Erechtheus;

30.118-25, Phlogius slain by Morrheus; 37.741-2, dove shot down in archery contest; and 39.336-7, dolphin killed by Deriades' spear), a gruesome variant on the other dance depictions in the *Dionysiaca*. The aristeia is curtailed at the end, Nonnus simply listing Corymbasus' other victims: Sebes, Oinomaus (who is to be distinguished from the king of Elis of the same name and from the other Oinomaus mentioned at 43.60), Tyndarius, Thoon, Austesion and Onites. Nonnus now leaves Corymbasus, to indulge depictions of a more grotesque sort. He firstly concerns himself with the postures of the slain, describing warriors who, though dead, remain standing in battle-readiness, poised as if to draw a bow or hurl a spear: καὶ πολὺς ἀρτιδάικτος ἔην νέκυσ ... θανῶν ἀτίνακτος ἐπεστηρίζετο γαίῃ, / μαρναμένῳ προμάχῳ πανομοίως, ὡς δόρυ πάλλων, ἴ<sup>ως</sup> τανύων θοὰ τόξα καὶ ὡς βέλος εἰς σκοπὸν ἔλκων (28.113-7). This macabre gallery of warriors frozen in death seems to have been imitated from some poem on Perseus petrifying his assailants with the head of Medusa. Thus in Ovid, Thescelus, as he prepares to throw his spear at Perseus, is frozen in this posture: 'utque manu iaculum fatale parabat / mittere, in hoc haesit signum de marmore gestu' (*Met.* 5.182-3). It is only in such a context that the scene is intelligible. One dead warrior, pierced with arrows from head to foot, is referred to as Ἄρεος ὀρθὸν ἄγαλμα (28.122), a phrase that the 12th century Byzantine writer Michael Italicus applies to the living, when he calls the emperor Andronicus Commenus τὸ ἔμπνουν Ἄρεως ἄγαλμα (cf. also Ἄρεως εἰκὼν at 28.156).<sup>10</sup> We note that in Ovid, Eryx, rushing on Perseus, becomes an armed statue: 'immotusque silex armataque mansit imago' (*Met.* 5.199).

Next follows a standard rhetorical set-piece, the warrior who fights on despite having his arms lopped off. This topos originated from a real life occurrence during the Persian wars, when Cynaigeirus, the brother of Aeschylus, had his arm lopped off as he seized the prow of an enemy ship (recorded in Herodotus 6.114: τοῦτο δὲ Κυναίγειρος ὁ Εὐφορίωνος ἐνθαῦτα, ἐπιλαβόμενος τῶν ἀφλάστων νηός,

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<sup>10</sup>Vian (1990) pp.158-9 has found the phrase used by the rhetorician Polemon (2.52), who, however, uses it purely figuratively, as a variant of Homer's δῆλος Ἄρης, i.e. to denote valour rather than to depict appearance.

τὴν χεῖρα ἀποκοπεῖς πελέκει πίπτει). The rhetoricians and later poets blew this incident out of all proportion, as we may see from Lucan's version (where it has been transposed to the context of an engagement between the Roman and Phocian fleets). A Phocian (one of two brothers) 'ausus Romanae Graia de puppe carinae / iniectare manum, sed eam gravis insuper ictus/amputat ... crevit in adversis virtus ... fortique instaurat proelia laeva / rapturusque suam procumbit in aequora dextram: / haec quoque cum toto manus est abscisa lacerto ... tum ... sanguine et hostilem defectis <sup>robore</sup> nervis / insiluit solo nociturus pondere puppem' (3.610-26). The Phocian thus out-performs Cynaigeirus, losing not one but two arms and still continuing the fight. The situation borders on the absurd but Lucan presents it in all seriousness. In Nonnus the same topos is taken beyond all limits of credibility in a way strongly suggestive of parody. In a manner reminiscent of Ovid, Nonnus both uses the rhetorical exaggerations and parodies them at the same time. He has taken the scene out of its naval context but has maintained the link with Athens by making his protagonist Athenian. The man loses his right arm, which rolls on the ground in a dance of death, marking the yellow dust: ἡ δὲ κυβιστήσασα φόνου βητάρμοι παλμῶ / ἤριπεν ἀρτιδάικτος, ὀμήλικι σύμπλοκος ὤμῳ / ξανθὰ διαστίζουσα κατάρρυτα νῶτα κονίης (28.128-30; cf. also 22.197-8 for a similar depiction of severed limbs jumping about in reptilic fashion). He seeks to recover the spear from the severed hand (cf. the Lucan passage above, where he endeavours to retrieve the hand itself), but loses his left arm as well in the process, which like the right goes through even more elaborately choreographed movements, clutching the soil as if wanting to grip the shieldstrap once more (28.138-42). The situation depicted is so patently untrue to life as to verge on the ridiculous. It is at this point that the Athenian decides to give a speech, expressing the wish that he had a third hand, ὄφρα τελέσω / τριχθαδίαις παλάμησιν ἐπάξια Τριτογενείης (28.138-42). He is punning now, playing on the similarity (difference of quantity notwithstanding) of the number three and the first syllable of the epithet of Athena. Armless, he fights on with his feet, ὄφρα τις εἶπη / εὐχος Ἀθηναίων περιδέξιον, ὅττι καὶ αὐτοῖς / ποσσὶν ἀριστεύουσι δαΐζομένων παλαμάων (28.147-9). Further word-play results from the contradiction between the περιδέξιον and the δαΐζομένων παλαμάων

(28.147-9). To describe an armless man as being περιδέξιος, which has the primary meaning 'ambidextrous', is singularly inappropriate in his present circumstances and therein lies the pun. The Athenian eventually succumbs to the many blows from the enemy, who surround him on all sides, the poet remarking: ἔην δέ τις Ἄρεος εἰκῶν / ὀφιγόνῳ ναετῆρι φυλασσομένη Μαραθῶνος (28.156-7). Vian's reading of Κυνεγείρω in place of Μαραθῶνος makes the reference to the historical figure even more explicit.

Nonnus now proceeds to depict the slaughter among the cavalry. A rider, thrown by his wounded horse, is compared to Bellerophon falling off Pegasus. Another, his feet caught around the belly of the horse, is dragged head first along the ground (28.168-71), a scene which, based on the death of the charioteer Cebriones in the *Iliad* (Π740-3), had become a standard set-piece in later epic (cf. Silius Italicus 4.255-8 for the same). The poet returns to this scene at 30.118ff., where Morrheus repeats in essence Patroclus' mocking comments on the fallen charioteer. After this brief anonymous segment Nonnus proceeds to narrate the feats of the Cyclopes at some length, the fighting assuming somewhat the aspect of a gigantomachy. Gigli-Piccardi has drawn attention to the quasi-comical nature of this segment, with the poet punning, in a manner reminiscent of Aristophanes, with the names of the Cyclopes.<sup>11</sup> The Cyclops' actions are made to represent their names, beginning with: καὶ βριαροὶ Κύκλωπες ἐκυκλώσαντο μαχητάς, / Ζηνὸς ἀοσητήρες (28.173-7). Argilipus (lit. 'the dazzling white one'), raising a torch lights up the dusky Indians: ὀμιχλήεντι δὲ λαῶ / Ἄργίλιπος σελάγιζε φεραυγέα δαλὸν αἰείρων, / καὶ χθονίῳ κεκόρυστο πυριγλώχινι κεραυνῶ / μαρνάμενος δαΐδεσσι· καὶ ἔτρεμον αἴθοπες Ἴνδοὶ / οὐρανίῳ πρηστῆρι τεθηπότες ἀντίτυπον πῦρ (28.173-7). It may be noted that Dionysus has recourse to the same weapons in his fight against the giants (and the poet recourse to the same vocabulary in depicting it): ἐπ' ἀντιβίῳ δὲ καρήνων / Βάκχος ἀνηώρητο μαχήμονα δαλὸν αἰείρων, / καὶ χθονίῳ πρηστῆρι δέμας θέρμαινε Γυγάντων / ἀντίτυπον μίμημα Διοβλήτοιο κεραυνοῦ (48.63-6). Argilipus burns the αἴθοπες Ἴνδοὶ (we note the play on the primary and secondary

<sup>11</sup>(1985) pp.140-1. Nonnus is rather keen on nomina significantia - for an earlier example cf.24.70: Δηριάδης ἐπὶ δῆριν ἐπώνυμον ὤπλισεν Ἴνδούς.

meanings of αἴθορες), chastising more than one Salmoneus: καὶ ἄσπετον ἄλλον ἐπ' ἄλλω / Ἴνδὸν οἰστευτῆρι κατέφλεγεν ἀνέρα πυρσῶ, / οὐχ ἓνα Σαλμωνῆα νόθῳ πρήνιξε κεραυνῶ (28.182-4). Argilipus is seen here to outdo Zeus in the way that Aiacus in an earlier segment outdoes Achilles: οὐχ ἓνα μῦνον ἐπέφνε Λυκάονα (22.380). The Indians are somewhat undeservedly equated with Salmoneus, who was punished by Zeus for wielding a νόθος κεραυνός. They are guilty of no such transgression; on the contrary it is Argilipus who wields it, committing the very offence for which Salmoneus paid with his life. The Indians are also compared to Capaneus, who like Salmoneus, had been struck down by Zeus for his hybris: οὐ μία μῦνου / Εὐάδιη στενάχιζε μαραινομένου Καπανῆος (28.185-6). This mention of a second victim of Zeus parallels the reference to Asteropaius, the second victim of Achilles, at 22.383. The Argilipus passage has been modelled on the Aiacus passage, and it in turn serves as a model, as far as the weaponry is concerned, for the passage in book 48 to which we referred above. Reuse of his own passages (imitatio sui) is almost as vital a part of Nonnus' compositional technique as is his use of passages from the works of his predecessors (though it must be admitted that "reuse" may not be quite the appropriate term here, as it is likely that Nonnus worked on the analogous passages simultaneously, writing them in parallel, cf. also p. 72n.).

Steropes, like Argilipus, lives up to his name αἰθερίας στεροπήσι φέρων ἀντίκτυπον αἴγλην (28.188). Brontes does likewise, βρονταίοις πατάγοισι χέων ἀντίκτυπον ἠχώ (28.196). Brontes is a νόθος ... ἀννέφελος Ζεὺς (28.199), as Typhoeus had been earlier (Ζεὺς νόθος, 1.295 and ἀννεφέλου ... Γίγαντος 1.299), but proves to be far more adept than the latter at handling the thunderbolt. Brontes uses other weapons as well: breaking off a boulder from a cliff-face, he hurls it at Deriades (28.206-7), which recalls Polyphemus' action in the *Odyssey* (ι206ff.). Nonnus returns to boulder-throwing in the naumachy, when Halimedes throws one at the Indian fleet (39.340-1). Deriades, stunned by the blow, lets go of his spear and shield: ἀκαμάτων δόρυ θοῦρον ἔων ἀπεσεῖσατο χειρῶν, / χάλκεον εἰκοσίπηχυ, πέδῳ δ' ἔρριψε βοεῖην / αἰδομέναις παλάμησι (28.214-6). This whole incident is inspired by the Ajax-

Hector confrontation in the *Iliad*, where Hector, hit by a rock thrown by Ajax, lets drop his spear: *χειρὸς δ' ἔκβαλεν ἔγχος, ἐπ' αὐτῷ δ' ἀσπίς ἐάφθη / καὶ κόρυς, ἀμφὶ δέ οἱ βράχε τεύχεα ποικίλα χαλκῷ* (Ξ419-20). Deriades falls gasping from his chariot: *καὶ ἀδρανὲς ἀσθμα τιταίνων ... ἠερόθεν προκάρηνος ἀπ' ἠλιβάτου πέσε δίφρου, / ὡς ἐλάτη περίμετρος ὑπέρλοφος, ἣ τε πεισοῦσα / ἄσπετον εὐρείης περιδέδρομε κόλπον ἀρούρης* (28.216-20). We recall that Hector too falls like a tree, though like one that has been struck by lightning: *ὡς δ' ὄθ' ὑπὸ πληγῆς πατρὸς Διὸς ἐξερύπη δρύς* (Ξ414).<sup>12</sup> Nonnus also has in view an earlier scene in the *Iliad*, where Antilochus downs Mydon, the charioteer of Pylaimenes, with a rock. Mydon lets go of the reins, which drop to the ground: *ἐκ δ' ἄρα χειρῶν / ἠΐα λεύκ' ἐλέφαντι χαμαὶ πέσον ἐν κοίησιν* (E582-3), and, struck with the sword on the head, falls headlong from the chariot: *ὁ γ' ἀσθμαίνων εὐεργέος ἔκπεσε δίφρου / κύμβαχος ἐν κοίησιν* (E585-6). Deriades, like Hector, is saved from further harm by his companions, who crowd around him and place him in a wagon: *ἀμφὶ δέ μιν προχυθέντες ἐς ἄρματα κούφισαν Ἴνδοί* (28.221), corresponding to: *τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἑταῖροι / χερσὶν αἰείραντες φέρον ἐκ πόνου, ὄφρ' ἴκεθ' ἵππους / ὠκέας, οἱ οἱ ὄπισθε μάχης ἠδὲ πτολέμοιο / ἔστασαν ἠνίοχόν τε καὶ ἄρματα ποικίλ' ἔχοντες* (Ξ428-31). We note that a further echo of this Homeric passage occurs at 32.215-8, in Morrheus' mocking speech to the fallen Echelaus.

Brontes' appearance frightens the Indians, who mistake his one round eye for the moon, rising in his face instead of the sky, to lend succour to Dionysus: *καὶ βλοσυροῦ Κύκλωπος ὑποπτήσσοντες ὄπωπὴν / θαμβαλέω δεδόνητο φόβω κυανόχροες Ἴνδοί, / οὐρανόθεν δοκέοντες Ὀλυμπίας ὅτι Σελήνη / Γηγενέος Κύκλωπος ἐναντέλλουσα προσώπῳ / πλησιφαῆς ἦστραπτε, προασπίζουσα Λυαίου* (28.228-32). This is clearly a comic exaggeration of stock poetic comparisons of the Cyclops' eye to a heavenly body, such as Vergil's *'lumen ... quod torva sub fronte latebat, / Argolici clipei aut Phoebeae lampadis*

<sup>12</sup> The falling tree simile is commonplace, cf. Apollonius 4.1682-8 for an elaborate example.

instar' (*Aen.* 3.635-7). Nonnus refers to Zeus' bemusement at the sight of Brontes' attempts to mimic himself, a reference which underlines the comic nature of the Cyclopeia as a whole. Other Cyclopes join the fray. Trachius prepares to do battle as does his brother Elatreus, who in accord with his name, wields an ἐλάτην περιμήκετον, with which he proceeds to cut off the heads of the enemy. Euryalus too lives up to his name by driving a troop of the enemy toward the sea: διατμήξας δὲ κυδοιμῶ / ἐκ πεδίου φεύγοντα πολλὸν στρατὸν ἄχρι θαλάσσης (28.242-3), which is reminiscent of Achilles' action at the beginning of the twenty-first book of the *Iliad*: ἔνθα διατμήξας τοὺς μὲν πεδίου δ' ἐδίωκε / πρὸς πόλιν ... ἡμίσεες δὲ ἐς ποταμὸν εἰλεῦντο (Φ3-8). The Homeric passage was used previously by the poet to describe the action of Aiacus in his own equivalent of the μάχη παραποτάμιος at 22.356-7. Having driven them into the sea, Euryalus hurls a rock at the Indians, who face a two-fold death, through being crushed by the projectile and at the same time drowning in the brine (28.248-9). The idea of the two-fold death recurs at 34.238-9, where the Bassarids, thrown into a well, meet their doom as they are simultaneously buried by the mud and drowned by the water. We may recall that Ajax Oileus succumbs to a similar two-fold fate in Quintus, γαίῃ ὁμῶς δηθέντα καὶ ἀτρυγέτῳ ἐνὶ πόντῳ (14.589). Halimedes takes up the fight alongside his fellows, taking care to protect his eye with a shield: φυλασσόμενος δὲ προσώπου / κυκλάδος ὀμφαλόεντα προίσχανε νῶτα βοείης (28.259-60). The poet may have been prompted here by the comparison of the Cyclops' eye to a shield (cf. the above Vergil example), which is understood to be just adequate to cover the eye. As with other shields in Nonnus, no sooner is it mentioned than it is forgotten, with Halimedes being forced to duck in order to avoid an arrow, which Phlogius aims at his eye, as if the shield did not exist. Halimedes retaliates by hurling a jagged missile at Phlogius, who escapes harm by sheltering behind Deriades' chariot. The Cyclops vents his frustration at Phlogius' escape with a mighty shout which kills twelve men (28.270-3), a passage that is obviously modelled on that in which the voice of Achilles, divinely augmented by Athena, kills twelve Trojans in the *Iliad* (Σ228-31). Nonnus is rather fond of such supernatural shouts; we note that Dionysus also issues them on two occasions (17.225-8 and 29.291-5) and Ares

once (32.176), all in imitation of E860 and Ξ148. His preoccupation with the physical effects of the voice has not been engendered by the *Iliad* alone, but also by Orphic notions of the magical power of the spoken word. It is notable that in the *Paraphrase* he ascribes this power also to the voice of Christ, when the followers of Annas, who have come to arrest him, are bowled over by the sound of his voice: καὶ ὡς ἐφθέγγετο λαῶ / ἀβροχίτων, ἀσίδηρος ἀνάξ ῥηξήνορι φωνῆ, / πάντες ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι μαχήμονες ἀσπιδιώται / αὐτόματοι πίπτοντες, ἐπεστόριυντο κούρη / πρηνέες, οἰστροθέντες ἀτευχεὶ λαίλαπι φωνῆς (18.34-8).

The feats of the Corybants, who had once protected the infant Zeus and were now helping the cause of Dionysus, are described forthwith. The play on names continues: Δαμνεὺς μὲν πολέμιζεν ἀνάρσια φύλα δαμάζων, / ποσσὶ δ' ἐλαφροτέροισι διεπτοίησε μαχητὰς / Ὀκύθοος (28.277-9). Ocythoos is compared to Iphiclus, ὅς τις ἐπείγων / ταρσὰ ποδῶν ἀβάτοιο κατέγραφεν ἄκρα γαλήνης, / καὶ σταχύων ἐφύπερθε μετάρσιον εἶχε πορείην, / ἀνθερίκων στατὸν ἄκρον ἀκαμπέα ποσσὶν ὀδεύων (28.284-7). These lines have been inspired by Homer's description of the horses of Boreas, αἱ δ' ὅτε μὲν σκιρπῶεν ἐπὶ ζείδωρον ἀρουραν, / ἄκρον ἐπ' ἀνθερίκων καρπὸν θεόν οὐδὲ κατέκλων· / ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ σκιρτῶεν ἐπ' εὐρέα νῶτα θαλάσσης, / ἄκρον ἐπὶ ῥηγγῖνος ἀλὸς πολιοῖο θέεσκον (Υ226-9), a passage which, incidentally, also inspired Apollonius' depiction of the Argonaut Euphemus (1.182-4). Mimas dances into battle ἔχων μιμηλὸν ἐνόπλιον ἄλμα χορείης (28.296). His mode of fighting is compared to the war-dance of the Corybants, which had screened the infant Zeus, in a passage (28.292-5) adapted from Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus (51-4). The phrase σάκος ξιφέεσσιν ἀράσων (28.293) is, however, an echo of σάκεα ξιφέεσσιν ἐπέκτυπον from Apollonius' description of the Argonauts' war-dance to propitiate Rhea (1.1134-8), while σκαρθμὸν ... ἐνόπλιον (28.293) reflects σκαίροντες βηταρμὸν ἐνόπλιον (1.1135). We note that Nonnus has previously imitated the Callimachus and Apollonius passages at 14.30-3 in connexion with the same theme.

Idaius likewise dances onto the battlefield - he is referred to as ὄξυφαής, which Vian suspects is meant to reflect the similarity between the name and the verb 'to see' (ιδεῖν). Melisseus stings like a bee: ἐπωνυμίην δὲ φυλάσσων / φρικτὰ κορυσσομένης μιμήσατο κέντρα μελίσσης (28.307-8). Acmon fights like an unshakable anvil: μάρνατο δ' ἀστυφέλικτος ἄτε σφυρήλατος ἄκμων (28.311), carrying a shield on which the infant Zeus had often slept. A brief description of Zeus' childhood follows (28.314-8), which echoes sections of Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus (cf. esp. 33-5, 47-9 and 52-4). The reference to Amalthea as αἶξ ἱερή is borrowed from Aratus (163). Nonnus' use of his Hellenistic predecessors is quite transparent, the unambiguous references to Callimachus, Apollonius and Aratus being to all appearances intentional; it is as if Nonnus desired that his audience mentally juxtapose with his own lines the passages he is imitating. Morrheus hurls a rock at Melisseus but misses, owing to Rhea's intervention, who considers it unseemly that a Corybant should be killed by stone, for it was by the help of the Corybants that she was able to feed that stone to Cronus which saved Zeus. The book concludes with a scene where the Corybants dance around the chariot of Deriades, striking their shields, of which the sound reaches the abode of Zeus. Nonnus is somewhat fond of the Corybants, returning to them briefly in the following book (29.215-24).

Book 29 is ostensibly a continuation of the battle scenes of the previous book, but Nonnus has interwoven a romance with the fighting. Almost half of the book is given to the depiction of Dionysus' affection for the youth Hymenaius, which parallels the earlier, more extensive, Dionysus-Ampelus episode (10.175-12.137). The theme of ἔρως παίδων, involving *pueri dilecti superis* (Ampelus, Calamus, Carpus, Hymenaius), parallels that of the παρθένοι φυγόδεμνοι (Nicaia, Aura, Chalcomede, Beroe) in the poem. The love of Dionysus for Hymenaius is introduced in the guise of battlefield camaraderie in imitation of the Achilles-Patroclus relationship in the *Iliad*, but Nonnus has given his episode an unabashedly homosexual colouring. As in the earlier Ampelus episode, which has been visibly influenced by Bion's Ἐπιτάφιον Ἀδώνιδος, Dionysus' lamentations in the aftermath of Hymenaius' wounding are infused with a distinct air of lugubriousness, even though the injury is, in the present case, only minor. Bucolic

elements are combined with details drawn from the *Iliad*, resulting in a not very well integrated whole, where Hymenaius, though only slightly wounded, is lamented by Dionysus as if he were already dead. The Hymenaius episode is followed by the short aristeia of Aristaius, the exploits of the Cabeirs and of the Corybants (who, as we mentioned, get a second airing), and finally by the feats of the Bacchantes, which are presented in a way that parallels in outline the Hymenaius episode, in that a number of wounded Bacchantes are brought back from death's door by the healing hands of Dionysus. Book 29 also signals the commencement of Hera's substantive interventions in favour of the Indians, which begin to have a deleterious effect on Dionysus in book 30, culminating with the Διὸς ἀπάτη and the maddening of Dionysus in book 32. Book 28 ended with Dionysus' forces in the ascendancy, a situation which Hera sets about reversing at the beginning of book 29. She proceeds to instil new martial vigour into Deriades, who has up to now been peculiarly inactive (29.1-2). A re-invigorated Deriades rallies the Indians, combining persuasion with menaces: προμάχοις δὲ χέων λυσσώδεα φωνὴν / κυανέην στοιχηδὸν ὅλην περιδέδρομε χάρμην, / λαὸν ὅλον φεύγοντα παλίσσυτον εἰς μόθον ἔλκων, / ἄλλον ἐνηεῖη μετανεύμενος, ἄλλον ἀπειλῆ (29.4-7). The passage is a condensation of the scene in the *Iliad* where Athena bids Odysseus check the flight of the Greeks after Agamemnon, in order to test their resolve, has granted them permission to abandon the siege and return home. Odysseus goes from ship to ship alternately cajoling and chiding the commanders: τὸν δ' ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσιν ἐρητύσασκε παραστάς (B189) ... τὸν σκήπτρῳ ἐλάσασκεν ὁμοκλήσασκέ τε μύθῳ (B199). Morrheus rallies to his monarch's call, fighting now with bow and arrows, now with spear, recalling the earlier passage where Oiagrus consecutively employed the two normally diverse modes of fighting (22.168-217, 320-53). Nonnus chooses to overlook the Homeric tradition, where archers are distinguished from spear-men, with only Paris acting in both roles. Morrheus wreaks havoc among the Satyrs and Sileni, who (along with the Bacchantes) are portrayed somewhat ambiguously throughout the poem as being now invincible and invulnerable, now quite susceptible to defeat and injury, even to death. The line of demarcation between divine and mortal is rather blurred overall as far as

these followers of Dionysus are concerned.

Hymenaius fights on horseback, Ἴνδους κυανέους ῥοδοιδεί χειρὶ δαίζων (29.17). The contrast between white and black, light and darkness (and, by extension, good and evil) is strongly brought forth in this passage: ἀγλαΐη δ' ἦστραπτον ἴδοις δέ μιν εἰς μέσον Ἴνδῶν / φωσφόρον αἰγλήεντα δυσειδέι σύνδρομον ὄρφνη (29.18-9). The lines recall other instances of light-darkness opposition in Nonnus (cf. 9.103-4, 45.280-3, and *Para.* 1.11-13), but are at the same time reminiscent of the contrast between Amycus and Polydeuces in Apollonius, where the former is representative of chthonian darkness and the latter of heavenly light: ὁ μὲν ἢ ὀλοοῖο Τυφώος, ἥε καὶ αὐτῆς / Γαίης εἶναι ἔϊκτο πέλωρ τέκος, οἶα πάροιθεν / χωομένη Διὶ τίκτεν· ὁ δ' οὐρανίῳ ἀτάλαντος / ἀστέρι Τυνδαρίδης, οὐπερ κάλλισται ἔασιν / ἔσπερίην διὰ νύκτα φαεινομένου ἀμαρυγαί (2.38-42). These lines of Apollonius have exerted an appreciable influence on Nonnus, who sees the whole of the Indian war in terms of light-dark, white-black, Olympian-Earthborn dichotomy. A little later in the narrative we have a direct verbal echo of the Apollonius passage, when Morrheus is compared to Typhoeus: ἰσοφυῆς Τυφῶνι πέλωρ βακχεύετο Μορρεύς (30.58, cf. also 34.183 and 22.41, where Thureus is similarly compared). Dionysus is infatuated with Hymenaius' beauty and prefers the help of his spear to that of Zeus' thunderbolt: καὶ συνάεθλον ἐῆς οὐκ ἤθελε χάρμης / ἀστεροπὴν Κρονίωνος, ὅσον μελίην Ἵμεναίου (29.23-4). This may well be an unconscious echo of Idas' words in Apollonius, οὐδέ μ' ὀφέλλει / Ζεὺς τόσον, ὅσσατίον περ ἐμὸν δόρυ (1.467-8), although no *hybris* is implied in the present case. Dionysus keeps close to Hymenaius at all times, οἱ αἰὲν παρέμιμνε (29.34), just as he does later to Beroe, παρθενικῇ παρέμιμνε (42.177), guarding him like a father, πατὴρ ἄτε παῖδα φυλάσσων (29.34). It may be noted that in Theocritus' idyll on Hylas, Heracles behaves in the same manner towards his protégé: καὶ νιν πάντ' ἐδίδασκε, πατὴρ ὡσεὶ φίλον υἱόν ... χρῶς δ' οὐδέποκ' ἦς (13.8-10). Dionysus enjoins Hymenaius to hurl his spear to strike Deriades, just as he had already struck him, Dionysus, with his beauty, and give someone cause to remark: "ἀμφοτέρων ἐτύχησε βαλῶν

Ἵμέναιος ὀιστῶ, / εἰς χροά Δηριάδαο καὶ ἐς κραδίην Διονύσου " (29.43-4). Nonnus is rather fond of such epigrammatic quotations (cf. for example Morrheus' description of his and Orontes' fates: " Μορρέα κεστὸς ἔπεφνε, καὶ ἔκτανε θύρσος Ὀρόντην ", 33.262, reflecting once more the theme of the all-vanquishing weapons of Aphrodite).

Now follows a series of reminiscences from the fourth book of the *Iliad*, from which Nonnus paraphrases virtually in entirety the story of the wounding of Menelaus by Pandarus. An unnamed Indian, corresponding to Athena disguised as Laodocus in the *Iliad*, persuades the archer Melaneus to take a shot at Dionysus, a feat which, should he accomplish it, would be generously rewarded by Deriades. Like Athena, the Indian exploits the archer's avarice, who is described as φιλοκτέανος (29.50 and 79). He tells Melaneus: δεῦρο βέλος προίαλλε καὶ ἐς σκοπὸν αἰ κε τυχῆσης, / δέχυσαι ἄσπετα δῶρα βαθυπλούτου βασιλῆος, / αἰ κεν ἴδη Δίονυσσον, ἀγήνορα παῖδα Θυώνης, / πυρκαϊῆς ἐπιβάντα τεῶ δμηθέντα βελέμνω (29.58-61), which echoes: τλαίης κεν Μενελάω<sup>ἔκ</sup> προέμεν<sup>α</sup> ταχὺν ἰόν, / πᾶσι δέ κε Τρώεσσι χάριν καὶ κῦδος ἄροιο, / ἐκ πάντων δέ μάλιστα Ἄλεξ ἀνδρῶ βασιλῆι. / τοῦ κεν δὴ πάμπρωτα παρ' ἀγλαὰ δῶρα φέροιο, / αἰ κεν ἴδη Μενέλαον ἀρήιον Ἄτρεος υἷον / σῶ βέλει δμηθέντα πυρῆς ἐπιβάντ' ἀλεγεινῆς (Δ94-9). The correspondence with Homer both in content and expression is extremely close, bordering on plagiarism. It is difficult to reconcile such servile copying (of which the *Dionysiaca* provides numerous examples, especially in book 37) with Hopkinson's general observation that Nonnus' stance vis-à-vis Homer is basically one of emulation and rebellion.<sup>13</sup>

The Indian reminds Melaneus to offer thanksgiving to Water and Earth, sacrificing a bull to the Hydaspes and a black ram to Gaia, which corresponds to Athena's reminder to Pandaros to offer a hecatomb of firstling sheep to Apollo on returning to his native Zeleia. The Indian, like Athena, convinces the archer (cf. 29.68 and Δ104). The way in which the arrow is chosen from the quiver, the bowstring pulled back and the arrow dispatched are all taken from Homer, but

<sup>13</sup> Hopkinson visualises Nonnus as a literary son of Homer, who " works within that blend of imitation and anxiety, obedience and rebellion, which so often distinguish the offspring of famous fathers" (1994b) p. 32.

Nonnus appears to be uninterested in technical details of this sort and he has considerably abridged Homer's account (cf. 29.70-4 and Δ116-26). This is remarkable in a poet normally so prone to expansiveness. In the present instance he omits the two points that Homer would have considered the most important: the prayer and the actual dispatch of the arrow with a mighty twang of the bow-string. Melaneus, unlike Pandaros, misses his intended victim, hitting Hymenaius instead. As in the case of Menelaus, the arrow inflicts only superficial injury owing to divine intervention. The wound, though only minor, arouses grave concern in Dionysus, as it does in Agamemnon. In Homer, Athena guides the arrow to 'where the fastenings of the belt were clasped and a doubled armour met it' (Leaf's translation), that is, to a spot where his body-armour accorded maximum protection. Nonnus, with his typical flair for proliferation (for another example of this characteristic cf. the proliferation of actors in his version of the Διὸς ἀπάτη in books 31-32), makes the intervention threefold: Zeus deflects the arrow, Dionysus (acting now every inch as a god, though ostensibly still on the way to becoming one) slows its flight, and Aphrodite sees to it that the barbs do not enter the flesh. Dionysus and Aphrodite are brought into the picture as if Zeus were not equal to the task of saving Hymenaius on his own. Nonnus is, clearly, out to glorify Dionysus. But why is Aphrodite introduced as well? The reason appears to be one of convenience: Nonnus, keen to render Homer's famous simile of the mother driving the fly from her sleeping child, needs a goddess for the part, and who better than Aphrodite, the sister of Dionysus and protectress of lovers (homosexual though they be in the present instance). Aphrodite βέλος ἔτραπε τόσσον ἀπὸ χροός, ὡς ὅτε μήτηρ / παιδὸς ἔτι κινώσσοντος ἀλήμονα μυῖαν ἐλάσση / ἠρέμα φάρεος ἄκρον ἐπαιθύσσουσα προσώπῳ (29.84-6), corresponding to Athena's action in the case of Menelaus: ἢ τοι πρόσθε σταῖσα βέλος ἐχεπευκὲς ἄμυνεν. / ἢ δὲ τόσον μὲν ἔεργεν ἀπὸ χροός, ὡς ὅτε μήτηρ / παιδὸς ἔεργη μυῖαν, ὅθ' ἠδέϊ λέξεται ὑπνω (Δ129-31).

Although Hymenaius' (like Menelaus') wound is superficial, it sends Dionysus into a paroxysm of despair, as if the injury were indeed mortal. His attitude reflects Agamemnon's disquiet with Menelaus' condition, but he expresses his anxiety differently, through mournful lamentations which recall his behaviour on the death

of Ampelus. He bears away Hymenaius (who, like Adonis in Bion, has been wounded in the thigh), seating him at the foot of an oak: καί μιν ἄγων ἀπάνευθε πολυφλοίσβοιο κυδοιμοῦ / ἰωθρόν ἐπὶ σκιάειντι πέδῳ παρὰ γείτονι φηγῶ / θῆκε κερηβαρέοντα (29.93-5), a scene which is repeated in the following book, where Hephaistus performs the same service for Eurymedon: ὑπόθι δ' ὤμου / υἷον ἐλαφρίζων ἐπερείσατο γείτονι φηγῶ / νόσφιν ἀπὸ φλοίσβοιο (30.101-3). These scenes have been inspired by the wounding of Sarpedon in the *Iliad*, who is borne away from the battle by his companions, who seat him under an oak: οἱ μὲν ... Σαρπηδόνα ... ἑταῖροι / εἶσαν ὑπ' αἰγιόχοιο Διὸς περικαλλεί φηγῶ (E692-3). Dionysus, tearing his hair, sobs over Hymenaius, as did Apollo over Hyacinthus (29.95-9), an association which is made also in the Ampelus episode (11.257). His behaviour seems to imply that the youth is already beyond help, but despair gives way to hope when he discovers that the barbs have not penetrated the flesh. Dionysus' despair and subsequent relief are modelled on Agamemnon's reaction at Δ151-2, but they are in his case ill-founded, seeing that he himself had participated in the preceding act of divine intervention, which ensured that the wound would be little more than a scratch. Nonnus, as often when imitating Homer, is forgetful of the particular circumstances of his own narrative. Dionysus proceeds to tend the wound, and beholding the youth's tearful visage vents his anger on Ares and Melaneus in a lengthy speech, beginning with a statement which again leaves the impression that Hymenaius is on the point of death: Ἄμπελον ἔκτανε ταῦρος, Ἄρης Ἰμέναιον ὀλέσσει (29.108). This is all the more surprising in view of the fact that he has just discovered the wound to be superficial. The remainder of the speech indicates the depth of his affection for the youth, for he would sooner have all his followers perish than see him dead: αἶθε δὲ πάντας ἔπεφνεν (Ἄρης), ὅσους ἐκόρυσσα μαχητάς (29.109), which recalls in essence Achilles' words to Patroclus: αἶ γὰρ ... μήτε τις οὖν Τρώων θάνατον φύγοι, ὅσοι ἔασι, / μήτε τις Ἀργείων νῶν δ' ἐκδῶμεν ὄλεθρον (Π97-9). Aristaius specifically he cares little for, seeing that the latter values the travail of the bee over the harvest of the vine (the honey-wine opposition, like that of nectar/wine, being a recurrent theme of the poem, cf.

13.253-74, 19.225-62). He accuses Hera of inducing Ares, disguised as Melaneus, to shoot Hymenaius, and, echoing Agamemnon's statement at Δ170-1, declares that, were Hymenaius to die, he would call off the whole campaign (29.130-1). Then, turning to Hymenaius, he promises that he will slay his killer Melaneus (τεὸν Μελανῆα φονῆα, 29.133), recalling his similar promise to Ampelus to kill the bull which had caused his death (τεὸν ... φονῆα, 11.266). He pleads with Aphrodite to send his brother Apollo to heal Hymenaius, but then abandons the idea for fear of reminding Apollo of his own loss of Hyacinthus, settling instead for Paieon (whom Nonnus, to his credit, distinguishes from Apollo, cf. also 40.401 and 407). He, Dionysus, has also been wounded by the wounding of Hymenaius: ἐν κραδίῃ δὲ / λοίγιον ἔλκος ἔχοντι συνουτήθην Ἵμεναίῳ (29.148-9), the λοίγιον ἔλκος again intimating that the latter was about to die. The idea has been borrowed from Bion, from where Vian adduces: ἄγριον ἄγριον ἔλκος ἔχει κατὰ μηρὸν Ἄδωνις, / μείζον δ' ἅ Κυθήρεια φέρει ποτικάρδιον ἔλκος (*Fun. Adon.* 16-7). The appeal to Aphrodite to send one of those great healers turns out to be somewhat gratuitous, as Dionysus forthwith shows himself quite capable of curing Hymenaius without their help: κοῦρον ἀνεζώγρησεν ἐὼ παιήονι κισσῶ, / οἶνον ἀλεξητῆρα περιρραίνων Ἵμεναίῳ (29.155-6), the ἀνεζώγρησεν 'resurrected' suggesting once more that the youth was dead or near death. The παιήονι κισσῶ appears to be a deliberate reference to Παιήων above (29.144) to emphasize Dionysus' powers as healer (cf. also παιήονι μύθῳ, used of the healing effect of Dionysus' words at 46.361 and 48.234, and of those of Christ at *Par.* 3.13 and 12.161). The speed with which the cure takes effect is illustrated by a simile copied from Homer: ὡς δ' ὅτ' ὀπὸς ταχυεργός, ἐπειγόμενον γάλα πήξας, / χιονέης κυκῶν ἀπαμείρεται ὑγρὸν ἔερσης, / ὄφρα μιν ἐντύνειε πεπηγμένον αἰπόλος ἀνὴρ / κυκλώσας ταλάροισι τύπῳ τροχοειδέι ταρσῶν· / ὡς ὁ γε φοῖνιον ἔλκος ἀκέσσατο Φοιβάδι τέχνῃ (29.157-61). The Φοιβάδι τέχνῃ is, like the παιήονι κισσῶ, an affirmation of Dionysus' curative powers. In Homer, Paieon heals the wound that Diomedes had inflicted on Ares ὡς δ' ὅτ' ὀπὸς γάλα λευκὸν ἐπειγόμενος συνέπηξεν / ὑγρὸν ἐόν, μάλα δ' ὦκα περιτρέφεται κυκῶντι, / ὡς ἄρα

καρπαλίμως ἴησατο θούρον ἼΑρηα (E902-4). Nonnus has in effect glossed Homer's κυκώωντι, by specifying the type of person doing the stirring (αἰπόλος ἀνήρ). A tendency by the poet to gloss and explain the passages he imitates is evidenced both in the *Dionysiaca* and *Paraphrase*, the most conspicuous examples of it being perhaps the ship- and raftbuilding scenes at 36.403-11 and 40.446-54, where in imitating ε247-55 Nonnus has incorporated words in his passages from the scholia to the Homeric passage (cf. Keydell *app. crit.* ad loc.).

Hymenaius, cured, returns to the battlefield, following Dionysus everywhere like his shadow (ὡς ... τις σκιοῖς τύπος ἀνέρος, 29.169), in a sort of reversal of roles (as Vian notes, cf. *Not. de ch.* 29 pp.202-3), since it was previously Dionysus who followed him. He pays back Melaneus, wounding him with an arrow. Dionysus in the meantime transfixes an Indian and holds him up in the air for Hera to see: ἐν ἠερίῃ δὲ κελεύθῳ / Ἴνδον ἐλαφρίζων ζηλήμονι δείκνυεν ἼΗρη (29.178-9). The word-play ἠερίῃ / ἼΗρη appears to be quite intentional. It may be noted that the name 'Hera' was, according to the Orphics, derived from ἀήρ, in the same way that they deduced 'Athena' from αἰθήρ. Vian observes that Dionysus is, in a manner of speaking, getting even with Hera, seeing that the arrow which wounded Hymenaios came ἀπ' ἠέρος (29.78).

The poet now turns his attention to Aristaius, who, being Dionysus' uncle by marriage, is also his rival as a benefactor to mankind, having invented apiculture. His gift to man, honey, vied with Dionysus' wine (cf. 5.242-57, 13.253-77), and he was credited as well with the inception of hunting (5.229-41), the tending of sheep and cattle, and the invention of the olive press (5.258-79). With such impressive accomplishments to his name, it is surprising that he is not accorded more attention in the poem. Nonnus, nevertheless, concedes him a brief *aristeia*, where he is shown fighting with the tools of the various trades that owe their inception to him: the shepherd's crook, the stone of the olive press, and the beekeeper's bull-roarer (ρόμβος). There is, however, no mention of the hunting dogs that he took along with him to use in battle (13.299), though we find Pan fighting with his pack later in the narrative (36.195-6). The Cabeirs, Eurymedon and Alcon, ride into battle on a chariot of adamant drawn by horses of bronze, which their father Hephaistus had fashioned. The eyes of both warriors emit

sparks that bespeak their fiery lineage: Ἡφαίστου δὲ τοκῆος ἐρευθόμεναι πυρὸς ἀτμῶ / συγγενέας σπιθῆρας ἀνηκόντιζον ὀπωπαί (29.195-6). The notion of eyes emitting sparks, used here (and at 18.261-2 w.r.t. the monster Campe) in their physical sense, is more often used by Nonnus figuratively (cf. 30.254-5, where Hera is described as νοερούς σπιθῆρας ἐπιπνείουσα Λυαίῳ, and *Par.* 5.135, where John the Baptist is similarly depicted: κείνος Ἰωάννης νοερούς σπιθῆρας ἰάλλων).<sup>14</sup> The description of the Cabeirs' chariot and horses (29.197-204) is inspired jointly by Pindar's (*Pyth.* 4.225-6) and Apollonius' (3.229-31) depictions of the bulls and ploughshare of Aeetes (cf. for example, χαλκείη κροτέοντες ἀρασσομένην κόνιν ὀπλῆ, 29.198 and Pindar's χαλκείους δ' ὀπλαῖς ἀράσσεσκον χθόν' ἀμειβόμενοι, 4.226). Eurymedon holds the reins with his left hand and a Lemnian spear in his right. A flashing sword hangs from his side: ἐπ' εὐφύεσσι δὲ | μηροῖς / φάσγανον ἠώρητο σελασφόρον (29.206-7), which statement, Vian notes, appears to be based on μίανθην αἷματι | μηροῖ / εὐφύεες κνήμαι τε (Δ146-7) of the wounded Menelaus. Here we have an example of Nonnus adapting an Homeric description to a context unrelated to the original. Homer's μηροῖ / εὐφύεες is simply inverted with the metric pattern remaining unchanged. Alcon fights with less conventional weapons, wielding a fiery bolt and swinging a festal torch of Hecate (29.214-5, cf. 32.203, where Echelaus fights with a Bacchic torch). Nonnus will return to Eurymedon and Alcon in the next book, but for now returns briefly to the Corybants, whose exploits were described at some length in the previous book. They are introduced in the same way as before, line 29.216 being identical to 28.276. As in the earlier segment, they do battle dancing, war being for them an imitation of the war-dance: φερεσσακέος δὲ χορείης / ... / ἄρει βακχευθέντες (29.219-21). They are identified with the Curetes, and nearly all of the verses used here seem to have been lifted whole or as half-lines from the passage depicting the feats of the latter by the Astacis lake (14.386-402). This transfer of lines or half-lines is continued even after the poet has finished with the Corybants and passed

<sup>14</sup> For the Orphic connotations of these expressions, cf. Gigli -Piccardi (1985) pp. 223-4.

on to describe the feats of the Bassarids (29.225 through to 229).<sup>15</sup> Collart believes that the passage in book 29 is the original and that in book 14 derivative, as the verses lack proper application there.<sup>16</sup> Vian is of the opinion that the repetitions are a deliberate attempt to give the text a quaintly Homeric flavour, seeing such verbatim repetitions are commonplace in the *Iliad*.<sup>17</sup> If this was indeed the poet's intention, it is indeed remarkable that the practice is not evidenced elsewhere in the poem. As we have noted previously, Nonnus is inclined rather to avoid exact verbatim repetition, almost invariably making some change, however minor, in the lines that he reuses. It is thus reasonable to assume that the finishing touches have not been applied and that, given more time, Nonnus would have effected his usual cosmetic changes on the repeated verses, either in book 14 or in book 29.

The Bassarids attack, killing many Indians with their θύρσοι. Leneus cuts off a mountain-top and hurls it at the enemy (29.229-30), this gigantomachy element being a recurrent motif in the *Dionysiaca* (cf. 28.206-10, 30.227-30, 39.218-9 and 39.340-1). Eupetale smashes iron with ivy: κέντορα κισσὸν ἔπεμπεν ἀλοιητῆρα σιδήρου (29.235), the last two words being a pun on the cliché ἀλοιητῆρι σιδήρω, with the destroyer becoming the destroyed. Stesichore dances amid the fighting and, clashing her cymbals, produces a greater noise than the rattle of Heracles (29.240-2), Nonnus possibly having in mind Apollonius 2.1052-7. A comic interlude follows. Trygie (τρυγία 'lees, sediment of wine', *L.S.J.*), an elderly female tippler, heavy-kneed, gets left behind, her feet frozen with fear. She receives no sympathy from Maron, who wishes rather that she fall by Deriades' spear, for all she could do was hinder the dances of the Corybants and Satyrs. Calyce ('flower-cup', cf. κισσοῖο ... καλύκεσσι, Theocr. 3.23) fights beside Dionysus, but Oinone is too drunk to be of much use. The tide of battle now turns in favour of the Indians, something that we would not expect to happen while

<sup>15</sup> Viz. 29.219=14.389; 29.220=14.390; 29.222=14.387; 29.223b=14.376b; 29.225b=14.394b; 29.226a=14.395a; 29.226b=14.395b; 29.227=14.396; 29.228-31a=14.391-4a; 29.231b=14.394b; 29.235-5=14.398-9; 29.237=14.401; and 29.238-9=14.400,402.

<sup>16</sup> (1930) p.120

<sup>17</sup> (1990) p.212: "à conférer au texte une fausse coloration archaïque en pastichant les procédés de l'Iliade".

Dionysus was present, for the Bacchantes are elsewhere shown losing their invincibility only in his absence (as in books 32-35, during his bout of insanity and in book 45, during his purported imprisonment by Pentheus). Astraei's chases Staphyle, Celaineus ('the black one') Calyce, while Morrheus wreaks havoc among the Sileni. One shout from Morrheus suffices to dizzy Astraius, put Maron to flight and make Leneus (who a little before showed himself capable of shearing off mountain tops) collapse. As earlier in the case of Hymenaius, Dionysus tends to the wounded. Vian draws attention to a parallel case of the commander-in-chief tending to his wounded in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, where Caesar is described doing likewise (7.566-7). Some of Dionysus' wounded Bacchantes appear to be divine, others mortal. Thus Dionysus stays the flow of ichor from Eupetale's wound, but blood from Staphyle's. Calybe's life is saved, but for Lycaste Dionysus can do no more than mourn her passing. The play on names continues where possible. Thus Myrto is healed with myrtle: Μυρτούς δ' οὐταμένην παλάμην ἴησατο μύρτω (29.270). Having healed his wounded followers, Dionysus fights with renewed vigour. A flame playing in the hair of a Bacchante testifies to her Bacchic ardour (29.280-1), a phenomenon which we have discussed above (p. 70). The Indians refuse to be dislodged at first, countering the din of the Corybants' cymbals and Pan's pipes with noise of their own. The battle rages: λίγξε βιός, βόμβησε λίθος, μικήσατο σάλπιγξ (29.290), echoing Homer's λίγξε βιός, νευρὴ δὲ μέγ' ἰαχεν, ἄλτο δ' οἰστός (Δ125). We note that Nonnus has inserted two of his favourite sound words βόμβησε and μικήσατο, of which he will <sup>be</sup> seen to make much use in book 43. The impasse is broken by a mighty shout from Dionysus (29.291-5), Nonnus being rather fond of this Homeric motif, as we have indicated earlier (pp. 82-3). The rally of Dionysus' followers is prefaced by the statement: ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ πόρον ἴξον, ὅπη πεφορημένος ὀλκῶ / λευκὸν ὕδωρ μεθύοντι ῥόω φοίνιξεν Ὑδάσπης (29.291-2), in what appears to be a conscious echo of Φ1-2. The Homeric statement, which ushers in the μάχη παραποτάμιος in the Iliad, was previously used by Nonnus to introduce his own version of this event at 22.1-3. The present segment, too, has a vague resemblance to the μάχη παραποτάμιος theme in that some of the Indians are said to meet their doom in the river, others in the plain: στρατιῆ δ' ἐμερίζετο Βάκχου, / δυσμενέας

κτείνουσα καὶ ἐν δαπέδῳ καὶ Ὑδάσπη (29.297-8), reflecting Φ3-10. The theme is not developed further. Dionysus issues a challenge to Deriades to meet him in single combat, the challenge being preceded by a brief syncrisis, in which Dionysus considers himself to be as superior to Deriades as Zeus is to the Hydraspes. He boasts too of his ability to rise to the clouds and strike the moon. There is almost a touch of comedy in the concluding words εἰ δὲ μέγα φρονέεις μεθέπων κεραελκέα μορφήν, / εἰ δύνασαι, προμάχιζε βοοκραίρῳ Διονύσῳ (29.309-10), which conjure up images of two bulls locking horns.

Dionysus and his followers now forge ahead unstoppably, Pan tearing open the belly of Melaneus, who though wounded a little while before by Hymenaius' arrow, seems to have rejoined the battle. His death in this fashion parallels the way in which Dionysus vowed to kill the bull that had gored Ampelus (11.268-70). Dionysus now lives up to his boast to expand himself to such prodigious size as to touch the clouds: ἄλλοτε μηκύνων ταναὸν δέμας, αἰθέρι γείτων· / καὶ νεφέων ἐψαυσε καὶ ἦψατο χερσὶν Ὀλύμπου / καὶ χθονὶ ταρσὸν ἔπηξε καὶ ἡέρα τύπτε καρῆνῳ (29.319-22). He appears prone to such displays: at 40.83 he is ἴσος Παρνησιδί πετρῆ as he faces Deriades; at 45.134-5 he is ὑψούμενος ἄχρις Ὀλύμπου, / νύσσων ἡερίων νεφῶν σκέπας as he confronts the Tyrrhenian pirates; and finally, in his showdown with Perseus at 47.657-61: ὑψώσας δ' Ἴόβακχος ἐὼν δέμας, αἰθέρι γείτων ... αἰθέρι χεῖρα πέλασσε, καὶ ὠμίλησεν Ὀλύμπῳ, / καὶ νεφέλας ἔθλιψε. There is a comic streak to these depictions, an observation that is underlined by the fact that (as noted previously, p. 42), the ὑψώσας δ' Ἴόβακχος ἐὼν δέμας is clearly intended to recall βάτραχος ὑψώσας ὠχιρὸν δέμας in the *Batrachomyomachy* (40), a comic poem. The topos derives from Homer's depiction of Eris: ἦ τ' ὀλίγη μὲν πρῶτα κορύσσεται, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα / οὐρανῷ ἐστήριξε κάρη καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ βαίνει (Δ442-3), but Nonnus seems rather to have been influenced by Callimachus' rendering of it: Δαμάτηρ δ' ἄφατόν τι κοτέσσατο, γείνατο δ' ἄθεύς· / ἴθματα μὲν χέρσω, κεφαλὰ δέ οἱ ἄψατ' Ὀλύμπῳ (6.57-8). At this stage it seems that Dionysus will, once for all, crush Deriades and the Indians and bring the war to a close. This is not to be, however, as nightfall interrupts the

hostilities (29.323-4). The idea of κόλος μάχη, which, incidentally, recurs at 36.391, is borrowed from Θ487-9, where Hector's apparently unstoppable advance on the Greek camp is stayed by nightfall.

The book ends with an episode that is essentially a digression, the deception of Ares. Like the story of the weaving of Aphrodite at the end of book 24, it is inspired by the *moicheia* in the *Odyssey* (Θ266-366), but is at the same time a counterpart of the deception of Zeus in books 31-32. The removal of Ares from the battle seems somewhat inadequately motivated at the present stage, seeing that he has so far done little to influence its outcome. It is only after his return that he assists the Indians in any tangible way, with his mighty shout (32.176) and by actively slaying the Bassarids (35.98-9). The story, which portrays Hephaistus as the adulterer and Ares as the deceived husband, has all the hallmarks of a rhetorical exercise of the kind where the student is required to prove his adeptness in writing the converse of some well known episode from epic or from history. Rhea informs Ares in a dream that through Athena's connivance Aphrodite has returned to the embraces of her former husband Hephaistus, Athena having brought about this reconciliation in order to avert another attempt on her virtue by the latter (i.e. like that which had resulted in the birth of Erichthonius). Ares is advised to trap Hephaistos in the same way that the latter had trapped him. Rhea nettles him by recalling what the other gods had said as they witnessed his predicament on that occasion. Her statement ἀνδροφόνου γὰρ / ὁ βραδὺς ὠκύν 'Αρηα παρέδραμε (29.346-7) echoes the remarks of one of the bystanders as he beholds Ares tied down in bed with Aphrodite: κιχάνει τοι βραδὺς ὠκύν / ὡς καὶ νῦν 'Ηφαιστος ἐὼν βραδὺς εἶλεν 'Αρηα / ὠκύτατόν περ ἔοντα θεῶν οἱ 'Ολυμπὸν ἔχουσι / χωλὸς ἐὼν τέχνησι (Θ329-32). He should ask the Cyclopes to contrive a trap, ποινήτορι δεσμῶ (29.255), similar to the one that had been used on him (the ποινήτορι probably alluding to the payment of the μοιχάγια (Θ332), which Hephaistus stipulated as the condition for freeing Ares). Ares on waking takes off in his chariot together with Phobus and Deimus. He fears that Aphrodite's face may be so covered by soot from Hephaistus' forge as to be unrecognisable, a comic touch in the manner of Lucian, who (*Dial. Deorum* 5.4) speaks of Hephaistus' visage being so black with soot that no one would dare kiss

him.

Book 30 opens with the resumption of hostilities that had been interrupted by nightfall. Dionysus dances into battle to reap a black harvest of Indians : ἀκοντιστήρι δὲ θύρσῳ / κυανέης ἤμησε θαλύσια δριοτήτος (30.5-6), recalling the earlier action of Aiacus, who κυανέης ἤμησε σιδήρεα λήια χάρμης (22.361). Morrheus, distraught at the apparent invincibility of Dionysus and his followers, voices his concerns to Deriades, expressing the wish that he could exchange his weapons for those of the enemy (30.24-6), a wish that he later repeats in different circumstances to Chalcomeda (35.153-4). Deriades' laconic reply is both mocking and threatening: τί τρομέεις Διόνυσον ἀτευχέα, νήπιε Μορρεῦ ; / ἦδὺς ὁ δεμαίνων Σατύρων παίζουσαν ἐνυῶ (30.41-2). He is a ruler who obtains compliance with his wishes through fear, ἀπειλή being the operative word in his relations with his subjects. His speech to his commanders in book 36 is referred to by that word (36.138), as is his short reply to Morrheus in the present instance (30.43). We might note that in book 40 the roles are reversed, this time it being Morrheus (i.e. Athena disguised as Morrheus) who does the mocking and chiding (40.11-30) and Deriades the complaining (40.37-60). Morrheus is emboldened to the point of invincibility by Deriades' reply, wreaking havoc among Dionysus' followers. He is described as being of monstrous proportions: ἰσοφυῆς Τυφῶνι πέλωρ βακχεύετο Μορρεῦς (30.58), something which the poet reiterates at 34.180-3: οὐ γὰρ ἐπιχθονίοισιν ὁμοίος ἔπλετο Μορρεῦς, / ... / ἠλιβάτου Τυφῶνος ἔχων αὐτόχθονα φύτλην. These descriptions are clearly inspired by Apollonius' depiction of Amycus: ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἦ ὀλοοῖο Τυφωέος, ἠὲ καὶ αὐτῆς / Γαίης εἶναι ἔικτο πέλωρ τέκος (2.38-9). Morrheus is accorded a lengthy aristeia during which he is well nigh irresistible (if we allow for the temporary set-back at the hands of Hephaistus), Dionysus' presence on the battlefield being apparently insufficient to infuse his followers with enough Bacchic fervour for any of them to take him to task. He attacks and wounds Eurymedon; Alcon promptly comes to the aid of his stricken brother. The theme of brother protecting brother occurs previously at 28.58-62, where Phlogius takes shelter behind his brother's shield, the incident being explicitly likened by the poet to that where Teucer takes shelter behind Ajax' shield in the *Iliad*. As we have

already noted, Nonnus not infrequently imitates the same Iliadic passage twice, sometimes more often. He echoes Homer rather closely here: Ἄλκων οὐκ ἀμέλησε κασιγνήτοιο πεσόντος, / ἀλλὰ βιαζομένῳ πρόμος ἦλυθεν ἔγχος αἰείρων / καὶ σάκος εὐδίμητον· ὅλον δ' ἐκάλυπτε μαχητήν, / ἀσπίδι πυργώσας δέμας ἀνέρος ... γνωτῶ γνωτὸς ἄμυνε (30.49-54), which corresponds to Αἴας δ' οὐκ ἀμέλησε κασιγνήτοιο πεσόντος, / ἀλλὰ θέων περίβη καὶ οἱ σάκος ἀμφεκάλυψεν (Θ330-1). Ajax' shield is elsewhere described as being ἡύτε πύργος (cf. for example H219), a notion which Nonnus has sought to indicate with his πυργώσας. Another Homeric reminiscence follows in the form of a simile: καὶ οὐταμένῳ περιβαίνων, / οἷα περὶ σκύμνοισι λέων, βρυχήσατο λαιμῶ (30.54-5), which is taken from the other memorable scene where Ajax shields the body of Patroclus from Hector: Αἴας δ' ἀμφὶ Μεινοιτιάδῃ σάκος εὐρὺ καλύψας / ἐστήκει, ὥς τις τε λέων περὶ οἷσι τέκεσσιν (P132-3). Morrheus now attacks both brothers at once, but Eurymedon calls on their father Hephaistus to help, reminding him how he had once protected his anvil and tongs from Demeter. Hephaistus responds by scorching Morrheus, whose body is engulfed in flame (30.78-85). As we have noted previously (p. 28), this scene, like that of the scorching of the Hydaspes and of Deriades (40.323-8), is an expression of the fire-water opposition, which is a leitmotiv in the poem. In the present instance the Hydaspes, who has been watching the fight from the top of a cliff ταυροφυῆς νόθον εἶδος ἔχων βροτοειδέϊ μορφῇ (30.89), comes to the rescue of Morrheus, χέων ἀντίπνοον ὕδωρ to douse the flames.<sup>48</sup> The Hydaspes protects him by covering his suffering limbs with a dark cloud, πορφυρέῃ νεφέλῃ κεκαφηότα γυῖα καλύψας (30.94), which is an echo from the Homeric hymn to Hermes, where Apollo searches for the stolen cattle πορφυρέῃ νεφέλῃ κεκαλυμμένος εὐρέας ὤμους (217). Hydaspes does not wish to see Deriades lose both his sons-in-law, having lost Orontes earlier (30.97-9). The present segment is peculiar in that it has two mutually opposed acts of

<sup>48</sup> We note that one of the three shapes assumed by the river Achelous in Sophocles' *Trachiniae* was that of a man with a bull's visage: ἄλλοτ' ἀνδρείω κῦτει / βούπρωιρος (12-3); cf. also Statius' depiction of the Ismenus: *stetit arduus alto / amne manaque genas et nexa virentibus ulvis / cornua concutiens* (*Theb.* 9.418-20).

divine intervention, representative of the fire-water opposition. It is unusual also in that here water emerges as the winner, Morrheus being saved to continue the fight. Morrheus, undaunted by his experience, takes to the field at once (30.105-7). We note that Deriades acts with similar defiance after his first duel with Dionysus (36.386-9). He slays the dancer Phlogius (who is to be distinguished from the Indian of the same name), and, as he beholds his death agony, addresses his victim with a mocking speech, suggesting that he entertain Persephone with his art (30.118-24).

