Iliad. This sometimes leads to awkward spelling inconsistencies in close proximity, for example, 'Patroclus … Patroklos … Achilles … Achilleus' (pp. 64–5). When quoting *Il.* 3.221–3, K. offers 'he let loose … could compete' (p. 35); but when rendering the same passage within a quotation by Strabo (for which she also provides the Greek), she unfortunately translates εἴη and ἐρίσσειε as 'there was … would quarrel' (p. 29). Likewise she renders τάδε πάντα from *Il.* 9.442 as 'all these matters' (p. 10) and 'these many things' (p. 35).

The University of Mississippi JONATHAN FENNO
jfenno@olemiss.edu

A GUIDE TO NARRATOLOGY

DE JONG (I.J.F.) *Narratology and Classics. A Practical Guide*. Pp. viii + 230. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Paper, £19.99, US$35 (Cased, £55, US$99). ISBN: 978-0-19-968870-8 (978-0-19-968869-2 hbk).
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What is the genealogy of narratology? One of its parents – it has several – is the Russian Formalism of the beginning of the twentieth century, when Victor Schlovsky could declare that Sterne's wonderfully wild *Tristram Shandy*, a book that cannot make it past the conception of its own hero, is 'the most typical novel', because of its most emphatic (mis)treatment of chronology. In the 1970s in Paris, the promise of a formal science of literary criticism seemed to open a heady vista. Roland Barthes' *S/Z* remains a work of genius, that manages to combine the most formal analysis with essays of extraordinarily cultured insight. Gérard Genette in three fat volumes attempted to develop a vocabulary that would categorise and analyse the tropes of narrative. Both had intellectual – and in Barthes' case institutional – roots in antiquity's science of rhetoric. Shortly after, Franz Stanzel in Germany and Mieke Bal in Holland engaged with Genette for their own theories of narrative – and narratology, which had focused first on novels or short stories, quickly spread into film, epic and other genres and media. Classicists were destined to find it a sympathetic methodological development. Narratology built on familiar ideas such as 'type scenes' or 'ecphrasis', recognised its deep history in rhetoric's formal rules and – to be more provocative – did not require any of the profound engagement with the philosophy of Kant, Hegel, Heidegger and Husserl that Derrida demanded, nor the obsessive fascination with Freud that Lacan performed, nor the political and sexual activism of Foucault, nor the feminism of Irigaray or Cixous, nor the historical self-awareness of Koselleck. Narratology provides, as d.J. writes here, tools 'ready for use'. It is still a very comfortable place from which to read antiquity.

There have been several introductions to narratology already published, as d.J. immediately notes, along with a couple of companions, an encyclopedia, a dictionary and an e-handbook – as well as many narratological studies of ancient texts, from d.J. on Homer's archaic epics through to Fusillo on the novels of Late Antiquity. It might seem, then, a daunting task to attempt to write a short introduction to such a bustling and overcrowded field. But this book will find itself on many a student's shelf, not least because it is the most approachable guide imaginable. It is written with extraordinary simplicity and directness, and with only the barest of technical vocabulary: narratology can fairly bristle with neologistic terms, and d.J. can certainly brandish them with the best, but here she limits herself to a minimum of clearly explained and justified *termi technici*. 'Actorial analepsis', 'hypothetical focalizer', 'metalepsis' are there, of course, but introduced clearly and exemplified with care.

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The book itself has a simple narrative structure. The first section is 'a narratological primer', which consists of an introduction and four substantive chapters, which introduce four key categories of narratology with a chapter to each: narrators and narrateees; focalisation; time; space (where space is a rather surprising but interesting addition to the more usual typologies of the field). The second section, 'narratological close readings', has three chapters, each with an extended, detailed reading of a passage of an ancient Greek text – the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, a section of Herodotus Book 1 and a messenger speech in Euripides' *Bacchae* – by way of exemplification of the value of narratology. The aim is to introduce the theory and then to provide the pay-off through some analytic use of the theory on well-known ancient literary narratives.

Each chapter of the primer has the same organisation. The central category is introduced, and then broken down into its different subcategories and, for each moment of definition, a couple of short passages, one from an English text, one from an ancient Greek or Latin text, is quoted in full and analysed as an example of the analytic subcategory in question. So, to demonstrate the most basic of focalisers, the *overt, external, primary narrator-focalizer*, d.J. quotes the beginning of *Emma* by Jane Austen, and then a passage from Book 3 of Apollonius Rhodius where Eros shoots his arrows of desire at Medea. The rather pleasing irony of juxtaposing two such love stories, two such pointed tales of inside feelings and outward show, is not discussed, though it is one of many such playful diptychs (*Catcher in the Rye* and the *Golden Ass*, stories of phonies both; or *Wuthering Heights* and *Oedipus Coloneus*, narratives of old marital sins remembered . . .). Each of these short quoted passages is decontextualised as a formal example, numbered for ease of reference, and receives the same very brief amount of direct and uncluttered interpretation. It makes for an easily manageable tour through some potentially confusing and difficult ideas. The strength of this style of exposition is both its clarity and the directness of exemplification. The weakness is the lack of interpretative depth. Formalism here is too hard-edged, too divorced from semantics: this is Jane Austen as primary narrator, but without any recognition of how self-conscious she might be at the beginning of a novel, now that she is a successful novelist of erotic entanglements, and whether the ironic wit of her famous opening description of Emma might not speak to her role as primary narrator in this genre.

