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Icarius Jesus Christ?

Dionysiac Passion and Biblical Narrative in Nonnus' Icarus Episode (Dion. 47, 1 – 264)*

Summary – In the storyline of the Icarus episode Nonnus introduces novelties which, governed by a spirit of “humorous detachment”, assimilate Icarus – the tree-planter chosen by Dionysus to spread his drink in Attica, murdered by those whom he was supposed to benefit, resurging post mortem to instruct his daughter – to Christ and, to a considerable extent, his murderers to the Jewish mob killing Christ, and Erigone to Mary Magdalene. A studied mixture of Dionysiac and Christian traits indicates that the episode, already in the prologue of the epic, is conceived as a substitute passion essential for Dionysus' translation to the sky. The widespread tenet that Nonnus is primarily indebted to Eratosthenes' *Erigone* is thus refuted.

Broadly speaking, the story of Icarus and Erigone, originally the foundation myth of an Attic deme, is as follows: when Bacchus visited Athens as part of his

* The present study was announced by Accorinti 2004, 155. I am indebted to Dr Domenico Accorinti and Dr Gianfranco Agosti for their remarks on earlier drafts. – The following abbreviations are used: Accorinti 2004: D. Accorinti, *Nonno di Panopoli. Le Dionisiache, canti XL–XLVIII*, Milan 2004; Accorinti-Chuvin 2003: D. Accorinti-P. Chuvin (edd.), *Des Géants à Dionysos. Mélanges ... offerts à Francis Vian*, Alessandria 2003; Agosti 2003: G. Agosti, *Nonno di Panopoli. Parafresi del Vangelo di San Giovanni, V. Canto*, Florence 2003; BDAG: W. Bauer-F. W. Danker, al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Chicago³2000; Brown 1966/1970: R. E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, London, I 1966, II 1970; Fayant 2000: M.-C. Fayant, *Nonnos de Panopolis, Les Dionysiaques, chant XLVII*, Paris 2000; Gigli Piccardi 2003: D. Gigli Piccardi, *Nonno di Panopoli. Le Dionisiache, canti I–XII*, Milan 2003; Golega 1930: J. Golega, *Studien über die Evangeliendichtung des Nonnos*, Breslau 1930; Keller 1946: G. A. Keller, *Eratosthenes und die alexandrinische Sterndichtung*, Zurich 1946; Keydell 1932: R. Keydell, *Eine Nonnos-Analyse*, AC 1 (1932), 173–202 = Kl. Schr., 485–514; Livrea 2000: E. Livrea, *Nonno di Panopoli. Parafresi del Vangelo di S. Giovanni, Canto B*, Bologna 2000; Maass 1883: E. Maass, *Analecta Eratosthenica*, Berlin 1883; Merkelbach 1963: R. Merkelbach, *Die Erigone des Eratosthenes*, in: *Miscellanea di Studi Alessandrini in memoria di Augusto Rostagni*, Turin 1963, 469–526; Rosokoki 1995: A. Rosokoki, *Die Erigone des Eratosthenes*, Heidelberg 1995; Solmsen 1947: F. Solmsen, *Eratosthenes' Erigone: A Reconstruction*, TAPhA 78 (1947), 252–275; Vian 1994: F. Vian, *Théogamies et sotériologie dans les Dionysiaques de Nonnos*, JS juill.-déc. 1994, 197–233 = id. 2005, 513–550; id. 1997: F. Vian, *MAPTYE chez Nonnos de Panopolis*, REG 110 (1997), 143–160 = id. 2005, 565–584; id. 2005: F. Vian, *L'épopée posthomérique. Recueil d'études*, ed. by D. Accorinti, Alessandria 2005.

mission to spread wine throughout the world, he was amicably entertained by Icarus, an aged farmer, and his daughter Erigone. The god presented them with wine and the know-how to cultivate vineyards. He also assigned them the task of introducing viticulture into Attica. Icarus travelled around Attica, but it all went wrong when inebriated peasants suspected his wine to be a poison – and killed him. When Erigone, guided by Icarus' faithful hound Maera, discovered the body of her father, she (and Maera) committed suicide. Zeus took pity on all three and translated them into stars.

The version of the Icarus myth in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* 47, 1–264 is often studied as a source for reconstructing Eratosthenes of Cyrene's Erigone, a διὰ πάντων ... ἀμώμητον (Longin. *De subl.* 33, 5) but, nonetheless, almost entirely obliterated epyllion. “[I]t would be astonishing”, wrote Adrian Hollis, “if Nonnus' version of Erigone ... did not owe much to the famous elegy by Eratosthenes”.¹ Secondary sources furnish valuable help in this effort. The hypothesis of an Eratosthenic version is provided by the scholium D to *Iliad* 22, 29 which ends with ἡ ἱστορία παρὰ Ἐρατοσθένει, and first Maass² has shown it to be probable that Hyginus *Astr.* 2, 4 conflates two versions, one of which reproduces the principal events in Eratosthenes' account. The crucial objection to Maass' reconstruction is that he attributed to Nonnus' hypothetical source more than the available evidence would allow and more than is altogether plausible.³ What can not be attributed to Eratosthenes has, since then, been regarded as Nonnus' own invention either per se or as a variation of different other, including some Egyptian, sources. The present essay aims at revealing a second, hitherto neglected but nonetheless privileged source that comes into Nonnus' treatment of the episode and the blending of Dionysiac and Christian features in it. It follows the text passage by passage, then concludes with an essay on the wider implications of Nonnus' handling of the Icarus episode.

Nonnus' departure from Eratosthenes can well be demonstrated by the αἴτιον for the establishment of tragedy in *Hyg. Astr.* 2, 4, 21, 153f. Viré apparently harking back to Eratosthenes, one verse of whose poem (fr. 22 Powell) is, in corrupt form, cited therein: *Qui [i. e. Icarus] cum sevisset vitem et diligentissime administrando floridam facile fecisset, dicitur hircus in vineam se coniecisse et quae ibi tenerrima folia videret decerpisse* [~ Erat. fr. 26 P. ap. *Suppl.* SH, 49]; *quo facto Icarum animo irato tulisse eumque interfecisse et ex pelle eius utrem fecisse ac vento plenum praeligasse et in medium*

¹ A. S. Hollis, *CQ* 26 (1976), 145 and, likewise, E. Livrea, *ZPE* 106 (1995), 57 n. 6.

² Maass 1883, 59–138. Research was then carried further by Solmsen 1947, 253f., and especially by Merkelbach 1963, 487f. Cf. also Rosokoki 1995, 64f.; Fayant 2000, 38f.; Accorinti 2004, 494f.

³ As noticed by Keller 1946, 94 and Solmsen 1947, 259.

proiecisse suosque sodales circum eum saltare coegisse. Itaque Eratosthenes ait: Ἰκαριοῖ, τόθι πρῶτα περὶ τράγον ὠρχήσαντο.

Nonnus plays down this aetiological aspect of the myth and leaves out the vengeful killing of the he-goat. The focus of his attention is shifted to the dispersal of Dionysus' drink in Attica and its repercussions. Unlike other places, in Attica this is not Dionysus' own duty, since according to a local tradition (which Nonnus knows to respect) Icarus performs that task. Therefore, Icarus is absorbed into the Bacchic propaganda of the poem as a minor, local Dionysus, or an apostle and martyr of him.⁴ It is Icarus who now has to confront the opposition Dionysus so often confronts in spreading his cult: "Der Verbreiter der göttlichen Pflanze setzt gewissermassen die Wanderung des Gottes fort; auf die Einkehr des Dionysos folgt der Aufbruch des Gastgebers, der zum Stellvertreter des Gottes wird und ebenso wie dieser freundlich oder feindlich empfangen werden kann."⁵ It therefore comes as no surprise, for example, that the questions addressed to Dionysus by the Tyrian herdsman in Achill. Tat. 2, 2, 4/5 are taken on by Nonnus (47, 76–103) but this time addressed instead by an Athenian peasant to Icarus. The primary approximation of Icarus and Dionysus also carries with it the programmatic weight of Dion. 1, 31–33 (discussed in section V, *infra* p. 85).

Along with taking up Dionysus' task, Icarus, it is argued, appears to assume, in parody, some 'Christian' features; particularly those related to Christ's passion and resurrection. Those around him also appear to model their thoughts and actions on newtestamental characters. The fundamentals for such an approach look promising: Icarus is on a mission ordered by a god who has chosen him to disperse his drink, Schol. D Il. 22, 29 κατὰ δὲ τὰς τοῦ θεοῦ ὑποθήκας περιήει τὴν γῆν ['his native land'], προφαίνων τὴν τοῦ Διονύσου χάριν. During his mission Icarus faces the angry opposition of local peasants. He is murdered by his countrymen whom he was supposed to benefit. He posthumously appears to his daughter instructing her on how to conduct herself. Eventually, by will of a compassionate Zeus, he (along with his daughter and dog) is translated to the sky through his catasterism. For such an approach it is telling, although clearly from a different perspective, that ethnic circles in search for alternative Christs suggested Orpheus for his leading a pious life and dying a violent death, Celsus ap. Origen C. Cels. 7, 53 = Orph. fr. 1062 Bernabé Ὁρφέα εἶχετε, ἄνδρα ὁμολογουμένως ὁσίῳ χρησάμενον πνεύματι καὶ αὐτὸν βίαιως ἀποθανόντα.

⁴ "Ein Märtyrer des neuen Dienstes", Wilamowitz, Der Glaube der Hellenen II, 65.

⁵ D. Flückiger-Guggenheim, Göttliche Gäste. Die Einkehr von Göttern und Heroen in der griechischen Mythologie, Bern 1984, 109. The evidence for resistance to Dionysus is presented in: P. McGinty, HThR 71 (1978), 77/78.

A quintessential element making possible such a conception of the episode is the function of wine as Dionysus' means of salvation in the Dionysiaca (7, 13f., 85f.), and its symbolism as Christ's spiritual message of eternal life in the Paraphrasis: in essence, these are not far from one another. In either case, wine marks a new era for humanity. Nonnus had worked on such a concept in his 'Umdichtung' of the wedding at Cana in Par. 2.⁶ As Nonnus presents the episode, Christ is invited (2, 7 κλητὸς ἔην σύνδορπος) to a feast (2, 8 εἰς εἰλαπίνην) at Cana amidst a thirsty crowd (2, 59 διωλόεην παρὰ δαίτα) and renders a conventionally sweet wine (2, 12 οἴνου ... ἡδυπότοιο, ἡδέος οἴνου 20) to a superior one (2, 53/54 ὑπέρτερον ... / οἴνον). In the Dionysiaca, Icarus the Athenian is martyred for spreading Dionysus' wine. The verbal similarities between the two episodes are one aspect of their resemblance: Par. 2, 13 (ἀμφιφορῆς) πάντες ἐγυμνώθησαν ἐπασσύτεροισι κυπέλλοις ~ Dion. 47, 106/107 (ἀγρονόμοι) ἐπασσύτεροισι κυπέλλοις / πάντες ἐβακχεύθησαν – with an antithesis of helpless emptiness as against destructive fullness; Par. 2, 31 ὑδάτων ἐγκύμονας ἀμφιφορῆς ~ Dion. 47, 42 μέθης ἐγκύμονας ἀσκούς; Par. 2, 35 καὶ εἰς χύσιν αἶθοπος οἴνου (καὶ αἶθ. εἰς χύσ. οἴν. Ludwich, "ft. recte" Livrea) ~ Dion. 47, 127 καὶ αἶθοπος εἰς χύσιν οἴνου; Par. 2, 51 βαρυνομένων δὲ καρήνων ~ Dion. 47, 110 ποτῶ δ' ἐβαρύνετο κόρη.

Then, as Icarus pours profuse fragrant wine from the skin bags into a pastoral krater, he spreads joy among his fellow diners, Dion. 47, 73–75:

καὶ νομίῳ κρητῆρι βαλὼν ῥόον ἄσπετον οἴνου
 δαινυμένους ἠϋφραϊνεν ἐπασσύτεροισι κυπέλλοις
 οἰνοδόκων θυόεσσαν ἀναπτύξας χύσιν ἀσκῶν.

At the Cana wedding the initial gaiety of the table companions is succeeded by an apprehensive despondency, unattested in the Johannine 'Vorlage', Par. 2, 14–16 στυγνοὶ δὲ φιλακρήτῳ παρὰ παστῶ / οἰνοχόοι δρηστήρες ἀβακχεύτοιο τραπέζης / ἀβρέκτοις παλάμησι μάτην ἤπτοντο κυπέλλων. This endured until Christ turns water into wine prompting the enthusiasm of the master of the feast (Par. 2, 48f.). Obviously, Christ's ability to take away sorrow and turn it into joy, this time, realises itself through wine. In this connection, it is significant that the toastmaster tells the νυμφίος that, unusually, he has reserved the superior wine 'for the last moment', Par. 2, 54 ἕως πέλε λοῖσθιος ὥρη (for Jn 2, 10 ἕως ἄρτι). The eschatological connotations here become apparent from the parallels adduced by Livrea (2000, 229). This is in sharp contrast to the ὄξος offered to Christ on the cross (Jn 19, 30). The Paraphrasis suggests that Nonnus, as probably St John before him, perceived the two passages as a contrasting pair.

⁶ See Livrea 2000, 85f.; Gigli Piccardi 2003, 515. For wine consoling or curing grief, or redeeming sin see J. Gerbeau, ed. Dion. XVIII-XIX, Paris 1992, 64.

I. The Death of the Tree-planter

Sources believed to be close to Eratosthenes indicate that, as is typical in theoxenies of this kind, Icarius received wine in return for his hospitality to Dionysus. Thus, the scholium D to Iliad 22, 29 reports ξενίσας δέ ποτε ὁ Ἰκάριος Διόνυσον ἔλαβεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ οἶνόν τε καὶ ἀμπέλου κλήμα, cf. Schol. vet. Ar. Equit. 700a, 169, 18 Mervyn-Jones φιλοξενίας ... δῶρον, ὅτι φιλοφρόνως αὐτὸν ὑπεδέξατο. Hyginus Astr. 2, 4, 21, 149 *Viré cui propter iustitiam et pietatem existimatur Liber Pater vinum et vitem et uvam tradidisse*, practically amounts to the same thing. Nonnus, as he usually does with well known accounts which he chooses to neglect in the main texture of his narrative, puts this version in the mouth of a secondary character, here as one of the mistaken assumptions of the Athenian peasant praising Icarius for the novel drink, Dion. 47, 99–103 (missing from Nonnus' model, Achill. Tat. 2, 2, 4/5). On the contrary, in Nonnus' account Icarius is picked out from among all citizens of Attica welcoming Dionysus, because he is the person most capable for spreading viticulture, 47, 34–36:

Οὐδέ τις ἦν ἀχόρευτος ἀνὰ πτόλιν. αὐτὰρ ὁ χαίρων
 Βάκχος ἐς Ἰκαρίου δόμον ἦλυθεν, ὃς πέλεν ἄλλων
 φέρτερος ἀγρονόμων ἑτερότροπα δένδρα φυτεύων.

In doing so, Dionysus performs a search well known for its allegorical meaning, in Christian context, from Mt 21, 1 ὁμοία γάρ ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν ἀνθρώπῳ οἰκοδεσπότη, ὅστις ἐξῆλθεν ἅμα πρῶτ' μισθώσασθαι ἐργάτας εἰς τὸν ἀμπελῶνα αὐτοῦ, or, as John Chrysostom in his oration on Matthew's verse (In Illud: Simile est regnum caelorum patri familias PG 59, 579) paraphrased, ἐγὼ ... συγκατέβην τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι καὶ περιέρχομαι ζητῶν ἐργάτας εἰς τὸν ἀμπελῶνά μου.

Like Dionysus' search, so Icarius' outstanding ability 'to plant new sorts of trees' evokes, in view of the mission he is appointed to carry out, a commonly employed metaphor of the initiation of new members to the Christian church figuratively imagined as a φυτεία, 'plantation'. This metaphor, of Jewish origin, enjoys scriptural authority from Mt 15, 13, it is employed of baptism by Paul 1 Cor. 3, 6 ἐγὼ ἐφύτευσα, Ἀπολλῶς ἐπότισεν, ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς ἤρξανε and it enjoyed frequent usage in early Christian literature, which called new converts νεόφυτοι, 'neophytes, newly planted' beginning with Paul 1 Tim. 3, 6.⁷ Planting and irrigating often appear as metaphors describing the missionary work of the apostles (cf. Rom. Mel. 471δ' M-Tr) and γεωργός finally came to denote the Christian preacher, cf. Clement Strom. 7, 12 ἐργάζεται τοίνυν ὁ γνωστικός ἐν τῷ τοῦ

⁷ Cf. Lampe, Patr. Lex., 905 s. νεόφυτος B and ib. 1503 s. φυτεύω I. See J. Daniélou, Les symboles chrétiens primitifs, Paris 1961, 33–48.

κυρίου ἀμπελῶνι φυτεύων, κλαδεύων, ἀρδεύων, θεῖος ὄντως ὑπάρχων τῶν εἰς πίστιν καταπεφυτευμένων γεωργός. ἑτερότροπα, which can mean ‘various’ or ‘of a different kind’ with connotations of ‘strange’, might be a tantalising play upon the lurking metaphor.

In compliance with his abilities, Icarus’ formulary description in the episode is γέρων φυτοεργός ἀλωεύς (47, 58. 70. 125). φυτοεργός is not an epic word. In the Dionysiaca it is used only of Icarus. In the Paraphrasis it occurs once in 4, 15/16 φυτοεργός Ἰακῶβ / ἀμπελόεν πέδον εἶχε of Jacob, one of the founders of Israel,⁸ and cf., further, Cyllenius FGE 125, Dionys. Per. 997. It is, however, employed outside Christianity of preachers of mystic/spiritual teachings (Nock-Festugière, Corp. herm. I, 104 n. 26) and, closer to Christianity, Philo’s treatise on Gen. 9, 6 is entitled Περὶ φυτουργίας Νῶε. The term is commonly employed in patristic literature of Christ or the apostles (Lampe, Patr. Lex., 1503 s. φυτουργός, add Akathistos 5, 9) on the strength of Jn 15, 1 ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή καὶ ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ γεωργός ἐστίν. John Chrysostom (In Illud: Simile est regnum caelorum patri familias PG 59, 579) calls the apostles τοὺς ἀκόκνους φυτουργοὺς τῆς οἰκουμένης and describes Christ in similar terms, Hom. 11, 5, in Rom. PG 60, 491 τοῦ καλοῦ φυτουργοῦ, τοῦ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀκριβῶς ἐπισταμένου καὶ τὴν ἄμπελον τὴν πνευματικὴν θεραπεύοντος καὶ τὴν οἰκουμένην γεωργοῦντος ἅπασαν. In this respect, it is rather unsurprising that Icarus, like Dionysus and Christ,⁹ is a ‘master’, 47, 72 ἐδίδαξε φυτηκομίας Διονύσου, 196 διδάσκων. Significantly, διδάσκειν in Nonnus often bears connotations of mystic initiation (e. g., Dion. 4, 271; 9, 114) and comes close to meaning ‘reveal’. Nonnus may well allude to this notion in Par. 2, 3 ἀεξιφύτου Γαλιλαίας for the place where Christ ἐφάνερωσεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ (Jn 2, 11, cf. Livrea 2000, 158). Erigone will revert to this metaphor, with equal strength of connotation, at the end of her atypical lament following Icarus’ resurgence, 47, 196/197 (Icarus) διδάσκων / γείτονα καλλιφύτοιο νέους ὄρπηκας ὀπώρης, 203 εἰ δὲ πατήρ τέθηκε καὶ οὐκέτι δένδρα φυτεύει etc.

Emphasis on Dionysus’ assignment of Icarus varies in the sources of the myth. In Ps-Apollod. 3, 14, 7 Icarus’ mission is self-motivated, τὰς τοῦ θεοῦ δωρήσασθαι θέλων χάριτας ἀνθρώποις, but this looks like an attempt to relieve the beneficiary god of any shade of complicity in the resultant crime and, at the same time, a dramatisation in view of Icarus’ undeserved death. In most accounts, including that of Nonnus, it is Dionysus who sends Icarus out on a mis-

⁸ Cf. Vian 1997, 159 = 2005, 583; M. Caprara, ed. Par. 4, Pisa 2006, 9/10.

⁹ For Dionysus as ‘master’ of his companions see F. Vian, L’‘invention’ de la vigne chez Nonnos, in: L. Belloni - G. Milanese - A. Porro (edd.), Studia classica J. Tarditi oblata I, Milan 1995, 203 = 2005, 554; for Christ see C. Greco, ed. Par. 13, Alessandria 2004, 117–119.

sion during which he is destined to meet his fate, cf. Schol. D Il. 22, 29 κατὰ ... τὰς θεοῦ ὑποθήκας, Hyg. Astr. 2, 4, 21, 150 *Viré existimatur Liber Pater vinum et vitem et uvam tradidisse, ut ostenderet hominibus* etc., Hyg. Fab. 130, 1 *ius-sitque ut in reliquas terras propagarent*. This tendency appears very lucidly in a version “euhemeristisch frisiert” (Keller 1946, 63) attested by Nigidius Figulus (116, 3 Swoboda): Dionysus appears as a human inventor of wine unwilling to spread his drink out of fear that it would be mistaken for a noxious substance, *veritus ne, cum civibus suis obtulisset saporis nobilitatem, ebrietatem iucunditatis arbitrarentur maleficium, persuasit Icario amicissimo sibi ut is inferret in civitatem quam vellet. quod et libens animo Icarius tulit et distribuit in Attica* etc. Here Dionysus unequivocally sends Icarius out to die in his place, and Icarius’ innocence and unearned fate are expressly pointed out.

Nonnus indirectly recognises the moral responsibility of Dionysus for Icarius’ death in 47, 249 where catasterised Erigone refuses to hold βότρυον ἐοῦ γενέταιο φονῆα (cf. Maxim. De act. ausp. 491–496). Fayant (2000, 19) argues that vestiges of Nigidius’ version are extant in Nonnus’ treatment. The Panopolitan intends to make no secret of Dionysus’ intentions: the choice of Icarius for this specific purpose and the god’s actions in enticing him into it, suggest that the god knows in advance the fatal outcome. Dionysus holds a glass of sweet-smelling wine in his right hand and lures Icarius with soothing words, 47, 43–45:

δεξιτερῆ δ’ εὐοδμον ἔχων δέπας ἡδέος οἴνου
 ὤρεγεν Ἰκαρίω· φιλίω δ’ ἠσπάζετο μύθω·
 Δέξο, γέρον, τόδε δῶρον, ὃ μὴ δεδάσιν Ἀθηναί.

Holding out a goblet filled with wine is, typically, the first act of intimation with wine.¹⁰ In Dion. 13, 469 ἔχων δέπας ἔμπλεον οἴνου Dionysus offers wine to Rhea for the first time; in 19, 248f. to the gods (Silenus’ pantomime). Dionysus’ ensuing ὀλβισμός of Icarius in 47, 46 ὦ γέρον, ὀλβίζω σε, and the promise for ever-lasting renown, is directly related to Icarius’ own ὀλβισμός of his orphan daughter in 47, 165 ὦ τέκος, ὀλβίζω σε: both are blessings to the newly initiated. They introduce their addressees into a new concept and call for action which entails fatal consequences for them without their knowing. But false promises were imputed to Jesus too, and one may recognise in Icarius’ absurd olbism of Erigone a ‘window allusion’ to them. It is certainly an interesting parallel that Christ’s macarism of Peter in Mt 16, 17 Μακάριος εἶ, Σίμων Βαριωνᾶ ... (19) δώσω σοι τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν is ridiculed by Porphyry (C.

¹⁰ For wine as a means of Bacchic initiation see I. Lada-Richards, *Initiating Dionysus. Ritual and Theatre in Aristophanes’ Frogs*, Oxford 1999, 137.

Christ. 26 Harnack) in the face of the disciple's prompt crucifixion, εἰρηκότος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τὰς ἄδου πύλας μὴ κατισχύσειν αὐτοῦ.

The god's address to Icarus is identical to his address to Brongus (47, 45a = 17, 74a), and similar to Bacchus' address to Falernus in Silius Italicus 7, 192 *'en cape'*, *Bacchus ait, 'nondum tibi nota [munera]'* where there is a happy-ending. In both of these cases, however, Nonnus and Silius follow a scheme typical of theoxenies (warm reception > generous reward), whereas in Icarus' case Dionysus' motivation is different. One can not, therefore, fail to recall Odysseus' scheming invitation to Polyphemus to drink his excellent wine; he too holds a drinking cup in his hands, Od. 9, 347–349 Κύκλωψ, τῆ, πίε οἶνον, ... / ὄφρ' εἰδῆς, οἶόν τι ποτὸν τόδε νηὺς ἐκεκεύθει / ἡμετέρη. Dionysus' gift is equally dangerous and insidious.¹¹ Treachery, as so often, is part of the Dionysiac way of death.

