

PHAETHON IN OVID AND NONNUS

Among the artifacts produced by nineteenth-century *Quellenforschung*, few have exerted more influence or endured more censure than the lost Hellenistic epyllion which, as reconstructed by G. Knaack,¹ told of the journey of Phaethon to the palace of the sun-god and his disastrous ride in the solar car. Relying chiefly upon the two versions of the story told by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses* (1.747–2.398) and Nonnus in the *Dionysiaca* (38.105–434), and applying techniques comparable to the stemmatic method of textual criticism, Knaack traced every shared feature of these two accounts to the inevitable lost Hellenistic ‘original’. Details from Lucian (*Dial. Deor.* 25) and Philostratus (*Imag.* 1.11), who were also presumed to have read this lost poem, helped to fill in the blanks. Knaack’s thesis illustrates the extremes of which source criticism was capable at a time when it was naively assumed that Roman poets were capable of little more than literal translation of their Greek models. In the early part of this century, a reaction set in against Knaack’s method, when it was alleged that there was no common source for the two poets and that Nonnus derived his account of Phaethon directly from his reading of Ovid. The case was first made by J. Braune, who examined four episodes common to both works – Phaethon, Cadmus, Actaeon, and Daphne – and argued that correspondences between the two are due to imitation of Ovid by Nonnus.² Braune’s arguments did not win complete acceptance; it is noteworthy that even his supporters were not entirely convinced by three of his four test passages, for which abundant evidence survives of sources earlier than Ovid. Only in the case of Phaethon, for which no apparent source for Ovid’s account is attested, did Braune’s thesis carry conviction; it was instantly accepted by Rudolph Keydell, to whose prestige this theory largely owes its long life.³ The question was later re-examined and the same results reached in two studies produced independently within a short space some thirty years after Braune. The first, by G. D’Ippolito, dealt only briefly with the Phaethon story within the larger context of a study intended to demonstrate Ovidian influence on a broad scale in the *Dionysiaca*.⁴ The second, by J. Diggle, consisted of an appendix to his edition of the fragments of Euripides’ *Phaethon*, and focused more narrowly on the objective, as he put it, of exorcizing ‘the Alexandrian spectre once and for all’.⁵ And indeed, since the publication of these two works, the proposition that Nonnus knew and imitated the *Metamorphoses* has gained wide currency among scholars of late antiquity and late Greek epic in particular, and Braune’s argument and methods of proof continue to win uncritical approval.⁶

¹ *Quaestiones Phaethontaeae*, Philologische Untersuchungen 8 (Berlin, 1886), esp. pp. 22–78.

² *Nonnos und Ovid*, Greifswalder Beiträge zur Literatur- und Stilforschung 11 (Greifswald, 1935).

³ See his review of Braune, in *Gnomon* 11 (1935), 597–605. Keydell was not always so confident: cf. ‘Zur Komposition der Bücher 13–40 der Dionysiaka des Nonnos’, *Hermes* 62 (1927), 428, where he remarks on Nonnus’ Phaethon: ‘die ihm bekanntlich in einem hellenistischen Gedicht vorlag.’ And later, ‘Eine Nonnos-Analyse’, *AC* 1 (1932), 176 or Cadmus (*Dion.* 4.285ff.): ‘nach der gewöhnlichen mythographischen Tradition weiter berichtet.’

⁴ *Studi Nonniani: L’Epyllion nelle Dionisiache* (Palermo, 1964), pp. 253–70.

⁵ J. Diggle, *Euripides: Phaethon* (Cambridge, 1970), p. 181.

⁶ Cf., e.g., Alan Cameron, ‘The Empress and the Poet: Paganism and Politics at the Court

Complications ensue with acceptance of Braune's thesis. In numerous cases scholars have been able to supplement knowledge of fragmentary Hellenistic works with material drawn from later Greek poets.⁷ But if Nonnus read Ovid, others might have turned to Latin authors as well; indeed, the substantial agreement among later witnesses to the story of Phaethon is now attributed to the impact of Ovid's version not only upon his Latin audience, but upon the Greek world as well.⁸ The logical extension of this argument is that the same process also took place in other traditions. The notion that Quintus of Smyrna relied upon the *Aeneid* for much of his narrative lives on in some quarters,⁹ despite firm rejection by the most recent editors. The same argument has been made for Triphiodorus,¹⁰ and R. Hunter has recently suggested that Longus also knew and imitated the Roman poets.¹¹ The question is important, not only for our understanding of literary culture in the Greek East in late antiquity, but for the proper assessment of the achievement of Ovid and his contemporaries. The initial scepticism about Braune's conclusions voiced by P. Maas has been shared by most scholars of Latin literature.¹² Much ground has already been cleared by H. Herter, who showed that Nonnus' account of the Deluge in Book 6 of the *Dionysiaca* is independent of Ovid's version in the opening book of the *Metamorphoses*.¹³ But Herter did not address the crucial Phaethon episode treated by Braune and his supporters, which is surely the place to begin. And the question needs to be reformulated, by looking not only to the tradition presumed to lie behind each poet's account, but by examining the methods employed by each in constructing his verse narrative. The first requirement is thus a close examination of Nonnus, since the case for Ovidian influence in the *Dionysiaca* has appeared credible only because Braune and his followers narrowed the focus exclusively to comparison of parallel narratives in the two works with consequent misprision of Nonnus' actual models and methods.

of Theodosius II', *YCS* 27 (1982), 233: 'Nonnus' debt to Ovid has been put beyond reasonable doubt.'

⁷ In the case of Nonnus, see e.g. A. S. Hollis, 'Some Allusions to Earlier Hellenistic Poetry in Nonnus', *CQ* 26 (1976), 142–50.

⁸ So Diggle (above, n. 5), 9: 'Ovid's successors, both Roman and Greek, could not remain immune from his influence.'

⁹ E.g. R. Keydell, 'Quintus von Smyrna und Vergil', *Hermes* 82 (1954), 254–6. But contrast F. Vian, *Quintus de Smyrne: La Suite d'Homère* (Paris, 1963–9), esp. Vol. I, xxxii–xxxv and M. Campbell, *A Commentary on Quintus Smyrnaeus Posthomerica XII* (*Mnem. Suppl.* 71 [Leiden, 1981]), pp. 115–17. See Vian's *Recherches sur les Posthomerica de Quintus de Smyrne* (Paris, 1959), pp. 95–101, with bibliography of earlier works. It has also been alleged that Quintus used Ovid: cf. Haupt-Ehwald on *Met.* 12.1 and R. Keydell, *Gnomon* 33 (1961), 280–1.

¹⁰ Cf. G. Funaioli, 'Virgilio e Trifiodoro', *RhM* 88 (1939), 1–7, with approving comments by A. Cameron, *Claudian: Poetry and Propaganda at the Court of Honorius* (Oxford, 1970), p. 20 n. 5.

¹¹ *A Study of Daphnis and Chloe* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 76ff. For Chariton, cf. Q. Cataudella, 'Riflessi Virgiliani nel romanzo di Caritone', *Athenaeum* 5 (1927), 302–12.

¹² See his review of Braune, *Byz. Zeitschr.*³⁵ (1935), 385–7, together with the criticisms by G. B. A. Fletcher, *CR* 50 (1936), 239. Cf. R. Heinze, *Virgils epische Technik*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig, 1915), p. 81; W. V. Clausen, *Virgil and the Tradition of Hellenistic Poetry* (Berkeley, 1986), p. 138 n. 27.

¹³ H. Herter, 'Ovidianum Quintum: Das Diluvium bei Ovid und Nonnos', *ICS* 6 (1981), 318–55. Herter had already expressed his confidence in the hypothesis of a common source for Ovid and Nonnus in 'Ovidius und sein Verhältnis zur bildenden Kunst', in *Ovidiana*, ed. N. I. Herescu (Paris, 1958), p. 58 n. 1, but in his subsequent publications did not return to the Phaethon episode.

