

the author's faults, readers can be grateful for the preservation of this material on Christian gnosis (pp. lii–liii). Finally, L.'s voluminous notes to the text contain numerous helpful references to other ancient texts, recent academic studies and interpretative debates. For scholars who already know the text of the *Refutation* well, these notes alone provide enough incentive to consider buying the book.

For those wanting to move L.'s project forward, it is worth noting that this volume does not contain a full textual apparatus. Such an apparatus remains desirable. Readers who would like a fuller list of variants in the manuscripts, particularly in book 1, will still need to access earlier editions, such as those by Marcovich or P. Wendland (*Refutatio omnium haeresium* [1916]). Others may see ways to improve upon L.'s text or translation, perhaps by using the text as a basis for translation into languages other than English. However, most readers will find in this volume a useful base from which to conduct further studies. One such study may consider the *Refutation* as an attempt to make Christianity more palatable to ancient audiences alongside other attempts to do the same, such as the second-century Apologists or Origen's *Contra Celsum*.

This edition of the *Refutation of All Heresies* offers a thorough introduction, a useful text and translation, and enlightening notes that enable readers to understand better the author's thesis that his opponents plagiarised their arguments from Greek philosophy, mystery religions and astrology. The book will be of interest to students, scholars and libraries who study, or facilitate the study of, early Christianity, Greek philosophy and interactions between religion and philosophy in Classical antiquity.

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NARRATIVE FEATURES IN NONNUS

GEISZ (C.) *A Study of the Narrator in Nonnus of Panopolis' Dionysiaca. Storytelling in Late Antique Epic.* (Amsterdam Studies in Classical Philology 25.) Pp. x + 282, fig. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018. Cased, €110, US\$127. ISBN: 978-90-04-35533-0.
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Once understudied, Nonnus of Panopolis (particularly his *Dionysiaca*) now has the allure of a true classic, at least if one were to judge based on the recent and vast scholarly interest in this author. The publication of *Brill's Companion to Nonnus of Panopolis* (2016, ed. D. Accorinti) is an important landmark. Whether Nonnus will one day also conquer a place among the classics for the general readership and in university curricula remains to be seen. G.'s book is not just another sign of this increased interest in Nonnus. Often indirectly, it also points its readers to reasons why the *Dionysiaca*, full of contrasts, is such a fascinating poem, embedded in the Classical tradition, yet surprisingly modern.

G.'s use of the theoretical concept of the 'spatial form' (G. defines it as 'a literary technique by which a narrative is structured according to the interplay of analogies and correspondences . . . rather than by a definite timeline' [p. 265]) of literature illustrates my point (pp. 74–8 and 254–8, a more extensive treatment would have been welcome). This term, developed in literary theory to describe an innovative feature of certain modernist novels,

applies very well to the *Dionysiaca*. It is not the only ‘modernist’ feature of this late-antique poem with its self-conscious narrator figure (*passim*) and – picking up here on what is one of G.’s minor points – its comical use of the character apostrophe (pp. 243–6) whereas forms of metalepsis in pre-modern literature are generally considered to add to the authenticity of the story rather than bringing comic relief.

G. offers a systematic analysis of the role of the narrator in the *Dionysiaca*. Narratological studies of this type, which label and catalogue certain features of a text, often get criticised for being too descriptive. G., however, manages to find a balance between a descriptive and an analytical mode (e.g. pp. 220–7, a fine set of close readings of Nonnus’ ‘Homeric’ comparisons), and also adds a valuable diachronic perspective by systematically comparing with, primarily, the narrators of Homer and Apollonius Rhodius, but also lesser-known imperial authors like Dionysius Periegetes and the Oppians.

Following a brief introduction, the main part of G.’s book is divided into four parts, corresponding to the ‘roles’ assumed by the narrator of the *Dionysiaca*: (1) that of the author-figure in his relation to the Muses and to Homer; (2) that of the scholar in the way he comments on his own narrative, refers to sources and juxtaposes variants; (3) that of the storyteller in dialogue with the narratee; and (4) that of the ‘narrator-character’ in passages where he metaleptically ‘enters’ the story world himself.