But, deriving from the Jewish notion of 'cup' as an expression for 'destiny', in Christian terms, the very act of offering a cup of wine would imply assignment to martyrdom. Christ was provided, by his father, with a glass which he had to drink to the bottom, Mt 20, 22, Jn 18, 11 τὸ ποτήριον ὃ δέδωκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ οὐ μὴ πῖω αὐτό; Nonnus would be in no doubt as to what liquid this glass contains. His rendition in Par. 18, 56–58 features patent Dionysiac traits (cf. Livrea ad loc.). Icarus' passion is predetermined by his own Dionysus like the passion of Christ is predestined by His father and symbolised with a full glass, cf. Clement Paed. 1, 46, 1 τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τοῦ ἰδίου πάθους 'ποτήριον' κέκληκεν καταχρηστικῶς, ὅτι ἐκπεῖν καὶ ἐκτελέσαι μόνον ἐχρῆν αὐτό, then, metaphorically, of martyrdom, Mart. Polyc. 14, 2 τοῦ λαβεῖν με μέρος ἐν ἀριθμῶ τῶν μαρτύρων ἐν τῷ ποτηρίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Another point showing the assimilation of Icarus with Christ is the fact that Icarus is of the same stock as his killers: he is a peasant (47, 36. 66 ἀγρονόμος) appointed to enlighten other peasants (70 ἄλλοις ... ἀγρονόμοισι) including his murderers (106 ἀγρονόμοι, 116 χορὸς ἀγρονόμων, 129. 164. 174). This is also the case with Jesus, Jn 1, 11 εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον ~ Par. 1, 31 ἐγγὺς ἔην ἰδίων, ἴδιοι δέ μιν ... / ... οὐκ ἐγέραιρον, Paul 1 Th 2, 14 (Jesus suffered) ὑπὸ τῶν συμφυλετῶν.

As Icarus wanders in Attica, he comes into contact with peasants who drink a sort of wine that affects everyone and removes reason, 107 πάντες ἐβακχεύ-

¹¹ In Virg. Georg. 2, 454 *Baccheia dona* (followed by a list of innocent figures put to death by intoxicated murders) looks like a focalisation from a lost Greek model. – In Ov. Met. 6, 125 Liber is said to have deceived Erigone through wine, *Liber ut Erigonen falsa deceperit uva*. The context remains unknown, but it seems a fair assumption that Liber took sexual advantage of her, conceivably in the fashion of the Nicaea or Aura stories, cf. Anacreont. 59, 14f. West. Wine is the means to seduce avowed virgins such as Erigone was.

θησαν ἀμερσινώφ φρένας οἴνω. In other words, they henceforth behave as an irrational herd. When the first drunken peasant falls on his back, a manic group of fellow peasants sets about Icarius. The text is as follows, 47, 116–124:

καὶ χορὸς ἀγρονόμων φονίῳ δεδονημένος οἴστρω
 τλήμονος Ἰκαρίοιο κατέτρεχε θυιάδι λύσση,
 οἶά τε φαρμακόμεντα κερασσαμένου δόλον οἴνου,
 ὃς μὲν ἔχων βουπλήγα σιδήρεον, ὃς δὲ μακέλλη
 120 θωρήξας ἕο χειράς, ὁ δὲ σταχυητόμον ἄρπην
 κουφίζων, ἕτερος δὲ λίθον περίμετρον ἀείρων,
 ἄλλος ἀνεπτοίητο καλαύροπα χειρὶ τιταίνων,
 γηραλέον πλήσσοντες· ἐλὼν δὲ τις ἐγγὺς ἰμάσθλην
 Ἰκαρίου τέτρηγε δέμας ταμεσίχροι κέντρῳ.

This kind of violent ferocity is not novel for the early stages of wine's introduction to humanity, when diluting wine with water was still unknown (cf. 47, 108 φιλακρήτοις ... κυπέλλοις ~ Ps-Apollod. 3, 14, 7 χωρίς ὕδατος) and immoderate drinking provoked frantically aggressive and violent reactions. Unmixed wine provoked the violence that killed Icarius in Eratosthenes' Erigone as it would appear from fr. 36, 4 P. = 4, 4 Diehl = 6, 4 Rosokoki (οἶνος) ἐκ δ' ἀνδρῶν πάντ' ἐτίναξε νόον ~ 47, 107 ἐβακχεύθησαν ἀμερσινώφ φρένας οἴνω, so that here we may touch upon Eratosthenic traces.¹² Similarly, in Dion. 45, 84 Pentheus, in a list of disadvantages, by tragic irony charges wine with 'exciting an unstable man's mind to murder'. A passage from Diodorus of Sicily 4, 4, 6/7 attests similar manners to explain (διὰ τινὰς τοιαύτας αἰτίας) Dionysus' association with the νάρθηξ and the institution of adding water to wine, both boons of Dionysus; both steps towards civilising primitive practices: κατὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς εὕρεσιν τοῦ οἴνου ... τοὺς συνεορτάζοντας δαφιλή τὸν ἄκρατον ἐμφορησαμένους μανιώδεις γίνεσθαι, καὶ ταῖς βακτηρίαις ξυλίνας χρωμένους ταύταις ἀλλήλους τύπτειν. διὸ καὶ τινῶν μὲν τραυματιζομένων, τινῶν δὲ καὶ τελευτώντων ἐκ τῶν καιρίων τραυμάτων κτλ. Jacoby (FGrH IIIbA, 274f.) called the supplier of such material "mythographer of Diodoros" on the model of the mythographus Homericus. The source is unknown and with confidence can only be said that this story derives from heurmatographic literature.¹³

Be this as it may, the distinctive difference between this 'traditional' violence and that in Icarius' myth is that in the latter case the violent reactions are

¹² Rosokoki 1995, 68; Accorinti 2004, 518.

¹³ Its aetiological character and rationalism might indicate that it could be the kind of story collected in Ephorus' *Περὶ εὐρημάτων* FGrH 70 F 2–5, which Diodorus knew second hand, cf. 5, 64, 4 = FGrH 70 F 104. On Dionysus-versions in Diodorus see J. Rusten, *Dionysius Scytobrachion*, Opladen 1982, 109 n. 52.

not due to wine as such, but to the erroneous assumption that Icarus' drink is a poison (Ps-Apollod. 3, 14, 7 πεφαρμάχθαι νομίζοντες ~ 47, 118 φαρμακόμεντα ... δόλον οίνου). It is certainly worthy of note that this is a charge known to have been raised primarily against Peter (Augustine De civ. dei 18, 53 fights against the accusation *Petrum ... maleficia fecisse*) and against Paul and the Christians in general (A. A. Barb, RAC X [1978], 1233), then also a charge levelled against Dionysus by his opponents in the Dionysiaca. In 14, 411f. Dionysus, in a scene with striking biblical underpinnings, turned water into wine out of pity for his enemies (14, 411 ὤκτειρε) but Orontes, in Dion. 17, takes wine as a venomous drink, 17, 127 χεύματι φαρμακόμεντι, 128 φονίης ... ἐέρσης, 173 δολόμεντα μεμηνότα φάρμακα, as does Pentheus in 45, 223 φαρμακόμεντι ποτῶ.¹⁴ But, beyond this obvious connection, the peasants' misunderstanding of Icarus' drink as poison, leading to the frenzied killing of an innocent, recalls one of the principal characteristics of Johannine Jesus and one of the founding reasons for his death: misapprehension. Humans fail to understand Jesus' word and His elusiveness is repeatedly pointed out in the Paraphrasis, see Caprara (above, n. 8), 178 with literature and infra p. 55 on Dion. 47, 142 ἀγνώσσουντες.

The Nonnian peasants perpetrate their crime by employing an extraordinary set of equipment. Their very first instrument (119 βουπλήγα σιδήρεον) is the weapon with which Lycurgus scares Dionysus away and murders his nurses in Il. 6, 135 (and in Nonnus Dion. 20, 186, al.: "it looks like a ritual weapon" Dodds, ed. Eur. Bac., XXVII n. 1) which, again, puts Icarus in the shoes of Dionysus. There is nothing comparable in the sources of our myth with regard to the means of Icarus' death. Lucian Dial. deor. 22, 2 παίοντες ταῖς δικέλλαις comes the closest, but mattocks are the countrymen's conventional equipment. In much the same fashion is to be interpreted Maximus (whom Nonnus seems to know: Fayant on 47, 69. 169. 248) De act. ausp. 495 στυφελαις κορύναις ἐδάϊξαν. The ῥόπαλα in 47, 126, resurfacing as κορύναι in 169, are probably not a belated addition to the list but, with Keller and Fayant, "zusammenfassend".¹⁵ On the contrary, Ampelius 2, 6 *lapidibus* (~ 47, 121 λίθον) and Hyginus Fab. 130 *fustibus* are important, the latter possibly being Eratosthenic, cf. Schol. D Il. 22, 29 πλήσσουντες ἐφόνευσαν.

Such lists have an apparent function as a means of dramatic intensification, so that Nonnus' long list of agricultural instruments turned to lethal weapons, set

¹⁴ For the wine - poison theme cf. F. Vian, REA 90 (1988), 407 = 2005, 450. It might be thought to prefigure in Nic. Alex. 27–35 where the symptoms of poisonous aconite are likened to those of drunkenness.

¹⁵ Keller 1946, 84; Fayant 2000, 151 (on v. 169). Cf. the Homeric mythographer in: P.Oxy. 4096 fr. 5, 9 (ap. W. Luppe, Die Ikarios-Sage im Mythographus Homericus, ZPE 112 [1996], 30) ῥο]πάλοις παίον[τες.

out in six full verses as it is, other than a product of an all but obsessive penchant for accumulation, might be seen as enhancing the impression that the victim suffered all possible kinds of sadistic brutality. It is a demonstration of Bacchic savageness and provides the sense of grim variation elsewhere produced by recounting the dismemberment of the individual limbs of a Bacchic victim or by recounting the individual savageries like those against Lycurgus in Dion. 21, 69–89. Specifically from this point of view, the instruments used in Ovid by maenads to hack to death Orpheus, who died “gewissermassen als Märtyrer seiner [i. e. Dionysus’] Lehre”,¹⁶ could provide a literary parallel, Met. 11, 28–30 *vatemque petunt et fronde virentes / coniciunt thyrsos non haec in munera factos. / hae glaebas, illae direptos arbore ramos, / pars torquent silices*. These being insufficient, *sarculaque rastrique graves longique ligones* (36), agricultural implements deserted by terrified land workers, are also grabbed by the maenads.

However, the intensively ritualistic character of the scene has not been properly stressed. Icarius dies the death of a sacrificial victim. The scene of Pentheus’ murder in Euripides’ *Bacchae* is revealing: the maenads swiftly pursue Pentheus (1090 ἦξαν πελείας ὠκύτητ’ οὐχ ἥσσορες ~ Theoc. 26, 16 Πενθεὺς μὲν φεῦγεν πεφοβημένος, αἱ δ’ ἐδίωκον ~ Dion. 47, 117 [χορὸς ἀγρονόμων] Ἰκαρίοιο κατέτρεχε θυιάδι λύσση)¹⁷ and pelt him with stones, fir branches and ‘thyrsoi’, 1096–1100:

πρῶτον μὲν αὐτοῦ χερμάδας κραταιβόλους
ἔρριπτον ...
ὄζοισί τ’ ἐλατίνοισιν ἠκοντίζετο,
ἄλλα δὲ θύρσους ἴεσαν δι’ αἰθέρος
Πενθέως, στόχον δύστηνον.

Significantly, this particular Euripidean scene is not exploited in the account of Pentheus’ murder in Dion. 46, 175f. The pursuit of Pentheus, the encirclement of the victim and the collective physical violence he suffers puts Pentheus in the position of a *φαρμακός*, a scapegoat pelted with stones.¹⁸ Next, the frenzy of the peasants who kill Icarius (47, 117 θυιάδι λύσση) is a distinctive Bacchic feature. As a matter of fact, *λύσσα* (or personified *Λύσσα*) typically comes up in scenes of Bacchic murder, as evidenced in the murder of Pentheus by the Theban maenads (Eur. Bac. 977 with Seaford ad loc., Nonn. Dion. 46, 194. 217, then

¹⁶ The quotation is from Nilsson, *Gesch. gr. Rel.* I, 687, who parallels the animosity between Bacchism and Orphism with that between Judaism and Christianity.

¹⁷ On ritual chase see Lada-Richards (as n. 10), 189.

¹⁸ See B. Seidensticker in: G. Bowersock, al. (edd.), *Arktouros. Hellenic Studies ...* B. M. W. Knox, Berlin - New York 1979, 185f.; R. Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual*, Oxford 1994, 284/285, 289/290.

Theoc. 26, 15 *μαίνεται ... μαίνοντο* just before the attack on Pentheus and long after the ritual has commenced), or Lycurgus' murder of his own children in the Hymn to Dionysus GDRK 56, 39. At the same time, in patristic literature *λύσσα* commonly refers to pagans' or Jews' "senseless refusal to believe" and is so employed repeatedly in the Paraphrasis.¹⁹

Further on, a peasant left anonymous (47, 123 *τις*, cf. Jn 19, 34 *εἷς τῶν στρατιωτῶν* ~ Par. 19, 178 *ἀκίχητος ἀνὴρ*) grabs a goad (*ιμάσθλην*) and pierces Icarus' flesh with unusual cruelty. The act occurs in Lycurgus' passion too, where Bacchant Phasyleia in Dion. 21, 85 *δυσμενέος κενεῶνα κατέγραφεν ὀξεί κέντρῳ* and Theope in 21, 87 pierces his flank *ρίνοτόρῳ νάρθηκι*. Here the martyrdom of Icarus unmistakably draws a feature from Christ's martyrdom. This is what, according to St John, happened when Jesus expired on the cross, 19, 33/34: *ἐπὶ δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐθλόντες [sc. οἱ στρατιῶται], ὡς εἶδον ἤδη αὐτὸν τεθηκῶτα, οὐ κατέαξαν αὐτοῦ τὰ σκέλη, (34) ἀλλ' εἷς τῶν στρατιωτῶν λόγῃ αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἔνυξεν, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν εὐθὺς αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ.*

If, as it is argued, this is not an isolated point of contact between Icarus' murder and the passion of Jesus, the rural mob killing Icarus could be seen as a version of the Jewish crowd demanding (and certainly imagined as carrying out) the death of Christ. The mob escorting Judas to arrest Jesus hold hand lanterns, torches and various weapons, Jn 18, 3 *ὁ οὖν Ἰούδας λαβὼν τὴν σπεῖραν καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων ὑπηρέτας ἔρχεται ἐκεῖ μετὰ φανῶν καὶ λαμπάδων καὶ ὄπλων*, and eventually, Jn 18, 12/13 *συνέλαβον τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸν (13) καὶ ἤγαγον πρὸς Ἄνναν πρῶτον* where the string of polysyn-deton verbs insinuates the violent actions of the mob. Later Christian dramatisation insisted on the mob's equipment,²⁰ and in the Paraphrasis Nonnus inflates the list with clubs derived from the synoptics (Mt 26, 47 *ὄχλος πολὺς μετὰ μαχαρῶν καὶ ξύλων*). Cyril In Joh. evang. 74, 580b described the army led by Judas as *πολεμικοῖς ὀργάνοις ἐνηρμοσμένην* to which comment may be indebted Par. 18, 59 *ζαθέης στρατιῆς*, a phrase used in Dion. 14, 16 of the Bacchic army led by Dionysus. The text runs as follows (what is being held or brandished by the mob is in italics), Par. 18, 12–16:

καὶ στρατὸν *ἀσπιστήρα* δεδεγμένους ἀρχιερίων,
καὶ πολὺν οἰστρήεντα παρ' ἀρχεκάκων Φαρισαίων
σύνδρομον ἄλλον ἔχων *κορνηφόρον* ἐσμόν ὀδίτην,
15 ἦλυθεν ἄλλοπρόσαλλος ἐς ἠθάδα κήπον Ἰούδας
τεύχεα καὶ λαμπτήρας ἔχων.

¹⁹ See Lampe, *Patr. Lex.*, 815 s. *λύσσα* 2; Livrea on Par. 2, 114.

²⁰ See Golega 1930, 84; Livrea on Par. 18, 14.

κατακόπτει με πληγαίς. (6) ἐγὼ δὲ ὡσπερ ἐν μυστηρίῳ μηδὲν ἴδειν etc.²¹ There is, however, an instance in which Jesus suffers the mockery and physical attack of a band of soldiers under Pilate. John reports simply, 19, 3 καὶ ἐδίδοσαν αὐτῷ ῥαπίσματα, but the synoptics get into greater detail, Mt 27, 30 καὶ ἐμπτύσαντες εἰς αὐτὸν ἔλαβον τὸν κάλαμον καὶ ἔτυπτον εἰς τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ ~ Mk 15, 19, Evang. Pet. 9, Act. Pil. 7. Nonnus in his rendition makes full use of these details in a dramatisation which bears considerable resemblance to the martyrdom of Icarus in the Dionysiaca. In Par. 19, 4/5 Pilate ἀμοιβαίησι δὲ ῥίπαῖς [~ 47, 129] / ῥιγεδανῆ Χριστοῖο δέμας φοίνιξεν [~ 47, 130] ἰμάσθλη, then in 19, 14/15 ἦεν ἄλλος ἐπ' ἄλλω [~ 47, 119–123] / χερσὶν ἀμοιβαίησι παρηίδος ἄκρον ἀράσων (on Par. 19, 129/130 see infra p. 86). Another feature shared in all these descriptions is the striking of Jesus' head with a stick of reed (in accordance with Is. 50, 6). It is by no means coincidental that this feature is repeatedly emphasised for Icarus too, Dion. 47, 128/129 καρήνου / ... πληγῆσιν ἀμοιβαίησι τυπέντος, 158 ἔλκεα τόσσα καρήατος, 166/167 ἀρασσομένοιο καρήνου, / ... πολὴν ... ἐρευθομένην ὑπὸ λύθρῳ.

Furthermore, this passage appears to portray a qualified reproduction of Christian symbolism. The mingling of wine and blood (130) could be considered *prima vista* as a variation of the mixture of flowing water with blood in epic battles,²² although there is at least one instance in the Dionysiaca where blood literally mixes with blood, in 4, 330/331 describing wretched Philomele's chopped tongue and lost virginity. The correlation of wine and blood in Nonnus finds its immediate precedent in the dialogue between a Tyrian herdsman first tasting wine and Dionysus in Achilles Tatius 2, 2, 4 πόθεν οὕτως εὔρες αἶμα γλυκύ; 5 (Dionysus, with pseudo-religious gravity) τοῦτό ἐστιν αἶμα βότρου. Achilles Tatius' passage presents close similarities with the eulogy of wine by an enthusiastic Attic peasant in Dion. 47, 78f.²³ It is possible that such a eulogy of wine echoes some passage in Eratosthenes' poem and Erat. fr. 25 P. (Icarus?) καὶ βαθὺν ἀκρήτῳ πλεύμονα τεγγόμενος might lend colour to such an assumption. On the other hand, Achilles, the Alexandria born novelist whom a later biographical falsification held as a Christian bishop (Suda s. νόβνα),²⁴ exercised

²¹ See, further, Lada-Richards (as n. 10), 97.

²² First in Il. 21, 21, often in Nonnus, Dion. 22, 365; 24, 20; 25, 68/69, see, further, Chrétien on Dion. 10, 174.

²³ The marvel of those first tasting wine is a standard reaction, cf. Soph. Dionysiscus fr. 172 Radt, Nonn. Dion. 14, 417f.; Vian (as n. 9), 208 = 2005, 559. On wine and blood see Seaford on Eur. Bac. 284 and Livrea 2000, 86 n. 80. In patristic literature: Lampe, Patr. Lex., 49 s. αἶμα D2d and 945 s. οἶνος 3.

²⁴ This might have become a 'fact' by Nonnus' time. Christian interest in Achilles Tatius is salient in the bios of St Galaction and Episteme (3rd cent.) where the parents of Galaction bear the names of the protagonists of Achilles' novel, as well as in Ps-Eustathius of

considerable influence on Nonnus so that his mediation here seems entirely possible.²⁵

Icarius' accidental act of spilling wine (47, 127 εἰς χύσιν οἴνου), which mixes with his blood, appears to be best paralleled in the initial slaughter-scene in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* 1,4–6, where a feast ends up in slaughter with the sudden attack of brigands and the instruments of the feasting table are turned into defensive or offensive weapons, 1,4 ὁ γὰρ πόλεμος ἐσχεδίαστο. The assailants use a variety of offhand weapons but most deaths are caused by arrow and javelin, i. e. by deadly piercing mentioned last in the list. Amidst the havoc, kraters are overturned (1,4 κρατῆρες ἀνατετραμμένοι), wine mixes with blood. In terms of narrative symbolism, the overturning of kraters and the mixing of wine and blood denote the complete reversal of the situation: the feast is turned into an unforeseen slaughter, Heliod. 1,5/6: ἔκειντο δὲ ὁ μὲν πελέκει τετρωμένος, ὁ δὲ κάχληκι βεβλημένος ... ἕτερος ξύλω κατεαγώς, ὁ δὲ δαλῶ κατάφλεκτος, καὶ ἄλλος ἄλλως, οἱ δὲ πλείστοι βελῶν ἔργον καὶ τοξείας γεγεννημένοι. (6) Καὶ μυρίον εἶδος ὁ δαίμων ἐπὶ μικροῦ χωρίου διεσκεύαστο, οἶνον αἷματι μίανας, καὶ συμποσίοις πόλεμον ἐπιστήσας, φόνους καὶ πότους, σπονδὰς καὶ σφαγὰς ἐπισυνάψας.

In Heliodorus things are overturned again, in the form of a cycle, at the end of the novel, where a rite involving human sacrifice (10,52,3 ἄνδρα καταθύειν) is turned into a wedding ceremony, 10,38,4 τὰ ἐναντιώτατα πρὸς συμφωνίαν ἤρμόζετο ... τῶν στυγνοτάτων εἰς ἑορτὴν μεταβαλλομένων ... τῶν προσδοκηθέντων φόνων εἰς εὐαγεῖς θυσίας μεταβαλλομένων. The passage quoted above presents obvious parallels with the scene of Icarius' murder, except that the focus in Nonnus is on one man alone as against all others in the offensive. An almost coeval employment of this motif in Quintus of Smyrna presents equally close similarities. In the description of Eurypylyus' shield, Pholus receives Heracles and, either on the latter's insistence or following an instruction of Dionysus, offers his guest wine whose odour provokes the brutal attack of maddened Centaurs. Blood mixes with wine, kraters are overturned, 6,281/282 οἴνω δ' αἷμα μέμικτο, συνηλοίητο δὲ πάντα / εἶδατα καὶ κρητῆρες εὐξεστοί τε

Antioch's Commentary on *Hexaëmeron* (4th/5th cent.) in which six passages from Leucippe and Clitophon are paraphrased. A rumour known to Socrates *Hist. eccles.* 5,22 (λέγεται) advanced the identification of Heliodorus with his namesake bishop of Tricca. See J. Bremmer, *Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus in Christian East Syria*, in: H. L. J. Vanstiphout (ed.), *All those Nations ... Cultural Encounters within and with the Near East*, Groningen 1999, 21–29.

²⁵ Keller 1946, 82 and Merkelbach 1963, 499 reckon with direct imitation of Eratosthenes, but see Fayant 2000, 16. G. W. Bowersock, *Fiction as History*, Berkeley 1994, 125–127 argues that Achilles is partly indebted to the Gospels (esp. 2, 2, 5/6 ~ Mt 26, 26. 28), cf. J. Bremmer, *The Rise and Fall of the Afterlife*, London 2002, 55.

τράπεζαι. The episode ends with the undeserved, accidental death of Heracles' host and wine provider.

