

REVIEW ARTICLES

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VARIETIES OF NARRATIVE IN ANTIQUITY

John Hilton

Programme in Classics, University of KwaZulu-Natal
Durban 4041, South Africa

Stelios Panayotakis, Maaïke Zimmerman and Wytse Keulen (edd.), *The Ancient Novel and Beyond*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003. Pp. xix + 489. ISBN 90-04-129995. EUR80.00.

This collection of essays, which is dedicated to Bryan Reardon in recognition of the important contribution he has made to the study of the ancient novel, is a selection of thirty out of approximately one hundred papers read at the International Conference on the Ancient Novel (ICAN) held at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands in July 2000.¹ The present book is neatly divided into three parts each consisting of ten often quite closely-paired chapters: the first part goes by the title 'The Ancient Novel in Context', the second 'The Ancient Novel in Focus', and the third 'Beyond the Ancient Novel'. In terms of the novels themselves, the emphasis falls mainly on Apuleius, who features in six chapters (this was perhaps to be expected from the hosts of the conference and the current popularity of this author). Petronius is the focus of two chapters, while Longus, Achilles Tatius, Chariton and Heliodorus are each discussed in one. There are nine general accounts of ancient fiction, two on the Alexander Romance, three on the Byzantine novel, and one each on the *Ahiqar* Romance, Plato, Lucian and Apollonius of Tyre. The current neglect of Heliodorus and Xenophon of Ephesus is shown by the fact that, according to the index to the volume, each of these authors is mentioned only three times (apart from the chapter about the influence of Heliodorus on Madame de Scudéry and Umberto Eco). In general, however (again with the notable exception of Apuleius), the contextualisation of the ancient novels, their reception in later literature, and discussion of other narrative genres are far more prominent in this bulky work than in-depth studies of the novels themselves. The editors suggest, in fact, that the next ICAN will not be an international conference on the ancient novel but rather on ancient narrative (p. xix).

¹ It is virtually impossible for one person to review this large collection of disparate pieces adequately. I therefore forego in this review discussion of a number of chapters in the collection.

Ellen Finkelpearl's chapter, 'Lucius and Aesop Gain a Voice: Apuleius *Met.* 11.1-2 and *Vita Aesopi* 7' (pp. 37-51), is largely devoted to the relationship between Isis' role in releasing Lucius from his embodiment as an ass in the novel and the part played by the same goddess in granting Aesop the power of speech in the biography of the fabulist. In giving speech both to Lucius in his asinine form and to Aesop, the mute slave, Isis endows the novel and fable with 'legitimacy' as genres (p. 40). This is an interesting metaliterary perspective on the by now well-established link between the shorter and longer forms of narrative fiction in antiquity that provides some quite fascinating perspectives on Apuleius' use of Egyptian hieroglyphic writing (*Met.* 1.1, 11.22), Egyptian religion (the Isis episode), and animal fables. Finkelpearl's second point—that there is a tension between 'two levels of language' (p. 42) the 'Apollonian', represented by Xanthus and formal Greek philosophy, and the 'Isiac' discourse, which 'does not disdain to be associated with donkeys and slaves' (p. 43), in both the *Metamorphoses* and the *Vita*—is more questionable. The discussion is of interest in view of work currently being done on the need to bring philosophy closer to literature—a proximity that the *Metamorphoses* could in many ways be thought to exemplify. However, Finkelpearl does not establish clearly what she means by 'Apollonian' and 'Isiac' discourse. She assumes that Aesop wrote 'populist fable-language' (p. 50) and that Apuleius was 'raising subliterate forms to the status of literature' (p. 50), but fables were as much the favourite literary form of the philosophical and social elite as they were of the socially dispossessed throughout antiquity (cf. Pl. *Phd.* 61c; Aesch. *Ag.* 716-36; Archil. fr. 172-81 [West]). Their application in the rhetorical practice of the second sophistic is clear from Hermogenes' *On Types* 406f., to take an example roughly contemporary with Apuleius. Fables are to be found in early wisdom literature (cf. Judges 9.8-15, for example) as well as in other traditions and it may be more helpful to consider them in origin alien to Greek culture, rather than as 'subliterary'. If that is the case then Finkelpearl's argument needs to be drastically restated.

