

# **Apuleius and Africa**

**Edited by Benjamin Todd Lee,  
Ellen Finkelppearl, and  
Luca Graverini**

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Claudio Orso-Giaccone, *Sorro Moro Educato*. Woodcut print, 2010.

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## Foreword

*Alessandro Barchiesi*

As the keynote speaker at Oberlin's "Apuleius and Africa" conference in April 2010, I prefaced the conference with a preliminary discussion based on my own work on the ancient novel, particularly emphasizing the variety of ways in which the ancient novel oscillates between the center and the periphery of empire and thereby negotiates a new literary-cultural space for this protean genre. My paper grew too long to be published in this volume, to my regret, but this development resulted in no small part from the stimulus of the other papers presented at Oberlin: the speakers have my gratitude. The intention of my contribution, briefly, was not to offer a fully formed new approach but to support the idea that we need to take seriously issues of provincial and ethnic identity in Apuleius: my title, "Provincial and Colonial Apuleius," was intended to show that Apuleius' oeuvre is a revelation of a local identity (African and provincial) but also that it is connected to a broader set of questions, involving Rome, Greece, and the idea of "provincialism" as a whole.

I was pleased to see that the goal of the conference was not so much to advance a particular theoretical approach to Apuleius as to enable a new kind of discussion about the author and the way we interpret his works. The strength of the conference (and of this volume) to my mind is the variety of sub-disciplines of Classics employed to pursue the question of Apuleius' relationship to his native North Africa. These include traditional philology and rhetoric (Luca Graverini, Wytse Keulen, Silvia Mattiacci), architecture and material culture (David L. Stone, Daniel L. Selden), comparative linguistics (Selden), historical inquiry (Keith Bradley and Carlos F. Noreña), comparative folklore (Emmanuel and Nadjima Plantade), and paleography (Julia Haig Gaisser, Benjamin Todd Lee). These varied approaches to the question of how Apuleius relates to Africa employ an innovative and diverse apparatus of hermeneutic tools, including post-colonialism, narratology, deconstruction, and contemporary sociological studies of multi-cultural identity (e.g., Lee, Selden, Richard Fletcher, and Sonia Sabnis). As I survey the completed volume, I note with pleasure how our discipline is re-inventing itself in the form of such multi-disciplinary investigations, despite the fact that not all readers will be obliged to agree

with the conclusions of every essay, or even all of the theoretical approaches espoused in this book.

In the introduction to this volume the reader will find a thorough survey of the *status quaestionis*, as well as the findings of the essays herein. From my perspective, however, the most important dimension of this book is its attempt to open new ways of reading an author who has seen his fair share of critical attention in the last forty years, thanks especially to the “Groningen Colloquia on the Ancient Novel” and the authoritative *Groningen Commentaries on Apuleius*, and also to the journal *Ancient Narrative*.

Jack Winkler’s narratological reading of Apuleius’ novel, *Auctor & Actor*, published in 1985, could be said to have put Apuleius’ novel “back on the map” for American classical studies (see Joseph Farrell’s essay in this volume on Apuleius’ integration into American university graduate program reading lists). Winkler’s work was instrumental in bringing a sophisticated interpretive apparatus to Apuleian studies proper but also influenced literary studies of the ancient novel at large. In fact, Winkler’s brilliant work ultimately has presented Apuleian studies with a sort of Gordian knot, almost an impasse or endless loop of narratological readings. A route around Winkler has been achieved by Luca Graverini’s recent work (*Le Metamorfosi di Apuleio: Letteratura e Identità*, 2007; translated into English in 2012 as *Literature and Identity in the Golden Ass of Apuleius*), at least to the extent that Apuleianists are now content to focus on a new set of non-Winklerian questions. Perhaps, then, Graverini’s work is partly responsible for the special capacity shown in this book: namely, to have opened up an old set of texts to new questions and new approaches (beyond Winkler). Indeed, this collection’s subtle analysis of a multi-cultural author stands to fare well in the future cultural ecosphere of classical studies, inasmuch as our modern intellectual community is *de facto* already multi-cultural and global. The hermeneutic approaches found in this volume—sociological, historical, and theoretical—will reflect this ascendant multi-culturalism.

I found one aspect of the conference particularly rewarding and lively, namely, the conversations and debates that followed both the pedagogy workshops (led by professors from *outside* classical disciplines—on which see the introduction) and took place during the discussion sessions of the paper panels, chaired by Joseph Farrell, Ellen Finkelppearl, Stephen Harrison, Silvia Montiglio, Gareth Schmeling, and Brent Shaw. These conversations were held not only during the conference panel and workshop sessions but also *passim* throughout the four days of the conference, at receptions, dinners, and even on the van ride to the Cleveland airport once the conference had ended.

In these discussions there was much vigorous debate, especially regarding the adequacy and limitations of new critical and theoretical hermeneutics. Unhappily, this dynamic repartee could not be transcribed or fully represented in the book, but the imprint of these vigorous engagements can be perceived in the substantial revisions made to each of the articles in this

volume, which were formerly thirty-minute papers but are now all much more rounded and complete considerations of their subjects.

As I said, not every reader will agree with every article in this book, but after reading it, no one will be able to say that they have not seen new things and have not had to ponder new questions. As the keynote speaker of the 2010 conference, looking over the book in its completed form, I seem to be in a position to say that this volume’s model of inquiry—multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural, dialectical—will be a useful exemplum for future interrogations of classical authors who are multi-cultural and multi-lingual, especially those who come from the periphery of the Roman Empire.

Arezzo-Bruxelles, October 2013

## Preface

This volume had its origins in a train ride from Rostock to Berlin after the conference “The Religious Ending of the *Golden Ass*,” organized by Wytse Keulen; the proceedings are now published as *Aspects of Apuleius’ Golden Ass III: The Isis Book*. Ellen Finkelppearl and Ben Lee both voiced a desire for more discussion of the cultural elements in Apuleius—Isis as Egyptian rather than simply another Greco-Roman deity, Apuleius as someone with origins outside Rome, the cultural center. We floated the idea of a conference, and Ben Lee was enterprising enough to follow through and apply for funding through the Mellon 23 initiative, which fosters cooperation among faculty at a group of liberal arts colleges. We also recruited Sonia Sabnis from Reed, another of the colleges in the Mellon 23 group, as she has a long-standing interest in such topics, and enlisted Luca Graverini, who has written extensively on Apuleius and provincial identity and who had also participated in the Rostock conference.

The conference and workshops took place in April 2010 with generous funding from both the Mellon Foundation and Oberlin College. Most of the papers in this volume were originally delivered at the conference (but heavily revised since), but a few have been added and a few dropped out. The conference also included workshops, chaired by Sonia Sabnis and Ellen Finkelppearl, geared both toward pedagogy and toward opening up new approaches to studying Apuleius.

In these workshops, three non-classical scholars who study theories of identity in the context of diaspora studies, cultural anthropology, and comparative literature delivered brief presentations on how their own research intersected with the themes of the conference and might serve as possible models for thinking about Apuleius’ Romano-African identity, and especially how the insights of their disciplines might broaden our approaches to identity in Greco-Roman antiquity.<sup>1</sup> The discussion was then opened up for workshop participants and presenters to think about the possibilities of using new methodologies and to consider the ways they might need to be adapted in the case of the ancient world. Following these presentations, Rachel Friedman of Vassar College discussed new approaches to teaching cultural contact in the ancient world. See the website <https://sites.google>.

com/site/apuleiusandafrica/ for details. These presentations and the discussions that followed were extremely valuable and provocative. We note that Ben Lee's essay in this volume draws on Pawan Dhingra's theoretical framework in discussing and analyzing Apuleius' multicultural identity.

The three editors have worked closely together at every stage of this project, beginning with the design of the conference through to selecting and soliciting the essays in this volume. We all read each paper and sent joint feedback to the authors for revision. Ben Lee has been the motivating force throughout. He pushed for the conference, wrote the Mellon 23 grant application, and located a publisher, working with Routledge on the contract, as well as managing all the communications about practical details after the contract was secured. Ellen Finkelppearl was largely responsible for the introduction. Luca Graverini designed our conference website and did most of the meticulous work copyediting the submissions at the final stages, as well as providing the greatest level of detail in the feedback to the authors.

We would like to thank all the conference participants, especially those who served as discussion panel chairs or who delivered papers that are not included in this volume: Roshan Abraham, Stephen Harrison, Silvia Montiglio, Madhlozi Moyo, Brent Shaw, and Gareth Schmeling. The Thomas Cooper Fund for Faculty Research and the Department of Classics at Oberlin College underwrote many costs for the original conference, including participant travel costs and the original woodcut, *Sono Moro Educato* by Claudio Orso-Giacone, which was commissioned for the conference. The rights to use images from the Getty archive were generously funded by the Jody Maxmin Fund for Faculty Development at Oberlin College. We are also grateful for the support of the Helen Garland Research Fund of Scripps College, which provided the funds to obtain the rights to use the conference artwork as the volume cover. Our gratitude also goes to Laura Stearns, publisher at Routledge, for her interest in this project, and to Lauren Verity for her assistance in seeing the volume through to publication. Finally, we would like to thank Amanda Jarvis for her work creating the indices.

#### NOTE

1. These were Pawan Dhingra (Tufts University, Department of Sociology), Charles Peterson (College of Wooster, Department of Africana Studies), and Julian Levinson (University of Michigan, Department of English and Judaic Studies).

## Introduction

*Ellen Finkelppearl, Luca Graverini,  
and Benjamin Todd Lee*

I pass much of my time in the excellent company  
of a Moroccan writer of the second century AD,  
Lucius Apuleius, a colonial of the old Roman Empire.

—Salman Rushdie, *Travels with a Golden Ass*

Though he, like Fronto, can speak lightly of his African background,  
Apuleius, through his name, literary culture and education, is funda-  
mentally Roman in cultural identity and a native speaker and writer  
of Latin.

—Stephen Harrison<sup>1</sup>

Consider these two contrasting views of Apuleius' cultural identity. Although Rushdie could be pedantically faulted on several points in this single sentence, it is clear that he sees Apuleius as a fellow colonial, with all the associations that may imply, and as a North African living under an empire that may be "old" but is implicitly still an empire sharing its characteristics with those of recent times. Harrison, writing of course in a stricter academic genre, emphasizes the many ways that Apuleius' provincial African status is irrelevant to his literary and philosophical productions and to his "cultural identity." The editors of this volume have long puzzled over the intricate web of issues surrounding this question of whether, and in what ways, Apuleius' status as an African provincial informs his works. This volume (and the conference from which it sprang) was an attempt to engage a group of scholars with varying perspectives in furthering and developing approaches to the question of "Apuleius and Africa," where we have deliberately left the two terms independent, linked only by "and," in order to leave everything open. After all, this is a question that Apuleius himself has asked us to consider, inasmuch as his great work, the *Metamorphoses*, is a Latin novel written by an African author modeled on a Greek novel. It narrates the adventures of a Greek character bearing a Roman name who ends the novel clothed in Egyptian robes—after spending a year as a donkey. And while a number of critics have undertaken to unravel this knot of identities, Apuleius' African side has received relatively little attention.

Apuleius was born and raised in Madauros (now M'Daurouch in Algeria) and spent most of his career in the province of Africa Proconsularis, not only in Madauros, but also in Carthage and Oea, where his wife's family lived. He was educated in Athens and Rome and may have lived for a time at Rome, but unlike many other provincials, he returned to North Africa, where he made a career in writing and public speaking, in Carthage and on the road (while married to a wealthy widow).<sup>2</sup> Apuleius was an elite from a Romanized family that held positions in Roman public administration (his father held the high position of *duumvir*). He writes in Latin and was also fluent in Greek (though Punic may well have been his first language), and was steeped in Greek and Latin *paideia*. However, as has long been recognized, he lived within a culture that retained many pre-Roman indigenous cultural practices in the spheres of art and architecture, religion, and language.

Apuleius lived in a world, then, in which (to steal an example from Keith Bradley), "anyone who visited the theater at Lepcis Magna could see that its sponsor, Annobal Tapapius Rufus, son of Himilcho Tapapius," had been commemorated with a bilingual inscription—in Latin and Punic—in the Augustan era.<sup>3</sup> He delivered his speeches in the theater of Carthage, a public building of Roman design, which, along with other buildings in the Roman style, symbolized Roman power in the province;<sup>4</sup> he translated and/or summarized works of Plato and Aristotle from Greek into Latin, but he had a stepson who knew neither. So, while there are arguably few (or no) evident traces of Punic language and pre-Roman culture in Apuleius' writing, the mixed cultural context he inhabited could have had more subtle influences on his writing—which is what we are investigating in this book.

Our project should be seen in the light of the current re-thinking of the complexities of what used to be called "Romanization." Recently, interest and fruitful research across the disciplines in Classics—in material culture, law, religion, and art—into the "colonialization" of the Roman provinces has thrived and has opened a lively debate about the various forces at work in the creation of new mixed cultures across the empire. Critics increasingly reject the earlier paradigm of "Romanization" with its Romanocentric perspective, its erasure of cultures other than the Roman, and its implication that every province, uniformly, simply became unproblematically more and more Roman over time.<sup>5</sup> Among these, Greg Woolf's important book *Becoming Roman* (1998), which traces the rapid transition from a forced adoption of Roman culture in Gaul to participation in all its aspects, emphasizes process and the participation of the subjects.<sup>6</sup> Given the process of layering of Roman institutions, culture, and language onto the pre-existing beliefs, practices, and arts, critics like Jane Webster<sup>7</sup> have spoken increasingly of "hybridity" and "creolization" in the study of Roman colonization. Willfully, strategically, or unconsciously, those under or participating in Roman rule adopt (actively or passively), transmit, resist,<sup>8</sup> and intermix the influx of new culture. The dynamics of "center" and "periphery" as well as the related issue of power inequalities have also been points of discussion.

New work on identity (using approaches from sociology and post-colonial theory) stresses the diversity of assimilation among different groups according to class, occupation (e.g., civilian vs. military), and gender, for example. In chapter 4 of his 2011 book *Imperialism, Power and Identity*, David Mattingly offers a model of "discrepant identities" (a term adapted from Edward Said's concept of "discrepant experience") in which groups might hold multiple, even contradictory, identities.<sup>9</sup> A vocal advocate of the need for discarding both the concept and the term "Romanization," Mattingly argues that "individual and group identities in the Roman period were multifaceted and dynamic."<sup>10</sup> He prefers the approach of "discrepancy" to "creolization" or "hybridization" because he often observes a tension in the interaction of Roman and pre-Roman cultural forms and practices.<sup>11</sup> Louise Revell (*Roman Imperialism and Local Identities*, 2009) emphasizes the ways Roman power and culture are actively reproduced at a local level: "a Roman identity is not a fixed point to be reached, but rather a more fluid concept which needs to be continuously worked at through the routines of everyday life."<sup>12</sup> On another front, Benjamin Isaac's important book re-thinking the truism that racism in the modern sense did not exist in antiquity has provided an opening for thinking about ancient ethnicity in different ways.<sup>13</sup>

Much of the work that has been done in this area has focused on material culture. Situating an author in his social and cultural setting, and determining how it has influenced his literary production or how the author reflects on his provincial status, is a somewhat different matter. But books such as David Wilhite's *Tertullian the African* (2007) or the conference organized in 2001 by Jim O'Donnell, "Augustine in Algeria," have begun this kind of investigation.<sup>14</sup> To move to provinces outside Africa, Woolf has also written about Martial's ambivalent and somewhat ironic relationship to Rome in the "backward" culture of provincial Spain.<sup>15</sup> Much more work has been done on the Greek novel and on Greek imperial narrative in general, examining the ways provincial authors from eastern Greek states under Rome negotiate their mixed identities; for example, Jas Elsner in Goldhill's volume *Being Greek under Rome* (2001) charts the interplay of identities involved in "Greek," "Syrian," and the politically present but unmentioned Rome in Lucian's *De Dea Syria*, where its three worlds "combine in creative conflict to produce cultural identity."<sup>16</sup> Tim Whitmarsh memorably describes the "reperspectivization" of the Hellenic world in Heliodorus, where center and periphery are confounded and the narrative moves from the old center of the Greek world, Athens, to the ends of the earth in Ethiopia, which now loses its peripheral status.<sup>17</sup> Susan Stephens surveys the ancient novel's interest and location in exotic lands of the east.<sup>18</sup> This brief survey is merely suggestive of new work and ongoing discussions; there is, of course, much more, an explosion of studies around identity and imperialism, doubtless thanks to the process of globalization we are witnessing in our own culture.<sup>19</sup>

Turning to Apuleius' province in particular, new and ongoing studies in the material culture of North Africa have been re-assessing the persistence

of pre-Roman practices, as well as the implications of this persistence for the cultural climate of the area. These studies often highlight the interactions and tensions between indigenous and Roman cultures: in the case of burial practices, for example, Mattingly (citing work by Carroll and by Stone–Stirling) notes that the Libyo-Phoenician elite in Lepcis sometimes built tombs of Roman architectural design but used Neo-Punic characters on the inside, on the sepulchral urn itself, or sometimes on the interior of the urn, possibly indicating “separate public and private names and perhaps identities.”<sup>20</sup> “Identity was thus Janus-headed,” binding the local elite to the power structures at Rome but also preserving local identities.<sup>21</sup> In his recent Jerome Lectures, Mattingly concludes that “local cultures and languages were more enduring, divisions and tensions between locals and Romans more stark, and the violence and upheaval of Roman domination more rending than we have heretofore supposed,”<sup>22</sup> presenting a rather different picture of cultural contact and adoption from that delineated by Greg Woolf for Gaul or Clifford Ando for other provinces.<sup>23</sup>

The distinctive African character of Apuleius’ homeland and the persistence of indigenous beliefs, practices, art forms, and so on are simply not in doubt. Nor is the presence of these distinctive landmarks and cultural practices in his rhetorical works, as Bradley’s work has shown. The next question is how to situate Apuleius and his literary-philosophical works in this environment. As an elite educated in Athens and Rome and steeped in Greco-Roman culture, was he completely outside local indigenous culture? Did he resist and disdain it? In what ways does he express, directly and indirectly, the Greek, Roman, and African aspects of his identity, and how did they factor in his works? In what ways does he manage to appeal to “discrepant” audiences? What do cultural “negotiation” and “integration” look like in his works, if indeed they are present at all? Where does he position himself in relation to the cultures around him, and in what ways might this enter his written works; as someone from the periphery yet belonging to the culture of the center, does he resist the exoticization of India and Africa seen in many Greco-Roman writers? Did the Punic and Libyan languages influence his style, and did indigenous traditions of story-telling enter his fiction? Should the question of “African Latin” be revisited?

#### 1. APULEIUS AND AFRICA/THE PROVINCES: EXPLICIT STATEMENTS IN HIS OWN WORKS

It must be admitted that Apuleius says less than we might wish explicitly about his status as an African or about the state of being a provincial—notwithstanding his evident interest in identity—and those few references have been extensively analyzed. Here is an overview of passages:

The *Metamorphoses*, as is natural for a work adapted from a Greek original and set in Greece, has few references to Africa.<sup>24</sup> The situation is further

complicated by the fact that any references to Africa and the provinces will possibly refer not to Apuleius himself but to Lucius, the protagonist. At 6.4.1–3, in a plea by Psyche to Juno, Carthage is mentioned as a seat of the goddess’s worship. Most dramatically, Lucius (or Apuleius?) is referred to near the conclusion of the work as *Madaurenses* (11.27.9), “the man from Madauros.”<sup>25</sup> In the prologue, Lucius, a Greek (or Apuleius, an African), refers to the excruciating labor involved in learning Latin as a second language and asks our indulgence if, as an inexperienced speaker, he slips up (*en ecce praefamur ueniam, siquid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero*).<sup>26</sup> (Latin is here defamiliarized as an exotic or foreign language.<sup>27</sup>) At 9.39–40, Lucius’ owner, a (Greek) gardener, is assaulted by a Roman soldier who at first arrogantly tries to speak Latin to him, then retreats into bad Greek. The gardener manages to retaliate and beat the arrogant soldier to within an inch of his life. The original passage in the *Onos* has been read as a critique of Roman imperialism that would be enjoyed by a Greek audience, and the same could be said *mutatis mutandis* for the African audience.<sup>28</sup> Book 11 offers us an Egyptian goddess and a vision of Lucius as a Greek immigrant in Rome, adapting with difficulty and frequently sporting an alien appearance. As Harrison points out, silence is also worth considering: while Apuleius was working with an existing script (the *Onos*), there are certainly places where local culture could have been casually introduced and is not; for example, Libyo-Punic deities could have been included at 11.5.2–3 when Isis lists all the names under which other nations worship her.<sup>29</sup> In this volume, Luca Graverini offers another approach to seeing Carthage in the *Metamorphoses*, via allusions to Vergil that reveal a picture of Carthage behind Hypata.

The *Apology* and *Florida* present a rather different picture, as rhetorical works addressed to audiences in North Africa and spoken by Apuleius himself. The most direct statement about African culture and Apuleius’ identity in these works is *Apology* 24.1–3, where Apuleius says, “I publicly described myself as half-Numidian, half-Gaetolian” (*memet professus sum . . . semi-Numidam et semi-Gaetulum*), commenting *non uideo quid mihi sit in ea re pudendum* (“I don’t see what there is to be ashamed of in this matter”) and adding, with a comparison to Anacharsis, that it is not where you are born but how you live that matters (*non ubi prognatus sed ut moratus*).<sup>30</sup> He reports that he had previously described himself this way, but now apparently his opponents are bringing it up against him. Shortly after this passage, in apparent retaliation, Apuleius refers to Pudens’ hometown as *illud tuum Atticum Zarat*, highlighting the cultural difference between this backward town and Athens. Pudens and Aemilianus oddly fault Apuleius for his *eloquentiam Graecam, patriam barbaram* (*Apol.* 25.2), but Apuleius also refers to his accusers as *barbari*.<sup>31</sup> Also in the *Apology* (98.8), Apuleius reports in a derogatory way that his stepson Pudens never speaks anything except Punic (*loquitur numquam nisi Punice*), a key statement often used to support the position that Apuleius rejects the native culture of

his area (but Ben Lee in this volume argues that Apuleius is not criticizing the speaking of Punic *per se*, but Pudens' inability to straddle two cultures).

In the *Florida*, Apuleius often pours extravagant praise on Carthage and states that here he got his first education even if it was strengthened in Athens, that he considers its citizens his *parentis ac primos magistris* (*Flor.* 18.18), and in other ways throughout the fragment expresses his close connection with the city. He makes a case for Carthage being the most important city of the time at *Florida* 20.10: *Carthago prouinciae nostrae magistra uenerabilis, Carthago Africae Musa caelestis, Carthago Camena togatorum* ("Carthage, the respected teacher of our province, Carthage the heavenly muse of Africa, Carthage the Camena [an Italic Muse] of the toga-wearers").<sup>32</sup> Granted, Carthage receives this praise because this is his audience—but we should note: this is his audience. Indeed, as Lee notes in his 2005 commentary, Rome is mentioned directly only once in the *Florida* (17.4).

And so what was Apuleius' ethnicity? Was he descended from Roman settlers, or was he of "Numidian-Gaetulian" descent? This question is doubtless of more interest to us than to ancient readers, though the lack of importance of race in antiquity has perhaps been exaggerated.<sup>33</sup> Most critics decline to speculate on Apuleius' ethnicity, and the rest disagree. Nicole Méthy concludes that both Apuleius and Fronto are from the indigenous population ("populations autochthones"), while Anthony Birley states that Apuleius "is doubtless of settler or mixed stock."<sup>34</sup> Méthy seems to base her claim on the degree of African background in the rhetorical works, and Birley grounds his on Apuleius' elite status, but there is really no concrete evidence. Bradley stresses that perhaps as many as 71% of the attested civic magistrates at Madauros were of native descent and that nomenclature is not necessarily a guide; many elites of African descent took names from former emperors and other well-known figures. He mentions a "C. Apuleius Rogatus, conceivably a relative," who was not necessarily of Italian blood.<sup>35</sup> It seems reasonable to take Apuleius' own statement (above) at face value: he was of mixed race (*genere mixto*), that is, Numidian and Gaetulian, though some take this statement to refer to geography.<sup>36</sup> Wytse Keulen in this volume discusses the possibility of references to Apuleius' non-Italic appearance.

## 2. STATE OF THE QUESTION

The prevailing tendency during the rise of Apuleius studies in the 1980s was to attempt to bring Apuleius out of the shadows of Africa and into the center of Roman literary production. Strategically, this was an important tactic in a period when the whole field of the ancient novel struggled for legitimacy and Apuleius was, for example, not yet canonical and not on graduate school reading lists (see Joseph Farrell in this volume). Ken Dowden's article "The Roman Audience of the *Golden Ass*" (1994), now the classic

statement of this position, straightforwardly seeks to make the eccentric *Metamorphoses* more "intraordinary" by emphasizing the Roman spatial markers, the survival of the manuscript at Rome, Apuleius' probable residence at Rome, and other factors that give the novel a Roman rather than Carthaginian orientation.<sup>37</sup> Somewhat later, but in the same vein, Gianpiero Rosati's article on cultural identity in the *Metamorphoses* (2003) emphasizes the many ways in which Apuleius moves away from the Greek points of reference in the Greek source, toward Rome. Rome is not necessarily the real point from which Apuleius wrote the book but is the fictional space in which he wrote. Like the major works of Vergil and Ovid, the book moves toward Rome and toward reality, away from myth. Rosati argues that the book's best readers are those who can recognize the physical points of reference in the city that come up *passim*, hence a Roman. Latin is the mark of Apuleius' cultural allegiance. Rosati does not, however, give much attention to the African elements of Lucius' (or Apuleius') identity.<sup>38</sup> Harrison's work, too, stresses Apuleius' assimilation to and promulgation more generally of Greco-Roman culture.<sup>39</sup>

Against this background, a series of interventions by Keith Bradley, Ellen Finkelpearl, and Luca Graverini have, in different ways, suggested greater attention to the African provincial background. In a series of articles beginning in 1997 (now collected with others in his 2012 book *Apuleius and Antonine Rome*), Bradley has focused on the historical and material background to Apuleius' works, often in relation to its African context. In "Apuleius and Carthage" (2005), he paints a complex picture of the emphatically Carthaginian background to the *Florida* in particular. Pointing out the strong persistence of the Punic language, bilingual inscriptions, the majority of native Africans in the population versus Roman settlers, and the persistence of indigenous deities and art forms, as well as the visual expressions of Roman power in central architectural monuments, Bradley reminds us that Apuleius is emphatically not speaking in Rome. "*Romanitas* and the Roman Family" (2000) thickly describes the survival of local culture in the regions of Oea and Sabratha, where Apuleius delivered the *Apology*, areas relatively untouched by Italian settlement where, for example, elephant tusks are sacrificed to Punic deities. In "Apuleius and the Sub-Saharan Slave Trade," Bradley emphasizes the racial diversity of Sabratha, different from the ethnic make-up of an Italian town.<sup>40</sup> In this volume, he recreates the background to the *Apology* using a multi-disciplinary approach, evoking Sabratha's sounds and sights, Apuleius' mixed audience of fishermen and slave merchants, the mingling of the Roman overlay and the pre-existing cultural elements. In general, Bradley concludes that Apuleius, as an elite, was a conveyor of Greco-Roman culture to the land of his birth: "He assimilated and came to identify with the dominant intellectual tradition—to enter the 'aristocracy of the intellect' in one telling phrase—and subsequently disseminated his learning in the land from which he had sprung."<sup>41</sup> Yet Bradley also emphasizes how jarring the introduction of Roman intellectual thought must have

been to areas of the region that were less steeped in Roman culture: “They [the *Florida*] can be seen, that is to say, as dynamic manifestations of how *Romanitas* made itself felt in Punic Carthage, and as markers of a society that was always having to respond to the arrival in its midst of what was in essence the intrusive and the alien.”<sup>42</sup>

Ellen Finkelpearl (*Metamorphosis of Language in Apuleius*, 1998), approaching the issue from the point of view of Apuleius’ allusiveness, argues that in the story of Charite, which has long been understood as heavily allusive to *Aeneid* 4, Apuleius has restored the original chaste Dido, who dies rather than remarry. Vergil’s version, though it is the one that has ultimately prevailed, was a re-writing of the North African legend of a chaste Dido, a version that was still current and prevalent in Carthage and its vicinity during Apuleius’ time and after. Vergil’s re-writing had inspired animosity among a number of later writers, such as Macrobius and the author of the Planudean Appendix.<sup>43</sup> Apuleius, as someone with strong allegiances to Carthage, has cause to restore the myth as preserved in local culture and in other African writers, and to “correct” Vergil’s version. Finkelpearl here views Apuleius’ re-writing of Vergil as fundamentally polemical and an assertion of his North African identity.<sup>44</sup> The argument, that the nature of allusion may reflect cultural differences between center and periphery, is supported with detailed discussion of the historical, religious, and social character of second-century North Africa, as separate from the cultural center, and is more generally a call to recognize Apuleius’ North African origins.

Luca Graverini, in “Corinth, Rome, and Africa: A Cultural Background for the Tale of the Ass” (2002) and then in chapter 4 of his book *Literature and Identity in the Golden Ass of Apuleius* (2007, English translation 2012), takes on the question of the multiple cultural points of reference in the *Metamorphoses*. He starts with a discussion of the associations of Corinth for both Romans and Greeks—a significant focus, since Apuleius has changed the location of the retransformation of Lucius from Patras in the *Onos*. Surveying the history of the destruction of Corinth in 146 BCE and the subsequent influx of purloined Greek art into Rome, Graverini says, “A Roman could use the symbol of Corinth to celebrate the greatness of his people and the vengeance of Aeneas’ descendants over the destroyers of Troy. A Greek, on the other hand, could use it to lament his loss of freedom, and to express his bitterness for the injustices he had suffered; he could also use it to parade his cultural superiority over the *feri uictores* of the west.”<sup>45</sup> Corinth therefore becomes a powerful symbol of cultural identity, not only of Romanization, but also of possible conflicts between different cultures.

Greece and Rome, however, are not the only pillars on which the novel’s (and Apuleius’) complex cultural identity rests. Augustine’s familiarity with the *Metamorphoses*, the praise of Carthage in the rhetorical works, and some of the rather critical views of Roman imperialism seen in, for example,

the confrontation between the gardener and the soldier are all, for Graverini, possible hints at a “provincial” reading of the *Metamorphoses*: Africa has therefore to be taken into account as a possible, or even primary, “market” for the novel. This leads to a detailed critique of Dowden’s arguments for a novel specifically written in Rome for a Roman audience: Graverini points out, for example, that the spatial markers used by Dowden to support his claim of Roman readership are recognizable much more widely; that Rome was not the only center of literary production; and that Africa was home to a sophisticated populace, alert to the literary and philosophical references in the *Florida* (though he stresses that Apuleius’ works were also heard and enjoyed by the non-elite). While, as Graverini adds, the *Metamorphoses* is fictionally written at Rome, Lucius’ identity as *Madaurensem* seems designed to appeal to an African readership. Moving toward a model of cultural mediation rather than conflict and resistance, Graverini states that “Apuleius’ works display a dynamic of integration, emulation, and even possibly competition that links the center and periphery of the Empire in the pursuit of a common cultural ideal.”<sup>46</sup> He parts ways somewhat with Finkelpearl’s arguments in the Dido chapter, supporting (as he does in the present volume) a picture less combative and more integrative but continuing to counter the Romanocentric reading: “the geography of the novel does not in any way press us to place Rome (and Rome alone) at the heart of Apuleius’ interests.”<sup>47</sup> (This last sentiment finds recent support in Méthy 2011, 162: “Rome n’est plus, dès lors, ni patrie ni grande.”)

The past decade or so has seen widespread attention to Apuleius’ cultural identity, as is natural in an academic climate turning toward cultural studies. Several pieces in the Kahane and Laird volume (2001) address Apuleius’ (or Lucius’) self-identification in the prologue. Yun Lee Too (“Losing the Author’s Voice: Cultural and Personal Identities in the *Metamorphoses* Prologue”) examines the way the prologue confronts its readers with a multiplicity of cultural influences and backgrounds but simultaneously “shows ‘origins’ to be an arbitrary idea and signifier.”<sup>48</sup> She calls attention to the confusing set of cultural markers that are presented within the prologue *as deliberately confusing*: not only Greek, Latin, and Egyptian but a Greek identity that is impossible in its regional variety (Corinth, Sparta, Athens), as well as multiple linguistic identities that do not necessarily seem aligned with cultural identities. The end result, as Too suggests via a comparison with contemporary identity politics, is that Apuleius and Lucius are simultaneously many things and that fixed or single identity is refused; “Apuleius is neither Greek nor Roman but Madauran, yet he is acculturated as Greek and Roman.”<sup>49</sup> Katherine Clarke (“Prologue and Provenance: *Quis ille?* or *Unde ille?*”) emphasizes the way the Latin language and Rome itself are de-centered, made foreign. The reader “is forced to realign his view of the world from one with Rome at the center to one where Rome can be seen as being on the fringes.”<sup>50</sup> Mark Edwards (“Reflections on the African Character of Apuleius”) situates Apuleius among slightly later Christian Africans like

Tertullian and Lactantius, who are also negotiating bilingualism and their status on the periphery. Edwards states that “the Latin culture of Africa is the best, if not the only, Latin culture of its time; yet its exponents know that they are not at the heart of the Roman world.”<sup>51</sup>

Any consideration of the cultural markers in the *Metamorphoses* must begin with the recognition that it is adapted from the original Greek *Metamorphoseis*, of which the *Onos* is perhaps an epitome, and consider the cultural positioning of the author of that work. Edith Hall argues that the original Greek *Metamorphoseis* “may well have been the most subversive ancient novel ever written,”<sup>52</sup> noting especially the mechanism by which the reader is given a “double vision” of society through the eyes of an aristocrat temporarily transformed into a slave. This double vision “produces a deeply ambivalent perspective on the Greek provinces’ relationships with the Roman imperial administration.” While the “ideal” Greek romances are set nostalgically in the pre-Roman Greek past, effacing Rome, the *Onos* takes place in the early second century in Achaea under Roman rule. The hero and his brother, “who both have stereotypically Roman names,” are from Patras, a city that had been given privileged status by Augustus and had long held a particularly strong allegiance to Rome. “The choice of this city for the hero’s provenance marks him out as a privileged member of the hyper-elite, descended from and especially loyal to and beloved by the Romans.”<sup>53</sup> Hall notes a number of instances in which the text signals a failure of the Roman imperial administration; for example, the market gardener is treated arrogantly by the Roman soldier (who speaks Latin to him) but then beats his oppressor (*Onos* 44). The presentation of these incidents would have been enjoyable to a provincial Greek audience.

While Hall asserts that most of these anti-Roman sentiments have been erased in Apuleius, Finkelpearl (2007) compares the evocations of Rome and Roman imperial power in the *Onos* and Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*, arguing that Apuleius reproduces and intensifies his source’s negative view of Roman power in the provinces, though “pseudo-Lucian” is writing from Roman Greece and Apuleius from Roman North Africa. The endings diverge, however, with Loukios, the main character of the *Onos*, re-joining the Romanized elite of Patras, and Lucius assimilating uncomfortably to life in Rome. Despite his success as an advocate in the Roman courts, the culturally hybrid Lucius describes himself as speaking anomalous Latin and feeling most comfortable in a foreign cult. Jean Alvares (2007), in an essay contrasting the conclusions of Greek novels with the ending of the *Metamorphoses*, also sees the “becoming Roman” of Lucius as problematic, and takes the portrait of the unsuccessful assimilation of the provincial as semi-autobiographical: “Apuleius presents a similar figure who tried to move from the provincial margins to the center. His reader might suspect that Apuleius expresses through the *Metamorphoses* some ambivalence concerning his own Romanization, for Lucius’ career is hardly a hearty advertisement for such cultural abandonment.” He suggests that Apuleius “may be

mocking those ambitious folk who go to Rome and do not realize they can never fit in.”<sup>54</sup>

In “Marsyas the Satyr and Apuleius of Madauros” (2009), Finkelpearl once again approaches the question of Apuleius’ cultural identity using *Florida* 3 (Marsyas and Apollo) as a possible way into the subjectivity of the African provincial. Her argument is ultimately that Apuleius expresses via the two antagonists “a dual and conflicted sense of Romano-African identity”<sup>55</sup> and an uncomfortable hybridity, portraying aspects of himself in both Marsyas and Apollo, the barbarian and the Greco-Roman. The Marsyas myth has become in Apuleius’ hands a story of the clash of cultures—the beautiful Greek Apollo versus the hairy, bestial barbarian Marsyas—where the musical contest is hardly present. Critics have almost universally seen the excerpt as referring to some rhetorical contest between Apuleius and a rival, in which Apuleius is identified as the beautiful Apollo; we are meant to rejoice in the defeat of his ineloquent opponent. Finkelpearl, by contrast, draws attention to aspects of Marsyas’ speech that echo Apuleius’ own language in the *Apology* and *Metamorphoses* and to the ambivalent attitude toward Apollo’s outward beauty. Marsyas becomes a double figure here, uncouth and ridiculous but also rather Apuleian. Apuleius, she argues, is not simply Apollo but also Marsyas.

Finkelpearl then considers the relationship between “provincial” and “barbarian.” Would an elite Romanized provincial in any way be equated to/assimilated to or call himself “barbarian”? She points out the way that Apuleius and his in-laws both try to associate the other with barbarism in the *Apology*. Fronto, too, famously calls himself a barbarian like Anacharsis and likewise worries about whether he might exhibit something barbarous in his letters (*M. Caes.* 1.5.10). The complex tone here is important; Apuleius and Fronto may be using “that familiar strategy of out-groups” in laying claim “humbly, defiantly, and ironically”<sup>56</sup> to this barbarian identity. As Benjamin Isaac says, “it is undoubtedly true that native Roman aristocrats tended to blur the distinction between a provincial Roman aristocrat and a native Phoenician, Syrian or other provincial.”<sup>57</sup> In the Marsyas extract, then, Apuleius portrays a dual identity, as an assimilated “Roman” and as “barbarian.”

To come full circle in this survey, the view of Rome as the *telos* of the *Metamorphoses* is still very much alive in different forms. In *AAGA* 3 (2012), Stefan Tilg argues that Lucius’ “Romecoming” (Keulen’s phrase) “is also a document of Apuleius’ search for his place in this [the Latin literary] tradition.”<sup>58</sup> The ending in Rome is crucial because here “Lucius reveals himself as a Roman prose-*uates* of the Second Sophistic, a veritable new order of learning (*doctrina*) which he can justly claim to have brought from Greece to Rome.”<sup>59</sup> Tilg argues that the purpose of the Isiac ending was not so much the introduction of foreignness for its own sake but that “Apuleius deliberately ‘exoticized’ the Isis book to advertise his work and draw readers.”<sup>60</sup> The real aim was to create a catchy enough and serious enough

ending to secure his reputation at Rome among Latin writers. Dowden in the same volume also stresses the importance of the closural gesture of the horizontal return to the “Rome of the Prologue,” while defining a vertical geography as well: the passage of the soul through the elements to the divine.<sup>61</sup>

### 3. “AFRICAN LATIN”

The one area in which Apuleius’ African origins have long been an issue and a matter of debate is that of “African Latin,” or *Africitas*, as it was termed in 1531 by Juan Luis Vives. Noting the stylistic exuberance (or *tumor Africus*) of a number of African authors, including Apuleius, Fronto, Tertullian, and Augustine, scholars at various periods have imputed what they see as an unfortunate turgid style to the racial characteristics of Africans. Stylistic studies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, uncovered very few grammatical or linguistic peculiarities in the language of these authors that are not found in the Latin of Rome and the other provinces. Other studies have postulated that schools of rhetoric in North Africa may have fostered a euphuistic style. Little more needs to be said here since Silvia Mattiacci’s contribution to this volume reviews the history of *Africitas* in careful detail.

The issues here are several: the objectionable racial associations of stylistic exuberance with Africans made by critics during the Renaissance and the nineteenth century are obviously a thing of the past, but in dismissing the racism, critics may too hastily have gone in the other direction. Instead, new work on the cultural diversity of the provinces makes the prospect of regional differences in Latin seem altogether likely (as shown specifically in the work of James Noel Adams).<sup>62</sup> The dearth of linguistic and grammatical features distinguishing the Latin of African writers must be separated from stylistic features that may have been promoted by local schools of rhetoric or by the habits of bilingualism; spoken Latin or subliterate written Latin will differ from the written Latin of the highly educated elite, who tended to suppress Punic features; in any case, there is little other contemporary Latin with which to compare that of Africa.

Mattiacci’s contribution to this volume incorporates new studies on bilingualism, multiculturalism, and regional variations in Latin. She concludes that there did exist a spoken and subliterate African Latin that was influenced by native languages and that there was a tradition of schools that fostered a particular unique style in literary Latin. She also discusses the experimental nature of the language of the writer who is bi- or trilingual and is writing in a language not quite his own (a suggestion made previously by Edward John Kenney and John Gwyn Griffiths).<sup>63</sup> Lara Nicolini’s work on Apuleian wordplay (2011) suggests that it is this multi-lingualism that prompts Apuleius to stand back from the language as if it is alien,

and to be linguistically inventive.<sup>64</sup> In this volume, Daniel L. Selden suggests that Apuleius’ exuberant style is in part a traditional feature of Afro-Asiatic languages. In short, there are a number of new angles to explore in the old problem of *Africitas*.

### 4. THIS VOLUME

This is an eclectic volume. We begin with several papers setting the historical context, situating Apuleius in his time and in our world: Keith Bradley describes the audible and visible North African backdrop as well as the apparatus of Roman rule seen in Apuleius’ rhetorical works. Carlos F. Noreña investigates Apuleius’ relationship to that apparatus, emphasizing the mechanisms of Roman law in the provinces and Apuleius’ subordination of his intellectual achievements to the “higher principles of Roman law and justice.” Julia Haig Gaisser offers a history of the survival of manuscripts, stressing the importance of Africa in that survival because of Apuleius’ importance for Augustine, a fellow African; followers of Augustine preserved Apuleius’ works because of their centrality for the African saint. Joseph Farrell connects Apuleius’ rise to prominence (as shown by the increase in Apuleian scholarship as well as his appearance on graduate school reading lists) with our own globalization and internationalization as a community of scholars.

The next set of papers focuses on the cultural and literary-linguistic context. Silvia Mattiacci revisits the questions of “*Africitas*,” incorporating new studies in bilingualism and allowing for a limited and revised conception of the presence of an African Latin in Apuleius. Both Luca Graverini and Wytse Keulen explore the complexity with which Apuleius (and his somewhat older contemporary, Fronto) approach and negotiate their Romano-African identities in their works. Keulen compares the careers of the two ambitious African intellectuals and the different ways they “negotiate and articulate the paradoxes and tensions of Roman identity” in relation to the land of their birth. Graverini examines the process of “cultural integration” effected in the *Metamorphoses* in the representation of Carthage both directly (at 6.4.1–3) and via the city of Hypata, which becomes a substitute Carthage through a series of Vergilian allusions. David L. Stone explores the concept of “identification” rather than “identity” in the *Metamorphoses*, concluding that its characters find and live their identities in terms other than ethnicity. Looking beyond the literary sphere, Emmanuel and Nedjima Plantade locate indigenous North African folktale elements in an examination of certain anomalies in the Cupid and Psyche tale.

The final section experiments in various ways with literary theory and with locating Apuleius firmly in Africa and the east more generally. Selden makes a connection between material culture and language, seeing the conglomeration of stylistic elements in architecture mirrored in linguistic

elements, and locates Apuleius' effusive style firmly in the tradition of Afro-Asiatic languages. Sonia Sabnis, using various methodologies from post-colonial theory (Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Graham Huggan on the post-colonial exotic) argues that Apuleius rejects the exoticized view of India that predominates in Roman texts and might have had access to a different tradition when he describes the castes of India and the mouths of the Nile. Richard Fletcher, using Jacques Derrida's concept of the "prosthesis of origins," argues that Apuleius' African identity as well as his identity as a philosopher are contested and that Apuleius affirms both by interrogating the notion of "origin" itself. Benjamin Todd Lee notes that the abbreviation A.V. in the *Florida* manuscripts, which only an African would understand, challenges us to interpret the work from an African perspective, which is a strategy at the heart of post-colonial theory. He continues by interpreting Apuleius in terms of two theoretical approaches, those of sociologist Pawan Dhingra on multiple and situational identities and of Chantal Zabus on the "palimpsest."

It should be obvious from the overview above that this volume takes a variety of approaches and focuses on different aspects of Apuleius' "situatedness" in the several cultures of North Africa. The papers range in methodology from fairly traditional socio-historical analysis to contemporary literary and cultural theory. They make claims for a range of embeddedness for Apuleius' works in the African context, from Noreña's implicit assertion that it is Rome and its authority that forms the focal point for Apuleius, through discussion of different ways to negotiate the varying cultural landscapes (as in, e.g., Keulen's essay), and finally to a bolder assertion of the outright presence of indigenous North African elements (as in Emmanuel and Nedjima Plantade on folklore or Selden on Afro-Asiatic poetics). Several essays also make a plea for the consideration of the importance of the physical manuscripts in North Africa (Gaisser, Lee). As we stated at the outset, the aim was to gather a group of scholars with differing perspectives and to see what emerged.

We believe that some of what has emerged reaffirms traditional and emerging views on the cultural context; Rome retains its importance as the hegemonic power and signs of its authority are everywhere; the world of Madauros and Carthage is also a world with its own indigenous cultures—Punic and Libyac—and signs of the dual (and triple) nature of the world are constantly before the eyes of its inhabitants. But many essays in the volume have experimented, with or without the aid of critical theory, with treating Apuleius as someone whose origins in North Africa have mattered deeply in the composition of his oeuvre.

There is much that remains to be done. Above all, we would like to see a productive conversation between literary studies, socio-historical studies, and the study of material culture in the unraveling of provincial identities. So far, literature and philosophy have remained at the margins of these conversations. This is meant as a beginning.

## NOTES

1. Harrison 2000, 3. Harrison 2013 reiterates this point: "The evidence examined above shows that Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* has almost no North African identity, and no detectable Punic colour; apart from the local links momentarily and shockingly indicated in the famous *Madaurensis*, the novel could have been written in any part of the Roman empire. Even the references to Punic and to Carthaginian history in Apuleius' speeches for Roman North African audiences are few and far from positive, and in the one passage where he discusses his own region of origin he is at pains to stress that it is not Punic, despite the probability that Punic was his first language." Important is also Dowden 1994, downplaying the Punic or North African element but arguing, unlike Harrison, for composition and a reading public at Rome. See further below.
2. For more on Apuleius' life, see Harrison 2000, 1–10; Apuleius' own *Apology*; Birley 1971, 25–33; Fantham 1996, 252–262. See further on Keith Bradley's contributions below.
3. Bradley 2005, 3.
4. See again Bradley 2005, 11, who also describes the whole array of Roman buildings and the extensive building program of Antoninus Pius.
5. See, e.g., Mattingly 2011, 3–42; Hingley 1996. Revell 2009, 8, declaring that these debates are a thing of the past, refers to the "post-Romanization intellectual climate." Fentress 2006, however, retains the term "Romanization," though with an altered perspective.
6. His more recent book (Woolf 2011) pursues some of the same issues, with an ethnographic slant.
7. For example, Webster 2001. On elite-driven cultural change, see, e.g., Millett 1990.
8. With regard to resistance, earlier work by Bénabou 1976 in particular stressed North African native resistance and revolt. The approach is less popular now than "negotiation," but see below on Mattingly's suggestions of a resistance of sorts based on artistic or architectural styles.
9. Mattingly 2011, 29, differentiates his approach from that of Said 1993, who defined "discrepant experience" more as a polarity or binary between the perspectives of colonizer and colonized. Mattingly sets out his terms in greater detail in his 2004 work.
10. Mattingly 2011, 213.
11. See Selden in this volume on the difference between hybridity and the juxtaposition of different styles of architecture.
12. Revell 2009, 8.
13. Isaac 2004.
14. See O'Donnell's account of the Conference at [www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/algeria/algeria-conference.html](http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/algeria/algeria-conference.html) (accessed January 8, 2014).
15. Woolf 2003.
16. Elsner 2001, 128. See also Whitmarsh 2005, on Lucian's identities.
17. Whitmarsh 1998. Whitmarsh pursues the same questions in Whitmarsh 2013.
18. Stephens 2008.
19. Revell 2009, 1–38, provides a good background to the question for archaeological studies. Some other studies and collections not yet mentioned include Ando 2000; Gruen 2010; Laurence–Berry 1998; C. Edwards–Woolf 2003.
20. Mattingly 2011, 240. The quotation is from Carroll 2006, 258–259. See also Stone–Stirling 2007.

21. Mattingly 2011, 241.
22. See the American Academy of Rome website. Quotations are taken from [www.aarome.org/news/features/jerome-lecturer-david-mattingly-rewrites-roman-north-africa](http://www.aarome.org/news/features/jerome-lecturer-david-mattingly-rewrites-roman-north-africa) (accessed January 8, 2014) with further details.
23. Woolf 1998; Ando 2000.
24. Graverini 2012, 85–86.
25. See, for example, Graverini 2012, 186–188; Alvares 2007, 9–10; Penwill 1990, 223–236.
26. See GCA 2007, 83–86, along with references and discussion throughout Kahane–Laird 2001. Harrison 1990 has also argued that the speaker is neither Lucius nor Apuleius but the book itself.
27. GCA 2007, *ad loc.*; Powell 2001, 30–32; Clarke 2001; see further below.
28. Hall 1995; see further below; also Graverini 2012, 196: “we clearly find here a vivid representation of the arrogance and brutality with which the centralized power of the Empire occasionally manifested itself.” Finkelpearl 2007.
29. Harrison 2013. In this passage, however, if Isis had mentioned *Caelestis* or another local deity, she would have had to deny that this was her true name.
30. See, for example, Hunink 1997, 2: 81–86; Mattingly 1994, 29; Méthy 1983, 41; Finkelpearl 2009, 25–26. See also Mattiacci, Keulen, Selden, and Fletcher in this volume.
31. See Finkelpearl 2009, 26.
32. Lee 2005, *ad loc.*, says “not enough can be said about the ideological significance of this section.” See also Hunink 2001, *ad loc.*
33. Isaac 2004.
34. Méthy 1983, 41; Birley 1971, 25. See also the essay on the Jim O’Donnell *Apologia* website, “Is Apuleius a Roman?” (a separate issue, of course). Bradley 2005, 24, and Mattingly 1994, 29, discuss these issues in general but do not opine on Apuleius’ ethnicity. Also see Mattiacci in this volume.
35. Bradley 2005, 24.
36. Mattingly 1994, 29; Harrison 2000, 4–5.
37. Dowden 1994. Many of these points are refuted in Graverini 2002, 67–74, and Graverini 2012, 182–193. See Gaiser and Lee in this volume on the survival of manuscripts and the audience for Apuleius’ works in North Africa.
38. Rosati 2003.
39. See above; also Harrison 1998, 64 f. Note also that there was not sufficient discussion of these issues to merit a section in Schlam–Finkelpearl 2000.
40. Bradley 2012, 164–180.
41. Bradley 2005, 22.
42. Bradley 2005, 21–22. See also Bradley 1997.
43. Finkelpearl 1998, 133.
44. Finkelpearl 1998, 115–148.
45. Graverini 2012, 174.
46. Graverini 2012, 202.
47. Graverini 2012, 205.
48. Too 2001, 178.
49. Too 2001, 187.
50. Clarke 2001, 109.
51. M. Edwards 2001, 48.
52. Hall 1995, 57.
53. All quotations are from Hall 1995, 51.
54. Finkelpearl 2009, 7.
55. Alvares 2007, 9–10.
56. Finkelpearl 2009, 29.
57. Finkelpearl 2009, 28, quoting Isaac 2004, 333.

58. Tilg 2012, 152.
59. Tilg 2012, 155.
60. Tilg 2012, 152.
61. Also in AAGA 3, Finkelpearl argues that Apuleius takes a very different approach from Plutarch in the representation of Egypt. While Plutarch erases or Hellenizes Egypt (e.g., “Isis is a Greek name” at *DIO* 2.351 f.) and allegorizes elements of Egyptian cult into the form of Platonic philosophy, Apuleius, via Lucius, describes features of Isiac cult in more objective terms, preserving the foreignness.
62. Adams 2007.
63. Kenney 1990, 2. Griffiths 1975, 59: “The lush inventiveness shown by Apuleius may be assigned in part to the attitude of a writer to whom Latin was not a mother tongue.” See, however, the objections by Farrell in this volume.
64. Nicolini 2011, 31–37.

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Part I

## Historical Contexts

# 1 Apuleius' *Apology*

## Text and Context<sup>1</sup>

*Keith Bradley*

This brief contribution outlines some of the historical circumstances that may be useful for or relevant to understanding Apuleius' *Apology*. On one view the work is a fiction, a form of sophisticated, even playful, entertainment intended for an audience of elite *littérateurs* who recognized the literary learning the text displays, but who also understood that the trial it seems to presume never took place. This view cannot be refuted, but in what follows it is rejected and the assumption made that the *Apology* derives from a real event in 158/159 when Apuleius was tried on charges of magical practice at Tripolitanian Sabratha before the governor of Africa Proconsularis, Claudius Maximus. Its great length may mean that in its present form the *Apology* is an amplified version of the speech Apuleius actually gave at Sabratha, perhaps set down at Carthage in the 160s, but the second starting assumption is that it nevertheless reflects matters that were dealt with in the court of the provincial governor. A speech made at a trial by the younger Pliny half a century earlier had lasted for several hours (*Epist.* 2.11.14).

The literary learning the *Apology* displays (*doctrina*) is evident from an important collection of textual comparanda that allows sophistic influence to be inferred and emphasized. How Apuleius acquired his learning is a question that is not yet fully resolved, but the period of study he spent in Athens as a young man (cf. *Flor.* 20.4), probably in the mid-140s, is pertinent. There he can be expected to have encountered a number of those figures memorably recorded by category in Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists*. Other influences may simultaneously have been at work. Topographically then as now the Acropolis dominated Athens, and as Pausanias (1.1.2–1.30.3) was soon to see and relate there were striking monuments everywhere from the city's glorious past. Such monuments were, however, as Pausanias' record makes clear, items of ancient history, symbols of a power that had long since vanished; and equally if not more impressive to the visitor's eye were the Roman monuments, particularly those associated with Hadrian—the great library and the temple to Hera and Zeus Panheltenios he had built, the agora he had enhanced, and the majestic Olympieion

he had brought to completion. There was also the gate erected nearby with its bold inscriptions that advertised Hadrian's personal appropriation of the city: "This is Athens, the former city of Theseus. This is the city of Hadrian and not of Theseus." One statement looked to the Acropolis, the other to the Ilissus. Athens was a Roman city, and as such a lesson to any visitor in contemporary political reality.<sup>2</sup>

As a Romano-African provincial Apuleius may well have long been aware of the impact Hadrian had made as emperor. People in the African provinces remembered a multitude of benefits Hadrian had showered on them, once relieving a five-year drought by his very presence (*Hist. Aug., Hadr.* 13.4, 22.14). Just after Apuleius' birth he had visited the troops stationed on Rome's southern frontier, addressing them on the importance of military preparedness and vigilance, and at some point the city of Carthage, where Apuleius studied as a boy (cf. *Flor.* 18.15, 20.3), was renamed after him, or so it was said (*Hist. Aug., Hadr.* 20.4). To anyone traveling in the Mediterranean as Apuleius did, the signs of Hadrian's power and magnificence were visible far and wide, both in the great builder's monumental architecture and especially in the images of him, now a god, that were everywhere to be seen (cf. Paus. 1.18.6). At Athens alone almost a hundred dedications have been identified, including images in the old agora and, together with that of Zeus Olympios, in the Olympieion. It is not surprising that Apuleius knew his poems (*Apol.* 11.3–4), and not a coincidence that the Lucius of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* bears a certain resemblance to the figure whom Tertullian (*Apol.* 5.7) was to describe as *omnium curiositatum explorator*. Hadrian was a figure to linger in the imagination.<sup>3</sup>

From this perspective sophistry may emerge as an expression of Greek subjection to Roman power. No practitioner, after all, could challenge the master of thirty legions (*Hist. Aug., Hadr.* 15.13), and its exponents, "voluble expounders of the commonplace who paraded the world in vanity and splendour," were not the most obvious models for a defendant in a criminal trial before a Roman provincial governor to emulate consciously. Other circumstantial factors may accordingly be of benefit for understanding both the knowledge that Apuleius displayed in his speech and the speech as a whole. A record of a trial is a document that requires a broad context. Evidence of socially deviant behavior might be anticipated, and the literary understood as one among a cluster of significant historical elements.<sup>4</sup>

Apuleius addressed his defense to a governor who after preliminary consideration heard the case with his *consilium*. The trial was not a trial by jury, therefore, but an example of the procedure historians commonly call *cognitio extra ordinem*, comparable to the procedure followed in the trials of Jesus before Pilate and of the apostle Paul before Felix and Festus as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. (So also in the trial of Paul at Iconium before Castellius as recounted in the fictional *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.) It was characterized by three elements: "the free

formulation of charges and penalties, summed up in the lawyer's phrase *arbitrium iudicantis*"; "the insistence on a proper formal act of accusation by the interested party"; and the hearing of a case "by the holder of *imperium* in person on his tribunal, and assisted by his advisory cabinet or *consilium* of friends and officials." The early sections of the *Apology* indicating how the trial arose (*Apol.* 1–2) are consistent with these criteria. The charges against Apuleius were brought by Sicinius Aemilianus in the name of his nephew Sicinius Pudens, respectively the brother and the son of the deceased first husband of Apuleius' wife Pudentilla.<sup>5</sup>

The most important feature of *cognitio extra ordinem* was its flexibility. Accusations of magical practice involved threats to public order, and charges were permissible without dependence on or reference to Roman statute law (the *leges* of the *ordo*). The formal basis of the trial is often taken to be the Sullan *lex Cornelia de sicariis ac ueneficiis* of 81 BCE, but procedurally the requirement of a *lex* was unnecessary. Whether indeed the *lex Cornelia* covered charges of magic in the late 150s is unknown: the legal texts that may suggest so are too late to be fully convincing. Notably, however, although he was familiar enough with other statutes (cf. *Apol.* 88.3; *Met.* 8.24), Apuleius makes no mention of the *lex Cornelia*. The *Apology* can accordingly be understood from one point of view to represent the exercise of customary jurisdiction on the part of a Roman proconsul when a potential threat to public well-being was at issue in which the capacity for discretion was all-important, and to be appropriate to a system of governance that was not in any modern sense bureaucratic. If required, and under Hadrian and Antoninus Pius it frequently was, guidance from the emperor could be sought.<sup>6</sup>

Claudius Maximus sat on a tribunal to hear Apuleius' case (*Apol.* 85.2), on a raised platform, that is, of the type from which Roman justice was traditionally dispensed. There may have been eight or so assessors with him—a proconsul of Sardinia in 69 heard a case accompanied by his legate, his quaestor, and six other consiliars—and as everyone knew the parties involved in the hearing had to stand and to look up to the governor and his attendants (cf. *Apul., Flor.* 9.10: *tribunal ascendit*). The tribunal in this instance can be precisely located: it was situated in an apse on the southern side of a large rectangular basilica that lay off the forum of Sabratha opposite the basilica's main entrance. The trial took place, that is to say, within an identifiably enclosed space that dated back to the Flavian era—its remains can still be seen—but it was a colonnaded not a walled space and may well therefore have admitted sounds, the sound of the sea, for instance, and smells such as that of fish that came from the *garum* manufactories close by. (Production of *garum* was one of Sabratha's principal occupations). It also allowed the proceedings within to be heard outside, perhaps provided relief from an oppressively high temperature, if the trial were to be placed, as is possible, between April and September 158, and permitted passersby to drift through and to watch the trial if they were sufficiently curious. Altogether

the archaeology of Sabratha contributes to recovery of the setting, and the texture of the setting, in which Apuleius' trial took place.<sup>7</sup>

Who might those passersby have been? Apuleius addressed his remarks in large part to the principals of the hearing: his judge, the *consilium*, his accusers, and the various witnesses who were summoned. There were moments, however, when a broader appeal may have been made. Although possibly exaggerating he speaks once of a *multitudo* of listeners (*Apol.* 28.3).

In the cities of Roman North Africa it was a matter of pride for those who were well educated to be able to claim, or to have claimed on their behalf, full command of Latin and Greek and an accompanying devotion to intellectual pursuits (*studia*). Funerary inscriptions provide the evidence. Q. Julius Felix from Cirta and the equestrian Julius Rusticianus from Calama were men who according to epitaphs that identify them both died at young ages, but who had long been dedicated to learning nonetheless, just as Apuleius, in his early thirties at the time of his trial, could also claim: *ab ineunte aeuo unis studiis litterarum ex summis uiribus deditus* (*Apol.* 5.1). Another epitaph identifies the *clarissimus uir* P. Flavius Pudens Pomponianus, who was notable for having added a Roman shine to his Attic eloquence: *Atticam facundiam adaequant Romano nitore*. One gifted individual from Thibilis, a man again comparable to Apuleius, was according to the inscription that commemorates him an accomplished declaimer, with a talent for extemporizing, and the author of various literary works: philosophical dialogues, epistles, pastorals, and eclogues. Such evidence illustrates how the lives of the provincial upper classes in Roman Africa were permeated by the oratorical and literary traditions of the metropolis; and in turn these traditions can be seen to complement other local indications of Roman culture (*Romanitas*), the Roman architecture of cities like Sabratha for instance or even the dispensation of Roman justice by an all-powerful provincial governor. At Claudius Maximus' assizes, there may well have been certain *domi nobiles* of the sort just mentioned who heard Apuleius' defense, men in a position to respond knowingly to the literary richness of his presentation. Some may have traveled from other cities for the occasion. Perhaps there were some learned women, too, such as the Julia Paula who died at the age of sixteen and whose epitaph, from Ammaedara, contains the triumphant line: *omnes uicisti specie doctrina puellas*. The bookish Pudentilla will be kept in mind (cf. *Apol.* 73.1).<sup>8</sup>

Roman society, however, was sharply pyramidal in character, and individuals of this kind can never have been more than a minuscule fraction of the population at large. But if any wider audience heard Apuleius' speech it must have comprised in the main people from Sabratha's working community: merchants, shopkeepers, artisans, manufacturers, bankers, business agents—the vast proportion of the ancient population on whose labor the studiously refined lifestyle of the socially privileged always depended. They are typified by the *artifex* Cornelius Saturninus, who had fashioned

for Apuleius a statuette of Mercury in his workshop, seemingly at Oea (*Apol.* 61.5–8), and by the local fishermen (*piscatores*) from whom he had procured, or was thought to have procured, specimens of sea creatures for his scientific researches (*Apol.* 29.3). They are the people whose simple *sepulcrales* may now often be seen, in abundance, in provincial Roman museums.<sup>9</sup>

Slave traders are one category of merchants to consider. In a clever allusion to Catullus and other authors from the literary canon, Apuleius at one point in his speech stung Sicinius Aemilianus with the slighting remark *etiam libenter te nuper usque albus an ater esses ignorauit* (*Apol.* 16.9). The remark is meant to indicate that until shortly before the trial Apuleius had known little about his opponent, and it forms part of an assault in which Apuleius contrasts his own life of brilliant enlightenment, as he sees it, with the dark ignorance of Aemilianus' existence. The forceful terms of reference, however, suggest a keen sensitivity to skin color in Roman culture and a notable presence of black people in the immediate environment of which advantage could be taken. This can be visually confirmed by material evidence, especially that of the mosaics with which prosperous North Africans like Apuleius and Pudentilla carpeted the floors and walls of their luxurious villas and town houses, where figures with a markedly dark complexion such as fowlers, camel drivers, and bath workers are sometimes portrayed. They represent the product in all likelihood of a trade in slaves from the sub-Saharan region of Lake Chad and the Niger Bend along routes, developed in later history by Islamic slave traders, that led directly to the cities of Tripolitania, Sabratha included. The Garamantes of the Fezzan were the key agents of the operation, a people known from recent discoveries to have controlled, from their capital at Garama, one thousand kilometers south of Oea, complex trading networks that linked the interior of the African continent with the northern coastal regions of Roman Africa. The dealers will always have been visible in the forum of Sabratha, as well as the traders who distributed to destinations throughout the Mediterranean the goods made of ivory, or the raw material itself, that they had likewise brought from the interior: in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni at Ostia the symbol of the *statio Sabratensium* was an elephant. They were men of the kind, the *Sabrathe[nses] ex Af[r]ica*, who marked in 138 the consecration of Diva Sabina Augusta in Rome.<sup>10</sup>

Workers from the extensive fishing industry of Sabratha are another category. A substantial proportion of the *Apology* is devoted to rebutting the allegation that Apuleius had obtained rare sorts of fish for sinister magical purposes (*Apol.* 29–41). This can hardly be an accident and should be attributed to the importance of fishing in the economy of the cities and towns of Tripolitania. The extensive production of *garum* at Sabratha that is known from archaeology has already been mentioned, but before production could occur fish had to be harvested from the sea, and the labor

this involved is again illustrated—quite literally—by the prolific evidence of mosaics. Observe this description of a seascape shown in the Villa of the Nile mosaic from Lepcis Magna:

Three muscular youths are exerting themselves to pull the fishing nets up onto the land; near them is a large basket. On the sea one fisherman is drawing a net, while another one who has hooked a great bass is holding out in his right hand a basket in which to land the fish. Behind this fisherman an old man is seated, intent on fixing the bait to his hook.

Other mosaics are full of comparably realistic details, illustrating particularly the differing techniques by which fishermen made their catches, with lines and traps and the casting and drawing of nets. Afterwards the fish were sold, and wholesalers were sometimes involved. From his time in Athens Apuleius may have known that Hadrian once ordered publication in the Piraeus of a letter through which steps were taken to prevent undue profiteering in the selling and supplying of fish at Eleusis.<sup>11</sup>

Mosaics displayed the power the prosperous few exercised over the laboring many, as well as the social distance that lay between them. Apuleius makes clear that Pudentilla was a slave-owning magnate (*Apol.* 93.4). But if people of the sort described represent the majority of those who passed through the basilica of Sabratha during Apuleius' trial, they are hardly likely to have had at their disposal the *doctrina* of the socially elite. Nor are they likely to have been preoccupied with Greek sophistry and the problem of asserting Greek identity under Roman rule that sophistry is sometimes thought to embody. This makes it all the more plausible that the only real object of Apuleius' attention was the party on the tribunal, although even so there is no reason to presume that every learned reference was immediately recognized by every member. Whatever the importance attached to memorization in the upper-class Roman educational curriculum, as understood above all perhaps from Quintilian's *Institute*, it cannot be expected that the men who governed Rome's empire were constantly thinking only of Greek and Latin literature and wondering who among those who appeared before them, when hearings were held, could produce the most intellectual or literarily allusive of speeches. Provincial governors were deluged with legal and administrative business, their time was fully occupied, and their level of tolerance might be challenged. When the apostle Paul gave his apologia to King Agrippa, Berenice, and Festus, he was met with the governor's firm interjection: "Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning (*grammata*) is driving you mad!" (*Acts* 26.24). In this connection it is worth recalling that by the age of sixty or so, the proconsul Claudius Maximus had fought in Trajan's Parthian war, governed armed provinces on the Danube, both before and after his consulship (ca. 144), supervised one of Italy's great trunk routes, and administered Rome's public works. He was "a remarkable

personality"—Apuleius called him a *uirum tam austerae sectae tamque diutinae militiae* (*Apol.* 19.2), that is, "a military man and an adept of the Stoic persuasion"—but he was not necessarily an academic.<sup>12</sup>

In his own person the proconsul was a symbol that the various indications of *Romanitas* mentioned earlier were cultural forms imposed on a region conquered and ruled by an alien power. As the references to slave trading and fishing suggest, however, the intrusion of *Romanitas* was not accompanied by an extrusion of all pre-existing social and cultural structures. Apuleius' trial and the events that preceded it in Oea (Tripoli), where Apuleius had met and married Pudentilla, took place in a culturally heterogeneous setting, one in which the Neo-Punic language was constantly to be heard and in which Punic religious forms were everywhere to be seen. Two items make the point: first, a Tunisian limestone relief in the British Museum showing a figure within an arched niche who is thought to be the relief's dedicator fulfilling a vow in return for the favor of a god. The full garment the figure wears, with long sleeves, many folds, and a pendant loop, hardly appears "Roman" at all, any more than the disk suspended from the necklace around his neck. Above the niche, in an upper register the goddess Tanit is depicted, holding grapes and pomegranates, and at the very bottom there is a Punic inscription. The relief belongs to the second century, the era of Apuleius, and makes as clear a statement as one could hope to find of the vitality and independence of local cultural idioms at this time, offsetting the impression created by the *Apology* that everything recounted there belongs to a world of unquestionable Latinized classicism. Secondly, the funerary monument of M. Vibius Tertullus and his family in the Yasmina cemetery in the southwestern quarter of Carthage, also from the second century. In a relief on its second story Tertullus appears as a man of Roman *doctrina*, holding and reading from a scroll as he sits in a high-backed chair above a depiction of Romulus and Remus with the She-Wolf. The monument itself, however, is a tower tomb of an indigenous North African architectural type, illustrating the ongoing fusion of local and imported cultural ideas. Formal Latin terms of governance were sometimes transcribed into Neo-Punic and apparently normal, and respectable, Roman names could be chosen for the associations or correspondences they bore with traditional Semitic names, which were predominantly theophoric in character. The names of Pudentilla and Pudens with their favorable moralistic connotations are especially apt examples.<sup>13</sup>

Apuleius himself was the product of a Romano-African background. In the community of Oea, however, he was on his own evidence an outsider (*Apol.* 68.4, 77.2), and this was the essential cause of the attack against him. The injurious effects of his marriage on the financial interests of powerful local families become clear in the second half of the *Apology*. Given the evidence as it is, the precise nature of his activities in Tripolitania in the pre-trial years will always be matters of controversy, and the argument Apuleius offered in his speech, that as a man of *doctrina* he had done no more than

make an intellectually dazzling splash, is evidently self-serving. Nonetheless, his detailed refutation of the magical allegations made against him implies a set of activities that could plausibly be construed before a Roman provincial governor as threats to public order in a local community. Corroboration comes from the so-called Greek magical papyri, the relevance of which to understanding the *Apology* has long been clear but is worth renewed emphasis.<sup>14</sup>

Together with *defixiones*, dream books and oracles, the magical papyri take the historian to the heart of what can be understood to be widespread and deeply held popular beliefs about the relationship between everyday human desires and divine, especially occult, power—to a world, that is, of popular religiosity. A number of details in the prescriptions the papyri contain for magical procedures stand out. First, to use a sexually inexperienced boy as a medium in divination is a standard element: by one means or another a boy can be put into a trance, with the predictable result that he might lose consciousness and collapse as though suffering an epileptic seizure. Second, linen is the fabric ubiquitously required for magical rituals: it can be used as a wrapper to conceal sacred objects or amulets, as a substance on which to write spells, as a sheet to put on the ground for the practitioner of magic to lie on (sometimes naked), as a covering with which to envelop a boy used as a medium, or simply to drape a lamp. It is also the fabric in which the virgins and gods who will appear when a Mithraic epiphany ritual is employed are expected to be dressed. Third, the sacred objects kept in linen wrappings are sometimes figurines—their use in magical practices was common—and frequently the figurines are images of gods: Apollo, Selene, Eros, Hermes. One type, however, is that of a skeleton. They can be made from a substance such as beeswax, but prescriptions for wooden images, and for particular types of wood, are conventional in magical spells as well: laurel for Apollo, olive for Selene, mulberry for Eros. If not made from wood they can be kept in a wooden shrine: juniper for a human figurine and lime wood for an image of Hermes. Juniper and ebony also appear in other ritualistic paraphernalia, with one love spell specifying that ebony is the special wood of Hermes (or Mercury, as Apuleius would call him), the god the spells describe as being “in charge of the power of understanding by which everything is managed,” the patron of public speaking who has justice in his province and who as Hermes Trismegistus is the “chief of all magicians.” Unsurprisingly magical rituals are to be practiced predominantly at night, sometimes beneath a full moon, and the instruction that accompanies one prescription, “So keep this in a secret place as a great mystery,” is enough to indicate their furtiveness. Frequently they require animal sacrifice in the form of burned offerings, and the animal of choice, at times to be offered specifically to Hermes-Mercury, is the rooster. (One example states that the bird’s head is to be cut off before its body is burned on an altar.) Finally, the divinity invoked in magical spells, whether named or not, is regularly addressed or described as “king” (*basileus*): “O king of

the heavenly gods,” “The king of all, ruling alone,” “King of kings,” “King of the heavens,” “King Osiris.”<sup>15</sup>

These details are striking to any reader of Apuleius’ speech, which records how he was accused at his trial, among other things, of having cast a spell in a secret spot on a slave boy who convulsed as though an epileptic (a lamp and a small altar were involved), of having secretly kept mysterious objects wrapped in a linen cloth, of having engaged in mysterious night-time rituals that left a residue of soot deposits from torches and birds’ feathers, and of having secretly had made a wooden figurine in the form of a skeleton that he called, in Greek, his king. This was the figurine of Mercury referred to earlier. Apuleius said in his defense that the statuette had been given to him as a gift, and although he acknowledged that the wood it was made from was ebony, he explained this as the choice of his conveniently dead stepson, Sicinius Pontianus. He refused, however, to admit whether he regarded the figurine of Mercury as his “king.”<sup>16</sup>

The details have not of course been randomly selected, but their correspondence with the charges brought against Apuleius cannot be coincidental. They make comprehensible in fact accusations that otherwise seem trivial, if not absurd, in view of Apuleius’ high-minded rationalizations of them, with full recourse to Plato and other giants of the literary and philosophical canon; and they provide a basis for imagining that suspicions of subversive behavior joined, in a clannish local community, with the suspicions that naturally attached to an alien adventurer to justify an appeal for the attention and intervention of the Roman governor. Observe in this connection the words of Thamyris to Paul and the similar situation presumed: “‘You have destroyed the city of the Iconians, and my betrothed, so that she will not have me. Let us go to the governor Castellius!’ And the whole crowd shouted: ‘Away with the sorcerer! For he has corrupted all our wives’” (*Acts of Paul and Thecla* 15).

