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978-1-107-03824-0 - The Romance Between Greece and the East

Edited by Tim Whitmarsh and Stuart Thomson

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CHAPTER I

*The romance between Greece and the East**Tim Whitmarsh*

In what has become one of the most quoted passages of scholarship on the ancient novel, Ben Edwin Perry claims that the first example of the form ‘was deliberately planned and written by an individual author, its inventor. He conceived it on a Tuesday afternoon in July, or some other day or month of the year.’¹ Behind the confrontationally captious phrasing lies an attack on those who suppose that ‘the aesthetic ideal represented by the new form is the result of a series of blindly groping experiments on the part of “forerunners”’.² Classical scholars have indeed always demonstrated an obsessive desire with recovering origins (the more obscure, elusive and time-eroded the better). Yet it does not follow that the novel ‘[sprang] up full grown all at once like Athena from the head of Zeus’ on that Tuesday in July, or at any other time.³ It is true that the imperial romances of Chariton, Xenophon, Achilles, Longus and Heliodorus seem both internally coherent as a genre and without precedent in Hellenistic literature (even if the matter is less settled than is sometimes presumed).⁴ But this body of texts represents only a small portion of antiquity’s novelistic output. The centrality they have assumed in modern criticism (to the extent that the history of the ancient novel is still conventionally written primarily in their orbit) is unhelpful and misleading.⁵

This book largely shuns the ideal romances, and looks instead to a very different body of ancient texts, which collectively stretch the definition of ‘the novelistic’, perhaps even to breaking point. The essays included here

¹ Perry 1967: 175. For a recent restatement of this position, see Tilg 2010, esp. 4–9.

² Perry 1967: 14. ³ Perry 1967: 206.

⁴ E.g. neither Perry 1967 nor Tilg 2010 considers the possibility that *Joseph and Aseneth* may antedate the imperial romances, or indeed the extraordinarily ‘novelistic’ presentation of the story of Zarinaea and Stryangaeus already in the Augustan writer Nicolaus of Damascus (*FGrH* 90 F5 = Ctesias F8c Stronk). Hellenistic prose fiction in general is discussed at Ruiz Montero 1996 and Whitmarsh 2010.

⁵ For example, Karla 2009a, while commendably attempting to shift the spotlight onto texts that have received less attention (particularly the *Life of Aesop*) ends up reinscribing the same centre/fringe model. Several contributors (notably Morales and Hunter) offer constructive critiques of the model.

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cover imaginative texts written (mostly) in Greek between 400 BCE and 200 CE, and composed in or projected onto Anatolia, Carthage, Egypt, Judaea, Mesopotamia and Phoenicia. I write ‘imaginative’ rather than ‘fictional’, because the category of ‘fiction’ is too narrow and culture-specific: it already sets up the categories in too restrictive terms. While we might claim a developed sense of fictionality for the Greco-Roman world,⁶ and perhaps in the Egyptian too (where sophisticated story-telling was already mature in the second millennium),⁷ the category makes little sense in other contexts. Did, for example, Jewish and Christian readers think *Joseph and Aseneth* was ‘fictional’? Such questions are as unanswerable as they are misguided, for (as Paul Veyne argues) criteria of truth in narrative are fluid, culture-specific and not even always salient. These texts are not ‘fictional’, but that observation only exposes the limitations of our own truth-fiction dyad: ‘si ma présente vérité de l’homme et des choses était vraie, la culture universelle deviendrait aussi fausse’.⁸

In other words, while this book focuses on novel-like texts – inventive prose narratives – a policy decision has been taken to avoid hard-and-fast generic definitions of ‘the novel’, definitions that would inevitably risk both ontological arbitrariness and epistemological presumption. Focusing on normative definitions of the novel risks precisely the ‘centrism’ discussed in my opening paragraph. What is under investigation here is precisely not the set of comfortable norms that guarantee membership of a genre, but the complex of difficult questions raised at the boundaries of genre definition.