That fables were foreign to Greek culture is suggested by the connection between the *Vita Aesopi* and Middle Eastern literature. This is the subject of Marko Marincic's contribution, 'The Grand Vizier, the Prophet, and the Satirist' (pp. 53-70). Marincic argues that the *Life of Aesop*, like the apocryphal *Tobit*, sets out 'to reduce the austere figure of the aristocratic Grand Vizier [Ahiqar] to an alternative type of a sage' (p. 55). Thus Isis' gift of speech to Aesop in the *Vita*, for example, is modelled on the conversion of Ahiqar in the oriental romance (p. 64) but with a very different outcome: unlike Lucius, Aesop remains a slave and may indulge his lust for his master's wife after his transformation (p. 68). It is this contrast that is supposed to explain the sudden change of fortune of Aesop, who hubristically rises to the status of a sage in the Babylon-Memphis episodes only to end his life ignominiously at the hands of the people of Delphi.

The relationship between philosophy and fiction is investigated by Kathryn Morgan, 'Plato's Dream: Philosophy and Fiction in the *Theaetetus*' (pp. 101-13), and Andrew Laird, 'Fiction as a Discourse of Philosophy in Lucian's *Verae Historiae*'

(pp. 115-27). Morgan begins with the 'troubling gap between Plato's practice [sc. of writing fiction] and any explicit theorizing of it' (p. 101) and proceeds to argue that dreaming in the *Theaetetus* should be taken as an 'analogue for the experience of fiction' (p. 102). The discussion centres on the long-standing problem of the relationship between dreams and reality in Greek (and indeed human) thought, complicated by the Platonic view that our 'reality' is itself unreal. This is a large and complex issue and Morgan evidently could not cover it all in her chapter, but some discussion of *Timaeus* 70e might have introduced consideration of Plato's idea of *phantasia* and fiction. There is no doubt that the use of framing narratives and fictional characters in Plato's dialogues do raise the important questions about the authority of the ideas contained within them. Laird's contribution on the other hand investigates the obverse of the relationship between philosophy and literature: the extent to which Plato's *Republic* constituted the 'principle [sic] foundation' (p. 123) of Lucian's *Veræ Historiae*. Evidence for the connection is sought in the educational value of *anesis* in the prologue (*Ver. Hist.* 1.1), the link between Plato's allegory of the cave and the wall built between the sun and moon (*Ver. Hist.* 1.19, 1.31, 1.39f.), the mention of Socrates and Plato (*Ver. Hist.* 2.17), the connection between fiction and lying (*Ver. Hist.* 1.4), the problematisation of author-narrator transitions (*Ver. Hist.* 2.28), and the slippage between authors and characters in the work. These intertexts are typical of the writers of the second sophistic, but this does not mean that Lucian's satirical squib is philosophical discourse.

Two contributions deal with narrative structure. Stephen Harrison, 'Epic Extremities: The Openings and Closures of Books in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*' (pp. 239-54), investigates how the novel 'uses many epic patterns and themes but . . . presents them in a way appropriate for its own . . . genre of Roman prose fiction' (p. 239). This study shows that Apuleius' literary openings and closures frequently and deliberately include epic time references, that they are more common in the first half of the work, and that they are sometimes significantly structurally-related (the transition between books 4 and 5 parallels that between books 5 and 11). Stephen Nimis, '*In Mediis Rebus*: Beginning Again in the Middle of the Ancient Novel' (pp. 255-69), likens the construction of fictional texts to building a wall from bricks ('thematic elements', p. 268) and mortar ('text-economic elements' such as references to composition, allusions to other genres, proleptic statements and summaries, p. 264). During the process, the author may alter the line of the plot and these 'mortar moments' (p. 256) are the subject of Nimis' investigation. In his conclusion, Nimis swaps this metaphor for the familiar one of weaving in which each thread is 'part of the design that is represented, but also exerts a force that holds the whole rug together' (p. 268). One such element occurs at the beginning of book 3 of Longus: here the narrative moves from war to peace, winter to spring, and metaphorically from death to resurrection in order to bring about narrative closure. The title of this paper promises too much, however, and the model needs to be exhaustively tested against all of the ancient novels to determine the extent to which there is such fully-articulated and comprehensive 'design' in these narratives.