I. THE BATH OF CLYMENE

The story of Phaethon is related by Ovid in an expansive narrative that begins before the close of the first book and extends well into the second. The prelude to the main narrative, occupying the end of the first book, is an encounter between the boy Phaethon, who believes himself to be the son of Helios, and Epaphos the son of Io, who taunts him with claims of false parentage. This scene is not attested elsewhere and bears all the marks of an Ovidian invention designed to form a link with the preceding story of Io; not surprisingly, then, there is no trace of this episode in Nonnus. In the second book Ovid provides the familiar outlines of the story: Phaethon journeys to the palace of Sol to ask for some proof that he is truly his father. Upon receiving the promise that one request will be granted as proof of paternity, Phaethon asks to be allowed to drive his car, a request that his father cannot deny. Ovid then provides a description of the fiery ride and crash of Phaethon; the story concludes with the metamorphosis of the Heliades into poplar trees and Phaethon's companion Cynus into a swan. Much of Nonnus' account of Phaethon parallels Ovid's, but he contrives a very different opening for the tale. His narrative forms the subject of a story recounted to Dionysus by Hermes after the appearance of terrifying celestial phenomena heralding Dionysus' victory in the Indian war; nothing like it, says Hermes, has been seen since the fall of Phaethon.

The story is then introduced by a description of the first encounter between Helios and the mother of Phaethon, Clymene, whom he catches sight of bathing in the waters of Oceanus. Nonnus was extraordinarily fond of such scenes: he describes no fewer than eight episodes in which someone, god or man, becomes infatuated with a woman spied bathing nude.¹⁴ To this total he adds five descriptions of nude bathing without amatory consequences.¹⁵ A number of elements recur in these descriptions and several are incorporated into the description of Clymene's bath from earlier scenes of this type, even if less than appropriate to their new context. Nonnus' debt to earlier poets may be traced in the extensive but hardly complete testimonia in Keydell's edition, but in the absence of a full-scale commentary on the *Dionysiaca* Nonnus' manner of re-using wholesale words and phrases of his own devising has remained largely undocumented. Recognition of Nonnus' reliance upon phrasing established in earlier books of the *Dionysiaca* is particularly important in assessing whether Ovidian influence is at work in this episode. A characteristic example of Nonnus' method is found at 38.122–4, where Clymene is compared to the light of the moon:

ἔην δέ τις, ὥς ὅτε δισσῆς
μαρμαρυγὴν τροχόεσσαν ἀναπλήσασα κεραίης
ἐσπερίῃ σελάγιζε δι' ὕδατος ὄμπνια Μῆνη

The final line of this comparison is repeated verbatim from his earlier description of Artemis at the bath as seen by Actaeon:¹⁶

φαίης δ' ὥς παρὰ χεῦμα παλίμπορον Ὀκεανοῖο
ἐσπερίῃ σελάγιζε δι' ὕδατος ὄμπνια Μῆνη (Dion. 5.487–8)

¹⁴ *Dion.* 5.304–15, 476–7, 482–8 (Artemis and Actaeon); 5.86–9, 601–10 (Persephone and Zeus); 7.171–279 (Semele and Zeus); 38.116–29. On such scenes in Nonnus, cf. G. D'Ippolito, 'Draconzio, Nonno e gli "idromimi"', *A&R* 7 (1963), 1–14, summarized in his monograph (above, n. 4), pp. 99–100. See too Chuvín's note on *Dion.* 5.304.

¹⁵ 10.141–74 (Dionysus); 11.45–53 (Ampelos); 11.408–11, 416–21 (Carpus); 35.185–91 (Morreus); 41.110–17 (Aphrodite).

¹⁶ For other such comparisons, cf. 10.586–7, 15.243, 16.48, 16.18, 34.40, 48.320; and see the discussion by L. Castiglioni, 'Epica Nonniana', *RIL* 65 (1932), 330.

While the daytime appearance of the moon may be excused in this scene as an appropriate term of comparison for Artemis,¹⁷ Nonnus repeats the imagery in his description of Clymene in spite of the apparent incongruity of such a comparison for a scene set at day in an encounter with the sun-god.

Similar incongruities do not disturb him as he imports elements from other scenes in the following lines. For example, the first half-line of v. 125 (ἡμιφανῆς δ' ἀπέδιλος) is repeated in a later book (ἡμιφανῆς ἀπέδιλος ἐβακχεύθη χορὸς ἄλμης, *Dion.* 43.260) without offence, but the blush of Clymene's cheeks is described in an infelicitous recasting of imagery taken from earlier books:

Ἡέλιον ροδέησιν ὀιστεύουσα παρειαῖς (*Dion.* 38.126)

It is one thing to say that one's cheeks shoot out a rosy gleam, as Nonnus does earlier of Methe,¹⁸

οὐκέτι βακχευθέντος ἀφ' ὑμετέρου καρῆνον
μαρμαρυγὴν ροδέεσαν ὀιστεύουσι παρειαί. (*Dion.* 18.352–3)

It is another to refer to the cheeks as projectiles. Nonnus is apparently conflating this image with another, more familiar amatory topos, in which the eyes of the beloved are said to wound the lover, as he himself applies it in an earlier book, describing the effect of a dying Bacchant, on Morpheus, the Indian warrior who killed her:¹⁹

παρθενικὴ ροδόπηχυ, τεὸν δυσέρωτα φονῆα
οὐτάσας οὐταμένη, φθιμένη ζῶοντα δαμάζεις,
καὶ σὺ τεὸν βλεφάροισιν ὀιστεύεις ὀλετήρα. (*Dion.* 35.37–9)

Indiscreet borrowing also appears to be at work in his description of another blush earlier at v. 129:

ἀργυφών εὐκυκλος ἵτυς φοινίσσετο μαζών

φοινίσσω is normally used in Nonnus of blood red or bright purple, not the most attractive skin tone,²⁰ and indeed the second half of the line appears to be inserted, somewhat incongruously, from a recurring formula used by Nonnus to describe the beating of breasts in mourning, as at 24.185 τυπτομένων παλάμησιν ἵτυς φοινίσσετο μαζών. The understandable failure to detect such patterns in Nonnus' narrative has combined with the less pardonable offence of ignoring other sources in Greek literature to leave the impression that the relationship between parallel passages in Ovid and Nonnus is closer than is actually the case.

The verbal evidence of this passage and the erotic preoccupations that are revealed here clearly mark the bath of Clymene as the product of Nonnus' own imagination (if that is the proper word) and no one argues for Ovidian influence in this passage.²¹ It is therefore not surprising that a point has been overlooked in favour of Ovidian influence that at first glance appears stronger than any other yet adduced. Ovid has nothing to say about the sun-god and Clymene, but he does report a different amorous escapade of Sol. In an otherwise unattested account,²² we hear how the maiden Leucothoe captured the affections of the sun-god:

¹⁷ Braune (above, n. 2), 36 asserts that Nonnus modelled this simile on Ovid in his Actaeon (*Met.* 3.183ff.), but, as Chuvin notes in his commentary on *Dion.* 5.488, Ovid's comparison of Artemis' blush to a cloud struck by sunlight has nothing in common with Nonnus' imagery.

¹⁸ For the phrasing, cf. 48.354 καὶ ροδέους σπινθήρας ὀιστεύουσι παρειαί.

¹⁹ The motif is repeated shortly thereafter of the maiden Chalcomede καὶ βλεφάρων ἀκτῖνες ἐμοὶ γεγάασιν ὀιστοί, 35.172.

²⁰ Cf. *Lexikon zu den Dionysiaka des Nonnos*, ed. W. Peek (Berlin, 1972–5), s.v.

²¹ His independence is acknowledged by both Knaack (above, n. 1), p. 25 and Diggle (above, n. 5), pp. 183–4.