Genre is far from the only, or even the most important, term under erasure. Or, rather, if genres are culture-specific, then decentering genre also means decentering culture. This is a book primarily about ancient Greek literature, and almost all of the texts were composed in Greek (all of them within sight of it). Yet rather than helping us to delineate a coherent ‘Greek culture’, they challenge the very idea. In the body of novelistic writing under scrutiny here, Greekness emerges less as a recognisable habitus, an acknowledged repertoire of cultural ‘moves’, than as a *language* that agglutinates different cultures in all their alterity. The question of whether a text like the Greek translation of the Egyptian myth of the Solar eye (see West’s chapter) or the Hellenistic Greek books of the Hebrew Bible (see Kneebone’s chapter) are ‘genuine’, ‘proper’, ‘authentic’ Greek sets up the question in the wrong terms. Classicists are used to thinking of ‘Greek culture’ as solid and self-evident, perpetuated through the ages by

⁶ Rösler 1980, Gill and Wiseman 1993 and Finkelberg 1998 are fundamental.

⁷ Parkinson 2009 offers an interesting attempt to reconstruct this performance culture.

⁸ Veyne 1983: 136.

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repetition of certain forms of social praxis (religion, education, athletics, etc.). But such a 'traditional' conception was only one aspect of Greekness. Collective identities, as Stuart Hall reminds us, have many different modalities: they *can* be defensive, conservative and resistant to hybridity, but they need not be.⁹ In Ptolemaic Egypt, for example, where ethnic groups were taxed differently, those classed as 'Greeks' included ethnic Egyptians working in the administration, and some Jews. In this context, Greekness was defined in a much more capacious (but no less rigorous) way than most scholars would be prepared to admit.¹⁰ Scholars of classical literature (even the phrase betrays exclusionary instincts) have, by contrast, typically cleaved to the most conservative definitions of Greekness possible. The reasons for this lie deep in the history of the formation of the discipline, which has shaped its practitioners into guardians of cultural and aesthetic value. This is not the occasion to explore those reasons, but it is certainly time to dispense with the prejudices that have followed from them.

The Greek novel and Greek culture

The history of the ancient novel has too often been written within contours still crudely defined by nineteenth-century philology. The pivotal figure here is Erwin Rohde, whose *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer* ('The Greek novel and its predecessors'),¹¹ a masterpiece of nineteenth-century German philology, is still a must-read for students of the ancient Greek romance. Rohde's *magnum opus*, published in 1876 when he was a mere 31, offered the first critical account of the Greek novel, as well as (re-)inventing the idea of 'the second sophistic'.¹² Yet for all his learning and acuity, Rohde was, in the final analysis, concerned primarily with racial polemics. The book is an attack on Pierre-Daniel Huet, whose attribution of the origins of the novel to 'the orientals' – itself a gesture mired in colonial politics (see Vasunia's chapter in this volume) – offended Rohde's sensibilities. The 'strange qualities of Greek novels' should not, he argues, be attributed to 'oriental influence'.¹³ If you look more closely, he continues, you will see that it is a question not of dependence on 'foreign culture-elements'

⁹ S. Hall 1992.

¹⁰ Thompson 1997: 247–8; the Ptolemies 'were granting dispensation to those prepared to "go Greek"' (248). More mysterious still, Thompson notes, were the privileges granted to the 'Persians'. Who can they have been?

¹¹ Rohde 1876. For an account of Rohde's cultural politics, his response to Huet and Martin Braun's response to him, see Whitmarsh 2011b.

¹² See briefly Whitmarsh 2005: 6–8. ¹³ Rohde 1876: 4.

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(*fremder Kulturelemente*) but of ‘the disposition of the Greek national spirit’ (*die Disposition des griechischen Volksgeistes*).¹⁴ In Rohde’s view, post-classical Greek culture was imperilled by threats both from Rome and more particularly from the effeminate, sensual, despotic East, which he repeatedly describes as *ungeheuer* (‘immense’, ‘numerous’, ‘monstrous’).¹⁵ Set against this faceless, servile, anonymity, the ‘second sophistic’, in Rohde’s view, constituted an attempt to reclaim manly ‘individuality’ (*Individualismus*) for the Greeks. Rohde’s Hegelian interpretation of the novel as an expression of ‘national’ sentiment has, of course, not gone unnoticed, but the challenges have typically come in the form of far-fetched hypotheses of ‘influence’ based on claimed similarities between Greek narratives and chronologically remote west Asian texts: Egyptian stories from the second millennium BCE,¹⁶ Sumerian literature of the third,¹⁷ or imagined antecedents of mediaeval Persian texts.¹⁸ Because such accounts have not in general won conviction, the reverse position has been largely unchallenged. Rohde’s idea that ‘the Greek novel’ is defiantly, *defensively* Greek has remained the dominant position.¹⁹