Donald Lateiner's contribution, 'Tlepolemus the Spectral Spouse' (pp. 219-38), examines 'the mythical and literary . . . antecedents of the spectral return of the anxious, dead spouse, Tlepolemus' (p. 219) and how it 'provides breakneck anti-romance that once again reveals Apuleius consciously subverting, when not inverting, his Greek "models"' (p. 238). Lateiner documents some cases of ghostly spouses from epic and tragedy (but does not consider the more contemporary story of Phlegon of Tralles made famous by Goethe in his poem 'Die Braut von Korinth', for example, though this of course concerns a female revenant).² He then argues that Charite has 'thoughts and rituals of sexual union or marriage with six partners or pursuers' (p. 234) and argues that Apuleius 'consistently figures marriage negatively' (p. 235) and that 'the Charite-frame forces us to question the meaning and relevance of the inset Psyche-canvas' (p. 236). However, this argument distorts Charite's evident commitment as *uniuira* (a woman who has had only one husband) to her husband, Tlepolemus (noted on p. 230) and their romance, while it fails tragically, is not therefore necessarily 'unideal' (p. 237). Ultimately Lateiner fails to resolve the paradoxical dichotomy between complex but nevertheless idealistic romances, such as those of Psyche and Charite, and the adulterous liaisons of Pamphile and others in the novel.

Two contributions analyze literary elements included in the ancient novels. Françoise Létoublon, 'La lettre dans le roman grec ou les liaisons dangereuses' (pp. 271-88) broadly categorises the letters in the novels as official letters and love letters (letters of seduction and letters between hero and heroine) and discusses their functions of conveying information and dramatising the action. Much has already been written on epistolary novels and letters in ancient fiction and, while this study contains many insights, it often touches on points treated more fully elsewhere.³ By contrast there have only been a very few discussions of inscriptions in the ancient novels, and Erkki Sironen produces a refreshingly new perspective in her chapter, 'The Role of Inscriptions in Greco-Roman Novels' (pp. 289-300). After a glance at the use of inscriptions in the historians and other prose narratives, Sironen shows that these fictional notices are plausible, if archaic and literary; that they play an important part only in Xenophon and Apollonius of Tyre; and that they serve to identify and reunite characters in the novels (p. 290). On the negative side, the *ταινία* ('headband', not a 'waistband' [!], p. 295) of Persinna, is somewhat more than an inscription (it is in fact *ἔστιγμένην*, 'embroidered', 4.8.1), and Sironen does not include reference to the

² D. Ogden, *Greek and Roman Necromancy* (Princeton 2001) was evidently too late to be included in the discussion.

³ Besides the numerous references noted by Létoublon there is also P. A. Rosenmeyer, 'The Epistolary Novel', in J. R. Morgan and R. Stoneman (edd.), *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context* (London 1997) 146-65. An example of letters more fully dealt with by other writers is the swaddling-band embroidered by Persinna, for which see T. Whitmarsh, 'Heliodorus and the Genealogy of Hellenism', in R. Hunter (ed.), *Studies in Heliodorus* (Cambridge 1998) 93-124, esp. 118-22.

public notice of Venus offering a reward for the return of her runaway slave, Psyche (*Met.* 6.7), which takes the form of an official edict (*edicere*).