This thinness is most obvious in comparison with Roland Barthes. As a subcategory of 'description', d.J. notes that a narrator can explicitly 'draw attention to the fact that he is giving a description by remarking that something *cannot* be described', for which she offers as examples Josephus' description of a royal palace and Shakespeare's description of Cleopatra who 'beggared all description'. This trope, she comments blithely, 'does not stop him from describing it'. Barthes famously argued that beauty cannot be described, but only expressed through tautology ('perfectly oval') or simile ('beautiful as Helen') – or silenced by such expressions of indescribability – and he went on to explore with great sensitivity how desire, language and description are intertwined; had he been faced by Josephus, he would no doubt have added some thoughts on the Hebrew bible's interconnected anxieties about representation and the power of a king to aggrandise property. Shakespeare precisely does *not* describe Cleopatra's person – the indescribable 'it' – but rather immediately talks of the pavilion in which she lay. Narratology here may note the formal paradox of declaring the impossibility of descriptive expression in the course of a description, but without the sort of further discussion brilliantly provided by Barthes, such an analytical comment is bound to seem like no more than a rather trivial formal observation.

The second section of the book with its 'close readings' offers a better opportunity to show narratology unlocking the semantics in conjunction with the form of a text – in the way that Jack Winkler so beautifully performed for Apuleius in his landmark study, *Auctor et Actor*. But, to take the last of d.J.'s examples, her analysis of the messenger-speech in

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the *Bacchae*, especially in contrast to the book-length study of Euripidean messenger speeches that d.J. has already published, feels short of the sort of fresh insight that would help sell narratology as a key to opening such complex texts.

The volume, then, is very much a primer, a clear, articulate and considered first step for those who need such a start; and no doubt there will be many who will sign up to such a course. For the suspicious and battle-scarred critic, there are too many difficult questions and options that are simply not faced here. For those who want to struggle with Euripides' bloody play with its politics of gender, violence, divinity and wild dancing, it may all feel a little too comfortable, a little too formal.

King's College, Cambridge SIMON GOLDHILL
sdg1001@cam.ac.uk

NARRATIVE

CAIRNS (D.), SCODEL (R.) (edd.) *Defining Greek Narrative*. (Edinburgh Leventis Studies 7.) Pp. xii + 380, ill. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014. Cased, £95. ISBN: 978-0-7486-8010-8.
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S. lays out at the start of her introduction the hope that lies beyond this volume – 'that we will someday achieve a general view of the history of ancient Greek narrative . . . – that is, that we will be able to present a meaningful narrative about how the practices of telling stories developed within Greek literature, and that this history will contribute to the understanding of both Greek literature and narrative more generally' (p. 1). It is an ambitious hope, and it is not to detract from the generally very high standard of the pieces to say that the volume as a whole still leaves the prospect of attaining that hope as distant as ever.

The first section, 'Defining the Greek Tradition', starts at the beginning of what we now identify as that tradition, with papers on Homeric narrative, including comparisons with the Ancient Near East (Haubold on *Gilgamesh*, Kelly on a variety of Ancient Near East battle narratives, S. on the Hebrew Bible) and with oral narrative modes more generally (Cook on structure in the *Odyssey*). In terms of contributing to the grander ambitions of the volume, Haubold's chapter is particularly useful for its opening discussion of Auerbach's treatment of Homer and the Bible in *Mimesis*. Haubold's careful reading drives home the political implications of the ways in which oppositions between Greek and other narrative traditions are defined. Given its title, however, the section as a whole could do more to interrogate the term 'Greek' itself in relation to Homeric narrative. Whose Greeks are we talking about?

The second section, 'The Development of the Greek Tradition', is more of a mixed bag. Eight papers tackle the big question from a variety of perspectives. In the opening paper, C. goes for the *longue durée*, analysing the way in which the 'principle of alteration' is treated in the *Iliad* and in Plutarch, partly through a conscious use of Homeric intertexts; he also glances in passing at the use of the motif in *Gilgamesh* and in Japanese poetry. The same focus on later authors looking back on the Greek tradition reappears in one of the most interesting papers in the collection, J. Morgan's 'Heliodorus the Hellene'. The great interest of the paper lies above all in the fact that Morgan tackles head on the question of ethnicity that lies at the heart of any project of 'defining Greek narrative', and does so in a way that is acutely sensitive (like Haubold's chapter) to the question of what is at stake in the volume's grand theme. (It is no accident that S.'s introduction uses Morgan's contribution as a way of defining the theme of the volume itself.) Morgan notes the shifting

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