We have become so habituated to thinking of Greek culture in eurocentric terms that we have by and large ceased to question whether the boundaries really were that clearly defined on the ground in antiquity. When modern readers think of ancient Greek literature, they look principally to authors like Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, the great Athenian dramatists, historians and orators, Plato. If our tastes are more *recherché*, then Theocritus, Callimachus and Apollonius of Rhodes might spring to mind, even Plutarch, Lucian and the ‘ideal’ Greek novelists.²⁰ But in fact such authors represent only a tiny sample of the Greek texts composed in antiquity. Could we imagine instead a history of Greek literature that incorporated the Greco-Egyptian *Alexander Romance*, the Septuagint, the fragmentary historians of the Near East, Ctesias, Manetho, Berossus, Philo of Byblos?

¹⁴ Rohde 1876: 4–5.

¹⁵ Particularly in the extraordinary lecture on the novella reproduced as an appendix to the third edition of *Der griechische Roman*, where Rohde argues that this, too, is a Greek rather than an eastern invention. The word appears at Rohde 1914: 578, 579, 598.

¹⁶ Barns 1956. A much more credible hypothesis suggests the influence of works of demotic Egyptian, which is at least contemporaneous: see Rutherford 1997, 2000, and Rutherford’s and Stephens’ chapters in this volume.

¹⁷ Anderson 1984. ¹⁸ Davis 2002.

¹⁹ E.g. the novels display ‘a profound satisfaction with being Greek’ (Swain 1996: 109); ‘The Greek novel is generally not questioned as a Greek art form’ (Kuch 1996: 220).

²⁰ My own *Ancient Greek Literature* (Whitmarsh 2004) followed precisely this track, albeit – I hope – showing awareness of the constructedness of this tradition.

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Disciplinary divisions and the inherited intellectual categories create blindspots, which it behoves us to interrogate.

The question as to what is 'Greek' about 'Greek culture' is immensely controversial, mired as it is in nationalist (and indeed anti-nationalist) ideology. The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' massive overinvestment in the myth of the origins of European culture has ensured that in a self-reflexive, post-colonially aware age, no one can approach ancient Greek identity from a position of ideological neutrality. Definitions of ancient Greekness are inevitably overdetermined by political considerations in the present. This situation has, of course, been compounded by Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* trilogy and its debaters (not to mention its precursors, all too often ignored).²¹

Ancient Greece was not a nation state. Authoritative delineations of identity were impossible in an environment with no passports, where citizenship was tied to cities rather than to countries, and where the borders of the Greek territory were only hazy and permeable. As ever, it is the marginal cases that are the most instructive. Modern debates between Greeks and Macedonians over the identity of Alexander the Great, for example, are only the latest stage in a history of contestation that stretches back to his own time, and indeed before that.²² It is arguably better, however, to see ancient Macedonians as neither definitively Greek nor non-Greek, but as *constitutively* marginal, defined by precisely their liminal position. The superimposition onto ancient geopolitical space of modern criteria of nationality, which are often (albeit not always) crisper and more clearly defined, is as misleading as it is anachronistic.

When European scholars first raised the question of Greek identity, in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European scholarship, the emphasis was largely (albeit often implicitly) upon race.²³ The Greeks were imagined as Indo-Europeans, which meant in practice ancestors of the very scholars who were doing the imagining.²⁴ Sometimes it was even fantasised

²¹ Most notably by *Black Athena* and the responses to it. See Bernal 1987, 1991, 2006; cf. 2001. Discussion: Lefkowitz and Rogers 1996, and Bhambra, Orrells and Roynon 2011. A notable predecessor in the field of Afrocentric history is Diop 1974; Howe 1998 provides an interesting, if unsympathetic, overview of the whole phenomenon.

²² Herodotus records an issue over the identity of 'the Macedonians' (by which he seems to mean the royal dynasty), coming down on the side of Greekness (5.22; 8.143–4, however, seems more equivocal). Isocrates hails Alexander's father Philip as a Greek leader who will take vengeance on the Persian 'barbarians' (*Ad Phil.* 32–4; 68; 76–7; 111–15); Demosthenes by contrast sees him as a barbarian threat (*Ol.* 1.17; 1.24; 3.31; 3.45 etc.). See in general J. Hall (2001).

²³ McCoskey 2012 contains much important reflection on this nineteenth-century legacy, as well as an attempt to reclaim the term 'race'.

²⁴ Survey at J. Hall 2002: 36–8.