Yet, in Nonnus there is more to the scene: the overturning of the krater signifies resistance to Dionysus, in whose cult the mixing bowl played an instrumental part. The kraters should be set up to stand upright in honouring the god: in Eur. Bac. 221/222 πλήρεις ... ἐστάναι κρατήρας seems a 'technical' expression.²⁶ The notion of 'overturning' appears to be integral to Bacchic resistance and punishment, cf. Pentheus' orders against Teiresias' seat in Eur. Bac. 348/349 μοχλοῖς τριαίνου κἀνάτρεφον ἔμπαλιν, / ἄνω κάτω τὰ πάντα συγγέας ὁμοῦ, and Dionysus' punishment in 602/603 ἄνω κάτω τιθεῖς ἔπεισι / μέλαθρα, 753 (Bacchantes). But the Nonnian passage would unavoidably evoke associations with Christian symbolism. In context, Icarius' proceedings appear to be a concrete allusion to Jesus' likening His blood with wine from which all fellow diners drink and which He sheds for the sake of mankind, Mk 14,23/24: καὶ λαβὼν ποτήριον εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες. (24) καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν.²⁷ The notion later enjoyed widespread representation with Jesus depicted in the wine press treading grapes,²⁸ and the symbolism of wine as blood is commonplace in theological literature principally in association with the sacrifice of the Redeemer: to cite but two examples, Clement Paed. 2,29,1 states μυστικὸν ... σύμβολον ἢ γραφὴ αἵματος ἁγίου οἶνον ὠνόμασεν, and Cyril in his commentary on John PG 74,729b explains Is. 63,2 (of the Messiah) διατί σου ἐρυθρὰ τὰ ἰμάτια καὶ τὰ ἐνδύματά σου ὡς ἀπὸ πατητοῦ ληνοῦ; by commenting οἶνω γὰρ μάλιστα τῷ νέφω, καὶ ἄρτι πεπατημένω τὴν τοῦ αἵματος εὐχροίαν [~47,130 ὁμόχροον οἶνον] παραβάλλουσιν. Nonnus shows himself very much aware of this interchanging symbolism in the description of a portent foreshadowing Ampelus' death (Dion. 11,91–93): a horned dragon sacrifices a young fawn upon an altar which is reddened by a stream of blood, 93 οἶνου λειβομένοιο φέρων τύπον. This association may also surface in the 'rhapsodic' version of the creation of wine in Dion. 12,295/296 (for which see Gigli Piccardi 2003, 851. 855), then cf. 12,318; 17,159–161; 21,160/161. Lastly, the notion may as well lurk in the sombre description of Icarius' phantom in 47,159 (Erigone ἴδε) λύθρον ἐρευγομένοιο νεόρρυτον ἀνθερεῶνος "le sang récemment coulé de la

²⁶ Cf. Eur. Bac. 1. c. with Di Benedetto ad loc., cf. Dem. Meid. 53 (Athens), Paus. 7,27,3 (Pallene); Nicander Thyat. FGrH 343 F 13; Porph. Antr. nymph. 13.

²⁷ Cf. Mt 26,27/28; Lk 22,20. In John the wine/blood metaphor occurs in the Capernaum Synagogue (6,53–58; 54 ὁ τρώγων μου τὴν σάρκα καὶ πίνων μου τὸ αἷμα ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον), not at the Last Supper where it originally belonged: Brown 1966, 287f.

²⁸ See H. Herter, RhM 100 (1957), 110; W. Burkert, Homo Necans, transl. P. Bing, Berkeley 1983, 223f.

gorge qui vomit le vin” in Fayant’s excellent rendition.²⁹ This absolute ἐρευγο-
 μένιοι is equivocal: the verb (‘disgorge’) is chiefly employed of wine in
 Nonnus, but of blood here and in 39,242 for which usage cf., already, Il. 16, 16
 and, further, Gerbeau on Dion. 18, 152.

The interpretation of 47, 128f. advanced here derives support by approaching
 Jesus’ experience with wine shortly before His expiration, Jn 19,28–30: ...
 εἰδὼς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤδη πάντα τετέλεσται, ἵνα τελειωθῆ ἡ γραφή, λέγει, Διψῶ.
 (29) σκευος ἔκειτο ὄξους μεστόν· σπόγγον οὖν μεστόν τοῦ ὄξους ὑσώπῳ περι-
 θέντες προσήνεγκαν αὐτοῦ τῷ στόματι. (30) ὅτε οὖν ἔλαβεν τὸ ὄξος ὁ Ἰησοῦς
 εἶπεν, Τετέλεσται· καὶ κλίνας τὴν κεφαλὴν παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα.

Icarius’ lamentations seem to obliquely rework Jesus’ πάθη before He expires
 which in anti-Christian literature attracted caustic comments as inappropriate to
 His divinity.³⁰ Like Jesus, Icarius is himself Ἰαίδι γείτων (47, 131). Icarius’ last
 complaint may now gain a new meaning, 47, 132/133 οἶνος ... / ὁ γλυκὺς εἰς ἐμὲ
 μούνον ἀμείλιχος. Such an antithesis between the sweetness and bitterness of
 wine functions both within and outside the contextual framework. Contextually,
 because the Attic peasants, Icarius’ murderers, had found wine honey-sweet.³¹
 Ἀμείλιχος plays on their insistent comparison of the novel drink with honey,
 47, 80 μελιθδέα δῶρα, 81 μελίρρυτα χεύματα, 85 καὶ μέλιτος γλυκεροῖο φέρεις
 γλυκερώτερον ὕδωρ. The Nonnian antithesis, then, functions outside context as
 the same contrast appears in St John with Jesus producing the excellent wine at
 the wedding at Cana (2, 10), while himself, thirsty on the cross, tasting ὄξος, a
 cheap sour wine (19, 30). Icarius’ complaint may (or, rather, should) be read as a
 snivelling parody of Jesus tasting sour wine shortly before He expires. In Par.
 19, 154 Nonnus calls this ὄξος ὀλέθρου (cf. Anastas. Traul. AP 15, 28, 9 πικρὸν
 δέπας, εἶδαρ ὀλέθρου). In 47, 134 it is said that wine Ἰκαρίῳ πόρε πότμον. The
 outcome is common to both (47, 137 μόρος δέ οἱ ἔφθασε φωνήν, Jn 19, 30
 παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα).

²⁹ For a similar allusion cf. Dion. 20, 136 (Pithos) τοῖον ἔπος ... ἐρευγέτο with D. Gigli
 Piccardi, *Metafora e poetica in Nonno di Panopoli*, Florence 1985, 106/107. To defend
 ἐρευγ- (ἐρευθ- Koch) Fayant 2000, 150 adduces 18, 152. The manuscript reading is
 secured from 15, 19 οἶνον ἐρευγομένων πολυχανδέος ἀνθερεῶνος, cf. 11, 162. For
 ἐρευγομαι ‘speak’ in the Paraphrasis see K. Smolak, *JÖB* 34 (1984), 8/9 and especially C.
 De Stefani, ed. Par. 1, Bologna 2002, 227/228.

³⁰ Cf. Porph. C. Christ. fr. 62. 84 Harnack; Celsus ap. Orig. C. Cels. 2, 24; 2, 33 τί δὲ ... καὶ
 γενναῖον ἔδρασεν οἶνον θεός κτλ.; R. T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, London 1972, 104. On
 Nonnus’ exploitation of this paradox see Vian 1994, 232 = 2005, 549/550.

³¹ Cf. W. Fauth, *Eidos poikilon. Zur Thematik der Metamorphose und zum Prinzip der
 Wandlung aus dem Gegensatz in den Dionysiaka des Nonnos von Panopolis*, Göttingen
 1981, 135f.

It is clearly the same man who in the Paraphrasis does not only stress the bitterness of the wine offered to Jesus (19, 152 δριμυτάτοιο ποτοῦ, 158 πικρὸν ... ποτόν), but emphatically upholds the antithesis between Jesus' honey-sweet gift and the sour wine he is offered, 19, 154–156:

(ἀνήρ δέ τις ὀξύς)
 ὄρεγεν ὑσσώπῳ κεκερασμένον ὄξος ὀλέθρου,
 ἀντίδοτον βασιλῆι μελισταγέος νιφετοῖο
 ἄρτου θεσπεσίοιο.

Icarius' phantom will revert to this theme with a last melancholic, but ludicrous comment at the end of his report to Erigone, 47, 184/185 ἀλλὰ μελιρραθάμιγος ἐμῆς ἀκόρητον ὀπώρης / κλαίε τεὸν γενέτην με δεδουπότα. Here Graefe emended ἀκόρητον (of Icarius) into ἀκόρητος (of Erigone) which is out of keeping with Erigone's character. Peek retained the manuscript reading³² but interpreted the passage as the self-criticism of a person who was heavily drunk at his death, and now assumes partial responsibility for the event, adducing Icarius' attitude in 58/59 καὶ πῖεν ἄλλο μετ' ἄλλο γέρων φυτοεργὸς ἀλωεύς, / οἶστρον ἔχων ἀκόρητον ἐυρραθάμιγος ἐέρησης. The lines can hardly be justified on this basis. This second comment of Icarius on wine may not be less ironic than his first in 47, 132f.: it retains the notions of wine's honey-sweetness (μελιρραθάμιγος) and Icarius' lack of satisfaction (ἀκόρητον ~ Jn 19, 28 Διψῶ) from his own drink (ἐμῆς ... ὀπώρης), both of which fit text and subtext. Icarius' complaint is of immediate relevance to a charge known from Celsus ap. Orig. C. Cels. 2, 37 castigating Christ χανδὸν ἐπὶ τῷ πείν ὠρμημένῳ καὶ μὴ διακαρτερήσαντι τὴν δίψαν, ὡς καὶ ὁ τυχὼν ἀνθρώπος πολλακίς διακαρτερεῖ. Earlier remarks on Icarius' unearned death such as the one of Nigidius Figulus, who had access to an Eratosthenic version,³³ (116, 18 Swoboda) *quod pro iucundissimo praemio est adeptus*, may be the secular parallel of an antithetical concept which plays into Nonnus' hands.

The second antithetical thought in Icarius' last soliloquy may again toy with newtestamental notions. Icarius last of all thinks of his unmarried daughter, 47, 135/136 ἡμετέριον γὰρ / νηπενθῆς Διόνυσος ἐθήκατο πενθάδα κούρη. The god rendering the world cheerful by means of his drink has rendered Erigone mournful (πενθάς) without fail in Nonnus, cf. also 47, 160. 188f. 200 μυρομένη; 214/215. 220/221 πενθάδι κούρη / ... ὄδυρομένη. The antithesis between the god dispensing joy (has Dionysus anything to do with tears?) and Icarius' mournful

³² W. Peek, *Kritische und erklärende Beiträge zu den Dionysiaka des Nonnos*, Berlin 1969, 49, but see Fayant 2000, 153.

³³ See A. Swoboda, *P. Nigidi Figuli operum reliquiae*, Vienna-Prague 1889, 51f.; Keller 1946, 55f. 59f.

‘daughter’ manipulates, with a touch of irony, the same notions as Jesus’ prediction that his ‘death’ will bring joy to the world and sorrow to his disciples, which will turn into everlasting joy once He rises and they see Him again, Jn 16,20 κλαύσετε καὶ θρηνήσετε ὑμεῖς, ὁ δὲ κόσμος χαρήσεται. ὑμεῖς λυπηθήσεσθε, ἀλλ’ ἡ λύπη ὑμῶν εἰς χαρὰν γενήσεται ~ Par. 16, 69–71 with Cyril’s comments In Joh. evang. PG 74, 457a–c. The generic image of Mary of Magdala is that of a woman wailing at Christ’s tomb (Jn 20, 11 κλαίουσα). She is described, in association with Jesus’ passion, as φιλοδάκρυος in Nonnus (Par. 19, 137; 20, 2 with Accorinti ad loc.) and broadly elsewhere in Christian literature (Lampe, Patr. Lex., s. φιλοδάκρυος 1). As Erigone seems to be a foil of Magdalene in other respects (see section IV), this trait of hers may constitute an initial point of contact between the two. Erigone’s sorrow will turn into joy upon Icarius’ appearance and macarism in 47, 165f.

II. The Burial by the Murderers

By completing his monologue Icarius is dead. His slayers look like that too, 47, 138–141:

καὶ νέκυσ αὐτόθι κείτο, σαόφρονος ἔκτοθι κούρης,
 ὄμμασι πεπταμένοισιν. ἐν ἀστρώτῳ δὲ χαμεύνη
 140 νήδυμον ὕπνον ἴαυον ὑπὲρ δαπέδοιο φονῆς
 οἰνοβαρεῖς, νεκύεσσιν ἔοικότες.

Strikingly, the dead man’s eyes never shut but rather remain wide open, 139 ὄμμασι πεπταμένοισι. A ‘Pythagorean’ view, which in the meantime had become “a piece of popular belief”,³⁴ in Plutarch Aet. gr. 300c holds that the souls of the deceased do not blink, and in Heliodorus 3, 13, 2 it is said πρὸς τὸ μυστικώτερον that gods and demons taking on a human shape can be recognised by their staring, non-blinking eyes, τοῖς τε ὀφθαλμοῖς ἂν γνωσθεῖεν ἀτενὲς διόλου βλέποντες καὶ τὸ βλέφαρον οὐποτε ἐπιμύοντες. The apocryphal Acts of John attribute such a property to Christ, 89 ἐπειρώμην γὰρ αὐτὸν κατ’ ἰδίαν ὄραν, καὶ οὐδέποτε εἶδον τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ ἐπινεύοντας, ἀλλὰ μόνον ἀνεωγότας, and Philo of Alexandria to the noetic eye of the wise souls, De plant. 58 μύσαντι μὲν οὐδέποτε, ἀεὶ ἀναπεπταμένῳ καὶ εὐθυτενῶς βλέποντι. Apparently, Icarius ‘died’ but still enjoys a posthumous life and, from now on, he will go on watching through metaphysical eyes. In similar fashion, when Ampelus died his beauty did not desert him (Dion. 11, 250), his eyes remaining bright as ever, 11, 282/283 καὶ νέκυός περ ἑόντος ... / ὀφθαλμοὶ γελώσι καὶ εἰσέτι. His open

³⁴ Nilsson, Gesch. gr. Rel. II, 551, cf. 566. On the eyes as ‘the mirror of the soul’ see *ibid.*, 710.

eyes are a sign of his metaphysical ‘life’, as Ampelus, through his metamorphosis, “even if he died is not dead” (12, 145). Also Tectaphus, half dead (26, 104 νεκρὸς ἐχέφρων), keeps his eyes open, 26, 132 ὄμματα ... οὐ μύοντα, as does a resurrected fighter in Lucan Phars. 6, 757/758 *lumina ... / nudantur*.³⁵ The language employed here may again be momentous: the ‘iunctura’ first occurs in Mosch. Eur. 19, one of Nonnus’ favourite poems, where it refers to a vision seen by Europa on awakening from a dream, εἰσέτι πεπταμένοισιν ἐν ὄμμασιν εἶχε γυναικάς, cf. also Licymn. PMG 771, 2/3 (Hyrnus enamoured with the rays of Endymion’s eyes) ἀναπεπταμένοις / ὄσσοις ἐκοίμιζεν κόρον, and the ever wakeful eyes of Dike in the so-called ‘Tattoo-Elegy’ Suppl. SH 970, 2 ἀναπεπταμένοις ἀτενὲς βλέπε[ι] ὀφθαλμοῖσιν, Nic. Alex. 435.

In the meantime, the killers of Icarus, heavy with wine, fall into a deep sleep on the bare ground “looking like dead men” (141). The approximation between sleeping and dead man is an old literary topos.³⁶ Since wine was “the usual sleeping-draught of antiquity”³⁷ those who have consumed large quantities of unmixed wine can be seized by such a heavy sleep that they might indeed give the impression of being dead. Athenaeus 15, 675a/b cites Philonides, a physician of the 1st cent. BC, Περὶ μύρων καὶ στεφάνων to such an effect: when Dionysus first introduced unmixed wine to Greece, of the heavy drinkers οἱ μὲν μανιωδῶς ἐκτρεπόμενοι παρέπαιον, οἱ δὲ νεκροὶς ἐώκεσαν ἀπὸ τῆς καρώσεως, and in Dion. 37, 540 Eurymedon, during a boxing match, falls on his back θυμολιπῆς μεθύοντι πανεῖκελος.

The heavy sleep of the murderers portends their image as dead. An analogous picture occurs in the ‘Eratosthenic’ Schol. D II. 22, 29 οἱ δὲ ἀθρόως ἐμφορησάμενοι ... εἰς βαθὺν ὕπνον ἐτράπησαν, and the spectacle of drunken peasants lying on the ground is manifestly the motivation for their fellow countrymen’s crime. Things are, though, different in Nonnus: in the first place, Nonnus makes no distinction between inebriated and clear-headed peasants. According to him, all peasants get drunk, all (but one) kill Icarus and then together fall on the ground (47, 106f.).³⁸ The issue is not only that the picture in Nonnus is reinforced (νεκύεσσιν εἰοικότες) but that it is misplaced after the crime. So the

³⁵ See, further, W. Deonna, L’oeil du mort, Latomus 17 (1958), 324–328; id., Le symbolisme de l’oeil, Paris 1965, 138–140. 303–309.

³⁶ Cf. Od. 13, 79/80 νήδυμος ὕπνος ... / νήγρετος ἥδιος, θανάτῳ ἄγχιστα εἰοικώς and see, further, Powell on Cic. De sen. 80 *nihil esse morti tam simile quam somnum*.

³⁷ Dodds on Eur. Bac. 282, with evidence. In Nonnus Nicaea (Dion. 16, 260–262) and Aura (Dion. 48, 605 ἠδέι θέλγομαι ὕπνῳ) fall asleep after being made to drink wine.

³⁸ The same flattening version occurs in Ps-Apollod. 3, 14, 7 and Hyg. Fab. 130, see C. Robert, Eratosthenis Catasterismorum reliquia, Berlin 1878, 39; a “Vergrößerung” for Keller 1946, 64.

reproduction of the traditional image in Nonnus makes no sense at the moment it occurs. Anyone noticing the absurd manipulation of the original scene could hardly fail to read into these words and images the symbolisms they carry: by tradition, the killers of Christ are blinded by a heavy sleep before they wake up and see the light of truth, cf. Or. Sib. 1, 371 (Jews kill Christ) βαρέι πεπεδημένοι ὕπνω, Evang. Pet. 41 ἐκήρυξας τοῖς κοιμωμένοις, Paul Ro 13, 11 ὥρα ἤδη ὑμᾶς ἐξ ὕπνου ἐγερθῆναι. Imagery and terminology such as these are old gnostic themes which found broad application, above all, in missionary contexts,³⁹ and are therefore particularly appropriate in Icarius' case.

So, these killers are “sleeping” (140 ἴανον) but their attitude towards Icarius will dramatically change once they “wake up” (141 ἐγρόμενοι) and realise their crime: at once they obtain ἔμφρονα θυμόν (144). The murderers also take care of Icarius' body and bury him, 47, 141 – 147:

ἐγρόμενοι δέ,
ὄν κτάνον ἀγνώσσουντες, ἀνέστηνον· ὑπόθι δ' ὤμων
νεκρὸν ἐλαφρίζοντες ἀνήγαγον εἰς ῥάχιν ὕλης
ἔμφρονα θυμόν ἔχοντες, ἐν εὐύδρω δὲ ῥεέθρω
145 ὤτειλὰς ἐκάθηραν ὀρεσσιχύτῳ παρὰ πηγῆ·
καὶ νέκυν ἀρτιδάικτον, ὄν ἔκτανον ἄφροني λύσση,
ἀνδροφόνοις παλάμησιν ἐτυμβεύσαντο φονῆς.

Despite their hideous crime (146 ἔκτανον ἄφροني λύσση), these slayers find some surprising understanding with κτάνον ἀγνώσσουντες (142). The narrator's sympathetic point of view is in consort with Icarius' own persistent attribution of their crime to their drunkenness. ἀγνώσσουντες would then seem to classify Icarius' murder as one of failed recognition such as is the murder of Actaeon (see section III, *infra* p. 61ff.) or Agave's crime in Dion. 46, 252 ὄν κτάνες ἀγνώσσουσα. In the Paraphrasis, however, Nonnus consistently employs ἀγνώσσειν of those unable to perceive the salvific message and in particular of Christ's adversaries (Livrea on Par. 18, 160). In several instances, Christ emphasised that it is ignorance that leads astray his killers and the upcoming persecutors of his disciples, Jn 15, 21 ὅτι οὐκ οἶδασι τὸν πέμψαντά με, 16, 3 ὅτι οὐκ ἔγνωσαν τὸν πατέρα οὐδὲ ἐμέ. The acme of this attitude is seen in what appears to be an early addition in Lk 23, 34 Πάτερ, ἄφες αὐτοῖς, οὐ γὰρ οἶδασιν τί ποιοῦσιν, cf. Peter in Acts 3, 17 κατὰ ἄγνοιαν ἐπράξατε, Paul *ibid.* 13, 27 τοῦτον ἀγνοήσαντες. The resemblance between cause and excuse of Christ's and Icarius' deaths shows forcefully in Nonnus' rendition in Par. 16, 9 – 11:

³⁹ Cf. Poimandres 1, 27 ὦ λαοί, ἄνδρες γηγενεῖς, οἱ μέθη καὶ ὕπνω ἑαυτοὺς ἐκδεδωκότες καὶ τῇ ἀγνώσῃα τοῦ θεοῦ, νήσατε, παύσασθε δὲ κραιπαλῶντες, θελγόμενοι ὕπνω ἀλόγω.

καὶ τὰ μὲν οἰστρηθέντες ἀμερσινόφω τινὶ λύσση
 δυσσεβέες τελέσουσιν ἐς ὑμέας· οὐδὲ γὰρ αὐτοὶ
 υἷα γινώσκουσι καὶ ὑψιμέδοντα τοκῆα.

The concept of forgiveness due to ignorance is the one that defined Jesus' passion. The Christian fathers often pled this extenuation for the Jews: Theodoret of Cyrrhus Graec. aff. cur. 2, 57 ξυγγνώμης εἶναι ἀξίους ὑπέιληφα, τὴν θεῖαν οὐκ ἐπισταμένους γραφήν· Ἰουδαίων δὲ τὴν ἐσχάτην ἀμαθίαν ὀδύρομαι ὅτι ... τὴν τῆς θεολογίας ἀγνοοῦσιν ἀλήθειαν, even the vehement Cyril of Alexandria, Litt. fest. 1, 6, 32 Burns εἰς γὰρ τοσαύτην ἀγνοίας ἐξῆλθον ὑπερβολήν, ὡς καὶ τὸν εὐεργέτην ἀρνήσασθαι, 13, 4, 81 Ἰουδαῖοι μὲν γάρ, οἱ τάλανες, τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας ἠγνοηκότες μυστήριον, 17, 4, 84. Such evidence includes Christus patiens 671–674 (ἀγνωσία), 827/828. This same notion of absolution on account of ignorance recurs in Dion. 5, 442–444 with Actaeon, as his last request, pleading to his father that he excuse the hounds who tore him asunder, ἀλλά, πάτερ, πυμάτην πόρε μοι χάριν, ἀφραδέας δέ / πένθος ἔχων φιλότεκνον ἐμούςς μὴ κτεῖνε φονῆας, / παιδοφόνους οἴκτειρον ἀμεμφέας (cf. Ps-Apollod. 3, 4, 31 ὑφ' ὧν κατὰ ἀγνοίαν ἐβρώθη), where Gigli Piccardi (2003, 432) associates the motif with Lk 23, 34.

When these unwitting murderers “wake up” they start groaning in quick repentance, 47, 141/142 (φονῆες) ἐγρόμενοι δέ, / ὄν κτάνον ... ἀνέστενον. The repentance of Icarus' killers is a feature of the Eratosthenic version, cf. Schol. D II. 22, 29 καταγνόντες ἑαυτῶν, Hyg. Astr. 2, 4, 22, 173 *Viré animi conscientia permoti*. But according to the synoptics the centurion in charge of Christ's crucifixion, a killer of Christ, and the crowd at the scene repented immediately on witnessing the phenomena taking place just as Jesus expired, cf. Lk 23, 47/48 (~ Mk 15, 39; Mt 27, 54) ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ ἑκατοντάρχης τὸ γενόμενον ἐδόξαζεν τὸν θεόν ... (48) καὶ πάντες οἱ συμπαραγεγόμενοι ὄχλοι ... θεωρήσαντες τὰ γενόμενα, τύπτοντες τὰ στήθη ὑπέστρεφον. Apocryphal gospels develop the record of those repenting by including the Jews and their priests, some even Pilate, Annas and Caiaphas in an effort to declare Christ's immediate and absolute victory over his adversaries.⁴⁰

In Icarus' burial too, Nonnus abandons Eratosthenes who apparently had the slayers fleeing to Ceos, cf. Schol. D II. 22, 29 εἰς φυγὴν ἐτράπησαν, Hyg. Astr. 2, 4, 22, 173–175 *Viré interfectores eius ... statim se fugae mandaverunt et in insulam Ceorum pervenerunt*. Hyginus, however, shortly mentions the burial as an alternative, 22, 170 *Viré ut alii demonstrant, secundum arborem quandam*

⁴⁰ Cf. Gospel of Peter 25 with M.G. Mara, *Évangile de Pierre*, Paris 1973, 151. On the violent death of the θεῖος ἀνὴρ followed by feelings of guilt see L. Bieler, *Θεῖος ἀνὴρ. Das Bild des göttlichen Menschen in Spätantike und Frühchristentum*, Vienna 1935, 47.

defoderunt, and this is how the story is concluded in Ps-Apollodorus 3, 14, 7, who elsewhere seems to be in accord with the Eratosthenic version.⁴¹ As the chapter in Hyginus is believed to be close to Eratosthenes, the burial might have been mentioned by the Cyrenean polymath in the form of ‘not buried, but fled’ opting for the version which would allow him to link the myth of Icarius with an aetium for the Cean ‘etesiai’, which Nonnus mentions elsewhere (Dion. 5, 220f. 269f., see Pfeiffer on Callim. Aet. fr. 75, 36f.). Nonnus’ motivation for choosing the alternative version here might be largely explained by his design to model Icarius’ burial on that of Jesus.