That the *Apology* is an allusive text is to be expected: Latin literature was by nature systemically traditionalistic. But if a catalogue of textual citations may well illuminate the rich veins of *doctrina* the speech contains, the loss of much that was written in antiquity automatically imposes limits on what can be gathered from extant texts alone. Full appreciation of the *Apology* may benefit therefore from a complementary approach that in the manner sketched here draws on perspectives from law, archaeology, art, and religion, with stress falling on the particular and varied circumstances in which the text was produced. Apuleius himself points the way with his reference not only to extensive study but also to distant travels (*Apol.* 23.2, *longa peregrinatione et diutinis studiis*). Perhaps it was true that he had learned the names of mighty magicians, Carmendas, Damigeron, Moses, and many more, by reading in libraries (*Apol.* 90.6, 91.2); but travel brought other rewards of knowledge, as consideration of the period spent in Athens suggests. At one point Apuleius visited Hierapolis in Phrygia (*De mundo* 17), a city that in the second century was a prosperous center of textile production

and a magnet for tourists who came to bathe in the hot waters of its mineral springs. (Hadrian might have visited before him.) High above the plain where the rivers Maeander and Lycus met Hierapolis was also a place of the religiously exotic. Visitors encountered there Apollo Lairbenos, who took into his service the children and slaves of his devotees and received confessions of moral and religious lapses on inscriptions the penitents set up in the mountain shrine where the god was worshipped together with Leto. Apuleius saw nearby the crack in the surface of the earth that notoriously gave entrance to the Underworld, allowing him to tell of the noxious vapors that continually arose from the cavity—the breath of Dis, as the poets called it—which whatever their physical origin were an evil that only the eunuch priests of the Great Mother could circumvent. In other places he noted that Phrygia was the land of the first-born and the home of the barbarously servile Marsyas; and he knew the Phrygian chant of the Syrian Goddess's priests.<sup>17</sup>

The Antonine age, it has been said, was characterized by “a failure of the intellect.” If true, sophistry may be taken as a symptom. Notably, however, Apuleius never calls himself a sophist, perhaps aware that the term might not always be considered a compliment. He preferred instead to style himself a Platonic philosopher. The author of the brilliant *Metamorphoses*, with its challenge of how to comprehend religious revelation in an age of anxiety, and even of the brilliant *Apology*, with its exposure of the impact magic might have on a second-century North African community, may call notions of intellectual decline into question. At a minimum, Apuleian *doctrina* in the *Apology* becomes more remarkable, if not more problematic, once considered against a background of historical contingency.<sup>18</sup>

## NOTES

1. This chapter in large part resumes, often verbatim, views on Apuleius' trial I have stated elsewhere (collected in Bradley 2012). I have deliberately kept the annotation and bibliography to a minimum as a result. I am grateful to Ellen Finkelpearl, Luca Graverini, and Ben Lee for encouraging me to include it, and more so for their invitation to the conference at Oberlin College that preceded this volume.
2. Comparanda: Hunink 1997. Striking monuments: cf. Plut., *De gloria Atheniensium* (Mor. 345C–351B). Hadrian: Spawforth–Walker 1985, 92–100; Boatwright 2000, 144–147. Inscriptions: *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 5185 (= Smallwood 1966, no. 485).
3. Benefits: Le Bohec 2003, 15. Troops: *ILS* 2487, 9133–9135<sup>a</sup> (= Smallwood 1966, no. 328) with Le Bohec 2003. Architecture: Fraser 2006. Dedications: Benjamin 1963. Resemblance: Perry 1967, 243.
4. Quotation: Syme 1988, 681.
5. Example: see Sherwin-White 1963, 48, with reference to T. Mommsen. Quotations: Sherwin-White 1963, 17. Cf. Taylor 2011.
6. Texts: *Pauli Sententiae* 5.23.15, for instance, at the earliest from the early third century. Statutes: *Met.* 8.24 refers to a *lex Cornelia*, but this is unlikely to be

the law concerned; see *GCA* 1985, 209–210. Appropriate: Ehrenberg 1974, chap. 7; Garnsey–Saller 1987, chap. 2. Frequently: Gualandi 1963, 1: 24–102.

7. Case: *ILS* 5947 (= McCrum–Woodhead 1966, no. 455). Remains: Joly 1998. Production: Wilson 1999.
8. Inscriptions: *CIL* VIII 7432, 5367, 2391 = 17910, 5530 = 18864, *ILAFr.* 158.
9. Community: Haywood 1938, 71–72, for various trades and crafts.
10. Garamantes: Mattingly 2003, 76–98. Ostia: Meiggs 1973, 283 and plate XXIIIa. Consecration: “Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità” 1933, 433–434 (= Smallwood 1966, no. 145b).
11. Quotation: Aurigemma 1960, 47. Techniques: Bekker-Nielsen 2002. Letter: Oliver 1989, no. 77.
12. Claudius Maximus: *PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 934. Quotations: Syme 1971, 237; 1988, 345.
13. Limestone relief: British Museum WAA 125183. Funerary monument: Norman–Haackl 1993. Names: Birley 1988.
14. Clear: Abt 1908.
15. Details: gathered from the following items (see Betz 1992 for translations): *PGM* I.262–347, III.282–409, IV.26–51, IV.52–85, IV.88–93, IV.94–153, IV.154–285, IV.475–829, IV.930–1114, IV.1716–1870, IV.2125–2139, IV.2241–2358, IV.2359–2372, IV.2373–2440, V.370–446, VIII.1–63, XII.182–189, XII.201–269, XII.270–350, XIII.1–343, XIII.343–646, XIII.646–734, XIII.734–1077; *PDM* xiv.295–308.
16. *Apol.* 42–47, 53–56, 57–60, 61–65.
17. Loss: Bradley 2008, 372–373. Hierapolis: Strabo 13.4.14; Plin., *Nat.* 2.208; Cass. Dio 68.27.3, with Pleket 1988 and Mitchell 1993, 1: 193–194. Hadrian: Birley 1997, 222–224. Other places: *Met.* 11.5.2; *Flor.* 3.6, with Lee 2005, 75, and Finkelpearl 2009 (note especially 15, “clash of cultures”); *Met.* 8.30.5.
18. Antonine age: Syme 1988, 688. Compliment: apparently not in the phrase “a florid sophist” (Syme 1971, 237; cf. 1988, 345: “another sophist, of inferior station and dubious repute”).

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## 2 Authority and Subjectivity in the *Apology*

Carlos F. Noreña

Apuleius' *Apology*, the text of a courtroom speech purportedly delivered in Sabratha, in the province of Africa Proconsularis, in the late 150s CE, is a long and meandering speech of self-defense on the charge of having employed magic—a capital crime in Roman law—to bewitch, seduce, and marry a wealthy widow, Pudentilla.<sup>1</sup> In the first half of the speech, as is well known, Apuleius discourses at length on a series of literary, scientific, and philosophical topics only tangentially related to the case, while the formal charges against him are not addressed until the second half. Nevertheless, the whole defense is so convincing, in terms of both the argument and the evidence, that it is generally assumed that Apuleius was acquitted of the charge.<sup>2</sup>

As the only example of Latin forensic oratory to have survived from the Roman Empire, produced in connection with a sensational case, the *Apology* has always attracted critical attention. Over the last twenty years or so, something like a consensus view on how best to interpret this text has emerged. In general, according to the new *communis opinio*, the *Apology* should be read as a characteristic product of the so-called Second Sophistic, and Apuleius himself classified as a Latin sophist. As a consequence of this view, the speech is routinely seen as more epideictic than forensic in nature, an opportunity for Apuleius to showcase his learning and eloquence in an entertaining and indeed lighthearted romp. Above all, and very much in sync with the continuing fixation in cultural studies on the subject of identity, the text is now read primarily as a literary masterpiece of cultural self-fashioning.<sup>3</sup> Given this set of concerns, it is no surprise that recent work on the *Apology* has focused overwhelmingly on the first half of the speech, with its dazzling displays of scientific knowledge, literary citation, and cultural identification, while the second half of the speech, given over to the more tedious details of the actual case against Apuleius, has been left to historians desperate for evidence of lived experience in the Roman provinces. No scholar has done more to advance our understanding of the social and historical contexts of the *Apology* than Keith Bradley, whose studies of the speech have shown that it was not merely a playful rhetorical exercise and

also that it can illuminate many aspects of “life on the ground” in North Africa in the middle imperial period.<sup>4</sup>

In this chapter, partly inspired by Bradley’s approach to Apuleius, I would like to offer a new reading of the *Apology* that focuses on the problem of authority. On the basis of this reading, I then want to push back, with Bradley, against some of the prevailing trends in the interpretation of the *Apology*. In brief, to anticipate my conclusions, I will argue that we must give due consideration to the Latin, Western, and legal contexts of the speech; that the speech may employ humor but is framed within a legal context that is deadly serious; and, finally, that while the *Apology* can be read as an expression of local or cultural identity, it can also be treated as a case study in the making of a specifically imperial subjectivity that necessarily transcended, and was surely as important as, the complex local and regional sources of identity that are expressed in the text.

I begin with the proposition that the *Apology* is structured in part by the interplay between two very different conceptions of authority. The first may be labeled “intellectualism,” which embraces both high literary culture and advanced learning in multiple disciplines. It is a sphere of activity in which Apuleius repeatedly asserts his own distinction. He sprinkles the speech with references to his own extensive literary studies, for example, a claim buttressed not only by a profusion of citations and quotations from more than sixty Greek and Latin authors but also by the recitation of his own poetry and public oratory.<sup>5</sup> In addition, he demonstrates his command of the physical sciences, with a short discourse on the properties of vision (*Apol.* 15.11–15) and a not-so-short discourse on those of fish (29–41). At the heart of this conception of authority, however, is philosophy, in which Apuleius, on the strength of several expositions of Plato, leaves no doubt about his credentials.<sup>6</sup> Through his celebration of literature, science, and philosophy, then, and through the insistent display of his own accomplishments in these spheres, Apuleius simultaneously promotes the authority of intellectualism and makes it his own.

The second conception of authority animating the speech as a whole is that of Roman imperial rule. Like intellectualism, Roman imperial rule was an almost infinitely complex form of authority. Indeed, from the perspective of any one inhabitant of the Roman Empire, living in the here and now, any engagement with the state must have been somewhat disconcerting, since political authority in this imperial system was always layered and variably articulated. The multiple and shifting configurations of political authority in the Roman Empire are an important issue to which we will return. In the case of the *Apology*, the key figure, and the very face of Roman imperial authority, was Claudius Maximus, the proconsul of Africa and judge in Apuleius’ trial.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the speech, as is well known, Apuleius constructs Maximus as the very embodiment of Roman justice, seeking to associate his own defense with this agent of Roman law and administration in a manner that could hardly be called subtle. But this strategy was not limited

to Maximus. For the authority of the Roman state is invoked through a series of carefully placed references to other imperial officials, too, especially Q. Lollius Urbicus, the urban prefect of Rome, and L. Lollianus Avitus, Maximus’ immediate predecessor as proconsul of Africa.<sup>8</sup> Roman emperors are also added to the mix. An appeal to the poetry of the deified Hadrian (*Apol.* 11.3–4), for example, establishes imperial conduct as a model for Apuleius’ own, while a pointed reference to a courtroom statue of Antoninus Pius (85), the reigning emperor, trains the symbolic gaze of the emperor, virtuous and censorious, on the ethically compromised prosecution. Finally, Apuleius exploits the very setting of the trial, as a handful of references to the courtroom and proconsular tribunal remind listener and reader alike of the formal legality of the proceedings.<sup>9</sup> As is universally recognized, it is through rhetorical strategies such as these that Apuleius attempts to align himself with the legitimate authority of Roman law and the Roman imperial state and, in so doing, to differentiate himself from his accusers.

Intellectualism and Roman imperial rule may be seen to represent two distinct conceptions of authority in the *Apology*. While they were not mutually exclusive, they did depend on distinct sets of ideals and values—erudition, logic, decorum, and *doctrina*, on the one hand; consensus, legitimacy, patrimonialism, and political power, on the other. The juxtaposition of intellectual authority in the first half of the speech, where literary and philosophical passages abound, with Roman imperial and legal authority in the second half, in which Apuleius confronts the main charges against him, would seem to indicate a dichotomy between these two conceptions, but in fact they went together. Indeed, several commentators have noted that the former was pressed into the service of the latter. Bradley, for example, suggests that Apuleius bases his defense “on the establishment of a common intellectual identity with his judge,” while Stephen Harrison sees the epideictic passages in the speech as critical to Apuleius’ forensic strategy, mainly, as he puts it, to “entertain” Maximus.<sup>10</sup> This general interpretation could be pushed further. For the epideictic also served the forensic in a narrower but much more significant way. In particular, I would like to suggest that the literary, scientific, and philosophical learning put on such magnificent display in the first half of the speech was mainly intended to enhance Apuleius’ credentials not only as a philosopher and intellectual but also, and more to the point, as an authoritative interpreter of texts.<sup>11</sup> And this was a vital strategy for the second half of the speech, in which questions about the authenticity and correct interpretation of written texts loom so large.

In considering the various written texts on which the case hinged, it is crucial to distinguish between different types of texts, especially in terms of their relative evidentiary value. The two key forms of written text in the *Apology* are the *tabula* and the *epistula*, both of which are formally submitted as items of evidence in the proceedings (see below, 38 ff.). In Roman law and administration, the *tabula* (or *tabella*) was the authoritative document

*par excellence*. Unlike other forms of writing, *tabulae*, as Elizabeth Meyer has demonstrated, were invested with an intrinsic, form-based authority.<sup>12</sup> In disputes of all sorts they were usually decisive. We can trace their use in Roman courts from the middle republic through the later empire, both in Rome and in the provinces, especially in cases involving either financial transactions or matters of personal status.<sup>13</sup> Significantly, *tabulae* could also be seen as the commanding and permanent expressions of official authority. As Apuleius himself declares in the *Florida*,

But the proconsul himself speaks in a controlled voice, sparingly, and from a sitting position, and frequently reading from a *tabella*. For it is a herald's job to have a sharp tongue but the proconsul's *tabella* is his judgment, which cannot be increased or diminished by a single letter once it has been read out, but is entered into the records of the province as soon as it has been recited.<sup>14</sup>

Letters (*epistulae, grammata*) were texts, usually private, which could also be entered into the record as a form of written evidence. At Rome, such letters began to be used in court by the late Republican period, while in the provinces they seem to emerge only in the second century CE, as the papyrological evidence suggests.<sup>15</sup> Now it must be emphasized that the authority and legal validity of letters were inferior to those of *tabulae*. In fact, as a form of legal evidence, letters were inherently suspect, their interpretation and even authenticity frequently contested.<sup>16</sup> As a result of this attitude, the evidence from letters was normally valid only when corroborated by some other, additional type of authority, such as a seal. Even letters attributed to emperors could be problematic in this regard.<sup>17</sup> In legal and administrative contexts, then, letters were of questionable value, and they usually depended for their validity on some sort of external and authoritative pronouncement regarding their authenticity and meaning.

In the case of the *Apology*, Apuleius raises these issues of authenticity and judgment right from the beginning of the speech in an attack on Sici-nius Aemilianus: "This is the man who claimed his own uncle's will, which he knew to be genuine, to be false. He did this so obstinately that even when the honorable Lollius Urbicus, on the advice of his council of men of consular rank, had declared that the document seemed to be valid, the madman opposed this noble voice, swearing that the will was false."<sup>18</sup> The stage is perfectly set for what follows, as Apuleius' accusers are here shown to be malevolent liars who do not shrink from disputing the authenticity of a will—surely preserved on a *tabula*—even in the face of the authoritative judgment of Roman imperial officials.

In terms of the written texts relevant to Apuleius' own case, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that the key documents in support of Apuleius' claims are all *tabulae*, while all of the prosecution's documents are *epistulae*.<sup>19</sup> This configuration of written evidence automatically put Apuleius in

a strong position. So the documents recording Pudentilla's age, which was in dispute; indicating the size of her dowry, also in question; and preserving her will, in which Apuleius was only a token beneficiary, are all preserved on *tabulae*.<sup>20</sup> On the basis of these documents, and the intrinsic authority of the tablets on which they are conveyed, Apuleius can place part of his defense on a very secure foundation indeed.

But the case against Apuleius also concerned his motivations and was ultimately based, of course, on the charge of magic, and on these issues he was on shakier ground. The key evidence against Apuleius was epistolary in form, and it was on these letters that the whole case hung in the balance, especially since the validity and even the meaning of these letters were "up for grabs," while the validity of the *tabulae* was beyond dispute. For this reason, Apuleius builds his defense against these charges with reference to a flurry of letters discussed in the second half of the speech. Addressing Pudentilla's own motivations, for example, Apuleius produces two letters and has them read in court, the first written by Sici-nius Aemilianus to Pudentilla's son Pontianus, supporting Pudentilla's desire to remarry, and the second written by Pudentilla herself to Pontianus, laying out her own reasons for seeking a second marriage.<sup>21</sup> Later he refers to a letter secretly sent by Pudens to his brother Pontianus, in which Pudens evidently wrote about his mother in "impertinent" and "shameless" terms.<sup>22</sup> Apuleius also disputes the authenticity of a letter written in his name, exclaiming:

And then there was that fabricated letter that was neither written by my hand nor plausibly forged. They intended it to show that I worked upon the woman by means of blandishments. . . . And moreover, why would I write in such defective words, such barbarous language? Did they not also tell you I was far from ignorant in the Greek language? . . . The man who was not able to read a letter by Pudentilla in perfect Greek had less trouble in reading this one and put it across better, since it was his own.<sup>23</sup>

All of these letters frame the central document in this whole drama, the letter written by Pudentilla in Greek, in which, according to the accusers, she clearly states that she had been bewitched by Apuleius and induced to marry him. Apuleius' main contention, however, is not that this letter was a forgery but that the letter has been misinterpreted and, in particular, that it was quoted out of context. As he claims:

This is what has been read until now. What remains is the part of the letter that was equally written in my defense but has turned its horns against me. It was sent on purpose to repel the charge of magic from me, but thanks to Rufinus (may he be praised!) it changed sides and as a result it earned me the very opposite reputation with some citizens of

Oea, who now think I am a magician. . . . These very words, written to absolve me, caused an immense hatred of me among the ignorant. This filthy fellow was raging and raving in the middle of the Forum, and often opened the letter and protested aloud, "Apuleius is a magician."<sup>24</sup>

Here Apuleius is attempting to confront head-on the very slipperiness of letters, always open to rival interpretations. He then seeks to refute the charge by having Pudentilla's letter read out in its entirety. The letter reads as follows:

As I was willing to marry for the reasons that I told, you were the one to persuade me to choose him above all others. For you admired the man and you were eager to join him to our family through me. But now, as slanderous accusers are misleading you, all of a sudden Apuleius is a magician, and I am bewitched by him and I am in love! So come to me, while I am still in my right mind.<sup>25</sup>

If only letters could speak, Apuleius concludes, they would have declared that Pudentilla's *epistula* was actually intended to exonerate him from the charge of magic.

The second half of the speech, then, revolves around a series of letters and the question of their validity as legal evidence. Apuleius successively reports on a letter not addressed to him and on another one secretly sent by Pudens to Pontianus, casts a negative aesthetic judgment on the appropriateness of another, denies the authenticity of yet another, and offers a competing interpretation of a letter that formed the backbone of the prosecution's case. But why should the judge—why should *anyone*—take Apuleius' word for these things? We must bear in mind that these *epistulae* are not like *tabulae*, which have an independent, automatic, and nearly unquestioned authority. Now Apuleius evidently expects that his listeners, especially Maximus, are in fact going to take his word for these things. And the reason he can be so confident that they will do so is that he had devoted so much of the first half of the speech to systematically building up his own authority as an interpreter of all sorts of different texts, literary, scientific, and philosophical. So even though his parade of learning was significant in its own right as an emphatic expression of cultural attainment, his intellectualism also functioned, I argue, to support his authority to pronounce on the validity and meaning of written texts, especially letters, in the trial itself.

Other readings of the *Apology* have not noted this particular connection between the epideictic and forensic strands in the speech. Most studies, in fact, examine either the first or the second half of the speech, rarely seeking to draw them together into a single, synthetic interpretation. But there have some recent, and welcome, exceptions to this pattern. So, for example, James Rives attempts to connect Apuleius' intellectual performance in the

first half of the speech with his legal defense in the second, as I do here, but he focuses not on the particular documentary evidence in the case but rather on the general accusation of magic. In his view, the literary and scientific sections of the speech were designed to show that Apuleius' occult practices were perfectly respectable, harmless, and legal.<sup>26</sup> Another example is a stimulating article by Richard Fletcher on Apuleius' identification as a Platonic philosopher, in which he also gives due attention to Pudentilla's letter, in close connection with the literary passages from the first half of the speech, as I do here. But his aim is to demonstrate how Apuleius employed literary quotation and citation throughout the *Apology* in order to encourage his readers' induction into Platonic philosophy.<sup>27</sup> In several respects, the arguments of both Rives and Fletcher are complementary to my own. But I do want to insist on the crucial importance of the different types of textual evidence used for and against Apuleius in the trial, and on Apuleius' determination to prove himself the best reader of that evidence. It is in this connection, too, that we should see his humiliating references to his accusers' inability to read Greek and Latin texts.<sup>28</sup> This was not mere invective, as it is normally understood, but had a tactical function, designed to further distinguish himself from his accusers as the one whose judgment of these key letters should be trusted and taken as authoritative.<sup>29</sup> In the *Apology*, that is to say, Apuleius' learning and erudition were not merely academic.

I have argued that Apuleius' case hinged on the interpretation of a series of written texts adduced in the second half of the speech, especially *epistulae*, and that Apuleius, through his display of mastery in the domains of literature, science, and philosophy in the first half of the speech, had successfully fashioned himself as the most authoritative interpreter of those texts. Now I want to pursue some of the implications of this reading for our analysis of the *Apology* as a whole, focusing on the nexus of issues I raised at the beginning of the chapter.

Let us begin with the wider cultural context in which Apuleius' intellectualism should be placed. It is now routinely asserted that Apuleius and the *Apology* both belong to the world of the Second Sophistic. This view goes back to Rudolph Helm's 1955 article on the *Apology*, but it has been pro-pounded more recently, and more categorically, in monographs by Gerald Sandy and Stephen Harrison, and in several studies that followed in their wake.<sup>30</sup> It goes without saying that there existed in the Roman Empire a Mediterranean-wide elite, defined in part by its control over high literary culture and by its public commitment to the Greek language, *paideia*, and Hellenic culture more generally.<sup>31</sup> It is also clear that Apuleius was a member of this exclusive club. But in employing the label "Second Sophistic," and in emphasizing its essential Greekness, we risk eliding significant differences within this Mediterranean-wide movement, whether articulated in cultural, linguistic, or regional terms. For in the case of Apuleius, he may equally be seen as an exponent of a specifically Latin, and perhaps even North African,

intellectual culture. As Bradley has suggested, this was a culture based on rigorous scholarship, technical knowledge, and highly specialized learning derived from books. Its animating principle was *doctrina*, a resonant term that is woven throughout Apuleius' corpus of writings, including the *Apology*, and one that closely links him to several other North African scholars from the mid-second century, such as Suetonius and Aulus Gellius.<sup>32</sup> It was precisely the scholarly expertise gained from this type of book learning that made Apuleius such a persuasive reader of all sorts of texts, including letters. And it is an expertise that places Apuleius firmly in the intellectual circles of the Roman West. Apuleius' intellectualism, in brief, is at least as much Latin and bookish as it is Greek and declamatory.

How we decide to categorize Apuleius' intellectual affinities is perhaps a matter of taste, and different perspectives on this question are not necessarily mutually exclusive. A more black-and-white problem, and one that is more relevant to my larger argument, is the question of just how serious the subject matter of this speech really was. It is not a question that admits of disparate answers; on this issue, I think, one really does have to choose. This brings me to the related (but logically distinct) questions of the relationship between the written text of the *Apology* and the putative courtroom speech, on the one hand, and of the historicity of the trial itself, on the other. It is unlikely that either of these two questions will ever be definitively resolved.<sup>33</sup> Although it seems more likely than not that there was in fact a trial, as no less an authority than Augustine apparently believed (*Ciu.* 8.19; *Epist.* 138.19), and the burden of proof rests with those who would deny it, for the purposes of the argument I wish to develop here, these questions are actually moot. Whether there was a trial or not and, if there was, whether our version of the speech was heavily edited or not, the *Apology*, as it stands, is a significant historical artifact in its own right. It reflects the intersubjective thought-world of its author and his readers, and insofar as texts shape meaning and consciousness, it will also have played its role in helping to constitute that thought-world. Its underlying logic may thus be analyzed both in terms of its own narrative framing and within the specific context of the time and place in which it was produced.

The main point I want to make about that specific context is that a criminal trial before a Roman provincial governor was very serious business. Whether or not the *Apology* as we have it is an accurate version of a forensic speech in a real trial, the text presents itself as such, and so necessarily participates in a preexisting script in which the judgment of the provincial governor was absolute and the threat of exemplary punishment very real. In other words, it was a script generated by the coercive apparatus of the Roman imperial state.<sup>34</sup> Now, it is this context, and this script, that so much recent work on the *Apology* has either rejected or, more frequently, ignored. Exclusively literary and what might be called "playful" readings are very much in the ascendant. Consider, in addition to all of the studies

that interpret the *Apology* as mere epideictic spectacle, Regine May's argument that the *Apology* was concocted by Apuleius as a courtroom drama, or the various articles in the first half of Riess's volume on Apuleius, including Harrison's on "sophistic play" in the speech or Stefan Tilg's on playful eloquence in what he calls, in the very subtitle of his article, "the cheerful side of standing trial."<sup>35</sup> Many more examples could be cited. These studies are all thoughtful, clever, and insightful. But in my view they are misreading the *Apology*, and in a fundamental way. Because whether it is the transcript of a real courtroom speech or a literary fabrication, or something in between, the *Apology* evokes a scenario, as Bradley has reminded us, that is the very opposite of playful or cheerful.<sup>36</sup>

It is worth pausing here for a moment to consider where the *Apology*, as a text, might have fit within contemporary discourses about Roman justice. One reason that the text should be taken seriously is that it must have worked to reinforce the whole script of Roman power and punishment mentioned above. Here we may take our cue from Brent Shaw's study of Roman judicial practice and Christian social memory.<sup>37</sup> As he argues, the institution of the Roman criminal trial, especially when followed by the spectacular execution of convicted Christians, imprinted itself deeply on Christian consciousness, a social effect reflected in Christians' frequent reports of nightmares about trial and punishment. But for the Roman trial to have become imprinted in social memory in this way, Shaw further suggests, it needed a literary text. For Christians, this was achieved mainly through the martyr acts. The major non-Christian literary form in which trial scenes were regularly embedded was the novel. In our case, of course, one thinks immediately of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, and the ludic trial of Lucius in the theater of Hypata in Thessaly. Even when scenes such as these were parodic or ludicrous in nature, they still replayed—even if in distorted or inverted form—the underlying idea of the Roman trial. In this respect, both the novel and, later, the Christian martyr acts, as texts, worked to sustain the discourse of Roman imperial justice and punishment by keeping the whole ordeal of the trial alive in the minds of readers.<sup>38</sup> Whether or not it was a real courtroom speech, the *Apology* represents just this sort of literary engagement with the ideology of the Roman criminal trial and the uncompromising message of imperial authority and coercion it communicated.

In assessing the internal logic of the *Apology*, we must not lose sight of the fact that this was a speech of self-defense, in a criminal case, on a capital charge.<sup>39</sup> This is all directly relevant to the nature of Apuleius' encounter with the Roman state, and his interface with the labyrinth that was Roman imperial authority. For in the Roman provinces a criminal case could never even get to trial before a provincial governor unless the prosecution had persuaded him to hear it.<sup>40</sup> So, to follow Apuleius' own characterization of the personal dynamics in the trial, in which he and the judge, Claudius Maximus, are constructed as a pair of intellectual outsiders amid, and in

opposition to, an unwelcoming rabble of rustic boors, is to ignore the procedural aspect of a criminal trial before a Roman provincial governor. If anything, it was Apuleius, and not his accusers, who was pitted against the machinery of Roman law.

Moreover, in such a case he was simultaneously confronting three different layers in the larger configuration of public authority that we label, as a matter of convenience, “the Roman state.” First, there were his accusers, the Sicinii of Oea, a family that must have belonged to the local elite of that town, or had the right connections to it, since they evidently had sufficient political influence and social capital to secure a trial with the proconsul, in the town of Sabratha, where he was holding his assizes.<sup>41</sup> As an imperial official formally delegated to Africa Proconsularis by the Roman Senate, Claudius Maximus, the proconsul and judge, represents a second, more immediate, and more powerful layer of public authority.<sup>42</sup> The third layer, towering above them all, was the Roman emperor. But where is the emperor in this trial? We have already noted Apuleius’ allusion to the statue of Antoninus Pius that stood in the courtroom (*Apol.* 85.2), generating an imaginary imperial “presence” there. But the emperor is also present here as a matter of formal jurisdiction. In technical terms, this trial was a *cognitio extra ordinem*, in which the judge had absolute authority to try the case in whatever manner he saw fit. That is, unlike a *iudex* in the so-called formulary procedure, he was wholly unencumbered by any procedural rules.<sup>43</sup> But what really makes a judge in a *cognitio extra ordinem* distinct from a *iudex* in the formulary procedure, as Bruce Frier has recently reminded us, is not the latitude of his discretionary power but rather the basis of his jurisdictional authority.<sup>44</sup> For a judge in the *cognitio* procedure derived his judicial authority wholly from that of the emperor, which was, of course, total. So to stand before the judgment of a provincial governor in a *cognitio extra ordinem* was as close as most inhabitants of the Roman Empire could ever come to direct, and in a jurisdictional (and more or less fictive) sense unmediated, contact with the Roman emperor himself. That is what the Apuleius of the *Apology* was notionally up against.

In light of this rather daunting background, we might see in this trial the potential for a confrontation between Apuleius, the accused, and Claudius Maximus, the main representative of Roman authority. Apuleius eschews that approach, of course, with one significant exception that deserves comment. I refer to the magical curse openly directed against Sicinius Aemilianus.<sup>45</sup> In a case in which Apuleius had been charged with magic, this is a startling and disconcerting move. What seems to have escaped notice is that this curse is immediately followed by what could be construed as an implicit challenge to the authority of the proconsul. As Apuleius declares, “I am not going to answer you, Aemilianus, as to which ‘King’ I worship. No, even if the proconsul himself asked me who is my god, I would remain silent.”<sup>46</sup> Indeed, this notional refusal to answer a direct question by a Roman official

about the nature of a god worshipped in private could have come straight out of a Christian martyr act.

In general, though, Apuleius plays his assigned role in this judicial script, carefully observing courtroom protocol and exhibiting an ostentatious deference to Claudius Maximus. Nor is it difficult to understand why he would adopt such a pose: he was working to acquit himself of a very serious charge. Such, at least, is the scenario evoked by the *Apology*. Now, it should be emphasized that not all courtrooms in the Roman Empire were quite so hegemonic in nature and effect. In civil trials in the Greek East, for example, as Ari Bryen has shown in a recent article, provincial subjects learned how to manipulate what he calls the “ritualized discourse” of the courtroom and, in so doing, discovered one way to bend provincial governors to their will.<sup>47</sup> But there was much less scope for this sort of thing in a criminal trial in the Roman West. Here, legal and especially procedural rules of law were not so easily renegotiated—and not least because in a *cognitio extra ordinem*, there were, in effect, no rules at all, beyond the absolute authority of the judge and, behind him, the emperor. So Apuleius was constrained to play by the rules of Rome’s game. And that is the ultimate reason, to return to my earlier argument, that his skill as an interpreter of literary and philosophical texts, culturally valuable as it might have been, was here put in the service of interpreting the more mundane documents on which the proof of his innocence depended. In this respect, the relationship between the two types of authority that structure the *Apology*, intellectualism, on the one hand, and Roman imperial rule, on the other, is clear. Because Apuleius is making the former answer to the demands of the latter, intellectualism is actively and self-consciously subordinated to Roman imperial rule.

It is precisely in the subordination of intellectualism to Roman power, to come to my final point, that Apuleius, in this text, constitutes himself as a subject of empire and, in so doing, circumscribes his basic identity. There are indeed some explicit markers of self-identification in the *Apology*, both ethnic and linguistic. So, for example, he famously identifies himself as “half-Numidian” and “half-Gaetolian” and also employs the term *apud nos*, “among us,” in a context that makes it clear that he is differentiating the Latin poets, with whom he identifies, from the Greeks.<sup>48</sup> Both references may be seen, in their own ways, as “local” markers of identity. But the local can exist only in relation to the translocal, and of the several translocal contexts in which statements like this might be situated, the definitive one, in my view, is empire. That local cultures in the Roman Empire emerged specifically in the context of Roman imperial culture is axiomatic in current scholarship on the world of the Roman provinces.<sup>49</sup> Missing in many contemporary discussions of cultural identity in the Roman Empire, however, is sufficient attention to the pronounced asymmetry of sociopolitical power between the local and the imperial. And the imperial creation of “the local,” both as a juridical category and as a cultural field, served the interests of this

sociopolitical order, especially by naturalizing and universalizing the wider frames of reference within which local cultures operated.<sup>50</sup>

To conclude, the courtroom of a Roman criminal trial in the provinces poses a particular challenge to those scholars who wish to comb the *Apology* for evidence of Apuleius' sense of himself, in cultural, ethnic, or regional terms. After all, a *cognitio extra ordinem* was a rather daunting place to assert one's own identity, much less "negotiate" it. It was a place, instead, where the coercive apparatus of the Roman imperial state was especially manifest, and where defendants on capital charges were constrained to appeal to the supreme authority of Roman law, justice, and government. And that is exactly what Apuleius did. For while it was obviously in his personal interests to amplify the authority of Roman law and the Roman state, his self-defense necessarily worked to legitimate that authority in the process. Indeed, his whole rhetorical strategy in the *Apology*, whether real or fictive, depended on a set of shared assumptions: that Roman law was a legitimate vehicle for the settling of grievances; that a Roman proconsul had the right to pronounce judgment in this case; and, more generally, that the normative claims of Roman imperial rule were in fact legitimate and just. Given the pronounced asymmetries of political power and authority in this setting, it is difficult to imagine that a speech of self-defense could do anything but reinforce such assumptions and the broader ideological hegemony they helped to sustain. Driven by these imperatives, Apuleius carefully subordinated his intellectual achievements to the higher principles of Roman law and justice and, in the process, exposed his own, imperial, subjectivity.

## NOTES

1. The location of the trial is mentioned in the speech itself: *Apol.* 59.2. The date is fixed by the proconsulate of Claudius Maximus, normally dated to 158/159; see Guey 1951; Hijmans 1994, 1713; Hunink 1997, 1: 12.
2. Assumption of acquittal: e.g., Fick 1991, 27; Hijmans 1994, 1714–1715; Hunink 1997, 1: 19–20; Harrison 2000, 7; Bradley 2012, 3. For the problem of the speech's authenticity and the historicity of the trial, see below, 42–43.
3. Representative studies in this vein include Sallmann 1995; Sandy 1997, esp. 131–148; Harrison 2000; Deremetz 2004; May 2007, esp. chap. 4, "Courtroom Drama: Apuleius' *Apologia*," 73–108; Riess 2008a; Fletcher 2009. Fletcher (43) approvingly quotes Hunink's assertion that the *Apology* "has become literature" (in Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001, 24).
4. See, above all, Bradley 2012, esp. chaps. 1, 3, 7–10, all with ample bibliography.
5. For Apuleius' representation of his own literary production, see Harrison 2008. For his engagement with Greek and Latin literature, see, e.g., Hunink 1997, 1: 23–24; Harrison 2000, 44–47; McCreight 2004; Hunink 2008.
6. Schindel 2000; Riess 2008a; Fletcher 2009.
7. Claudius Maximus: *PIR* C 933, with Syme 1965; Bradley 2012, 15.
8. Q. Lollius Urbicus: *PIR*<sup>2</sup> L 327, with Bradley 2012, 21, 261. Lollianus Avitus: *PIR*<sup>2</sup> H 40.
9. Courtroom setting: Bradley 2012, 4–6, 21. In general on the spatial aspect of Roman judicature, see De Angelis 2010, with Noreña forthcoming.
10. Bradley 2012, 12; Harrison 2000, 45.
11. Rives 2008 and Fletcher 2009 have also attempted to synthesize Apuleius' epideictic and forensic strategies but to different ends; see below, 40–41.
12. Meyer 2004.
13. Meyer 2004, 216–249, with abundant references.
14. *Flor.* 9.11–12: *enimvero proconsul ipse moderata uoce rareret et sedens loquitur et plerumque de tabella legit, quippe praeconis uox garrula ministerium est, proconsulis autem tabella sententia est, quae semel lecta neque augeri littera una neque autem minui potest, sed utcumque recitata est, ita prouinciae instrumento refertur.* All translations of Apuleius are from Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001.
15. γράμματα: e.g., *BGU* 19 (130 CE); *SB* 9213 (215 CE); *BGU* 1567 (third century CE). ἐπιστολαί: e.g., *BGU* 19 (135 CE); *SB* 15–16 (155/156 CE); *BGU* 245 (second century CE).
16. Consider, for example, Cicero's thundering charge in the *Pro Flacco* (93): *his tu igitur epistulis, Deciane, recitatis, his mulierculis productis, illo absente auctore laudato tantum te crimen probaturum putasti, praesertim cum ipse non deducendo Falcidium iudicium feceris plus falsam epistolam habituram ponderis quam ipsius praesentis fictam uocem et simulatum dolorem?*
17. Note, for example, Pliny's suspicion about letters attributed to Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian (*Ep.* 10.65.3): *recitatae et epistolae diui Vespasiani ad Lacedaemonios et diui Titi ad eosdem et Achaeos et Domitiani ad Auidium Nigrinum et Armenium Brocchum proconsules, item ad Lacedaemonios. quae ideo tibi non misi, quia et parum emendata et quaedam non certae fidei uidebantur, et quia uera et emendata in scriiniis tuis esse credebam.*
18. *Apol.* 2.10–11: *qui auunculi sui testamentum quod uerum sciebat pro falso infamarit, tanta quidem pertinacia, ut, cum Lollius Urbicus V.C. uerum uideri et ratum esse debere de consilio consularium uirorum pronuntiasset, contra clarissimam uocem iurauerit uecordissimus iste, tamen illud testamentum fictum esse.*
19. As noted by Meyer 2004, 239.
20. Pudentilla's age (*Apol.* 89.2): *pater eius natam sibi filiam more ceterorum professus est. tabulae eius partim tabulario publico, partim domo adseruantur, quae iam tibi ob os obiciuntur.* Amount of Pudentilla's dowry (*Apol.* 91.6–92.1): *ad haec [sc. the amount of the dowry], Maxime, longa oratione fatigare te non est consilium. nihil uerbis opus est, cum multo disertius ipsae tabulae loquantur . . . haec, ut dico, tabulis ipsis docebo.* Pudentilla's will (*Apol.* 100.1–101.1): *cedo tu testamentum iam inimico filio a matre factum me, quem isti praedonem dicunt, uerba singula cum precibus praeunte. rumpi tabulas istas iube, Maxime . . . at ego hasce tabulas, Maxime, hic ibidem pro pedibus tuis abicio).*
21. Sicinius Aemilianus' letter to Pontianus, supporting Pudentilla's wish to remarry (*Apol.* 69.5–6): *at tibi, Aemiliane, non uenit in mentem, priusquam ego Oeam uenirem, te litteras etiam, uti nuberet, scribisse ad filium eius Pontianum, qui tum adultus Romae agebat. cedo tu epistolam, uel potius da ipsi: legat, suas ibi uoce suisque uerbis sese reuincat.* Pudentilla's letter to Pontianus, explaining her reasons for wanting to remarry (*Apol.* 70.5–8): *ceterum ipsa de ea re Pontiano suo Romam scripsit, etiam causas consilii sui plene allegauit . . . recitari iubebo exemplum epistulae huius ad filium missae.*
22. Pudens' letter about Pudentilla (*Apol.* 86.4): *at quam ausus es tuam ipsius epistolam legendam dare, quam nimis irreuerenter, nimis contumeliose et turpiter de matre tua scriptam.*

23. *Apol.* 87.2–5: *fuit et illa commenticia epistula neque mea manu scripta neque ueri similiter conficta, qua uideri uolebant blanditiis a me mulierem sollicitatam . . . cur praeterea tam uitiosis uerbis, tam barbaro sermone ego scriberem, quem idem dicunt nequaquam Graecae linguae imperitum? . . . hic, qui epistulam Pudentillae Graecatiorem legere non potuerat, hanc ut suam facilius legit et aptius commendauit.*
24. *Apol.* 81.1–82.6: *haec usque adhuc lecta sunt. superest ea pars epistulae, quae similiter pro me scripta in memet ipsum uertit cornua, ad expellendum a me crimen magiae sedulo missa memorabili laude Rufini uicem mutauit et ultro contrariam mihi opinionem quorundam Oeensium quasi mago quae-siuit (81) . . . quae purgandi mei gratia scripta erant, eadem mihi immanem inuidiam apud imperitos conciuere. turbabat impurus hic in medio foro bacchabundus, epistulam saepe aperiens proquirabat: “Apuleius magus” (82)*
25. *Apol.* 83.1: βουλομένην γάρ με δι’ ἄς εἶπον αἰτίας γαμηθῆναι, αὐτὸς ἔπεισας τοῦτον ἀντί πάντων αἰρεῖσθαι, θαυμάζων τὸν ἄνδρα καὶ σπουδάζων αὐτὸν οἰκεῖον ὑμῖν δι’ ἐμοῦ ποιεῖσθαι. νῦν δὲ ὡς κατήγοροι ἡμῶν κακοῖθεις σε ἀναπειθουσιν, αἰφνίδιον ἐγένετο Ἀπολῆιος μάγος, καὶ ἐγὼ μεμάγευμαι ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐρῶ. ἔλθῃ τοίνυν πρὸς ἐμέ, ἕως ἐτι σωφρονῶ.
26. Rives 2008.
27. Fletcher 2009.
28. Implication that Sicinius Aemilianus has not learned how to read (*Apol.* 10.8): *disce igitur uersus Platonis philosophi in puerum Astera, si tamen tantus natu potes litteras discere.* Tannonius Pudens could not read Pudentilla’s Greek letter (*Apol.* 30.11): *memorassem tibi etiam Theocriti paria . . . ni te dudum animaduertissem Graecam Pudentillae epistulam legere nequiusse* (Sicinius Aemilianus could not read it either: see above, n. 23). Sicinius Pudens cannot even speak Greek or Latin (*Apol.* 98.8): *loquitur nunquam nisi Punice et si quid adhuc a matre graecissat; enim Latine loqui neque uult neque potest.*
29. In general on invective in the speech, see McCreight 1990.
30. Helm 1955; Sandy 1997; Harrison 2000. Cf. Riess 2008a for the continued influence of this approach to the text.
31. Convenient introductions can be found in Whitmarsh 2005; Richter–Johnson forthcoming.
32. Bradley 2012, 12–17, 126–146, 153–156. For the African origins of Gellius, possible but not certain, see the discussion in Holford–Strevens 1988, 11–21. That Suetonius was originally from Hippo Regius, where an honorific inscription celebrating his career was erected, has been disputed by Lindsay 1994, but the traditional view on his African origins has been convincingly restated by Wardle 2002.
33. For the relationship between the text and the (putative) courtroom speech, see the discussion in Vallette 1908, 115–121; Winter 1969; Hijmans 1994, 1715–1719; Gaide 1993; Hunink 1997, 1: 25–27; Harrison 2000, 42; Bradley 2012, 287–288, n. 19. For arguments against the historicity of the trial, see Riemer 2006, esp. 186–188; cf. Hunink 2008, 86–87, n. 32.
34. For the setting and atmosphere of provincial trials, see now Capponi 2010 and Aubert 2010. On exemplary punishment in the Roman world, see, e.g., MacMullen 1990, esp. 205–206 for provincial governors in the first two centuries CE; Coleman 1990; Potter 1993; Fagan 2011, 49–74, 133–137.
35. May 2007, 73–108; Harrison 2008; Tilg 2008.
36. See especially the postscript to his 1997 article on the *Apology* in Bradley 2012, 20–22.
37. Shaw 2003.
38. See the discussion in Bodel 2010 and Schwartz 2010.
39. We can infer from Apuleius that the (notional) formal charge was the use of magic for a malevolent purpose, covered under the Sullan *lex Cornelia de sicariis ac ueneficis* (cf. Iust., *Inst.* 4.18.5: *eadem lege [sc. Cornelia] et uenefici capite damnantur, qui artibus odiosis, tam uenenis uel susurris magicis homines occiderunt uel mala medicamenta publice uendiderunt*); see the discussion in Hunink 1997, 1: 12–14. In general on law in the *Apology*, see Norden 1912.
40. Under the procedure of *cognitio extra ordinem* (see below, 44). For the discretion of the proconsul in hearing criminal cases, formalized in the *Digest* (48.2.3 *pr.*, 48.2.7), see Burton 1975, 101–102.
41. Bradley 2012, 6–7 (“negotiating a path to the governor’s tribunal was indeed a tension-laden affair”).
42. For the proconsul as the face of Roman imperial authority in the provinces, see Meyer–Zwiffelhofer 2002, esp. chap. 3, on *cognitio*.
43. A concise discussion is found in Kaser–Hackl 1996, 435–445.
44. Frier 2010, 83–86.
45. *Apol.* 64.1–2: *at tibi, Aemiliane, pro isto mendacio dicit deus iste superum et inferum commeaor utrorumque deorum malam gratiam semperque obuias species mortuorum, quidquid umbrarum est usquam, quidquid lemurum, quidquid manium, quidquid larbarum, oculis tuis oggerat, omnia noctium occursacula, omnia bustorum formidamina, omnia sepulchorum terriculamenta, a quibus tamen aeuo et merito haud longe abes.*
46. *Apol.* 64.8: *non respondeo tibi, Aemiliane, quem colam βασιλέα; quin si ipse proconsul interroget quid sit deus meus, taceo.*
47. Bryen 2012.
48. Apuleius declares himself “half-Numidian” and “half-Gaetolian” (*Apol.* 24.1–2): *de patria mea uero, quod eam sitam Numidiae et Gaetuliae in ipso confinio meis scriptis ostendistis, quibus memet professus sum, cum Lolliano Auito C. V. praesente publice dissererem, seminumidam et semigaetulum, non uideo quid mihi sit in ea re pudendum . . .*; Apuleius distinguishes “us” from the Greeks (*Apol.* 9.6–8): *apud Graecos . . . apud nos.*
49. On this theme, see, e.g., Whitmarsh 2010; Galinsky forthcoming.
50. A key theme of Noreña 2011, esp. chaps. 5–6; cf. Ando 2010.

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### 3 How Apuleius Survived The African Connection<sup>1</sup>

*Julia Haig Gaisser*

By his own account, Apuleius was a celebrity in his native North Africa—the star figure (and winner) in a famous trial that drew spectators from miles around, an orator delighting packed houses with his philosophical utterances, and the proud recipient of statues erected in his honor. Such triumphs no doubt led him to hope that his books and reputation would last far into the future, and so they did, although surely not in the ways he might have expected. Apuleius' name survived well into the Middle Ages but in association with magic rather than philosophy or rhetoric. Many (probably most) of his works are extant, but modern enthusiasm for his racy novel, the *Golden Ass*, far exceeds any interest in the philosophical works in which he took such pride.

Apuleius' philosophical and literary works survived the Middle Ages in two different traditions whose fates were intertwined at critical points. In what follows I will argue that interest in the philosophical works was ultimately responsible for the preservation of the *Golden Ass* and other literary works and that credit for the survival of both traditions belongs to Apuleius' fellow North Africans and especially to Augustine. My discussion will invoke both material remains and literary testimony from late antiquity to the Renaissance, with emphasis on several decisive moments: the transition from roll to codex, the several phases of Apuleius' reception in North Africa, preservation of the sole manuscript of the *Golden Ass* and other literary works in the Middle Ages, and the transition of the surviving corpus from manuscript to print in the fifteenth century.

I like to describe these decisive moments as “points of reception,” a term I have borrowed from Charles Martindale's famous dictum: “meaning is always realized at the point of reception.”<sup>2</sup> Martindale's pronouncement has rightly become a basic principle of modern reception studies: every reader and every historical moment is a potential point of reception at which a work's meaning comes to life. But I would argue that its converse is also true: if reception is to take place, meaning must be realized. To put it baldly, if readers at any point do not find meaning in a work, they will ignore it, and reception will not occur. Failure of reception, if it occurs too often or at the wrong time, may result in the loss of the work—simply because readers have

too little interest in it to produce or acquire copies. Although any classical text that has come down to us has had many points of reception along the way, some were critical to its survival.

#### 1. FROM ROLL TO CODEX

The first major point of reception for all classical texts was the transition from the papyrus roll to the codex around the fourth century. Many books, however, never made it this far. Catullus, for example, probably just barely squeaked through; we hear almost nothing about him after the time of Apuleius, and we can be sure that only a very few rolls of his poems were available for transcription into a codex a century or so later.<sup>3</sup> The works of his friends Cinna and Calvus had probably already been lost much earlier. I would ascribe these losses (and the near loss of Catullus) to simple lack of interest. These poets, so important in their own day and in ours, had lost their audience. They were no longer being received. All books were at risk, however, at the time of the transition to the codex. This was the critical moment at which a work's survival depended on its seeming important or interesting enough for someone to take the *active* step of making or commissioning a copy in the new medium. Any book that failed to make it onto the Noah's ark of the new technology was lost, but even those brought aboard could and did fall off from time to time in the long passage through the Middle Ages. Codices, like rolls before them, could be lost or destroyed by any number of vicissitudes, including the prime culprit: failure of reception, or lack of interest when intervention was essential to a work's survival. If there were too few codices of an author, or if he was unlucky, his works could sink with barely a trace.

Apuleius, of course, was not unlucky. Quite the reverse. His works—most of them, at least—survived their journey from antiquity almost intact. They have come down to us in two separate traditions.<sup>4</sup> One group (*De deo Socratis*, *De Platone*, and *De mundo*), generally known as the philosophical works, circulated in northern Europe; the other, dubbed the literary works (*Apology*, *Metamorphoses*, *Florida*), was preserved in a single manuscript in the famous library of Monte Cassino.

Apuleius' works passed their first critical point of reception—into the codex—for various reasons, depending on the particular text and the interests of its readers. The philosophical and literary texts no doubt attracted different readers, as they do today and did in the Renaissance—a consideration that may explain their transmission in separate traditions.<sup>5</sup> The works in both traditions were transferred into codices in several different times and places: that much is clear from early testimonia. But only in a single case do we know anything about the early history of a particular codex.

That case is the transcription of the literary works in Rome at the end of the fourth century, when a young Roman aristocrat in a rhetorical school

read and corrected the text with his teacher. The aristocrat was named Sallustius; his teacher Endecheius.<sup>6</sup> We know all this because a descendant of Sallustius' manuscript—with his subscriptions—was preserved at Monte Cassino. This manuscript is called *F* (for Florence, its present home), and either it or a lost manuscript from the same tradition is the source of all our existing manuscripts.<sup>7</sup> Because *F* preserves several codicological features typical of *uolumina*, or rolls, as Oronzo Pecere has demonstrated, it is possible that Sallustius' manuscript was transcribed from *uolumina*; if it was not, the transfer of Apuleius' text into a codex was certainly in the very recent past.<sup>8</sup>

We do not know what attracted Sallustius and Endecheius to Apuleius, although there was interest in our author in Rome at this period, as contemporary contorniates, or circus medals, with his portrait attest.<sup>9</sup> Various suggestions have been made. We can rule out the old idea that the manuscript and contorniate were both products of a pagan resistance against victorious Christianity. Few scholars now would argue for the pagan resistance, and the thesis is invalid for the manuscript in any event because Endecheius, at least, is known to have been a Christian.<sup>10</sup> More recently, it has been argued that Apuleius had already become a school author in the fourth century—an idea that fits very well with the fact that Sallustius and Endecheius' manuscript originated in a rhetorical school.<sup>11</sup> It would be quite natural for them to want the rhetorical works *Apology* and *Florida*. But what about the *Golden Ass*? The question is worth asking because it is the only complete Roman novel we have, and its preservation was anything but a forgone conclusion. In late antiquity novels were popular but of low repute—a situation nicely summed up by Jerome's disdainful sniff "Many more scroll through Milesian tales than through the books of Plato."<sup>12</sup> The low value placed on novels surely accounts for their almost universal loss: they were widely read, to be sure, but not worth the expense and effort of transcribing into a codex—unless one had a particular reason. I have suggested elsewhere that Sallustius and Endecheius perhaps had different motives—Endecheius' connected with his teaching and Sallustius' personal—but that the two might also have shared an interest in allegory.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. APULEIUS IN AFRICA

Sallustius' encounter with Apuleius turned out to be a *necessary* condition for the survival of the *Apology*, *Golden Ass*, and *Florida*: without it we would not have these works today. But I am not sure that by itself it was a *sufficient* condition. Rather, I suggest that the African connection played a crucial role in the survival and reception of all of Apuleius' extant works—literary as well as philosophical.<sup>14</sup> Sallustius' Roman manuscript and its descendants were the vehicles, but ultimately the impetus—the engine, we might say—came from Africa, and above all from Augustine, Apuleius' most important African reader.

Apuleius' reception in Africa falls into four phases, each with several points of reception. For the first phase (from around 170 to 300), we have no written record; the evidence is from a single monument and traces of an oral tradition. In the second (from around 300 to 400), Apuleius appears in Christian polemic. In the third (from around 412 to 425), his works are treated by Augustine; in the fourth (from around 430 to 530), he is allegorized by Martianus Capella and Fulgentius. It is only in the third and fourth phases that we can be sure that the person referring to his works had actually seen and read a manuscript—by this time probably a codex rather than a roll.

### 2.1. Phase 1 (ca. 170–ca. 300): A Monument and a Legend

Given Apuleius' celebrity status and efforts at self-promotion, this first phase would have been a great disappointment to him; he is not mentioned by name in a single text.<sup>15</sup> But he did have a monument: a statue was erected to him in his native city Madauros either in his lifetime or not long afterward. The statue itself is long gone, although its base is preserved—without his name; its inscription, "To the Platonic Philosopher," makes Apuleius the obvious candidate.<sup>16</sup> The statue was probably taken down within a generation or so—certainly by the middle of the fourth century, for the base was reused for a dedication to one of the sons of Constantine, as the opening of the inscription on the reverse attests: *D(omino) n(ostro), diui C[ons]tanti[ni] Maxim[i] fil(io)*.<sup>17</sup>

This lone statue base is the only physical witness from the period. Scholars (including me) used to believe that there were two, the other being a second-century papyrus illustration that shows Cupid and Psyche.<sup>18</sup> The pair are clearly identifiable by their wings, and Cupid is reclining on a couch, looking as beautiful as Apuleius' Psyche thought he was. But the pair, though Cupid and Psyche, are not in fact *Apuleius'* Cupid and Psyche, as Antonio Stramaglia has shown in a recent study.<sup>19</sup> Psyche seems to be holding not a lamp but a torch, and the papyrus may even antedate the *Golden Ass*. It represents a slightly different version of the story—and one apparently in circulation before Apuleius' novel.<sup>20</sup>

The second element in this phase is appropriately insubstantial: the legend of Apuleius as a magician. The legend certainly had its origin in the charges of magic Apuleius ambiguously rebuts in the *Apology*, as well as in the story of the *Golden Ass*, and I suspect he may have fostered it himself. But dubious as it was, the tradition would be of major importance to the fate of his works. It circulated—how widely we do not know—in the century or so after his death, but it comes to light in the historical record only in the next phase of his African reception: Christian polemic.

### 2.2. Phase 2 (ca. 300–ca. 400): Christian Polemic

Our first source is Apuleius' fellow North African, the Christian apologist Lactantius, the first person to mention Apuleius by name. The date would be somewhere between 304 and 312, nearly 150 years after Apuleius'

death.<sup>21</sup> In the *Divine Institutes* Lactantius argues against the pagan Hierocles, who had claimed that Apollonius of Tyana had performed wonders even greater than the miracles attributed to Christ.<sup>22</sup> He professes astonishment that Hierocles had not named Apuleius as well: “It’s a wonder that he overlooked Apuleius,” he exclaims, “for people like to talk about *his* many marvels, too.”<sup>23</sup> The comment presents Apuleius not as a writer but as a figure of the popular imagination. Perhaps Lactantius had read some of Apuleius’ works (although we cannot be sure of it), but in the *Divine Institutes* he is clearly recalling North African tales and oral tradition. Apuleius himself cannot have been Lactantius’ source, since he claims no marvelous or supernatural accomplishments in any of his works.

After Lactantius, the linking of Apuleius and Apollonius apparently became a fixture in religious polemic. Around 400 Jerome—sarcastic as ever—used it in an attack on the pagan Porphyry, who had apparently argued that the miracles of the apostles had been performed for gain.<sup>24</sup> Writing from Bethlehem, Jerome makes the same charge against pagan magicians:

Apollonius performed wonders, and so did Apuleius: in fact, they performed boundless wonders. I grant you, Porphyry, that they performed wonders with their magic arts in order to get money from silly rich women whom they had seduced.<sup>25</sup>

Jerome’s citation of Apuleius is different in kind from that of Lactantius, for his mention of using magic to seduce “silly rich women” clearly evokes the charges Apuleius refutes in the *Apology*. Jerome knows about the *Apology* even if he has not read it.

The idea of Apuleius as a magician, originating in oral reports after his death, was brought to the fore by fourth-century Christian polemicists (and perhaps also by their pagan opponents, although we cannot be sure of this point since their works have perished). It would be most fully developed by Augustine in the next century.

### 2.3. Phase 3 (ca. 412–425): Augustine

Augustine had much in common with Apuleius, including his background, education, and youthful ambition. He was a North African, he went to school in Apuleius’ hometown Madauros, and he later studied and taught rhetoric at Carthage, the scene of so many of Apuleius’ oratorical triumphs.<sup>26</sup> Between around 412 and 425 he made Apuleius a frequent subject in both his correspondence and *City of God*.<sup>27</sup> He discusses him as a devotee of magic, condemns his demonology in *De deo Socratis*, and both praises and criticizes his Platonic philosophy. To a modern reader these different aspects of Apuleius (magician, demonologist, Platonist) might seem distinct, but for Augustine they were all interconnected: Apuleius’ magic is a corollary of his philosophy. The link is Apuleius’ work *De deo*

*Socratis*, which sets out the Platonic conception of *daimones* as intermediaries between gods and mortals. For Augustine these *daimones* are simply demons, evil spirits and purveyors of the magic arts, with which they delude and destroy their devotees.

Space allows us to mention only three examples of Augustine’s treatment of Apuleius: the contrast between Christ’s miracles and Apuleius’ magic, the discussion of Apuleius’ Platonism, and the famous reference to the *Golden Ass*.<sup>28</sup>

First: miracles versus magic. Augustine alludes to this theme several times—most interestingly in a letter from Hippo in 412 to his fellow Christians Marcellinus and Volusianus in Carthage.<sup>29</sup> They have asked him to counter the familiar claim that Apollonius and Apuleius were better wonderworkers than Christ. In *Epistle* 138, Augustine responds. After attacking the pagan gods as demons who deceive men’s minds with their magic arts, he turns to Apuleius, who, as he says, “as an African is better known to us Africans.”<sup>30</sup> He neatly punctures the pagan claims for their hero, observing on the one hand that Apuleius’ magical powers brought him little worldly success and on the other that he denied practicing magic: anyone touting his miracles is in fact accusing him of being a liar. Augustine makes his argument with a quick sketch of Apuleius’ biography, including his social position, education, priesthood, marriage, and trial, as well as his otherwise unknown oration urging the citizens of Oea to honor him with a statue. From the standpoint of reception this is the most interesting part of the letter: Augustine clearly knows a great deal about his fellow African.

Second: Apuleius’ Platonism. In *City of God*, book 8 (composed around 415–417), Augustine praises the Platonists as supreme among pagan philosophers.<sup>31</sup> Among the later Platonists he singles out Apuleius, his fellow countryman:

. . . the Greeks Plotinus, Iamblichus, and Porphyry are renowned; but the African Apuleius was prominent as a famous Platonist in both languages—that is, in both Greek and Latin.<sup>32</sup>

But he also pours scorn on the Platonists for their polytheism, using Apuleius’ convenient taxonomy of gods, *daimones*, and mortals in *De deo Socratis* as the basis for a detailed and scathing attack that takes up nearly two books in *City of God*. Augustine’s contempt for polytheism, of course, did not keep him from embracing and developing many Platonic (and Neo-Platonic) ideas. As we will see presently, his own Platonism and his interest in that of Apuleius played a critical role in the transmission and survival of Apuleius’ works.

Third: the *Golden Ass*. In book 18 of *City of God*, Augustine brings the connection between magic and demons into the discussion of metamorphosis. If such transformations ever took place, he argues, they would be mere illusions produced by the trickery of demons, who “change only in

appearance things created by the true God so that they seem to be what they are not."<sup>33</sup> He says that he himself has heard (but does not believe) stories of men being transformed into animals and keeping their human reason,

just as Apuleius either declared or pretended happened to him in the books which he entitled *Golden Ass*—that after taking a magical substance he became an ass, but with his mind remaining human.<sup>34</sup>

The passage is often quoted since it is our earliest evidence for the title “Golden Ass,” which Augustine says was awarded by Apuleius himself. The descendants of Sallustius’ manuscript call the novel *Metamorphoses*, and so do most modern scholars, but in my view *Golden Ass* has equal authority. It was what the novel was called in North Africa. But the passage is also the earliest evidence for the way in which the novel was understood by a specific, identifiable reader. Augustine clearly takes it as autobiography, whether real or fictitious; for he assumes without question that Apuleius is claiming to relate his own experience—that he is, in fact, the Lucius of his novel. The assumption continued to be unquestioned for at least 1,500 years, and the identification of Apuleius and Lucius was to play a major role in the interpretation of the *Golden Ass*.

#### 2.4. Phase 4 (ca. 430–530): Allegories

After Augustine, African readers continued to be interested in Apuleius—although for different reasons. In the fourth phase of his African reception, interest turned to allegory, and especially to the story of Psyche. Our protagonists are Martianus Capella and Fulgentius the mythographer—the one a pagan writing in the second half of the fifth century, the other a Christian writing a generation or so later.<sup>35</sup> As interesting as they both are, I must pass over them very quickly. They are important to the reception of Apuleius but less so to his survival, which concerns us here. Martianus echoes passages from the *Golden Ass*, *De deo Socratis*, and *De mundo* and uses Cupid and Psyche, but not the story told by Apuleius.<sup>36</sup> Fulgentius tells and allegorizes Apuleius’ story but omits every detail connected with Psyche’s redemption and final happiness: her pregnancy, Cupid’s assistance in completing the tasks set by Venus, her divinity, and her joyous marriage.<sup>37</sup> We might allegorize Apuleius’ tale as the story of the union of the Soul with Love. Fulgentius’ allegory is about the sins of the flesh and the evils of sexual desire.

The North African authors of our third and fourth phases—Augustine, Martianus, and Fulgentius—all had manuscripts of Apuleius, but almost certainly different manuscripts, and of different works. Fulgentius was interested above all in Cupid and Psyche, but he probably had the whole text of the *Golden Ass*; he also cites words from two lost works not transmitted in either the literary or the philosophical tradition: *Hermagoras* and *De*

*re publica*.<sup>38</sup> Martianus echoes language from at least the *Golden Ass*, *De deo Socratis*, and *De mundo*—that is, from works in both the literary and philosophical traditions. Did he see them in a single manuscript? We cannot know. Augustine knew something about the *Golden Ass*, the *Apology*, and Apuleius’ lost oration lobbying for a statue in Oea, but we cannot be sure that he had a manuscript of these works. He was not especially interested in them. He did have *De deo Socratis*, *De mundo*, and (perhaps) *De Platone*, as well as the pseudo-Apuleian *Asclepius*.<sup>39</sup> The three genuine works were probably contained in a single manuscript—probably by this time a codex—but *Asclepius* may have been circulating separately, for Augustine clearly does not attribute it to Apuleius himself.<sup>40</sup>

### 3. THE MIDDLE AGES

It is impossible to estimate how many manuscripts of Apuleius’ several works (including those now lost to us) were in circulation in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages (six? ten? a dozen?). For the literary works, it came down to one: the manuscript corrected by Sallustius in Rome and Constantinople at the end of the fourth century. At an unknown date, probably in the eighth century, either this manuscript or a copy of it arrived in Monte Cassino.<sup>41</sup> And there either it or one of its descendants remained until the mid-fourteenth century.<sup>42</sup> Copies of it, however, were already slipping out of Monte Cassino by around 1300; eleven of the forty extant manuscripts of the *Golden Ass* were transcribed before 1360.<sup>43</sup> There are few traces of the philosophical works between late antiquity and the Middle Ages (ca. 500 to 800).<sup>44</sup> The oldest extant manuscript was transcribed around 830, probably in Germany.<sup>45</sup> After that point, the philosophical works circulated not in Italy but in northern Europe; no manuscript before 1200 is of Italian origin.<sup>46</sup>

Augustine’s interest in Apuleius’ Platonism was crucial for the survival of the philosophical works. His commendation of Apuleius as “a famous Platonist in both Greek and Latin” and his close study of *De deo Socratis* in *City of God* were enough to persuade the Greekless scholars of the Middle Ages to include them in their library of Latin works on Platonic philosophy. The collection varied over time, but works commonly read with Apuleius (in addition to Augustine himself) included Macrobius’ commentary on *Somnium Scipionis*, Calcidius’ translation and commentary on the *Timaeus*, and *Asclepius*.<sup>47</sup> *Asclepius* circulated together with Apuleius’ philosophical works from at least the ninth century; it, too, probably owes its survival to Augustine, who discussed it in detail in *City of God*.<sup>48</sup>

But what about the *Golden Ass* and other literary works? I began by talking about points of reception, especially the points critical to a work’s survival. The literary works passed the first important point of reception by getting into Sallustius’ manuscript, but they passed another in the eleventh

century in Monte Cassino, when the monks embarked on a campaign of recopying their ancient manuscripts—especially those that were mutilated or damaged. Our essential manuscript of the literary works (*F*) is a product of that effort. And Augustine should probably have the credit, for as Francis Newton has pointed out, the monks were especially eager to have texts both of Augustine himself and of authors he was interested in.<sup>49</sup> The philosophical works of Apuleius were out of reach, in northern Europe, but the monks of Monte Cassino had the unique manuscript of the literary works and copied that—saving the *Golden Ass* and its companions for posterity.

Augustine's influence continued in the fourteenth century. The prehumanists who cite the literary works (Benzo of Alessandria, pseudo Walter Burley, the author of the *flores moralium auctoritatum*, Thomas Waleys, Guglielmo da Pastrengo) all rely on Augustine's description of the *Golden Ass* (*Ciu.* 18.18) and generally borrow from his wording in presenting their own accounts.<sup>50</sup> They follow him in assuming that the adventures in the novel are those of Apuleius himself, and they cement the identity by awarding Apuleius the praenomen of his hero, Lucius, first attested in a manuscript dated around 1316.<sup>51</sup> Francesco Petrarca, who knew much more about Apuleius than his predecessors did, also repeatedly identified him with the hero of his novel.<sup>52</sup> His beautifully illuminated manuscript, copied in northern Italy sometime between 1330 and 1340, is the earliest to bring together the literary and philosophical works, separated since late antiquity.

#### 4. EPILOGUE: FROM MANUSCRIPT TO PRINT

Interest in Augustine had a hand in the transcriptions of the philosophical works in the ninth century and of the literary works in the eleventh century that secured the survival of the bulk of Apuleius' works. (No one knows the number and value of what was lost in late antiquity.) But Augustine was also important at a landmark point of reception in the fifteenth century: Apuleius' transition into print. The works of Apuleius—all of them—were printed by Sweynheim and Pannartz in Rome in February 1469. This is very early. Apuleius was the second classical author to be printed in Italy—after Cicero, of course, but several months ahead of Vergil.<sup>53</sup> He pushed his way to the head of the line because of his Platonism and his position in the Latin Platonic library, a position he owed ultimately to Augustine.<sup>54</sup> His works were printed to announce the publication, six months hence, of Cardinal Bessarion's *Defence of Plato*, an important salvo in the culture wars of the fifteenth century.<sup>55</sup> Self-promoter that he was, I suspect that Apuleius would have liked the idea of launching what James Hankins has described as “the first concerted press campaign in the history of printing.”<sup>56</sup> At any rate, he had survived—and with a vengeance. With the 250 copies printed in 1469 Apuleius became more widely read than at any time in his history.

Apuleius had survived but in ways he would not have expected—saved by his philosophy and by Sallustius and his manuscript, to be sure, but also

by his reputation for magic, and carried into the future on the coattails of a saint.