The poet leaves Morrheus to wreak havoc among the Sileni and turns his attention to another Indian, Tectaphus, who has likewise been distinguishing himself on the battlefield. Tectaphus, whose imprisonment in an underground dungeon and rescue from death by starvation through the inventiveness of his daughter Eerie, who breastfeeds him, thereby eluding the watchfulness of his jailers, is the highlight of book 26, meets his fate at the hands of Eurymedon!<sup>19</sup> Tectaphus' story, a quintessential example of filial piety, was well known in antiquity in various forms.<sup>20</sup> The present scene, involving his daughter's inability to save him a second time, forms a tragic sequel to the events narrated in book 26, and resembles in its pathos the scenes of Indian lamentation in books 24 and 40. The tragic tone of these passages stands in marked contrast with the generally mock serious character of the poem as a whole. Eurymedon strikes Tectaphus on the forehead, splitting it open, but that notwithstanding, Tectaphus has time to address Eerie, who witnesses the slaying from the walls, with a carefully constructed speech. Mindful of the role she had played during his subterranean confinement, he addresses her as μήτηρ ἐμῆ καὶ μαῖα, which elicits the response υἱὲ πάτερ from Eerie. Employing an antithetic mode of speech he asks his daughter why she does not come to him as he lies dying as she had when he was alive: ἦ ῥα φυλάσσεις / πιστὰ τεῶ ζῶντι καὶ οὐ θνήσκοντι τοκῆι; (30.153-4). Having once outwitted Deriades' guards, she should now seek a way to outwit

<sup>19</sup> Tectaphus' involvement in the Indian war is attested in Dionysius: καὶ τότε Βωλίγγησι μετ' ἀνδράσι Τέκταφος ὤρτο (*Bassarica* frag. 19 recto v. 4, Livrea p.88). Whilst it is unclear how important a part he may have played in the *Bassarica* in Nonnus he appears on the battlefield only to be slain by Eurymedon.

<sup>20</sup> Pliny recounts the story of a Roman woman who saved her mother in this fashion (*Nat. Hist.* 7.36). Hyginus speaks of Xanthippe saving her father in like manner (*Fab.* 254)

Hades, as if there were a way to return from *that* pit, whence no one returns: εἰ πέλε νόστιμος οἶμος ἀνοστήτοιο βερέθρου (30.159). The speech is marked by the antitheses ζῶντι / θνήσκοντι and νόστιμος / ἀνοστήτοιο, which give the address a distinctly rhetorical flavour. He refers to Eerie as δύσαμαε (30.150), which is rather puzzling, seeing that she is losing a father and not a husband. Nonnus appears to have been influenced by Andromache's remarks on the death of Hector (cf. ἐγὼ δύστηνος Ξ477 and σύ τ' ἐγὼ τε δυσάμμοροι Ξ485). Eerie makes the usual physical gestures of grief, putting ashes on her head, ripping her dress and tearing her hair (30.163-5), which are later repeated by Orsiboe as she grieves for Deriades (40.104-7), both passages being inspired by X78-9 and 406-7, where Hecuba manifests her grief in the same way. Not even in tragic scenes of this sort will Nonnus forego the opportunity to remark on Indian racial characteristics (cf. σκολιῆν ... κόμην 30.163 and σκολιῆς ... ἐθείρης, κυανέους ... βραχίονας 40.104, 106). She voices her despair in rhetorical clichés that detract from the pathos of a situation which demands spontaneity and naturalness, not studied juxtapositions: ποῖον ἔχω γλάγος ἄλλο φερέσβιον, ὦ ἔπι δειλῆ / ψυχὴν ὑμετέρεην παλινάγρετον εἰς σὲ κομίσσω ; / ποῖον ἐγὼ πάλιν ἄλλον ἀρηγόνα μαζὸν ὀρέξω ; (30.169-71). The speech is marked by the anaphora of ἄλλο and πάλιν, so as to juxtapose all the steps she takes now with those that she took on the previous occasion. She promises to kill herself so that she can accompany him to the nether regions: σοί, πάτερ, ἐν γέρας ἄλλο φυλάσσειται ... σὺ δὲ κταμένης σέο κούρης / δέξο καὶ αὐχένος αἶμα μετὰ προτέρου γάλα μαζοῦ (30.173-5), appeals to Deriades' guards to show her another subterranean dungeon from where she might retrieve her father a second time: δείξατέ μοι μυχὸν ἄλλον ἔσω χθονός, ἦχι μολοῦσα / νεκρὸν ἐμὸν γενετήρα πάλιν ζῶντα τελέσσω (30.177-8), and concludes her speech with the wish that her father's killer slay her as well, so that somebody might say: " καὶ γενέτην καὶ παῖδα μὴ πρήνιξε μαχαίρη ", the pithy quotation adding further to the overall artificiality of the speech. Overuse of rhetorical devices notwithstanding, the speech is free of the flippancy that characterises so many of the speeches in the poem, and conveys something of the sense of tragedy

demanded by the situation.

Nonnus now returns to the aristeia of Morrheus, who continues his devastating forays into the ranks of Dionysus' followers, killing Dasyllius and the maiden Alcimacheia, who had brought Hera's rage on herself by thrashing her statue with her thyrsus. The beautiful Codone meets the same fate at Morrheus' hand, the Indian paying no attention to her κάλλος ἄωριον (30.219). Her youth is recalled at 33.53, where she is judged to have departed προῶριος, before attaining the fullness of womanly beauty. Both her <sup>death that of</sup> and Alcimacheia: are recalled at 35.376-7. Ravaged female beauty forms one of the recurrent themes in the poem, especially in the segment dealing with the Indian war. Nonnus dwells on the suffering endured by the Bassarids at the hands of the Indians, the depictions, more often than not, having sexual overtones (cf. for instance, 34.223ff. and 35.21ff.). Morrheus forthwith slays Eurypyle, Sterope, Soe and Staphyle, all of whom are no more than names, appearing only in the present passage. He wounds Gigarto, who is previously mentioned in relation to Lycurgus (21.76-9) and again at 33.15-6, 52-3, where she is spoken of conjointly with Codone as if already dead or in the throes of death. Also wounded is Melictaine, who is, like the first three, merely a name, appearing only here. It is difficult to understand how the Bacchantes, who are susceptible to such outrages only in Dionysus' absence, could be depicted as being at the mercy of Morrheus, when (as the narrative leads us to believe) Dionysus is present among them. Seeing that traditionally the very presence of Dionysus sufficed to make his votaries invincible, it would seem logical for Nonnus to have postponed the aristeias of the Indians till after the removal of Dionysus from the field in book 32. The poet has, quite clearly, chosen not to do so, indicating once again his indifference in matters of narrative consistency.

Now follows another gigantomachy segment, this time involving the Telchines, who had once fulfilled the same role for Poseidon as the Corybants had for Zeus. Their mode of fighting with boulders and mountain tops (30.227-30) parallels that of the Cyclopes in book 28 (28.240 and 266) and of Leneus (29.299). Singled out in Deriades' speech along with the Cyclopes (27.105-9), the Telchines play no further role in the narrative, except that one of them, Lycus, is mentioned at 39.12-

3, riding into the naval battle, having earlier been appointed admiral of Dionysus' fleet (36.417-21). Hera now intervenes to turn the tide of battle decisively in favour of the Indians. She bolsters the self-assuredness of Deriades and makes a flame glow about his helmet and shield to strike terror into his opponents: Ἥρη δ' ... ἐπιβρίζουσα Λυαίῳ / δῶκε μένος καὶ θάρσος ἀγήνορι Δηριαδῆι, / καὶ οἱ ἀριστεύοντι σελασφόρον ὤπασεν αἶγλην / εἰς φόβον ἀντιβίοισι· κορυσομένου δὲ φορῆος / ἀσπίδος Ἰνδῶης ἀμαρύσσετο φοῖνις αἶγλη, / καὶ κυνέης σελάγιζεν ὑπὲρ λόφον ἀλλομένη φλόξ (30.231-6). Nonnus has imitated the scenes from the *Iliad* where Athena bolsters the stature of Diomedes (and later, of Achilles) in this manner. We note that Athena Διομήδει ... / δῶκε μένος καὶ θάρσος ... δαίε οἱ ἐκ κόρυθός τε καὶ ἀσπίδος ἀκάματον πῦρ (E1-4). Dionysus, sensing Hera's involvement, takes fright, relapsing into that state of timidity which he had experienced in his earlier confrontation with Lycurgus. In both instances Hera is described as ἐπιβρίζουσα Λυαίῳ (30.231 and 20.347). The glow about Deriades has the same effect on Dionysus as did the sound of thunder which accompanied Lycurgus' onslaught. He makes for the woods (30.247), as he does later when overcome by madness (32.125-6), but Athena's prompt intervention ensures that his disgrace is short-lived this time. At the behest of Zeus, Athena comes down from heaven to check Dionysus' flight and restore his spirits; standing behind him she grabs him by his blond hair: ἦλθε δ' Ἀθήνη / οὐρανόθεν· πρὸ γὰρ ἦκε διάκτορον ὑψιμέδων Ζεὺς, / ... στῆ δ' ὀπιθεν, ξανθῆς δὲ κόμης ἐδράξατο Βάκχου, / μούνῳ φαινομένη βλοσυρῆ θεός (30.249-54). This is an evocation of the scene from the first book of the *Iliad*, where Athena holds back Achilles by the hair to stop him from attacking Agamemnon: ἦλθε δ' Ἀθήνη / οὐρανόθεν· πρὸ γὰρ ἦκε θεὰ λευκώλενος Ἥρη / ... στῆ δ' ὀπιθεν, ξανθῆς δὲ κόμης ἔλε Πηλείωνα, / οἷῳ φαινομένη (A194-8). We note that the situations depicted are diametrically opposed: whereas Achilles is being restrained from attacking, Dionysus is being held back from fleeing. It is possible that Nonnus has deliberately used the Homeric passage to highlight the inherent cowardice of Dionysus, by placing his action in direct contrast to that of Achilles. In the speech which follows, Athena compares

Dionysus' behaviour adversely with that of Aiacus, who exemplifies the traditional heroic qualities and acts as a foil to Dionysus at various stages of the narrative. Athena upbraids Dionysus for his cowardice and expresses dissatisfaction, at the same time, with the lack of progress shown hitherto by his campaign (30.261-2), her remarks recalling the earlier recriminations of Rheia (25.327ff.). Perseus and Aiacus are shown forth as examples, the first for his achievements, the second for his valour. We note that Perseus' achievements were previously used by Staphylus as means of stirring Dionysus to action (18.289ff.), though more by way of exhortation than recrimination as here. Athena continues with references to her own and Dionysus' father Zeus, who never shirked battle, and to Rheia, who is still waiting to see Orsiboe and Cheirobie captive. Athena will not deign to call a fleeing Dionysus her brother (30.287-8), a tactic she will again employ later, when, disguised as Morrheus, she upbraids the fleeing Deriades in the same way, expressing shame at being known as his son-in-law (40.23-4).

Athena's speech induces Dionysus to return to the fray, his courage restored. A brief *aristeia* follows, introduced in the Homeric manner: *ἔνθα τίνα πρῶτον, τίνα δ' ὕστατον ἔκτανε Βάκχος;* (30.296), echoing *ἔνθα τίνα πρῶτον, τίνα δ' ὕστατον ἔξενάριξαν* (E703) and used previously with respect to Oiagrus (22.187). A list of wounded or slain Indians follows, whole contingents of the enemy being thrown into disarray. One Indian, Meilanion, he wounds as the latter, concealed in a tree (somewhat like Pentheus later in the narrative), shoots at the Bassarids *κρυφίοισιν... βελέμοις* (30.319). He is saved by Hera as a recompense for his previous stealthy attacks on the Bacchantes. The Indians are now in overall disarray, a situation that propels Hera toward taking more radical measures in the books that follow.

#### Chapter 4: books 31-35.

Books 31 to 35, encompassing the period of Dionysus' insanity, form a self-contained segment, which exhibits a considerable measure of dramatic unity, within the broader framework of the *Indiad* as a whole. Unlike the preceding books, which depict events in a linear way, we have here a genuine plot: Hera displays all her powers of persuasion, marshalling the assistance of various gods to deceive Zeus and temporarily remove him from the action by putting him to sleep; she then secures from Persephone the services of Megaira to induce insanity in Dionysus, removing him from the fray. Dionysus, without Zeus to protect him, quickly falls victim to Hera's machinations, but the traffic is not all one-way, as Aphrodite, responding to the pleas of one of her attendant Graces to help his beleaguered followers, effectively removes the Indian champion Morrheus from the field by overwhelming him with passion for the nymph Chalcomeda. Nonnus has quite adeptly combined the theme of Dionysus' madness with the Homeric Διὸς ἀπάτη, at the same time incorporating a romance modelled on the Apollo-Daphne theme into the narrative. The Morrheus-Chalcomeda story is, as the poet himself intimates (33.210ff.), a replica of that of Apollo and Daphne. Seeing that Ovid has left us a radiant version of the latter, it is tempting to assume that Nonnus used it as the model for the Morrheus-Chalcomeda episode, especially seeing that several of Ovid's witty turns of phrase appear to be echoed in the latter. As appears to be his usual practice in respect of the Homeric passages that he imitates, Nonnus has imitated the Διὸς ἀπάτη twice (or three times, if we count the little story of the ἀπάτη ἸΑΡΕΟΣ at the end of book 29). The first instance involves Hera's use of the girdle of Apatē or Deceit to persuade Semele to insist that her lover Zeus reveal himself in his full might to her, which results in her incineration and in the first, premature, birth of Dionysus (8.109-77). The present instance is a much closer and more extensive rendering of the Homeric theme. Nonnus has both paraphrased and amplified the original, introducing, in his usual manner, additional speeches into the story. As in the earlier adaptation in book 8, Hera's speeches are studied examples of the rhetoric of persuasion, in which the personal grievances of the addressees are cleverly exploited to demonstrate why it is in their interest too

that they lend a hand to her. The tendency to multiply the participants of the action is also in evidence, with Nonnus assigning active roles to characters who are merely peripheral to Homer's account. Thus Iris, who in Homer only makes an appearance at the very end of the episode, to convey Zeus' message to Poseidon to withdraw from the fray (O55-8), is assigned an active role from the start, being given firstly the task of finding Hypnus, and then, disguised as his mother Night, of persuading him to put Zeus asleep on Hera's behalf. Nonnus appears quite obsessed with the notion of false identities. Whilst it is expected that the gods should assume various guises in their relations with mortals, it is somewhat less believable that they should be able to conceal their true identities in this way from their fellow immortals.

The story commences with Hera observing the suffering of the Indians on the banks of the Indus, and the *λείψανα* of the deeds of that other bastard son of Zeus, Perseus, sights which so incense her that she embarks on a plan to divert Zeus' attention from the battlefield by putting him to sleep for a day, so that she can deliver a telling blow to Dionysus' cause. The situation is thus the converse of that in the *Iliad*, where Hera, elated at seeing Poseidon fighting for the Greeks, embarks on this course of action to forestall the possibility of Zeus noticing his brother and ordering him to desist. Nonnus has closely entwined Hera's deception of Zeus with her visit to the underworld to enlist the services of the Furies. Evidence for such a visit occurs elsewhere in extant literature only in Vergil and Ovid. Hera is portrayed in the former as one who would stop at nothing to destroy those who had offended her, as had the Trojans, even if it meant canvassing the support of the infernal gods: 'flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo' (*Aen.* 7.313). Here again the possibility that Nonnus was influenced by the Latin poets presents itself. The correspondences with Vergil and Ovid may be observed at: 31.5-7 (Hera beholding a sight that rouses her anger), 31.30-97 (her visit to Persephone) and 32.98-109 (the assault of the Fury). Braune, the great proponent of Latin influence on Nonnus,<sup>1</sup> does not examine the above passages, but Otis in his book on Ovid is convinced that they constitute the most tangible indication yet of direct Ovidian influence. Commenting on Braune's omission of this episode from his list of Ovidian parallels, he deems it "a far more impressive demonstration

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<sup>1</sup> See his 'Nonnos und Ovid', 1935 and 'Nonno e Claudiano', 1948.

of his general thesis of Nonnus' dependence on Ovid than the episodes he does treat." <sup>2</sup> Otis assumes that the visit to the underworld is an invention of Vergil's, which Ovid subsequently adapted for his Athamas and Ino story, which in turn served as the source for Nonnus. Owing to the loss of so much ancient literature, the assumption is somewhat debatable, nor is there anything to indicate that Nonnus obtained his version exclusively from Ovid. His version seems indeed to share some features with Vergil's that do not appear in Ovid. We note that in both Nonnus and Vergil Hera is depicted flying through the air, when she beholds, far below, a scene that so angers her as to impel her to seek the assistance of the infernal powers: κατέγραφεν ἠέρα ταρσῶ / αὐτόθι παπταίνουσα ... στρατὸν Ἰνδῶν / θύρσοις ... ἀλοιηθέντα Λυαίου (31.5-7), which corresponds schematically to: 'aurasque invecta tenebat, / et laetum Aenean classemque prospexit ./.. moliri iam tecta videt, iam fidere terrae, / deseruisse rates' (*Aen.* 7.287-91). There is no corresponding scene to trigger Juno's visit to the underworld in Ovid, where she simply acts out of long-standing resentment. In both Nonnus and Vergil she addresses a particular individual there (Persephone/Allecto), while in Ovid she speaks to the Furies collectively. The correspondences with Ovid, on the other hand, reside in the fact that in both poems it is Dionysus who is at the root of Hera's resentment and in the way that the Fury is depicted. Nonnus' καὶ κεφαλὴν ἐλέλιξε, δρακοντείων δὲ κομάων / φρικτὰ τινασσομένων ἐπεσύρισε λοίγιος ἦχώ / καὶ σκοπιῆν ἔρραινον ἐρημάδα πίδακες ἰοῦ (32.104-5), parallels Ovid's 'caesariemque excussit, motae sonuere colubrae. / ... / sibila dant saniemque vomunt linguasque coruscant' (*Met.* 4.491-3). As the details relating to the onset of the Furies were likely to have been of a stereotyped nature, no great store can be set by the above correspondence on its own, but when placed within the context <sup>of</sup> other coincidences between the *Dionysiaca* and the *Metamorphoses*, it is indeed significant. Hera, on arriving in Hades, gives two speeches, one addressed to Persephone, the other to Megaira. The speeches have little in common with Juno's brief address to Allecto in Vergil, and her even briefer address, relayed in indirect speech, to the Furies in Ovid. The twin notions of injustice and outrage, which permeate Hera's addresses in Nonnus, do, however, have a precedent in

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<sup>2</sup> (1966) p. 373

Juno's monologue prior to the visit in Vergil (*Aen.* 7.293-322). Hera portrays herself as the affronted goddess to Persephone, telling her how fortunate she is to reside in her underworld realm and not have to witness the inroads of mortals, by Zeus' connivance, into Olympus. Zeus' indifference to Ares being confined in a jar by Otos and Ephialtes and to the fate of Zagreus, the legitimate Dionysus, are adduced as examples of his injustice. Hera then reminds Persephone that she, too, has cause to be offended, seeing that her mother Demeter had been upstaged on the banks of the Nile by yet another mortal upstart, Io. Then, somewhat in contradiction to her original remark about Persephone being fortunate to be in Hades, Hera tells her that she had been given a raw deal in being consigned there, when the mortal upstart Semele is allotted a place in the starry heavens: Κρονίδης πόλον ἄστρον / ἔδνα πόρεν Σεμέλη καὶ Τάρταρα Περσεφονείη (31.50). Persephone, swayed by Hera's words, grants her Megaira's services, and as the two fly off, Hera draws the Fury's attention to the plight of the pious Indians and to the injustice of Zeus, who allows the Tyrrhenian pirates and the murderous Dryopes to thrive, while consigning the former to destruction. We note that Hera's view of the Indians is the very opposite of Zeus', who, as we recall, assigns Dionysus the task of bringing to heel the δίκης ἀδίδακτον ὑπερφιάλων γένος Ἴνδῶν (13.3).

Megaira (presumably briefed by Hera of her plan) assumes the shape of an owl and hides in a cleft in the Caucasus until such time as she knows Zeus to be asleep (31.98-102). One is immediately reminded of Hypnus in the *Iliad* assuming the appearance of a bird and biding his time in a tall pine until called to put Zeus to sleep (Ξ286-91). With Megaira in hiding, Hera seeks out Iris, who, when found, is told to look for Hypnus in the west and in Lemnus (31.112-3). Lemnus is, incidentally, where Hera finds Hypnus in the *Iliad* (Ξ225-30). Iris is to impersonate Hypnus' mother Night and promise him the hand of Pasithea in return for his cooperation. Nonnus omits mentioning Hera's initial offer of chair and footstool in the *Iliad*, which Hypnus rejected. Iris finds Hypnus at Orchomenus, paying court to Pasithea, and assumes the form of Night as instructed. Night figures in Homer's account only by way of a retrospective mention, as having interceded on behalf of Hypnus when Zeus had threatened to hurl him into the sea

for putting him to sleep on a previous occasion at Hera's behest (Ξ256-61). Iris' speech to Hypnus resembles Hera's speech to Persephone, in so far as she draws his attention to the affronts suffered by him and his mother Night, in the way that Hera had drawn Persephone's attention to the affronts suffered by her and her mother Demeter. Dionysus' followers offend Night by the light of their torches and Hypnus by their sleeplessness. The speech is punctuated by a mocking refrain: Ὕπνε, τί πανδαμάτωρ κικλήσκει ; (31.143 and 158), and evinces Nonnus' liking for contrastive juxtapositions, viz. ἡματίη Νύξ (151), ἀθελγέα θέλξον (154). The kinship of the Indians with Hypnus and Night is deduced from their shared attribute of darkness (cf. Γηγενέων δ' ἐλέαιρε γονὴν μελανόχρουν Ἰνδῶν ... ὑμετέρης γὰρ ὁμόχροές εἰσι τεκούσης, 31.173-5) and they face a common enemy in Dionysus. Hypnus and Deriades are kinsmen, seeing that Hypnus is the neighbour of Tethys, the spouse of Oceanus, who is the grandfather of Deriades. We recall that Nonnus used a similar geographical argument in his syncrisis of Dionysus and Perseus, when he gave as one reason for the deeds of Dionysus being superior to those of Perseus the fact that they were performed in the east rather than in the west (25.98-104). This type of flippant logic, based on capricious associations, is reminiscent of the style of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the similarity being further underlined by the use of clever juxtapositions of the sort indicated above. Tethys and Oceanus, whose alleged falling out was Hera's excuse to Zeus for undertaking her journey in the *Iliad* (Ξ301-11), will be mentioned again at a later stage, in Hera's speech to Zeus (32.52-5), that is to say, in the context in which they are referred to in the *Iliad*. Hypnus is told not to be afraid of Zeus in what is obviously an allusion to Hypnus' speech to Hera in the *Iliad*, where he voices his misgivings about putting Zeus to sleep again in view of what had happened on the previous occasion he had done so (Ξ247-62). Eros, the other god enjoying the epithet πανδαμάτωρ, is adduced as the model to emulate, since he is not afraid to shoot his little arrow into Zeus.

Hypnus is so completely won over by Iris' arguments that he even offers to put Zeus to sleep for three days, an offer which Iris prudently declines. We would expect him to accompany Iris back to Hera, so that the two of them could go to

Zeus as in Homer (Ξ281-3), but Nonnus somewhat inexplicably states that he stayed where he had been all along (at Orchomenus): αὐτόθι δ' Ἵπνος ἐμίμνε, δεδεγμένος εὐγάμον ὤρην (31.196). We note that <sup>in</sup> Homer Hypnos waits concealed in a tall pine close to Zeus: Ἵπνος μὲν ἐμίμνε πάρος Διὸς ὅσσε ιδέσθαι (Ξ286). Iris returns alone to Hera (31.197-8), who sets out to find Aphrodite (the gods appear to be continually roaming about in Nonnus' account, having invariably to be searched for, cf. 31.106, 113, and 202). Aphrodite greets Hera with feigned concern, mixed with a good deal of *Schadenfreude*, asking her whether she has come to announce yet another marital infidelity on Zeus' part: Ἥρη, Ζηνὸς ἀκοίτι, τί σοι χλοάουσι παρειαί ; / τίπτε τεαί, βασίλεια, κατηφέες εἰσὶν ὀπωπαί ; / ἦ ῥα πάλιν πέλεν ὄμβρος ἐπίκλοπος ὑέτιος Ζεύς; (31.212-4). Nonnus has reused phrases from his earlier adaptation of the Διὸς ἀπάτη in book 8. We note that there Hera greets Semele with the same question: εἶπέ, πόθεν, βασίλεια, τεαί χλοάουσι παρειαί ; (8.207). Aphrodite recalls Zeus' past infidelities through a series of rhetorical questions, but her list (31.214-24) differs from Zeus' so-called 'Leporello catalogue' in the *Iliad* (Ξ315-28), having only Danae, Europa and Semele in common with the latter. Nonnus, in his version of the 'Leporello catalogue' (32.63-74), seems to be at pains to produce a list even more remote from Homer's than the present one, having only Io in common with it. Nonnus, influenced perhaps by Apollonius' depiction of her (3.52ff.), has made Aphrodite's behaviour a good deal more sarcastic than it is in Homer. The mocking tone of Semele's speech to Hera (9.208-42) is echoed throughout her address. She nevertheless offers to help Hera to the best of her ability (31.227) corresponding to her offer in Homer (Ξ195-6).

Hera makes no comment on Aphrodite's address (unlike Apollonius' version, where she retorts with κερτομέεις, 3.56), replying with a speech carefully contrived to win over the addressee. She intimates her fear that Zeus, not content merely with admitting mortals to Olympus, may expel her from there in the wake of Cronus (31.232-5, cf. 8.152-4, where she expresses similar fears to Apatē). Olympus would indeed become a drinksodden place, were Dionysus to get his way and introduce the vine (31.235-48). The nectar-wine anthesis, of which the

present passage presents a rather colourful exposition, is, as we have stated earlier, a recurrent theme in the poem. The speech, like those that precede it, is a studied rhetorical construct (note the anaphora of δείδια, 31.234, 238, 244). Aphrodite is, first of all, put into a frame of mind in which she would be likely to respond favourably to the request for the use of her *cestus*. As in the other speeches, the suffering of the Indians is made out to be a matter of personal concern to the addressee: Aphrodite owes it to the Indians, who have always received her hospitably, to help them. In contrast to the *Iliad*, where Hera gives Aphrodite a spurious reason for needing the cestus, namely the reconciliation of Tethys and Oceanus, in Nonnus she divulges her true reason, which is to grant the Indians respite from their suffering at the hands of Dionysus. Hera's exercise in persuasion is somewhat inadequately motivated, seeing that Aphrodite, in her address, had already signalled her willingness to comply with Hera's wishes (31.227). The request is made at the very end: δός μοι κεστὸν ἱμάντα βοηθῶν, ᾧ ἔνι μούνῳ / θέλγεις εἶν ἐνὶ πάντα (31.280-1), corresponding to δός νῦν μοι φιλότητα καὶ ἱμερον, ᾧ τε σὺ πάντας / δαμνᾷ ἀθανάτους ἠδὲ θνητοὺς ἀνθρώπους (Ξ198-9) and ἀπὸ στήθεσφιν ἐλύσατο κεστὸν ἱμάντα / ποικίλον, ἔνθα τέ οἱ θελκτήρια πάντα τέτυκτο (Ξ214-5). The Homeric passage is previously imitated in Hera's speech to Apate, from whom she likewise requests her girdle: δός μοι ἔχειν ζωστήρα βοηθῶν, ὄφρα φυγόντα / θέλω θούρον Ἄρεα (8.163-4). Hera justifies her use of the *cestus* by virtue of her role as guardian of conjugal love (31.281-2), a role that she would have been fulfilling, had she in fact been on her way to reconcile Tethys and Oceanus, as she claimed in her address to Zeus in the *Iliad*.

Book 32 begins with Hera beautifying herself in preparation for her meeting with Zeus. In Homer this scene is presented at the beginning of the episode, and Nonnus has quite aptly transposed it to just prior <sup>to</sup> the meeting with Zeus, seeing that the beautification is for his benefit alone. Nonnus has paraphrased the Homeric passage rather closely, as the following examples demonstrate. Hera arranges her hair: πολλάκι δ' ἰσάζουσα καθειμένον ἄχρι μετώπου / πλαζομένης ἔστησε μετήλυδα βότρυν ἐθείρης (32.12-3), which transforms into typically Nonnian terms the simple Homeric statement: ἰδὲ χαίτας / πεξαμένη, χερσὶ πλοκάμους

ἔπλεξε φαεινοὺς / καλοὺς ἀμβροσίους ἐκ κράατος ἀθανάτοιο (Ξ175-7). Βότρυς, 'cluster, bunch (of grapes)', used with reference to hair is commonplace in Nonnus (e.g. 15.230, 16.16; the verbal adj. βοτρυόεντας 34.308 is probably imitated from Apollonius 2.677). Πλαζομένης, 'wandering', used of an inanimate object such as hair is another such affectation. She moistens her plaited hair with an unguent, the scent of which permeates the universe: καὶ πλεκτὴν θυόεντι κόμην ἐδίηεν ἐλαίῳ, / τοῦ καὶ κινυμένοιο μετ' αἰθέρα καὶ μετὰ πόντον / γαίαν ὅλην ἐμέθυσσε μύρου δολιχόσκιος ὄδμή (32.16-8), which is another close paraphrase, though Homer has her use the oil to cleanse her body rather than moisten her hair: ἀπὸ χροὸς ἱμερόεντος / λύματα πάντα κάθηρεν, ἀλείψατο δὲ λίπ' ἐλαίῳ / ἀμβροσίῳ ἐδανῶ ... / τοῦ καὶ κινυμένοιο Διὸς κατὰ χαλκοβατῆς δῶ / ἔμπης ἐς γαίαν τε καὶ οὐρανὸν ἴκετ' αὐτμή (Ξ170-4). Nonnus, not content with cestus alone, has Hera don a headband adorned with an assortment of precious stones, to which the poet attributes the power to induce amorous passions in the beholder, and entwine in her hair a myrtle twig that Aphrodite had worn in her meetings with Adonis. Curiously, Nonnus rounds off his depiction of Hera's accoutrements with the statement that Hera put on the robe which she had worn on the occasion of her first sexual intimacy with Zeus and which still bore the blood marks testifying to her virginity at the time (32.32-5). Nonnus was most likely prompted by Zeus' remark to Hera in the *Iliad* that she seemed to him now as she had on that first occasion (Ξ294-6).

Hera flies off ὡς πτερόν ἢ ἐ νόημα (32.37), a phrase taken from η36 but corresponding at the same time to O80-2, which is the simile developed from the same comparison.<sup>3</sup> Zeus is inflamed with passion as he catches sight of her (32.38-41), which is a restatement in Nonnian terms of what Homer says at Ξ293-4. Typically Nonnian are the phrases ἱμάσσετο κέντορι κεστῶ and Διὸς εἰσορόωντος ἐδουλώθησαν ὀπωπαί, which are used to render Homer's μιν ἔρος πυκινὰς φρένας ἀμφεκάλυψεν. Zeus asks: Ἥρη, τίπτε βέβηκας ἑώιον εἰς κλίμα γαίης; / τίς χρεῖώ σε κόμιζε; τί σήμερον ἐνθάδε βαίνεις; (32.42-3), again echoing Ἥρη, πῆ μεμαυῖα κατ' Οὐλύμπου τόδ' ἰκάνεις; (Ξ299). In

<sup>3</sup> Coffey (1957) p. 121, suggests that η36 is derived from O80-2.

Nonnus the dialogue loses some of the point that it has in Homer, in that Zeus divines that the true purpose of Hera's visit is to fight Dionysus and help the Indians (32.44-5). Hera denies this, claiming instead that she has come to recall Eros to his duties, who, overwhelmed with love for Oceanus' daughter, is tarrying about Tethys' abode. As a consequence of his dereliction of duty the universe is out of kilter: Ῥοδόπης δεδονημένος οἴστρω / συζυγίην ἀπέειπε· καὶ ἔπλετο κόσμος ἀλήτης, / καὶ βίος ἀχρήστος ἀποιχομένων ὑμεναίων (32.53-5). Nonnus has maintained the link with Hera's speech in the *Iliad* (Ξ301-6) by mentioning Tethys and Oceanus, but they are only incidental in his version, the attention being focussed instead on Eros. Nonnus, as earlier at 24.319-20 (p. 33), gives the passage a distinctly Orphic colouring by referring to Eros as the primal cosmic force that he is in the Orphic system.<sup>4</sup> Zeus replies, asking Hera to put strife aside - he appears to ignore completely Hera's stated reason for coming - and invites her to bed with him (32.60-2). In Homer Zeus accepts Hera's explanation at face value and, asking her to put off the reconciliation of Tethys and Oceanus for another time, invites her to bed (Ξ313-4). Nonnus copies the passage in which Zeus details his past infidelities in the *Iliad*, but, as we have mentioned previously, seems to have made some effort not to duplicate Homer's list. As in Homer the list is inserted almost by way of parenthesis into the statement that never had his passions been aroused to such heights as they were now (cf. 32.62-73 and Ξ315-28). Except for the names, Nonnus has imitated Homer's structure (οὐ γὰρ ... τόσον - the list - ὡς σέο νῦν) almost exactly.

In Homer Hera balks at the prospect of sexual intimacy in so exposed a place as the summit of Ida, and Zeus allays her concerns by forming an impenetrable bower of clouds. Nonnus, who appears to have little inclination or aptitude for scenes involving dialogue, omits this amusing exchange, stating simply that Zeus assembled the bower (presumably of his own accord and not in response to any prompting from Hera): ὡς εἰπὼν χρυσέας νεφέλας πυργηδὸν ἐλίξας / διωτὴν ἐπίκρυτον ἐνεσφαίρωσε καλύπτρην (32.76-7), which recalls Zeus' words to Hera in the *Iliad*: τοῖόν τοι ἐγὼ νέφος ἀμφικαλύψω / χρύσειον (Ξ343-4). The hierogamy of Zeus and Hera derives from a remote past when Zeus

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. the Orphic *Argonautica*, 12-6.

(like the Vedic Dyaus) represented the sky itself (which was later to be designated eponymously by Ouranos),<sup>5</sup> the union of sky and earth (Gaia) causing vegetation to spring up. In the Homeric version Hera has replaced Gaia, but the latter is still present, albeit in an ancillary role, making vegetation spring up as bedding for the couple. Nonnus (32.83-101) has again closely paraphrased Homer (Ξ346-52), his dependence on his model being quite self-evident, but he has, at the same time, added a distinctive touch of his own, by making the plants, which spring up, behave like sentient beings, entwining in passionate embrace as if to mimic the loving couple. Thus the narcissus leaping upon the anemone portrays with meaningful silence (νοήμονι ... σιγῆ, 32.93) the passion of Zeus. Nonnus had earlier represented plants anthropomorphically at 12.272-4 in a non-sexual context, where trees bow their tops in homage to the vine.

Nonnus leaves the blissful scene for one of horror, the assault of Megaira on Dionysus. We have already commented on the similarities between Nonnus' and Ovid's portrayals of the Fury, noting that the similarity may in large measure be attributed to the stereotyped nature of such depictions. Megaira metamorphoses into various animal shapes and attacks Dionysus in the shape of a lion: ἄλλοτε θηρείοιο τύπον φαίνουσα προσώπου / αἰνομανῆς ἔφριξε λέων πυκινότριχι λαιμῶ, / χάσματι φοινῆεντι καταΐσσων Διονύσου (32.107-9). We note that Dionysus himself later attacks Deriades in the same way: ἰσοφυῆς μίμημα λεοντείοιο προσώπου / ὄρθιον ἤερταζε μετάρσιον ἀνθερεῶνα, / πηχαλέον βρύχημα χέων πυκινότριχι λαιμῶ (36.300-2). Artemis attempts to protect Dionysus, but is frightened off by Hera wielding a firebrand. The most she can do is to see that her own dogs cause him no harm (32.116-8). This may be a reminiscence of Ω19-21, where all that Apollo can do for Hector is to protect his body from being mangled, having been unable to prevent his death. As madness takes hold of him, Dionysus rushes about like a bull stung by the gad-fly (32.125-9). The scene has obviously been inspired by Apollonius' description of Heracles' behaviour following the disappearance of Hylas (1.1265-9). As may be expected, Nonnus imitates the Apollonius passage a second time to depict Dionysus' infatuation with Beroe (42.185-93). As with the Διὸς ἀπάτη, the second imitation

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Puhvel (1987) p.130

is rather closer to the original than the first. The application of the stung bull simile is especially apposite to Dionysus' case, seeing that he is often depicted with horns in visual representations and accorded the epithet βούκραυρος (45.250).

Dionysus' madness sends his followers into disarray, allowing the Indians to gain the ascendancy on the battlefield. One cannot help noticing the schematic parallelism between maddened Dionysus and dazed Hector (as a result of being struck by a stone hurled by Ajax, Ξ409-20) in the *Iliad*. The parallelism is especially noticeable in book 35, where Zeus on waking reacts to the sight of Dionysus in the throes of madness in a way similar to his reaction on seeing Hector unconscious. Nonnus has been influenced by or made use of scenes in Ξ and Ο beside the Διὸς ἀπάτη itself. The rock-throwing scene, where Ajax knocks Hector unconscious, may have prompted Nonnus to compose one of his own, involving Morrheus and Echelaus. He has, however, elected to use the earlier Diomedes-Aeneas confrontation rather than the present encounter for a model. Echelaus, struck on the hip by a boulder thrown by Morrheus, rolls in the dust: πληγῆς ἰσχίον ἄκρον, ὅπη χροὸς ἤλικι δεσμῶ / συμφορτὴν κοτύλην φύσις ἤρμοσεν ἄξονι μηροῦ (32.204-5), which is a close paraphrase of τῷ βάλεν Αἰνείας κατ' ἰσχίον, ἔϊθα τε μηρὸς / ἰσχύω ἐνστρέφεται, κοτύλην δέ τέ μιν καλέουσιν (E305-6). Morrheus' taunts to the dying Echelaus include a remark that Aphrodite had not favoured him with a long life and a mule-drawn waggon to convey him out of harm's way (32.215-8). Unlike his fellow Cypriot Pygmalion, on whom Aphrodite had conferred these favours, Echelaus was destined to die young. But Nonnus is, quite clearly, not thinking only of Pygmalion here, but of Aeneas as well, who is likewise saved by Aphrodite, and of Hector, who is carried to safety in similar fashion (Ξ430-1). Echelaus is portrayed at the same time as one too young to die, Nonnus voicing pity for him (32.201-2), as Apollonius does for Cyzicus (1.972-3) and Vergil for Euryalus (*Aen.* 9.435-7). The pathos of these scenes derives from the *Iliad* where death on the battlefield is portrayed on many occasions with a palpable sadness, with the poet lamenting the cutting off of the lives of young men in their prime. Especially pitiable is the case of Polydorus, a mere lad who wished to show off his running skills on the battlefield. He is slain by the inexorable Achilles (Υ407-18), whose

mercilessness is highlighted by the childishness of his victim.

With Dionysus out of the way, Deriades and Morrheus are having a field day. This is not to say that they were exactly doing poorly when Dionysus was present. As we have noted previously (pp. 934,97), Nonnus by according aristeias to the Indians in books 28-30, when Dionysus was present at the head of his forces, has somewhat blunted the difference that the presence or absence of Dionysus was meant to make on the battlefield. His followers were traditionally invincible in his presence and vulnerable in his absence. If Nonnus had followed that tradition consistently, he would have postponed Corymbasus' and Morrheus' aristeias until after the removal of Dionysus from the battlefield. Now, in his absence, Morrheus and Deriades are accorded further aristeias, though in abbreviated form, with the poet simply listing the names of Dionysus' followers slain by each. For Deriades two lists are given, the first preceding the slaying of Echelaus, the second following Morrheus' list (i.e. Deriades, 32.184-98, 228-39; Morrheus, 221-8). Announcing the first list of Deriades' victims, Nonnus appeals to Homer's muses to tell him . . . who they were: 'Ομηρίδες εἶπατε Μοῦσαι / τίς θάνε, τίς δούπησεν ὑπ' ἔγχει Δηριαδῆος ; (32.184-5), which corresponds to ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι 'Ολύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι, / ὅς τις δὴ πρῶτος βροτῶντ' ἀνδράγρι' Ἀχαιῶν / ἦρατ', ἐπεὶ δ' ἔκλινε μάχην κλυτὸς ἐννοσίγαιος (Ξ508-10). This is yet another example of Nonnus' continued use of Ξ and O outside the Διὸς ἀπάτη proper - the appeal to the muses, made at the corresponding stage of developments, reinforces the parallelism of book 32 and the second half of 35 with Ξ and the first half of O respectively. Nonnus not only duplicates from the *Iliad* the theme of the deception of Zeus, but also the developments that it specifically engendered on the battlefield. Erechtheus and Aiacus are unable to stem the Indian advance, their prodigious fighting qualities notwithstanding. Erechtheus gives ground with hesitant foot: ὀκναλέοις δὲ πόδεσσιν ἐχάζετο κωθρὸς Ἐρεχθεύς / ἐν<sup>ρ</sup>τροπαλιζομένην τανύων εὐκυκλον ὀπωπήν (32.265-6), a depiction that is reused in the case of Poseidon in the Beroe episode: ὀκναλέου ποδὸς ἔχνος ὑποκλέπτων Ἐννοσίχθων / ἐντροπαλιζομένῳ βαρυπειθεί χαζέτο ταρσῷ (42.56-7). These descriptions have been inspired by the retreat of Ajax before the Trojan onslaught in the *Iliad*, who gives ground

ἐντροπαλιζόμενος, ὀλίγον γόνυ γουνὸς ἀμείβων (Λ547). Aiacus alone holds his ground, but he, too, sorely misses the presence of Dionysus.

Book 33 sees the beginning of the Morrheus-Chalcomeda episode, which, interspersed with further battle scenes, occupies the poet's attention up to 35.222. The episode is ushered in rather contrivedly: one of the Graces attending on Aphrodite - the same Pasithea, we are duly informed, whom Hera had promised to Hypnus - while gathering flowers for her mistress, witnesses the madness of Dionysus and the plight of his followers, in particular of the beautiful Chalcomeda fleeing before the fury of Morrheus. Chalcomeda is so beautiful that Pasithea is afraid to draw attention to her, lest she defeat Aphrodite in a beauty contest: καὶ φθονερὴ δεδόνητο ῥοδώπιδος εἶνεκα κούρης, / μή ποτε νικήσειεν ἐς ἀγλαίην Ἄφροδίτην (33.19-20). Hollis cites Rufinus (*Anth.* 5.73), who mistakes his beloved Rhodoclea for Aphrodite, as according a parallel to this motif.<sup>6</sup> We note that the motif recurs in Pan's speech at 42.226, where Beroe is considered superior to Aphrodite, and in Poseidon's speech at 42.459ff., where she is said to surpass Aphrodite and the three Graces in beauty. Aphrodite, observing Pasithea's distress, suspects that she is dismayed at the prospect of marriage to black skinned Hypnus and reassures her that she has no intention of forcing her into such a union: οὐδὲ συνάψω / λευκάδι Πασιθέῃ μελανόχροον Ὑπνον ἀκοίτην (33.39-40). Nonnus displays throughout the *Dionysiaca* a deep-seated prejudice against dark-skinned races, an attitude which is perhaps attributable to the poet having passed his formative years at Panopolis on the very confines of Abyssinia. His οὐλοκάρηνοι Indians seem, if anything, born from recollections of the Abyssinians.<sup>7</sup> He usually rationalises his attitude by identifying blackness with the earthborn, but in the Morrheus-Chalcomeda episode his dislike assumes an undisguisedly personal character. His ironic asides at regular intervals betray his repugnance for the idea of a black man making amorous advances to a white woman. We are reminded throughout of Morrheus' presumption and temerity in believing that Chalcomeda would be attracted to one of his skin colour, the poet's feelings being perhaps best summed up in the comment: κοῦφος ἀνὴρ, ὅτι παῖδα σαόφρονα δίξετο θέλγειν / κυανέοις μελέεσσι, καὶ οὐκ

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<sup>6</sup>(1994) p. 53 <sup>7</sup>We recall that Odysseus describes his herald Eurybates as μελανόχρους, οὐλοκάρηνος (τ246), which is generally assumed to denote Ethiopian origin (cf. J.Russo, *Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, Oxford, 1992, note *ad loc.*)

ἐμνήσατο μορφῆς (33.206-7).<sup>8</sup> Pasithea subsequently reveals to her mistress the true cause of her anguish, addressing her through a stereotyped Orphic formula: ἀενάου κόσμοιο φυτοσπόρε, μήτηρ Ἑρώτων (33.42).<sup>9</sup> Aphrodite, who by acceding to Hera's request for the cestus was indirectly responsible for the situation giving rise to Pasithea's dismay, will now make amends for her deed by inducing in Morrheus an all-consuming passion for Chalcomeda, incapacitating him from causing further harm to Dionysus' followers. She sends Aglaia to fetch Eros, who, as it happens, is engaged in a contest with Hymenaius: εὔρε δέ μιν χρυσεῖοι περὶ ῥίον ἄκρον Ὀλύμπου / νεκταρέας ῥαθάμιγγας ἀκοντίζοντα κυπέλλοις / πὰρ δέ οἱ ἴστατο κούρος ὁμέψιος ἀβρὸν ἀθύρων, / εὐχαίτης Ὑμέναιος (33.64-7). This is an adaptation of the scene in the third book of Apollonius, where Aphrodite finds Eros similarly occupied: βῆ ῥ' ἔμεν Οὐλύμποιο κατὰ πτύχας, εἴ μιν ἐφεύροι. / εὔρε δὲ τόνγ' ἀπάνευθε Διὸς θαλερῆ ἐν ἀλωῇ, / οὐκ οἶον, μετὰ καὶ Γανυμήδεα ... ἀμφ' ἀστραγάλοισι δὲ τώγε / χρυσεῖοις, ἅτε κούροι ὁμήθεες, ἐψιόωντο (3.113-8). Nonnus' περὶ ῥίον ἄκρον Ὀλύμπου has been extracted from Θ25, but corresponds thematically to Apollonius' Οὐλύμποιο κατὰ πτύχας. Other correspondences are εὔρε δέ μιν / εὔρε δὲ τόνγ' and κούρος ὁμέψιος / κούροι ὁμήθεες ἐψιόωντο. The presence of the word χρύσεος in both passages (though used differently) should also be noted. Hymenaius has been substituted for Ganymede, but the latter has not been forgotten. Indicative of Nonnus' tendency to proliferate characters, Ganymede as well is brought into the picture to referee the contest. The contest itself consists of throwing wine from a goblet at a statue of Hebe. The scene appears to confirm the fears expressed earlier by Hera in her speech to Aphrodite regarding the introduction of wine to Olympus. Hebe, the legitimate dispenser of nectar to the gods is being pelted, even if only in effigy, with wine in a contest adjudicated by the mortal upstart Ganymede, who has usurped her prerogative. The two contestants each put up a prize, with the winner to collect

<sup>8</sup> For another instance of ancient perceptions of race, cf. Petronius, *Satyricon* 102, where negroid features are equated with extreme ugliness.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Orphic hymn to Aphrodite, 55.4-9 and Proclus' hymn to Aphrodite, 2.15-6, for similar language.

both, Eros a golden necklace of Aphrodite's and Hymenaius a globe resembling the speckled form of Argus ( σφαῖραν ... τροχόεσσαν ... /'Αργου δαιδαλής ἀντίρροπον εἰκόνα μορφῆς, 33.69-70). The reference to the many-eyed form of Argus is yet another indication of Nonnus' fascination with spotted objects, which like the oft-mentioned στικτὸς νέβρις of Dionysus, are viewed by him as μιμήματα of the starry vault of the heavens. The idea of a sphere as prize comes, however, from Apollonius, where Aphrodite promises Eros a σφαῖραν ἐυτρόχαλον (3.135), which likewise has astronomical associations. Eros emerges the winner in both poets, in Apollonius through deceit, in Nonnus because he offers a prayer to Aphrodite prior to making his throw (Hymenaius failing to do likewise with regard to his mother, the Muse). Nonnus has in mind here the foot-race in the *Iliad*, in which Odysseus beats Ajax because he, unlike the latter, offers a prayer to Athena (Ψ768-9, cf. also Ψ861ff., where Meriones, promising a hecatomb to Apollo, defeats Teucer, who fails to do likewise, in the archery contest). Nonnus uses this Homeric motif at 29.62-7 with regard to the archer Melaneus, and again at 37.638ff., where Erechtheus offers a prayer to Boreas before the foot-race, but omits it from his version of the archery contest (p. 189). Eros, collecting the prize, draws his sorrowful opponent's hand from his face (33.103-4). In Apollonius, Ganymede is likewise described as downcast, as he prepares to make his last throw (3.122-3).

As Aglaia begins to tell him of Aphrodite's troubles, Eros with the impatience of youth urges her to dispense with the preliminaries and come to the heart of the matter (33.114-6), which may be seen as a subtle adaptation of Eros' impatience, in Apollonius, to get the gift promised to him by Aphrodite at once (αὐτοσχεδόν, 3.148), even before embarking on his mission. Eros, on being told Aphrodite's message that she has been forsaken by all her attendant Graces, is stung by a perceived affront to his mother and launches into a plethora of boasts and threats against the other gods, which is reminiscent of the tirades of Typhoeus (2.258ff.) and Pentheus (44.134ff.) and starkly discordant with the otherwise pleasantly rococo scene inspired by Apollonius. He flies off with Aglaia and is welcomed by Aphrodite, who sits him on her lap, kissing his mouth and eyes (33.144-6). This affectionate scene is again drawn from Apollonius, where Eros is likewise kissed

by Aphrodite as he demands to see the toy promised him (3.148-50). The parallels with Apollonius do not end here: the task that Aphrodite sets Eros is essentially identical in both poets, namely to inject all consuming passion into a designated individual (Morrheus in Nonnus, Medea in Apollonius). But, whereas in Apollonius Aphrodite speaks to Eros as mother to child, in Nonnus she launches into a lengthy diatribe against Deriades and the gods helping him, accusing Hera of inciting Ares to become Ἰνδῶν βασιλῆι συνέμπορος (33.159). Her speech, like Eros' earlier bluster, grates with the mother-child imagery borrowed from Apollonius. Aphrodite proffers Eros a gift, as she does in Apollonius, if he does her bidding. This gift needs to be different from that in Apollonius, which Nonnus has already used as one of the prizes in the contest with Hymenaius. It is a gleaming garland wrought by Hephaistus (33.174-6). Eros takes off at once, armed with his bow and quiver (33.180-3), a scene again inspired by Apollonius (3.154-7). Eros' arrow pierces Morrheus with the same effect as it does Medea in Apollonius (cf. 33.194 and 3.286-7).

It is obvious from the correspondences in substance and expression, sustained over nearly two hundred lines, that Nonnus has been following Apollonius' text rather closely. For the ensuing romance, however, he has turned to sources other than Apollonius, henceforth using the latter only in a few isolated instances. As he himself intimates, the Morrheus-Chalcomeda story is a repeat of that of Apollo and Daphne, and some commentators are convinced that Ovid's version of it has been used by Nonnus as his model. Braune's 1935 thesis that Nonnus modelled his episode on Ovid's has more recently been endorsed by D'Ippolito (1964) and Otis (1966). Earlier, Castiglioni in his *Epica nonniana* (1932) had examined the Nonnus-Ovid relationship with specific reference to the Morrheus-Chalcomeda episode, but he discounted the possibility of direct influence. As Braune, D'Ippolito and Otis have not brought to bear on the question any evidence additional to that already adduced by Castiglioni, the question is purely one of interpretation, the debate being as to what sorts of conclusions we are entitled to draw. Compared with the lengthy parallels with Apollonius in the preceding segment, the parallels with Ovid are limited to three isolated but exact verbal correspondences, consisting of statements whose contrived cleverness possibly bespeaks a rhetorical origin. Otis, commenting on the nature of Ovidian influence

on Nonnus in general, appears to concede that the character of Nonnus' relationship to Ovid is different from that to his Greek predecessors, when he says Nonnus "imitates Ovid in the most eclectic manner, using motifs rather than whole episodes from the *Metamorphoses* ... He is in fact not influenced by Ovid's narrative or plot so much as by the piquantly Ovidian motifs".<sup>10</sup> He makes no attempt to explain why Nonnus' imitation of Ovid should have assumed a character so different from his imitation of say Homer or Apollonius. When we consider how minutely he had just before duplicated details from Apollonius, it is difficult to see why he should not continue in the same vein with Ovid. D'Ippolito puts the difference down to Nonnus' conscious desire to hide his indebtedness to Ovid, speaking of "il desiderio del Nostro di mascherare il suo debito verso il latino sia col variare e con l'amplificare, sia soprattutto nella diversa impostazione dei racconti, nelle differenti versioni mitiche volutamente seguite, nel tacere di taluni tratti essenziali per seguire talora l'accessorio o la sfumatura che il testo latino presenta".<sup>11</sup> He does not, however, elaborate as to why Nonnus should have adopted such a stance in relation to Ovid. The long-held belief that Greeks deliberately ignored the literature of their Roman conquerors seems hardly relevant to the case of so conspicuous an admirer of things Roman as Nonnus shows himself to have been in book 41.

Compared with Ovid's concise and pointed presentation of the Apollo-Daphne story, Nonnus' Morrheus-Chalcomeda episode is crammed with the long speeches and marred by the narrative inconsistencies that we have almost come to expect from our poet. In Ovid the situation is very clear-cut: Cupid dispatches two arrows, one into Daphne and the other into Apollo, the first designed to banish love, the second to promote it ('fugat hoc, facit illud amorem', 1.469). In Nonnus, Morrheus alone is targeted, while Chalcomeda is described as being δολοφρονέουσα (33.201) and bent on leading Morrheus astray by pretending to reciprocate his passion (οἶά περ ἰμείρουσα, 33.202). Morrheus is buoyed by vain hope, ἐλπίδι μαψιδίη πεφορημένος (33.204), resembling Ovid's Apollo, who, in the same situation, 'sterilem sperando nutrit amorem' (*Met.* 1.496).

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<sup>10</sup> (1966) p. 374

<sup>11</sup> (1964) p.75

Chalcomeda recounts the story of Apollo and Daphne to Morrheus, to point out the futility of his quest, but succeeds only in spurring the latter to greater effort, lest he suffer Apollo's fate and let her slip from his grasp. At this point the narrative becomes somewhat unclear. Chalcomeda goes into the woods to look for Dionysus, and Morrheus, presumably, follows her, but why he should do so ὀκναλέοις ... πόδεσσι (33.233) is difficult to understand. We note that Poseidon in pursuit of Beroe is similarly described as ὀκναλέου ποδὸς ἔχνος ὑποκλέπτων (42.56), the meaning there being likewise obscure. A little later Morrheus pursues Chalcomeda φειδομένοις ... πόδεσιν (34.310), but in that instance we are given to understand his reasons for doing so. Morrheus declares that he will abandon the Indian deities of Water and Earth, and set up an altar to Aphrodite and Dionysus, throwing away the brazen spear of Ares and Athena (33.243-5). The construction of an altar serves here as visual confirmation of one's conversion to the new faith (cf. also 25.290, where an aged Indian sets up an altar to Zeus and Dionysus out of gratitude for having his sight restored). Morrheus voices his intentions in the darkness of night, which is described in a manner reminiscent of Apollonius 3.745ff. The narrative sequence is not entirely clear, Morrheus seeming to abandon his search for Chalcomeda and return to his bed-chamber, only to venture out again into the night (33.280-2). It looks as if Nonnus wants him back, sleepless in his bed-chamber, to reinforce the parallel with Medea in Apollonius. Morrheus, like Medea, is alone sleepless (cf. 33.280 and 3.751), when others slumber and darkness envelops the land. The depiction of the nocturnal scene has obviously been composed with a view to eliciting comparison with the celebrated passage in Apollonius, with Nonnus adding some touches of his own. Nonnus' inflated idiom stands out in an almost comic manner against the sober language of Apollonius. Nightfall is described as follows: ἤδη γὰρ σκιάεντι θορῶν αὐτόχθονι παλμῶ / ἄσφοφος ἀννεφέλοιο μελαίνετο κῶνος ὀμίχλης / καὶ τρομερῆ ξύμπαντα μιῆ ξύνωσε σιωπῆ (33.266-8), recalling νύξ μὲν ἐπειτ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἀγεν κνέφας (3.744) and σιγὴ δὲ μελαινομένην ἔχεν ὀρφνὴν (3.750). No wayfarer walks through the city: οὐδέ τις ἔχνος ἔπειγε δι' ἄστεος Ἰνδὸς ὀδίτης (33.269), partly contradicting ὑπνοιο δὲ καὶ τις ὀδίτης / ἤδη καὶ πυλαωρὸς ἐέλδετο (3.746-7). Nor does a working woman persevere in spinning by her lamp: οὐδὲ

γυνὴ χερνήτις ἐθήμονος ἦπτετο τέχνης, / οὐδέ οἱ ἐν παλάμησι  
 φιληλακάτω παρὰ λύχνῳ / κύκλον ἐς αὐτοέλικτον ἰὼν ἄτρακτος ἀλήτης /  
 ἄστατος ὄρχηστήρι τιταίνεται νήματος ὀλκῶ, / ἀλλὰ καρηβαρέουσα  
 φιλαγρύπνῳ παρὰ λύχνῳ / εὔδε γυνὴ ταλαεργὸς (33.270-5). The above  
 passage recalls both Apollonius' earlier simile of the poor working woman, ὡς δὲ  
 γυνὴ μαλερῶ περιὶ κάρφεα χεύατο δαλῶ / χερνήτις, τῆπερ ταλασίμια ἔργα  
 μέμληεν, / ὡς κεν ὑπωρόφιον νύκτωρ σέλας ἐντύναιτο (3.291-4), and the  
 Homeric original, which (though used in a different context) provided Apollonius  
 with his inspiration: ὡς τε τάλαντα γυνὴ χερνήτις ἀληθῆς / ἢ τε σταθμὸν  
 ἔχουσα καὶ εἶριον ἀμφὶς ἀνέλκει / ἰσάζουσ', ἵνα παισὶν ἀεικέα μισθὸν  
 ἄρῃται (M433-5). Nonnus has sought to vary the τόπος by having the woman  
 actually fall asleep at the loom. In place of Apollonius' sleeping dogs Nonnus has a  
 sleeping snake and elephant.