²² For the details see F. Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso: Metamorphosen, Buch IV–V* (Heidelberg, 1976), p. 75. Later references, as Bömer notes, are sure to derive from Ovid, but he almost certainly used a source now lost to us.

nempe tuis omnes qui terras ignibus uris,
 ureris igne nouo, quique omnia cernere debes,
 Leucothoen spectas. (Met. 4.194–6)

The point is of the sort usually called ‘Ovidian’.²³ Commentators note no parallels or apparent models, but a precise parallel does lie close to hand in Nonnus’ introduction to the bath of Clymene when Helios first catches sight of her:

κάμνε πυρὸς ταμίης ἐτέρω πυρί· καὶ φλόγα δίφρων
 καὶ σέλας ἀκτίνων ἐβίησατο πυρσὸς Ἑρώτων²⁴ (Dion. 38.116–17)

Did Nonnus derive this conceit from Ovid?²⁵ Applied to the sun-god, it is an apparent novelty in the *Metamorphoses*, but the topos would in fact have been familiar from amatory epigram where it was applied to the common theme, ἐρώμενος ἐρασθεῖς,²⁶ as in a well-known epigram of Meleager:

ὁ τρυφερὸς Διόδωρος ἐς ἡθέους φλόγα βάλλων
 ἤγρευται λαμυροῖς ὄμμασι Τιμαρίου,
 τὸ γλυκυπέκρον Ἑρωτος ἔχων βέλος. ἡ τόδε καινὸν
 θάμβος ὁρῶ· φλέγεται πῦρ πυρὶ καίμενον. (AP 12.109 = LXI G–P)

The imagery in the final line of fire overcome by flame is common both in Hellenistic verse²⁷ and in later rhetorical texts;²⁸ and Ovid is extremely fond of similar plays on *ignis*.²⁹ Nonnus, too, recognized a useful trope when he saw one, and exploited it throughout the *Dionysiaca* in a variety of different contexts:

καὶ πυρὸς ἔλκος ἔχων, τετορημένος ἔγχει θερμῷ,
 ἄλλω θερμότερῳ νοερῷ πυρὶ κάμνε Τυφωεύς. (Dion. 13.493–4)³⁰

In this passage Nonnus refers to the thunderbolt that defeated Typhoeus, but he applied the motif to an amatory context in his description of Zeus’ infatuation with Semele, a passage which which the bath of Clymene shares many traits:

παιδὶ πατὴρ ὑπόειξεν· ἀκιδνοτάτῳ δὲ βελέμνω
 βαιὸς Ἑρως ἐφλέξεν οἰστευτήρα κεραυνοῦ·
 οὐδὲ χύσις νιφετοῖο, καὶ οὐ φλογόεσσα φορῇ
 ἀστεροπὴ χραίσμησεν, ἐνίκηθη δὲ καὶ αὐτὴ

²³ Bömer (above, n. 22), p. 79: ‘ein gelungenes und typisches Ovidianum.’

²⁴ For the phrase πυρσὸς Ἑρώτων, cf. Dion. 15.402 πυρσὸν Ἑρώτων, Paul. Sil. AP 5.290.3 πυρσὸν Ἑρώτων; Aristaen. 2.5. Dion. 38.117 is imitated at Musaeus 90 σὺν βλεφάρων δ’ ἀκτίσιν ἀέζετο πυρσὸς ἐρώτων. The motif is Hellenistic, derived from Meleager, AP 12.110 (= CV G–P) χαίρε Πόθων ἀκτὶνα φέρων θνατοῖσι, Μυῖσκε, | καὶ λάμποις ἐπὶ γὰρ πυρσὸς ἐμοὶ φίλος. Cf. esp. Parthenius, SH 640.3 Κύπριδος... πυρσὸν ἀναψαμένη, a passage upon which Nonnus draws earlier in this scene, as the editor points out to me: with Dion. 38.111 νυμφίος ὕδατόεις, compare SH 640.5 ὕδατόεντα γάμον.

²⁵ The parallel has only been noticed by Castiglioni (above, n. 16), 326, who thinks it a conceit owed independently to the rhetorical tradition.

²⁶ Cf. Gow on Theocr. 7.118, where he refers to Theocr. 23.33, 29.22; AP 12.12, 12.16, 12.109, 12.193; Plan. 251 (cf. 5–6 ἄ μέγα θαῦμα· | φλέξει τις πυρὶ πῦρ, ἦψατ’ Ἑρωτος Ἑρως).

²⁷ See the note by Gow–Page *ad loc.*, and to the examples collected there add Plan. 197 (= Antip. Thess. LXXXIX G–P) and the anonymous hexameter epigram AP 9.449, which opens, τίς πυρὶ πῦρ ἐδάμασσε; τίς ἔσβεσε λαμπάδι πυρσόν; This epigram is probably from the second half of the fifth century, but shows no obvious signs of Nonnian influence: cf. A. Wifstrand, *Von Kallimachos zu Nonnos* (Lund, 1933), p. 170.

²⁸ E.g. Lucian, *Dial. Deor.* 25.3, τοῦ σοῦ πυρὸς ὁ κεραυνὸς πυρωδέστερος.

²⁹ Cf., e.g. Am. 2.16.11–12, Met. 6.708, 14.444, Fast. 6.439, Trist. 4.3.65; and see J.-M. Frécaut, *L’esprit et l’humour chez Ovide* (Grenoble, 1972), p. 30 n. 12. In this passage note 2.280–1 liceat periturae uiribus perire tuo.

³⁰ Cf. of Helios Dion. 23.26, οὐ πυρὶ πῦρ ἀνάειρε, καὶ εἰ πυρὸς ἡγεμονεύει.

ἀπτολέμου Παφίης ὀλίγῳ πυρὶ τοσσατὴ φλόξ
οὐρανίη.

(Dion. 7.270–5)

And he uses it once again in the inset narrative of the Indian warrior Morrheus and his passion for the Bacchant Chalcomede, again a passage with particularly close verbal parallels to the bath of Clymene:

οὐκέτι πυρσὸν ἔχων θωρήσσομαι· ἄδρανέος γὰρ
δαλὸν Ἐνναλίοιο κατέσβεσε πυρσὸς Ἑρώτων·
ἄλλῳ θερμότερῳ πυρὶ βάλλομαι.

(Dion. 33.246–8)

If Nonnus first discovered the conceit applied to Helios in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, then it made a deep impression on him, for he applies it also in an earlier reference to the god's love life. In the thirty-third book of the *Dionysiaca*, as Eros flies east, it gives him particular pleasure to recall his victories over Helios:

ἀμφὶ δὲ Κέρνη
κυκλώσας πτερὰ κοῦφα βολαῖς ἀντώπιος Ἡοῦς
ἵπτατο μειδιῶν, ὅτι τηλίκον ἡνιοχῆα
δίφρων οὐρανίων ὀλίγοις ἐφλέξε βελέμνοις,
καὶ σέλας Ἡελίοιο σέλας νίκησεν Ἑρώτων.

(Dion. 33.183–7)

And the same warrior Morrheus refers to Helios in this fashion at the opening of Book 34:

καὶ τί μάτην δόρυ θοῦρον ἀείρομαι; εἶξον, ἀκωκῇ
εἰ Παφίη νίκησεν ἀκοντιστήρα κεραυνοῦ,
εἰ πολέμων σκηπτοῦχον ἐὼ σπινθήρι δαμάζει
εἰ φλογερὸν Φαέθοντα κατέφλεγε μείζονι πυρσῷ
καὶ κλονέει πυρόντα, τί κεν ῥέζοιμι σιδήρῳ;

(Dion. 34.60–4)

The courtship of Clymene by Helios clearly derives from an account of the story of Phaethon that Ovid did not follow, as conceded by all critics. In constructing this part of his narrative, Nonnus proceeds in his characteristic manner, adapting imagery and phrasing from earlier portions of the *Dionysiaca* to their new context. In the one instance where it might be possible to detect Ovidian influence using Braune's methods, we discover that the topos is so widespread in later Greek poetry as to make it impossible to attribute its appearance to familiarity with Ovid. The conceit of the sun-god set afire by love derives, with the rest of this episode, from the common literary and rhetorical traditions upon which Ovid and Nonnus both drew.