#### NOTES

1. This paper pulls together and adds to several discussions in Gaisser 2008.
2. Martindale 1993, 3.
3. For the early history of Catullus, see Butrica 2007, 13–24.
4. The separation of the two traditions is less clear than this implies. The text of *De deo Socratis*, the first work in the philosophical collection, begins with excerpts that some scholars believe belong to the *Florida*, the last work in the literary collection. For discussion see Harrison 2000, 90–92; Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001, 177–180. The point of separation, whether correct or not, goes back to a very early date, at least to 395, the date of the archetype of the literary tradition.
5. Of the forty extant manuscripts of the *Golden Ass*, only nine contain any of the philosophical works. For a list of the manuscripts of the *Golden Ass*, see Gaisser 2008, 302–308; for the philosophical manuscripts, see Klibansky–Regen 1993.
6. See Pecere 1984, 113–118; Gaisser 2008, 45–52.
7. Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Laur. Plut. 68.2. The essential modern discussions are Pecere 1984 and 1987. See also Gaisser 2008, 61–63, 303, with further bibliography.
8. Pecere 1984.
9. A very fine example is preserved in Paris (Cabinet des Médailles, Paris 17163, Bibliothèque Nationale de France). For discussion and bibliography, see Gaisser 2008, 28–29, 43–44, and plate 4.
10. The idea of a pagan resistance was proposed by Alföldi 1943 and Bloch 1945 and 1963. It has had many critics, including Toynbee 1945; Cameron 1977; O'Donnell 1979; Salzman 1993, 193–196. For Endecheus, see Cameron 1977, 5–6; Pecere 1986, 32 and n. 65.
11. Stramaglia 1996a.
12. *Multoque pars maior est Milesias fabellas reuoluentium, quam Platonis libros*: Jerome, *Commentariorum in Esaiam, Liber 12, pr.* For other examples of contempt for novels in the period, see Gaisser 2008, 41–43.
13. Gaisser 2008, 51–52. For discussion of an allegorical reading of Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* in fifth-century Constantinople, see Stramaglia 1996b, 141–143.
14. Scholars often note that many of the late antique sources mentioning Apuleius were North African, e.g., Stramaglia 1996a, 124–127, 135–141. For a table of late antique testimonia with the dates and locations of readers and the works mentioned by them, see Gaisser 2008, 300–301.
15. A possible but dubious exception appears in a passage in the *Historia Augusta* in which Septimius Severus attacks his fellow North African Albinus (d. 197) for wasting time reading Apuleius: *cum neniis quibusdam anilibus occupatus inter Milesias Punicas Apulei sui et ludicra litteraria consenesceret* (*Hist. Aug., Alb.* 12.12). The story may not antedate the late fourth century, the probable time of composition of the *Historia Augusta*. Equally shaky are the parallels that some scholars have adduced between Apuleius' philosophical works and the texts of the North Africans Tertullian and Arnobius (e.g., Moreschini 1978, 219–240). Neither apologist makes any reference to Apuleius' works, and the echoes have been seen as unconvincing (Barnes 1971, 256–258).

16. [Ph]ilosopho [Pl]atónico [Ma]daurenses ciues ornament[o] suo. D(ecreto) d(ecurionum), p(ecunia) [p(ublica)]. Gsell 1922, *ILAlg* 1:2115.
17. Gsell 1922, *ILAlg* 1:4010.
18. See Gaisser 2008, 20, with earlier bibliography. Illustrations of the papyrus, PSI VIII 919, appear in Cavallo–Crisci–Messeri–Pintaudi 1998, 2: 231–232 (color plate); Stramaglia 2010, plate 4.
19. Stramaglia 2010, esp. 167–168. I wish to express my thanks to Luca Graverini for drawing this article to my attention.
20. This fact seems to undermine the widely held view that Apuleius invented the story; see Stramaglia 2010.
21. Barnes 1973, 431.
22. For Hierocles, see Barnes 1976. For Apollonius and his role in religious polemics, see Gaisser 2008, 22–23, with earlier bibliography.
23. *Mirum quod Apuleium praetermisit, cuius solent multa et mira memorari*: Lactantius, *Inst.* 5.3.7.
24. For the date, see Jay 1988, 377–378.
25. *Fecit et Apollonius, fecit et Apuleius: et infinita signa fecerunt. Concedo tibi, Porphyri, magicis artibus signa fecerunt, ut diuitias acciperent a diuitibus mulierculis, quas induxerant*: Jerome, *Tractatus de Psalmo lxxxii* 225–232.
26. For a recent biography of Augustine, see O'Donnell 2005, with earlier bibliography.
27. For Augustine's quotations from Apuleius, see Hagendahl 1967, 1: 17–28, 2: 680–687. Augustine pairs Apuleius with Apollonius at *Epist.* 102.32, 136.1, 138.18. He mentions Apuleius alone at *Epist.* 137.13, 138.19; *Ciu.* 8.19, 18.18.
28. For a detailed discussion, see Gaisser 2008, 29–36, with earlier bibliography.
29. For the date, see O'Donnell 1980, 149 n. 15.
30. *Apuleius . . . qui nobis Afris Afer est notior*: Augustine, *Epist.* 138.19.
31. For the date, see O'Donnell 1980, 149.
32. *Ex quibus sunt ualde nobilitati Graeci Plotinus, Iamblichus, Porphyrius; in utraque autem lingua, id est et Graeca et Latina, Apuleius Afer extitit Platonicus nobilis*: Augustine, *Ciu.* 8.12.
33. . . . *specie tenus, quae a uero Deo sunt creata commutant, ut uideantur esse quod non sunt*: Augustine, *Ciu.* 18.18.
34. . . . *sicut Apuleius in libris, quos asini aurei titulo inscripsit, sibi ipsi accidisse, ut accepto ueneno humano animo permanente asinus fieret, aut indicauit aut finxit*: Augustine, *Ciu.* 18.18.
35. For the date of Martianus Capella, see Shanzer 1986, 8–17; for that of Fulgentius, see Hays 1996, 8–17.
36. For Martianus' echoes of Apuleius, see Shanzer 1986, *passim*. Cupid and Psyche are mentioned at *Mart. Cap.* 1.7.
37. *Mit.* 3.6. For discussion, see Gaisser 2008, 53–59.
38. For some verbal echoes of Apuleius in Fulgentius, see Mattiacci 2003, 239–252. Carver 2001, 169, points out that the first sentence in the prologue to the *Golden Ass* is echoed in *Mit. pr.* 1.3: *Tuarum aurium sedes lepido quolibet susurro permulceam*.
39. Augustine quotes extensively from *De deo Socratis* in *Ciu.* 8 and 9 and at some length from a passage in *De mundo* (*Ciu.* 4.2). He does not quote from *De Platone*, but he may have used it silently; Horsfall Scotti 1990, 318–319 and n. 96. He also quotes in detail from *Asclepius* (*Ciu.* 8.23–26).
40. Augustine attributes the views on demons in *Asclepius* to Hermes Trismegistus and contrasts them with those of Apuleius; see especially the beginning of *Ciu.* 8.23.
41. For speculation about the date of the manuscript's arrival, see Gaisser 2008, 61.
42. It was apparently brought to Florence in the 1350s by Zanobi da Strada. See Gaisser 2008, 93–94, with earlier bibliography.
43. For the list, see Gaisser 2008, 309.
44. Klibansky–Regen 1993, 36–42.
45. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier 10054–10056; the manuscript contains (in order) *De deo Socratis*, *Asclepius*, *De Platone*, and *De mundo*. See Klibansky–Regen 1993, 60–62; also Marshall 1983, 16–18; Munk Olsen 1982, 13.
46. Klibansky–Regen 1993, 46–51.
47. For the Latin Platonic library, see Gaisser 2008, 146. Many manuscripts include *Asclepius* with the philosophical works. Medieval manuscripts from the twelfth through the fourteenth centuries containing Apuleius in combination with any or all of the other Latin Platonic works include the following numbers in the list of Klibansky–Regen 1993: 10, 15, 42, 63, 67, 69, 86, 90, 102.
48. *Asclepius* appears in the earliest witness for the philosophical works. See n. 45.
49. Newton 1999, 319–321.
50. Gaisser 2008, 66–75, 81.
51. The manuscript, Vatican Library, Ottob. lat. 2091, introduces the novel thus: “Lucii Apuleii Platonici Maudorensis Methamorphoseon liber primus incipit;” fol. 30r. For a description, see Pellegrin et al. 1975, 785–786.
52. Gaisser 2008, 77–82, with earlier bibliography.
53. Hirsch 1967, 138; Feld 1982, 286.
54. In addition to the literary and philosophical works, the edition includes *Asclepius* and a Latin translation of a second-century Platonic handbook by Alcinous.
55. Hankins 1990, esp. 208–217.
56. Hankins 1990, 214.

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## 4 Apuleius and the Classical Canon

Joseph Farrell

I begin with the question, “Is Apuleius a canonical author?” Any answer that one might give would of course raise other questions; in the context of this volume, the most important of these would be whether Apuleius’ African origin enters into it. But before confronting that question, I have to address a few others that are more basic. For one can hardly get started on this problem without asking, what *is* the canon, and what forces govern its formation?

My inclination is to approach these questions practically as well as historically. During the “culture wars” of the 1980s and 1990s, the questions of what did or didn’t belong in the canon of Western literature, why a work did or didn’t belong, and whether there should even be such a canon, and what legitimate purpose it might serve, were all hotly debated.<sup>1</sup> It would be difficult to maintain that the matter was ever officially settled, but one result of that turmoil has been a greater openness to difference in the popular and professional evaluation of literature. Within the academy as a whole there is no question that the range of authors taught and studied as literature is much larger than it was until thirty or even perhaps twenty years ago. And within classical studies specifically, where the amount of literature that has survived from Greek and especially Roman antiquity is so small, there has nevertheless been a noticeable increase in the number of works that scholars study more or less for their own sake instead of for secondary purposes.<sup>2</sup> But breadth of general interest may not tell us much about how the profession actually defines the canon; if that is what interests us, then our inquiry more or less reduces to the mundane question of whether a writer’s name appears on graduate school reading lists.

Such lists can hardly be said to stir the passions of great numbers of people, and even as instruments for enforcing rigid standards of professional training, they may be honored in the breach about as often as they are observed, with free substitution of one item or author for another characterizing the preparation of many students. But notwithstanding their practical flexibility, just because they are ubiquitous and, at least apparently, definite and explicit elements of all PhD programs, they are probably the most readily available indicator of what our discipline regards as the indispensable

core of classical literature that an aspiring professional must know. So, what do they have to tell us?

First, and unsurprisingly, such lists are fairly consistent from one program to the next. A group of about two dozen authors predominate on every list, and another dozen are usually represented in some form. By this criterion, I am happy to report that Apuleius does seem to qualify as a canonical author. He is present on every list that I checked, along with authors such as Cicero, Catullus, Vergil, Horace, Livy, Seneca, and Tacitus, and on more lists than authors such as Seneca the Elder, Persius, Statius, and Suetonius.<sup>3</sup> I believe, though—and here I am relying on memory and inference rather than on actual research—that Apuleius’ status by this measure is fairly recent. I can remember quite clearly that in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Apuleius was not on the reading list of my own program or of several others I knew about.<sup>4</sup> So I infer that Apuleius’ canonical status is relatively recent and that it has a lot to do with the heroic achievements of John Winkler, the Dartmouth Novel Conference, and a number of other individual scholars, including several represented in this volume.<sup>5</sup> But I am inclined to consider his canonical status somewhat tenuous, partly because it *is* recent and partly because only one work, the *Metamorphoses*, tends to be required of PhD students, and it is unusual to require them to read much of that. In fact, there is even a sense in which these requirements are quite misleading, because they usually involve only the Cupid and Psyche episode, which is in many ways the most unrepresentative section of the novel, to say nothing of the remaining corpus.<sup>6</sup> So Apuleius *has* become a canonical author, but for all these reasons perhaps a slightly marginal or eccentric one.

Apuleius is marginal in another way as well, because on some reading lists he is the *latest* author represented. Where he is not the absolute latest, he generally precedes the next latest, if it is Ammianus, by at least a century and, if it is Augustine, by much more than that.<sup>7</sup> And, if I am not mistaken, both of these authors are also fairly recent additions to these lists. But what is of special importance for our purposes is that Apuleius, along with Augustine when he is included, is the only African writer to be found, with the interesting exception of Terence, who has always been a fixture on all reading lists since antiquity. Now, someone might point to Terence, or indeed to Augustine, as proof that Apuleius’ place in the canon or outside of it has nothing to do with the fact that he was from Africa. But the situation is rather more complex than that.

Without question the most influential person in shaping our idea of the classical canon is Quintilian. We owe to him most of the specific names found on our reading lists and many of the reasons why we think they belong. He names Cicero and Vergil quite explicitly as the chief Roman authors of prose and poetry, and the typical modern reading list requires more of them than it does of any other author.<sup>8</sup> There follow Sallust, Livy, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius, Lucretius, and a few others, reading list fixtures all. But even if Quintilian excluded many good writers from his canon (to prevent it, as he

says, from becoming an actual library),<sup>9</sup> some whom he did include—Ennius, Accius, Pacuvius, Lucilius, Caelius, Calvus, Pollio, Messala, and quite a few others—were winnowed out in late antiquity and in the Middle Ages.<sup>10</sup> In contrast, very few writers whom Quintilian does not name were ever added to the canon.

Quintilian's canon reflects the opinions he formed over his entire career, but he cannot have changed or added to them much later than 95.<sup>11</sup> Those few canonical authors who postdate Quintilian were mainly younger contemporaries whom, following convention, he did not name—writers like Martial, Pliny, Tacitus, and perhaps Juvenal.<sup>12</sup> I do not wish to focus on poetry, but Juvenal's case is too instructive to pass by. It is hard to say just when he was born, but his surviving works belong to the second century, definitely after Quintilian drew up his canon.<sup>13</sup> He is never mentioned by the grammarian Donatus or by the chronicler Jerome, which implies that his standing as an *actor* was not very high within a century or two of his death. But in the late fourth or early fifth century, Servius cites Juvenal more than eighty times in his commentary on Vergil.<sup>14</sup> If these citations, despite Juvenal's absence from Donatus, are tralatian, then they could attest an interest in Juvenal among earlier commentators. If not, they could betoken a sudden, unexplained rise in Juvenal's reputation during Servius' own time. They could also indicate great insight (or perhaps mere eccentricity) on the part of Servius himself.<sup>15</sup> However this may be, it is quite possible that the enormous popularity of Servius' commentary as a medieval school text did something to ensure Juvenal's reputation and perhaps even his survival. Until recently, of course, it was Juvenal who stood at the outer limit of most graduate reading lists. This is just one of the capricious ways in which the dynamics of canon formation have determined the horizon of modern possibilities.

What prose writers after Quintilian's time have enjoyed the status of *actors* for most of the modern period? None, I think, who lived after the second century, and probably none who lived after the reign of Trajan.<sup>16</sup> (That is one of the factors that makes Juvenal's membership in the canon so significant.) And it is interesting to consider the pronounced stylistic differences among the chosen—mainly Pliny and Tacitus but also the more marginal Suetonius. Of the three, it is Suetonius whose claim to canonicity is now based almost exclusively on his value as a historical source, and not on his considerable literary influence or, certainly, his extremely undistinguished style.<sup>17</sup> Pliny and Tacitus, on the other hand, are both accomplished stylists as well as important historical sources, though they are both of these things in very different ways. To this extent they are (I think it is fair to say) canonical authors in a fuller sense than Suetonius, but the roads by which each of these writers reached canonical status were quite different.

Pliny obviously imbibed and exemplified the Ciceronian literary ideals of his teacher Quintilian, and in some sense he owes his place in the canon mainly to this fact.<sup>18</sup> He is not Cicero, by a very long shot, but his patterning of

himself on Cicero—and, perhaps as important, his willingness and even eagerness to be seen as adopting and exemplifying the Ciceronian standards promulgated by Quintilian but without really affecting to challenge Cicero—provided an accessible and appealing model for later writers, like Sidonius Apollinaris and, much later, neo-Latin writers who accepted Ciceronianism as a norm.<sup>19</sup> Today, as a result, few may regard Pliny as the most inspiring *actor* in the classical canon.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, it is hard to argue that he doesn't belong.

If Tacitus was also a pupil of Quintilian, then he rejected many of his teacher's ideas and went in a quite different direction.<sup>21</sup> It is not clear whether this independence cost him in the short run, for we have no early commentary on his style, but there is little to suggest that Tacitus was a very popular author in later antiquity.<sup>22</sup> It is true that he was read by other historians, and in the fourth century Ammianus regarded him as the standard authority on the early principate, as appears from the fact that his own history is a continuation of Tacitus.<sup>23</sup> But other references to Tacitus occur only sporadically down into the fifth century.<sup>24</sup> Already in the Severan period he begins to be remembered disparagingly as a traducer of the Christians.<sup>25</sup> And in other respects as well Tacitus' fortunes are greatly reduced. Here his brilliant but unusual style may come into play: at any rate, in the surviving commentaries of late antiquity, he is never cited as an *actor*.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps for this reason, at least in part, he was anything but popular in the Middle Ages, not even being mentioned during the seventh and eighth centuries. Only in the early modern period did he start coming into his own as one of the great Latin authors, and arguably the greatest of them.

So, then, Suetonius, Pliny, and Tacitus all owe their positions within the canon, central or marginal as they may be, to important differences between them in form, style, and content and to a comparably varied history of reception. There will be more to say about that, but what of Apuleius? How did his reputation fare in later antiquity, what were his early experiences with regard to the modern classical canon, and can these experiences explain why his attainment of this honor is so recent and, perhaps, still somewhat questionable?

The general answer may seem obvious, but perhaps it should not. It is true that by the criteria I have been considering, Apuleius apparently had a lot going against him. Born perhaps around 125, he was of a decidedly later generation than Pliny and Tacitus, Suetonius, and even Juvenal. But this is disadvantageous only from a modern perspective. Presumably no one understood in advance that canon formation would basically come to a close with the death of Trajan, and it is definitely the case that late antique authors like Sidonius speak of Fronto, Apuleius' contemporary, and of Apuleius himself alongside Pliny with evident respect.<sup>27</sup> One might suppose it was disadvantageous to leave behind a corpus of writings that is so sharply bifurcated between the oratorical and philosophical works on the one hand and the novel on the other.<sup>28</sup> Of course, one can find elements of

unity between these two major components of Apuleius' oeuvre, and it may be that critics nowadays are much more inclined to do so than they were in the recent past.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, although for us the versatility that it required to produce such a body of work is impressive, one can understand how either of these components alone might, in the eyes of a less sympathetic age, have worked against canonization. For that matter, if Apuleius had left only the *Apology*, the *Florida*, and the rest of the shorter works, would he have been admitted to the canon? This is not to disparage the *opera minora*; it is the same as asking whether Vergil would have gained admission without the *Aeneid*, or Tacitus without the *Histories* and *Annals*. From this point of view, it is the *Metamorphoses*, an ambitious and, to a modern judge, brilliant work conceived on a large scale, that bears the identifying signs of a true masterpiece. In addition, it is all the more dazzling because it is our only complete specimen of the Roman novel. But in antiquity, this genre seems, as everyone knows, not to have been much esteemed by the literary establishment. And stylistically, by comparison with Petronius or indeed with the Greek romances, this unique specimen is very eccentric, all the more so when judged by Ciceronian standards. One can easily imagine Quintilian pronouncing the same judgment on Apuleius that he leveled against the author of those other *Metamorphoses*—that he was too *lascivus*, that he indulged his talent rather than disciplining it.<sup>30</sup> But since Quintilian does not even recognize prose fiction as a genre, Apuleius would not have received from him the ambiguous honor of disapprobation tempered with grudging praise such as Ovid obtains. That is to say, even if Apuleius' novel is a masterpiece, it is obviously not the sort of masterpiece likely to get the person who wrote it admitted into the charmed circle of canonical authors.

It is odd, then, that in spite of these supposed disadvantages, Apuleius seems to have had at least some status in later antiquity—a higher status, in fact, than such pillars of the modern classical canon as Pliny and Tacitus. That is among the lessons taught by Julia Gaisser and Robert Carver in their two wonderfully complementary books on the reception of Apuleius, which demonstrate that Apuleius was in fact held in some esteem from a period shortly after his death at least until the early fifth century.<sup>31</sup> As an indication of this, we may briefly consider the Trier cathedral ceiling and also the sculpture gallery in the Baths of Zeuxippus, both of which Gaisser discusses.<sup>32</sup> On the Trier ceiling Apuleius appears together with Vergil and another figure, whom Erika Simon in her reconstruction identifies as Heraclitus.<sup>33</sup> Vergil is identified through motifs inspired by the Fourth Eclogue, Apuleius by images of Cupid and Psyche. To appear in such company is a testimony to Apuleius' high standing.<sup>34</sup> But it may be even more significant that in the sculpture gallery in Constantinople, Apuleius and Vergil are the only Roman authors included among dozens of Greek poets, philosophers, and historians (as well as gods, goddesses, and figures of myth). The program of the sculpture gallery is not well understood as a whole, but I wonder whether the inclusion of Apuleius and Vergil alone among Roman authors might not

be interpretable and perhaps might even shed a bit of additional light on the paintings found at Trier.<sup>35</sup> In addition to including Apuleius and Vergil individually in both cases, could there not also be a collective and representative element at work? For instance, might the names of Apuleius and Vergil, one beginning with the first letter of the Latin alphabet, the other (in effect) with the last (since there are no Latin authors with names like Xenophon or Zeno), represent the alpha and the omega of Roman authors? And, in this sense, might they by themselves be taken as representing the entire Latin canon? Alternatively, or in addition, the pair could be taken to represent prose and poetry, perhaps even as the most esteemed writers of the two forms, which would amount to a remarkable revision of the Ciceronian norm advocated by Quintilian.<sup>36</sup> This is of course very speculative, and I offer the idea in that spirit. But however this may be, it is obvious that Apuleius' presence in these monuments attests the considerable esteem in which he was held at Constantine's court.

Between the seventh and the eleventh centuries Apuleius' trail becomes difficult to follow.<sup>37</sup> After his rediscovery in the Renaissance he has certainly had his champions, but only recently has he begun to regain some measure of the prestige that he apparently enjoyed at Trier and Constantinople in late antiquity. That the process of regaining canonical status has been difficult is perhaps a vestige of Quintilian's criteria in our own ideas about canon formation. Apuleius' masterpiece, as I mentioned before, is a work of prose fiction, a genre that Quintilian did not even recognize, and in the modern period, widespread interest in the ancient novel is still a relatively new thing. With regard to his other works, Apuleius' claim to be a philosopher was more compelling in his own time and for several centuries thereafter than it is today—or, perhaps, than it would have been if he had lived a century earlier than he did. It is hard to imagine that Quintilian would have found a place in his canon for someone like Apuleius, as he might well have done for Pliny or Tacitus. And perhaps this difference in perspective explains everything: perhaps the intellectual climate in which Apuleius lived had changed sufficiently from that of the Flavian and even the Trajanic period that it makes sense for modern students of antiquity to see the death of Trajan as marking the end of an era, an end that calls for the closing of the classical canon. In this case, Apuleius' greater celebrity during late antiquity, as compared with that of Pliny and Tacitus, would by itself prove that he was already part of a world that was less classical than theirs, and that he did not really belong in the classical canon.

The case has never been made, so far as I am aware, in quite these terms—in part because appreciation of Apuleius' fame in late antiquity is itself a relatively recent phenomenon. But the fact remains that Apuleius, despite what seem from a modern perspective to have been insuperable disadvantages, nevertheless did manage during late antiquity to achieve a reputation greater than that of Pliny or Tacitus. The fifth century was a great leveler, however, and during most of the Middle Ages neither Pliny, Tacitus, nor

Apuleius was widely known. In a sense, the slate was wiped clean, and they all had to start from scratch when Renaissance scholars began the modern game of classical canon formation. It was Pliny, for reasons that I have explained, who made his way into the canon with the least difficulty, and he has remained there ever since. Tacitus caused much more excitement, meaning that he attracted both ardent supporters and ardent opponents, not least on historical and political grounds.<sup>38</sup> Stylistically, his case parallels that of Apuleius to a certain extent, in that both authors became implicated in controversy over their flouting of Ciceronian norms.<sup>39</sup> But the specific charges leveled against each of them are different in quite interesting ways, which are easiest to grasp if they are stated in their most extreme forms.

Although Tacitus was an extreme stylistic non-conformist, ever since antiquity the main thing that his enemies held against him was the belief that he was a liar who invented episodes that never happened and reported them as fact. Tertullian was the first to make this charge; Voltaire was the first modern writer to pick up on the idea.<sup>40</sup> Eventually, the notion that Tacitus fabricated historical events mutated into the theory that most of his works were the fabrications of a much later age.<sup>41</sup> It is a rather strange story, and its details need not concern us, but one thing that is notable, for our purposes, is that Tacitus' distinctive and un-Ciceronian style plays so little a part in these arguments.<sup>42</sup> By the same token, when the tide in Tacitus' fortunes began to turn in the mid-sixteenth century, they did so not so much because tastes had changed regarding his style but because his historical perspective proved congenial to commentators on political developments that were taking place throughout early modern Europe.<sup>43</sup> Then, eventually, with progress in editing and explicating Tacitus' challenging prose style, appreciation of his artistry increased as well, to the point that he is now regarded as one of the best thinkers *and* one of the best stylists that Latin literature has to offer. But it seems important that it was appreciation of what Tacitus had to say that led the way, and that appreciation of how he said it followed.

Apuleius, too, challenged the literary expectations of early modern intellectuals. As was the case with Tacitus, from the Ciceronian controversies of the Renaissance until quite recently the merits of Apuleius' style have been vigorously debated and, gradually, vindicated.<sup>44</sup> But throughout the modern period, critical reception of Apuleius has continued to be conditioned more by style than by content. It is in connection with a category of style that the particular objection that interests me has surfaced—intermittently and only in part, but persistently and unmistakably as well—namely, an interest in Apuleius' status as a provincial and, specifically, as an African. This is of course the aspect of his reception that is most germane to the concerns of this volume, and it will occupy our attention for the remainder of this paper.

To frame my discussion of Apuleius as an African author, let us conduct a brief, very modest thought experiment. Perhaps it is appropriate in light of Apuleius' distinction as a novelist to view his canonical status through the lens of an idea about the novel promulgated by Mikhail Bakhtin, namely,

that of the chronotope.<sup>45</sup> This is the word that Bakhtin coined to designate the peculiar way in which, as he argues, every literary genre defines itself by virtue of its treatment of space and time. My idea is to borrow this concept and to apply it to the “genre” of Latin literature as a whole, or to the canon of Latin literature, and in this light to ask how space-time behaves within this genre's precincts. Rome of course is the center of this chronotope. But as the canon moves forward in time, it also expands in space, in the sense that later canonical authors tend to be born farther and farther away from Rome. This ever-expanding canon-chronotope thus bears some resemblance to the physical universe as described by the Big Bang theory of cosmology. In the chaotic early period, canonical authors might come from anywhere—Greece, Puglia, and even Africa itself—until, after this initial period of chaos settles down, the chronotope of the literary canon expands at an even rate for a long period of time. Earlier authors all come from Italy, initially from a moderate distance away from Rome (Lucilius, Accius, Cicero, and Sallust; then Horace, Propertius, and Ovid), but then they are joined and eventually outnumbered by writers from Cisalpine Gaul (Catullus, Vergil, Livy, Pliny, Tacitus). By the same token, the Italians are eventually joined by writers from more distant provinces, like Hispania (Seneca, Lucan, Columella, Quintilian, Martial). What is more, under the principate an additional feature comes into view, which is that the literary chronotope comes to be related to a different one, which it anticipates and even predicts. That is, if we can extend this thought experiment to include the provenance of the emperors, we find that we get great Italian provincial authors (under Augustus) several decades before we get Italian provincial emperors (the Flavians), and great Hispanic provincial authors (under Nero and the Flavians) before Hispanic emperors (like Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius). According to this model, the next step should be great *African* authors appearing in advance of African emperors—which is, in fact, just what we do get, in the form of Apuleius and Fronto heralding the accession to the purple of their fellow Africans in the form of the Severan dynasty.<sup>46</sup> Then, perhaps, if we can recur once more to cosmology as a model for literary-imperial Latin space-time, comes the Big Crunch of the third century, when everything collapses back into chaos. What could be clearer?<sup>47</sup> A Bakhtinian history of Latin literature would be founded on such principles as these rather than on the usual, boring ones of gold and silver or the ages of man.<sup>48</sup> But we don't seem to believe in this model. Why not?

This Bakhtinian experiment, however whimsical, has the virtue of focusing our attention on the fact that the ever-expanding universe of the Latin canon stops at the coast of Africa. The model does not tell us why it stops there or why it should, nor is it obvious why it should. But, conventionally, it seems to do so, and realizing this helps to focus our attention on how Apuleius' Africanism has complicated the history of his modern reception.<sup>49</sup>

One of the first, if not the first, critics to impugn Apuleius' style, along with that of Tertullian, as provincial and specifically African is none other

than Desiderius Erasmus.<sup>50</sup> A weighty opinion, then, but it is amusing that in the same letter where this occurs, Erasmus contrasts Apuleius with Augustine—who himself of course speaks of Apuleius as a fellow African!<sup>51</sup> Perhaps it was Augustine's status as an orthodox Christian as much as his occasionally orthodox Ciceronian style that allowed him to rise above his African origins in Erasmus' eyes, while a heretic like Tertullian and a magician like Apuleius could not. But Apuleius' more secularly minded editors have occasionally shown similar concerns. David Ruhnken in his preface to Frans Oudendorp's posthumous edition of Apuleius criticized his author's Africanism in terms like those used by Erasmus.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, Gustav Friedrich Hildebrand, in his edition of 1842, contrasted the exuberance of the *Metamorphoses* with the more austere, Ciceronian style of Apuleius' other works, finding in the style of the novel (which he regarded as a youthful work) evidence of an Africanism that Apuleius had not yet purged from his system.<sup>53</sup> The idea of African Latinity more generally enjoyed some currency in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; more recently, one tends to hear that it is an idea whose time has gone. But it keeps resurfacing, as in the work of Serge Lancel and Hubert Petersmann.<sup>54</sup> Also, Jonathan Powell in his contribution to Ahuvia Kahane and Andrew Laird's *Companion to the Prologue to Apuleius'* *Metamorphoses* accepts the idea that the provincial accent of Madaurus is on display, even if only to a small extent, in the prologue to the novel.<sup>55</sup> Now, in this very volume Daniel Selden puts forth some impressive arguments to suggest that the non-Latinate cultures of Africa, Egypt, and the Near East may have played an important role in determining elements of Apuleius' rhetorical style. My own view is that Selden's approach is the most cogent that has been advanced so far but that I will need time to make up my mind about his results; if I may continue in the meantime to approach the problem from a pre-Selden perspective, I would be inclined to go along, at least in part, with Mark Edwards's judgment in *his* contribution to the prologue companion:

When we call Apuleius an African, do we speak of "African Latin"? Not if that connotes the barbarous dialect of the province, which exists indeed, but only in official documents. The Latin of the African literati was no dialect, no pidgin; from the middle of the second to the middle of the fourth century, the Africans are almost the only Latin writers extant. Of course they have Roman models, but they excel them both in brilliance and in bathos, monotonously exhausting all varieties, and frequently as strict in imitation of the ancients as they are fertile in the invention of new forms. For all that, though the tone is not provincial, Roman Africa is a province, and the truth in such a phrase as "African Latin" is that, like the Punic capital, it brings together the margins and the centre. The Latin culture of Africa is the best, if not the only, Latin culture of its time; yet its exponents know that they are not at the heart of the Roman world.<sup>56</sup>

This carefully nuanced statement takes us some way toward the answer we have been seeking but not all the way. Edwards is saying that a provincial and specifically African *dialect* is not on display in the prologue to the novel. The question is what he means by focusing our attention in the way that he does on the provincial *consciousness* of Apuleius and other African writers. It is certainly not obvious, as I think Edwards himself makes clear, that this is a specifically linguistic trait. If he means to say that Apuleius in the *Metamorphoses* thematizes provincialism, placing this issue before the reader in ways that are ironic and thought-provoking, then I certainly agree. But the provincialism of the prologue can be read as advertising a certain cosmopolitanism as well. Miletus, Egypt; Attica, Corinth, and Sparta; Athens again; and, finally, Latium and Rome are all invoked, in just this order, before we are told that we should attend to and enjoy a tale "Greek in origin but adapted for Latin use."<sup>57</sup> The itinerary implied is not quite a complete tour of the empire such as we encounter so often in imperial literature, but it is close: imperial cosmopolitanism, then, but viewed perhaps from a *provincially* cosmopolitan point of view?<sup>58</sup> In any case, one province not mentioned here is Africa Proconsularis, nor is any part of the novel set there; so if Apuleius the writer wished to thematize his own specifically African origin, he could have been clearer about his intent.<sup>59</sup>

But let us suppose that provincialism in some sense is under consideration in Apuleius' writings. Is this true generally of African writers in the second century in ways that it was not true of Hispanic writers in the first? Is Apuleius' interrogation of provincialism a function of his Africanism, or something that he shares with other African writers? At the linguistic level, certainly not. As Stephen Harrison has pointed out apropos of the style of the *Metamorphoses*, "if learning Latin in an African context engendered such a style, we would expect more of it in writers of similar background such as Fronto, who shares Apuleian archaism but not his exuberance."<sup>60</sup> This is perfectly correct, and one might go farther: if Fronto, who was much esteemed and very influential in his own day, and was praised by Sidonius for his *grauitas*, had been discovered along with Pliny, Tacitus, and Apuleius during the Renaissance, then modern intellectuals might have formulated their ideas about Africanism differently than they in fact did.<sup>61</sup> Arguments such as the one that Wytse Keulen makes in this volume might have been formulated earlier, so that we would all be thinking differently about the relationship between Fronto and Apuleius precisely as African authors. But as things happened, Fronto's works remained unknown until the great palimpsest hunter Angelo Mai discovered them in 1815, by which time the conditions that governed the initial reception of new works of classical literature had changed enormously and many of the basic conceptions of classical antiquity that obtain today had already become firmly entrenched.<sup>62</sup> So we will never know how a discovery of Fronto in the Renaissance would have affected the reception of Apuleius.

Other African writers may share specific traits with Apuleius (or with the Apuleius of the *Metamorphoses*, as opposed to the rest of his corpus; or vice versa), but it is hardly clear that these individual shared traits add up to something we can call Africanism or even to a persistent and characteristic interest in provincialism as such. In fact, it seems to me far from clear that African writers can really be defined as a coherent group any more, really, than Hispanic writers can. Africanism is always available as a category, but what purpose it serves is always open to interpretation. Here I would just bring up in passing E.J. Kenney's idea about Apuleius and Nabokov.<sup>63</sup> This is definitely suggestive, and where these two modern writers are concerned, the idea that exuberance is the likely result of writing literature in a language not one's own certainly seems apt. But I am not sure it has any real general validity. If we considered Roman comedy, for instance, Kenney's idea would be much truer of the exuberant Italian Plautus than of the more restrained Terentius Afer, that *puri sermonis amator* whose African background is of practically no interest to anyone. And in modern literature I cannot see that the idea applies to such writers as Joseph Conrad or Samuel Beckett, or perhaps even to those Italian writers who grew up speaking a regional dialect before learning to write in standard Italian almost as if in a foreign language.

All of this suggests, in my view, that the modern concern with Apuleius' Africanism is greatly exaggerated and quite possibly fundamentally mistaken. That does not mean that investigation of African themes in Apuleius' writings is also mistaken; far from it. Rather, what I question is the hypostatization of Apuleius' African origins to a linguistic and literary-historical issue.

To return in conclusion to the idea of Apuleius' place in the canon, I believe that the modern focus on Africanism does much to explain Apuleius' marginality. He really is, literally, marginal. He is not only the first African author, other than the altogether exceptional Terence, to be included in the canon, but also the first post-Trajanic author to win that distinction. But there is more at stake than the place of Apuleius alone. For if we take at all seriously the idea of Africanism, or even if we merely ask why an author should be excluded from the canon, however we define it, simply because he is African, then we must face a whole series of other questions in the form of petitions from other African authors clamoring for admission. Perhaps the problem is that antiquity, apparently, has to end somewhere, but literary Latinists persist in ending it earlier than do others. To put it simply, why do we not accept the results of our earlier Bakhtinian experiment and expand the precincts of the canon to admit not only writers like Fronto and Apuleius but Perpetua, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, and others as well? Here, no doubt, the issue of Christianity as well as Africanism complicates the decision. But historians, art historians, and archaeologists have by now long been used to living in such a heterogeneous world. Literary Latinists, in contrast, mainly persist in ending antiquity with the death of Trajan, classifying most later writers as para-literary—encyclopedists, commentators,

grammarians, lexicographers, and so forth—and dealing with others chiefly in terms of reception or else leaving them to specialists in late antiquity. Accepting Apuleius into the canon challenges this way of doing things—not a lot, because what is *one* exception, after all? But if we think through the issues and the reasons that are involved, the implications of this challenge are not small, and they are potentially fundamental.

## NOTES

1. For a convenient survey of these debates, see Star 2002.
2. Although it has to be said that the recent expansion of interest in texts that were formerly little read is in large part due to a significant shift in what constitutes literary study away from *belles lettres* in the direction of social and cultural history.
3. My survey consisted of ten randomly chosen North American PhD programs whose Latin reading lists were available on their websites at noon on August 27, 2012.
4. My memory of the program at Chapel Hill includes an episode in which one of my professors, in a course on Latin prose composition, was surprised when we students told him that there was no Apuleius on the PhD reading list, his opinion being that there should be, because including Apuleius would help to represent the diversity and flexibility of the language. And it happens that I still have in my possession a copy of that reading list, which does in fact exclude Apuleius. In a discussion of Apuleius' absence from 1980s reading lists at the Oberlin conference, Ellen Finkelppearl confirmed that he was not on the Harvard reading list, either, and that it was precisely this non-canonical status that attracted her to studying him.
5. Winkler 1985; Tatum 1994; one should also mention Schlam 1971 and 1992. The Groningen commentaries have their own unique importance, although they began in an era when Apuleius was still regarded by many as orbiting well beyond the Kuiper Belt of classical studies, and later volumes retain more than a little of the project's originary spirit, even if one can detect the progressive influence of the *Zeitgeist* as well.
6. Instructive is the way in which Apuleius is represented in another quasi-canonical form, the estimable series of Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics, popularly known as "green and yellows." The point is that Kenney 1990 is not green and yellow but two shades of purple, because it belongs to the "Imperial Library," which, in the words of the press, "has been established as a part of Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics to accommodate titles that fall outside the conventional canon but are works of genuine interest and literary quality" ([www.cambridge.org/us/knowledge/series/series\\_display/item3936987/?site\\_locale=en\\_US](http://www.cambridge.org/us/knowledge/series/series_display/item3936987/?site_locale=en_US), accessed August 27, 2012). As of this writing there are four volumes in this series, as against eighty-six green and yellows. As in many reading lists, the only Latin author represented besides Apuleius is the much later Augustine, and the only portion of Apuleius' novel included is the Cupid and Psyche episode. See O'Donnell 1991.
7. The Brown program was the only one I found that requires students to read authors such as Ausonius, Boethius, Claudian, Macrobius, Mamertinus, Prudentius, Sidonius, and Symmachus.
8. Vergil's oeuvre is typically the most voluminous that is required to be read in its entirety, or, short of that, more lines of Vergil are required than of any

- other poet, just as more pages of Cicero are required than of any other prose writer.
9. *Inst.* 10.1.57.
  10. It is interesting that Quintilian names many Republican poets but few of post-Augustan date, and no prose author who antedates Cicero but many who lived after him.
  11. Jerome says that Galba brought Quintilian to Rome in 68, and Quintilian says that he taught there for twenty years before eventually beginning to compose his *magnum opus* (*Inst.* 1 *pr.* 1), on which he says (in the introductory epistle to Trypho the bookseller) he worked for a little more than two years before taking Horace's advice (*Ars* 388) and laying it aside for nine more. All of this, particularly if twenty is just a round number and the Horatian conceit is not pressed too hard, is compatible with a date of publication not long before the assassination in 96 of Domitian, who is flatteringly addressed at 10.1.9.
  12. Quintilian makes his policy clear at 10.1.96 when he says that one might add the recently deceased Caesius Bassus along with Horace to the canon of lyric poets, although there are living authors far more talented than he. If Quintilian is thinking strictly of lyric poets, then presumably he has Statius in mind.
  13. We really have no reliable information at all about Juvenal's life. Syme 1979, 260, who is cited with approval by Braund 1996, 16 n. 41 (from the reprint in Syme 1984), states that "there is no sign, let alone proof, that Juvenal published or even wrote anything before 115, or indeed before 117," that is, before the very last years of Trajan's reign or even the accession of Hadrian.
  14. The citations are discussed and evaluated in different ways by Fendrick 1971 and Monno 2009.
  15. Monno 2009 infers from the distribution of citations between Servius and Servius Danielinus that Servius was more interested in Juvenal than were his predecessors.
  16. Among Antonine writers Gellius has always been the most widely read but has been viewed mainly as a source rather than an object of study in his own right. Holford-Strevens 1988 marked a sea change, and Gleason 1995, though not specifically focused on Gellius, was very influential as well: see, e.g., Beall 1997, 1999, 2001; Vardi 2000, 2001; several of the essays in Holford-Strevens-Vardi 2004; Keulen 2009; Gunderson 2009. Fronto's writings of course were basically unknown until 1815, when Angelo Mai began to discover his works in palimpsests (for details see Reynolds-Wilson 1983, 173–174); thereafter, he too was long valued mainly as a historical and biographical witness, until Champlin 1980 and Van den Hout 1999 prepared the way for him to be studied in his own right (see, e.g., Fleury 2003, 2006; Richlin 2006) and specifically as an African intellectual at Rome (Fleck 2006; Claassen 2007, 2009; Degn 2010). Neither author as yet appears on any graduate reading list that I have seen. On Apuleius and Antonine culture, see now Bradley 2012.
  17. *De uita Caesarum* effectively determined the form of literary and especially regal biography in the West for the writers of the *Historia Augusta*, for Einhard in his life of Charlemagne, and for Petrarch in his *De uiris illustribus*. Hurley 2001, 20–22, succinctly outlines the ancient and medieval reception.
  18. Pliny refers to Quintilian as one of his teachers at *Epist.* 2.14.9 and 6.6.3.
  19. On Pliny's imitation of Cicero (and others), see Marchesi 2008. Sidonius programmatically declares his allegiance to the example of Pliny along with his own unwillingness to be seen as rivaling Cicero (*Epist.* 1.1; cf. 4.22.2, 8.10.3, 9.1.1). Twice he includes Apuleius along with Pliny in lists of authors whom he admires (2.10.5, 4.3.1; cf. 2.9.5).
  20. That said, Pliny no less than Gellius and Fronto is undergoing a significant critical reevaluation. Besides Marchesi 2008, see Ludolph 1997; Hoffer 1999; Henderson 2002; Gibson–Morello 2003, 2012; Castagna–Lefevre 2003.
  21. The relationship is often supposed, but we have no actual evidence.
  22. For the essential data concerning the reception of Tacitus from antiquity to the Renaissance, see Mendell 1957, 225–255. What follows here covers only a selection of the material that he discusses.
  23. Jerome sheds further light on how Tacitus the historian was understood in later antiquity. At *Commentarius in Zacariam* 14.1–2, he calls Tacitus the author of "the lives of the Caesars following Augustus to the death of Domitian" (*post Augustum usque ad mortem Domitiani uitas Caesarum*), as if he wrote in the manner of Suetonius. Mendell 1957, 228–229, observes that there is nothing in this notice to indicate that Jerome had read or even seen either the *Annals* or the *Histories*, and suggests that he merely knew of the two works at secondhand as a chronologically continuous, unified *corpus* of thirty books.
  24. Sidonius speaks of Tacitus with obvious respect (*Epist.* 4.22.2, 4.14.1; *Carm.* 2.192, 23.154). Orosius in *Adu. pag.* 1 (5.1, 10.1) cites *Hist.* 5.7 and 5.3. In book 7 he cites otherwise lost portions of Tacitus' works (collected by Mendell 1957, 231–232; Koestermann 1969, 238–239). In the mid-sixth century Cassiodorus (*Var. lib. epist.* 2.2) and his pupil Jordanes (*Getica* 2.13) become the last authors of antiquity to quote Tacitus, whom they know simply as "Cornelius."
  25. Tert., *Apol.* 16; cf. *Nat.* 1.11, 2.12; Sulpicius Severus of Aquitaine, *Chronicorum libri* 2.29–30.
  26. Servius quotes a lost portion of the text in his commentary on the *Aeneid* 3.399.
  27. Sidonius, *Epist.* 4.3.1.
  28. Note, however, that earlier ages may not have viewed this bifurcation in the same way as we do. The manuscript tradition divides Apuleius' works in two but groups them differently. One tradition (the "philosophical" works) consists of *De deo Socratis*, *De Platone*, *De mundo*, and the falsely ascribed *Asclepius*; the other ("literary") group includes *Apology*, *Metamorphoses*, and *Florida*. See Marshall 1983; Gaisser 2008, 40.
  29. I just note in passing that other authors whose works have been perceived as bifurcated in some other way, such as Seneca (philosophy and drama) and Ovid (pre- and post-exilic poetry), have also enjoyed a major upsurge in critical interest at roughly the same time as Apuleius, and that in these cases as well the nature of the relationship between the two different components of their oeuvres has been a significant focus of attention.
  30. E.g., *Inst.* 4.1.77, 10.1.98.
  31. Carver 2007; Gaisser 2008. Cf. also Stramaglia 1996.
  32. Gaisser 2008, 25–28.
  33. Simon 1986, 19–37.
  34. In view of my earlier point about a perceived bifurcation between the novel and the *opera minora*, it may be significant that the iconographic program of the Trier ceiling seems to allude to the Cupid and Psyche story as a philosophical allegory. This would point to the perception of an underlying unity at least between the novel and the philosophical works. See Simon 1986, 19–37; Gaisser 2008, 25–27.
  35. We know of the sculpture gallery from a verse ecphrasis by Christodorus of Thebes, *Description of the statues in the public baths named for Zeuxippus*,

- which forms the second book of the *Anthologia Palatina*. The arrangement of the poem obviously need not reflect that of the gallery itself, which may also have contained holdings beyond what the poem describes. Specifically Roman figures are very few: besides Apuleius (303–305) and Vergil (413–416) they include only Julius Caesar (92–96) and Pompeius (398–407). Among mythological figures there is, however, a strong Trojan representation that includes Aeneas (143–147), though as a strictly Homeric character. There is also a representation of the Vergilian characters Dares and Entellus (221–227). Apuleius is followed by Artemis (306–310) and then by Homer (311–350), the longest single entry in the poem. Vergil himself occupies an honorific position as the last figure mentioned. He is immediately preceded by a second Homer (407–413), son of Moero and himself a tragedian.
36. I am grateful to Stephen Harrison for this suggestion.
  37. For details and some interesting possibilities for Apuleius' presence in vernacular literature during the Middle Ages, see Carver 2007, 61–107.
  38. On Tacitus' early modern reception in history, politics, and literature, see, variously, Schellhase 1976; Momigliano 1990, 109–131; Luce–Woodman 1993; Mellor 1993, 140–157; Krebs 2005, 2009; Gajda 2009, 253–268.
  39. On Tacitus and the early modern controversies surrounding Ciceronianism, see Croll 1966, 163–202; Salmon 2003, 27–53.
  40. On Voltaire and Tacitus, see Volpilhac-Auger 2009, 141–142, with further references.
  41. The facts, which are often reported inaccurately, are these. First, Ross 1878, while accepting the authenticity of the *Histories*, *Germania*, and *Agricola*, attempted to prove that the great humanist Poggio Bracciolini was the real author of the *Annals*. Then, Hochart 1890 expanded the thesis to include the *Histories*. Finally, Wiener 1920 argued on a different basis, and without reference to the authenticity of the other works, that the *Germania* was a forgery emanating from Arabic Spain. No scholar takes or ever did take these arguments seriously, but doubts about the authenticity of Tacitus' works persist as a kind of urban legend.
  42. It is particularly ironic that Ross 1878 and Hochart 1890 nominated Poggio, a staunch Ciceronian, as Tacitus' forger. But Ross does occasionally convict Poggio of betraying himself by elements of his Ciceronian style (e.g., 108, 111, 117, 361). Comparing the Latinity of what he regards as Tacitus' authentic works to that of the *Annals*, he opines that “the eloquence of Tacitus is grave and majestic, his language copious and florid. The language of the author of the *Annales* is cramped; and he maintains a dignified composure, rather than majesty” (115; cf. 285). It goes without saying that neither Ross's method nor his taste is beyond cavil. Wiener 1920 for his part does detect the occasional Arabism in the *Germania* but says nothing about the style of the other works.
  43. Salmon 2003, 37.
  44. D'Amico 1984; Gaisser 2008, 168–169, 202–203.
  45. Bakhtin 1981, 84–258.
  46. Nor, of course, does the parade of African writers stop with them: it continues into the early third century but mainly with Christian authors, like Tertullian, whom literary historians seem to consider beyond the pale of the classical, and even with Christian women, like Vibia Perpetua (on whose marginal position see Farrell 2001, 74–83; Farrell 2012).
  47. Amusingly, chronotope theory “explains” both of the previous major crises that beset the principate as well, namely, the failure of the Latins Galba and Vitellius or the Etruscan Otho to consolidate their power in 69, and also the Latin Nerva's need in 96 to adopt the Hispanic Trajan. Only Antoninus Pius, born in Lanuvium to a family from Nîmes, breaks the pattern, anticipating by centuries the appearance in any quantity of writers from Gaul.
  48. On these tropes of literary history, see Farrell 2001, 84–94.
  49. The following summary is much indebted to Harrison 2002.
  50. *Mibi ueterum dictionem uariam consideranti uidetur uix ullos prouinciales feliciter reddidisse Romani sermonis simplicitatem praeter aliquot, qui Romae a pueris sunt educati. Nam et Tertulliano et Apuleio suus quidam est character et in decretis Afrorum, quae multa refert Augustinus contra Petilianum et Crescentium, deprehendas anxiam affectationem eloquentiae, sed sic, ut Afros agnoscas* (*Epist.* 1334, from 1523: “On considering the varying styles of the ancients, it seems to me that hardly any writers of provincial origin have successfully rendered the purity of the Roman language, except for those who were educated at Rome from their youth. For Tertullian and Apuleius have their own particular stylistic stamp; in the decrees written by Africans, too, which are cited in abundance by Augustine writing against Petilianus and Crescentius, you will find an anxious affectation of style, but such as to enable you to recognize them as Africans”).
  51. Aug., *Epist.* 138.19: *Apuleius enim . . . qui nobis Afris Afer est notior. . .*
  52. Ruhnken (in Oudendorp 1786, i–v) begins by comparing Apuleius and Gellius, whom he considers the greatest writers of the Antonine period, and noting how far and in what ways each of them, by a lapse of judgment, fell short of the standard established by Cicero and other writers of his age. He praises Gellius for tempering his penchant for archaism by confining his lexicon for the most part to that of Plautus and Terence, and he chides Apuleius for his unrestrained love of far-fetched words. Ruhnken further complains that he finds the effect of Apuleius' *tumor Africanus* particularly irritating in those works that Apuleius expected the learned to read—works, then, other than *Apology*, which Ruhnken goes on to praise for being free of such faults, or, presumably, the novel.
  53. Hildebrand 1842, xxiv–xxv, makes much of the stylistic differences between the *Metamorphoses* on the one hand and all of the other works—which he regards as not far short of Cicero's standard—on the other. He posits that the novel was written at Rome but in Apuleius' youth, before he had lost those provincial qualities—mainly, a love of archaism—that, in Hildebrand's view, he shared with Tertullian, Cyprian, and other African authors but exaggerated even more than they because of his presumed youth.
  54. Lancel 1985; Petersmann 1998. On the issue of African Latin, cf. Mattiacci in this volume.
  55. Powell 2001.
  56. Edwards 2001, 48.
  57. *Fabulam Graecanicam*, with the commentary of Harrison–Winterbottom 2001, 15.
  58. In contrast, then, to the centrist imperialism of Ovid (see Habinek 2001, 151–170) or Martial (*Spect.* 1, 3).
  59. Keith Bradley's insistence in his paper at the conference that one take seriously the ancient Roman conception of Africa as the basis for understanding Apuleius as an African writer is very much to the point.
  60. Harrison 2002, 162.
  61. Sidonius, *Epist.* 4.3.1. He praises Apuleius alongside Fronto, but a textual uncertainty makes it tantalizingly uncertain whether the quality that Sidonius admires in Apuleius is the impact (*fulmen*) or the copious stream (*flumen*) of his eloquence.

62. On the transmission of Fronto, see Reynolds 1983.  
63. Kenney 1990, 29.

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## Part II

# Cultural Contexts

## 5 Apuleius and *Africitas*

*Silvia Mattiacci*

In a famous passage of the *Apology*, Apuleius mentions the land of his birth, “situated on the border between Numidia and Gaetulia”<sup>1</sup>—an emblematic origin for one destined to take on a key role in the discussion of “borders” between different cultures and languages in second-century imperial society. There is also an episode in the *Metamorphoses* that translates the permanent conflict involved in border issues into a significant image, with an interesting warning at the end: a rich, greedy landlord tries to push the borders of his lands further and further forward, at the expense of his poor neighbors, but at the end of this dramatic conflict he is reminded that, despite all his bullying, he will always have *uicinum aliquem* (*Met.* 9.38.3). The warning sounds like an implicit invitation to mediation and integration, and it is tempting to see it in relation to the broader reality of the time, a world where ever more frequent relations among different geographical areas were leading to interactions among diverse cultures, religions and languages that were not always easy.

Thus, Apuleius, with his “mixed” origins, his almost symbolic wanderings through Carthage, Athens and Rome, and the interplay among these worlds reflected in his works, offers us significant evidence and suggestions for reflection on the processes of cultural fusion within the Roman Empire. In particular, this brilliant Latin sophist, who shows a specific interest in language as a factor of cultural identity (emblematic here is the prologue to the *Metamorphoses*),<sup>2</sup> occupies a key position in the study of linguistic relations between the center and the periphery of the empire. Indeed, the question of *Africitas*, that is, the *uexata quaestio* of the existence of an African Latin, is closely connected to Apuleius. This problem, which already seemed to have found a definitive solution at the start of the last century, has reemerged in recent studies and will therefore have to be reexamined in the light of new perspectives offered by recent investigations into bilingualism and the regional diversifications of Latin. The first part of this paper is dedicated to the problem of *Africitas* in general, to the history of the concept and the debate surrounding it, while the second part deals with the topic in relation to Apuleius’ linguistic identity.

## 1. THE PROBLEM OF *AFRICITAS*

As is known, the period between Hadrian and the Severi is characterized by two important phenomena: the spread in Rome of a strong philhellenic cultural tendency (corresponding to the Second Sophistic),<sup>3</sup> and the emergence of Africa as an area of great cultural vitality, which was to lead to the birth of the first provincial Latin literature. Indeed, between the second and third centuries, Latin literature is represented almost exclusively by African authors, and there undoubtedly exists a common trait that characterizes these writers, a manner of writing not easy to define precisely but made up of expressive exuberance, lexical polychromy and verbal creativity, with particular attention paid to the phonic and rhythmic values of the structure of the discourse.<sup>4</sup>

In the Renaissance, these features were seen for the first time in relation to the land of origin of their authors. Erasmus, convinced that provincials could not render the purity of the Roman language if they were not educated in Rome from the time they were small, denounced the lack of clarity and the stylistic affectation of the Africans.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after, the Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives, a contemporary and friend of Erasmus, gave the name of *Africitas*<sup>6</sup> to this concept, while it is to other late-Renaissance purists, perhaps to Casaubon or Saumaise, that we owe the equally successful formula of *tumor Africus*.<sup>7</sup> These are clearly definitions that imply the negative judgment of scholars accustomed to classicism and the cult of Ciceronian style. For them, the Latin of Fronto, Apuleius, Tertullian and Augustine represented not only a decadent variety of Latin but also one that was provincial, barbarian and inferior. Recent studies have revealed that in the Renaissance Apuleius' linguistic *auctoritas* was not limited to Beroaldus and was far greater than previous scholars thought.<sup>8</sup> However, in the end Ciceronianism decidedly prevailed, and the criticism of Apuleius' Latinity continued to be closely tied to his African origins. In this connection, the judgments expressed in the prefaces to two important editions of Apuleius are eloquent: in Oudendorp's posthumous edition (1786), David Ruhnken calls the author's *affectatio antiquitatis* (i.e., archaism) *molesta*, and his *tumor Africanus* even *molestior*,<sup>9</sup> while Gustav Friedrich Hildebrand (1842) considers the unbearable exuberance and the *antiquitas obsoleta* of Apuleius' language typically African features.<sup>10</sup>

But it was above all in the last decades of the nineteenth century that the concept of *Africitas* was developed as a linguistic theory that comprehended aspects of both language and style. Formulated mainly by German philologists, this theory was at the heart of a lively debate not only in Germany but also in France and England. The notion of *Africitas* was already present in Michael Zink's monograph of 1867 devoted to Fulgentius, in order to explain the peculiarities (lexical, syntactic and stylistic) of the Latin of this late fifth-century African author.<sup>11</sup> It was taken up again by Karl Sittl, who, in a dissertation published in Erlangen in 1882, made it the object of

particular study within the broader framework of the local differentiations of Latin. He argued that African Latin was a distinct dialect, with strongly marked peculiarities of vocabulary, syntax, sentence structure and style, and alleged as causes of these characteristics the exuberant African temperament, the country's climate and environment, and the circumstances under which the Latin tongue was first established in Africa.<sup>12</sup> In the same years these ideas were upheld and developed by Eduard Wölfflin and scholars close to him,<sup>13</sup> who, however, did not take into due consideration Sittl's substantial retraction of his thesis in an article published in 1891.<sup>14</sup> Thus, Sittl's dissertation, which constituted a sort of manual of African Latin based on documentation drawn from African authors ranging over three centuries, from Apuleius to Fulgentius, continued to be at the center of the debate, arousing both enthusiasm and harsh criticism.

Among the most convinced followers of Sittl's and Wölfflin's theses in France was Paul Monceaux. In his *Les Africains* of 1894 Monceaux gave these theses an "emphatic orchestration" that amplified all the faults of his predecessors.<sup>15</sup> The underlying determinism already present in his predecessors, who had linked the Africans' way of writing to inborn traits (such as the "Semitic" or "oriental blood" that flowed in their veins),<sup>16</sup> was translated by Monceaux into the famous interpretation of the "African genius" as a "mix of Greco-Roman culture and Eastern imagination under the ever persistent action of the free native temperament and climate."<sup>17</sup> It has been rightly observed that the frequent connection in Monceaux's work between race and climate and his attraction to local color betray a prevailing taste for the colonial picturesque.<sup>18</sup> In all of this, the risk of racism is clear, as is the lack of historical perspective shown in considering Roman Africa as an organism independent of the Roman Empire and, consequently, African Latinity as an isolated linguistic entity.<sup>19</sup>

As we have said, the theory of *Africitas* did not distinguish between linguistic and stylistic facts: archaisms, vulgarisms, neologisms, Grecisms, Semitisms and rhetorical artifices were considered the peculiarities of the so-called African dialect of Latin. In particular, the heavy archaic patina, which more than any other element seems to characterize the language of the African writers, was explained by referring to an unlikely total isolation of the province: Latin was introduced into Africa at the time of the fall of Carthage, and this was the Latin of Cato and Plautus, which supposedly remained unaltered there, immune to the effects of classicism.

Eduard Norden hotly disputed this hypothesis of an African Latin in his first great work, *Die antike Kunstprosa* (1898). His famous scrutiny of the subject begins as follows: "'African' Latin is, among the evil ghosts that haunt the history of style and literature, one of the worst, and it is time, I think, to banish it once more into the darkness from which it emerged."<sup>20</sup> It is the merit of this German scholar to have distinguished, above all, between the purely linguistic problem and the stylistic one. He does not deny that the Latin spoken in Africa had its own phonetic and morphological features

(and perhaps, but with less likelihood, also lexical and syntactic ones), but he denies the existence of an African style that might have been distinct because of Semitic influences, efficaciously showing that the idea of a *tumor Africus* goes back to the humanists and is not based on any ancient evidence. He thus reacts to the hypothesis of a phenomenon with strictly local roots and points to the influence of Greek culture, setting the stylistic peculiarities of Apuleius and Tertullian, both well-versed in Greek as well as Latin, in the line of Asian rhetoric represented by the Second Sophistic: “The bombastic and at the same time affected style of Africans is nothing but Greek Asianism (mannerism) in Latin guise.”<sup>21</sup>

Around the same time as the first and second editions of Norden’s work (1898 and 1909), two other important studies, more strictly linguistically focused, contributed to further demolishing the thesis of *Africitas*: a dense but concise article by Wilhelm Kroll (1897) and the ample “Appendix on African Latinity” of Dorothy Brock’s book on Fronto (1911),<sup>22</sup> which reexamines analytically and with an impressive amount of evidence all the categories of Africanisms. From the examination of these two scholars it clearly emerges that the majority of so-called Africanisms may be found in writers and documents of earlier and later times in many parts of the empire.<sup>23</sup> But equally fundamental is the problem of method underscored from the beginning by Brock: Latin literature of the second and third centuries is represented almost exclusively by African authors; consequently, it is risky to consider the peculiarities of these writers as African Latin elements, simply because it is impossible to make a comparison with the Latin of other provinces.<sup>24</sup> The thesis of *Africitas* thus rests on an argument *ex silentio*, and a detailed analysis shows that archaisms and vulgarisms are not evidence of provincialism; rather, the former are the expression of a stylistic fashion, and the latter, of a general evolution of Latin that was increasingly influenced by forms derived from the spoken language.<sup>25</sup> Brock goes on to conclude that “African Latin was practically free from provincialism” and that it “was the Latin of an epoch rather than that of a country.”<sup>26</sup>

The contemporaneous studies of Norden, Kroll and Brock would seem, then, to have given an exhaustive response to the problem of *Africitas* and to have pushed the ghost of African Latin back into the shadows it emerged from: there is no African style; there is no African Latin dialect. Sister Wilfrid’s article of 1928, entitled “Is There an Africitas?” offers only a summary account of the discussion, adding nothing new. Still, she reacts to Brock’s radical position with a certain legitimate doubt, concluding with the compromising hypothesis of “an attenuated Africitas,” which leaves open the possibility of an African style—without demonstrating it, however.<sup>27</sup> After this summary no specific study was produced on the question for decades. Then, in 1985 an article by Serge Lancel was significantly given the same title as Sister Wilfrid’s (“Y-a-t-il une Africitas?”), almost as if meaning to take up once again an issue that was not, after all, definitively settled, contrary

to what had been thought for some time, as is shown by Einar Löfstedt’s eloquent words in the chapter “Local Variation in Latin” in his well-known book *Late Latin*: “The theory of African Latin now has no more than an historical interest, but it is instructive from the standpoint of methodology, as showing how easily one can generalize from a number of peculiarities in certain writers and be led thereby to false conclusions.”<sup>28</sup>

In reality, Norden’s position regarding the so-called African style had successfully identified the core of the problem, showing the intrinsic weakness of a hypothesis that attributed the phenomenon to exclusively local roots. Still, his exclusive reference to the Greek tradition risked being too unilateral, failing to take into due consideration the complexity of the African environment, with its constant network of relations with the Mediterranean world and the consequent mix of different cultures (Greek and Latin, Libyan and Punic), which more recent studies in various fields (literary, historical, epigraphic and archaeological) have called attention to.<sup>29</sup> It is precisely the necessity of treating this issue in the light of a broader cultural context that underpins Lancel’s above-mentioned article. The rich contribution of this French scholar traces a lucid history of the problem and tries to identify in a series of authors of certain African origin some common stylistic traits (verbal inventiveness, redundancy, a tendency to adapt metric clauses to accentual rhythm), which could be explained by the exceptional vigor of the local schools of rhetoric. We can therefore speak of an autonomous development and African specificity of stylistic forms linked to a broader cultural movement: certain baroque traits of sophistic origin probably found conditions favorable for their development and more prolonged conservation in North Africa.<sup>30</sup>

Naturally, another problem—already indicated by Norden—is that of spoken Latin in Rome’s African territories. Recently, Hubert Petersmann has pointed out some phonetic, morphological and syntactic peculiarities of African spoken Latin. Since some of these are also to be found in early or vulgar Latin inscriptions in Italy, where they seem to result from the influence of Italic dialects, especially Oscan, he suggests that some features of African Latin can be traced back to the first Roman settlers in the second century BCE.<sup>31</sup> This does not mean that the use of archaisms by Apuleius and other African authors is a sign of their regional orientation: as has been demonstrated by opponents of *Africitas* (see above) but also asserted by more recent scholars,<sup>32</sup> the use of Latin archaisms is a consequence of the archaizing movement in Rome. Petersmann himself makes a clear distinction between a specific African Latinity as regards the written language, which is to be denied, and a *sermo Latinus Africanus* distinct from the Latin spoken in other provinces, which, on the contrary, he feels did exist.<sup>33</sup> However, even if we limit ourselves to the spoken language, Petersmann’s thesis does not take into account that the Roman occupation of Africa was gradual, with new settlers and immigrants arriving over the course of several centuries, and that Africa was not isolated. This is stressed by James

Adams, who treats the issue of *Africitas* within the broader framework of “the regional diversification of Latin” (this is the title of his fundamental work of 2007).<sup>34</sup> Adams does not share Brock’s trenchant conclusion, which we have discussed above (“African Latin was practically free from provincialism”); rather, he believes that *Africitas* “is not to be found where Sittl looked for it.”<sup>35</sup> The archaisms, Graecisms and vulgarisms found by supporters of *Africitas* in literary texts are not actually significant in this sense. Even the use of the pluperfect subjunctive for the imperfect, which until recent times was thought to be mainly African, is actually typical of vulgar and late Latin and left its mark on the Romance languages.<sup>36</sup> Adams follows a different path, examining first of all the explicit evidence from ancient African and non-African authors and grammars, which show the existence of an African pronunciation of Latin. He then goes on to discuss a substantial body of lexical material drawn from texts of sub-literary Latin (practical texts, not immune from the influence of the spoken language, and non-literary documents on wood and on *ostraca*) representative of three different African communities: medical practitioners, agricultural landholders and the military.<sup>37</sup> The African usages collected and reviewed in detail by Adams are innovations, probably of imperial date, rather than archaisms. They clearly show that African Latin was not “free from provincialism” and that Punic, Libyan and other African elements did penetrate Latin, particularly in rural areas (noteworthy is, e.g., the number of terms to do with flora that are of African origin, especially in medical texts). Therefore, Adams’s answer to the question whether or not there was such a thing as *Africitas* is “that there was, and that, given the remoteness of parts of Africa, there was probably a plurality of varieties of Latin rather than a single ‘African Latin.’”<sup>38</sup> Of particular interest is also his discussion of the links between African Latin and Sardo-Romance, which could lead to speculation that the “lost” Romance language of Africa would have shared features with Sardinian.

But the Latin produced in Africa is not less remarkable for its social and educational diversity. Indeed, Adams makes a sharp distinction between the Latin of texts and documents produced by writers without a literary education, which reveal local influences and a marked intrusion of vernacular loanwords, and texts produced by writers with a literary style. He points out that the African writers whose works have survived were highly educated products of the rhetorical school, and that the influences on their Latin were purely Greco-Roman; they were entirely capable of excluding any trace of Punic linguistic interference from their Latin, even if they were native speakers of Punic or simply knew it.<sup>39</sup>

From this brief summary there emerge—it seems to me—at least two points that are certain, on the basis of which it is possible to re-propose the discredited concept of *Africitas* in different forms: (1) there existed a spoken African Latin that was also used for sub-literary written texts and was to some extent influenced by native languages, whose interaction and

persistence are better known today than they were a century ago; and (2) in Africa there was an important tradition of schools with peculiar features that may well have influenced literary Latin, determining a partially independent development. Therefore, though for different reasons and in different ways, both the literary and sub-literary variants of African Latin were in some ways characterized by elements that reflected regional peculiarities. Moreover, the bilingualism, or rather pluri-lingualism (Latin-Greek-Punic), of learned writers may have been at the root of a particular attention to language that had significant effects at the stylistic level. Thus revised and corrected, the concept of *Africitas* fully regains the right to be considered among the vast range of issues (bilingualism, Romanization, cultural identity) that have informed the research of the post-colonial generation, which is particularly attentive to matters of cultural blending and local survivals. As many recent studies have shown, Roman culture did not completely uproot the Punic tradition; rather, it interacted with it in a continual process of adaptation, negotiation and resistance (obviously stronger in less urbanized areas and lower social levels), which never really reached a stable equilibrium.<sup>40</sup>

Apuleius fully reflects this process biographically, linguistically and in the content of his works, whose “Romano-centric vs. African-provincial” perspective has been much discussed.<sup>41</sup> Here, obviously, we shall treat his linguistic identity, which, however, cannot be isolated from the broader context of cultural identity. For Apuleius, what has been said above about African writers in general is especially true: he is a classical product of the school of rhetoric, a Latin sophist and a brilliant traveling lecturer, whose language is immune to African localisms and traces of Punic. Nonetheless, he still presents aspects important for a study that takes into consideration new insights into the concept of *Africitas*: a definition of the linguistic context of his origins; his initial Latin-Punic bilingualism, to which the learning of Greek was later added; his attitude toward the Punic language; the interaction between education and rhetorical culture, on the one hand, and linguistic and performative practice, on the other. Indeed, we shall see that when speaking to provincial elites Apuleius hints at his African background while at the same time masking it behind a fundamentally Roman cultural identity, of which the linguistic aspect and the constantly exhibited knowledge of Greek are an integral part.