About to make his second sortie into the night, Morrheus engages in a further  
 monologue, voicing his envy of Zeus, who by assuming the shape of a Satyr had  
 won over Antiope. The speech contains the same brand of flippant argumentation  
 exhibited by the speeches in books 31 and 32. Morrheus sees himself victimised  
 by Aphrodite for being an Indian, because as such he is a neighbour of the Sun,  
 whom the goddess has not forgiven for witnessing her adultery with Ares. He  
 appeals to the stones to speak (33.312), which, as Keydell points out, recalls  
 Jesus' words in Luke, 19.40, this being one of number of correspondences with  
 evangelical texts to be found in the *Dionysiaca*.

Chalcomeda too is pictured as plagued by sleeplessness, though for different  
 reasons from Morrheus. Though described a little while before as δολοφρονέουσα  
 (33.201) and as fostering false hopes in Morrheus in order to lure him from the  
 battlefield, she is now depicted as so terrified of her would-be lover, that she wants  
 to throw herself into the sea like Melis fleeing from Damnameneus. She is only  
 dissuaded from doing so by the timely appearance of Thetis, who advises her to  
 distract Morrheus from the battlefield by engendering in him the delusion that he  
 may eventually overcome her intransigence. As Chalcomeda by her actions has  
 anticipated much of what Thetis is now telling her, the advice is accordingly to a

large extent otiose. If the segment comprising Chalcomeda's terrified flight and Thetis' advice were placed at the beginning of the episode, the narrative would make much better sense. A similar situation is encountered in book 42, where Pan's advice is rendered largely gratuitous through Dionysus having by his actions anticipated most of its content (pp.215-4). Book 34 begins with Morrheus engaged in a Hamlet-like monologue, should he or should he not kill Chalcomeda. The idea of such an introspective monologue derives again from Apollonius, where Medea is likewise beset by a dilemma, should she or should she not help Jason (3.772-801). Morrheus' speech stands in marked contrast with the posturing and bluster of the other speeches in the poem in that it reveals his true character. There is very little character delineation in the *Dionysiaca*, the little that there is being accorded to the person of Dionysus. Here Morrheus' character emerges from the thoughts that he voices. The only thing that keeps him from killing Chalcomeda is the fear that his subsequent yearning for her will kill him also. At the same time fear of Deriades' injunction not to meddle with enemy women and compassion for his wife Cheirobie deter him from marrying Chalcomeda. He is moved almost exclusively by considerations of self-interest and self-preservation, the only mitigating feature being his pity for Cheirobie (but note that at 34.295-6 he wishes her dead).

Morrheus' erratic behaviour is noticed by Hyssacus, who correctly divines its cause. Morrheus subsequently discloses his infatuation for Chalcomeda in a speech encumbered by the usual clichés. He asks how he can resist Aphrodite, who scorched the Sun with a flame more searing than its own: εἰ φλογερὸν Φαέθοντα κατέφλεγε μείζονι πυρῶ / καὶ κλονέει πυρόεντα, τί κεν ῥέξοιμι σιδήρῳ ; (34.63-4). The notion, which has the appearance of a rhetorical cliché, occurs previously at 33.186-7, and again at 38.116-7, where the poet uses the phrase κάμνε πυρὸς ταμίης ἑτέρῳ πυρί, which bears an uncanny resemblance to Ovid's 'nempe tuis omnes qui terras ignibus uris, / ureris igne novo' (*Met.* 4.194-5). Morrheus then returns to his bed-chamber and, falling asleep, dreams that Chalcomeda comes to him a willing bride (34.89-98). Chalcomeda addresses him, saying: ἔστι καὶ ὑπναλέοιο γάμου χάρις, ἔστι καὶ αὐτῶν / ἱμερόεις γλυκὺς

οἴστρος ὄνειρῶν ὑμεναίων (34.96-7).<sup>12</sup> Nonnus seems to have a fascination with erotic dreams: at 40.402-6 he tells us how the god Γάμος was begotten by Zeus as a result of such a dream, and at 42.323-45 Dionysus has a similar dream with regard to Beroe. Morrheus on waking is deluded into believing that Chalcomeda is actually enamoured of him, ἀπατήλιον ἐλπίδα βόσκων (34.102), a phrase reused in a slightly different sense in the Zeus passage (cf. τελέων ἀπατήλιον ἴμερον εὐνήσ, 40.403), indicating that the passages were in all likelihood composed in parallel. He addresses the absent Chalcomeda with an ode to her beauty (34.106-13), which stands out as an element of love lyric in epic. Chalcomeda's beauty will bloom as the Seasons wane, which is an inversion of the traditional theme of beauty fading with the passing of the Seasons.

Dawn recalls Morrheus to the battlefield, his infatuation with Chalcomeda not having extinguished his martial ardour to quite the extent we were led to believe from the preceding segments. Morrheus not only fights with his habitual zeal, but treats the females whom he takes captive with exceptional cruelty, the latter theme being subsequently pursued at some length in all its objectionable details. The acts of cruelty, perpetrated invariably on females, appear to be of a premeditated nature, rather than spontaneous outbursts of barbarian savagery. Their sexual connotations appear to be quite intentional. Morrheus takes alive eleven of the most comely Bassarids after Chalcomeda and ties their hands behind their backs (34.163-5), an action corresponding to Achilles' treatment of the twelve Trojan youths at Φ27-30 (cf. χεῖρας ὀπισθοτόνους ἀλύτῳ σφηκώσατο δεσμῷ and δῆσε δ' ὀπίσσω χεῖρας ἐντμήτοισιν ἱμάσι). Even though the girls are presented as handmaidens to Deriades for Morrheus' bride-price, a fate no less cruel than that which the Trojan youths met awaits them. Deriades drags them by the hair, handing them over to his underlings Phlogius and Agraius. Some them are strung up in front of the palace, others being cast into a deep well, where they face the prospect of a twofold death, by being buried alive in the mud and drowning at the same time. One of the Bassarids muses with remarkable detachment that the two gods of the Indians, Earth and Water, have decided to assail her simultaneously (34.236-40).

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<sup>12</sup>For similar use of anaphora, cf. Vergil's 'sunt hic etiam sua praemia laudi, / sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt' (*Aen.* 4.461-2)

Her composure in mortal danger recalls that of Ovid's Andromeda, who is more concerned with her modesty when accosted by Perseus than with the imminent prospect of being devoured <sup>by</sup> the sea-monster (*Met.* 4.680ff.).

Morrheus drives the whole of the Maenalid host (Μαιναλίδων ... όλον στρατόν, 34.250) into the city, prodding <sup>them</sup> with his spear as the shepherd uses his staff: ὡς δ' ὅτε μηλονόμος ... συμμιγέων δ' ἰων σποράδας στίχας εἰς ἐν ἐλαύνων / εἰροπόκων ἔθνευε καλαύροπι πῶεα μῆλων ... (34.252-4). This long simile, embracing altogether seven lines, is unusual for Nonnus (but cf. also 35.245-52, eight lines). It has most likely been inspired by Homer's ὄσσον τίς τ' ἔρριψε καλαύροπα βουκόλος ἀνήρ· / ἧ δὲ ἐλισσομένη πέτεται διὰ βοῦς ἀγελαίας (Ψ845-6), though the latter is used in an entirely different context. Morrheus' cruel treatment of Chalcomeda's comrades contrasts sharply with the tenderness of feeling that he displays toward her in the preceding segments. But his callousness extends to Chalcomeda as well, as he now plans to make her his servant-woman during the day and bed-partner at night: ὄφρα οἱ αἰεὶ / ἡματίη θεράπεινα καὶ ἔννουχος εὐνέτις εἴη, / καὶ διδύμων τελέσειεν ἀμοιβαδὶς ἔργα θεάων, / λάθρια Κύπριδος ἔργα καὶ ἀμφαδὸν ἰστόν 'Αθήνης (34.265-7). These lines are obviously a recollection of Agamemnon's words to Chryses, who had come to ransom his daughter: τὴν δ' ἐγὼ οὐ λύσω ... ἡμετέρῳ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ... ἰστόν ἐποιχομένην, καὶ ἐμὸν λέχος ἀντιώσωσαν (A29-31, cf. also A113-5, where Agamemnon states that he prefers Chryseis to his wife). The Athena / Aphrodite opposition, like that of Athena / Dionysus, is a popular motif with Nonnus (cf. esp. 24.242ff.).

Morrheus now assails the Bassarids again (34.269ff.), the poet forgetting his statement some twenty lines before that he drove them all, like a shepherd his flock, into the city (34.250ff.). He comes face to face with Chalcomeda, who appears to be unaffected by the malaise that has taken hold of the other Bacchantes as a result of Dionysus' absence, for she picks up a huge rock and hurls it at him. The rock strikes Morrheus' shield, damaging the image of Cheirobie embossed on it. Morrheus addresses Chalcomeda, telling her that he would the rock had rather hit Cheirobie herself (34.295-6). He then sets out in pursuit of Chalcomeda in front

of the city walls. This scene is partly patterned on Achilles' pursuit of Hector around the walls of Troy, which Nonnus imitates a second time at 40.84ff., where Dionysus pursues Deriades. Nonnus has not taken care to adapt the Homeric scene to the peculiar circumstances of his own narrative. We recall that Hector kept close to the walls in the hope that the Trojans could accord him cover with missiles (εἰ πῶς οἱ καθύπερθεν ἀλάλκοιεν βελεέσσιιν, X196). There is no reason for Chalcomeda to do so; quite the contrary, she should run away from them, seeing that they belong to the enemy. Nonnus, as often, copies a Homeric theme oblivious of his own context. The chase itself, though placed in a Homeric setting, is nevertheless depicted differently, bearing a close resemblance to Apollo's pursuit of Daphne in Ovid. As to whether Nonnus actually used Ovid or some now lost Hellenistic source - the story is one which by its very nature would have inspired many poetic renderings - is a question which cannot be definitively answered.

Nonnus is rather fond of depicting female beauty in a state of rapid movement - as Castiglioni remarks "la bellezza delle eroine nonniane è bellezza di donna in rapido movimento".<sup>13</sup> This mode of depiction is also employed in the present passage, Chalcomeda's beauty being displayed to best advantage as she runs: ἡ δὲ φυγοῦσα / ἠέριας ταχύγουνος ἐπέτρεχε σύνδρομος αὔραις· / τῆς δὲ τιταινομένης ἀνεμῶδεῖ γούνατος ὀρμῆ / πλοχμοῦς βοτρυόεντας ἀνερρίπιζον ἀῆται, / αὐχένα γυμνώσαντες ἐριδμαίνοντα Σελήνη (34.305-9). This passage consists largely of descriptive elements previously used by other poets. Lines 305-6 correspond to Ovid's 'fugit ocior aura / illa levi' (1.502-3), line 308 to Apollonius' πλοχμοὶ βοτρυόεντες ἐπερρώνοντο κίοντι (2.677), employed in his depiction of the epiphany of Apollo, and also in sense to Ovid's 'et levis impulsos retro dabat aura capillos' (1.529). Morrheus runs after her φειδομένοις δὲ πόδεσσιν ἐκούσιος (34.310), the reason for which only becomes clear when the action is viewed in conjunction with Apollo's words to Daphne in Ovid: 'moderatus, oro,/curre, fugamque inhibe; moderatus insequar ipse' (1.510-1). The usefulness of Ovid's text in clarifying Nonnus' meaning does not necessarily prove that Nonnus' version is derived from it. Ovid simply states the facts with greater clarity than Nonnus, facts which both poets may have

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<sup>13</sup> (1932) p.329

garnered from previous Hellenistic versions of the Apollo-Daphne story. Morrheus calls out to the fleeing girl *μίμνε με, Χαλκομέδεια ... δήϊος οὐ γενόμην, μὴ δείδιθι* (34.316-9), which corresponds to Ovid's 'nympha, precor, Penei, mane: non insequar hostis' (1.504). Nonnus has interwoven with this simple plea his oft-repeated theme of the superiority of Aphrodite's arms to those of Ares (especially 319-23). Morrheus' pleas are of no avail, and the girl escapes him, slipping away into the ranks of her fellows. Other Bacchantes are in the meantime driven beneath the battlements by Deriades and thence through the gates into the city itself. Once inside the girls lose their martial ardour and long to resume their normal womanly duties and exchange the thyrsus of Dionysus for Athena's spindle (34.352-6). The converse takes place later in Thebes, where Bacchic fervour induces that city's womenfolk to abandon the spindle for the thyrsus (45.48-9), an idea expressed a number of times in Euripides' *Bacchae* (117-9, 514, 1236-7).

Book 35 begins with a massacre of the Bassarids trapped in the city. Old men watch the scene from the walls (35.11-2), and women behold the thyrsus-wielding throng from the rooftops, a girl leaning on her nurse pitying the slaughter of her agemates. Now follows a scene evocative of the Achilles-Penthesilea encounter: an unnamed Indian slaying a Bacchante is inflamed by the beauty of his victim. Nonnus' treatment of the theme has little in common with Quintus' dignified account of Achilles' wonderment at the beauty of the slain Penthesilea (1.659-68), being characterised by a vulgar prurience, which is doubly reprehensible seeing that its object is a corpse. Unlike Achilles, who was struck by remorse at having slain one so beautiful and whom he now wished he had made his wife instead, the Indian is driven by a desire for actual sexual gratification, being restrained from violating the body only through fear of Deriades' injunction forbidding intimacy with enemy women. We are told that the Indian *ἤθελε καὶ φιλότῃτι μιγήμεναι* (35.35), and in the speech which follows, he does indeed admit to having an unusual passion: *ξεῖνον ἔχω καὶ ἄπιστον ἐγὼ πόθον, ὅττι διώκω / κούρης νεκρὸν ἔρωτα καταφθιμένων ὑμεναίων* (35.44-5). Grotesque elements aside, the episode serves as vehicle for depicting the theme of Aphrodite's superiority to Ares. As the dead girl's anatomy is revealed it becomes a weapon by which she conquers her slayer: *παρελκομένου δὲ χιτῶνος / ἀγλαίῃ κεκόρυστο καὶ*

ἰμείροντα φονῆα / οὔτασεν οὔτηθείσα, βέλος δέ οἱ ἔπλετο μορφή, / καὶ  
 φθιμένη νίκησε· κατ' ἀντιβίοιο δὲ γυμνοὶ / μηροὶ ἐθωρήχθησαν,  
 ὀλοτευτῆρες ἐρώτων (35.22-6). These lines clearly echo Claudian: Κύπρις δ'  
 οὔτε βέλος φέρει οὔθ' ὄπλον, ἀλλ' ἐκόμιζεν / ἀγλαίην ... λεπτὰς  
 εὐανέμοιο ῥαφὰς χαλάσασα χιτῶνος, / πορφυρέων οὐ κρύπτειν ὑφ'  
 εἵμασιν ἄνθεα μαζῶν, / ὄμματος εἰς ἀγρὴν ὀπλισμένη. εἶχε γὰρ αὐτῇ /  
 πλέγμα κόρυν, δόρυ μαζόν, ὄφρυν βέλος ... εἰ δέ τις αὐτῇ / ὄμμα βάλοι,  
 δέδμητο, βέλος δ' ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἑάσας / ὡς Ἄρεως αἰχμῇ τῇ Κύπριδος  
 ἄλλυτο μορφή (43-54). Later in the present book, Nonnus again recalls  
 Claudian's lines, when Aphrodite boasts to Ares of her superiority to him, after  
 making Morrheus renounce war for love: ἔγχος ἔμὸν πέλε κάλλος. ἔμὸν ξίφος  
 ἔπλετο μορφή, / καὶ βλεφάρων ἀκτῖνες ἐμοὶ γεγάασιν ὀιστοί· / μαζὸς  
 ἀκοντίζει πλέον ἔγχους ... οὐ τὸσον αἰχμάζεις, ὅσον ὄφρυες· οὐ τὸσον  
 αἰχμαὶ / ἀνέρας οὐτάζουσιν, ὅσον βάλλουσιν ὀπωπαί (35.171-9; for a further  
 instance of the same cf. 42.234-7). The theme of resuscitation from the dead is also  
 touched upon when the Indian, after expressing his regrets for not having the hairy  
 Satyrs and Sileni as victims in place of the girl, longs for a Chiron to revive her and  
 appeals to Glaucus to point out to him a βοτάνην ζωαρκέα (35.75), by which to  
 restore her to life.

The Indian women vent their fury on the Bacchantes: Protonoe στενάχουσα  
 καὶ εἰσέτι νεκρὸν Ὀρόντην (35.80) fights like another Atalanta, Cheirobie,  
 seizing the shield and spear of Morrheus, resembles Gorge, and Orsiboe takes to  
 the field by her husband's side like another Deianeira. The tale of Gorge defending  
 Calydon as Meleager sulked is only recorded in the present passage, while  
 Deianeira's taking up arms by Heracles' side is mentioned in only one other  
 source, the scholion to Apollonius 1.1212. Some of the Indian women attack the  
 Bassarids on the ground, others showering them with rocks from rooftops.

Morrheus in the meantime resumes his pursuit of Chalcomeda, who carries her  
 game of deception a step further, suggesting that her pursuer take off his armour, if  
 he is serious about consummating their relationship. She reciprocates Morrheus'  
 previous declaration (33.254-6) of renouncing his fealty to Deriades and becoming

a follower of Dionysus by promising to forsake Maeonia for India (35.151-2). Morrheus does her bidding and removes his armour, which leads Aphrodite to boast of her victory over Ares (35.171-9). He bathes in the sea to cleanse himself of the gore of battle, but his skin remains black as before, however much he wished it to become snow-white. He is in the end denied his prize by the guardian snake that the Bassarid wears for a belt. The snake predictably assumes fearsome proportions, the rocks resounding with its hiss (35.212-3), recalling the snake which guarded the Golden Fleece in Apollonius (4.129-30). Its attack on Morrheus (35.216-22) is similar to that on Tylus (25.457-67), coiling about his neck and showering him with poison. We are not told how Morrheus extricates himself, only that the girl's virtue is preserved.

The Bacchantes held captive in the city are now freed through the intervention of Hermes, who, assuming the appearance and voice of Dionysus, Βακχείην ἐκάλεσσεν ὄλην στίχα μύστιδι φωνῇ (35.229). This appears to be a recollection of the scene in the *Bacchae*, where the captive Bacchantes, hearing the call of Dionysus, shake off their fetters and escape from Pentheus' prison (443ff. and 576ff.). In Nonnus' rendering of the latter event (44.17ff.) Dionysus' followers accomplish their escape from Thebes without outside help. Hermes gets frequent laudatory mention in the *Dionysiaca*: it was he who conveyed the infant Dionysus to the care of Ino (9.17ff.), and it is between Apollo and Hermes that Dionysus takes his place at the celestial table in Olympus (48.979). In the present episode he appears in his habitual role of guide, as he does in the twenty-fourth book of the *Iliad*, displaying at the same time his incomparable gifts of trickery and theft (cf. the epithet φώριος, 35.236 and λάθριος ἡγεμόνευε, 239). He puts the Indians to sleep with his ῥάβδος and opens the heavy lock of the towering gates to lead out the Bacchantes: καὶ φυλάκων στοιχηδὸν ἀκοιμήτοισιν ὀπωπαῖς / νήδυμον ὕπνον ἔχευεν ἐῆ πανθελγεί ῥάβδω ... χεῖρὶ δὲ θεσπεσίῃ βριαρὴν κληίδα πυλάων / ἠλιάδων ὤϊξε (35.235-41), which recalls his action in the *Iliad* as he guides Priam into the Greek camp: τοῖσι δ' [sc. φυλακτῆρεσσιν] ἐφ' ὕπνον ἔχευε ... / πᾶσιν, ἄφαρ δ' ὤϊξε πύλας καὶ ἀπῶσεν ὀχῆας (Ω445-6, cf. also μεγάλην κληίδα θυράων, 455). He subsequently dispels the ἡματίη νύξ (35.242, a term previously used at 31.151) from the

Indians, and Deriades wakes to find the Bacchantes gone. A long simile follows, in which Deriades is compared to one who in a dream has acquired great wealth only to find on waking that he has nothing (35.245-52).

Nonnus now returns to the theme of the Διὸς ἀπάτη, by which the whole train of events described in the foregoing books had been set in motion. Zeus wakes to discover the effects of Hera's trickery, the scene being closely patterned on Homer's: ἔγρετο δὲ Ζεὺς / Καυκάσου ἐν κορυφήσιν ἀπορρίψας πτερὸν Ὕπνου (35.262-3), corresponding to ἔγρετο δὲ Ζεὺς / Ἴδης ἐν κορυφήσιν παρὰ χρυσοθρόνου Ἥρης (O4-5). Zeus realizes that he has been tricked by Hera as he views the scene below: καὶ δόλον ἠπεροπήμα μαθὼν κακοεργέος Ἥρης / Σιληνοῦς ἐδόκευε πεφυζότας ... καὶ Σατύρους κείροντα καὶ ἀμύοντα γυναῖκας / Δηριάδην ἐνόησεν ὀπίστερον, ὄρχαμον Ἰνδῶν, / υἷέα δ' ἐν δαπέδῳ κατακείμενον· ἀμφὶ δὲ νύμφαι / ἐγγὺς ἔσαν στεφανηδόν· ὁ δὲ στροφάλιγγι κονίης / κείτο κερηβαρέων, ὀλιγοδρανὲς ἄσθμα τιταίνων, / ἀφρόν ἀκοντίζων χιονώδεα, μάρτυρα λύσσης (35.264-72), which is freely patterned on: Ἴδε δὲ Τρῶας καὶ Ἀχαιοὺς, / τοὺς μὲν ὀρινόμενους, τοὺς δὲ κλονέοντας ὀπισθεν / Ἀργείους· μετὰ δέ σφι Ποσειδάωνα ἄνακτα. / Ἐκτορα δ' ἐν πεδίῳ ἴδε κείμενον· ἀμφὶ δ' ἑταῖροι / εἶαθ'· ὁ δ' ἀργαλέῳ ἔχετ' ἄσθματι, κῆρ ἀπινύσσων, / αἶμ' ἐμέων (O6-11). The parallels Dionysus : Hector and Deriades : Poseidon are clearly discernible. Zeus' reaction is given forthwith: καὶ φθονερῆς ἠέλεγξε δόλον δυσμήχανον Ἥρης, / καὶ δολίην παράκοιτιν ἐμέμψατο κέντορι μύθῳ· / καὶ νύ κεν ἀχλύέντος ὀμέστιον Ἰαπετοῖο / Ὕπνον ὀμιχλήεντι κατεκλήισε βερέθρῳ, / εἰ μὴ Νῦξ ἰκέτευε, θεῶν δμητήερα καὶ ἀνδρῶν (35.273-7). The δόλον δυσμήχανον Ἥρης echoes Zeus' first words to Hera in the *Iliad*: ἦ μάλα δὴ κακότεχνος, ἀμήχανε, σὸς δόλος, Ἥρη (O14), the remainder being drawn from Hypnus' earlier speech to Hera: καὶ κέ μ' ἄιστον ἀπ' αἰθέρος ἔμβαλε πόντῳ, / εἰ μὴ Νῦξ δμητήερα θεῶν ἐσάωσε καὶ ἀνδρῶν (Ξ258-9). Zeus' speech in Nonnus is in the main a paraphrase of his speech in Homer with a few inessential additions: ἄζεο σοὺς προτέρους πάλιν ἄκμονας· εἰσέτι κείνοι, / εἰσέτι μοι

παρέασιν ἀρηγόνες, οὕς ποσὶ δήσας / ὑμετέροις ἔσφιγξα· σὺ δ' ἄστατος  
 ὑπόθι γαίης / αἰθέρι καὶ νεφέλῃσι μετάρσιον εἶχες ἀνάγκην (35.284-7),  
 which echoes ἦ οὐ μέμνη, ὅτε τ' ἐκρέμω ὑπόθεν; ἐκ δὲ ποδοῖν / ἄκμονας  
 ἦκα δύω (O18-9) and σὺ δ' ἐν αἰθέρι καὶ νεφέλῃσιν / ἐκρέμω (O20-1).  
 Hera's two sons, Ares and Hephaistus, had been powerless to help her (35.288-  
 91), reflecting the situation in Homer, where all the other gods, though they pitied  
 Hera in her plight, were deterred from coming to her assistance for fear of being  
 hurled down from Olympus (O21-4). We note that in Nonnus, Zeus speaks in the  
 past tense up to line 292, changing at that point to the future, switching from  
 merely reminding to actually threatening. He promises to bind Hera's hands: δήσω  
 σὰς παλάμας χρυσέω πάλιν ἠθάδι δεσμῶ (35.293-4), something that he did in  
 Homer as he affixed the anvils to her feet: περὶ χερσὶ δὲ δεσμὸν ἴηλα /  
 χρύσειον, ἄρρηκτον (O19-20). In Nonnus, Zeus extends his menaces to Ares,  
 threatening to tie him up and whip him, should he entertain thoughts of coming to  
 Hera's assistance (35.293-4). Nonnus may have been prompted here by Homer's  
 reference to Otus and Ephialtes' tying up of Ares (E385-7).

Unlike Homer, Nonnus, demonstrating his habitual disinclination to include  
 dialogues in his narrative, omits any attempt on Hera's part to exculpate herself.  
 Zeus does not wait for any reaction to his threats, but orders Hera to breastfeed  
 Dionysus so as to cure him of his madness, promising by way of recompense, to  
 place her milk among the constellations (35.308-11). The restoration of Dionysus'  
 sanity through breastfeeding recalls the Tectaphus episode (26.101ff.), and the  
 poet has, predictably, reused some of the phrases employed in the latter.  
 Tectaphus, deprived of food and water, κείτο δυηπαθέων ... ὀλιγοδρανὲς  
 ἄσθμα τιταίνων (26.113-4), a statement repeated in the present instance as κείτο  
 καρηβαρέων, ὀλιγοδρανὲς ἄσθμα τιταίνων (35.271). Eerie feeds Tectaphus  
 ἀλεξικάκων γάλα μαζῶν (26.137), a phrase that recurs in Zeus' speech as  
 ἀλεξικάκου σέο μαζοῦ (35.311).

Dionysus, ὑγιασθεῖς, harangues his followers with a lengthy speech, telling  
 them that Zeus is again their leader and Hera no longer begrudges their cause.  
 Displaying feelings reminiscent of Achilles' sentiments on the death of Patroclus,

he declares his anguish at seeing Deriades alive and Opheltes lying unburied (35.372-5). Achilles, we recall, would not rest before he had avenged Patroclus (cf. his remarks to Hector, X331-6). Opheltes, little more than a name, is artificially made into another Patroclus by our poet, so as to provide a reason for the funeral games in book 37. With the close of book 35 the stage is now set for Dionysus to bring his campaign to a successful close, without encountering further obstruction from Hera.

## Chapter 5: books 36 and 39-40.214.

In this chapter we propose to examine the final phase of the Indian war, postponing the funeral games for separate treatment in chapter 6. Book 36 commences with another famous Homeric set-piece, the theomachy. In Homer the theomachy precedes the Achilles-Hector duel, its somewhat farcical nature serving to heighten the tragic impact of the latter. Later poets came to view the theomachy as the harbinger of some momentous development in the war being fought out between mortals. Thus in Quintus it heralds the entry of the wooden horse into Troy (12.157ff.), in Silius it ushers in the battle of Cannae (9.287ff.). One would expect Nonnus to observe the same convention and have the theomachy directly precede the demise of Deriades. This does indeed appear to be the case initially, seeing that Dionysus and Deriades meet in single combat in the battle which follows. The expected slaying does not take place, however, Deriades being, rather inexplicably, pardoned to fight another day. Nonnus has decided to prolong the proceedings, inserting another Homeric set-piece, the funeral games, and a naumachy, before he has Dionysus again meet Deriades, this time resulting in the death of the Indian king.

Leaf has characterised, unfairly perhaps, Homer's theomachy as "an early parody" and a "precursor of the Battle of the Frogs and Mice", believing it to be a late insertion into the *Iliad*.<sup>1</sup> Undeniably the theomachy is a lighthearted diversion, providing comic relief before the tragic scenes of the following book. Silius and Quintus, in contrast to Homer, have painted their theomachies in sombre

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<sup>1</sup> In A.Lang, *Homer and the Iliad* (Lond. 1893) p. 207. Lang on the contrary sees the theomachy and Zeus' crude bullying of Hera as remnants of a primeval cosmogony.

tones more akin to Hesiod's gigantomachy, viewing it as a grim portent of the events to follow. Nonnus, on the other hand, retains Homer's lighthearted tone, though he has dispensed with some of the more farcical elements, such as Hera's boxing Artemis' ears. His version, as Campbell observes, is remarkably free of Hesiodic "gigantomachy elements", which characterise those of his two predecessors.<sup>2</sup>

Only in Homer are the causes of the conflict properly set out. Zeus convenes a great assembly of gods telling them that they must now actively partake in the war and array themselves into two opposing camps according to their respective sympathies. For now that Achilles has rejoined the fray, their participation is essential, lest he preempt the Fates and capture Troy prematurely (Υ26-30). Zeus not only enjoins the gods to fight among themselves but takes obvious delight in watching them do so (Φ389-90). In none of the later versions does Zeus behave in quite this way. In Quintus the fight breaks out in his absence (12.161-2), occasioning his displeasure when he returns to find them so engaged (12.190-200). In Nonnus the conflict likewise begins in his absence, but far from condemning it, Zeus signals his approbation by assuming the role of regulator (36.6-7). It may be noted that in the *Iliad*, though Zeus proposes the theomachy to a general assembly of all the gods (bar Oceanus), only a handful - the major gods - actually end up fighting. The gods face each other in pairs, Athena confronting Ares, Poseidon Apollo, Hera Artemis, Hermes Leto, and Hephaistus Scamander (Υ66-74). Silius and Quintus mention only the first pair, but Nonnus gives us the full Homeric complement, except that the Hydaspes has been substituted for the Scamander. Their allegiances are different though, with Hera, Ares and Poseidon being on the Indian side - Poseidon's position appears somewhat ambiguous, seeing that in the naumachy he is presented as sympathetic to Dionysus (39.95-7) - while Athena, Hephaistus, Apollo and Artemis support Dionysus. The position of the last pair, Hermes and Leto, is difficult to ascertain. One would imagine that both (particularly Hermes) would want to side with Dionysus. Nonnus seems to lose sight of who is supposed to fight for which side, imitation of Homer being foremost in his mind. As often when imitating Homer, he becomes so engrossed in

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<sup>2</sup> Campbell (1981) p.57

the theme at hand as to forget whether it fits accurately into the context of his own narrative.

Ares attacks Athena - this attack is described by all the poets, but Homer is the only one to enlighten us as to his reason for doing so: he is annoyed at Athena for enabling Diomedes to wound him (E855ff.) and uses the present situation to get even with her (Φ394-9). In Nonnus, as in Quintus and Silius, Ares' assault on Athena comes unannounced. Athena is victorious in all instances, though it is only in Nonnus that we meet anything resembling a full Homeric treatment. Ares hurls his spear, striking the locks of the image of Medusa on Athena's shield (36.15-20). The action is similar to that where Chalcomeda damages Morrheus' shield with a rock (34.284ff.), and, as usual, there has been some reuse of expressions (cf. for example, 36.20 and 34.287). Athena retaliates by striking Ares with her ἔγχος ὀμόγιον. Ares, stunned, sinks down on one knee - the impression is that he has been hit by a rock rather than pierced by a spear, and this is indeed what happens in Homer. Nonnus likes to see Athena fight with her spear but at the same time copies the result of her action from the *Iliad*. Nonnus, clearly, has little regard for verisimilitude or consistency of any kind, writing purely for effect. Ares is described as being ἑπταπέλεθρος (36.14), which corresponds to the length of ground he occupies as he lies sprawled on his back after being hit by Athena's rock (cf. ἑπτὰ δ' ἐπέσχε πέλεθρα πεσών, Φ407). Athena pulls him upright and delivers him back to his mother, Hera (36.26-7). In Homer he is led away by Aphrodite (Φ416-7).

The confrontation between Artemis and Hera is taken out of order by Nonnus, and again no reason is given for the attack: Artemis simply starts shooting arrows at Hera. In Homer it is Hera who attacks Artemis and does so because she is enraged at her for upbraiding Apollo for not having stood up to Poseidon. Hera protects herself with a νέφος ... ἀραγές (36.31-2, cf. the ἀρήκτους νεφέεσσιν, 22.258, with which Athena protected Aiacus). This unbreakable cloud supposedly corresponds to the αἶγίς of Athena in the *Iliad* (Φ400-1). The arrows stick, harmless, in the cloud and Hera throws a jagged lump of ice at Artemis, breaking her bow and knocking her to the ground. We note that Hera's weapons are of a distinctly meteorological kind, which bespeaks her identification

with ἄρηρ (similar to the way in which Athena was associated with αἰθήρ). Nonnus shows himself to have been influenced by these Orphic notions, which may have derived from the superficial similarity of the names of the two goddesses to ἄρηρ and αἰθήρ respectively (for another example cf. the pun at 29.177-8). Nonnus spares Artemis the undignified punishment that Hera metes out to her in the *Iliad*, opting instead for a mocking address.

Hera's remarks in Nonnus reflect the remarks she makes in the *Iliad* prior to boxing Artemis' ears. Artemis is advised to confine herself in future to hunting (36.48-56), this admonition reflecting in essence Hera's words to Artemis in the *Iliad* (Φ481-3 and 485-6). Artemis' role of inducing birth pangs in women is likewise alluded to (36.63-6), again reflecting Hera's words in the *Iliad* (Φ483-4). Apollo clasps Artemis with both arms and escorts her from the fray (36.79-81), his action resembling that of Aphrodite with regard to Ares in the *Iliad* (Φ416-7).

The next engagement is that between Apollo and Poseidon. We recall that in the *Iliad* Apollo declines the challenge, for which he is rebuked by Artemis. In Nonnus, on the other hand, a full battle ensues, involving not only the two gods, but a number of lesser deities as well, all of them belonging to Poseidon's retinue, namely Triton, Nereus and the Nereids. The engagement anticipates the battle between Dionysus and Poseidon over Beroe, in which all their followers participate. The description of Triton (36.93-4) is repeated in much the same language at 43.205-8, and echoes that given by Apollonius (4.1610-4). The descriptions reflect the sculptural representations of this biform deity, half-man, half-fish, from Hellenistic times. For Nonnus the Apollo-Poseidon conflict is yet another variant of the fire-water opposition, that would be more naturally represented by the last pair of adversaries, Hephaistus and the Hydaspes, whose duel does not get off the ground in Nonnus. We note that Nonnus, in common with other late poets, identifies Apollo with the sun, in contrast to, say, Apollonius, where the two are clearly separated, Apollo favouring the Argonauts, Helios his son Aeetes. It is for this reason that Nonnus has Apollo fight with lighted torch as well as his customary bow and arrows, matching the waves and trident of Poseidon (36.84-7). We recall that in the earlier Dionysus-Hydaspes confrontation the role <sup>of</sup> torch-wielder had devolved upon Dionysus, who in the fluid

world of Orphic pantheism could also be identified with the sun. The involvement of Poseidon's coterie of sea-deities in the fight is out of character with the otherwise limited and intimate nature of the theomachy, which in Homer has, more than anything, the appearance of a family squabble.

It is at this stage that Hades, fearing that Poseidon will open the nether world to light, voices his anxiety (36.97-105), reflecting the scene in the *Iliad*, where he expresses the same concern (Υ56-65). The theme also occurs in Hesiod's *Theogony*, where Hades is subject to the same anxiety, as Zeus blasts Typhoeus with lightning bolts (850-2), a passage which is imitated by Quintus (12.178-80). In both Hesiod and Quintus Hades' misgivings are, somewhat paradoxically, shared by the imprisoned Titans. Why the Titans should dread their place of confinement being rent open, defies comprehension: one would rather expect them to be elated at the prospect of being able to escape. Nonnus, in Hermes' plea to Apollo and Poseidon to desist from their fight, quite rightly observes that the giants would rejoice at this eventuality (36.112-4). We note that Nonnus has quoted directly from the *Iliad* the line describing the din accompanying the fighting: τόσσοσ ἄρα κτύπος ὤρτο θεῶν ἐριδι ξυιόντων (36.106 = Υ66).

We recall that in Homer Hermes declines to fight his opponent Leto, who is more concerned with picking up Artemis' bow and arrows than engaging in battle. In Nonnus Leto is no longer even mentioned, Hermes appealing instead to Apollo and Poseidon to stop fighting, lest the giants take advantage of the Olympians' intestine strife (36.110-32). Hydaspes is also cautioned not to take on the fire of Hephaistus, having already experienced the torch of Dionysus (36.130-2). As we noted above, Nonnus has transposed the fire-water opposition in this instance to the Apollo-Poseidon confrontation. The gods abide by Hermes' advice and with this the theomachy comes to a close.

As the theomachy ends, events on the ground get under way, with Deriades haranguing his fleeing troops with threats: εἰς ἐνοπήν οἴσθησε πεφυζότας ἡγεμονῆας· / καὶ ξυνήν πρυλέεσσι καὶ ἱππῆεσσιν ἀπειλήν / βάρβαρον ἐσμαράγησε βαρυφθόγγων ἀπὸ λαιμῶν (36.137-9). Deriades is the quintessential oriental tyrant, whom his subjects fear more than the enemy, his manner of speech recalling that of Typhoeus, to whom he is compared on several

occasions (cf. ὁμογλώσσω ἀπὸ λαιμῶν / εἰς ἐνοπήν πολύπηχυσ ἐπέβρυχάτο Τυφωεύς, 2.244-5). The Indians are enjoined to decorate their halls with the horned heads of the Satyrs and Sileni (36.147-50), recalling the earlier threat by Dionysus with regard to Deriades himself (27.219-20). He, for his part, shall lead Dionysus to captivity, with torn nebris and thyrsus cast aside.

The battle itself is the usual blend of the conventional with the bizarre and magical, except that here animals too are assigned a role. The Bassarids hurl poisonous snakes at the enemy in imitation of Phidaleia, who overcame the assailants of Byzantium in this way (36.176ff.). Panthers leap on the necks of elephants, lions and bulls roar, with bears joining in the fray. Pan fights with his pack of dogs (36.195-7), something that we would have expected Aristaius to do as well, seeing that he came to the war with his fighting dogs (13.299), as indicated earlier (p.91). The zoological extravaganza is followed by a typical πεζομαχία segment, where the poet lists the various kinds of wounds inflicted (36.206-20), those affected being referred to according to a rhetorical convention by an anonymous τις, ὅς, ἄλλος κ.τ.λ. Similar passages occur previously at 22.191-5, where wounds inflicted by Oiagrus on a number of unnamed Indians are specified, and at 22.232-46, where injuries sustained on the battlefield are depicted anonymously. A confrontation between an infantryman and a horseman follows, a situation analogous to that at 22.299ff., except that here it is the former who emerges the victor. He tosses sand in the horse's eyes, which throws its rider, who then becomes easy prey for his opponent. Returning to the realm of fantasy, the poet now tells how the gigantic Colletes, comparable in size to Otus and Ephialtes, is felled by a rock from the Bacchante Charopeia. Deriades forthwith assails Charopeia, who falls back to take up position alongside Dionysus. Deriades slays Orithallus, one of the Curetes, whose chief Melisseus kills Cyllarus by way of retribution. Cyllarus, here qualified by the patronymic Λωγασίδης, though previously referred to as one of the two sons of Brongus in the Catalogue (26.220), is singled out by the poet as being, on account of his wise counsels, esteemed by Deriades second only to Morrheus. He is a sort of Indian Polydamas, but makes an appearance only to be slain. The name of his father, Λώγασος, derived from λόγος, seems a typical Nonnian formation, the difference in quantity

being no barrier to associations of this kind (cf., for example, Homer's pun on the name Odysseus, when Athena, remonstrating with Zeus regarding the latter's fate, asks τί νύ οἱ τόσον ὠδύσαο, Ζεῦ; α63).

The battle now enters a crucial phase, with Dionysus meeting Deriades in single combat. The duel has two distinct stages, the first of which sees Deriades take the fight to Dionysus, but all his attempts at striking a telling blow come to nought owing to the latter's continual form-changes. In the second, Dionysus ties his hapless adversary down with vines and ivy strands, which he makes suddenly spring up from the ground under him. Nonnus has a noticeable obsession with form-changes: two extended passages are devoted to Dionysus' form-changes, the present duel (36.291-334) and Deriades' later inaccurate recollection of it (40.37-60), while Proteus, the quintessential form-changer, gets his due at 43.225-52. We recall that Nonnus sees himself too as a sort of literary form-changer in that he sets out to compose a poem whose sudden thematic alternations are meant to rival Proteus' form-changes (1.11-34). Nonnus derives his inspiration from Menelaus' account in the *Odyssey*, how he and his companions, disguised in seal skins, tried vainly to apprehend Proteus: ἡμεῖς δὲ ἰάχοντες ἐπεσσύμεθ', ἀμφὶ δὲ χεῖρας / βάλλομεν· οὐδ' ὁ γέρων δολίης ἐπελήθετο τέχνης, / ἀλλ' ἦ τοι πρῶτιστα λέων γένετ' ἠυγένειος, / αὐτὰρ ἐπειτα δράκων καὶ πάρδαλις ἠδὲ μέγας σῦς· / γίγνετο δ' ὑγρὸν ὕδωρ καὶ δένδρεον ὑβιπέτηλον. / ἡμεῖς δ' ἀστεμφέως ἔχομεν τετληότι θυμῷ (δ454-9). Nonnus has expanded this passage in a number of ways. Of the three passages, that devoted to Proteus in book 43 is the most faithful to the Homeric prototype, but even there Nonnus has added gratuitous touches of his own. Thus when Proteus assumes the form of a snake, Nonnus cannot refrain from adding ἀποπτύων δὲ γενείων / ἰὸν ἀκουτιστῆρα κεχηρότι σύρισε λαιμῷ (43.240-1). By way of deliberate reference to Homer, Nonnus has Proteus appear in a seal-skin (43.226), though it is his would-be captors who wear the seal skins in the *Odyssey*. The shapes assumed by Proteus correspond to those in the *Odyssey* passage, but in the case of Dionysus Nonnus takes greater liberties, Dionysus becoming in addition fire, water, a lion, then a tree touching the heavens. The fire-water theme is, as we have noted, a favourite with Nonnus, but it occurs also in Ovid's depiction of Proteus:

'interdum, faciem imitatus aquarum, / flumen eras, interdum undis contrarius ignis' (*Met.* 8.736-7). Hitherto the changes have been instantaneous, but Dionysus' turning into a tree seems to come about by a more gradual process: ἀμειβομένου δὲ καρῆνου / μιμηλοῖς πετάλοισι νόθην δενδρώσατο χαίτην, / γαστέρα θάμνον ἔχων περιμήκετον· ἀκρεμόνας δὲ / χεῖρας ἕως ποίησε, καὶ ἐφλοίωσε χιτῶνας, καὶ πόδας ἐρρίζωσεν (36.307-11), which recalls the metamorphosis of Daphne in Ovid: 'in frondem crines, in ramos bracchia crescut; / pes, modo tam velox, pigris radicibus haeret. / ora cacumen obit' (*Met.* 1.550-2; cf. also Myrrha's metamorphosis, 10.490-8). Dionysus then becomes a panther, which leaping on the elephant's neck, impels it to throw its θεημάχον ἠμιοχῆα (36.317) to the ground. Then, becoming in turn a lion and a boar, he further exasperates Deriades, who, perhaps justifiably, accuses him of using cowardly, deceitful tactics and promises to counter his magic with that of his own Brahmins, who, he claims, have it in their power to stop the sun and the moon.

Deriades remounts his elephant, but Dionysus induces vines and ivy to spring up and envelop both beast and rider. Deriades, like Lycurgus previously, is tied to the spot, unable to move. In both instances Nonnus compares the immobilised warrior to a ship held fast by the remora or echeneis. In the earlier episode, Ambrosia, addressing Lycurgus, gives a description of the ship-detaining ability of the fish: ἔκλυες εἰναλίην ἔχενηίδα, πῶς ἐνὶ πόντῳ / ἰχθύς βαιὸς ἀναλκίς ἐπέχραε πολλάκι ναύταις / ἄψ ἀνασειράζων, ὀλίγῳ δ' ὑπὸ χάσματι λαιμοῦ / μηκεδανὴν ἀνέκοψε κατάσχετον ὀλκάδα δεσμῷ ; / δέξο με χερσαίην ἔχενηίδα, δέξο πετήλων / αὐτοπέδην ἀσίδηρον ἐρισταφύλοιο κυδοιμοῦ (21.45-50). Deriades is held down even more securely than a ship by the echeneis: οὐ τόσον ὀλκάδα πόντου / θηκτὰ περιπλεκέων ἔχενηίδος ἄκρα γενείων / δεσμῷ καρχαρόδοντι διεστήριξε θαλάσση (36.367-9). Nonnus has in mind the passage in Oppian's *Halieutica* where a ship is described as being held fast by this little fish: ἰχθύος οὐτιδανοῖο κατὰ στόμα ῥίζωθείσα (1.234; cf. also Pliny, *N.H.* 9.41). Deriades seeks and obtains clemency, but in place of expressing gratitude, reaffirms his stated intention either to slay Dionysus or to take him captive.

Nonnus now turns his attention to the building of the fleet for the forthcoming naval engagement, an event forecast at 21.306-9 but which, nevertheless, appears to have been added by way of afterthought by the poet. The process of shipbuilding is described in a manner reminiscent of Odysseus' raft-building in Homer. The shipbuilders remain anonymous, being designated by the usual ὁ, ὅς, ἄλλος κ.τ.λ. : ὁ μὲν τορνῶσατο γόμφους, / ὅς δὲ μέσῃν πεπόνητο περὶ τρόπιν, ἔκρια δ' ἄλλος / ὀρθὰ περὶ σταμίνεσσιν ἀμοιβαίησιν ὑφαίνων / ὀλκάδι τοίχον ἔτευχεν ἐπηγκενίδας τε συνάπτων / μηκεδανὰς κατέπηξε, βαθυνομένη δὲ μεσόδμη / ἰψιφανῆ μέσον ἰστὸν Ἄραψ ὠρθῶσατο τέκτων / λαίφει πεπταμένῳ πεφυλαγμένον· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' ἄκρῳ / δουρατέην ἐπίκρυτον ἐτορνῶσαντο κεραίην / ἔδμονες εὐπαλάμοιο καὶ Ἥφαιστου καὶ Ἀθήνης (36.403-11). Odysseus performs these tasks on his own: τέτρηνεν δ' ἄρα πάντα [sc. δούρατα] καὶ ἤρμοσεν ἀλλήλοισιν· / γόμφοισιν δ' ἄρα τήγχε καὶ ἀρμονίησιν ἀρασσεν· / ... ἔκρια δὲ στήσας ἀραρῶν θαμέσι σταμίνεσσιν, / ποίει ... ἐν δ' ἰστὸν ποίει καὶ ἐπίκρυτον ἄρμενον αὐτῷ· / πρὸς δ' ἄρα πηδάλιον ποιήσατο, ὄφρ' ἰθύνοι (ε247-55). The *Odyssey* passage is imitated a second time at 40.446-54, where Heracles Astrochiton tells Dionysus how he taught the founders of Tyre the art of raft-building. Keydell notes in his *apparatus* that Nonnus has in each instance borrowed a word from the scholia to the Homeric passage, namely ὀρθὰ (36.405) and πυκνοῖς (40.446), which may be taken to indicate that Nonnus experienced as much difficulty with understanding the Homeric passage as does the modern reader.

The ship-building is understood to take place after the first duel between Dionysus and Deriades, but at the same time we are told that the fleet is being built in the sixth year of the war (36.422-3), which seems to suggest that the events described from book 26 to the present have taken place before the final or seventh year. This clearly cannot be the case, as it would go against the poet's stated intention at the beginning of book 25 to sing thenceforth only of the last year of the war. The often ambiguous and misleading nature of the poet's remarks indicates his lack of concern for narrative consistency and it is futile to press him too closely on points of logic. Book 36 ends with an address by Morrheus to the Indians, in

which he expresses his confidence in their superior prowess in naval warfare (36.464-6). Deriades dispatches a messenger to Dionysus with a declaration of sea war (36.474-5), but when the narrative is resumed at the beginning of book 39 the Indians show none of their pugnacious stance, and the declaration of sea war appears to be entirely forgotten. They are, on the contrary, cowed and astonished at the sight of Dionysus' fleet, as if its arrival were something unanticipated, nor is Deriades himself exempt from fear (39.21-3). It is only now that Deriades orders the mobilisation of his naval forces, to counter what seems an unexpected and imminent threat. Disguising his anxiety ποιητῷ γέλωτι, he summons his fighters from the three hundred islands of his realm and has them assemble for combat, all in the time it takes Dionysus' fleet to draw near, from the moment that it was first sighted. This is the second overall muster of the Indian forces (39.24-30), the first having taken place thirteen books earlier (26.38-43).<sup>3</sup>

Deriades addresses his assembled forces, enjoining them to light firebrands and burn Dionysus' fleet (39.34-6). This tactical directive apart, the speech is the usual congeries of taunts and threats to which the reader must by now be accustomed. Irritated by the ὀδυρὴ βοτρυόεσσα of the Hydaspes - here we have yet another recollection of the original conversion of the river into wine - he declares that he would block it up with earth were it not his father (39.40-52), echoing Dionysus' earlier threat to make it bone dry (27.185-8). Deriades questions Dionysus' claim to be a god - a theme borrowed from Euripides' *Bacchae* - and compares him adversely with Zagreus, who was given the use of the thunderbolt instead of the humble thyrsus (39.59-60), a notion reappearing in Poseidon's speech at 43.176-8, where Dionysus is challenged to match with thunder and lightning the latter's trident. A comparison of wine with nectar follows, which, as we have noted, is another recurrent motif in the poem.

Dionysus' speech is presented next, commencing with a rousing exhortation to his followers to rout the Indians on water as they had previously done on land:

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<sup>3</sup> If the remarks which the poet makes in the course of the Indian war narrative were taken at face value, we would have the following unacceptable time-frame: crossing of the Hydaspes - 6 year period of inactivity - first muster of the Indians (26.38ff.) - land battles - first duel - second six year period of inactivity (38.10-4) - shipbuilding for Dionysus - second muster of the Indians - naumachy - second duel. As Collart observes (pp. 167-8), this would extend the Indian war to 13 instead of the stated 7 years.

Ἄρεος ἄλκιμα τέκνα καὶ εὐθώρηκος Ἀθήνης, / οἷς βίος ἔργα μόθοιο καὶ ἐλπίδες εἰσὶν ἀγῶνες, / σπεύσατε καὶ κατὰ πόντον αἰστώσαι γένος Ἴνδῶν, / εἰναλίην τελέσαντες ἐπιχθονίην μετὰ νίκην (39.78-81). These lines, similar in tone to the battle hymn of the Greeks as they prepare to engage the Persian fleet at Salamis in Aeschylus' *Persae* (402-5), hardly seem to befit the Satyrs and Sileni, whose life of carousing and amorous pursuits was anything but ἔργα μόθοιο καὶ ἀγῶνες. Dionysus, who appears to have divined Deriades' intentions, tells his troops to keep the enemy at bay with sea-pikes, to prevent the enemy setting fire to their ships (39.82-7). Nonnus is thinking here of the scene in the *Iliad* where the Greeks used their sea-pikes to keep the Trojans from setting fire to their beached ships (O386-9). In view of all this, it is perhaps somewhat ironic that in the end it is Dionysus who sets fire to Deriades' ships (39.391-401). The Mimallones are urged to fight fearlessly. (νόσφι φόβου μάρνασθε, Μιμαλλόνες, 39.88), as they can count on the sea-deities to lend them succour. It is ironic that Dionysus should in book 43 urge the Mimallones, using similar language, to fight those same sea-deities, of whose help he assures them in the present instance (cf. ἀλλὰ πάλιν μάρνασθε, Μιμαλλόνες, κ.τ.λ. 43.133). Melicertes will immerse Deriades' ship (39.102), yet in book 43 the same Melicertes is deemed no match for drunken Silenus (43.80). The sea-deities extolled here are correspondingly depreciated in book 43, along the lines of rhetorical encomia and psogoi. Dionysus concludes by boasting that he could at any time call on the winds to scuttle the Indian fleet, but chooses not to, so as not to deprive his νηοφθόρα θύρα of that distinction.

A brief interlude of fighting ensues, followed by two more speeches, one from Aiacus and the other from Erechtheus. Some of the descriptive elements used here recur in book 43. For example, Echo replies to Pan's voice as it carries over the waves: ἀντὶ δὲ πετραίης πολεμῆμα λείψανα φωνῆς / Πανιάς ὑστερόφωνος ἀμείβετο ποντιάς Ἥχώ (39.129-30), a motif repeated in book 43, where Pan's πολέμου μέλος likewise elicits a response from Echo: ὑπηνέμιος δὲ καὶ αὐτὴ / τικτομένη σύριγγι διώκετο ποντιάς Ἥχώ (43.220-1). Dionysus' ships encircle the Indian fleet (39.132-5), an idea which seems to have been borrowed from Aeschylus' *Persae*, where the Persian ships, trapped in the narrows, are

similarly encircled by the Greeks (415-8). We note that in both Nonnus and Aeschylus they are likened to fish caught in a net (cf. 39.135 and *Pers.* 424-6). There can be little doubt that Nonnus was influenced by Aeschylus, even though his language differs from that of the dramatist.<sup>4</sup>

Aiacus' speech is addressed to Zeus, who is asked to respond to the speaker's plea as favourably as he had on that previous occasion when he had ended the drought on Aegina, so that it might be said: ὡς ἐνὶ γαίῃ / Ζεὺς ἐὸν υἱὰ γέραιρε, καὶ ἐν πελάγεσσι γεραίρει (39.143-4) and that he χάρμα πόρεν Δήμητρι καὶ εὐφροσύνην Διονύσῳ (39.148). Nonnus is fond of such quotations, introduced by ὄφρα ... τις, μὴ ... τις εἶπη, ἐνίψη κ.τ.λ. ( cf. 33.262, 40.156-7, 48.549 and, for a Homeric precedent, cf. X105-7). Aiacus asks Zeus to indicate a favourable disposition by means of the portent of an eagle, appearing on his right and carrying in its talons a dead horned serpent, and at the same time to presage their demise to the enemy, by another eagle, black in colour and appearing on their left (39.158-64). This is an adaptation of the omen of the snake and eagle in the *Iliad*, which boded ill for the Trojans (M200-6). Nonnus' νεκρὸν ὄφιν stands in conscious opposition to Homer's δράκοντα ... ζῶν (M201-2), the device of *oppositio in imitando* corroborating the situational parallel.

Erechtheus' speech follows forthwith, without any intervening battle scenes. His address is directed to his son-in-law Boreas, whom he reminds of the bride-price owing to him, the debt that he can now repay by scattering Deriades' fleet. Erechtheus is confident that Boreas can overcome the east and south winds, who are more likely to side with Deriades. There is lack of agreement with Dionysus' speech, in that Dionysus boasts of having all the winds on side, should he wish to call for their services. While Erechtheus calls on Boreas in all earnestness, Dionysus dispenses with their help so as not deprive his thyrsus of the glory of destroying the Indian fleet. Erechtheus is confident that Poseidon and Athena will take up the fight alongside Boreas, as will Hephaistus.

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<sup>4</sup>The reconstituted Persian empire under the Sassanids posed a continual threat to the eastern provinces from the 3rd century, a circumstance which led to renewed interest in literature on the Persian wars of the 5th century B.C., as evidenced by the number of epigrams on Medic themes in the *Anthology*.

Erechtheus' speech is followed by a passage depicting the carnage on the waves, there being many slain on both sides: καὶ φόνος ἦν ἐκάτερθε, καὶ ἔζεε κύματα λύθρῳ / καὶ πολὺς ἀμφοτέρων στρατὸς ἤριπεν· ἀρτιχύτῳ δὲ / αἵματι κυανέης ἐρυθαίνετο νῶτα θαλάσσης (39.225-7). These lines echo Aeschylus' description of the slaughter at Salamis: θάλασσα δ' οὐκέτ' ἦν ἰδεῖν / ναυαγίων πλήθουσα καὶ φόνου βροτῶν (*Pers.* 419-20). We note that Herodotus likewise states that many perished on both sides (8.1). Nonnus is typically inconsistent with his statement of facts, as we are given to understand a few lines later that the slain were all Indians (39.235-7). Some of the details are repeated from books 22 and 23. Thus οἰδαλέοι πλωτῆρες ἐναυτίλλοντο θαλάσση (39.230) is a rewording of καὶ πλόος ἦν εὖσπλος· ἐκουφίζοντο δὲ λαοὶ / οἰδαλέοις μελέεσσιν (23.105-6). The πολλοὶ δ' αὐτοκύλιστον ... / εἰς ῥόον ὠλίσθησαν ... βριθόμενοι θώρηκι (39.232-5) echoes καί τις ἀνὴρ ... / κύμβαχος αὐτοκύλιστος ἐπωλίσθησε ῥεέθρῳ (22.366-7) and εἰς βυθὸν ... κατέσπασεν ἀνέρα θώρηξ (23.112). Helmets and shields float about: νεοσφαγέος δὲ φορῆος / αὐτομάτη λοφόεσσα δι' ὕδατος ἐπλεε πήληξ (39.243-4), recalling ἀποφθιμένου δὲ φορῆος / ἡμιφανῆς πλωτῆρι λόφῳ πορθμεύετο πήληξ (23.106-7). The ἐπενήχετο κύκλα βοείης / σὺν διερῶ τελαμῶνι (39.239-41) echoes νηχομένους τελαμῶνας ἐναυτίλλοντο βοεῖαι (23.110). Many find their tomb in the jaws of carnivorous fish: ἐτυμβεύοντο δὲ πολλοὶ / κητείοις γενύεσσιν, ἐν ἰχθυόεντι δὲ λαιμῷ / ἄπνοον αἰθύσσουσα νέκυν τυμβεύσατο φώκη (39.239-41). The notion of a gullet or stomach furnishing a last resting place occurs earlier at 21.121-3, where as one of the horrors visited on Lycurgus' subjects is that male offspring are eaten by their own mothers, whose stomachs become their children's tombs (ἄτροφον ἀρσενόπαιδα τόκον τυμβεύσατο γαστήρ, 21.123). The idea most likely originated in the schools of rhetoric (cf. Gorgias frag. 5a D: γῦπες ἐμψυχοί τάφοι). We recall also that the fear of being devoured κύνεσσιν / οἰωνοῖσι τε (A4-5) is strongly voiced in the *Iliad* (cf. Priam's apprehension about being eaten by his own dogs, X74-6). The line, ἀφρὸς ἐρευθιῶν πολιῆς ἀνεκῆκιεν ἄλμης

(39.248), depicting the bloodied state of the waters, echoes Apollonius' ἀφρῶ δ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα <sup>κεκίεν</sup> κήκειεν ἄλμη (1.542), who uses it in an entirely different context, namely to describe the Argo as it ploughs its way through the sea.

