# Introduction

The theme of the present volume, 'Readers and Writers in the Ancient Novel,' gives the contributors to this book the freedom (intended by the organizers) to use their skills to tease out within the works of the genre new perspectives on readers and writers. While a large numbers of publications exist which deal with readers and writers *of* the ancient novel, very few explorations have been made about readers and writers *in* the ancient novel. Publishing the papers of RICAN 4 should go some way to correct that imbalance. The lively discussion of the papers in the academic setting at the University of Crete remains a treasure only in the memory of those at the sessions, and of course cannot be recounted here, but hints of those discussions surface in the changes made to the papers orally delivered in 2007 and printed in 2009.

The continued lively world-wide interest in the ancient novel and ever increasing academic research into all areas of the ancient novels (from the rise of the genre, its affiliation with later Jewish and Christian narratives, its intrinsic merit as literature, and its use today in modern media) were recently demonstrated once again at the hugely popular 4th International Conference on the Ancient Novel (ICAN 4 = ICAN 2008) in Lisbon. The RICAN conferences, on the other hand, are just as intense, but more manageable and personal.

David Konstan begins his essay 'The Active Reader and the Ancient Novel' by explaining what he means by 'active', and how such a reader is different from a reader of today. He quotes I. Watt (1957) on a description of modern readers: '… ceasing to be conscious of the printed page … we surrender ourselves entirely to the world of illusion which the printed novel describes … we are usually alone when we read …', whereas in the ancient world reading was often a public and oral performance, and readers probably dealt with ancient novels as they dealt with elite literature such as Virgil's *Aeneid*, but they did not lose themselves entirely in the 'world of illusion'. Beginning in school students in the ancient world were encouraged to engage intensively with texts, actively and dialogically, to help to create the text, which the ancient writer might intentionally leave incomplete so that the reader could engage actively and out loud with the text. Among exam-

ples from several ancient novels of various kinds of reading Konstan explains that many of the riddles and puzzles in the *Historia Apollonii* make not only for a good story but 'provoke the competitive intervention' of the readers/listeners to answer the various riddles as soon as they are posed, since the reader of *Historia Apollonii* 2, e.g., knows more than the questioning nurse who receives riddles for answers.

In 'Dialogues between Readers and Writers in Lucian's *Verae Historiae*', Marília Futre Pinheiro begins by laying a theoretical foundation for her study in Bakhtin's work on the dialogic imagination. The object of her paper is to analyze the space, the interface, between the writer Lucian who stresses that his work is a deliberate lie and then that he (mis)uses his many sources and the reader who probably has a hard time disbelieving an autodiegetic narrator: 'Every act of taking in the message of a discourse presupposes a response. The enunciation is a complex and polymorphous phenomenon, characterised in our view by the remote and almost imperceptible resonance of the interchange between the speaker and the listener. It is in this interchange that the dialogic inter-relation between the two participants in the verbal process takes place'. She stresses the fact that she wishes to read the *Verae Historiae* as an 'interactive text'. Lucian puts forward characters and situations to which the reader might react in many ways: authors and characters from earlier literature and history become re-used actors in Lucian's *Verae Historiae*; they encounter Lucian in his own work, and Lucian enjoys playing with them, as he reinvents them. Literary tradition becomes a playground but also a stage wardrobe from which Lucian takes costumed characters and 'subverts' their original appearances. Lucian seems to subvert serious matter and style by encasing his un-solemn content in a solemn form.