The intrusion of official documents into the novels is a form of authentication and this is the subject of the chapter by William Hansen, 'Strategies of Authentication in Ancient Popular Fiction' (pp. 301-14). Techniques such as superabundance of detail have been researched before, as has the pseudo-documentation in Photius' account of Antonius Diogenes' *Wonders Beyond Thule* and Dictys' Trojan war diary,⁴ but Hansen takes this aspect of ancient narrative further by identifying a number of devices used by these authors: the relaying of information, the establishment of a pedigree for the narrative, and the association of celebrity names with the work (pp. 306f.). He also differentiates between light pseudo-documentation (the inscriptions in Xenophon and Apollonius of Tyre) and heavy pseudo-documentation (divine revelation of the doctrine in Thessalos of Tralles' *On the Virtues of Plants*) and shows how the authors of ancient narratives differ in the degree of earnestness with which they authenticate their narratives.

Niall W. Slater, 'Spectators and Spectacle in Apuleius' (pp. 85-100), explores the 'instability' (p. 86) of the spectator in the *Metamorphoses*, and how spectators may become spectacles. The analysis focuses on the festival of laughter in book 3, but includes also the story of the robber Thrasyleon, which 'functions as a warning against ambitious role-playing' (p. 96), the attempted escape of Charite, and the performances of Lucius himself as ass in *triclinium* and amphitheatre. The novel therefore tells how Lucius 'begins as an eager spectator and ends as spectacle' (p. 100). This is a revealing study, although I was not persuaded that Lucius' progression to being an object of public scrutiny is necessarily 'more terrifying than comforting' (p. 100) in Apuleian terms in view of the fact that ancient society was rather more communal than that of the United States in the twenty-first century. The importance of the gaze is also the subject of Froma Zeitlin's contribution, 'Living Portraits and Sculpted Bodies in Chariton's Theater of Romance' (pp. 71-83). Visual elements in the romance are classified as epiphanies (for example, the epiphany of Kallirhoe's divine beauty, 4.1) and apparitions (the appearance of Chaereas at the trial of Mithridates, 5.7), sculptural representations (the golden statue of Kallirhoe, 3.6) and dream images (Dionysius' dream of his wife, 2.1). These representations 'serve as organizing elements that sustain the work's technique of doubling' or 'as imaginative signposts that clarify its structure and deepen its emotional valence' (pp. 82f.).

Violence in ancient narrative fiction is the subject of Kathryn Chew's contribution, 'The Representation of Violence in the Greek Novels and Martyr Accounts' (pp. 129-41) and that of Stelios Panayotakis, 'Three Death Scenes in *Apollonius of Tyre* (pp. 143-57). Chew discusses the reasons for violence against

⁴ Cf. J. R. Morgan, 'History, Romance, and Realism in the *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros', *CIAnt* 1 (1982) 250-60; 'Make-believe and Make Believe: The Fictionality of the Greek Novels', in C. Gill and T. P. Wiseman (edd.), *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World* (Austin 1993) esp. 193-215.

women in the novels and martyrologies and seeks her answer in sociology and a theory of sexuality, specifically the ideas of Durkheim and Butler, whose thoughts Chew paraphrases respectively as 'violence indicates social disorder' and 'women are the phalluses which men have and which they constantly fear losing control or possession of' (p. 135).⁵ The subject is vast and controversial and the importation of these recent, post-industrial revolution theories does not help the clarity or cogency of Chew's analysis. Panayotakis, on the other hand, has a much narrower focus. He simply argues that 'three passages from the anonymous romance of Apollonius share the rhetoric of violence with well known death scenes from Biblical and hagiographical texts' (p. 157).