## 2. APULEIUS’ LINGUISTIC IDENTITY

In the passage of the *Apology* mentioned at the beginning, Apuleius speaks at length of his native land, starting with these words:

*De patria mea uero, quod eam sitam Numidiae et Gaetuliae in ipso confinio meis scriptis ostendistis, quibus memet professus sum, cum*

Lolliano Auito C.V. *praesente publice dissererem, Seminumidam et Semigaetulum, non uideo quid mihi sit in ea re pudendum.* (24.1)

Then there was the issue of my native town. It is situated on the boundary between Numidia and Gaetulia, as you showed from my own writings: in a public speech delivered in the presence of the illustrious Lollianus Auitus, I proclaimed myself to be “half-Numidian” and “half-Gaetulian.” Now I cannot see what I should be ashamed of [in this matter].<sup>42</sup>

Evidently Apuleius’ accusers had denigrated his frontier homeland (shortly after he mentions that they had called it *barbara*<sup>43</sup>), and he reacts by saying that he had not hesitated to present himself as *Seminumida* and *Semigaetulus* at a public lecture and that he is not ashamed of this (cf. also 24.7). Yet he still feels the need to justify his “mixed” origin and goes on to point to Cyrus the Great, *Semimedus ac Semipersa*,<sup>44</sup> as an example that what counts is not the *regio* where a man was born or lives but the *ratio* that inspires his behavior; he then adds a further example, the mythical sage Anacharsis, born among the torpid (*socordissimos*) Scythians (24.2–3, 6). Finally, he speaks proudly of his native land, which had become a flourishing Roman colony, and of the lofty position achieved by his father, which he has been careful to preserve (24.8–9).<sup>45</sup> So Apuleius openly declares his African origins, but above all he boasts about the Romanization of his homeland, starting from the victory over Syphax, and the integration of his family into the Roman community; instead of naming his city,<sup>46</sup> he says *splendidissima colonia sumus*, fully identifying it with this institution. Apuleius’ attitude may well have been in part determined by circumstances—he is responding to accusations and speaking in front of a Roman court. Still, the defensive tone he adopts in his attempt to dispel prejudices and attenuate the features that might distinguish an African from a Roman citizen seems to betray some real discomfort—perhaps a consciousness of his obscure origins, especially because he came from a small town lacking any cultural prestige, located at the crossroads of territories inhabited largely by native tribes. Fronto, too, who was a native of Cirta, a city not far from Madauros but certainly more prestigious, had not hesitated to call himself “a Libyan of the nomad Libyans.” He also compared himself to Anacharsis, “a Scythian of the nomad Scythians,” to excuse himself for possible linguistic barbarisms in a letter written in Greek to Marcus Aurelius’ mother.<sup>47</sup> The recourse to the same example of Anacharsis highlights the similarity in the attitudes of these two writers: both exhibit their African roots while at the same time distancing themselves from them, thereby showing a complex and somewhat ambiguous sentiment that blends loyalty toward and embarrassment about their origins, a sentiment that their cultural and social position probably made it necessary for them to deal with continually.<sup>48</sup>

Fronto was probably a citizen of native descent, and perhaps Apuleius was as well.<sup>49</sup> We really do not know Apuleius’ ethnic identity, but his name,

apparently Roman like that of many of Madauros’ citizens (see esp. C. Apuleius Rogatus, conceivably a relative), does not necessarily indicate his descent from Italian settlers. Madauros was established as a Roman colony in the Flavian period, when veteran troops were settled there, but some of Madauros’ first settlers were Africans and, based on studies of the nomenclature of the epigraphic sources, it has been suggested that almost three-quarters of Madauros’ attested civic magistrates (men with *nomina* taken from senators who had served in Africa) came from families of African origin.<sup>50</sup> In any case, Madauros was a very small community where Romans and natives were closely mingled and where Punic was probably spoken as much as or more than Latin.<sup>51</sup>

Bilingualism was, after all, common all over the African province. Literary evidence and a substantial corpus of inscriptions—some bilingual Latin-Punic, others in Punic written in Latin script, all gathered and discussed in the last few decades<sup>52</sup>—reveal the extraordinary persistence of Punic in a large part of Roman North Africa, Numidia and Tripolitania, at least up to the age of Augustine, himself an important source of information. Indeed, he attests the Semitic character of Punic and its diffusion in rural as well as urban areas, presents it as having the same status as Latin as the language of African Christians, and shows it as a specific identifying feature of Africa (*Punica lingua, id est Afra*). And there was at least one other vernacular language in North Africa, usually called “Libyan,” which was probably the precursor of Berber. This, however, held a marginal position compared with Punic, which continued to be used throughout the imperial period as a spoken and perhaps even written language (though not necessarily in Semitic script, as the above-mentioned Punic inscriptions in Latin letters shows, along with the Punic passages of Plautus’ *Poenulus*). Significant in this context are the words of Ulpian (early third century) on the legitimacy of using Punic for official documents (*fideicommissa*).<sup>53</sup>

In light of all this, the genre picture drawn by Monceaux and mocked by Norden, of baby Apuleius babbling in Punic in his mother’s lap,<sup>54</sup> does no more than translate into an image the totally plausible hypothesis that Punic was indeed the vernacular first language of Apuleius. The same could be said for Fronto. However, in neither of these authors do we find the least mention of this, unless we believe that Apuleius is hinting at it through the words pronounced by the ambiguous character of the prologue to the *Metamorphoses* on his labored learning of Latin.<sup>55</sup> In any case, it is not hard to explain the silence of these authors if we consider the lack of prestige of Punic, as Apuleius himself testifies.<sup>56</sup>

In the *Apology*, Apuleius more than once stresses his Greek and Roman linguistic competence and his contempt for the barbarous speech of his opponents. By emphasizing, with a verbatim citation, the initial formulation of the accusation, which went (4.1) *accusamus apud te philosophum formosum et tam Graece quam Latine . . . disertissimum* (“we accuse before you a philosopher, who is handsome and who, in both Greek and Latin . . . is

a very skilful speaker”<sup>57</sup>), it becomes easy for Apuleius to demonstrate his opponents’ contradictions: a letter exhibited as evidence against him, written in such defective words and barbarous language, is not in fact his but was composed by one of his boorish accusers, who have a hard time with Greek (87.2–5). The most eloquent example of such linguistic barbarity is offered by Sicinius Pudens, the younger son of the wealthy widow Apuleius had married at Oea, in whose name the suit had been filed. Apuleius recounts how, under the misguided guardianship of his paternal uncle, the boy had left school and his worthy teachers and had taken up banqueting, bad companions, prostitutes and a very different sort of school, that of gladiators (98.5–7), with dire consequences for his linguistic education as well:

*Loquitur nunquam nisi Punice et si quid adhuc a matre graecissat; enim Latine loqui neque uult neque potest. Audisti, Maxime, paulo ante, pro nefas, priuignum meum, fratrem Pontiani, disertum iuuenis, uix singulas syllabas fringultientem, cum ab eo quaereres donassetne illis mater quae ego dicebam me adnitente donata.* (98.8–9)

He never speaks anything but Punic, or perhaps one or two words of Greek which come from his mother. Speaking Latin is beyond both his wish and his grasp. You heard shortly before, Maximus (what a shame!) how my stepson, the brother of the eloquent Pontianus, was stuttering and stammering a few syllables with great difficulty, when you asked him whether or not his mother had actually donated with my support the things I have mentioned.<sup>58</sup>

This testimony is inserted in a tendentious context and is probably to some degree exaggerated, but certain significant facts do emerge: the wide use of Punic as a first language even among well-to-do citizens; the varying degrees of mastery of Latin—which is, after all, the official language—even among members of the same elevated social class (exemplified by the two brothers: the eloquent Pontianus *versus* the stuttering Pudens); the habit of trilingualism (to Punic and Latin was added Greek, which not only Pontianus, Apuleius’ schoolmate in Athens, but also his mother, Pudentilla, evidently spoke and wrote, cf. *Apol.* 82.2 and 83.1); and, finally, Apuleius’ disapproval of and shame about the broken Latin used by a native speaker of Punic, who is also his stepson. A similar attitude is attributed in the *Historia Augusta* to the emperor Septimius Severus, who is alleged to have been so ashamed of the broken Latin of his sister—who came from Lepcis Magna, not far from Oea—that he made her go back home.<sup>59</sup> Whatever may be the credibility of these passages<sup>60</sup>—and although both cases refer to “learners’ Latin,” which is not the same thing as a regional variety<sup>61</sup>—it is important to stress their value as examples: they attest a feeling of embarrassment that the provincial elites must have felt when faced with the poor Latin of one of their members, and so suggest that learned provincials

aspired to a fluent command of Latin so that their origins could not be recognized from their speech.

An accent could also create problems in this sense, and not only for “learners’ Latin.” Jerome mentions the *stridor linguae* and the *uitia oris* of an African teacher of grammar at Rome, *uir eruditissimus*.<sup>62</sup> The term *stridor* would seem to suggest interference in pronunciation coming from Semitic phonetics, given that Jerome also speaks of *anbelantia stridentiaque uerba* regarding Aramaic, whose pronunciation he says he learned only with difficulty.<sup>63</sup> Among the *uitia oris* of the Africans, ancient sources also indicate neglect of vowel quantity and labdacism;<sup>64</sup> in reality, these phenomena—like betacism, frequent in inscriptions and non-literary documents from Africa (cf. n. 37)—are widespread in other areas of the empire at a certain phase of the language, although certain tendencies may have developed earlier and more markedly in Africa.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, we must take into account the unreliability of ancient grammars when they attempt to give phonetic details about regional speech. Nonetheless, despite doubts about the accuracy of some of these remarks, the sources indicate that the language varied according to region<sup>66</sup> and that African Latin must have been distinctive to inspire these discussions.<sup>67</sup> The emperor Septimius Severus himself, who was ashamed of his sister’s Latin, kept his African accent through to old age, probably due to interference from Punic, his first language: *canorus uoce, sed Afrum quiddam usque ad senectutem sonans* (*Hist. Aug., Sept. Seu.* 19.9, “his voice was clear but retained an African accent even to his old age”).<sup>68</sup> Once again, what is of interest here is not so much the reliability of the information as the attitude of the biographer, who, after praising the emperor’s appearance and voice, introduces with a *sed* the negative feature of his foreign accent. On the contrary, the absence of *sermo Poenus* (probably a Punic accent in Latin)<sup>69</sup> is a source of praise for a homonymous ancestor of the emperor, who was also a native of Lepcis Magna and who is apostrophized by his friend Statius as follows: *non sermo Poenus, non habitus tibi, / externa non mens: Italus, Italus* (*Silu.* 4.5.45–46, “neither your speech nor your dress is Punic, yours is no stranger’s mind: Italian are you, Italian”).<sup>70</sup> Along with his behavior (*habitus*), his perfect Latin speech makes up for his provincial birth, which is conventionally felt as a mark of inferiority. For Ausonius, the *Punica origo* is something that *obstat* and that the emperor Severus was able to compensate for through his *uirtus*: *Punica origo illi, set qui uirtute probaret / non obstare locum, cui ualet ingenium* (*Caes.* 128–129 Gr., “he was Punic by birth, yet such as to prove by virtue that place is no bar when native power is strong”). Moreover, the concern shown by provincial elites even in the late fourth century to imitate the speech of educated Romans (or Italians) reveals a defensive attitude that goes beyond simply looking to Rome (or Italy) as the cultural center, showing genuine linguistic insecurity as well: in 389, when about to deliver a panegyric on the emperor Theodosius before the Roman Senate, the Gallic orator Pacatus apologized for his rough Transalpine language; in the same years Augustine affirmed that

despite all his efforts he was still criticized by the cultivated *Itali* of Mediolanum *in multis uerborum sonis*.<sup>71</sup>

We have said that Punic may have been Apuleius' first tongue, although this is not a necessary condition for supposing that he, too, felt some linguistic insecurity. Augustine did not know Punic well, and Latin was almost certainly his first language, yet he is conscious of his provincial speech and gives the Latin spoken in Italy high prestige, showing some anxiety not only about his accent but also about possible solecisms.<sup>72</sup> Whatever Apuleius' native tongue may have been, his borderline birthplace and the bilingualism of the African context in which he lived most of his life will have left their mark on his linguistic sensibility. We have seen that Fronto openly reveals his uncertainties with Greek and with an excess of modesty defines himself virtually as a barbarian in that tongue.<sup>73</sup> By contrast, Apuleius claims the same facility in performance and literary production in Greek as in Latin,<sup>74</sup> but this representation of himself, perhaps exaggerated to impress his audience and promote himself, does not eliminate all traces of "provincial" insecurity.

Before the vast audience gathered in Carthage to listen to him, Apuleius affirms that, despite his *inuiores*, he has won the esteem and favor of many. For this very reason he cannot allow himself any negligence or banality of expression, and he goes on as follows:

*Quis enim uestrum mihi unum soloecismum ignouerit? quis uel unam syllabam barbaramente pronuntiatam donauerit? quis incondita et uitiosa uerba temere quasi delirantibus oborientia permiserit blaterare? Quae tamen aliis facile et sane meritissimo ignoscitis. Meum uero unumquodque dictum acriter examinatis, sedulo pensiculatis, ad limam et lineam certam redigitis, cum torno et coturno uero comparatis: tantum habet uilitas excusationis, dignitas difficultatis. Adgnosco igitur difficultatem meam, nec deprecor quin sic existimetis. (Flor. 9.7–9)*

For who among you would forgive me for a single solecism? Who would allow me one ignorantly pronounced syllable? Who would permit me to jabber any wild and uncouth words like those that well up in the mouths of the insane? Yet you easily forgive others for these faults and quite justly so. But you examine every word of mine keenly, weigh it carefully, subject it to the file and the rule, and compare it with the products of the lathe or productions on the stage. Such is your lenity towards poor ability, such your severity towards true merit. I therefore acknowledge my difficulty and do not ask you not to think this way.<sup>75</sup>

The orator's inadequacy before a demanding (and not entirely well-inclined) public is obviously a prefatory topos, and the stress on correct Latinity matches the promotion of correct Attic in the contemporary Greek Second Sophistic.<sup>76</sup> Still, the particular reference to solecisms (i.e., barbarisms) and

to a pronunciation that might sound "barbarian" evidences the same preoccupation that Augustine has about being recognized as a foreigner,<sup>77</sup> and the final admission underscores this insecurity (*adgnosco difficultatem meam*). It is interesting to note that, unlike Augustine and Pacatus, Apuleius is not speaking to a public of native Latin speakers; still, he attributes to his learned Carthaginian public a linguistic purism that likens them to the Romans and Italians, in keeping with his characterization of Carthage and its inhabitants found in the eulogy of *Flor.* 20.9–10:

*Quae autem maior laus aut certior, quam Carthagini benedicere, ubi tota ciuitas eruditissimi estis, penes quos omnem disciplinam pueri discunt, iuuenes ostentant, senes docent? Carthago prouinciae nostrae magistra uenerabilis, Carthago Africae Musa caelestis, Carthago Camena togatorum.*

But what greater or more certain praise is there than to speak well of Carthage, where all your citizens are most erudite and among whom boys study learning in all its forms, adults show it off, and old men teach it? Carthage, the respected teacher of our province; Carthage, the heavenly Muse of Africa; Carthage, the inspiration of those who wear the toga!<sup>78</sup>

Just before this, when speaking about his cultural formation in Athens, Apuleius had said that there he had drunk from all the chalices of knowledge, showing off his versatility, which is echoed in the passage above in relation to the citizens of Carthage, who are said to be versed in every field of knowledge. The city is then apostrophized in a diminishing tricolon (five, four and three words) that reaches a climax in the third element with its distinctly Roman color in both *Camena* and *togati*.<sup>79</sup> Thus, Carthage is emphatically assimilated to Rome but without a loss of its African identity, as seems to be suggested by *caelestis*, in which we can probably find a reference to the Punic goddess *Caelestis*, identified with Juno.<sup>80</sup> Rome and Athens continue to be models of cultural prestige, but they are no longer the only cultural centers of the empire, if Carthage can compete with them. And in another passage of the *Florida* (18.15–18) Apuleius stresses his strong sense of belonging to this city: his homeland—he says—is represented here in the council of Africa, here he had his first schooling, and now it is here that everyone listens to his speeches and admires his books. For this reason he celebrates in every time and place the city's inhabitants *ut parentis ac primos magistratos*.

The pride of a cultured man for the *magistra uenerabilis* not only of the province (defined as *nostra*) but also of the entire empire (*Camena togatorum*)<sup>81</sup> is thus both Roman and African together. This ambivalent perspective can also be seen clearly—even though in the context of a prefatory topos—in the passage of *Flor.* 9.7–9, because to declare one's own efforts

to reach the high standard of Latin expected by the Carthaginian public means both to praise the linguistic Romanization of that public and to show one's awareness of the residual linguistic insecurity that marks the provincial: indeed, as Augustine says of his Latin, *aliud est esse arte, aliud gente securum*.<sup>82</sup>

The attitude of the African Apuleius toward Latin is obviously of great importance for understanding how he constructed his cultural identity. The declared ambition to eliminate all traces of provincialism from his Latin comes from a perspective that merges learning with self-advancement and that also produces contempt for those who speak only Punic. Rejection of one's native tongue for another of greater cultural, social and political prestige is a typical snobbish feature of upper classes and intellectuals, as John Gwyn Griffiths notes when pointing to the example of the nineteenth-century Russian aristocracy, who spoke Russian with their servants and dogs but French among themselves.<sup>83</sup> For a second-century African citizen, speaking Latin meant showing oneself to be an integral part of the community. After all, the process of Romanization was quite recent and for this very reason more warmly welcomed by the provincial elite. Conversely, the refusal to speak Latin could nourish suspicions of an attitude of dissent toward the authorities. When standing before the proconsul and a Roman court, Apuleius says, as we have seen above, that his stepson cannot and does not want to speak Latin (*Latine loqui neque uult neque potest*). He is therefore aiming to discredit his adversary in two ways: the inability disqualifies his intellectual capacity, while the lack of will casts doubt on his honesty as a citizen and on his loyalty toward the political power.<sup>84</sup> Thus, it is natural that Apuleius refers to Latin as *lingua nostra* (*Apol.* 25.9; *Socr.* 15.151), and while still before the proconsul he boasts of his own merits in favor of the language of Rome: he has introduced new words of Greek origin, but thanks to his efforts, they sound as though they were coined by a Latin mint (*Apol.* 38.5).<sup>85</sup>

This attitude would seem to contrast with the characterization of Latin as the language of an oppressive, harassing power in an episode of the novel (*Met.* 9.39.2–3): a Roman legionary wants to steal Lucius' ass from a poor market gardener and addresses him *superbo atque adroganti sermone*, but the other, *Latini sermonis ignarus*, does not answer, and his silence, understood as an offense to authority, provokes a violent reaction on the part of the soldier, who is not able to control his *familiarem insolentiam*. However, this episode—inherited from the Greek source and marked by stylized comic character types<sup>86</sup>—is not enough to cast doubt on Apuleius' loyalty to Rome, also as regards the use of Latin. Indeed, the traces of a “provincial” viewpoint present in his works would seem to suggest a movement toward integration with, rather than cultural resistance to Rome.<sup>87</sup>

The verbal creativity that the above-quoted passage from the *Apology* (38.5) mentions is a typical feature of Apuleius' language, along with exuberance and lushness of expression. We shall now see how these features can

be related to the author's context, history and linguistic perception, as they have been outlined so far. As we have said above, the supporters of the old theory of *Africitas* attributed these features to the fiery character of the Africans, also mentioned in a famous, often-quoted passage by Sidonius (*Epist.* 8.11: *urbium ciues Africanarum, quibus ut est regio sic et mens ardentior*). We have also said that these racial arguments, which are found even in a firm opponent of *Africitas* like Norden,<sup>88</sup> have been replaced by a more complex analysis of multiculturalism, pluri-lingualism and the particular tradition of schools in Roman Africa.

In this context, insights into the psychological aspects of linguistic practice can also offer a useful contribution, as Griffiths was the first to show. This scholar, convinced that Punic was Apuleius' first language, believes that his lush inventiveness may be in part due to the attitude of a writer to whom Latin is not a mother tongue. Griffiths has also tried to restore the hypothesis of some partial Semitic influences on Apuleius' Latin: for example, his fondness for abstract nouns and parataxis, the strongly poetical coloring of his prose, and the expression *deus deum magnorum potior* (*Met.* 11.30.3), for which it would be “perverse to deny its non-classical origin.”<sup>89</sup> Griffiths' argument here may leave us unconvinced; nor can we consider the comparison of *deus deum* with the construction and concept of *rex regum*, conspicuous in Semitic sources, to be decisive: we need only think of *diuom deo supplicate* of the *Carmen Saliare* (Varro, *Ling.* 7.27 = fr. 1 Blänsdorf), or of *regum rex regalior* in Plaut., *Capt.* 825, usages that were doubtless attractive for an archaizer like Apuleius, who only a few words before *deus deum* adopts a diminutive (*bellhule*) of clear Plautine stamp.<sup>90</sup> In contrast, Griffiths' remarks of a psychological nature, concerning Latin as an acquired language, seem more interesting: “an acquired language, when used by a virtuoso, tends to be more richly treated.”<sup>91</sup> This observation is shared by Edward John Kenney, who suggests the modern examples of Joseph Conrad and Vladimir Nabokov to confirm it.<sup>92</sup> The comparison can obviously be understood only in a broad sense, but it is even more stimulating if we think of these authors' trilingualism: for Conrad, English was his third language after Polish and French, while Nabokov, who grew up in a family where Russian, English and French were spoken fluently, could understand and speak these languages from childhood, as he recounts in his autobiography *Speak, Memory*. In ancient times the example of Ennius is famous: according to the testimony of Gellius (17.17.1), he said he had *tria corda* because he knew Greek, Oscan and Latin. In this case, too, familiarity with several spoken languages is associated with bold lexical and phonic experimentation in the written language, even more significant for us in that Apuleius shows a lively interest in this archaic author.<sup>93</sup>

We can also attribute *tria corda* to the rhetor of Madauros, because the context in which he lived and grew up—which we know better today than we did a century ago—assures us that he must have spoken Latin, Greek and Punic as well. If he does not mention Punic as his language, it is because

his cultural identity aims to be (and is) essentially Roman. While Greek was part of this identity, Punic was perceived as a sign of coarseness, of membership in a native sub-culture and even, as we have seen, of resistance to the reigning power. It is highly likely that from the time he was a boy Apuleius was used to Punic-Latin bilingualism in his family, where it is certain that at least his father, as a member of the municipal government (cf. n. 45), knew and spoke Latin. Especially after Apuleius' stay in Athens (*Flor.* 20.4), another bilingualism, Greek-Latin, was grafted onto the first, which was to become a frequent vaunt of the author (cf. n. 74). This habit of plurilingualism may have had the inevitable consequence of special attention to language. Lara Nicolini, who has done an interesting study of Apuleius' etymologically based wordplay, feels that the lexical awareness he continually shows is to be connected to the *forma mentis* of the bilingual "used to 'thinking' the language he speaks, a language that he does not feel (and that does not come out) completely natural, and that even during the act of expression is somehow translated, disassembled, analyzed." From Apuleius' bilingualism could thus come an attitude toward Latin that is not completely natural, as a language that, though from very early on the main one, maintained a kind of alien quality that inevitably led him to reflect on it and almost to compete with it. In this light, etymological thinking, identified as the determining factor in Apuleius' brilliant linguistic inventiveness, finds its primary impulse in bilingualism.<sup>94</sup>

From what we have said thus far, I think it is clear that bilingualism does not mean Punic interference in Apuleius' Latin, a Latin that was formed in the schools of rhetoric and based on great works of literature: every search, even recently, for possible Africanisms in his language has been quite fruitless. However, we must remember that the substantial influence of Asian rhetoric on his style and his tendency toward archaism should probably be linked to the strong presence of these traits in the African schools. The striking singularity of Apuleius' language would thus seem to depend to some degree on two factors closely linked to his African origins: on the one hand, a particular perception of Latin, a language that was at the same time his and "other"; and, on the other, a rhetorical and literary education that was not free of distinctive local traits. Only in this sense, I believe, is it possible to speak of *Africitas*, or better—given the strong connotation of the term—of an African identity in Apuleius' language and style. The tendency of this "word-juggler" to recover archaic and colloquial terms, to coin neologisms "with tyrannical complacency,"<sup>95</sup> to attribute new meanings to existing words and to search for euphony and poetic color<sup>96</sup> reflects an experimental orientation linked to a specific linguistic and cultural reality, while perhaps also allowing us to imagine the effort to compensate, through an excess of virtuosity, for the underlying sense of insecurity that the non-native Roman felt with regard to the Latin of Rome. If this supposition is correct, then the dynamics of linguistic "competition" would represent a significant aspect in the process of Romanization that Apuleius and the intellectuals of

second-century provincial Africa were carrying on. To write Latin in a style without precedent in its expressive exuberance and rhetorical artifice was perhaps a way to show a desire for integration. And in this, too, Apuleius is typically African.

## NOTES

1. Cf. *Apol.* 24.1, on which see below.
2. Cf. Rosati 2003, 272 ff.; and below, n. 55.
3. On the links between Latin archaism and the Atticism of the Second Sophistic, still fundamental are the pages of Norden 1898, 361–367. On the interaction between Latin and Greek cultures in the Antonine age, cf. La Penna 1992, esp. 514–535; Gamberale 1996. In general, on the Second Sophistic, cf. Anderson 1993.
4. Cf. Gualandri 1989a, 485 ff.; 1989b, 519.
5. Cf. Erasmus, *Praef. in Hilarii editionem* (1523) = *Epist.* 613 (in *Opera*, t. III, Lugduni Batavorum 1703, p. 695).
6. *De tradendis disciplinis* (1531), l. III (*Opera*, Basel 1555, 1: 482): "Augustinus multum habet *Africitatis* in contextu dictionis." *Africitas* is a neologism probably modeled on *Pataunitas*, mentioned by Erasmus himself in the passage cited above (n. 5).
7. On the use of this formula, see Sittl 1882, 92.
8. Cf. D'Amico 1984; Stramaglia 2003, 119; Gaisser 2008, 168–169, 202–203.
9. Oudendorp 1786, iv. On Ruhnken's position concerning Apuleius' lexical archaism, see Harrison 2002, 150–151.
10. Hildebrand 1842, xxiv. More precisely, according to Hildebrand, the turgidity and archaism of the *Metamorphoses*—in contrast to the more Ciceronian character of Apuleius' other works—are both African traits and evidence of their author's young age; on this and on the defense of the *Metamorphoses* in an allegorical key, see once again Harrison 2002, 152–153.
11. Zink 1867, esp. 37–62.
12. Sittl 1882, esp. 77–143.
13. Wölfflin's first observations on *Africitas* are found in a study of 1880 dedicated to the language of the African physician Cassius Felix (fifth century); this was followed by a series of contributions (by him and others) in the journal directed by him, *Archiv für lateinische Lexikographie und Grammatik*: see esp. Wölfflin 1889; Kübler 1892 (further bibliography in Wilfrid 1928, 78).
14. Sittl 1891, esp. 226–227, 236. On the "palinode" of Sittl, see Brock 1911, 164; Lancel 1985, 164.
15. Lancel 1985, 164.
16. Cf., e.g., Wölfflin 1880, 382; Sittl 1882, 84, 109, with Lancel's observations (1985, 165).
17. Monceaux 1894, 4.
18. Cf. Lancel 1985, 165. For the connection between the contemporary colonial enterprise and the author's ideology, the words with which Monceaux opens his preface are emblematic: "Roman Africa has largely become French territory. Anything related to the history of this country is interesting for us as much as our national antiquities" (p. i); and shortly further on: "Roman Africa presented a spectacle similar to that of French Africa. . . . Arabs have replaced the Phoenicians of Carthage and Tell, the French replace the Italians of Rome: that's all" (p. 3).

19. Cf. Monceaux 1894, iv: "It is therefore from Carthage, not from Rome, that we have to study the intellectual evolution of Roman Africa. . . . The country of Atlas is here considered as having an independent life in a remote corner of the empire."
20. Norden 1898, 588.
21. Norden 1898, 596.
22. Cf. Kroll 1897; Brock 1911, 161–261.
23. We need cite only a few examples. The disappearance of the distinction between the degrees of comparison (see, e.g., the juxtaposition of positive and superlative/comparative, or the comparative with *magis*) is not a result of Semitic influence (since Punic has no comparative and superlative); rather, it is a phenomenon attested all over Latin, and even in Cicero (*Nat. deor.* 3.68: *recte et uerissime*): cf. Kroll 1897, 586–589; Brock 1911, 186–187. The extended use of the diminutive is not an Africanism but is due in part to the archaistic revival (it is a feature of old Latin poetry, especially of Plautus); it is also characteristic of all vulgar Latin: cf. Brock 1911, 189–190. Finally, the use of a substantive with the genitive of the same word (e.g., Aug., *Conf.* 3.6.10: *uita uitarum*) is considered a Semitism, but it is also found in non-African authors of diverse periods (see Plaut., *Capt.* 825: *rex regum*; Sen., *Med.* 233: *ducem ducum*; Petron. 37.8: *nummorum nummos*) and in Greek: cf. Kroll 1897, 585; Brock 1911, 213–214; Schäfer 1974; see also below, p. 101.
24. Cf. Brock 1911, 163, 179. The observation was made by Edward William Watson, quoted in Norden 1898, 593 n. 1.
25. On archaism especially, cf. Kroll 1897, 574 ff.; Norden 1898, 361 ff.; Brock 1911, 181 ff.
26. Cf. Brock 1911, 257, 260.
27. Cf. Wilfrid 1928, 77.
28. Löfstedt 1959, 42.
29. Cf. Gualandri 1989b, 519–520, with bibliography.
30. Cf. Lancel 1985; see also Gualandri 1989b, 520–521. Brock 1911, 179–180, had already insisted on the need to limit research to authors who were certainly African. On the spread and importance of the schools in Africa, see Vössing 1997, who comes back with some clarifications on the problem of *Africitas* and the stylistic specificity of the Africans in relation to their rhetorical education (pp. 579–583).
31. Cf. Petersmann 1998. Although based on new arguments and distinctions (see below), this thesis does not seem any more convincing than that (mentioned above, p. 89) of the first supporters of *Africitas*. Indeed, the Roman occupation of Africa was gradual: the Gracchi's project of colonization in the second century was just a failed attempt, and it was Caesar who was responsible for the first major Roman settlements in Africa (cf. Raven 1993, 49–55).
32. Cf. Marache 1952; Steinmetz 1982; Gamberale 1990. See also Harrison 2005, 276.
33. Petersmann 1998, 126, 128.
34. Adams 2007, 518–519.
35. Adams 2007, 516.
36. Adams 2007, 520, with bibliography; I would also add Ronconi 1968, 144–145, with examples of Italian imperfect subjunctive *fossi, lodassi* from Latin pluperfect subjunctive *fuissem, laudassem*.
37. Adams 2007, 192–195, 259–270, 516–576. The inscriptions are mainly treated in a chapter specifically dedicated to them (pp. 642–649). They offer evidence consistent with that found in non-literary documents written on wood (the *Tablettes Albertini* from Vandal Africa) and on *ostraca* (the Bu Njem *ostraca* of the third century): in particular, *b* and *v* are often confused in all African sources, whereas vocalic misspelling (*eli*) is extremely rare. These phenomena point to a regional differentiation between Africa and other countries, for instance, Gaul. On the limits of Punic influence in bilingual and funerary inscriptions (which instead evidence the influx of Latin formulas and names into Punic), see Adams 2007, 570. On possible Africanisms in Nonius Marcellus, see Contini 1987; Adams 2007, 546–549.
38. Adams 2007, 573.
39. Adams 2007, 570, 575 and *passim*.
40. Current interest in bilingualism in the ancient world is evidenced by Adams–Jense–Swain 2002; Adams 2003; Oniga 2003. On local cultures in Roman Africa, see Millar 1968. On Romanization and African cultural resistance seen from a post-colonial perspective, fundamental is the controversial work of Bénabou 1976; for a summary of the profound ideological background (colonial and post-colonial) in studies on Roman Africa, see Mattingly–Hitchner 1995, 169–170 and *passim* (but the entire article is important, in that it offers an up-to-date review of issues and studies on Roman Africa). On the limits of Roman colonization, especially in borderline areas, see Cherry 1998. For a new approach to Romanization in terms of a “discrepant” experience and identity, see Mattingly 2011 (esp. 236–245 in relation to Africa). On the interactions between Roman and African cultures in relation to Apuleius, cf. Finkelpearl 1998, 135–143, and 2009; Bradley 2012 (esp. chaps. 3 and 7); Graverini 2012 (esp. chap. 4).
41. For a summary and new perspectives, see Finkelpearl 2009.
42. Trans. Hunink in Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001.
43. Cf. 25.2: *At non contraria accusastis? . . . eloquentiam Graecam, patriam barbaram?* (“Or did you not accuse me of two contrary things? . . . my eloquence is Greek, but my birthplace is barbarous.”) The accusers were evidently interested to show that Apuleius, having been born in a frontier territory, was a stateless adventurer.
44. The two pairs of compounds in *semi-* are *hapax*, on the phonostylistic valence of which, see Facchini Tosi 2000, 176. Apuleius neutralizes the original derogatory connotation of these forms (cf. Cic., *Pis.* 14: *Semiplacentinus*), thereby turning his adversaries’ accusation to his own favor (cf. Pasetti 2007, 124–125 and n. 123).
45. He says that his father achieved the *duumvirate*, which was the highest magistracy of a colony (the *duouiri* were annual magistrates elected by the municipal senate, corresponding in smaller degree to consuls); it is not clear what is meant by *cuius* (sc. *patris*) *ego locum in illa republica . . . tueor* (“it is his position that I upheld in the same town”), because it seems that Apuleius held no municipal magistracies (but see, in contrast, La Rocca 2005, 16–23). The considerable wealth left him by his father (*Apol.* 23.1) placed Apuleius in the small circle of the town’s aristocracy and made him *idoneus* to the magistracies (cf. once again La Rocca 2005, 13–14).
46. This city, whose name never figures in his speech, has to be identified with Madauros, as *Madaurensis* in *Met.* 11.27.9 suggests and as ancient evidence shows (cf., e.g., [Apul.] *Herm.* 4, p. 178 Th.; Aug., *Ciu.* 8.14.2; Sidon., *Epist.* 9.13.3). Madauros is an inland town of Africa Proconsularis, situated some 230 kilometers southwest of Carthage, today M’daourouch in Algeria. The reference to Gaetulia has seemed exaggerated, since this was far to the south, but the Musulamii of Gaetulia came close to Madauros;

- so “Gaetulan” could be “a generic nomadic designation that included the Musulamii” (Bradley 2012, 145). On Madauros, see below.
47. Front., *M. Caes.* 1.10.5, on which see Champlin 1980, 7; Finkelppearl 2009, 28. On Cirta, see once again Champlin 1980, 5–6.
  48. Méthy 1983, esp. 43–44, attributes a new type of patriotism to these authors, which she calls “provincial” (the province is for them both birthplace and Roman place, in that it is defined not in opposition to but in function of Roman power, which is accepted and praised). On Apuleius’ passage, cf. also Hunink 1997, 82–86; Finkelppearl 1998, 141; Rosati 2003, 283–282 (with interesting observations on identity as a fruit of cultural acquisition); Finkelppearl 2009, 25–27 (in an article that offers new insights on the complex attitude of Apuleius toward his African origins).
  49. Méthy 1983, 41; Champlin 1980, 7–8 (for Fronto); Bradley 2012, 144–145 (for Apuleius).
  50. Documentation and discussion in Bradley 2012, 144–145; see also Harrison 2000, 4–5 (esp. on the *gens Appuleia*, from which Apuleius’ family might have gained its name and citizenship). The name *C. Apuleius Rogatus* occurs in *ILAlg* 2276–2277.
  51. On Madauros, see Griffiths 1975, 60; Bradley 2012, 143–146 (with bibliography). On the strategic purpose of the colony of Madauros to control a region populated mainly by native tribes and clans, see Bénabou 1976, 115, 418–419.
  52. Cf. Adams 2003, 200–201.
  53. For Punic in Roman North Africa, see MacMullen 1966, esp. 11–13; Millar 1968; Lancel 1981, 270–273, and 1995, 436–438; Bradley 2012, 138–139; an in-depth reconsideration of the entire question is found in Adams 2003, 200–245 (Punic), 245–247 (Libyan and Berber). The key passages of Augustine regarding the spread of Punic (*In epist. Ioh.* 2.3, quoted in the text; *Epist.* 66.2, 108.14, 209.2–3; *Serm.* 167.4) are collected and commented on by Green 1951 and Vattioni 1968; cf. also *In psalm.* 118.32.8 on acrostic psalms composed in both Latin and Punic. Augustine himself, who was almost certainly a first-language speaker of Latin, had some passive knowledge of Punic (cf. Aug., *Mag.* 13.44) and shows respect for that language (cf. *Epist.* 17.2); see Adams 2003, 237–240, and also Vattioni 1968, 446 ff. On Christianity, local cultures and the creation of a Latin—or sub-Latin—religious culture, see Brown 1968. For the testimony of Ulpian, cf. *Dig.* 32.11 pr.; 45.1.1.6.
  54. Cf. Monceaux 1894, 41; Norden 1898, 589, who clearly is alluding to Monceaux, though without citing him.
  55. Cf. Apul., *Met.* 1.1.4–5: *Mox in urbe Latia aduena studiorum Quiritium indigenam sermonem aerumnabili labore nullo magistro praeueunte aggressus excolui* (“Soon afterwards in the city of Latins, as a newcomer to Roman studies I attacked and cultivated their native speech with laborious difficulty and no teacher to guide me”). To see in this passage elements of a biographical portrait of Apuleius presents, as is known, many difficulties: Apuleius certainly did not learn Latin as an adult in Rome, let alone after Greek; what is more, it should be remembered that a declaration of modesty regarding one’s inadequacy in speaking, as a foreigner, is a prefatory topos (cf. Norden 1898, 595 n. 1; Harrison 1990, 510; on the multiple identities of the speaking voice in the prologue, see Too 2001). Though aware of these limits, Nicolini 2011, 33, sees in the character’s insistence on the fact that he is a foreigner and on the effort made to learn Latin as an “other” language a real-life cultural condition.
  56. The hypothesis that Apuleius was a native speaker of Punic is shared by many nowadays: Griffiths 1975, 59–60; Kenney 1990, 2; Harrison 2000, 2; Hilton in Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001, 126; Graverini 2012, 165 n. 1; Nicolini 2011, 31–32. More cautious is Adams 2007, 570, and, for Fronto, Champlin 1980, 7–8. On Punic’s lack of prestige, cf. Champlin 1980, 16: “The *lingua punica* was not a source of pride, most particularly in the late first and early second centuries, just when Africans were first beginning to penetrate the courts, the salons, and the senate of Rome.”
  57. Trans. Hunink in Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001.
  58. Trans. Hunink in Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001.
  59. *Hist. Aug., Sept. Seu.* 15.7.
  60. Cf. Barnes 1967, 96–97, who perhaps raises exaggerated doubts on these two passages (the use of Punic by the upper classes is for him a patent slander), while he rightly underscores that they reveal what the African aristocracy thought of Punic (from this viewpoint, Augustine’s attitude seems different; see n. 53).
  61. Cf. Adams 2007, 260.
  62. Hier., *Adu. Rufin.* 3.27 (PL 23, 499B).
  63. Hier., *In Dan.*, praef. (PL 28, 1358C). On these passages of Jerome, see Adams 2007, 268–269.
  64. On the loss of quantity, see the famous passage by Augustine: *Doctr. Christ.* 4.10.24: *Afrae aures de correptione uocalium uel productione non iudicant*; cf. also Aug., *Mus.* 2.1.1; Consent. GLK V 392.3: *ut quidam dicunt “piper” producta priore syllaba, cum sit breuis, quod uitium Afrorum familiare est*; 392.11: *ut siquis dicat “orator” correpta priore syllaba, quod ipsum uitium Afrorum speciale est*. Labdacism consisted in the gemination of the *l*, more precisely in substituting clear for dark *l* or vice versa (see Consent. GLK V 394.22–24), but evidence regarding this phenomenon is quite confused and only partly referred specifically to the Africans: cf. Isid., *Orig.* 1.32.8: *labdacismus est, si pro uno L duo pronuntientur, ut Afri faciunt, sicut colloquium pro conloquium* (but this particular instance is not labdacism at all, it is simply assimilation of a prefix); Pomp. GLK V 287.5: *labdacismus scaten Afri, raro est ut aliquis dicat L*. On these complex phenomena of vocalism and consonantism, with detailed examples from relative sources, see Adams 2007, 260–268; see also Petersmann 1998, 129–132.
  65. Cf. Brock 1911, 177–178; Lancel 1981, 276–283; Contini 1987, 21–22; Adams 2007, esp. 264–266.
  66. Cf. also Hier., *In Galat.* 2 (PL 26, 357A): *cum . . . ipsa Latinitas et regionibus cotidie mutetur et tempore*.
  67. Cf. Adams 2007, 268.
  68. Cf. also Ps. Aur. Vict., *Epit.* 20.8: (*Septimius Severus*) *Latimis litteris sufficienter instructus, Graecis sermonibus eruditus, Punica eloquentia promptior, quippe genitus apud Leptim prouinciae Africae* (“he was sufficiently educated in Latin literature, erudite in Greek language, more at ease with Punic eloquence, inasmuch as he was born near Leptis in the province Africa”). On this passage, see Barnes 1967, 97.
  69. Cf. Adams 2003, 437.
  70. Also Martial (12.21.3–4, as regards his Spanish friend, Marcella) and Ausonius (*Biss.* 3.11–12 Gr., regarding his young Swabian slave, Bissula) praise the perfect Latin of non-native Romans.
  71. *Paneg.* 2.1.3; Aug., *Ord.* 2.17.45: *me enim ipsum . . . adhuc in multis uerborum sonis Itali exagitant . . . Aliud est enim esse arte, aliud gente securum. Soloecismos autem quos dicimus fortasse quisque diligenter attendens in oratione mea reperiet* (“indeed I myself . . . am still criticized by the Italians in the matter of many sounds within words. . . . It is one thing to be secure in one’s training, another in one’s birth. Perhaps any carefully instructed person

- will find in my speech so-called solecisms”). The *De ordine* is dated 386. On these passages, see Adams 2007, 192–194.
72. See nn. 53 and 71.
  73. See n. 47, concerning Front., *M. Caes.* 1.10.5, to which is to be added *Epist. uar.* 8.1.
  74. Cf. *Apol.* 4.1, 36.6, 39.4; *Flor.* 9.27–29, 18.16 and 38–39; fr. V Beaujeu. On the bilingualism of Apuleius and other second-century authors, cf. Gamberale 1996, 66 ff.
  75. Trans. Hilton in Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001.
  76. Cf. Harrison 2000, 107. Gamberale 1996, 68 ff., highlights in Apuleius’ declamatory oratory a specific desire for purism and a particular mixture of rhetoric and philosophy, which are aspects peculiar to the Second Sophistic.
  77. But also *uitiosa uerba* is comparable to *uitium*, which Augustine uses as a designation of non-standard speech in the same chapter of *De ordine* cited in note 71 above (*sermonem . . . qui locutionis et linguae uitio careat*).
  78. Trans. Hilton in Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001.
  79. Cf. Hunink 2001, 206.
  80. Cf. La Rocca 2005, 286; Graverini 2012, 202 ff. (also in relation to Apul., *Met.* 6.4.1).
  81. Cf. Lee 2005, 184: “This phrase manages to describe the Roman empire without mentioning Rome’s name.” According to Finkelppearl 2009, 25, Apuleius’ clause “represents not simply a mixing of cultures but a polemical reversal of hierarchies.”
  82. Cf. n. 71. Note also that in the very moment when he proclaims his difficulty before the severe judgment of his audience, Apuleius demonstrates his consummate rhetorical ability with homeoteleuta and assonant pairs (*Flor.* 9.8: *examinatis . . . pensiculatis . . . comparatis; ad limam et lineam . . . cum torno et coturno*).
  83. Griffiths 1975, 63.
  84. The observation is by Rosati 2003, 283. The passage from the *Apology* is quoted above.
  85. These were terms belonging to the field of animal onomastics, introduced in a Latin work on fish (obviously lost, on which see Harrison 2000, 29–30); immediately before, an example is provided from the ecolalic pair *uiuiiparos et ouiparos* (translation from Greek ζωροτόκα and φροτόκα), of which the former seems an absolute *hapax*, while the latter is an Apuleian *hapax* that reappears in Ausonius and Fulgentius (cf. Facchini Tosi 2000, 176).
  86. On this episode, see Millar 1981, 67–68; GCA 1995, 322 ff.; Mattiacci 1996, 173 ff.; Graverini 2012, 196.
  87. See Graverini 2012, 202: “More than cultural conflict and resistance, Apuleius’ works display a dynamic of integration, emulation, and even possibly competition that links the center and periphery of the Empire in the pursuit of a common cultural ideal.”
  88. Norden 1898, 597.
  89. Griffiths 1975, 65.
  90. Cf. Pasetti 2007, 23–24. On the supposed *Africitas* of *deus deum* and such-like, see also above n. 23.
  91. Cf. Griffiths 1975, 55–65; the quote is on p. 64.
  92. Kenney 1990, 2.
  93. Cf. Mattiacci 1986, 180–190.
  94. Nicolini 2011, 31–37; the quote is on p. 34.
  95. Norden 1898, 602.
  96. On the *sermo cotidianus*, present above all in the *Metamorphoses*, see Callebat’s fundamental study of 1968. On Apuleius’ style in general, deservedly

famous is Norden’s profile (1898, 600–605); still useful is Bernhard 1927. On the presence of archaisms in Apuleius’ language, and especially on his considerable debt to Plautus, see Pasetti’s recent study (2007). On the search for euphony, see Facchini Tosi 2000, esp. 113–189.

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## 6 The Negotiation of Provincial Identity through Literature

### Apuleius and Vergil

Luca Graverini

Apuleius' cultural identity has always been a contentious subject, and he has been considered fundamentally Greek, Roman or African by different scholars.<sup>1</sup> Those who want to highlight his African roots can find much useful material in the *Apology* and *Florida*, two works whose origin is, or is commonly thought to be,<sup>2</sup> directly connected to Apuleius' life and career in Africa; the novel, in contrast, does not seem to offer much food for thought. Starting with the prologue, it appears to be much more concerned with a negotiation between Greek and Roman cultural contexts; Africa has no place in it, and Carthage is mentioned only once, in passing, in the story of Cupid and Psyche.

One might wonder why Africa, which features so prominently in other Apuleian works, gets almost no space at all in the novel. It is a rather safe assumption, I think, to say that this is due to both the genesis and the plot of the *Metamorphoses*, a Greek story that has been adapted and translated by Apuleius into Latin and that tells the adventures of a character who moves from Greece to Rome. The cultural and geographical framework of the novel, and very likely also of its prologue, was mainly determined by Apuleius' model, the Greek *Metamorphoseis* attributed to a Lucius of Patrae;<sup>3</sup> we can have a fairly good idea of this lost Greek novel thanks to the *Onos*, another adaptation of it that has been preserved among the works of Lucian. The final and rather unexpected Roman twist of the *Metamorphoses* was most likely added by Apuleius, but it involves only the last five chapters of the novel (11.26.1: "I set out toward Rome . . .") and Lucius' two final initiations.<sup>4</sup> Integrating Africa into the plot as well would have been much more difficult and would have required more radical changes.

Nevertheless, I think that this movement from Greece to Rome is not as straightforward as it appears and also involves Africa, albeit indirectly. I will try to demonstrate this statement through a comparison with Vergil's *Aeneid*—indeed, a very old topic for Apuleian studies but one that does not cease to offer interesting material.

#### 1. VOCIS IMMUTATIO

Apuleius' prologue is a very cryptic text that involves the reader in a complex hermeneutical game.<sup>5</sup> One of the cryptic expressions we find there is

*uocis immutatio*; these words are often connected with the change in language from Greek to Latin both of the novel itself, written in Greek and translated into Latin, and of its main character, who moves westwards from Greece to Rome. Recently, Wytse Keulen has suggested that *uocis immutatio* might also refer to the modulation of the voice adopted by some rhetors, which he defines as "a lack of restraint in vocal performance that goes hand in hand with a lack of restraint in stylistic embellishment."<sup>6</sup>

In my opinion, the two interpretations can coexist, since the poetics of the prologue is an inclusive one: images shift and blur into each other, suggesting very vague meanings that can find confirmation and clarification in what follows. I will limit myself to pointing out that there is an important and thus far neglected precedent for the idea of a "change of voice" from an Eastern language to Latin. At the end of the *Aeneid*, Juno finally gives up and stops fighting against Venus, fate and Jupiter: she will allow Aeneas to settle in Latium, so that his descendants can found Rome. But she does not surrender unconditionally, and she negotiates the identity of the future Romans with Jupiter:

*ne uetus indigenas nomen mutare Latinos  
 neu Troas fieri iubeas Teucrosque uocari  
 aut uocem mutare uiros aut uertere uestem.  
 sit Latium, sint Albani per saecula reges.* (*Aen.* 12.823–826)

Don't require those who were born here, the Latins, to alter their ancient name, become "Trojans," be known as "The Teucrians," or alter their language. Don't make them change their traditional dress. Let Latium continue, let there be Alban kings who will span all the centuries.<sup>7</sup>

The Latins will not be forced to "change their voice" as a consequence of their union with the Trojans; they will keep speaking Latin. What kind of language are they threatened to be forced to speak? There is an implicit epic convention according to which all those who took part in the Trojan War—Greeks, Trojans and their allies—spoke Greek and could understand each other; however, it is likely that Juno and Jupiter refer more specifically to the Trojans' "true" language here,<sup>8</sup> which will be discarded and forgotten by the Trojans who are going to settle in Latium. Juno and Jupiter are mainly concerned with language as a representation of national identity, but their words might also be read as implying that the Trojan language is not suitable to true male heroes (12.825: *uiros*) and to their ancestors (12.834: *sermonem patrium*) because of some of its intrinsic features, not simply because it is "not Latin": as an Eastern language, it is liable to be considered too soft and effeminate, like some other features of the Trojans pointed out by their enemies in several passages of the *Aeneid*.<sup>9</sup> In this context, it might be interesting to note that, according to Hilary Mackie, the language of the Trojan heroes in the *Iliad* is more poetical and introspective, and less aggressive, than that of the Achaeans:<sup>10</sup> therefore, one might argue, not a good model for the future warlike and victorious Roman people. In any case, it

would seem that Juno wants the language, as well as several other features of the future Romans, to stay Western and not to change into something soft and oriental. Vergilian epic is mainly about westward movements.

If this parallel has any value (and if the preposition in the word *immutatio* used by Apuleius does not mark a true semantic difference from the simple *mutatio/mutare* but is only due to his research of “précision” and “pittoresque”),<sup>11</sup> we must note that the relationship between Apuleius’ prologue and Juno’s words in the *Aeneid* is not one of either simple continuity or direct opposition. It is true that the novel and its main character, by “changing their voice,” do something that is deemed despicable, and indeed explicitly forbidden, by Jupiter and Juno, but this “change of voice” needs to be qualified. On the one hand, Lucius and the novel move from Greek to Latin, from East to West: that is, they follow the general direction of the *Aeneid*. On the other hand, as we have seen, the idea of “changing one’s voice” is also charged with a rhetorical meaning, and this semantic overload complicates both the meaning of this *uocis immutatio* in the novel and the relationship between Apuleius’ and Vergil’s texts.

We must take seriously Keulen’s suggestion that *uocis (im)mutatio* can refer not only to a change of language but also to a modulation of the voice, and we need to take into consideration the widespread contempt in ancient culture for the excessive sophistication and effeminacy that resulted from the extreme modulation of the voice adopted by some rhetors.<sup>12</sup> It might also be noted that Cicero considers the singsong and effeminate *pronuntiatio* described by the expression *uocis mutatio* as especially typical of Phrygia<sup>13</sup>—that is, the region in Asia Minor where Troy was situated, the language of which was not worthy of the future Roman people. Perhaps these rhetorical definitions and classifications were already a subtext of Juno’s words in Vergil, suggesting some contempt for a language that was too oriental and not suitable for the heroic ancestors of Rome; perhaps Apuleius’ treatment of the idea of *immutare uoces* is a free but not unwarranted interpretation of Vergil’s text, prompted by the technical and rhetorical meaning that the expression *(im)mutare uoces* had taken on by Apuleius’ times.<sup>14</sup> In other words, while Juno perhaps simply meant that the future Romans must speak Latin and not Trojan, Apuleius could read that text between the lines and imagine that Juno also demanded that the future Romans speak as a true Roman should speak: that is, in a manly language and not like those (chanting, effeminate) Phrygians from the East. All of this acts as a sort of restraint to the decidedly westward direction that the “change of voice” would otherwise have in Apuleius’ prologue. Indeed, the prologue presents us with a movement from Greece to Rome, but it also makes us suspect that the new voice of the novel will preserve some Eastern flavor.

I would also add that this ambivalent expression suggests something about the relationship between the novel and its epic models, and between Lucius and Aeneas: there is not simple imitation but a complex dialectic

between tradition and innovation. Lucius and the novel itself make a westward journey, as did Aeneas, but the negotiation between Eastern and Western cultures implied by their journeys appears to be rather different in the two authors. The prologue lets us foresee something of the cultural identity that will gradually emerge from the novel: the centripetal movement, from the periphery to the center of the empire and from East to West, is not without nuances and ambiguities.

Now, we are going to see that this already rather complicated movement “from Greece to Rome” is even less straightforward than has been indicated so far and also involves Africa in some subtle ways—but in the end, if we consider how important a model Aeneas’ journey was for Lucius’ adventures, this should not come as a complete surprise.

## 2. HYPATAN TEMPTATIONS

The greatest part of the novel is set in provincial Greece: this was the most convenient choice for Apuleius since he is translating and adapting his *Metamorphoses* from the lost Greek ass-novel, the main plot and settings of which he leaves more or less unchanged. Apuleius’ narration is usually more indeterminate than that of the *Onos* (and therefore, presumably, of the lost Greek original as well) as far as precise geographical coordinates are concerned;<sup>15</sup> however, on some occasions he expands on the Greek tale to provide us with the description of a landscape. The city of Hypata, for example, is famously described by Lucius’ aunt, Byrrhena, as a provincial jewel:

*Quam commode uersaris in nostra patria? Quod sciam, templis et lauacris et ceteris operibus longe cunctas ciuitates antecellimus, utensilium praeterea pollemus adfatim. Certe libertas otiosa, et negotiosum quidem aduenae Romana frequentia, modesto uero hospiti quies uillatica: omni denique prouinciae uoluptarii secessus sumus. (Met. 2.19.5–6)*

How do you like your stay here in our home town? to my knowledge we are far ahead of all other cities with our temples, our baths, and our other public buildings, and besides we are amply provided with the necessities of life. Indeed we offer freedom for the man of leisure, the bustle of Rome for the traveling businessman, and resort-like restfulness for the tourist of modest means. In short, we are the pleasure-seeker’s retreat for the entire province.<sup>16</sup>

Byrrhena’s high praise, after all, is in full accord with the name of the city, Hypata = “the highest,” or, in a more Roman perspective, “the consular.” Of course, the choice of this particular Greek city is not due to Apuleius’ wit, since it was already used as the setting for Lucius’ metamorphosis in the lost Greek model. However, the words and turns of phrases he uses to describe it are significant; let us take a glance at his own view of provincial

reality. In fact, there is no need to think that Apuleius is describing the real Hypata here, or *only* the real Hypata: as always, literature can come into play at least as much as reality.<sup>17</sup>

My point is that Hypata and many events and characters related to it in the *Metamorphoses* are somehow reminiscent of the way Vergil describes Carthage, as well as the events and characters connected to that city. Again, this choice is not particularly surprising, given the primary role Vergil has among Apuleius' literary models,<sup>18</sup> but we can also press the point a little further and consider the choice of Carthage hardly casual given Apuleius' well-known historical ties to the African city, particularly evident in his rhetorical works. Carthage, therefore, might be showing up through Hypata; Greece might not only be historical Greece but also stand for Africa or, more generally, for any imperial province.

Let us look at some details, since only some of them have been highlighted by previous studies and commentaries. First of all, the name itself of Hypata fits an epic background very well. All epic cities are "high," and of course Carthage is no exception in the *Aeneid*:<sup>19</sup> her standard epithet is *alta* at 4.97 and 4.265. Byrrhena says, among other things, *utensilium pollemus adfatim* "we are amply provided with the necessities of life"—the reference being mainly to food.<sup>20</sup> Her words are supported by historical reality since Thessaly was well known for wealth and excess,<sup>21</sup> but that was also a typical feature of Carthage in the *Aeneid*: the city is *diues opum*, "rich in resources," at 1.14, and its inhabitants are a *facilem uictu per saecula gentem*, "a nation rich in substance through the ages," at 1.445. In both passages, these features are combined with a mention of the Carthaginians' warlike valor. It must not escape us that these qualities were not usually considered to blend very well: indeed, they make Carthage into a rather strange, almost paradoxical city. Servius, for example, is surprised: "it is amazing that, according to Vergil, the Carthaginians are both warlike and wealthy: wealth always inclines to laziness" (1.14). On a smaller (provincial?) scale, Byrrhena's description of Hypata shows the same tendency toward paradox: of course, the provincial city is not belligerent like Carthage (there is no way it could be, in the peaceful second-century empire), but it can offer both *quies uillatica* and *Romana frequentia*, both *otium* and *negotia*—two easy bourgeois substitutes for peace and war.<sup>22</sup> There is no clear Vergilianism in Byrrhena's description so far, but these subtle similarities between Hypata and Carthage might become more significant in the light of the further parallels described below.

These indirect parallelisms between Hypata and Carthage, in fact, set the stage for more important and eye-catching correspondences that link Byrrhena and Lucius to Dido and Aeneas. I will be brief here, since these analogies have already been explored in two papers by me and Stephen Harrison; Harrison, in particular, points out that "the *grande dame* Byrrhena, generously prepared to dispense hospitality, is a thematic reworking of Dido."<sup>23</sup> Her first appearance in the novel, for example, closely recalls the

description of the Carthaginian queen ready to set off for the hunt; it will suffice to quote the parallel passages:

*et ecce mulierem quampiam frequenti stipatam famulitione ibidem gradientem adcelerato uestigio comprehendo; aurum in gemmis et in tunicis, ibi inflexum, hic intextum, matronam profecto confitebatur.* (Apul., *Met.* 2.2.3–4)

There I saw a woman walking in the company of a large domestic staff. I quickened my pace and caught up with her; the gold entwined in her jewelry and woven in her clothes marked her surely as the wife of an important man.

*tandem progreditur magna stipante caterua  
Sidoniam picto chlamydem circumdata limbo;  
cui pharetra ex auro, crines nodantur in aurum,  
aurea purpuream subnectit fibula uestem.* (Verg., *Aen.* 4.136–139)

Finally, she makes her entrance, attended by hosts of retainers, draped in Sidonian fabric with needlework fringes, her shoulders armed with a quiver of gold, hair clasped by a golden tiara, cloaked in a bright purple mantle secured by a brooch-pin of pure gold.

Many other details are provided in the papers I have mentioned above. Here, I will add only a few words on the scene in which Lucius gazes at the statue of Actaeon in the home of Byrrhena. Harrison has rightly compared this scene to the passage in the *Aeneid* where Aeneas admires the paintings of the Trojan War in Juno's Carthaginian temple (1.453 ff.). According to Harrison, Aeneas probably does not realize that those paintings celebrate the victory of the Greeks over the Trojans, and he misinterprets them "as expressing interest and sympathy for the Trojans"; he also fails to recognize their possible prophetic value, foretelling the new Trojan War awaiting him in Italy. Similarly, Lucius is completely blind to the prophetic value of Actaeon's metamorphosis, which (at least for a second reader) clearly foretells Lucius' own transformation into an animal. In a way, we could say that Lucius is even more blind than Aeneas: at least the Vergilian hero "recognized himself" (*se quoque adgnouit*, 1.488) in the paintings in Juno's temple, whereas Lucius fails to recognize himself in the statue of Actaeon, and, as often happens, his reaction is only one of hedonistic appreciation.<sup>24</sup>

But there is more. Lucius' blindness is famously pointed out by Byrrhena's cryptic words, *tua sunt cuncta, quae uides*, "everything you see belongs to you" (*Met.* 2.5.1). Lucius, and a first reader together with him, cannot probably do much more than take Byrrhena's words in their literal meaning: "feel at home, my house is yours." A reader who already knows the plot of the novel knows better. He can really see Actaeon's statue for what it is, a warning to Lucius, and can read a hidden meaning in that apparently innocent phrase—a meaning that is to be attributed only to

Apuleius, of course, and has nothing to do with Byrrhena's intentions: "all you are watching is suitable to you, in the end it is *about you*, describes you as well as Actaeon."<sup>25</sup> If we take both meanings into account, Byrrhena's words can be interpreted as, at the same time, a temptation and a warning to Lucius: "You are welcome to my house and this city, but beware: you could end up like Actaeon, metamorphosed into an animal because of your curiosity."

This hidden meaning of Byrrhena's words is also supported by intertextuality, thanks to which even a very skilled first reader can suspect that there is more to them than is apparent at first sight. Let us go back once more to the first book of Vergil's *Aeneid*.<sup>26</sup> Dido is kind and welcoming to the Trojans: after Ilioneus has finished begging for her help, she does not hesitate to promise her aid and even to suggest that the Trojans and Carthaginians should merge into a single nation. Here are her words:

*urbem quam statuo, uestra est; subducite nauis;  
Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur.* (*Aen.* 1.573 f.)

The city I'm founding is yours. Beach your vessels.  
Trojan and Tyrian: both shall be one and the same in my judgments.

The similarity of Apuleius' *tua sunt* to Vergil's *uestra est* is even more striking if we think that, in the poem, the city that Dido is building is first of all the object of Aeneas' admiring gaze (cf. 1.421–22: *miratur molem Aeneas, magalia quondam / miratur portas . . .*; and 1.494 f.: *haec dum Dardanio Aeneae miranda uidentur / dum stupet obtutuque haeret defixus in uno*); therefore, Byrrhena's *cuncta quae uides*, "everything you see," is a very easy substitute for Dido's *urbem quam statuo*, "the city I'm founding."

Now, marrying Dido and becoming Carthaginian is a true temptation for Aeneas, so much so that a divine intervention is needed to make him move on toward Italy to fulfill his destiny. When Mercurius arrives to deliver Zeus' message to him, he finds Aeneas *fundantem arces ac tecta nouantem*, "constructing defences, refurbishing houses" (4.260), dressed in Tyrian purple as a Carthaginian and ready to act at Dido's whim (4.266: *uxoriosus*). Staying in Carthage would result in a total loss of heroic and virile identity for Aeneas.<sup>27</sup> Hypata is a similar temptation for Lucius. He becomes more and more involved in the city's unhealthy passion for magic,<sup>28</sup> and this will result in the interruption of his business trip (1.2.1: *Thessaliam ex negotio petebam*). Even more than that, he "does not prepare his return home" (3.19.6: *nec domuitionem paro*). In Greek and Homeric terms he forgets his *nostos*, exactly the opposite of what an Odysseus-like character should do: he ends up like Odysseus' comrades when they meet the lotus-eaters and Circe—and, of course, also like Aeneas in Carthage.<sup>29</sup> Hypata, like Carthage, is a temptation and a dangerous deviation from the best course of action; as

for Aeneas, sex and love contribute to Lucius' misfortunes, although the novelistic hero's curiosity about magic is especially highlighted as the primary cause of his troubles. In Byrrhena's words, as we have seen, Hypata is a *uoluptarius secessus*, a retreat for the pleasure seeker, and we know the importance of *uoluptas* in Mithra's reinterpretation of Lucius' vicissitudes in the last book of the novel.<sup>30</sup>

To sum up, although there are no eye-catching quotations, there is a coherent web of subtle clues that connect Hypata, Byrrhena and Lucius to Carthage, Dido and Aeneas. This allows us to suspect that Apuleius has a complex agenda:

- From the narrative point of view, he is suggesting that Hypata is fateful and important for the future plot, like Carthage in the narrative economy of the *Aeneid*; something crucial and dramatic is going to happen there, and that place represents a temptation and a dangerous diversion for Lucius.
- From the literary point of view, once more Apuleius is giving us a sample of the relationship between his novel and epic literature. What is heroic becomes erotic, rhetorical and bourgeois: a lowering of epic material that was typical of all ancient novels.<sup>31</sup>
- From the more general cultural point of view, this subtle but extended parallelism might be a way to include Africa and Carthage in the novel, or at least in its intertextual structure. It might also be a way to titillate an African audience: Ellen Finkelpearl has shown that African readers could be extremely sensitive to the African resonances of both Vergil's *Aeneid* and the later texts that imitated it.<sup>32</sup>

The idea that an African audience should be pleased to recognize some features of Vergil's Carthage through Apuleius' Hypata is also supported by the last passage I will examine here. It shows us that even though the description of Hypata as a place of temptation and diversion is enhanced by exploiting its Vergilian and Carthaginian literary background, Carthage itself has moved on and cannot be confined to a marginal, let alone hostile, role in the life of the empire anymore.

### 3. THE WRATH OF JUNO

The African city is mentioned only once in the novel, toward the end of the story of Cupid and Psyche. Psyche tearfully calls on Juno to intercede on her behalf with Venus:

*Magni Iouis germana et coniuga, siue tu Sami, quae sola partu uagituque et alimonia tua gloriatur, tenes uetusta delubra, siue celsae Carthaginis,*

*quae te uirginem uectura leonis caelo commeantem percolit, beatas sedes frequentas, seu prope ripas Inachi, qui te iam nuptam Tonantis et reginam deorum memorat, inclitis Argiuorum praesides moenibus, quam cunctus oriens Zygiam ueneratur et omnis occidens Lucinam appellat. . . . (Met. 6.4.1–3)*

O sister and consort of great Jupiter (*magni Iouis germana et coniuga*)—whether you dwell in the ancient sanctuary of Samos, which alone glories in your birth and infant wails and nursing; or whether you frequent the blessed site of lofty Carthage, which worships you as a virgin who travels to the sky on the back of a lion; or whether you protect the renowned walls of the Argives beside the banks of Inachus, who proclaims you now the Thunderer’s bride and queen of goddesses—you whom all the East adores as “Yoker” and all the West calls “Bringer into Light”. . . .

As he had done in the prologue, Apuleius presents us with a broad panoramic view of the ancient world in this passage. Juno is venerated in Samos, Carthage and Argos; she is worshipped in all the East with the epithet *Zygia*, a Greek word,<sup>33</sup> and in the West with *Lucina*, notably a word in Latin. But in contrast to the prologue, Apuleius introduces an innovation by also mentioning Africa. The literary texture of these phrases, as the Dutch commentators<sup>34</sup> have aptly noted, decidedly points at Greek and Latin epic, especially the epithet *magni Iouis germana et coniuga*, which recalls analogous formulations in Vergil and Homer.<sup>35</sup> The opening of the *Aeneid* (1.12–16) appears to be the clearest model for Apuleius’ description here, which closely links Juno with Carthage and Samos:

*Urbs antiqua fuit (Tyrii tenuere coloni)  
Karthago, Italiam contra Tiberinaque longe  
ostia, diues opum studiisque asperrima belli,  
quam Iuno fertur terris magis omnibus unam  
posthabita coluisse Samo.*

Once, an old city existed, and Tyrian settlers controlled it: Carthage, a distant menace to Italy, facing the Tiber’s estuary, rich in resources, ferocious in practice of warfare. Juno reportedly cherished this one land more than all others, even than Samos. In Carthage she kept both her chariot and weapons.

In the beginning of the poem, Juno is hostile to the Trojans, and even before the events that will trigger Dido’s resentment against Aeneas, the description of Carthage (*Italiam contra*) seems to prefigure the irreducible antagonism that will set Rome against that city. This perspective of conflict will be superseded at the end of the *Aeneid*, when Juno agrees with Jupiter to give up her anger on certain conditions. In Ovid’s *Fasti*, however, this antagonism seems on the verge of resurfacing, and the poet evokes Vergil as

he describes Juno’s resentment over the fact that she had no month named after her:

*paeniteat quod non foueo Carthaginis arces,  
cum mea sint illo currus et arma loco;  
paeniteat Sparten Argosque measque Mycenae  
et ueterem Latio subposuisse Samon. (Fasti 6.45–48)*

I should be sorry for not supporting the city of Carthage, although my chariot and armory were there. I should be sorry for subjecting to Latium both Sparta and Argos, my very own Mycenae and ancient Samos.<sup>36</sup>

However, this is only a momentary outburst; the danger that Juno would once more become the wrathful goddess she was at the beginning of the *Aeneid* is averted a few lines later: “but I shouldn’t be sorry for that, and no nation is dearer to me. Let my cult be here, and a temple to share with my Jupiter” (6.51–52: *sed neque paeniteat, nec gens mihi carior ulla est: / hic colar, hic teneam cum Ioue templa meo*). Apuleius seems to look at Vergil without forgetting Ovid, whose broader Mediterranean perspective he adopts by including Argos in the list of Juno cults in addition to Samos. Latium, which had already been included in the generic mention of the Occident, is implied by the term *Lucina*.<sup>37</sup>

These three passages by Vergil, Ovid and Apuleius seem to present us with three snapshots of the long history of the relationship between Rome and Carthage. The ancient hostility that opposed Rome and Venus to Juno and Carthage occupies an absolutely prominent place in the *Aeneid*, and it finds a solution only at the end; in Ovid it is a momentary bout of anger and regret, fearsome but very short lived; in Apuleius, no trace of it remains. Juno is worshipped everywhere (*cunctus oriens . . . omnis occidens*), and the list of the centers of her cults could not be geographically broader or more inclusive. There is no hierarchy in that list, and no space for the rivalry hinted at by both Vergil (1.16: *posthabita Samo*) and Ovid (6.49: *ueterem Latio subposuisse Samon*).

We can even detect an attempt at rewriting the past in this passage, the epic past that is narrated in the *Aeneid* and lives again in the poetic memory of Ovid’s *Fasti*. First of all, there is a reversal: it has been noted that in Apuleius the angered goddess is Venus and not Juno, and almost as if to highlight this contrast, Venus’ character often seems to be modeled after Vergil’s Juno.<sup>38</sup> But what mainly concerns us here is a sort of *damnatio memoriae*. In her answer to Psyche, Juno affirms that she cannot give her any aid; if she did, she would “act contrary to the interests of my daughter-in-law Venus, whom I have *always* loved like a daughter” (6.4.5: *contra uoluntatem Veneris nurus meae, quam filiae semper dilexi loco, praestare me pudor non sinit*).

“Always”? Really? If Juno always got along so well with Venus, there would have been no *Aeneid*. In fact, that “always” is a pointed allusion to a literary past of epic hostility that Juno and, through her, Apuleius are trying to conceal: rather than literary memory, this is a case of literary amnesia. It is a feigned amnesia, of course, and a very provocative one, since at the beginning of the *Aeneid* Juno’s wrath is a *memor ira*, programmatically eternal and “incapable of forgetting.”<sup>39</sup> This small and apparently insignificant adverb *semper* cannot really be understood without a reference to the mythical past narrated in the *Aeneid*; paradoxically, *semper* denies its existence and at the same time reveals it as the unavoidable subtext of this passage.

So this forgetful Juno can now obliterate her old hostility against Venus, not only for the sake of the humor of the scene, but also for the sake of the new imperial polycentrism, in which Carthage and Rome can peacefully coexist. Carthage had been destroyed by Scipio a century and a half before the times of Vergil and Ovid; a feeling that it was necessary to get over that past history was perhaps shared when Caesar and Augustus started to rebuild *Iulia Concordia Carthago*,<sup>40</sup> but the epic fight between the two cities was clearly still alive in the memories of the Roman people and of the two Augustan poets.<sup>41</sup> It is exactly that memory that Juno’s words try to obliterate. In Apuleius’ times, Carthage was a prosperous city with a rather long and successful history of gradual Romanization; Apuleius, an active and prominent agent in this process of Romanization, chooses to conceal rather than highlight the ancient hostility between Carthage and Rome, which in his beloved epic models even provided the city with a foundation myth but which no longer resonated with the feelings and political perspectives of his contemporary audience. Thus, the new and strangely “eternal” friendship between the two goddesses Juno and Venus seals the peaceful coexistence of Carthage and Rome.<sup>42</sup>

In the novel Carthage, rather than being set opposite to Rome (as in Vergil’s poem, where the city was described as looking from afar to the mouths of the Tiber with uneasiness and hostility),<sup>43</sup> finds itself inserted with “full membership” into a circuit of divine cults that encompasses the entire Mediterranean. Nevertheless, integration does not mean that all differences are flattened: Carthage retains its own distinct cultural identity—or, more appropriately in this case, its own identity of cult. Juno is the Hera-Juno of Greek and Roman mythology but also the *Iuno Caelestis* of the local cult, identified through syncretism with the Punic goddess Tanit, who was often depicted as riding on the back of a lion.<sup>44</sup>

In this context, I would say, Apuleius’ phrase *celsae Carthaginis . . . beatas sedes* (6.4.1) can be read as a sort of correction to the words of Juno in Vergil, *suspectas . . . domos Carthaginis altae* (*Aen.* 4.97). This correction has the same goal as the amnesia I have mentioned earlier: it removes every trace of the hostility between Juno and Venus, or between Carthage and Rome, that could be found in the text of the *Aeneid*. Carthage is no longer

an enemy, and she is only *celsa*, “high, lofty,” like the other great cities of the epic tradition.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Indeed, the trajectory “from Greece to Rome” outlined in the prologue is slightly more complicated than it might seem at first sight: the change of language is not completely straightforward, since some oriental features typical of Greek will be retained in the novel’s Latin. Also, as we have seen, Lucius’ westward journey includes, at least figuratively, a couple of African detours. Intertextuality integrates Carthage into the plot: the Vergilian model contributes to the characterization of Hypata as a place of dangerous temptations connected with love and sex, but it also lets us take a glance at the prosperous and peaceful city of Apuleius’ time, whose cultural traditions coexisted and interacted with those of the empire’s capital.

Of course, intertextuality can provide us only with an extremely general idea of Apuleius’ cultural identity and of the complex interactions between provincial Africa and Rome. Much more study is needed to obtain a more detailed and credible picture; this is why, when I was asked to co-organize the Oberlin conference, I accepted with enthusiasm and welcomed the opportunity to discuss with friends and colleagues who are experts in so many different fields. Scholarly discussions, of course, rarely lead to unanimity, but they always expand the horizons of those who take part in them; my own small contribution to the ongoing debate is a picture of Apuleius as a successful character in a long and complex story of cultural integration.