The sea deities are stained with blood (e.g. καὶ φονίαις λιβάδεσσι ἐφουνίχθη Μελικέρτης, 39.250), but unlike their reaction in the earlier Hydaspes episode (cf. the representations of an unnamed Indian to the Hydaspes, which is αἰμαλείς λιβάδεσσι φόνου πλημμυρίδα σύρων, that it will defile Oceanus and Poseidon, 23.98-103), they do not appear to be overly concerned at the defilement of their abode. Galatea fears lest she encounter Polyphemus fighting in the ranks of Dionysus' followers. Poseidon, on the other hand, reproaches Dionysus for not having enlisted Polyphemus' services, who, he asserts, would have made short work of Deriades and the Indians: στήθεα βουκεράιοι διέθλασε Δηριαδῆος, / καὶ ... εἰς μίαν ἠριγένειαν ὄλον γένος ἔκτανεν Ἴνδῶν (39.284,283), recalling Dionysus' earlier boast to Attis, that were it not for the obstructionism of Hera and Zeus, εἰς μίαν ἠριγένειαν ἀιστῶσαι πόλιν Ἴνδῶν ... δυνήσομαι (25.341-2). Poseidon continues, telling Dionysus that Polyphemus would help him just as Aigaion, who was also a son of his, had helped Zeus.

At this point the narrative becomes extremely fragmented, losing what little cohesion it may have previously possessed. Collart's characterisation of the present book as "non pas comme un amas de ruines, mais comme un étalage de matériaux disparates, préparés pour un construction", is especially pertinent to the last third of it, which is no more than an assemblage of unconnected tableaux.<sup>5</sup>

Nereus and Poseidon are astounded at (but apparently not offended by) the ξανθῆς ... νῶτα θαλάσσης (39.297) and the πληθὺ νεκρῶν ... ἄβροχα νῶτα γεφυρωθέντα θαλάσσης (39.298-9), statements which, like 39.225-7, are a recollection of Aeschylus, Pers. 419-20. The overuse of νῶτα is, as mentioned previously (p.13), a mannerism of our poet. A segment depicting the types of wounds inflicted (introduced by the usual anonymous τις etc.) follows. Phlogius aims at Deriades, but misses, the arrow hitting the ship's deck. Deriades then hurls his spear at Dionysus, but strikes a dolphin instead, which does a dance of death in

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<sup>5</sup> (1930) p. 223

the water (39.331-7). Halimedes raises a cliff from the sea and hurls it at the Indians, sinking a ship (39.218-9), like Polyphemus in the *Odyssey* (1481ff.). Such gigantomachy elements are, as noted earlier, interspersed with Nonnus' battle scenes (cf. 28.206-10, 29.229-30 and 30.227-30). The disposition of the opposing squadrons is now given (39.348-51), something that one would rather have expected to be supplied at the outset of the hostilities. The opposing squadrons are aligned with the four winds in much the same way that Dionysus' land forces were at 27.148-63. Morrheus makes a brief appearance, only to be wounded and retire to have his wounds tended by a Brahmin (39.351-60). Another segment of generalised fighting follows, in which the poet attributes the Indians' greater loss of life to their inability to swim (χειρας ἐρετμώσαντες ἀήθεας ἐς μέλαν ὕδωρ, / ἰχνεσιν ἀσταθέεσσιν ἐτυμβεύοντο θαλάσση, 39.366-7), while Dionysus' followers, being proficient swimmers, escape a similar fate (39.368-71). This is, clearly, a reminiscence of Herodotus 8.89, where the Persians, in contrast to the Greeks, perish for the same reason.

Zeus now tilts the battle in favour of Dionysus, somewhat gratuitously perhaps, as the latter's forces appear to have had the upper hand all along. The winds enter the fray, οἱ μὲν Δηριαδῆος ἀρηγόνες, οἱ δὲ Λυαίου (39.381). The idea of the winds taking sides is in accord with Erechtheus' words (39.193-201) and belies Dionysus' claim that they are all at his call should he need their help (39.11-6). Eurymedon sets his ship alight and sends it adrift toward the Indian fleet. With their ships on fire, the Indians panic and withdraw to land.

Book 40 finds Deriades on land, despondent and about to flee for his life. Athena, seated on a rock in the sea, decides to convince him to make a stand and fight, lest he should elude death at Dionysus' hands. Assuming the form of Morrheus, she <sup>ῶ</sup>upraids him for his cowardice, an idea borrowed from the *Iliad*, where Athena in the shape of Deiphobus convinces Hector to stand and fight Achilles. Morrheus' role has been portrayed somewhat ambiguously in the preceding narrative. On the one hand, he is a great champion, haranguing the Indians to defeat Dionysus on the sea (36.430-69), and his wounding and withdrawal from the fray spell disaster for the Indians (39.357-60). On the other, his infatuation with Chalcomeda has made him a traitor to his native land and a

willing tool of Dionysus, something that is subsequently highlighted in Cheirobie's speech (40.167ff.). The continued representation of Morrheus as the invincible champion of the Indians long after his dereliction constitutes a serious flaw in the narrative, of which the poet must surely have been aware, but (as often) makes no attempt to amend. Morrheus' speech corresponds schematically to that of Deiphobus in the *Iliad*, but differs in tone and content, being delivered κερτομίους ἐπέεσσιν in the usual Nonnian fashion.<sup>6</sup> Athena begins by asking: φεύγεις, Δηριάδη; τίμιν κάλλιπες ἄρα νηῶν; (40.11), echoing the question she had on a previous occasion put to Dionysus, as he fled before Deriades: πῆ φεύγεις, Διόνυσε; τί σοι φόβος ἀντὶ κυδοιμοῦ; (30.258). Athena asks Deriades how he could bear to face his subjects (40.12), an idea which was perhaps suggested to Nonnus by Hector's determination to remain outside the walls and face Achilles for fear of reproach should he do otherwise (X99ff.). Deriades is told, furthermore, that he will be held to shame beside his wife Orsiboe, a warrior in her own right, and daughter Cheirobie, who accompanies her husband to battle. The make-believe Morrheus then asks that the command be turned over to him and promises to slay Dionysus. He voices his shame at being known as Deriades' son-in-law, calling for another to take his place as Cheirobie's husband. He will go to the land of the Medes, to Scythia, to escape the stigma of being related to Deriades, and find himself another warrior-wife (to replace Cheirobie) from the ranks of the Amazons.

The speech draws protestations from Deriades, who seeks to excuse his conduct by saying that he could not overcome an opponent, try as he might, who was forever assuming different shapes. He subsequently recapitulates in detail, but inaccurately, the various form-changes of Dionysus during their first duel. We note that Deriades' reply skirts around the point at issue, namely his forsaking his fleet in the present instance. Pseudo-Morrheus' reproaches nevertheless have the desired effect, with Deriades now resolved to stand and face Dionysus for a second time.

The second duel is patterned rather closely on the Achilles-Hector confrontation in the *Iliad*, though with some modification of the sequence of events

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<sup>6</sup> For chiding speeches in the *Iliad*, cf. Hector's rebuke to Paris at Z326ff. and to Polydamas at M231ff.

and a noticeable curtailment of the actual fight-scene, which in Hopkinson's words "provides a grotesquely disproportionate climax to the more than twenty-four books of conflict".<sup>7</sup> Such narrative truncation is attributable to Pindaric influence, as noted previously (pp. 37-8). The events are ordered differently than in the *Iliad*. Thus, as we have just seen, Athena's intervention is made to take place at the very beginning, when Deriades is simply fleeing from the battle, rather than later, when he is running, like Hector from Achilles, specifically from Dionysus. Deriades throws his spear at Dionysus thrice, falling wide of the mark each time; on the fourth attempt he calls out to Morrheus to lend him a hand, only to find that he has been deceived by Athena: τρίς μὲν ἔδον δόρυ πέμπε, καὶ ἤμβροτεν ἤερα βάλλων / ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον ἐπέδραμεν οἴνοπι Βάκχῳ / εἰς σκοπὸν ἀχρήστον ἐπήρορον ἐγχος ἰάλλων / Δηριάδης ὑπέροπλος, εὐὸ συνάεθλον ἀγῶνος / γαμβρὸν ἔδον καλέεσκε, καὶ οὐκέτι φαίνεται Μορρεῦς / ἀλλὰ μεταστρέψασα δολοπλόκον εἶδος Ἄθηνη / δαίμονι βοτρύοντι παρίστατο (40.69-75). This passage is a composite of Homeric reminiscences, the first part being based on Diomedes' attack on Aeneas: τρίς μὲν ἔπειτ' ἐπόρουσε, κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων / τρίς δέ οἱ ἔστυφέλιξε φαινήν ἀσπίδ' Ἀπόλλων. / ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον ἐπέσσυτο, δαίμονι ἴσος / δεινὰ δ' ὁμοκλήσας προσέφη ἑκάεργος Ἄπόλλων (E436-9), but Nonnus' imitation is not strictly accurate. He has Deriades hurl his spear three times, an improbable scenario seeing that his adversary would be unlikely to allow him <sup>to</sup> retrieve it for each successive throw. We note that in Homer Diomedes attacks three times, but does not part with his spear. The second half is drawn from Hector's duel with Achilles, when he turns to the make-believe Deiphobus to borrow his spear, only to discover that the latter is no longer there: Δηίφοβον δ' ἐκάλει λευκάσπιδα μακρὸν ἄυσας, / ἦτέε μιν δόρυ μακρὸν· ὁ δ' οὔτι οἱ ἐγγύθεν ἦεν (X294-5). Hector then realises that Athena has deceived him: Δηίφοβον γὰρ ἐγὼ γ' ἐφάμην ἦρωα παρεῖναι / ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἐν τείχει, ἐμὲ δ' ἔξαπάτησεν Ἄθηνη (X298-9). Hector never beholds Athena physically, but intuits her presence from what he has just experienced and knows that his moment of doom has

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<sup>7</sup> (1994b) p. 27

arrived. Nonnus has deprived this tragic scene of its impact, turning it into something quite banal, even parodic. Not only does Deriades see Athena physically, but Dionysus at the same time puffs himself up to outlandish proportions (as he does later in his confrontation with Perseus, cf. 47.657-61). Seeing Athena and a much-expanded Dionysus, Deriades entrusts his future to his feet, running off with Dionysus in hot pursuit. A much abbreviated version of Achilles' pursuit of Hector is now given. Deriades, on reaching the Hydaspes, decides to make a stand in the expectation that the river, his father, will come to his aid: ἀλλ' ὅτε χῶρον ἱκανον, ὅπη πολεμητόκον ὕδωρ / κύματι λυσσώοντι γέρων κελάρυζεν Ὑδάσπης / ἦτοι ὁ μὲν ποταμοῖο παρ' ἧόνας ἀπλετος ἔσση, / ὡς γενέτην συνάεθλον ἔχων κελάδοντα μαχητήν (40.86-9). This corresponds to the point in the *Iliad* at which Zeus decides to bring the matter to a close: ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ το τέταρτον ἐπὶ κρουνοῦς ἀφίκοντο, / καὶ τότε δὴ χρύσεια πατὴρ ἐτίταινε τάλαντα κ.τ.λ. (X208-9), though the initial phrase is modelled on οἱ δ' ὅτε χῶρον ἱκανον, ὅθι σφισὶ πέφραδ' Ἀχιλλεύς (Ψ138), referring to the place designated for the pyre of Patroclus.<sup>8</sup> The slaying of Deriades is quite anticlimactic. Dionysus has merely to graze Deriades' skin with his thyrsus to cause his death: ἀκρότατον χροῶ μούνον ἐπέγραφε Δηριαδῆος (40.92), whereupon the latter slips into the Hydaspes, bridging it with his enormous limbs: πατρῶψ προκάρηνος ἐπωλίσθησε ῥεέθρω, / μηκεδανοῖς μελέεσσι γεφυρώσας ὅλον ὕδωρ / αὐτόματος (40.94-6). His death recalls that of Orontes, who commits suicide and slides into the river named after him (17.287-9). Collart understands 40.92 to mean that Deriades was flayed alive ('écorché vif') and sees the reference at 1.42-3 to the flaying of Marsyas as auguring a similar fate for Deriades.<sup>9</sup> There is, however, nothing in the present passage to justify such an interpretation. The gods return to Olympus, signalling the end of the Indian war. Dionysus' followers pierce Deriades' body with their spears, as the Greeks do that of Hector.

The lamentations of Deriades' widow, Orsiboe, and his two daughters,

<sup>8</sup> One wonders whether Nonnus was not prompted by Homer's simile at X162-4, likening Achilles' pursuit of Hector to an athletic event in honour of a dead man, to go to Ψ in the present instance.

<sup>9</sup> (1930) p. 229.

Protonoe and Cheirobie, are next presented. The speeches reflect the lamentations of Priam, Hecuba and <sup>ῥ</sup>Andromache in both *Iliad* 22 and 24, but exhibit marked rhetorical tendencies. Too visible a use of rhetorical artifice, exemplified by symmetrical antithetical statements, detracts from the the gravity of the situation and robs the speeches of much of their genuineness and pathos. Orsiboe indicates her grief through gesture, but is not accorded the opportunity to express it verbally before her daughters have had their say. The physical manifestations of her grief (40.103-7; cf. also 40.160-1 and the similar scene at 24.181-4) are modelled on those of Hecuba (X405-7), but even here Nonnus cannot forgo the opportunity to remark on the mourner's racial characteristics (esp. 40.104 and 106). Protonoe's speech follows forthwith, her grief being seen to be the greatest, as she has not only lost her father but her husband as well. Although Orontes had died many years previously, before Dionysus' arrival in India, Protonoe speaks as if she had but now lost him: ἀνερ, ἀπ' αἰῶνος νέος ὤλεο· κὰδ δέ με χήρην / κάλλιπες ἐν μεγάροισιν ἀπειρήτην τοκετοῖο· / νήπιον οὐ τέκον υἷα παραίφασιν (40.113-5). This is an explicit reference to Andromache's words: ἀνερ, ἀπ' αἰῶνος νέος ὤλεο, κὰδ δέ με χήρην / λείπεις ἐν μεγάροισι· πάις δ' ἔτι νήπιος αὖτως, / ὄν τέκομεν σύ τ' ἐγώ τε (Ω725-7). Nonnus has changed one key detail, the alteration contrasting with the original phrase (*oppositio in imitando*), by saying that no child is left behind. While Andromache voices her anxiety regarding Astyanax' future, Protonoe bewails the fact that she does not have one to remind her of Orontes. The theme was touched on at 24.209-12, where an unnamed Indian, who is expecting a child, expresses her sorrow at her husband's death and pities the child, who is never to know its father. Nonnus presents two alternatives to Andromache's situation in a manner reminiscent of rhetorical exercises in which the student, confronted with the above contingencies, had to determine which of them constituted the worse predicament. Protonoe then proceeds to compare her situation with those of Orsiboe and Cheirobie, by way of two rather frigid syncrises, where the misfortunes of each are compared in a calculated manner that accords ill with the emotive circumstances in which the speech is made. Orsiboe is less unfortunate than herself, having seen her daughters grow up and marry, and Cheirobie even less so, since her husband Morrheus is

still alive. Protonoe again expresses her longing for a son, who could take her to kiss the waves of the Hydaspes and, better still, to the vale of Daphne, where she could embrace the river that was once her husband. She wishes that she too could become a stream or a fountain hard by the Orontes. She would be like Comaitho (referred to previously at 2.143-6), who loved the river Cydnus and still holds him in her arms. She would not be like Periboia, who drew her stream away from her watery husband. Hollis suggests that Periboia could be a variant name of Meliboia, who evaded the embraces of the river Orontes in ps.-Oppian's *Cynegetica*, 2.115-20.<sup>10</sup> Nonnus is quite clearly referring to some myth of Near Eastern provenance, something that he will be doing to a greater degree later in the present book and in books 41-43. Should her wishes remain unfulfilled, she pleads, then let the Hydaspes cover her with its waters, so that she may be spared the embraces of some horned Satyr and the sight of Dionysus' revels. The speech concludes with a quotation (toward which Nonnus evinces such partiality): μή τις ἐνίψη ' κούρη Δηριάδαο δοριθρασέος βασιλῆος / ληιδίη μετὰ δῆριν ὑποδρήσσει Διονύσω ' (40.156-7).

Cheirobie's speech is more a diatribe against Morrheus than a lament for Deriades: to quote the poet's own words, γενετῆρα / οὐ τόσον ἔστενάχιζεν, ὅσον νεμέσιζεν ἀκοίτη (40.162-3). She counters Protonoe's remark that ἀμφιέπει μὲν / Χειροβίη ζῶοντα φίλον πόσιν (40.127-8), with Πρωτονόη πόσιν ἔσχευ ἀοσητήρα τιθήνης, / Χειροβίη πόσιν ἔσχευ ἐῆς δηλήμονα πάτρης (40.177-8). She foresees the most humiliating of fates for herself, as the bonded servant of her husband's paramour (40.285-6). The final word is with Orsiboe, who, like Protonoe, speaks with dignity and pathos. She wishes that the city of the Indians (which remains forever unnamed in the poem) be sacked and that Dionysus hurl her into the Hydaspes, so that she might see Deriades again and not have to witness her daughters being dragged into servitude. She wants to become one of the Naiads, to be another Leucothea, whom Poseidon received still living. The speech ends with a reference to her race: ἀντὶ δὲ λευκῆς / ἄλλη κυανόπεζα φανήσομαι ὑδριάς Ἴνώ (40.211-2).

<sup>10</sup>(1994) p.58. Cf. also Chuvin (1991) pp.169-201, regarding the rivers Cydnus and Orontes.

Dionysus' followers send forth a victory shout (40.217), following which the dead are buried with the appropriate rites. Modaius is made king of the Indians, and partakes of the same meal with the victors and drinks of the Hydaspes, which is (once again) flowing <sup>with</sup> wine.

Book 37, containing the funeral rites of Opheltes and the games held in his honour, is but the latest in a series of ancient imitations of the twenty-third book of the *Iliad*. Apart from the funeral and games for Achilles in Quintus Smyrnaeus (*Posthom.* 3 & 4), all of the other surviving versions are to be found in the Latin poets, Vergil (*Aeneid* 5), Statius (*Thebaid* 6) and Silius Italicus (*Punica* 16). Individual events from Homer's games have, however, been imitated in contexts other than that of funeral games by later poets, notably the chariot-race in Sophocles' *Electra* (680-760) and the boxing-match in Theocritus (*Id.* 22.80-134), Apollonius (2.45-97) and Valerius Flaccus (4.250-314). Nonnus himself earlier imitates the wrestling match at 10.339-82 and the foot-race at 10.383-430, though these are more representative of homosexual love-play between Dionysus and Ampelus than of genuine athletic contests. The contests at the exequies of Staphylus in book 19 are confined to song and dance, anticipating the Athenian Dionysia and unrelated to the Homeric funeral games. Book 37 does not manifest the influence of these earlier imitators of Homer, except in the case of the boxing-match, where some use appears to have been made of Theocritus and Apollonius. According to his usual practice the poet has reemployed some descriptive elements from book 10 in the present book. There is no indication that Nonnus was familiar with any of the versions of the Latin poets, but it is nevertheless useful to adduce them by way of comparison, so as to highlight the extraordinary closeness of his imitation of Homer. With Statius in particular our poet shares many of the tendencies that characterise the so-called baroque style of the imperial period: a tendency to hyperbole and deliberate searching for effect by way of unexpected juxtapositions of words and ideas and other rhetorical devices. Like Statius, he is little concerned to recreate the archaic ambience that his subject matter would seem to warrant. In depicting athletic contests he seems unable or unwilling to distinguish Homeric practices from those of his own time. His chariot race with trackside betting resembles more a hippodrome spectacle than the Homeric event in spite of massive borrowings from the

*Iliad*, and his boxing- and wrestling-matches are of the gladiatorial 'no holds barred' type that had supplanted the classical modes of boxing and wrestling in the amphitheatres of the Empire. Nonnus commences the book with the same phrase as Homer: Ὠς οἱ μὲν ..., referring to the Indians as Homer does to the Trojans. The parallelism with Homer's account is, as it were, indicated from the outset. Nonnus likes to usher in his imitations of Homeric episodes by using either the same phrase or one very similar to that used by Homer (cf., for instance, 24.1 and Φ1, and 37.104 and Ψ258). The arrangement of *Iliad* 23 is duplicated with minimal alteration, almost as if the poet intended to facilitate comparison of the corresponding passages. In referring to the Indians in the present instance, Nonnus takes the opportunity to comment on their peculiar attitude to death, an attitude which, as transpires from his remarks, is grounded in Orphic tenets. Contrary to the tearfulness of the Trojans (Ψ1), the Indians go about burying their dead ὄμμασιν ἀκλαύτοισιν (37.3), their inability to shed tears being a characteristic which they share with Dionysus, who a little later is seen to groan tearlessly at the pyre of Opheltes: ἔστεινε Βάκχος ἀπειθήτοιο προσώπου / ὄμμασιν ἀκλαύτοισιν (37.41-2). Nonnus sees the Indians' absence of grief in the event of death as stemming from a belief that death is no more than the release of the soul from its corporeal fetters, enabling its return κυκλάδι σειρή / νύσσαν ἐς ἀρχαίην (37.5-6). The idea of the soul returning to the ἀρχή (i.e. rejoining the divine νοῦς of which it is a minuscule fragment), and the language which Nonnus uses to describe it, are borrowed from the Orphics, the present instance constituting one of many references to Orphic beliefs in the *Dionysiaca*.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting that he should attribute to the Indians, of whom he invariably speaks pejoratively as primitive worshippers of the physical manifestations of nature, of the sun, earth and water (cf. 17.271ff.), the ability to transcend grief through the firmness of their belief in an abstract Orphic notion derived ultimately from the philosophy of Plato.

After this brief excursus into Indian religion Nonnus takes up the narrative from the point in the *Iliad* at which Agamemnon orders the procurement of timber for

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<sup>1</sup>See the *Chaldean Oracles* (ed. R.Majercik, 1989) for examples of this notion.

Patroclus' funeral pyre. Our poet devotes less space to the funeral than does Homer (102 lines as against 261), his version having nothing to correspond to scenes that depict Achilles' grief for Patroclus. Even though Dionysus groans with tearless eyes for Opheltes, there is no indication in the poem of any such special bond having existed between the two as existed between Achilles and Patroclus. Opheltes, like his namesake in Statius' *Thebaid*, is a pallid figure, a sort of surrogate Patroclus, created merely for the purpose of staging the funeral games. If there is a real counterpart to Patroclus in the *Dionysiaca* it is Hymenaius rather than Opheltes (29.15ff.), but he is spared Patroclus' fate. Nonnus has no parallel to Achilles' addresses to Patroclus, through which the hero reveals the depth of his feeling toward his dead friend, and which greatly intensify the sense of tragedy attached to the occasion. Achilles' utter desolation stands in stark contrast to the sporting events later in the book, which constitute a reaffirmation of life over death. No such contrast is brought out in Nonnus. His account is merely mechanical, exhibiting none of the pathos which we encounter in Homer's.

Homer's wood-cutting scene appears to have been much imitated in antiquity, judging from the number of renderings that have come down to us. Quintus mentions the wood-cutting for Achilles' pyre in passing (3.372-7), reserving fuller description of this operation for when the Greeks return to the slopes of Mount Ida to procure timber for building the wooden horse (12.124-6). The remaining examples are all from Latin poetry, from Ennius, Vergil and Statius. Overall, Nonnus devotes 30 lines (37.7-36) to the cutting and transport of the wood, almost double that in Homer (ψ110-26, i.e. 17 lines) and slightly less than Statius (6.84-117, i.e. 34 lines). Phaunus is appointed overseer of the timber-getters, corresponding to Meriones in Homer and to Epeius in the later Quintus passage. Both Nonnus and Quintus (in the second passage) have followed Homer closely, but Nonnus more <sup>closely</sup> than Quintus. His description of the wood-cutting is closely linked to Homer's through use of the same or similar expressions: δρυτόμῳ στοιχηδὸν ἐτέμνετο δένδρα σιδήρῳ / πολλὴ μὲν πελέη ταυυήκει τάμνετο χαλκῷ, / πολλὴ δ' ὑπιπέτηλος ἐπέκτυπε κοπτομένη δρῦς / καὶ πολλὴ τετάνυστο πίτυς, καὶ ἐκέκλιτο πεύκη / αὐχμηροῖς πετάλοισι (37.14-8). This is

based on Homer's αὐτίκ' ἄρα δρῦς ὑψικόμους ταναήκεί χαλκῶ / τάμνον ἐπειγόμενοι· ταὶ δὲ μεγάλα κτυπέουσαι / πίπτον (Ψ118-20). The correspondences are somewhat obvious: ἐτέμνετο, τάμνετο / τάμνον, ἐπέκτυπε / κτυπέουσαι, ὑψιπέτηλος ... δρῦς / δρῦς ... ὑψικόμους, and ταναήκεί ... χαλκῶ / ταναήκεί χαλκῶ. Nonnus, like the Roman poets, has diversified the picture, naming other species of tree as well as the oak (cf., for example, Vergil, 6.180-2). The anaphora of πολλή may have been suggested by Homer's use of it in the *Iliad* to indicate the great numbers of different animals slaughtered for Patroclus' funeral feast (Ψ30-2). All the later poets tend to exaggerate the effects of the wood-cutting on the landscape: in Nonnus, ἐγυμνώθησαν ἐρίπναι (37.19), in Quintus, νάπη δ' ἀνεφαίνετο πᾶσα (12.127), in Statius it has the same effect, 'lucosque ostendere Phoebos' (6.89). The discomfiture of the forest deities as a result of the wood-cutting is noted by Nonnus (37.20-1) and Statius (6.96-113). Nonnus is brief here, since he has already given us a full description of the woes of the silvan deities in the wake of Typhoeus' forays (2.77-93). A hamadryad takes refuge with a fountain nymph in her watery abode, the association of the two being a recurrent motif (cf. 2.94-7, 37.20-1, and 44.11-4). We may note that the idea of the established order of things being turned topsy-turvy is a favourite one of our poet's, appearing in various guises throughout the work (cf., for instance, Typhoeus' boasts to this effect, 2.258ff., and those of Pentheus, 44.174-83).

The timber, as it is being cut, is conveyed at the same time to the site of the funeral pyre. Nonnus is by now so engrossed in imitating Homer as to forget that Dionysus and his forces are by the Hydaspes in India and speaks as if they were at the foot of Mount Ida. The topography quite imperceptibly takes on the appearance of that with which we are familiar from the *Iliad*. The timber-getters are pictured meeting up with one another as they go up and down the mountain slope on criss-crossing paths: καὶ πολὺς ἐρχομένοισιν ὀρίδρομος ἦεν ἀνὴρ / οὔρεος οἶμον ἔχων ἑτερότροπον· ἦν δὲ νοῆσαι / ὑψιφανῆ προβλήτα κατήλυδα λοξὸν ὀδίτην / ποσσὶ πολυπλανέεσσιν (37.22-5), which is an expansion of Homer's πολλὰ δ'

ἀναντα κάταντα pápanτα τε δόχμιά τ' ἦλθον (Ψ116). The impression of simultaneous movement in all directions, so effectively conveyed by Homer, is diminished by Nonnus' rendering, owing to the transfer of the verb denoting the movement of the timber-getters to the previous sentence and the dilution of the emphatic ἀνά-κατά-παρά contrast. In Homer the timber is felled, split and tied into bundles, which are then transported on the backs of mules to the site of the pyre. Nonnus omits the splitting altogether, speaking as if the logs were tied together whole (cf. his εὐπλέκτοιο δὲ σειρής, 37.25, corresponding to Homer's σειράς τ' εὐπλέκτους, Ψ115) and placed in this condition on the backs of mules (37.25-7), which is of course an impossibility. He subsequently speaks of the logs being dragged along the ground by the mules (37.29-30), which is indeed a practical alternative to the procedure employed in the *Iliad*. Nonnus has befuddled the issue by confusing the two modes of transporting the timber. As we have noted on previous occasions, Nonnus is, in contrast to Homer, somewhat remiss in his depiction of technical procedures. The Satyrs and Pans are hard at work ὑλοτόμοις παλάμησιν ἀμοιβαίων ἀπὸ δένδρων ... / φιτροῦς ἀκαμάτοισιν ἐλαφρίζοντες ἀγοστοῖς (37.32-3), the description echoing Homer's πάντες δ' ὑλοτόμοι φιτροῦς φέρον (Ψ124). The timber is unloaded at the place designated by Dionysus for Opheltes' tomb: καὶ τὰ μὲν ὑλοτόμοι χθονὶ κάτθεσαν, ἦχι τελέσσαι / Εὐίος ἐν δαπέδῳ σημήνατο τύμβον Ὀφέλτη (37.35-6), corresponding in substance to καὶ δ' ἄρ' ἐπ' ἀκτῆς βάλλον ἐπισχερώ, ἐνθ' ἄρ' Ἀχιλλεὺς / φράσσατο Πατρόκλῳ μέγα ἥριον ἠδὲ οἱ αὐτῷ (Ψ125-6). Nonnus, though using different words, has retained the pattern of Homer's sentence: κάτθεσαν replacing καὶ ... βάλλον, χθονὶ - ἐπ' ἀκτῆς, ἦχι - εἶθα, Εὐίος - Ἀχιλλεὺς, σημήνατο - φράσσατο, τύμβον - ἥριον, Ὀφέλτη - Πατρόκλῳ.

Nonnus has no counterpart to the ritual whereby fully armed Myrmidons carry Patroclus' body to the place designated for the cremation (Ψ128-34). Opheltes' body is surrounded by a throng of mourners, each of whom cuts a lock of his hair to place on it, the body being blanketed by hair as they file past (37.37-40), corresponding to the scene in Homer (Ψ135-6), which Quintus likewise reproduces (3.685-6). The building

of the pyre and the various offerings placed on it are described by Nonnus in 12 lines (37.44-55), compared to Homer's 16 (Ψ161-76). This segment shows Nonnus at his least original, containing, among a number of close echoes, two lines which have been transferred from Homer without any alteration. He begins with one of the duplicated lines: ποίησαν δὲ πυρὴν ἑκατόμπεδον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα (37.44 = Ψ164). Such wholesale copying is uncharacteristic of Nonnus, who normally takes care to maintain a margin of originality by making some change, however slight. The body is placed on the pyre: ἐν δὲ πυρῇ μεσάτῃ στόρεσαν νέκυν (37.46), corresponding to ἐν δὲ πυρῇ ὑπάτῃ νεκρὸν θέσαν (Ψ165). Here we have an instance of minimal alteration within the same metrical scheme. Twelve Indians are subsequently killed by having their throats cut and their bodies are placed around that of Opheltes on the pyre (37.48-9). We recall that Achilles in his address to Patroclus at the beginning of *Iliad* 23 vows to kill twelve Trojans in this fashion (Ψ22), but in the passage where he gives effect to this undertaking, the method of killing is not specified, with only Patroclus' two hounds stated as being disposed in this manner (Ψ174-6). Nonnus has used this theme previously, when Morrheus delivered eleven of the most comely Bassarids to Deriades, who subsequently put them to death (34.162ff.). Jars of honey and oil are placed on the pyre, Nonnus again transposing one of Homer's lines in entirety: ἐν δ' ἐτίθει μέλιτος καὶ ἀλείφατος ἀμφιφορῆας (37.50 = Ψ170). In Homer, sheep, cattle, horses and dogs are placed on the pyre, the first two for the fat that will be extracted from them and put around the corpse, the last two presumably to accompany and serve the departed in the nether world. Nonnus ignores these distinctions, omitting any mention of the dogs and, quite mistakenly, lumping in the horses with the cattle and sheep as a source of the fat (37.51-5). Apart from this, Nonnus' description is again a rather close paraphrase of Homer's (Ψ166-9), as is obvious from the correspondences ἐπενήεε / νῆει, πρόσθε πυρῆς / πρόσθε πυρῆς, σώματα / σώματα, δημὸν ἅπαντα λαβῶν / ἐκ ... πάντων δημὸν ἐλών.

Nonnus alone of the later poets has duplicated a particular circumstance from Homer's account, namely the difficulty encountered in setting the pyre alight (cf. 37.70

and Ψ192). In Quintus, by contrast, there is no such problem, with Zeus, unsolicited, sending Hermes to Aeolus with orders to fan the flames, a task that is subsequently seen to by Boreas and Zephyr (3.696-704). Nonnus, speaking now in a didactic vein, describes how the flame was kindled by rubbing together two stones smeared with sulphur, but in referring to the stones as ἄρσην and θήλυς (37.67) he appears to be confusing this method of making fire with an alternative one, which consisted of rotating a hardwood stick in a hole bored in softwood. We note that in an earlier didactic segment, where he explains the origin of lightning, Nonnus compares the effect of clouds rubbing together to that of two fire-stones, to which he again refers as male and female (2.495). When Dionysus sees that the fire would not envelop the pyre, he turns to the sun and calls to the east and south winds to help (37.71-3), corresponding to Achilles' plea to the north and west winds (Ψ194-5). Hard by, the Morning Star, on hearing Dionysus' plea, sends forth his brother the south wind to help him (37.74-6). The east wind blows all night (πάννυχος, 37.79), corresponding to the actions of the north and west winds in Homer, who are likewise described as παννύχιοι (Ψ217). In Homer, Achilles' prayer is heard by Iris, who betakes herself to the west wind's abode, where the other winds are seated at dinner, and tells them of the hero's plight. Nonnus' scheme thus parallels Homer's, there being a petitioner (Dionysus/Achilles), an intermediary (Morning Star/Iris) and helpers (the winds). He has varied Homer's treatment by bringing the Sun and the Morning Star into the picture, and does so quite appropriately in view of their associations with fire and flame, but has incurred an inconsistency in having the east wind blow all night (in imitation of Homer), in spite of referring to it as the dawn wind (Ἐώλος Εὐρος, 37.72) and having Dionysus make his appeal at sunrise to the Morning Star. What he is in effect saying is that the dawn wind remained idle all day long and, contrary to its name, started blowing at dusk, a difficulty which he could easily have avoided by using Quintus' πᾶν ἡμᾶρ καὶ νύκτα (3.713) in place of πάννυχος. As in Homer, the cremation ends with the dawn of a new day, when the pyre has burnt itself out. The embers are quenched with wine poured by the mourners as they file past (37.86-9), corresponding to Homer's statements to that effect

at Ψ226-8 and 250. Quintus, it may be noted, depicts the same scene at Achilles' pyre (3.719-23), and Nonnus appears to have been influenced by him in his use<sup>of</sup> the ὅτε ... δὴ τότε construction. Our poet seems, for reasons unknown, to be at pains to disguise his use of the work of his immediate predecessor in the field of epic. The details pertaining to the wine-pouring ritual are copied by Nonnus from Homer (cf. 37.82-5 and Ψ218-21). Nonnus with his characteristic love of hyperbole renders Homer's δευε δὲ γαῖαν (Ψ220) by χυτὴν ἐμέθυσσε κοινίην (37.84). The bones of the deceased are enveloped in a double layer of fat and placed in a golden box: Ἄστέριος δὲ / ὀστέα συλλέξας κεκαλυμμένα δίπλακι δημῶ / εἰς χρυσέην φιάλην κατεθήκατο λείψανα νεκροῦ (37.91-3), corresponding to: ἐτάριοιο ἐνήος ὀστέα λευκὰ / ἄλλεγον ἐς χρυσέην φιάλην καὶ δίπλακα δημόν (Ψ252-3). The same procedure is conveyed by Quintus with more originality (3.730-2). A tomb is erected: καὶ τροχαλοὶ Κορύβαντες ... / τύμβον ἔτορνώσαντο (37.94-5), echoing Homer's τορνώσαντο δὲ σῆμα (Ψ255). The remains are interred: βαθυμένων δὲ θεμέθλων / νεκρὸν ἐταρχύσαντο πεδοσκαφέος διὰ κόλπου ... / καὶ κόνιν ὀθνείην πυμάτην ἐπέχευαν Ὀφέλτη (37.95-8), corresponding to θεμειλιά τε προβάλοιντο/ἀμφὶ πυρήν· εἶθαρ δὲ χυτὴν ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἔχευαν (Ψ255-6). We note that the bones of Patroclus are not interred, the box containing them being taken back to Achilles' tent (Ψ254), an action prompted by Patroclus' wish, communicated to Achilles in a dream, that their bones should not be separated (Ψ83). The funeral rites are concluded with the composition of an epitaph to Opheltes (37.101-2), which is one of the many instances of anachronism in the poem. In summary it may be said that Nonnus has followed closely in Homer's footsteps as far as the depiction of the proceedings is concerned, but Achilles' grieving over his friend, illustrated by a moving simile (Ψ222-5), finds no counterpart in Nonnus. The repeated foreshadowing of Achilles' own imminent demise combined with his seemingly inconsolable grief envelops the funeral scene in an oppressive fog, which lifts suddenly and dramatically with the opening of the games. In Nonnus, on the other hand, the transition from the one to the other is merely mechanical, without the contrast of death and life, grief and joy that marks it in Homer.

The games are announced by Dionysus: αὐτόθι λαὸν ἔρυκε καὶ ἰζανεν εὐρὺν ἀγῶνα (37.104), which is virtually identical to the phrase used by Homer of Achilles (Ψ258), with only the initial αὐτοῦ changed into αὐτόθι. The individual contests are presented in much the same order as they are in Homer, and are of comparable length, beginning with the chariot race, 37.103-484 (382 lines) : Ψ262-657 (396 lines), followed by the boxing match, 37.485-545 (61 lines) : Ψ658-99 (42 lines), the wrestling match, 37.546-613 (68 lines) : Ψ700-39 (40 lines), the foot-race, 37.614-66 (53 lines) : Ψ740-801 (62 lines), the throwing of the σόλος, 37.667-702 (36 lines) : Ψ826-49 (24 lines) - Nonnus has postponed the φιλίη δῆρις, which comes fifth in Homer, to the end - the archery contest, 37.703-49 (47 lines) : Ψ850-83 (34 lines), and the φιλίη δῆρις, 37.750-78 (29 lines) : Ψ802-25 (24 lines). The final event in Homer, the javelin-throw, for which the prize is awarded to Agamemnon uncontested, is omitted by Nonnus.

The later imitators of Homer's chariot race tend to visualise it in terms of contemporary hippodrome racing, which involved a set number of runs (usually twelve) by four-horse chariots around two turning-posts separated by a distther of one stadion (cf. Pindar's ἀνθεα τεθρίππων δωδεκαδρόμων, *Ol.* 2.50). In Homer, on the other hand, the chariots, drawn by two horses, go once around a single turning-post, which is so far from the starting-line as to be out of sight for the spectators. The four-horse chariot was unknown in the Heroic Age and is mentioned by Homer only in a simile (ν81-2), though its origins were later projected back to mythological times (cf. for example, Vergil, *Geo.* 3.113-4). While Sophocles depicts the race in the form that it had acquired in the Panhellenic games of his own times (*El.* 680-760), even though it was set in the Heroic Age in the play, later poets tried to arrive at some compromise between the Homeric and contemporary modes of racing. Silius Italicus and Nonnus have somewhat incongruously tried to fit elements of the latter into the Homeric pattern of once around the post and back. Although they follow the Homeric pattern, they speak as if every stage of the race took place within full view of the spectators, something that would only be the case if it were held in the confined space of a hippodrome. Nonnus

indeed employs the terminology associated with the later type of racing, such as βαλβίς (37.242) and στάδια (37.246), and has two turning stones (37.105-13), in place of Homer's single stump, which would seem to indicate that the course was meant to be traversed more than once.

In Homer the layout of the course is divulged only as part of Nestor's advice to his son Antilochus. Nonnus, even though he later copies Nestor's speech, has extracted the part concerning the course layout and placed it at the beginning of his account. His description of the turning posts as two stones which an old craftsman had rounded in preparation for carving into statues is quite original and constitutes yet another indication of Nonnus' fascination with round objects. One of them is described as ἡμιτόμου κύκλιοι φέρων τύπον, εἰκόνα μήνης / ... οἶον ὑφαίνων / ἔργοπόνοις παλάμησι γέρων τορινώσατο τέκτων, / ἔνθεον ἀσκῆσαι ποθέων βρέτας (37.107-10). Nonnus reused this passage to describe the garden of Gethsemane in the *Paraphrase*: ἄλλος ὄπερ δονάκεσσιν ἀμοιβαίοισι συνάπτων / πυκνὰ μεριζομένοισι γέρων κυκλώσατο τέκτων, / ἀστερόεν μίμημα, καὶ εἴκελον ὄξει κόσμῳ (18.19-21). Similar language was employed earlier for the depiction for the sphere which Eros set up as a prize in his competition with Hymenaius in book 33, which was described as Ἄργου δαιδαλέης ἀντίρροπον εἰκόνα μορφῆς (33.70), with the same cosmic connotations. The stone had been put there by a Cyclops to serve as a turning post, νύσσης λαϊνέης ἀντίρροπον (37.112), with another like it, ἴσον ἐκείνῳ, placed at the opposite end.

The prizes on offer for the contestants in all the events are listed as in Homer (37.114-5, cf. Ψ259-61), Nonnus using asyndeton, a common device in later poetry, to enhance the cumulative effect (for another example cf. 40.334-6). He has, somewhat inexplicably, placed this general prize list for all the events at the games after his course-description for the chariot race. In Homer the list is presented immediately after the announcement of the games. The prizes reserved specifically for the chariot-race are described almost contiguously with the general list (37.116-8), and they correspond partly with those in Homer (Ψ263-5). For the first prize Nonnus has substituted an

Amazon for Homer's working woman, which is anachronistic in the context of his narrative, seeing that Dionysus has yet to defeat the Amazons (cf. 40.291-4). Such contextual anachronisms are common in Nonnus, who will not allow his imagination <sup>to</sup> be held in check by the exigencies of the narrative (cf. also 42.143-4). The second prize is, as in Homer, a pregnant mare, κεύουσαν ἔτι βρέφος (37.123), echoing βρέφος ἡμίονον κεύουσαν (Ψ266). The third prize is a breast-plate, τὸν μὲν ἀριστοπόνοσ τεχνήσατο Λήμνιος ἄκμων (37.126, cf. τὰ περ κάμε Λήμνιος ἄκμων, used of the shields of Dionysus, 25.337, and Aiacus, 28.6). In Homer the breastplate is not among the announced awards, but is given as a consolation prize to Eumelus (Ψ560-2). The fourth prize is a shield, in place of Homer's δύο χρυσοῖο τάλαντα (Ψ269), which are offered as the fifth prize in Nonnus (δοιὰ τάλαντα, 37.129) instead of the ἀμφίθετον φιάλην (Ψ270).

Dionysus stands up to address the drivers: ὀρθωθείς δ' ἀγόρευεν ἐπισπέρχων ἐλατήρας (37.130), duplicating Achilles' action: στῆ δ' ὀρθός, καὶ μῦθον ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἔειπεν (Ψ271). While Achilles announces the prizes and his decision not <sup>to</sup> compete, Dionysus by way of an aetiological excursus delivers a lecture on the origins of the various Panhellenic games and the prizes associated with them (37.131-53). The discourse, resembling in substance Pindar's remarks in *Ol.* 9.84-99 and 13.98-113, is both anachronistic in the present context and inaccurate in some details. Thus Dionysus states that the prize for winning the chariot race at Marathon was a κάλπις πιαλέης ἑέρσης (37.147), whereas we are informed by Pindar that it was not oil but silver cups (cf. ἐν Μαραθῶνι ... μένεν ἀγῶνα .... ἀμφ' ἀργυρίδεσσιν, *Ol.* 9.89-90). The rather unusual prize of a woollen cloak accorded the winner at Pallene was bound to be mentioned by Nonnus (37.149-51, cf. Pindar, *Ol.* 9.97-8 and *Nem.* 10.44 regarding the same). The allusion to the story of Pelops and Oinomaus (37.138-43) is to be expected in a scene concerned with chariot racing (37.138-43, cf. also Quintus, 4.526-9), and is repeated three more times in the present book (37.308-9, 338-41, 428-30).

As in Homer, the summons elicits a swift response (cf. 37.154 and Ψ287).

Erechtheus is πρῶτιστος to yoke his horses, as Eumelus in Homer is πολὺ πρῶτος to take up the challenge, but this initial correspondence is not borne out by subsequent events, which reveal Scelmis and not Erechtheus to be the parallel of Eumelus. The names of Erechtheus' horses are likewise taken from the *Iliad*, Xanthus being the name of one of Achilles' horses, and Podarge the Harpy who gave birth to them (Π149-50). Nonnus' story that Erechtheus received the horses as a gift from Boreas by way of compensation for the abduction by the latter of his daughter (37.155-61) is not found elsewhere. The horses do not appear to have met the full amount of the bride-price, seeing that Erechtheus demands additional favours from his son-in-law in the foot-race (37.640-1) and, later, in the naumachy (39.174-6). The second charioteer to present himself is Actaion, the son of Aristaius, the third is Scelmis, a son of Poseidon, the fourth is Phaunus, who, in imitation of his grandsire the Sun, drives a four-horse chariot, and the fifth is Achates from Sicily.

Nonnus is alone among the imitators of Homer's chariot race to give a full rendering of Nestor's advice to Antilochus. We note that in Statius, Adrastus in entrusting the steed Arion to Polynices, does also give words of advice to the recipient, but his directions are concerned solely with handling the horse (6.317-20). Nonnus, on the other hand, has Aristaius counsel his son on tactics and the nature of the course in much the same way as Nestor does in the *Iliad*. In each case the father begins with a few words of encouragement, reminding the son of his descent from Apollo, as in Nonnus (37.179), or of his tutelage under Zeus and Poseidon, as in Homer (Ψ306-8). In Nestor's speech these initial remarks are soon tempered by the sobering reminder ἀλλά τοι ἵπποι / βάρδιστοι θείειν (Ψ309-10), and it is this disadvantage that the advice is intended to remedy. This handicap may be overcome through skill and cunning by the charioteer, especially in negotiating the turning-point, and Nestor proceeds to brief his son as to the nature of the course, of which he appears to have prior knowledge, and regarding the tactics he should adopt. The advice is, in short, meant to compensate for the inferiority of Antilochus' horses. Nonnus appears to have overlooked the reason behind Nestor's speech, seeing that Aristaius, in direct contrast to Nestor, tells his son

that his horses are superior to those of the others: ἡμέτεροι δὲ / κρείσσοι  
αἰσσοῦσιν ἐπὶ δρόμον Ἄρκάδες ἵπποι (37.179-80). Aristaius' speech thus  
becomes no more than a caution to his son against becoming complacent in the  
knowledge of the superiority of his horses. Skill and cunning are required as well, if  
victory is to be attained. The idea that μῆτις and κερδοσύνη matter as much<sup>as</sup> if not  
more than σθένος (37.181-3 and Ψ315-8) is fundamental to both speeches. It has long  
been a source of puzzlement to Homeric commentators why the turning-point, on  
which Nestor bestows such attention, is all but ignored when the poet comes to describe  
the race itself. Nonnus makes no attempt to remedy this inconsistency in his version, the  
turning-point getting no further mention once the race is under way. The only  
recollection of Aristaius' speech during the race occurs when Actaion tries to ram  
Phaunus' chariot, at which point he is described as Ἄρισταίου μεμνημένος εἰσέτι  
μύθων / κερδαλέων (37.349-50), but the reference is misleading, for at no point does  
Aristaius specifically recommend such a tactic. We note that Sophocles, on the other  
hand, does portray Orestes putting into practice at the turning point the very ideas that  
Nestor conveyed to Antilochus, the connexion with Nestor's advice being made quite  
explicit through the use of the same vocabulary (cf. *El.* 720-2 and Ψ334-40). Aristaius,  
sensing that his son is lacking in κερδοσύνη, proceeds to pass on to him knowledge  
distilled from a lifetime's experience (37.185-6). He exhorts Actaion to match his  
efforts in the coming race with his attested prowess on the battlefield (37.189-91).  
Aristaius' instructions are virtually a paraphrase of Nestor's. Actaion is to use cunning  
(37.195-6, cf. Ψ313-4); the untutored man will have his horses wandering all over the  
track (37.197-201, cf. Ψ219-21), while the one possessing τέχνη will always keep on  
course, though his horses be inferior, keeping his eye on the driver in front and never  
scraping the turning-post (37.202-6, cf. Ψ322-5).<sup>2</sup> Aristaius' τεχνήεντι δόλω  
(37.202), which sounds like an outright invitation to cheat, is apparently how Nonnus

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<sup>2</sup> In Quintus the efficacy of this advice is demonstrated in Sthenelus' case, who  
having the best horse nevertheless does not win, as he lets the horse run wide of the  
course (4.563-6), ignoring technique and putting his faith solely in his horse's feet  
(4.575).

understands Nestor's κέρδεα (Ψ302). It should be noted that the reference to ἐλάσσονας ἵππους (37.203), which is a direct echo of ἤσσονας ἵππους (Ψ322), is hardly pertinent to Nonnus' context, seeing that Actaion's horses are κρείσσονες (37.180). Nonnus, as often, becomes so engrossed in imitating Homer as to forget his own earlier statement. It is at this point that Nestor interrupts his driving instructions to give a description of the layout of the course, something which, as we have noted, Nonnus has divorced from the speech and placed at the beginning of his account (37.105-13). The instructions as to how Actaion should negotiate the turning-post are a close paraphrase of those conveyed to Antilochus (37.207-13, cf. Ψ335-40). Actaion is to take especial care not to touch the turning-stone, lest he break his axle and destroy the chariot and horses (37.214-5), which corresponds to Nestor's caution to Antilochus at Ψ340-1. We note that it is Orestes' failure to observe these precautions on the final turn which proves his undoing in Sophocles (El. 743-5). Aristaius concludes his speech with a nautical simile, comparing the charioteer to a steersman, with the charioteer's mind being likened to a rudder: ἔσσο κυβερνήτη πανομοίος ἄρμα νομεύων / εἰς δρόμον ἰθυκέλευθον, ἐπεὶ τεχνήμονι βουλή / πηδάλιον δίφροιο πέλει νόος ἠμιοχῆος (37.221-3). This comparison seems to have been inspired by one of the examples given by Nestor to illustrate the use of μήτις: μήτι δ' αὐτε κυβερνήτης ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ / νῆα θοὴν ἰθύνει ἐρεχθομένην ἀνέμοισι (Ψ316-7).

Nonnus' rendering of Nestor's speech is thus, for the main part, little more than a paraphrase, characterised by close copying in identical contexts. He makes no attempt to remedy the absence in Homer of any application of that advice during the race, but he has, by removing the course description from the speech and placing it in the body of the narrative, at least resolved the problem in the *Iliad* of how Nestor had obtained this knowledge. He has, by designating Actaion's horses as superior, missed the whole purpose behind Nestor's speech, which was to overcome the handicap of inferior horses by driving skills. Now Hopkinson, speaking of the *Dionysiaca* as a whole, asserts that Nonnus was concerned "not only to imitate Homer, but in the course of his

imitation to subsume, contain, and ultimately surpass his poetic ancestor".<sup>3</sup> It is difficult to see how such a claim could be borne out by the present passage, or, indeed, by the description of the games as a whole. While adding some amusing touches here and there, Nonnus has generally given us a rather flaccid and less coherent rendering of the original.

Aristaius having spoken withdraws, his task of instruction completed (37.224-5), corresponding to Nestor's action in the *Iliad* (Ψ349-50). The contestants draw lots to determine their respective positions on the starting line, Nonnus comparing the drawing of lots to the casting of dice: οἶά τις ἀνὴρ / εἰς κύβον ἀλλοπρόσαλλον ἐκηβόλα δάκτυλα πάλλων (37.228-9); the phrase δάκτυλα πάλλων comes from the vocabulary of mime and dance (for its use in that context cf. 19.219). Erechtheus, the eventual winner, draws the last place (37.234-5), just like Diomedes, who wins in the *Iliad* (Ψ356-7). Erechtheus, like Diomedes, is qualified in advance as the best (φέρτατος / ὄχ' ἀριστος). A four-line portrait of the umpire Aiacus follows (37.238-41), corresponding to the description of Phoenix, to whom this task is allotted in the *Iliad* (Ψ359-61). The charioteers are drawn up at the starting line, raising their whips (37.242-3), as is the case in Homer (Ψ358, 362). In Homer the race starts as the drivers strike with the whips and shout in unison (Ψ363-4), but in Nonnus the act of striking and the shout are deferred incomprehensibly to a later stage, when the race has been under way for some time (37.287-8). We note that Sophocles (*El.* 711-3) renders Ψ363-4 in its proper place at the start of the race; so also Quintus (4.558-60). The shout is meant to jolt the horses into motion, once the signal to go is given. Such apparent displacement of passages out of their natural context is a feature of the poem as we have it (cf. for example, 39.348-51, where the dispositions of the opposing squadrons are given long after the battle has started). In describing the shout as being sharper than the whip, Nonnus once more evinces his preoccupation with the supernatural power of the voice, to which we have referred previously (p.39). His depiction of both the charioteers and onlookers is lively and amusing, and is no doubt

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<sup>3</sup> (1994b) p. 26

drawn from personal acquaintance with such events at the local hippodrome. The rather phrenetic activity of the charioteers is representative of Nonnus' animated word-pictures (37.249-55). The reactions of the spectators are likewise conveyed with lively realism, as their mood fluctuates between exhilaration and despondency, depending on the fortunes in the field of their favourite driver (37.271-8). This passage owes something to Homer's portrayal of the behaviour of the onlookers at the foot-race (Ψ766-7) - the correspondence ἐλατῆρι κελεύων (37.272-8) / σπεύδοντι κέλευον (Ψ766) deserves to be noted - but there can be no doubt that Nonnus has the hippodrome crowd before his eyes. A very similar picture is found in Silius Italicus (16.320-4). Nonnus turns his attention to the spectators a second time as the race nears completion, his remarks intimating that bets were placed at these meetings, as they are at their modern counterparts (37.439-41).

A description of the chariots hurtling at great speed along the stretch is now presented. The chariots now fly through the air, now skim the dust (37.279-81), as they do in Homer (Ψ368-9). A difficult sentence follows: καὶ ταχινῶ ψαμαθῶδες ἔδος τροχοειδέι κύκλω / ἄρματος ἰθυπόροιο κατέγρ<sup>α</sup>φεν ὀλκὸς ἀλήτης (37.282-3), which can only be translated as 'the wandering furrow left by the fast-rotating wheel of the straight-moving chariot marks the sandy soil'. The apparent contradiction in the idea of a straight moving chariot leaving a wandering track may be attributed to Nonnus' habitual disregard for consistency. The description seems to have been inspired by Homer's description of Diomedes' chariot (on account of its speed) leaving not much in the way of wheel marks in the dust as it neared the finishing line: οὐδέ τι πολλή / γίγεται ἐπισσώτρων ἄρματροχίη κατόπισθεν / ἐν λεπτῇ κονίη (Ψ504-6), which Nonnus predictably imitates in the corresponding segment of his own account: καὶ οὐ τροχόεντι σιδήρῳ / λεπταλέης ἀτίνακτα τινάσσετο νῶτα κονίης (37.459-60). Dust rises to the horses' chests, their manes moved by the wind: στήθεσιν ἵππείοισιν ἀνηώρητο κονίη, / χαῖται δ' ἠερίησιν ἐπερρώντο θυέλλαις (37.285-6), corresponding to ὑπὸ δὲ στέρνοισι κονίη / ἴστατ' ἀειρομένη ὡς τε νέφος ἠὲ θυέλλα, / χαῖται δ' ἐρρώντο μετὰ πνοιῆς ἀνέμοιο (Ψ365-7). As in Homer, the

incidents all occur on the home stretch, after the turning-stone has apparently been negotiated uneventfully. Nonnus has, in his usual manner, proliferated the number of incidents and verbal exchanges taking place during the race. He introduces his account of the return lap with a statement transferred from Homer verbatim: ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ πύματον τέλεον δρόμον (37.289 and Ψ373). Nonnus has not only increased the number of incidents but given them a different complexion: the strategy of overtaking in the narrows, for which Antilochus is censured in the *Iliad*, is replaced by more blatant forms of interference, with drivers intentionally setting out to disable their rivals' chariots. Aiacus, though called a σκοπὸς ἐπήτυμος (37.238), seems to be a totally ineffectual umpire <sup>since he</sup> remains silent in the face of such infractions. Whereas in Homer Menelaus challenges Antilochus to state under oath that he did not wilfully execute a dangerous tactic in order to get in front of him, no such appeals are made in Nonnus in response to much more obvious instances of fouling. It may be noted that the charioteers behave in a similarly reckless manner in Statius, again earning no reprimand for their conduct. It appears likely that Nonnus and Statius are giving us pictures of the hippodrome spectacles of imperial times, coloured by their shared tendency to exaggeration and theatricality. Silius and Quintus are, on the other hand, somewhat more restrained in their treatments (though too much of Quintus' account has been lost to allow us to speak with certainty).

In Homer the return stretch is marked by two incidents: Eumelus' accident, and the near-collision occasioned by Antilochus' failure to yield right of way to Menelaus. Nonnus has replaced them by three incidents involving Scelmis and Erechtheus, Phaunus and Actaion, and Achates and Phaunus, with the first member of each pair becoming the victim of some form of interference contrived by the second. Homeric parallels are portioned out among the three incidents: Scelmis and Erechtheus are made schematically parallel to Eumelus and Diomedes (though there is no conflict between the latter), Phaunus and Actaion to Menelaus and Antilochus (though Phaunus' discomfiture resembles more that of Eumelus than that of Menelaus, differing only in that he is able to resume the race), and Achates and Phaunus to Menelaus and

Antilochus. Scelmis, like Eumelus, takes the early lead but is closely pursued by Erechtheus, as Eumelus is by Diomedes. Erechtheus' chariot looks as if it is about to mount that of Scelmis (37.292-3), which reflects the situation in the *Iliad*, where Diomedes' horses appear about to mount Eumelus' chariot ( $\Psi$ 379), a motif also imitated by Silius (16.379). One of Erechtheus' horses is warming Scelmis' back with its breath (37.294-6), just as Diomedes' horses warm Eumelus' back with their breath ( $\Psi$ 380-1). The notion of 'breathing down one's back' recurs in the foot-race (37.628-30), again in imitation of Homer ( $\Psi$ 765-6). The idea is also used in Statius' foot-race (*Theb.* 603-5). It is at this point that the opportunity to engage in underhand tactics first presents itself. The fact that Erechtheus' horses are close enough to breathe down Scelmis' back, gives the latter the opportunity to grab one of the horses by its mane so as to make it spit out the bit (37.297, 299, 303). Nothing of the sort happens in Homer, even though Eumelus is in exactly the same position as Scelmis. In Homer premeditated interference appears to be the prerogative of the gods (for example, Apollo making Diomedes lose his whip and Athena breaking the yoke of Eumelus' horses in retaliation,  $\Psi$ 382-92). Antilochus' action of cutting in front of Menelaus only poses the possibility of harm if Menelaus were to prevent him from doing so by not slowing down, and is not aimed specifically at disabling Menelaus' chariot. It is only in the later poets that contestants engage in deliberate acts of interference (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 5.334-8, where Nisus intentionally falls in front of Salius to enable his friend Euryalus win the foot-race, and Statius, *Theb.* 6.615-7, where Idas grabs Parthenopaeus by the hair to prevent the latter from crossing the finishing line first; and Silius 16.517-23, where Hesperus seizes Theron's hair, enabling Eurythus to win). The outrageous behaviour of Nonnus' contestants is thus not wholly unprecedented. Scelmis is, nevertheless, prevented from giving effect to his nefarious design by the quick action of Erechtheus, who anticipating the sudden danger, reins back the horse. The opportunity for mischief having slipped his grasp, Scelmis addresses Erechtheus, telling him that he will win regardless, that his father Poseidon will see to it just as surely as he had in the case of Pelops' victory over Oinomaus. A σύγκρισις of Poseidon with Athena, the patroness

of Erechtheus, follows, wherein Poseidon, as the κυβερνητὴρ ἵπποσύνης, is considered a better sponsor to have on the racetrack than ἱστοτέλεια Athena. Incensed by these remarks, Erechtheus utters a prayer to Athena, which takes the form of a refutation of Scelmis' remarks. Addressing her as ἵπποσσόος and reminding her of her victory over Poseidon in their contest for the possession of Attica, he asks her to grant her subject a similar victory over Poseidon's protégé. Having said his prayer Erechtheus pulls alongside his rival and seizes the bridle of one of Scelmis' horses, holding it back as he spurts past. He then mocks Scelmis, resuming the Poseidon-Athena comparison and highlighting the male-female opposition. Just as θῆλυς Ἀθήνη had overcome ἄρσενά Ποσειδάωνα, his mare Podarge has out-run Scelmis' stallion Balius. As to Pelops, he had really only won because Oinomaus' charioteer Myrtilus had replaced his master's axle-pin with one made from wax.