Icarius’ slayers lift his body and take it to a wooded crest, clean his wounds in a stream and bury him (47, 142–147). Not only the sequence of events, but *mutatis mutandis* the specifics of Jesus’ deposition are identical. This is how St John describes it, 19, 38–42 (Joseph of Arimathea, after permission by Pilate): ἦλθεν οὖν καὶ ἦρεν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ. (39) ἦλθεν δὲ καὶ Νικόδημος ... φέρων μίγμα σμύρνης καὶ ἀλόης ὡς λίτρας ἑκατόν. (40) ἔλαβον οὖν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἔδησαν αὐτὸ ὀθονίοις μετὰ τῶν ἀρωμάτων, καθὼς ἔθος ἐστὶν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἐνταφιάζειν. (41) ἦν δὲ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ὅπου ἐσταυρώθη κήπος, καὶ ἐν τῷ κήπῳ μνημεῖον καινόν ... (42) ἐκεῖ οὖν ... ἔθηκαν τὸν Ἰησοῦν.

The correlation between the Dionysiaca and Paraphrasis 19 on this point is again telling:

- 202 καὶ νέκυν ἐστηῶτα κατήγαγε δειέλως ἀνὴρ
 φόρτον ἐλαφρίζων θεοδέγμονι κείμενον ὦμα.

 ἦν δὲ τις αὐτόθι κήπος ἀερσιλόφῳ παρὰ χώρῳ,
 214 Χριστὸν ὅπῃ σταυροῖο συνεκλήμισαν ὀχῆτι
 νηλὴς ἐχθρὸς ὄμιλος.

(N. b. 203 φόρτον ἐλαφρίζων ... κείμενον ὦμα ~ 47, 143/144 ὑπόθι δ’ ὦμων / νεκρὸν ἐλαφρίζοντες; 213 ἦν δὲ τις αὐτόθι κήπος ἀερσιλόφῳ παρὰ χώρῳ ~ 47, 143 ἀνήγαγον εἰς ῥάχιν ὕλης, 145 ὀρεσσιχῆτῳ παρὰ πηγῆ.)

The fact that it is the awakened murderers themselves who bury Icarius is in agreement with the scriptural substratum. Such collective notions developed early in relation to Christ, cf. Paul in Acts 13, 29 ὡς δὲ ἐτέλεσαν πάντα τὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένα, καθελόντες ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου ἔθηκαν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον. Besides, the term *φονῆες* designating Icarius’ slayers in 47, 140. 147 and 195, is the one regularly employed in the Paraphrasis of Christ’s crucifiers, 19, 86. 91. 129. The word occurs, in context, already in St Stephen’s deprecatory speech to the Jewish congress, Acts 7, 52 οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς προδόται καὶ φονεῖς ἐγένεσθε, to express a

⁴¹ Cf. Robert (as n. 38), 39; Keller 1946, 79.

charge against Jews that must have been common among Christ's early followers (cf. also St Peter's speech in Solomon's portico, Acts 3, 15). Nonnus would be familiar with the contemporary characterisation of Jews as 'Christ-killers' which had become established in fourth century Christian vocabulary.⁴² The usage exudes anti-Jewish sentiment based upon a widespread tenet holding all Jews collectively responsible for Christ's death, to which Nonnus refers in Par. 19, 86/87 φονῆες / πάντες ὁμοῦ. Such a notion relied on Mt 27, 25 and it was happily adopted by people such as Cyril of Alexandria, Litt. fest. 10, 5, 42 Burns ταῖς οἰκειαῖς οἱ δεῖλαιοι κεφαλαῖς καὶ ὄλω τῷ γένει τὸ τῆς ἀσεβείας ἐπιγράψαντες ἔγκλημα, id. In Joh. evang. PG 74, 668a.

The peasants murdering Icarus, as in the case of the instruments they use to perpetrate their crime and as in the case of their alleged ignorance, bear features commonly attributed to the Jews demanding (and thought of as executing) the crucifixion of Christ: primitive ferocity, cruelty and savageness. The mob killing Icarus is emphatically described as raging with murderous, Bacchic madness, 47, 116 φονίῳ δεδονημένος οἴστρω, 117 θυιάδι λύσση, 146 ἔκτανον ἄφροني λύσση, 164 δασπλήτες, 174 βλύζοντες ἀήθεος ἰκμάδα Βάκχου. The mob of Jews, outraged, demands Jesus' death, Jn 18, 40 ἐκραύγασαν, 19, 6. 12. 15 κραύγασαν οὖν ἐκείνοι, Ἄρον ἄρον, σταύρωσον αὐτόν. In Nonnus' Paraphrasis the madness of the Jewish mob is given emphasis, 19, 1/2 αἰνομανῆ ... / ... ἀφραδέων στομάτων ἀλαλητόν, 19, 27. 33 φθέγξαντο μεμνηότες ἀρχιερεῖς, and 19, 78.⁴³ Contemporary Christian literature expresses itself in very similar terms. Cyril does not mince his words on this issue; even more so as it concerns Jews. A representative selection would include In Joh. evang. PG 74, 632b ὠμότητος θηριοπρεποῦς πεσόντας ἐπέκεινα, 74, 649 τῆς τῶν φονῶντων μανίας, Litt. fest. 8, 4, 40 Burns παραληροῦντες, 10, 5, 2 μανίαν νοσοῦντες θηριοπρεπῆ, 13, 4, 82 λελυττήκασιν ἀκρατῶς.

Two central axes of antithesis running through the scene of Icarus' murder are criminal intoxication on the one hand, and pious sobriety on the other. The agents of anti-Icarus actions ἐβακχεύθησαν ἀμερσινῶ ... οἴνω (107), they are highlighted as οἰνοβαρεῖς (141), μεθύοντας (162, cf. 163 χάριν οἴνου), οἰνωθέντες (173) and, more forcefully, βλύζοντες ἀήθεος ἰκμάδα Βάκχου (174). Whereas those loving and taking care of Icarus are described as σώφρονες, or the like, 138 σαόφρονος ἔκτοθι κούρης, 144 (peasants about to bury Icarus) ἔμφρονα θυμὸν ἔχοντες, 214 (Erigone lamenting Icarus) σαόφροني μαίνετο λύσση, which distinguishes her devout λύσσα from the rabid λύσσα of Icarus'

⁴² See Lampe, *Patr. Lex.*, 1531 s. χριστοκτόνος; R.L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews*, Berkeley 1983, 125/126.

⁴³ See Livrea on Par. 18, 114; Agosti 2003, 410/411 on Par. 5, 57/58 Ἑβραῖοι μανιώδεις ἄφροني θυμῷ / Ἰησοῦν ἐδίωκον.

slayers (117 θυιάδι λύσση). Erigone's oxymoronic "controlled frenzy" is a typically Dionysiac combination of opposing traits: maenads rage in performing Bacchic rites, thereby displaying σωφροσύνη. σωφροσύνη emphatically belongs to the Bacchic cult in Euripides' *Bacchae*.⁴⁴ The phrase is certainly to be paralleled with the Nonnian oxymoronic formula ἔμφρονα λύσσαν, a frenzy inspired and controlled by Dionysus. Such a state of mind was best explained by H. Lewy: "this metaphor ... is used in the mystical texts of later antiquity in order to express the supra-intellectual character of the union with the godhead".⁴⁵

For Dion. 47, 144 ἔμφρονα θυμὸν ἔχοντες the pagan source provides a first hint, cf. Schol. D II. 22, 29 μεθ' ἡμέραν δὲ νηψάντων αὐτῶν ... εἰς φυγὴν ἐτρέπησαν, Ps-Apollod. 3, 14, 7 νοήσαντες⁴⁶ ἔθαψαν αὐτόν. Such attributes, under the influence of Neoplatonism,⁴⁷ denote in their many manifestations in the *Dionysiaca* superior human beings in the gradation between the αἰσθητός and the νοητός cosmos. Obviously, it is these same notions which Nonnus transposes to a different context when he advances the dichotomy between anti-Christ ἄφρονα λύσση (Par. 1, 30) and devout ἔμφρονα θυμῷ (1, 31), which, as an addition to the Johannine 'Vorlage', obtains programmatic significance in the prologue of the Paraphrasis.

The approximation of these homicidal but nonetheless ignorant peasants with Jesus' killers is also facilitated by a liberal notion of drunkenness. The metaphorical usage of μεθύω is not widespread in earlier poetry, but it is used, several times, of mental effects in Nonnus.⁴⁸ Early Christian literature in a figurative sense characterised as μεθύοντες those who have lost their mind, overwhelmed by their passions, as against those observing Christian solemnity and temperance, then, in a broader sense, those believing in false gods outside Christianity, in much the same fashion as it characterised as νήφοντες those "free fr[om] every

⁴⁴ Cf. esp. 685/686 (maenads) πρὸς πέδω κάρα / εἰκὴ βαλοῦσαι σωφρόνως, 940 σώφρονας βάκχας. See R. Seaford, *Euripides. Bacchae*, Warminster 1996, 48, 229 on v. 1002.

⁴⁵ For this Nonnian formula cf. Dion. 3, 74; 17, 115; 45, 252 with F. Vian, *RPh* 72 (1998), 283. Lewy's definition is cited from: *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy*, rev. ed. by M. Tardieu, Paris 1978, 199 where a reference to id., *Sobria ebrietas. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der antiken Mystik*, Giessen 1929.

⁴⁶ νήψαντες Valckenaer, but see P. Scarpi, *Apollodoro. I miti greci*, Milan 1996, 604. The reading νοήσ- appears now confirmed by the Homeric mythographer ap. P.Oxy. 4096 fr. 5, 12/13 (ap. Luppe [as n. 15], 32) καὶ δ[ί]κ[η]ν δ[ε]διότες ἔφυγον νοή-]σαντες.

⁴⁷ Golega 1930, 55 n. 2; F. Vian, ed. Dion. XXV–XXIX, Paris 1990, 234; Gigli Piccardi 2003, 21f.

⁴⁸ For earlier poetry see Gow/Sens on Theoc. 22, 98 πληγαῖς μεθύων which is probably the earliest occurrence in a metaphorical sense. In Nonnus cf. Dion. 4, 457 of bloodthirsty belligerence, 6, 31 of sorrow, 10, 21 of madness, 28, 211 of pain, 36, 79 of fear. See Gigli Piccardi (as n. 29), 147.

form of mental and spiritual ‘drunkenness’, fr[om] excess, passion, rashness, confusion etc.”⁴⁹ In the third sentence of the first Oxyrhynchus *logion* (P. Oxy. I. 1, saec. II/III p. C.) Jesus appears saying ἔ[σ]την ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ κόσμου ... καὶ εἶρον πάντας μεθύοντας.⁵⁰ ‘Drunkenness’ is also associated with acts directed against Christ. Judas leading an army to arrest Jesus is described by Cyril In Joh. evang. PG 74, 580c as παρεφθαρμένος τὸν νοῦν καὶ μεθύων, cf. id. In Luc. evang. PG 72, 924a ὡς ἐκ μέθης, which is echoed in Par. 13, 124 μεθύων (with Livrea in Accorinti-Chuvin 2003, 454 n. 25), then Or. Sib. 1, 360 Ἰσραὴλ μεμεθυσμένος οὐχὶ νοήσει. This notion of mental μέθη is outlined by John Chrysostom on several occasions. In the introduction of his speech Κατὰ μεθύντων PG 50, 433 he explains that μέθη ... οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἐστὶν ἀλλ’ ἢ ἔκστασις τῶν κατὰ φύσιν φρενῶν, παρατροπὴ λογισμῶν, ἐρημία διανοίας, πενία συνέσεως. Ταῦτα δὲ οὐχ ἢ μέθη ποιεῖ μόνη ἢ ἐξ οἴνου, ἀλλὰ καὶ μέθη ἢ ἐξ ὀργῆς καὶ ἐπιθυμίας ἀτόπου. In his eighth speech Against Jews Chrysostom defines the lexical range of the word, PG 48, 927 οὐ τοῖνυν μόνον ὁ ἄκρατον ἐκχεόμενος πολύν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ πάθος ἕτερον ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τρέφων, μεθύειν λέγοιτο ἂν ἰσχυρῶς. In this sense, among other soul-destroying vices, those overwhelmed by rage, and principally the Jewish opponents of Christ, are drunken too. The symptoms of intoxication (cf. Clement Paed. 2, 24, 1), apparently elaborated in Erigone (fr. 36 P. = fr. 4 Diehl = fr. 6 Rosokoki), also affect those suffering from an intoxicating wrath. They are described by John Chrysostom in an artful and elaborate manner, which can be compared with Dion. 47, 106–115, in Adv. Jud. PG 48, 927: καὶ ὁ ὀργῇ κατεχόμενος μεθύει πάλιν· οὕτω γοῦν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ ὄψις οἰδεῖ, καὶ ἡ φωνὴ τραχύνεται, καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ γίνονται ὕφαιμοι, καὶ ὁ νοῦς σκοτοῦται, καὶ ἡ διάνοια καταποντίζεται, καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα τρέμει, καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ παραφέρονται, καὶ αἱ ἀκοαὶ ἕτερα ἀνθ’ ἑτέρων ἀκούουσιν, ἀκράτου παντὸς χαλεπώτερον τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ πληττούσης τὴν μήνιγγα, καὶ χειμῶνα ἐργαζομένης, καὶ ζάλην ποιούσης ἀπαραμύθητον.

In particular, in contemporary Christian literature, notions of drunkenness were frequently employed when referring to the actions perpetrated by Christ’s Jewish killers, Cyril Litt. fest. 9, 6, 103 Burns ἐμπαρονησάντων αὐτῷ τῶν ἀνοσίμων Ἰουδαίων, Arcad. PG 76, 1268d τὸν ... Δεσπότην ... ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐμπαροινούμενον, Theodoret Graec. aff. cur. 10, 63. And when Celsus ap. Origen. C. Cels. 3, 76 claims ὁμοιον ποιεῖν τὸν ... διδάσκαλον, (ὡς) εἴ τις μεθύων εἰς μεθύοντας παριῶν κακηγορεῖ τοὺς νήφοντας ὡς μεθύοντας, he simply responds to a

⁴⁹ BDAG s. νήφω (often in St Paul), cf. E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos*, Leipzig 1913, 199 n. 3, also Or. chald. 15, 2 Des Places.

⁵⁰ Text in A. de Santos Otero, *Los evangelios apócrifos*, Madrid ¹⁰1999, 85; cf. A. Puech, *Histoire de la littérature grecque chrétienne I*, Paris 1928, 172. This *logion* is now known to originate in the gnostic Gospel of Thomas 28 (de Santos Otero, op. c., 680).

charge widely levelled against non-Christians by Christians. οὐδεὶς ... σωφρονῶν καὶ διδάσκων τὸν Χριστιανῶν λόγον μεθύει and πάντες ... μεθύουσιν οἱ τοῖς ἀψύχοις ὡς θεῶ προσλαοῦντες was Origen's reply, cf., then, Greg. Naz. Or. 39, 1.

III. The Demanding Ghost

Following his murder and burial Icarus makes a post mortem appearance to his sleeping daughter Erigone. The scene of his apparition has long been considered a major innovation introduced by Nonnus into the story. In search of its model, already Maass approached Patroclus' appearance to Achilles in Il. 23, 65f.⁵¹ An overt allusion to the Iliadic passage indicates that Nonnus uses this epic precedent as a starting point: 47, 148 (quoted *infra*) with the appearance of Icarus' ghost echoes the disappearance of Patroclus' ghost in Il. 23, 100. This is, under the influence of Neoplatonic theories on dreaming, Nonnus' typical description of the appearance or disappearance of ghosts in dreams, cf. Dion. 16, 302 (ψυχὴ) σκιάεντι πανεῖκελος ἔσσυτο καπνῶ = 48, 563. Such a procedure is typical of his methods: "Nonnus has many episodes based on famous Homeric scenes ... In such episodes it is often his practice to begin with close imitation and/or quotation of the parallel Homeric scenes, but then to move gradually away from Homer as his narrative progresses".⁵² There is, however, a fairly exact and convincing Nonnian doublet in the appearance of Actaeon's soul to his father in Dion. 5, 412–534. Macro and micro resemblance (Chuvin, ed. Dion. III–V, Paris 1976, 186) testifies to the conception of the latter episode as a qualified pair to the former. Still, whereas Actaeon's apparition can be traced back to a literary model with a considerable degree of confidence,⁵³ the apparition of Icarus is in all probability a novelty: "ein echt nonnianisches Requisit" as Keydell formulated it.⁵⁴ Nonnus' motivation for introducing an apparition here remains in question, particularly as Eratosthenes and subsequent tradition employed the hound Maera as the most appropriate messenger.⁵⁵ "N[onnos] hat

⁵¹ Maass 1883, 99f.; cf. Chrétien on Dion. 10, 266; D. Auger in: Accorinti-Chuvin 2003, 423f.

⁵² Cited from N. Hopkinson, Greek Poetry of the Imperial Period, Cambridge 1994, 122, the practice amply exemplified by id., Nonnus and Homer, in: Studies in the Dionysiaca of Nonnus, Cambridge 1994, 9–42.

⁵³ Probably a lost tragedy: P. Chuvin, ed. Dion. III–V, Paris 1976, 102f.; Gigli Piccardi 2003, 428f.

⁵⁴ Keydell 1932, 194 = Kl. Schr., 506; cf. Solmsen 1947, 265; Accorinti 2004, 495.

⁵⁵ Another dog, conceivably that of murdered Hesiod, may act as messenger of his master's death in Eratosthenes' Ἀντρινύς (fr. 19 P.). Dionysus himself possesses a hound with human intelligence and feelings whom he promises to catasterise if it helps him find Nicaea, Dion. 16, 185f. (16, 185b = 47, 238b).

etwas Besonderes geben wollen” opined Keydell (l. c.); “sans doute par goût esthétique” deemed Fayant (2000, 24).

This is how Icarus’ soul is presented upon its appearance, 47, 148–151:

Ψυχὴ δ’ Ἰκαρίοιο πανεῖκελος ἔσσυτο καπνῶ
 εἰς δόμον Ἑριγόνης· βροτῆη δ’ ἰσάζετο μορφῆ,
 150 κούφον ὄνειρείης σκιερῆς εἶδωλον ὀπωπῆς,
 ἀνδρὶ νεουτήτῳ πανομοίος.

Let us take a closer look by approaching the cardinal Christian posthumous appearance, that of Jesus to his disciples. Similarities such as the fact that Icarus’ soul appears in the room of Erigone, 149 εἰς δόμον Ἑριγόνης (but not, as often in epic, ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς) ~ Par. 20, 86 ὀππόθι φωλεύοντες ἐναυλίζοντο μαθηταί, or that it has the look of a man recently slain, 151 ἀνδρὶ νεουτήτῳ πανομοίος ~ Par. 20, 90/91 δειξε πόδας καὶ χεῖρας ... / ... πλευρὴν τε νεούτατον may not be casual. But what is truly weird in the description of this apparition and what cannot be explained by appealing to the secular tradition is the explicit, but superfluous and pointless, reference to its taking on a human semblance, 149 βροτῆη δ’ ἰσάζετο μορφῆ. Nonnus’ epic prototype describes Patroclus’ ghost like this, Il. 23, 65–67:⁵⁶

ἦλθε δ’ ἔπι ψυχὴ Πατροκλῆος δειλοῖο,
 πάντ’ αὐτῷ μέγεθός τε καὶ ὄμματα κάλ’ εἰκυῖα
 καὶ φωνήν, καὶ τοῖα περὶ χροῖ εἶματα ἔστο.

In the Iliadic context it makes sense to say that Patroclus’ apparition resembles him: ἔικτο δὲ θέσκελον αὐτῷ will Achilles soliloquise (Il. 23, 107). It also makes sense to describe the appearance of transformed apparitions such as Aetæon’s in Dion. 5, 412/413, or Eros’ in *ibid.* 11, 351–353, or of a god assuming the appearance of a specific mortal so as to appear in someone’s dream, such as Od. 4, 796 (Athena) εἶδωλον ποίησε, δέμας δ’ ἦκτο γυναικί. But a statement about Icarus taking on a human appearance hardly makes any sense. In fact, here tradition is turned upside down: whereas, in its typical description, the soul of the deceased looks like a “shadow” (e. g. Od. 11, 207 σκιῆ εἶκελον ἢ καὶ ὀνειρῶ), Icarus’ soul is a shadow looking like a man, 149–151 (note ἰσάζετο ‘made himself equal to’ in accordance with christological orthodoxy, not simply εἶσκετο or ἦκτο ‘looked like’). Here Icarus’ phantasm does not only seem to assume a feature of his Christian counterpart, but to also reproduce traditional

⁵⁶ This Iliadic passage was cited by Origen C. Cels. 2, 61 in association with Thomas’ disbelief of Christ’s physical resurrection.

phraseology about it.⁵⁷ A prominent feature of John's theology is the ἐνανθρώπισις of the Word, Jn 1, 14 καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, cf. Ad Phil 2, 7 ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος ~ Or. Sib. 1, 325 σαρκοφόρος θνητοῖς ὁμοιούμενος, 8, 458 βροτέην ἐνεδύσατο μορφήν, Greg. Naz. Carm. arc. 2, 82/83 Moreschini (PG 37, 408a) χθονίην μορφήν ... / ἦν ... μορφώσατο ἄφθιτος Υἱός, Ps-Apollin. Proth. 86 θεὸν ἀνδρομέη προφανέντ' ... μορφῆ, Paul Sil. Ecphr. 694 δυσσαμένου βροτέης ἰνδάλματα μορφῆς, Christ. pat. 1546 μορφήν λαβόντα ... βροτησίαν. Other than in Par. 1, 39f. (41 ξυνώσας ζαθέην βροτοειδέϊ σύζυγα μορφήν), Nonnus refers to the incarnation in 3, 67/68, 8, 15 ἐμήν βροτοειδέα μορφήν and 14, 31/32 ἀθηήτοιο τοκῆος / συμφυές ἔνθεον εἶδος ἔχων βροτοειδέϊ μορφῆ.⁵⁸

But the allusion here is specifically concerned with the form in which Jesus appeared to his disciples. The description of Icarius' phantom in 150 as κοῦφον ὄνειρεῖς σκιερῆς εἶδωλον ὀπωπῆς partly reproduces epic wording, and Erigone might be thought to see her father in terms similar to those in which Odysseus saw his mother Anticleia in Od. 11, 206f. Still, κοῦφον 'immaterial' does not fall within epic tradition, although this is how Lazarus is described after his resurrection in Par. 11, 175 κοῦφον ... νεκρόν. Such wording is, though, amply attested in tragedy in expressions referring "to the unreality of human existence as a whole".⁵⁹ The closest parallel is Soph. Aj. 126 (the living resemble) εἶδωλ(α) ... ἢ κούφην σκιάν. Then, at a verbal level, the description of Icarius' phantom bears close similarity to the description of the shade of Artemis with which maddened Athamas converses in Dion. 10, 42/43 παπταίνων σκίοεσσαν ἐπίκλοπον εἰκόνα μορφῆς / Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ κοῦφον ἰδὼν εἶδωλον ὀπωπῆς. Not much is to be construed from this: Athamas has lost his mind (10, 25); the images he sees on the adjacent wall (10, 41, cf. Iambl. De myst. 132, 7) emanate from his own hallucination and, 'more Dionysiaco' (cf. Eur. Bac. 912f. ~ Dion. 46, 102), herald his upcoming death.

All in all, I would venture to suggest that the whole of Icarius' description appears to be insinuating rationalising exegetical comments such as those of John Chrysostom (or his source) on Jesus' appearance to Thomas, In Joh. hom. PG 59, 474: Ἄξιον δὲ διαπορήσαι πῶς σώμα ἄφθαρτον τύπους ἐδείκνυτο τῶν

⁵⁷ For another instance of Nonnus picking up New Testament language see Gigli Piccardi (as n. 29), 108/109. Many such individual words were gathered and discussed by R. Keydell, BZ 33 (1933), 246 = Kl. Schr., 573.

⁵⁸ See C. Kannengiesser, Athanase d'Alexandrie, Sur l'incarnation du Verbe, Paris 1973, 258 n. 1. The controversy on Christ's σὰρξ is nicely reviewed by Romanos 41β, 5f. M-Tr with P. Maas, Kl. Schr., 301.

⁵⁹ Fraenkel on Aesch. Ag. 839, Stanford on Soph. Aj. 124–126. Later, in epic, cf. Blemymachia 13 (soul leaving dead body like) κοῦφος ὄνειρος.