#### NOTES

1. For an overview of the scholarship on this subject, see the introduction to this volume and Graverini 2012, 176–177, 193–197. In any case, it must be emphasized that “being Roman” (or Greek, or African) is not a simple concept, and its meaning must vary according to time, space, social status, occasion, and so on. As Revell 2009, 193, notes, “there was no single Roman identity in the past, but instead a discourse of Romanness within which a multitude of experiences could be created. . . . we have to write of how the experience of being Roman was recreated within specific situations, and through this, to explore which were the elements of commonality, and conversely, the extent of the ‘give’ within them.”
2. Considering the connections of many of the *Florida* fragments with Carthage and Africa, it is entirely probable that “the anthologist (whether Apuleius himself, or more likely, someone else) did his work from a personal sense of national pride, or with his eyes set on a clearly marked audience, e.g. the urban elite of Carthage” (Hunink 2001, 13). According to Lee 2005, 14, “the *Florida* could be correctly termed Carthaginian orations.” See also S. Harrison 2000, 132–134.

3. See Graverini 2012, 166–169, for the geographical framework; 42–50 on the models of the prologue.
4. On the clausal nature of these last chapters, see Finkelppearl 2004.
5. For the wide range of interpretive possibilities, see the collection of essays in Kahane–Laird 2001; cf. also Graverini 2012, 1–50, with further references.
6. GCA 2007, *ad loc.*; cf. Graverini 2012, 27–31. Important treatments of this kind of rhetorical style are in E. Norden 1898, 294–295, 372 ff.; Gleason 1995, 112 ff. and *passim*.
7. Translations from the *Aeneid* are always from Ahl 2007, sometimes with small adaptations.
8. Of which we know very little: see, e.g., Watkins 1986. See below, n. 10, on the representation of Trojan language in Homeric Greek.
9. See, e.g., Numanus Remulus' words in *Aen.* 9.617 ff.: *O uere Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges . . . sinite arma uiris et cedite ferro*. On Numanus', Iarbas' (4.215: *ille Paris cum semiuiro comitatu*) and Turnus' (12.97 ff.: *da sternere corpus . . . semiuiri Phrygis*) view of the Trojans as a weak and effeminate people, see Bettini 2005 (who points out that it is not necessary to think that Vergil shares these characters' opinions); Nauta 2007, 85 ff. Perhaps Juno herself is giving us an example of the "lack of restraint in stylistic embellishment" that a *uocis immutatio* implies, according to GCA 2007, 88, with a striking and rare (unique?) quadruple alliteration of *u* (*aut uocem mutare uiros aut uertere uestem*).
10. Cf. Mackie 1996. She has detected a consistent differentiation in the *Iliad* between representations in Greek of Achaean and Trojan speech; in the simplest terms, Trojans speak poetically, with the aim of avoiding conflict, whereas Achaeans repeatedly engage in public, ritualized abuse: "Achaeans are proficient at blame, while Trojans perform praise poetry" (p. 83).
11. Cf. Callebat 1968, 394–398 (who does not consider this instance). See also Cicero's passages quoted below in n. 13 on *uocis mutatio*.
12. See GCA 2007, 86–87; and Graverini 2012, 25–31, with further references.
13. *Orat.* 55–57: *uocis mutationes totidem sunt quot animorum . . . est autem etiam in dicendo quidam cantus obscurior, non hic e Phrygia et Caria rhetorum epilogus paene canticum. . . . Cf. Orat.* 25: *Caria et Phrygia et Mysia, quod minime politae minimeque elegantes sunt, adsciuerunt aptum suis auri-bus opimum quoddam et tanquam adipale dictionis genus*.
14. Keulen 2007, 121: "the ambivalence towards 'ear-charming' eloquence is a particular characteristic of the intellectual culture of Antonine Rome."
15. On the geographical changes in the *Metamorphoses* as compared to the *Onos*, see above, n. 3.
16. Here and elsewhere, the English translations from the *Metamorphoses* are from Hanson 1989, with occasional adaptations.
17. For an analysis of this passage more oriented toward social aspects, see, e.g., Barchiesi 2010, 187–188: Apuleius here represents "la moderna mitologia della vita di provincia, una realtà che vive di un'economia libidica particolare, fatta di competizione e dipendenza, con i provinciali che desiderano la vita della capitale, e i metropolitani che rimpiangono la quiete della provincia." On the name of Hypata, see H. Harrison 2002, 41–42; GCA 2007, 154.
18. See, e.g., Lazzarini 1985. For a quick overview and further references, see S. Harrison 2000, 222–223; Graverini 1998 for a particular case. On the importance for Apuleius of *Aeneid* book 4 and its Carthaginian background, see Finkelppearl 1998, esp. 115–148.
19. Cf. *Il.* 2.538; *Od.* 3.485, 10.81, and 15.193 for the formula αἰπὺ πτολίεθρον. Further references can be found in Pease 1935, 165 *ad Verg.*, *Aen.* 4.97. Pease, however, maintains that in Vergil the epithet *celsa* refers to the height of Carthage and the hill of Byrsa in a literal sense.
20. GCA 2001, 292.
21. GCA 2001, 292.
22. For *negotia* = *bellum*, cf., e.g., Sall., *Cat.* 2.2; Cic., *Pis.* 82; *Fam.* 10.34.2, 15.20.3; Gell. 9.3.2. As regards Carthage, Aristotle already emphasized that the African city was both prosperous and belligerent, a sort of "better Sparta": see Santoni 2006, 32–35.
23. Harrison 1997, 58, too hastily dismissed by GCA 2001, 65; cf. Graverini 1998, 135–137, for parallels between the dinner at Byrrhena's and the banquet at Dido's palace.
24. Cf. 2.5.1: *dum haec identidem rimabundus eximie delector*. Of course, it is more difficult for Lucius than for Aeneas to "recognize himself" in what he sees, since he does not have a representation of his own past in front of himself. But it could not be otherwise: the novelistic hero's past does not have the mythic status of that of Aeneas and is not likely to be the subject of any artistic representation. What really concerns the reader (and should concern the hero himself) is his future.
25. On the dramatic irony implied in Byrrhena's words and their literary background, see Barchiesi 2010, 192–193. Barchiesi also points out that the presence itself of an *atrium* in Byrrhena's (Greek) house is to be considered an element of Romanization.
26. I think that there is not much point in connecting the phrase *tua sunt cuncta quae uides* to the mancipation and vindication formulas of Roman law, as F. Norden 1912, 160, does. More interesting is the comparison with the words that a *uox* . . . *corporis sui nuda* addresses to Psyche in Cupid's palace, *tua sunt haec omnia* (*Met.* 5.2.3): another passage that combines dramatic irony and epic models (see Barchiesi 2010, 192–193).
27. He would end up by really assuming the soft and effeminate qualities with which some of his enemies reproach Trojans. See above, n. 9.
28. Cf., e.g. 2.1.2–3: *reputansque me media Thessaliae loca tenere qua artis magicae natua cantamina totius orbis consono ore celebrentur . . . curiose singula considerabam. Nec fuit in illa ciuitate quod aspiciens id esse crederem quod esset, sed omnia prorsus ferali murmure in aliam effigiem translata. . . .*
29. Cf. Graverini 2012, 151–152; Montiglio 2007. On the theme of the *nostos*, see Frame 1978; Alexopoulou 2009.
30. 11.15.1: *lubrico uirentis aetatae ad seruiles delapsus uoluptates curiositatis inprosperae sinistrum praemium reportasti* ("on the slippery path of headstrong youth you plunged into slavish pleasures and reaped the perverse reward of your ill-starred curiosity"). There is a Platonic background to these *seruiles uoluptates*: see Graverini 2012, 115–118, with further references.
31. For an overview of this process, see Graverini 2014.
32. Finkelppearl 1998, 131–148. I have suggested elsewhere that the (in)famous *Madauremsem* at 11.27.9 might be "a subtle nod to an African audience, who have thereby been invited to sympathize with a protagonist/author who comes from their own province" (Graverini 2012, 187–188).
33. It is not attested elsewhere in Latin, as is pointed out by GCA 2004, 390; Festus and Servius mention the epithets *Iuga* and *Iugalis*.
34. GCA 2004, 387 ff.
35. Verg., *Aen.* 1.47: *et soror et coniunx*; 10.607: *germana . . . atque . . . coniunx*; Homer, *Il.* 16.432: *κασιγνήτην ἀλοχόντε*. Perhaps also *Aen.* 12.830: *es germana Iouis Saturnique altera proles* is worth quoting: there is no mention of the marriage between Jupiter and Juno, but the collocation *germana Iouis* is identical.
36. Trans. Nagle 1995.
37. Cf. Varro, *Ling.* 5.10.69: *ab Latinis Iuno Lucina dicta*. For other Ovidian phrasings, cf. Apuleius' *nuptam Tonantis* with Ovid, line 33: *matrona*

- Tonantis*; cf. also *reginam deorum* with Ovid's line 37: *regina uocor principesque dearum*.
38. Lazzarini 1985, 160 n. 77.
39. Verg., *Aen.* 1.4: *saeuae memorem Iunonis ob iram* ("through savage Juno's unforgiving anger); 1.36: *Iuno, aeternum seruans sub pectore uulnus* ("Juno, who kept her wound eternally fresh in her bosom"). In Apuleius, Ceres also mentions her *foedus antiquum amicitiae* with Venus, which prevents her from helping Psyche (*Met.* 6.3.1). There are no sources for such a tight friendship either, but Kenney 1990, 192 (followed by Nicolini 2011, 119), interprets the goddess's words as "a metonymical glance at the proverbial association of food (and drink) with love: Ter., *Eun.* 732 *sine Cerere et Libero friget Venus*." In both cases Apuleius freely and rather humorously elaborates on a preexisting tradition: he creates the narrative equivalent of a proverbial expression at 6.3.1 and reverses a mythical topos at 6.4.5.
40. On the founding of the new colony, see Zecchini 2000. In this context, it is also worth remembering that the name of the first colony founded by C. Gracchus in the territory of Carthage was *Colonia Iunonia* (Plut., *Gracch.* 32.1).
41. On the place occupied by Carthage and the Punic Wars in the imagination of the contemporaries of Vergil, see Syed 2005, 150–151.
42. Of course, divine relationships in literature can often be interpreted as mythical representations of human political power structures; see, e.g., Lazzarini 2012, 61–63, for an example in Valerius Flaccus.
43. *Aen.* 1.12 ff.: *urbs antiqua fuit (Tyrii tenuere coloni) / Karthago, Italiam contra Tiberinaque longe ostia, / diues opum studiisque asperrima belli. . .*
44. Cf. *Met.* 6.4.1–3 quoted above, p. 119 f. See La Rocca 1990, 817–839; GCA 2004, 389, whose comment "this is the Juno of Horace (*Carm.* 2.1.25) and Vergil" I find misleading inasmuch as Vergil and Ovid did not identify distinct cultural traits in Juno's cult, despite her being the divine protector of Africa. The diffusion of the cult of *Caelestis* can be seen as an aspect of the process of "re-Punicization" of Carthage in the second century, when the city "became increasingly Africanized and aware of its glorious past" (Finkelpearl 1998, 139; cf. Rives 1995, 162–169). On the cult of *Caelestis* in Rome, see Cordischi 1993; on *Tanit/Caelestis* in Africa, see Cadotte 2007, 65–111. Further references can be found in Frazer 1929, and Bömer 1958 on Ovid, *Fasti* 6.45. Nisbet–Hubbard 1978, 25, *ad* Horace, *Carm.* 2.1.26, are more skeptical than Cordischi about the statement of Servius, who claimed that Juno had been transferred with the rite of *euocatio* from Carthage to Rome before the destruction of the city.

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## 7 Fronto and Apuleius Two African Careers in the Roman Empire

Wytse Keulen

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This article offers a comparative investigation of the literary self-fashioning of two Africans who became famous intellectuals in the Roman Empire of the second century CE, Apuleius, the *philosophus Madaurensis*, and his fellow African, Marcus Cornelius Fronto, the *orator Cirtensis*, who was about one generation older. Although they never mention each other, Apuleius must have known Fronto at least by reputation, because he was a major celebrity as an orator, a statesman, and the teacher of Marcus Aurelius.<sup>1</sup> Fronto never mentions Apuleius, although he probably had heard of the philosopher from Madauros. Significantly, one of Fronto's protégés was the Platonist philosopher and orator Julius Aquilinus, who was active in Carthage in 159–160 CE.<sup>2</sup> We know nothing about a possible acquaintance between this Aquilinus and Apuleius, but they might have distantly known each other, and possibly even entertained a relationship of friendship and solidarity, as they both belonged to the *Platonica familia* celebrated by Apuleius in the *Apology* (64.3). There is no evidence, however, that their careers were closely intertwined or connected with a shared network of friends, even if they both originated from Africa.

In a similar way, it seems that Apuleius' relationship with Fronto, if there was any, was not one that we could define in terms of close friendship or a relation between client and patron, unlike the relation between Fronto and Aquilinus. Neither did Fronto and Apuleius originate from the same African region: Fronto came from Cirta, the second town after Carthage, which had been in the vanguard of the Romanization of Africa and was traditionally well represented in Rome through a strong network of friendships and patronage.<sup>3</sup> Apuleius came from the still relatively insignificant Madauros, some distance away.

Being scions of wealthy, educated families from the provincial elite, both Fronto and Apuleius rose to important positions in the empire and were leading figures in the process by which the African aristocracy paved its way to its destined role in the governing elite of Rome.<sup>4</sup> Apuleius was elected to the chief priesthood of the province of Africa Proconsularis and thus became

a priest of the imperial cult.<sup>5</sup> Yet, in contrast with Fronto and his brother Cornelius Quadratus,<sup>6</sup> Apuleius never became a Roman senator, as far as we know, and never had direct access to the emperor, although he represented himself as conversing on an equal level with those who had—most notably, with Claudius Maximus, who was closely tied to the imperial court and was admired by his pupil Marcus Aurelius for his moral virtues.<sup>7</sup> Apart from one vague reference in the *Florida* (17.4), there is no evidence that Apuleius actually had a career in Rome.<sup>8</sup> Yet, at the end of the fictionalized self-portrayal contained in the *Metamorphoses*, the philosopher from Madauros seems to “dream aloud,” imagining his *alter ego* Lucius as a glorious orator on the Roman stage, on which Fronto once shone, reaching the peak of his career at the heart of Roman imperial power.

As Luca Graverini notes, Apuleius’ works reflect the contemporary dynamic process of integration, emulation, and also competition, which connected the empire’s center and periphery in the pursuit of a shared cultural ideal.<sup>9</sup> The concern for the Latin language expressed by both Fronto and Apuleius was a central element of this pursuit, and it became a trademark of Roman Africa.<sup>10</sup> Fronto’s success in Rome as a standard-bearer of Latin letters, as a powerful patron of African and non-African friends and interests, and as an influential political, forensic, and educational authority in the highest imperial circles was unsurpassed.<sup>11</sup> Both as a successful patron of language and as a distinguished advocate of African interests, Fronto must have been worthy of admiration to a Roman African like Apuleius, who frequently refers to his own authority in Latin.<sup>12</sup> Traces of Frontonian influence can be seen in Apuleius’ archaizing Latin<sup>13</sup> but also in his self-fashioning as a patron for African friends, writing letters of recommendation in which he praises their character and eloquence. Apuleius’ self-representation as the patron of his future stepson Sicinius Pontianus, whose eloquence he had recommended in a letter to the African proconsul Lollianus Avitus (*Apol.* 94.3–6), was possibly inspired by his African role model, the powerful patron *par excellence* and writer of many such letters, Marcus Cornelius Fronto.<sup>14</sup> Apuleius’ self-fashioning closely resembles that of Fronto as he prides himself on friendships founded on culture with prominent Roman magistrates such as Lollianus Avitus.

This shared cultural ideal had a particular social function: the exclusive mastery of the *lingua docta* favored the cohesion of the Romanized African elite, who recognized its identity as such in a cultural patrimony of shared “values” and in the tendency to reject anything unworthy of the common ideal of aiming at perfection. At the same time, the competitive nature of this shared cultural pursuit left space for individual and sometimes clashing styles of self-fashioning. Each in their own way, Fronto and Apuleius played an active and influential role in giving Africa a prominent place on the map of Roman imperial history and Latin literary culture. The dream career of the wealthy *orator Cirtensis*, one of the pillars of the imperial establishment, possibly challenged and inspired the “poor man from Madauros” to

construct his own idiosyncratic, eccentric, sometimes provocative modes of self-fashioning, in order to develop a perspective on a career on an imperial level, which would benefit him and his African home region.

In the following sections, I first compare Fronto and Apuleius in their infrequent but significant references to Africa as a means to construct Roman cultural identity in a context of imperial patronage. Both use the realm of the imagination and the symbolism of animals to immortalize the successful career of an African man of letters in Rome, writing literary self-portrayals that symbolically connect the African periphery with the Roman center (section 2). A special section is dedicated to their use of references to ethnic “otherness” as a symbolic means of negotiating of Roman identity (section 3). Then, I elucidate Fronto’s and Apuleius’ literary activities in the context of a system of patronage in which they, on the one hand, make propaganda to serve the interests of their home region and, on the other hand, establish connections with Roman power in order to become benefactors of their *patria* (section 4). In the last section, I focus on the contrasting ideological paradigms used by Fronto and Apuleius in their self-fashioning as public personalities, with Apuleius’ Ciceronian self-presentation as the talented *arriviste* and Fronto’s Caesarian authority as the patrician ex-consul viewed as two different ways in which Africans could establish themselves as successful Roman intellectuals.

## 2. HYENAS AND ASSES: THE AFRICAN ANIMAL AS A SYMBOLIC SELF-PORTRAIT

One of the few passages in which Fronto refers to his African—possibly even his ethnic—origin is the famous Greek letter to Marcus Aurelius’ mother, Domitia Lucilla (*M. Caes.* 2.3, p. 21 ff.), in which he states (2.3.5) ἐγὼ δὲ Λίβυς τῶν Λιβύων τῶν νομάδων (“I am a Libyan of the Libyan nomads”). Scholars disagree whether this should be taken as a literal reference to Fronto’s native (ethnic) descent or as a statement of a more general nature or a “playful” pose.<sup>15</sup> In my view, the first option is not necessarily contradicted by the second or third one and is confirmed by other passages from the correspondence, in which Fronto implicitly or explicitly refers to his own African origins or even physiognomy.<sup>16</sup>

Leaving the question of ethnic descent aside for a moment, I suggest the letter quoted above should be read in particular as an intriguing example of employing “peripheral origin” for negotiating *Roman* cultural identity . . . in Greek! By referring to Roman proverbs and expressions while using the Greek language, Fronto adopts the pose of a Greek writing about the Romans as an outsider, as Amy Richlin rightly notes;<sup>17</sup> an entertaining twist is added as it becomes clear that Fronto is writing as an African. This reminds us of the voice of the *ego*-narrator in the *Metamorphoses*, adopting the pose of a young Greek who experiences Rome as an outsider, where he finally becomes

an insider in a context in which the author's African origin is explicitly mentioned (*Met.* 11.27.9: *Madaurensem*).

Fronto's letter is a symbolic self-portrait containing both African imagery and references to his prominent role in Roman literary culture. He apologizes for not having written a Greek letter to Marcus' mother, because he had been too busy writing a panegyric speech in Latin for Emperor Antoninus Pius. Although he was perfectly able to write in good Greek, Fronto requests to disregard any mistakes in his Attic (see below, section 3), which reminds us of a similar apology in the Apuleian prologue (*Met.* 1.1.4).

To emphasize his "shortcomings" toward Domitia Lucilla, whose cultural preference was obviously Greek, Fronto uses various images, which derive from or can be associated with the "rough" and wild nature of his land of origin, Africa. Fronto uses the "African" simile of the hyena to prove that he was completely focused on something far more important (panegyric *Latin* writing about the emperor and his son) and could not be distracted by something else:

ὑπὸ τῆς πολλῆς ἀφύιας καὶ οὐθενείας ὁμοίων τι πάσχω τῇ ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων ὑαίνῃ καλουμένῃ ἢς τὸν τράχηλον κατ' εὐθὺ τετάσθαι λέγουσιν, κάμπτεσθαι δὲ ἐπὶ θάτερα τῶν πλευρῶν μὴ δύνασθαι. κἀγὼ δὴ ἐπειδάν τι συντάττω προθυμότερον, ἀκαμπῆς τίς εἰμι καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πάντων ἀφέμενος, ἐπ' ἐκεῖνο μόνον ἴεμαι ἀνεπιστρεπτει κατὰ τὴν ὑαίναν. (2.3.1, p. 22, 2–7 vdH)

Due to my great lack of talent and my worthlessness, my condition is like that of the creature the Romans call the hyena, whose neck, they say, stretches out straight ahead but cannot be bent to one side or the other. And I, whenever I am mustering something especially enthusiastically, am an unbending sort of person, and neglecting everything else I throw myself at that one thing, unstoppably, like the hyena.

"Reading between the lines" and "solving riddles" are marked features of Fronto's teaching, with various similes and images that have to be "solved" by his pupil.<sup>18</sup> Here, Fronto's coded play with oppositions (Greek vs. Roman, animal vs. human, Greco-Roman vs. African) invites the reader to identify the author as being Roman (not Greek), as a sophisticated human being (not a wild animal), and as an insider at the heart of Roman power, who originates from Africa.

By choosing to write not just ὑαίνῃ, but rather τῇ ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων ὑαίνῃ καλουμένῃ, Fronto adds at least two aspects to the riddle. On the one hand, borrowing an expression from the language of erudite explanations ("the Romans call . . ."; "the Greeks call . . ."), Fronto jokingly calls attention to the fact that the "Latin term" *hyena* is simply a borrowing from the Greek. By attributing the obviously Greek word *hyena* to the Romans, Fronto points to his own cultural preference in an amusing way. On the other hand, Fronto also insinuates that there is another name for the hyena that stands outside the Greco-Roman jargon of erudite explanations—the

self-comparison with the hyena suggests, then, that the "Libyan nomad" Fronto is obliquely referring to his own ethnic African origins, where in Libyca or Punic the same animal goes by a different name.<sup>19</sup> Fronto alludes here both to Africa's reputation as the country that rears and breeds wild animals (cf. Vitr. 8.3.24: *nutrix ferarum bestiarum*) and to the hyena as the typically African animal, which is attested by Pliny the Elder.<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, Pliny the Elder pairs the hyena with the ass as typical animals that come from Africa; in addition, in another passage from book 8 of the *Natural History*, Pliny discusses African asses.<sup>21</sup>

Fronto symbolically represents the hallmark of his cultural activity, his tireless, unbending focus on Latin literary culture, by the African animal *par excellence*, the hyena.<sup>22</sup> Against the shared African background of hyenas and asses, Fronto's symbolic self-portrait invites comparison with the ass story of his fellow African Apuleius, who may have been inspired by Fronto in his use of animal imagery related to Africa in a kind of symbolic self-portrait that depicts the hybrid identity of a man who is transformed from man into ass, from ass into man, from "outsider" into "insider," and from "Greek" into "African," having Rome as his final destination. There, the protagonist of the ass story becomes the devotee of a goddess who is African in origin but whose visual appearance bears great resemblance to Venus/Aphrodite in particular, while her universal cult is spread all over the Roman Empire (cf. *Met.* 11.5.2–3).

The intriguing connection between Africa and asses certainly deserves further study, since it could throw further light on the meaning of the *Metamorphoses* and its connection to Africa. The complexity of this connection emerges especially in the final book of the novel. In the religious closure of the *Metamorphoses*, Lucius significantly loses not only his asinine shape but also his hair, as part of the process of integrating into the culture and society of Rome. Isis points out that the asinine shape has long been hateful to her (11.6.2: *iam dudum detestabilis*), which is usually interpreted as a reference to the association of the ass with Typhon, who murdered Osiris. Yet, against the general background of the ass's associations with Africa, Isis' remark could also allude to her own African origins from the distant past (cf. *iam dudum*).<sup>23</sup> She had undergone significant transformations, first into a Hellenic goddess and then, as she presents herself in Apuleius' narrative, into a universal goddess with a Roman physiognomy (11.5).<sup>24</sup> Yet Apuleius' ecphrasis of Isis' epiphany (11.3–4) still presents the goddess with recognizably African characteristics through the description of her locks (*crines . . . sensim intorti per diuina colla passiue dispersi*).<sup>25</sup> Following the footsteps of the goddess, who has long been assimilated to a Greco-Roman divinity, without betraying her African roots, Lucius assimilates into the cultural and religious community of Rome while remaining true to his native roots as a "man from Madauros."<sup>26</sup>

Beyond the symbolic implications with reference to Africa, Fronto's and Apuleius' references to these two peculiar African animals may have additional implications on a more physiognomic and personal level, reflecting

individual characteristics that reveal their physical condition or even their ethnic African descent. This would be entirely in accordance with the contemporary fascination with physiognomy, which we see especially reflected in Apuleius' work.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps Fronto had quite a long neck; his mention of the hyena's troubles in bending its neck may be an allusion to his own physical condition, as he famously suffered from rheumatism.<sup>28</sup> In the case of the physiognomy of the ass, especially interesting are the references to the ass's thick, bristly, curly hair (cf., e.g., 6.28.5: *frontem crispata[m] prius decori[m]t discrimina[m]bo*), which possibly mirrors the appearance of Apuleius' own African hair.<sup>29</sup>

### 3. SCYTHIUS, AFRICANUS, BARBARUS, OPICUS: ETHNIC "OTHERNESS" AS AN EMBLEM OF ROMAN IDENTITY

The parallels with Apuleius become even stronger in another part of Fronto's letter, in which Fronto explicitly raises the question of his ethnicity as part of his apology for writing impure Attic:

εἰ τι τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐν ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς ταύταις εἴη ἄκυρον ἢ βάρβαρον ἢ ἄλλως ἀδόκιμον ἢ μὴ πάνυ Ἀττικόν, ἀμελεῖν μὲν τοῦ ὀνόματος σ' ἀξιῶ τὴν δὲ διάνοιαν σκοπεῖν αὐτὴν καθ' αὐτήν· οἶσθα γὰρ ὅτι ἐν αὐτοῖς ὀνόμασιν καὶ αὐτὴ διαλέκτῳ διατριβῶ. καὶ γὰρ τὸν Σκύθην ἐκείνον τὸν Ἀναχάρσιν οὐ πάνυ τι ἀττικίσαι φασίν, ἐπαινεθῆναι δ' ἐκ τῆς διανοίας καὶ τῶν ἐνθυμημάτων. παραβαλῶ δὲ ἔμμετον Ἀναχάρσιν οὐ μὰ Δία κατὰ τὴν σοφίαν ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ βάρβαρος ὁμοίως εἶναι. ἦν γὰρ ὁ μὲν Σκύθης τῶν νομάδων Σκυθῶν, ἐγὼ δὲ Λίβυς τῶν Λιβύων τῶν νομάδων (2.3.5, p. 24, 1–9 vdH)

If any of the words in this letter should be unauthorized or barbaric or otherwise illegitimate or not totally Attic, I hereby request that you disregard it, but consider the word's meaning in itself; for you know I am interested in words and diction for their own sake. And after all they say that famous Scythian, Anacharsis, didn't speak wholly Attic Greek, but he was praised for his meaning and his thoughts. Not that I would compare myself with Anacharsis for wisdom, good heavens, but for being a barbarian like him. After all, he was a Scythian of the nomad Scythians, I am a Libyan of the Libyan nomads.

Fronto's mock self-deprecation in apologizing for any barbarisms in his Attic Greek reflects traditional Roman forms of self-irony and is entirely in accordance with the playful literary communication in Fronto's correspondence with the imperial family. More specifically, the use of βάρβαρος playfully combines a traditional allusion to Roman ("non-Greek") identity (*Plautus uortit barbare*) with a reference to African origin.<sup>30</sup> We can observe a similar ambivalent use of *barbarus* in Apuleius (*Apol.* 25.2: *patriam*

*barbaram*) and Aulus Gellius (19.9.7: Greeks mocking the Roman rhetor Antonius Julianus, who taught Latin rhetoric but had a Spanish accent: *tamquam prorsus barbarum et agrestem*).<sup>31</sup>

In a similar mode, Fronto, Marcus Aurelius, and Aulus Gellius use the term *opicus* with a gesture of mock self-irony in their self-fashioning as Romans. The term reflects a traditional external perspective on Roman cultural identity as belonging to the periphery and the country<sup>32</sup> but at the same time articulates a certain cultural pride in the confrontation with philhellenic rivals, recalling Cato's censure of Greek arrogance (*Ad fil.* fr. 1).<sup>33</sup> Along these lines, the peripheral, non-Hellenic, "barbaric" nature of Africa can become a symbolic and self-confident way of negotiating *Roman* identity in the contemporary context of second-century philhellenism. African origin serves to *reinforce* Roman identity against the Greek cultural claims of exclusiveness, as it is emphasized in a context where Fronto refers to his characteristic activity as the standard-bearer of Latin letters. In *M. Caes.* 2.2 (where he uses *opicus*) and 2.3 (where he emphasizes his Africanness and calls himself a Libyan nomad), Fronto presents himself as a successful orator who writes and performs Latin speeches for the Roman emperor or a critical imperial audience.

In the *Apology* (24.6), Apuleius echoes Fronto's example in using the "peripheral" example *par excellence*, that of the Scythian Anacharsis, in his self-fashioning to emphasize his Roman cultural identity and his good connections with the center of Roman power (on this, see also section 5.1 below). Apuleius mentions Anacharsis in a context where he explicitly refers to his African origin.<sup>34</sup> This occurs in Apuleius' self-defense against defamations that had been uttered by Aemilianus, who in his speech as prosecutor had vilified Apuleius' morals, conduct, and origins. Anacharsis had been the first foreigner to receive Athenian citizenship, which is important for his symbolic meaning for Roman Africans: both Fronto and Apuleius refer to themselves as being at the center, though originating from the periphery, with "Anacharsis in Athens" being symbolic of the "African man of letters in Rome." Moreover, it was well known that Anacharsis was a good friend of the statesman Solon (cf. Plut., *Solon* 5), which sheds light on how Apuleius and Fronto perceived their relationship with Roman power. Being from Madauros, Apuleius retorts, he is more Roman than his calumniators, just as Anacharsis was more Athenian than some Athenians, because he was a clever philosopher. Anacharsis was not only a Scythian nomad and a wise representative of his own people but also became one of the Seven Wise Men, achieving fame for his wisdom in Greece, where he mastered a foreign language and culture. Anacharsis' intentions to let his own people benefit from his knowledge of other ethical and religious codes were not appreciated by the Scythians, who were hostile to foreign influence (cf. Herodotus 4.76–77).<sup>35</sup> This can be compared with Apuleius' position at his trial, as he was attacked by local fellow Africans for being an eloquent philosopher who was fluent in both Latin and Greek.

Whereas Fronto emphasizes his “barbaric” origins and unpolished Greek as a way of presenting himself as Roman, Apuleius instead emphasizes fluency in Greek as an important indicator of elite Roman identity. Apuleius sarcastically calls his opponent’s birthplace *Atticum Zarat* (24.10), giving the poor village from the African province an epithet suggesting high culture, as if it were a contradiction in terms. With the reference to Attic standards, Apuleius not only draws attention to his own excellence in Greek (cf., e.g., *Apol.* 4.1–2), contrasting the poor culture of his opponent from Zarat with the superior education of the *philosophus Platonicus* from Madauros, but also points out that his *patria* was far more advanced in terms of Romanization—the mastery of Greek being an important yardstick to measure the level of Roman culture (someone who was *utraque lingua eruditus* proved more “Roman” than someone who did not know Greek).<sup>36</sup> In a similar paradox to that used by Fronto in his Greek letter, whose Greek is flawless in spite of his apologies, Apuleius’ excellence in Greek helps him to present himself as a superior Roman, whose culture puts him on the same level as Roman magistrates like Claudius Maximus, and above fellow Africans who still revealed traces of their Punicness (*Apol.* 98.8). Even when defending his origin from Madauros, Apuleius takes care to call it a *colonia* (24.8), and not “Madauros,” reminding his opponents of his personal connection to the Roman center through the periphery of the *colonia*.<sup>37</sup>

To sum up: both Fronto and Apuleius use references to Africa as a mode of self-fashioning that can be viewed in connection with a traditional Roman discourse of authorial modesty, articulating the paradoxes and tensions of Roman cultural identity from a Hellenocentric perspective and defining Romanness with a gesture of mock self-deprecation, which emphasizes its “barbaric” nature, originating from the periphery (cf. *barbarus, opicus, Scythius*). This self-ironic gesture may be amusing, but it also opens a space for asserting cultural pride, introducing “otherness” as a distinctive feature. Both African intellectuals lend the discourse of Roman self-presentation new depth and weight and imbue it with an important contemporary dimension by presenting their home region of Africa as the periphery *par excellence* that shapes Romanness: being African becomes an ideal condition for becoming Roman.<sup>38</sup>

Similar to their Greek contemporary Lucian, who includes his native Syrian identity in the literary negotiation of his cultural identity (especially in his *De Dea Syria*),<sup>39</sup> Fronto and Apuleius employ the “benefit of exoticism” inherent in their African identity for a successful literary self-fashioning of themselves as Roman intellectuals, negotiating a cultural identity that is even more complex than in Lucian’s case, as it includes Africanness, Romanness, and Greekness. Whereas Fronto asserts his Roman identity by playfully referring to his unpolished Greek, Apuleius takes a slightly different stance and emphasizes his excellence in Greek as another proof of his superior elite Roman identity, especially in comparison with other Africans who fall short of these high standards. For both Fronto and Apuleius, references to Africa belong to their

strategies of Roman self-making, in which originating from the periphery entails being well connected and established in the center. Like their shared “role model” Anacharsis, who left his Scythian identity intact while becoming a famous Athenian citizen, Fronto and Apuleius introduce Africanness as a positive and fundamental part of their self-assertion as Roman intellectuals.

#### 4. PATRONAGE AND PROPAGANDA: FRONTO AND APULEIUS AS PATRONS OF THEIR AFRICAN HOMETOWNS

As Konrad Vössing observes,<sup>40</sup> the mutual sneers between Apuleius and his African opponents point to the fierce competition between African towns in their quest for support and benefaction from Roman power.<sup>41</sup> The weapons used in such battles include insults of poor linguistic abilities (cf. *Flor.* 9.7–8; *Apol.* 98.8; see below) and ethnic slurs (*Apol.* 24). When Apuleius mocks his opponent for coming from Zarat in the *Apology* (24.10), he beats him at his own game: in a similar way, Apuleius’ own origin from the boundary between Numidia and Gaetulia had been criticized by his opponents (24.1).<sup>42</sup> Yet Apuleius turns the tables and transforms his ethnic origin into a matter of pride. The fact that Apuleius had proudly mentioned his Numidian-Gaetulian origin in a public speech, delivered in the presence of the Roman proconsul Lollianus Avitus (*Apol.* 24), may suggest a competitive context of local patronage, in which Apuleius praised Madauros or defended its interests or celebrated the proconsul or someone else as a benefactor of his hometown.<sup>43</sup> This reminds us of Fronto, and the role of his home region in his letters of recommendation. Both Fronto and Apuleius seem reluctant to call their *patria* directly by its name; strikingly, Fronto mentions his *patria* explicitly only in a letter dealing with the patronage of the Four Colonies of Circa, where he mentions the presence of many other *Cirtenses* in the Roman Senate.<sup>44</sup>

This may shed light on the fact that Apuleius mentions the adjective *Madaurensis* in just one passage, but a prominent one, at the end of the *Metamorphoses*, where his *alter ego* Lucius begins to establish a foothold as a foreigner in Rome, the political, cultural, and religious center of the empire. Both Fronto and Apuleius show awareness that a good patron should be well connected on both ends of the chain of patronage: only those who have established a good reputation in their home region and who attain a high position at the bar in Rome (*fori principes*) will be able to benefit their *patria* on an imperial level.<sup>45</sup> In addition, the mention of Madauros at the climax of the *Metamorphoses* may have a similar propagandistic function to the poems and hymns written by Apuleius to celebrate Carthage and its powerful citizens *toto orbe*, all over the world (literature as an instrument for raising one’s profile).<sup>46</sup>

Lucius’ role as a priest in the cult of the originally African goddess Isis, represented by Apuleius as the globalized religion *par excellence* (cf. *Met.* 11.5),

reflects the importance of religious organizations for imperial networks of friendships and patronage, which is also evidenced by Apuleius' "international" contacts through the cult of Asclepius, the patron deity of Carthage (*Flor.* 18.42).<sup>47</sup> In the *Metamorphoses*, Apuleius not only erects a literary statue for himself, the *philosophus Platonius* from Madauros, by immortalizing himself in a work of narrative fiction, but also puts Madauros on the map of Roman cultural history and Latin literature.<sup>48</sup> While he cannot boast of the presence of many *Madaurenses* in the Roman Senate, he gives his home region everlasting prestige by paying homage to the place that produced the glorious career of one unique personality.

## 5. CONTRASTING CAREERS: THE "NEW MAN" FROM MADAUROS VERSUS THE SENATORIAL ARISTOCRAT FROM CIRTA. CICERONIAN PANACHE VERSUS CAESARIAN SCRUPULOUSNESS

### 5.1. Introduction

The significant contrasts between Fronto's self-fashioning as an African intellectual in Rome and Apuleius' self-fashioning as a Roman intellectual in Africa can be observed in detail in their respective self-comparison to Anacharsis. At first sight, Apuleius seems to echo Fronto's example, as we have seen above. Yet, in accordance with his philosophical outlook, Apuleius identifies with Anacharsis' philosophical identity (*Apol.* 24.6: *sapiens*), whereas Fronto explicitly distances himself from the image of the wise man and instead identifies with Anacharsis' mastery of "meaning and thoughts" (*διανοίας καὶ τῶν ἐνθυμημάτων*), which reflects the Frontonian programmatic zeal for words and their meanings.

This reflects a fundamental ideological contrast between the two Africans, which can be observed in many aspects of their self-presentation as intellectuals and which recalls famous paradigms of intellectual and political antagonism from the Roman Republic, most notably the case of Caesar and Cicero. Whereas the senatorial aristocrat Fronto stands for Caesarian *elegantia*, the hallmark of his teaching (its most important characteristic being a scrupulous care for word choice), the *nouus homo* Apuleius seems to embody the Ciceronian ideal of the orator-philosopher, whose universal knowledge and philosophical outlook are the hallmarks—and the sources—of his powerful and abundant eloquence.

### 5.2. Fronto's Caesarian Program

In his correspondence, Fronto is clearly aware of the well-known polemic between Cicero and Caesar on the norm for pure Latinity.<sup>49</sup> As George Lincoln Hendrickson has shown,<sup>50</sup> Cicero and Caesar had fought this battle through the medium of literary treatises, most notably Cicero's *De oratore*, which contains an implicit attack on Caesar's linguistic program, and

Caesar's polemical reply to this treatise, the *De analogia*, which he dedicated to Cicero. Cicero alludes to their debate in his *Brutus*, where he quotes some passages from Caesar's work and discusses his rival's eloquence. From Cicero's ideological perspective, the over-scrupulous care for *elegantia* characteristic of Caesar, who saw in the accurate choice of words the source of eloquence, was likely to degenerate into a pedantic and enervated kind of eloquence, in contrast to the true kind of oratory envisaged and embodied by Cicero himself, a forceful and abundant eloquence characterized by *copia* ("fullness") and *ornatus* ("distinction").

Fronto taught eloquence to Marcus Aurelius, the heir to the title of Caesar.<sup>51</sup> In his own teaching, Fronto presents himself as a true heir to Caesar's linguistic program,<sup>52</sup> especially in his programmatic letter (4.3) to the young Marcus Aurelius, where he emphasizes the scrupulous choice and arrangement of words that distinguishes the true orator from the man of half-knowledge. Being faithful to the Caesarian credo of the *dilectus uerborum* as the foundation of eloquence, Fronto even continues Caesar's polemic with Cicero in this letter by criticizing the orator for his lack of care in the choice of words—significantly, Cicero is omitted from the list of authors who can serve as a model for Marcus Aurelius in this respect (*M. Caes.* 4.3.3).<sup>53</sup> This criticism, which is combined with ironic allusions to Cicero's characteristic penchant for rhetorical embellishment and display (cf. *ostentare . . . ornanda*), is confirmed by another letter, in which Fronto criticizes Cicero's historical work *De consiliis suis* and again makes an ironic remark about his penchant for *ornatus* (cf. *inornatus*).<sup>54</sup> In other letters, Fronto recommends Cicero to his pupil mainly for his ability to write letters.

### 5.3. The African Cicero: Apuleius' Embodiment of the Ideal Orator-Philosopher, Talented New Man, and Independent Intellectual

A significant contrast to the Caesarian dimension permeating Fronto's Latin teaching can be seen in Apuleius' ideological self-presentation in his literary works. Echoing Cicero's contempt for the *puerilis doctrina* related to school teaching (*De orat.* 3.38, 48, 52), which implied a sneer at Caesar's painstaking concern for *Latinitas* in his *De analogia*, Apuleius emphasizes that his education goes far beyond that of others, who are content to learn from the *litterator*, the *grammaticus*, and the *rhetor*, since he had been privileged to imbibe deeper drafts of erudition in Athens, most of all the nectar of universal philosophy (*Flor.* 20.4). This statement gains a particular emphasis if we see it as an implicit response to Fronto's Latin teaching.<sup>55</sup>

The profound influence of Cicero on Apuleius' literary self-presentation can be observed in both his philosophical and his rhetorical works; this has been discussed in detail by Stephen Harrison. In Apuleius' panegyric of Lollianus Avitus' eloquence in the *Apology* (94), he ascribes to him a range of oratorical virtues through comparisons to the great Roman speakers of the Roman Republic (*Apol.* 95.5), climaxing in the praise of Cicero's *opulentia*.

As Harrison notes (2000, 83), Cicero is in the climactic final position in the list, and the literary virtue of *opulentia* ascribed to him is one that Apuleius himself might particularly admire. Moreover, the list echoes Cicero's commendations of fine orators of the past in the *Brutus*, a work that presents its own author as the pinnacle of Roman eloquence—in a similar Ciceronian vein, Apuleius seems to draw attention to his own Roman oratorical virtues by praising other Roman orators from the past and present. Cicero's *Brutus* is also recalled in the beginning of the *Apology* (5.1–6: the opening words are “*de eloquentia*”), where Apuleius fashions his identity after the Ciceronian *orator perfectus* by recalling Cicero's dedication to literature and oratory (*Brut.* 309) from an early age, his days and nights of study (*Brut.* 308), and the damage to his health (*Brut.* 314). In the same context (4.11–12), Apuleius draws attention to his own visual appearance, with an elaborate description of his hair that allows us to picture him as a native African.<sup>56</sup>

Yet I would like to draw particular attention to his use of Cicero's *De oratore* in *Florida* 9, a speech in praise of the departing proconsul of Africa, Severianus, in which Apuleius praises his own varied talents and contrasts himself with his less talented rivals in the mastery of the Latin language. The allusions to Cicero's treatise on the ideal orator go beyond the often noted parallel of the Hippias anecdote, where Apuleius alludes to the Ciceronian contrast (*De orat.* 3.127) between the gentleman-like education of a true Roman intellectual (*liberales doctrinae atque ingenuae*) and the *artes sordidiores* (cf. *Apul., Flor.* 9.25: *sellulariae*) of the manual crafts represented by Hippias, which Romans traditionally viewed with contempt. In a Ciceronian vein (cf. also *De orat.* 1.105), Apuleius commends his authority as a Roman orator through the comparison with the paradigm of Greek sophists.

Yet the Ciceronian dimension of Apuleius' self-presentation in *Florida* 9 can already be detected at the beginning of the fragment. Alluding to the possible presence of jealous rivals in the vast audience, the orator from Madauros emphasizes his awareness of the sheer difficulty of the task that awaits him here: he, Apuleius, cannot afford to make a slip in his speech, because people expect perfection in his Latin eloquence and will judge him severely,<sup>57</sup> whereas his rivals, who do not reach Apuleius' level by far, are forgiven for their mistakes, for people do not expect any perfection from them and show leniency for their poor ability (cf. 9.7–8).

Through Apuleius' acknowledgment of the difficulty of speaking flawlessly in the presence of this vast audience (and the hint that his rivals do not acknowledge this difficulty), plus his aim to be free of all faults as a speaker, Apuleius “proves” himself to be an ideal orator in the terms of the *De oratore* (cf. *De orat.* 1.116–120).<sup>58</sup> Cicero discusses this difficulty in the context of the orator's natural ability, which plays along in Apuleius' allusion to the passage—hence, Apuleius implicitly points to his own strong natural abilities in comparison to his poor-speaking rivals, who cannot live up to him from the start. The competition between a good orator and his bad rivals

is also important in the Ciceronian passage, as is the comparison with the performance of actors in the theater (cf. *Flor.* 9.8: *cum torno et coturno*; *Cic., De orat.* 1.118: *item in theatro actores malos perpeti*). In the same context, Apuleius also expresses his wish to avoid barbarism and solecism in Latin (9.7). This undoubtedly refers to the danger of speaking with an African accent, yet it also refers to Apuleius' claim that he can speak Latin without a foreign accent, after the ideal of the Ciceronian *orator perfectus*, who cultivates the pure Latin that is spoken in Rome itself.<sup>59</sup>

A Ciceronian dimension may also be observed in the fame and success of the “outsider” (*aduenia*) Lucius, who as the “man from Madauros” became an orator of renown in Rome despite the envy of his rivals (who undoubtedly tried to censure the African provincial for his language, as they strove to become models of pure, unflawed Latin themselves<sup>60</sup>) and was even enrolled in the order of the quinquennial decurions. Lucius' career can be seen as a literary projection of the oratorical and political success that the “outsider” and “coming man” Apuleius, the “man from Madauros,” envisaged for himself on an imperial level as the glorious “patron of the Roman language” (*Met.* 11.28.6: *patrocinia sermonis Romani*; 11.30: *gloriosa in foro . . . patrocinia*), defeating his rivals as a universally acknowledged talent on the Roman stage, on which Fronto once shone.<sup>61</sup>

Just like Cicero, Apuleius molds his identity within Roman culture through a range of works in Latin, in which he presents himself as a cultural mediator who excels in turning Greek lore into a Latin and Roman form for a Latin-speaking audience. Just like Cicero, Apuleius chooses to fashion himself as the talented *arriviste*, who bases his authority on a range of intellectual, oratorical, and literary accomplishments, instead of noble birth or political honors.<sup>62</sup> Whereas the ex-consul Fronto could take pride in the established prestige of a senatorial career in Rome, profiting from the traditionally strong presence in the capital of an influential network of friendships and patronage from Circa, the most plausible role for Apuleius was that of the “coming man” from a “coming” African *colonia*, which was aspiring to be heard and seen at the seat of Roman government.

Against this competitive background, we can also elucidate Apuleius' self-fashioning as a detached philosopher and independent intellectual, on the one hand, and his political role as a “voice” of Africa, on the other hand (*Flor.* 9.39). In the public context of his encomiastic speeches for Roman governors, Apuleius operated as the voice of the whole province of Africa (9.39: *iam te, Seueriane, tota prouincia desideramus*) and of the citizens of its capital (*ciues*), who are critical observers of those in power.<sup>63</sup> This enhanced Apuleius' political prestige and made him someone whom important Roman magistrates needed to take seriously in the interest of their own public support.<sup>64</sup> Although, like Cicero, Apuleius started from the position of an outsider, his reputation in Roman North Africa as an exemplar of intellectual and moral authority and as a transmitter of *Romanitas* helped to make him an insider in the imperial elite, a mediator between

African citizens and Roman power. His cultural authority allowed Apuleius to address Roman magistrates from a more or less independent and disinterested position, placing himself, as it were, above the system of political power and patronage, which was flawed by the opportunism and flattery that Apuleius ascribes to his political rivals (*Flor.* 17.1–3).

Apuleius' self-conscious stance of holding himself aloof from *commendatio* ("recommendation") presents another significant contrast with Fronto, whose letters of recommendation seem to take the entanglement of personal and public interests entirely for granted.<sup>65</sup> Fronto does not hesitate to request kindness from Marcus and his father, Emperor Antoninus Pius, when they come to consider the public accounts of Fronto's client Q. Saenius Pompeianus, the African tax collector who had helped Fronto in financial matters related to his family.<sup>66</sup> Apuleius' self-presentation reflects his consciousness that only an independent intellectual who does not promote his own private interests but acts out of concern for the public good will be taken seriously by those who are in power.<sup>67</sup> Apuleius' concern for the public good (e.g., *Flor.* 18.40: *utilitatibus publicis*) can be viewed as an echo of the concern of the Ciceronian *orator perfectus* for the state (*res publica*).

Yet by presenting himself as part of the old boys' network and at the same time placing himself above it, Apuleius seems to want to have his cake and eat it too. Also in the tensions and self-contradictions inherent in negotiating his authority as a Roman intellectual from Africa, Apuleius seems to recall Cicero. Like Cicero, Apuleius seems to have two faces: on the one hand, the face of the detached philosophical counselor and cultural authority and, on the other hand, the face of the *orator perfectus*, whose eloquence implies much more than being successful at the bar.<sup>68</sup> We do not know whether Apuleius' dream of excelling as an orator on the Roman stage, where Fronto once shone, ever came true—we have no evidence that Fronto supported Apuleius in advancing his career in this direction. What we do know is that Apuleius succeeded in immortalizing himself as a philosopher from Africa, whose fame spread all over the ancient world and lasts until the present day, putting even Fronto in his shade.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The careers of the African orator-philosopher Apuleius and his older contemporary, the African orator Marcus Cornelius Fronto, paint an intriguing and complex picture of both the Romanization of Africa and the ways the region was poised to become an important part of the empire in its own right, politically and intellectually. A contrastive analysis of the literary self-fashioning of Fronto and Apuleius shows that they embody two different ways of being an African intellectual in the Roman Empire: the Caesarian versus the Ciceronian, the African at Rome versus the African in Africa, the patrician ex-consul versus the gifted *arriviste*, the active patron with access

to the emperor versus the public intellectual. Both assert themselves in their own ways as models of *Romanitas* and *Latinitas*, Fronto as the teacher of a Caesarian program of scrupulous word choice, Apuleius as an African Cicero whose strong natural abilities and all-embracing culture enable him to cultivate the pure Latin of a Roman *orator perfectus*. Both Fronto and Apuleius use African animal imagery (the hyena vs. the ass) to lend further depth and resonance to the ethnic dimension of their own identities. Their symbolic use of such images and other comparisons (e.g., with Anacharsis) has far-reaching implications, not only regarding the significance of their African home region within the context of the Roman Empire on an intellectual and political level, but also with respect to the religious preferences, literary ambitions, and possibly even physical characteristics of Fronto and Apuleius themselves as Africans. Especially in the case of Apuleius, we can observe that African origin can be employed for successful strategies of self-fashioning, as he uses the "benefit of exoticism" to establish himself as a charismatic Roman intellectual. Each in his own way, Fronto and Apuleius use references to their African origins as a means to negotiate and articulate the paradoxes and tensions of Roman identity in a contemporary context, presenting Africa as the fertile soil *par excellence* on which genuine Roman-ness, including pure Latinity, can thrive.<sup>69</sup>

## NOTES

1. See Champlin 1980; Fleury 2006.
2. Fronto wrote a letter of recommendation for Julius Aquilinus to his friend, the African *legatus pro praetore* Aegrius Plarianus (*Epist. ad amicos* 1.4, p. 174, 9 ff. vdH). See Champlin 1980, 33; La Rocca 2005, 175.
3. Already in the first century, there had been a Fronto from Ciria who became consul (see Champlin 1980, 13). Q. Aurelius Pactumeius Fronto was consul in 80 CE, his brother Clemens earlier.
4. I do not view the Romanization of Africa as a phenomenon of the past, resulting in a status quo in which Fronto and Apuleius lived, but as an ongoing, dynamic process in which the African aristocracy, both in Africa and in Rome, actively participated. Apuleius explicitly refers to the Romanization of his hometown in *Apol.* 24.7–9, emphasizing the influential role of his father in Madauros, who after a full political career achieved the *duumvirate* there, the "mini-consulate," which was the highest magistracy of a *colonia*. Apuleius himself claims that his own political career, which started from the moment he first entered the local senate, was by no means inferior to his father's—an important remark in the context of this article. See Bradley 2005 on the importance of Apuleius' cultural activities for the ever-evolving process in which *Romanitas* spread in North Africa.
5. The honor is confirmed by the testimony of Augustine (*Epist.* 138.19); see Harrison 2000, 8 with n. 30. Part of the duties of the *sacerdos prouvinciae* was to defend the interests of the province of Africa; see Vössing 1997, 457. The *sacerdotium prouvinciae* of Africa Proconsularis had been established by the emperor Vespasian and was connected to the rise of the African aristocracy in the imperial elite: the first known *flamen* of Africa, elected by

- Vespasian for the highest possible honor, his new provincial cult, was the first known knight from African Cirta, the birthplace of Fronto, the eminent C. Caecilius Gallus (Champlin 1980, 13). Rives 1994 suggests that Apuleius was possibly not a priest of the imperial cult but a priest in the civic cult of Asclepius, which would be supported by Apuleius' personal religious concerns with Asclepius (cf. *Apol.* 55.10; *Flor.* 18.38).
6. Both Fronto and his brother had been raised by the emperor Antoninus Pius to the highest honors and had been admitted into imperial *amicitia* (see Champlin 1980, 9–10).
  7. Cf. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 1.17.5; and see Rutherford 1989, 59.
  8. But see Coarelli 1989, who identifies our Apuleius with the owner of the “House of Apuleius” at Ostia, whose name was L. Apuleius Marcellus; see also Beck 2000.
  9. See Graverini 2012, 202.
  10. See La Rocca 2005, 177: the importance of linguistic purity is attested in various African authors (Tert., *Nat.* 1.3; Arnob., *Nat.* 2.6; Mart. Cap. 3.326; Aug., *Conf.* 1.18.28).
  11. For Fronto's reputation as a standard-bearer of Latin letters, cf. Gell. 19.13.3, which refers to Fronto's canonical authority in Latin: when Fronto deigns to use a certain word, he gives that word “citizenship” (*ciuitas*): in other words, he is the arbiter on questions as to what is acceptable Latin or not. With this anecdote, which is significantly staged on the Palatine, before the imperial palace, Gellius points to the imperial context in which Fronto had played his influential role in matters of Latin language. For Fronto's powerful role as a patron of protégés in Antonine Rome, see Saller 1982, 136–138, 163–164; Keulen 2009, 9, 26, 42 n. 20, 197. For Fronto as a patron of African interests, cf., e.g., *Epist. ad amicos* 2.11 (p. 199, 5 f.) on the patronage of Cirta (see Champlin 1980, 10–11); cf. also his *Gratiarum actio in Senatu pro Carthaginensibus* (pp. 256–258 vdH); CIL VIII 5350 (Test. 1 vdH) *M. Cornelio T(iti) f(ilio) Quir(ina) Frontoni Iluir(o) capital(i), q(uaestori) prouinc(iae) Sicil(iae), aedil(i) pl(ebis), praetori municipes Calamensium patrono*.
  12. Cf. *Apul.*, *Apol.* 38.5: *pauca etiam de Latinis scribitis meis ad eandem peritiam pertinentibus legi iubebo, in quibus animaduertes cum re<s> cognitua raras, tum nomina etiam Romanis inusitata et in hodiernum quod sciam infecta; ea tamen nomina labore meo et studio ita de Graecis prouenire, ut tamen Latina moneta percussa sint.* (“I will also have some passages read from my Latin writings in the same field of knowledge. Here you will notice not only lesser known facts, but also words not used before even by the Romans and, as far as I know, non-existent to this day. Through my own effort and study I have derived these names from the Greek in such a manner that they are coined by a Latin mint.”) Cf. also *Apol.* 39.5: *ego . . . , qui res paucissimis cognitae Graece et Latine propriis et elegantibus uocabulis conscribo* (after quoting Ennius) (“all I am doing is describing topics known to only very few people with proper, elegant words in Greek and Latin”); cf. *Met.* 11.28.6: *patrocinia sermonis Romani*; 11.30.4: *studiorum meorum laboriosa doctrina*. For Apuleius' role as an authority for Roman culture and the Latin language, see Opeku 1993, who draws attention to Apuleius' role in promoting Latin as a learned language and Carthage as a center of higher studies in the second century CE. In my opinion, these efforts should instead be viewed in the context of Apuleius' ambitions on an imperial level, where the Romanization of Africa and the promotion of Latin language and Roman culture on an imperial scale are two sides of the same coin.
  13. See Marache 1957; Portalupi 1974. Cf., e.g., the diminutive adjective *breuiculus*, which before Fronto (*M. Caes.* 3.12.1, p. 44, 8) and Apuleius (*Met.* 1.11.8, 6.25.4) is attested only once in Plautus (*Merc.* 639). In his use of the verb *superruere* (*Met.* 1.16.6, 2.26.3), Apuleius may have been inspired by Fronto (*M. Caes.* 1.6.6, p. 12, 16; the only attestation before Apuleius); the same goes for *demeare*, which is first found in Fronto and then frequently used by Apuleius (Marache 1957, 33). Cf. also their shared interest in rare archaizing adverbs in *-tus*, like *sublimitus* (occurring only in Fronto, *Epist. ad Verum imp.* 2.19, p. 128, 15) and *naturalitus* (first attested in *Apul.*, *Met.* 1.12.1).
  14. Apuleius' description of his friendship with Pontianus recalls the numerous descriptions of friendships from the Frontonian correspondence; cf. *Apol.* 72.3: *eo uenit ad me Pontianus. Nam fuerat mihi non ita pridem ante multos annos Athenis per quosdam communis amicos conciliatus et arto postea contubernio intime iunctus.* 94.3–6: *Petit postea suppliciter, uti se Lolliano quoque Auito C. V. purgem, cui haud pridem tirocinio orationis suae fuerat a me commendatus. [ . . . ] [h]is epistulis meis lectis pro sua eximia humanitate gratulatus Pontiano, quod cito [h]errorem suum correxisset, rescripsit mihi per eum quas litteras.* (“Then he [Pontianus] humbly entreated me to excuse him also to the distinguished Lollianus Auitus, to whom he had been recommended by me not long before, at the beginning of his career in oratory. . . . Having read this letter of mine he showed his exceptional kindness in paying Pontianus a compliment for quickly correcting his error and handing him a letter in reply to me.” Compare Fronto's letter of recommendation for Licinius Montanus to Lollianus Auitus in *Epist. ad amicos* 1.3, p. 172, e.g., 1.3.1: *quotiens quomque Romam uenit, in meo contubernali fuit, meis aedibus usus est. Una nobis mensa semper, postremo omnium paene rerum consiliorumque communicatio et societas fuit. For contubernalis* as a key word for Frontonian patronage, especially of fellow Africans, see Claassen 2009, 61–62.
  15. Méthy 1983 thinks Fronto is particularly conscious of his African origin here; van den Hout 1999, 60, disagrees, pointing out that both Scythians and Libyans were proverbial barbarians. According to Claassen 2009, 69, Fronto's self-presentation as a Libyan nomad is “playful”: “Fronto may have had Libyan origins, but he was not a nomad, in any sense of the word. He had travelled to Rome in his youth, and there settled down.”
  16. In *Epist. ad Verum imp.* 2.25 (p. 132, 20), Fronto solemnly refers to his ancestral gods: *deos patrios ita comprecatus sum: Hammo Iuppiter et Li<byae>*, which, according to Champlin 1980, 7, confirms Fronto's native descent. As Claassen 2009, 63, points out, in his letter to his fellow African Claudius Julianus, Fronto possibly refers to their shared African physiognomy. In this letter, he expresses the wish that Marcus and Lucius should love Julianus, who “shared his body and mind,” as they love Fronto himself: *Epist. ad amicos* 1.20.3: *ut te quoque participem mei corporis et animi diligant*; a similar expression occurs in the African playwright Terence, *Ad.* 957: *nunc tu mihi es germanus frater pariter animo et corpore* (“You're equally my brother in [both] mind and body”).
  17. Richlin 2006, 92.
  18. See Fleury 2006, 39–63 (with 57–58 referring to the present letter); Keulen 2009, 205–206.
  19. I am much indebted to the suggestions made by Daniel Selden regarding this part of my paper.
  20. For Africa as the country that inspires stories about wild animals, cf. also Gellius' narrative about Androclus and the lion (*Noctes Atticae* 5.14), where Androclus, the protagonist, is a slave who flees into the African desert because his master, the Roman proconsul of Africa, abuses him. In a cave he meets a

- lion with a lame paw, and they become close friends after Androclus helps the animal by drawing out a huge splinter from the sole of his foot. Later, Androclus and the lion meet again in the Circus Maximus in Rome, where the slave was condemned to fight with wild beasts but instead is reunited with an old friend.
21. Cf. Plin., *Nat.* 8.108: *Hyaenae plurimae gignuntur in Africa, quae et asinorum siluestrium multitudinem fundit*. For asses coming from Africa, cf. also 8.39: *septentrio fert et equorum greges ferorum, sicut asinorum Asia et Africa, praeterea alcen iumento similem, ni proceritas aurium et ceruicis distinguat*.
  22. The core of Fronto's rhetorical program is great care and continuous zeal in hunting out "unexpected and unlooked-for words" (*insperata atque inopinata uerba*), entailing laborious literary study. See Fronto's famous programmatic letter, *M. Caes.* 4.3.3 (p. 57, 8 f.), and Gellius' reference to Fronto's unrelenting enthusiasm for searching out Latin words in *Noctes Atticae* 19.8.16: *sed ut nobis studium lectitandi in quarendis rarioribus uerbis exerceret* ("but to rouse in us an interest in reading for the purpose of hunting down rare words").
  23. Apuleius significantly excludes any explicit references to the original Egyptian myths about Isis and Osiris from the Isis Book; details about this background can be found in Plutarch's treatise *De Iside et Osiride*.
  24. Isis' dislike of asses can also be viewed in light of her role as the originator of civilization, which enables humanity to give up the habits of wild beasts, that is, to give up animal food and "beastly" behavior and become civilized (cf. Lucius' prayer to the Moon Goddess in 11.2.1: *sive tu Ceres alma frugum parens originalis, quae, repertu laetata filiae, uetustae glandis ferimo remoto pabulo, miti commonstrato cibo nunc Eleusiniam glebam percolis*; Isis presents herself, in direct response to this prayer, as *rerum naturae parens* and claims Ceres to be part of her universal identity; cf. 11.5.1–2). In a similar fashion, Isis expects Lucius to give up his past life and to integrate into a new kind of civilization.
  25. See the forthcoming GCA 2015, *ad loc.*, for *intortus* (*tortus, retortus*) and *dispersus* as terms for curly hair, especially used as an indication of an ethnic background associated with Africa. For Isis as an originally African goddess, cf. also *Met.* 11.5.3, where the goddess points out that her true identity is perceived only by Ethiopians and Egyptians.
  26. Snowden 1983, 97–98, points out that black people frequently played an influential role in the spread of the Isiac rituals and mentions frescoes from Herculaneum that depict black and white Isiac cultists. He concludes that "a black man, far from his homeland, may have been like Apuleius' Lucius," referring to *Met.* 11.26.3: *fani quidem aduena, religionis autem indigena* ("a stranger to the shrine, but a native to the cult"). See the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* s.v. *indigena*, 1a "one born in a place, a native." The reference to the "man from Madauros" (11.27.9) occurs in a context of mutual recognition by physical characteristics, with a cluster of terms referring to identifying tokens and signs (11.27.5–7: *signum; uestigium; indicium; status; habitus*). Hence, it is implied that just as Lucius recognizes Asinius Marcellus by his physical appearance, the priest will recognize the man from Madauros as such, that is, by his appearance as a native African.
  27. For the importance of physiognomic knowledge in Antonine literature, see Swain 2007; Keulen 2006 (Apuleius); Keulen 2009, 100–105 (Gellius). On the importance of analogies between humans and animals for ancient physiognomists, see Barton 1994, 124–128.
  28. Cf. *M. Caes.* 5.73–74; Artemid., *Oneir.* 4.24; see Claassen 2009, 55–56, on Fronto's "extreme valetudinarianism."
  29. In the *Apology*, Apuleius describes his own hair as being tightly curled in little round knots (4.11–12: *capillus . . . globosus et congestus, prorsum inenodabilis*), which, as Claassen 2009, 63 n. 69, observes, resembles typically African hair. Since we cannot be sure about the ethnic composition of second-century Africans from Apuleius' region, it is questionable whether the wide nostrils and thick lips of the ass (*Met.* 3.24.5) may be interpreted as a symbolic reference to African ethnic characteristics. Today, most North Africans are very different in appearance from sub-Saharan Africans and do not have the appearance described here.
  30. In a similar way, Fronto notes that his Greek "Discourse on Love" (Ἐρωτικὸς λόγος; *Add. epist.* 8, pp. 250–255) was composed by "this foreigner, in speech little short of a barbarian" (διὰ τοῦδε τοῦ ξένου ἀνδρός, τὴν μὲν φωνὴν ὀλίγου δεῖν βαρβάρου). Whereas Claassen 2009, 64, interprets this as an "apparent indication of Fronto's awareness of his otherness, 'non-Romanness,'" I prefer to take it the other way around: the authorial modesty of admitting he is a non-Greek functions in constructing Roman identity, in this case the Roman identity of someone originating from Africa.
  31. Although the theory that Aulus Gellius himself was of African birth has long been discredited, recent literature on Gellius re-establishes the possibility that his origin may have been in a *colonia* in Africa (cf. *Noctes Atticae* 16.13.2 and 8.13; see Holford-Strevens 2003, 13–15; Claassen 2009, 52 n. 22).
  32. Cato (*Ad fil.* fr. 1) censured the Greeks' unflattering use of *Opikoi* to describe Italians as barbarians who did not understand Greek. See Dench 1995, 29–66, on Greek perceptions of *Opikoi*. The Latin adjective *opicus* originally means "Oscan" (thus: from outside Rome, non-Latin, barbarian, Italic) and then acquires the meaning of "ignorant (especially of Latin), uncultured, barbarian"; as a noun, *opicus* means "an ignorant or uneducated person" (see the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* s.v. *Opicus*). On the ethnic slur *opicus*, see also Richlin 2006, 89: "a hillbilly."
  33. Cf. Fronto, *M. Caes.* 2.2.8 (p. 21, 12 f.): *epistulam matri tuae scripsi, quae mea impudentia est, Graece, eamque epistulae ad te scriptae implicui. Tu prior lege et, si quis inerit barbarismus, tu qui a Graecis litteris recentior es corrige, atque ita matri redde. Nolo enim me mater tua ut opicum contemnat*. ("I have written your mother a letter, such is my assurance, in Greek, and enclose it in my letter to you. Please read it first, and if you detect any barbarism in it, for you are fresher in your Greek than I am, correct it and so hand it over to your mother. I should not like her to look down on me as a boor.") Most probably, Fronto did not think of himself as writing bad Greek but as being quite articulate in Greek. Through the ironic disclaimer he points to his identity as a Roman intellectual, whose first language (and language of preference) was Latin. In a letter to Fronto, *M. Caes.* 2.11.2 (p. 31, 2 f.), Marcus Aurelius gives himself the name that Greeks once gave to his rude forefathers (*opicus*), but at the same time he denounces the Greek performers at his court as the real barbarians and fashions himself as a truly gifted Roman intellectual who does not trust Greeks but is articulate in Greek. He puts these Greek intellectuals in their place with the use of Roman lore, a quotation from Caecilius (*Com.* 282), honoring the educational program of Fronto. In a vivid scene of competition between Greek and Latin intellectuals, who are traveling together on a boat from Aegina to Piraeus, Gellius (2.21.4) challenges his fellow Latin-speaking intellectuals to present the Roman counterpart of the display of Greek erudition just performed by

- their Greek colleagues. Although the Roman traveling companions did not have the chance to prove themselves yet, Gellius already calls them *opici*, with a charming mixture of teasing and putting them to the test.
34. *Apol.* 24.1: *De patria mea uero, quod eam sitam Numidiae et Gaetuliae in ipso confinio mei<s> scriptis ostendistis, quibus memet professus sum, cum Lolliano Auito c.u. praesente publice dissererem, "Seminumidam" et "Semi-gaetulum."* ("Then there was the issue of my native town. It is situated on the boundary between Numidia and Gaetulia, as you showed from my own writings: in a public speech delivered in the presence of the illustrious Lollianus Avitus, I proclaimed myself to be 'half Numidian' and 'half Gaetulian.'")
  35. See Schubert 2010, 175–183, esp. 182.
  36. On the mastery of Greek as the truly distinguishing accomplishment for Roman Africans, see Champlin 1980, 17. For bilingualism (Latin and Greek) in Fronto and Apuleius, see Swain 2004.
  37. Apuleius' explicit use of terms like *prouincia* (*Karthago prouinciae nostrae magistra uenerabilis*) and *colonia* (*splendidissima colonia*, with regard to Madauros) clearly reflects his Romano-centric view of the world. In my view, Apuleius' point of view is certainly not *polemically* opposed to the notion that Rome is the only cultural center (Finkelpearl 1998, 141–143); on the contrary, in *Apol.* 24.8 he celebrates the Romanization of Africa.
  38. The emphasis is on *becoming* instead of *being*, in accordance with recent views on cultural identity (Greek, Roman) being formed and achieved by strategies of self-making in the social context of education (*paideia*) in the Roman Empire; see Goldhill 2001b, 158; Whitmarsh 2001, *passim*.
  39. I thank Peter von Möllendorff (Gießen) for pointing out the parallel with Lucian. On Lucian's strategies of asserting cultural identity in the *De Dea Syria*, see Elsner 2001, who points out that identity is a matter of cultural negotiation between two ethnic, linguistic, and religious poles, with a mutual dependence of Greek and Syrian culture.
  40. Vössing 1997, 455 n. 1534.
  41. The context of rivalry and competition in which Apuleius was operating is especially evident in the *Florida*, where Apuleius refers to flattering or jealous rivals, for example, in *Flor.* 9.1–2, 17.1–3 (cf. *Met.* 11.30.4).
  42. The references to Numidia and Gaetulia point to a Roman literary tradition of mocking African natives; cf. Juvenal 5.52–53 and 59, where *Gaetulus* is a sarcastic expression for emphasizing someone's low status and ugliness (here, a lowly black slave, viewed in contrast with *flos Asiae*, "the flower of Asia"). Cf. also Verg., *Aen.* 4.40–41, where the Gaetulians and Numidians are depicted as the savage African natives that ring in the vulnerable queen Dido on all sides (I thank Sascha Ansbacher for drawing my attention to this).
  43. Perhaps Apuleius had referred to *amor ciuicus* for Madauros (his or someone else's) in the speech held in the presence of Lollianus Avitus (*Apol.* 24.1), comparable to the love for Carthage shown by Iulius Perseus and Safidius Severus, who are praised by Apuleius for their munificence and efforts for the public good (of Carthage) in *Flor.* 18.39–40; see La Rocca 2005, 280–282.
  44. Fronto, *Epist. ad amicos* 2.11 (p. 199, 5 f.): *quare suadeo uobis patronos creare et decreta in eam rem mittere ad eos, qui nunc fori principem locum occupant: Aufidium Victorinum . . . Seruilium quoque Silanum optimum et facundissimum uirum . . . Postumium Festum et morum et eloquentiae nomine recte patronum uobis feceritis . . . Alii quoque plurimi sunt in senatu Cirtenses clarissimi uiri.* ("Wherefore my advice to you is to choose for your patrons, and send resolutions to that effect to those, who at present stand highest at the bar—Aufidius Victorinus . . . Servilius Silanus also, an excellent and most eloquent man . . . Postumius Festus you cannot do wrong in electing as your patron in consideration of his character and eloquence. . . . There are many other natives of Cirta also in the Senate, entitled to be called most eminent.") This is the only letter from which we can derive that Fronto originally came from Cirta (confirmed by Min. Fel. 9.6: *Cirtensis . . . nostri oratio*). See Champlin 1980, 10–11.
  45. Apuleius mentions his good reputation in Rome, possibly deriving from an extended stay in the capital; cf. *Flor.* 17.4. For the credit and prestige one gains through the patronage of one's home region (cf. Fronto, *Epist. ad amicos* 2.11 p. 199, 6: *gratiam*), see Champlin 1980, 11, who views the reference to *gloria* in the preceding letter, extant only in its first three words (*meae totius gloriae*), as a reference to the same theme of honor gained through patronage. An inscription from Africa proclaims Fronto to have been the patron of Calama, near Cirta (quoted in van den Hout's Teubner edition, Test. 1, p. 259, 3–7).
  46. *Apul., Flor.* 18.36: *hanc ego uobis mercedem, Carthaginienses, ubique gentium dependo pro disciplinis, quas in pueritia sum apud uos adeptus. Vbiue enim me uestrae ciuitatis alumnus fero, ubique uos omnimodis laudibus celebro, uestras disciplinas studiosius percolo, uestras opes gloriosius praedico, uestros etiam deos religiosius uenero.* ("This is the kind of payment I make to you, Carthaginians, all over the world, for the education I received among you in my boyhood. Everywhere I go I present myself as an alumnus of your city; everywhere I go I celebrate your praises of every kind. I enthusiastically admire the education you offer, I boastfully parade your wealth, and I religiously venerate your gods.") Cf. also *Flor.* 16.28, 16.47–48. See Vössing 1997, 454: "es gab auch ein gemeinsames Interesse aller Karthager daran, dass 'ihr' orator sein gutes Verhältnis zur Bürgerschaft mit immer neuen Panegyriken auf die *ciuitas* unter Beweis stellte. Denn jede Stadt stand mit einigen Rivalen in einem harten Konkurrenzkampf, in dem die Propaganda eines bekannten Literaten eine scharfe Waffe sein konnte."
  47. The African dimension of Apuleius' religious concerns with Asclepius (cf. *Flor.* 18.36–38), the patron god of Carthage who was worshipped throughout Africa, also appears from the fact that Apuleius declaimed *De maiestate Aesculapii* in Oea (cf. *Apol.* 55.10); see Harrison 2000, 6.
  48. Perhaps Apuleius was rewarded for this literary monument by the Madaurans with a statue, possibly the famous statue of which the inscription partly survives: *ILALg 1.2115* (on a statue base) *ph]ilosopho [P]latonico | [M]daurenses ciues | ornament[o] suo. d[ecreto] d[ecurionum], p[ro]p[ri]etate [p]ublica).*
  49. Fronto, *De Bello Parthico* 9 (p. 224, 12 f.): *fac meminere et cum animo tuo cogites C. Caesarem atrocissimo bello Gallico cum alia multa militaria tum etiam duos De analogia libros scrupulosissimos scripsisse, inter tela uolantia de nominibus declinandis, de uerborum aspirationibus et rationibus inter classica et tubas.* ("Recall to your mind and ponder the fact that Caius Caesar, while engaged in a most formidable war in Gaul, wrote besides many other military works *On Analogy* in two books of the most meticulous character, discussing amid flying darts the declension of nouns, and the aspiration of words and their classification mid the blare of bugles and trumpets.") Cf. Cic., *Brut.* 253: *Qui* (sc. *Caesar*) *etiam in maximis occupationibus ad te ipsum* (sc. *Ciceronem*) . . . *de ratione Latine loquendi accuratissime scripserit primoque in libro dixerit uerborum dilectum originem esse eloquentiae . . .* ("But that he, who, involved as he was in a perpetual hurry of business, could dedicate to you, my Cicero, a labored Treatise on the Art of Speaking