The second incident involves Phaunus and Actaion, who is meant to parallel Antilochus. But whereas Antilochus merely risks a collision, Actaion purposely engineers one. The incident does not take place on a narrowing of the road, that detail being reserved for the next incident involving Phaunus and Achates. Actaion, described by the poet as mindful of his father's advice (even though Aristaius suggests no such thing in his speech) rams Phaunus' chariot, scraping his horses' legs with his wheel. Three of the horses tumble to the ground, the fourth being left standing, while Phaunus rolls in the dust beside the wheel of his overturned chariot (37.365-8), the description corresponding to what happened <sup>to</sup> Eumelus in the *Iliad* (Ψ394-6). Phaunus falls in the same way as Eumelus, κεύλιστο παρὰ τροχόν, just as the latter παρὰ τροχόν ἐξεκλίσθη, and suffers the same injury, θρύπτετο δ' ἄκρα μέτωπα - θρυλίχθη δὲ μέτωπον, but unlike the latter is able to rejoin the race and mete out to the hapless Achates treatment similar to that to which he himself had been subjected by Actaion. Actaion taunts Phaunus, telling him that he will inform Dionysus that his arrival will be delayed (37.377-8). He will come in late after all the rest ἄρματα σύρων, the description recalling that of Eumelus, who likewise comes in last of all ἔλκων ἄρματα (Ψ532-3).

Phaunus, dragging his horses up by their tails, re-harnesses them and takes off after Achates, the tail-ender of the bunch. He sees the road ahead narrowing and decides to pull alongside Achates at that point (37.394-6). This corresponds to the situation in the *Iliad* where Antilochus sees the road narrowing (Ψ418-9), after telling his horses that he will try to overtake Menelaus on a narrow stretch (Ψ415-6). The explanation for the narrowing of the road is again paraphrased from Homer (37.397-400, cf. Ψ420-1). The ornate, somewhat bombastic description of Nonnus contrasts with the naturalness and simplicity of the original, Homer's χειμέριον ... ὕδωρ being rendered by χειμερῆ μάστιγι Διὸς μετανάστιον ὕδωρ ἠερόθεν προχέοντος, and ἀλεῖν by ἐεργόμενον ῥέεθρον/ ὄμβρου γειοτόμοιο. Such use of disproportionately grandiloquent expressions to render simple concepts is especially noticeable in the *Paraphrase*, where the sayings of Jesus are deprived of much of their effectiveness by being dressed in similarly bombastic garb. As to the incident itself, Nonnus has changed the order of things somewhat. Whereas in Homer Menelaus calls out to Antilochus to give way and, getting no reply, is forced to pull up to avoid a collision, in Nonnus Achates first pulls up, then addresses Phaunus. We note that Silius, who also paraphrases this incident, adheres to the order in Homer, with Atlas, the threatened party, shouting out to Durius, who is about to cut him off. In both Silius and Nonnus the collision does actually take place, in Silius because Atlas, unlike Menelaus, cannot stop in time (16.409ff.), in Nonnus for no apparent reason. The sequence of events in Nonnus is improbable in the extreme in that the collision occurs after Achates has pulled up and addressed Phaunus. The speech seems inordinately long (37.404-21, i.e. 18 lines), when we take into consideration the circumstances in which it is made, but even more incredible is the fact that, in spite <sup>of</sup> having the time to hear out this extended diatribe, Phaunus still crashes into Achates. In his address Achates chastises Phaunus for his folly in not yielding right of way and warns him that he may be in for a whipping at the hands of Actaion (an illogical rejoinder, seeing that it was Actaion who wronged Phaunus and not the other way around). He appears to treat Phaunus as a social inferior, reminiscent of the way in which Odysseus addressed Thersites (cf. esp. 37.409-11 and B261-4). Lampooning

him mercilessly, Achates predicts what a laughing-stock he will be to the Satyrs and Sileni, when he returns all soiled and scratched. Phaunus reacts by ramming Achates' chariot, which has its axle broken like that of Oinomaus (37.425-30). Now follows a rather puzzling passage. Achates waits in the narrows until Phaunus, whipping his horses, passes him as if he did not hear: *στεινωπήν δὲ κέλευθον ἔχων ἀνέμμνεν Ἀχάτης, / εἰσόκε ... / ὠκυτέρῃ μάλιστα παρήλυθε Φαῦνος Ἀχάτην, / οἶά περ οὐκ αἰών* (37.431-4), which echoes *Ἀντίλοχος δ' ἔτι καὶ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἔλαυνε / κέντρῳ ἐπισπέρχων, ὡς οὐκ αἰόντι εἰκῶς* (Ψ429-30). With a broken axle Achates would no longer seem to have the option of waiting only so long as to let Phaunus pass, but he would, on the contrary, be immobilised for the duration of the race. The *οἶά περ οὐκ αἰών*, which can only refer to Phaunus pretending not to hear Achates' speech, seems peculiarly out of context, now that the collision has already taken place. It seems as if Nonnus had originally intended to copy the Antilochus-Menelaus incident more closely, with lines 431-4 following directly on from line 404, but had subsequently decided to expand what must have been a short warning shout from Achates (cf. *τρομερὴν ... φωνήν*, 37.404) into a full-blown speech and insert yet another collision. The original order would have been as follows: Achates' warning - Phaunus' reaction (*οἶά περ οὐκ αἰών κ.τ.λ.*) - Achates pulling up and waiting (lines 401-2 and 431-2) - Phaunus speeding past, with no collision. Phaunus finishes fourth, trailing *Actaion ὄσσα θορόντος / δίσκου πεμπομένοιο πέλει δολιχόσκιος ὄρμη, / ὄν βριαρῆ παλάμη δονέων αἰζητὸς ἰάλλει* (37.436-8), which corresponds to the distance that Antilochus succeeded in putting between himself and Menelaus as the result of his underhand manoeuvre: *ὄσσα δὲ δίσκου οὖρα κατωμαδίῳοι πέλονται / ὄν τ' αἰζητὸς ἀφῆκεν <sup>ἀνήρ</sup> πειρώμενος ἤβης* (Ψ431-2). Nonnus, in common with other late poets, has extended the use of *δολιχόσκιος* to objects other than the spear (cf. *αὐχὴν*, 12.181, *ποιμήν*, 40.370) and even to actions (as *ὄρμη* here), where it can no longer be rendered in its literal meaning of 'casting a long shadow'.

Our poet now turns his attention once more to the spectators, telling how they placed bets on who they thought would come in first. In naming the objects wagered

Nonnus has imitated the passage where Idomeneus offers to wager a tripod or cauldron to settle the point with Ajax regarding who, Eumelus or Diomedes, was in the lead on the home stretch (cf. 37.441-2 and Ψ485-7). The lively altercation between Idomeneus and Ajax has no counterpart in Nonnus, who, as we have noted previously (pp.28-9), is averse to including dialogue in his narrative.

Erechtheus comes in first, incessantly whipping his horses, κατωμαδὸν αἰὲν ἰμάσσων (37.454), which recalls the arrival of Diomedes, who likewise μάστι δ' αἰὲν ἔλαυε κατωμαδόν (Ψ500). He is speckled with dust: καθ' ἠνιόχοιο δὲ πυκναὶ / αὐχμηραὶ ραθάμιγγες ἐπερρώοντο κοίης (37.456-7), as is Diomedes: αἰεὶ δ' ἠνιόχον κοίης ραθάμιγγες ἔβαλλον (Ψ502). The chariot follows hard on the horses' heels: ἄρματα δ' ἀγχιπόροισιν ἐπέτρεχεν ἰχνεσιν ἵππων (37.458), echoing ἄρματα δὲ ... ἵπποις ὠκυπόδεσσι ἐπέτρεχον (Ψ503-4). Sweat streams in profusion down the neck and sides of the horses: καὶ πολὺς ἵππείοιο δι' αὐχένος ἔρρεεν ἰδρῶς / καὶ λασίου στερόνιο (37.455-6), corresponding to πολὺς δ' ἀνεκῆκιεν ἰδρῶς / ἵππων ἔκ τε λόφων καὶ ἀπὸ στερόνιο χαμάζε (Ψ507-8). The surface of the dirt hardly shows any wheelmarks (37.459-60), as is the case in Homer (Ψ504-6), a correspondence already noted (p.169). Erechtheus alights from his chariot and leans his whip against the yoke: καὶ ταχὺς ἐκ δίφροιο κατήγε· μηκεδανὴν δὲ / εἰς ζυγὸν εὐποίητον ἔην ἔκλινεν ἰμάσθλην (37.464-5), again corresponding to Diomedes' action: αὐτὸς δ' ἐκ δίφροιο χαμαὶ θόρε παμφανώνυτος, / κλινε δ' ἄρα μάστιγα ποτὶ ζυγόν (Ψ509-10). The above passage is indicative of the close nature of Nonnus' imitation, which embraces the minutest of details. The second to arrive is Scelmis, and he is only as far behind Erechtheus as the wheel of the chariot is from the hind quarters of the horse drawing it: κύκλος ὅσον τροχόεις ἀπολείπεται ὠκέος ἵππου, / τοῦ μὲν ἐπαῖσσοντος ἐπισσώτρων μόγις ἄκρων / ἑκταδῆς ψαύουσιν ἐλισσομένης τρίχες οὐρῆς (37.422-4), which is equal to the distance that Menelaus is from Antilochus at the finish: ὅσον δὲ τροχοῦ ἵππος ἀφίσταται ... τοῦ μὲν τε ψαύουσιν ἐπισσώτρου τρίχες ἄκραι / οὐραῖαι (Ψ517-20). Not even the detail about the tips of the horse's

tail hairs touching the rim of the wheel has been passed over, demonstrating once more the closeness of the imitation. The third and fourth places go to Actaion and Phaunus respectively, Achates arriving last βραδυδινέος ἐγγύθι δίφρου (37.482), that is to say, on foot like Eumelus (Ψ532-4).

The next contest, the boxing-match, was, like the chariot-race, a favourite set-piece, judging by the number of renderings of it that have come down to us. Besides the two accounts in Homer (Ψ683-99 and the fight between Odysseus and Irus (σ89-99), we have those of Theocritus (*Id.* 22.80-134), Apollonius (2.45-97), Vergil (*Aen.* 5.421-84), Valerius (4.504-45), Statius (*Theb.* 6.750-825), Quintus (4.341-404) and Nonnus (37.504-45). Of his predecessors, Nonnus is discernibly influenced only by Homer and, to a lesser extent, by Theocritus and Apollonius. Unlike the other poets following Homer, Nonnus has not expanded on the original, keeping his version within the Homeric proportions. Dionysus puts up the boxing contest: ὁ πυγμαχίης χαροπῆς ἔστησεν ἀγῶνα (37.485), just as Achilles does in the *Iliad*: αὐτὰρ ὁ πυγμαχίης ἀλεγεινῆς θῆκεν δέθλα (Ψ653). The winner will receive a bull, the loser a shield, as against a mule and chalice in Homer. Melisseus rises at once in answer to the call (37.494-5), as Epeius does in Homer (Ψ664-5), and, taking hold of the bull, dares anyone to come forward and fight for the second prize: ἐλθέτω, ὃς ποθέει σάκος αἰόλον· οὐ γὰρ ἐάσω / ἄλλω πίονα ταῦρον, ἕως ἔτι χεῖρας αἰείρω (37.497-8), which echoes Epeius' bravado: ἄσσον ἴτω, ὃς τις δέπας οἴσεται ἀμφικύπελλον· ἠμίονον δ' οὐ φημί τιν' ἀξέμεν ἄλλον Ἄχαιῶν / πυγμῆ νικήσαντ', ἐπεὶ εὐχομαι εἶναι ἀριστος (Ψ667-9). Epeius' bravado also finds an echo in Vergil, where Dares demands that he be given the first prize uncontested (5.382-5), but the imitation is not nearly as close as that in Nonnus. We note that Epeius takes to the ring again at Achilles' funeral games in Quintus, though without repeating his boastful challenge. In Homer Epeius tempers his brashness with the admission that he is not much of a warrior: ἦ οὐχ ἄλις, ὅττι μάχης ἐπιδούομαι (Ψ670), a shortcoming also noted in Quintus, who describes him as πολέμου δ' οὐ πάγχυ δαήμων / ... λευγαλέου (4.327-8). Nonnus, somewhat surprisingly, considering his close imitation

of Homer, passes over this feature, but he takes note of another, namely Epeius' poor performance in the the discus throw, by having Melisseus also perform poorly in that event. The challenge is met by anxious silence: ὡς φαμένου ξύμπαντας ἐπεσφρήγισσε σιωπή (37.499), which reflects the situation in Homer: ὡς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἀκὴν ἐγένοντο σιωπῇ (Ψ676). Statius imitates this Homeric touch as well, saying that on Capaneus' challenge 'obstupere animi, fecitque silentia terror' (6.738). A lone contender nevertheless soon appears: Εὐρυμέδων δέ οἱ οἶος ἀνίστατο (37.500), as in Homer: Εὐρύαλος δέ οἱ οἶος ἀνίστατο (Ψ677). In imitation of Homer both Nonnus (37.500ff.) and Statius (6.740ff.) lavish more attention on the second contender, elaborating on his credentials as a boxer and supplying details of his training, than they do on the first. With such a build-up the second contender would seem the obvious candidate for victory - one would not like to see arrogance triumph - but quite surprisingly this is not to be: in all three instances it is the boastful first contender who wins. Only in Vergil is the result otherwise, with the insolent Dares being defeated by the aging Entellus. In Quintus, Epeius is better behaved and the match ends in a draw. Eurymedon's brother Alcon readies him for the contest (37.505-7), corresponding to Diomedes' action, who performs the same service for Euryalus (Ψ683-4). Eurymedon steps forth like an armed warrior, his left arm being described by the poet as a σάκος ἔμφυτον and his thongs as taking the place of the spear (37.508-10). Nonnus is fond of such depictions where the unusual takes the place of the usual, cf. his earlier description of Dionysus, who wields a thyrsus instead of a spear and wears the nebris in place of a breastplate (14.235-9). The equating of two unlike objects in this way appears to have been a mannerism with the late poets. Tryphiodorus, for instance, equates Helen's arm to a charioteer of fire: οἴνοπα πῆχυν ἀνείλακε φίλου πυρὸς ἠμιοχῆα (521), and that after having already called the arm a χρυσέην ... πεύκην (513), more effective than Sinon's firebrand.

Eurymedon is portrayed as being ever watchful of his adversary's moves to avoid a blow from the latter's caestus. The deleterious effects of such blows are then listed in gruesome detail (37.512ff.). Among other things, Eurymedon must beware lest

his opponent strike him on the forehead and make his eyes pop out (ὄμματα γυμνώσειε λιπογλήνοιο προσώπου, 37.517), a situation more commonly referred to in battle scenes (cf. N616-7, Π741-2). In Apollonius, Polydeuces lands a similar blow on the forehead of one of the Bebrycians, who attack the Argonauts after Amycus' death, removing the eyelid so as to leave the eye exposed: δρύψε δέ οἱ βλέφαρον, γυμνή δ' ὑπελείπετ' ὀπωπή (2.109). The line ending λιπογλήνοιο προσώπου recurs in the *Paraphrase* as ἀγλήνοιο προσώπου (9.31), used to describe the visage of the blind man given sight by Christ. The horrors of ancient boxing are documented in other poets as well: for example, Vergil speaks of the caestus of Eryx as 'sanguine ... sparsoque infecta cerebro' (*Aen.* 5.413, cf. also Val. Fl. 4.153), which is in itself testimony to the lethal nature of the contests. In describing the fight Nonnus has availed himself of both Theocritus and Apollonius besides Homer. Eurymedon, acting defensively at first, subsequently goes on the offensive and is struck on the chest by Melisseus: ἔνθα μὲν Εὐρυμέδοντος ἐπεσσυμένοιο Μελισσεὺς / στήθεος ἄκρον ἔλασεν (37.520-1), which seems an imitation of Theocritus' τοῦ δ' ἄκρον τύψε γένειον / Τυνδαρίδης ἐπίοντος (22.88-9). A blow to the chest was not considered effective,<sup>4</sup> but Eurymedon's countermeasure is even less telling: going for Melisseus' face he strikes only air (37.521-2). This is to be distinguished from feinting, where the boxer purposely strikes the air to intimidate and disorient his opponent (cf. Theocr. 22.103 and Verg. 5.376-7). Eurymedon then lands a right under the exposed breast of Melisseus, another useless blow by Greek standards. The boxers come together delivering blows at close quarters: ἄλλος ἐπ' ἄλλω / ἴχνησι φειδομένοισι ποδὸς πόδα τυτθὸν ἀμείβων (37.525-6).<sup>5</sup> Hands mix with hands: χερσὶ δὲ χεῖρας ἔμιξαν (37.527), as when Polydeuces parries Amycus' attack in Apollonius: χερσὶν ἐναντία χεῖρας ἔμειξεν (2.78), which in turn echoes Homer's σὺν δέ σφι βαρεῖται

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Gow's note to Theocritus 22.109-10. Gow cites Philostratus *Gymn.* 9, where it is stated that in Greek boxing the head alone was the target. In Val. Fl. likewise, Amycus' attack fails in that he only manages to strike Pollux on the chest: 'nec spes effecta, sed ambae/in pectus cecidere manus' (4.300-1).

<sup>5</sup>The phrase indicating movement from one foot to the other, used by Homer in describing Ajax' lingering retreat before the Trojans (Λ547), is used in relation to boxing by Apollonius (2.94) and Quintus (4.347).

χεῖρες ἐμιχθεν (Ψ687). There is a frightful banging of leather on leather: φρικτὸς ὁμοπλεκέων ἐπεβόμβεε δοῦπος ἱμάντων (37.528), something also mentioned by Valerius Flaccus: 'inflictaque late / terga sonant' (4.282-3). Straps are spattered with blood from cut cheeks, and jaws resound with blows: χαρασσομένης δὲ παρειῆς / αἱμαλείς λιβάδεσσιν ἐφοινίχθησαν ἱμάντες· / καὶ γενύων πέλε δοῦπος (37.529-31), which corresponds in substance to Apollonius' τοῖσι παρήϊά τ' ἀμφοτέρωθεν / καὶ γένυες κτύπεον, βρυχή δ' ὑπετέλλετ' ὀδόντων/ἄσπετος (2.82-4), which is, in turn, an elaboration of Homer's δεινὸς δὲ χρομάδος γενύων γένητ' (Ψ688). It may be noted that Apollonius, Vergil and Quintus illustrate the action with similes, Apollonius likening the blows to those of shipwrights' hammers, in keeping with his nautical theme (2.79-82), Vergil comparing them to hailstones striking a roof (5.458-60), and Quintus to lightning flashes issuing from two thunder-clouds coming together (4.349-54). Nonnus, whose poem is notable for its overall paucity of similes (except when imitating Homeric passages containing a simile), abstains from employing one here. Cheeks swell up, eyes close in: ἐπιθρωσμῷ δὲ προσώπου / εὐρυτέρου γεγαῶτος ἐκυμαίνοντο παρειαί, / ὀφθαλμοὶ δ' ἐκάτερθεν ἐκοιλαινόντο προσώπου (37.531-3). Theocritus depicts Polydeuces' jabs as having a similar effect on Amycus' face: ὄμματα δ' οἰδήσαντος ἀπεστείνωτο προσώπου (*Id.* 22.101). Eurymedon is being tired out by Melisseus' skilful manoeuvring, as a result of which he is forced to fight with the sun in his eyes (37.534-6), a situation similar to the one in which Amycus finds himself in Theocritus (*Id.* 22.83-6). Melisseus now comes in for the kill: ἄφνω γναθμὸν ἔτυψε ὑπ' οὐάτος (37.538). This is how Odysseus floors Irus: ὁ δ' ἀυχέν' ἔλασσε ὑπ' οὐάτος (σ96), and in Apollonius, Polydeuces finishes off Amycus with a similar blow ὑπὲρ οὐάτος (2.95). Eurymedon falls on his back, rolling in the dust like one inebriated, μεθύοντι πανεῖκελος (37.540), his condition recalling that of Irus, who is likewise μεθύοντι ἐοικώς (σ240). His plight is elaborated further: εἶχε δὲ κόρησιν / κεκλιμένην ἐτέρωσε, καὶ αἵματος ἔπτυνεν ἄχνην / λεπτὰ παχυνομένοιῳ (37.540-2), which corresponds to Euryalus' state in the *Iliad* : αἶμα παχὺ πτύοντα, κάρη βάλλονθ' ἐτέρωσε (Ψ697).

It is plain that Nonnus' presentation of the boxing-match is largely a composite of ideas and phrases drawn from Homer, Theocritus and Apollonius. The renderings of Quintus, Valerius and Statius exhibit a similar lack of inventiveness, though not quite to the same degree, nor is their dependence on Homer so transparently obvious. Theocritus, Apollonius and Vergil have, on the other hand, enriched Homer's account, each according to his particular talents: Theocritus through the technical virtuosity of his description, Apollonius by his remarkable similes, which are at the same time so apposite to his overall nautical theme, and Vergil by providing a psychological dimension to the contest, by revealing the inner feelings of the contestants and the effect that these (e.g. pudor, ira) have on their performance. Nonnus' account is by comparison mediocre and derivative, possessing no special feature to commend itself to the reader.

He is more effusive in his coverage of the next event, wrestling, dedicating some 48 lines to it (37.554-602), four more than Quintus (4.220-64), only nine less than Statius (6.847-904), and more than twice as many as Homer (Ψ710-32). Nonnus' interest in this sport - which he incidentally calls *καλὸς ἀγών* (37.552) in contrast to Homer's *παλαιμοσύνη ἀλεγεινή* (Ψ710-32, θ126) - is indicated by the fact that the present contest is but the second of three in the poem, the others being the bouts that Dionysus has with Ampelus (10.339-77) and Pallene (48.106-71). These other matches are not serious contests, being of an overtly erotic nature - we note that the poet *glubs* the contestants in the first *ἀθλητῆρες Ἐρώτων* - but they share some details with the present bout. The type of wrestling depicted in Nonnus (and, we may add, in Statius) is very different from the classical *ὀρθὴ πάλη*, which consisted of three consecutive bouts (*τρία παλαίσματα*), victory going to whoever achieved the most throws. The Homeric contest was based on the same principles, with the first round going to Odysseus and the second to Ajax, but the contestants forego the third and deciding round in favour of a draw. As earlier in the case of the chariot race, Nonnus has attempted to combine a later form of sport with the Homeric type, even though the two are not compatible. The contest starts off in a distinctly Homeric fashion, but then develops into a form of

ground wrestling, in that the bout continues on the floor after a throw until such time as one of the contestants is incapacitated to the point of being unable to offer further resistance (cf. Statius, 6.901-4) or signals his wish to surrender (37.608-9).

The prize offered the winner is a tripod as in Homer, with the loser to receive a cauldron (instead of Homer's woman 'versed in many tasks'). The contestants are Aristaius and Aiacus, corresponding, broadly speaking, to Ajax and Odysseus in Homer, Ajax and Diomedes in Quintus, and Agylleus and Tydeus in Statius. The two gird loincloths, being naked apart from that: ζώματι δὲ σκεπόμεντες ἀθηήτου φύσιν αἰδοῦς / γυμνοὶ ἀεθλεύοντες ἐφέστασαν (37.556-7), which is an expansion of Homer's ζωσαμένω δ' ἄρα τῷ γε βάτην ἐς μέσσον ἀγῶνα (Ψ710). In Quintus, the participants in the foot-race gird their loins out of respect for Thetis (4.188-91). Nonnus reuses 37.556 in the *Paraphrase*, when he refers to Peter girding his loins with a skin as a mark of respect for Jesus: δέρμα, τόπερ ... ἰχθυβόλοι φορέουσιν ἀθηήτου σκέπας αἰδοῦς (21.41-2). Pallene does likewise: ἀμφὶ δὲ μηροῖς / ἤρμοσε λευκὸν ὕφασμα, γυναικείης σκέπας αἰδοῦς (48.119-20). The match begins with the contestants pulling and tugging: ἔην δ' ἀμφίδρομος ἀνὴρ ... ἔλκων ἐλκόμενός τε (37.561-3), recalling the language used in the Dionysus-Ampelus bout, where Dionysus is described as ἀειρόμενος καὶ αἰείρων (10.346). The two clasp, head butressed against head: μεσσατίω δὲ κάρηνον ἐπηρείδοντο μετώπῳ / ἀκλινέες (37.565-6). This corresponds to the situation in the *Iliad* which Homer illustrates with his famous two-rafters simile, but Nonnus will not use the simile here, reserving it for a later stage in the bout. Sweat pours from the wrestlers: ἐκ δὲ μετώπων ... ἔρρεεν ἰδρώς (37.566-7), echoing κατὰ δὲ νότιος ῥέεν ἰδρώς (Ψ715). Weals come up from flesh being tightly gripped: σμῶδιξ δ' αὐτοτέλεστος ἀνέδραμεν, αἵματι θερμῷ / αἰόλα πορφύρουσα (37.574-5), again echoing Homer: πυκναὶ δὲ σμῶδιγγες ἀνὰ πλευράς τε καὶ ὤμους / αἵματι φοινικόεσσα ἀνέδραμον (Ψ716-7). The contestants make a display of their skills: οἱ δὲ παλαιμοσύνης ... μάγγανα τέχνης / ἀλλήλοις ἀνέφαινον ἀμοιβαδῖς (37.576-7), the action being now at the stage when Ajax proposes to Odysseus that they should take

turns lifting one another. The pattern of action that follows: ἀντίβιον δὲ πρῶτος Ἄρισταῖος ... πηχύνατο ... ὀχλίζων ... δεύτερος ἠέρταζε ... κουφίζων ... υἷα Κυρήνης Αἰακός conforms to that in Homer [πρῶτος Αἴας] ἀνάειρε ... δεύτερος ... ἀνάειρε ... Ὀδυσσεύς, but his second round is developed very differently, according to the rules of the later gladiatorial-type ground wrestling. Aristaius lifts Aiacus, but the latter gets the better of him by striking him in the hollow of the knee: δολίης δ' οὐ λήθητο τέχνης / Αἰακὸς αἰολόμητις, ὑποκλέπτοντι δὲ ταρσῶ / λαιὸν Ἄρι<sup>6</sup>ταῖοιο ποδὸς κώληπα πατάξας / ὑπτίον αὐτοκύλιστον ὄλον περικάββαλε γαίῃ (37.579-82), which is precisely the tactic used by Odysseus against Ajax: δόλου δ' οὐ λήθητ' Ὀδυσσεύς / κόψ' ὀπιθεν κώληπα τυχῶν, ὑπέλυσε δὲ γυῖα./ κάδ δ' ἔπεσ' ἔξοπίσω (Ψ725-7). Ampelus uses the same stratagem in the earlier bout: ὁ δὲ Βρομίοιο τυχήσας / κόψε ποδὸς κώληπα καὶ Εὐίος ... ὑπτίος αὐτοκύλιστος ἐπωλίσθησε κονίῃ (10.353-6). Nonnus has thus copied Homer closely not once but twice. Quintus displays more inventiveness, devising a different stratagem whereby Diomedes discomfits Ajax: Τελαμώνιον ... υἷα ... ἀνάειρεν ὑπὸ μυῶνος ἐρείσας ὦμον (4.227-9). Aiacus hurls Aristaius to the ground ἠλιβάτω πρηῶνι πανεῖκελον (37.583), which resembles Ajax' action in Quintus, when he throws Diomedes in the second round ἤυτε πέτρην (4.260). In the second round Aristaius has no opportunity to redress his loss in the first, being lifted and held high in the air by Aiacus. It is this image, of one wrestler holding the other above his head, that Nonnus has chosen to illustrate by Homer's rafters simile: ἴσον ἀμειβόντεσσιν ἔχων τύπον, οὓς κάμε τέκτων / πρηῶνων ἀνέμοιο θυελλήεσσαν ἀνάγκην (37.593-4), corresponding to ὡς ὅτ' ἀμείβοντες, τοὺς τε κλυτὸς ἦραρε τέκτων, / δώματος ὑψηλοῖο βίας ἀνέμων ἀλεείνων (Ψ712-3). As used here by Nonnus the simile is not entirely appropriate to the situation which it is meant to illustrate. Pindar's image of a beam held aloft by columns (*Pyth.* 4.267-8) could perhaps have been accommodated to the present context to provide a more accurate analogy. Greene, commenting on the unsuitability of the simile to its present context, suggests that lines 588-94 'should be placed after line

557, with a change of ἔχων to ἔχον'.<sup>6</sup> Keydell notes and rejects this conjecture in his apparatus. In view of Nonnus' habitual disregard for consistency, it is better to abstain from improving the text through transpositions of this kind. Aiacus forthwith hurls his hapless opponent to the ground and, jumping on top of him, proceeds to strangle him in true gladiatorial fashion: αὐχένι δεσμὸν ἔβαλλε βραχίονι, δάκτυλα κάμψας (37.601), a stratagem Dionysus later repeats on Pallene: εὐπαλάμῳ σφήκωσεν ὁμόζυγον αὐχένα δεσμῶ (48.171). Aristaius' imminent death is only prevented by the timely intervention of the heralds, since, as the poet explains, the tapping signal whereby the defeated party signalled surrender had not yet been invented (37.605-9). We note that Pallene too is saved by the timely intervention of her father (48.172-6).

The depiction of the next event, the foot-race, is little more than a paraphrase of Homer's, so closely does Nonnus follow his model here. The depictions of Vergil, Statius, Silius and Quintus, if dependent on Homer's and coinciding with it in a number of particulars, manifest at least some endeavour to be innovative by introducing fresh nuances and elements not encountered in the original. Nonnus, after displaying a more eclectic approach in his boxing and wrestling matches, resorts now to straight paraphrasing, following Homer alone to the exclusion of other influences. The episode is introduced with the statement that Dionysus ἔθηκε ποδῶν ταχυτήτος ἀγῶνα (37.614), corresponding to the action of Achilles, who likewise τίθει ταχυτήτος ἀεθλα (Ψ740). The prize designated for the winner is a silver bowl made in Sidon, exactly as in Homer, Nonnus adding a woman captive for good measure. The second prize is a dappled Thessalian horse in place of Homer's fattened ox, and the third a sword with strap instead of the gold half-talent in Homer. Dionysus invites fleet-footed men to compete for the prizes as does Achilles. The runners are Ocythous corresponding to Ajax son of Oileus, Erechtheus corresponding to Odysseus, and Priasus corresponding to Antilochus. Nonnus signals the start of the race with the phrase used earlier to signal the start of the chariot race: τοῖσι μὲν ἐκ

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<sup>6</sup>(1911) p.131

βαλβίδος ἔην δρόμος (37.625 and 242). There the phrase had no Homeric precedent, but here it has one: τοῖσι δ' ἀπὸ νύσσης τέτατο δρόμος (Ψ758). We might observe how conveniently the line-ending at 37.625, Ὀκυθοῦς δέ, substitutes for line-ending at Ψ758, ὦκα δ' ἔπειτα, which may have given Nonnus the idea for the name 'Ocythous'. Ocythous is quickest off the mark, followed closely by Erechtheus. The distance between Ocythous and Erechtheus is illustrated by the same simile that is used by Homer: φιληλακάτοιο δὲ κούρης / οἶα κανῶν στέρνοιο πέλει μέσος, ὄν τι μίτρον / παρθένος ἱστοπόνοιο τεχνήμονι χειρὶ τανύσση, / Ὀκυθοῦ πέλε τόσσον ὀπίστερος (37.630-3), which corresponds to ὡς ὅτε τίς τε γυναικὸς ἐυζώνοιο / στήθεός ἐστι κανῶν, ὄν τ' εὖ μάλα χερσὶ τανύσση / πηλὸν ἐξέγκουσα παρέκ μίτρον, ἀγχόθι δ' ἰσχει / στήθεος ὡς Ὀδυσσεὺς θέεν ἐγγύθεν (Ψ760-3). The simile was used earlier in shorter form by Nonnus in the foot-race between Kissus, Leneus and Ampelus, who trailed the first two by ὀππόσον ἱστοπόνοιο κανῶν πρὸς στήθει κούρης / μεσσοφανῆς λάχε χώρον ἀκαμπεί γείτονα μαζῶ (10.411-2). Nonnus is alone among the later poets in using Homer's simile, demonstrating once again how much closer his rendering is to Homer than those of the others. Erechtheus treads in Ocythous' footprints before the dust has had a chance to settle: ἴχνια τύπτε πόδεσσι, πάρος κόνιν ἀμφιχυθῆναι (37.634), which <sup>has</sup> been copied verbatim from Homer (Ψ764). Of the other poets, only Vergil echoes this detail, rendering ἴχνια τύπτε πόδεσσι by 'calcemque terit iam calce' (5.324). Erechtheus appeals to Boreas for assistance, having already called on him during the chariot race (37.155-62). His appeal (37.640-3), in which he reminds Boreas of his obligations to him, corresponds thematically to Odysseus' prayer to Athena (Ψ770). Boreas grants his wish by making him swifter than the wind: καὶ μιν ἐυτροχάλοιο ταχίονα θῆκεν ἀέλλης (37.645), and presumably faster than Ocythous, who is previously referred <sup>to</sup> as taking off ἀέλληεντι ποδῶν ... παλμῶ (37.626). Despite this, Erechtheus seems unable to overtake Ocythous, the relative positions of the runners remaining unchanged, with Ocythous in the lead, then Erechtheus followed by Priasus (37.646-50). In Homer, on the other hand, Athena's intervention is decisive, not only making

Odysseus' limbs lighter, but more importantly, causing Ajax slip on bull dung as he is about to cross the finishing line ahead of Odysseus. Nonnus copies the slipping incident from Homer, but in his version it occurs purely fortuitously, without any divine involvement: ἐσσυμένων δὲ / ὀππότε λοίσθιος ἦεν ἔτι δρόμος ἄλματι ταρσῶν, / Ὀκύθοος ταχύγουνος ἐπωλίσθησε κονίη, / ἦχι βοῶν πέλεν ὄνθος ἀθέσφατος, οὐς παρὰ τύμβῳ / Μυγδονίη Διόνυσος ἀπηλόησε μαχαίρη (37.650-4), corresponding to ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τάχ' ἔμελλον ἐπαίξεσθαι δέθλον, / ἔνθ' Αἴας μὲν ὄλισθε θέων, βλάβειν γὰρ Ἀθήνη, / τῇ ῥα βοῶν κέχυτ' ὄνθος ἀποκταμένων ἐριμύκων, / οὐς ἐπὶ Πατρόκλῳ πέφνειν πόδας ὠκύς Ἀχιλλεύς (Ψ773-6).<sup>7</sup> The accident occasions the mirth of the onlookers (37.664-6), as it does in Homer (Ψ779-81). Ocythous, undeterred, gets up and would have overtaken Erechtheus: εἰ τότε βαιὸς ἔην ἔτι που δρόμος, ἦ τάχα βαίνων / ἦ πέλεν ἀμφήριστος ἢ ἔφθασεν ἀστὸν Ἀθήνης (37.655,58-9,56-7,60). Nonnus appears to have contrived Ocythous' recovery solely for the purpose of being able to insert yet another Homeric echo - we are reminded of Menelaus in the chariot race, who after being put out by Antilochus' stratagem, makes up lost ground so rapidly that he would have not only caught up but even passed him had there been a little more of the course left to traverse: εἰ δέ κ' ἔτι προτέρῳ γένετο δρόμος ἀμφοτέροισι, / τῷ κέν μιν παρέλασσ' οὐδ' ἀμφήριστον ἔθηκεν (Ψ526-7).

Nonnus' treatment of the next event, the discus throw, is likewise closely patterned on Homer's. This contest, the second last in Homer, has been brought forward to take the place of the φιλίη δῆρις, which Nonnus has moved to the last place. In Homer the prize for the winner is the σόλος itself, which was apparently deemed to be of considerable value for its metal content. It was clearly distinct from the stone δίσκος, with which Odysseus displayed his mettle at the Phaeacians' games (θ186-90). Nonnus, confusing the σόλος with the δίσκος (to which no particular

<sup>7</sup>In Vergil's rendering of the above, the slipping is likewise brought about fortuitously: *iamque ... sub ipsam / finem adventabant, levi cum sanguine Nisus / labitur infelix, caesis ut forte iuvenis / fusus humum viridisque super madefecerat herbas* (Aen. 5.327-30). In Quintus, Teucer trips over a tamarisk root instead, the accident being attributed to the will of the ἀθάνατοι (4.201), though for no apparent reason.

value could be attached), opts for more conventional fare: πρῶτῳ μὲν δύο δοῦρα σὺν ἵπποκόμῳ τρυφαλείῃ / θῆκεν ἄγων, ἑτέρῳ δὲ διαυγέα κυκλάδα μίτρην (37.669-70), which bears an unmistakable resemblance to the second prize in Quintus' horserace: δῶκε δ' ἄρα Σθενέλῳ βριαρὴν κόρυν / χαλκείην καὶ δοῦρε δύω καὶ ἀτειρέα μίτρην (4.587-8). The correspondences τρυφαλείῃ / κόρυν, δύο δοῦρα / δοῦρε δύω and κυκλάδα μίτρην / ἀτειρέα μίτρην cannot be purely coincidental.<sup>8</sup> The third and fourth prizes are a bowl and fawnskin respectively. Dionysus proclaims the contest: καὶ σόλον αὐτοχόωνον ἄγων ἐπέθηκεν ἀγωνί / δισκοβόλους Διόνυσος ἀκοντιστήρας ἐπέιγων (37.667-8). The first line echoes αὐτὰρ Πηλείδης θῆκεν σόλον αὐτοχόωνον (Ψ826); the second is indicative of the failure to distinguish between σόλος and δίσκος. The two terms are used interchangeably by the poet in describing Halimedes' throw: ἠκόντιζεν ἐν ἡέρι δίσκον ἀλήτην / καὶ σόλος ἡερίησιν ἐπερροίζησεν ἀέλλαις (37.687-8), despite the scholion to Ψ826 clearly stating: διαφέρει δὲ σόλος καὶ δίσκος, ὅτι ὁ μὲν δίσκος πλατύς ἐστι καὶ κοιλότερος, ὁ δὲ σόλος στρογγύλος καὶ σφαιροειδής. Statius is similarly oblivious to the distinction, speaking at one moment of a discus (cf. 'emisso ... disco', 6.646), at another of a mass of bronze ('aenae lubrica massae / pondera', 6.648-9). Quintus alone seems to understand the true meaning of the σόλος, when he makes the one used at Achilles' funeral games so heavy that only Ajax can throw it (4.436ff.).

As in Homer, there are four contestants and they stand in a row (στοιχηδὸν ἐφέστασαν 37.678 / ἐξείης δ' ἴσαντο, Ψ839). Melisseus, like Epeius in Homer, throws first, and his poor performance, like that of Epeius, rouses the mirth of the onlookers (cf. 37.679-80 and Ψ839-40). His present humiliation may be seen as belated poetic justice for his arrogance in the boxing-match. Eurymedon, who corresponds to Homer's Leonteus, throws next, without any comment from Nonnus regarding his

<sup>8</sup>Nonnus seems to wish to disguise his use of Quintus, but his procedure is quite transparent: he changes δῶκε δ' ἄρα Σθ. to θῆκεν ἄγων, substitutes the latter for χαλκείην in the next line, transfers δοῦρε δύω to the previous line, changing it to δύο δοῦρα to suit the new metrical position, and retains the line ending with minimal change (κυκλάδα pro ἀτειρέα). With a little in-fill the rest falls into place quite effortlessly.

performance. Earlier editors assumed that something had been lost here, but as Keydell notes in his apparatus, Nonnus is merely following Homer to the letter, in that Homer likewise records Leonteus' throw without any comment (Ψ841). Acmon, who corresponds to Ajax, throws next, bettering Eurymedon's mark: καὶ σκοπὸν Εὐρυμέδοντος ὑπέρβαλε μείζονι μέτρῳ (37.685), which echoes Homer's comment on Ajax' throw: ὑπέρβαλε σήματα πάντων (Ψ843). Halimedes, the parallel of Polypoites in Homer, throws last, his throw bettering all previous marks: σήματα πάντα παρέδραμεν (37.694), just like that of Polypoites παντὸς ἀγῶνος ὑπέρβαλε (Ψ847). Nonnus has omitted Homer's picturesque analogy between Polypoites and a shepherd throwing his staff, electing instead to liken the discus flying from Halimedes' hand to an arrow shot forth from a bow.

The archery contest is the next event and involves only two contestants, Asterius and Hymenaius, corresponding to Teucer and Meriones in the *Iliad*. The target is, as in Homer, a pigeon tied by the foot to a masthead. Nonnus is seeing things in the Homeric context, where the contest takes place on the sea-shore, by the beached ships of the Achaians, forgetting that Dionysus' army is landbound and without a ship in sight. Vergil, likewise, has a bird attached to a masthead as the target (5.486-7), but his context is similar to Homer's, the games taking place in the vicinity of the cove where Aeneas' ships are berthed. Nonnus and Vergil alone among the later poets have treated the archery contest at length, Statius and Quintus giving only very cursory accounts. While both are closely indebted to Homer, they diverge considerably in the way that they have used him. Vergil has increased the number of contestants to three, the first of whom hits the mast, the second severs <sup>the</sup> string and the third transfixes the bird. The vibration caused by the first archer's arrow hitting the mast scares the perching bird into taking to flight, thereby extending the string, which is then severed by the second archer's arrow, freeing the bird. The third archer transfixes the bird as it soars towards the clouds. Vergil has endeavoured to render the scene more realistic than it is in Homer, where we have to visualise the bird flying about the mast on the end of a ~~tail~~ string, without any suggestion as to why it should have taken flight in the first place.

Nonnus, unlike Vergil, makes no attempt to improve on the original, being content to merely paraphrase.

For the prizes offered in Homer, namely ten double-edged axes for the winner and an equal number of single-edged axes for the loser, Nonnus has substituted something less specialised, a mule and a cup respectively. The mule, it will be recalled, is in Homer the prize offered to the winner of the boxing-match (Ψ654), replaced in Nonnus by a bull (37.492). By a rather strange piece of anticipation the second prize in Homer is designated for the archer who should hit the string, by which the bird is attached to the mast. Hitting the string was fortuitous coincidence, the archers aiming at the bird and not the string, which could not have been foreseen at the time the prizes were allocated. Vergil avoids the difficulty by not specifying beforehand the criteria whereby the prizes were to be allocated, saying simply that Aeneas 'praemia dicit' (*Aen.* 5.486). Only after the contest are we informed that the first prize (naturally) went to the archer who brought down the bird, the second to the one who severed the string, and the third to the one who hit the mast. Nonnus merely duplicates the Homeric depiction, without any attempt to make it more believable.

The target is set up: Εὐρύαλος δὲ / νήιον ὀρθώσας περιμήκετον ἰστὸν ἀρούρη / στῆσεν ὑπὲρ δαπέδου ψαμαθώδεος, ὑψιφανῆ δὲ / δέσμιον ἠώρησε πελάδα σύμπλοκον ἰστῶ / λεπταλέον δισσοῖσι μίτον περὶ ποσσὶν ἐλίξας (37.707-11), which corresponds rather closely to ἰστὸν δ' ἔστησεν νηὸς κυανοπώροιο / τηλοῦ ἐπὶ ψαμάθοις· ἐκ δὲ τρήρωνα πέλειαν / λεπτῆ μῆρινθω δῆσεν ποδός, ἧς ἄρ' ἀνώγει / τοξεύειν (Ψ852-5). The way in which Dionysus announces the prizes (37.714-9), including the reference to the severing of the string, is likewise closely imitated from Homer (Ψ855-8). The contestants are then introduced, Nonnus foregoing the drawing of lots, though intimating later, when the contest was already underway, that it had taken place (37.726). One would imagine that the drawing of lots was of paramount importance in an event of this kind, seeing that if the archer who gets to shoot first succeeds in bringing down the bird, the contest would be over, with the other archer deprived of the chance to compete. Another detail in Homer that

Nonnus passes over is Teucer's failure to promise a hecatomb to Apollo, an oversight which costs him the victory. Asterios shoots first, having obtained that privilege by lot, and hits the string (37.726-9), which corresponds in substance to Homer's representation of Teucer's attempt (Ψ862-9). We may note a minor discrepancy: whereas Homer says that the string on being cut hung downward towards the ground (παρείθη / μήριθος ποτὶ γαῖαν, Ψ869), which is natural seeing that it was attached to the masthead, Nonnus with typical disregard for verisimilitude says that it fell to the ground (καὶ μίτος εἰς χθόνα πῖπτε, 37.729). Vergil on the other hand makes the picture more explicit, saying that the arrow severed the knot by which the string was tied to the bird's foot (*Aen.* 510-1). Hymenaius shoots next and brings down the bird (37.729-33), his feat corresponding to that of Meriones (Ψ870-4), except that Meriones also promises that all-important hecatomb to Apollo. Nonnus does, however, speak of Hymenaius' arrow as having been guided on target by Apollo, implying that Hymenaius may have given the undertaking after all. Both Nonnus and Vergil have overlooked another apparently important detail in Homer's account, namely that both contestants use the same bow (so as to eliminate any possible advantage either one could derive from possessing a superior instrument). Meriones, having his arrow at the ready, quickly takes the bow from Teucer's hand (ἐξείρυσσε χειρὸς/τόξον, Ψ870-1), before the bird can fly out of reach. Hymenaius' arrow pierces the bird's chest and it falls half-dead to the ground at the feet of Dionysus and does a dance of death in his honour before expiring (37.734-42). Nonnus has not followed Homer's account, in which the arrow falls back at Meriones' feet and the bird lands first on the mast with hanging neck and drooping wings, before falling to the ground dead (Ψ875-9). Nonnus' βαρυνομένου δὲ καρήνου (37.739), used to describe the dying bird, is apparently a rendering of Homer's αὐχέν' ἀπεκρέμασεν (Ψ879), but otherwise our poet seems to have distanced himself from his model. We might note that in Vergil the bird dies on being struck, there being no prolonged death agony as in Homer. Onlookers are astounded at Hymenaius' feat: ἀγχινεφῆ θάμβησαν ἐκηβολίην Ὕμεναίου (37.746), which echoes Homer's λαοὶ δ' αὐθιγῆτό τε θάμβησάν τε (Ψ881).

Nonnus has left what is potentially the most hazardous of the contests, the φιλίη δῆρις, till the last. The other poets have seen fit to curtail this event or find reasons for not having it take place: in Quintus, Euryalus, fearful of Ajax' superior prowess, forfeits the contest before it could begin, in Statius, Adrastus cancels it with the words 'manet ingens copia leti', with reference to the impending war, while Vergil omits it altogether. Only in Silius do two brothers engage in it, killing themselves in the process (16.527-50). Nonnus follows the scheme of Homer's bout, in which Ajax puts his spear through Diomedes' shield but does not penetrate to the skin, and Diomedes then aims at Ajax' neck, at which point the contest is stopped as too dangerous. Asterius corresponds to Ajax, and Aiacus to Diomedes. Asterius hurls his spear, wounding Aiacus on the arm, whereupon Aiacus threatens to strike Asterius on the chin, the fight being stopped at this point and adjudged in Aiacus' favour, though he did little more than constitute a potentially mortal threat to his opponent.

We may conclude with the general observation that of all the later renderings of the twenty-third book of the *Iliad*, that of Nonnus is closest to it in layout and substance, if not in tone and atmosphere. His near-obsessive preoccupation with duplicating passages down to the minutest details leads him at times into conflict with the peculiar circumstances of his own narrative. A tendency to bombast and hyperbole, combined with his inability or unwillingness to differentiate the Homeric age from his own time, distances his account from that of his model.

## Chapter 7: Dionysus in Lebanon (40.298-43.449).

The three and a half books which Nonnus devotes to Dionysus' sojourn in Lebanon consist of material that is largely extraneous to the body of myths traditionally associated with the god. Aside from Tyre being his ancestral home, there seems little to link Dionysus directly with Lebanon and one suspects that Nonnus has made extensive use of his inventive faculty in co-opting Phoenician traditions to create yet another amorous episode in the life of his hero, in which he depicts Dionysus' pursuit, in competition with Poseidon, of the nymph Beroe, the supposed eponymous heroine of Beirut. In contrast to the foregoing books on the Indian war, in which Nonnus patterned his narrative on the *Iliad*, and the three books on the return to Thebes, for which Euripides' *Bacchae* served as the model, the present segment is not based on the work of any one literary predecessor and shows our poet at his most eclectic and resourceful. The subject matter falls into two thematically distinct segments: the first (and by far the smaller) comprises descriptions of Tyre and Beirut, together with their foundation myths (Tyre: 40.311-580, Beirut: 41.14-158), and the second, though purporting to represent an alternative, more recent (ὀπλοτέρη), foundation myth of Beirut, is in fact the story of Dionysus' and Poseidon's rivalry over the maiden Beroe, which constitutes yet another variant of the παρθένοι φυγόδεμνοι theme, exemplified elsewhere in the poem by the stories of Chalcomeda, Nicaia and Aura. The ecphrases of Tyre and Beirut display an admiration and enthusiasm that bespeak personal acquaintance on the poet's part with the two cities. Special praise is lavished on Beirut and its law school, though its connexion with Dionysus is at best tenuous. It seems as if the poet is intent on giving voice to personal experiences of an agreeable kind that he may have had with the city at some stage of his life, at the same time adapting its local traditions to form a new episode in the life of Dionysus. Nonnus' excursion into Phoenician mythology attracted the attention of the celebrated Semitist, O. Eissfeldt, who in 1939 examined his

foundation myths of Tyre and Beirut in relation to the Φοινικικὴ Ἱστορία of Philo of Byblos and the then recently discovered Ugaritic texts. His study was later supplemented by R. Dostálová-Jenistová, who in 1957 published a survey of evidence pertaining to the foundation myths of the two cities that could be gleaned from literary sources, and by P. Chuvin, who in his 1991 monograph on Nonnus' geography supplements the literary sources with archaeological and numismatic material illustrative of the myths. Chuvin sees a close interaction on Nonnus' part with Philo's text, being of the opinion that our poet was not only familiar with it (as verbal coincidences seem to suggest) but actively set out to refute it on certain points. The story of the two gods' wooing of Beroe appears nevertheless to be almost completely of the poet's own making, recalling in many ways the earlier Chalcomeda episode and, as Braune has demonstrated, showing clear evidence of having been partly modelled on Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae*. The war between Dionysus and Poseidon over Beroe does, however, seem to have some precedent in Phoenician mythology, as the investigations of Eissfeldt and Chuvin indicate.

Dionysus' journey from India to Lebanon is described in a most cursory fashion. He returns by way of the Caucasus, where he fights a war with the Amazons - an event on which the poet expends but one line (40.293) - and passes through Arabia, whose inhabitants he introduces to viniculture. He examines the handiwork of Babylonian Arachne on cloth dyed with Tyrian purple. This leads to the story of how the dye was first discovered, when a dog, eating a shell-fish, stained its jaws purple (40.304-10), a story recounted in somewhat more detail by Achilles Tatius (2.11.5-8). Nonnus, incidentally, omits the most important element in the tale, namely that the purple stain was found to be indelible, a property essential for its use as a dye. Dionysus, anxious to visit his ancestral home, heads for Tyre, which the poet now proceeds to eulogise by means of a lengthy ephrasis, using all the conventions germane to such compositions. Dionysus beholds the panorama of the city and its environs with a feeling of elation: καὶ πόλιν ἀθρήσας ἐπεγῆθ' ἦν Ἐνοσίχθων / οὐ διερω̄ μίτρωσεν ὄλω ζωστῆρι θαλάσσης, / ἀλλὰ τύπον λάχε τοῖον Ὀλύμπιον, οἷον ὑφαίνει / ἀγχιτελῆς λείπουσα μὴ γλωχίνοι σελήνη (40.311-4). This description exhibits

some of the typical features of the ἔκφρασις λιμένος (cf. for comparison Libanius, Ἐκφράσεις, η', 3, where a harbour is described likewise as an incomplete circle, κύκλον οὐχ ὅλον, ἀλλ' ὅσον στόμα τῷ λιμένι καταλιπεῖν). In attributing the particular configuration of Tyre to Poseidon the poet fails, of course, to take account of the fact that the city only acquired it with the building by Alexander of his famous causeway from the mainland in order to facilitate its capture. The depiction is thus anachronistic in the context in which it is presented. The topography is likened to a girl about to undertake a swim, with her upper body in the water whilst her feet are still touching the shore: νηχομένη δ' ἀτίνακτος ὁμοίως ἔπλετο κούρη / καὶ κεφαλὴν καὶ στέρνα καὶ αὐχένα δῶκε θαλάσση, / ... καὶ πόδας ἀμφοτέρους ἐπερείσατο μητέρι γαίῃ (40.319-23). The comparison, which reflects Nonnus' fondness for depicting females engaged in athletic activities such as running or swimming, has possible emblematic significance, representing the dual role of Tyre as a centre of maritime and land-based industries, something on which the poet will dwell shortly. Somewhat paradoxically, Beirut too appears to be depicted as having a long ridge whipped on both sides by the sea: ἔστι πόλις Βερόη ... οὐ ράχιν ἰσθμοῦ / στεινὴ μῆκος ἔχοντος, ὄπη διδύμης μέσος ἄλμης / κύμασιν ἀμφοτέροισιν ἰμάσσεται ὄρθιος αὐχίν· / ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν βαθύδενδρον ὑπὸ ράχιν αἰθροπος Εὐρου, / Ἀσσυρίῳ Λιβάνῳ παραπέπταται ... ἀλλὰ δὲ πὰρ πελάγεσσιν ἔχει πόλις, ἦχι τιταίνει / στέρνα Ποσειδάωνι (41.14-29). It looks at first sight as though Nonnus is duplicating for Beirut the topographical features he had first assigned to Tyre, an impression that is reinforced by the use of similar expressions (e.g. στέρνα ... δῶκε θαλάσση / τιταίνει στέρνα Ποσειδάωνι). Chuvin points out that such a description is wholly incompatible with the actual topography of Beirut and has come about through the preference for the reading οὐ over οὔ (41.15) by textual critics (Koechly, Rouse, Keydell) unfamiliar with it. The reading οὔ, for which there is some justification in the ms. tradition (cf. Keydell's *apparatus*), would, on the other hand, make the whole segment from ράχιν to αὐχίν refer to the topography of Tyre, to which that of Beirut is contrasted (i.e. Beirut (unlike Tyre) does not have a long narrow ridge ... but (on the contrary) extends...). This

reading not only makes good sense geographically, but improves the syntax, restoring the contrast οὐ (41.15) ... ἀλλά (41.18). We may note a similar contrast at 41.63-5, indicating Nonnus' liking for negative comparisons.

The convergence in Tyre of maritime with agricultural and pastoral activities is emphasised by extended use of asyndeton, a common device in the later poets<sup>1</sup> : τῆ ἔνι μούνη / βουκόλος ἀγκικέλευθος ὀμίλει γείτοιν αὐτῆ / ... καὶ αἰπόλος ἰχθυβολῆι ... εἰναλίης δ' ὀάριζον ... ἐγγύθι λόχμης / ποιμένες ὑλοτόμοισι, καὶ ἔβρεμεν εἰν ἐνὶ χώρῳ / φλοῖσβος ἄλος, μύκημα βοῶν, ψιθύρισμα πετῆλων, / πείσμα, φυτόν, πλόος, ἄλσος, ὕδωρ, νέες, ὀκάς, ἐχέτλη, / μῆλα, δόναξ, δρεπάνη, σκαφίδες, λῖνα, λαίφρα, θώρηξ (40.327-37). The juxtaposition of maritime and agricultural activities appears to have been a rhetorical commonplace. Achilles Tatius in his depiction of the Nile uses the same technique: καὶ ποταμὸς καὶ γῆ καὶ θάλασσα καὶ λίμνη· καὶ ἔστι τὸ θέαμα καινόν, ναῦς ὁμοῦ καὶ δίκελλα, κώπη καὶ ἄροτρον, πηδάλιον καὶ πτύον, ναυτῶν ὁμοῦ καὶ γεωργῶν καταγωγῆ, ἰχθύων ὁμοῦ καὶ βοῶν. ὁ πέπλευκας, φυτεύεις· Καὶ ὁ φυτεύεις, τοῦτο πέλαγος γεωγούμενον (12.1). Nonnus employs it as well (if somewhat less pointedly) in the case of Beirut, the contrasting elements being drawn this time from pastoral and agricultural activities: ὄθι πολλάκις ἐγγύθι λόχμης / Παιὶ ... ἤντετο Δηῶ, / καὶ τις ἐφ' ἰστοβοῆι γεωμόρος αὐχένα κάμψας ... γείτοιν μηλοβοτῆρι ... ὀμίλει κυρτὸς ἄροτρεύς (41.22) and also σύννομος ἰχθυβολῆι γέρων ἐμελίζετο ποιμήν (41.50). Acting like any traveller, Dionysus expresses his amazement at the peculiar configuration of Tyre: νῆσον ἐν ἠπειρῷ πόθεν ἔδρακον· εἰ θέμις εἰπεῖν, / τηλίκον οὐ ποτε κάλλος ἐσέδρακον (40.338-9). Achilles Tatius likewise refers to this peculiar illusion, which, incidentally, Tyre only presents to one approaching it from the sea: καὶ γίνεται τὸ θέαμα καινόν, πόλις ἐν θαλάσῃ, καὶ νῆσος ἐν γῆ (2.14.4). As Dionysus was approaching the city from land he could not have obtained this view, but Nonnus, as often, will not let logical niceties deprive him of the opportunity to use an effective phrase. The pleasantness of the climate, due to a cooling breeze from the hinterland, is

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Curtius (1953), pp. 285-7 for a discussion of this feature.

noted (40.342-5), an observation later also made concerning Beirut (41.19-21).