II. THE PALACE OF THE SUN

Failure to take account of Nonnus' methods of composition has made it easy to assume that common elements in the *Metamorphoses* and *Dionysiaca* were to be ascribed to direct imitation of Ovid by Nonnus. We also need to consider what merit, if any, ought to be attached to Knaack's alternative hypothesis of a single common source. Knaack supposed, for example, that the description of the palace of the sun-god that opens the second book of the *Metamorphoses* was taken directly from the Alexandrian poem. For the most part, critical attention has focused on the scene following the ecphrasis proper, in which the four seasons are described as attendants of Sol, and each is accorded its appropriate attributes. Nonnus, too, describes the four Ὠραι in a different context in the eleventh book, and, not surprisingly, spring is portrayed as a time of flowers, summer is hot, winter cold, and autumn is the season of the vintage. For Knaack this coincidence argues for the existence of his epyllion, while Braune and his adherents find further evidence in it of Ovidian influence in the *Dionysiaca*. Plainly, the evidence points in neither direction, unless it

can be shown that summer is not normally described as hot, winter cold, and so forth.³¹ But an ecphrasis of a palace, which also conforms to the requirements of a tradition, will contain a number of conventional elements, and there is no reason to attribute the preceding description of the palace of the sun to any specific source, whether that be an Alexandrian poem, as Knaack would have it, or Euripides, as Diggle suggests:³²

regia Solis erat sublimibus alta columnis,
clara micante auro flammisque imitante pyropo,
cuius ebur nitidum fastigia summa tegebat,
argenti biforesh radiabant lumine ualuae.
materiam superabat opus: nam Mulciber illic
aequora caelarat medias cingentia terras
terrarumque orbem caelumque, quod inminet orbi. (Ov. *Met.* 2.1–7)

Some features of Ovid's description are clearly unique to his account. In the first instance, Ovid has removed the home of the sun-god from its traditional location in the West to the East in order to facilitate the encounter between the Ethiopian Phaethon and his father. As commentators note, Ovid's ecphrasis is obviously indebted to Vergil's temple descriptions at the opening of *Georgics* 3 and *Aeneid* 6.³³ It differs from Vergil's technique, though, in one important respect: as Friedländer noted,³⁴ while Vergil is careful in his description of the temple at Cumae to portray images on the temple carving that are relevant to the experiences of the Trojans through whose eyes the scene is viewed, Ovid's sun palace has no psychological connection with the experience of Phaethon, who does not even pause to consider it.

Most of the components of Ovid's description are traditional, deriving from the description of the palace of Alcinous in the seventh book of the *Odyssey*, with details accruing from Apollonius' description of the palace of Aeetes in *Arg.* 3: the imposing exterior (*sublimibus alta columnis*, 2.1; a reference to the temple at *Aen.* 7.170, *tectum augustum, ingens, centum sublime columnis*); the brightly coloured façade (*clara micante auro*, 2.2; cf. *Od.* 4.71–3),³⁵ the decorated double doors (*biforesh ... ualuae*, 2.4; cf. *Od.* 7.88–90; *Arg.* 3.223, *Aen.* 6.14ff.); the quality of work which is indicated by the hand of Hephaistos (*Mulciber*, 2.5; cf. *Od.* 7.92). A further elaboration in the detailed carving on the doors is the procession of sea-creatures drawn from the *Europa* of Moschus.³⁶ There is no need to attribute Ovid's ecphrasis here to the Phaethon tradition. Such material is the common property of Hellenistic narrative poetry; so

³¹ As noted by Maas (above, n. 12), 386 and Diggle (above, n. 5), p. 185.

³² He remarks (above, n. 5), p. 42 n. 3, 'perhaps the messenger also included some description of the palace buildings', comparing *Ion* 1146–65, *Hyps.* fr. 764, and this passage of the *Metamorphoses*. But cf. Herter (above n. 13), 58: 'Es gibt auch keinen Anhalt dafür, dass in den beiden Vorlagen Ovids eine Ekphrasis des Palastes vorgekommen wäre: für das hellenistische Gedicht ist das seiner ganzen Anlage nach unwahrscheinlich und für Euripides jedenfalls nicht erweisbar.'

³³ P. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius: Kunstbeschreibungen Justinianischer Zeit* (Berlin, 1912), pp. 19–21; cf. E. Norden, *Aeneis Buch VI*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig and Berlin, 1926), pp. 120–3; Haupt–Ehwald on *Met.* 13.680; Herter (above, n. 13), 53.

³⁴ Friedländer (above, n. 33), p. 21.

³⁵ See Herter (above, n. 13), 54 n. 21 for further parallels. Houses of the gods are conventionally golden: cf. Diggle on *Phaethon* 238 ἀστερωποῖσιν δόμοισι χρυσεῖς, which he takes to refer to Helios' palace, comparing Mimn. fr. 11a.2 W τόθι τ' ὠκέος Ἡελίοιο | ἀκτῖνες χρυσεῖω κείται ἐν θαλάμῳ and *PTebt.* 3.6 (= *SH* 988) Ὑπεριονίδα χρύσειον οἶκον.

³⁶ See E. J. Kenney's note on this passage in the translation of the *Metamorphoses* by A. D. Melville (Oxford, 1986). For further parallels, see W. Bühler, *Die Europa des Moschos* (Weisbaden, 1960), pp. 156–7.

too Nonnus incorporates this subject at a suitable point of the *Dionysiaca* in an ecphrasis describing the palace of Electra in Samothrace. This palace shares many features with Ovid's description of the sun-palace, but these are to be attributed to the common tradition, not to any dependence of Nonnus on Ovid.³⁷

ἀλλ' ὅτε οἱ στείχοντι λεωφόρα κύκλα κελεύθου
 τηλεφανῆς βασιλῆος ἐφαίνετο πανδόκος αὐλή
 κίοσιν ὑψωθείσα, τανυσσαμένη τότε Κάδμω
 δάκτυλον ἀντιτύποιο νοήμονα μάρτυρα φωνῆς
 σιγαλέω κήρυκι δόμον σημῆνατο Πειθῷ
 ποικίλον ἀστράπτοντα· καὶ αἰθέρα δύσατο δαίμων
 ἀλλοφανῆς πτερόεντι διαιθύσσουσα πεδίλῳ.
 καὶ δόμον ἐσκοπίαζεν ἀλήμονι Κάδμος ὅπωπῃ,
 'Ηφαίστου σοφὸν ἔργον, ὃν 'Ηλέκτρῃ ποτὲ νύμφῃ
 ἐργοπόνος Λήμνοιο Μυριναίῃ κάμε τέχνη,
 δαίδαλα πολλὰ φέροντα. νεοσταθέος δὲ μελάθρου
 χάλκεος οὐδὸς ἦν εὐήλατος· ἀμφίθυροι δὲ
 σταθμοὶ ἐμκύνοντο πολυγλυφῶν πυλεώνων. (Dion. 3.124–36)

The lofty façade with imposing colonnade (κίοσιν ὑψωθείσα, 126), the brightly coloured exterior (ποικίλον ἀστράπτοντα, 129),³⁸ the workmanship of Hephaistos ('Ηφαίστου σοφὸν ἔργον, 132 – a tag taken from Quintus of Smyrna),³⁹ and the double doors carrying carvings (ἀμφίθυροι... πολυγλυφῶν πυλεώνων, 135–6)⁴⁰ are features shared by this tradition. Despite several clear verbal parallels, this description cannot be owed to Ovid's ecphrasis at the opening of Book 2. Nonnus had available a wealth of material which would have included the likely sources for these details in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In the case of so commonplace a topic as the description of a palace, it is impossible to judge whether the immediate source for Ovid's ecphrasis was another account of Phaethon. The occurrence of the same details in an unrelated context in the *Dionysiaca* would suggest rather that neither Ovid nor Nonnus was confined to a single narrative tradition in constructing such a scene.

III. REQUEST AND DENIAL

The evidence begins to suggest that Ovid and Nonnus are on parallel but not converging tracks; it will prove instructive, though, to look at the central episode of Nonnus' narrative, the encounter between Phaethon and his father, where it is alleged that he is indebted to Ovid for both the form of the narrative and the verbal expression. In both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Dionysiaca* the sun-god delivers two speeches, a point of which much has been made by Diggle and D'Ippolito. In each version, Helios first attempts to dissuade Phaethon from making the ride, and when the young man persists, advises him, as best he can, on how to proceed through the heavens. This coincidence has been interpreted by Knaack as evidence for the lost epyllion, and by Braune as evidence for Ovidian influence.⁴¹ But the two passages

³⁷ So, rightly, P. Chuvin, *Nonnos: Les Dionysiaque, II: Chants III–V* (Paris, 1976), p. 4, emphasizing Nonnus' debt here to Homer.

³⁸ These lines refer to the decoration of the walls, rather than the sculpture; cf. Chuvin (above, n. 27), *ad loc.*

³⁹ Cf. QS 3.738 'Ηφαίστου κλυτὸν ἔργον, itself an adaptation of [Hes.] *Aspis*, 123, 'Ηφαίστου κλυτὰ δῶρα.

⁴⁰ Nonnus may also have Euphron in mind in this passage; see Chuvin *ad loc.*, and cf. Dion. 4.204 τυκτὰ πολυγλυφῶν ἡσπάσσατο κύκλα θυράων.