- correctly; that he, who, in the first book of it, laid it down as an axiom, that an accurate choice of words is the foundation of Eloquence.”)
50. See Hendrickson 1906; Dugan 2005, 177–189.
51. Cf. Fronto, *M. Caes.* 3.1 (p. 35, 19–23): Fronto teaches *eloquentiam Caesaris*, “Caesar’s rhetoric,” meaning both “the rhetoric of someone who is Caesar” and “your rhetoric” (addressed to Marcus, the young Caesar). In this passage, Fronto compares *eloquentia Caesaris* to blowing the trumpet (*tuba*), a symbol of the high style (*genus grande*). Significantly, in *M. Caes.* 3.17 (p. 49, 19 f.), Fronto excludes Cicero from the few orators of the past who were able to “blow the trumpet”: *oratores ueteres, quorum aut pauci aut praeter Catone et Gracchum nemo tubam inflat; omnes autem mugiunt uel stridunt potius*. Yet he includes him in a later period, at *De eloquentia* 4 (p. 148, 11): *ubi Catonis et Sallustii et Tullii tuba exaudita est*.
52. In *Noctes Atticae* 19.8, Gellius, who was also aware of the polemic between Caesar and Cicero, parodies Fronto’s admiration of Caesar’s *De analogia* as a source of unshakable authority; cf. especially Fronto’s flattering praise of Caesar in Gell. 9.8.3: *uir ingenii praecellentis, sermonis praeter alios suae aetatis castissimi*.
53. Fronto, *M. Caes.* 4.3.3 (p. 57, 5 f.): *Hic tu fortasse iandudum requiras quo in numero locem M. Tullium qui caput atque fons Romanae facundiae cluet. Eum ego arbitror usquequaque uerbis pulcherrimis elocutum et ante omnis alios oratores ad ea, quae ostentare uellet, ornanda magnificum fuisse. Verum is mihi uidetur a quaerendis scrupulosius uerbis procul afuisse uel magnitudine animi uel fuga laboris uel fiducia non quaerenti etiam sibi quaeuix aliis quaerentibus subuenirent, praesti adfuturo*. (“At this point, perhaps, you will have long been asking in what category I should place M. Tullius, who is held the head and source of Roman eloquence. I consider him on all occasions to have used the most beautiful words, and to have been magnificent above all other orators in embellishing the subject which he wished to display. But he seems to me to have been far from disposed to search out words with especial care, whether from greatness of mind, or to escape toil, or from the assurance that what others can scarcely find with careful search would be at his call without the need of searching.”)
54. *Epist. ad Verum imp.* 2.15 (p. 125, 4–7): *Pater Tullios iubilatatus Consiliorum suorum, si in formam epistulae contulisset (necessario breuius et expeditius et densius et, quod interdum res poscit, inornatius), scripsisset melius*. (“If father Tullius had thrown the jublations of his Counsels into the form of a letter, in a style necessarily terser, readier, and more compact, and, what this matter sometimes requires, even with a want of finish, he would have written better.”)
55. See Champlin 1980, 18, who also points out that it was at Athens, not Carthage, that Apuleius met another young African, the knight of Oea and his future stepson Sicinius Pontianus (*Apol.* 72.3). See above, n. 14, for parallels between Apuleius’ self-fashioning as a patron of Pontianus and Fronto’s self-fashioning in his letters of recommendation; an important contrast between Fronto and Apuleius is that Apuleius connects the origin of his friendships, even with Africans, with Athens as a center of studies. Cf. also *Flor.* 18.42: *qui mihi Athenis condidicerunt*, and, in a fictional context, *Met.* 1.24.5: *Pythias condiscipulus apud Athenas Atticas meus*.
56. For Apuleius’ African hair see above, n. 28.
57. For the indignant reaction of the audience if the speaker makes a mistake—in that case, by pronouncing syllables wrongly (making them too short or too long)—cf. Cic., *De orat.* 3.196: *theatra tota reclamant*; cf. also *Orat.* 17.3: *tota theatra exclamant*; and see Fantham 2004, 280, on the popular judgment of oratory as an important theme in *De oratore* and *Brutus*.
58. Cf. especially *De orat.* 1.116: *Magnum quoddam est onus atque munus suscipere atque profiteri se esse, omnibus silentibus, unum maximis de rebus magno in conuentu hominum audiendum; adest enim fere nemo, quin acutius atque acrius uitia in dicente quam recta uideat* (“It is a huge burden and a huge responsibility you undertake, when you claim that, before a vast assembly of people where all others stand silent, you alone are to be heard on affairs of the highest importance. For there is hardly anyone in such a crowd who will not notice the speaker’s faults with a sharper and more discriminating eye than he does his merits”); 120: *ut enim quisque optime dicit, ita maxime dicendi difficultatem variosque eventus orationis exspectionemque hominum pertimescit* (“... the better a man speaks, the more frightened he feels about the difficulty of speaking, the unpredictable outcome of a speech, and the expectations of the audience”).
59. Cic., *De orat.* 3.44: *Qua re cum sit quaedam certa vox Romani generis urbisque propria, in qua nihil offendi, nihil displicere, nihil animadverti possit, nihil sonare aut olere peregrinum, hanc sequamur neque solum rusticam asperitatem, sed etiam peregrinam insolentiam fugere discamus* (“thus, there is a particular kind of accent characteristic of the Romans who are from the city itself, in which there is nothing that can give offense, nothing unpleasant, nothing to provoke criticism, and nothing to sound or smell of foreignness. So let us cultivate this accent, and learn to avoid not only countrified roughness, but also peculiar foreign pronunciation”). Cf. also *Brutus* 171 on the barbarisms found in the province; see Dugan 2005, 158. The polemic between Cicero and Caesar regarding *Latinitas* arose from a situation that already anticipated later times: the need of a correct Latin as a cultural ideal, in the situation of a growing Roman Empire with a periphery where Latin was or became the lingua franca but noticeably did not meet the standards of the *uox urbis*.
60. See Finkelpearl 2009, 27–28 and 31.
61. Fronto’s unsurpassed reputation in forensic oratory is in accordance with Juvenal’s designation (7.148) of Africa as the *nutricula caudicorum*. As Vössing (1997, 458) observes, forensic activity was not a goal in itself but a stepping-stone to higher office, as we can see in Fronto. Also, the ideal orator of Cicero embraces knowledge and experience that go beyond those of a court speaker (*De orat.* 1.202).
62. Cf. *Flor.* 16.31, where Apuleius compliments the Roman magistrate Aemilianus Strabo, who was Apuleius’ fellow pupil (16.37: *condiscipulum*): *est enim tantus in studiis, <ut> praenobilior sit proprio ingenio quam patricio consulatu*.
63. See La Rocca 2005, 72–73; also Vössing 1997, 457.
64. For Apuleius’ great reputation with Roman magistrates in Africa, cf. *Flor.* 9.31: (*laus*), *quae mihi dudum integra et florens per omnes antecessores tuos ad te reseruata est*.
65. Cf. *Apul., Flor.* 17.1–2, where he associates *commendatio* with the practice of flattering his adversaries, a practice he places himself above.
66. Cf. Fronto, *M. Caes.* 5.49 (p. 79, 1 f.): *Saenius Pompeianus in plurimis causis a me defensus, postquam publicum Africae redemit, plurimis causis rem familiarem nostram adiuuat. commendo eum tibi, cum ratio eius a domino nostro patre tuo tractabitur, benignitatem ingenitam tibi, quam omnibus ex more tuo tribuis, ut huic et mea commendatione et tua consuetudine ductus impertias*. (“Saenius Pompeianus has been defended by me in many actions since he undertook the tax-farming of Africa and has often assisted me in my affairs. I commend him to you that, when his accounts are scrutinised by our Lord your Father, you may be induced both by my recommendation

and your own constant practice to extend to him that characteristic kindness, which you habitually show to all.”) Notably, the only other known *conductor IIII publicorum Africae* was T. Iulius Perseus, who is celebrated for his munificence and literary culture by Apuleius in *Flor.* 18.39–43. As he was also a magistrate of Carthage, he expressed his love for the city by the construction of delightful baths nearby, dedicated to Asclepius, which Apuleius also mentions in the *Florida* (16.2).

67. Cf. *Flor.* 9.32: *ego me dilectorem tuum profiteor, nulla tibi priuatim, sed omni publicitus gratia obstrictus.*  
 68. See above, n. 58.  
 69. I thank Peter von Möllendorff, Ulrike Egelhaaf-Gaiser, Helmut Krasser, Ruurd Nauta, and the editors of this volume for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of this article.

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## 8 Identity and Identification in Apuleius' *Apology, Florida, and Metamorphoses*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

What constituted identity in the ancient world? How did the inhabitants of the Roman Empire construct their identity (or identities)? These questions have loomed large in recent discussions within all the subfields of classical studies. In Latin literature, some attention has been devoted to the prominent second-century CE author Apuleius, and the debate has centered on whether to consider him a Roman, a Greek, or an African.<sup>1</sup> One recent analysis judged Apuleius an author who, “through his name, literary culture, and education, is fundamentally Roman in cultural identity.”<sup>2</sup> Another suggested that he wrote the *Metamorphoses* in Rome and aimed it at a Roman audience.<sup>3</sup> A third held that he brought “Greek intellectual achievements” to Latin-speaking regions of the western Mediterranean, while a fourth argued that he introduced “*Romanitas*” by “transmitting in his own person elements of a dominant philosophical and literary idiom to a local African population.”<sup>4</sup> In his philosophical pursuits, which were so well known they may have caused the citizens of his hometown Madauros in Numidia to erect a statue in his honor, he was a “Socrates Africanus,” according to three further scholars.<sup>5</sup> Against these views aligning Apuleius closely with Greece or Rome, there are studies that place greater emphasis on the parts of his oeuvre concerning the plight of those subjected to imperial authority. These studies tend to be more sophisticated and nuanced, allowing for the construction of multiple national identities in different circumstances. Thus one scholar has emphasized Apuleius’ provincial origins, suggesting that he “identified himself with Africa” yet that “the culture within which [he] . . . operated was highly Romanized.”<sup>6</sup> Another has claimed that he wrote for more than just Roman readers, interpreting a reference to his hometown in the *Metamorphoses* as “a nice way to give a hint to an African audience, invited to sympathize with an African character-author.”<sup>7</sup> The latest work of these scholars has painted a picture of Apuleius as an author with “a double, hybrid, and shifting cultural identification” who was pulled “toward the dominant elite culture and a significant identification with the marginalized local population.”<sup>8</sup> Finally, there is the broader view of a

modern analyst who specified that Apuleius was neither Greek, nor Roman, nor African, but “Western.”<sup>9</sup>

I build on these recent assessments but offer an alternative perspective that shifts the debate from the *identity* of Apuleius himself to *identification* in Apuleius’ works. I argue that an approach that foregrounds the investigation of whether Apuleius was Greek, Roman, or African simplifies and essentializes his background and his contribution to Latin Literature. For one, it rarely defines these terms, the assumption being that readers know what “Greek,” “Roman,” and “African” mean. Yet this vocabulary is vague, given the multiple meanings of such national or geographical entities across space and through time. Furthermore, this approach focuses on models of acculturation and emulation that accentuate similarities within societies but overlook differences. It also emphasizes elite behavior and top-down views of society. As an investigative method, it is similar to the “Romanization” paradigm, which has been criticized in a number of recent analyses.<sup>10</sup> Instead of focusing on national or ethnic identities, I explore here how Apuleius identified his characters through the actions they repeatedly performed, often in particular spaces or with reference to specific items of material culture. I evince a portrait that takes into account the many ways the author identified himself and the other protagonists in the *Apology, Florida, and Metamorphoses*, thus investigating the issue across a range of his writings. I suggest that while Apuleius was fundamentally concerned with the identification of his characters, he constructed their identities along the lines of rich and poor, urban and rustic, literate and illiterate, male and female, moral and corrupt, educated and boorish—and was far less motivated to distinguish national and ethnic origins. In this way I diverge from the approaches taken in much recent scholarship on Apuleius.

### 2. THEORIES OF IDENTITY AND IDENTIFICATION

To situate my analysis in a larger context, I begin by drawing on modern theoretical approaches to “identity” and “identification,” which may suggest more appropriate ways to consider these terms. As important lenses through which cultures and societies have come to be viewed, these concepts have been prominent topics of discussion in many disciplines in the humanities, and they have had an impact on studies in Classics particularly in the last fifteen years.<sup>11</sup> The sociologist Richard Jenkins defines the concepts in the following way: identity “involves knowing who we are, knowing who others are, them knowing who we are, us knowing who they think we are, and so on: a multi-dimensional classification or mapping of the human world and our places in it, as individuals and as members of collectivities. It is a process—*identification*—not a ‘thing.’”<sup>12</sup> Jenkins’s definition of identification is helpful in emphasizing the role that members of society play in

creating identity and reminds us that the purpose of constructing one's own identity, or someone else's, is to use it in social interactions.<sup>13</sup>

In discussing "identity" and "identification" as illustrative themes in Apuleius's writings, I recognize the need to use these terms with caution. Criticism of the academic use of the concept of identity in particular has appeared in the last several years, especially as studies bearing this word in their titles have proliferated. Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper raised several concerns in an influential article.<sup>14</sup> The term "identity" is vague. Many authors do not define it, leaving the audience unsure of its meaning.<sup>15</sup> "Identity" can be used in contradictory senses: for example, a person's identity is often asserted to be multiple, flexible, and contingent, but such a weak conception of identity conflicts with an understanding of something that remains "identical" over time.<sup>16</sup> Some classicists have also found the term unhelpful. Martin Pitts, a Roman archaeologist, has pointed out that very few archaeologists have considered how to approach identity from a methodological or theoretical standpoint, even though they cannot assume a correlation between a particular kind of material culture and a specific identity in the past. He argues that "care must be taken to ensure that identity is not simply imposed onto the past by the analyst in the present."<sup>17</sup> Although the term "identity" has come under fire, "identification" has received greater support. Brubaker and Cooper regarded the latter term as informative because it "calls attention to complex (and often ambivalent) *processes*, while the term 'identity,' designating a *condition* rather than a *process*, implies too easy a fit between the individual and the social."<sup>18</sup> Admittedly, the distinction may appear semantic, but since I am exploring the ways in which both an ancient author and modern scholars have identified their subjects, I employ the concept in an active sense: identify, identification, or construction of identity. That is to say, identification is an active process of (to paraphrase Jenkins above) "defining who we are, defining who others are, them defining who we are, us defining who they think we are, and so on."

### 3. APULEIUS AND IDENTIFICATION

Let us now observe how Apuleius constructed the identity of characters in the *Apology*, *Metamorphoses*, and *Florida*, with greater emphasis on the first of these three, since it enables a closer look at the identification of the author. My central contention is that although Apuleius imparted the geographical origins of many of his characters, he generally did not do so in the nationalistic way that modern authors have claimed (i.e., Roman, Greek, and African). Instead, Apuleius thought about identity primarily in terms of education, wealth, language, literacy, and religious practices, among other categories. The most explicit passage in which the author stated his views on what determined identity comes in the *Apology*, in which he declared that "one should judge a man by 'how,' not 'where,' he lives."<sup>19</sup> For Apuleius,

the key components of identity were a person's *mores* and *ratio uiuendi*. In my discussion of Apuleius' three works, I argue that his characters expressed their customs and lifestyles through the habitual performance of daily actions, such as speaking a language, inhabiting a dwelling, and using prestigious as well as mundane objects. I see the repeated daily actions of characters as producing individual identity.<sup>20</sup>

### 4. THE APOLOGY

The *Apology* is ostensibly a work of non-fiction, presenting the defense Apuleius made against numerous accusations in a court in the Tripolitanian town of Sabratha around 158 CE.<sup>21</sup> It is a key text for the study of identification because the trial hinged on what the judge (Claudius Maximus, the governor of Africa Proconsularis) learned about Apuleius and his opponents: would the stereotypes the prosecution hurled at Apuleius stick, or would the defendant persuade the magistrate that he was framed by explaining his actions, emphasizing the bonds they shared, and lobbing retaliatory insults back at the prosecution? A trial, like the census or collection of taxes, was a key mechanism through which the Roman state exercised power over its subjects. It was therefore ritualistic, with the goal of identifying and classifying people and activities, recording them in writing, and, where necessary, imposing punishment.<sup>22</sup> The records we possess of the African trials suggest that tribunals followed standard procedures, beginning with the identification of the prosecution, defense, and witnesses. Let us take the record of one court proceeding held before the governor of Numidia, Domitius Zenophilus, in the town of Constantine (Cirta) in 320 CE as our first example. It began with a declaration of family history and education not unlike that which we shall see Apuleius present:

Zenophilus the senator and consular man said: "what position do you hold?" Victor said: "I am a professor of Roman literature, a teacher of Latin." Zenophilus the senator and consular man said: "what is your rank?" Victor said: "my father was a decurion of [the town of] Constantine, my grandfather a soldier who fought in the field army, we have descended from Moorish blood."<sup>23</sup>

We may note that Victor, a witness in a case against a bishop named Silvanus, does not hide his indigenous origins but seeks to emphasize his standing as well as the shared bonds that he and his father and grandfather have with the Roman judge. The records of African trials show the state was interested in establishing the identity of participants only briefly, often in stereotypical fashion. But the *Apology*, in which the entirety of one side of a trial has survived, offers an unusually close look at how a defendant went about the "process of identification" in the courtroom.

The strategy adopted by Apuleius was multifaceted, aiming to establish his credentials as both an attractive suitor for his wife, Aemilia Pudentilla, and an upstanding member of society, while doing the opposite to the prosecution and its allies. He did so by stressing the differences between his own habitual pursuits and those of his accusers. Apuleius said to Sicinius Aemilianus, "You are ensconced in rustic pursuits while I am occupied in learning."<sup>24</sup> Apuleius portrayed himself as "fluent in Latin and Greek equally," whereas he claimed that Sicinius Pudens could "speak nothing but Punic or the little Greek he learned from his mother."<sup>25</sup> He also characterized Sicinius Clarus as a "rustic and decrepit old man" who was nowhere near so desirable as the "eloquent and attractive youth" whom Pudentilla chose to marry.<sup>26</sup>

Although the nature of the text makes it hard to understand the prosecution's case in full, it is clear that the accusers attempted to identify Apuleius as an "outsider" whose appearance and behavior contrasted with those of the residents of Oea.<sup>27</sup> This was a medium-sized port town in the Roman Empire and was at its peak in the mid-second century.<sup>28</sup> Still, its elite formed a relatively small group that could close ranks against foreigners and outside influences. By examining each of the points Apuleius made in his own defense, we can detect the prosecution's strategy of emphasizing the eccentricity of Apuleius' daily activities in a small community like Oea. In the opening of his speech he responded to accusations that he was unusually good-looking and eloquent. He discussed the dentifrice and mirror that he was alleged to possess and use. Next, he took on the charge that he was a writer of erotic verse.<sup>29</sup> Such accusations must be regarded in the following contexts: first, the ability of physical appearance to create distinction in social interactions; second, the capacity of objects, particularly rare ones, to set their bearer apart from the rest of society; and, third, the selective way in which provincial groups accepted, rejected, and negotiated the transmission of cultural elements from Greece and Rome.

In the following section of the text, Apuleius answered the prosecution's charges that he was a *magus* whose abnormal conduct threatened Pudentilla, her family, and the wider society of Oea. While some modern commentators have regarded the charges of magic against Apuleius as less important sections of the *Apology*, possibly because Apuleius himself referred several times to "frivolous charges," James Rives's and Keith Bradley's position that this section was a critical part of his defense seems more credible.<sup>30</sup> For if the prosecution could identify Apuleius as a deviant *magus* who regularly conducted abnormal practices of magic, he could be found guilty. At least five specific accusations were made: Apuleius utilized fish to construct love charms for the enchantment of Pudentilla; he put a slave named Thallus in a trance, presumably for the purpose of divination; he kept unknown "sacred objects" hidden in a linen cloth; he owned an unusual ebony statuette of Mercury, which he referred to as "*basileus*"; and he worshipped clandestinely, sacrificing chickens at night.<sup>31</sup> Even if the number of instances in which Apuleius was said to have made love potions or put others into a

trance was small, the cumulative effect of the charges was to portray Apuleius as a regular practitioner of witchcraft. Identification as a *magus* posed problems for one's reputation, and it is clear that the charge was serious. As Rives has argued, the prosecution claimed that Apuleius possessed unnatural powers that he used against people and that undermined the authority of Rome.<sup>32</sup> We need only be reminded of another trial in Africa Proconsularis, that of Vibia Perpetua, who was brought before the governor Hilarianus in 203 CE, less than fifty years after the date of Apuleius' hearing. She had refused to participate in sacrifices for the birthday of Geta, son of the reigning emperor, Septimius Severus. Perpetua reported that at her trial the encounter between herself and Hilarianus involved the exchange: "'Are you a Christian?' And I responded: 'I am a Christian.'" As a result, the governor sentenced her to death *ad bestias*.<sup>33</sup> Likewise, when the bishop of Carthage, Cyprian, was brought before the governor Galerius Maximus in 258 CE, on a private estate rather than in a law court, he was also asked to identify himself and responded like Perpetua that he was a Christian. When he did not renounce his faith or agree to participate in sacrifices to the emperor, he was beheaded.<sup>34</sup> Although Perpetua and Cyprian, like Apuleius, were both from wealthy families and were well educated, they did not offer their social standing as a defense. Perhaps to them, or to the redactors of their stories, identification as Christian was the only thing that mattered. Thus, these were two legal proceedings in which the prosecution succeeded in establishing the identity of the accused as contrary to Roman law. But Apuleius' case was different.

Apuleius based much of his defense on identifying himself as an educated *philosophus* rather than a *magus*. As the son of a wealthy decurion in Madauros, he had attained his education (*doctrina*) in a system of schooling that was open to members of the upper classes in the Roman world.<sup>35</sup> Claudius Maximus, who had almost certainly grown up in Rome as the scion of an elite senatorial family, had received similar training.<sup>36</sup> Much previous scholarship has focused on demonstrating how Apuleius sought to flatter Maximus by appealing to the knowledge of philosophy and literature they held in common.<sup>37</sup> Apuleius said, "You accuse me of that which Maximus and I both admire in Aristotle," and "It is a good thing that this case is being tried before you, Maximus, since you have read and understand completely Aristotle's works *On the Origins of Animals*, *On the Anatomy of Animals*, and *On the History of Animals*, and especially his *Innumerable Problems*, and works of others in the Platonic school which treat many types of issues."<sup>38</sup> In addition, Apuleius quoted numerous authors in his courtroom speech, and he read from his own treatises on fish, which he had written in both Greek and Latin. He emphasized the great pains he had taken to translate obscure information about fish from Greek to Latin.<sup>39</sup> He also made a point of showing that he lived simply like a philosopher, with a small house, few slaves, little food, and light clothing.<sup>40</sup> While I agree that Apuleius went to considerable effort to construct his identity as a literate *philosophus*, I do

not take the interpretation so far as modern scholars do who consider *doctrina* or *paideia* characteristic of Greek or Roman culture, and who therefore suggest that Apuleius sought to project a specifically Greek or Roman identity through philosophy and literature.<sup>41</sup> In my view, the critical aspect of identity that Apuleius aimed to project through his discussion of philosophy was that of an educated man who habitually engaged in reading, writing, and learning, in multiple languages. This sort of education was a major component of identification for elites in antiquity, but it does not necessarily equate to an affiliation with Greece or Rome, nor to a rejection of Africa. In his defense against many accusations, Apuleius employed education to rationalize his behavior, to differentiate himself from the prosecution, and above all to assert that he was a member of the elite, creating a link with the magistrate. A counter-example from the *Historia Augusta* concerning the emperor Septimius Severus may help to substantiate this point: “when Severus’s sister Octavilla came from Lepcis Magna to visit him, and it became known that she could barely speak Latin, the emperor grew red in the face with embarrassment.”<sup>42</sup> The sense of this passage is that the source of his embarrassment was Octavilla’s lack of fluency, not her Lepcitanian origins. For it was known that Severus had spent his early years in Lepcis but nonetheless spoke Latin, Greek, and Punic, all with some eloquence.<sup>43</sup>

The final section of the text provides evidence for other important charges the prosecution made: Apuleius had married Pudentilla for money rather than love; she was too old for marriage; she had been bewitched and therefore was *insana*; and the wedding was carried out in the countryside (i.e., away from public view). Since Pudentilla’s reputation was at stake, it was necessary for Apuleius to construct her identity as a rational, educated, and chaste woman. To prove that he did not seduce his wife with magic, he argued that Pudentilla’s own son, Sicinius Pontianus, had encouraged her to marry Apuleius. He produced official documentation of her birth. He brought her letters into court to prove that Pudentilla could write in both Latin and Greek and that she had never claimed that Apuleius was a *magus*. He argued that she was a modest and virtuous woman who did not seek another suitor after her first husband, Sicinius Amicus, died. Instead, it was only fourteen years later, after she had been ill and her doctor had prescribed sexual relations to improve her health, that she became interested in Apuleius. He constructed a portrait of Pudentilla as a conscientious money manager and offered three examples of her thrift. She did not interfere with the trust and the trust manager arranged for her sons. She did not marry Apuleius in the town of Oea because of the necessity of providing costly *sportulae* to the townspeople; instead, they wed in the countryside to keep the marriage expenses low and save money for her sons’ inheritance. She herself also carefully managed the accounts of her estate. Like a prudent *bonus agricola*, she managed a large rural estate with extensive grain fields, olive orchards, pastureland, and more than 400 slaves, scrupulously overseeing the accounts with the bailiffs, shepherds, and grooms.<sup>44</sup> Apuleius’

picture of Pudentilla asserted her *mens sana*, chaste *mores*, and upright *ratio uiuendi*.<sup>45</sup> By contrast, he stated that Herennius Rufinus, an ally of the prosecution who wanted Sicinius Pudens to marry his daughter, lived in “a house contaminated by prostitution . . . where all day and all night carousing youth knock at the doors, the windows reverberate with sound, revelers party in the dining room, and adulterers congregate in the bedchambers.”<sup>46</sup>

In sum, both Apuleius and his opponents highlighted identity as they made their cases before Claudius Maximus. Both sides defined it similarly, as deriving from the way one spoke, read, wrote, dressed, worshipped, earned a living, used objects, and got married, among other things. To a certain extent they considered national identity, as I discuss below, but only as one trait among many.

## 5. THE FLORIDA

At this point I expand my analysis to include the *Florida*, which is often regarded as a series of speeches delivered in Carthage. Although I treat this text (and the *Metamorphoses* in the next section) in less detail than the *Apology*, I continue to argue that Apuleius primarily thought about identity in relation to social status, age, gender, education, literacy, and other similar categories. In these speeches Apuleius defined characters through their repeated daily actions: the languages they spoke, the jobs they performed, the clothes they wore. One method the author employed to identify characters was to depict them in relation to everyday objects. The use of material culture as a means of identification was nowhere so directly approached as in *Florida* 4.<sup>47</sup> Here, Apuleius spoke about the flute player (*tibicen*) Antigenidas, who was troubled that musicians who played at funerals were also known as *tibicenes*. Antigenidas apparently was quite disappointed that the Latin language did not distinguish these two professions. Apuleius commented that this misidentification was minor by comparison to the confusion resulting when items of clothing traditionally worn by individuals to demonstrate high status could also be worn by others of low status, even in similar contexts. At a theatrical event, for example, officials wore a purple stripe when presiding, but mimes in the performance wore a similar outfit. Likewise, a *munerarius* and a gladiator dressed comparably, a toga was worn to make a vow and to attend a funeral, and both philosophers and dead men were accustomed to be attired in the *pallium*.<sup>48</sup> Apuleius’ discussion presents good evidence for the importance of objects in connoting identity and status for individuals in the Roman Empire. The great number of studies concerning ancient bodily adornment that have arisen in the last three decades have likewise considered the many ways that individuals used clothes, everyday objects, and prestige items. As many working in this field have pointed out, objects at times convey ethnic origins but are useful for much more than that.<sup>49</sup>

*Florida* 16 also points to the use of material culture as a means of identification. In this speech, Apuleius discussed a statue he had been awarded in recognition of the major public priesthood he held.<sup>50</sup> He thanked the leading citizens of Carthage for decreeing him the honor, and he singled out Aemilianus Strabo, who proposed the idea, for praise. Since the statue had not yet been erected, he promised more gratitude in future speeches. One reason, it seems, was that he still needed to ensure that his statue was placed in as prominent a location as possible within the civic landscape.<sup>51</sup> To receive such a statue, with an inscription indicating that the city had bestowed the honor, was an important achievement for a member of the Roman Empire. Many citizens were visible on a daily basis as they passed through the forum, theater, temples and baths, and other public venues. Elite members of society could often be detected by their clothes, the number of retainers surrounding them, and the activities in which they engaged. Elites could also be identified through their ceremonial roles as magistrates, priests, and priestesses on occasions of civic significance such as religious processions and festivals, when most of the citizenry would gather. But the importance of the elite would be accentuated if they had statues of themselves on display in important public spaces. This is because the honorific statue would reproduce an individual's status for viewers, even when he or she was not physically present. Thus, statues were a key means by which the elite demonstrated their identity in public. Credible evidence suggests that Apuleius received the honor of a statue in two other cities with which he had close ties, Oea and Madauros.<sup>52</sup> Family, friendship, school, and patronage networks linked an individual like Apuleius to several cities; statues underscored his ability to demonstrate his identity in multiple venues at the same time (Image 2).

## 6. THE METAMORPHOSES

The plot of the *Metamorphoses*, a novel Apuleius adapted from a Greek tale called the *Metamorphoseis*, revolves around Lucius the narrator's conversion from a man to an ass and back. As a story told by a high-status provincial man trapped in the body of a low-status animal, it includes the construction of identity as an important element, as well as additional issues such as the dangers of incorrect identification, the loss and reinstatement of identity, and its concealment and revelation. Lucius and other characters who lost or disguised their identities experience trying circumstances but ultimately have their identities restored. Let us begin with a relatively minor passage in the novel, the story of how a decurion's son is put on trial for poisoning a member of his family and is threatened with the loss of his elite social standing.<sup>53</sup> The plot may be said to bear a certain resemblance to the author's own experience in the *Apology*. Apuleius introduces the story with the construction of the main characters' identities. These are the decurion's

elder son, born to his first wife, and the decurion's second wife, whom he had married after his first wife passed away. The boy is a well-educated, pious, and modest young man; the second wife a beautiful but unchaste woman who lusted after the first son and sought to seduce him as he reached maturity.<sup>54</sup> When the son refused his stepmother's advances, she contrived to murder him with the assistance of a deceitful slave. The slave was sent to procure a poison, but the younger brother, a lad of just twelve years, by accident drank the drug meant for the elder and collapsed. He was buried, and the decurion's wife blamed his death on the elder son, accusing him of incest as well. The proceedings shifted to the local court, where the deceitful slave testified that the elder brother had poisoned the younger. The remaining son was nearly convicted, and his identity as an educated and pious upper-class young man almost lost, until a physician spoke up on his behalf. The physician revealed that the slave had come to him to procure the poison but that he had substituted a sleeping medicine. The younger brother was then revived from his tomb, the elder was allowed to go free, and the slave was executed and the unchaste wife exiled in perpetuity. The story thus ends with the restoration of the proper identities to all the characters.

A second passage in the *Metamorphoses* concerns the attempt of a bumbling band of robbers to plunder the house of Chryseros, a banker at Thebes.<sup>55</sup> Chryseros was very wealthy but hid his riches, living alone in a small house (*domuncula*) and dressing in rags (*pannosus*). Although he jealously guarded evidence of his wealth, the robbers learned of his fortune soon after they arrived in his city. They attacked at night, but Chryseros vigilantly protected his home and his stash of golden coins. He foiled the robbery by trapping the ringleader as he attempted to get inside the door and then calling to his neighbors for assistance. This vignette presented a character who was unable to disguise his true identity, which brought him into danger, but who used his wits to triumph over those intending to deprive him of his wealth.

The stories of Chryseros the banker and the decurion's wife in the *Metamorphoses* both feature the identification of individuals as central elements, but as is common in the texts of Apuleius, they involve identification on the basis of wealth, morality, education, and intelligence. The issue of national or ethnic origins, though certainly raised, is not dominant; as an example, I now turn to another tale within the *Metamorphoses* around which the issue has arisen: the encounter between the peasant and the soldier.<sup>56</sup> In this tale, the narrator was the property of a peasant gardener (*hortulanus*), who was leading him home. A legionary soldier accosted the peasant, demanding in Latin to requisition the ass to transport his commander's belongings. When the peasant did not answer, because he did not understand Latin, the soldier struck him with a stick and shoved him off the ass. The soldier repeated his demand in Greek and began to lead the ass away. Thereupon, the peasant protested that the ass was old and slow and would not be of much assistance. The soldier was insistent, however, and threatened the peasant again.

When an opportunity presented itself, the peasant knocked the soldier to the ground, beat him with his fists and a stone, bit him, took away his sword, and left him by the side of the road. Then the peasant rode to his village on the ass and took refuge in a friend's house. Although the soldier was initially too embarrassed at his beating and the loss of his sword to do anything, he later told his companions, who searched for the peasant on the false pretense that he had stolen a silver cup. They found both him and the ass in their hiding places, then brought the captured peasant before the magistrates, who sentenced him to death while the soldier took possession of the ass.

A closer examination of the way Apuleius constructed the identity of the soldier and the peasant may be helpful in suggesting whether this is a tale that should be interpreted as anti-Roman, in that the peasant suffers unjustly from both the unfairness of the requisition and the legal judgment against him, or as reaffirming imperial power, because the state punished the peasant for his rebellious acts.<sup>57</sup> Apuleius defined the *hortulanus* as a hard-working, Greek-speaking man so poor that he had just a tiny house covered with fronds, and no shelter for the ass.<sup>58</sup> The soldier, in contrast, was identified as arrogant, Latin-speaking, and dishonest in inventing the theft of a silver cup as a reason to search for the peasant.<sup>59</sup> Apuleius thus identified the participants through several binary oppositions: poverty and wealth, Greek and Latin, peasant and soldier, and provincial and imperial. The encounter presents several interpretative possibilities, although the idea of an opposition between subject and ruler seems paramount. Yet, while the story is nominally set in Greece, it could apply equally well to many other Roman provinces, including Africa, Egypt, Judea, Gaul, Spain, Asia Minor, and Britain. The tale offered something to any provincial audience accustomed to requisitions of money, food, transport, lodging, and sex from soldiers or to inappropriate treatment from imperial officials.<sup>60</sup> Apuleius does not, in other words, highlight any particular national identity in his retelling.

## 7. NATIONAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY IN THE *APOLOGY, FLORIDA, AND METAMORPHOSES*

In previous sections I have made the case that Apuleius constructed identity with respect to many different factors, but to this point I have avoided instances where he discussed national or ethnic identity—the notion that a person's geographical, tribal, racial, and family origins identify him or her. Regarding this subject, Apuleius provided the reader of the *Apology* with his viewpoint while commenting on his own background. He described himself as “half-Numidian and half-Gaetolian” in response to a derisive remark the prosecution made about his *patria*, Madauros. At first glance, this comment appears to have been a geographical rather than ethnic claim, by which Apuleius meant that Madauros straddled the boundary of Numidian and

Gaetolian territory, not that he was the product of a marriage between a Numidian and a Gaetolian. But he proceeded to compare himself to Cyrus, the king of Persia in the mid-sixth century BCE, who was the offspring of a Persian father (Cambyses) and a Median mother (Mandane). It is therefore difficult to decide whether the passage has simply geographical or both geographical and ethnic connotations.<sup>61</sup> What is clear, though, is that Apuleius did not deny his origins as a provincial who hailed from the borderland between Numidia and Gaetulia. Nor was he ashamed to be a resident of Madauros, an indigenous town inhabited from at least the third century BCE that was not obscure—a veteran colony was settled here under the Flavians—but was not a prominent town in Africa. He stressed, however, that he came from a distinguished family, that his father served as a *duumvir* in his hometown, and that he had earned similar respect.<sup>62</sup> What was most important for the court to consider, he emphasized, was not his ethnic origins but his *mores* and *ratio uiuendi*.<sup>63</sup>

As a counter-argument, it might be objected that Apuleius sometimes endorsed the notion that ethnic origins constituted one's identity. In a passage near the beginning of the *Apology*, he mocked Zarat, the hometown of his opponent Sicinius Aemilianus, as “Attic.”<sup>64</sup> This insult was designed to show how different Zarat was from Athens. Later, the sole occasion on which he used the adjective *Afer* in any of his writings also occurred in reference to Aemilianus. It was also a derogatory statement, playing on the correspondence between the *cognomina* of Sicinius Aemilianus, the *Afer* (from Zarat!), and Scipio Aemilianus, the great general who defeated Carthage in the third Punic War, for which he was awarded the honorific title *Africanus*.<sup>65</sup> These are two clear examples in which Apuleius used ethnic origins to define a character. Despite Apuleius' protestations at *Apology* 24.3 that these were not relevant, it would obviously be unwise to claim that he never wrote about ethnic identity. On the other hand, did he more often construct ethnic identity on local rather than national grounds? The much-discussed reference to *Madaurensem* in the *Metamorphoses* surely relates to ethnic identity and is surely significant, but was it a national reference, as it has sometimes been interpreted?<sup>66</sup> Or was it of more local significance? When Apuleius delivered *Florida* 20, in which he lauded Carthage as “the esteemed teacher of our province, the heavenly Muse of Africa, the poetic Muse of the toga-wearers” before a Carthaginian audience, he intended for his listeners to draw the conclusion that it mattered very much where they lived.<sup>67</sup> Still, this is more likely to be a comment about civic identity, rather than African identity, given the extensive praise of Carthage in Apuleius' writings.<sup>68</sup> In other instances local civic identity may be as prominent as, or more so than, national identity. One might point to Luca Graverini's recent discussion of Corinth as the venue for the opening of the *Metamorphoses*, rather than Patras (which appeared in the *Onos*). He has argued that Corinth might have appealed to Apuleius: he was remaking the Greek *Onos*

into a Roman novel, and Corinth itself was first a Greek city and was then refounded as a Roman colony a century after its destruction in 146 BCE.<sup>69</sup> In this case, Apuleius thought about Corinth, Greece, and Rome in both local and national ways.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Previous scholars have mined Apuleius' writings for illustrations of what was Roman, Greek, or African and have evaluated the author based on these criteria. They have portrayed Apuleius as an indigenous African who received an education in Greek and Roman culture, frequently concluding that he was an example of a "Romanized African," a "Latin sophist," or a "Socrates Africanus."<sup>70</sup> My intention in this chapter has been to move beyond such essentializing formulations of identity. I have placed less emphasis on the extraordinary elements of his learning and have taken a closer look at how Apuleius constructed the identities of his characters. In other words, I have tried to take the discussion of Apuleius' writings away from the "identity of" the author to a focus on "identification in" the *Apology*, *Florida*, and *Metamorphoses*.

My argument has been that Apuleius employed a variety of means of identification, including social status, age, gender, language, literacy, wealth, education, religious practice, and urbanity. Much of the scholarship on Apuleius seems to have overemphasized what is Roman, Greek, or African about him at the expense of considering these other features, but in antiquity, and in the pre-modern world in general, they were defining categories of identification. In the modern world we have come to regard national identity as paramount and have too often—consciously or unconsciously—interpreted the past in this fashion. I have suggested here that issues of geographical or national origins played minor roles in the identification of characters in Apuleius' works, though they were not absent. Indeed, for him identification appears to have referred to civic as much as to national origin, and he used adjectives like *Carthaginensis* more often than *Afer*.

If one thing stands out about the identification of characters in Apuleius' works, it is that the repeated patterns of their daily lives define them. These patterns are evidenced by the languages they speak, the spaces they inhabit, the ways they spend their time, and the objects they use regularly. The approaches to identity of modern theorists such as Jenkins, Brubaker, and Cooper, discussed above, bear much resemblance to what we have found in the *Apology* and also in Apuleius' other works: identification is an active process of defining ourselves, defining others, and being defined by them that occurs regularly throughout our lives. Identity is neither fixed nor entirely malleable but is open to constant redefinition from multiple sources, in accordance with the details of one's biography. Identification is therefore a lifelong project, permanently under way, though impossible to complete.<sup>71</sup>



Figure 2 The forum of Madauros, showing the bases of two statues inside a colonnade. *ILAlg* 1.2115, the inscribed statue base that may have belonged to a statue of Apuleius, was found reused in a fourth-century context in this forum; it likely came from a nearby location (photo: Lea Stirling).

## NOTES

1. Graverini 2012, 165.
2. Harrison 2000, 3.
3. Dowden 1994.
4. Sandy 1997, ix; Bradley 2005, 26. Cf. also Bradley 2000, 232–233.
5. Riess 2008a; Schindel 2000; Tatum 1979, 105–134. Statue: *ILAlg* 1.2115.
6. Finkelpearl 1998, 143. See also Finkelpearl 2007, 274–275.
7. Graverini 2002, 69; cf. Graverini 2012, 188.
8. Finkelpearl 2009, 9, 33–34.
9. Méthy 1983, 46.
10. For an overview of the flaws in the Romanization model, see Mattingly 2004, 5–9; on its origins, see Freeman 1997. In Africa, especially, discussion of "Romans" and "Natives" has a long association with scholarship; see, *inter alia*, Broughton 1929 and Bénabou 1976 for colonialist and postcolonialist views respectively. For historiographical analyses of scholarship on Africa, see Février 1989, 1: 23–90; Mattingly 2011, 43–72.
11. See, for example, Dench 2005; J. Hall 1997; Mattingly 2006; Whitmarsh 2010. But see also the critical review of the study of identity in Roman archaeology made by Pitts 2007, discussed below.
12. Jenkins 2008, 5 (*italics* in original).

13. Notions of constructing identity appear in recent scholarship within Classics, including Goldhill 2009; Hope 2001; McEnroe 2010.
14. Brubaker–Cooper 2000, 1–14.
15. In my view this problem has surfaced in many earlier discussions of identity in Classics, including my own work (Stone 2007).
16. Cf. Brubaker–Cooper 2000, 8: “the term ‘identity’ is made to do a great deal of work. It is used to highlight non-instrumental modes of action; to focus on self-understanding rather than self-interest; to designate sameness across persons or sameness over time; to capture allegedly core, foundational aspects of selfhood; to deny that such core, foundational aspects exist; to highlight the processual, interactive development of solidarity and collective self-understanding; and to stress the fragmented quality of the contemporary experience of ‘self’, a self unstably patched together through shards of discourse and contingently ‘activated’ in differing contexts. These usages are not simply heterogeneous; they point in sharply differing directions.”
17. Pitts 2007, 699–700.
18. Brubaker–Cooper 2000, 17 (italics in original).
19. *Apol.* 24.3: *non enim ubi prognatus, sed ut moratus quisque sit spectandum, nec qua regione, sed qua ratione uitam uiuere inierit, considerandum est.*
20. In a larger sense, of course, I am alluding to links between theories of identity, agency, and structure (cf. Giddens 1979, 1984).
21. Some scholars have argued that the text reliably presents Apuleius’ defense at his trial in Sabratha, pointing to parallels from antiquity that suggest stenographers may have taken down court proceedings verbatim, so they could later be published (Winter 1969, 612; Bradley 1997, 213–214). We must remember that the text is the sole source from antiquity to mention these events, however, and presents only one side of the trial. We do not even know the outcome, as the verdict of the judge is nowhere revealed. Nor do we know how or why the text was disseminated. Most scholars have presumed that Apuleius was not guilty and published it himself to proclaim his innocence. Yet both of these are assumptions. Still, it seems essential to bear in mind that the text we possess is almost certainly biased in Apuleius’ favor, and I share the view of those who think that it was not the *oratio ipsa* pronounced in the courtroom but a version composed (or revised) afterwards (Hunink 1997, 1: 25–27).
22. The comments of Michel Foucault 1979, 184–192, on “the examination” have influenced my thinking here.
23. *Zenophilus uir clarissimus consularis dixit: cuius condicionis es? Victor dixit: professor sum Romanarum litterarum, grammaticus latinus. Zenophilus uir clarissimus consularis dixit: cuius dignitatis es? Victor dixit: patre decurione Constantinensum, auo milite; in comitatu militauerat: nam origo nostra de sanguine mauro descendit (Gesta apud Zenophilum, 1 = Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 26, 185; Modéran 2003, 529–530).*
24. *Apol.* 16.10: *tu rusticando obscurus es et ego discendo occupatus.*
25. *Apol.* 4.1: *tam Graece quam Latine pro nefas disertissimum;* 98.8: *Loquitur nunquam nisi Punice et si quid adhuc a matre graecissat.*
26. *Apol.* 70.3: *Igitur si Claro nubsisset, homini rusticano et decrepito seni, sponte eam diceres sine ulla magia iam olim nubturisse; quoniam iuuenem talem qualem dicitis elegit.*
27. *Apol.* 68.4, 77.2: *extrarius.* Cf. Bradley 2000, 227–228.
28. Mattingly 1995, 122–125.
29. *Apol.* 4–13.4.
30. For example, Gaide 1993, 230–231. *Friuola: Apol.* 3.8, 3.12, 25.1, 35.2, and 67.6. Rives 2008, 23–24; Bradley 1997, 207.
31. Apuleius responds to these accusations at *Apology* 27–65. It is also possible to construe a sixth magical charge—that Apuleius practiced divination with a mirror (*katoptromanteia*)—although the text does not state it explicitly (*Apol.* 13–16).
32. Rives 2008, 26: “Apuleius had a specialized knowledge of arcane doctrines and secret rituals, . . . this knowledge gave him power that other people did not have, . . . he used this power in ways that were subversive and anti-social.” See also Hunink 1997, 1: 14, for a definition of “magic” in the context of the trial, and Graf 1997, 65–88, and MacMullen 1966, 121–124, on the character of the *magus*.
33. *Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 6.4: *Hilarianus: Christiana es? inquit et ego respondi: Christiana sum.*
34. *Acta Proconsularia Sancti Cypriani* 1.2: *Cyprianus Episcopus dixit: Christianus sum, et Episcopus. Nullos alios deos noui, nisi unum et uerum Deum, qui fecit caelum et terram, mare, et quae sunt in eis omnia.*
35. Bradley 1997, 213, has pointed out that Apuleius referred to his education as *doctrina*, although some modern scholars refer to it as *paideia*.
36. Vincent Hunink, 1997, 1: 18 and 2: 10, has discussed the possibility, which cannot be convincingly proved, that Claudius Maximus is to be identified with a man of the same name who served as tutor of the future emperor Marcus Aurelius and governor of Upper Pannonia in the early 150s CE. If such a connection seems plausible, then Claudius Maximus would certainly have been well acquainted with Stoic philosophy, but even if he was not, we can expect that he would have read the major philosophical works in his education.
37. For examples of this approach, see Harrison 2000, 45–47; Sandy 1997, 143–148.
38. *Apol.* 36.5, 41.4. See also 38.1.
39. *Apol.* 38.5: *res cognitu raras.*
40. *Apol.* 21.2.
41. Riess 2008a; Sandy 1997; Schindel 2000.
42. *Hist. Aug., Sept. Seu.* 15.7: *cum soror sua Leptitana ad eum uenisset uix Latine loquens ac de illa multum imperatore rubesceret, dato filio eius lato clauo atque ipsi multis muneribus redire mulierem in patriam praecepit.*
43. *Hist. Aug., Sept. Seu.* 15.7; *Ps. Aur. Vict., Epitome de Caesaribus* 20.8.
44. *Apol.* 87.7.
45. *Apol.* 87.
46. *Apol.* 75.1–2: *Prorsus diebus ac noctibus ludibrio iuuentutis ianua calceis propulsata, fenestrae canticis circumstrepitae, triclinium comisatoribus inquietum, cubiculum adulteris peruium.*
47. We have seen material culture discussed previously in the *Apology* (in Apuleius’ ebony statuette of Mercury) and will refer to it later in the *Metamorphoses* (in the rudimentary shelter of the peasant gardener), for example.
48. *Flor.* 4.3–4: *Sed ferret aequo animo hanc nominum communionem, si mimos spectauisset: animaduerneret illic paene simili purpura alios praesidere, alios uapulare; itidem si munera nostra spectaret: nam illic quoque uideret hominem praesidere, hominem depugnare; togam quoque parari et uoto et funeri, item pallio cadauera operiri et philosophos amiciri.*
49. See, for example, Foucault 1990; Bourdieu 1984; and for discussion of more recent scholarship, Boric–Robb 2008. For works relevant to the Roman Empire, see Edmondson–Keith 2008; Olson 2008; Rothe 2009. On objects and ethnic origins, see Wobst 1976.
50. It is not clear from the speech, or from other details of Apuleius’ biography, which priesthood he held; for a discussion of the possibilities, see Rives 1994.
51. *Flor.* 16.41.

52. Augustine wrote that Apuleius received a statue in his wife's hometown of Oea (*Epist.* 138.19). A statue base (*ILAlg* 1.2115) bearing the fragmentary inscription “. . . to a Platonic philosopher, the citizens of Madauros, by a decree of the town council and at public expense, [dedicated this statue] for the purposes of adornment,” [*Ph*]ilosopho [*Pl*]atonico [*Ma*]daurenses *ciues ornament[o] suo d[ecreto] d[ecurionum] p[ecunia] p[ublica]*, was found in the forum of Apuleius' own hometown. Since the time of its discovery, this statue base has been identified with Apuleius (Gsell–Joly 1914, 2.31).
53. *Met.* 10.2.1–10.12.5.
54. *Met.* 10.2.1–3: *iuuenem filium, probe litteratum atque ob id consequenter pietate, modestia praecipuum . . . nouerca forma magis quam moribus in domo mariti praepollens.*
55. *Met.* 4.9.1–4.10.4.
56. *Met.* 9.39.1–9.42.4.
57. There are multiple possible interpretations. For instance, writing about the *Onos*, where the encounter between peasant and soldier had appeared in the Greek version of the novel, Edith Hall 1995, 52, commented on the irony that while the Greek peasant was temporarily victorious, “Roman hegemony is simultaneously subverted and maintained.”
58. *Met.* 9.31.3–9.32.3: *pauperculus quidam hortulanus . . . dum fodiens, dum irrigans, ceteroque incuruus labore deseruit . . . frondoso casulae contentus umbraculo.*
59. *Met.* 9.39.2–3: *miles e legione, factus nobis obuius, superbo atque adroganti sermone percontatur, quorsum uacuum duceret asinum? At meus, adhuc maerore permixtus et alias Latini sermonis ignarus, tacitus praeteribat.*
60. The bibliography on relations between provincial residents and imperial officials is vast: for recent evocative treatments of the subject, see Given 2004; Mattingly 2011.
61. *Apol.* 24.1–2: *De patria mea uero, quod eam sitam Numidia et Gaetuliae in ipso confinio mei<-> scriptis ostendi scis, quibus memet professus sum, cum Lolliano Auito clarissimo uiro praesente publice dissererem, “Seminumidam” et “Semigaetulum:” non uideo quid mihi sit in ea re pudendum, baud minus quam Cyro maiori, quod genere mixto fuit Semimedes ac Semipera.* On Cyrus' origins, see Herodotus, 1.107; Xenophon, *Cyr.* 1.2.1. Finkelpearl 2009, 27, provides a recent discussion of the passage with references to previous interpretations.
62. Compare the testimony of Victor before the court of Domitius Zenophilus in 320 CE, discussed above.
63. *Apol.* 24.3.
64. *Apol.* 24.10.
65. *Apol.* 66.8: *At hoc ego Aemiliano, non huic Afro, sed illi Africano et Numantino et praeterea Censorio uix credidisset; ne huic frutici credam non modo odium peccatorum sed saltem intellectum inesse.* Apuleius referred to Africa (nine examples) and Africus (two examples) as a province, wind, or sea. See Oldfather, Canter, and Perry's *Index Apuleianus* (1934, 20) for a complete listing of Apuleius' references to related words.
66. *Met.* 11.27.9. For an African interpretation, see Graverini 2002, 69, and 2012, 186–188. For a summary of other interpretations, see Harrison 2000, 229–231.
67. *Flor.* 20.10: *Karthago prouinciae nostrae magistra uenerabilis, Karthago Africae Musa caelestis, Karthago Camena togatorum.*
68. In this respect, we might note that references to Carthage (and related words) outnumber those to Africa in the Apuleian corpus. *Carthago* appeared eighteen times, *Carthaginensis* five times (Oldfather–Canter–Perry 1934, 56).

69. Graverini 2012, 166–175.

70. See the introduction to this paper for references to some of these approaches.

71. This paper was partly written while I held a Margo Tytus Fellowship in the Department of Classics at the University of Cincinnati in 2012, and I thank the members of the department and the John Miller Burnham Classics Library for their generosity during that time. I also thank the editors of this volume and Molly Swetnam-Burland, Lea Stirling, and David Potter for comments and assistance with this paper.

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## 9 *Libyca Psyche* Apuleius' Narrative and Berber Folktales

*Emmanuel and Nedjima Plantade*

In this paper, we endeavor to show that in the tale of Cupid and Psyche Apuleius used an ancient Berber oral source that can still be discerned when reading North African folktales.<sup>1</sup> It is only natural to consider that Apuleius may have heard the story during his childhood in Madauros, on the borders of Roman Numidia, where the “Libyan” culture was pervasive in the second century CE.<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact, it can be argued that this Libyan influence is not a completely new idea. The relationship between Berber oral tradition and Apuleius' narrative was first pointed out by the French orientalist Henri Basset in 1920.<sup>3</sup> At that time, the German ethnologist Leo Frobenius had, for his part, an insight into the role that Berber oral narratives had played in forming a certain number of motifs that existed in the Greco-Roman written culture. As far as the Cupid and Psyche narrative is concerned, these first intuitions became a serious hypothesis in the writings of Otto Weinreich and Emile Dermenghem (see below). Yet Apuleius specialists have never considered this option, mainly because they have preferred to look for the origins of the tale in more elevated Greek or Near Eastern texts.<sup>4</sup>

Many readers will be surprised to see the issue of folklore raised once again in relation to Cupid and Psyche. In current research, Detlev Fehling's approach (1977) still dominates. He criticizes what he sees as the romantic methodology of folklorists, who are naively attached to “popular” orality: Apuleius' narrative, he asserts, has influenced folklore, not vice versa. In this vein, the Groningen commentary on Cupid and Psyche begins with the premise that the question of folkloric influence has lost its relevance; instead, the tale is fundamentally a literary creation.<sup>5</sup> But the idea that Apuleius completely invented a fantastical narrative might involve as much romanticism as the methods of the folklorists.

The point is not to accept uncritically the work of the folklorists. It is true that the bulk of existing research based on folklore has thus far failed to yield a clear-cut answer as to the folkloric sources of the Apuleian narrative.<sup>6</sup> According to philologists, such a failure mainly results from methodological shortcomings in the folklorists' approach. For instance, Jan Öjvind Swahn, the author of an authoritative comparison between Cupid and Psyche and global folklore, has been rightly criticized because, in his

typology, he equates the enchanted human of most folktales with the Apuleian god, Cupid.<sup>7</sup> It may also seem strange that Swahn has inserted all kinds of taboos into the very paradigm of the Cupid and Psyche narrative.<sup>8</sup> Thus, folkloric typology is at pains when it comes to establishing intertextual or genetic connections.

This criticism, which is legitimate, does not necessarily mean that folklore's resources should be neglected, and Fehling undoubtedly exaggerates when he assumes that Apuleius' narrative has undergone only literary influences.<sup>9</sup> As Carl Schlam puts it, Fehling's thesis “depends not so much on analysis of particulars but on his general rejection of folklore as part of ancient (or any other) highly developed culture.”<sup>10</sup> Finally, the readers of Cupid and Psyche should not feel obliged to see in the question of sources simply an alternative between folklore (oral) and literature (written). It is completely legitimate to ask whether Apuleius might not have been influenced by lost Hellenistic sources to which the surviving iconography testifies.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, it is also legitimate to examine possible folkloric sources.

In fact, the very text of Apuleius hints at oral literature in several ways, and in this regard some questions remain unsolved. For instance, there is the female storyteller, an old woman (*Met.* 4.7.1: *anus quaedam*)—the archetype of storytellers in ancient learned discourse<sup>12</sup>—who actually claims (*Met.* 4.27.8) to relate both folktales (*aniles fabulae*) and short stories (*lepidae narrationes*). Similarly, there is the setting of her narrative, a cave (*Met.* 4.6.1: *spelunca*), which implies an archaic non-elite discourse. No legitimate literary genre (poetry, oratory or history) can be performed in such a context. This type of setting instead fits “irrational” speech, whether popular narrative (in Greek and Berber cultures, traditional oral storytelling actually required the darkness provided by nighttime)<sup>13</sup> or the vatic utterance that a sibyl, for instance, could deliver.<sup>14</sup> Finally, the *asinus*-narrator himself may be alluding to something that resembles ethnological note taking, when he comments on the old woman's oral performance (*Met.* 6.25.1).<sup>15</sup>

In classical literature there is, in fact, an example of oral literature that has passed into written culture: the fable. Apuleius, as a Roman sophist/rhetorician, certainly knew this model, for the narration of fables played a part in the *progymnasmata*, and he made effective use of an Aesopic model in a fragment of the *Florida*.<sup>16</sup> He might have understood the process that had given the oral fables of Libya the stature of Greek and Latin poems. He could then have modeled his own creative practice on this precedent.<sup>17</sup> The subject is poorly understood, but one might hypothesize that the oral fables of Libya were translated into Greek and written down at Cyrene, a colonial city where Greek men often married Libyan women—repositories of the oral tradition.<sup>18</sup> It is certain that these Libyan fables were known at Athens from the fifth century on, as a fragment of Aeschylus shows.<sup>19</sup> Mentioned in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, edited by one of his disciples, these fables made their

way into the corpus of texts serving as *progymnasmata* quite early, and they continued to be used into the imperial era, as their presence in the manual of Aelius Theon shows.<sup>20</sup>

The methodology adopted by this study differs from previous folkloric approaches. First, this work is philologically oriented because it attempts to pinpoint precise similarities between folkloric tales and Cupid and Psyche. Second, the focus is on the author's homeland, namely, North Africa. Our study is based on a close scrutiny of Berber tales, focusing on key motifs in the Apuleian narrative. Such a method may seem rather bold, but we felt encouraged by a statement of Ruth Finnegan, an authority in oral literature studies: "Insofar as instances of oral tradition or verbal arts are considered forms of literature, they can be approached through any, perhaps all, of the established methods of literary analysis."<sup>21</sup>

### 1. DEFINING A RELEVANT NORTH AFRICAN CORPUS OF FOLKTALES

In our opinion, Swahn, although rightly criticized by philologists, brought two significant advances in his time. He integrated into his monograph the corpus collected by Dermenghem, the only study that had compared the Apuleian narrative to the North African tales.<sup>22</sup> He also elaborated a classification of narrative motifs and subtypes to better study the folk literature classified as type AT 425 by Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson in their groundbreaking international typology.<sup>23</sup> According to Swahn, tales that match fairly closely the structure of the Apuleian narrative correspond to subtype A of type AT 425.<sup>24</sup> As Schlam rightly observes, the core of subtype A is "the search for the lost husband who appears first as an animal or monster and whose loss follows upon the violation of a taboo."<sup>25</sup> To be complete, subtype A involves an ordered sequence of seven narrative motifs, shown in Table 1.<sup>26</sup> In addition, there are eleven other subtypes that correspond to variations in the second part of the plot.<sup>27</sup>

In the North African corpus that Swahn borrowed from Dermenghem, there is a Berber folktale, a story told in a native North African language, that deserves particular attention. It is entitled "The Son of the Ogress" and was collected by the German ethnologist Leo Frobenius in colonial Kabylia when French schooling was nearly non-existent.<sup>28</sup>

This Berber oral folktale immediately struck two early readers of Frobenius: the philologist Weinreich and the archivist Dermenghem.<sup>29</sup> However, in Swahn's day, it still seemed to be isolated within the North African corpus, even though the sight taboo was already apparent as a feature common to many of the known tales (as Dermenghem noticed).<sup>30</sup> Since Berber tales—the term "Berber" is taken here in the linguistic sense—are known to contain a large number of mythical features antedating the Islamization period,<sup>31</sup> it is certain that they contain Libyan traditions that already

existed during the Roman era. Therefore, the Libyan plot we think Apuleius used could be reconstructed by studying Berber tales like "The Son of the Ogress."

Fortunately, it is now possible to contextualize the tale collected by Frobenius by inserting it in a larger corpus of Berber tales that were still unknown in Dermenghem and Swahn's day.<sup>32</sup> This corpus consists of three main tales (designated by a capital letter) whose structure is comparable to Apuleius' narrative, along with four other tales (designated by a lowercase letter) that clearly belong to the same tradition, even if they do not entirely fit Swahn's structure defining subtype A:

- F "Son of the Ogress" (Frobenius, Kabylia)
- B "Gold Bud" (Allioui, Kabylia)
- O "The Bird of the Air" (Nacib, Kabylia)
- f "Son of the Ogress" (Radi, Middle Atlas, Morocco, Sefrou region)
- s "The Story of Seffar lhwa" (Bezzazi, eastern Morocco)
- o1 "The Bird of the Storm" (Amrouche, Kabylia)
- o2 "The Bird of the Storm" (Allioui, Kabylia)<sup>33</sup>

These seven originally oral narratives, which European terminology may designate as "fairy tales," are referred to in the Kabyle dialect as *timucuha* (narrations of evening gatherings), a much more encompassing term.<sup>34</sup>

It is worth pointing out that these tales were collected in regions more than a thousand kilometers apart. This geographical spread supports a rather ancient (although not yet datable) origin of the tale. The presence of a "Son of the Ogress" (f) in the area of Sefrou, Morocco, makes the thesis of Apuleian influence on North African oral literature less likely, especially since Sefrou is outside what was Latin-speaking Mauretania.<sup>35</sup>

First of all, it is important to show how F, B and O are similar to the narrative of Psyche in the sense that they fit into the frame defined by Swahn,<sup>36</sup> whose monograph is still authoritative in current folkloric research. Obviously, the narrative structure of these three tales includes all of the motifs that define the subtype labeled as AT 425 A. As shown in the table, their adherence to the same pattern of motifs (as defined by Swahn) is also striking.

As far as the four other tales are concerned, they surely derive from this same tradition because they share specific features with those of the main branch. Tale f is characterized by the terse conciseness of its narrative style. The only element it lacks is motif V, namely, "The search for the husband," which is actually the main defining feature according to folklorists since Aarne and Thompson. Nonetheless, its male main character, named "Son of the Ogress," is identical to the one in the three full tales.

Tale s offers a totally different pattern. The male protagonist in this tale is named *Seffar lhwa* (Arabic for "whistling of the wind"), which is none other than the name attributed to the main character in F (see section 2).

Table 1 Narrative Motifs

Swahn's motifs	F	B	O
I. Introductory motifs	The father sets out to look for a present for his youngest daughter.	The father receives magical presents from a supernatural being.	The father sets out to look for a present for his youngest daughter.
II. The supernatural husband	A supernatural voice addresses him in the forest, asking for the youngest daughter in marriage.	A supernatural voice addresses him in the forest, asking for the youngest daughter in marriage.	A supernatural being gives him what he seeks, in return for marriage with his youngest daughter.
III. The wedding	The husband visits his wife at night, without revealing himself.	The husband visits his wife at night, without revealing himself.	The husband lives in the dark.
IV. The breaking of the taboo	The young woman looks at her husband by the light of a lamp.	The young woman looks at her husband by the light of a lamp.	The young woman gazes at her husband's face by the light of a candle.
V. The search for the husband	The young woman goes after her husband through the forest.	She waits for her husband to come back home, then sets out to search for him.	The young woman is on the trail of her husband.
VI. The meeting	The young woman finds her husband in the house of an ogress, his mother. She succeeds in carrying out the tasks.	She finally finds him at the house of this mother, an ogress, who sets her tasks.	She finally finds him at the house of his mother, an ogress, who sets her tasks.
VII. Conclusive motifs	After killing his mother and his aunts, the husband takes his wife to live in the forest.	Her husband saves her from the ogress and takes her to live in the forest.	The son of the ogress takes her back to her family, which celebrates her homecoming.

However, this tale is structurally distinct from the main tradition, insofar as the motifs are ordered differently. Thus, motif VI, in which the female protagonist confronts her mother-in-law, occurs before sequence III–V. This, of course, entails a change in the meaning of the story.

As for tales **o1** and **o2**, they offer a much simpler pattern. The male protagonist in both narratives, poetically referred to as the “Bird of the Storm,” remains the same as in the main branch. Yet the structure of the narrative is truncated: the tale contains only sequence I–IV, and the female protagonist is condemned to rehash her guilt until her death without ever getting the opportunity to redeem herself.

Thus, the Berber world, covering lands from the Siwa oasis to the Canary Islands, could be regarded as having a quite coherent tradition of AT 425 A, of which tales **F**, **B** and **O** are full forms, whereas **f**, **s**, **o1** and **o2** are reordered or abridged variants of the same tale. This oral tradition is unique in that it has preserved numerous motifs that are contained in Apuleius' narrative but that hardly exist in Greek tales.<sup>37</sup>

## 2. THE INITIAL CHARACTERIZATION OF THE PROTAGONISTS: “MOONLIGHT” AND “WHISTLING OF THE RAIN”

In the tales of our Berber corpus, the female main character is the youngest daughter (**F** 334, **B** 33, **O** 75, **o1** 224, **o2** 40).<sup>38</sup> Her family bears the burden of a large number of girls, seven (**B** 33, **O** 75, **o2** 40) or four (**F** 334); tale **o1** (223) merely says, “God gave them more girls than boys, but the parents, in their wisdom, did not complain.” Both Moroccan variants of our corpus depict her as an only child, granting her, though, a special status: she is presented either as a girl with no family who lives alone in a forest, which is protected by “seven gates” (**f** 73), or as a girl whose birth is magical: “The wife of a man who was sterile took an egg and hatched it as if she were a chicken. After nine months, a girl came out of the egg” (**s** 184). This bizarre birth serves, actually, as an initial characterization of the girl. In Kabyle versions, however, the heroine is endowed with at least one outstanding feature that offsets the misfortune of the family: it is either physical beauty (**B** 33) or noble-mindedness (**F** 334, **O** 75, **o1** 224), or both at the same time (**o2** 42). It should be noted that Apuleius in his narrative emphasizes the value of the heroine's physical beauty first (*Met.* 4.28.2–3), because it is the element that triggers the dispute with Venus, before he introduces her noble-mindedness through the consolatory discourse that the girl, doomed to an ill-fated marriage, holds while addressing her parents (*Met.* 4.34.3–6).

Although the female main character is anonymous in some tales (**F**, **O**), she is sometimes given a Muslim name—Aisha (**f** 73), Yamina (**o1** 224) or Heniya (**s** 185)—or, more interesting from our point of view, a Berber name, Tiziri, “Moonlight” (**B** 33, **o242**), which is actually a proverbial way to

denote beauty.<sup>39</sup> In fact, she is portrayed in one of our tales as “more beautiful than the moon and the stars together” (B 33).

As for the male protagonist, he is introduced for the first time through an authoritative voice that resonates in the forest (F 335, B 34) or in the form of a human (O 75, o2 42, f 73), both making him somewhat ambiguous. But in almost all of the tales, he is endowed with the faculty to metamorphose into different creatures, an ability that dispels all doubts as to his supernatural nature: he carries his bride in the shape of a camel (F 336), a horse (O 77) or a mythical bird (B 40, o2 43).<sup>40</sup> In one of the abridged versions, the metamorphosis is not fully endorsed in the sense that the male protagonist is depicted as an anthropomorphic character having the ability to act like a bird (o1 224): “But the beggar put the bowl which was still hot on the threshold, loaded the little girl on his shoulders, and flew with her like a bird under the storm.”