Dionysus now turns his gaze from the natural features to the streets and buildings of the city, beholding the palace of Agenor, Cadmus' bedroom and the maiden-chamber of Europa. He sees three remarkable fountains - a feature of Old Tyre on the mainland which Nonnus with poetic licence has transposed to the island city <sup>2</sup> - named after the nymphs Abarbaree, Callirhoe and Drosera, who as Heracles Astrochiton later informs Dionysus, were induced to mate with the earthborn, giving rise to the Tyrian nation (40.538ff.). The scene is reminiscent of those in the *Odyssey* where Odysseus first beholds the city of the Phaeacians (η43-5) and where the springs in Alcinoos' vineyard are described (η129-31), as well as of that in Apollonius (3.209ff.), where the Argonauts marvel at the palace of Aetes and the four magical fountains nearby. On completing the tour, he takes himself to the house of Heracles Astrochiton, a god whose name and identity call for some explanation. The name of the Dorian strongman had long been used by the Greeks to refer to the Tyrian Melkart 'Lord of the City' (Melec=κύριος, Karta=πόλις), who, supposedly with the growth in importance of Tyre, was elevated to the more exalted station of 'Lord of the Universe', in which capacity he is represented in the present passage.<sup>3</sup> The cognomen 'Astrochiton', which is incidentally encountered in the Orphic *Argonautica* as a purely ornamental epithet of the moon (μήνη δ' ἀστροχίτων, 513), is, outside the *Dionysiaca*, associated with Heracles in only one other ancient source.<sup>4</sup> Heracles, it appears, is in the first instance no more than a statue in the temple dedicated to him, which on being addressed μύστιδι φωνῆ (40.368) by Dionysus, assumes the characteristics of the god himself: ἑξαπίνης δὲ / ἔνθεον εἶδος ἔχων θεοδέγμονος ἔνδοθι νηοῦ / Ἄστροχίτων ἤστραψε· πυριγλήνου δὲ προσώπου / μαρμαρυγὴν ῥοδόεσσαν ἀπηκόντιζον ὀπωπαί (40.411-4).<sup>5</sup> Dionysus' address has all the

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Chuvin (1991) p. 228

<sup>3</sup> Chuvin (1991) p. 229 n. 22 refers to two goblets, found in Malta, bearing the dual inscription Mlqrt b'lsr and Ἡρακλῆς ἀρχηγέτης.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Dostálová -Jeništová (1957) 39n. 12. The source (*Anecdota Graeca*, Paris II p.97-8) says, referring to Heracles, τοῦτον ἀποθεώσαντες μετὰ τελευτὴν ἐκδέξαν ἀστέρα οὐράνιον ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ τὸν Ἄστροχίτωνα Ἡρακλέα.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. the Orphic *Argonautica* 983-4, where the statue of Artemis comes to life in a similar manner at the sight of the Furies conjured up by Medea.

hallmarks of an Orphic hymn, resembling in both form and content the hymn to Helios (Hymni Orphici, 8) and Proclus' Hymn to Helios (Procli Hymni, 1). It has also some affinity with the Orphic hymn to Heracles (Hymni Orphici, 8), who had come to be partially identified with Helios in the Orphic system. We note that in the Orphic pantheon Helios acquired a status far above that which he had possessed in the traditional Olympian hierarchy, being raised to parity with Zeus and even identified with him (cf. *H.O.*, 8.13). In the Phoenician pantheon, on the other hand, Helios or Beelsamen had always enjoyed such pre-eminence (Philo, 2.5). In Tyre the role of sun-god had apparently devolved on Melkart, who, as mentioned above, was in the first instance merely the city's tutelary god but came later to be venerated as lord of the universe. The somewhat fluid lines of demarcation between the various gods in the Phoenician pantheon seem to have accorded well with the Orphic system, in which, as we may observe from the Orphic hymns, the traditionally distinct functions of the gods are often confused and the gods themselves <sup>are</sup> identified with one another and share the same epithets. Dionysus' address demonstrates that Melkart had been wholly assimilated to the Orphic system: ἀστροχίτων Ἡρακλῆς, ἀναξ πυρός, ὄρχαμε κόσμου, / Ἥελιε, βροτέοιο βίου δολιχόσκιε ποιμήν, / ἵππεύων ἐλικηδὸν ὄλον πόλον αἴθροπι δίσκω, / υἱά χρόνου λυκάβαντα δωδεκάμηνον ἐλίσσων / κύκλον ἄγεις μετὰ κύκλον (40.369-73). The epithets used above (or their near equivalents) occur in the Orphic hymn to Helios: πυρόεις (8.6), κοσμοκράτωρ (8.11), δέσποτα κόσμου (8.16), φερέσβιε (8.12), ζωῆς φῶς (8.12), χρόνου πάτερ (8.13, and also in the Orphic hymn to Heracles, 12.3), and κυκλοέλικτε (8.11). Proclus has πυρός νοεροῦ βασιλεῦ (1.1), πυριστεφές (1.33), which, incidentally, is used by Nonnus to describe the nuptial bed of Hera at 8.289, and φάους ταμία (1.2). Some of the epithets refer merely to the physical properties of the sun, others to Helios' role as the beneficent provider of sustenance to mankind. Dionysus continues: παμφαῆς αἰθέρος ὄμμα, φέρεις τετράζυγι δίφρω / χεῖμα μετὰ φθινόπωρον, ἄγεις θέρος εἶαρ ἀμείβων (40.379-80), again reflecting πανδερκῆς ἔχων αἰώνιον ὄμμα (8.1), κρᾶσιν ἔχων ὠρῶν (8.5) and τετράορον ἄρμα διώκων (8.19). He then proceeds to identify his host

with various gods, ending with the invocation: εἴτε Σάραπις ἕφους, Αἰγύπτιος ἀννέφελος Ζεὺς, / εἰ Κρόνος, εἰ Φαέθων πολυώνυμος, εἴτε σὺ Μίθρης, / Ἡέλιος Βαβυλῶνος, ἐν Ἑλλάδι Δελφὸς Ἀπολλων, / εἰ Γάμος ... εἴτε σὺ Παιήων ὀδυνήφατος, εἰ πέλες Αἰθήρ / ποικίλος, Ἀστροχίτων δὲ φατίζεαι - ἐννύχιοι γὰρ / οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντες ἐπαυγάζουσι χιτῶνες (40.399-409). The disjunctive form of expression appears to have been normal in invocations of this kind. In Apuleius, Isis is addressed in similar fashion: 'regina caeli, sive tu Ceres alma ... seu tu caelestis Venus ... seu Phoebi soror ... seu nocturnis ululatus horrenda Proserpina' (*Met.* 11.2). Another example of this formula occurs in Plutarch: λέγεται δὲ καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους αὐτῷ Σύλλα φανῆναι θεὸν ἦν τιμῶσι. Ῥωμαῖοι παρὰ Καππαδοκῶν μαθόντες, εἴτε δὴ Σελήνην οὖσαν εἴτε Ἀθηνᾶν εἴτε Ἐννώ (*Sulla*, 9.31-4), although here it may simply indicate the author's own uncertainty as to the precise nature of the god involved. Nonnus will use this form of address again in Dionysus' speech to Selene, another of the multiform Orphic deities, at 44.193-204. The reference to Gamus, a god of Priapic associations, and in particular to the way in which he was conceived ἐκ Διὸς ὑπνώοντος ὅτε γλωχίτι μαχαίρης / αὐτογάμῳ σπόρον ὑγρὸν ἐπιξύσαντος ἀρούρη / οὐρανίαις λιβάδεσσιν ἐμαιώθησαν ἐρίπναι (40.404-6), seems somewhat out of character with the reverential tone of the address. Rouse suggests that Nonnus may have been prompted to include Gamus through recollection of the wedding song beginning with the line Γάμε θεῶν λαμπρότατε (quoted in Athenaeus, 1.6), the λαμπρότατε, though used purely metaphorically in relation to Gamus, supplying the link with Helius. We have noted Nonnus' fondness for bringing together individuals on the basis of capricious associations, as for instance at 31.173-5, where Night is identified with the Indians on the basis of their shared attribute of darkness. The reference to Gamus thus appears to be a typical Nonnian pun, but this is not how all commentators see it. Keydell suggests that Nonnus may have been thinking here of Χαμῶς, mentioned in the *Suda* as a Tyrian god and venerated by Solomon (*Kings*, 3.11.7), a suggestion which is not implausible in itself, bearing in mind

Nonnus' rather free interpretation of Phoenician mythology.<sup>6</sup> The identification of Helios with Apollo was commonplace in late antiquity, though this was not the case earlier. We note that in Apollonius and Valerius Flaccus they are not only distinct, but favour opposite sides, Apollo being invoked by the Argonauts and Helios by his son Aetes. In Valerius Flaccus Sol humbly beseeches Jupiter not to allow the Argonauts to reach Colchis, lest his son Aetes should come to harm (1.505ff.). In the Orphic hymn, as in Nonnus, Helios is identified with Apollo (cf. χρυσολύρη, 8.9), but Proclus makes Apollo, along with Paieon and Dionysus, son of Helios (1.18-24), which is understandable seeing that Helios is identified with Zeus.

Heracles feasts Dionysus on nectar and ambrosia, a scene which together with the exchange of gifts at the end of the visit (40.575-8), is understood by Vian to constitute the second milestone on Dionysus' path to apotheosis, the first having been the presentation of the shield from Rhea (25.352ff.).<sup>7</sup> Dionysus asks his host to tell him the story of the city, its buildings and fountains, with which the latter all too gladly obliges. The visit thus follows the Homeric scheme, where the guest is first treated to the table, followed by a narration of events by the host and ending with an exchange of gifts (cf. Telemachus' visit to Menelaus in the *Odyssey*). The city, says Heracles, is coeval with the creation of the world: ἐνθάδε φῶτες ἔναιον, ὁμόσπορος οὐς ποτε μούνους / ἀενάου κόσμοιο συνήλικας ἔδρακεν Αἰών, / ἀγνὸν ἀνυμφεύτοιο γένος χθονός, ᾧ ποτε μορφήν / αὐτομάτην ᾗδινεν ἀνήροτος ἄσπορος ἰλύς (40.430-3). The origins of Beirut, we may note, are described in a parallel fashion, albeit with an overlay of Orphic terminology: ἐνθάδε φῶτες ἔναιον ὁμήλικες Ἑριγενείης, / οὐς φύσις αὐτογένεθλος ἀνυμφεύτω τιλὶ θεσμῶ / ἤροσε νόσφι γάμων, ἀπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτωρ, / ὅπποτε συμμιγέων ἀτόμων τετράζυγι δεσμῶ / ὕδατι καὶ πυρόεντι πεφυρμένον ἥερος ἀτμῶ / σύζυγα μορφώσασα σοφὸν τόκον ἄσπορος ᾧδὶς / ἔμπνοον ἐψύχωσε γοιήν ἐγκύμοι πηλῶ, / οἷς φύσις εἶδος ὅπασσε τελεσφόρον (41.51-9). The expressions τετράζυγι

<sup>6</sup> Abhandl. Deutschen Akad. Wiss. zu Berlin, 1969, 1, p. 44 (cited by Chuvin (1991) p. 236n.56, who considers it improbable).

<sup>7</sup> (1990) p. 33.

δεσμῶ, σοφὸν τόκον, ἔμπνοον ... γονήν, ἐγκύμοι πηλῶ and τελεσφόρον are all part of the Orphic lexicon, as are ἀπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτωρ, which, as Keydell indicates, are also used by Gregory Nazianzen as epithets of Christ: αὐτοπάτωρ, ἀλόχευτος, ἀμήτωρ ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος (*Carm.* II, 2.7.254, Migne v.37, p.1571). The passages echo the Phoenician creation myth as presented in Philo, according to which the first living beings emerged from a substance engendered from the primeval πνεῦμα or χάος called Μῶτ, which, as the author tells us, some call mud (τοῦτό τινές φασιν ἰλύν, 2.1). We have thus a point of contact between Nonnus and Philo, but the two diverge when it comes to depicting these first beings. According to Nonnus, they were, unlike Cecrops and Erechtheus (=Erichthonius), fashioned in the very image of the gods (θεῶν ἰνδαλμα γονῆς, 41.65). Philo's depiction is quite different, comprising two generations of beings, the first yet incapable of perception, the second possessing intelligence but formed in the shape of eggs (ζῶα νοερά ... καὶ ἀνεπλάσθη ὁμοίως ῥοῦ σχήματι, 2.2; cf. the εἶδος στρογγύλον attributed to the first humans in Plato, *Symp.* 189E). Chuvin suggests that Nonnus meant his assertion that these first beings were formed in the image of gods to be understood as a direct refutation of Philo, this being but one of a number of such contradictions arising from what he calls "cet antagonisme implicite entre les deux auteurs".<sup>8</sup> It is difficult to imagine why Nonnus should harbour such antagonism for the author of a prose text, who lived some three centuries before his time, unless it be out of mere rhetorical bravado, with Nonnus, having taken upon himself to champion Beirut, challenging Philo, whom he sees as being too partial to the claims of his native Byblos. Most of the supposed contradictions of Philo do indeed occur in the segment concerned with the first foundation myth of Beirut, where, as if to redress a perceived imbalance in favour of Byblos in Philo's account, Nonnus is claiming for Beirut what Philo had claimed for Byblos. When Philo claims primacy for Byblos, viz. ὁ Κρόνος τείχος περιβάλλει τῇ ἑαυτοῦ οἰκίσει, καὶ πόλιν πρώτην κτίζει τὴν ἐπὶ Φοινίκης Βύβλον (2.17), Nonnus counters with assertions of his own in favour of Beirut, viz. ἦν Κρόνος αὐτὸς ἔδειμε (41.63)

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<sup>8</sup> (1991) p. 213

and πόλις Βερόη προτέρα πέλεν (41.83), the second claim being made in relation to several other ancient cities, but, somewhat surprisingly, Byblos does not feature among the latter. If, as Chuvin believes, Nonnus is specifically contradicting Philo, then surely one would have expected him to have included Byblos among the cities that Beirut is supposed to predate.

Heracles continues by saying that these first men, who emerged from the primeval ἰλύς, built a city of stone on foundations of rock: οἱ πόλιν ἰσοτύπων δαπέδων αὐτόχθονι τέχνῃ / πετραίοις ἀτίνακτον ἐπυργώσαντο θεμέθλοις (40.434-5), and explains how they came to do this with his guidance. Firstly, he taught them how to build a raft so that they could reach the rocks out at sea, which were to become the site of their city. The instructions for building the raft, which Heracles gave to these first men and now repeats for Dionysus, are based on the raft-building scene in the *Odyssey* (ε42ff.); they have already been mentioned in conjunction with the shipbuilding at 36.403ff., which is based on the same *Odyssey* passage. There is no talk now of that long narrow isthmus, which the poet had a little earlier attributed to Poseidon's handiwork, despite it being common knowledge that it was built by Alexander so that he could move his siege-engines to the walls. In speaking of the island city as the first ever to be built, Nonnus overlooks completely the existence of Old Tyre (Παλαίτυρος) on the mainland, though he mentions it as a point of reference, when he says that the moving rocks, which were to provide the foundation for the island city, came to rest opposite Tyre by the sea (ἄγχι Τύρου παρὰ πόντον, 40.533). Besides, some of the features he attributes to the island city, such as the fountains referred to earlier, are part of the mainland topography. The correspondences with Philo may be briefly noted. According to Philo, two brothers, Hypsouranius and Ousous, were the first to settle in the environs of Tyre (it is to be assumed that he means Old Tyre on the mainland). Ousous was the first man to venture out to sea on a tree, which he had shorn of its foliage (2.1), but it was Chryсор (whom Philo equates with Hephaistus), a descendant of Hypsouranius, who first learnt how to build a raft and make fishing implements: εἶναι δὲ τοῦτον τὸν Ἥφαιστον, εὐρεῖν δὲ καὶ ἄγκιστρον καὶ δέλεαρ καὶ ὀρμιᾶν καὶ σχεδιάν, πρῶτόν τε πάντων ἀνθρώπων πλεῦσαι (2.9). Chryсор had two sons, Technites and Autochthon,

who discovered the arts of brick-making and roof-building. Nonnus has telescoped all this into the space of a single generation, replacing Philo's "inventors" with divine instructions. The αὐτόχθονι τέχνη at 40.434 seems, nevertheless, to be an unconscious reminiscence of Philo's Τεχνίτης and Αὐτόχθων. Heracles refers to the raft which the earthborn built according to his instructions as σχεδίην πρωτόπλοον (40.449), which (as Chuvin points out) appears to be a condensation of Philo's σχεδίαν, πρῶτόν τε ... πλεῦσαι, but could be simply an echo from the *Odyssey*, where πρωτόπλοον (θ35) is used to describe the Pheacian ship by which Odysseus is to be conveyed to Ithaca (though with a different meaning, that of 'sailing for the first time', instead of 'first to sail' as here). The earthborn are told to sail until they reach two wandering rocks, on (one of) which they will observe an olive tree, on top of which perches an eagle beside a silver bowl. The tree is burning but remains unscathed by the flames: δουρατέω κενεῶνι χαράξατε νῶτα θαλάσσης, / εἰσόκε χῶρον ἴκοισθε μεμορμένον, ὀππῶθι δισσαὶ / ἀσταθέες πλώουσιν ἀλήμονες εἰν ἀλλὶ πέτραι, / ἄς Φύσις Ἀμβροσίας ἐπεφήμισεν, αἷς ἔνι θάλλει / ἦλικος αὐτόρριζον ὁμόζυγον ἔρνος ἐλαίης, / πέτρης ὑγροπόροιο μεσόμφαλον· ἀκροτάτοις δὲ / αἰετὸν ἀθρήσητε παρεδρήσσοντα κόρυμβοις / καὶ φιάλην εὖτυκτον· ἀπὸ φλογεροῖο δὲ δένδρου / θαμβαλέους σπινθήρας ἐρεύγεται αὐτόματον πῦρ, / καὶ σέλας ἀφλεγέος περιβόσκεται ἔρνος ἐλαίης (40.466-75). A snake writhes around the trunk, but does not threaten the eagle, which likewise poses no threat to the snake: καὶ φυτὸν ἰψιπέτηλον ἔλιξ ὄφιν ἀμφιχορεύει / ... οὐ γὰρ ἀερσιπότητον ἐς αἰετὸν ἀψοφος ἔρπων ... ὄρνιν ἐαῖς γενέεσσι κατεσθίει, οὐδὲ καὶ αὐτὸς / αἰετὸς ἐρπηστήρα πολυσπεύρητον ἀκάνθαις / ἀρπάξας ὀνύχεσσι μετάρσιος ἥερα τέμνει / οὐδέ μιν ὀξυόδοντι καταγράφει γενεῖω (40.476-84). The scene depicted here corresponds to the emblem of Tyre represented on coins issued by the city in Roman times. Chuvin (planche 3) provides photographs of a number of coins displaying elements related to the above scene, two of which fit Nonnus' description almost exactly. The first (no. 27) shows an olive tree between two rocks; the second (no. 28) has, likewise, an olive tree, but in place of the two rocks are two steles with the legend

ΑΜΒΡΟCΙΕ ΠΑΙΤΡΕ. The rocks and steles are thus symbolically equivalent, though they appear to have originally been distinct entities, as we may gather from Philo's reference to Ousous erecting two steles to fire and wind, and making sacrifices before them: ἀνιερώσαι δὲ δύο στήλας πυρὶ καὶ πνεύματι, καὶ προσκυνῆσαι, αἰμά τε σπένδειν αὐταῖς ἐξ ὧν ἤγρευε θηρίων (2.8). Eissfeldt<sup>9</sup> adduces a passage from Achilles Tattius depicting a sacred enclosure in Tyre that appears to symbolise the burning tree. In the enclosure grows an olive tree, around which an underground fire sends up flames (2.14). This seems to have been a cleverly contrived piece of engineering, designed to create the illusion in anyone viewing it from the outside that the tree was actually alight. Chuvin<sup>10</sup> describes a bas-relief from Roman times, consisting of an olive tree with a snake around its trunk and an eagle by its side. The tree is alight with the wind pushing the flames to the left. We see, then, that all the elements of the Nonnus passage can be accounted for from other sources, attesting to its authenticity. The comment in Rouse's edition, "where, if anywhere, Nonnos found this extraordinary tale of the founding of Tyre is unknown"<sup>11</sup>, which intimates that our poet made the story up, is thus wholly unjustified. Nonnus, while giving a faithful rendering of the Tyrian foundation myth, has added some literary allusions of his own: the reference to the eagle not wishing to grasp the snake by its talons, and the snake not wishing to thrust at the eagle, brings to mind the portent in the *Iliad* (M200-6), where precisely the opposite takes place, the eagle seizing the snake in its talons, the snake biting the eagle (Nonnus has already used the *Iliad* passage at 39.158-64).

Heracles tells the earthborn to sacrifice the eagle, which will deliver itself into their hands, to Poseidon. Chuvin<sup>12</sup> links this act of sacrifice on the Ambrosian rocks with Ousous' animal sacrifices before the two steles referred to by Philo. The earthborn are told to pour the blood of the sacrificed eagle on the two rocks, which will then unite and become rooted to the sea-bottom. Once this has been carried out, they are to build their city on the now united and stabilized rocks.

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<sup>9</sup> (1963) p. 247.

<sup>10</sup> (1991) p. 241

<sup>11</sup> (1940) v. 3, p. 187

<sup>12</sup> (1991) p. 241

Heracles makes a nautilus fish come to the surface to instruct (by example) the earthborn in the art of navigation. The earthborn subsequently learn the function of ballast-stones from cranes, who carry them in their beaks. As we have noted previously, Nonnus is rather fond of the idea of man learning from animals. When the earthborn have carried out Heracles' instructions, the rocks come to rest near Tyre by the sea (40.533). As we mentioned<sup>o</sup> above, this reference to an apparently pre-existing Tyre on the mainland undermines the claim that the island city of Tyre was coeval with the creation of the world (40.430-5), but, as we have often had occasion to note, Nonnus is not one to be unduly concerned about such inconsistencies.

Heracles next recounts to Dionysus the story of how the three fountains, which had earlier caught the visitor's eye, came to acquire their names. It was by these fountains that Heracles found the earthborn asleep as he was about to address them (πηγαίησι παρ' εὐύδροισι χαμειναῖς ... εὐδον ὁμοῦ (40.436-9).<sup>13</sup> In the fountains resided three nymphs, Abarbaree, Callirhoe and Drosera, who (like most of the females in the *Dionysiaca*) had a strong attachment to the maiden state, an attitude that angered Eros, who addressed one of them with a long speech, arguing that as inhabitants of a watery abode they owed allegiance to sea-born Aphrodite rather than to Artemis (40.542-73). A similar line of reasoning is employed by Poseidon in his address to Beroe, when he tells her that, as the daughter of sea-born Aphrodite, it is only fitting that she should marry him rather than Dionysus (42.468ff.). Eros subsequently shoots his arrows into the three nymphs, who then join in amorous union with the earthborn, giving rise to the Tyrian race. Chuvin<sup>14</sup> sees a connexion between the nymphs' apparent promiscuity in the present passage and the promiscuous women who, in Philo, mated with giants to give birth to Hypsouranius and Ousous, who received their names from their mothers. Referring to the giants, Philo says that ἐκ τούτων ... ἐγεννήθη Σαμημοῦμος, ὁ καὶ Ἰψουράνιος, <καὶ Οὔσοος> · ἀπὸ μητέρων δὲ ... ἐχρημάτιζον τῶν τότε γυναικῶν ἀνέδην μισγομένων οἷς ἂν ἐντύχοιεν (2.7). Hypsouranius and Ousous were in a sense the first Tyrians, the

<sup>13</sup> Chuvin (1991) p. 243 n. 78, thinks that the phrase εὐδον ὁμοῦ may be an echo of Οὔσου, the Phoenician name for Old Tyre.

<sup>14</sup> (1991) p. 243

first members of that race which in Nonnus sprang from the union of the fountain nymphs with the earthborn. Thus even the story of the fountains, though embellished with poetic adornments and given a Hellenised garb, can be linked to authentic Phoenician traditions. With the story of the fountains Heracles' speech to Dionysus comes to an end. The two exchange gifts and part company.

Books 41-43 are ostensibly concerned with Beirut, but, as we have noted, only the first 150 lines, comprising the ecphrasis and the first foundation myth, are devoted to this end. The so-called second and more recent foundation myth (ἀλλά τις ὀπλοτέρη πέλεται φάτις, 41.155) is the story of the rival courtship of Dionysus and Poseidon for the nymph Beroe, who is referred to as the eponymous heroine of Beirut or Beroe, as Nonnus prefers to call the city (probably after the same-named city in Macedonia, modern Veria). We would expect an eponymous hero or heroine to be born before the city bearing his or her name. Yet in this instance Beroe is a contemporary of Dionysus, while the city bearing her name has existed from time immemorial. We are to assume then that the city bore her name by way of anticipation and that Beroe's birth augured a specific epoch in its history, that was to come about many centuries later, in the reign of Augustus, when it became a Roman colony and a centre for the teaching of Roman law. The connexion with Beirut is merely incidental to Nonnus' real purpose, which is to present the story of yet another παρθένος φυγόδεμνος, that parallels in many ways the earlier Chalcomeda episode. Nonnus previously used the technique of presenting two variants of a story in the case of Ampelus, though in that instance it was the second version which was deemed the more ancient (ἄλλη πρεσβυτέρη πέλεται φάτις, 12.294). The ὀπλοτέρη φάτις, being further removed in time from the events it purports to describe, would seem to be almost by definition further from the truth than the older version. It is, more than anything, a convenient device designed to enable the poet to give free flight to his imagination, without having to account for lack of truthfulness. And this is precisely what Nonnus has done: the story of Beroe is largely his own compilation, partly modelled on Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae*, partly on his own Chalcomeda story. The story is nevertheless not entirely unprecedented, resembling in concept the myth of Amydone, who was likewise forced to become

wife to Poseidon, and exhibiting certain points of contact with Phoenician traditions recorded in Philo.

Nonnus regards Beirut and its two foundation myths sufficiently important to warrant a new invocation of the Muses: ἀλλὰ θεμιστοπόλου Βερόης παρὰ γείτοιν πέζῃ / ὕμνον Ἀμυμώνης Λιβανηίδες εἶπατε Μοῦσαι / καὶ βυθίου Κρονίδαο καὶ εὐθύρσοιο Λυαίου / ἄρεα κυματόεντα καὶ ἀμπελόεσσαν ἐνωῶ (41.10-4). It is noteworthy that the invocation is directed almost entirely to the second foundation myth and that Beroe is actually called Amymone. Rigler<sup>15</sup> suggests that Nonnus is identifying some Phoenician tale with the story of Amymone, though the scant fragments of Phoenician mythology transmitted to us by Philo lend no support to such a supposition. The correspondences between Nonnus' story of Beroe and the traditions recorded in Philo are of a much more circumspect nature. Philo does indeed mention a woman named Beruth, the consort of one Elioun or Hypsistus, but associates the couple with Byblos rather than Beirut: κατὰ τούτους γίνεται τις Ἐλιοῦν καλούμενος Ὑψιστος, καὶ θήλεια λεγομένη Βηρούθ οἱ καὶ κατῴκουν περὶ Βύβλον (2.12). We note that in another instance he speaks of a woman called Sidon, but does not associate her in any way with the city of the same name (2.21). The similarity of the names in both cases is too overwhelming to be ignored, and the two women may be assumed to be connected with the cities bearing their names, but apart from that nothing is known about their relation to Beirut and Sidon. Chuvin has photographs of coins minted by Beirut in Roman times, showing a female figure, sometimes together with Poseidon (18a-b, 19a-b and 23), but it is likely that this female figure is simply that of Τύχη or Fortuna, rather than a representation of the eponymous heroine. As for Dionysus, who is given such prominence - the poet expends on his courtship of Beroe about three times the number of lines that he does on Poseidon's - there is no evidence whatever of any special connexion that he may have had with Beirut. Rigler<sup>16</sup> cites Pliny (*N.H.* 14.75 and 15.86), who describes Beirut as a producer of quality wines, but that hardly constitutes testimony of

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15 (1860) p. 5

16 (1860) p. 6 n.3.

Dionysus having played a special role in the city's mythology. Chuvin<sup>17</sup> identifies Dionysus with the Phoenician Baalmarqod on the basis of numismatic evidence, but again there is nothing to indicate the latter's relationship to Beirut. Indeed, the only major god who can be securely associated with Beirut is Poseidon (Philo, 2.25). The possibility that Nonnus invented Dionysus' connexion with Beirut is further strengthened by the glaring embarrassment of his role as the unsuccessful rival in the quest for Beroe.

Since we have already remarked on the description and first foundation myth of Beirut in conjunction with those of Tyre, it remains here to consider a few additional details. With reference to the foundation of Beirut, Nonnus makes the comment: Ζεὺς τότε κούρος ἔην, ἔτι που βρέφος· οὐ τότε πυκνῶ / θερμὸν ἀνασχίσασα νέφος βητάρμονι παλμῶ / ἀστεροπὴ σελάγιζε, καὶ οὐ Τιτηνίδι χάρμη / Ζηνὸς ἀοσητῆρες οἰστεύοντο κεραυνοί· / οὐδὲ συνερχομένων νεφῶν μικήτορι ρόμβῳ / βρονταίη βαρύδουπος ἐβόμβεεν ὄμβριος ἤχῳ (41.77-82). This is similar to the cosmogony sung by Orpheus in Apollonius, where referring to Cronus and Rhea, Orpheus says: οἱ δὲ τέως μακάρεσσι θεοὶ Τιτῆσιν ἄνασσον, / ὄφρα Ζεὺς ἔτι κούρος, ἔτι φρεσὶ νήπια εἰδῶς, / Δικταῖον ναίεσκεν ὑπὸ σπέος· οἱ δέ μιν οὐπω / γηγενέες Κύκλωπες ἐκαρτύναντο κεραυνῶ, / βροντῆ τε στεροπῆ τε (1.507-11). Lines 81-2 recall Nonnus' own earlier explanation of lightning (2.483ff.) and are couched in the resonant vocabulary usually reserved for the depiction of Bacchic rites: ρόμβῳ, ἐβόμβεεν, ὄμβριος ἤχῳ.<sup>18</sup> Stressing the primacy of Beirut, the poet goes on to say: οὐ τότε Ταρσὸς ἔην τερψίμβροτος, οὐ τότε Θήβη, / οὐ τότε Σάρδιες ἦσαν ... Σάρδιες, Ἥελίοιο συνήλικες ... οὐ γένος ἀνδρῶν, / οὐ τότε τις πόλις ἦεν Ἀχαιιάς, οὐδὲ καὶ αὐτὴ / Ἀρκαδίη προσέληνος· ἀνεβλάστησε δὲ μούνη / πρεσβυτέρη Φαέθοντος, ὅθεν φάος ἔσχε Σελήνη (41.85-91). Nonnus' lines allude to Argus' speech in Apollonius, who had said how Tritonian Thebes in Egypt predated all other ancient cities and nations, including the Arcadians, who had existed before the moon, a statement which

17 (1991) pp. 218-21.

18 The Roman satirist Persius ridicules poets who overuse such vocabulary, cf. 1.99-104.

Nonnus sets out to correct in favour of Beirut. The similarities with the Apollonius passage are rather self-evident: ἔστιν γὰρ πλόος ἄλλος, ὃν ἀθανάτων ἱερῆς / πέφραδον, οἱ Θήβης Τριτωνίδος ἐκγεγάασιν. / οὐ̐πω τείρεα πάντα, τά τ' οὐρανῶ εἰλίσσονται / οὐδέ τί πω Δαναῶν ἱερὸν γένος ἦεν ἀκούσαι / πειθομένοις· οἳοι δ' ἔσαν Ἀρκάδες Ἀπιδανῆες, Ἀρκάδες, οἳ καὶ πρόσθε σεληναίης ὑδέονται / ζῶειν, φηγὸν ἔδοντες ἐν οὖρεσιν· οὐδὲ Πελασγίς / χθῶν τότε κυδαλίμοισιν ἀνάσσετο Δευκαλίδῃσιν (4.259-66).

We might note the schematic correspondence: οὐ τότε Σάρδιες ἦσαν ... Σάρδιες, Ἡελίοιο συνήλικες / οἳοι δ' ἔσαν Ἀρκάδες, ... Ἀρκάδες, οἳ κ.τ.λ. Beirut is not only the oldest city; it is also the place where Aphrodite first came ashore upon emerging from the foam. The rival claims of Paphos, Corinth, Byblos, Colias and Cythera are dismissed: καὶ θεὸς ἰχνεύουσα δι' ὕδατος ἄψοφον ἀκτὴν / οὐ Πάφον, οὐκ ἐπὶ Βύβλον ἀνέδραμεν, οὐ πόδα χέρσῳ / Κωλιάδος ῥηγμῖνος ἐφήρμοσεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτῶν / ὠκυτέρῃ στροφάλιγγι παρέτρεχεν ἄστῳ Κυθήρων (41.106-9). Byblos' association with Aphrodite may be inferred from Philo's statement: ὁ Κρόνος Βύβλον μὲν τὴν πόλιν τῇ θεᾷ Βααλτίδι, τῇ καὶ Διώνῃ, δίδωσι (2.2), Dione being the mother of Aphrodite in the alternative legend of the goddess' birth (E370). Astarte, the direct Phoenician counterpart of Aphrodite, is mentioned by Philo only in connexion with Tyre, as having consecrated a meteorite on its island site (2.24). It is not clear on what tradition Nonnus bases his claim for Beirut. Chuvin adduces a coin from Roman times featuring the facade of a temple of Aphrodite with the legend COL IVL AUG FEL BER (planche III, no. 20), which he believes to be indicative of some special relationship between the goddess and the city. Nonnus makes his case on behalf of Beirut with ostentatious self-assurance, accusing the inhabitants of Cyprus of lying, when they point out to visitors what they claim to be the footprints that Aphrodite left as she waded ashore after emerging from the sea: ποδῶν δ' ἐπίβαθρα θεαίνης / ἐξ ἄλδος ἐρχομένης ναέτης ἐψεύσατο Κύπρου (41.117-8). This is a pointed reference to Callimachus' claim on behalf of Delos: ἦν ἐπενήξατο Κύπρις / ἐξ ὕδατος τὰ πρῶτα, σοῖ δέ μιν ἀντ' ἐπιβάθρων (4.21-2). The accusation of mendacity is copied from Callimachus'

hymn to Zeus, where the poet muses as to which of the claimants to the birthplace of Zeus is lying: Ζεῦ, σὲ μὲν Ἰδαίοισιν ἐν οὐρεσὶ φασι γενέσθαι, / Ζεῦ, σὲ δ' ἐν Ἀκαδίῃ· πότεροι, πότερ, ἐψεύσαντο ; (1.6-7), and then quotes a popular saying about the Cretans: "Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψεύσται " (1.8), in response to the claim by the latter to possess the tomb of Zeus. Nonnus had previously referred to this Callimachus passage, when speaking about Apate, who ἀεὶ παρέμιμνε Διὸς ψευδήμοι τύμβω / τερπομένη Κρήτεσσιν, ἐπεὶ πέλον ἠπεροπῆς (8.117-8). As already noted, Nonnus is rather prone to make more than one allusion to such well known passages in the course of his narrative.

As Aphrodite steps ashore in Beirut, the meadows spring into flower on all sides, roses redden the shore line and wine bubbles forth from the rocks (41.123-5). This goes counter to the underlying theme of the whole poem that the gift of wine was conveyed to mankind by Zeus exclusively through the agency of Dionysus. The sudden blooming of nature resembles that which accompanied the hierogamy of Zeus and Hera (32.84-90). Aphrodite forthwith gives birth to Eros, who is described in solemn Orphic verbiage as γονῆς πρωτόσπορον ἀρχὴν / ἀρμονίης κόσμοιο φερέσβιον ἡμιοχῆα ( 41.129-30), which contrasts with the rococo depiction of the birth: κυβιστητῆρι δὲ παλμῶ / δινεύων πτερὰ κοῦφα πύλας ὠίξε λοχείης. / καὶ ταχὺς αἰγλήεντι θορῶν ἐπὶ μητρὸς ἀγοστῶ / ἄστατος ἀκλινέεσσιν Ἔρως ἀνεπάλλετο μαζοῖς / στήθει παιδοκόμῳ τετανυσμένος (41.135-9).

An address to the city of Beirut, composed in the form of an Orphic hymn, follows: ῥίζα βίου, Βερόη, πολίων τροφός, εὐχος ἀνάκτων, / πρωτοφανής, Αἰῶνος ὁμόσπορε, σύγχρονε κόσμου, / ἔδρανον Ἑρμείας, Δίκης πέδον, ἄστῳ θεμίστων, ἐνδιον Εὐφροσύνης, Παφίης δόμος κ.τ.λ. ( 41.143-6). The role of the city as a centre for the teaching of Roman law is one to which Nonnus returns in more detail at the end of the book (41.364ff.). There the poet makes ample reference to the reconstitution of Beirut as a Roman colony, an event which resulted in a great upsurge in the city's fortunes and prestige. He now proceeds to recount the second foundation myth, beginning with a rather emblematic depiction of Beroe's birth. The city's future legal role is pre-ordained at Beroe's birth.

Hermes, holding aloft a Latin tablet, and Themis, with a scroll of Solon's laws in her hand, act as midwives. The child is brought forth on a scroll, just as Spartan women deliver their offspring on a shield, and is bathed by the four winds with water provided by Oceanus. Aion is depicted as shedding the burden of age, like a snake shedding its skin, as he proceeds to swaddle the newborn: γήραος ἄχθος ἀμείβων, / ὡς ὄφης ἀδρανέων φολίδων σπείρημα τινάξας / ἔμπαλιν ἠβήσειε λελουμένος οὔδασι θεσμῶν (41.180-2). The notion that a snake is rejuvenated when it sheds its skin is borrowed from Nicander, a poet who more than once has left his mark on Nonnus: ῥικνήεν φολίδων περὶ γήρας ἀμέρσας / ἄψ ἀναφοιτήση νεαρῇ κεχαρημένος ἠβῆ (Ther. 137-8). Nonnus has used the comparison by way of allegorical reference to Beirut, a city previously described as old as time itself, which recovers its youth once it has been refurbished as a Roman colony.

The birth of Aphrodite's daughter is greeted by the animals, who for the occasion put aside their natural dispositions to celebrate the child's arrival in friendly harmony. Traditionally it is the song of Orpheus that induces animals to behave in this manner (cf., for example, Euripides, *Bacch.* 561-4, Apollonius 1.569-79 and the Orphic *Argonautica* 435-7), though it is occasionally found in other contexts. In the fourth *Eclogue* of Vergil the birth of Pollio's son is greeted by animals in like manner (18ff.). Nonnus himself paints a similar scene to mark Dionysus' arrival in India (22.28-38). The predators and their prey frolic together amicably (41.191-9), recalling the earlier passage. Astrae takes on herself the duties of wet-nurse, feeding Beroe ἔμφρονι μαζῶ / παρθενίῳ δὲ γάλακτι ῥοᾶς βλύζουσα θεμίστων / χεῖλεα παιδὸς ἔδευσε (41.215-7). Nonnus shows a fondness for breastfeeding scenes (cf. 9.30-1, 57-8; 26.103, 137; 35.326-7), the present scene recalling Hera's breastfeeding of Dionysus, where she brings about the latter's recovery βλύζουσα χύσιν ζηλήμονι μαζῶ (35.327). We cannot fail to note that, notwithstanding the impressive circumstances of her birth and nurture, Beroe when she grows up is, apart from her beauty, quite ordinary, displaying none of the mental attributes we would expect to find in one fed laws in place of mother's milk. She is indistinguishable from the other παρθένοι φυγόδεμνοι in the poem, a huntress fashioned in the image of Artemis (ὁμόδρομος ἰοχαίρη,

41.230), resembling Nicaea, who is συνάεθλος ἰοχεαίρη (15.179), and Aura, who is Ἄρτεμις ἄλλη (48.245). Nonnus, in extolling the circumstances of the girl's birth, is quite clearly not thinking of her so much as of the Roman city of Beirut with its law school.

Beroe, having blossomed into maidenhood, attracts Zeus' attention, as had Persephone (5.600ff.), but Zeus, fearful of a confrontation with Poseidon, who has likewise taken an interest in the girl, yields in the face of his brother's threats: Βερόην διεροῖσιν ὀφειλομένην ὑμεναίοις / γνωτῶ λείπεν ἄκοιτιν, ἐπιχθονίης περὶ νύμφης / ὑσμίνην γαμίην πεφυλαγμένος Ἐννοσιγαίου (41.247-9). This rather inglorious backdown by Zeus recalls his equally inglorious backdown from Hades' demand that Persephone be given to him for wife in Claudian's *Deraptu Proserpinae*. In Claudian's poem, Pluto threatens to turn loose Saturn and the giants from Tartarus if his demand is rejected (1.89-121). Zeus has on two other occasions been compelled to reach a compromise with other gods in the *Dionysiaca* so as to preserve cosmic harmony: firstly, in conceding to Hera's wish that Lycurgus be deified, he had to be content with punishing Lycurgus with blindness while still on earth (21.148-69); secondly, when he acquiesced to Oceanus' plea to stop Dionysus burning the Hydaspes, in order to avert the threatened deluge (24.1-6). The present situation is quite different, however, involving a disagreement over a female between two brothers, an idea which Braune attributes to Claudian: "ambedue le volte vediamo Zeus in una situazione poco gloriosa: l'idea di una lotta fra gli dei per il raggiungimento di uno scopo privato come quello di un matrimonio, proviene da Claudiano".<sup>19</sup> It is not so much the situational or verbal parallels of Nonnus' portrayal of Poseidon with Claudian's portrayal of Pluto, as the fact that the plots of both poets exhibit precisely the same compositional failing, which lends strength to Braune's contention that Nonnus imitated the Latin poet. The fault is most glaring in Nonnus: Poseidon demands Beroe from Zeus with menaces, and yet, in spite of this, needs to be injected with passion for the maiden by an arrow from Eros. The same inconsistency, if a little less obviously, runs through the *De raptu Proserpinae*. As Braune has demonstrated, the inconsistency originates in

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Claudian's somewhat misguided attempt to combine two mutually incompatible versions of the Persephone legend. In the first version, recounted in the Homeric hymn to Demeter, Persephone is given to Hades by Zeus seemingly as part of a preordained course of events: ἦν Ἄιδωνεὺς / ἦρπαξεν, δῶκεν δὲ βαρύκτυπος εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς (2-3), an idea that Claudian adopts as his basic theme: 'candida Tartar<sup>o</sup> nuptum Proserpina regi / iamdudum decreta dari' (1.217-8). In the second or Sicilian version - so-called because the abduction took place there - Aphrodite, not Hades, is the prime mover. In this version, represented in Ovid (*Met.* 5.341-437), the abduction is the result of Aphrodite's desire to extend her sway to the nether regions, with Hades himself becoming the unwitting instrument of her expansionist aspirations. Emerging above ground in Sicily after an earthquake for no reason other than to ensure that no cracks have developed in the firmament, which might admit light to his underworld domain, Pluto is spotted by Venus, who has Cupid shoot an arrow into him to infect him with love for Proserpina. Claudian, as we have said, has chosen to follow the first version, but has at the same time adopted some features from the second, by having the abduction take place in Sicily and by assigning a role to Venus which in his context is entirely otiose, as Pluto certainly stands in no need of encouragement. And yet Jupiter addresses Venus as if Pluto did indeed need some prodding, almost reproaching her for laxity in not extending her influence to the nether world, by asking 'cur ultima regna quiescunt?' (1.224). Now, as Braune points out, Claudian has taken the question 'Tartara quid cessant?' (*Met.* 5.371) from Venus' address to Cupid in Ovid, and placed it, in slightly altered form, into the mouth of Jupiter, who, menaced by Pluto's demand for Proserpina, should be the last to complain about the lack of passion on his brother's part. This illogicality is faithfully duplicated (and indeed, aggravated) by Nonnus, who has Aphrodite direct Eros to shoot an arrow not only into Dionysus, but also into Poseidon (as if that were necessary!). The fact that Nonnus duplicates an artistic failing peculiar to the *De raptu Proserpinae* appears to provide incontestable evidence for Braune's contention that he was familiar with the poem. It is interesting that Zeus, so anxious himself to avoid conflict with Poseidon, is not at all averse to witnessing his brother do battle with Dionysus: δμματι μειδιῶντι πατὴρ κεχάρητο Κρονίων, / δῆριν

ἀδελφειοῖο καὶ υἱέος ἰψὶ δοκεύων (42.540-2). This is obviously a reminiscence of Zeus' joy in the *Iliad* at watching the gods fight among themselves: ἐγέλασσε δέ οἱ φίλον ἦτορ / γηθοσύνη, ὄθ' ὄρατο θεοὺς ἔριδι ξυλιόντας (Φ389-90). Nonnus, as we have noted previously, gathers ideas from diverse sources, without sufficient regard as to whether or not they fit consistently into his narrative.

Aphrodite betakes herself to Harmonia's abode to find out which city shall have the distinction of bearing Beroe's name. The visit parallels Demeter's earlier visit to Astraius 6.15ff.) in that in both cases we have a mother determined to ascertain the future in so far as it concerns her daughter. Harmonia's residence is described in some detail, the poet drawing heavily on Orphic imagery. Aphrodite hurries εἰς δόμον Ἀρμονίης παμμήτορος ὀππῶθι νύμφη / εἶκελον οἶκον ἔναιε τύπῳ τετράζυγι κόσμου, / αὐτοπαγῆ· πίσυρες δὲ θύραι στιβαροῖο μελάθρου / ἀρραγέες πίσυρεςσιν ἐμιτρώθησαν ἀήταις (41.277-80). One cannot but notice the emphasis on the number four, an emphasis which is also evident in the earlier Astraius passage, where the four winds act as servants: πίσυρες λαγόνεσσι καθαψάμενοι τελαμώνας / πατρὸς ὑποδρηστήρες ἐμιτρώθησαν Ἀῆται (6.37-8). As expected there has been some reuse of earlier material here. The τέσσαρες Ἀῆται also bathe the newborn Beroe (41.173-4) and earlier Dionysus aligns his forces with the four winds: καὶ πυσύρων ἀνέμων ... τέτραχα τεμνομένην στρατιὴν ἐστήσατο Βάκχων (27.148-9). The Orphic symbolism of the number four is extended to the *Paraphrase* as well. Livrea<sup>20</sup> draws attention to Nonnus' use of it in the scenes associated with the Crucifixion, where Nonnus renders the evangelist's λάβετε αὐτὸν ὑμεῖς καὶ σταυρώσατε (18.6) by ὑμεῖς τετραπόρῳ σφηκώσατε τοῦτον ὀλέθρῳ (18.31, cf. also 18.74 and 91-2). Harmonia is engaged in weaving a tapestry of the universe. Braune points out that Proserpina in Claudian is engaged in weaving a tapestry on exactly the same subject. Not only do the tapestries correspond, but in both instances work on them is abruptly suspended with the unexpected arrival of a visitor or visitors: καὶ πυμάτην παρὰ πέζαν ἐυκλώστοιο χιτῶνος / ὠκεανὸν κύκλωσε

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περίδρομον ἄντυγι κόσμου / ἀμφίπολος δέ οἱ ἦλθε καὶ ἐγγύθι θήλεος  
 ἱστοῦ / ἱσταμένην ἤγγειλε παρὰ προθύροις Ἀφροδίτην / καὶ θεὸς ὡς  
 ἤκουσε, μίτους ῥίψασα χιτῶνος / θέσκελον ἱστοπόνων ἀπεσεῖσατο  
 κερκίδα χειρῶν (41.301-6), which may be compared to: 'coeperat et vitreis  
 summo iam margine texti / oceanum sinuare vadis, sed cardine verso / cernit adesse  
 deas imperfectumque laborem/deserit' (1.269-72). This correspondence is seen to  
 further corroborate the case for direct influence.

Harmonia greets Aphrodite with a string of Orphic epithets: ῥίζα βίου,  
 Κυθήρεια φυτοπόρε, μαῖα γενέθλης, / ἐλπίς ὅλου κόσμοιο, τεῆς ὑπὸ  
 νεύματι βουλῆς / ἀπλανέες κλώθουσι πολύτροπα νήματα Μοῖραι (41.315-  
 7). The notion that the Fates are subservient to Aphrodite's will also occurs in the  
 Orphic hymn to her (cf. καὶ κρατέεις τρισσῶν μοιρῶν, 55.5). The epithet  
 ἐλπίς κόσμου is also used of Christ by Nonnus, when he says that Judas  
 παρέδωκεν ἀτέρμονος ἐλπίδα κόσμου (*Par.* 18.32). Aphrodite responds in an  
 equally stilted manner with a string of epithets of her own: εἰρομένη θέσπιζε,  
 καὶ ὡς βιότοιο τιθήνη, / ὡς τροφὸς ἀθανάτων, ὡς σύγχρονος ἡλικι κόσμῳ,  
 / εἶπέ· τίμινι πολλίων βασιλίδος ὄργανα φωνῆς / λυσιπόνων ἀτίνακτα  
 φυλάσσεται ἡνία θεσμῶν; (41.318-21). That laws share with wine the epithet  
 λυσίπονος is perhaps indicative of the importance that Nonnus attaches to  
 jurisprudence. The eulogising of Beirut as a seat for the study of law complements  
 the main theme of the poem, as Nonnus sees the laws as another medium beside  
 wine through which mankind is relieved of its cares (by deriving comfort from the  
 knowledge that justice will prevail). Harmonia replies by telling Aphrodite that the  
 answer to her question is to be found in the seven tablets of Ophion (the first ruler  
 of Olympus according to the Orphic creed, cf. Apollonius 1.503-40). These  
 tablets, bearing the names of the seven planets, have inscribed on them events past  
 and those yet to come. The tablet of Cronus reveals that the guardianship of the  
 laws is to be assigned to Beirut, an event which will take place σκῆπτρον ὅλης  
 Αὐγούστος ὅτε χθονὸς ἡμιχεύσει, / Ῥώμη μὲν ζαθέη δωρήσεται  
 Αὐσόμιος Ζεὺς / κοιρανίην, Βερόη δὲ χαρίζεται ἡνία θεσμῶν, / ὅπποτε  
 θωρηχθεῖσα φερεσσακέων ἐπὶ νηῶν / φύλοπιν ὑδρομόθοιο κατευνήσει

Κλεοπάτρης (41.389-93). Nonnus is fond of prognostications (cf., for example, 7.1-135 and 12.1-117). With Zeus' revelations of the future to Aion at 7.73-105 we may compare his revelations to Helios in Valerius Flaccus 1.531-67. Harmonia's tablets in the present passage presage the future of Beirut in similar terms to Anchises' speech to Aeneas in Vergil's *Aeneid* (especially 6.791ff., where Augustus is associated with peace and the rule of law). Having ascertained this, Aphrodite returns to her own abode. Her subsequent actions have little connexion with the foregoing: she will have Eros inject both Dionysus and Poseidon with love for Beroe, but the poet does not enlighten us as to what motivates her to do so. Nonnus appears to be mechanically copying the scene at the beginning of the Morrheus-Chalcomeda episode, with Aphrodite having again to bribe Eros to make him do her bidding. Lines 41.402-5 are a verbatim repetition of 33.143-5, bar one minor change (ἀμφότερον δέ, 41.404 replacing ἐζομένου δέ, 33.145). As in the previous episode, Aphrodite has for Eros a present, a χρυσή χέλυς (41.425), corresponding to the εὐποίητον στέφος (33.175).

Book 42 begins with the flight of Eros to Lebanon, a flight which is likened to that of a meteor: ὡς δ' ὀπότην ἀνεφέλοιο δι' αἰθέρος ὄξυς ὀδίτης / ἑκταδίῳ σπιθηῆρι τιταίνεται ὀρθίος ἀστήρ / ἢ στρατιῆ πολέμοιο φέρων τέρας ἢ τι νούτη (42.6-8), which is an adaptation of οἶον δ' ἀστέρα ἦκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω, / ἢ νούτησι τέρας ἢ στρατῶ εὐρέι λαῶν (Δ75-6). The two recipients of Eros' arrows are not given equal exposure: compared to Dionysus, who is allotted four hundred lines (42.40-441) to express his love for Beroe, Poseidon has to make do with only fifty-five (42.441-96). They <sup>both</sup> arrive at the same place simultaneously, Poseidon emerging from the sea, Dionysus journeying from Tyre (although verses 41.1-4 give the impression that he is already in Beirut). Maron unbridles the sweating panthers from Dionysus' chariot and takes them to water: ἀπὸ βλοσυροῖο δὲ δίφρου / πόρδαλιν ἰδρώοντα Μάρων ἀνέλυσε λεπάδων, / καὶ κόνιν ἐξετίναξε καὶ ἔκλυσεν ὕδατι πηγῆς / θερμὸν ἀναψύχων κεχαραγμένον αὐχένα θηρῶν (42.19-22). This echoes the following passage from Callimachus' hymn to Athena: πρὶν κόνιν ἰππειῶν ἐξελάσαι λαγόνων ... πολὺ πρᾶτιστον ὑφ' ἄρματος αὐχένας ἰππων

/ λυσαμένα παγαῖς ἔκλυσεν Ὠκεανῶ / ἰδρῶ καὶ ραθάμιγγας (5.5-11). It is here that Eros shoots at Dionysus and Poseidon - why the two should have come together is left unexplained - leaving them infatuated with Beroe. Poseidon subsequently disappears from view, reappearing briefly at 42.55-9, this time coming ἐκ Λιβάνου (42.55), only to vanish once again before making a final dramatic re-entry from the sea at 42.441-6. Nonnus takes no interest in him, being primarily concerned with depicting Dionysus' unrequited love for Beroe. His assignment accomplished, Eros flies off κυκλώσας βαλίοισιν ὁμόδρομον ἔχνος ἀήταις (42.36), which (as Keydell indicates) is an echo of Callimachus' ἴετο κυκλώσας βαλιὰ πτερὰ θήλυς ἀήτης (frag. 110.53), used of the action of Zephyr as it swirled picking up the lock of Berenice.

The Dionysus-Beroe relationship corresponds to the Morrheus-Chalcomeda episode in much the same way as the Aura episode corresponds to that of Nicaea. Whilst Dionysus' attraction to Nicaea and Aura is purely physical, his infatuation with Beroe, like Morrheus' passion for Chalcomeda, is of an all-consuming nature, affecting mind as well as body. Here, even more than in the case of Morrheus, Nonnus concerns himself with the thoughts and feelings of the lover, the pangs of unrequited love being minutely described. Whereas Morrheus appears to act mostly on impulse, Dionysus exhibits a remarkable degree of mental composure in the throes of love, deliberating on various ways of ingratiating himself with the girl. Thus, while Morrheus reveals his predicament to Hyssacus only on the latter's prodding, Dionysus of his own accord approaches Pan, seeking advice on ways of getting Beroe to respond favourably to his advances. In its emphasis on the techniques of amatory persuasion, the story of Dionysus' quest for Beroe stands apart from the Morrheus-Chalcomeda episode, showing at the same time a distinct affinity with Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*. Pan's speech in particular shares a number of precepts with that work as well as with Tibullus 1.4, where Priapus dispenses similar advice. Pan's advice to Dionysus is clearly designed to be the centrepiece of the whole episode, but this notwithstanding, it is not well integrated with the action, seeing that some of the things Pan instructs Dionysus to do he has been doing all along, while he fails subsequently to act on other pieces of advice. Pan's advice, like Thetis' advice to Chalcomeda (34.316-37), is thus rendered largely

gratuitous in the context of the narrative.

It is remarkable that Dionysus, unlike Morrheus, who has only to cope with the intransigence of the girl, has also to overcome the added obstacle of his own inhibitions, <sup>a feature</sup> which gives the episode a psychological dimension. On the strength of the foregoing episodes, it is difficult to visualise Dionysus inhibited and tongue-tied, but this is how Nonnus, possibly under the influence of Alexandrian love-elegy, chooses to portray him here. But he is inconsistent even in this: while Dionysus is described as being shy and frightened of the girl, his addresses to Beroe, with their double entendre and sexual innuendo, create quite the opposite impression. Dionysus traces Beroe's steps in the forest, observing her discreetly from a distance. Each sighting only intensifies his infatuation: οὐδέ οἱ εἰσορώωντι κόρος πέλεν· ἰσταμένην γὰρ / παρθένον ὅσον ὄπωπε, τόσον πλέον ἤθελε λεύσσειν (42.47-8). The poet returns to the notion of insatiability later in the episode with a good-humoured retort to Homer: πάντων γὰρ κόρος ἐστὶ παρ' ἀνδράσιν, ἠδέος ὕπνου / μολπῆς τ' εὐκελάδοιο καὶ ὀππότε κάμπτεται ἀνὴρ / εἰς δρόμον ὀρχηστῆρα· γυναιμανέοντι δὲ μούνῳ / οὐ κόρος ἐστὶ πόθων· ἐψεύσατο βίβλος Ὀμήρου (42.178-81). The reference is to Menelaus' comment on the Trojans' insatiable lust for battle: πάντων μὲν κόρος ἐστὶ, καὶ ὕπνου καὶ φιλότητος / μολπῆς τε γλυκερῆς καὶ ἀμύμονος ὀρχηθμοῖο ... Τρῶες δὲ μάχης ἀκόρητοι ἔασιν (N636-9). Dionysus pleads with Helios to hold back his steeds (so that he may have more daylight in which to observe Beroe): Ἥλιον λιτάνευεν, ὀπισθοτόνων ἐπὶ δίφρων / αἰθερίῳ στατὸν ἵππον ἀνασφίγγοντα χαλιῶ / μηκύνειν γλυκὺ φέγγος (42.50-3). This is yet another echo of Callimachus, from the hymn to Artemis: ἐπεὶ θεὸς οὐποτ' ἐκείνον / ἦλθε παρ' Ἥλιος καλὸν χορὸν, ἀλλὰ θεῆται / δίφρον ἐπιστήσας, τὰ <sup>δέ</sup> φάεα μηκύνονται (3.180-3). Poseidon now makes a brief appearance: ἐκ Λιβάνου δὲ / ὀκναλέου ποδὸς ἔχνος ὑποκλέπτων Ἐνοσίχθων / ἐντροπαλιζομένῳ βραδυπειθεὶ χάζετο ταρσῶ, / καὶ νόον ἀστήρικτον ὁμοῖον εἶχε θαλάσση, / κύμασι παφλάζοντα πολυφλοίσβοιο μερίμνης (42.55-9). These lines have been adapted from the earlier passage depicting Erechtheus' retreat before the Indian onslaught: ὀκναλέοις δὲ

πόδεσσιν ἐχάζετο κωθρός, <sup>Ἐλεῖθεός</sup> ἢ ἐντροπαλιζομένην τανύων εὐκυκλον ὄπωπῆν  
 (32.265-6), which is an imitation of the passage depicting Ajax' retreat in the *Iliad*  
 (Λ544-7), as previously indicated (pp. 75-6). It is unclear from what Poseidon is  
 withdrawing - he will not be heard of again before 42.441ff., when he makes  
 his dramatic re-entry from the sea. The poet now devotes all his attention to  
 Dionysus' pursuit of Beroe. Lines 65-70 seem to indicate that he has already  
 succeeded in making contact with the girl and is on familiar terms with her.  
 Affecting a serious demeanour, δολίην ... ἔχων ἀγέλαστον ὄπωπῆν (42.65),  
 anticipating thereby Pan's instruction to that effect (cf. οἶα σαοφρονέουσιν ἔχων  
 ἀγέλαστον ὄπωπῆν, 42.218), Dionysus approaches her and enquires about her  
 father, behaving ὡς φίλος, ὡς ὁμόθηρος ὀρίδρομος (42.67). Keydell places a  
 marginal bar alongside lines 65-70 to indicate their unsuitability to the context in  
 which they occur. Koechly and Ludwich (followed by Rouse) transpose them to  
 follow line 274, so as to make it seem that Dionysus was carrying out Pan's  
 instruction. Such radical transpositions to improve the logical coherence of the  
 narrative are not countenanced by Keydell and Collart, who see them as amounting  
 to tampering with the text as left by the poet. Besides, as Collart points out, this  
 would still leave a number of other anticipations of Pan's advice, which could not  
 be removed by transposition.<sup>21</sup> At 42.71ff. we find Dionysus again stalking the  
 girl, as he had been doing up to 42.55. He drinks from a fountain from which he  
 had seen Beroe drink, and is mocked by a nymph, who tells him that no amount of  
 water will quench his passion. With the somewhat peculiar logic that is a hallmark  
 of our poet, Dionysus deduces from the fact that Beroe had drunk water instead of  
 wine, that she prefers Poseidon to himself, and is tormented by jealousy. He then  
 addresses her in her absence, reminding her of the fate of Tyro, who had been  
 seduced by Poseidon on the banks of the Enipeus (42.117-20), a warning which  
 he later succeeds in conveying to her, this time citing the fates of Amymone, Scylla  
 and Asterie, who upon succumbing to Poseidon's advances were changed  
 respectively into a fountain, a rock and an island (42.406-13). Dionysus forthwith  
 assumes the identity of a young hunter so as to have a pretext for conversing with  
 Beroe, the huntress. He puts on an air of fake modesty: ἀκλινὲς ἀμφὶ προσώπῳ /

21 (1930) pp. 238-9.