In 'Divide and Rule: Segmenting *Callirhoe* and Related Works', Tim Whitmarsh considers the implications for the narrative of the novel and for its readers, if as seems probable, it was composed for a book and not for oral performance. The narrative's medium or perhaps textuality encourages Whitmarsh to focus on the spatial nature of the novel as narrative in the process of creation, but one with eventual form in space as a novel. Because the finished book is an object, Whitmarsh examines how it was constructed by looking at its division into books (a unit of space) and how the reader is manipulated to respond to the order imposed by the author: 'This sense that book divisions stimulate in the reader a feeling of gradual mastery over the text will be [my] central theme …' Although he looks at many novelists and historians, Whitmarsh uses Chariton as a kind of base-text. After noting the fluidity of Books 1-4, he concludes that Books 5-8 establish a thematic unity

and progression: Books 5 and 8 both begin with a recapitulation: the one in 5 marks also the division between the first half and the second (note also the importance of Book 5 in Achilles Tatius' Book 5 of 8); the one in 8 marks a turning point from a storm of troubles to one of legitimacy leading to a happy ending. Such segmentation shows the author's firm grip on the process of his narrative. Whitmarsh also notes that as in other authors (e.g., Herodotus, Xenophon of Athens, Achilles Tatius, Philostratus) there is a general geographical unity to each of the books in Chariton: 'the geographical frontier serves as a spatial analogue for the book division'. Chariton 8.1.4 calls Book 8 the 'final book', and Whitmarsh adds that it is also the 'final word on the text'. See also Bowie's and Hunter's essays for parallel studies.

The novelist understands that most people have a natural *polypragmosyne* for the secrets or hidden deeds of others, and he conspires with the reader to suppress the mundane and assemble a series of events which he knows will appeal to the natural curiosity for that which is more or less unusual, inexplicable, indecent, or embarrassing. In 'The Curious Incident … : *polypragmosyne* and the Ancient Novel', Richard Hunter overlays schemes of a variety of texts (Petronius, Plutarch *de Curios*., Chariton, Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, Achilles Tatius) on the *Life of Aesop*, particularly on Xanthos' statements that no one can lack curiosity. Like characters in the *Life of Aesop* who poke their noses into everything, Encolpius is pathologically curious about Trimalchio, his clothes, wife, friends, the competency of his cooks, and his treatment of slaves – but in particular everything that is new to himself. Hunter adduces Plutarch *de Curios*. 518a which provides a list of subjects about which people are curious (seductions, adultery, lawsuits), and then compares it with Chariton's remarks at the beginning of Book 8: he will set aside all discussions of slavery and lawsuits and focus on lawful love and marriage, i.e. subjects of no interest to the *curiosi*. While earlier in *Callirhoe* there were many episodes of life's evils, Chariton now renounces any continuation of such (fascinating) evils, and by so doing offers us a happy ending. Only by ceasing to engage the reader with misfortunes of others can Chariton re-focus his story and bring it to any kind of an end which dampens further curiosity. See also the essay by Whitmarsh.

Niall Slater, 'Reading Inscription in the Ancient Novel,' discusses the role inscriptions play in Petronius, Xenophon, the *Alexander Romance*, Iamblichus, Heliodorus, and the *Historia Apollonii*, and concludes that inscriptions represent a polyphony of data used in ingenious ways by inventive writers. He examines the 7 (or so) inscriptions in the *Cena* and concludes that each one probably has meanings/intentions at several levels but that

underlying each is always a need to 'control the reading process'. An irony here is that readers have somehow to be tempted into reading inscriptions (the message): what writers of inscriptions think important might not be transferred to readers. In Xenophon he inspects several inscriptions erected in a temple which serve as aids to recognition, but observes that it is difficult to know if they are intended to be private or public (though in a public space), and then at one sepulchral epigram (3.2) which in construction, intent, and impact on the reader belies the label of 'unsophisticated' usually attached to its author, Xenophon. After reviewing inscriptions in the *Alexander Romance*, Iamblichus, and an embroidered text of Heliodorus, in all of which it is difficult/impossible to ascertain whether the writer or reader controls the important elements of the inscription, Slater concludes with a study of the inscriptions in the *Historia Apollonii* which represent the only public inscriptions in the ancient novels.