Three papers deal with generic links. Giuseppe Zanetto, 'Archaic Iambos and Greek Novel: A Possible Connection' (pp. 317-28), finds that 'the novelists [particularly Achilles Tatius] had a direct knowledge of most of archaic iambography' (p. 327) and that 'the Greek novels . . . are cultivated texts in which hidden quotations, allusions, and veiled reminiscences play an important part' (p. 328). Judith P. Hallett, 'Resistant (and Enabling) Reading: Petronius' *Satyricon* and Latin Love Elegy' (pp. 328-43), sees *Satyricon* 16-26 as a 'resistant reading' (p. 330) of Propertius 4.8 and concludes that 'Petronius is here reinforcing traditional, conservative, patriarchal (and some might even say misogynistic) assumptions about female, and male, sexual conduct' (p. 343). Danielle van Mal-Maeder, 'La mise en scene declamatoire chez les romanciers latins' (pp. 345-55), states that Petronius and Apuleius make use of rhetoric to create intertextual, sensational, and fantastic effects within the context of the fictive universe of their novels. Gareth Schmeling's chapter, 'Myths of Person and Place: The Search for a Model for the Ancient Greek Novel' (pp. 425-42), can perhaps be added to these three studies of genre. Schmeling seeks 'another group of novels, quite unrelated to the Greek novels, which shows, however, a number of literary similarities to the Greek novels and also similarities in social institutions which help to give rise to its popularity' (p. 426). This group is found in the novels about the American South, whose female protagonists are known as Southern Belles. I found this an extremely interesting and original comparative study.

The epic character of Charite's story is demonstrated by Luca Graverini, 'The Winged Ass' (pp. 207-18), who connects the tears of Charite in her dream (*Met.* 4.27) with those of Odysseus (*Hom. Od.* 8.521-31), Medea in Apollonius Rhodius (3.656-64), and Dido (*Verg. Aen.* 4.465-68). The main interest of Graverini's contribution, however, lies in his discussion of the narrators in the novel. Graverini links the narration of the story of Cupid and Psyche by the old woman to the tales told by Aeneas in the *Aeneid* and by Demodocus in the *Odyssey* and also discusses the stories told by Diophanes (*Met.* 2.14) and Socrates (*Met.* 1.7). He concludes that there are more 'I-narrators' than heterodiegetic, omniscient narrators in the *Metamorphoses* and that, although Apuleius exploits epic intertexts, 'the physical and spiritual virtues

⁵ E. Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society* (Glencoe 1960); J. Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York 1993).

typically shown by the epic hero are replaced by more bourgeois and everyday features' (p. 218).

Wyte Keulen, 'Swordplay-Wordplay: Phraseology of Fiction in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*' (pp. 161-70), interprets Lucius' description of a sword-swallower and contortionist (*Met.* 1.4) as 'the *Metamorphoses* in miniature' or 'the novel in a nutshell' (p. 170). This claim is based on the context of the anecdote regarding belief and disbelief in magic at the beginning of the novel (with possible intertexts with Empedocles via Plutarch) and on the metaphor of words as swords enforcing persuasion (with intertexts in Apuleius and Plutarch). Neither argument appears strong enough for Keulen to go on to describe the incident as 'a visual comment on the genre of prose fiction' (p. 168), especially as the reader of this chapter is expected on these grounds to swallow the theory that Apuleius 'seems to make the reader his sceptical accomplice in observing Lucius as a ridiculous pseudo-philosopher' but he, the author, 'turns out to be the accomplice not of the reader, but of the narrator, whom he makes the mouthpiece of his deceptive literary strategy' (p. 170).

The 'polyphony of narrating voices' (p. 171) is more fully and more convincingly expounded in J. R. Morgan's chapter, 'Nymphs, Neighbours and Narrators: A Narratological Approach to Longus' (pp. 171-89), a study based on his regrettably still unpublished commentary on Longus.⁶ Morgan argues that the author of *Daphnis and Chloe* is to be distinguished from the narrator, whom the prologue reveals to be urban, superficial, lacking in understanding and conventional. Thus the novel has a Chomskyan 'surface "narrators text" and a deeper "author's text"' (p. 178). Morgan suggests that this 'textual duplicity' (p. 178) can be seen in the narrator's (as opposed to the author's) belief that cows may lose their hooves in water (1.30); in his failure to connect the images dedicated by Daphnis and Chloe at the conclusion of the novel (4.39) with the painting described in the prologue; in his restrained description of how Chloe rescues Daphnis from a pit by means of her breast-band (1.11); in his sarcastic reference to Lykainion's education of Daphnis in love (3.18); in his ignorance of the significance of the nymphs (Pitys, Syrinx and Echo) in the novel; and in his prim treatment of the cicada episode (1.26). The hidden author makes his presence felt through inclusion of details whose significance is lost on the narrator, and by 'structural symmetries and symbolisms' (p. 187). Morgan himself provides a caveat (p. 189): the author's presence may be so recessive and elusive as to become invisible.