ἤλων, καὶ ἀπτὸν ἦν θνητῇ χειρί. Ἄλλὰ μὴ θορυβηθῆς· συγκαταβάσεως γὰρ ἦν τὸ γινόμενον. Τὸ γὰρ οὕτω λεπτὸν καὶ κοῦφον, ὡς κεκλεισμένων εἰσελθεῖν τῶν θυρῶν, παχύτητος πάσης ἀπήλλακτο· ἀλλ' ὥστε πιστευθῆναι τὴν ἀνάστασιν τοῦτο δείκνυται etc., cf. Ammonius In Joh. exp. PG 85, 1520c διὰ γὰρ συγκατάβασιν οὕτως ὥφθη τῷ Θωμᾷ, καίπερ πάσης παχύτητος τοῦ σώματος ἀπηλλαγμένου, καὶ κούφου γεγονότος, ἵνα πεισθῇ etc. This is contrary to Cyril's view, exposed in great length and verbosity, that ὅπερ πεφόρηκε σῶμα τοῦτο πάλιν ἀνέστησε (In Joh. evang. PG 74, 705a ~ Theod. Mops. Comm. evang. Joh. 417, 4 Devreesse) and that his coming through closed doors should be considered σωφρόνως as another miracle,⁶⁰ cf. In Joh. evang. PG 74, 704a–705d, 724b/c οὔτε φάσμα ἦν ἢ σκιά, κατὰ τινος, τὸ ἀνθρώπινον πλαττομένη σχῆμα, καὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας ιδέας ψευδομένη τοὺς χαρακτήρας, 733d ~ Or. Sib. 8, 318/319, Theod. Mops. Comm. evang. Joh. 256, 22 *Vosté et quia spiritualis surrexit e sepulcro, lucidus, subtilis et agilis, facile ingreditur per portas clausas ... quamvis non alius surrexerit, sed ille idem qui mortuus est.*⁶¹ Terms such as σκιά (cf. 47, 150 σκιερῆς, 160 σκιοίεις) were part of the vigorous debate about this matter, cf. Origen C. Cels. 3, 23, Cyril II. II., further BDAG, 929 s. σκιά 3, Lampe, Patr. Lex., 1238 s. σκιά 1.

Besides, 47, 150 εἶδωλον ὀπωπῆς denotes a visible but nonetheless insubstantial representation. Nonnus' wording seems motivated by Neoplatonic (and, in that case, also Origenist) considerations regarding the resurrection of bodies as impossible⁶² and, therefore, predisposed to think of Christ post mortem as an immaterial phantom. In the Paraphrasis Nonnus appears to be aware of the question, cautiously expressing himself in vague Homeric phraseology, 20, 87 ὡς πτερόν ἢ ἐ νόημα μετάρσιος εἰς μέσον ἔστη. His unwillingness to endorse the idea of the restitution of bodies manifests itself most clearly in the case of Lazarus sitting at dinner with Christ (Jn 12, 2), as Nonnus Par. 12, 9/10 describes it, Λάζαρος ἴσος ὀνειρῶ, / πασιφανής. Alexandrian orthodoxy sternly opposed such views.

In superficial conformity with the description of Patroclus' ghost (II. 23, 67), attention is diverted to the attire of Icarius' phantom: he is clad in a bloody, filthy tunic torn to rags by the many blows it has suffered, 47, 151–154:

⁶⁰ Homeric ghosts come in and out of the room through the keyhole, Od. 4, 802/803. 838; E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley 1951, 122 n. 11.

⁶¹ For instances in which Nonnus seems to defy Cyril on christological matters see Golega 1930, 111. 130. In most such cases influence from Antiochene exegesis or broader Neoplatonic influence is probable.

⁶² Cf. Synes. Ep. 105, 88 Garzya/Roques with S. Vollenweider, *Neuplatonische und christliche Theologie bei Synesios von Kyrene*, Göttingen 1985, 183–187. Origenist views on resurrection had already come under attack in Methodius' *De resurrectione mortuorum* in the 3rd cent. AD.

εἶχε δὲ δειλή

- 152 στικτὸν ἀσημάντοιο φόνου κήρυκα χιτῶνα,
αἴματι φοινίσσοντα καὶ αὐχμώνοντα κονίη,
ῥωγαλέον πληγῆσιν ἀμοιβαίοιο σιδήρου.

Before saying a word Icarius acts in a manner blatantly atypical for an epic scene, 47, 155 – 157:

- καὶ παλάμας ὤρεξε· νεοσφαγέων δὲ δοκεύειν
156 ὤτειλὰς μελέων ἐπεδείκνυε γείτοني κούρη.
παρθενική δ' ὀλόλυξε φιλοθρήνοισ ἐν ὄνειροις ...

Jesus wears a tunic (χιτῶν) during his passion which John describes in 19, 23 ἦν δὲ ὁ χιτῶν ἄρραφος, ἐκ τῶν ἄνωθεν ὕφαντός δι' ὅλου, but this tunic is seamless (ἄρραφος) and it remains unscathed as the soldiers decide not to tear it, 19, 24 μὴ σχίσωμεν αὐτόν etc., whereas Icarius' tunic is riddled with holes, 47, 154 ῥωγαλέον. What is riddled with holes and bloody (cf. Par. 19, 5 [Pilate] Χριστοῖο δέμας φοίνιζεν ἰμάσθῃ) is Jesus' body, and Icarius' invitation for Erigone to watch (or, rather, examine) his body in 172 αἴματι πορφύροντας ἐμοὺς σκοπίαζε χιτῶνας recalls Jesus' invitation for his disciples to do likewise, Lk 24, 39/40: ἴδετε τὰς χεῖράς μου καὶ τοὺς πόδας μου ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός· ψηλαφήσατέ με καὶ ἴδετε, ὅτι πνεῦμα σάρκα καὶ ὀστέα οὐκ ἔχει καθὼς ἐμε θεωρεῖτε ἔχοντα. (40) καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τοὺς πόδας. This suggests that χιτῶν is used here as a corporeal vesture in the allegorical sense advocated by Neoplatonists and Origen.⁶³ Nonnus used the word in such a sense in the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene in Par. 20, 74 ἐμῶν μὴ ψαυε χιτῶνων (μὴ μου ἄπτου, Jn 20, 17), 81/82 (Mary) μεταχθονίου γυμνούμενα γυῖα χιτῶνος / Χριστὸν ἴδε στίλβοντα κτλ.⁶⁴ Besides, in 172 σκοπίαζε means more than just 'look at': it reflects Luke's ψηλαφήσατέ με καὶ ἴδετε.

An infallible indication corroborating the possibility that here the scene of Jesus' appearance to his disciples is at work, is provided in 47, 155/156 where Icarius' phantom stretches out its hands and exhibits its recent wounds for Erigone to see. Clearly, this is "hardly a genre picture".⁶⁵ Of the three ghosts

⁶³ See Lampe, *Patr. Lex.*, s. χιτῶν B1b; K. Domiter, Gregor von Nazianz, *De humana natura*, Frankfurt a.M. 1999, 87; C. Noce, *Vestis varia: l'immagine della veste nell'opera di Origene*, Rome 2002. Such a usage goes back to Emped. 31 F 126 DK and appears often in Neoplatonic writings, see Bernabé on Orph. fr. 469, 6.

⁶⁴ See Livrea ap. Accorinti, ed. Par. 20, Pisa 1996, 187 (on Par. 20, 74); Accorinti on Par. 20, 81.

⁶⁵ Solmsen 1947, 262. Cf. D. Auger in: Accorinti-Chuvin 2003, 424: "Des tels *eidôla* [sc. such as Actaeon and Icarus] n'ont plus rien d'homérique". Auger attributes their presentation to the "esthétique baroque de Nonnos, qui va parfois jusqu'à l'expressionnisme".

(Darius in Aesch. Persae, Clytaemestra in Eumenides, Polydorus in the Eur. Hecuba-prologue) appearing in extant Greek tragedy Clytaemestra actually displays her wounds (“that is, the bloodstained rents in her garment”, A. H. Sommerstein, ed. Aesch. Eum., Cambridge 1989, 102) and calls on the sleeping Erinyes to see them through their mind’s eye, 103 ὄρα δὲ πληγὰς τάσδε καρδίᾳ σέθεν. This is part of her urging the Erinyes to wake up and go after Orestes who has escaped his crime unpunished. Nonnus might recall this memorable scene, but the apparition of Clytaemestra, indebted as it is to the appearance of Patroclus’ ghost in Iliad 23, comes from the ‘visual’ genre of tragedy and lacks the critical detail of actually displaying the wounded hands and feet. John’s report appears in 20, 19/20 (20 καὶ ... ἔδειξεν καὶ τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῖς. ἐχάρησαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν κύριον), but the driving passage here is that of Luke quoted above. His account features prominently in almost all exegetical commentaries on John’s Gospel that Nonnus could consult: cf. Ammonius fr. 624 Reuss, John Chrys. In Joh. hom. PG 59, 458, Cyril In Joh. evang. PG 74, 732c.

Icarius’ course of action follows the scriptural order step by step but whereas the disciples rejoice (as predicted in Jn 16, 22), Erigone cries out in agony, 47, 157 παρθενικὴ δ’ ὀλόλυξε φιλοθρήνοις ἐν ὄνειροις. It is, however, hardly fortuitous that since Homer ὀλολύζω can mean ‘cry out’ either in joy, as a few lines further in 47, 463, or in grief as here (see Hopkinson on Dion. 21, 35). Above all, the verb lends a mystic dimension to Icarus’ and Erigone’s visionary meeting. Pertinent is its employment in scenes of recognition such as Eurycleia’s recognition of Odysseus in Od. 22, 408 ἴθυσέν ῥ’ ὀλολύξαι, and especially its long history as the standard reaction to divine epiphany.⁶⁶ Nathanael’s reaction after his mystic recognition of Jesus as Christ in Par. 1, 198 Ναθαναὴλ δ’ ὀλόλυξεν is very much in context here.

Once Icarus’ soul has indicated his identity by showing his wounded limbs, he instantly urges Erigone into conducting a double search, 47, 160–164:

καὶ σκίοεις γενέτης ἔπος ἔννεπε πενθάδι κούρη·
 ‘ἔγρεο, δειλαίη, καὶ δίξεο σείο τοκῆα·
 162 ἔγρεο, καὶ μεθύοντας ἐμοὺς μάστευε φονῆας.
 Εἰμὶ τεὸς γενέτης βαρυώδυνος, ὃν χάριν οἴνου
 ἀγρονόμοι δασπλήτες ἐδηλήσαντο σιδήρω.’

⁶⁶ See L. Deubner, *Ololyge und Verwandtes* (Abh. d. Preuss. Acad. d. Wissensch., phil.-hist. Kl., 1), Berlin 1941; R. Hunter, *Theocritus. Encomium of Ptolemy Philadelphus*, Berkeley 2003, 147 (on Theoc. 17, 64).

From a formal point of view, verses 161/162 recall Bion Epit. Adon.⁶⁷ 4/5 (sleeping Aphrodite) ἔγρεο δειλαία ... καὶ πλατάγησον / στήθεα, and Actaeon's ghost in Dion. 5,416/417 expresses itself with a double ἔγρεο καὶ γίνωσκε ... / ἔγρεο καὶ πήχυνε, in Icarius' admonition to Erigone to wake up (ἔγρεο: its soteriological connotations are discussed in Agosti 2003, 363) and search for him, one can read a call for vigilance in requisition of god, a widespread Christian principle, recalling Jesus' command (δειλαία can have a reprimanding touch) to chosen disciples in the Prayer at Gethsemane, Mt 26,41 γρηγορεῖτε καὶ προσεύχεσθε ~ Mk 14,38; Lk 22,45 εὔρεν κοιμωμένους αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς λύπης, (46) καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τί καθεύδετε; ἀναστάντες προσεύχεσθε. This is corroborated by Icarius' second command to Erigone to search for his slayers (one wonders just what was Erigone expected to do to them) in 47,162 μάστευε φονῆας (cf. Jesus' address to apostle Andreas in the so-called 'On the Mission of the Apostles', Rom. Mel. 31ζ,1 M-Tr εὐρὲ ... τὸν πλανώμενον) which is perfectly matching the conditions of – and, in style, is as terse and straightforward (Par. 20,93 ὀξεί μύθῳ) as Jesus' admonition to his disciples, Jn 20,21 Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν· καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέν με ὁ πατήρ, κἀγὼ πέμπω ὑμᾶς ~ Par. 20,94/95. To this request, which broadens the mission of Erigone, the latter will shortly respond with a cry, 47,195 πατρὸς ἐμοῦ κταμένοιο τίνες γεγάσι φονῆες, but the request is left hanging on the air along with Erigone's dead body in the rest of Nonnus' narrative.⁶⁸

Icarius' revelational self-introduction in 163 εἰμι τεὸς γενέτης βαρυῶδυνος is the traditional epiphanic formula for a god to announce his identity in pagan poetry. In quite similar wording it is as well the form of identification employed by Jesus in epiphanic conditions (Mk 6,50; Jn 6,20).⁶⁹ Icarius' introduction to his daughter would seem superfluous and it is doubtful if it could be justified on the premise that his look has been disfigured beyond recognition. His procedure would rather seem to replicate Christ's self-introduction in his appearance to his own disciples in Lk 24,39 ἴδετε τὰς χεῖράς μου καὶ τοὺς πόδας μου ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι αὐτός (~ Christ. pat. 2507/2508 γνῶτέ μ' ὡς ἐγὼ πάλιν / εἶμ' αὐτός), to which theme may as well allude Dion. 5,419 (Actaeon's phantom to his father) αὐτὸν ὀπιπέυεις με, τὸν ἔτρεφες.

⁶⁷ Another 'Lieblingsgedicht' of Nonnus (Chuvin on Dion. 5,374), cf., in the Icarius episode, Epit. Bion. 21 πενθαλέα νήπλεκτος ἀσάνδαλος ~ 47,216 παρθένος ἀκρήδεμνος ἀσάμβαλος; compare also the mourning of Erigone to that of Aphrodite in Epit. 19–27. To a Christ-era reader 'Adonis' may evoke the Aramaic word for 'Lord'.

⁶⁸ Cf. Rosokoki 1995, 70f.; Fayant 2000, 21 n. 2.

⁶⁹ Pagan: Richardson on Hom. Hy. Dem. 268 εἰμι δὲ Δημήτηρ etc., cf. Hom. Hy. Dion. 56 εἰμι δ' ἐγὼ Διόνυσος ἐρίβρομος and in Nonnus Dion. e. g. 7,352; 44,73/74 bis. Christian: E. Pax, RAC V (1962), 869. See also Norden (as n. 49), 186.

Icarius next proceeds to an ὀλβισμός of his daughter for not having eye-witnessed his murder, 165 ὦ τέκος, ὀλβίζω σε etc. Icarus' turn of phrase is, of course, a parodic inversion of the fixed mystic macarism blessing the initiate precisely for the contrary, for having, that is, 'seen' the secret rites.⁷⁰ This is an overt hint at Jn 20, 29 μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες ~ Par. 20, 134/135 κείνοι μᾶλλον ἔασι μακάρτεροι, οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες [concessive!]/μείζονα πίστιν ἔχουσι καὶ οὐ χατέουσιν ὀπωπῆς. Erigone is said to have been prevented by a protecting daimon, 47, 169–171:

ἀλλὰ σε δαίμων
170 ἔκτοθι πατρὸς ἔρυκε, τήν δ' ἐφύλαξεν ὀπωπήν,
μὴ μόρον ἀθρήσειε δαΐζομένου γενετῆρος.

The employment of the term δαίμων in this passage is unique: in Nonnus it equals θεός and elsewhere it always refers to a specific deity (never to Zeus: Peek, *Lex. Dion.*, 351 s. v.). This unique daimon saves Erigone from viewing a series of appalling images at the scene of Icarus' murder which are set out in full detail. Such an ὀλβισμός looks paradoxical for a daughter who has lost her father, an orphan fated to remain unmarried (185/186). Fayant (2000, 21) explains it as a prophecy of Erigone's catasterism. Merkelbach (1963, 490), adducing Hom. Hy. Dion. 54 καί μιν ἔθηκε πανόλβιον εἶπέ τε μῦθον· θάρσει κτλ., rightly recognised in Dionysus' blessing of Icarus in 47, 46, of which Icarus' blessing of Erigone is a replica, a sign of mystic initiation. Icarus' macarism may be due to the task assigned to Erigone to look for Icarus' 'drunken' slayers, thereby bestowing on her the status of an apostle as the very name 'apostle' suggests (cf. Orig. In Joh. 32, 198 πέμπει μὲν τοὺς διὰ τὸ ἀποστέλλεσθαι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἀποστόλους ὀνομαζομένους). Christ cares to save his crucifiers by sending them His apostles. As John Chrysostom In Joh. hom. PG 59, 458 explicitly says, ἀλλ' ὅμως αὐτὸς ... πάντα ἔπραττεν, ὥστε σῶσαι καὶ ἀπαλλάξαι τοὺς ταῦτα ποιοῦντας τῆς ἀποκειμένης κολάσεως. καὶ γὰρ ἀποστόλους ἐπὶ τῇ τούτων ἔπεμψε σωτηρίᾳ. Then the woman who will be shown to be Erigone's Christian foil, Mary Magdalene, plays an important part as mediator of revelation and is the one who first receives and carries out a request by the resurrected Jesus, Jn 20, 17 πορεύου δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ εἶπέ αὐτοῖς etc., so the one who was seen as the first apostle, cf. John Chrys. In Joh. hom. PG 59, 467 ὁ γὰρ οὐκ εἶδον οἱ μαθηταί, τοῦτο εἶδεν ἡ γυνὴ πρώτη, Cyril In Joh. evang. PG 74, 697b τῶν μεγάλων ἀγαθῶν κελεύει γενέσθαι πρωτάγγελον καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸ ἄνω βάδισιν

⁷⁰ See Norden (as n. 49), 100; V. Di Benedetto, Euripide, *Le Baccanti*, Milan 2004, 286. The 'negative olbismoι' in Dion. 5, 337–340; 31, 32/33 seem irrelevant to the point.

εὐαγγελίζεσθαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς.⁷¹ Thus, Icarius' tender address ὦ τέκος reads as referring to a relation of blood but may contextually imply a spiritual relationship:⁷² in the Paraphrasis Jesus addresses the apostles as τέκνα (13, 132), cf. Jn 13, 33; Mk 10, 24.

Most importantly, the interpretation advanced here would seem to explain what remains awkwardly unaccounted for in Icarius' speech, why, that is, Erigone, a young woman bereft of her aged father, one who is now assigned with carrying out a mission, would have to give up not only her usual business in pasture and garden, in other words to abandon not only her property, but her husband too, 47, 179–183:

180 οὐκέτι κουφίζουσα καλαύροπα μεσσόθεν ὕλης
 εἰς νομὸν ἀνθεμόεντα καὶ εἰς λειμῶνας ἰκάνεις,
 σὴν ἀγέλην βόσκουσα σὺν ἀγραύλῳ παρακοίτη.
 οὐκέτι δενδροκόμοιο τεῆς ψάουσα μακέλλη
 κῆπον ἐς εὐώδινα φέρεις ἀμαρῆιον ὕδωρ.

Leave the subtext out and it all makes little sense.⁷³ The Bacchic initiate's pure life (Eur. Bac. 72–75 ὦ μάκαρ, ὅστις ... βιοτὰν ἀγιστεύει) would not account for the specifics of Icarius' prediction. It would have to be assumed that Erigone's mission of searching for Icarius' slayers is envisaged as a life-long and intense, full time exercise. In addition, 181 παρακοίτη has long⁷⁴ been considered troublesome, being in direct contradiction, just a few lines further, to 186 ἀπειρήτην ὑμεναίων, and to 232 ἄζυγα κούρη, 236 παρθενικὴν ἀδμήτα. Of all proposals, textual and interpretative, advanced hitherto, likeliest has seemed that of G. Giangrande⁷⁵ taking παρακοίτη as insinuating the dog Maera, described in 219 as κύων ὁμόφοιτος (cf. Ps-Apollod. 3, 14, 7 κύων συνήθης, Luc. Deor. conc. 5) and one who following Erigone's suicide remained at her tomb, 229–245, 244 ἔμιμνε κύων παρὰ ... τύμβῳ. Such an interpretation is not free of inconvenience, first as Maera appears decisively excluded from the scene before Erigone's suicide in 219–225, then as it violates the ordinary meaning of

⁷¹ Cf. A. Brock, *Mary Magdalene, the First Apostle: The Struggle for Authority*, Cambridge Mass. 2003.

⁷² Cf. BDAG s. τέκνον 3b “of a spiritual child in relation to a master, apostle, or teacher”, Norden (as n. 49), 290f.; Greco, ed. Par. 13, Alessandria 2004, 160.

⁷³ Peek (as n. 32), 48 is at a loss with the question: “Ist gemeint, daß sie den Rest ihres jungen Lebens in hilfloser Trauer verzehren wird, oder sind diese οὐκέτι-Sätze nur Rhetorik um der Rhetorik willen?” In any case οὐκέτι is firmly fixed to the past, cf., in Dionysus' lament of Ampelus, Dion. 11, 301–303.

⁷⁴ “σὺν ἀγρ. παρ. editt., sed coniugem non habuit” Graefe ad loc. in his Leipzig 1826 edition.

⁷⁵ G. Giangrande, *Hermes* 92 (1964), 483–485, convincing Fayant 2000, 152, but “seinen halsbrechenden Versuch ... kann ich nicht ernst nehmen”, Peek (as n. 32), 48.

ἄγραυλος παρακοίτης describing a shepherd sleeping out in the fields (when ἄγραυλος refers to animals, it is always of oxen in Homer).

It all looks less obtrusive, when it is taken into consideration that desertion of property and family is a prerequisite for winning the kingdom of heaven as the stories of the rich man unwilling to abandon his possessions (Mt 19, 36; Mk 10, 17–31; Lk 18, 18–30) and of the would-be followers of Jesus (Mt 8, 19–22; Lk 9, 57–62) show. Above all, it is required of an apostle, such as Erigone becomes by dint of her ‘father’'s request. The cost of discipleship includes family and property, Lk 14, 26 εἴ τις ἔρχεται πρὸς με καὶ οὐ μισεῖ τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφούς καὶ τὰς ἀδελφάς, ἔτι τε καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἑαυτοῦ, οὐ δύναται εἶναι μου μαθητής ... (33) πᾶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ὃς οὐκ ἀποτάσσεται πᾶσιν τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ ὑπάρχουσιν οὐ δύναται εἶναι μου μαθητής. The model is laid by Jesus himself, acknowledging as his mother and brothers those who heed the will of god (Mt 13, 46–50; Mk 3, 31–35; Lk 8, 19–21), and by his disciples, Lk 5, 11 ἀφέντες πάντα ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ. The secular metaphor of this very motif, with a Christian intertext, is known from Methe's devotion to Dionysus in Dion. 19, 27–31.⁷⁶ But this, Porphyry says (C. Christ. 58 Harnack, cf. Julian C. Galil. 100 Masaracchia), is the ultimate disgrace and misfortune. For Nonnus' treatment of the episode it is, again, highly ironic that Icarus appears to deplore what he actually calls for.

The phantom Icarus goes on to describe the conditions of his death: totally drunken peasants encircled him and no shepherd responded to his call for help, 47, 175–178:

δαϊζόμενος δὲ σιδήρω
176 μηλονόμους ἐκάλεσσα, καὶ οὐκ ἤκουσαν ἰωήν·
μόνη δ' ὑστερόφωνος ἐμὸν κτύπον ἔκλυεν Ἥχώ
θρήνοις ἀντιτύποισι τεὸν στενάχουσα τοκῆα.

According to Icarus' own phraseology he was murdered δαϊζόμενος ... σιδήρω. Icarus' insistence on δαϊζω and derivatives (171, 175, 168 ἀρτιδάικτον, cf. 146, 241) seems just right as the verb is often employed in emotional contexts⁷⁷ and finds a precedent in Maximus De act. ausp. 495 στυφελαῖς κορύναις ἐδάϊξαν. Fayant (2000, 21 n. 1) is no doubt right in discerning here an allusion to a ‘sparagmos’, like that of Zagreus, the first Dionysus, in Dion. 6, 206 προτέροιο δαϊζομένου Διονύσου. So Icarus' choice of words implies a death tailored to fit his assignor. In 47, 175 (drunken peasants) ἀμφ' ἐμὲ κυκλώσαντο is usually

⁷⁶ Discussed by G. D'Ippolito, Intertexto evangelico nei Dionysiaca di Nonno, in: L. Belloni, (as n. 9), 226.

⁷⁷ Always in Homer: R. Führer, LfrE s. δαϊζω.

thought to be a reminiscence of Callim. Hec. fr. 69, 14 Hollis οἱ μιν ἐκυκλώσα[ν]το (in festivity), but it may well evoke the threatening surrounding of Jesus in Jn 10, 24 ἐκύκλωσαν οὖν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ~ Par. 10, 86 (Ἑβραῖοι) Χριστὸν ἐκυκλώσαντο, then Dion. 21, 61 (of Lycurgus) ἐκυκλώσαντο δὲ Βάκχαι, a usage of κυκλώ well known from the Septuagint.