What does something said, repeated and repeated, look like – when written in prose? What is the reader meant to make of text, after it has been adjusted by the requirements of prose, author, editor, and translator? Prose pieces which are meant to be private, even secret, or limited to a few people, often have a public face, and prose pieces opened to the public are really embarrassingly private. These are some of the issues discussed around 3 texts (a letter in Chariton, a story within a story in Heliodorus, and an ekphrasis in Achilles Tatius) in 'Cite and Sound: the Prosaics of Quotation in the Ancient Novel' by Stephen Nimis. Once a letter leaves the hands of the writer, its future and fortune, like the report of a spy to his masters, are subjected to the kind of misdirection from which thrillers arise. In *Callirhoe* Chaereas' letter to Callirhoe is explained by a cover-letter from Mithridates and all of that by another letter, but the recipient of the letter is Dionysius, the one person who should not have read it (according to the writer), and whose reaction is described in his utterance or quotation of the first 3 words of Chaereas' original letter and by a short Homeric tag now 'prosified'. How is this all rendered on a page of prose? Nimis follows this with Knemon's tale from Heliodorus and the picture of Philomela and Prokne in Achilles Tatius.

In 'Eumolpus the Poet' Warren Smith argues that Eumolpus is the most important character in the second half of the *Satyrica*, because he sets the mood and in general controls events. Smith compares the role of Eumolpus with those of the bards Phemius and Demodocus in the *Odyssey*. Then, too, Eumolpus in various ways might be compared with Nero: poet, singer, performer of sex acts in public. Petronius through Eumolpus might be parody-

ing the Greek *Tabula* of Pseudo-Cebes of Thebes, since both comment on the meaning of figures in painting.

After analyzing the salient features of Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis*, emphasizing those literary forms and allusions (Virgil and Homer) which he will use later, Michael Paschalis in 'Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis* and Petronius' *Satyricon*' also dissects the *Apocolocyntosis* as a Menippean Satire, as defined by Bakhtin (events take place on 3 levels: Olympus, earth, the underworld). Paschalis notes unique features of Claudius in the Menippean *Apocolocyntosis*: Claudius is not an observer of the action but a dead character involved in the action at 3 levels, and, once in the underworld, stays there. Though the *Apocolocyntosis* uses the *Odyssey* as an intertext, Paschalis points out how the world of the *Apocolocyntosis* is an inverted *Odyssey*. The *Satyricon* also has many similarities to the *Apocolocyntosis* (they are often printed together in Latin editions and translations), but Paschalis discusses some elements unnoticed before: similarities consciously drawn between Claudius and Encolpius, and the interplay of fiction, history, and juridical language between the *Apocolocyntosis* and the *Satyricon*. The journeys of Encolpius like those of Claudius imitate intertextually journeys of Hercules, Odysseus, and Aeneas – all 4 descend into the underworld but only Claudius is already dead and only he remains there. Claudius is the odd man out, or viewed within an analogy, is inverted. Paschalis also compares Claudius' arbitrary administration of justice and the arbitrary gathering of evidence about Claudius' death or ascension from one witness who turns out to be the superintendent of the Appian Way, with Eumolpus' invocation of the best literary *testes* (118) to support his approach to epic within the larger structure of his simultaneous *testamentum* fraud on the *captatores* in Croton.

In 'The Uses of Bookishness' Ewen Bowie focuses on the tension/opposites between orality and written text (the way in which the reader obtains the story) in Antonius Diogenes and Longus, but he manages to include in this study of textuality (their status as books to be read) the novels of Xenophon, Achilles Tatius, and Chariton. Though the novel of Antonius Diogenes survives only in the summary of Photius and though the format is difficult because it is presented as a succession of first-person narratives, one within the other like a set of Russian dolls, Bowie is still able to demonstrate that most of the dolls/narrators are using or producing written texts. Bowie adduces two recently published papyri (*P. Oxy.* 4760, 4761) which mention the 'bag of books' discussed in Antonius Diogenes (110a16-17) and connects recent papyri with ancient novels. Bowie concludes that 'Both Antonius Diogenes and Longus present their narratives in ways that draw atten-

tion to the differences between oral story-telling and the writing down of texts to be read'. For more on Antonius Diogenes, see the essays by Hunter, Morgan, and Whitmarsh in this volume.