ψευδαλέον μίμημα σαόφρονος έπλασεν αίδους (42.128-9), again anticipating Pan's advice: μιμηλῆς έρύθημα φέρων άπατήλιον αίδους (42.217). Dionysus is described as being overcome by anxiety to the extent of being unable to speak (as if indeed he had not only acquired the young hunter's visage, but his bashfulness as well): σχεδόν ήλθε και ήθελε μῦθον ένίψαι, / άλλά φόβω πεπέδητο (42.138-9). The poet then proceeds to chide him for his fear: φιλεύει, πῆ σέο θύρσοι / άνδροφόνοι ; ... πῆ στομάτων μύκημα βαρύβρομον ; ά μέγα θαῦμα, / παρθένον έτρεμε Βάκχος, δν έτρεμε φύλα Γιγάντων / Γηγενέων όλετήρα φόβος νίκησεν Έρώτων (42.139-44). These lines may be interpreted alternatively as a monologue in which Dionysus makes self-recriminations for fearing the girl. We note that the reference to the giants is anachronistic in the context of the narrative, as Dionysus is yet to do battle with them (48.31ff.). Pan in his speech will be seen to assuage these fears: άλλά φόβος μεθέπει σε σαόφρονος έγγύθι κούρης / είπέ, τί σοι ρέξει μία παρθένος ; (42.233-4). But when Dionysus does at length manage to speak, his speech betrays no sign of timidity, and he addresses the girl with deceitful glibness: και Βερόην έρέεινε χέων ψευδήμονα φωνήν (42.157). He begins by asking: 'Αρτεμι, πῆ σέο τόξα; (42.158), a question later posed to Artemis herself by Nemesis (48.397). The likening of Beroe to Artemis is yet another anticipation of Pan's advice, who tells Dionysus to compare her favourably with the Graces, Artemis or Athena (42.224-5). Dionysus utters his words in fake astonishment: έννεπε θάμβος έχων άπατήλιον (42.164), again anticipating Pan's advice: ψευδαλέον σέο θάμβος έχέφρουι δείκνυε σιγήν (42.233). The flattery of being likened to a goddess has the girl lift her head with pride (42.166-7), something that Pan will be telling Dionysus (42.227-8).

Caught <sup>as he is</sup> in the throes of passion, Dionysus' condition superficially resembles his bout of insanity earlier: και μογέων Διόνυσος υπεβρυχάτο σιωπῆ / δαιμονίη μάστιγι τετυμμένος, ένδοθι πέσσων / κρυπτόν άκοιμήτων υποκάρδιον έλκος έρώτων (42.182-4). In the earlier episode his behaviour was compared to that of a bull stung by the gadfly (32.125-9), and we noted the influence of Apollonius on Nonnus' imagery. In the present instance he makes

even more extended use of Apollonius' comparison of Heracles to a bull stung by the gadfly. The love-crazed Dionysus is depicted ὡς δ' ὅτε βοῦς ἀκίχητος ἔσω πλαταμῶνος ὀδεύων / ἐσμὸν ὀρεσσινόμων παρεμέτρειν ἡθάδα ταύρων / οἰστρηθεὶς ἀγέληθεν, ὃν εὐπετάλω παρὰ λόχημῃ / βουτύπος ὀξυόεντι μύωψ ἐχαράσσετο κέντρῳ / ἀπροϊδής, ὀλίγῳ δὲ δέμας βεβολημένος οἰστρῳ / τηλικός ἐστυφέλικτο, καὶ ὀρθιον ὑπόθι νώτου / ἀψ ἀνασειράζων παλινάγρετον ἔκλασεν οὐρῆν / κυρτὸς ἐπιτρίβων σκοπέλων ράχιν, ἀντίτυπον δὲ / ὀξὺ κέρας δόχμωσεν ἀνούτατον ἡέρα τύπτων (42.185-93). In Apollonius the maddened bull simile is used to illustrate Heracles' frantic rushing about in his futile search for Hylas, as the realization that the lad has come to harm progressively takes hold (1.1265-9). The simile does not seem quite appropriate in Dionysus' case, seeing that he is anything but aimless and frenzied, pursuing the girl according to a preconceived plan of action. It may well be, however, that Nonnus means to depict Dionysus' state of mind rather than his outward actions, in which case the simile is indeed fitting.

When all his efforts to win over the girl have come to nought, Dionysus seeks the advice of Pan, the traditional *praeceptor amoris*. Other instances of Pan dispensing advice to lovers are found in Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 5.25 and in Longus 2.7, but neither of these prose versions compares in length and thoroughness with that which we find in Nonnus. Similar in conception and scope to Pan's speech in Nonnus is Priapus' speech in Tibullus (1.4), where that god issues precepts of amatory persuasion (albeit of a homosexual nature) to the poet himself. The closest parallels to the individual precepts aired by Pan are, however, to be found in Ovid's *Ars amatoria* and *Amores*. D'Ippolito<sup>22</sup> draws attention to the following: Pan's observation πᾶσα γυνή ποθέει πλέον ἀνέρος (42.209), corresponding in idea to 'parcior in nobis nec tam furiosa libido' (*Ars Am.* 1.281); the notion that women conceal their passion more effectively (cf. 42.210 and 212-4) corresponding to Ovid's 'tectius illa cupit' (*Ars Am.* 1.276). The idea that the lover's pretence of modesty should be accompanied by a serious expression, μιμηλῆς ἐρύθημα φέρων ἀπατήλιον αἰδοῦς / οἶα σαοφροκούσαν ἔχων

22 (1964) pp.113-4, the correspondences having first been noted by Ş. Bezdechi "Nonnos și Ovidio". Sibio, 1941.

ἀγέλαστον ὀπωπῆν (42.217-8), occurs likewise in Ovid: 'tantum ne pateas verbis simulator in illis. / effice, nec vultu destrue dicta tua' (*Ars Am.* 2.311-2). The lover should partake of the activities of his beloved, which happens to be the hunt in the present instance, praising her beauty at the same time: καὶ λίνα πάλλων / θαύματι μὲν δολίῳ ῥοδοειδέα δέρκεο κούρην / κάλλος ἐπαινήσας (42.219-21), which corresponds in sense to Ovid's 'attonitum [sc. te] forma fac putet esse sua' (*Ars Am.* 2.296). He should charm her with silent play of the eyes: παρθενικὴν δ' ἐς ἔρωτα νοήμονι θέλγε σιωπῇ, / κινυμένων βλεφάρων ἀντώπια νεύματα πέμπων (42.231-2), which again corresponds to Ovid's 'atque oculos oculis spectare fatentibus ignem / saepe tacens <sup>vocem</sup> verbaque vultus habet' (*Ars Am.* 1.573-4). Even the κινυμένων βλεφάρων may be accounted for: 'multa supercilio vidi vibrante loquentes, / nutibus in vestris pars bona vocis erat' (*Amores*, 5.14-5). Pan tells Dionysus not to be afraid of the girl, as her weapons are only her eyes and rosy cheeks (42.233-7), the theme of Aphrodite's weapons being one which Nonnus never seems to tire of reiterating. Pan further assures Dionysus that his youthful beauty will carry far more weight with the girl than any presents he cares to give her, an idea also found in Tibullus (1.4.27ff.). Dionysus, as we see later, will not heed this piece of advice, lavishing presents upon Beroe.

When Dionysus returns, Beroe asks him in her youthful innocence who he is. Dionysus answers her with a long speech crammed with sexual double entendre. Gigli-Piccardi<sup>23</sup> interprets the whole speech as an extended metaphor, whereby Dionysus intimates his designs on the girl in the language of viticulture. He begins by saying εἰμὶ τεοῦ Λιβάνοιο γεωμόρος· ἦν ἐθειλήσης / ἀρδεύω σέο γαίαν, ἐγὼ σέο καρπὸν ἀέξω (42.283). According to Gigli-Piccardi, Dionysus is telling Beroe in a thinly disguised manner that he plans to get her with child. She links ἀρδεύω with the frequently occurring ὄμβρος Ἐρώτων (to which one might add γαμία ἔέρση, 16.351, and γαμία ῥαθάμιγξ, 48.656). The καρπός, understandably, denotes 'offspring'. Dionysus drives home his intended message, stating that he will donate the first fruits of the harvest to Aphrodite instead of Demeter (42.299-300). He will caress his unripe grapes: ὄμφακα γινώσκω νεοθηλέα χερσὶν ἀφάσσω (42.306), meaning of course the young girl's

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23 (1985) pp. 21ff.

breasts, the word ὄμφαξ 'unripe grape' being commonly used by the late poets to mean 'immature breast' (cf. Triphiodorus 34, and 48.365 and 369). Dionysus makes known his horticultural expertise, depicting plants as if they were sentient beings capable of giving expression to their sexuality, with some species being ascribed a male, others a female role: ἠνίδε, πῶς ἰάκιθος ἐπέτρεχε γείτουι μύρτω, / πῶς γελάα νάρκισσος ἐπιθρώσκων ἀνεμώνη (42.301-2), which echoes the earlier description of plants behaving in an animated fashion at the hierogamy of Zeus and Hera: θήλει δ' ἄρσενα φύλλα συνέπλεκε γείτουι ποίη ... καὶ ... / ἱμερόεις νάρκισσος ἐπιθρώσκων ἀνεμώνη (32.87-92). Dionysus demands no monetary remuneration for his work: οὐ χρέος ὄλβου· / μισθὸν ἔχω δύο μῆλα, μιῆς ἓνα βότρυν ὀπώρης (42.311-2). Μῆλα, as we learn from Theocritus (27.49-50), is a colloquialism for μαζοί. The rest may be construed from Nonnus' own later statement: Αὔρης ὑπναλέης γαμίην ἔκλεψεν ὀπώρην (48.632).

Beroe remains unmoved by Dionysus' speech, apparently ignorant of its insinuations (42.313-4). Dionysus takes the nets from her hand, with feigned astonishment at her skill (42.316-7). He may in this regard be seen to be translating Pan's advice into action, but we recall that he acted also with feigned astonishment before consulting Pan (42.164). Beroe's reaction is not stated. Now follows a passage where Dionysus (like Morrheus previously) dreams that Beroe comes to him in bridal robes, with the poet making the comment that one often sees in dreams what he has been engaged in during the day (42.325-35). Dionysus on waking beseeches Eros and Aphrodite to prolong his dream, but his wish is not granted. We next find Dionysus taking part in the hunt with Beroe and Adonis. The passage (42.346-52) is similar to 42.124-35, with Dionysus casting furtive glances at the girl, who covers her face with a veil to avoid them. Dionysus now resumes his divine form (we recall that he has been masquerading as a young hunter from 42.126), and addresses Beroe with a lengthy speech in which he appeals to her not to disappoint her parents Aphrodite and Adonis by turning her back on love. He argues that her loyalty should be to her mother, not to Artemis and Athena, with whom she has no ties of kinship. The argument is essentially the same as that previously used by Eros in his address to Abarbarie (40.563-7).

Turning his attention now to Poseidon, he is depreciative of the presents that his rival is likely to offer her. Poseidon would make her a marriage bed of foul smelling seal skins: στορέσει πνείοντα δυσώδεα πόντιον ὄδμῆν / δέρματα φωκάων (42.398-9), seal-skins having been mentioned previously by the poet in a pejorative reference to Homer's theme in contrast to his own (1.36-8). The same comparison is made here: just as Nonnus' theme is redolent of nectar and Homer's of seal-skins, Dionysus' gifts are fragrant, while Poseidon's smell of the sea. Dionysus concludes by reminding Beroe of the fates of Poseidon's previous spouses, Amymone, Scylla and Asterie. Beroe reacts to all this by putting her hands on her ears.

Poseidon arrives anew, making a dramatic entry from the sea: ἀνεσσύμενος δὲ θαλάσσης, / ἴκμια διψαλέοιο δι' οὖρεος ἔχνια πάλλων, / παρθενικὴν μάστευε Ποσειδάων μετανάστης, / ἄβροχον ὑδατόεντι περιρραίνων χθόνα ταρσῶ / καὶ οἱ ἔτι σπεύδοντι παρὰ κλέτας εὐβοτον ὕλης / οὖρεος ἄκρα κάρηνα ποδῶν ἐλελίζετο παλμῶ (42.441-6). The description has been imitated from Poseidon's arrival on the battlefield in the *Iliad*: ἐνθ' ἄρ' ὁ γ' ἐξ ἀλὸς ἔζετ' ἰών ... αὐτίκα δ' ἐξ ὄρεος κατεβήσετο παιπαλόεντος / κραιπνὰ ποσὶ προβιβάσ· τρέμε δ' οὖρεα μακρὰ καὶ ὕλη / ποσσὶν ὑπ' ἀθανάτοισι Ποσειδάωνος ἰόντος (N15-9). Braune's contention<sup>24</sup> that Nonnus has been influenced by Claudian's description of the emergence of Pluto (*De raptu Proserpinae*, 2.151ff.) is somewhat otiose, seeing that the Homeric passage accounts for all that Nonnus has to say. Poseidon eyes Beroe ἐκ ποδὸς ἄχρι κάρηνου and addresses her with a lengthy speech replete with blandishments. He calls her a fourth Grace: ὀπλοτέρη γὰρ / τρισσάων Χαρίτων Βερόη βλάστησε τετάρτη (42.466-7), which recalls Pan's advice to Dionysus: χάριτας κίκλησκε χερείνας (42.224). Poseidon then tells her that since her mother Aphrodite had emerged from the sea, it is only fitting that she herself be wedded to the sea-god (an argument which Eros used on the fountain nymph Abarbarie, 40.563-7). He promises to make all the sea-deities her servants, including Ino, the nurse of Dionysus. Beroe is as indifferent to Poseidon's overtures as she had been to those

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24 (1948) p.185 n.1

of Dionysus, walking away before he can finish.

Aphrodite, unaware, it appears, that Beroe has already been promised to Poseidon, invites the two suitors to fight over her, demanding sureties that the loser, should he be Poseidon, not shatter the πατρίς of Beroe with his trident, and, should he be Dionysus, not destroy its vineyards. Both are obliged to take an oath to that effect: ἀμφὶ δὲ νύμφης / ἄμφω ἀεθλεύσοιτε γάμου προκέλευθον ἀγῶνα· / ὅς δέ κε νικήσει, Βερόην ἀνάεδνον ἀγέσθω ... ἀμφοτέροις φίλος ὄρκος (42.512-5). These lines are imitated from the *Iliad*, from the passage where Paris proposes to Menelaus that they fight over Helen in single combat: ὀππότερος δέ κε νικήσει κρείσσων τε γένηται, / κτήμαθ' ἑλὼν ἔν πάνα γυναικά τε οἴκαδ' ἀγέσθω· / οἱ δ' ἄλλοι φιλότητα καὶ ὄρκια πιστὰ ταμόντες ναίοιτε Τροίην ἐριβώλακα (Γ71-4). The book closes with a portent favouring Poseidon: a falcon descending on a pigeon has its prey snatched from under it by an osprey. Dionysus, when he sees this, loses all hope of victory, but enters the fray regardless.

Book 43 is wholly devoted to the battle between Poseidon and Dionysus. It is essentially a theomachy, as it does not seem to involve any of Dionysus' mortal followers, though at one point the Indians, who are now his allies, are depicted in action against Proteus. The fighting does not conform to the traditional theomachy pattern, in that at no instance do Dionysus and Poseidon fight one another. We have instead a confused *mêlée* between the lesser deities. This type of battle, involving all the deities making up the retinue of the two adversaries, is foreshadowed in the earlier Apollo-Poseidon confrontation, where Poseidon marshals his sea deities to fight by his side (36.94-6). The war between Poseidon and Dionysus appears to have some precedent in Phoenician mythology. Philo refers to an incident in the struggle between Ouranus and Cronus, where Demarous (a son of Ouranus, 2.16, and the father of Melkart, 2.22) attacks Pontus (the father of Poseidon, 2.21, and ally of Cronus), but is defeated: ἐπεισὶ τε Πόντῳ ὁ Δημαροῦς, τροπούται τε αὐτὸν ὁ Πόντος (2.22). There is no mention of Beirut in connexion with this battle, but we are informed a little later that Cronus assigned Byblos to Dione and Beirut to Poseidon, the Cabeirs, the Hunters and the Fishers, and that the remains of Pontos were hallowed there (2.25). Nonnus'

Poseidon can conceivably be identified with Philo's Pontus, but the relation between Dionysus and Demarous is more tenuous. According to Philo, Demarous was co-ruler of the world with Astarte under the auspices of Cronus (2.24). He was in some respects the Phoenician equivalent of Zeus (cf. Ζεὺς Δημηφροῦς, ὁ καὶ Ἄδωδος βασιλεὺς θεῶν, 2.24), but he never seems to have toppled Cronus, who retained overall control. We note that in Philo's account Demarous took the fight to Pontus (cf. the ἔπεισι), as Dionysus does in Nonnus, the battle taking place on the sea (i.e. in Poseidon's domain). It seems as if Nonnus has made rather free use of the events recorded in Philo: in his version Pontus and Poseidon become one and the same, Dionysus is substituted for Demarous, and the acquisition of Beirut (in the form of the maiden Beroe) is made out to be the cause of the conflict between the two gods.

Beroe stands in dread of Poseidon, preferring Dionysus, just as Deianeira, the poet reminds us, feared Achelous and preferred Heracles (cf. Sophocles, *Trachiniae*, 15ff.). Poseidon and Dionysus rush into battle roaring like bulls, Poseidon βλοσυρὸν μύκημα χέων λυσσώδεϊ λαιμῶ (43.18) and Dionysus τρηχαλέον μύκημα σεσηρότι χεῖλεί' πέμπων (43.27), resembling monsters rather than gods. Considerable emphasis is placed on sounds in this episode, the roar of the waves, the howl of the gales and the way in which the voices of the combatants carry over the watery medium. It seems that the opposing sides are vying with one another to see who can generate the most noise. Dionysus assures his followers he will match any sounds Poseidon shall make: αὐλὸς ἐμὸς πολεμήιον ἦχον ἀράσσω / ἀντίτυπον φθέγγαιτο μέλος μυκήτορι κόχλω / καὶ διδύμοις πατάγοισι μόθου χαλκόθροον ἦχῶ / τύμπανα δουπήσειεν (43.71-4). Dionysus drives Rhea's chariot toward the sea, his body covered with vines and ivy that spring from its rim (43.23-5). An elephant drinks dry a nearby spring: καὶ βραδὺς ἐρπύζων ἐλέφας παρὰ <sup>χεῖτον</sup> πηγῇ ... ὄμβριον ἀζαλέοισιν ἀνήφυσε χεῖλεσιν ὕδωρ, / καὶ προχοᾶς ξήραινε (43.29-32). The notion is probably borrowed from Claudian's Greek *Gigantomachy*, a work which has so conspicuously influenced Nonnus. There a giant drinks a river dry: ἄχρι δὲ πηγᾶν ὑπεδέχυντο μυρίον ὕδωρ / ἐσπόμενος προχοῆσιν ἀπολλυμένου

ποταμοῖο (28-9). Nonnus has already used this motif in book 40, where Cronus, to ease his birth pangs, drinks a whole river dry: χανδὸν ὄλου ποταμοῖο ῥόον νεφεληδὸν ἀφύσσων (40.72). Dionysus whips the abode of Poseidon with vine-clusters, while Poseidon wreaks havoc on land, shaking mountains and uprooting vines. The Bassarids attack a herd of black cattle belonging to Poseidon, the *sparagmos* (43.40-51) anticipating that at 45.287-93. The scene, which will be discussed in the next chapter along with the latter, is inspired by Euripides' *Bacchae* 660-774. The disposition of Dionysus' forces is outlined next. The disposition is analogous to that at 27.148-65, except that here a five-fold division obtains: καὶ στρατιῆς Διόνυσος ἐκόσμεεν ἡγεμονίης, / στήσας πέντε φάλαγγας ἐς ὕδατόεσσαν ἐννώ· / τῆς πρώτης στιχὸς ἦρχε Κίλιξ εὐάμπελος Οἰεὺς / υἱὸς Ἐρευθαλίωτος, ὃν ἦροσεν ἐγγύθι Ταύρου / Φυλλίδος ἀγραύλοισιν ὁμιλήσας ὑμεναίοις· / τῆς δ' ἑτέρης ἡγεῖτο μελαγχαιῆς Ἐλικάων ... Οἰνοπίων τριτάτης, Στάφυλος προμάχιξε τετάρτης ... πέμπτης δ' ἡγεμόνευε Μελάνθιος, ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν, / ὃν τέκεν Οἰνώη Κισσηιάς (43.52-63). The first half of the passage has been imitated from Homer's depiction of the chieftains of the Myrmidons: τῆς μὲν ἱῆς στιχὸς ἦρξε Μενέσθιος αἰολοθώρηξ, / υἱὸς Σπερχειοῖο ... / ὃν τέκε Πηλῆος θυγάτηρ ... τῆς δ' ἑτέρης Ἐύδωρος ἀρήμιος ἡγεμόνευε (Π173-9). As the leaders and their divisions play no part in the ensuing action, the passage is quite irrelevant in the context of the narrative. Their names are fanciful formations of the kind found in the *Batrachomyomachy* - we may for instance compare Οἰνοπίων to Τρωξάρτης in the latter poem. One cannot help thinking that Nonnus is punning here. Μελάνθιος would surely call for the reading ὄρχαμος Ἰνδῶν rather than ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν (cf. Keydell's *apparatus*). The Indians are the only mortals to have a role in the ensuing action, attempting, on Dionysus' orders, to apprehend Proteus (43.225ff.).

As may be expected, both Dionysus and Poseidon harangue their associates with long speeches, in which each promises to make the other's followers his servants, an idea already familiar from the Dionysus-Deriyades harangues. The theme of turning the established order of things on its head is a recurrent one in the

*Dionysiaca*, beginning with Typhoeus' speech in book 2. Thus Dionysus tells his followers: ἀπειρήτησι δὲ Νύμφαις / κύμβαλα Νηρεΐδεσσιν ὀπάσσετε· μίξατε Βάκχαις / Ὑδριάδας (43.93-5), and Poseidon responds in kind: ἐν εὐδρῳ δὲ μελάθρῳ / Βασσαρίδες στορέσειαν ἐμὸν λέχος ἀντὶ Λυαίου (43.154-5). The two adversaries are selective in regard to whom of the other's followers they will co-opt. Dionysus rejects Nereus' daughters (43.107-8), and Poseidon, almost as if he had heard Dionysus' speech, responds by rejecting the Satyrs and Maenads (43.156-7). Both conclude their speeches with personal taunts, Dionysus inviting Poseidon to sing at his and Beroe's wedding, Poseidon enjoining Dionysus to put aside the thyrsus and fight with the thunderbolt, if he is, as he claims to be, the son of Zeus. All of Dionysus' adversaries, from Deriades to Pentheus, at some stage accuse him of being an impostor, and the same allegation is implicit in Poseidon's taunt in the present instance. Poseidon promises to swamp the constellations in a manner reminiscent of Typhoeus' boasts in book 2. He recalls how in his previous confrontation he had done just that, raising the sea to the skies, washing the Wain in the Ocean and having his dolphins come face to face with the celestial Dolphin. Poseidon's entry into battle is conveyed in language evocative of sea sounds: τριόδοντι μυχούς ἐτίναξε θαλάσσης, / καὶ ῥοθίῳ κελάδοντι καὶ οἰδαίνοντι ῥεέθρῳ / ἥερα μαστίζοντες ἐβόμβεον ὕδατος ὄλκοί (43.193-4). The language, if hackneyed, is nevertheless effective in conjuring up images of a menacing squall at sea. A depiction of Triton (43.205-9), similar to that at 36.93-4, and that in Apollonius 4.1610-6, follows. Such depictions appear to have been inspired by Hellenistic sculptures of this biform deity. A number of isolated vignettes follow. Glaucus assails the Satyrs, Pan cavorts over the waves, chasing the echo of his own pipes: ὑπηνέμιος δὲ καὶ αὐτῇ / τικτομένη σύριγγι διώκετο ποντιάς ἠχώ (43.220-1). The sound of the pipes carried by the wind and echoing off the water is well represented by the poet's choice of words. Proteus appears forthwith on the scene to be confronted by the αἰθόπες Ἴνδοί (43.227), erstwhile enemies and now followers of Dionysus. Their conversion from enemy to ally does not exempt them from being referred to in a racially depreciative manner by the poet, who persists in calling them οὐλοκόμων στίχες ἀνδρῶν (43.228). Proteus baffles his hapless foes with

multiple form-changes, just as Dionysus had baffled Deriades in their first duel. Nereus takes to the fray next, accompanied by his daughters. Ino also makes an appearance, λευκὸν ἐρευγομένη μανιώδεις ἀφρὸν ὑπήνης (43.263), a slightly unkind portrait considering that she had nursed Dionysus. We note that Dionysus tells his followers not to capture Thetis because of the hospitality she had shown him when fleeing from Lycurgus (43.95-6), but does not extend the same consideration to Ino, to whom his debt is just as great. Eido rides on the back of a pilot fish, her riding skill being illustrated by a long simile drawn from chariot-racing: ὡς δέ τις ἵππεύων ἐλατήρ ὑπὸ κυκλάδι τέχνη, / δοχμώσας ὄλον ἵππον ἀριστερὸν ἐγγύθι νύσσης, / δεξιτερὸν κάμψει, παριεμένοιο χαλινού / κέντρῳ ἐπισπέρχων, προχέων πλήξιππον ἀπειλήν, / ὀκλάζων ἐπίκυρτος, ἐπ' ἄντυγι γούνατα πήξας, / ἰξυί καμπτομένη, καὶ ἐκούσιον ἵππον ἐλαύνων / φειδομένη παλάμη τεχνήμονι βαιὸν ἰμάσσει, / ὄμμα βαλὼν κατόπισθε, παρελκομένου δὲ προσώπου / δίφρον ὀπισθοπόροιο φυλάσσεται ἥμιλοχῆος (43.270-8). As Collart <sup>25</sup> points out, the simile is little more than a pastiche of lines and phrases from the chariot race in book 37, collation with which yields the following: line 271=208, 272 differs only slightly from 220, 273=218, 274=355, 275-6=252-3 and 277-8 approximate to 254-5. The simile is not particularly apposite to the situation it is meant to illustrate, as Eido cannot be seen here as racing against or being pursued by anybody.

The rivers and Oceanus now join the fray - even though the battle has been in progress for some time, the poet somewhat confusingly speaks as if it were only now starting (43.286-9). We are not told what effect their combined onslaught has on Dionysus' followers. Nonnus turns instead to the feats of the individual members of each god's entourage. Even the animals seek out their opponents, an elephant taking on a seal (43.337-9). A Bacchante, with hair aflame with a fire that does not burn her, dances over the water οἶα Ποσειδάωνος ἐπισκαίρουσα καρῆνῳ (43.353). Psamathe, fearing that Glaucus will be killed and Nereus and Thetis be made servants of Dionysus, appeals to Zeus to intervene, though the foregoing narrative gives no indication that Poseidon is losing the battle. Zeus grants her prayer: ὡς φαμένης ἤκουσε δι' αἰθέρος ὑψιμέδων Ζεὺς / καὶ

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25 (1930) pp. 245-6.

Βερόης ὑμέναιον ἐπέτρεπεν Ἐννοσιγαίῳ / καὶ μόθον ἐπρήνυε  
γαμοστόλον· οὐρανόθεν γὰρ / νυμφιδίην ἀτέλεστον ἀναστέλλοντες ἐννῶ /  
Βάκχον ἀπειλητῆρες ἐκυκλώσαντο κεραυνοί (43.372-6). Braune sees the  
above lines as an imitation of the passage in the *De raptu Proserpinae* where  
Minerva is warned off by Jupiter as she is about to obstruct Pluto's chariot:  
'libratur in ictum / fraxinus et nigros illuminat obvia currus. / missaque paene foret,  
ni Iuppiter aethere vulso / pacificas rubri torsisset fulminis alas, / confessus  
socerum. nimbis Hymenaeus hiulcis / intonat, et testes firmant connubia flammae'  
(2.226-31). Dionysus, like Minerva in Claudian, must not be permitted to abort a  
course of action previously agreed to by Zeus and his brother. In both poems Zeus'  
command is obeyed with some reluctance: Dionysus ὀκναλέοις δὲ πόδεσσιν  
ἐχάζετο νωθρὸς ὀδίτης, / στυγνὸς ὀπισθοβόλῳ δεδοκημένος ὄμματι  
κούρην (43.381-2); in Claudian likewise 'invitae cessere deae' [sc. Minerva and  
Venus] (2.232). Nonnus has used elements of the above passage previously: at  
25.346-7, it will be recalled, Dionysus complains about being restrained by Zeus'  
βρονταίοις πατάγοισιν, and at 33.233 Morrheus pursued Chalcomeda  
ὀκναλέοις δὲ πόδεσσι (used in the same metrical position). The conjunction of  
the elements - Zeus stopping with a show of thunder and lightning a conflict  
between his brother and another god that is likely to upset the pre-arranged  
marriage of his brother - is common to Claudian and Nonnus. This  
correspondence, when viewed alongside the parallels already cited, places beyond  
reasonable doubt the case for direct acquaintance.

The book concludes with the wedding feast of Poseidon and Beroe, which is  
schematically parallel to the wedding feast of Pluto and Proserpina in Claudian. In  
both cases the anticipated gloom is dispelled by the splendid festivities put on by  
the bridegroom. In place of the unpleasantly smelling seal skins, which Dionysus  
had foretold would greet her (42.398-403), Beroe is given all manner of precious  
ornaments (43.398-403). The depiction of the ornaments is inspired by the passage  
in the *Iliad* where Hephaistus tells how during his nine-year undersea sojourn  
with Eurynome and Thetis he fashioned many precious objects (Σ400-1). Some of  
these very same ornaments are now given to Beroe, with Nonnus proceeding to  
comment directly on the Homeric passage by explaining how Hephaistus had used

his implements under water (43.403-7). We have noted previously an exegetical tendency on Nonnus' part with regard to certain Iliadic passages that he imitates. The present is one such instance, functioning more as a commentary on Hephaistus' words in Homer than as a necessary part of his own narrative. The lines are nonetheless significant as an example of the fire-water opposition (ἐν ῥοθίοις ἀσβεστον ἐβόμβεεν ἐνδόμυχον πῦρ, 43.407) , which, as we have seen, is a leitmotiv in the poem.

Dionysus, consoler par excellence, stands himself in need of consolation, which he promptly receives from Eros, who promises him another bride, Ariadne, who is even daintier than Beroe. Reassured, Dionysus sets off for Thebes, to the site of his fiery birth.

## Chapter 8: Dionysus' return to Thebes.

The events associated with Dionysus' return to Thebes, to the site of his first, premature birth from lightning-consumed Semele, comprise the subject of books 44 to 46 of the *Dionysiaca*. Nonnus' treatment of the theme, comprising a total of 1035 lines of narrative and speeches, is comparable in length to Euripides' *Bacchae* (1392 lines in its present state), a work to which he is heavily indebted and which he may have sought to emulate. Though he does not mention Euripides by name as he does Homer (25.8 and 264-9), his dependence here on the *Bacchae* is no less close than was his dependence on the *Iliad* in the books devoted to the Indian war. Tyrrell, in a reference to Nonnus in his introduction to the play, even goes so far as to dismiss books 44 to 46 as "little more than a paraphrase of the *Bacchae* in hexameters"<sup>1</sup>, and this assessment, if a little exaggerated, does underline the remarkable correspondence between the two works.

The correspondence is, nevertheless, not total, for a really close parallelism can only be said to exist between *Dionysiaca* 45.56 - 46.319 and *Bacchae* 170-1326, the earlier segment from 44.1 to 45.55, consisting in part of an elaboration of events referred to in retrospect in the prologue of the play, partly of a series of anticipations of later developments, and the segment 46.320-69 consisting of the consoling of Cadmus and his daughters by Dionysus, an element absent from the play. The different endings are indicative of a difference of emphasis in the two authors' depiction of Dionysus. Whereas Euripides ends his play with a disconsolate Cadmus and daughters undertaking their separate paths to exile and Dionysus aggravating Cadmus' anguish with the prophecy that he and Harmonia will be turned into snakes and lay waste to Hellas at the head of a barbarian host (1330-6), Nonnus has Dionysus assuage their grief as he had done previously for Botrys and Methe (19.1-58), emphasising the god's consolatory role. It needs to be noted, however, that even where Nonnus has elected to differ from Euripides, the

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<sup>1</sup> (1871) p. xiv

latter's influence remains paramount. This is especially true of the anticipatory passages in book 44, where the rending of Pentheus as depicted in Agave's dream is as much dependent on *Bacchae* 1095-1136 as is the description of the actual sparagmos in book 46.

In the segment from 45.52 to 46.319, which parallels *Bacchae* 170-1326, Nonnus has, in place of Tiresias' philosophical discourse on the importance of Dionysus to mankind (266-327), substituted two cautionary tales, illustrative of the god's powers: the stories of the Tyrrhenian pirates (45.105-68) and of Alpus (45.169-215). These substitutions are indicative of Nonnus' partiality to the miraculous and magical, instances of which, though present in the *Bacchae* - Dionysus is, after all, the god of sudden epiphanies and magical transformations - have been proliferated beyond the requirements of the plot in the *Dionysiaca*. The psychological element, so crucial to Euripides' carefully tailored progression of events, has largely been eliminated from Nonnus' version of the story. The process whereby Dionysus subtly elicits Pentheus' curiosity and voyeuristic tendencies to lure him to his destruction has no counterpart in Nonnus. Instead, Pentheus' decision to go and spy on the Bacchantes is brought about through the joint efforts of Dionysus and Selene, who simply instil λύσσα in the king's mind, effecting an instant transformation. Pentheus, sane and obdurate in his opposition at one moment, becomes a frenzied Bacchant at the next (46.97-105). There is no gradation, no inner struggle such as we encounter in Euripides. Dionysus simply suggests that Pentheus spy on the Bacchantes and the king complies without hesitation.

Nonnus shows himself unappreciative of the underlying pattern of cause and effect, which gives Euripides' exposition of events a strong semblance of probability and renders the actions of his characters plausible. For example, whereas the earthquake that shakes Pentheus' palace is introduced by Euripides for a specific purpose, as a diversion to facilitate Dionysus' escape from custody without compromising his disguise as a merely human choir leader, in Nonnus it is relegated to the ranks of the miracles heralding Dionysus' approach at the beginning of book 44. Thus an element, functional in Euripides, has been rendered largely ornamental in Nonnus. Dionysus' action of shaking the palace in a threatening way, before Pentheus has even had an opportunity to display his ὕβρις, seems

somewhat pointless in the narrative context.

In the portrayal of character Nonnus may be seen to be equally insensitive to the subtle gradations of Euripides. For instance, while in the *Bacchae* Pentheus is credited with some redeeming features, his steadfast resistance to a new cult which he perceived as a threat to the moral fabric of the state (215ff.) being singled out as a praiseworthy characteristic by some critics,<sup>2</sup> in the *Dionysiaca* he is pictured as an unregenerate villain, like his fellow earthborn, Typhoeus and Deriades, all of them uncompromisingly evil chthonian foes of the Olympian order, represented by Zeus and Dionysus. His anger and hostility toward Dionysus spring from envy at the latter's feats (44.131) and from the belief that he has come to deprive him of his throne (46.63-70). Pentheus is himself portrayed as a usurper (κοιρανίην πατρώιον ἥρπασε, 44.50), something that he most certainly is not in Euripides, where we are told on two separate occasions (43-4, 213) that Cadmus voluntarily relinquished the throne in favour of his grandson.

Nonnus' tendency to model his speeches on hackneyed rhetorical stereotypes leaves them devoid of the spontaneity and immediacy that we find in Euripides. In the *Bacchae* only Tiresias' address to Pentheus is cast in such a rhetorical mould, and as his purpose is to persuade, the use of rhetorical devices is quite apposite. But the use of studied rhetoric is quite out of place in some of the situations in which Nonnus employs it, as for example when it is put in the mouth of Pentheus about to be torn to pieces or in the mouth of Agave on discovering that she has killed her own son. Agave's anguish and Autonoe's attempt to console her sister are presented in the form of studied syncrises (46.282-352), which detract considerably from the pathos of the moment. By over-long and partly irrelevant speeches, as well as by his already noted tendency to anticipate key elements of the story in seemingly unnecessary detail, Nonnus deprives the plot of Euripides of its inherent suspense, but enough of the genius of the original survives in the imitation to render books 44 to 46 among the most engaging in the *Dionysiaca*.

Editors of the *Bacchae*, from Hermann in 1823 to Dodds in 1960, have drawn attention to the correspondences between the play and the *Dionysiaca*, but have, quite understandably, confined their observations to those instances where Euripides' meaning stood in need of elucidation and where Nonnus' imitation was

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dodds (1960) p. xli

believed to cast some light on textual problems. Where the text of the *Bacchae* posed no such difficulties, there was no need to refer to the work of a late imitator. In the present chapter, it is proposed to look at all the correspondences between the two works from the vantage point of the *Dionysiaca* and arrive at an assessment of the extent of Nonnus' indebtedness to the dramatist. Seeing that the present segment of the *Dionysiaca* also contains an episode, the story of the Tyrrhenian pirates, where our poet is presumed to have been influenced by Ovid, we have an opportunity to compare Nonnus' relationship to the Roman poet with his relationship to Euripides.

Nonnus' account of Dionysus' arrival in Thebes differs from that of Euripides in a number of details. While in Euripides Dionysus comes to Thebes in the guise of a mortal, as leader of a band of fifteen female votaries of the god from Lydia, in Nonnus he arrives in all his divine glory at the head of a vast host of nymphs and satyrs, with whom he had accomplished the conquest of India (there is no further mention of his mortal followers, who presumably went their own ways after the conclusion of the Indian war). In Euripides the approach of Dionysus occasions Bacchic frenzy in the womenfolk of Thebes (cf. Dionysus' remark καὶ πᾶν τὸ θῆλυ σπέρμα Καδμείων ὄσαι / γυναῖκες ἦσαν ἐξέμηνα δωμάτων, 35-6), the men being exempt, apart from Cadmus and Tiresias, who join the procession, one from political expediency, the other out of respect for religion (195-6). We may note that Euripides is not entirely consistent here, as he seems to imply in two other instances that the frenzy was universal (cf. the chorus at 114: αὐτίκα γὰρ πᾶσα χορεύσει and Agave's remark at 1295: πᾶσά τ' ἐξεβακχεύθη πόλις). In the *Bacchae* the onset of frenzy comes about surreptitiously with the arrival of the Lydian choir leader and his fifteen female followers at Thebes. In Nonnus, on the other hand, Dionysus' approach is heralded by grand portents and upheavals of nature. Nonnus, with characteristic love of hyperbole, speaks of the rivers Asopus, Dirce and Ismenus swirling in dance and hamadryads emerging from their trees to sing his praises (44.8-14). As on his arrival in India (22.16-38), predatory beasts put aside their normal dispositions and frolic with their would-be prey (44.30-4). Pentheus alone stands apart from the universal rejoicing and orders the gates of Thebes to be shut. A series of miraculous happenings prevents him from putting his

orders into effect (44.20-45), happenings which recur on two further occasions (44.123-9 and 45.323-31). The depiction of these supernatural events is clearly modelled on the passage in the *Bacchae* where Dionysus induces similar happenings in order to make good his escape from Pentheus' custody (622ff.), but in Nonnus they are taken out of their proper context and made merely to signal the god's arrival. Nonnus, it may be noted, has jettisoned the scene of Dionysus' captivity, perhaps viewing it as too undignified for a god to be imprisoned by a mortal. The gates which Pentheus ordered shut open miraculously of their own accord, with Pentheus' men described as fighting the winds in their efforts to keep them closed: ἔξαπίνης δὲ / αὐτόματοι κληῖδες ἀνωίγνυντο πυλάων, / καὶ δολιχοῦς πυλεῶνι μάτην ἐπέβαλλον ὄχῆας / ἠερίοις θεράποντες ἐριδμαίνοντες ἀήταις (44.20-3). Nonnus has undoubtedly been influenced by the passage in Quintus depicting the portents accompanying the death of Laocoon, where among other things, αὐτόματοι δ' ἄρ' ὄχῆες ἀνωίγνοντο πυλάων (12.511), though the idea also occurs in Euripides, who describes the freeing of the Bacchantes imprisoned by Pentheus in similar terms: αὐτόματα δ' αὐταῖς δεσμὰ διελύθη ποδῶν, / κληῖδες τ' ἀνήκαν θύρετρ' ἄνευ θνητῆς χερὸς (447-8), a description which Nonnus imitates when he comes to give his own account of the freeing of the Bacchantes (45.278-83). The futility of resisting a divinely ordained event, such as the attempt by Pentheus' men to keep the gates closed, is likewise alluded to in Euripides, when the king's servants vainly try to put out the magical fire in his palace: ἀπας δ' ἐν ἔργῳ δοῦλος ἦν μάτην πονῶν (626). When Pentheus' men see that they are no match for the aged Sileni, they disobey his orders and join in the Bacchic revelry, turning into the very image of the noise-loving Corybants (44.33). As we have noted, in Euripides the only men to join the festivities are Cadmus and Tiresias. Portents of a more menacing nature follow, which have the effect of terrifying the inhabitants (δεῖμα φέρων ναέτησι, 44.44, καὶ ναέται δεδόνητο, 44.46). Why Dionysus should seek to terrify them in this way, when Pentheus alone is deserving of his ire, one is at a loss to understand. Nonnus, as often, is interested in immediate impressions and not overly concerned to assign plausible motives for the actions of his characters. The palace is shaken: αὐτοέλικτος ἐσειέτο Πενθέος αὐλή / ἀκλινέων σφαιρηδὸν ἀνατσοῦσα

θεμέθλων· / καὶ πυλεῶν δεδόνητο θορῶν ἐνοσίχθονι παλμῶ,/πήματος  
 ἔσσομένοιο προάγγελος (44.35-8). This is an echo, reworked in typically  
 Nonnian language, of Euripides' ἐν δὲ τῷδε τῷ χρόνῳ / ἀνετίναξ' ἔλθων ὁ  
 Βάκχος δῶμα (622-3). The depiction of frenzied circular motion, properly used of  
 dancers smitten by Bacchic frenzy, is in the present instance applied to a building  
 shaken by an earthquake. Athena's altar, too, is described as spinning around  
 (44.38-9), a portent which may be interpreted variously as a sign of the goddess'  
 annoyance at the womenfolk abandoning the spindle for the thyrsus (a recurrent  
 theme in Euripides, 117-9, 514, 1236-7, echoed by Nonnus at 34.353-6 and  
 45.49), or merely as another threat directed at Pentheus by Dionysus. The thyrsus-  
 spindle opposition would seem to imply a conflict of interest between Dionysus and  
 Athena, which would make Pentheus an ally of Athena, but the theme is not  
 developed further in either Euripides or Nonnus. Next we have two instances of  
 animated statues, recalling the animated statue of Artemis in the Orphic *Argonautica*,  
 who let drop her torches and turned her eyes skyward at the sight of Hecate (983-  
 4), and also the statue of Heracles in Tyre that came alive on being addressed by  
 Dionysus μύστιδι φωνῆ (40.368). Here the δῖγαλμα πολιισσοῦχοιο θεαίνης  
 (presumably Athena) is seen to perspire and the statue of Ares is covered ἐκ ποδὸς  
 ἄχρι καρῆνου in gore (44.42-5). The last two omens would appear to indicate that  
 a major catastrophe is pending for the city as a whole, though in the event  
 Pentheus alone will be called to account.

These portents revive in Agave the memory of a dream she had when Pentheus  
 seized the throne, a dream for which there is no precedent in the play. Dreams had  
 long been used in epic and tragedy as means of foreshadowing some catastrophic  
 event. Such dreams needed to be perplexingly vague in order to generate a sense of  
 foreboding. Too explicit a preview of the coming events would deprive the audience  
 of that feeling of suspense, as they would be informed in advance of the  
 denouement. Nonnus, by making Agave's dream an accurate and detailed preview  
 of the *sparagmos* of Pentheus, as it were gives the plot away, thereby diminishing  
 the impact of the actual event. Agave's dream differs from the actual event only in  
 that the roles of man and beast are reversed. Whereas in the actual event Agave sees  
 the spying Pentheus as a lion, here she sees him as himself, beset by wild animals,

one of which, a lioness, proceeds to attack her son. Nonnus has, on both occasions, made considerable use of Euripides' *sparagmos* scene. As far as the present passage is concerned, the following correspondences with Euripides may be noted. Agave seems to see Pentheus perched on top of a tree: καί μιν ἰδεῖν ἐδόκησε ... ἐζόμενον σκιεροῖο μετάρσιον ὑψόθι δένδρου (44.58-9), which recalls ὡς δ' εἶδον ἐλάτη δεσπότην ἐφήμενον (1095). The beasts encircle the tree: φυτὸν ... θῆρες ἐκυκλώσαντο (44.60-1); in Euripides Agave enjoins the Bacchantes to encircle the tree: περιστᾶσαι κύκλω/πτόρθου λάβεσθε (1105-6). The beasts try to bring the tree down by levering up its roots: δένδρον ἀπειλητῆρι μετοχλίζοντες ὀδόντι, / τρηχαλαίς γενύεσσι (44.62-3), which is precisely what the women try to do in Euripides: ῥίζας ἀνεσπάρασσον ἀσιδήροις μοχλοῖς (1104). The beasts tear the fallen Pentheus to pieces in a manner which fairly accurately anticipates the actual *sparagmos* at 46.209-20, with the lioness biting off his head, presenting it to Cadmus and saying in a human voice that she is Agave. Telling him that she has just slain a lion, she asks him to receive the head as the firstfruits of her strength and to hang it up for a trophy: λεοντοφόνοιο δὲ νίκης / δέχνησο τοῦτο κάρηνον ἐμῆς πρωτάγριον ἀλκῆς / ... σὺ δὲ σύμβολα παιδὸς Ἀγαύης / <sup>πῶς</sup>ἀριστοπόνοιο τεοῦ προπάροιθε μελάθρου (44.74-9). These words recall Agave's in Euripides: αἰρέσθω λαβὼν / πηκτῶν πρὸς οἶκους κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις, / ὡς πασσαλεύση κρᾶτα τριγλύφοις τόδε / λέοντος ὃν πάρειμι θηράσασ' ἐγώ (1212-5) and φέρω δ' ἐν ὠλέναισιν, ὡς ὄρας, τάδε / λαβοῦσα τάριστεία, σοῖσι πρὸς δόμοις / ὡς ἂν κρεμασθῆ· σὺ δὲ πάτερ δέξαι χεροῖν (1238-40). Agave's dream is thus an accurate précis of the *sparagmos* and its aftermath. Why Nonnus should present us with such an elaborate anticipation of the real event is difficult to gauge. One can only point to the even more elaborate anticipation of the Argonauts' voyage in the prophecy of Phineus in the second book of Apollonius (317-407).

Agave seeks to assuage her disquiet on waking by consulting Tiresias, who instructs that a bull be sacrificed to Zeus beside a tall tree on Mt. Cithaeron. The reference to the μηκεδανῆ ἐλάτη (44.87) contains a hint of its future role. A little later we are informed that Erinys buries the Attic knife at its roots (44.272-3)

further compounding its sinister associations. At the outset of the *sparagmos* scene the tree is depicted once again in all its threatening majesty (46.150-1). As the bull is slain, a jet of blood spouts toward Agave, staining her hands (44.106), which provides yet another hint of the impending *sparagmos*. Two snakes, one male and the other female, coil themselves around Cadmus and Harmonia. The snakes are friendly, and the one which has attached itself to Cadmus licks his chin: *μείλιχος ειλικόεντι δράκων μιτρούμενος ὀλκῶ, / ... καὶ γλῶσσα πέριξ λίχμαζεν ὑπήνην* (44.109-11). This detail is borrowed from Euripides, who describes snakes licking the chins of the Bacchantes (who use them as girdles): *ὄφεισι κατεζώσαντο λιχμῶσιν γένυν* (698, cf. also 767-8). The snakes are then turned into stone, betokening the future role of Cadmus and Harmonia as stone snakes at the head of the Illyrian gulf (46.364-7). Nonnus makes no mention of the deleterious role that they will play as real snakes, a role that is forecast for them in Euripides (1357-60).

Nonnus now resumes the depiction of miracles left off at 44.45. The endemic nature of the Bacchic fervour is once again emphasized: *οὐδέ τις ἦν ἀχόρευτος ἀνὰ πτόλιν* (44.125). The sacred precinct marking the site of Semele's wedding chamber is covered with green vine-clusters: *καὶ θάλαμον Σεμέλης χλοερῶ σκιάσασα κορύμβω / νυμφιδίου σπινθῆρος ἔτι πνείοντα κεραυνοῦ / αὐτοφυῆς ἐμέθυσσεν ἔλιξ εὐώδει καρπῶ* (44.127-9). These lines are a reminiscence of Dionysus' words in the *Bacchae*: *ὄρω δὲ μητρὸς μνήμα τῆς κεραυνίας / τόδ' ἐγγὺς οἰκῶν καὶ δόμων ἐρείπια / τυφόμενα Δίου πυρὸς ἔτι ζῶσαν φλόγα* (6-8) ... *ἀμπέλου δέ νιν / πέριξ ἐγὼ 'κάλυφα βοτρυώδει χλόη* (11-2). Euripides refers to the precinct again at a later stage in conjunction with the miracles facilitating Dionysus' escape from custody, stating that the flames appeared to be rekindled from the smouldering ashes (597-9, 623-4).

The miracles have the effect of arousing Pentheus' envy and suspicions, and he orders his men to apprehend Dionysus and his followers. Nonnus seems now to visualise Dionysus as he appears in Euripides, at the head not of a great army but <sup>of</sup> a small band of followers. Pentheus is, however, moved by envy for the newcomer, and not, as in Euripides, out of concern for the welfare of the polis. Nonnus, as we

have noted already, is not prepared to ascribe to him any redeeming features. Pentheus appears to have forgotten the futility of his earlier attempt to apprehend Dionysus (44.25ff.) and launches a torrent of abuse against him (44.134-83) that is reminiscent of Typhoeus' speech (2.258ff.) and of the speeches of Deriades. The influence of Euripides is nevertheless discernible in several ways. Firstly, Dionysus is addressed as a θῆλυς ἀλήτης (44.134) from Lydia, echoing Euripides' θηλύμορφος ξένος (353). At the same time we find a reference to the ἀμφιπόλους Βρομίοιο συνήλυδας (44.142), who appear to correspond to the chorus in the *Bacchae*, whom Dionysus calls his παρέδρους καὶ ξυνεμπόρους (57). So, despite all the miracles and portents that have occurred, Pentheus still sees Dionysus as no more than a mortal wanderer from Lydia, that is, exactly as he sees him in the *Bacchae*, where no such events have as yet taken place and where the god has purposely assumed a human disguise. In Euripides the mortal disguise is removed gradually, as the divine nature of Dionysus unfolds to the background of the miracles, with Pentheus realising that he is dealing with a god only just prior to his sparagmos (1069). Nonnus, by placing the miracles at the beginning and then having Pentheus still address Dionysus as a vagrant impostor, shows himself wholly insensitive to the gradual process whereby Dionysus reveals his divinity in Euripides. Other inconsistencies are apparent as well: Pentheus threatens to flog his aunt Autonoe (44.137-8), echoing his threat in the *Bacchae* to hunt down his aunts (228-30), but whereas there the aunts have already been smitten by Bacchic frenzy, in Nonnus they have yet to be seduced by the god (44.283ff.), a circumstance which renders the threat entirely unjustified at the present stage of developments. One idea is lifted almost verbatim from Euripides, namely Pentheus' threat to cut off Dionysus' hair: πλοκάμους τμήξωμεν ἀκερσικόμου Διονύσου (44.147), corresponding to πρῶτον μὲν ἄβρον βόστρυχον τεμῶ σέθεν (493). Pentheus threatens to strike Dionysus with his chthonian thunderbolt which he claims to be as devastating as that of Zeus, which had killed Semele (44.150-3).<sup>3</sup> Nonnus classes Pentheus as an earthborn, an idea which is emphasized also in the *Bacchae* (Πενθεύς, ὃν Ἐχίων ἐφύτευσε χθόνιος, / ἀγριωπὸν τέρας, οὐ φῶ- / τα

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3 Cf. Deriades' boast at 27.89 of forcing the Cyclopes to make a thunderbolt for him so that he can become an earthly Zeus - Nonnus is rather fond of the idea of pretenders to Zeus' role as wielder of the thunderbolt.

βρότειον, φόνιον δ' ὥστε γίγαντ' ἀντίπαλον θεοῖς, 540-4, and τὸν ἄθεον ἄνομον ἄδικον Ἐχίονος / τόκον γηγενῆ, 995-6). In the *Bacchae*, however, these remarks are confined to the choral interludes, and at no point does Pentheus act otherwise than as an ordinary mortal. In Nonnus, on the other hand, he assumes the poses and bluster of a Typhoeus (especially 44.168ff.). Dionysus shall experience the might of his chthonian spear: γνώσεται, οἶον ἔχω χθόνιον δόρυ (44.156). Pentheus then lists the ways in which he does not intend to kill him. He will not cut off his head, οὐδὲ διατμήξω μέσον αὐχένος (44.160), which is precisely what he does threaten to do in the *Bacchae*: παύσω κτυποῦντα θύρσον ... τράχηλον σώματος χωρὶς τεμών (240-1), but will instead kill him with a blow to the thigh ὅτι Διὸς μεγάλοιο γονὴν ἐψεύσατο μηροῦ (44.162). The end of Pentheus' tirade contains an extended and seemingly intentional echo of Euripides, with Pentheus telling Dionysus in absentia: εἰ δὲ τεῖν Σεμέλην οὐκ ἐφλεγεν οὐρανίη φλόξ, / παιδὸς ἑῆς διὰ μῶμον ἐὼν δόμον ἔφλεγε Κάδμος, / ἀστεροπὴν δ' ἐκάλεσσε χαμαιγενὲς ἀπτόμενον πῦρ, / καὶ δαΐδων ὀνόμηγε σέλας σπιθῆρα κεραυνοῦ (44.180-3). The idea that Semele's pregnancy resulted from an indiscretion with an ordinary mortal and that her relationship with Zeus and death by lightning were a charade, concocted by Cadmus to save the family's honour, is taken from Euripides, where Semele's sisters are described as entertaining the same notion: Διόνυσον οὐκ ἔφασκον ἐκφῦναι Διός, / Σεμέλην δὲ νυμφευθεῖσαν ἐκ θνητοῦ τινος / εἰς Ζῆν' ἀναφέρειν τὴν ἀμαρτίαν λέχους, / Κάδμου σοφίσμαθ', ὧν νιν οὐνεκα κτανεῖν / Ζῆν' ἐξεκαυχῶνθ', ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο (27-31), of which a slightly different variant is later given by Pentheus, who claims that Zeus killed both mother and unborn child, because she had passed off her illicit union with a fellow mortal onto the god: ὃς ἐκπυροῦται λαμπάσιν κεραυνίοις, / σὺν μητρὶ, Δίους ὅτι γάμους ἐψεύσατο (244-5). Whereas Semele's sisters in the first passage point to Cadmus as party to the affair, who on discovering Semele's indiscretion, induces her to make up the story of her relationship with Zeus, a fabrication for which she pays with her life, Pentheus notably does not implicate Cadmus in the matter. Nonnus, on the other hand, places a more cynical explanation in Pentheus' mouth, according to which

there was no involvement of Zeus in the matter at all, either as lover or punisher, but Cadmus himself had kindled the flames to expunge the family's shame, concocting at the same time the story about Zeus. We have here a rather uncharacteristic piece of realism on Nonnus' part. It is of some interest to note that the sixth-century writer Malalas, bent on discrediting the Dionysus myth, even names the mortal, a Boeotian called Polymedon, who had fathered Semele's child.<sup>4</sup> In his later address to Dionysus (46.33-9) Pentheus no longer voices this extreme view.

When Pentheus has concluded his speech, his troops go in search of Dionysus, but, as on the previous occasion (44.23), their efforts come to naught *κενεοῖσιν ἐριδμαίνοντες ἀήταις* (44.185). Dionysus in the meantime seeks Selene's aid in his struggle against Pentheus. It is difficult to understand why Dionysus, who in the previous book could fight Poseidon on his own, should have to request assistance from another god in order to overcome a mere mortal. Selene is not a goddess in the traditional sense, but a complex entity, Artemis-Hecate-Persephone, who also appears in the Orphic *Argonautica* (934-87). Dionysus' speech to her is similar to the one he previously directed to that other multiform Orphic deity, Heracles Astrochiton, involving the same disjunctive form of address: *εἰ σὺ πέλεις Ἑκάτη πολυώνυμος ... Ἄρτεμις εἰ σὺ πέλεις ἐλαφιβόλος ... εἰ δὲ σὺ Περσεφόνη νεκυσσός* (44.193-204). The appeal to Selene is couched in Orphic terms, with Zagreus-Dionysus (44.213) pitted against Pentheus, a son of the Earth, whom Hera has armed as yet another Titan against that god. Dionysus still sees Hera as his enemy, notwithstanding the apparent reconciliation in book 35, when she breastfed Dionysus at Zeus' bidding to cure him of his madness (35.319-35). The present conflict with Pentheus is meant to be viewed in the context of the primeval struggle between Zagreus and the Titans described earlier in the poem (6.174-99).

Selene tells Dionysus not to fear the race of weakling humans (44.223-4). She then draws attention to her other function besides that of regulating time, which is to instil madness into men, a function which she in fact shares with Dionysus: *ἴσα δὲ Βάκχῳ / κοίρανώ μανίης ἑτερόφρονος* (44.226-7). The partnership of

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Bowersock (1994) pp.162-3.

Dionysus and Selene is instrumental in bringing about Pentheus' madness later in the narrative (46.99-100). In Euripides, Dionysus fulfils that task himself, the personified Lyssa, to whom the chorus appeals at 977-81, being no more than an instrument at his disposal. Selene further encourages Dionysus by reminding him of his past exploits, of his victory over Deriades, and of how he turned the Tyrrhenian pirates into dolphins, a feat not previously described in the poem though briefly alluded to at 31.89-91. This exploit will be narrated at length by Tiresias as an example of Dionysus' power (45.103-68). Nonnus, with his already noted fondness for anticipation, supplies us with a short précis of the episode, placing it in the mouth of Selene (44.240-9).