The main character acts as if he were the tutelary deity of the forest, protecting a dove (F 335) or protecting trees from the lumberjack’s axe (B 34–39).<sup>41</sup> But as the relationship that he establishes with the father in the tales of the main branch (F 335, B 34–39, O 75) demonstrates, he is a caring supernatural entity, quite patient and comprehending toward human needs. The disclosure of the male protagonist’s name, which takes place after the father asks a question, is worthy of notice. The name is revealed with religious solemnity (F 335): “The man stiffened, seized with fright. This voice coming out of nowhere was bloodcurdling. He stopped, looked around, but did not see a living soul. He managed to say: ‘In the name of God, I beg you to tell me who you are, you who are talking to me from the depths of the earth.’ The powerful voice replied: ‘It’s me, *Asfer n lhwa!*’ As soon as he heard the name, the father of the four daughters was seized with terror.”

Although this episode is highly dramatic, we have to keep in mind that human beings are familiar with this supernatural entity. The element of hierophany of our tales, based on the voice of a famous deity, clearly recalls the tale of Apuleius, in which the oracle of Apollo prescribes Psyche’s marriage (*Met.* 4.32.5–4.33.3). It is therefore quite likely that Apuleius was seeking a kind of *interpretatio* ushering the male main character of Berber tales into the Greek religious world.

In one of the abridged variants, the fame of the male protagonist is even emphasized through an obvious riddle (o2 43): “Well, my name is carried by the wind through the rain and the storm.” This is clearly an allusion to the Berber name in tale F, *Asfer n lhwa*, which can be translated as “Whistling of the Rain” and which is referred to in our eastern Moroccan version as *Seffar lhwa* (“Whistling of the Wind,” in s 185). However, tale B—which embraces the point of view of the heroine, who, in fact, ignores the mythical aspect of her husband (B 41)—refers to the male main character as “Gold Bud.” This naive appellation is a metaphor that not only serves to denote the husband’s mysterious identity but also emphasizes the fact that he is rooted in the natural world.<sup>42</sup> It is obviously the same character named “the

Bird of the Storm” elsewhere (o1 224, o2 44), although one of the main tales attempts to conceal his ornithomorphic nature, explaining that his name is merely a metaphor for velocity (O 77): “It is he [i.e., the supernatural horse] that was called the airy bird as he came and went, appearing and disappearing like lightning.” These hints at the ornithomorphic nature of the male protagonist require a thorough comparison with the text of Apuleius, which will be carried out subsequently (sections 4 and 6).

### 3. THE BREAKING OF THE SIGHT TABOO: TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE THE MALE BEAUTY

The breaking of the sight taboo contained in each of our seven tales is close to that in the Apuleian narrative.<sup>43</sup> From our point of view, this element is more important than the “search for the lost husband” in the narrative of Psyche because curiosity is a central theme for Apuleius.<sup>44</sup> In all our tales, even those that do not include all of Swahn’s motifs (f, o1, o2), the female main character wants to see her mate’s body by the light of a lamp. Analyzing this scene enables us, on the one hand, to have a better understanding of the connections that exist between the different tales within the corpus and, on the other hand, to compare these tales with Psyche’s narrative. In the extracts below, we have called attention to the most striking narrative elements that recur in these tales by putting them in boldface.<sup>45</sup>

Then she placed a clay pot next to the oil lamp. In the evening, the light she had lit was still glimmering when, as usual, there was a knock at the door and the same voice came from outside: “Turn out the light!” The young woman did not obey; she only covered the lamp with the pot. In the darkness, *Asfer n lhwa* drew near her and lay down on the bed. He fell asleep. Hearing him snoring, the young woman was sure that he was asleep. Cautiously, she lifted the pot and looked at her husband by the light of the lamp. **The young woman was stunned by the beauty of *Asfer n lhwa*.** She had never seen a young man of such beauty. His body was covered with little fairies sitting in pairs bustling diligently with their little hands. (F 338–339)<sup>46</sup>

One evening, when a breeze announced the arrival of Gold Bud, she turned off all the lamps except one that she kept close to her. As he was busy talking, she quickly relit the lamp. Surprised and bitterly disappointed, he cried out loud addressing the master of Heaven: “Ah! Moonlight, I trusted you and you betrayed me!” Gold Bud turned immediately into a dark and scary bird. (B 42)

In the evening, she put the dinner plate on the already lit press.<sup>47</sup> The ogre entered. As soon as she lifted the plate, **the glow of the lamp**

revealed the wild and dreadful face of an ogre. He instantly, though belatedly, turned into a man. (O 78)

One day, she decided to surprise the mysterious husband by lighting up a candle that she had prepared beforehand. He was **stunningly handsome**. At the sight of such beauty, Aisha fainted and **the candle fell down burning his face**. (f 73)

The day came when she could stand it no more. She could not bear her fate anymore. At dusk, she went to her room, took the precious candle out of her bosom, lit it and concealed it in a priceless vase. She covered the vase with a plate and placed it near her bed within reach of her hand. She couldn't sleep that evening. Yamina anxiously awaited the slight breeze which announced the return of her husband every day. As soon as she felt that the Bird of the Storm was on the doorstep, she wanted to uncover the light. **But barely had her hand touched the plate than a furious wind overthrew the vase, blowing out the candle**. Yamina heard a roar-like sound. (o1 229)

One night, she woke up as the Bird of the Storm was sleeping by her side. She stretched her arm under the bed and grabbed the lantern. Without thinking, she lit up the lamp. But as the light appeared, the wind watching over the Bird of the Storm soon blew it out! **She only saw a dark bird draped in grim black**. A dark night as she had never seen before fell upon the castle. (o2 52)

In the evening, her husband was lying on his back, **she took the candle and saw all kinds of <shops>**, then she asked: "Who owns this diamond shop?" "Seffar lhwa," he replied sleepily. "Who owns this shop full of all kinds of precious stones?" she asked again. "Seffar lhwa," he replied. Seffar lhwa woke up and caught her trying to unveil his secret. He left swearing that he would take revenge on her. (s 187)

The scene always takes place in the evening or at night. Moreover, the heroine is presented, in all versions, as a lightbearer who appears in the dark. Undoubtedly, this feature is related to the moonlike aspect of her beauty as well as to the name given to her in some Kabyle versions, as mentioned above. It should be noted, however, that unlike Apuleius' text, none of the Berber versions mentions any murder project fomented against the husband, nor, indeed, do they mention the sexual relations between the spouses (*Met.* 5.21–22). In our tales, even monstrous as he is, the husband seems to be sacred.

The description of what the heroine sees is highlighted in tale F: there is, on the one hand, the heavenly beauty of a young man and, on the other hand, an embellished narrative wildly exaggerating the wonderful aspect of

the disclosed body, a motif found in s.<sup>48</sup> In contrast, tale B does not provide a description of what the young woman sees when she finally unmask her husband. Nonetheless, we could infer that this time he has a human form, as we are told that "Gold Bud turned into a bird." Consequently, the description provided in F is implicit in B, and the absence of the husband's body must be understood as a strategy to create suspense in order to emphasize the final apotheosis of the male protagonist.<sup>49</sup>

As for tale O, it presents yet another pattern. The order of the actions found in B is reversed: the main character is no longer an anthropomorphic being that takes the form of a bird, but a hideous ogre who turns into a man. In fact, the storyteller in version O subverts the traditional meaning of the story out of a moralizing tendency, although he maintains the structure of the narrative. If the male protagonist is portrayed as a hideous being as well as an impostor, the wife's flaws (curiosity, disobedience) appear to be mitigated, since she was deceived by the husband's false identity from the outset. Rather than leading to a final confirmation of the marriage, the tasks that the heroine has been assigned are used to purify her thoroughly for the audience. The husband is then forced to forgive her and set her free.<sup>50</sup> Hence, tale O ultimately reshapes the tradition passed on by tales F and B, in such a way as to negate the possibility of a legitimate marriage between a girl of good morals and a supernatural being.

This moralizing tendency can be seen even more clearly in o1 and o2. Indeed, these two tales do not show the male protagonist in a human form. In the narrative logic of Berber folklore, an emphasis on the beauty of the husband would imply a happy ending and at the same time render the wife's disobedience legitimate. Such an emphasis would also give too much validity to popular beliefs about the supernatural, which were perceived as a threat to the monotheistic morality. From a puritanical storyteller's point of view, this indecent story could be rescued only if it was first altered. To do so, storytellers resort to the narrative device of sudden gusts of wind, which either hinder the heroine from lighting up the room (o1) or blow out the candle instantly (o2), preventing the young woman from discerning the human nature of her husband. Ironically, the use of the wind to alter the course of the plot passed on by F, B and O was borrowed from meteorological motifs that the oral tradition attributes to the male protagonist.

The puritanical and moralistic tendency that prevails in tales o1 and o2 shows that the tradition of the long tales—namely, F, B and O—is the oldest, in that this tradition has preserved names and motifs whose ideological relevance seems to have died out. It is worth mentioning that these three tales are the only ones containing the archaic detail that is found in the narrative of Psyche, namely, the oil lamp (*Met.* 5.22.1: *lucerna*), whereas the other tales mention a candle (f, o1, s) or a lantern (o2). Moreover, the fact that the central scene related to the unmasking of the husband is found in a region situated outside of Latin-speaking Mauretania confirms the assumption that F, B and O, Kabylia's long versions, are the oldest. In this way, tale f,

which was collected in the Moroccan Middle Atlas, shares a fundamental feature with the narrative of Psyche, namely, the exceptional anthropomorphic beauty of the husband.<sup>51</sup>

Apuleius, for his part, actually follows the ancient tradition of the anthropomorphic vision common to tales F, B and f. However, unlike the Berber storytellers, he mentions marital sexuality and focuses the narration more on the weapon (equally missing in the oral tradition) than on the lamp (*Met.* 5.21.4–22.4); Apuleius here seems to contaminate a dramatizing motif rooted in Greek tragedy (Clytemnestra) with the Berber frame:<sup>52</sup>

Yet when the evening came and the night followed, she feverishly hastened the preparations for her horrible crime. The night came, the husband came. After the first skirmishes in the battles of Venus, he fell into a deep sleep. Then, drawing strength from the cruel will of destiny, Psyche, whose body was frail and whose mind was weak, found the energy to take out the lamp, and grabbed a knife, with an audacity that is strange to her sex. **But once the mystery of the bed was made clear, she saw the most charming of beasts, delicious, Love himself, the god of grace, resting gracefully.** . . . Stunned by such a scene, unable to regain her senses, failing, all pale and trembling, Psyche fell on her knees, trying to conceal the blade in her own bosom. (*Met.* 5.21.3–5.22.3; translation ours)

In addition, we note that one of our tales, related by the female storyteller of the Middle Atlas (f 73), shares a key feature with the Apuleian narrative: it is the oil of the lamp that wakes up the male main character:

But, shaken by this bliss, all trembling, she almost fainted; but the lamp, either out of abominable perfidy or harmful envy, or perhaps it was craving to touch such a handsome body and kiss it, let a drop of oil fall from the tips of its flame on the right shoulder of the god. (*Met.* 5.23.4–5; translation ours)

Furthermore, the close relation between the narrative of Psyche and the oral tradition could explain why Apuleius' old woman (*anus*) engages in a kind of free improvisation related to the motif of the lamp ("Ah bold and reckless lamp, vile servant of love . . .").<sup>53</sup> It is worth noting that, in Kabylia, the oil lamp is actually a symbolic artifact that plays an important role during the wedding ritual.<sup>54</sup>

#### 4. THE "SEARCH FOR THE LOST HUSBAND": THE HEROINE'S INITIATION INTO THE SUPERNATURAL

The search for the lost husband is not specific to the Balkanic AT 425 A versions, as argued by Swahn and James R.G. Wright.<sup>55</sup> This episode occurs in

F, B, O and s. The abbreviated tales present us with a female main character, brought back to her father's home after an implicit repudiation (o1 229, o2 53). Tale f skips the episode of the search because the breaking of the sight taboo automatically brings about the arrival of the ogress, the mother-in-law of the heroine. It moves, thus, directly to the reunion motif (VI), which includes the tasks. The F narrative pays little attention to this reunion scene: the heroine simply follows her husband, who moves away in a human form through the forest (F 339). Rather than accumulating symbolic motifs of a more or less traditional nature, this version amplifies the ethical qualities of the heroine, highlighting her faithfulness and courage, so as to minimize the transgression that has just occurred: while her husband warns her of the dangers awaiting her in his mother's dwelling, the wife bravely exclaims, "I am your wife and I am staying with you" (F 339). Did the storyteller deliberately alter the tradition, or did she or he actually forget the usual motif?

In fact, it seems that B is the oldest version and that the two other tales—one from Kabylia (O) and the other from eastern Morocco (s)—more or less amount to expanded variants of it. According to this tradition, the starting point of the "search for the lost husband" is the metamorphosis of the male protagonist into a bird (see also sections 2 and 6), which precedes his flight (B 42). We may wonder, at this point, if Apuleius' insistence on Cupid's wings betrays the adaptation of the Berber bird metamorphosis: *Met.* 3.22.5: *Cupido pinnatus*; 4.30.4: *pinnatum illum*; 4.33.2: *pinnis uolitans*; 5.22.6: *alis quiescentibus extimae plumulae tenellae ac delicatae; uolatilis dei pinnae*; 5.24.2: *inuolauit proximam cupressum*; 5.24.5: *pinnis in altum se proripuit*; 5.25.1: *uolatus mariti*; 5.25.1: *remigio plumae*; 5.29.5: *istas pinnas*; 5.30.6: *pinnas*; 6.5.1: *maritum uolatilem*; 6.21.3: *refectis pinnis*; 6.21.4: *amator leuis in pinnas se dedit*.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, the Latin author underscores Cupid's ornithomorphic behavior, granting him the unparalleled attitude of a bird bothered by an intruder,<sup>57</sup> even before he rises high, lofty in the sky (*Met.* 5.24.5): "he flew to land on a cypress" (*Met.* 5.24.2). Certainly, the author's "winged Cupid" (*Met.* 3.22.5) is deeply rooted in Greco-Roman culture.<sup>58</sup> But Apuleius specifically uses the verb *inuolare*, which, according to the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, had never been applied previously to the flight of a god (cf. *Met.* 10.32.1: *Cupidines ueros de caelo uel mari inuolasse*). As a matter of fact, the word is often used to refer to birds of prey by prior Latin authors (Varro, *Rust.* 3.9.15, 3.11.3; Colum. 8.15.1). Hence, it is very likely that Apuleius has embedded here a Libyan allusion, echoing Berber folklore, at the very moment his text seems to be so typically Greco-Roman. This may be what we could label a cultural double entendre, attested elsewhere in Psyche's narrative.<sup>59</sup>

But let us return to the motif of the search for the husband as expressed in tale B. After a storm that lasts seven days and seven nights, symbolizing the husband's wrath, two complementary sequences develop. At first, Tiziri ("Moonlight"), the heroine, encounters the pastoral world of domestic

animals: she meets several shepherds tending their flocks, but they refuse to show her which road her husband has taken to escape her. Instead, they remind her that it is her fault she has lost her status as a wife (B 43–44). Later, Tiziri encounters entities from the wilderness that turn out to be true helpers insofar as they give positive information about the route taken by her runaway husband (B 44–45).<sup>60</sup>

Our heroine is then amazed to converse with a pair of springs, one that has dried up and one that is flowing with water. The dry spring explains (B 45): “On his way, Gold Bud refreshed in its waters [i.e., those of the running spring] not deigning to touch me.” This passage represents the dry spring as a victim of the husband’s supernatural powers. The husband’s supernatural and destructive powers over *physis* are also emphasized in a similar episode involving a pair of ash trees, in which a dead tree holds a similar discourse. This repeated narrative motif is, of course, the traditional feature of the initiatory teaching that the heroine has to undergo. For the young woman, it is a question of understanding what the supernatural power of her husband actually is, in order to correctly identify him and be able to find the dwelling of her mother-in-law. The symbolic nature of her errands is further emphasized by the plainness of the narrative style, which lacks a substantial narrative background (B 46): “Moonlight resumed her journey. She walked and walked and walked until she found a house. She knocked at the door. From the inside, a hoarse voice said: ‘Come in!’” This is the logic that underlies the search in tale B.

According to Swahn, the sequence of the “search for the lost husband” in Psyche’s narrative is not expanded at all and is made up only of Greco-Roman mythological items.<sup>61</sup> However, from the items we have just mentioned it is possible to discern how the oral tradition might have been adapted. Apuleius reverses the order of the elements of this oral version. The real helpers, that is to say, “the gentle stream” (*Met.* 5.25.2: *fluuius mitis*) and the god Pan (*Met.* 5.25–26), come first, while the goddesses Ceres and Juno, who refuse to help Psyche, intervene later (*Met.* 6.1–5). It is probably no coincidence that the heroine is tempted to commit suicide when she stands in front of the water, since, on the one hand, this river (*amnis*) is an amplified reminiscence of the modest spring found in tales B and s and, on the other hand, the two springs and both ash trees in tale B can also be interpreted as alternatives that symbolize the choice between life and death. At any rate, it is very likely that the oral archetype Apuleius knew included the episode maintained in B. Moreover, the mystical knowledge yielded by the natural entities in tale B is taken up in an extremely striking way by the speech of the god Pan, a divinity connected to the wilderness.<sup>62</sup> The ecphrasis (*Met.* 5.25.3: *complexus Echo montanam deam*, “embracing Echo, the goddess of the mountain”) that introduces this helper portrays him as a lustful figure, a kind of initiate into the religion of Eros.<sup>63</sup> Consequently, he is the most appropriate character to unveil the identity of the husband to the heroine and to initiate her into the extent of his power (*Met.* 5.25.6):

“Stop crying, leave your sorrow and, rather, offer your prayers to love, the greatest of all gods, and by your humble respects be worthy of the favor of this delicate and voluptuous youngster.”

##### 5. ON THE SIDELINES: THE HUSBAND INTERFERES, AND THE MOTHER-IN-LAW RESPONDS

In Apuleius’ narrative, the male protagonist does not intervene directly; the author only hints at the way he exerts an influence on the characters that assist the heroine. The Groningen commentary shows that this pattern reoccurs in each of the four tasks.<sup>64</sup> With regard to how Berber tales treat the motif of a series of tasks, we can observe that the interference of the supernatural husband is made explicit in the form of a magical action (F342, O 80–82, s 186), life-saving advice matched with a delegation of power (F 343–344, B 47–52, f 74) or a ploy (F 345–346, s 186). Apuleius’ narrative shows strong similarities to the oral tradition concerning the assistance provided by the male protagonist to the heroine, and it employs a similar narrative logic. The tale of Cupid and Psyche, however, differs from the oral tradition in one important regard: the consequences of the injury of the god. Cupid and Psyche live under the same roof without being able to meet, while the Berber spouses freely rendezvous in the absence of the mother-in-law. It can be argued that the author solved this narrative difficulty by resorting to allegory, shown in the nature of the male protagonist: Love is personified and acts from afar. Other important divergences from the oral tradition in Apuleius include mythographical and poetic intertexts, such as epigram and elegy.

In addition to the motif of a series of tasks, it is interesting to compare the mother-in-law’s response to the success of her daughter-in-law in Apuleius’ narrative with that in the Berber tradition. In the tale collected by Frobenius, the heroine’s mother-in-law, who is an ogress, simply acknowledges the value of her daughter-in-law after each task without comment. This ambiguity could be interpreted as either a form of stupidity (typical in Kabyle ogresses)<sup>65</sup> or a form of duplicitous hypocrisy: “You are a dexterous and wise woman” (F 342); “You are a very intelligent young woman” (F 343). On the other hand, as we have already seen, tale B preserves several archaic elements from the oral tradition. Thus, far from complimenting her daughter-in-law, the ogress systematically exclaims that “it is a trick of Gold Bud” (B 47, 49, 50, 51), emphasizing her son’s role in assisting the heroine. This suspicious attitude of the mother-in-law, which is found in the other two tales in the corpus that include a series of tasks, seems to correspond to the oldest oral tradition (O 80–81, s 74).

It is therefore not surprising to find this narrative option in the Apuleian tale when Venus exclaims: “This is not your work, vile creature, nor the accomplishment of those hands of yours, but rather his, the boy who fell in

love with you, to your misfortune and his too.”<sup>66</sup> She subsequently repeats this remark in a different form (*Met.* 6.13.3).

At the end of the third task, Venus’ accusation of Psyche introduces a new twist in the former’s discourse: she accuses Psyche, whom she considers merely the slavish concubine of her son, of witchcraft (“I am convinced now that you must be some high and mighty sorceress”).<sup>67</sup> This divergence from the Berber oral tradition can be explained as an attempt by Apuleius to add more excitement to the story; the narrative element of the heroine’s attempted murder also seems to be an innovation on Apuleius’ part, as no such episode is found in the Berber tradition (see section 3).<sup>68</sup> These departures from the oral tradition perform two narrative functions: first, the new *ethos* of the heroine motivates the explicitly lethal nature (the descent to the underworld) of the fourth task and, second, as a thematic variant, it introduces the end of the narrative sequence.<sup>69</sup>

## 6. THE TASKS OF THE HEROINE: SEED SORTING AND FEATHER COLLECTING

The folktales of North Africa that deal with the search for the lost husband (F, B, O, f, s) also contain tasks. The tasks Psyche is assigned have always been a central issue in the discussion regarding the extent to which Apuleius made use of folklore in his text.<sup>70</sup>

As the Table 2 shows, the main folktales F and B involve the same number of tasks as Apuleius’ narrative. Throughout universal folklore, there is no mandatory number of tasks, but the coincidence is striking. Moreover, our corpus as a whole includes four recurrent patterns, denoting the coherence of the tradition. We believe that the most informative ones are the seed sorting (B, O), of which pepper cleaning is a variant (s), and feather collecting (F, B, O, f, s). Seed sorting is a task that is well attested in Swahn’s universal corpus, although it is restricted to the Mediterranean and the Near East.<sup>71</sup> This does not appear to be proof of a specifically Libyan background, since it is found in only two Kabyle tales belonging to type AT 425 A. Nevertheless, these two occurrences are in fact crucial to corroborate the relation between the narrative of Apuleius and the Libyan tradition. Indeed, in both narratives, the helpers who intervene to assist the heroine are ants, which obey the orders of the supernatural husband:

<The ogress> hurried to the storeroom, brought a bag of wheat, a bag of barley and another one of beans, mixed them with semolina and made a huge heap in the middle of the room. When she had finished, she glared at Moonlight saying: “I’m going out. If I do not find the different elements separated as they were before, I will eat you as well as the ground on which you walk.” She stormed out, strangled by anger. Moonlight, frozen with fear, scratched the rear of her ear and

Table 2 The Tasks Faced by the Heroine

	F	B	O	f	s	Apuleius
Task 1	Cleaning the yard	Cleaning the yard and house	Sorting seeds	Watering the floor	Cleaning pepper	Sorting seeds
Task 2	Collecting feathers	Sorting seeds	Collecting feathers	Collecting feathers	Collecting feathers	Collecting golden fleece
Task 3	Returning the feathers	Collecting feathers	Cleaning the house	X	Crossing two scary supernatural rivers to fetch a utensil	Fetching water from the Styx
Task 4	Parting water and milk	Returning the feathers	X	X	X	Fetching Proserpina’s beauty

cried softly. She heard again Gold Bud whispering to her: “**Raise the middle slab, ants will come out . . .**” When Tseryel came back she was quite surprised to find the seeds duly sorted as if they had never been mixed. She said angrily: “Again, this is another trick of Gold Bud.” (B 48–49)

<The ogress> took large bags full of beans, others of chickpeas, peas, lentils, wheat and barley, mixed them up, then she threatened: “I’ll be back soon. If I do not find each cereal in a separate bag, I’ll eat you up and eat up even the ground you trod.” As soon as the ogress had gone out, her daughter-in-law began to sort out the seeds, crying. But years would not have sufficed to separate chickpeas from lentils, wheat from barley and peas. As she lamented while working feverishly, her husband entered. As soon as he saw the impressive heap of seeds to be sorted out, he said: “For a young bride, family visits are a curse!” Then, he took the ring, turned it, and soon **all the ants on earth appeared** and began to sort and part the seeds, arranging them into separate heaps. No sooner had the insects finished sorting than the ogress returned home. She was about to question the young woman when she saw the ordered heaps of seeds, meticulously lined up: wheat was on the right, barley on the left, chickpeas across from them, peas in a corner and lentils in another. She remarked out loud: “This a ploy of my son, the Airy Bird!” “Come on,” replied her daughter-in-law, “your son is away.” (O 80)

First off, it is to be pointed out that the list of the sorted seeds in B and O is similar to Apuleius’ list (*Met.* 6.10.1: *et frumento et hordeo et milio et papauere et cicere et lente et faba*, “wheat, barley, millet, poppy seeds, chickpeas, lentils, beans”). Second, in both tales, it is the supernatural husband who is behind the magic intervention of the ants, a detail Apuleius has kept (*Met.* 6.10.5: *miserta contubernalis magni dei*, “seized by pity for the mate of a powerful god”), since the helper acts out of respect for Cupid.<sup>72</sup>

From our point of view, the presence of these ants in Berber folktales of the type AT 425 A is fundamental, insofar as this helper is one of the motifs that Swahn has considered as resulting from Apuleius’ imagination.<sup>73</sup> In fact, their role in the text of Apuleius is a specifically Libyan element, even if ants are common in world folklore.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, it is on the basis of this clue in particular that Henri Basset relates Apuleius’ tale to the oral Berber tradition.<sup>75</sup> Indeed, the presence of the sorting ants is well attested in North African folklore: they sort grains into separate heaps in “The King’s Son with Six Keys” and colorful beads in “Maiden Safra Daughter of Elghozlane,” and an ant sifts flour in “The Wedding of the Ant.”<sup>76</sup> Finally, the author may have been familiar with this feature in the oral archetype, because ants play an important role in the mythical world of North Africa. For instance, an undoubtedly pre-Islamic creation myth collected by Frobenius shows an ant teaching men, by example, how to sort cereals and eat them.<sup>77</sup>

Feather collecting, which Swahn considers a Mediterranean task,<sup>78</sup> is found in every single tale of our corpus, which clearly shows that they belong to the same oral tradition. In addition, its pervasiveness in different parts of North Africa undoubtedly reveals its antiquity. Within the corpus, F and B are further distinguished as the most faithful witnesses of this tradition in the sense that a symmetrical task reversing the motif follows the task of the collection (F 343, B 49–50). It is in these two versions in particular that the clearest traces of the mythical dimension of the male protagonist are to be found. Indeed, when the wife has to collect feathers, she acts on behalf of her husband and addresses the birds saying, “Birds, listen to me, your master is sick” (F 343); or “Pluck up, pluck up, o bird, your king is naked!” (B 49).<sup>79</sup> In the first case, this appellation confirms the airy quality of the character’s name right from the initial characterization (F 335: “Whistle of the Rain”). In the second case, the name of the character, “King of Birds,” offers a mythical answer to any doubts the audience might have when the husband turns into a bird. This metamorphosis is also accompanied by meteorological phenomena related to “the Bird of the Storm” in tales o1 and o2.<sup>80</sup> Hence, it is possible to refute the old thesis held by folklorists, according to which the oral model of Apuleius had to include a reptilian male protagonist.<sup>81</sup>

## 7. CONCLUSION

We do not pretend that all of the comparative issues have been dealt with in this paper. For instance, it would be interesting to study the character of the mother-in-law as well as to analyze how the breaking of the taboo is introduced in the tales. Similarly, the magic dwelling of the spouses or the wind’s narratological role might deserve a closer look.

Yet we believe that, in spite of these omissions in our study, we have contributed a way to profitably exploit and go beyond *Quellenforschung*, which remains central for philologists. First off, it seems that the long tales, such as AT 425 A, represent the oldest version of the Berber folkloric tradition. Undoubtedly, within our corpus, tale B preserves a number of the most archaic aspects of the story, among which are the ornithomorphic divine nature of the male protagonist and the initiatory version of “the search for the lost husband” (motif V). These conclusions enable us to figure out what an ancient folkloric archetype looked like.

Parallel to this, we have noted that there are numerous similarities between Apuleius’ narrative and the Berber corpus. Regardless of the literary aspects of Cupid and Psyche, highlighted by Schlam,<sup>82</sup> among many others, the Apuleian narrative presents structural similarities to the Berber tradition. In addition, the analogy in the way key motifs are handled is even more striking. For instance, all the Berber tales collected here contain the breaking of the sight taboo (motif IV), even though tale f is the only one to

show the groom being wounded by the lamp oil. Also, the male protagonist is indeed a divine being, not a human victim of witchcraft (motif II). Hence, our study takes into consideration Schlam's most important objection to the framework established by Swahn and his followers.<sup>83</sup>

In view of all this, the North African corpus, even if it is not highly significant in terms of quantity, is more closely connected to the Apuleian narrative than any other folkloric tradition. Of all the answers given so far in regard to the folkloric origin of Apuleius' narrative, our Berber tales can be considered as providing the most relevant one. The process of adaptation that the ancient oral archetype has undergone in its written version from the second century CE seems to be dual, thus justifying the transdisciplinary study of the text. It is, on the one hand, an *aemulatio* that consists of turning a simple story into a complex literary narrative (consider, e.g., the use of Vergilian *interea* to relate the story from various points of view, as well as the numerous allusions to poetic and philosophical traditions), as current research always tends to highlight. On the other hand, one similarly discovers an *interpretatio* that consists of shifting the narrative from the Libyan cultural context to that of the imperial Roman culture, as we have endeavored to point out. The treatment of the male protagonist is singularly representative of this dual poetic mechanism. It is now possible to understand how the author's imagination transformed a Libyan deity known in the shape of a bird into an anthropomorphic winged god, well known in ancient iconography, thereby activating allusions to erotic poetry and Platonic philosophy.

But what do we make of Fehling's thesis that we mentioned in the introduction? Why should we exclude the possibility that the Berber tradition has been influenced by Apuleius' narrative?

First, many elements converge to show that the Berber tradition of AT 425 A is autonomous and local. No Berber version takes up the motif of the attempted murder of the husband by his spouse. It is easy to see how Apuleius has added this idea to the local tradition, borrowing it from Greek tragedy (or perhaps from the fictive universe of declamation). More generally, the Berber stories bear more resemblances to each other than to Cupid and Psyche. The tradition of our Berber tales extends into regions where the influence of the Latin language was weak, like the interior of Mauretania. The rivalry between the wife and her mother-in-law under the same roof, a motif common to all our Berber stories, is an ethnographic characteristic known in North Africa, which Plutarch mentioned in connection with a custom at Lepcis Magna.<sup>84</sup> Apuleius' narrative contains clear allusions to Berber beliefs, such as the mythic function of the ants (section 6) or of the reed (see note 56). The lamp to which the narratrix in Apuleius accords a special role constitutes an important element of the marriage ritual in Kabylia.

Finally, if we examine the possibilities of a cross-over from the world of letters to the oral world, it is hard to see how a complex literary story

like Cupid and Psyche could have influenced the Berber world as a whole between the third century and the beginning of Islamization in the eighth century. Indeed, rural populations spoke Libyan dialects with, at best, a mastery of Latin for basic communication.<sup>85</sup> Besides, the African process of Christianization brought about by the Latin-speaking elite would not have had much place for such a pagan story. And it is not, obviously, the learned allegorical version of Apuleius' text created by Fulgentius that could have had such a great impact. As for a diffusion by literate Muslims, the hypothesis is not credible. To conclude, Cupid and Psyche can be reasonably considered a Greco-Roman literary narrative based largely on a folkloric canvas of Libyan origin.<sup>86</sup>

## NOTES

1. We would like to thank the early readers of this paper, Daniel Vallat, Luca Graverini and Ellen Finkelppearl, for their remarks. We would also like to express our gratitude to Amina Plantade, who undertook the task of translating this paper, and to thank Roxane Plantade for her remarks.
2. Gsell 1913, 310. On the languages in ancient North Africa, see mainly Chaker 1980–1981, and Selden in this volume. A recent review of the linguistic situation in ancient Numidia can be found in a monumental thesis at the University of Barcelona: Múrcia Sánchez 2010, 1: 537–722. In the case of key literary figures such as Apuleius and Augustine, Múrcia Sánchez argues for an exclusively Berber environment (p. 26: “un entorn plenament amaziguitzat”).
3. H. Basset 1920, 114–115.
4. The way in which Grimal 1963, 6–24, sums up the folklore research without mentioning Weinreich's 1930 paper is rather typical.
5. GCA 2004, 2 n. 5.
6. Schlam 1992, 86; Schlam–Finkelppearl 2000, 135–140; Anderson 2000, 60.
7. Schlam 1992, 86: “Identification of Apuleius' narrative with the tale-type of the ‘monster mate’ is problematic. Here the husband, Cupid, is not a human who has been magically transformed, nor is his disenchantment part of the resolution.”
8. Swahn 1955, 27.
9. Fehling 1977.
10. Schlam 1981, 165; see also Schlam 1992, 88. Hansen 2002, 112: “Fehling's skepticism regarding oral tradition is so extensive that he scarcely allows even for the existence of international folktales, believing as he does that human memory is so limited that oral narrators must be constantly fed by written texts, which along with iconography constitute the only reliable means of transmitting information. This vision seems to me a caricature of the philological model, in which all knowledge is transmitted via written documents, which derive in turn from other written documents. It does not jibe with the experience of fieldworkers who have collected oral texts from illiterate narrators and from semi-literate narrators with little access to books, nor with the fact that good storytellers may recount tales that they heard decades earlier.”
11. Stramaglia 2010, 175.
12. Anderson 2000, 58; Ziolkowski 2002, 93; Renger 2006, 27–45; Graverini 2006; 2012, 95–110.
13. Papachristophorou 2008, 422; H. Basset 1920, 103–104.

14. Ustinova 2009, 160.
15. *Sic captivae puellae delira et temulenta illa narrabat anicula. sed astans ego non procul dolebam mehercules, quod pugillares et stilum non habebam, qui tam bellam fabellam prae-notarem.* (“And I—standing off to one side, not too far away—I was in anguish, believe you me, because I had neither steno books nor stylus to record such a beguiling fiction”; trans. Relihan 2007.) Ethnological note taking is actually an aspect of the method used by the investigator Herodotus, who, unlike Apuleius, does not mention graphic instruments. See Aly 1921 as to folklore collected by Herodotus. For Herodotus’ note taking, see, for example, Herodotus’ ironic authorial interventions in his narrative, collected by Lateiner 1989, 34, especially 4.195.2: “Whether this story is true, I do not know, I write what I’m told” (trans. Lateiner). In addition, the intervention of the *asinus*-narrator (*Met.* 6.25.1) echoes a previous allusion to historiographical practice: the arrival at the robbers’ lair, where all the embedded tales are told, is introduced by a meta-poetic sentence typical of the speech of historians (see GCA 1977, 55–56); *Met.* 4.6.1: *Res ac tempus ipsum locorum speluncaeque quam illi latrones inhabitabant descriptionem exponere flagitat* (“Now my narrative—and this free time too—fairly demands that I lay out in evidence before you a verbal picture, an ephrasis, of these locations and of that cave where the robbers were residing”; trans. Relihan 2007).
16. Aelius Theon, *Progymn.* 3: “As an exercise, *mythos* is treated in a variety of ways, for we state the fable and inflect its grammatical form and weave it into a narrative, and we expand it and compress it” (trans. Kennedy 2003). The Aesopic model mentioned in the text is “The Fox and the Crow” (Aesop 165 Chambry; Babrius 77 Perry; Phaedrus 13 Perry; the Apuleian text is found in Beaujeu 1973, 166–168, that is, the “false preface” to the *De deo Socratis*, usually considered part of the *Florida*; see Harrison 2000, 91–92). On *progymnasmata* in the *Florida*, see Lee 2005, 24–25.
17. On the fable as a Roman poetic genre, see Citroni 1991. The only clear evidence so far is the case of “The Eagle Wounded by an Arrow” (international motif U161) in Aesch. fr. 231a1 Mette: “Even so is the Libyan fable famed abroad: the eagle, pierced by the bow-spied shaft, looked at the feathered device, and said, ‘Thus, not by others, but by means of our own plumage, are we slain’” (trans. Hugh Lloyd-Jones in Smyth 1930); cf. Aesop 4 Halm (= 7 Chambry) and Babrius 185 Crusius (“An eagle, shot by an arrow tipped with bird feathers, exclaimed, ‘This is all the more painful, that I die by means of my own wings’”; trans. Perry 1965).
18. On early intermarriages between Greek men and Libyan women, see Marshall 2004, 127–130; Pindar, *Pyth.* 9.105–125; Call., *Hymn to Apollo* 85–86; on women’s role in transmitting Libyan culture, see Marshall 2004, 130–135.
19. Fr. 231a1 Mette; see above, n. 17.
20. Arist., *Rb.* 1393a; Aelius Theon, *Progymn.* 3: “Fables are called Aesopic or Libyan or Sybaritic . . .” (trans. Kennedy 2003).
21. Finnegan 1992, 166.
22. Swahn 1955, 48–51; Dermenghem 1945b. On Dermenghem’s work, see Boyer 1971; Lacoste-Dujardin 1977. Thompson 1946 did not really take into account the folklore of North Africa (see bibliography in Thompson 1946). And, in general, the international typology is European centered; Dundes 1997, 199: “it is only the Indo-European folktale which is the acknowledged delimited corpus covered.” Uther 2008, 941.
23. Megas 1977, 467.
24. Swahn 1955, 48–49.
25. Schlam 1992, 86.
26. Swahn 1955, 25–36.
27. Megas 1977, 468. Hansen 2002, 113 n. 2, also recalls that Aarne–Thompson 1961 expands Swahn’s classification to fifteen subtypes.
28. Frobenius 1922, 281–293. The tale was collected before World War I; see Braukämper 1987. In regard to its ethnological value, which was controversial at the start, see Lacoste-Dujardin 1998.
29. Weinreich 1930, 93: “Mir scheinen die Übereinstimmungen in wichtigen Grundzügen so stark zu sein, daß ein engeres Verhältnis der Kabylenform zur lateinischen vorauszusetzen ist.” Weinreich’s short study consists mainly of a long quotation and an abstract. This proves that, according to him, the mere reading of the Berber tale was convincing enough. Similarly, Dermenghem 1945b, 48, considers the same tale as “a very rich variant” of the Apuleian text.
30. Dermenghem 1945b, 60.
31. Galand-Pernet 2004, 460: “This Islamization of texts is strong, but there remain important fragments of archaic myths.”
32. We draw the reader’s attention to the fact that this study is merely a first approach to the folklore of North Africa in relation to Apuleius’ narrative. We ultimately intend our research to take into account some twenty tales that are now published.
33. Respectively: Frobenius 1922, 281–293 = Frobenius 1996, 334–347 (our references correspond to the French edition); Allioui 2002, 33–53; Nacib 1986, 75–82; Radi 2009, 73–74; Bezzazi 1993, 3: 184–188 (tales heard in both Moroccan Arabic and Berber); Amrouche 1971, 223–229; Allioui 2008, 41–53. It is interesting to note that the Berber specialist Vermondo Brugnattelli (2005) has drawn a comparison between the tale of Psyche and two Berber tales (“Gold Bud” and Amrouche’s version of “The Bird of the Storm”).
34. On the ritualized circumstances of oral Berber narration, see H. Basset 1920, 102–105; Dermenghem 1945a, 209–214. On the problem of the designation of oral genres in Berber resulting from dialectal and regional variations, see Merolla 2006, 104–107.
35. Múrcia Sánchez 2010, vol. 3, map 6.
36. Swahn 1955, 24–36.
37. It is significant in this regard that Megas 1977, 469–471, does not mention any specific Greek version of subtype A that could be fully compared to the ancient text. He confines himself to quantitative considerations (eighty-nine relevant tales in the Greek Mediterranean) without making any genuine philological assessment. The same vagueness regarding the philological aspect is found in Papachristophorou 2008, 423.
38. F 334 indicates p. 334 in the F tale text. See n. 33 for full references.
39. Rivière 1882, 215: “A man had a wife as beautiful as the moon, who in turn had a daughter more beautiful than the moon. She never separated from her and was jealous of her.”
40. The metamorphosis can also occur from the outset, as in the version from eastern Morocco, where the entity is a spindle, carried by the heroine, which changes into a man under her eyes (s 185).
41. See H. Basset 1920, 137: “The fairy sometimes looks like the spirit of the tree or the spirit of the water.” In fact, the introductory motifs in tale B differ from those in tales F and O because the motifs in tale B are abridged versions of an autonomous tale known throughout North Africa, in Berber (Stumme, 1895, 73–77; R. Basset 1897, 290–300) and Arabic (Légy 1926, 43–47).

42. Later, the female protagonist says to her mother: "Then, I only saw a gold bud that turned red and was talking to me" (B 42). Consequently, the reader is made to understand the meaning of the character's name, which is naively used by the young bride. See section 3 for more on B's naming strategy.
43. On the sight taboo in Apuleius and folklore, see Swahn 1955, 374: "The breaking of the taboo is a typical example of the simple sight taboo which is traditional in the modern Italian tradition of Aa 425 A but which is lacking in the Greek." In contrast, Megas 1971, 90, among his eighty-nine Greek tales of subtype A, finds only four versions that include the sight taboo (no. 64, "The Fisherman's Daughter," Phanaitika; no. 97, "The Green-Gold Eagle," Athens; no. 214, "The Golden Eagle," Libatho; no. 437, "O Kundo tou Bergadorou," Apulia).
44. Lancel 1961; De Filippo 1990; GCA 2004, 3 n. 9; more references in Kirichenko 2008.
45. Here we do not have space to analyze the context that leads the heroine to break the sight taboo, but only the narratives that follow it.
46. Our translation of Frobenius 1922, 285: "Die junge Frau stellte sich dann neben den Ölleuchter einen Topf. Das Licht der jungen Frau brannte abends noch, als es wie stets klopfte und die Stimme von draußen sprach: 'Lösche das Licht aus.' Die junge Frau löschte das Licht nicht aus, sondern sie stülpte einen Topf darüber. Asphor'ulehöa kam im Dunkeln herein. Er streckte sich auf sein Lager. Er schlief ein. Die junge Frau hörte an den regelmäßigen Atemzügen, daß ihr Gatte schlief. Vorsichtig hob sie den Topf in die Höhe und beleuchtete ihren Gatten. Die junge Frau erschrak, so schön war Asphor'ulehöa. Noch nie hatte sie einen so schönen Jüngling gesehen. Seine ganze Gestalt war aber bedeckt mit ganz kleinen Kinderchen (ein Mann erklärt, es wären Malaika gewesen, also arabisch Engel); sie saßen immer zu zweien zusammen und waren sehr emsig beschäftigt mit ihren kleinen Händen."
47. "On the already lit press" means that the female character has put a lamp in it. Cf. *Met.* 5.20.2–3: *lucernam . . . subde aliquo claudentis aululae tegmine*.
48. This motif is also present in "Caftan of Love" (subtype AT 425 K for Swahn), a tale collected in Arabic in Fez, around the Berber Middle Atlas (Dermenghem-El Fasi 1926, 232): "When she was sure that he was sleeping heavily, she took the candle from her pocket, and brought it close to the face of the djinn. She saw a handsome young man, whose eyes were closed and whose chest heaved regularly under a silk caftan. As she had a close look at his clothes, she noticed that the buttonholes had a small padlock with a tiny key. Driven by curiosity, she activated the lock and half opened the caftan . . . and here she found herself in front of a staircase that took her to a big house. Going down the stairs, she saw a room filled with gold ingots, then another room filled with gold dust, and then another one that was full of all kinds of precious stones. Having visited all the rooms she went up the stairs and closed the lock. But out of clumsiness, a drop of wax fell from the scorching hot candle, which was still in her hand, on the face of her husband. He woke up, all annoyed, guessing what had happened."
49. "The bird spread out its wings and opened like a bud. A young man came out, beautiful as the rising sun" (B 53).
50. "He said to her: 'You have humiliated me through guile, but I took the commitment to always protect you.' Having said these words, he turned into a horse, and took her to her family. The sisters and their father then organized a feast which lasted seven days and seven nights" (O 82). Normally, the return of the heroine to her parents would be a sign of punishment, but here the meaning of the motif is reversed by the addition of the feast.
51. The same anthropomorphism is found in "Caftan of Love" (Dermenghem-El Fasi 1926, 232).
52. The handling of the lamp developed in F is subjected to a narrative ellipsis. But the actions of Psyche, though implicit in this passage, are indicated previously by one of the sisters: *Met.* 5.20.2–3: *lucernam . . . subde aliquo claudentis aululae tegmine* ("place a lamp beneath the cover of a little pot to cover it"); 5.20.4: *postquam . . . altum soporem flare coeperit* ("when he has already started to sleep deeply"; trans. GCA 2004, 255).
53. On the narratrix intervening at this stage of the narrative, see Van Mal-Maeder-Zimmerman 1998, 87: "In 5.23 (121, 13–16) she reacts very emotionally to the accident of the lamp which burns Cupid by spilling hot oil. She scolds the lamp in an eloquent apostrophe"; also GCA 2004, 288: "Apparently, the *anus*-narratrix is alone responsible for the lengthy excursus on the *lucerna*."
54. Makilam 2007, 32: "In the rites of traditional marriage the young Kabyle woman holds a lit lamp made of clay in her hand, and is followed by a procession that accompanies her from the parental domain to her new home." Evidence of this ritual in folktales, for instance, in Rabdi 2006, 86: "the hen . . . reached to the bride, flew off to the lamp, and threw it down by its broad wings."
55. Swahn 1955, 244; Wright 1971, 276.
56. On 5.22.6 *uolatilis dei pinnae*, see GCA 2004, 279; on 5.25.1 *remigio plumae*, see GCA 2004, 301–302.
57. Quignard 1993, 15: "Le daimôn Éros devient oiseau. Cupido se pose sur la branche d'un cyprès." *Contra* Wright 1971, 276: "Cupid's flight with Psyche as a temporary appendage is strikingly described in Apuleius (*Met.* 5.24.1). His perching on a tree to address Psyche (*ibid.* 2) is strongly reminiscent of this motif, but the idea of the winged Cupid is so normal that there may be no folk-influence here." There is nothing on this aspect of the text in GCA 2004, 296–297, probably because no parallel is to be found in Greco-Roman literature.
58. Cf., e.g., Plato, *Phdr.* 252b; Propertius 2.12.14, Ovid, *Am.* 2.7.27. For the Cupid iconography, see Gantz 2004, 21.
59. A parallel to this kind of hardly detectable cultural double entendre can be found in the reed episode when the reed refers to "my sacred waters" (*Met.* 6.12.2: *meas sanctas aquas*). There is a metaphoric way to deal with this possessive (GCA 2004, 456), inasmuch as the reed can be the spokesperson of the river. But the reed is itself a divine entity in the Berber world (Gélard 2007) and a helper endowed with supernatural powers in Berber tales (e.g., Rivière 1882, "H'ab Sliman," or Frobenius 1996, tale 24), which allows us to read the text literally. Moreover, the reed as a single vatic singer seems unparalleled in Greco-Roman literature; reeds are normally said to talk or sing collectively under the action of a wind: see, for instance, Ovid, in *Met.* 10.191–194, where a *lucus* of *barundines* betrays Midas' secret.
60. Both stages presented in B are condensed in another Kabyle tale, which empties the episode of its symbolic meaning: "Along the way, she asked stones, brooms, shepherds: 'Have you not seen the bird of the air?' Someone has passed by here, indeed. It was certainly he that they all had seen, but no one dared speak his name" (O 79). Tale s includes only the second stage, connected to the wilderness, in terms very close to those of B: "She saw a dry tree and said: 'Tree, why are you dry?' 'Seffar lhwa passed by, he did not talk to me, and he did not even sit in my shade,' replied the tree. She went her way and found a source whose water was dirty, she said: 'Source, why is your water dirty?' 'Seffar lhwa passed by and he did not drink my water and he

- did not do his ablutions,' replied the source. The girl continued to walk and found another source whose water was clear, she said: 'Source, why is your water so clear?' 'Seffar lhwa passed by, he drank my water and he made his ablutions.' 'Where is he?' asked the girl. 'There, under the vine,' replied the source" (s 187–188).
61. Swahn 1955, 274.
  62. GCA 2004, 301.
  63. The Arcadian scene that Apuleius depicts might come from a work of art that has been lost and to which several epigrams make reference (cf., e.g., *Anth. Pl.* 154); see GCA 2004, 303. From our point of view, what is important is that the author has selected a variant from the mythological tradition that makes Pan a happy lover: see GCA 2004, 304.
  64. GCA 2004, 302, on *Met.* 5.25.2: "Although the previous sentence suggests that Psyche has lost her Lover forever, from here on there is a suggestion that the power of the God of Love pervades everything around her and will remain with her throughout her errands."
  65. Lacoste-Dujardin 1970, 199.
  66. *Met.* 6.11.2: *Non tuum, inquit, nequissima, nec tuarum manuum istud opus, sed illius, cui tuo, immo et ipsius malo placuisti.*
  67. *Met.* 6.16.2: *Iam tu quidem magna uideris quaedam mihi et alta prorsus malefica.*
  68. It is also possible that he deliberately recalls a northern Mediterranean folk motif. See GCA 2004, 486–487; Megas 1971, 111–112.
  69. This twofold effect is also highlighted by the emphatic style, as well as the lexical innovation (*malefica* as a female substantive); see GCA 2004, 487.
  70. On the relations between Apuleius' tasks and universal folklore, see Swahn 1955, 375.
  71. Swahn 1955, 375. The motif of "grain sorting" is encoded as VI A 3b (p. 253).
  72. See GCA 2004, 302.
  73. Swahn 1955, 375.
  74. Klíma 1977, 448–453.
  75. H. Basset 1920, 114: "It is assumed that a number of folktales have existed in North Africa since Roman times, at least, because they are attested by classical antiquity and are unknown to Oriental peoples who have settled in Berberia: the theme of Psyche's task, to sort the grains from a huge mound, assisted in her work by ants, is one of those."
  76. Respectively, in Delheure 1989, 34, 92; and R. Basset 1897, 51.
  77. Frobenius 1921, 61.
  78. Swahn 1955, 254. This motif is encoded as VI A 3c by the author.
  79. In the story from eastern Morocco, this mythical identity is obliterated: the supernatural husband visits "the master of birds," who is himself a bird (s 186). Even if tale O is called "The Bird of the Air," it attempts right from the initial characterization to conceal the protagonist's ornithomorphic character. It is therefore not surprising not to find a mythical appellation.
  80. "It flew into the sky in heavy rain, thunder, blinding lightning and wind" (B 42).
  81. Friedländer 1910, 1: 546–547; Swahn 1955, 374: "The snake-motif is probably the primary one"; Wright 1971, 274; Hansen 2002, 111. *Contra* Fehling 1977, 36–37; Sandy 1999, 113.
  82. Schlam 1992, 82–83.
  83. Schlam 1992, 86. See our introduction.
  84. Plutarch, *Coniugalia Praecepta* 143 A–B; on Kabyle mothers-in-laws' warnings to brides, see Lacoste-Dujardin 1985, 133–135. A Kabyle proverb says,

"Yesbedd awal n tmettut, yerza awal n yemma-s" ("He <the husband> has supported his wife's word and neglected his mother's"); cf. Ait Ahmed-Slimani 1996, 59. This proverb can be applied as much to Cupid as to the Berber main male characters.

85. The linguistic gap between elite Latin speakers and the rest of the people is shown in Adams 2007, 574: "There is marked social variation in the Latin extant in African Latin, ranging from the artificial literary style of Apuleius to the crude use of formulaic language in the Albertini tablets and Bu Njem ostraca."
86. This is the implicit conclusion drawn by Weinreich 1930, 94: "So würde ich es also für möglich halten, daß eine der schlichten, antiken Fassungen von Amor und Psyche, eine reine Märchenform, sich auf dem Boden des alten Numidien im Grundzügen bewahrt und nun allmählich zur heutigen 'Kabylen'-Form gewandelt hat, mit den immer erfolgenden Anpassungen an Umwelt und Vorstellungswelt des neuen Volkes. Daß Apuleius mit seiner Fassung nicht auf der schlichten fabula-Form beruht und sie erst auffüllt und umgestaltet, ist selbstverständlich."

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## Part III

# Theoretical Approaches

## 10 Apuleius and Afroasiatic Poetics

*Daniel L. Selden*

*Magna his libido coitus et ob hoc maribus ira. Africa haec maxime spectat, inopia aquarum ad paucos amnes congregantibus se feris. Ideo multiformes ibi animalium partus, uarie feminis cuiusque generis mares aut ui aut uoluptate miscente: unde etiam uulgare Graeciae dictum semper aliquid noui Africam adferre.*

—(Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia* 8.17)

### 1. AFRICA [ŠD LWBYM]

. . . a point of departure, perhaps, a premise, one that would make it possible—perhaps, here and now, yet only *ex hypothesi*—to rethink Apuleius not simply as a Roman but also—yet always already—as an African:<sup>1</sup>

In this world, no culture is ever totally homogeneous. All societies, insofar as they do not thrive in a closed vessel, come, at one moment or another in their history, to know diverse cultural influences, more or less numerous, according to the amplitude and the profundity of the contacts which they entertain with their neighbors. . . . Roman Africa, far from being an exception to this rule, was one of the regions most favorable to such mélanges, owing in part to its geographic situation and in part to the vagaries of its history, which made it a veritable crossroads for multiple influences, both from the Orient (from Phoenicia, above all, but also Egypt, Asia, and Syria) and from the Occident (Sicily, Magna Graecia, Rome, and the western provinces of the Roman Empire). One realizes from these conditions, to what extent the question of African [culture] constitutes among the most complex of enigmas, owing to the number of different cultures represented there.<sup>2</sup>

France has entrusted every *baccalauréat* with the responsibility to know this complex of enigmas, even as France—itself never totally homogeneous—continues its neocolonial investment in المغرب,<sup>3</sup> which we too, more or less numerous, according to the amplitude and the profundity of the contacts that

each of us entertains with the history that *nuestra América* shares, then and now, with precolonial Africa, witness as our responsibility, then and now, to know this, then and now, as a condition of the possibility of a recuperation, here and now, of a “Lucius Apuleius” المغربي<sup>4</sup> perhaps . . .

### 1.1. Demography

. . . *mixtum Punicum Afris genus* . . . (Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 21.22.3)

According to the archaeological record, Libyic peoples first settled north-western Africa (Libya) in the eighth millennium BCE. Phoinician colonization of the area began in the ninth century, followed by Roman conquest in 149 BCE. Just as Q. Ennius boasted that he had three hearts in his breast: Greek, Oscan, and Latin, so Apuleius was born into a world comprised of three main ethnic groups: Libyic, Punic, and Italic, all of which—despite centuries of mutual interaction—remained anthropologically distinct. Libyacs and *Poeni* belong to separate branches of the Afroasiatic peoples, while the Latins were an Italic tribe descended from the Indo-Europeans. In addition, Greek colonists and Egyptian traders also settled in the area so that, for purposes of demographic analysis, it becomes possible to resolve this “most complex of enigmas” into two principal ethnic stocks that met along the ancient North African coast and there commingled: Afroasiatic (Libyic/Punic/Egyptian), on the one hand, and Indo-European (Italic/Greek), on the other—although each group continued to bear the stamp of its own historical identity through idiosyncratic forms of cultural expression. The Libyic population comprised—as Berbers do today—several distinct tribes (Massylii, Masaesyli, Maxyes, etc.), whose geographical distribution remained much the same before, as well as under, Roman administration.

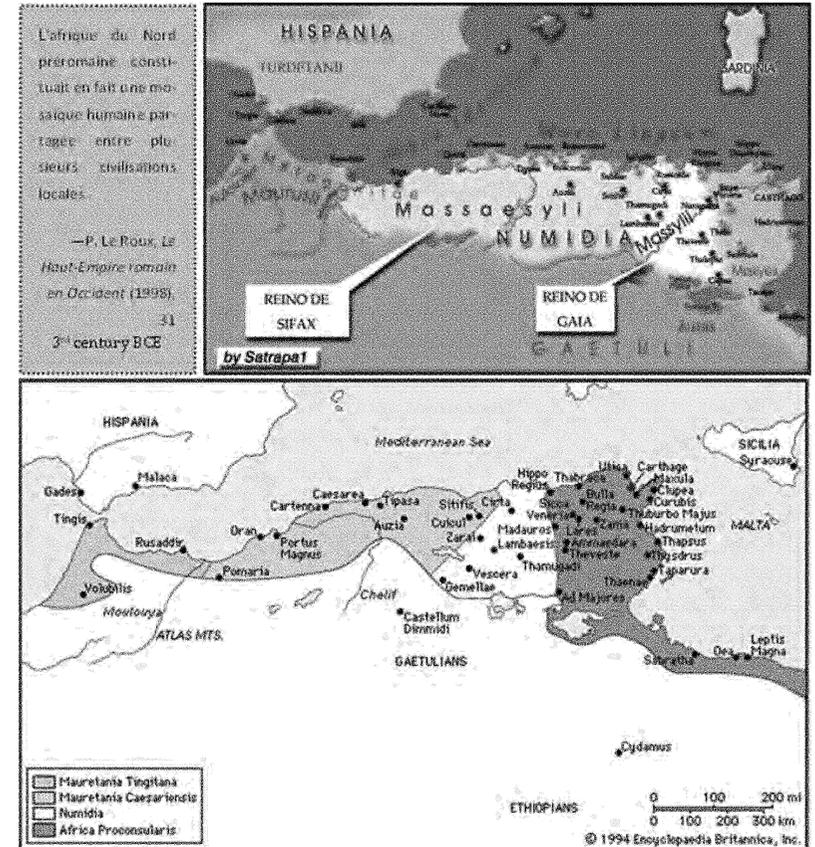


Figure 3 The provinces of Africa

The Libyans belong to a powerful, formidable, brave, and numerous people; a true people like so many others the world has seen—like the Arabs, the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans. The men who belong to this family of peoples have inhabited the Magrib since the beginning. (Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*)

- Nomadic Libyan tribes enter the historical record in the thirteenth century BCE in Egyptian inscriptions
- Meshwesh Libyan Dynasties (XXV–XXVI) rule over Egypt 943–734 BCE
- Indigenous Libyan kingdoms (third century BCE): Maurusii, Massaesyli, Massylii
- Kingdom of Numidia: 202–46 BCE

Despite this intractable diversity, however, it remains possible to distinguish, in turn, two main types of discourse about the population of the ancient *Magrib*, one dominant—which is to say either Greek or Roman, which presents itself, then as well as now, as a spurious unity, a united front, against all evidence of internal fracture to the contrary—and one deliberately diverse, which we can only glean from the extant monuments—literary or otherwise—of the several provincial cultures that flourished in the region: Berber, Punic, and Egyptian, which have never claimed anything like historical affinity or cohesion.

Most familiar—at least to post-Enlightenment students of classical antiquity—is what we might call the “Romanocentric” view of North

Romano centric view: Discourse of Rome

ROMANI VS. BARBARI

*Barbarus hic ego sum, quia non intellegorulli . . .*

—Ovid, *Tristia* 5.10

African demography; the other—let us call it “Afrocentric”—emerges from the indigenous artifacts themselves and not—in the first instance—from what Greeks or Romans wrote about other North African peoples. The Greek adage πᾶς μὴ Ἑλληὴν βάρβαρος (“Every non-Hellene is a barbarian”) sums up the hegemonic point of view. Herodotus, the Great Original of Greek and Roman historians and ethnographers alike, divided up the world between Hellenes, on the one hand, and barbarians, on the other—a distinction already implicit in the *Odyssey*, books 5–12, and largely isomorphic with the opposition civilized/uncultured. So Herodotus’

*Verum enimvero ut, quatenus possum, de uniuersitate quod sentio breuiter absoluiam, elementorum inter se tanta concordia est, aeris, maris atque terrae, ut admirari minus deceat, si illis eadem incommoda soleant ac secunda contingere, particulatim quidem rebus ortus atque obitus adferentia, uniuersitatem uero a fine atque initio uindicantia. Sed quibusdam mirum uideri solet, quod, quum ex diuersis atque inter se pugnantibus elementis mundi natura conflata sit, aridis atque fluxis, glacialibus et ignitis, tanto rerum diuortio nondum sit eius mortalitas dissoluta. Quibus illud simile satisfaciet, cum in urbe ex diuersis et contrariis corporata rerum inaequalium multitudo concordat; sunt enim pariter dites et egentes, adolescens aetas permixta senioribus, ignaui cum fortibus, pessimi optimis congregati.*

—Apuleius, *De mundo* 19

Afrocentric view: Discourse of the provinces

*At ego tibi . . . uarias fabulas conseram . . .*

—Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 1.1.1

Ἱστορίη aims to record the “great and marvelous deeds” (ἔργα) wrought by men, τὰ μὲν Ἑλλησι τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα (“some by Hellenes, others by barbarians”).<sup>5</sup> Cn. Naevius, author of the *Bellum Punicum*, Romanized the phrase, in turn, in a dramatic fragment: *Grai atque barbari*—by which he meant to cover the totality of mankind.<sup>6</sup> By the Late Republic, moreover, Hellenizing Romans so stressed their affinity with the Greeks that the Latin loanword *barbarus* came to indicate anyone who was not a Greek or Roman. Hence Cicero: *non solum Graecia et Italia, sed etiam omnis barbaria commota est* (“not only Greece and Italy, but the entire barbarian world is in commotion”).<sup>7</sup> As a hierarchized, binary opposition, Greco-Roman/*barbari* came to function as one of the mainstays in the construction of Greco-Roman thought or—if you will, as Martin Heidegger preferred to put it—of “Western” metaphysics.<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of the imperial administration of Apuleius’ world, there were effectively, then, three types of persons: Romans and Greeks, over and against *barbari*, not a sufficiently refined distinction to account for the cultural diversity of North Africa, hence the continued slippage we find in Latin literature between *Poeni* and *Libyci*, which Ovid and Lucian, for example, use as if they could be interchanged.

### 1.2. Language

*Id oppidum ab Sidoniis conditum est . . . Eius ciuitatis lingua modo conuorsa conubio Numidarum; legum cultusque pleraque Sidonica . . .*

(Sallust, *Bellum Iugurthinum* 78.1–4)

Language often serves as the false double of demography. Thus, the elder Pliny’s contention that the names (*nomina*) of the Libyan peoples and their cities constitute *ineffabilia*—be they in Latin or in Greek—turns out to be just another way of saying that the *Libyci* and *Afri* remain *barbari*, whose native tongues he does not even consider taking the trouble to master.

The Greeks have given the name of Libya to Africa, and have called the sea that lies in front of it the Libyan Sea. It has Egypt for its boundary, and no part of the earth is there that has fewer gulfs or inlets, its shores extending in a lengthened line from the west in an oblique direction. The names of its peoples, and its cities especially, cannot possibly be pronounced with correctness, except by the aid of their own native tongues. Its population, too, for the most part dwells only in fortresses.

—Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia* 5.1

Egyptian and Greek aside, however, the Apuleian world conversed primarily in three languages, with varying degrees of proficiency, depending on the speaker: Libyac and Punic, as well as Latin, which had no particular purchase except that it functioned as the language of official administration: in fact, Augustine, who at times had to preach in Punic or Libyac to make himself understood, gives us good reason to believe that Latin had no more currency or cachet in the Roman provinces of Africa and Numidia than it had in Dacia or Syria.

North Africa was a land of three languages, Berber (Libyan), Punic, and Latin, in order of their age in the country. . . . What is known of their relation with each other . . . and of their comparative vitality, is best interpreted by assuming a very wide prevalence of bilingualism, Punic and Berber, with Latin strong in the elite of the North African Provinces.  
—MacMullen 1966

In fact, Roman Africa is best seen as a site of linguistic interface, most importantly between the first waves of Afroasiatic-speaking settlers, followed some time later by the advent of the Roman colonists.

Since all three of the languages were not only spoken during Apuleius' lifetime but also widely written, we are dealing with two distinct factors—trilingualism and triscripturality, which by no means constitute the same phenomenon. Since each of these languages has its own peculiar history and profile, what follows constitutes a short dossier on each, in the order in which they established themselves in the region.

**Libyac/Berber**

From epigraphic evidence it is clear that in [Numidia Proconsularis] the vast majority of the population continued to speak Libyac through the first century CE. The language remained alive at least until the fifth century CE.<sup>9</sup>

[In the second century BCE,] the Libyan language and script were gradually coming into their own as official forms of expression [which have persisted up through today]. There was an obvious literate component of the urban population which expressed itself in Berber and not in Punic. How far the use of the Libyan alphabet spread into the countryside is evident from the distribution of the inscriptions: many are found in the wilder areas along the Tunisian-Algerian border, and the vast majority come from rural rather than urban contexts. Libyac inscriptions are found in areas where either Punic or Roman epigraphy is also present, and it appears to have developed

concurrently. . . .

[Overall,] the use of the Libyan alphabet and language appears assertive and symbolic rather than functional, [although] all Berber states [have been] essentially bilingual and bicultural and put this duality to good use.<sup>10</sup>

⊙	⊖	⊗	⊗ <sup>u</sup>	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗
yā	yāb	yāg	yāg <sup>u</sup>	yād	yād	yāy	yāf	yāk	yāk <sup>u</sup>	yāh
[a]	[b]	[g]	[g <sup>u</sup> ]	[d]	[d]	[y]	[f]	[k]	[k <sup>u</sup> ]	[h]
⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗
yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā
[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]
⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗
yā	yāh	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā	yā
[a]	[h]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]

Figure 5 Libyac script

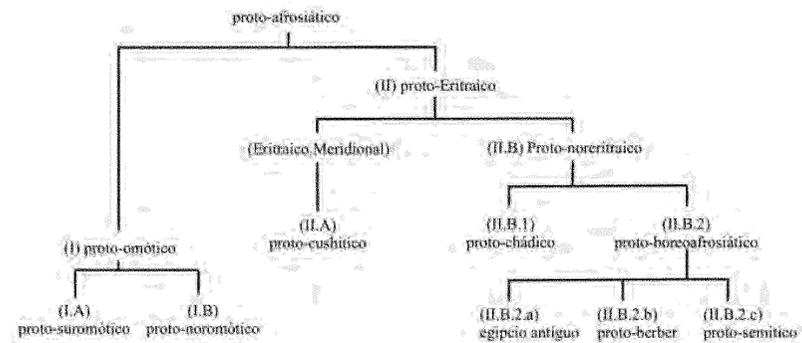


Figure 4 Tree of Afro-Asiatic languages

**Punic**

What emerges from the bilingual and neo-Punic inscriptions which have survived from Africa is a prolonged vitality of the Punic language well into the Empire, not only in rural areas but also in the cities. [In fact,] the bilingual inscriptions reveal tell-tale signs of a developing sense of a double identity among Punic speakers, who remained African [?] but were sometimes concerned to present themselves as Roman as well. . . . [Bilingual funeral] inscription provide an illustration of two languages being used to convey the same basic information in independent ways appropriate to the conventions of the two funerary traditions. The marks of honor, whatever they were, were specific to one culture, and no real effort was made to find an exact Latin correspondent at this point. . . . [T]he diversity suggests that bilingualism [?] was spread across a fairly

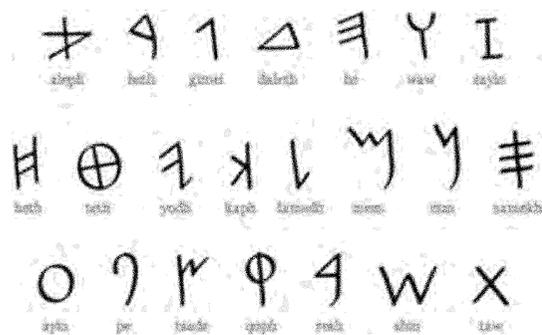


Figure 6 Punic script

broad social/educational spectrum.<sup>11</sup>

Karthago's ultimate revenge on its executioners was the extraordinary persistence of its language. Of course, the fall of Karthago brutally interrupted the practice of official writing of Punic. But . . . a cursive "neo-Punic," which was increas-

ingly altered and thus increasingly difficult to decipher, continued to be used until nearly the end of the first century AD. . . . In the end, the skill of writing disappeared, but orally the language stayed alive. People still spoke Punic, even if they no longer wrote it, or rather, it went on being written but in Latin characters or, more rarely, Greek letters. In the middle of the third century AD, soldiers posted at Bu Ngem . . . spoke a sort of pidgin made up of Punic mixed with Latin, which they sometimes transcribed on ostraka or scratched on the walls of the barrack-rooms.<sup>12</sup>

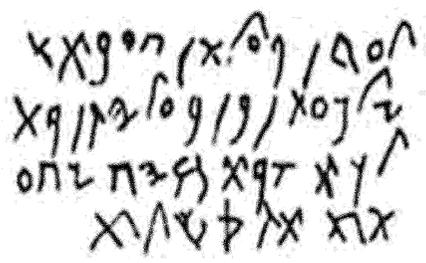


Figure 7 Cursive Neo-Punic

**Latin**

[Testimonia] show that in antiquity itself African Latin was perceived as having distinctive characteristics. If one looks beyond the high literary [compositions] . . . to more mundane works such as medical texts and non-literary documents, one finds that it is indeed possible to attribute certain texts to Africa on linguistic grounds, and to identify some features of local Latin. . . . I will address [here] the question that is the title of Lancel's paper (1985): Was there Africitas? The answer will be affirmative. . . . Punic, Libyan, or other African elements penetrated

Latin particularly in rural areas. African Latin is also remarkable for its social or educational diversity. On the one hand Africa produced many

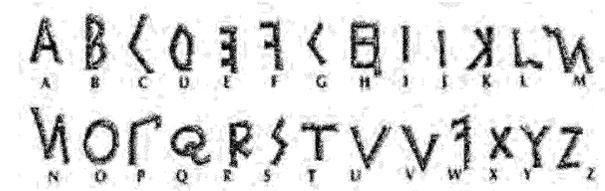


Figure 8 Latin alphabet

writers of literary style who were untouched by local influences. But on the other hand there are extant several texts and documents from the hand of writers who had

not had a literary education (!), and these reveal marked intrusion of vernacular loan words into more popular varieties of the language.<sup>13</sup>

The household Augustine grew up in was likely not entirely monolingual, with linguistic and social fault lines running in many directions. In the course of his life, Augustine would find himself in many different moments of linguistic differentiation and confrontation. His Latin was the Latin of Africa, not Italy; it was Latin and not Greek; it was upper-class Latin and not vernacular . . . ; it was Latin and not Punic; it was Latin and not Berber; it was Latin, marking him out as a Roman against whatever barbarian languages (!) may have come his way. . . . So to speak of "Latin" in Augustine's time is to speak of a complicated thing.<sup>14</sup>

Both James Noel Adams and James Joseph O'Donnell remain primarily concerned with the purity of the Latin spoken in North Africa and the social standing of its speakers. Educated writers, on their account, produced "high literary" compositions in a Latin uncontaminated by "barbarian languages": only "mundane works . . . and non-literary documents" by men of little learning, in particular from rural areas, show signs of *Africitas*. Thus, whenever Berber or Punic words "penetrate" Latin prose or poetry, we can be sure that we are dealing with less literate versions of the language. This position—which we should not hesitate to identify as neo-colonialist—remains enormously convenient, if not entirely self-serving, insofar as it implies that modern classicists—including documentary historians—need not concern themselves overmuch with Libyic or Punic, at least in any serious manner, since at best we are dealing with artifacts that deserve little to no attention.

In his defense *Pro se de magia*, however, Apuleius undercuts this neocolonialist perspective. To the contrary, he indicates that even for *uiri honesti* in

Roman Africa, the ability to express oneself in fluent and “unadulterated” Latin was neither a necessity nor a desideratum for all people. Thus, Apuleius stresses that his own stepson, Sicinius Pudens, “never speaks anything but Punic, even if he has a smattering of Greek by way of his mother. He does not desire to speak Latin, nor is he able (*potis*)” (*Apol.* 98.8). From this we can draw at least three conclusions: first, it is apparent that the average citizen of Africa Proconsularis—even one addicted to Roman pastimes such as the gladiatorial games—could get along perfectly well in African society by speaking only Punic, which suggests that at no point was it absolutely necessary for the average African to be conversant in Latin.