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that a northern-European ‘Dorian migration’ had catalysed the achievements of Greek civilisation (the German for ‘Indo-European’ remains to this day *indogermanisch*). For reasons that do not need labouring, the idea of biological race as a category of historical explanation has all but disappeared since the 1930s.²⁵ Race has been subtly superseded by a term that is at first sight less threatening. ‘Culture’ has the advantage of relocating identity from (hypothecated) reality into the sphere of collective fiction, of imaginary communities and invented traditions.²⁶ But do we really know what Greek culture is, or was? Who owns the right to define certain forms of practice as Greek or not? We can, for sure, appeal to the ancients’ own statements on the matter, but these tend (inevitably) to be circumscribed by local context, rather than authoritative and objective judgements.²⁷

The likelihood is, however, that classical scholars themselves, self-appointed guardians of intellectual and aesthetic value as they are, erect much firmer boundaries between the Greek and the non-Greek than ancients themselves did. The specific risk for specialists of Greek literature is of conflating *culture* (in the ‘anthropological’ sense of the collective matrix of praxeis that are taken to define a people) with *high culture*, the locus of a privileged body of texts and artefacts. In other words, Greek culture becomes ‘good’ culture, and the scholars who define what is good become gatekeepers of cultural values. Every literary classicist working in a university knows that arguments over undergraduate syllabuses, postgraduate research areas, new appointments and so forth are routinely couched in terms of the claimed quality of one particular body of texts or another. (One of the Press referees of this volume expressed, in the midst of a pleasingly constructive review, her or his desire ‘to get back to reading some Longus’!)

This tendency in classical scholarship was given impetus by Werner Jaeger’s influential three-volume *Paideia: the ideals of Greek culture*.²⁸ Jaeger

²⁵ For a compact critique of ‘race’, see Isaac 2004: 25–39.

²⁶ See esp. S. Hall 1992: 292: ‘national identities are not things we are born with, but are formed and transformed within and in relation to *representation*’. I discussed and adopted this definition of culture at Whitmarsh 2001: 35–8. For a critique of the term ‘culture’, see McCoskey 2012: 93.

²⁷ As in the famous case of Herodotus 8.144.2, where *to Hellēnikon* (Greekness/‘the Greek thing’) is defined in terms of ‘sharing blood and language, with temples to the gods and religious rites in common, and sharing a way of life’. Context matters: this ‘definition’ appears in the midst of a speech at a moment of high drama, when the Athenians are rejecting Persian overtures (and, as it happens, slapping down a Macedonian whose claims to Greekness have themselves been challenged earlier on, even if Herodotus himself is convinced (5.22)).

²⁸ Jaeger 1954, which is the fourth and latest edition; the first volume of the German original appeared in 1934, and of the English translation in 1939. ‘Ideals’ and ‘culture’ in the title, however, are Hightet’s (the translator’s) innovation: the German original was called *die Formung des griechischen Menschen*.

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left Nazi Germany in the 1930s (with his Jewish wife) and settled at Harvard after a spell at the University of Chicago. Understandably resistant to racial definitions of Greekness,²⁹ he argued instead, on a monumental scale, that it should be understood in terms of humanist values, and in particular to the centrality of education to human civilisation (*paideia*). The insistent elitism underpinning Jaeger's vision of antiquity is well known;³⁰ the 'specific character of Hellenism',³¹ in his eyes, was a mirror image of the ideals of an aristocratic European of the early twentieth century.

The preoccupation with cultural value has not just shaped the classical canon in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries; it has also shaped the way in which we tell the very story of ancient literature. Ever since Jaeger, the idea that Greekness was in antiquity constituted by *paideia*, a word that can denote either the process of education or the cultivated civility that (at least for the rich) is taken to issue from it, has steered classical scholarship, particularly in relation to the Hellenistic and imperial eras. More recent critics have, for sure, been more sensitive to the iniquities of cultural hierarchy implicit in this model, more alive to the *Macht* that accompanies *Bildung*.³² But they have not, in general, questioned the idea that literary value lay at the heart of ancient apperceptions of Greek identity. Time and again one comes across the assumption (expressed in a variety of forms) that the Hellenistic period adopted a 'culturally-based definition of Hellenic identity',³³ along the lines of Isocrates' famous claim that 'those who are called Hellenes are those who share our culture (*paideusis*) rather than a common biological inheritance' (*Panegyri*. 50). 'Culture' here need not mean narrowly 'aristocratic elite culture', but in practice the slide from one to the other is easy and imperceptible.