Yet, the real issue in 47, 175 – 178 stems from the fact that in the actual scene of Icarus' murder there is no reference of him summoning anyone to his aid. The same inconsistency appears, in similar but not identical terms, in Dion. 5, 441 θήρας ἐμοὺς ἐρέεινε καὶ οὐς ἐκάλεσσα νομῆας where the ghost of Actaeon adduces as eyewitnesses of his murder his hounds and previously unmentioned (and subsequently unspecified) νομῆες. Icarus' complaint about the μηλονόμοι (= ποιμένες) may turn out to be no less interactive with – and no less teasing about – his 'reading' of the Gospels. After Jesus' arrest and Peter's triple denial the absence of the disciples from the events under way is conspicuous. Christ had predicted in Jn 16, 32 ἰδοὺ ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ ἐλήλυθεν ἵνα σκορπισθῆτε ἕκαστος εἰς τὰ ἴδια καὶ μόνον ἀφήτε. His prediction fulfils an old Jewish tradition about the Messiah but Cyril In Joh. evang. PG 74, 469d mentions a view holding this as a euphemism for a cowardly and selfish attitude: τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶν εὐπεριστόλως εἰπεῖν, ὅτε δειλίας ἀνάνδροις κεκρατημένοι, μόνης τῆς ἑαυτῶν ψυχῆς προνοήσετε, καὶ τὴν τῷ διδασκάλῳ χρεωστούμενην ἀγάπησιν κατόπιν τῆς ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίας ποιησάμενοι πρὸς οὐσπερ ἂν εὕρητε διοικήσεσθε τόπους. At the scene of Christ's arrest Matthew (26, 56, cf. Mk 14, 50) speaks tout court of complete abandonment and desertion, τότε οἱ μαθηταὶ πάντες ἀφέντες αὐτὸν ἔφυγον. In Is. 63, 5, a passage lying at the heart of Jn 16, 32, the loneliness of the Redeemer is described in similarly dramatic terms, καὶ ἐπέβλεψα, καὶ οὐδεὶς βοηθός· καὶ προσενόησα, καὶ οὐθεὶς ἀντελαμβάνετο.

Present at (or, following the synoptics, at a distance from) the scene of crucifixion are only women from Galilee (Brown 1970, 904f.). The deposition of Jesus is taken care of by two clandestine disciples, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Subsequent to Jesus' resurrection, it is Mary Magdalene who first visits the tomb. It is she who lets two of the disciples know; the disciples run to the tomb and after inspecting it ἀπήλθον οὖν πάλιν πρὸς αὐτοὺς (Jn 20, 10) leaving Magdalene alone at the scene. And when Jesus appears to his disciples, they find themselves behind closed doors out of fear of the Jews, Jn 20, 19 τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων ὅπου ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων. Nonnus would be alerted to this issue as it prompted considerable speculation in contemporary Christian authors (cf., then, Rom. Mel. 19γ, 1–10 M-Tr). In regard to Jesus' burial, Chrysostom addresses the question in a quite straightforward manner, In Joh. hom. PG 59, 464: Πῶς δὲ οὐδεὶς τῶν δώδεκα προσήλθεν, οὐκ Ἰωάννης, οὐ Πέτρος, οὐκ ἄλλος τις τῶν ἐπισήμων; Καὶ οὐδὲ

τοῦτο κρύπτει ὁ μαθητής. Εἰ γὰρ τὸν φόβον λέγοι τις τῶν Ἰουδαίων, καὶ οὗτοι τῷ αὐτῷ κατείχοντο φόβῳ, and further on he produces a fitting explanation, PG 59,466 Οἱ γοῦν δώδεκα οὐχ οὕτως αὐτὸν ἐτίμων, ἀλλὰ θανάτῳ καὶ σφαγῇ καὶ τοῖς ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ κινδύνους ...

Cyril of Alexandria in his commentary to John's Gospel praises Joseph's and Nicodemus' courage for overcoming fear of the Jews through unshakeable faith (PG 74,680b). However, when Cyril addresses the disciples' immediate return to their abode after their visit to the tomb he seems to be seeking excuses, not least when he holds the departure of the disciples as an act inspired by Christ, In Joh. evang. PG 74,685b/c: "Ἰοι δ' ἂν οὐκ ἀπὸ σκοποῦ τὸ καὶ ἕτερον τι πεπραχθαι νομίζειν παρ' αὐτῶν. Ἐν ἀκμαίᾳ γὰρ ὄντος ἔτι τοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων θυμοῦ, καὶ φονώντων ἐκθύμως τῶν καθηγεῖσθαι λαχόντων κατὰ παντός μὲν ἀνθρώπου τὸν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θαυμάζοντος λόγον ... μάλιστα δὲ κατ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἁγίων μαθητῶν, τὸ ἐμπεσεῖν εἰκότως παραιτούμενοι, πρὸ ἀγῆς τῆς τελείας ἀποφοιτῶσι τοῦ μνήματος, ὡς οὐκ ἐξὸν ἀκινδύνως τοῦτο δρᾶν, εἰ ὀρῶντο μεθ' ἡμέραν Καὶ οὐ δῆπου δειλίαν ἐροῦμεν τὴν ἀνανδρον αἰτίαν ὥσπερ αὐτοῖς τῆς οὕτω ἐμμελεστάτης καταστῆναι φυγῆς, οἰησόμεθα δὲ μᾶλλον τοῦ χρησίμου τὴν γνῶσιν ταῖς τῶν ἁγίων ψυχαῖς ἐντεθεῖσθαι παρὰ Χριστοῦ, ἄωρὶ κινδυνεύειν οὐκ ἐπιτρέποντος τοὺς οἵπερ ἔμελλον ἔσεσθαι τῆς οἰκουμένης φωστήρες καὶ διδάσκαλοι, cf. also Ammonius In Joh. exp. PG 85,1516c = fr. 614 Reuss οἱ μαθηταὶ ... πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς ἔφυγον δι' οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ, ἵνα μὴ τι πάθωσι πρὸ τοῦ κηρύγματος. It is only when Cyril's passage is taken into consideration that the introduction and role of the obscure daimon, preventing Erigone (47,170 ἔρκε implies 'despite your will') from witnessing Icarus' murder is explained. This is, of course, a concealed mockery of sophisticated scriptural exegesis. The rendering in the Paraphrasis shows that Nonnus is clearly aware of the question about the courage of a woman, Magdalene, and the fear of the disciples, 20,45–48:

45 πυκνὰ δὲ θαμβήσαντες ὀπιτευτῆρες ἑταῖροι
 ἀσταθῆες σφετέροισιν ἐναυλίζοντο μελάθροις,
 ἄφοφα καλλεῖψαντες ἀπενθέος ἄντυγα τύμβου.
 Μαγδαλινὴ δ' ἔλελειπτο γυνὴ παρὰ σήματι μούνη etc.

In this context, *μηλονόμος* could well harbour an allusion to the disciples. It is a term designating leadership in Dion. 34,252 where, by apparent influence of Jn 10,7; I Pet 5,4, a *μηλονόμος* commands βοτῆρες 'drovers' leading the herd, as is ποιμῆν, used by Nonnus in the Dionysiaca of human and divine leaders (Peek, *Lex. Dion.*, 1356 s. v.) and, in the Paraphrasis, almost always in association with Jesus the principal shepherd, Jn 10,11 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός, Nonn. Par. 1,200 ὑψίθρονε ποιμῆν (see K. Smolak, *JÖB* 34 [1984], 6). The disciples are 'shepherds' by the authority of Christ's command to Peter in

the longer ending of John, 21, 15. 16 ποιμαίνε τὰ προβάτιά μου, 17 (~ Par. 21, 89. 98. 108, cf. 1 Pet 5, 2–4), and later leaders of Christian communities are commonly designated as shepherds. At the same time, Nonnus is certainly aware of the designation of leading members of Dionysiac associations as βουκόλοι.⁷⁸

Icarius' phantom concludes his speech with what is, as many have failed to realise, a wish,⁷⁹ 47, 185/186 καὶ σε νοήσω / ὀρφανικὴν ζώουσαν ἀπειρήτην ὑμεναίων. This is utterly incomprehensible, unless ἀπειρήτην ὑμεναίων is meant to allude to observance of chastity to which all servants of God are bound. In this respect Icarius' wish is no different from – in fact, it seems to be a covert parody of – Jesus' wish on the cross, Jn 19, 26/27 > Par. 19, 139f., that His virgin mother (139 φιλοπάρθενε μητέρα) should consider John as Her virgin son (140 παρθένον υἱά). Nonnus added his own comment about John's adoption, Par. 19, 144/145 καὶ ἄσπορος ἔσκε τεκούσης / υἱός, ἀνὴρ ἀλόχευτος ἀπειρώδιος ἀνάσσης.

IV. Erigone's Mission

When Erigone wakes up, she bewails, then eyes the oxen standing by her, near the rock, and asks hills and cattle in a plaintive, but robust, voice about the fate of her dead father, 47, 191–204. In doing so, Erigone momentarily takes on the guise of a maenad. Maenads sit on rocks in the open (Eur. Bac. 38 ἀνορόφους ἦνται πέτρας ~ Dion. 47, 191 πέτρῃ). Bulls are closely associated with Dionysus,⁸⁰ and the maenads appear amidst calves and oxen in Eur. Bac. 677, 691 (cf. Dion. 47, 194 ἐθήμονες ... ταῦροι). The image of the maenad resurfaces in 205 ταχύγουνος ἀνέδραμεν εἰς ῥάχιν ὕλης but, all in all, there is no consistent shaping of Erigone as a maenad. What is astonishing in Erigone's lament is the fact that she shows herself wholly confused and incoherent. She first wonders, quite sensibly, where Icarius' body is and who his murderers are. Then, although she saw the vision and received the ugly news first hand, she surprisingly wonders about the motivation behind Icarius' long absence, and his current whereabouts. She appears resolved to wait until he returns, and gives equal thought to the possibilities that he will either come back or not. Keydell (1932, 194 = Kl. Schr., 506) attempted to explain her rambling soliloquy as a resurfacing of

⁷⁸ Cf. Gerlaud on Dion. 16, 156 μετὰ βουκόλον Ὕμνον ὀλοώτα. In general see W. Burkert, Bacchic Teletai in the Hellenistic Age, in: T. H. Carpenter - C. A. Faraone (edd.), Masks of Dionysus, Ithaca and London 1993, 267/268; P. Scarpi, Le Religioni dei Misteri I: Eleusi, Dionisismo, Orfismo, Milan 2002, 581; Bernabé on Orph. fr. 585, 7/8.

⁷⁹ See R. Keydell, ed. Dion., I, Berlin 1959, 73*. νοήσω often expresses a wish in the Dionysiac, but in other instances in the negative form of 2, 209 μηδὲ νοήσω etc. Cf. 19, 313; 23, 250; 36, 119; 40, 204; 43, 363; 48, 17.

⁸⁰ E. R. Dodds, Euripides, Bacchae, Oxford 1960, XVIII; Seaford-Di Benedetto on Eur. Bac. 100.

Nonnus' model with reference to Hyg. Astr. 2, 4, 23, 182 *Viré neque enim puella timida suspicari debebat nisi patrem interfectum qui tot dies ac menses abesset*. But, in view of Icarus' protracted absence, Erigone's resolution to wait with enduring perseverance can hardly be seen as a reasonable decision. Fayant (2000, 22) comes up with a 'psychological' explanation: in deep sorrow Erigone holds on to a desperate hope that the dream is false.⁸¹ In this case the inconsistency may not be due to clumsy amalgamation, but rather to character-sketching. The fact remains that Erigone appears to fail to comprehend what was so patently shown to her. Is she dim-witted?

No more dim-witted than Mary Magdalene was thought to be: πολλή ἢ εὖνοια καὶ φιλοστοργία τῆς γυναικός: ὑψηλὸν δὲ οὐδὲν οὐδέπω παρ' αὐτῇ deemed John Chrysostom In Joh. hom. PG 59, 469. Mary too saw, first, the open grave, and then the angels and, finally, a vision of Jesus but she was unable (Jn 20, 14 θεωρεῖ ... καὶ οὐκ ᾔδει) to comprehend the miracle of resurrection. Each of them has got it the wrong way round: as Erigone considers a dead man as living, so Mary considers the living divinity as dead. Mary's dullness is an issue in authors whom Nonnus has consulted: Ammonius In Joh. exp. PG 85, 1516c μηδὲν ἐννοήσασα τέλειον, John Chrys. In Joh. hom. PG 59, 467 οὐκ ἦν ὑψηλὴ τῆς γυναικός ἢ διάνοια, ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν σουδαρίων ὑποδέξασθαι τὴν ἀνάστασιν, Cyril In Joh. evang. PG 74, 689b βραδεῖα μὲν πως εἰς σύνεσιν ἢ γυνή, μᾶλλον δὲ σύμπαν τὸ θηλειῶν γένος. Μανθάνει γὰρ οὐ̄πω τὸ ἐκ τῆς ὀπτασίας ὑποδηλούμενον, *ibid.* 692c. In the Paraphrasis Nonnus appears aware of such criticism of Mary, cf. her vain stubbornness in 20, 10–12 ἐρημαίης δὲ χαμεύνης / ἦψατο μαστεύουσα νέκυν φύξηλιν ἀλείψαι. / ἀλλὰ μιν οὐκ ἐκίχησεν (an addition of Nonnus), the oxymoron in 20, 50 μυρομένη ζώνοντα,⁸² and 'expressis verbis' 20, 60 ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ οἶδα νοῆσαι, 63 εἶδε καὶ οὐ γίνωσκεν.

Like her father, Erigone too uses highly oblique language in her lament, first of Icarus then of herself. Her first worry concerns Icarus' whereabouts, 47, 196–199:

ἡ ῥα διδάσκων
γείτονα καλλιφύτιο νέους ὄρηκας ὀπώρηκ
198 πλάζεται ἀγρονόμοισι παρήμενος, ἢ τινι βούτῃ
δενδροκόμῳ παρέμιμε συνέστιος εἰλαπινάζων;

⁸¹ It is an astonishing coincidence that Ammonius claimed the same plea for Magdalene, fr. 616 Reuss καταποθείσα ὑπὸ τῆς λύπης ἔτι ἀμφέβαλλεν περὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως.

⁸² The expressive oxymoron in 20, 50 and 51 δακρυχέεσκε λάλλον νέκυν ἐγγὺς ἐόντα may be reminiscent of Penelope's weeping for Odysseus in Od. 19, 209 κλαιούσης ἐὼν ἄνδρα παρήμενον. Nonnus was fond of such figures, cf. Par. 4, 123/124 (woman of Samaria) Χριστῷ Χριστὸν ἐλεξεν ... / ... τὸν ἐγγύθεν εἶχε μολόντα, Dion. 10, 67 (Ino) κικλήσκων ἐὼν υἷα τὸν ἔκτανεν.

Obviously, these were Icarus' habits in life. Like his lord Dionysus, Icarus spent his time either "teaching" or banqueting (cf. Eur. Bac. 418 χαίρει ... θαλαίσιν). His neighbours and fellow diners are ἀγρονόμοι or some βούτης, the sort, that is, of people who need Icarus' teaching. At the same time, this description bears an uncanny resemblance to Jesus' habits of socialising. Following his calling, Matthew (alias Levi; the βούτης of 47, 198?) hosts a large banquet at his residence, in honour of Jesus (~ 47, 199 συνέστιος εἰλαπινάζων?), with publicans and sinners (the ἀγρονόμοι of 47, 198?) as guests, Lk 5, 29/30 (~ Mt 9, 10/11; Mk 2, 15/16) καὶ ἐποίησεν δοχὴν μεγάλην Λεὺς αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἦν ὄχλος πολὺς τελωνῶν καὶ ἄλλων οἱ ἦσαν μετ' αὐτῶν κατακείμενοι. (30) καὶ ἐγόγγυζον οἱ Φαρισαῖοι ... λέγοντες, Διὰ τί μετὰ τῶν τελωνῶν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν ἐσθίετε καὶ πίνετε; Such habits provoked the criticism of Jesus' contemporaries, Mt 11, 19 (~ Lk 7, 34; 15, 2) ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος φάγος καὶ οἰνοπότης, τελωνῶν φίλος καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν. Significantly, the very same charge is reproduced by Deriades to contest Dionysus' divinity at Dion. 39, 67 Βάκχος ὁμοῦ Σατύροισιν ἐπὶ χθονός [i. e. not in heaven] εἰλαπινάζει. Note also the Homeric εἰλαπινάζων in 47, 199 which is normally rendered as εὐωχοῦμενος 'revelling in a large company' and, in mystic language, is appropriate of Dionysus, cf. Orph. fr. 413, 8 Bern. πάσησί τ' ἐπ' εἰλαπίνησι πάρεστι, 299, 3 εἰλαπιναστή; Dion. 11, 76. At the same time, banqueting is a profound act of initiation. Taking part in the table of Zeus is the scene that seals Dionysus' accomplishment at the end of the poem (48, 974–978) and, on the other hand, the eucharist practised by Christ. εἰλαπινάζειν features prominently in the rendition of the wedding at Cana (Par. 2: 4x) and of Christ's teaching of the bread of life (Par. 6: 6x). Cyril of Alexandria made use of such information in his attempt to explain Jesus' sociability, before his death and resurrection, and his 'Noli me tangere' to Mary Magdalene, In Joh. evang. PG 74, 693c πρὸ τοῖνυν τοῦ σωτηρίου σταυροῦ καὶ τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστάσεως ... δικαίοις καὶ ἀδίκοις ἐπέμισγετο, καὶ συνέσθιε μὲν τελῶναις καὶ ἁμαρτωλοῖς ... ἀδιαφόρως ἐπέμισγετο δικαίοις καὶ ἁμαρτωλοῖς: ἀπεσόβει δὲ παντελῶς οὐδένα τῶν προσιόντων αὐτῷ. But such a description is branded with a touch of irony: εἰλαπινάζειν bears connotations of parasitic life (Athen. 6, 236c, Schol. T II. 17, 577b) and may glance at an early accusation against Christ ap. Orig. C. Cels. 1, 62 τῆδε κάκεισε ... ἀποδεδρακέναι, αἰσχυρῶς καὶ γλίσχυρως τροφᾶς συνάγοντα. It appears aware of Platonic and Neoplatonic aversion to excess in food and revelry, both considered absolutely incompatible with a godhead.

Despite her ignorance, Icarus' daughter shows firm, missionary resolution, 47, 200–204:

200 εἶπατε μυρομένη, καὶ τλήσομαι εἰσόκεν ἔλθῃ.
εἰ μὲν (ἔτι) ζῶει γενέτης ἐμός, ἔρνεα κήπου

ἀρδεύσω παλίνορσος ἅμα ζώουσα τοκῆι·
 εἰ δὲ πατήρ τέθνηκε καὶ οὐκέτι δένδρα φυτεύει,
 ἀθρήσω μόρον ἴσον ἐπὶ φθιμένῳ γενετῆρι.

Erigone is determined to persevere and wait (200 τλήσομαι) until such time as Icarus “comes”, as do all believers in the Second Coming. εἰσόκεν ἔλθη is a Homeric clausula,⁸³ and at the same time such phraseology does not only contain ἔρχεσθαι, the ‘vox propria’ for the day of judgement,⁸⁴ but also corresponds exactly to the biblical stereotype for the Second Coming, Mt 10,23 ~ Paul 1 Cor. 4,5 ἕως ἂν ἔλθη, Mt 25,31 ~ Mk 8,38 = Lk 9,26 ὅταν ἔλθη, Paul 1 Cor. 11,26 ἄχρις οὗ ἔλθη, preserving the indeterminacy of its realisation, Mt 24,36 περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης καὶ τῆς ὥρας οὐδεὶς οἶδεν. Gregory of Nazianzus had employed, in context, such a wording in his hexametric poems, Carm. dogm. PG 37,510,19 ὅτ’ ἂν ἔλθη ~ Carm. de se ipso PG 37,1011,7.

Should her father be alive and able to work, Erigone will irrigate tender plants in the garden living alongside him. Jesus had declared in Jn 5,17 ὁ πατήρ μου ἕως ἄρτι ἐργάζεται καὶ γὰρ ἐργάζομαι, and Nonnus’ rendition contains notions that recall Erigone’s promise, Par. 5,63/64 εἰσέτι νῦν γενέτης ἐργάζεται ἡθάδι κόσμῳ, / ἦθεσιν ἀντιτύποις καὶ ἐγὼ πάις ἔργον ὑφαίνω. In Dion. 47,202 παλίνορσος is usually taken as an equivalent of πάλιν ‘again’ (Peek, Lex. Dion., 1250 s. v.), but it actually means ‘risen again’. It is used in the Paraphrasis of Christ’s resurrection, in 2,105/106 νόστιμος ἐξ Ἀΐδαο ... / ... παλίνορσος, and of Lazarus’ and other mortals’ resurrection in 5,80; 11,79; 12,40 etc.,⁸⁵ and, in a pagan context, of Tityus’ return to life in Dion. 48,395. In the same verse, 47,202, ἅμα ζώουσα τοκῆι expresses a cardinal concept in John about the Second Coming, shaped as the will of Christ (Jn 12,26 ἐὰν ἐμοί τις διακονῆ ... ὅπου εἰμι ἐγὼ ἐκεῖ καὶ ὁ διάκονος ὁ ἐμὸς ἔσται, 14,3; 17,24) and the wish of his followers, Paul 1 Th. 4,18 καὶ οὕτως πάντοτε σὺν κυρίῳ ἐσόμεθα, but nonetheless ridiculed as foolish in anti-Christian literature (Celsus ap. Orig. C. Cels. 4,23 bis). Conversely, should Icarus be dead, no longer planting trees, Erigone is resolute to die a death equal (204 μόρον ἴσον) to her father’s: in other words Erigone predicts, for herself, a martyr’s death.

Another conspicuous innovation of Nonnus, with regard to Eratosthenes, is his treatment of Icarus’ hound Maera, who is long kept out of sight and comes into picture, without a name, shortly before her catasterism in 219–221. By all

⁸³ Il. 10,62; 14,77; 21,231, cf. Hes. WD 630; Quint. Smyr. 2,30 and see Ebeling, Lex. Hom., 487 s. ἐς IICdβ; Schwyzer, Gr. Gr. II, 653. In Nonnus: Dion. 24,150; Par. 12,29.

⁸⁴ BDAG, 394 “the idea of coming is even plainer in connection with ... the return of Jesus from his heavenly home”; Lampe, Patr. Lex., 550 s. v.

⁸⁵ See Livrea 2000, 297; Agosti 2003, 444.

indications,⁸⁶ in the current version of the myth, it was the hound that led Erigone to the dead body of her father. Instead of this, in Nonnus Erigone searches in vain until an ἄλωεύς appears out of the blue, 47, 205–212 (Erigone after her lament):

- 205 ὦς φαμένη ταχύγουνος ἀνέδραμεν εἰς ῥάχιν ὕλης,
 ἴχνια μαστεύουσα νεοσφαγέος γενετῆρος.
 οὐδέ οἱ εἰρομένη θρασὺς αἰπόλος, οὐ παρὰ λόχμαις
 παρθένον οἰκτεῖρων ἀγελήκωμος ἔννεπε βούτης
 ἴχνιον ἀστήρικτον ἀκηρύκτοιο τοκῆος,
 210 οὐ νέκυν Ἰκαρίοιο γέρων ἐπεδείκνυε ποιμήν·
 ἀλλὰ μάτην ἀλάλητο. μόγις δέ μιν εὗρεν ἄλωεύς
 καὶ κινυροῖς στομάτεσσι δυσάγγελον ἴαχε φωνήν,
 καὶ τάφον ἐγγὺς ἔδειξε νεοτμήτοιο τοκῆος.

The introduction of the gardener in Nonnus is challenging. To begin with, why a gardener? “Weil eben Ikarios ein ἄλωεύς war” was Keydell’s reply.⁸⁷ Furthermore, how does it happen that this knowledgeable anonymous gardener appears at the time and place he is needed? “Pastorem [!] Nonnianum putares clamore virginis advocatum subvenisse” rationalized Maass (1883, 119).

Attention to the New Testament subtext yields a more coherent explanation. After Jesus’ resurrection Mary Magdalene finds herself in a situation similar to Erigone’s. As soon as Erigone rises the morning following Icarius’ appearance, she gets on with the business of finding his corpse, 47, 193 Πῆ νέκυσ Ἰκαρίοιο, 196 Πῆ μοι ἐμὸς γενέτης γλυκὺς οἴχεται; By a significant accident, Erigone rushes to the place where Icarius was buried by his murderers, 47, 143 ἀνήγαγον εἰς ῥάχιν ὕλης ~ 205 ἀνέδραμεν εἰς ῥάχιν ὕλης. The phrase is a Nonnian cliché, but one that retains its full weight within the framework of the episode. This is exactly what Mary Magdalene does early in the morning of the day after Sabbath, Jn 20, 1 ἔρχεται πρῶτ σκοτίας ἔτι οὔσης εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον rendered in the Par. 20, 2/3 Μαγδαλινὴ Μαρίη ... ἐγγύθι τύμβου / πρῶϊον ἴχνος ἔκαμπτεν. Consequently, and crucially, Erigone meets the mystifying gardener at her father’s grave, which is confirmed beyond doubt by 47, 213 (ἄλωεύς) τάφον ἐγγὺς ἔδειξε ... τοκῆος.