⁴¹ Cf. Knaack (above, n. 1), p. 30, and Braune (above, n. 2), pp. 21–3, who is followed by Diggle (above, n. 5), p. 187; D'Ippolito (above, n. 4), p. 263; and Keydell, (above, n. 3), 599.

must be evaluated carefully to determine whether this coincidence is significant and thus constitutes evidence for either borrowing or a common source; for a strong case can be made that this sequence of events did not originate with Ovid.

The brief account of the story given by Lucian in the form of a dialogue between Helios and Zeus after the death of Phaethon recalls just such a sequence:

πάντα μὲν ἠπιστάμην ταῦτα καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἀντείχον ἐπὶ πολὺ καὶ οὐκ ἐπίστευον αὐτῷ τὴν ἔλασιν·
ἐπεὶ δὲ κατελιπάρησε δακρύων καὶ ἡ μήτηρ Κλυμένη μετ' αὐτοῦ, ἀναβιβασάμενος ἐπὶ τὸ ἄρμα
ὑπεθέμην, ὅπως μὲν χρή βεβηκέναι αὐτόν. (Luc. *Dial. Deor.* 25)

Helios first resists the request (ἀντείχον ἐπὶ πολὺ καὶ οὐκ ἐπίστευον αὐτῷ τὴν ἔλασιν), and then reluctantly offers advice (ὑπεθέμην, ὅπως μὲν χρή βεβηκέναι αὐτόν). Although Ovidian influence is simply assumed here by Braune and Diggle, there is no evidence to suggest direct imitation of Ovid by Lucian. Indeed, this unsurprising outline of events appears to have been the common property of the mythographical tradition attached to Phaethon. It appears in summary form in the scholion attached to *Odyssey* 17.208: ὁ δὲ Ἥλιος ἀκούσας παρατὰ μὲν ἀντέλεγεν εἰδὼς ἃ πείσεται, σφόδρα δὲ αὐτῷ ἐγκειμένῳ συγχωρεῖ διδάξας ὅτι τὸ μεταίχμιον. Again, Helios is said to have offered first resistance (παρατὰ μὲν ἀντέλεγεν), then advice (διδάξας ὅτι τὸ μεταίχμιον). The subscription to the scholion refers this account to tragedies, not specified, although, as Diggle notes, Euripides is probably not among them.⁴² None the less, the play is likely to have contained just such an encounter of which a part of the second portion, Helios' advice to Phaethon, survives:

ἐλα δὲ μήτε Λιβυκὸν αἰθέρ' εἰσβαλὼν
κράσιν γάρ ὕγραν οὐκ ἔχων ἀψίδα σὴν
καίων διοίσει...
(desunt lineae fere ii)
ἴει δ' ἔφ' ἐπὶ Πλειάδων ἔχων δρόμον.
τοσαυτ' ἀκούσας παῖς ἔμαρψεν ἡνίας·
κρούσας δὲ πλευρὰ πτεροφόρων ὀχημάτων
μεθῆκεν, αἱ δ' ἔπταντ' ἐπ' αἰθέρος πτυχάς.

(Eur. *Phaethon* 168–74 Diggle)

These lines, quoted by Longinus, are plausibly attributed to a messenger speech by Diggle, who draws the further inference that the messenger has already described events in the palace of Helios prior to Phaethon's departure. This too seems a reasonable surmise. Now if the messenger reported Helios' words of advice, for which we have the unanimous testimony of the extant witnesses to the myth, it is a natural inference, not drawn by Diggle, that the messenger also reported an effort by Helios to dissuade Phaethon from the attempt. Every version of the myth reports a request by Phaethon of Helios, to which his father must accede, although the circumstances under which the request is made often differ. Thus, the simple coincidence that two authors portray Helios first resisting and then assisting his son cannot constitute

Braune's argument that the first speech of Helios in Nonnus is a later insertion drawn from Ovid is reported with approval by Diggle; the comments of G. B. A. Fletcher, *CR* 50 (1936), 239 are worth repeating: 'When it is argued that the first speech of Helios in Nonnus XXXVIII.196ff. is an insertion based on Ovid, and it is asserted that "die beiden Halbverse 194 und 212 schliessen inhaltlich eng aneinander an" it must be observed that, if the whole speech is removed, what results, as we have the text now, is ὁ δὲ (sc. Phaethon) πλέον ἤδὲι μύθῳ | αἰτίζων λιτάνευε· παῖς δὲ ... (sc. Phaethon).' The speech forms an integral part of Nonnus' conception, each part of which can be shown to conform to embedded tradition.

⁴² The scholion differs in several important respects from the plot of his *Phaethon* in so far as it is susceptible of reconstruction; cf. Diggle (above, n. 5), pp. 31–2.

evidence of a significant relationship between the texts. For that we must look more closely at their respective treatments of the scene.

Ovid's first speech is by far the longer of the two in his account (51–102), and in it the father makes two points: first, Sol makes an emotional plea invoking the rigours of the ride; and secondly, he describes at great length the dangerous path through the constellations. By contrast, in Nonnus' first speech only the first point is treated; an astrological digression is found in his second speech of advice. None the less, several correspondences in theme have been discovered between Ovid and Nonnus at this point. In the opening lines of the fourth passage Helios asks that he change his request:

ὦ τέκος 'Ηελίοιο, φίλον γένος 'Ωκεανοῖο
ἄλλο γέρας μάστευε' (Dion. 38.196–7)

As Diggle notes,⁴³ Ovid's sun-god too makes this request, but the idea is after all not very surprising in this context, and admits of limited possibilities for rephrasing. There are no verbal echoes here of the elegant periphrasis in which Ovid's sun-god tries to reject this request:

dissuadere licet: non est tua tuta uoluntas!
magna petis, Phaethon, et quae nec uiribus istis
munera conueniant nec tam puerilibus annis. (Met. 2.53–5)

Further, it can be shown that Nonnus has other models in mind for the phrasing and rhetorical structure of this speech. This includes the rather peculiar salutation addressed to Phaethon by his father, 'O son of Sun', with which we may compare 44.191 ὦ τέκος 'Ηελίοιο, πολύστροφε, παντρόφε Μῆνη, where the phrase fits comfortably in an address not made by Helios.⁴⁴

The major portion of Helios' address consists of a catalogue of deities and their proper functions, employed by Helios to persuade Phaethon not to exceed his station (Dion. 38.200–11). Braune, loyally followed by D'Ippolito and Diggle, maintained that this passage is based upon the concluding point of the corresponding section of Sol's speech in the *Metamorphoses*, of which it is said to be a rhetorical expansion.⁴⁵ There, the sun-god asserts that only he has the strength to handle his team; not even Jupiter would attempt it:

uasti quoque rector Olympi,
qui fera terribili iaculatur fulmina dextra,
non agat hos currus: et quid Ioue maius habemus? (Ov. Met. 2.60–2)

Ovid's point is brief – a typical *sententia* to punctuate a rhetorical division. By contrast, Nonnus' wordy account contributes nothing to the point, and Nonnus' source of inspiration is surely not Ovid:

οὐ ποτε θούρος Ἄρης φλογερῷ κεκόρυστο κεραυνῷ
ἀλλὰ μέλος σάλπιγγι καὶ οὐ βρονταῖον ἀράσσει·
οὐ νεφέλας Ἥφαιστος ἐοῦ γενετήρος αἶρει,
οὐ νεφεληγερέτης κυκλήσεται οἷα Κρονίων,
ἀλλὰ παρ' ἐσχαρεῶνι σιδήρεον ἄκμονα τύπτει,
ἄσθμασι μιμηλοῖσι χέων ποιητὸν ἀήτην·
κύκνον ἔχει πτερόεντα καὶ οὐ ταχύν ἵππον Ἀπόλλων,

⁴³ Diggle (above, n. 5), p. 187.

⁴⁴ ὦ τέκος is found at line opening at *Il.* 24.425, *Od.* 7.22; *QS* 7.39, 7.294, 12.74, 13.226, 14.444; cf. *Dion.* 26.355 Ὠκεανοῖο γένος. Nonnus' awkwardness here may be due to the influence of a model in which the parentage of Phaethon had been disputed as is the case in Ovid, a suggestion that I owe to the editors.

⁴⁵ As Braune (above, n. 2), p. 22 puts it, 'um Ovid zu übertrumpfen'.