Though *Incredible Things beyond Thule* is no longer extant, and almost everything which we know about it comes from the 9th century Byzantine patriarch Photius who summarizes it in Cod. 166, yet there is a fascination emanating from this summary which has attracted the attention of several other contributors to this volume (Bowie, Hunter, Whitmarsh). J.R. Morgan in 'Readers writing Readers, and Writers reading Writers: Reflections of Antonius Diogenes' focuses on the summary – rather I should say that like a pathologist he dissects the summary, or, as it were, peels off one layer at a time (or one narrator) and then the next, until he gets to the core, or he opens one Russian doll after another until he arrives at the last and the prize. In a series (A-I) of dissections of Photius' summary, Morgan itemizes everything we know about how *Incredible Things* went from an intricate pattern of verbal communications to an even more intricate one of texts. The original novel of 24 books which Photius read, perhaps began life according to Antonius Diogenes' history of the text as something short, which was reduced possibly to something as brief as one page, and then re-worked, parts being added, until Antonius re-assembled it into 24 books. Morgan speculates that the inspiration behind *Incredible* ('implausible truths') *Things* might be related in some fashion to Lucian's *True Histories*: Antonius calls attention to his own narrative's lack of truthfulness by selecting sources known to be unreliable or fiction; he then re-constructs a work of fiction from earlier writers, and pokes 'fun at the untruthfulness [and] exploring the limits of plausible fiction'.

In 'The Author of the *Alexander Romance*' Richard Stoneman poses questions not only about the kind of author who might have written the *Alexander Romance* but also about the work within the framework of the genre of the novel. After or near Alexander's death there were written a series of *encomia* for him, some more historical than others, but what has survived as the *Alexander Romance* is much better known than anything resembling a history, even though it is only a collection of various literary forms added to the core story over the years: letters, diatribes, sections of prosimetrum, choliambics associated with the Cynics, Palladius *On the Brahmans*, and the *Death and Will of Alexander*. Hägg (1987) argues that it is not an historical novel but rather a *vita* or a romantized *bios*. Stoneman also points to many shared comic motifs/ideas among the *Alexander Romance*, the *Life of Aesop*, Cynic diatribes, utopias, and the *Apocryphal Acts*. To make the *Alexander*

*Romance* even harder to understand, there is a clear layer of Egyptian influence permeating the work, which perhaps was added to please a Ptolemaic patron and create a firmer basis for the Ptolemies as pharaohs of Egypt.

Diktys of Crete's *Ephemeris*, an eye-witness account in Punic of the Trojan War, now lost, but a copy reportedly found in his tomb in Crete and written in Greek in the late 1st century AD, now extant only in a 4th century Latin translation by Septimius, is perhaps not a novel, perhaps a fringe-novel if the fringe is broad enough, but more likely a work of the 'new mythology', as Ken Dowden terms it. In whatever genre it survives, it is, however, charmingly bogus – and hence Dowden's title for his paper, 'Reading Diktys: the Discrete Charm of Bogosity'. Like Merkle (1996) Dowden wants to show that Diktys is not a writer of little literary merit, categorized with novelists of more merit, but rather a mythographer who chose his stylistic register carefully and made his work immediately accessible to an audience of the late 1st century. Though at one level a kind of historian, Diktys does not misrepresent history but rather invents something for the new mythography, a 'ludic *verismo* … an enjoyment of the game of realism, a reconstruction of the history that might have been …' Dowden concludes by suggesting that Diktys and Antonios Diogenes share the same learned environment which fosters incredible things lost in history but made to live in mythology.