The identity and limitations of the narrator are also the subjects of Tim Whitmarsh's 'Reading for Pleasure: Narrative, Irony, and Erotics in Achilles Tatius' (pp. 191-205), a paper that follows his recent translation of the text.⁷ Like Morgan (p. 172), Whitmarsh also draws inspiration from Conte's work on Petronius (p. 192),⁸

⁶ J. R. Morgan (ed.), *Longus, Daphnis and Chloe* (Warminster 2003).

⁷ T. Whitmarsh (tr.), *Achilles Tatius, Leucippe and Clitophon* (Oxford 2001).

⁸ G. B. Conte (tr. E. Fantham), *The Hidden Author: An Interpretation of Petronius' Satyricon* (Berkeley 1996).

but Whitmarsh focuses more on the relationship between reader and narrator than on that between author and narrator. Clitophon is a complex figure: he is at once experienced (1.2) and naive, especially in comparison with his pederastic cousin, Clinias (1.7), but the reader is 'never quite sure how much he [sc. Clitophon] knows' (p. 196). Clitophon shows himself at times to be not as naive as he seems, particularly in his use of erotic metaphor (1.16) and in respect of his own not inconsiderable sexual experience (2.37). Likewise, Clinias' behaviour is not always mature and self-controlled (1.12-14). Both Clitophon and Clinias are in fact often remarkably of a kind: for example, Clitophon discourses on the physical impact of beauty on the soul (1.4); this passage should be read together with Clinias' very similar pronouncement (1.9). Thus both Clitophon and Clinias are ironised and Achilles creates considerable space for the novelised reader to enjoy the act of reading 'this wonderful, narratologically opulent, and self-consciously readerly text' (p. 205). To me, this chapter is the highlight of the collection.

This is a very large collection of articles on the ancient novel; there are some brilliant and inspirational chapters and new reputations have clearly been made. The pairing of contributions (noted in this review) gives the book an intriguing, dialectical character. Taken as a whole, this volume demonstrates that scholarship on the ancient narrative is strongly debated and continues to grow in new and fascinating directions.

ON THE DIVINITY OF THE ROMAN EMPEROR ONCE MORE

David Wardle

University of Cape Town

Cape Town 7700, South Africa

Ittai Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Pp. xvii + 398. ISBN 0-19-815275-2. GBP55.

The long-awaited appearance of Gradel's DPhil thesis in published form provides an excellent opportunity to discuss the phenomenon of ruler cult in the early Roman empire and the controversial theses that Gradel advances.¹ The study of Greco-

¹ The thesis was passed in 1995 and the transformation into a book was essentially completed by early 1998, although the preface dates from April 2002 and publication followed later in the year. Although Gradel says he has taken account of later scholarship, only one item appears in the bibliography: G. Camodeca, *Tabulae Pompeianae Sulpiciorum: Edizione critica dell'archivio puteolano dei Sulpicii* (Rome 1999). He fails therefore to take account of M. Bergmann, *Die Strahlen der Herrscher: Theomorphes Herrscherbild und politische Symbolik im Hellenismus und in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz 1998), M. Clauss, *Kaiser und Gott: Herrscherkult im römischen Reich* (Stuttgart 1998) and D. Feeney, *Literature and Religion at Rome: Cultures, Contexts, and Beliefs* (Cambridge 1998) of the major monographs published in 1998. There are also hints that Gradel has not