οὐ στεροπὴν πυρόεσσαν ἀερτάζει γενετήρος·
 Ἑρμῆς ῥάβδον ἔχων οὐκ αἰγίδα πατρός ἀείρει.
 ἀλλ' ἐρέεις· Ζαγρῆι πόρεν σπινθήρα κεραυνού'.
 Ζαγρεὺς σκηπτὸν αἶρει καὶ ὠμίλησεν δλεθρῷ.
 ἄλξο καὶ σύ, τέκος, πανομοῖα πῆματα πάσχειν. (Dion. 38.200–11)

The passage is largely a pastiche of words and phrases repeated from other contexts in the *Dionysiaca*: v. 200 consists of a Homeric tag in the first half-line (θεοῦρος Ἄρης),⁴⁶ with a line-ending repeated from an earlier book (28.175 κεκόρυστο... κεραυνῷ). In vv. 204–8 occur five half-lines repeated from other contexts: with v. 204 παρ' ἐσχαρεῶνι, compare QS 5.504 παρ' ἐσχαρεῶνι (in the same *sedes*); in v. 205 χέων ποιητὸν ἀήτην, Nonnus re-uses 23.248 ἀσκόις οἰδαλέοισι χέων ποιητὸν ἀήτην;⁴⁷ v. 206 καὶ οὐ ταχὺν ἵππον may be compared with 19.145 καὶ οὐ ταχὺν ἵππον ὁπάσσω; v. 207 οὐ στεροπὴν πυρόεσσαν is modelled on 31.180 οὐ στεροπὴ πυρόεσσα; v. 208 Ἑρμῆς ῥάβδον ἔχων is a reworking of 2.218 Ἑρμῆς ῥάβδον ἔθηκεν and 20.66 ῥάβδον ἔχων; and, finally, in v. 209 σπινθήρα κεραυνού is a stock phrase often repeated in the *Dionysiaca*.⁴⁸ Once again, it is clear that Nonnus is drawing on the material he knew best, stitching together successful phrases culled from earlier books of the *Dionysiaca*.

We may see Nonnus drawing on the same verbal resources to deploy a similar topos earlier in the tenth book of the *Dionysiaca*. Here we are shown Dionysus praying that if only Zeus would grant him the boy Ampelus, he might leave thunder and lightning for the other gods:

σεῖο δ' ἐγὼ πρηστήρος ἀναίνομαι αἰθέριον πῦρ,
 οὐ νέφος, οὐ βροντῆς ἐθέλω κτύπον· ἦν δ' ἐθέλησθης,
 Ἥφαίστω πυρόεντι δίδου σπινθήρα κεραυνού,
 Ἄρης σὺν νεφέων ἐχέτω θώρηκα καλύπτρην,
 δὸς χάριν Ἑρμῶνι Διυπετέος χύσιν ὄμβρου,
 καὶ στεροπὴν γενετήρος ἀερτάζειεν Ἀπόλλων·
 μούνον ἐμοὶ λίπε παῖδα... (Dion. 10.298–304)

In the corresponding portion of Helios' speech in Book 38 Nonnus recalls not only the general formulation of this passage, but in several instances specific phrasing: v. 299 here οὐ νέφος, οὐ βροντῆς assists in the formulation of 38.197–8; σπινθήρα κεραυνού of v. 300 is repeated in 38.209; and v. 303 στεροπὴν γενετήρος ἀερτάζειεν Ἀπόλλων is reworked in 38.206–7. It is important to distinguish between those recurrent patterns which could only be attributed to imitation of another poet, and others, such as these, that reflect the poet's habits of composition and the outline of a common tradition. This speech of Helios is indeed a rhetorical elaboration of a predecessor; the model, however, is not Ovid but Nonnus himself, the poet he is most fond of imitating.

IV. AD ASTRA

Ovid follows this topic with a brief description (63–83) of the path the sun-god's chariot must take through the heavens. Ovid's sources for this astrological excursus cannot be pinpointed. As often in technical digressions, he follows no single extant description of the sphere, but combines elements from a number of similar astrological excursuses in Greek and Roman poetry.⁴⁹ Nonnus differs from Ovid here

⁴⁶ The epithet was picked up by Callimachus, *H.* 4.64, and subsequently applied to the planet by Dorotheus of Sidon, fr. 8.1 Stegemann. Cf. Chuvin (above, n. 37), on *Dion.* 4.52.

⁴⁷ Cf. 3.408 χέων ποιητὸς ἀήτης, 12.284 φέρων ποιητὸν ἀήτην.

⁴⁸ Cf. 8.337 σοὶ πόρεν... πάλιν σπινθήρα κεραυνού, 2.601, 23.235, 35.291, 44.183.

⁴⁹ See Bömer's commentary *ad loc.*

on more general questions of structure and rhetoric, as well as verbal details. This part of Helios' advice is placed at the opening of the second speech to Phaethon. He describes the nature of the Zodiac and its position relative to the seven spheres of the sky along which the planets move. There is a lacuna in the text following v. 231, upsetting the proper sequence of the planets,⁵⁰ but enough can be extracted from the text as it stands to detect Nonnus' sources. The differences between this passage and the comparable portion of Ovid's text, which deals only with the path of the sun, are considerable, though they have often been glossed over.⁵¹

δώδεκα πάντες ἔασι πυρώδεος αἰθέρος οἶκοι,
 Ζωδιακοῦ γλαφυροῖο πεπηγότες ἄντυγι κύκλου,
 κεκριμένοι στοιχηδὸν ἐπήτρημοι, οἷς ἐνὶ μούνοις
 λοξῇ πουλυέλικτος ἀταρπιτός ἐστι πλανήτων
 ἀσταθῶν. καὶ ἕκαστον ἑλιξ Κρόνος οἶκον ἀμείβει
 ἐρπύζων βαρύγουνος, ἕως μόγισ ὅψε τέλεσση
 εἴκοσι καὶ δέκα κύκλα παλιννόστοιο Σελήνης,
 ζώνης ἑβδομάτης ὑπὲρ ἄντυγος· ὑπόθι δ' ἑκτης
 ὠκύτερον γενετῆρος ἔχει δρόμον ἀντίπορος Ζεὺς,
 καὶ δρόμον εἰς λυκάβαντα διέρχεται· ἐν τριτάτῃ δέ...
 ἡμασιν ἐξήκοντα παρέρχεται ἔμπυρος Ἄρης,
 γείτων σείο τοκῆος· ἐπαντέλλων δὲ τετάρτῃ
 αὐτὸς ἐγὼ στεφανηδὸν ὅλον πόλον ἄρμασι τέμνω
 οὐρανίων ἐλίκων πολυκαμπέα κύκλα διώκων,
 μέτρα χρόνου πισύρησι φέρων κυκλούμενος Ὠραῖς,
 τὴν αὐτὴν περὶ νύσσαν, ἕως ὅλον οἶκον ὁδεύσω,
 πλησας ἡβάδα μῆνα τελεσφόρον.

(Dion. 38.222–38)

Nonnus describes the paths of all seven planets and the length of time it takes for each to pass through a single sign of the Zodiac. The times assigned to each of the planets are the standard ones given by ancient authorities,⁵² with the exception of Mars (232–3), for which figures ranging from thirty-five to seventy-five days are recorded, while Nonnus puts the figure at sixty. Nonnus' fascination with astronomy is well catalogued,⁵³ his interest here is in translating into verse a standard form of textbook exposition of the orbit of the planets, as in the following sample from the scholia to Aratus:

καὶ ὁ μὲν Κρόνος εἰς ἕκαστον ζώδιον ποιεῖ ἐνιαυτοὺς β' καὶ μῆνας σ' (μεῖζων γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἡ περιφορά), ὡς ἀνύειν πάντα τὸν ζωδιακὸν κύκλον δι' ἐτῶν λ', ὁ δὲ Ζεὺς δι' ἐτῶν ιβ', ὁ δὲ Ἄρης εἰς ἕκαστον ζώδιον ἡμέρας οδ' ποιεῖ καὶ πάντα τὸν κύκλον ἀνύει εἰς β' ἐνιαυτοὺς καὶ μῆνας ε'. ὁ δὲ ἥλιος...

(Schol. Arat. 455)

The manner of exposition does not vary significantly from one author to another: similarly worded accounts may be found, for example, in Geminus and Cleomedes.⁵⁴ Nonnus probably had such a prose account before him, although the work of versification may already have been done for him; perhaps by Dorotheus of Sidon, an author known to have been familiar to Nonnus, from whom he has taken a tag

⁵⁰ For details, see Keydell's apparatus at 231 and 241.