While Apuleius in the *Metamorphoses* (e.g., 9.13.4) very openly alludes to Lucius' voyages as if they were the kind experienced by Odysseus (e.g., *Od*. 1.3), and these make the *Odyssey* an important intertext for the *Metamorphoses*, Stephen Harrison changes our focus a bit and writes on the use Apuleius in the *Metamorphoses* makes of the *Iliad* in his paper, 'Apuleius and Homer: Some Traces of the *Iliad* in the *Metamorphoses*'. As Harrison notes, the allusions to the *Iliad* in Apuleius' overall treatment of epic in the *Metamorphoses* are so skillfully intertextualized that Apuleius is surely writing for a very learned audience. In a section entitled 'Iliadic divine colour in "Cupid and Psyche"', Harrison makes a particularly telling argument that *Iliad* 5.719-32 (plus 5.778-9) is a source text for *Metamorphoses* 6.6.1-4, and that *Iliad* 1.493-530 (plus 1.528) and *Iliad* 5.357-62 (plus 24.332-9) are source texts for *Metamorphoses* 6.7-8. Through these and other allusions Harrison regularly reminds his reader that the intense and serious scenes from the *Iliad* are used by Apuleius in less elevated contexts. He concludes, however, that ' … the sophisticated nature of the intertextuality involved … shows yet again the rich and complex nature of the literary texture of Apuleius' novel'.

In his ‘No Success like Failure: the Task of the Translator in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*’, Richard Fletcher discusses ‘Apuleius the translator’ of the Lucius of Patrae-*Onos*-*Metamophoses* as well as Apuleius’ portrait of Lucius, the narrator and translator of the *Metamorphoses*. After a discourse on whether the art of the translator (from any language) is high or low or whether the reader of a translation should be taken into account by the translator, Fletcher turns his attention to Lucius who presents the reader with an account of his earlier life as an ass (a life lived in Greek language) recounted in his recently adopted Latin language. Fletcher notes that at various places Lucius points out that Latin (rather than Greek?) is used for some purpose (oracle at 4.32; ignorant farmer at 9.39). When Lucius the ass becomes frustrated by his inability to comment in any language on the scene before himself (3.29; 7.3; 8.29), in what language was he thinking or trying to form words? Latin. Is the point being laid out by Lucius (or Apuleius) that he is translating from Greek? Fletcher also looks at *Metamorphoses* 11.16-17 in which Lucius leaves 2 Greek terms (*pastophori* and *ploiaphesia*) untranslated and later gives the contemporary reader a gentle reminder that he should not ‘too readily conflate narratological and authorial voices’.

In a jointly authored piece in which the two halves actually do make a whole, Luca Graverini and Wytse Keulen join forces in ‘Roman Fiction and its Audience: Seriocomic Assertions of Authority’, and illustrate how various authors by disparaging their own works as something like juvenile (seriocomic), entertain their readers with fictions which are neither *dulce* at the cost of *utile* nor so narrowly Greek that Roman readers might sacrifice their Roman identity by enjoying them. Graverini discusses the intersection between the readers of Phaedrus and Apuleius and the novelists themselves, who are concerned about the low literary status of the fable (*nenia*) or novel (*anilis fabula*) and notes that just as Horace might equate the playful image of a ‘child’s game’ with a path leading the reader toward a serious inquiry of values, so for Phaedrus and Apuleius who define their writings as a child’s game, the meaning behind their statements is to connect them to the self-ironic tradition of Horace. In Keulen’s part of the essay he examines the other side of the coin, as it were, from Graverini: serious works are disguised as trifles: ‘Both Gellius and Apuleius create a kind of literary playground, in which the Roman reader is allowed to enjoy and pursue Greek culture, but is at the same time challenged to position himself as a Roman, reflecting on his Roman identity in terms of a healthy, ironical distance from the pleasures and enticements of Greece’.