⁸⁶ Schol. D Il. 22, 29; Hyg. Astr. 2, 4, 22, 178; 23, 180 Viré *canis* ... *perduxit ad cadaver*, id. Fab. 130, 3; Ps-Apollod. 3, 14, 7 Μαίρα ... τὸν νεκρὸν ἐμήνυσε.

⁸⁷ Keydell 1932, 194 = Kl. Schr., 506 and Rosokoki 1995, 72. Cf. 47, 37 with Fayant ad loc., 58 γέρων φυτοεργὸς ἄλωεύς, 64. 70. 125.

Besides, just as Erigone consults, in vain (47,211 μάτην), anyone she happens to come across on the mountain slope (207–211),⁸⁸ so does Mary. As soon as Mary realises that Jesus' body is missing, she rushes off⁸⁹ and consults, first, the disciples (Jn 20,2 τρέχει οὖν καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς Σίμωνα Πέτρον etc.), then the two angels (20,13) and, lastly (~ Dion. 47,211 μόγις), the supposed gardener (20,15, cf. Brown 1970, 1009). At that point Mary is crying alone (Par. 20,48 μόνη ~ Theod. Mops. Comm. evang. Joh. 414,21 Devreesse ἔμεινεν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον μόνη) at Jesus' tomb, Jn 20,11 εἰστήκει πρὸς τῷ μνημείῳ ἔξω κλαίουσα. To the two angels who ask why she is crying Mary replies Ἦραν τὸν κύριόν μου, καὶ οὐκ οἶδα ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν (Jn 20,13, cf. 20,2). Erigone's quest has the same objective, 47,206 ἴχνια μαστεύουσα νεοσφαγῆος γενετῆρος. The "traces" Erigone is after are described in 209 as ἴχνιον ἀστήρικτον ἀκηρύκτιοιο τοκῆος where ἀστήρικτον can be read as a hint at an ascension. In the single other occurrence of this juncture in Dion. 16,375 Nicaea looks over the mountains for ἴχνιον ἀστήρικτον ἀθηήτου Διονύσου who had, though, vanished unnoticed beyond the sky (16,342).

The Johannine narration takes a sudden turn when Jesus appears to Magdalene. As she turns back, Mary sees Jesus but mistakes him for the gardener, Jn 20,15: λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς· Γύναι, τί κλαίεις; τίνα ζητεῖς; ἐκείνη δοκοῦσα ὅτι ὁ κηπουρός ἐστιν λέγει αὐτῷ· Κύριε, εἰ σὺ ἐβάστασας αὐτόν, εἰπέ μοι ποῦ ἔθηκας αὐτόν, κάγω αὐτόν ἀρῶ.

Here is Nonnus' paraphrase of the Johannine verse, 20,64–69:

καὶ ξείνος ἀνὴρ ἄτε κήπον ὀδεύων,
65 τίπτε, γύναι, στενάχεις; κινυρὴν ἐρέεινε γυναῖκα·
εἰπέ, τί μαστεύεις; Μαρίη δ' ἐφθέγγατο φωνήν
ἐλπομένη κήποιο φυτηκόμον ἄνδρα νοῆσαι·
εἰ σὺ νέκυν ζοφόνετος ἐκούφισας ἔκτοθι τύμβου,
ἔννεπε, πῆ μετέθηκας· ἐγὼ δέ μιν ἔνθεν ἀείρω.

Both Mary Magdalene's and Erigone's task remain unaccomplished until they come across a gardener, or someone they think is a gardener. The symbolism of John's narration was recognised early enough, the Christian god being the supreme gardener (Par. 15,1/2 ἐγὼ ... / ζωῆς ἄμπελός εἰμι, πατήρ δ' ἐμός ἐστιν ἀλωεύς) of the supreme garden, cf. Cyril In Joh. evang. PG 74,680d.

⁸⁸ Whence Erigone Ἀλήτις, ὅτι πανταχοῦ ζητοῦσα τὸν πατέρα ἠλάτο (EtG α 454 Lasserre-Livadaras), cf. Hyg. Astr. 2,4,24,206 Viré; Dion. 47,211 ἀλλήτο; L. Deubner, Attische Feste, Berlin 1932, 120; Rosokoki 1995, 72; further Theod. Coloph. SH 753. The motif is known from Greek epic: Merkelbach 1963, 507 approaches the Hom. Hy. Dem. 44–46, where see Richardson's comment.

⁸⁹ Α γυνὴ πάροιστρος for Celsus ap. Orig. C. Cels. 2,59.

Nonnus' paraphrase indicates that he is aware of this symbolism: Christ is "a stranger" (64 ξείνος ἀνὴρ) giving the impression that he walks in a garden and as a gardener he is (mis)identified by Mary Magdalene (67).⁹⁰ The Nonnian ἄλωεύς appears to Erigone and then disappears as suddenly as the Johannine Jesus to Magdalene. He comes just at the end (211 μόγις) and "finds" (211 εὑρεν) rather than accidentally bumps into Erigone. For such readers as have recognised Nonnus' covert play with the Johannine passion of Jesus, the gardener's appearance gains a dramatic intensity: it implies that the gardener might be the resurgent phantom of Icarus himself.

Erigone disconsolately plucks and lays her hair on Icarus' tomb, 47, 215 καὶ πλοκάμους τίλλουσα φίλῳ παρακάτθετο τύμβῳ à la Achilles in Il. 23, 141 – 153. Whether there is any hair left to pluck after 47, 190 καὶ δολιχῆς προθέλυμον ἀνέσπασε βότρυν ἐθείρης is a pointless question – Nonnus cares little for consistency. Erigone's act is different from the usual cutting of hair in mourning; this is a sepulchral offering, a rare habit for which M. Nilsson remarked that "in reality it only occurs in Homeric and mythic examples".⁹¹ Orestes in Aesch. Choeph. 6 offers a lock of his hair at the tomb of his father, whose funeral he has not been able to attend. Garvie ad loc. pertinently noted that an approach to the custom sees it as "a symbolic self-immolation" of the person offering the hair and this seems to have been Nonnus' understanding of it, to judge from Kalamos' words before his suicide in Dion. 11, 468 δέξο μετὰ πλοκάμους καὶ ἔμὸν δέμας.

Then, like Mary, Erigone too wails in desolation, 47, 216/217 αὐτοχύτοις δέ / δάκρυσιν ἀνάοισι λελουμένον εἶχε χιτῶνα. Her lament is presented as extremely passionate. Erigone apparently complies with Icarus' request, in 47, 185 κλαίει τεὸν γενέτην, with a zeal meant to eventually become farcical. Such is Mary's lament, Par. 20, 49 θερμὸν ἀναβλύζουσα γοήμονος ὄμβρον ὀπωπῆς, a description apparently influenced by Cyril Comm. Joh. PG 74, 688a ἀνοιμῶζει γὰρ ἀπληστότερον, καὶ ἀκορέστως τῶν ἰδίων ὀμμάτων ἀποθλίβει τὸ δάκρυον (Golega 1930, 130). The wording in both cases implies copious tears in an abundance characteristic of a water source. This is a feature of the Nonnian version which is not in disagreement with the Eratosthenic treatment. In Hyginus' account the sequence of events leading to Erigone's suicide is not dissimilar, Astr. 2, 4, 23, 184–187 *Viré quod (sc. cadaver patris) filia, simul ac vidit, desperata spe, solitudine ac pauperie oppressa, multis miserata lacrimis, in eadem arbore qua*

⁹⁰ Accorinti, ed. Par. 20, Pisa 1996, 178 (on Par. 20, 67) refers to N. Wyatt, 'Supposing Him to be the Gardener' (John 20, 15). A Study of the Paradise Motif in John, ZNW 81 (1990), 21–38.

⁹¹ Nilsson, Gesch. gr. Rel. I, 180 with reference to Il. 23, 141. Nonn. Dion. 11, 464–467 is particularly pertinent, see Vian on Dion. 11, 239–241.

parens sepultus videbatur suspendio sibi mortem conscivit ~ Ps-Apollod. 3, 14, 7 κατοδουραμένη τὸν πατέρα ἑαυτὴν ἀνήρτησε.

Following the discovery of Icarus' grave and her lament, before Erigone kills herself, she seals the everlasting silence of her suicide with silent lips, 47,218/219 χεῖλεσι δ' ἀφθόγγοισιν ἐπεσφρηγίσσατο σιγὴν / εἰς χρόνον. Such 'silence' is not contradictory to her groan (47,221 οἱ ὀδυρομένη) as the latter does not constitute articulate speech. Likewise, in Soph. OT 1071 Jocasta cries out *ιοῦ ιοῦ*, *δύστηνε* which the chorus describes in 1075 as [ἐ]κ τῆς σιωπῆς τῆσδ'. It is, however, somehow odd that after Erigone's first lament in 47,188f., which was provoked by Icarus' phantom, this time, at the location of her father's tomb, she is said not to utter a word. Erigone's silence is not, as it has often been misinterpreted, a means of dramatic intensification prior to a suicide, a motif well attested in Greek tragedy (cf., e. g., Jebb on Soph. Ant. 1244f.); it rather underscores the transition from silence to the permanent silence of death.⁹² A description such as this recalls the topos of martyrdom founded by Christ in passages such as Mk 14, 60/61 ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς ... ἐπηρώτησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν λέγων· Οὐκ ἀποκρίνη οὐδὲν ... ; (61) ὁ δὲ εἰσώπα καὶ οὐκ ἀπεκρίνατο οὐδέν, Jn 19,9 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀπόκρισιν οὐκ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ~ Par. 19,42–44.⁹³ Cyril In Joh. evang. PG 74, 640c commenting on Jn 19,10 recalls Old Testament traditions about the Redeemer (the silence of the lamb in Is. 53,7 [Acts 8,32/33] and Ps. 38,2/3) and attributes to such silence a mystic dimension, τῆς σιωπῆς τὸ μυστήριον. Such an attitude, on the part of Erigone, would be in agreement with her voluntary death (225) and would be in keeping with her presentation not as a desperate suicide but as a true martyr in the name of her father.

Eventually, Erigone takes her own life by hanging. Nonnus' comment in Dion. 47,225 καὶ θάνε, καὶ μόρον εἶχεν ἐκούσιον seems superfluous for what is, by definition, a 'mors voluntaria', unless one considers that Erigone dies the willing death of a martyr. Christ and all His martyrs (for example, Ignatius Ro. 4,1 ἐκὼν ὑπὲρ θεοῦ ἀποθνήσκω) are put to death of their own free will, cf. Jn 10,18 οὐδεὶς αἴρει αὐτήν [i.e. τὴν ψυχὴν μου] ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τίθημι αὐτήν ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ ~ Par. 10,64; 11,210 θαναεῖν ἡμελλεν ἐκὼν, then at the scene of

⁹² 47,219 εἰς χρόνον "pour toujours" Fayant, "per sempre" Accorinti (not "for a time" Rouse, "eine Zeitlang" Peek), with εἰς expressing a durative notion (Livrea 2000, 104/105), or even "to the end of time" (εἰς = *usque ad*: Keydell, ed. Dion., I, *64), seems just right here, as if equivalent to εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (χρόνον), which is a formulaic expression in St John. The meaning of εἰς χρόνον varies in the Dionysiaca (the entry in Peek, Lex. Dion., 1781 s. χρόνος is cursory). Cf. Par. 8,74 εἰς χρόνον ἐμπεδόκυκλον = Jn 8,29 πάντοτε, Par. 4,170 εἰς χρόνον οὐ λήγοντα = Jn 4,36 εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

⁹³ BDAG, XXIX approach Plato's similar stance (μηδ' ὀτιοῦν φθέγγασθαι) during his detention on Aegina in Diog. Laert. 3,19.

crucifixion Par. 18,132; 19,88. 160 καὶ κεφαλὴν ἔκλινε, θελήμονι δ' εἴκαθε πότμῳ. The 'libido moriendi' (Rom. Mel. 31β, 5 M-Tr ἐντροφᾶν τὸ θανεῖν) is the distinctive feature of Christian martyrdom which attracted the irony and mockery of pagan authors.⁹⁴ Nonnus' implicit reference to it, conflated with the concept of imitating the Lord, seems ironic too.

Upon Erigone's decision to sacrifice her life, the hound Maera is instantly introduced into the story (47,219). In comparison to Eratosthenes, her presentation has been delayed for a while, in the interest of introducing Icarius' phantom and the gardener-informant, but Maera maintains her traditional function. Her role as a messenger is not altogether forgotten, it is rather transposed from indicating the location of the body of Icarius to that of Erigone, 231/232 παρερχομένοισι δ' ὀδίταις / νεύμασιν ἀφθόγγοις ἐπεδείκνυν ἄζυγα κούρην. Yet, the hound seems to serve, primarily, as a caricature of Erigone herself. By her actions and attributes, Maera imitates, in parody, the actions and attributes of her mistress. The dependence becomes instantly apparent with Maera presented in 219–221 as κύων ὁμόφοιτος ἐχέφρων / ... συνέστιχε ... κούρη and with καὶ οἱ ὀδυρομένη συνοδύρετο. Then, Erigone hangs herself in 226 ἀμφοτέρους δονέουσα πόδας (the ὀρηθμόν ὀλέθρου as Nonnus nicely puts it in Dion. 22,240) and the dog runs around her with equally uneasy feet, 227 πυκνὰ κύων δεδόνητο. Like Erigone, Maera bears all attributes of piety: upon presentation in 219 she is ἐχέφρων, she buries Erigone in 238 πινυτόφρονι θυμῷ, she even sheds νοήμονα δάκρυα in 228. The uncanny similarity shows itself more forcefully in 244/245 where the passers by who took care of Erigone's burial retire and go about their business quickly:

αὐτὰρ ὁ μῦθος ἔμμινε κύων παρὰ γείτοني τύμβῳ
Ἡριγόνης ὑπ' ἔρωτι, θελήμονι δ' ὤλετο πότμῳ.

In her voluntary death Erigone expressly follows the example of her father, 47,204 ἀθρήσω μόρον ἴσον. The passers-by who bring Erigone down from the tree (47,236 παρθενικὴν ἀδμήτα κατήγαγον ~ Par. 19,202 [of Christ on the cross] καὶ νέκυν ἐστηῶτα κατήγαγε) and provide funerary honours to her body (241 ἐπεκτερέιξαν) act like the peasants burying Icarius and like the clandestine disciples of Christ taking care of his deposition.⁹⁵ Then, carrying a weight of sorrow in their hearts, the passers-by nonetheless disperse, as Icarius' friends

⁹⁴ Cf. Luc. De mort. Peregr. 13; Celsus ap. Orig. C. Cels. 7,40; see V. Schmidt, VigChris 49 (1995), 389/390.

⁹⁵ The meaning of 47, (234/235 (οικτεῖροντες ἀνήιον εἰς φυτὸν ὕλης /) ἴχνησιν ἀκροτάτοισιν is not clear and the phrase may only be a formulaic filling. In Par. 19,199 Joseph approaches the cross ποδι σιγαλέῳ, Nicodemus in 205 φυλασσομένῳ ποδί which could be a parallel if their motivation would be reverence, not fear.

and Christ's disciples did. There is no doubt that the proceedings around each victim in the story replicate the proceedings of the previous victim in witty parody. In due course, as Erigone and Mary Magdalene sit at the tomb alone, so does Maera (alone, μούνος) in 244 out of love for her master, cf. Ael. Nat. anim. 7, 28 (Maera took her life) δι' ὑπερβολὴν εὐνοίας τῆς πρὸς τὴν δέσποιναν. To round off this design, as Erigone in 225, in all honour, μόνον εἶχεν ἑκούσιον so Maera too dies a voluntary death in 245; tellingly, the formula θελήμονι δ' ὤλετο πότμῳ is varied in Nonnus of an Indian fighter committing suicide in Dion. 23, 74 and of Christ in Par. 19, 160. Here replication makes altered use of the topos of a dog's emaciation and death due to the loss of his/her master,⁹⁶ but the notion of self-sacrifice is pressed so hard that it reaches its farcical extremity. Nonnus needs such an entity, a third 'natura animalis', to complete the Bacchic triad he aims at:⁹⁷ the father, the daughter and the intelligent hound. The mimesis of one another prompts a sense of unity among the three.

The notion of imitation in death, in some form, is present in the secular version of the Erigone myth, which was soon associated with an Attic (Icarian?) fecundity rite, the αἰώρα, and had the Athenian virgins hanging themselves in epidemic proportions, cf. Hyg. Astr. 2, 4, 23, 197–200 *Viré multae virgines sine causa suspendio sibi mortem consciscerent, quod Erigone moriens erat precata ut eodem leto filiae Atheniensium afficerentur quo ipsa foret obitura*, Fab. 130, 4 *Liber pater iratus Atheniensium filias simili poena afflixit*. But this epidemic is due to folly caused either by Erigone's curse or by the god's wrath, whereas in Nonnus the deaths of Erigone and Maera are emphatically of their own free choice. All Christians (should) act following the example of the Lord. The proceedings around the death of Erigone and Maera with the latter manifestly being a variation of the former, are too similar to be unaffected by – indeed to rehearse in parody – the early Christian traditions of τὸ κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον μαρτύριον (Mart. Polyc. 1, 1), in other words, a martyrdom following the example of the Master out of zealous love for Him, then others, in their turn, following the example of the martyr and so on. Ignatius on his way to martyrdom in Rome writes to the Christians of the city, Ro. 6, 3 ἐπιτρέπατέ μοι μιμητὴν εἶναι τοῦ πάθους τοῦ θεοῦ μου, and imitation of Christ is the driving motif in a work such as the Martyrdom of Polycarp which lays the topoi of later martyrological accounts that were to become very popular among Christian readers, cf. 17, 3 τοὺς δὲ μάρτυρας ὡς μαθητὰς καὶ μιμητὰς τοῦ κυρίου ἀγαπῶμεν ἄξιως ἕνεκα εὐνοίας

⁹⁶ Cf. Eupolis' dog in Ael. Nat. anim. 10, 41, Lysimachus' in id. 6, 25, see S. Lilja, Dogs in Ancient Greek Poetry, Helsinki 1976, 102/103; Accorinti on Dion. 47, 244f.

⁹⁷ Dionysus is in many respects associated with notions of triads, see P. Chuvin, ed. Dion. VI–VIII, Paris 1992, 16/17; Dodds on Eur. Bac. 680; cf. Theoc. 26, 2 with F. Cairns, PCPS 38 (1992), 5/6; Scarpi (as n. 78), 589.

ἀνυπερβλήτου τῆς εἰς τὸν ἴδιον βασιλέα καὶ διδάσκαλον, 19, 1 (Polycarp) μάρτυς ἔξοχος, οὐ τὸ μαρτύριον πάντες ἐπιθυμοῦσιν μιμεῖσθαι κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον Χριστοῦ γενόμενον, then Euseb. Hist. eccles. 3, 32, 3 (Symeon) τῷ τοῦ κυρίου πάθει παραπλήσιον τέλος ἐπηνέγκατο.⁹⁸

In the end, all three protagonists are catasterised by will of Zeus. ‘Glory towering heaven’ was, it seems, the reward of initiation in Dionysiac mysteries (cf. Eur. Bac. 972 with Seaford ad loc.) and the catasterism is a point of contact with the Christian substratum of the episode which easily offers itself. The approach of 47, 251 (Zeus Ἰκάριον) εἰς πόλον ἀστερόφοιτον ἄγων with Par. 20, 43 (Jesus) ἀναβήσεται εἰς πόλον ἄστρων may not, therefore, be casual, among scores of other verbal similarities between the Dionysiaca and the Paraphrasis, but employed as a final trace of Nonnus’ clandestine methods.

V. Conclusion

Paul Collart, like Rudolf Keydell, believed that Nonnus was a pagan when he wrote the Dionysiaca and that he later converted to Christianity. With so many allusions to the Gospels and exegetical literature having been unearthed,⁹⁹ it looks ironic that one of his arguments was that “comme Nonnos énumère toujours les différentes formes qu’il connaît d’une légende, il n’aurait pu s’empêcher, s’il avait été déjà converti, de faire au moins allusion à des traditions chrétiennes en plusieurs endroits des Dionysiaques”, followed indeed by a list of lost opportunities.¹⁰⁰ If the reasoning behind such categorisations presumes that religious convictions dictate the parameters of Nonnus’ poetry, it seems to be generally misguided.

The affiliate subject of Christian reception in the Dionysiaca has not been thoroughly studied yet. Such a study, other than detecting passages, would have to explore the mechanisms of reception. A preliminary research indicates that Christian reception in the Dionysiaca realises itself in the form of (a.) ad hoc verbal loans, (b.) integration or reworking of individual motifs or scenes, and, more complexly, (c.) adoption of narrative patterns. The Icarus episode belongs

⁹⁸ As early as Acts 7, 57–60 the author makes an apparent effort to parallel Stephen’s stoning to Christ’s crucifixion. See, further, J.B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers II.1*, London 1889 (Peabody Mass. 1989), 610–614; P.Th. Camelot, *Ignace d’Antioche: Lettres*, Paris⁴ 1969, 33, 200f.

⁹⁹ Cf. Golega 1930, 68–79 (a collection of passages “prezioso, anche se alquanto acritico” according to Livrea, *Stud. Hell.*, II, 443 n. 12), and, for an updated list, Gigli Piccardi 2003, 50f.

¹⁰⁰ P. Collart, *Nonnos de Panopolis. Études sur la composition et le texte des Dionysiaques*, Cairo 1930, 9. Golega 1930, 67 was closer to the truth: “[e]s ist ein ständiges Hinüber und Herüber von Christlichem und Heidnischem in beiden Gedichten.”

to this third category. It is, therefore, no surprise that there is no complete identification of the protagonists with biblical figures. We are, rather, dealing with an amalgamation of traits which serves the adopted narrative sequence. Instructive, in this respect, is the eclectic treatment of Erigone: she first sees Icarus in a vision, which bears the features of Jesus' appearance to his disciples, and she is accordingly addressed by Icarus as an apostle; then she, as does Mary Magdalene, fails to comprehend what she has just seen, and searches for Icarus' body in a way patently consistent with the actions of Magdalene. Finally, she volunteers to die in imitation of her father as a true Christian martyr. Apparently, Nonnus' Erigone is a persona who incorporates diverse typical features first of an apostle, then of Mary Magdalene and eventually of a protomartyr. Occasionally, Erigone adopts the guise of a maenad.

So the episode harmoniously brings together Bacchic and Christian traits. Icarus' murder, for instance, is Bacchic in terminology and execution, and Christian with the piercing of Icarus' flesh, with a goad, by an anonymous peasant. This has been observed in other instances of Christian reception in the *Dionysiaca*: in Dionysus' attempted arrest by soldiers of Pentheus (Dion. 45, 228–239), for example, Eur. Bac. 434f. is blended with reminiscences of Jesus' arrest at Gethsemane.¹⁰¹ In such cases Nonnus' method does not seem to involve the superimposition of a Christian layer over a pagan one, but rather the fusion of old and new traits in a radically different presentation. In the process many features of both sources lose their original colour to fit both ends. Amalgamation apparently constitutes a firm *modus operandi* of the poet and is primarily operative in the occasional presentation of Dionysus as 'figura Christi'.

Collart, as part of his broader theory on the composition of the *Dionysiaca*, had as well postulated an earlier, separate treatment of the Icarus episode and then its incorporation into the body of the poem. But soon Keydell objected that the Icarus episode is unalienable from the preceding entry into Athens (47, 1–33).¹⁰² The signs of a modal manipulation of the old story are already extant in Dionysus' triumphant ingress into Athens which is to a considerable extent modelled on Jesus' triumphant ingress into Jerusalem, the preamble to His passion. R. Brown¹⁰³ remarked that the Johannine description already takes up fea-

¹⁰¹ See D. Gigli Piccardi, *Sileno 10 = Studi in onore di A. Barigazzi*, II, 1984 [1986], 249–256; F. Tissoni, *Nonno di Panopoli, I canti di Penteo (Dionisiache 44–46)*, Florence 1998, 74. Vian 1997, 159 = 2005, 582/583 qualifies Gigli Piccardi's approach; decisively against it is B. Simon, ed. *Dion. XLIV–XLVI*, Paris 2004, 74/75, cf. *ib.*, 133/134.

¹⁰² Collart (as n. 100), 257, answered by Keydell 1932, 194 = *Kl. Schr.*, 506.

