religious developments common to Christianity and paganism in late antiquity. But he pays less attention to the rôle of the *Recognitions* in the development of Christian fiction: the novel represents an intermediate stage between the various apostolic *Acts* composed in the second century, and the saints' lives whose popularity expanded so quickly in the fourth. V.'s work would make a good basis for investigating this development. Another starting point for further analysis is V.'s account of the novel's representation of the relationship between pagan culture and Christian education. It might now be asked not only what part fiction played in representing Christian analyses of classical culture, but what kind of rôle fiction had in the propagation of the Christian culture which was developing in the third and fourth centuries.

This book is interesting, suggestive, and fills an obvious gap in recent scholarship. Nobody interested in the ancient novel or pre-Constantinian Christianity should overlook it.

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THE LAST 'GRONINGEN COLLOQUIUM'

H. Hofmann, M. Zimmerman (edd.): *Groningen Colloquia on the Novel. Volume IX*. Pp. xi + 240. Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998. Paper. ISBN: 90-6980-122-1.

This is the last of the series of *Groningen Colloquia on the Novel* before its metamorphosis into the electronic journal *Ancient Narrative* following the major conference on the ancient novel held at Groningen in 2000. Its twelve papers are typical of the series as a whole: the innovative and the traditional, the central and the peripheral, the broadly sweeping and the painstakingly detailed rub shoulders in these pages; and space is found for young and unfamiliar scholars, as well as a few of the usual suspects.

Some recurrent concerns are manifest, notably the theatre, theatricality, and the novel's intertextual relationships with specific dramatic texts. Sophie Couraud Lalanne's 'Théatralité et dramatisation rituelle dans le roman grec' interprets theatrical presentation as highlighting scenes which constitute the novel plot as a rite of passage, particularly associated (in contrast to real initiation rituals) with the female characters. Jim Pletcher in 'Euripides in Heliodoros' *Aithiopika* 7–8' (deriving from a fine but unpublished St Andrews thesis) plots the complex intertextuality of the Arsake episode. Regine May's 'Köche und Parasit. Elemente der Komödie in den *Metamorphosen* des Apuleius' examines Apuleius' use and playful inversion of stock characters from the comic stage in the penultimate book of his novel, while Vincent Hunink ('Comedy in Apuleius' *Apology*'), accepting that there is some judicial reality behind the speech, analyses Apuleius' use of comic stereotypes and clichés as part of his rhetorical armoury.

A cluster of papers on early Christian 'fiction' comes from across the frontier between classics and theology, and suggests that scholars on both sides of the divide still have much to teach each other. Pieter Lalleman ('The Canonical and Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles') resists Richard Pervo's classification of *Acts* as fiction, and traces the continuities between the Luke-Acts and the more novelistic New Testament apocrypha. Ton Hilhorst ('Erotic Elements in the *Shepherd* of Hermas') identifies three motifs whose incompatibility with their context seems to betray an origin in romance. The widest ranging and most provocative of these papers is Jan Bremmer's

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'The Novel and the Apocryphal Acts: Place, Time and Readership', which advances several controversial ideas; for instance, that lexical correspondences between the novels and the earliest apocryphal Acts indicate a shared link with the area of Aphrodisias; or that evidence for the readership of the apocryphal Acts suggests that women may after all have formed a significant if not predominant part of the intended readership of the novels too.

Issues of readership are also broached in Antonio Stramaglia's 'II soppranaturale nella narrativa Greco-latina: testimonianze papirologiche', a *parergon* of his important collection *Res inauditae, incredulae. Storie di fantasmi nel mondo greco-latino* (Bari, 1999). S.'s line in palmary re-examination of fragmentary texts is familiar to specialists; here he treats five fictional papyri in which the supernatural plays a prominent rôle. An important conclusion suggests that the disappearance of this sub-genre may be only partly the responsibility of Christian copyists; the signs are that most of this material was already lost before the Byzantine period. Stelios Panayotakis's 'On Wine and Nightmares: Apul. *Met*. 1.18' also deals with the spooky: P argues that in Aristomenes' tale of the murder of his friend Socrates by witches, Apuleius plays with medical material on the effects of drinking too much so as to offer the reader a range of possibilities of interpreting (or, as it turns out, misinterpreting) the tale—a significant enrichment of our understanding of a few pages. Apuleius' inset tales also feature in Stephen Harrison's 'The Milesian Tales and the Roman Novel', a review of the evidence for Aristeides and his Roman imitator Sisenna, concluding that Aristeides' *Milesiaka* was formally a travel narrative by a visitor to Miletos, framing a series of amusing and scabrous stories by the locals. The apparent formal legacy in both Petronius and Apuleius is obvious.

In his paper 'The Social Dimensions of Gladiatorial Combat in Petronius' *Cena Trimalchionis*', Marc Kleijwegt offers reinterpretations of the figures of Echion and Trimalchio himself, not as reflecting the reality of rich freedmen but as literary characterizations. Echion emerges as a newcomer to the urban environment, eager to project himself as on intimate terms with local dignitaries but numb to the nuances of local politics, while Trimalchio is a double outsider, severed from his own cultural heritage and forever debarred from entering the Roman municipal élite with which he is so fascinated. His social ambiguity is imaged in his enthusiasm for the gladiator Petraites, controversially interpreted as a citizen who volunteered for gladiatorial service. The final piece in this collection is Betine van Zyl Smit's 'The Story of Candaules, his Wife and Gyges: Love and Power in Ancient and Modern Literature', which fascinatingly but all too briefly traces the Herodotean and Platonic hypotexts through a series of reworkings from La Fontaine to Ondaatje.

The Groningen Colloquia have played an important part in the development of ancient fiction studies; the diversity of theme and approach and the uniformly high quality of the papers presented here make this volume a worthy epitaph to the enterprise.

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A NEW SURVEY OF NEOPLATONISM

F. ROMANO: *Il neoplatonismo*. Pp. 204. Rome: Carocci editore, 1998. Paper, L. 29,000. ISBN: 88-430-1166-9.

The last book-length survey on Neoplatonic philosophy, R. T. Wallis's *Neoplatonism*,

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