⁵¹ An exception is D'Ippolito, 264: 'Il secondo discorso di Elio (222–90), presenta con Ovidio solo qualche concordanza, ma nella maggior parte sembra elaborazione propria di Nonno, il quale à modo, seguendo i suoi speciali interessi, di riversarvi la sua cultura astrologica.'

⁵² See W. Gundel, 'Planeten', *RE* 20 (1950), 2091–2.

⁵³ V. Stegemann, *Astrologie und Universalgeschichte: Studien und Interpretationen zu den Dionysiaka des Nonnos* (Leipzig, 1930).

⁵⁴ Geminus, *Isagog.* 1.24–8, Cleom. 1.3. Cf. Stegemann (above, n. 53), pp. 32–3 for further references.

in v. 232 (ἔμπυρος Ἄρης).⁵⁵ It is unlikely that this digression was prompted by Ovid's; for the Roman poet's description of the Zodiac accurately portrays the route Phaethon must take, while Nonnus' list of the planets is a simple display of erudition, irrelevant to the progress of the narrative, and drawing on a variety of sources. In his account of the sun's route, for example, we may detect the influence of Hellenistic verse: with *Dion.* 38.360 οὐρανόιο δὲ Λέοντος ὀπισθιδίω παρὰ ταρσῶ compare Diophilus (or Diophila) *SH* 391.6–7 οὐδὲ Λέοντος ἀπόπροθεν αἰωρεῖται, | οὐρανίοιο Λέοντος, of the Coma Berenices, cited by the scholiast on Callimachus, fr. 100. 65–6.⁵⁶ What is clear is that even in this portion of the story, where Nonnus is alleged to be most under the influence of Ovid, he can be seen to be drawing independently on different sources to add detail to the outline of the myth as he knew it. Parallels between Ovid and Nonnus' two speeches of Helios are limited to commonplaces of an insignificant nature in a tradition that required the sun-god to resist his son's fatal request. The most distinctive features of Nonnus' account clearly derive from his own very different preoccupations.

V. BACK TO EARTH

The fundamental flaw in Knaack's argument was the hypothesis of a single common source for both Ovid and Nonnus. Each drew not only on earlier literary treatments of the Phaethon story but on the whole range of Hellenistic narrative verse. Two of the most distinctive features of Ovid's account are the short catalogues included in his description of the devastation of the world by fire during Phaethon's ride; such catalogues are found elsewhere in the *Dionysiaca*, but it is clear that the influence of a common narrative tradition may be detected in the two. Ovid's first list consists of mountaintops scorched by the flame:

siluae cum montibus ardent;
ardet Athos Taurusque Cilix et Tmolus et Oete
et tum sicca, prius creberrima fontibus, Ide
uirgineusque Helicon et nondum Oeagrius Haemus:
ardet in immensum geminatis ignibus Aetne
Parnasosque biceps et Eryx et Cynthus et Othrys
et tandem niuibis Rhodope caritura Mimasque
Dindymaque et Mycale natusque ad sacra Cithaeron.
nec prosunt Scythiae sua frigora: Caucasus ardet
Ossaque cum Pindo maiorque ambobus Olympus
aeriaque Alpes et nubifer Appenninus. (Met. 2.216–26)

Some significance resides in the names, most of them Greek or eastern, a characteristic display of geographical lore, which Ovid caps by adding two western contributions to the list. But though the names in the final line are domestic, the rhythm is imported: an instance, not so rare in Ovid as in other Roman poets, of a spondaic hexameter ending with a Latin word.⁵⁷ All of the names would be familiar, at least

⁵⁵Doroth. *CAG* V.3.125.13 ἔμπυρος Ἄρης. Lists of the planets are not uncommon in late Egyptian poetry: cf. Cameron (above, n. 10), 206–7 on Theon of Alexandria (Heitsch ii.S 4 = Stobaeus 1.5.14) and the likely source of the list of planets in Claudian, *Stil.* 2.433–40. The evidence adduced by Cameron here tells strongly against Braune's thesis that Nonnus read Claudian's Latin poetry, developed in 'Claudian and Nonnus', *Maia* 1 (1948), 176–83.

⁵⁶ The text of *Coma* is defective at this point, so we cannot tell whether Diophilus owes this phrase (in the same metrical position as in Nonnus) to Callimachus. In a similar context, cf. Call. fr. 748 Pf. ἐσχατὴν ὑπὸ πέζαν ἐλείψαιο Λέοντος.

⁵⁷ The spondaic line ending was originally a neoteric affectation: cf. D. O. Ross, *Style and Tradition in Catullus* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), pp. 130–1; R. O. A. M. Lyne, *Ciris: A Poem*

as names, to Ovid's reader, for they have occurred earlier in Latin poetry.⁵⁸ Ovid, however, probably also draws independently on Greek sources for this list, with the peaks selected for their exotic associations rather than prominence (e.g. Mycale) or height (e.g. Cynthus). By contrast, he selects only the most imposing western mountains for inclusion. At 2.219 *Oeagrius Haemus* is a clear echo of Verg. *Geo.* 4.524 *Oeagrius Hebrus*, with identical rhythm and articulation; but the adjective *Cilix* in 217 is rare in Latin poetry and occurs only here in Ovid, where it apparently reflects an independent piece of learning. The epithet is Homeric, attested once in the *Iliad* (6.397), but it is not attested again in Greek poetry until Nonnus, where it is found as an epithet of the same mountain in Nonnus' second book:

καὶ Διὶ παμμεδέοντι χέων ἐπινίκιον ἡχώ,
λαϊνέη σάλπγγι Κίλιξ μυκήσατο Ταῦρος. (Dion. 2.632–3)

This is surely not simple coincidence (Nonnus repeats the phrase a second time), nor is it likely that Nonnus extracted this tag from Ovid to use twice in his poem. Ovid's list of mountains reflects the Roman poets' continuing interest in the geographical lore that fascinated their Alexandrian predecessors, and this detail is only one of several that we can verify by comparison with later Greek poetry.

Ovid's catalogue of springs and rivers parched by the fire reveals a similar structure. Capping a long list of eastern rivers, a familiar and expected Italian river to close the series:

fors eadem Ismarios Hebrum cum Strymone siccāt
Hesperiosque amnes Rhenum Rhodanumque Padumque
cuique fuit rerum promissa potentia, Thybrin. (Met. 2.257–9)

Again, although the name is familiar, the form is Greek; although Ovid uses the Latin form of the Tiber in the *Fasti*, only the Greek form is found in the *Metamorphoses*, here and three times in the final books devoted to Italian themes. Again, too, an independent display of learning: *Pirenidas* (240) is an Ovidian invention – the form is not attested in Greek.⁵⁹ And several streams make their first appearances in Latin poetry: Amymone (240),⁶⁰ Ismenus (244), Lycormas (245), and Melas (247). And in v. 244 *et celer Ismenos cum Phegiaco Erymantho* there is a piece of erudition derived, perhaps, from another work by the author of a treatise on rivers. The epithet *Phegiacus* is attested nowhere else, while the *Erymanthus* appears only here as the name of a river in Latin poetry. In Greek, too, it is rare, usually referring to the homonymous mountain. But Callimachus refers to it in the *Hymn to Zeus*:

Λάδων ἀλλ' οὐπω μέγας ἔρρεεν οὐδ' Ἐρύμανθος,
λευκότατος ποταμῶν (H. 1.18–19)

And so does Antipater of Sidon.⁶¹

Attributed to Vergil (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 15–16. In his elegiacs Ovid conforms to type, with all but one of the spondaic lines ending in a Greek word. The exception occurs in a suspect epistle, *Her.* 12.121; cf. M. Platnauer, *Latin Elegiac Verse* (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 38–9. Of 34 spondaic lines in the *Metamorphoses*, 15 end with Latin words, *pace* Bömer on *Met.* 1.14. Spondaic line endings with some form of *Appenninus* may already have been common before Ovid: cf. Hor. *Epod.* 16.29, Cornelius Severus, fr. 10 Morel and the jibe by Persius at 1.95. For the practice of other hexameter poets, cf. E. Norden, *P. Vergilius Maro: Aeneis Buch VI* (Stuttgart, 1957), p. 438.

⁵⁸ See D. G. Swanson, *The Names in Roman Verse* (Madison, 1967), s.vv.