¹⁰³ Brown 1966, 462. The partial equation between Icarus' entry in Athens and Jesus' entry in Jerusalem was proven by Accorinti 2004, 33–36, cf. R. Shorrock, *BMCR* 30 March 2006 fin.

tures from “the joyful reception of Hellenistic sovereigns into a city”. Dionysus’ entry into Athens is said to bring about a change in the themes sung by melodic Attic birds as they forget the traditional themes of Attic mythology associated with themselves (47, 30–33, discussed in *Appendicula II*). In the ancient capital of the Hellenic world it is all Bacchus now. The hint distantly recalls Palladas’ genuine, or otherwise, melancholy on the extinction of Hellenic culture, AP 10, 82; 10, 90, 5 “Ἑλληνές ἐσμεν ἄνδρες ἐσποδωμένοι. But more than elsewhere, the gradual demise of pagan culture in Athens, the ἀσιγήτος city (Dion. 24, 240; 46, 369) and the χθόνα βωπιάνειραν ... μητέρα βίβλων (Procl. Hy. 7, 23), was exceptionally grievous to the local, hard-line anti-Christian (A. Cameron, *The Last Days of the Academy in Athens*, PCPhS 15 [1969], 9) intelligentsia. We are well informed of Neoplatonic efforts, beginning with Plutarch in the second half of the 4th cent., to revive philosophy in Athens, as well as of Hellenic donations to restore derelict Attic monuments. Proclus, in an emotionally charged passage, likens the effect of Christian dominion in Athens to a natural catastrophe.¹⁰⁴

But the plan for a qualified treatment of the Icarius episode manifests much earlier. In the Dion. 1, 31–33 Proteus’ transformation into a tree is coupled with the story of Icarius:

εἰ φυτὸν αἰθύσσοιτο νόθον ψιθύρισμα τιταίνων,
 μνήσομαι Ἰκαρίοιο, πόθεν παρὰ θυιάδι ληνῶ
 βότρυς ἀμιλλητήρι ποδῶν ἐθλίβετο ταρσῶ.

The proposed reading allows for a new appreciation of the complexity of this early reference to the Icarius episode.¹⁰⁵ Proteus is here transformed into a φυτόν, an equivocal word able to denote either a tree, such as Proteus is transformed into in Od. 4, 458, or a vine which would suit better Icarius φυτοεργός. The tree/vine’s whispering is νόθον (cf., of the same transformation, Dion. 43, 235 ψευδαλέον ψιθύρισμα) on the one hand because of Proteus’ metamorphosis, and on the other because of Dionysus’ broken or dubious promise that wine will secure Icarius lasting fame and joy (47, 45f.). Then, the violent vocabulary (θυιάδι, ἀμιλλητήρι, ἐθλίβετο) and the image of grapes being

¹⁰⁴ In Tim. I, 122, 8 Diehl. On Neoplatonists and Athens see G. Fowden, *JHS* 102 (1982), 43–45; H.S. Schibli, *Hierocles of Alexandria*, Oxford 2002, 6. On the interest in restoring Attic monuments see H.D. Saffrey - A.-Ph. Segonds, *Marinus, Proclus ou Sur le bonheur*, Paris 2002, 114 n. 6. On the Christianisation of Attica see F.R. Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianisation c. 370–529*, I, Leiden etc. 1993, 283–328.

¹⁰⁵ On Nonnus’ Proteian metapoetics see, recently, P. Hardie, *Nonnus’ Typhon: The Musical Giant*, in: M. Paschalis (ed.), *Roman and Greek Imperial Epic*, Herakleion 2005, 121; 123. Of his transformations as a programmatic summary of the whole poem see V. Giraudet, *Les Dionysiaques de Nonnos de Panopolis: un poème sous le signe de Protée*, BAGD 2005, II, 75–98.

crushed in the wine press with rivalling feet which does not feature in the actual episode, not only evoke the scene of Icarius' violent death in which Dionysus' drink and Icarius' blood mix, but also the allegorical interpretation of Dionysus' dismemberment as a vintage, with the god imagined as a grape crushed and composed again in form of wine (Cornut. Theol. 30, 62, 10 Lang, cf. the allegorical interpretation of Il. 6, 132–137 ib. 62, 16 L. ~ Heraclit. Alleg. Hom. 35, 3–8). Next to this lies the widespread image of Jesus as a grape crushed on the cross (Hippol. Rom. Antichr. 11 αίματι ... σταφυλῆς ... τῆς ἀγίας σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ ὡς βότρυν ἐπὶ ξύλον θλιβείσης, Clement Paed. 2, 19, 3 ὁ μέγας βότρυν, ὁ λόγος ὁ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν θλιβεῖς) which, supported by verbal reminiscences of Par. 19, 129/130 δασπλήτες (~ 47, 164 ἀγρονόμοι δασπλήτες) ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι φονῆες / ξυνοὶ ἀμιλλητῆρες, further intimates Icarius' approximation with Him. This is all by design; the reference to the Icarius episode at the opening of Nonnus' massive epic calls attention to its significance at the closure of the poem.

The transformation discussed here is the last of Proteus' six transformations, it follows the Homeric order (Od. 4, 456–459) and is preceded by a reference to another resistance myth, Dionysus' persecution by Lycurgus. Whereas all stories, as anticipated, concern Dionysus, this one, crucially, is unique in that it does not involve the god himself: in reality, though, it may not be far from him. A fundamental 'Leitmotiv' of the poem is the interchangeable relationship between Zagreus and Dionysus.¹⁰⁶ The two are opposed, in form of 'syncrisesis', several times until Dionysus' final victory over the Indians. But after that, they converge and, on Attic ground, where Zagreus is worshipped (Dion. 31, 66–69), they meld, as is apparent from the two references to Zagreus in the Icarius episode, 47, 29. 65: in the latter passage Icarius sings for Dionysus a hymn to Zagreus. Dionysus is in the first place conceived by Zeus to be a reincarnation of Zagreus, murdered in an awful fashion, Dion. 5, 563–565 νέον Διόνυσον ... / ... μίμημα παλαιγενέος Διονύσου, / αἰνομόρου Ζαγρῆος. So Dionysus is associated, early on, with the murder of Zagreus. Even as an infant, Dionysus comes close to suffering a Zagreus-like death at the hands of his demented nurses, 9, 49/50 καὶ νύ κε ... / νήπιον εἰσέτι Βάκχον ἐμιστύλλοντο μαχαίρη, which glances directly at 6, 205 ταυροφυῆ Διόνυσον ἐμιστύλαντο μαχαίρη. At the last moment, Hermes carries the baby away. Clearly, a different fate awaits this infant. But the fate of Zagreus continues to haunt Dionysus: Zagreus often pops up at times when Dionysus' life is threatened, and his opponents are branded as

¹⁰⁶ See in primis Chuvin, ed. Dion. VI–VIII, Paris 1992, 13–16; Vian 1994, 215/216 = 2005, 531/532; id., ed. Dion. XLVIII, Paris 2003, 82–84; D. Gigli Piccardi, Zagreo, Semele, Dioniso: morte e rinascita nelle Dionisiache di Nonno, in: F. Benedetti-S. Grandolini (edd.), Studi ... in memoriam di A. Colonna, Naples 2003, 359–380.

Titans in 44,211 (Pentheus) and 48,25–30 (Giants). Icarus quite obviously takes up a role elsewhere performed by Dionysus and also dies ‘*loco Dionysi*’. His murder is perpetrated by slayers in the form of a ‘*sparagmos*’. Zagreus did not live long. His own murder, widely popular with coeval Neoplatonists, involves *φωνήες* (6,204/205 *ἀμοιβαίη δὲ φωνήες / ... μαχαίρη* ~ 47,129 *ἀγρονόμων πληγῆσιν ἀμοιβαίησι*; 6,209 *Ζαγρέος ... φωνήας*) and the ‘*sparagmos*’ par excellence (6,206 = 31,47 *δαϊζομένου* ~ 47,171; 175). It would seem that Icarus’ death occurs at a time and place, and in a way as if it was meant to fill a yawning gap in the relationship between Zagreus and Dionysus and that, in this respect too, Icarus serves as a foil of Dionysus.

But above all, in a poem where redemption often defies sheer reason and demands sacrifice, it seems as if Dionysus, too, had to go through the ordeal of an immortalising death, as if he had to – somehow – die a false death as a pre-supposition to his translation to heaven. Within the broader structural and conceptual frame of the epic, the Icarus episode seems primarily concerned with Dionysus. At the end of the poem, the apotheosis of Dionysus is immediately balanced by Iacchus’ birth. Not much is said of Iacchus the son of Aura, but what is actually said unmistakably recalls the conception and infancy of Dionysus, son of Semele (Collart [as n. 100], 270). The triadic scheme is Orphic in its origin (Vian 1994, 210 = 2005, 526) but the dominance over the earthly world seems to be subjected to the same unending (and mystic) process of decadence and rebirth which decisively underlies the whole epic, moving, as it does, in circles each of which is not identical with the previous one but, nonetheless, bears distinctive features thereof; to put it in Nonnus’ own words, *ἐπεὶ παλινάγρετος ἔρπων / εἰς νέον ἐκ πολιοῖο ῥέει μορφούμενος αἰών* (Dion. 3,255/256). The overall structure of the epic with its prelude about Zagreus interspersed with references to earlier struggles over cosmic rule, and its closure with Iacchus’ succession, imprint upon it a sense of timelessness envisaging an eternal background of strife, and an equal infinite future.

Suppose this is a fact: under the pretext of Icarus, Nonnus is engaged in systematic reworking of Jesus’ passion and resurrection. Are there any conclusions to be drawn about Nonnus’ religious beliefs? Far from it. His approach is defined by covert parody and a great deal of idiosyncratic, if not, at times, perverted wit.¹⁰⁷ In the Icarus episode Nonnus appears to rework or to parody Christ’s ambiguous blessing of Peter; the violent death of Jesus; His experience with wine at Cana and His (perceived) avidity for wine on the cross, in Icarus’

¹⁰⁷ W. Liebeschuetz, *Pagan Mythology in the Christian Empire*, *IJCT* 2 (1995), 205 defined Nonnus’ approach as one of “humorous detachment”, cf. id., *Decline and Fall of the Roman City*, Oxford 2001, 233/234.

burlesque soliloquy just before he expires; His slayers' joy and His disciples' sorrow; the rage and ignorance of His slayers; the resurrection of Christ and the controversy about the nature of his body then; His appearance to His disciples and the gestures involved; His participation in Levi's banquet; His command to search for disbelievers and to lead a life of absolute devotion to Him, i. e. abandoning family and property; Mary Magdalene's love, vain stubbornness and intellectual slowness; finally, the central Christian notions of imitation in death, voluntary death (manipulated to apply to hound Maera too) and the Second Coming. Some of these themes, all of scriptural origin, appear individually in the poem (e. g. in Lycurgus' passion in Dion. 21) but are only here integrated in a comprehensive and meaningful entirety. Many of these points are concerned with Christ's human nature and were attacked in especially Neoplatonic anti-Christian literature as inappropriate to a godhead. Had that literature been better preserved, one can well imagine that more affinities could be revealed. But even as things stand, this is a topic where further exploration is likely to prove rewarding. In any case, it is at least interesting to come across some of these issues, raised by Dionysus' opponents, in the *Dionysiaca*. Nonnus makes use of equivocal terms and symbolism such as 'wine', 'drunkenness', 'sleep', 'death' or 'return'. He reproduces traditional scenes but, more often than not, he alters or transposes them to serve his own scenario. His presentation of the parodied events is defined by exegetical literature we know he took into account in the *Paraphrasis*. In his travesty of the apostles' absence from Christ's passion, crudely introduced into the episode, Nonnus toys with the justifications advanced in exegetical literature to excuse their absence. As a consequence, the intrusion of such material quite often renders his narrative illogical or inconsistent. But consistency is an enemy of 'poikilia', and in Nonnus it is a question of an altogether minor priority.

As a corollary to the above analysis, it may as well be noted that where *Paraphrasis* and *Dionysiaca* intersect chronological priority appears to be firmly on the side of the *Paraphrasis*. Among the many themes and phrases shared, note, in particular, the verbal echoes of Par. 2 in the Icarus-episode; Christ's and Icarus' sweet and bitter wine; their murder due to failed recognition; their φωνῆς; the motif of desertion at passion; Icarus' burial which features verbal reminiscences from Christ's deposition in the *Paraphrasis*; the ἄφρων/ἔμφρων dichotomy; and Christ's and Icarus' εἰλαπινάζειν. This is, as far as chronology is concerned, a twin conclusion with the one elicited in Vian's exploration of the notion of μάρτυς in both works (Vian 1997, 157–160 = 2005, 580–584, cf. D. Gigli Piccardi, *Prometheus* 24 [1998], 180 n. 163).

It is also worthy of note that, whereas there is no trace of mockery of the Christian God in the *Paraphrasis*, Nonnus plays with Christian ideas under the

safe cover of the pagan gods. Whether Nonnus could be affected by the atmosphere of an era in which a law passed by emperors Theodosius II and Valentinianus III on the 17th of February 448 committed “all that Porphyry, driven by his own insanity, wrote against the pious religion of the Christians at whose possession they are” to the flames (Porph. fr. 40T Smith), or whether this is a Christian’s self-imposed limitation, cannot, unfortunately, be determined. It might be indicative, though, that Proclus’ coeval criticism of Christian doctrines operates in a similarly covert manner through ‘code-phrases’.¹⁰⁸

It is the same kind of detached wit – and this is the appropriate conclusion to this study – that gives shape to Pentheus’ and Dionysus’ mock-dialogue in Dion. 46. For Pentheus it is an overt lie that Dionysus was born from Zeus’ thigh: he could have at least claimed that he sprang from his head like Athena. Dionysus’ reply reworks Jesus’ response to Pilate: I have no need of an earthly kingdom, my home is the πατρώιος αἰθήρ, Dion. 46, 64–70:

- 65 καὶ χθονὸς εἰ κρίσις ἦεν ἢ ἀστερόεντος Ὀλύμπου,
 εἰπέ μοι εἰρομένω, τίνα φέρτερον αὐτὸς ἐνίψει
 οὐρανὸν ἐπτάζωνον ἢ ἐπταπύλου χθόνα Θήβης;
 οὐ χατέω Πενθήος ἐπιχθονίοιο μελάθρου.
 μῦνον ἐμήs κύδαινε μελισταγὲς ἄνθος ὀπάρης·
 70 μὴ ποτὸν ἀμπελόεντος ἀτιμήσης Διονύσου.

Appendicula I: Colluthus’ ‘Nachfolge’

For Rudolf Keydell, Colluthus was “wenn man von Dioskoros von Aphrodito absieht, der schlechteste Dichter der griechischen Spätzeit, den wir kennen”.¹⁰⁹ His verdict commands agreement: read the Abduction of Helen seriously and it is a disaster. Even in the Hermione scene (326–386), the most original of his poem, Colluthus is largely indebted to Nonnus’ Erigone-scene. This debt was revealed by Orsini, and won the approval of Keydell in his austere review of Orsini’s edition.¹¹⁰ The verbal echoes and the narrative affiliations are too close and too many to be coincidental. Hermione, πολύδακρυς upon presentation and throughout the episode (Orsini, ed. Colluth., XXII n. 2), has lost her

¹⁰⁸ See H. D. Saffrey, *Allusions anti-chrétiennes chez Proclus, le diadoque platonicien*, RSPH 59 (1975), 553–563 = *Recherches sur le Néoplatonisme après Plotin*, Paris 1990, 201–211; Saffrey-Segonds (as n. 104), 162 n. 7. On the tensions of the era between Church and paganism see now F. Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire. Power and Belief Under Theodosius II (408–450)*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 2006, 116–123.

¹⁰⁹ R. Keydell, *Gnomon* 47 (1975), 543 = *Kl. Schr.*, 611. Cf. E. Livrea, *Helikon* 9 (1969), 1.

¹¹⁰ P. Orsini, *Colluthos. L’enlèvement d’Hélène*, Paris 1972, XXII–XXVI, then Keydell (as n. 109), 544 = *Kl. Schr.*, 612. Cf. O. Schönberger, *Kolluthos. Raub der Helena*, Würzburg 1993, 10/11. Contra: F. Williams, *JHS* 93 (1973), 239.

mother, 330 πῆ με λιποῦσα ... ὄχετο μήτηρ ~ Nonn. Dion. 47, 196 πῆ μοι ἐμὸς γενέτης ... οἴχεται; As Erigone (47, 205–211), so Hermione is said – without prior mention – to have conducted a thorough search for her mother. There is no hill or peak that she has left unploughed, she even investigates through the leaf-age of the forest trees (356–358. 374). Her assumptions about Helen’s whereabouts, a distinguished νύμφη, are adapted from Erigone’s assumptions about Icarus’ whereabouts, a distinguished ἀλωεύς. And as Erigone sees her father in a dream vision, so does Hermione in a deceitful dream (369/370).

Two further observations can improve upon Orsini’s dossier. First, although Hermione is just told by her mother about her elopement with Paris (378. 383/384), she declines to give credit to her dream and keeps on searching for Helen, 386 μητέρα μαστεύουσα, μάτην ἐπλάζετο κούρη ~ Dion. 47, 206 ἴχνια μαστεύουσα, 211 μάτην ἀλλάγητο. There is a flow of suggestions advocating the transposition of 386 on grounds of nonsensicality: “addi enim debebat Hermionem iam desiisse matrem quaerere” as Otto Schneider put it.¹¹¹ Hermione’s attitude, however, is clearly modelled on Erigone’s confusion and incapability of comprehending the vision she has seen (47, 193f.). Erigone commences her search right after her dream. Therefore, any attempt to transpose Colluth. 386 is futile.

Secondly, Hermione’s attendants, weeping along with her, try to relieve her sorrow in 336/337 Τέκνον ὀδυρομένη, γόνον εὔνασον. ὄχετο μήτηρ, / νοστήσει· παλίνορσον (-σει παλίνορσος· v.l.) ἔτι κλαίουσα νοήσεις. The maidens suggest that Helen will come back (νοστήσει). Hermione will glimpse her not before too long, indeed while she is still weeping, which comically envisages either a very quick reappearance or a very protracted weeping. But Hermione is in a state of desperate expectation (348), Helen οὐ παλίνορσος ἰκάνει (350). This is an adaptation (even a meta-literary reworking – or is this too much for a poet of Colluthus’ stature?) of Erigone’s vain stubbornness in 47, 200 εἶπατε μυρομένη, καὶ τλήσομαι εἰσόκεν ἔλθῃ, and her expectation of her father returning παλίνορσος. But the woman who actually saw the one she was looking for παλίνορσον, while she was still weeping, is Mary Magdalene. To conclude that Colluthus reworks facets of Nonnus’ manipulation of the biblical narrative seems far-fetched. Colluthus interacts with his model through overstatement and wit.

Appendicula II: Attic birds tune in (Dion. 47, 30–33)

Λησαμένη δ’ Ἰτύλοιο καὶ ἰστοπόνου Φιλομήλης
 σύνθροος αἰολόδειρος ἀνέκλαγεν Ἄτθις ἀηδῶν,
 καὶ Ζεφύρου λάλος ὄρνις ὑπωροφίην χέε μολπήν,
 μνήστιν ὄλην Τηρήος ἀπορρίψασα θυέλλαις.

¹¹¹ O. Schneider, *Philologus* 23 (1866), 416, cited by Livrea on Colluth. 385.

In Athens, as previously in Thebes (Dion. 44, 123–129), Dionysus is welcomed by a unanimous (Fayant 2000, 9–11) χορός of citizens rejoicing at his arrival. Amidst general merriness the nightingale and the swallow, a couple of conspicuously sorrowful Attic birds, give up their perennial lament to join in the festive concert. The shift is not a small thing as a weighty literary tradition has solidified their image as mourning.¹¹² But birds have long had the charisma to communicate with gods (Plut. De soll. anim. 975a/b; Celsus ap. Orig. C. Cels. 4, 888; Porph. De abst. 3, 5, 5) and the melodious nightingale, in particular, is said to sing at the same place at Colonus in Athens where the reveller Dionysus and his maenads perform their rites (Soph. OC 670–680, cf. Accorinti 2004, 32/33). The critical observation on these lines was, however, made by L. Castiglioni,¹¹³ who drew attention to a rhetorical topos, according to which nightingales and swallows in Athens, upon a theophany, stop mourning and start singing in honour of the god: Himerius Or. 47, 3 (proconsul Basilius visits Athens at the Panathenaea, himself likened to a god [1] and his visit to a theophany [2], whereupon by nightingales is sung) ὦδὴ μὲν, οὐ θρήνος ... οὐκ ἐπὶ τῷ παιδί ... ἀλλ' ἐφ' ὕμνῳ θεῶν while swallows sing οὐ γοεράν ὦδὴν, ἀλλὰ μέλος ἡρινόν. It is certainly a striking coincidence that these same birds react in the very same manner, i.e. forgetting about their misfortunes to tune in with the god, when Apollo, in mid-summer, first arrived at Delphi to found his oracle, Himerius Or. 48, 10/11¹¹⁴ ἐπιδημοῦντος Ἀπόλλωνος ... ἄδουσι μὲν ἀηδόνες αὐτῷ ... ἄδουσι δὲ καὶ χελιδόνες καὶ τέττιγες, οὐ τὴν ἑαυτῶν τύχην τὴν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀγγέλλουσαι ἀλλὰ πάντα τὰ μέλη κατὰ θεοῦ φθεγγόμενα. In both instances living nature hails the arriving deity in view of a major event to come.

Poets as well as other intellectuals are traditionally compared to birds. Socrates, for example, is likened to a nightingale in Libanius Decl. 1, 175, 11 ἔρημον δὲ τὸ ἄστν τῆς ἐκείνου φωνῆς, ὥσπερ τινὸς ἀηδόνος and, “as philosophy is the greatest kind of music” (Pl. Phd. 61a2), in Themist. Or. 23, 295b ὦδὴ can, in informal style, denote the Iamblichian version of Neoplatonism, θεραπεύων δὲ οὐ τὴν νέαν ὦδὴν, ἀλλὰ τὴν πάτριον καὶ ἀρχαίαν τῆς Ἀκαδημίας καὶ τοῦ Λυκείου. In the preceding discussion on Dionysus’ ingress into Athens I hinted at the possibility that Nonnus adopted the aforementioned rhetorical topos to

¹¹² Cf. (e.g.) Od. 19, 518–523; Pherecyd. fr. 124 Fowler θρηνεὶ δὲ αἰεὶ ποτε τὸν Ἴγυλον; Conon FGrH 26 F 1, 31 καὶ ἄδουσι διὰ παντὸς τὰς τότε συμφοράς. See P. Monelle, Procne e Filomela. Dal mito al simbolo letterario, Bologna 2005.

¹¹³ L. Castiglioni, Decisa forficibus, 1954, 205–207, followed by I. Cazzaniga in: Miscellanea di Studi Alessandrini in memoria di A. Rostagni, Torino 1963, 632 n. 5.

¹¹⁴ The passage is supposed to paraphrase a paean by Alcaeus (fr. 307c Voigt), but Wilamowitz (Pindaros, Berlin 1922, 81 n. 2) may well be right that the details belong to ‘Asiatic’ Himerius as they are out of keeping with Alcaeus’ unadorned style.ξ

portray, in context, a facet of the impact that the all-embracing dominance of Christianity had on the historical capital of Hellenism. It is the end of an era and even Attic ‘birds’ have to change tune, abandoning the one which reminded of their sinful past. This interpretation appears to gain support from a digressive passage from Choricus’ first oration, an encomium to bishop Marcianus of Gaza delivered about a century after the Dionysiaca were written (t. a. q. 536), where birds are distinguished between pious and impious, the nightingale and cicada falling to the second class. Choricus’ oration contains an extensive description (17–76)¹¹⁵ of the church of St Sergius in Gaza inaugurated by the bishop honoured. The central apse of the newly found church, combining beauty with holiness (30), portrays Virgin Mary holding on her bosom new born Christ. The lateral apses, smaller in size, depict ideal sceneries in which feature the typical elements of the ever green trees, the overgrown vines, the mild zephyr whispering through the leafage (this one expressly drawn from Theocritus’ first idyll, Choric. 1, 32 οἶδεν ὁ Συρακούσιος ποιητής, where scholium M Θεό]κριτον λέγει) and the fresh cool water. But when it comes to birds the artist is commended for leaving the memory of fabled birds such as the nightingale and the cicada out of the holy place choosing, instead, to supplant them with other species of birds with Christian associations, prominent among which is a swarm of partridges, all solemnly keeping silent so as not to obstruct the hearing of divine things, 1, 33 (11, 8 Foerster - Richtsteig) ἀηδόνα μὲν οὖν καὶ τέττιγα, τὰς ὄρνις τῶν ποιητῶν,¹¹⁶ ἀπεδοκίμασεν εὖ ποιῶν ὁ τεχνίτης, ἵνα μὴδὲ μυθικῶν ὀρνίθων ἐν εὐσεβεῖ χωρίῳ συνεισέρχεται μνήμη· ἀντὶ δὲ τούτων πλῆθος ἑτέρων ὀρνέων καὶ περδίκων ἀγέλην φιλοτεχνήσας ἴσως ἂν καὶ μουσικὸν ὑπηχοῦσαν ἐποίησεν, εἰ μὴ πρὸς τὴν θεῖαν ἀκρόασιν ἐμπόδιον ἦν φθεγγομένη.

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¹¹⁵ Translated in English with notes by C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire* 312–1453, New York 1972, 60–72.

¹¹⁶ Foerster - Richtsteig cite for the expression Pl. Phdr. 262d (cicadas) οἱ τῶν Μουσῶν προφῆται, but context and wording point rather to Theoc. 7, 47 (poetasters) Μοισῶν ὄρνιχες (~ Call. HyDel. 252, of swans).