The Furies now invade Pentheus' palace, a scene for which there is no precedent in Euripides and which contains further anticipations of Pentheus' eventual demise, such as the placing of the Attic knife, which had been used in the murder of Itylus, at the roots of the tall pine on Cithaeron (44.272-3) and the drenching of Agave's rooms with water from the Styx (44.262). Dionysus then enters the palace himself, to instil Bacchic frenzy into Autonoe, to whom he tells the seemingly absurd story that Actaeon, far from being dead - the report of his death as a result of being attacked by his own hounds being merely a malicious fabrication of jealous herdsmen - has become the bridegroom of Artemis. If she wishes to see her son hunting beside Dionysus on Cithaeron, she has only to take herself there. The notion of the marriage of Artemis is most peculiar and recalls the boasts of Typhoeus earlier in the poem that he will make Artemis marry (2.305-6) and Athena become a mother (2.313). As we have noted previously, Nonnus is rather taken by the idea of the established order of things being turned topsyturvy, and the present remarks may be taken to be a manifestation of it. Cadmus, in the knowledge that his grandson has become bridegroom of Artemis, is described as rejuvenated and celebrating on Cithaeron: *χάρματι δ' ἠβήσας σέθεν υἱέος εἶνεκα νύμφης / κωμάζει σέο Κάδμος ὄρεσσαύλω παρὰ παστῶ, / σείων ἠερίοις ἀνέμοις χιονώδεα χαίτην* (44.306-8). The idea of Cadmus' rejuvenation is borrowed from his conversation with Tiresias in the *Bacchae*, which takes place as the two are about to set off for Cithaeron. Cadmus asks Tiresias: *ποῖ δεῖ χορεύειν, ποῖ καθιστάναι πόδα / καὶ κρᾶτα σείσαι πολιόν;* (184-5), adding *, ἐπιλελήσμεθ'*

ἠδέως / γέροντες ὄντες (188-9), to which Tiresias replies: ταῦτ' ἔμοι πάσχεις ἄρα· / κάγῳ γὰρ ἠβῶ κάπιχειρήσω χοροῖς (189-90).

Book 45 begins with Autonoe rushing off to Cithaeron accompanied by Agave, who likewise has been smitten with Bacchic fervour. Agave gives a boastful speech, in which the sparagmos is again foreshadowed: ἦν ἐθέλήσω, / καὶ γυμναῖς παλάμησιν ὅλον Πειθῆα δαμάσσω, / καὶ στρατιῆν εὖοπλον ἀτευχεῖ χειρὶ δαίξω (45.10-2). She is rejoicing here in her newly acquired strength, but her boast of overcoming Pentheus has an ominous ring to it. She renounces her erstwhile aversion towards Dionysus: οὐκέτι βοτρυόεντος ἀναίνομαι ὄργια Βάκχου, / οὐκέτι Βασσαρίδων στυγέω χορόν (45.25-6). Thus we are now at the stage of the story at which the action commences in the *Bacchae*, and Nonnus will henceforth be following Euripides closely. Agave concludes her speech, remarking that she is forsaking Athena's yarn for Artemis' nets: ἔσσομαι ὠκυπέδιλος, ὀμηλύδος ἰοχαίρης / δίκτυα κουφίζουσα, καὶ οὐ κλωστήρας Ἀθήνης (45.29-30), which corresponds in substance to her remark to Cadmus, when she returns with Pentheus' head in the *Bacchae*: τὰς παρ' ἰστοῖς ἐκλιπούσα κερκίδας / εἰς μείζον ἤκω, θῆρας ἀγρεύειν χεροῖν (1236-7).

Next follows a brief segment describing the festivities on Cithaeron. Nonnus has moved perceptibly closer to Euripides by depicting the participants exclusively as women. A maiden stung by Bacchic fervour leaves her chamber for Cithaeron, abandoning Athena's spindle: καὶ τις ἀνοιστρηθεῖσα / ... κούρη ... διέσσυτο παρθενεῶνος, / κερκίδα καλλείψασα καὶ ἰστοτέλειαν Ἀθήνην (45.47-9). This bears a verbal similarity to Euripides' θηλυγενῆς ὄχλος / ἀφ' ἰστών παρὰ κερκίδων τ' / οἰστρηθεῖς Διονύσῳ (117-9). That Nonnus must have had Euripides' first choral ode before him when he composed the above lines is borne out by other echoes as well, cf. εἰς ὄρος (116 / 45.46); the specific mention of αὐλός (45.43) and κτύπος... βοείης (45.44), corresponding with βυρσότονον κύκλωμα (124) and αὐλῶν πνεύματι (127-8), was probably inspired by Euripides' explanation of how the two instruments came to be used at Bacchic feasts (120-9). The female gender of the celebrants is again emphasized at the end of the passage: μίσγετο Βασσαρίδεσσι καὶ Ἀοῖς ἔπλετο Βάκχη (45.51).

The statement appears also to echo Euripides' distinction between the Ἄσιάδες Βάκχαι (1168), the fifteen Lydian women forming the chorus, and the Βάκχαι Καδμείαι (1160) or Theban converts to the Bacchic religion. In Euripides only the latter revel on Cithaeron, the Lydian chorus remaining in Thebes.

Tiresias is next described building an altar and sacrificing to ἀλεξικάκῳ Διονύσῳ, but his effort is in vain as the Fates have already woven their thread (45.52-5). This detail yet again foreshadows Pentheus' demise. From 45.56, at which point Tiresias invites Cadmus to worship Dionysus, the correspondence with the *Bacchae*, properly speaking, begins. Cadmus, decked out in Bacchic regalia, dances with heavy foot: βριθομένοις δὲ πόδεσσι γέρων ὠρχήσατο Κάδμος / στέψας Ἄουίῳ χιονώδεα βόστρυχα κισσῶ (45.58-9). The second line is an echo of Tiresias' words στεφανοῦν τε κράτα κισσίνοις βλαστήμασιν (177) and perhaps, by association, of the chorus' στέφετε λευκοτρίχων πλοκάμων / μαλλοῖς (112-3), Nonnus having transferred the idea of whiteness from wool to hair. Nonnus conveys in narrative form what transpires in the dialogue between the two old men in the play, and succeeds in preserving to some degree the unmistakably comic tone of the original. Pentheus appears on the scene and expresses his revulsion at the old men's behaviour. Nonnus passes over the first, monologue, portion of Pentheus' speech (i.e. the segment from 215 to 247), the contents of which he will place in shortened form at the end of Pentheus' address, and begins his rendering from the point at which the king catches sight of Cadmus and Tiresias. Pentheus pleads with Cadmus to remove the ivy from his hair and put down the fennel: Κάδμε, μαινομένης ἀποκάτθεο κισσὸν ἐθείρης, / κάτθεο καὶ νάρθηκα νοσπλανέος Διονύσου (45.67-8), echoing his plea in Euripides: οὐκ ἀποτινάξεις κισσὸν ; οὐκ ἐλευθέραν / θύρσου μεθήσεις χεῖρ', ἐμῆς μητρὸς πάτερ; (253-4). Pentheus enjoins Tiresias to do likewise, adding the remark: αἰδέομαι σέο γῆρας, ἀμετροβίων δὲ καὶ αὐτῶν / μάρτυρα σῶν ἐτέων πολὴν πλοκαμίδα γεραίρω (45.73-4), the first part of this statement being clearly modelled on Euripides' ἀναίνομαι, πάτερ, / τὸ γῆρας ὑμῶν

είσορῶν νοῦν οὐκ ἔχον (251-2).<sup>5</sup> Pentheus adds menaces to his request, telling the seer: εἰ μὴ γὰρ τόδε γῆρας ἐρήτυε καὶ σέο χαίτη, / καὶ κεν ἀλυκτοπέδησιν ἐγὼ σέο χεῖρας ἐλίξας / δέσμιον ἀχλύεοντι κατεσφρήγισσα μελάθρῳ (45.75-7), echoing his threat in the play: εἰ μὴ σε γῆρας πολὶὸν ἐξερρύετο, / καθῆσ' ἂν ἐν Βάκχαισι δέσμιος μέσαις (258-9). Nonnus' ἀχλύεοντι μελάθρῳ may have been prompted by Euripides' σκότιον κνέφας (510), used of the stables where Pentheus has Dionysus imprisoned. Pentheus accuses Tiresias of having been swayed by promises of Lydian gold by Dionysus to make that impostor out to be a god through mendacious oracles (45.78-81), echoing similar recriminations of venality levelled by him against Tiresias in the play (255-7). Pentheus proceeds, through a series of suppositions and denials, with an imaginary interlocutor, to probe the reasons behind Tiresias' siding with Dionysus. Firstly he repeats his imaginary interlocutor's suggestion that Tiresias' commitment to Dionysus stems from the latter's having invented the vine: ἀλλ' ἐρέεις, ὅτι Βάκχος ἐποίειον εὖρεν ὀπώρην (45.82). This suggestion reflects Tiresias' statement in the play: ὁ Σεμέλης γόνος / βότρυος ὑγρὸν πῶμ' ἠῦρε κείσηνέγκατο / θνητοῖς (278-80). Pentheus then counters by adducing that wine engenders moral laxity: οἶνος ἀεὶ μεθύοντας ἐφέλκεται εἰς Ἀφροδίτην, / εἰς φόνον ἀσταθέος νόον ἀνέρος οἶνος ἐγείρει (45.83-4). This statement accords with Pentheus' remarks in the play (221-5), but takes no account of Tiresias' celebrated refutation of the same: οὐχ ὁ Διόνυσος σωφρονεῖν ἀναγκάσει / γυναῖκας εἰς τὴν Κύπριν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει / τὸ σωφρονεῖν ἔνεστιν εἰς τὰ πάντ' ἀεὶ (314-6).<sup>6</sup> Pentheus concludes by questioning Dionysus' claims to be a god, challenging him to fight with the aegis of Zeus (instead of the fawnskin) if, as he claims, he is the latter's son (αἰγίδα καὶ σὺ

<sup>5</sup> The ἀναίνομαι troubled earlier editors of the *Bacchae*, Porson suggesting that it should be changed to αἰδοῦμαι. Nonnus quite obviously thought likewise, and his rendering was adduced by Hermann in support of Porson's emendation (though Hermann himself rejected it). Dodds finds no difficulty with ἀναίνομαι provided it is read in conjunction with εἰσορῶν, yielding the meaning 'I shrink from seeing'.

<sup>6</sup> The popular association of wine with Aphrodite is voiced later in the *Bacchae* by the Messenger, at the end of his account of the happenings on Cithaeron: οἴνου δὲ μηκέτ' ὄντος οὐκ ἔστιν Κύπρις / οὐδ' ἄλλο τερπνὸν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἐπι. (773-4). Here the connexion appears to be presented in a positive light.

τίταινε τεοῦ Κρονίδαο τοκῆος, 45.94, which recalls the earlier taunt of Poseidon: καὶ στεροπὴν κούφιζε καὶ αἰγίδα πάλλε τοκῆος, 43.178).

Tiresias replies, commencing with a reaffirmation of the second birth of Dionysus from Zeus' thigh, this being all that Nonnus retains of Euripides' attempted rationalization of this event through the mouth of Tiresias. Dionysus is then coupled with Demeter: οὗτος ἀμαλλοτόκῳ Δημήτερι μῦθος ἐρίζει / ἀντίτυπον σταχύεσσιν ἔχων εὐβοτρυν ὀπώρην (45.101-2). The same association is made by Tiresias in the play: δύο γάρ, ὦ νεανία, / τὰ πρῶτ' ἐν ἀνθρώποισι· .... ὅς δ' ἦλθ' ἐπειτ' ἀντίπαλον ὁ Σεμέλης γόνος .... ὁ παύει τοὺς τάλαιπῶρους βροτοὺς / λύπης, ὅταν πλησθῶσιν ἀμπέλου ῥοῆς (274-81). Tiresias now tells Pentheus two cautionary tales illustrative of Dionysus' powers, in order to dissuade him from opposing the god. The first of the two, the story of the metamorphosis of the Tyrrhenian pirates into dolphins, was one of long-standing popularity, judging from the number of renderings of it that have come down to us. The three principal extant poetic versions of it are those in the Homeric hymn to Dionysus (59 lines), Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (3.582-691, i.e. 109 lines) and the present passage (45.103-68, i.e. 66 lines). The story appears briefly in the prologue of Euripides' *Cyclops*, but the *Bacchae* contains no allusion to it. Another brief version is found in Seneca's *Oedipus* (449-66). Proponents of the Ovidian hypothesis, notably D'Ippolito, have expressed the belief that Nonnus was influenced by Ovid's version, a belief that James has shown to be based on an erroneous premise. The premise, which D'Ippolito accepts without qualification, stems from Keydell's assumption that in both Ovid and Nonnus the story is told in the context of a warning to Pentheus. James<sup>7</sup> has pointed out that this assumption is in Ovid's case quite untenable, there being nothing in his version to suggest that Acoetes, the narrator of the story, meant it to serve as a warning to Pentheus. The misconception that Acoetes tells the story to Pentheus arises most likely from the fact that the passage in which it is presented immediately precedes that which recounts the death of Pentheus. By juxtaposing the two the poet simply wished <sup>to</sup> convey the idea that he who fails to take cognisance of the fates of those who oppose the power of a god will suffer the same fate. If there is a warning here,

it is a warning from the poet to his audience, a warning which the stories of both the pirates and Pentheus serve conjointly to illustrate, and not a warning directed by Acoetes to Pentheus. In Nonnus, on the other hand, Tiresias tells the story to Pentheus, specifically to caution him against resisting Dionysus. D'Ippolito<sup>8</sup> adduces two putative verbal correspondences in the way that Nonnus and Ovid depict the pirates' demise: ἔβακχεύοντο δὲ λύσση / εἰς φόβον οἰστρηθέντες (45.248) and 'exsiluere viri, sive hoc insania fecit / sive timor' (3.670-1); εἰσέτι κωμάζουσι καὶ ἐν ῥοθίοις Διονύσῳ (44.248) and 'inque chori ludunt speciem' (3.685). These correspondences, imprecise at best, amount to paltry evidence when compared with the precise and sustained parallels that Nonnus has with the *Bacchae*. The situation here is analogous to that which we noted previously regarding Ovidian influence in the Chalcomeda-Morrheus episode, where parallels with Ovid were likewise minuscule compared with the extensive borrowings from Apollonius. To the Homeric hymn, on the other hand, Nonnus evinces an indebtedness of a rather more palpable kind. He follows the underlying theme of the hymn, the punishment of the pirates for their misdeeds, a theme entirely absent from Ovid's version, and indeed places Dionysus' punitive undertaking into even sharper focus. As James observes, "Nonnus' version reads like an interpretation of the hymn in this respect, an interpretation designed to show Dionysus in the best light".<sup>9</sup> As the various correspondences between Nonnus and the Homeric hymn have been examined in detail by this author, it is not proposed to repeat them here.

The second cautionary tale, involving the confrontation between Dionysus and the giant Alpus, is connected to the first in that Alpus, like the Tyrrhenian pirates, is a brigand, and like them operates in Sicily or its vicinity. The confrontation serves, at the same time, as yet another instance of the Olympian-chthonian opposition. Alpus is described as a ὑψινεφῆς περίμετρος ... υἱὸς Ἀρούρης (45.195), that is to say, one akin to Typhoeus. In a previous reference to this story, Alpus is described as ἐχιδναίους ἑκατὸν κομόωντα καρήνοισ, / Ἡελίου ψαύοντα καὶ αὐτὸν ἐρύοντα Σελήνην (25.239-40), a description matching the poet's earlier description of Typhoeus. Dionysus in defeating him is shown to have powers

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<sup>8</sup> (1964) pp. 176-7

<sup>9</sup> (1975) p. 30

rivalling those of Zeus. Beaten by Dionysus, Alpus falls ἡμιθανής into the bay, as a result of which the sea-level rises, cooling the scorched body of his brother Typhoeus (45.211-3). The fire-water opposition, a recurrent motif in the poem, finds yet another echo here. Tiresias concludes his speech, cautioning Pentheus to heed these examples, lest the same fate befall him (45.214-5).

After this diversion Nonnus returns to his close dependence on the *Bacchae*. Pentheus, unconvinced by Tiresias' examples, orders his men to bring back Dionysus in chains: στείχοντες ἐν ἄσπεϊ καὶ μέσον ὕλης / ἄξατέ μοι βαρύδεσμον ἀνάγκιδα τοῦτον ἀλήτην, / ὄφρα τυπεῖς Πενθήος ἀμοιβαίησιν ἰμάσθλαις / μηκέτι φαρμακόμεντι ποτῶ θέλξειε γυναῖκας, / ἀλλὰ γόνυ κλίνειεν (45.220-4), which corresponds to his order in Euripides: οἱ δ' ἀνὰ πόλιν στείχοντες ἐξιχνεύσατε / τὸν θηλύμορφον ξένον, ὃς εἰσφέρει νόσον / καινὴν γυναιξὶ καὶ λέχη λυμαίνεται (352-4). Pentheus' remarks are similar to those he made in his previous speech (44.135ff.), when he had likewise ordered Dionysus to be apprehended. This time Pentheus' men make contact with Dionysus, but the latter, unlike his reaction in the *Bacchae*, where he delivers himself to his captors, proves to be an elusive quarry. He foils Pentheus' soldiers by assuming the identity of one of them and seizes a bull by its horns, calling out to Pentheus (who, it appears, accompanied his men) that the bull is Dionysus and should be shackled (45.239-51). Pentheus orders that the animal be bound, but then proceeds to perform the task himself: εἶπε καὶ ἀγραύλοιο πόδας ταῦροιο πιέζων / σφίγξεν ἀλυκτοπέδησι· λαβὼν δέ μιν ἀντὶ Λυαίου / ἤγαγεν ἰππεΐης πεπεδημένον ἐγγύθι φάτιης, / ὡς Σεμέλης θρασὺν υἷα καὶ οὐ τινα ταῦρον ἐέργων (45.262-5). This idea is taken from Euripides, from the scene in which Dionysus makes good his escape from Pentheus' stables. There the Lydian, explaining to the choir how he had escaped, says that the king had tied up a bull thinking that it was he: ταῦτα καὶ καθύβρισ' αὐτόν, ὅτι με δεσμεύειν δοκῶν / οὐτ' ἔθιγεν οὐθ' ἤψαθ' ἡμῶν, ἐλπίσιν δ' ἐβόσκετο. / πρὸς φάτναις δὲ ταῦρον εὐρών, οὐ καθείρξ' ἡμᾶς ἄγων, / τῷδε περὶ βρόχους ἔβαλλε γόνασι καὶ χηλαῖς ποδῶν (616-9). Pentheus had previously ordered Dionysus to be imprisoned in the stables: καθείρξατ' αὐτὸν ἰππικαῖς πέλας /

φάτναισιν, ὡς ἂν σκότιον εἴσορᾶ κνέφας (509-10). Nonnus continues, saying that the Bacchantes were likewise bound by the king and confined in a dungeon described as Κιμμερίων μίμημα δυσέκβατον, ἄμμορον Ἴουῦς (45.269). This rather fanciful description, which seems to echo the reference to the Cimmerians in the Orphic *Argonautica*, Κιμμερίοισι ... οἳ ῥά τε μῦνοι / αἴγλης ἄμμοροί εἰσι πυριδρόμου ἠελίοιο (1120-2), answers to Euripides' σκότιον κνέφας, the idea of darkness being transferred from the stables to the women's place of confinement. The women thus imprisoned must correspond to those whom Pentheus in the *Bacchae* has succeeded in apprehending (ὄσας μὲν οὖν εἴληφα, δεσμίους χέρας / σώζουσι πανδήμοισι πρόσπολοι στέγαις, 226-7), and who are reported by the θεράπων, who brings the captured Dionysus to the king, to have escaped in a miraculous way: ἄς δ' αὐτὸν Βάκχας εἶρξας, ἄς συνήρπασας / κᾶδηςας ἐν δεσμοῖσι πανδήμου στέγης, / φροῦδαί γ' ἐκείναι λελυμέναι πρὸς ὀργάδας / σκιρτῶσι Βρόμιον ἀνακαλούμεναι θεόν· / αὐτόματα δ' αὐταῖς δεσμὰ διελύθη ποδῶν, / κληῖδές τ' ἀνήκαν θύρετρ' ἄνευ θνητῆς χερὸς (443-8). Nonnus' women escape with similar ease: θευλλήεσσα δὲ Βάκχη / ... ἀρραγέων ἀνέκοπτε παλίλλυτον ὄλκον ἱμάντων, / ... χαλκοβαρῆς σφριγώσα ποδῶν ἐσχίζετο σειρή. / καὶ δόμον ἀχλυόεντα θεόσσυτος ἔστεφεν αἴγλη / Βασσαρίδων ζοφεροῖο καταστάζουσα μελάθρου / καὶ σκοτίου πυλεῶνες ἀνεπτύσσοντο βερέθρου / αὐτόματοι (45.274-83). The idea of fetters falling away from the captives' hands and feet derives from the Homeric hymn to Dionysus, which tells of the pirates' vain efforts to tie up the god: τὸν δ' οὐκ ἴσχανε δεσμά, λύγοι δ' ἀπὸ τηλόσ' ἔπιπτον / χειρῶν ἠδὲ ποδῶν (13-4). Nonnus does not convey the idea exactly, since his Bacchantes actually break the chains, though they do this effortlessly. As at 44.21, αὐτόματοι is applied to the gates. The θεόσσυτος αἴγλη indicates the spiritual presence of the god. We may recall that the gloomy lightless chamber, in which Ino hid the infant Dionysus on Hermes' instructions, was likewise lit by the luminescence emanating from the child's visage (9.103-6), a passage which the poet later reuses in the *Paraphrase* (1.11-3) to render the evangelist's καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει (Joh. 1.5). The same idea is used metaphorically in the case of Tectaphus'

dungeon, which is lit by the visit of his daughter, who is described as ὀρφναίῳ γενετῆρι φαεσφόρος (26.136).

Nonnus now proceeds to give his version of the women's activities on Cithaeron (45.285-322), corresponding to *Bacchae* 660-774. Nonnus' description does not include the attempt by the herdsmen, one of whom is conveying the account to Pentheus as the Messenger, to apprehend Agave. He begins his version with the slaughter of a herd of bulls and the rending of a flock of sheep (45.287-93). The incident corresponds to the slaughter of the cattle tended by the herdsmen in Euripides, who have themselves barely escaped a similar fate after their unsuccessful attempt to capture Agave. Nonnus presents a slightly more detailed version of the sparagmos of the cattle at 43.40-51, in the context of the Dionysus-Poseidon confrontation. Both passages are indebted to Euripides, as the following correspondences indicate: the ἡμιθανῆς δὲ / ὑπτιος αὐτοκύλιστος ὑπώκλασε ταῦρος ἀρούρη (43.46-7) corresponds in idea to ταῦροι δ' ὑβριστὰί κείσ κέρας θυμούμενοι / τὸ πρόσθεν, ἐσφάλλοντο πρὸς γαίαν δέμας (743-4); ἄλλη πλευρὸν ἐτέμνευ ὄλον βοός (43.46) recalls εἶδες δ' ἂν ἢ πλευρ' ἢ δίχηλον ἔμβασιν / ῥιπτόμεν' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω (740-1). Nonnus does not forget the hooves, saying that another Bacchante πολυστροφάλιγγι δὲ ῥιπῆ / ὄρθιον ἐσφαίρωσεν ἐς ἠέρα δίζυγα χηλήν (43.50-1). The verbal correspondences πλευρ' - πλευρόν, δίχηλον ἔμβασιν - δίζυγα χηλήν, and ῥιπτόμεν' - ῥιπῆ warrant noting; the ἐσφαίρωσεν may be compared to διεσφαίριζε (1136), used in the sparagmos of Pentheus. The ταύρου ἢ μὲν ἐφαπτομένη ῥάχιν ἐσχισεν (43.42-3) and the ταυρείην ὀνύχεσσι διασχίζουσα καλύπτρην / τρηχαλέην (45.289-90) are probably inspired by Euripides' more colourful διεφοροῦντο σαρκὸς ἐνδυτὰ (746). At 45.290-3 sheep and goats are described undergoing a similar fate and the women as reddened with the blood of the slaughtered animals: ἐφοινίσσοντο δὲ λύθρου / αἱμαλέαις λιβάδεσσι δαΐζομένης ἀπὸ ποιμνῆς (45.292-3). In Euripides, snakes are described as licking droplets of blood off the women's cheeks (767-8). This takes place not immediately following the sparagmos of the animals, which Nonnus takes to be the cause of the Bacchantes' defilement, but after their raid on

two villages, from which they make off with the villagers' children, repulsing an attack by the villagers, in which only the latter suffer casualties. Oranje, in his commentary on the *Bacchae*,<sup>10</sup> believes that Nonnus either failed to understand or did not wish to acknowledge the sinister import of the Euripides passage, namely that the blood on the women's cheeks was that of the children whom they had abducted. What Oranje does not mention is that the blood could have been that of the villagers wounded or slain in the skirmish. Still, the fact that the bloodstains are described as being specifically on the women's faces seems to lend credibility to the supposition that they resulted from the ὠμοφαγία of the abducted children. Euripides appears to have been deliberately ambiguous here, possibly inserting the battle scene to provide the more squeamish in his audience with an alternative rationalisation for the bloodstains. That ὠμοφαγία of humans did indeed take place at such Bacchic rites is attested by the *Bassarica* (frag. 19 recto), and it is possible that Nonnus, who wished to portray Dionysus' sojourn on earth in terms of a civilizing mission, shied away from associating his hero with such horrific practices. We may recall with what revulsion he described the Nysian women's action of eating their offspring under Megaira's goad (21.105ff.), comparing them to Agave. His Bacchantes will not spill the blood of innocents; only the evil Pentheus is destined suffer that fate. He imitates Euripides in that he has a Bacchant snatch a three-year-old child from its father and sit him on her shoulders without restraints of any kind: ἀλλῆ δὲ τριέτηρον ἀφαρπάξασα τοκῆος / ἀτρομον ἀστυφέλικτον ἀδέσμιον ὑψόθεν ὤμων / ἴστατο κουφίζουσα μεμηλότα παῖδα θυέλλαις, / ἐζόμενον γελώοντα καὶ οὐ πίπτοντα κοίῃ (45.294-7), corresponding to ἤρπαζον μὲν ἐκ δόμων τέκνα, / ὅποσα δ' ἐπ' ὤμοις ἔθεσαν, οὐ δεσμῶν ὑπο / προσείχετ' οὐδ' ἔπιπτον εἰς μέλαν πέδον (754-6). Nonnus quashes any speculation as to the intentions of the woman, by introducing one of his recurrent breastfeeding scenes, with the Bacchante suckling the infant, her maiden breasts miraculously filled with milk (45.298-300). In Euripides too, the women give suck, but to animal cubs and for a very practical reason: having abandoned their own newborn, they need some way to dispose of their milk (699-702).

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<sup>10</sup> (1984) ad loc.

Nonnus now resumes the depiction of the miracles which had been taking place ever since Dionysus' arrival in Thebes, giving us a sequel to the happenings described at 44.2-45, 123-9. Dionysus sends forth a shout, roaring like a bull, that reaches the stars (45.332-4); we note that in Euripides, Dionysus speaks with a supernatural voice only as he is about to draw the Bacchantes' attention to Pentheus spying on them (1077-83), this being the moment when he abandons his mortal disguise to resume his divine persona. Whereas previously Pentheus' palace had been shaken, now the whole city is subjected to the same (45.326-8). A fire rages through the palace, but causes no damage (45.336-40). Nonnus, as we have had occasion to note previously, is rather fond of such magical fires, but this one is clearly inspired by the inextinguishable palace fire imagined by Pentheus in Euripides (622-6). In Nonnus, too, the fire resists all attempts to put it out by Pentheus' servants, who in their efforts to do so are described, with typically Nonnian exaggeration, as emptying out all the cisterns and the river itself (45.354-6). In Euripides the shaking of the palace and conflagration are, as already noted, a distraction to enable Dionysus to slip away; in Nonnus they have no purpose other than to astound Pentheus and his subjects. Euripides, with characteristic realism, treats the fire as a purely mental phenomenon, as an hallucination planted by Dionysus in the king's mind (ὁ δ' ὡς ἐσεῖδε, δώματ' αἴθεσθαι δοκῶν, 624), akin to the λύσσα which is later to take hold of his mother Agave. While Euripides consigns the fire to the realm of the imagination, Nonnus presents it as one of a number of physical (albeit preternatural) events signalling the god's presence. Euripides sought to find a rationale for the miraculous events, which those affected by Bacchic fervour seem to have experienced, in the recesses of the mind. Nonnus, who composed his poem for readers conditioned by Orphic mystery religion and Christianity, both of which subscribed to miracles and miracle workers as an article of faith, had little reason to occupy himself with such concerns.

In Euripides, Dionysus escapes from the stables and confronts his erstwhile captor in front of the palace, where another dialogue (the previous one having been at 415-518, when he had been captured and brought before the king) takes place between the two, in the middle of which comes the herdsman's account of the happenings on Cithaeron. It is in the course of this dialogue that the king succumbs

to the persuasive power of Dionysus, who gains ascendancy over his mind through skilful manipulation of his latent voyeuristic tendencies. Pentheus, who was initially resolved to attack the Bacchantes with all his forces, is induced by Dionysus to first spy on their rituals. In the *Dionysiaca*, as we recall, Pentheus, tricked into believing the bull to be Dionysus (45.239ff.), has not succeeded in capturing him at all, but a dialogue nevertheless takes place, presumably in the palace. The *μιν ἰδῶν ... παλίνδρομον* (46.6) seems to imply not only that Dionysus had been in the palace before - which he had, clandestinely, to instil Bacchic frenzy in Autonoe (44.278-82) - but that Pentheus was already personally acquainted with him, something of which there is no indication in the foregoing narrative. The only time Dionysus had previously spoken to Pentheus was, when disguised as one his soldiers, he had misled him into apprehending the bull, but on that occasion Pentheus was of course not to know that he was being addressed by the god. Nonnus is simply duplicating a situation from the *Bacchae*: without taking into account the particular circumstances of his own narrative.

Pentheus, on seeing Dionysus, launches a tirade of insults, claiming that he is as deceitful as his mother Semele and warning him that, by incurring the wrath of Zeus, he is likely to suffer a fate similar to hers. He again voices the idea of collusion with Tiresias (cf. 45.78-81 and *Bacchae*: 255-7). Pentheus then proceeds to show, by means of a *σύγκρισις* of Semele with the other mortal loves of Zeus, such as Pasiphae and Europa, that Dionysus cannot be the son of Zeus. For it is absurd to assume that a god could be born from Zeus' thigh: *Ζεὺς γενέτης πότε Φοῖβον ἢ Ἄρεα γείνατο μηρῶ*; (46.41). The mockery of such a double birth was, it will be recalled, imputed by Tiresias to Pentheus in the *Bacchae*: *καὶ καταγελᾷς νιν, ὡς ἐνεβράφη Διὸς / μηρῶ*; (286-7).

Dionysus replies with a *σύγκρισις* of the Celtic method of testing the authenticity of one's offspring in the waters of the Rhine and the test which he himself had undergone in the fire of Zeus' thunderbolt. The idea that the Celts would cast their newborn into the Rhine, on the assumption that a legitimate one would float but a bastard would drown, has already been referred to by the poet in a different context at 23.94-6. Here this water test is compared to the fire test undergone by Dionysus, with the latter being adjudged the more exacting. The

theme is yet another variant of the fire-water opposition, which, as we have noted, is a leitmotiv in the poem. Dionysus assures Pentheus that he, being a god, has no interest in usurping his throne: οὐ χατέω Πενθήος ἐπιχθονίῳ μελάθρου / δῶμα Διωνύσοιο πέλει πατρῷος αἰθήρ (46.63-4), the last remark having a distinctly Christian ring to it. Dionysus tells Pentheus that his very name is emblematic of the manner of his death: ἔθεντο προμάντιες οὖνομα Μοῖραι / ὑμετέρου θανάτοιο προάγγελον (46.73-4). This detail, too, is taken from Euripides, from the first stichomythia between the king and Dionysus, where the latter makes the comment: ἐνδυστυχήσαι τοῦνομ' ἐπιτήδειος εἶ (508). Then follows a restatement of the Olympian-chthonian opposition, with Dionysus predicting that he will vanquish Pentheus just as Zeus vanquished the earthborn giants (this theme, as we have noted, is also highlighted in the *Bacchae*, 264, 538-44, 995-6). A rather abrupt change of subject now occurs, with Dionysus proposing to Pentheus that he should dress up as a woman and spy on the Bacchantes on Cithaeron. There is no gradual build-up to this proposition, no subtle bringing out of the king's voyeuristic tendencies, to help overcome his initial resistance at having to don women's clothes, as in Euripides. Dionysus simply tells Pentheus to exchange his armour for female garments since it is futile to try to fight the Bacchantes (46.89-93). What Dionysus appears to suggest is that, since it is impossible to prevail over the Bacchantes by force of arms, Pentheus should spy on them instead. The idea of spying is introduced as it were out of the blue, as a preferred alternative to military intervention, without any prior indication that the king would be amenable to this course of action.

Pentheus is now driven completely insane through the combined efforts of Dionysus and Selene (46.97-105) and is found prancing through the streets of Thebes, making his way to Cithaeron decked out as a Bacchantē (οἶα γυνὴ παίζουσα χοροῖτυπος, 46.120). In Euripides he is only dressed as a Bacchantē and there is no indication that he makes a spectacle of himself as Nonnus would have him do. In Euripides his progressive dementia manifests itself through his remarks: καὶ μὴν ὄρᾶν μοι δύο μὲν ἡλίους δοκῶ, / δισσᾶς δὲ Θήβας καὶ πόλισμ' ἐπτάστομον (918-9). Nonnus echoes this: καὶ διδύμους Φαέθοντας ἐδέρκετο καὶ δύο Θήβας (46.125), adding ἔλπετο δ' ἀκαμάτων ἐπικείμενον

ἰψόθεν ὤμων / Θήβης ἐπταπόροιο μετοχλίζειν πυλεῶνα (46.126-7). This last statement is inspired by Euripides' ἀρ' ἂν δυναίμην τὰς Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχὰς / αὐταῖσι Βάκχαις τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὤμοις φέρειν; (945-6).

The story nears its climax with the arrival of Pentheus and Dionysus on Cithaeron. The *sparagmos* of Pentheus was apparently a popular set piece in antiquity and two other versions, beside those of Euripides and Nonnus, have come down to us, namely those of Theocritus (*Id.* 26) and Ovid (*Met.* 3.701-33). Ovid's version is appended to the story of the Tyrrhenian pirates, which is the main focus of his attention, providing as it does the example of metamorphosis. All the later versions are to varying degrees indebted to Euripides, that of Nonnus more so than the others. Nonnus does not appear to have used Theocritus or Ovid at all, concentrating solely on Euripides. He begins with a description of the scene, drawing special attention to the pine tree which Pentheus will presently ascend. The tree is so tall that it overshadows the surrounding hills, which themselves are described as ἀγχινεφεῖς (46.151); beneath it Cadmus had made his sacrifice to Zeus after Agave's dream (44.86-7), and at its roots Erinys had buried the Attic knife (44.272-3). Dionysus draws its top level with the ground, so as to enable Pentheus<sup>to</sup> clamber on, and then lets it resume its vertical position. The use of repetition by Nonnus to depict the gradualness of the process of bending down the tree is conspicuously imitated from Euripides: ἀκρότατον δὲ κόρυμβον ἀφειδέι χειρὶ πιέζων / εἰς πέδον, εἰς πέδον εἴλκε (46.152-3), corresponding to: λαβὼν γὰρ ἐλάτης οὐραίου ἀκρον κλάδον / κατῆγεν, ἦγεν, ἦγεν εἰς μέλαν πέδον (1064-5). The Bacchantes are about to commence their dances (46.157-60), something not mentioned in Euripides, where the women are simply engaged ἐν τερπνῶις πόνοις (1053). In Theocritus, on the other hand, they are grouped in three companies of dance led by Autonoe, Agave and Ino (26.56), while, in Ovid they are engaged in singing (3.702-3). In Theocritus, as well as in Nonnus, the women pull up their robes (26.17 and 46.159 resp.), but, unlike Nonnus' version, they do so only when they are about to give chase to Pentheus.

Nonnus' version alone has Agave addressing the Bacchantes and exhorting them to dance. She is described as foaming at the mouth: ἀφροκόμοις στομάτεσσιν ἀπερροίβδησεν ἰωήν (46.161). In Euripides she likewise foams at

the mouth, but only after she notices Pentheus and is about to attack him: ἡ δ' ἄφρον' ἐξείεσα καὶ διαστρόφους / κόρας ἐλίσσοιο' (1122-3). As noted at a number of previous points, Nonnus has transposed a notion borrowed from Euripides into a less appropriate context: it is hard to imagine Agave in such a state of fury when she is as yet unaware of the presence of a spy. It is only as she is nearing the end of her address that she notices what she believes to be a lion sitting high up in the tree. In the *Bacchae* a voice from the sky, clearly that of Dionysus, draws the women's attention to the spy in the tree: ἐκ δ' αἰθέρος φωνή τις, ὡς μὲν εἰκάσαι / Διόνυσος ἀνεβόησεν (1077-8), which provides a dramatic introduction to the final horrific series of events. In Euripides Agave sees a beast in the tree which she later identifies as a lion (1215) and Nonnus has copied this detail. In Ovid she sees instead a boar roaming in the field (*ille aper in nostris errat qui maximus agris*, 3.714), and in Theocritus she sees Pentheus as himself, crouching under a bush on a high cliff (26.10-1).

Agave with superhuman strength uproots the tree (46.183-5). This contrasts with Euripides' account (and also with Nonnus' own anticipatory passage, 44.58-65), in which it presents a considerable obstacle to the besiegers, resisting the women's efforts to lever it up by the roots. It is only when the Bacchantes bring their combined efforts to bear under Agave's leadership that the tree is finally uprooted and Pentheus tumbles to the ground (1109-13). The actual sparagmos is described by all four poets with only minor discrepancies. In Euripides, Ovid and Nonnus, Pentheus pleads with his mother to spare him, but she neither recognises nor hears him. Only in Ovid and Nonnus does he appeal for help against Agave, in the former from Autonoe, who is asked to remember the fate of her own son Actaeon (3.720), in the latter from the hamadryads. In both Ovid and Nonnus, Pentheus then delivers a speech replete with all the rhetorical niceties, an extremely improbable feat in the circumstances. Pentheus concludes his address by beseeching Agave that, if he has to die, he would rather it be by her hand than the νόθαις παλάμησιν of the Bacchantes (46.207-8). Why Pentheus should refer to the Bacchantes as νόθαι is somewhat puzzling when viewed in the context of Nonnus' narrative alone. A glance at the *Bacchae* will resolve the difficulty, where we find that Pentheus refers to them in the same way: οὐκ ἐξικνούμαι Μαινάδων ὄσσοιο

νόθων (1060). We know from an earlier passage in the play why Pentheus should refer to the Bacchantes as 'sham': in his very first speech he chides them for having forsaken their homes for πλασταῖσι βακχεΐαισιν (218), alleging that the women have gone into the woods to give effect to their licentious impulses under the pretext (πρόφασιν, 224) of religious worship. In Nonnus' account Pentheus uses the notion without giving any prior indication why he should do so. The women assail Pentheus, tugging at his feet and right arm. Autonoe detaches his left arm, while Agave, placing her foot on his chest, cuts off his head with her thyrsus. In Euripides, Agave takes hold of Pentheus' left arm and, placing her foot on his chest, rips off his shoulder. Ino works on the other shoulder and Autonoe joins in the attack, followed by the rest of the women. Theocritus has Ino place her foot on his stomach and tear off a shoulder, while Agave takes the head (κεφαλὰν ... ἐλοῖσα, 26.20). Ovid has Autonoe tear off the left arm and Ino the right, while Agave severs the head and holds it by her fingers (avulsumque caput digitis complexa, *Met.* 3.727). We may observe, that while details vary with each poet, two elements remain constant, namely that the mortal blow is in all cases delivered by Agave, and that (with the sole exception of Ovid's version) one of the women places her foot on Pentheus' chest, presumably to acquire the necessary leverage, before pulling off the limb. Gow in his commentary on Theocritus notes (ad loc.) that this was the common practice of warriors pulling their spear from a fallen enemy.

The return of Agave to Thebes with the head of Pentheus is depicted by Nonnus in a way reminiscent of Euripides. Agave, convinced that she has slain a lion, shows the head to Cadmus and says: Κάδμε μάκαρ, καλέω σε μακάρτερον (46.221), echoing her statement in Euripides: μακάριος γὰρ εἶ, / μακάριος, ἡμῶν τοιάδ' ἐξειργασμένων (1242-3). Nonnus, ever fond of syncrisis, makes Agave boast that even Artemis must envy her for killing a lion χερσὶν ἀθωρήκτοισιν (46.222), which echoes θήρας ἀγρεύειν χερσὶν (1237), uttered by Agave in the same context in Euripides. Nonnus appears to have forgotten that a few lines earlier he had Agave slay her quarry ὄξει θύρσῳ (46.216). Agave asks for Pentheus, so that she might display her trophy to him and arouse his jealousy (46.229-31). She makes the same request in the *Bacchae* (1255-8). She then orders

the servants to affix the head of Pentheus at the porch of Cadmus' house: παρά προπύλαια δὲ Κάδμου / πήξατε τοῦτο κάρηνον ἐμῆς ἀναθήματα νίκης (46.232-3). She gives the same order in Euripides: αἰρέσθω λαβῶν / πηκτῶν πρὸς οἶκους κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις, / ὡς πασσαλεύση κράτα τριγλύφοις τόδε / λέοντος ὃν πάρειμι θηράσασ' ἐγώ (1212-5). She finishes by holding aloft her φίλον βάρος (46.239), which corresponds to the ἀθλιον βάρος (1216) used by Cadmus in referring to Pentheus' remains.

In Euripides, Cadmus, realizing that his daughter is deranged, undertakes a step by step psychotherapy, first subjecting her to a series of questions designed to test her perceptual faculties, and when satisfied that they are no longer impaired he asks her: τίνος πρόσωπον δῆτ' ἐν ἀγκάλαις ἔχεις ; (1277) to which Agave replies: λέοντος, ὡς γ' ἔφασκον αἰ θηρώμεναι (1278), but she no longer appears to speak with absolute certitude, needing to defer to the opinion of others for confirmation. Cadmus asks her to look again, and it is now that the true nature of the object she is holding begins to impinge on her consciousness: ἔα, τί λεύσσω; τί φέρομαι τόδ' ἐν χεροῖν; (1280). It is only gradually that the full realization of her deed hits her (1285-95). In Nonnus, on the other hand, Cadmus simply addresses his daughter with a speech tinged with irony, which makes no allowance whatever for her disturbed state. In reply to Agave's request that he call Pentheus, Cadmus replies sarcastically πῶς καλέσω Πενθήα, τὸν ἐν παλάμησιν αἰείρεις ; (46.250). Then turning to Dionysus he voices his bitterness: καλὰ φέρεις, Διόνυσε, τεῷ θρεπτήρια Κάδμω (46.253), reflecting his complaint in the *Bacchae* : ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἡμᾶς ἐνδίκως μὲν, ἀλλ' ἄγαν / Βρόμιος ἄναξ ἀπώλεσ' οἰκεῖος γεγώς (1249-50). The idea that Dionysus has acted with excessive severity against his kinsfolk has, clearly, been borrowed by Nonnus from Euripides. Cadmus bemoans the calamity that has overtaken his house and his uncertain future: εἰς τίνα φεύγω, / Πειθέος ὄλλυμένοιο καὶ οἰχομένου Πολυδώρου; / τίς πόλις ὀθνεῖη με δεδέξεται ; (46.260-2). In Euripides, Cadmus is similarly resigned to the prospect of exile: νῦν δ' ἐκ δόμων ἄτιμος ἐκβεβλήσομαι / ὁ Κάδμος ὁ μέγας, ὃς τὸ Θηβαίων γένος / ἔσπειρα κἀξήμησα κάλλιστον θέρος (1313-5), a bitter irony manifesting itself in the old

man's comment on his own fate and achievement.

Agave is, in Nonnus, restored to sanity by Dionysus on the completion of Cadmus' speech, out of respect for Cadmus' age and pity on hearing his groans: πολὴν δὲ κόμην ἠδέσσατο Κάδμου / καὶ στοναχὴν Διόνυσος ... / ... νόον μετέθηκεν Ἀγαύης, / καὶ πάλιν ἔμφορα θῆκεν, ὅπως Πενθῆα γοήσῃ (46.268-71). Agave, restored to sanity, stands silent for a while, then realising what she has done succumbs to a paroxysm of lamentation and mourning, holding Dionysus responsible for her actions. She asks to be driven mad a second time: νηλεῖς Διόνυσε, τεῆς ἀκόρητε γενέθλης, / δὸς προτέρην ἔτι λύσσαν ἐμοὶ πάλιν· ἄρτι γὰρ ἄλλην / χεῖρονα λύσσαν ἔχω πιτυτόφρονα. δὸς μοι ἐκείνην / ἀφροσύνην, ἵνα θῆρα τὸ δεύτερον οὐα καλέσω (46.283-6). The notion that Dionysus treated his own family cruelly is, as already mentioned, in Euripides. The idea that Agave would be better off remaining insane derives likewise from Euripides, from Cadmus' remark to Agave: φρονήσασαι μὲν οἱ ἔδράσατε, / ἀλγήσεται ἄλγος δεινόν· εἰ δὲ διὰ τέλους / ἐν τῷδ' αἰεὶ μενεῖτ' ἐν ᾧ καθέστατε, / οὐκ εὐτυχοῦσαι δόξετ' οὐχὶ δυστυχεῖν (1259-62). The remainder of the speech is of the nature of a syncrisis, with Agave comparing her situation to Autonoe's, much in the manner in which Deriades' daughters compared one another's misfortunes (40.113ff.). She remarks how fortunate Autonoe is in not having killed her own son: ὀλβίη Αὐτονόη βαρυδάκρυος, ὅτι θανόντα / ἔστενεν Ἀκταίωνα, καὶ οὐ κτάνεν οὐδὲ μήτηρ (46.289-90). Then, in contradiction to Pentheus' last wish that better his mother slay him than the other Bacchantes (46.207-8), she wishes that some other Bacchante had been his slayer (46.306-7). She proceeds to exculpate herself as the unintended instrument of Dionysus' wrath, blaming the god for all that has transpired. She laments that Pentheus died unwedded and vows to build a tomb for him with her own hands, where she will deposit his headless body: τύμβον ἐγείρω / χερσὶν ἐμαῖς ἀκάρηνον ἐνικρύψασα κοίτῃ / σὸν δέμας (46.315-7). Why the body should be buried headless, when Agave has all the while been holding the head, defies comprehension. Autonoe in her speech implies the direct opposite, when she says that instead of her son's head (οὐδὲ ἀντὶ καρήνου, 46.327) she has only antlers

to bury.

Autonoe's speech, by which she endeavours to console Agave, turns into a catalogue of her own woes, which she deems worse than those of her sister. Whereas Agave has her son's body, albeit dismembered, to bury, she had been left with nothing but the remains of a stag: μούνη δ' ἔδρακον υἷα νόθον νέκυν, ἀλλοφυῆ δὲ / καὶ στικτὴν καὶ ἄναυδον ἐκώκυον εἰκόνα μορφῆς, / καὶ μήτηρ ἐλάφοιο καὶ οὐκέτι παιδὸς ἀκούω (46.332-5). The lament over her son's conversion to a stag recalls Inachus' lament over Io's conversion to a heifer in Ovid (*Met.* 1.651-60). Ovid contrived a situation with unmistakably comic overtones, and although the same cannot be said of our poet's intention in the present case, Autonoe's predicament does resemble that of Inachus. Autonoe's exaggerated sense of grief over the long dead Actaion parallels Protonoe's wailing over the long dead Orontes in book 40: just as Protonoe wished to become a fountain to join Orontes who had become a river, so now Autonoe wishes to be made a stag so that she too could share Actaion's fate. She bids farewell to the pinetree (as if that were still standing) and to Cithaeron (46.344-5), echoing perhaps Agave's farewell to her home in the *Bacchae* (1368-9). Overall, the speech is characterised by an excessive bathos that detracts somewhat from the sense of tragedy demanded by the situation.

As Agave buries Pentheus, Dionysus, witnessing the desolation of Cadmus and his daughters, erases their anguish with sweet wine as he had done earlier for Botrys and Methé to help them overcome their grief on the death of Staphylus (19.16ff.). Nonnus has, in accordance with his usual practice, reused elements of the earlier passage, making the necessary changes in order to avoid literal repetition. Thus Βάκχος ἀναξ ἐλέαιρε (46.357) takes the place of the metrically equivalent ὡς φαμένην ἐλέαιρε (19.16) and πένθιμον ἐπρήνυε γόον παίηονι μύθῳ (46.361) replaces the metrically identical καὶ στοναχὴν πρήνυε Μέθη καὶ Βότρυσ ἀνίην (19.21). We are not told how Dionysus appeared on the scene. In the play he is presumed to reappear in his divine persona during Agave's speech and then to address Cadmus and his daughter (as we now have it, the text resumes from about mid-way through Dionysus' speech). In Nonnus, Dionysus takes his leave fulfilling the prophecy referred at 44.115-8: Ἴλλυρίην δ' ἐπὶ γαίαν ἐς Ἑσπερίου χθόνα πόντου / Ἀρμονίην λιπόπατρην ὁμόστολον ἠλικὶ Κάδμῳ /

ἀμφοτέρους πόμπευεν ἀλήμονας, οἷς χρόνος ἔρπων / ὤπασε πετρήεσσαν  
 ἔχειν ὄφιδεα μορφήν (46.364-7). This corresponds to Dionysus' statement in  
 the *Bacchae*: δράκων γενήσει μεταβαλῶν, δάμαρ τε σὴ / ἐκθηρωθεῖσ' ὄφεος  
 ἀλλάξει τύπον (1330-1), but, as Cadmus subsequently intimates, the couple will  
 play a role far other than that of innocuous stone snakes, invading Greece as real  
 snakes at the head of a barbarian host (1355-61). In Euripides, Cadmus remains in  
 a state of absolute desolation, ending his speech with the words οὐδὲ παύσομαι /  
 κακῶν ὁ τλήμων, οὐδὲ τὸν καταβάτην / Ἄχέροντα πλεύσας ἦσυχος  
 γενήσομαι (1355-63). The *Bacchae* comes to an end in an atmosphere of  
 hopelessness engendered by this crushing prediction. Nonnus, the dire omens at  
 44.35-45 and 45.326-9 notwithstanding, ends his version on a happier note, an  
 ending which accords well with his emphasis on Dionysus' consolatory role.

We may now briefly recapitulate the observations made at various points during  
 our discussion. Broadly speaking, three characteristics emerge. Firstly, Nonnus is  
 heavily indebted to the *Bacchae*, not only for the contents of his narrative but also  
 for minor details and artistic touches. At no point does his much touted dependence  
 on Ovid exhibit a comparable degree of closeness. Secondly, Nonnus has wrought  
 changes in the story, depicting Dionysus at all times as his divine self and not as a  
 god masquerading as a mortal, as he appears in Euripides; his Dionysus is more  
 benign than Euripides', and his Pentheus correspondingly more evil. In accordance<sup>with</sup>,  
 his differing conception of the two principal characters, he has made changes in the  
 sequence of events as they occur in the *Bacchae*, changes which do not seem to  
 have been well thought through, resulting in a number of inconsistencies. Thirdly,  
 Nonnus' own peculiar predilections, in particular his obsession with the magical  
 and marvellous, combined with his habitual use of rhetorical clichés, have left their  
 imprint on his presentation.

## Conclusion.

It is convenient to summarise the observations made in the foregoing chapters and to cite page references to where they may be located. First, so far as Nonnus' imitation of preceding literature is concerned, it is apparent that although his coverage of literary works is quite broad, embracing much of Greek and possibly some of Latin literature, only a few select works are imitated on an extensive scale. In the Indian war books the poet is principally indebted to the *Iliad*, and to a lesser degree to the *Odyssey* and Apollonius' *Argonautica* (for the *Odyssey* cf. pp. 31-4, 95-6, 141; for Apollonius, pp. 117-9, 121-2). Pindar's influence is evidenced in the technique of 'narrative truncation' which is particularly apparent in the rather anticlimactic demise of Deriades in book 40 (pp. 37, 150), while that of Ovid is limited to a few select motifs drawn from the first half of his *Metamorphoses* (pp. 119-20). While the case for Ovidian influence may not have been conclusively proven, that for another Latin poet, Claudian, seems to be on a firmer footing (pp. 210-1). In his rendering of the Pentheus episode, Nonnus is as heavily indebted to Euripides' *Bacchae* as he is to Homer's *Iliad* in the books on the Indian war, his dependence being if anything even closer (pp. 230-2). As far as his imitation of Homer is concerned, we have noted that passages from the *Iliad* are often paraphrased and inserted with insufficient consideration given to ensuring that they are compatible with the particular circumstances portrayed in Nonnus' own narrative (for example, pp. 18, 67, 89, 126, 134, 162-3, 167). In imitating Homeric scenes concerned with specific activities, Nonnus is often remiss in matters of technical detail and generally unconcerned with verisimilitude (pp. 9, 18, 24, 88, 149, 158, 189). Homeric epithets are used rather freely by Nonnus as by other late poets. For instance, the epithet *δολιχόσκιος*, 'casting a long shadow', which is used exclusively to qualify 'spear' in the *Iliad*, is applied by Nonnus to various disparate objects, to Bacchic paraphernalia such as 'thyrsus', to parts of the body such as 'neck', to persons such as 'shepherd', and even to actions such

as 'a throw (of the discus)' (pp. 11, 174). A tendency to gloss the Homeric passages paraphrased is occasionally evidenced (90-1, 229). We noted also that, while Nonnus' imitation of Homer is closer and generally less innovative than that of other poets (pp. 154ff.), the tone of his narrative is the least Homeric of all the later imitators of Homer, being characterised by a distinctly parodic streak reminiscent of such works as the *Batrachomyomachia* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (pp. 42, 45). In adapting Homeric set pieces such as the Deception of Zeus and the Funeral Games, Nonnus shows a remarkable propensity to multiply characters and incidents and insert lengthy speeches (pp. 57, 104-5, 170), but he is distinctly averse to including dialogue similar to that found in the *Iliad*: the long speeches of his characters rarely elicit a reply, and when they do, the reply usually fails to address the concerns raised by the first speaker or does so only in passing (pp. 28-9, 110, 112, 131, 148). Regarding his imitation of the *Bacchae*, we have noted that Nonnus was unappreciative of the underlying pattern of cause and effect in the play and insensitive to Euripides' subtle psychological gradations (pp. 231, 252-4, 257).

A second feature which we have frequently noted is the very considerable amount of repetition and duplication in Nonnus' poem, ranging from the briefest of motifs, such as the fire-water (for example, p. 253), thyrsus-spindle (pp. 127, 242), wine-nectar (pp. 109-10) oppositions, and the superiority of Aphrodite's weapons over those of Ares (pp. 127-8), to whole parallel episodes, such as the stories of Nicaea and of Aura, of Ampelus and of Hymenaius, where the story-line is analogous and considerable reuse of descriptive elements is evidenced. It is remarkable that Nonnus extends his tendency to repetition to his borrowings from the *Iliad*, the repetitions ranging from short passages, such as the *συνασπισμός* (p.13), to whole episodes like the *Διὸς ἀπάτη* (p. 104). From Euripides he imitates the sparagmos scene twice, firstly as Agave's dream and then the actual event (pp. 236, 255-6).

A third feature which comes to the reader's attention are the seemingly wanton contradictions and inconsistencies endemic to the narrative as a whole. We have already mentioned the sometimes inapposite duplication of details from the *Iliad* that do not match Nonnus' own narrative. This problem has elicited differing

explanations and responses from editors and commentators (p. 68 n.) Most (notably Keydell, Collart and Vian) have tried to exculpate the poet, by attributing the inconsistencies either to the unfinished state of the poem (Keydell, Collart and their nineteenth century predecessors) or to our own misguided reading of the text in assigning too literal a meaning the poet's statements, when the poet meant them to be understood in a symbolic way only (Vian). An alternative view, proposed by Livrea, is that inconsistency was an accepted stylistic trait among the late poets (he cites Claudian and Colluthus as parallels), and that Nonnus simply made use of a practice that gave precedence to achieving effect in the immediate context over narrative consistency. The conversion or non-conversion of the Hydaspes into wine is the most prominent example of such contradictions (pp. 31, 48-50, 67-8, 142, 152-3), which Keydell and Collart attribute to a previous draft that Nonnus expunged in favour of a Homeric battle with the river, without, however, removing all traces, and which Vian interprets as a metaphor for the subjugation of India. But there are other blatant contradictions that cannot in any wise be explained away, such as the portrayal of Morrheus simultaneously as the saviour of and traitor to his country (pp. 147-8, 152) or the boast by Dionysus in book 43 that he had slain the giants, though this event has not yet taken place, being described only in book 48 (p. 217). We have noted Keydell's and Collart's objections to the previous editors' practice of transposing lines and passages to make the narrative more coherent and logical, which they see as tantamount to tampering with the text as left by the poet (pp. 183, 216-7).

A fourth aspect which strikes the reader is the conspicuousness of rhetorical set pieces in the poem. While other poets made some attempt to assimilate them to the poetic medium, Nonnus does little more than versify them, even retaining debating-chamber rejoinders of the kind, ἀλλά φίλοι, κρίνωμεν (p. 40). Too visible a use of rhetorical devices deprives Nonnus' speeches of genuineness and pathos (p. 151). His version of the standard rhetorical battlefield horrors is so extreme in its exaggerations as to verge on caricature (p. 73).

A fifth important feature to be noted are the numerous passages of a distinctly Orphic coloration. We have noted that this feature, prominent in both the *Dionysiaca* and the *Paraphrase*, is not merely ornamental, but seems, on the contrary, indicative of a genuine commitment, on part of the poet, to some form of

Orphic syncretism, to which he may have sought to assimilate the Christian gospels (pp. 61-2).

We may now quickly summarise other observations made in the course of this discussion. Nonnus is prone to certain verbal mannerisms, like the periphrasis *άντυξ, κύκλος, νῶτον* plus genitive of object depicted, the adjectives *άγχιφανής, γείτων* (pp. 13, 146) and oxymoron (cf. pp. 21, 108). He likes epigrammatic quotations (p. 87, 144, 152). He is partial to depicting breastfeeding scenes of various sorts (p. 209); to the notions of a world turned topsy-turvy (pp. 226, 241), of gods taking unusual roles upon themselves (pp. 33-4) and of the dispossession of nymphs and hamadryads from their haunts (pp. 29, 157); to the idea of man learning from animals (pp. 51, 202); to the ideas of ravaged female beauty (p. 101), erotic dreams (p. 124) and failed sexual encounters (p. 65). He occasionally takes it on himself to explain natural phenomena, an idea derived from didactic poetry (p. 160). Along with other late writers he evinces a penchant for describing precious objects (pp. 10, 111, 229). Finally, a feature which commentators seem to have passed over are the repeated and clearly derogatory references to dark-skinned races, which appear to reflect the poet's personal views (p. 116).

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