⁵⁹ See Bömer on *Met.* 1.472 for a list of such forms coined by Ovid.

⁶⁰ Prop. 2.26.47 has nothing to say about the metamorphosis; *pace* J. J. Moore-Blunt, *A. Commentary on Ovid, Metamorphoses II* (Uithoorn, 1977), p. 55. See Bömer *ad loc.* on the sources: he suspects a Hellenistic origin. ⁶¹ Cf. too A. R. 1.127 Ἐρυμάνθιον... τίφος.

τὰν ἑλαφον Λάδωνα καὶ ἀμφ' Ἐρυμάνθιον ὕδωρ
 νῶτά τε θηρονόμου φερβομέναν Φολόας
 παῖς ὁ Θεαρίδew Λασιώνιος εἴλε Λυκόρτας (AP 6.111.1-3 = XLVI G-P)

Similar lists appear in Nonnus on several occasions, most conspicuously in the sixth book (326-57), where he describes the Deluge, and the twenty-third (79-103), during the battle by the Hydaspes. Many names recur from Ovid's list; this is simply the manner of Hellenistic narrative, and whether or not Knaack's hypothetical epyllion really existed is irrelevant, for both Ovid and Nonnus were capable of drawing such material from anywhere.⁶² Again, it is relevant to note that these two catalogues, which constitute a distinctive feature of Ovid's account, are not reflected in Nonnus' version of the story of Phaethon. Nonnus expands on the confusion of the heavens (*Dion.* 38. 318-409),⁶³ with only the briefest reference to the fire on earth, as we would expect in a poet so interested in astronomy. Nonnus had access to vast amounts of learned poetry in his own tongue upon which he draws for this material; there was no reason to look for such information in Latin poetry, which we cannot be sure Nonnus was even able to read.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Recent efforts to vindicate Braune's hypothesis have focused less on the details of the alleged imitations than on external evidence which might support the proposition that Latin literature was a potent influence in Greek poetry of the fifth century A.D. by demonstrating that familiarity with the Latin classics was widespread during this period. In particular, the evidence of Latin literary papyri has loomed large in such arguments.⁶⁴ Caution is required. The Latin authors represented by papyri uncovered in Egypt to date reflect in the first instance the standard syllabus of the schools: Cicero and Sallust for prose, Terence and Vergil for poetry.⁶⁵ Not surprisingly, Vergil appears to have been widely read, but most of the 18 papyrus fragments of his works were clearly intended for use in language instruction, and were thus equipped with interlinear or juxtalinear translations into Greek.⁶⁶ Somebody was studying Latin, to be sure, but this is not evidence for the serious study of literature, only for the acquisition of a foreign language by reading of literary texts, as Greek had always been taught at Rome.⁶⁷ For some purposes a knowledge of Latin was still important in the late Empire, both in the administration and in the army. The other Latin literary texts discovered in Egypt reflect an interest in Roman history, represented by

⁶² L. Castiglione, *Studi intorno alle fonti e alla composizione delle Metamorfosi di Ovidio* (Pisa, 1906), p. 284 recorded his suspicion of an Alexandrian model for Ovid's two catalogues; and even Knaack (above, n. 1), p. 40 concedes that it need not have been his epyllion.

⁶³ Knaack (above, n. 1), p. 40 attributes this discrepancy to each poet's following his own taste in adapting the lost poem; cf. A. Rohde, *De Ovidi arte epica* (Diss. Berlin, 1929), p. 22.

⁶⁴ Cf. esp. A. Cameron, 'Wandering Poets: A Literary Movement in Byzantine Egypt', *Historia* 14 (1965), 494-6, who is followed by Diggle (above, n. 5), p. 199. See too D'Ippolito (above, n. 4), pp. 73-5 and Cameron's later discussion with special reference to the career of Claudian (above, n. 10), pp. 19-20. Elsewhere (316-21) Cameron concedes that the evidence for literacy in Latin in Constantinople is very slim, and rightly judges that Claudian wrote for a western audience.

⁶⁵ On the shifting fortunes of the classics in the schoolroom, see H. I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. G. Lamb (London, 1956), pp. 277-8.

⁶⁶ For a full account of the Vergil papyri, with plates, see R. Seider, 'Beiträge zur Geschichte und Paläographie der antiken Vergilhandschriften', in *Studien zum antiken Epos*, edd. H. Görgemanns and E. Schmidt (Meisenheim am Glan, 1976), pp. 129-72.

⁶⁷ Cf. Marrou (above, n. 65), pp. 255-8.

Livy and Lucan, and, perhaps a surprise, satire in the person of Juvenal, an author newly rediscovered in the fourth century and the object of much attention from the grammarians. But Ovid was not read in the schools; no Ovidian papyrus has yet appeared, nor perhaps should we expect to see one.⁶⁸ It is therefore possible that Nonnus could read Latin, even Latin poetry, but it is unlikely that he could count on an audience that would recognize and admire his dexterous re-handling of Ovidian material.⁶⁹ Further, while it is easy to understand why Vergil, for example, might appeal to Greek readers interested in Roman traditions, it is *a priori* improbable that a Panopolitan would use a Latin poem as his source for Greek mythology, when there were so many works available in his native tongue.⁷⁰

A number of common sources for Ovid and Nonnus do survive, at least in part, and accordingly Knaack's assumption of a lost source is not improbable in principle, although its content and character must remain undetermined. The story of Phaethon was popular, recounted as Diodorus informs us (5.23.2) by πολλοὶ ... τῶν τε ποιητῶν καὶ τῶν συγγραφέων. And Ovid himself seems to refer to earlier sources for his narrative: cf. 2.176 *memorant*, 2.268 *fama est*.⁷¹ The *Dionysiaca* provides us with an important witness to the traditions available to Ovid and his Roman contemporaries, which can be used with caution, as a standard against which to measure their innovations within the material that they inherited.⁷² In the story of Phaethon, for example, we may compare the significant role allotted to Clymene in all the Greek sources with her trivial appearance in the *Metamorphoses*. In Euripides' tragedy it is a promise made to Clymene, not Phaethon, that Helios must honour; while in both Lucian and Nonnus it is Clymene's entreaties that finally persuade Helios to give way. We may conclude that it was Ovid who chose to diminish her importance in the story in order to focus exclusively on the encounter between father and child, which he portrays in vivid, human terms. Egypt was still quite a civilized place in the fourth and fifth centuries, and Nonnus had at his disposal an enormous amount of Greek literature now lost to us. The Roman poets had very clear reasons, rooted in the development of their culture, for their deep and fruitful interest in Greek poetry. The onus of proof continues to lie with those who maintain that Nonnus had a similar interest in Ovid.

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⁶⁸ There is little basis for the confidence expressed on this score by D'Ippolito (above, n. 4), p. 74: 'Anche se papiri ovidiane non sono stati finora rinvenuti è assurdo che il poeta delle *Metamorfosi* venisse trascurato.'

⁶⁹ As Herter (above, n. 13), 319 puts it: 'das Problem liegt nicht so sehr darin, ob er Latein genug verstand, einen römischen Poeten in extenso zu lesen, sondern das ist die Frage, ob er es auch wirklich getan hat, ob er diese Mühe nötig befand, wo er doch genug Autoren seiner eigenen Sprache zur Verfügung hatte, zumal wenn er, wie man früher wenigstens glaubte, von der Singularität der hellenischen Kultur durchdrungen war.'

⁷⁰ Where Claudian acquired his knowledge of Latin poetry we can only guess. It is virtually certain that his familiarity with the language at least began in Egypt; cf. Cameron (above, n. 10), p. 19. But his reading of Ovid need not have been much earlier than his first productions in Latin. For what it is worth, there is no trace of Latin influence in his surviving Greek verse.

⁷¹ For this style of reference to earlier traditions by the Roman poets, see Norden's note on *Aen.* 6.14.

⁷² For example, Nonnus presents different versions of a number of myths where one would expect to detect some trace of Ovidian influence if in fact he had read the *Metamorphoses*. For example, his account of Pyramus and Thisbe at *Dion.* 6.347–55 and the scattered references to Daphne, as at *Dion.* 42.387, assume different versions of the myths, which may have been known and rejected by Ovid. On the latter, see H. Herter, 'Daphne und Io in Ovids Metamorphosen', *Hommages à Robert Schilling*, edd. H. Zehnacker and G. Hentz (Paris, 1983), pp. 318–19.