It is undeniable that some elements in ancient society wanted to see the Greek world in this way. Callimachus, Plutarch and Lucian would no doubt have agreed broadly with the conclusions described in the previous paragraph. But we should guard against any assumption that such rare birds described the norm (even if they undoubtedly sought to *prescribe* it). There should be no presumption that literary practice operated according to a single, inflexible rule. The case of the Ptolemaic tax bands has already shown us that there was more than one way of defining Greekness; the reasons

²⁹ Even if he cannot entirely shake them off: see p. xv ('our kinship with Greece is not merely racial...').

³⁰ Jaeger's 'aristocratic humanism' is one of the themes running through the essays in Calder 1992.

³¹ Jaeger 1954: xxiii. ³² See Schmitz 1997.

³³ J. Hall 2002: 224 (who does, however, raise the question of how widely held such beliefs were in antiquity).

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why classical scholars have superelevated on the Isocratean/Jaegerian model tells us, no doubt, more about their own priorities than about the ancient world itself.

Cultural pluralism in antiquity

How much cultural dialogue took place between Greece and the Near East in antiquity? For the archaic period, the efforts of scholars such as Walter Burkert, Martin West and Johannes Haubold (who appears in this volume) have brought into play a vast amount of evidence for cultural transfer.³⁴ Much of this evidence, admittedly, is circumstantial, and some of it controversial;³⁵ but taken as a whole it has tipped the balance of presumption in favour of those who would see the early Greek cultural economy as tightly interwoven with those of its various eastern neighbours.

Yet while there is a broad recognition that Greek culture was shaped in the archaic era by contact with Near Eastern cultures, there has been far less attention paid to the possibility of an ongoing dialogue through the classical, Hellenistic and imperial eras. During these ages, it is generally assumed, the dominance of *paideia* meant that Greek culture remained largely insulated from the intellectual culture around it (at least until widespread Christianisation brought Greeks into contact with Jewish scripture). It is sometimes maintained that the distinctive character of Hellenistic Greece was its relentless monoglottism: ‘The intellectual influence of the barbarians was . . . felt in the Hellenistic world only to the extent to which they were capable of expressing themselves in Greek’, writes Momigliano. ‘No Greek read the Upanishads, the Gathas and the Egyptian wisdom books.’³⁶ This kind of claim is deeply misguided. For a start, the choice of examples is skewed: few Greeks are likely to have come across the (Indian) Upanishads, or the Avestan Gathas (on which see Selden in this volume), and if they did encounter Egyptian instructional texts they are unlikely to have seen much cultural value in them. But there were certainly lively bilingual cultures from at least the fifth century BCE, even if they have been oddly neglected in much scholarship.³⁷ There are numerous literary works that are or pose as translations or transcriptions from Near Eastern sources: even leaving

³⁴ Burkert 1992, esp. 88–127; M. L. West 1997; Haubold 2002.

³⁵ See e.g. Kelly 2007 and 2008; more general methodological issues in Kelly forthcoming. I thank the author for advance sight of this important discussion.

³⁶ Momigliano 1975: 7–8.

³⁷ M. L. West 1997: 606–9. West quotes David Lewis on the ‘strange presupposition that there was a political and linguistic iron curtain between Greeks and Persians’ (606).

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aside the case of Herodotus and his much-discussed ‘sources’, we have the prominent examples of Ctesias of Cnidos (see further Wiesehöfer, this volume) claiming to have consulted the royal records of the Persian court for his *Persian History*;³⁸ the *Periplus* of Hanno the Carthaginian (supposedly translated from Phoenician); Menander of Ephesus, a historian of Phoenicia writing in the second or third century BCE, who ‘translated the ancient records of Tyre from the Phoenician dialect into the Greek language’;³⁹ and figures such as Manetho (see Dillon, this volume), Berossus (Haubold, this volume), and Philo of Byblos. Of course, the immediate response from some will be that most of these figures are not in fact Greeks, but Hellenised Near Easterners. But as we have seen above, this distinction reflects a confident cultural ‘ontology’ born of modern nationalism, and which was not found systematically in antiquity. If we wish to understand how ‘Greek culture’ operated, we must consider the full range of evidence, not simply that which best fits our preconceived ideas.