In her essay '"Food for Thought" for Readers of Apuleius' *The Golden Ass*', Maaike Zimmerman tackles some of the perennial problems surrounding both Apuleius and his *The Golden Ass* and offers some new syntheses and compromises for readers in the early 21st century. The framework for her investigation is rightly Martindale's (1993) 'chain of receptions', because she assembles a succession of links through time which in fact constitutes a chain. By 1500 Filippo Beroaldo had offered allegorical interpretations (which are based on a biographical approach) of the complete *The Golden Ass*, some of which remain viable to this day (perhaps more than is at first apparent), some of which have been modified, and some of which rejected in our more empirical age of German scholarship, which questions any serious content in the novel, criticizes the novel's lack of unity, and dismisses allegorical interpretations as unworthy. This 'new' German link in the chain casts light on other link-makers like Perry (1967, Book 11 does not fit), Winkler (1985, the novel is a mystery to be solved), Harrison (2002, the novel is not an allegory but a complex and allusive text), and Schlam (1992, the novel is not pure allegory but has allegorical moments). Zimmerman holds that the link of allegorical moments envisaged by Schlam might be the most elucidative in the current chain of interpretations. In a beautiful Appendix Zimmerman prints 33 woodcuts which accompanied the 1510 edition of Beroaldo's commentary and adds a selection of 18 (from the more than 60) woodcuts from the 1518 Italian translation of *The Golden Ass* by Boiardo. The woodcuts open up new areas of interpretation.

The problems discussed in the paper 'To Reason and to Marvel: Images of the Reader in the *Life of Apollonius*' by Jean-Philippe Guez center on the reader: is he to come to the work believing that it is fact or fiction (or some kind of mixture)? Secondly, is the Narrator different from Philostratus, and does the Narrator expect the reader to understand the 'Memoirs of Damis' as authentic or as a fictional device? Interpretive cooperation by the reader is needed to approach this hybrid 'truthful fiction'. Guez has determined that he will obtain the best results if he examines the text for embedded readers: (To Reason) an active, intellectual reading and/or (To Marvel) a passive emotional reading. The first kind of reader is the Narrator who in the beginning privileges autopsy, reading direct sources, and holds an independent judgment. Both the Narrator and Apollonius (one and the same?) ask themselves at every turn whether they can believe what they read/hear, and if possible they check out the sources. The second kind of reader is the audience which is 'amazed at' Apollonius the 'miracle-worker' who speaks like an oracle (this arises from his status as a magician). Apollonius' recep-

tion into a city by its inhabitants is strangely reminiscent of that of Jesus. The reader must be at once intellectual and emotional, and have the passion of youth and the caution of old age. The demands on the reader are almost impossible to achieve.

Can the *Confessions* of Augustine, which are regarded by some as representing a kind of reality, be studied and compared with the ancient novels, which are fiction? This among other questions are asked and answered by Vincent Hunink in his paper 'Hating Homer, Fighting Virgil: Books in Augustine's *Confessions*', who compares certain features/motifs of the *Confessions* with those of the ancient novel. Like Petronius and Apuleius, Augustine offers a first-person narrative with a youthful protagonist, a model notoriously subjective, a story full of travel (some marked suspense), confusion over what the literary genre of the work is, some erotic elements (i.e., something to confess), something like *Scheintod*, a story told in chronological order but with digressions and inner stories. For Augustine the reconstruction of his life begins like Tristram Shandy's in his mother's womb, and like Paul he confesses to sins in his early life which mark the contrast to his later rebirth. Like all boys in good Public Schools he was beaten; he hated elementary Latin and Greek literature but loved Latin literature, especially Virgil (Dido), from which in later life he tried to distance himself (as well as from assorted concubines and at least one love-child). Augustine in the end judges Homer and Virgil to be bad because untrue, but the lives of saints (unexamined fiction in imitation of ancient novels) like the *Vita Antonii* transform Augustine's life: reading books becomes very important for Augustine, changes his life, and then books are used by him to change the lives of others.

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