This insightful division in roles is in itself one of G.’s most important conclusions, but from the point of view of the overall structure of the argument it also causes some problems. It has resulted in the separation of Chapters 1 and 2 (on the first and second prologue; Part 1: narrator-author) from Chapter 10 (again on the two prologues; Part 4: narrator-character), which, based on their subject matter, would logically belong together. Chapter 1, thus, quite artificially discusses the first prologue of the *Dionysiaca* without paying attention to the figure of Proteus and the Bacchic transformation of the narrator himself (Chapter 10), but instead focuses almost exclusively on the (related) transformation of the traditional figure of the Muse. In contrast with later chapters, in which the substantial comparisons with (mainly) Homer, Apollonius and Quintus Smyrnaeus are well grounded in other studies, the analogies drawn here with Colluthus, Musaeus and Triphiodorus (the latter erroneously called a ‘contemporary’ of Nonnus) remain rather superficial.

Chapter 2 then zooms in on the very explicit way Nonnus’ narrator addresses his relationship to Homer, and shows very well how Nonnus appropriates Homeric devices (e.g. 25.8: ἐμῆς σπουθοῖο, p. 21). I was not entirely convinced by some of G.’s thought-provoking conclusions: pp. 22–3 on the relation between Nonnus and Homer and p. 27 on the relationship between Nonnus’ narrator and his main character Dionysus, both based on the narrator’s use of one rare word.

Chapter 3 rounds up G.’s survey of Muse invocations by its focus on invocations outside of the two prologues. Other than their Homeric precedents, they seem to draw the attention of the narratee not so much to important events in the narrative as to the role of the narrator himself, his control over the narrative and his ambiguous attitude towards Homer.

With Part 2 the focus shifts to the narrator-scholar. Chapter 4 focuses on references to sources (S. Hinds’ ‘Alexandrian footnote’; see *Allusion and Intertext* [1998], not mentioned by G.) and draws convincing parallels with the narrator’s persona in didactic epic and historiography. The second part of Chapter 4, on comprehensive narrating, deals with two distinct but related phenomena: the juxtaposition of competing variants of one myth, and myths that are repeatedly alluded to but never narrated in full.

Chapter 5 starts with a brief but important section on the self-positioning of the Nonnian narrator in space and time. It continues with a survey of different forms of nar-

ratorial comments: on evaluative adjectives, on explicit judgements (with first person verbs) and on the overtly partial rhetorical syncrisis that is part of the poem's second prologue.

Chapters 6–8 (Part 3) focus on the way the narrator involves the narratee in the story. G. here moves from direct means of involvement (the twelve apostrophes to the narratee, which are analysed in Chapter 6), to comparisons and similes (Chapter 8) as indirect ways of steering the narratee's imagination and interpretation. The position of Chapter 7 as well as its title, 'Indirect Addresses', suggests that it makes the transition between 6 and 8. The very composite nature of this chapter in which at least six distinct phenomena are discussed (some of which, like the gnomic utterances and exclamations of wonder, would perhaps belong more naturally in Chapter 5), however, makes it difficult to interrelate the interesting observations.

The headline in Part 3 is that Nonnus systematically appropriates traditional epic devices but applies them in innovative ways, sometimes with entirely different aims. If-not situations (Chapter 7) are not used to show the narrator's reliability but, quite the reverse, to underline that he is in charge of giving the narrative any shape he wishes. Similes and comparisons (Chapter 8) do not offer an alternative image familiar to the narratee from his own experience (nature and daily life), but rather compare mythological scenes with other mythological scenes, which implies a purely literary framework of interpretation.

Part 4 discusses forms of metalepsis. Apostrophes to characters (Chapter 9) are one of the most common forms of metalepsis in antiquity and part of the epic tradition since Homer. The small number of examples here (only seven) allows for a thorough analysis. Chapter 10 re-analyses the two prologues, now with the focus on the metaleptic move of the narrator who enters the world of the story. It fills several of the gaps left by the analysis of the two prologues in Chapters 1 and 2. The late formal introduction of the 'spatial form' as a theoretical concept (p. 256, while already applied on pp. 74–8) may give the impression that this chapter was transformed to become the final chapter at a late stage of the writing process.

In contrast with the 'summaries' at the end of each chapter, which primarily serve to recapitulate, the general conclusion also offers some new food for thought. The reflections of B. Harries, A. Hollis and N. Hopkinson that are cited here (on genre-mixing and on Nonnus' engagement with Homer) would probably better have been introduced earlier in the book, instead of only as an afterthought. This brings me to my most important overall point of critique. It would certainly have been possible for G. to ground the analysis and arguments more in the vast existing literature on Nonnus, even though she largely covers new ground. The introduction of Harries and Hollis in the conclusion do not make up for the complete absence of, for example, G. Agosti and G. D'Ippolito in the bibliography. Notwithstanding these considerations, this book is an important contribution to the study of the *Dionysiaca*. Because of its clear and exhaustive lists of so many interesting phenomena, it will easily become a work of reference.

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