Conversion of St Paul. He stresses (I would not say noncontroversially) the rôle of ideology in determining salient inter- and intratexts of each. Carole Newlands's text, the stop–start, done–undone *Fasti*, is made to order for this kind of analysis, and she persuasively traces out implications of Ino's ambivalent appearances in the poem in the (political) context of Livia's cult of Concordia. Another Latin poet, Lucretius, occupies Duncan Kennedy in the contribution that fits least well into this collection. Only 'intratextual' at a stretch, K. meditates on the problem of textual representation of the universe, making the ineffable comprehensible, and the rôle of personifying imagery in that project. Despite the ill fit with its companion pieces, this is an intriguing essay that rewards attention, and to the degree that it highlights the 'irony' inherent in utilizing the animate to conceptualize the inanimate, it neatly introduces the more explicitly irony-centred pieces of Jon Hesk and Matthew Fox. Hesk picks up Laird's stress on interpretive communities, determining here both significant intratextual relations in Aristophanes and their ironic and revisionary potential, while Fox, going back to Bakhtin and Kristeva, explores ironic rhetorical tensions in Cicero's *De Republica*, composed as it is of both literary dialogue and monologic prologue. In both cases, 'irony' comes to mean considerably more than it usually does; good reads. John Henderson's 'Life and Soul of the Party' (on Plato's *Symposium*) is, no surprise, just that. It is a typical gotta-read-every-sentence-twice performance, but also conscientiously 'intratextual' in approach, looking closely at the narrative/inductive/dramatic framing and linkages rather than the usually featured speeches. The discursive distance Plato establishes between reader and Socrates is an old topic, but I have not seen it approached before with such sharp interrogation.

Morales' 'Endtext', answering Sharrock's introduction and suturing the book together with neat intratextual (beginning–middle–endtext) conventionality, offers a further resuming take on these essays. She reiterates the observation that intratextuality is no 'grand theory', but 'a property of texts where the internal design, structure, and partition of the text are particularly paraded, or where the reader shows [quoting Sharrock] "an explicit awareness of the process of dividing and rejoining in the act of reading" ' (p. 326). One could quibble; but the term is undeniably useful, as these fascinating essays have shown. And Morales points out what they in their very different ways have further demonstrated: that revisionary attention to literary infrastructure, intratextuality, need be no craven retreat to New Critical habits but something altogether more of our critical moment. For that alone—though there is much more in the intraspective details—this book is a valuable contribution to literary studies.

The University of Missouri D. M. HOOLEY

EPISTOLARY FICTIONS

P. A. ROSENMEYER: *Ancient Epistolary Fictions: The Letter in Greek Literature.* Pp. x + 370. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. cased, £45. ISBN: 0-521-80004-8.

The epistolary exchange was exploited as a narrative device in the novel already at the dawn of the modern era. Even if the genre can nowadays be perceived as somewhat out of fashion, it will probably not be long before we can read an epistolary novel based on the electronic media; writers of film scripts have already started to explore—and to exploit—the new tools just a few decades after their invention. Ancient

© Oxford University Press, 2002

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/52.1.32 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Greek authors were more cautious in using 'mail' as an artistic device, according to Rosenmeyer's latest book, if the first entirely 'epistolary novel' can only be dated to the first century C.E. However, as soon as the Muse learned to write she also began to inspire the complex use of letters in narrative, so that, for the first time in the recorded history of Greek literature, an important part of the Bellerophon episode in Book 6 of the *Iliad* is conveyed by a deceitful letter.

A fictional letter can perform a static rôle, as a mere report of events, or a kinetic rôle, instigating action in a play or a novel. The declared intention of R.'s book is not to focus on classification or on a comprehensive inventory of epistolary *topoi*, but instead to emphasize the rôle assigned by Greek authors to fictional letters in a dramatic or narrative representation of a story. Several key threads run throughout this study. One is the issue of verisimilitude, either in the use of epistolary *formulae* or in the sender's representation of the self. Going beyond the rigid early twentieth-century distiction between 'real letter' and 'literary epistle', R. notices that 'whenever one writes a letter, one automatically constructs . . . a version of the truth'. If so, then a fictional letter offers its construction of reality to two audiences: the actual (often fictitious) addressee and the general public, who will read or listen to the contents of the letter.

The second *Leitmotiv* is the connection between a written text and deception, and its strong links with the sphere of 'alterity': in literature gods, barbarians, and women are often associated with letters either as *protoi heuretai*, as skilful 'interpreters', or as authors of the texts sent. Not surprisingly, the aura of trickery grows denser when letters are conceived by women, in spite of the fact that, as a result of its early connection with the military and political spheres, epistolary deception was mainly a male activity. This darker side of the letter tends to fade in the late Imperial age, in a culture long familiar with everyday writing. From the Hellenistic era onwards, the letter also displays another, more reassuring, feminine aspect, as a means of private communication expressing feelings. A third recurring theme is the function of both the real and the fictional letter as a bridge in space and time which connects two distant correspondents and links past and future—a way of making the absent present.