Multilingual public inscriptions also testify to bilingualism on a wide scale. The earliest known multilingual source that incorporates Greek is the Letoon inscription of the mid-fourth century BCE, which also features Lycian and Aramaic. Dedications featuring both Greek and Semitic inscriptions have been found far afield: not just in obvious contact zones such as Cyprus, Malta, Palmyra and the Negev, where they might be expected, but also on Cos and Rhodes, in Athens and Miletus, and elsewhere in the Greek world.⁴⁰ It is important, of course, not to offer facile generalisations for the interpretation of such material, which reflect a wide diversity of intentions and local circumstances. But at the very least we can conclude that the phenomenon of multilingual inscriptions articulates a level of comfort with the concept of cultural liminality on the part of the individuals or societies that erect them. Inscriptions are projections, or performances, of identity; bilingual inscriptions thus show that bicultural identity was a workable stance to adopt.

The inscriptional record is the tip of a vast historical iceberg. Bilingual or bicultural individuals and communities existed, but often we know next to nothing about their experiences, their instincts, their preferences, their emotional and intellectual universes. We have no traces of Phoenician or

³⁸ Diod. Sic. 2.32.4 = *FGrH* 688 T3, F5; also Diod. Sic. 2.22.5 = *FGrH* F1b. Plut. *Art.* 13.4 suggests Ctesias’ competence in Persian; see in general Stronk (2010) 21–5. For other persophone Greeks in the classical era, see Thuc. 1.138.1 and Plut. *Them.* 29.5 (Themistocles), Hdt. 6.29.2 (Histiaeus), Ath. *Deipn.* 535e (Alcibiades). (I owe these references to M. L. West 1997: 607 n. 60.)

³⁹ Jos. *Ant. Jud.* 8.144 = *FGrH* 783 T3(a); cf. T3 (b–c), also on Josephus’ testimony.

⁴⁰ See e.g. Fraser 1970. Adams, Janse and Swain 2002 offer a series of discussions of the phenomenon of bilingualism in the ancient world, with much Greek material.

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Palmyrene literature. The world of Phoenician story-telling, as we know it from Greek sources, is a playful fictional construct, a spectral other created from the resources of the Greco-Roman tradition rather than from any real connection to Phoenicia itself (Ní Mheallaigh, this volume).⁴¹ Even Carthage, a vitally important Punic city throughout antiquity, speaks to us only through Greco-Roman fantasies (the most famous of which is the *Aeneid*); certainly, as Harrison shows in this volume, it is hard to use Apuleius of Madaura as a straightforwardly bicultural text.

Similarly elusive are Anatolian narrative traditions. The Ionian coast was, of course, a major point of intersection between Greek and pre-Greek cultures, and our deeper understanding of Hittite literature in particular has given a particular focus to what is distinctive about the Trojan War traditions.⁴² It also became a contact zone between Greece and Achaemenid Persia, to the extent that late sixth- and early fifth-century Ionian philosophy composed in Greek is likely to draw heavily on Persian thought: ‘a period of active Iranian influence stands out sharply in the development of Greek thought, from c. 550 to c. 480 BC’.⁴³ Yet tracing the interaction of cultural systems in later times is extremely difficult – and perhaps misguided, since the degree of Hellenisation was so intense and sustained that there was, by the Hellenistic period at any rate, no longer any meaningful differentiation between Greek and non-Greek in this hybrid space. Tagliabue in this volume, for example, completely sidesteps the question of Anatolian influence on the Ephesian novelist Xenophon, preferring instead to consider how Ionia was liminally positioned in the Greek imaginary, between Greece and the Near East. But perhaps even if there is no possibility of separating out Greek and Anatolian layers, we can see something distinctively Ionian in the tradition of short, scurrilous or pointed story-telling tracked by Bowie in this volume. Eduard Schwartz’s hypothesis that the Greek novel originated in Ionia is certainly reductive and overly linear;⁴⁴ but there does seem to be consistent association, from Herodotus and Xanthus of Lydia onwards, between this part of the world and punchy, risqué anecdotes – even if these were in no sense exclusive to that region.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Philo of Byblos is a complex case, but my own view is that this is more ‘Phoenician mirage’. Bonnet 2010 surveys the history of critical speculation as to whether he transmits genuine Phoenician material.

⁴² See Collins, Bachvarova and Rutherford 2008, with the contributions of Bryce and Bachvarova specifically on the Homeric material.

⁴³ M. L. West 1971, at 239. ⁴⁴ Schwartz 1896.

⁴⁵ Trenkner 1958: 168–77 offers further qualification of the ‘Ionian theory’ of the origin of the novella.