After a prologue setting out a *status quaestionis* on the study of ancient epistolography, an introductory chapter briefly outlines the development of the culture of letter writing in the Greek world. The book is then arranged in three sections, which follow a loose chronological order. As the author herself warns in the Prologue, a detailed treatment of late Imperial and Christian epistolographers, as well as a deeper discussion of pseudepigraphic letters, has had to be sacrificed in favour of a more focused analysis of the period between Homer and the Second Sophistic.

Section II explores the first uses of embedded letters as a dramatic and narrative device in Homer, in the fifth-century historians, in Athenian drama, concluding with an 'interpretation of some epistolary passages in Hellenistic poetry. From the third to the first century B.C. we find *poetae docti*, eager to explore new literary *paignia*, playing with epistolary conventions; but apparently there is not yet any trace of a literary use of fictional letters as frequent as we should expect from a society familiar with the everyday use of written texts: R. argues that 'the heavy use of letter documents in civic affairs seems not to have encouraged, and possibly even actively discouraged, the creative use of the genre' (p. 100). In fact, we know too little of early Hellenistic literature (i.e. erotic elegy before and after Callimachus, Euphorion's poems, most of historiography) to draw such conclusions. Apart from the presentation of poems composed to accompany gifts, the chapter focuses on a curious kind of letter, the

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/52.1.32 Published online by Cambridge University Press

inscribed apple at the core of Cydippe's story, first known in Callimachus' *Aetia* version.

Section III analyses the use of embedded letters in the Greek novel: here we find once again the relationship between letters and deception, the bridging function of letters, and the obsession with authenticity. A whole chapter (Chapter VII) is devoted to the *Alexander Romance*, presenting the title character as a master-writer and master-reader. Chapter VIII deals with the collection of letters attributed to famous historical characters. Considered since the beginning of the scientific study of philology as vile forgeries and in many cases lacking a modern edition more recent than Hercher's (1873), these epistolary collections are rightly set by R. within the framework of school and rhetorical exercises. Chapter IX is devoted to the only surviving example of a Greek 'epistolary novel'. R. deals only marginally with the issues of dating and attribution, focusing instead mainly on the typology of the letters, on the presence or absence of the epistolary conventions, and on the structure of these *corpora.* Section IV presents the collections of fictive letters conceived in the cultural environment of the Second Sophistic: we are not dealing here with *ethopoeiai* of great historical characters, but with the challenge of recreating the everyday life of the common people of fifth- and fourth-century B.C. Athens; unlike the pseudonymous letters, these are overt literary fictions, *progymnasmata*, concerned only with artistic verisimilitude.

This is a really enjoyable and interesting work, designed, as the author states (p. 16), to appeal not only to classicists but also to students of modern literature, who will be pleased to find many references here to modern epistolary fiction and theory.

Milan SILVIA BARBANTANI

FAIRY TALES

G. ANDERSON: *Fairytale in the Ancient World*. Pp. xi + 240. London and New York: Routledge, 2000. Paper, £16.99. ISBN: 0–415–23703–3.

Graham Anderson's latest book is in some ways as radical as he announces it to be, while in other respects retreading methodological ground that his readers will have come to expect. In his first book, *Lucian: Theme and Variation in the Second Sophistic* (Leiden, 1976), he argued that the satirist's *oeuvre* can be reduced to a series of witty variations upon a limited range of stock themes. A later book, *Ancient Fiction: The Novel in the Graeco-Roman World* (London, 1984), claimed to have proven that the origins of the ancient novel lay in Near Eastern literature. The book under review welds together both these preoccupations, claiming that the existence of certain motifs apparently shared by ancient literature and fairy tale proves the continuity of a tradition into the modern period from classical times (and indeed pre-classical: the Near East again proves a rich hunting ground).

A. braces himself for resistance from his readers, and resistance there surely will be. In some contexts, for sure, scenarios exists where new approaches are repulsed because they threaten to undermine the fragile foundations upon which a wobbly discipline is built. A. takes classicists to task for the 'elementary howlers' (p. 14) that stem from their ignorance of the study of folklore and its complex methods, and (implicitly) for constructing ancient literature in their own (adult, educated, élite) image: 'the student is constant [*sic*] labouring under the bias that *Red Riding Hood*, *Cinderella*, *The Frog Prince*, *Snow White* and the rest, somehow, should not have had any right to exist in antiquity' (p. 23). Fairy tale is the excluded other, the doppelgänger now returning to

© Oxford University Press, 2002

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/52.1.32 Published online by Cambridge University Press