*Ipsē domi tuae rector, ipse familiae dominus, ipse magister conuiuio. In ludo quoque gladiatorio frequens uisitor; nomina gladiatorum et pugnas et uulnera plane quidem ut puer honestus ab ipso lanista docetur. Loquitur nunquam nisi Punice et si quid adhuc a matre graecissat; enim Latine loqui neque uult neque potest.*  
 —Apuleius, *Pro se de magia* 98.7

Second, fluency in Latin, much less Greek, remained the province of a relatively thin layer of the social and political elite, so that in terms of “cultural capital” Latin was, in fact, a luxury language. Third, and most important for the purposes of the argument here, this passage constitutes proof that Apuleius—at least insofar as he represents himself to the African public—spoke fluent Punic since, elsewhere in the speech, he makes it clear that he conversed regularly with his stepson. What is odd about Apuleius, then, from a North African perspective, is not that he could hold a conversation in Punic but that he could also do so in Latin.

Belonging to a language is undoubtedly not comparable to any other mode of inclusion: for example, to limit ourselves to a few elements, belonging to a language does not compare, at first sight, with inclusion in the space of citizenship or nationality; natural, historical, or political borders; geography of geo-politics; soil, blood, or social class. As soon as these totalities are overdetermined, or rather contaminated by the events of language (let us say instead, by the events of the mark), which they all just as necessarily imply, they, in turn, are no longer thoroughly what they are or what one thinks they are, that is, they are no longer identical to themselves, hence

no long simply identifiable and to that extent no longer determinable. Such totalities therefore no longer authorize simple inclusions of a part in the whole.  
 —Derrida 1996

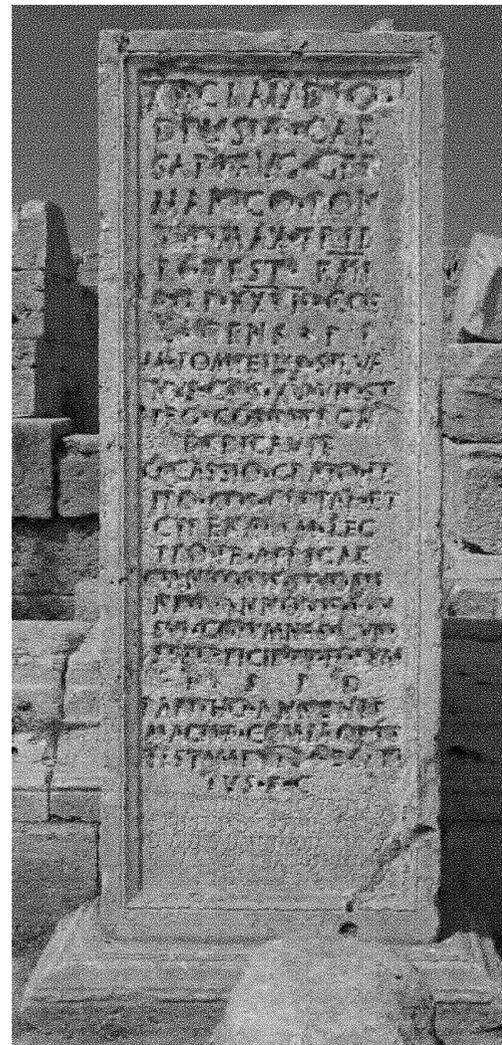


Figure 9 Theater, Lepcis Magna, 1–2 CE

Inscriptions, both urban and rural, from the first and second centuries CE express the relationship between the colonial and indigenous languages of North Africa in graphic form. Thus, a stele set up in the Roman theater at Lepcis Magna opens with Latin, only to be followed by four lines of Neo-Punic at the bottom, as if Latin—the language of public works—were in some fashion deficient and required supplementation in Punic to make the dedication whole. Latin may take pride of place, but graphically *utraeque linguae* sit conspicuously side by side, neither a translation of the other. This double consciousness exerts itself with particular clarity in a funeral stele from Qal‘at Abī aṣ-Ṣibā<sup>c</sup> that bears a bilingual inscription—in Punic and Latin—in which each language conveys the funerary protocols of the culture that it metonymically represents.

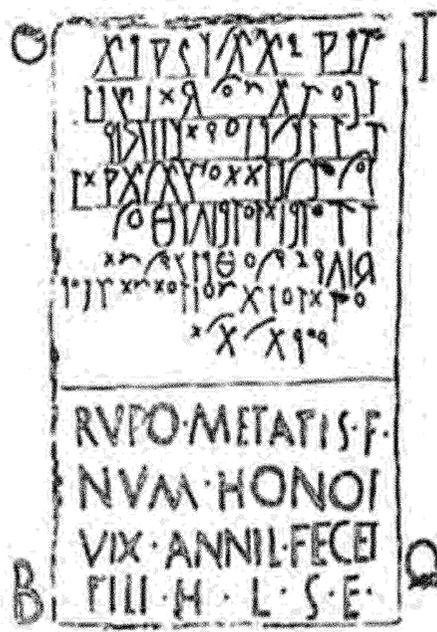


Figure 10 Rufus inscription (Jongeling–Kerr 2005, 52)

a name of heroism, he lived fifty years; a monument of his family forever.

The author of the text was likely fluent in both languages; he did not translate literally, however, but used expressions appropriate to the funereal conventions of each language respectively. Thus, the Punic text gives the full Semitic lineage of the deceased (*tsdt bn mt<sup>t</sup> bn gwt<sup>l</sup> | hngry*), while the Latin version employs the typically Roman formula *ossa tibi bene quiescant*. Moreover, the name of the deceased in the Latin text (“Rufus”) differs from the one he bears in Punic, *Tsdt*—which is actually a Libyac name. This may suggest that for the author Libyac-Punic stood allied as a cultural-conceptual unity over and against Latin. Thus, Punic occupies the topmost register of the stele here; however, line five of the Latin is actually abbreviated, with the four letters standing in the outside corners of the textual field—*Ossa Tibi Bene Quiescant*—thereby effectively circumscribing the Punic within Latin bounds. There is thus a dialectical interplay here in which each language vies for authority over the other, a graphic device, perhaps adopted from earlier colonialist inscriptions, in

*sbq y<sup>2</sup> 2lk y q<sup>r</sup>  
t p<sup>s</sup> 2š<sup>l</sup> hmnšbt  
st tkl bn<sup>c</sup> dm kn nhr  
w<sup>c</sup>lk lktm m<sup>c</sup>š<sup>2</sup> Pqmt  
tsdt bn mt<sup>t</sup> bn gwt<sup>l</sup> |  
hngry dl<sup>c</sup> trt wdl šm  
t<sup>c</sup>šmt<sup>c</sup> w<sup>2</sup> š<sup>c</sup>nt<sup>c</sup> mšm sk<sup>c</sup>r  
dr<sup>2</sup> Plm*

Rvfo. Metatis. filio  
Numidiae. honorato  
vixit. annis l. fecerunt  
fili. hoc. loco. sepultus. est  
O[ssa] T[ibi] B[ene]  
Q[ui]escant

PUNIC: Stay still, passer-by, and read the text which is on this stele: man trusts when he is young and goes his way but finds opposition. Tasdat, the son of Metat, the son of Gautal the Nagarite, owner of a crown and owner of



Figure 11 Punic-Libyac inscription

which Punic literally encapsulates the Libyac text as if to assert its ultimate linguistic—or at least scriptural—authority.

### 1.3. Architecture

*Haec autem ita erunt recte disposita, si primo animaduersum fuerit, quibus regionibus aut quibus inclinationibus mundi constituentur. Namque aliter Aegypto, aliter Hispania, non eodem modo Ponto, dissimiliter Romae.* (Vitruvius, *De architectura* 6.1)

The built environment of Roman Africa, particularly in the early imperial period, exhibited the same sorts of cross-cultural juxtapositions and *mélanges* that we find in the demographic and linguistic record, so that North Africans, whatever their family's original stock, stood constantly surrounded by stark juxtapositions of Libyac, Punic, and Italic architectural motifs. A Punic tomb from Jebel Melezza displays four structures

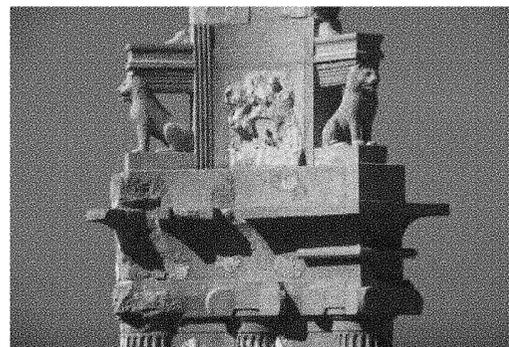


Figure 12 Sabratha, mausoleum of Bes (photo: DEA—C. Sappa—Getty Images)

by stark juxtapositions of Libyac, Punic, and Italic architectural motifs. A Punic tomb from Jebel Melezza displays four structures

on its walls, all characteristically Punic in design: the back wall depicts a typically curvilinear city, alongside a stele with the sign of the ancient Karthaginian goddess TNT. Similarly, the two grave markers painted on the lateral walls give schematic renderings of typical Punic monuments. In fact, the city plan of Kerkouan, the only Punic town whose remains stand reasonably intact (fl. 650–250 BCE),

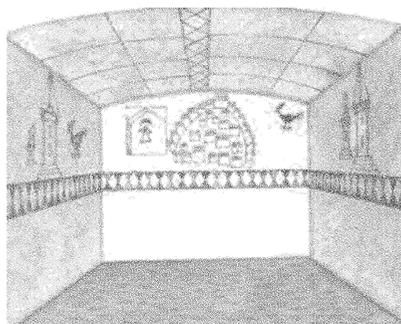


Figure 13 Tomb, Jebel Melezza

looks very much like an enlarged and slightly more complex realization of the sketch at Jebel Melezza. The city, built in an arc that follows the curve of the Mediterranean coastline, conforms to a sophisticated standard plan.<sup>15</sup> It could hardly be more different, however, from the orthogonal town planning we find in Roman colonies of a slightly later era—for example, the Colonia Marciana Ulpia Traiana Thamugadi (Timgad), which Trajan founded *ex nihilo* about 100 CE, was organized rationally in a grid plan with streets marked out at equal lengths from the intersection of the *cardo* and the *decumanus*. Something of a fusion or compromise between the arc and the angle organizes the coastal city of Tipaza, an ancient Punic trading post that the emperor Claudius turned into a military colony. While the Romans converted the center of the city into a grid, the town still hugged the coastline, with areas that conserved the curvilinear plans of the original Punic design, so that the effect was one of spatial hybridization.<sup>16</sup>

Elsewhere, city designs preserved architectural features that stem from Libyic traditions. Bulla Regia, for example, whose design

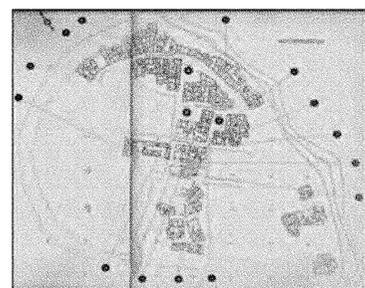


Figure 14 Kerkouan

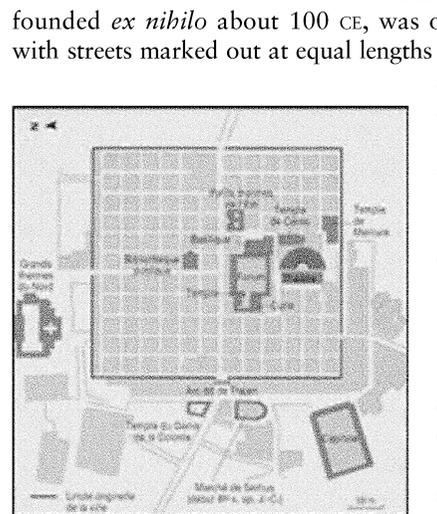


Figure 15 Timgad

remained largely curvilinear in form, boasted a whole second level where interior spaces were constructed underground in the old Libyic manner.<sup>17</sup> While, above ground, the curved Punic design was laid out with Roman streets and fora, what lay beneath the surface was quintessentially Libyic, so that the space was quite conspicuously a conjunction of the urban traditions of all three

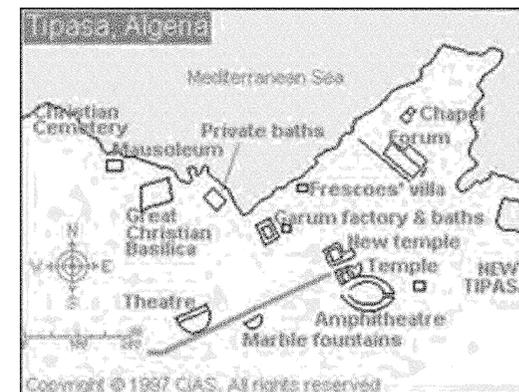


Figure 16 Tipaza

major cultures of North Africa. Similarly elsewhere, Libyic-type houses were cut into the rocks of hillsides, as the cities followed in Punic fashion the curvature of the mountain slopes, again replete with typical Roman-style quarters. Since each culture's contribution to the built environment stood out starkly on its own—it would be wrong to speak here of a fusion—residents of North Africa not only proved conscious of the historical layering of cultures in Roman Africa but forged these disparate legacies into an eclectic harmony of urban designs.

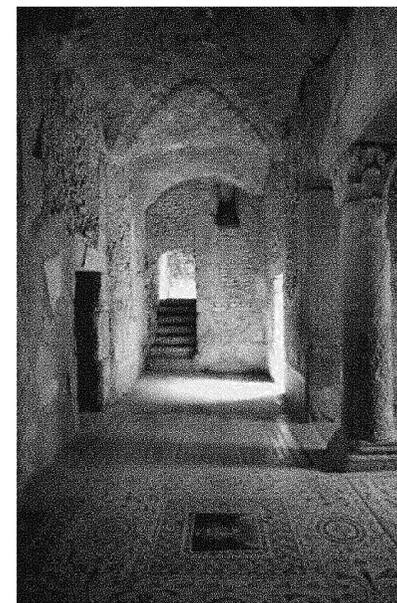


Figure 17 Bulla Regia, house of Amphitrite (photo: Walter Bibikow—Getty Images)

What was true of city planning in North Africa also held for the monuments displayed both in urban centers and in the surrounding countryside. At Oea, for example, Marcus Aurelius built a four-square Roman arch in 165 CE, commemorating the sack of Ctesiphon, which not only bore a bilingual Punic-Latin inscription but shared the cityscape with two other prominent monumental structures: a funeral tower in the old Libyic style, as well as a sizable *tophet*,



Figure 18 Oea, Roman arch

where Poeni traditionally sacrificed children to the god Ba'al by burning them alive. So Diodorus Siculus:

In former times [the Poeni] had been accustomed to sacrifice to [Ba'al] the noblest of their sons. . . . There was in their city a bronze image of [Ba'al], extending his hands, palms up and sloping toward the ground,

so that each of the children when placed thereon rolled down and fell into a sort of gaping pit filled with fire. (20.14)

Whatever the accuracy of this account, there remains at Oea a cemetery with grave markers for the children, some of which are miniature, multi-storied towers in the Libyac style. Residents of Oea would thus have found themselves surrounded by monuments from three distinct architectural traditions—Libyac, Punic, and Roman—which were, in this case, more or less pure examples of these disparate styles without notable syncretism.



Figure 19 Oea, Tophet

Dougga and its environs similarly displayed funeral monuments of several distinct types. The earliest, dating from roughly 2000 BCE, were rounded dolmens whose cultural affiliation remains the subject of scholarly debate.<sup>18</sup> In addition, circular bazina tombs, a burial type found only in Numidia and hence presumably indigenous to the region, also dotted the surrounding landscape. Libyac towers, as well as sepulchers and hypogaea from the Roman period, complete the picture. Of particular interest here



Figure 20 Numidian bazina tomb

is a multi-tiered Libyac-Punic mausoleum that displays, both in its design and in its ornamentation, a remarkable amalgam of artistic styles culled from the Mediterranean world over. As Serge Lancel describes it:

[T]he storeyed mausoleum at Dougga [ca. 150 CE] sums up the Egypto-Greek syncretism which often characterizes what is left to us of Karthago's monumental art, from the Classical to the Hellenistic periods. The bottom storey, which rests on a podium of five steps, is decorated on the corners by pilasters with Aeolic capitals ornamented with lotus flowers. The second storey, seated on three steps, presents a decoration of engaged fluted Ionic columns, supporting an architrave itself surmounted by a cornice with Egyptian molding. The third storey is flanked at the four corners by pedestals that used to carry horsemen; the corner pilasters have lotus-flower capitals and, as on the second storey, support an entablature surmounted by a cornice with Egyptian molding. The whole is topped by a pyramid flanked at the corners by



Figure 21 Dougga, mausoleum





Figure 25 False door

door to the crypt and the repeated image of Gurzil as a “strong bull” (𓆎𓆑𓆑𓆑 *k3 nht*), both motifs central to Egyptian funerary culture, attested as far back as the third millennium BCE and preserved here down through the third century CE. With this sidelong glance at Egypt, therefore, the tombs at Ghirza epitomize the quadrilateral compass that situated the built environment of Roman Africa on the cultural map, drawing in an integral, if desultory, way on at least four different cultural traditions. With the mausoleums at Ghirza, then, we can begin to speak of the emergence of a “genuine” *architectura africana*,<sup>27</sup> whose masterpiece is perhaps the triumphal arch that Septimius Severus dedicated at Lepcis Magna to commemorate victory over the Parthians on the far side of the empire in 203 CE.<sup>28</sup>

mausoleum bear ornaments, sculptured reliefs, and rosettes—all clearly reminiscent of Punic decorative schemes, even if the ubiquitous bull motifs constitute part and parcel of the Libyac cult of Gurzil.<sup>26</sup> As such—not unlike the inscriptional practices that we have examined previously—the architect(s) at Ghirza have in effect sandwiched the building’s Roman portico between Libyac and Punic architectural components respectively, as if the Roman arches could not stand without the support of the solid Libyac base, or the mausoleum could not achieve its unique structural and aesthetic effect had it not been capped with Karthaginian bas reliefs.

In many respects, however, the most remarkable of these architectural components are the false

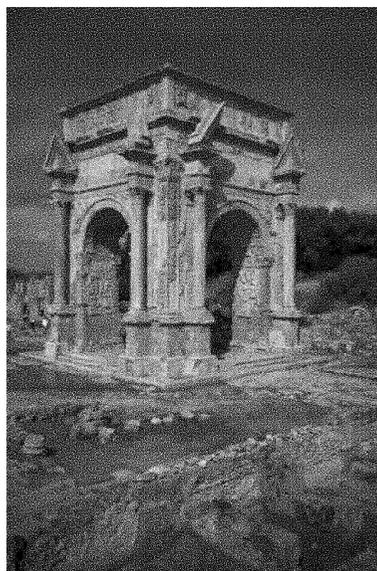


Figure 26 Lepcis Magna, arch of Septimius Severus

### 1.4. Religion

ἦν δὲ παρὰ [Καρχηδονίους] ἀνδριάς Κρόνου χαλκοῦς, ἐκτετακῶς τὰς χεῖρας ὑπτίας ἐγκεκλιμένας ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, ὥστε τὸν ἐπιτεθέντα τῶν παίδων ἀποκυλίεσθαι καὶ πίπτειν εἰς τι χάσμα πλήρες πυρός . . . παραδεδομένος ὅτι Κρόνος ἠφάνιζε τοὺς ἰδίους παῖδας, παρὰ Καρχηδονίους φαίνεται διὰ τούτου τοῦ νομίμου τετηρημένος. (Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica* 20.14)

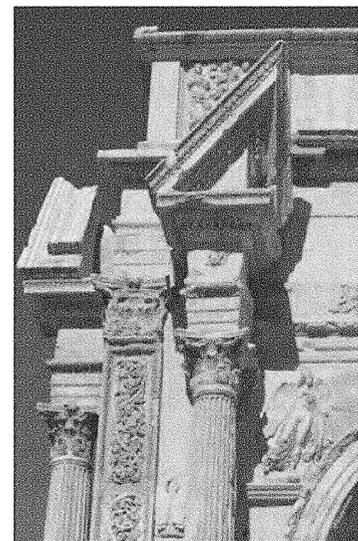


Figure 27 Lepcis Magna, arch of Septimius Severus (detail) (photo: Patrick Aventurier—Getty Images)

Diodorus’ aetiology of how the Hesiodic account of Kronos swallowing his own offspring—a tale itself derived from the Hurrian myth of Kumarbi<sup>29</sup>—authorized the ancient Karthaginian rite of child sacrifice provides one index to the complex-

ity of Roman Africa’s religious heritage and its cultic constitution in the second century CE. As early as the fifth century BCE, Greeks identified the Tyrian deity *BʿlHmn* (Grk. ΒΑΛΑΜΟΥΝ; Lat. *Balamon*), translated by Phoinikian colonists at Karthago, with the great Titan “cutter” Kronos.<sup>30</sup> The Romans in turn associated *BʿlHmn* / Κρόνος with the archaic Italic agricultural deity *Sāturnus*, a figure probably derived from the Etruscan god *Satre*, although comparatively little is known about either.<sup>31</sup>

Under Roman rule especially, worship of *Sanctus Saturnus* proved highly popular throughout the African countryside, where inscriptions commonly address him as *dominus*, a straightforward rendering of the Punic *bʿl*—one of the many reminiscences of ancient Syrian tradition that continued, frequently *sub rosa*, to attend his cult. Thus, the sanctuary near Karthago, situated on a distinctive double

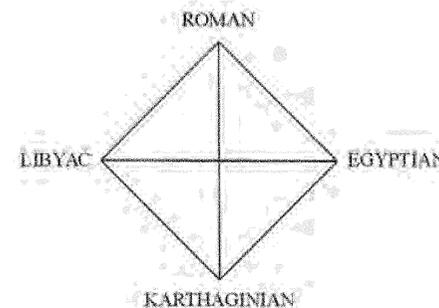


Figure 28 Roman Africa: Religious Heritage

*Et primam quidam providentiam esse summi exsuperantissimique deorum omnium, qui non solum deos caelicolas ordinavit, quos ad tutelam et decus per omnia mundi membra dispersit, sed natura etiam mortales eos, qui praestarent sapientia ceteris terrenis animantibus, ad aevitatem temporis sedidit fundatisque legibus reliquarum dispositionem ac tutelam rerum, quas cotidie fieri necesse est, diis ceeris tradidit.*

—Apuleius, *De Platone et eius dogmate* 12

peak, lent Saturnus the double-voiced epithet *Balcaranensis*, a Latinate adjective derived directly from the Punic deity Baʿal Qarnêm, “Lord of the Two Horns”: evidently, *Saturnus Balcaranensis* took his cult title from the local two-horned mountain, just as the original Tyrian *Bʿl Ḥmn* meant “Lord [of Mount] Amanus,” the current Kýzýl Dađý, which towers above the right bank of the Orontes.<sup>32</sup> Trade and conquest accordingly linked *Bʿl Ḥmn/Dominus Saturnus* directly to a vast and ancient Levantine-Mediterranean cultic network, which included not only Mesopotamian, Syrian, Greek, and various Italic deities: even the Greek inscription ΒΑΛΑΜΟΥΝ might well have been construed macaronically as a transliteration of the Egyptian \**Bʿl Jmn*: “Lord Amun.”

North African memorials—whether in Libyac, Punic, Latin, or Greek—often served to locate the commemorand between two (or more) religious cultures. Thus, a boustrophedon inscription from Mactaris, which commemorates a votive offering (Pun. *ndr*; Heb. נָדַר), vowed (Pun. *ndr*; Heb. נָדַר) to Baʿal, begins in Punic, reading right to left, turns the corner into Latin, now reading left to right, and concludes by switching back to Punic, reading right to left.

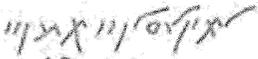
	lʔdn lbʿl ndr ʔš ndr
	CRES
	šmʿ qlʔ brk

Figure 29 Maktar inscription (Jongeling 2008, 91) | Cres(cens) | vowed. He heard his voice, and blessed him.

The change imposed on the movement of the eye serves, on the one hand, to highlight the albeit abbreviated Roman script, which appears sandwiched between two lines of cursive Punic. On the other, it effectively allows the Latinate form *Cres(cens)* to stand out from the otherwise Punic linguistic and religious context of the dedication. Karel Jongeling comments, “The use

of Neo-Punic script for most of the text and Latin script for the name of the dedicant probably indicates that this type of stele could be bought prefabricated including the inscription, with only the name to be filled in.” Accordingly, this makes it difficult to tell whether the offering issues from a Romanized Phoinikian who wanted to foreground his *Romanitas*, or whether the dedicant was of Roman heritage but had become a devotee of Baʿal.<sup>33</sup> Either way, we find that just as with the built environment, in matters of religion there is less syncretic amalgamation overall than an imposition of code-switching, where each cultural index (in C. S. Peirce’s sense of that term<sup>34</sup>)—Punic and Roman—stands over and against the other, set in tandem, side by side, so that the reader is forced to move back and forth between them.

A Neo-Punic stele, now in the British Museum (Fig. 30), offers a more elaborate, triple analogue to this bi-cultural inscription. Here, a *uir togatus*—presumably the dedicant—stands recessed in an aedicule, flanked by Corinthian-style columns and surmounted by a dentelated pediment, a



Figure 30 Punic votive stele

faux-brickwork entablature, and a coffered ceiling that faces outward. In contrast to these readily identifiable Greco-Roman architectural details, the top third of the stele, above the pediment, represents the Punic goddess Tanit, together with votive attributes common to her cult in Africa, with no indication of spatial depth.<sup>35</sup> Finally, below the aedicule is the bas-relief of a bull managed by two men, which is

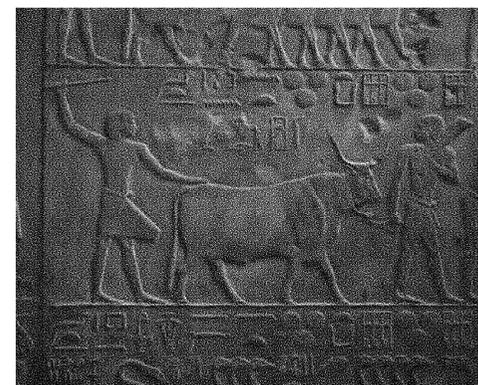


Figure 31 Mastaba of Idut, Saqqara (photo: DEA / G. Dagli Orti—Getty Images)

unmistakably Egyptian in its style. Once again, as in the inscription from Mactaris, the Greco-Roman graphics stand sandwiched between two sets of indigenous North African motifs, such that the viewer is continually required to switch willy-nilly from one iconographic system to the next. The stele refuses to resolve the cultural, and here specifically religious, contradictions that the bas-relief sets into play, presenting a subject in the central aedicule who, while he wears the trappings of a Roman gentleman, stands, on the one hand, supported by Egyptian religious imagery from beneath (e.g., Mnevis, or the Apis bull) and, on the other, crowned by well-known Punic and Berber religious symbols. Clearly, the sculptor does not see this triple stratification as problematic but rather, given the many similar stelae that have survived, as a characteristic expression of the religious tapestry of Roman Africa. Rather than amalgamate, each time the viewer crosses from one symbolic system to another, he or she enacts what Latin speakers would properly call *conuersio*.

The term *interpretatio romana* normally implies an assimilation [of deities] pure and simple. In reality, however, the phenomenon is much more complex than it seems: total and absolute assimilations are rare, if not non-existent, and the traditional African gods, although cloaked under Roman names, for the most part preserved their original nature and remained African in spirit. . . . Once one scratches their Roman varnish that covers them—however thick or thin—one discovers with surprise an entirely different personality, rich and complex, whose diverse traits derive not from an Italic heritage, but from African realities, forged by history and the religious climate of the region, long dominated by the Numidians and Karthaginians.

—Cadotte 2007, 6 and 385

This is not the place to revisit in detail the complex question of the “Romanization” of Libyan and Punic deities, as it evolved from the second century BCE through the third century CE. In general, the African pantheon

proposed the set of correspondences—as shown in the image—where superimposed on each indigenous deity there stood a Roman equivalent, though for the most part their connections proved fairly superficial. In this regard, David Potter calls our attention to a three-word Latin dedication

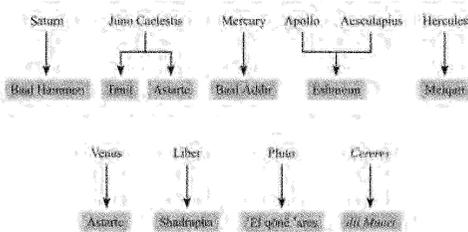


Figure 32 Romanization of deities

found in Libya at Ksar Lemsa, which reads *Maragzu Aug(usto) sac(rum)*—that is, “Dedicated to Maragzu Augustus.” As Potter explains:

Maragzu is the chief god of the region; his importance in the Roman context is emphasized by the addition of the title Augustus, which signifies the concept of supreme power. Maragzu, as the name suggests, was a divinity of the local Berber population who, rather than being effaced by the new regime, is assimilated to a generalized conception of importance. . . . In a case like this, a term like Romanization fails to do justice to the process, for what is suggested is not the formulation of “Romanized” conceptions of the gods, but rather the formulation of new identities that were neither Roman nor traditional.<sup>36</sup>

Perhaps it would be fairer to say that the dedication did not actually present to the passer-by a new religious figment but rather required of him a type of double vision: on the one hand, the adjective *augustus* belongs first and foremost to the vocabulary of Roman religion—as Cicero writes in his *De natura deorum*, “*nostrī maiores auguste sancteque Liberum cum Cerere et Libera consecrauerunt*” (2.62). In this sense, then, the epithet *augusto* clarified for Roman readers Maragzu’s venerable place within the pantheon of Libyan deities—something presumably already evident to Libyans themselves. At the same time, however, for indigenous inhabitants of Africa Proconsularis, the epithet helped to position Maragzu vis-à-vis a colonial culture that, from the time of *Imperator Caesar Diui Filius Augustus* on, apotheosized its rulers—thus the *aureus* above, minted under Domitian shortly after 82 CE, displays *Diuus Augustus Vespasianus* on the obverse and *Diua Domatilla Augusta*—presumably his sister<sup>37</sup>—on the reverse. By the second century BCE, then, the epithet *Augustus* (< Lat. *augeo*, “to increase, grow”) had become a title, in effect a metonym that designated not so much the “concept”—as Potter puts it—but rather the phantasmatic *locus* of supreme power. For the fixed, dedicatory syntagm *Diuo Augusto*, then, the African inscription substitutes *Maragzu Augusto*, filling in the generic *diuo* with the

*Infantes penes Africam Saturno immolabantur palam usque ad proconsulatum Tiberii, qui eosdem sacerdotes in eisdem arboribus templi sui obumbraticibus scelerum uotiuus crucibus exposuit. Sed et nunc in occulto perseueratur hoc sacrum facinus. Cum propriis filiis Saturnus non pepercit, extraneis utique non parcendo perseuerabat, quos quidem ipsi parentes sui offerebant et libentes respondebant et infantibus blandiebantur, ne lacrimantes immolarentur.*

—Tertullian, *Apologeticum* 9.1–4



Figure 33 Tanit (photo: DEA / G. Dagli Orti—Getty Images)

proper name of the local Libyac high god. Not only does this imply that Maragzu holds supreme power, in place of the reigning emperor at Rome, but the refusal to inflect Maragzu as a Latin dative (e.g., \**Maragzui*) suggests some degree of local resistance against assimilation to the Roman order.

Long after the fall of Karthago (146 BCE) and the introduction of the Roman pantheon to North Africa, Berbers and Karthaginians, as well as resident Romans, continued to worship the great Punic deities *Tnt* (Tanit) and *Bʿl Ḥmn* (Baʿal Hammon<sup>38</sup>) with their traditional names and institutions, including child sacrifice. For centuries, Rome had identified the great goddess of Karthago with Juno, although her

devotees, in both the city and the provinces, preferred to call her *Caelestis*, an epithet that may reflect the ubiquitous ancient Levantine title “Queen (or Mistress) of Heaven” (Sum. *Nin-anna*; Ugrt. *bʿlt šmm*; Heb. מלכת השמים; etc.),<sup>39</sup> hence the proliferation of such inscriptions as CAS [*C(aelesti) A(ugustae) s(acrum)*]. Even Vergil, at the opening of the *Aeneid*, registers the translucent nature of Karthaginian religious nomenclature, where the Punic terms, in particular, continue to shimmer through the official Latin overlays:

*Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?  
Urbs antiqua fuit, Tyrii tenuere coloni,  
Karthago. . .  
quam Iuno fertur terris magis omnibus unam  
posthabita coluisse Samo. . .*

The phrase *urbs antiqua*—with which the narration proper opens—constitutes a *figura etymologica* that plays ironically on Karthago’s Punic name: *Qart-ḥadašt*—that is, “New City.” Moreover, the subsequent identification of Juno as the chief deity of the Phoinikian colony, lends a retrospective coloring to *caelestibus*<sup>40</sup>—which rhetorically queries Juno’s

For much of the early empire the cultural life of Roman Africa was maintained and modified by an élite group who thought of themselves as Romans, but who bore little resemblance to modern expatriates or creoles. Born, brought up and educated in Africa, they looked to no metropolitan centre as “home” and were separated from those they lived among by wealth and the education and lifestyle that it brought. That Good Life was shared in many features with that of similar élites throughout the Roman west and indeed the empire.

—Woolf 1997, 341

wrath. This suggests wide recognition of the code-switching between Punic and Roman terminology not only in the North Africa provinces but at Rome itself. Significantly, then, the same cultural complexities that we find in the demography, the languages, and the built environment of Roman Africa remain enshrined *at the very outset* of the most canonical of Latin compositions.

## 2. APULEIUS [ʿPWLʿY]

African intellectuals—Fronto, Tertullian, Apuleius, Augustine, and Donatus Magnus, among others—were always already deracinated in their relationship to Rome: at most, the imperial capital functioned as an asymmetric site of political appointment, an estranged locus for cultural referral, which served to shape the self-stylization of dispersed local elites and hence to lend them recognizable affinity with one another. Some of the cultural complexities involved here emerge from the Punic-Latin inscription erected at el-ʿAmruni and reproduced here, where behind the *tria nomina* Q. Apuleius Maxssimus [*sic*] stands the thinly disguised—though isomorphically tripartite—Karthaginian onomasticon: ʿpwlʿy bn Ywbzʿlʿn bn Ywrʿtʿn. The wife of ʿpwlʿy also bore the Punic name *Tʿnbrʿ*. Their sons, however, in both the Punic and the Latin versions of the dedication, show up as the already Romanized Pudens, Severus, and Maximus—at least so far as we can judge by the reduplication of the names. Iuarthe’s descendants, then, seem to have moved fluidly between at least two, perhaps three, distinct cultural milieux. At any rate, they are clearly at pains not only to acknowledge but also patently to display their incomplete assimilation to the Roman order, which not only resembles what we know of the *maḡribī auctor* Apuleius and his family but also repeats the information that he divulges in his *Apologia* in an all too uncanny way. According to that account, for instance, Apuleius spent a considerable amount of time not only in Karthago but also in and around

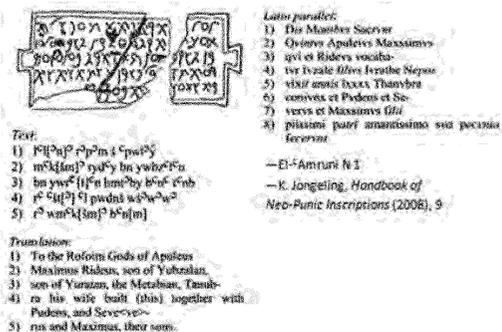


Figure 34 El-Amruni inscription

Oea, where—as we have seen—he would have found himself surrounded by monuments from four distinct architectural traditions (Libyac, Punic, Roman, and Egyptian), which were more or less pure examples of these disparate styles without notable syncretism. Without recourse to the fraught matter of *Africitas*, then,

to what extent does the irreducible eclecticism of the demographic, linguistic, and architectural environment of Roman Africa resonate with Apuleius’ prose?

### 2.1. Proof Texts

1. *Mox in urbe Latia aduena studiorum Quiritium indigenam sermonem aerumnabili labore, nullo magistro praeunte, aggressus excolui. En ecce praefamur ueniam, si quid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero. Iam haec equidem ipsa uocis immutatio desultoriae scientiae stilo quem accessimus respondet.*

Next, in a Latin city, a stranger to the pursuits of the Quirites, I took on and cultivated the local language with afflicted labor and without the lead of any master. So I beg your indulgence in advance if I should offend in any way as an inexperienced speaker of the language of the forum, which is foreign to me. Indeed this very change of language corresponds to the style to which, replete with knowledge of switching horses at a gallop, we have acceded. (Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 1.1.4–6)<sup>41</sup>

From the outset, the *Metamorphoses* presents itself as a representation at one remove of Latin as a foreign language, the idiom of an autodidact who exhibits imperfect command of Roman usage, in particular of the official language of the forum as it might have been taught to him by a proper Roman grammarian. Part of the task Apuleius sets himself, then, in the *Metamorphoses* is to “defamiliarize” the language of power or—if you will—the language of empire. The passage sets up a correspondence between the narrator’s bilingualism and the style of his prose, which he characterizes as *desultoriae scientiae*—as if he were riding two horses at the same time and jumping back and forth between them. The language of the *Metamorphoses* is consistently “imperfect” Latin, but beyond this Apuleius’ narrator invites us to be on the lookout for at least two different

styles of writing, each requiring its own specific “knowledge,” across which the prose will either vacillate back and forth or “ride” in tandem. This is precisely, in his view, the achievement of the novel—not a conflation of styles but a decisive collocation that preserves each style as distinct.<sup>42</sup> In any event, it is the burden of the *Metamorphoses* to represent at least two distinct literary modes. Is it by chance—considering this context—that all known ancient readers of Apuleius, with the possible exception of Sallustius, did their major work in North Africa, with a minority in Gaul?<sup>43</sup>

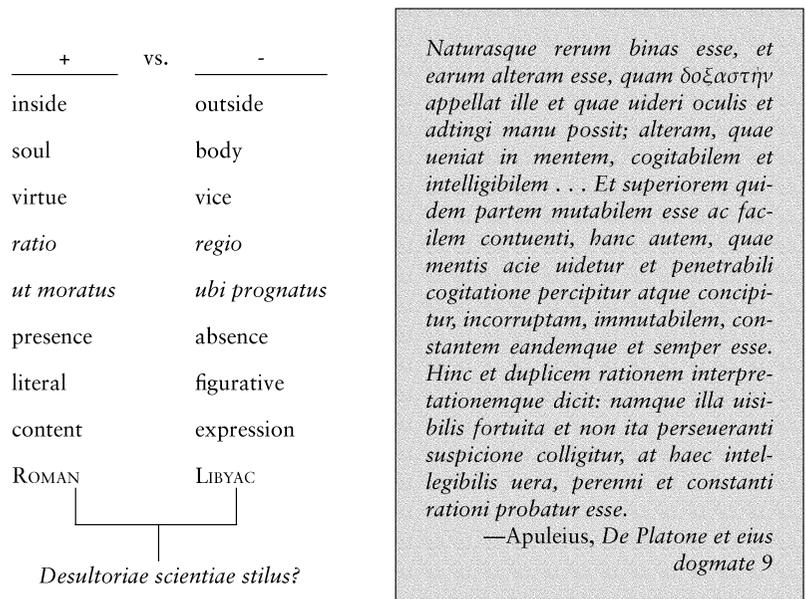
2. *De patria mea uero, quod eam sitam Numidiae et Gaetuliae in ipso confinio mei<s> scriptis ostendi scis, quibus memet professus sum, cum Lolliano Auito C. V. praesente publice dissererem, “Seminumidam” et “Semigaetulum”: non uideo quid mihi sit in ea re pudendum, haud minus quam Cyro maiori, quod genere mixto fuit Semimedus ac Semipersa. Non enim ubi prognatus, sed ut moratus quisque sit spectandum, nec qua regione, sed qua ratione uitam uiuere inierit, considerandum est. . . . Enimuero animo hominis extrinsecus in hospitium corporis immigranti quid ex istis addi uel minui ad uirtutem uel malitiam potest?*

Then there was the issue of my native town. It is situated on the very boundary between Numidia and Gaetulia, as you are aware inasmuch as you showed this from my own writings (*meis scriptis ostendi scis*): in a public speech delivered in the presence of the illustrious Lollianus Auitus, I proclaimed myself to be “semi-Numidian” and “semi-Gaetulian.” Now I cannot see what I should be ashamed of, any more than Cyrus the Great because he was of mixed birth, being half-Mede and half-Persian. You must not judge a man’s district of origin but his disposition, not *where* but *how* he has commenced to live. . . . For a human soul, coming from outside and putting up at the lodgings of the body, how could any of these factors exert any influence on its virtue or vice? (Apuleius, *Apology* 24.1–5)

Like the double-voicedness that the *Metamorphoses* overtly puts on display, Apuleius identifies himself here as half-Numidian and half-Gaetulian, which would mean—if true, and we have no reason to believe that it is not—that he was fully Libyac by birth. That his native town lies on the border (*in ipso confinio*) is significant not only because it emblemizes the hybridity of Apuleius’ writerly “origins” but also because Numidia was a province of the Roman Empire, while the Gaetuli remained largely outside of Roman control.<sup>44</sup> Apuleius thus positions himself—as Libyac—both within and beyond the authority of Rome (cf. Lib. *amazigh*, “free person”), a proposition that he complicates by stating this in a Latin that is not only fluent but manifestly highly polished.<sup>45</sup> In likening himself to *Cyro maiori*, moreover, Apuleius does not only represent himself as other to the Greco-Roman order. The analogy assumes historical resonance within the context

of Rome’s ongoing war with Parthia (66 BCE–217 CE): Valaxš IV invaded Armenia in 161 CE, thereby officially reopening hostilities between the two empires after a considerable period of peace.<sup>46</sup> Apuleius’ reference, then, proves difficult to position: depending on the publication date of the *Apology* the allusion might suggest that Apuleius’ relationship with the Roman world was tensely benign or, conversely, that there was some genuine hostility between them.

Context, nonetheless, requires us to refine the question. The main thrust of Apuleius’ argument here is that origin—however factitious—is ultimately a poor indicator of either character (*mores*) or acuity in thought (*ratio*). To make this case, the passage conspicuously avails itself of a series of well-worked binary oppositions, whose hierarchized terms are immediately familiar from *De Platone et eius dogmate*.



One of the staples of Apuleius’ art is to call these hierarchies into question, to *deconstruct* them, as Jacques Derrida would say.<sup>47</sup> In so doing, Apuleius does not merely reverse this value system—on which the whole of Greek and Roman imperial thought stands<sup>48</sup>—to show, for example, that the outsider is superior to the insider, or that the figural supersedes the literal. Rather, he demonstrates that the very possibility of opposing such terms is illusory: thus, even within his lifetime, the writings of Apuleius, the Libyac, served as a model for *die afrikanische Kunstprosa*, according to the ideal that he describes elsewhere as *uenustas et maiestas uerborum*.<sup>49</sup> The same holds for the *Apologia*’s recourse to Cyrus Maior—the allusion is simultaneously

literal and figurative, yielding precisely the type of *desultoria scientia* that Apuleius identifies as the hallmark of his work. Unable to resolve such differences, the reader is forced to shuttle back and forth between the two hierarchically opposed terms, just as the Isis-Book of the *Metamorphoses* compels each reader to vacillate between a sacred and a profane construction of the antecedent narrative,<sup>50</sup> thereby effectively rendering the account an allegory of its own unreadability.<sup>51</sup>

3. *Vt ferme religiosi uiantium moris est, cum aliqui lucus aut aliqui locus sanctus in uia oblatus est, uotum postulare, pomum adponere, paulisper adsidere: ita mihi ingresso sanctissimam istam ciuitatem, quamquam oppido festinem, praefanda uenia et habenda oratio et inibenda properatio est. Neque enim iustius religiosam moram uiatori obiecerit aut ara floribus redimita aut spelunca frondibus inumbrata aut quercus cornibus onerata aut fagus pellibus coronata, uel enim colliculus sepimine consecratus uel truncus dolamine effigiatus uel cespes libamine unigatus uel lapis unguine delibutus. Parua haec quippe et quamquam paucis percontantibus adorata, tamen ignorantibus transcursa.*

It is the usual practice of wayfarers with a religious disposition, when they come upon a sacred grove or holy place by the roadside, to utter a prayer, to offer an apple, and pause for a moment from their journeying. So I, on entering the revered walls of your city, feel that, for all my haste, it is my duty to ask your favor, to make an address, and to break the speed of my journey. I cannot conceive aught that could give a traveler more just cause than to halt in sign of reverence; no altar crowned with flowers, no grotto shadowed with foliage, no oak bedecked with horns, no beech garlanded with the skins of beasts, no mound whose encircling hedge proclaims its sanctity, no tree-trunk hewn into the semblance of a god, no turf still wet with libations, no stone astream with precious unguents. For these are but small things, and though there be a few that seek them out and do worship them. The majority, however, do not note them and pass them by. (Apuleius, *Florida* 1)

In part, this passage turns on the evolving ambivalence of the adjective *religiosus*, which by the middle of the second century CE had already come to mean “pious,” that is, an inner state of reverence for the gods, and not, as it had originally designated in more archaic Latin, “strict” or “scrupulous” in the observance of ritual. Following suit, then, recent commentaries on *Florida* 1 tend to stress *either* the content of the extract *or* its mode of expression, in effect perpetuating the inside/outside dichotomy that—at the lexical level—the passage refuses to allow the reader to resolve and that, more generally, the extract deconstructs. Benjamin T. Lee has, for example, noted:

Apuleius is here taking part in a tradition of Middle Platonic allegory, which describes life as a religious journey. In so doing Apuleius would

be participating in a metaphor as old as Greek literature . . . which describe[s] philosophy as a process of initiation into the mysteries. The religious path is a metaphor for the manner in which we conduct our lives: just as philosophy will provide a helmsman for the sea-voyage of life in *Florida* fragment 23, here the religious path provides an analogy for the conduct of one's self. . . . Furthermore, the fragment suggests there is a sort of hermeneutic benefit to such sensibility, since a group of travelers is defined that are unable to perceive "hidden" mysteries. . . . Such an allegorical interpretation of the religious traveler connects the *Florida* to the *Metamorphoses*, which begins as a travel narrative and of course culminates in an account of Lucius' religious conversion.<sup>52</sup>

"*Deus deus te nobis, o Asclepi, ut diuino sermoni interesset adduxit, eique tali, qui merito omnium antea a nobis factorum uel nobis diuino numine inspiratorum uideatur esse religiosa pietate diuiniore. quem si intellegens uideris, eris omnium bonorum tota mente plenissimus—si tamen multa sunt bona et non unum, in quo sunt omnia. alterum enim alterius consentaneum esse dinoscitur, omnia unius esse aut unum esse omnia . . . Tatque, nobis qui intersit, euoca.*"

Quo ingresso Asclepius et Hammona interesse suggestit. Trismegistus ait: "Nulla inuidia Hammona prohibet a nobis, praeter Hammona nullum uocassis alium, ne tantae rei religiosissimus sermo multorum interuentu praesentiaque uioletur. tractatum enim tota numinis maiestate plenissimum inreligiosae mentis est multorum conscientia publicare."

—Apuleius, *Asclepius* 1

Lee's exegesis of the Middle Platonic trope of philosophy as a journey or a rite of initiation—the fragment's "hidden" message, if you will—patently reduplicates the dichotomy between inside and outside that institutionally structured the initiatory orders to which Apuleius alludes<sup>53</sup>—a set of conceits that have their origin in Plato's Parable of the Cave.<sup>54</sup> At the same time, however, the consonance between the content of the passage (*philosophía*) and the allegorical mode of its expression (*poreíalmustērion*) would seem to lend Apuleius' prose the type of ideal perspicacity that he elsewhere associates with his philosophic master: *quem ubi adspexit ille ingeniumque intimum de exteriore conspicatus est facie*.<sup>55</sup> This effectively renders Apuleius' allegory a *mise-en-abyme* of its own philosophical precepts, such that the passage ultimately collapses the dichotomy between inside (content) and outside (expression)—without which, ironically enough, the metaphor could not have arisen—insofar as the two turn out to be congruent. Returning, then, to the *ferme religiosi* with which the passage opened, we wind up comfortably close to Pascal's wager:<sup>56</sup> the inability to decide whether those who pray *religiōsē* do so from a

sense of inner piety or for the sake of ritual observance throws the passage's presumed transparency completely into doubt.

At the same time, however, Vincent Hunink calls our attention to other linguistic features of the extract that seem to work at cross purposes to its allegorical framework by stressing grammatical and phonic aspects of Apuleius' prose that distract us from—rather than reinforce—the message that Lee describes:

One may state that in poetry similarity is superimposed on contiguity, and hence "equivalence is promoted to the constitutive device of the sequence." Here any noticeable reiteration of the same grammatical concept becomes an effective poetic device. Any unbiased, attentive, exhaustive, total description of the selection, distribution and interrelation of diverse morphological classes and syntactic constructions in a given poem surprises the examiner himself by unexpected, striking symmetries and antisymmetries, balanced structures, efficient accumulation of equivalent forms and salient contrasts, finally by rigid restrictions in the repertory of morphological and syntactic constituents used in the poem, eliminations which, on the other hand, permit us to follow the masterly interplay of the actualized constituents.

—Jakobson 1980, 83–84

All elements listed by Apuleius show the same syntactical pattern and word order: a noun followed by a participle with an adjunct in the ablative (*ara floribus redimita*). The words seem carefully chosen to the audience by their very sound; for example the first four elements (*redimita, inumbrata, onerata, coronata*) have female endings, whereas the second group of four has male endings (*consecratus, effigiatus, umigatus, delibutus*). The resulting homoeoptoton creates a deliberate rhyme, while further complex sound patterns are produced by additional internal correspondence in rhythm, number of syllables and sound (e.g. *sepi-mine, dolamine, libamine, unguine*).<sup>57</sup>

Roman Jakobson, in the passage quoted in the textbox, refers to the type of discursive devices that Hunink describes here as the "*poetry of grammar*," but it is not difficult to extend this notion to Apuleius' prose. In fact, Hunink notices only the most obvious such features in a piece whose aural architecture turns out to mobilize virtually every acoustic figure in the North African literary soundscape:

*Ut ferme RELIGIOSIS UIANTUM MORIS est,*

*cum aliqui lucus*

*aut aliqui locus*

*sanctus in uia oblatus est,*

uotum postulare,  
pomum adponere  
paulisper adsidere;

ita mihi ingresso  
santissimam istam ciuitatem  
quam oppido festinem

praefanda uenia  
et habenda ratio  
et inhibenda properatio est.

**Neque enim iustius RELIGIOSAM MORAM UIATORI obiecerit**

aut ara floribus redimita  
aut spelunca frondibus inumbrata  
aut quercus cornibus onerata  
aut fagus pellibus coronata,

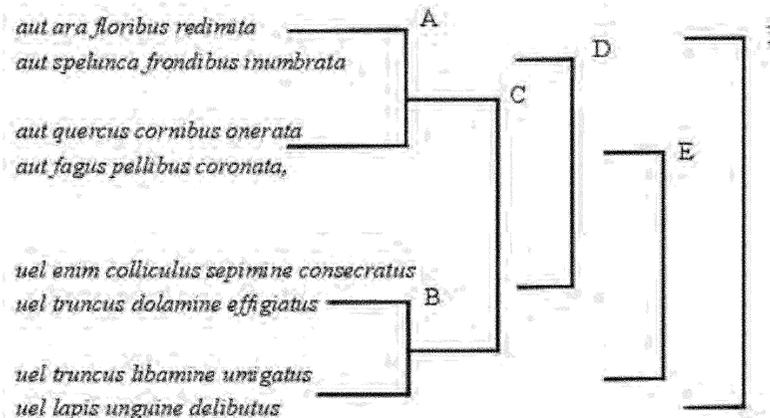
uel enim colliculus sepimine consecratus  
uel truncus dolamine effigiatus  
uel cespes libamine umigatus  
uel lapis unguine delibutus.

Parua haec quippe et quamquam  
paucis percontantibus adorata  
tamen ignorantibus transcurrsa.

While, on the one hand, the Middle Platonic allegory, which organizes the thematics of this tour de force, outlines a trajectory from the material to the spiritual, on the other, Apuleius' prose so insists on the materiality of the signifier that the sound consistently overwhelms the sense, both literal as well as allegorical.<sup>58</sup> As such, not only does the passage revolve around a recurrent—and ultimately irreducible—tension between the thematics of the speech and its phonological articulation, but close analysis of the composition reveals the systematicity with which Apuleius has distributed the phonic, grammatical, and syntactic features that make up the composition.

Given the composite cultural makeup of North Africa in the second century CE—as concretized, for example, in bilingual inscriptions, multi-ethnic city planning, the slippage between Italic and North African divinities, or Apuleius' own self-positioning as Libyae, partly inside and partly outside the Roman order—the competing sets of claims that *Florida* 1 makes on its

**Neque enim iustius religiosam moram uiatori obiecerit:**



- A. feminine endings: -a/-us
  - B. masculine endings: -us/-is
  - C. aut / uel; -ibus / -me
  - D. -ta / -tus
  - E. -ta / -tus
  - F. -ita / -utus
- See Jakobsen-Lévi-Strauss 1962

readers—sense versus sound—clearly constitute another instance of what the *Metamorphoses* call *desultoriae scientiae stilus*, insofar as the auditor has to constantly shuffle back and forth between the two or, better yet, appreciate them in tandem.

**2.2. Style**

Phonic repetition constituted an important feature of early Roman verse—hence Cicero's notorious line from his *De consulatu suo* (fr. 7): *O fortunatam natam me consule Romam!*, a line critics have treated with undue severity by application of the standards of the classical period that commences with Catullus, which for the most part avoided such acoustic figures.<sup>59</sup> These, at any rate, are the principles laid down for good *Latinitas*,

as we find them codified in rhetorical handbooks from the first century BCE through the second century CE.<sup>60</sup>

Artistic composition consists in an arrangement of words which gives uniform finish to the discourse in every part. To ensure this virtue we shall avoid (*fugiemus*) the cramped compaction of vowels [hiatus], which makes the style harsh and gaping. We shall also avoid the excessive recurrence of the same letters [alliteration], a blemish that the following verse [of Ennius] will illustrate: *O Tite, tute, Tati, tibi tanta, tyranne, tulisti*, and reject this verse of the same poet: *quoiquam quiquam quemquam, quemque quisque conueniat*. And again we shall avoid the excessive repetition of the same word, as follows: *Nam cuius rationis ratio non extet, ei / rationi ratio non est fidem habere admodum*. Again, we shall not use a continuous series of words with like case endings [homoeoptoton], as follows: *Flentes, plorantes, lacrimantes, obtestantes*. (*Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.18; ca. 90 BCE)

Every figure of speech would be an error (*uitium*) if it were not deliberate but accidental. But as a rule such figures are defended by authority (*auctoritate*), age, and usage, and not infrequently even by some reason (*ratione*). Consequently, although they involve a divergence from direct and simple speech . . . if a speaker uses them sparingly (*quodsi quis parce utetur*) and only as occasion demands, they will serve as a seasoning sprinkled on his style and increase its attractions. If, on the other hand, he strains after them overmuch, he will lose that very charm of variety which they confer. . . . Moreover, *recherché* figures lying outside the range of common usage prove cloying if used too lavishly, and make it quite clear that they did not present themselves naturally to the speaker, but were hunted out by him, dragged from obscure corners, and artificially piled together. (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 9.3.2–5; ca. 100 CE)

Apuleius was a rhetorician, writing for audiences themselves trained both in the practice of effective communication and in the techniques of critical appreciation. An enumeration of the various tropes and figures of thought and speech employed by him in the *Metamorphoses* would comprise virtually the entire repertory of “Asian” rhetoric as it was cultivated in the Graeco-Roman world of his day. Nearly every feature of his style can be paralleled by the Latinity of all periods. What makes him unique among Latin writers is the gusto and lack of inhibition with which he handles these common resources. . . . His syntax, if not always strictly “classical,” rarely poses problems. In the first

place his sentence-structure is based on co-ordination (parataxis) rather than subordination (hypotaxis): fully periodic sentences à la Caesar or Cicero are a rarity. Secondly he writes expansively, with much pleonasm, variation and amplitude. Emphasis and colour are imparted by the lavish use of alliteration and assonance, and by careful attention to rhythm.

—Kenney 1990, 28 and 30

Q: Is the exorbitance of Apuleius’ style really best described as a “practice of effective communication”?

cf. Koziol 1872, 197–248.

Apuleius was, of course, perfectly capable of writing a straightforward Latin sentence. In his *De mundo* 6, for example, we read *maria maiora sunt Oceanus et Atlanticum, quibus orbis nostri terminantur anfractus*, a construction well within the range of any first-year Latin student. At the same time, however, he regularly indulges in a more florid style that ostentatiously “diverges from direct and simple speech,” concatenating acoustic and syntactic figures “artificially piled together,” so that, “lying outside the range of common usage, [they] prove cloying” in their excess.<sup>61</sup> The following formulations, culled at random from Apuleius’ major works, illustrate the hallmarks of this more extravagant idiom: paratactic coordination, pleonasm coupled with variation, liberal use of alliteration and assonance, and careful attention to prose meter:

*Quin igitur etiam ex aliis plerisque me arguitis? Nam saepe numero et unum et holus et pomum et panem pretio mutauit.* (*Apologia* 29.5)

*Nuntio Psyche laeta florebat et diuinae subolis solacio plaudebat et futuri pignoris gloria gestiebat et materni nominis dignitate gaudebat.* (*Metamorphoses* 5.12.1)

*Item ut nonnullis regni futuri signa praecurrant, ut Tarquinius Priscus aquila obumbretur ab apice, Seruius Tullius flamma conluminetur a capite.* (*De deo Socratis* 7)

*Sicuti nauem bonam, fabre factam, intrinsecus compactam, extrinsecus eleganter depictam, mobili clauo, firmis rudentibus, procero malo, isigni carchesio, splendentibus uelis, postremo omnibus armamentis idoneis ad usum honestis ad contemplationem, eam nauem si aut gubernator non agat aut gubernator agat, ut facile cum illis egregiis instrumentis aut profunda hauserint aut scopuli comminuerint.* (*Florida* 23.1–2)

*Sed cum disseramus oratione, cuius uariae species sunt, ut imperandi mandandi succensendi optandi uouendi irascendi odiendi inuidendi fauendi miserandi admirandi contemnendi obiurgandi paenitendi deplorandi tum uolutpatem afferendi tum metum incutiendi, in quibus oratoris excellentis est lata anguste, angusta late, uulgata decenter, noua usitate, usitata noue, textenuare magna, maxima e minimis posse efficere aliaque id genus plurima: est una inter has ad propositum potissima, quae pronuntiabilis appellatur. (Peri Hermeneias 1)*

In his *Apologia*, Apuleius offers the following comment on his work: *Graece et Latine propriis et elegantibus uocabulis conscribo* (39.4). Conversant, then, with both Greek and Latin, Apuleius self-consciously *conscribes* two different prose styles for his work—the one “proper,” the other “luxurious”—which he either interweaves together or conspicuously places side by side so that, once again, the reader must either switch back and forth between the two or appreciate them in tandem.

Surveying the range of poetic traditions that flourished in Roman Africa

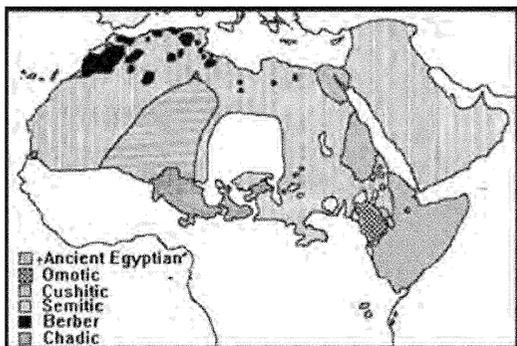


Figure 35 Map of Afro-Asiatic language distribution

in the second century CE, Apuleius’ more florid prose style, which abounds in *Klangfiguren* such as homoeoteleuton, homoeoptoton, anadiplosis, paromoeosis, and so forth,<sup>62</sup> has more in common with Libyic and Punic poetry than it does with silver Latin prose.<sup>63</sup> In keeping with other Afroasiatic literary traditions, Libyic and Punic poets relied primarily on parallelism,

as well as a rich phonological soundscape, including internal rhymes, wordplay, and puns:

In the [Afroasiatic] poetic tradition the formal requirement which had to be met by the poet was parallelism instead of meter. To create parallelistic poetry, the poet had first to link together at least two cola to form a line, since the words of a colon without a partner could not enter into parallelism. Secondly, and concomitantly, he had to produce B cola whose words formed parallels to the words used in cola A.<sup>64</sup>

The poetry of an ancient verse like [the Egyptian] *hms hr-ht3w hrw-t3w* “sitting under sails on a windy day” must be analyzed linguistically but it is not only a sequence of grammatical forms. Even when read in a modern library there is more visceral physicality in the verse than we often appreciate. In a felucca near Sehel, aping the metaphor, we have more of a chance of sensing this and the lexicographical debates as to whether the sails (*ht3w*) are the “sails” of a boat or a term for an “awning” seem redundant, as the waters of the cataract swirl as they always have, beating against the prow and troubling the water between the boulders.

—Parkinson 2009

Just as parallelism activates the grammatical, lexical, and semantic aspects of language, so, too, it activates the phonological aspect; phonological equivalences and contrasts are [regularly] present in parallel lines and they contribute to the perception of correspondence between the lines. . . . Biblical scholars, on their part, recognized long ago the Bible’s penchant for wordplay or punning, and have taken note of various kinds of phonological repetition in a wide variety of passages. These phenomena are generally subsumed under the term *paronomasia*.<sup>65</sup>

Relevant to all of this is the paratactic style of [Afroasiatic] poetry. The lines are placed one after another with no connective . . . ; rarely is a subordinate relationship indicated on the surface of the text. This has bearing both on the terseness of the poem and on its connectedness. The lines, by virtue of their contiguity, are perceived as connected, while the exact relationship between them is left unspecified.<sup>66</sup>

Apuleius’ formulation *Tarquinius Priscus aquila obumbretur ab apice, Seruius Tullius flamma conluminetur a capite*, constitutes—when laid out colometrically—a thought couplet in the Afroasiatic style, where each word in line A finds its grammatical and semantic counterpart in line B:

*Tarquinius Priscus aquila obumbretur AB apice*  
*Seruius Tullius flamma conluminetur A capite*

The matter that the couplet treats—auguries of the fifth and sixth *reges Romae*—could scarcely be more Roman; however, the high incidence of *Klangfiguren* stands much closer to Libyic and Punic style.

Semiology helps to clarify the situation here, particularly the Danish linguist Louis Hjelmslev’s redefinition of the sign. Ferdinand de

Expression	Substance	(Fausst) La voix humaine	Signifier
	Form	LIBYAC/PUNIC	
Content	Form	LATIN	Signified
	Substance	Idées romaines (Buness)	

Figure 36 Signifier and signified

Saussure had considered a sign as having two principal functions, a signifier and a signified. Hjelmslev, however, famously renamed Saussure’s signifier and signified, respectively, the *plane of expression* and the *plane of content*, each of which, he argued, also assumed a peculiar *form* manifested in a peculiar *substance*. The combination of these four variables would thus yield the following components of the sign: the *form of expression*, the *form of content*, the *substance of expression*, and the *substance of content*.<sup>67</sup> In Hjelmslev’s analysis, then, a sign is not only a function between two forms—the *form of expression* and the *form of content*; at the same time, every sign finds materialization in two discrete substances: the *substance of the expression* and the *substance of the content*. The *substance of expression* is the material support that carries the sign: this could be sound, as in the case of spoken languages, or it could be some other medium, for example, knotted string, as in the case of the Tawantinsuyuan *khipu*.<sup>68</sup> In both instances, the *substance of the content* is the psychological and conceptual presentation of the sign (*Vorstellung*).<sup>69</sup> So in the boxed phrase from Apuleius’ *Apologia*, the form of the content is clearly Latinate, while the form of the expression is distinctively Afroasiatic.



Figure 37 Sound and sense

On the one hand, the Latin here is entirely grammatical, and its significance, in context, generally clear;<sup>70</sup> on the other, the four-fold iteration of the ending *-is*, *-is*, *-is*, *-is* (both within and across word boundaries) constitutes precisely the sort of repetition along the syntagm that Jakobson identified as the “poetic function,” that is to say, the “project[ion of] the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection onto the axis of combination.”<sup>71</sup> While the poetic function plays some role in all linguistic utterances

(cf. Dwight D. Eisenhower’s campaign slogan “I like Ike”), Apuleius promotes equivalence as the constitutive device of the sequence so much that it not only begins to encroach upon the referential function—that is, the set (*Einstellung*) of the message toward its referent—but at times almost occludes it. What distinguishes Apuleius’ prose, however, from other instances that Jakobson has studied is that the referential function directs the reader to one cultural domain, that is, the Latin culture derived from Indo-European, while the extreme dominance of the poetic function follows Indo-European protocols best attested in Libyac, Punic, and other Afroasiatic verse.

### 3. AFROASIATIC POETRY [ŠRM]

What follows is a sampling of thought couplets, as well as more complex strophic forms, culled from the five major branches of Afroasiatic literary composition attested around the Mediterranean littoral, along the coast of the Red Sea, across the Magrib, and from there directly south of the Sahara: Egyptian, Semitic, Cushitic, Berber, and Chadic. Attested in antiquity up through the present day, this poetic tradition—effectively an extensive text network<sup>72</sup>—constitutes the archive to which the more florid style of Apuleius’ prose properly belongs.

#### A. Egyptian

1. Old Egyptian: Pyramid Texts, Spell 276, 417a–b (ca. 2400 BCE)<sup>73</sup>


jrj=k jr=k jrj.t=k jr=k  

zkzk jmj qrq.t=f jmj-rd  
 yirek yirek yiryetek yirek  
 zekzek yimy-qerqetef yimy-red

Do against yourself what you can do against yourself,  
 Zkzk-snake which is in its hole, which entangles my feet!

This incantation—presumably intended to protect the deceased king against the onomatopoeic *zkzk*-snake: the phrase *Dd mdw* (“Say these words”) immediately precedes the spell—provides a stunning example of Jakobson’s poetic function in which, like the entanglement of the snake in the feet, it becomes difficult to extricate sense from sound. The serial repetition of *y*, *r*, and *k* along the axis of combination and the redoubling of *jmj*, as well as the close proximity in pronunciation of *k* and *q*, creates clear phonic repetition that the hieroglyphs serve to redouble visually.



Shofār, the opening of each line shows the acoustic pattern: ρ, ρ, κ-ρ, ρ, κ, so that morphemically, the lines read *qad-*, *qir-*, <sup>3</sup>*is-* | *qad-*, *qiv-*, <sup>3</sup>*is-*. Other alliterative devices include *con* / -*cār-*; <sup>5</sup>*ām* / -*hāl*; and *-ēnim* / -*ālim*, which are so disposed in a way that links the different words that they become effectively constitutive of the celebrant community.

### C. Alexandrian Greek

Theocritus, *Idyll* 1.5–6 (ca. 275 BCE)

αἶκα δ' αἶγα λάβη τῆνος γέρας, ἐς τὲ καταρρεῖ  
ἀ χίμαρος: χιμάρω δὲ καλὸν κρέας, ἔστέ κ' ἀμέλξης.

aika d'aiga labēi tēnos geras es te katarrei  
hā khimaros khimarōi de kalon kreas este k'amelksēis

If he takes the she-goat as his prize, to you will fall  
The kid. The kid's flesh is tasty before she is milked.

All modern commentators have noticed the remarkable sonority of these lines, with their striking echo effects (αἶκα δ' αἶγα | χίμαρος: χιμάρωι) and their arresting *Klangfiguren*, where out of the sound there gradually emerges sense: χιμάρω δὲ καλὸν κρέας ἔστέ κ' ἀμέλξης. The *Idyll*'s own characterization of this poetic style is “sweet” (ἀδὺ δὲ καὶ τὸ συρίσδες [2–3]), although others refer to the poem's inimitable χάρις. Richard Hunter, for example, proposes, “In sound, dialect and rhythm [*Idyll* 1's] opening exchange announces a ‘new’ poetry to which our ears must become accustomed.”<sup>78</sup> While the Theokritean soundscape may appear novel to ears schooled in classical Greek verse, the paronomasia actually has a good deal in common with Egyptian and Semitic verse. Theocritus spent at least part of his life working in Alexandria, where the Ptolemies were engaged in the historically unprecedented project of creating a joint culture that would accommodate Egyptians as well as Hellenes and Jews.<sup>79</sup> From the perspective of an audience familiar with traditional and contemporary Egyptian poetry, then, *Idyll* 1 reads as if Theocritus were attempting to incorporate Afroasiatic literary devices into the conventions of Greek *epos*, part of the generic mixture that gave rise to what we know today as “Bucolic.”

### D. Qurʾānic Arabic<sup>80</sup>

1. Azān (c. 600 CE) [Sunnī]

الله أكبر ◊ الله أكبر ◊ الله أكبر ◊ الله أكبر  
اشهد ان لا اله الا الله ◊ اشهد ان لا اله الا الله  
اشهد ان محمدا رسول الله ◊ اشهد ان محمدا رسول الله  
حي على الصلاة ◊ حي على الصلاة  
حي على الفلاح ◊ حي على الفلاح  
الله اكبر ◊ الله اكبر  
لا اله الا الله

*allāhu akbar*  
*ašhadu an-lā ilāha illa llāh*  
*ašhadu anna Muḥammadan rasūlu llāh*  
*ḥayy ʿala ṣ-ṣalā*  
*ḥayy ʿala ʿl-falāh*  
*allāhu akbar*  
*lā ilāha illa llāh*

God is greatest.

I bear witness that [there is] no god but god.

I bear witness that Muḥammad is the messenger of god.

Come alive to the prayer.

Come alive to the flourishing.

God is greatest.

[There is] no god but God.

This extraordinary chant, which calls Muslims to worship five times per day, weaves the distinctive long Arabic vowel *ā* into a thicket of double *ll*'s. The morpheme *llāh* occurs in every line save one, amid other phonic repetitions such as *anna* / *amma* or *ašhadu* / *allāhu*. In its varied repetitions, the strophic form represents an expansion of the couplet, which comes to a climax on the *šahādah*—arguably the greatest single line of Afroasiatic verse: *lā ilāha illa llāh* (“no god but god”), a tour de force of echo effects, composed of just three phonemes: *l*, *ā*, and *h*, which extends the principle of Theocritus' felicitous αἶκα δ' αἶγα across the entire line.<sup>81</sup>

### 2. Sūrat al-Qadr (97)

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ  
وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ  
لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ  
نَزَلَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ آيَاتٌ فِي الْقُرْآنِ  
وَمَا يَدْرَأُكَ أَهْلُ الْقُرْآنِ

<sup>2</sup>*innā ʾanzalnā hu fī laylati l-qadr*

*wa mā adrāka nā laylatu l-qadr*

*laylatu l-qadrī ḥayrun min ʾalfi šahr*

*tanazzalu l-malāʾikatu wa r-rūḥu fihā bi ʾiẓni rabbihim min kulli ʾamr*

*salāmun hiya ḥattā maṭla ʾi l-fajr*

Indeed we sent it down on the night of power.

And what could tell you of the night of power?

The night of power is better than a thousand months.

Therein come down the angels and the spirit by God's permission, on every errand:

Peace! . . . until the rise of dawn!

Few *suwar* illustrate so succinctly and straightforwardly the “inimitability of the Qur’ān” (*iʿjāz al-Qurʿān*).<sup>82</sup> To put this otherwise, the Qur’ān—viewed as one verbal artifact among others—constitutes the culmination of Afroasiatic literature as it came to be perfected in late antiquity. In this case, the end rhymes (*qadr*, *šahr*, *ʿamr*, *fajr*) reinforce the persistent repetition of the phonic pattern “Cā” (*nā*, *mā*, *lā*, *hā*, *tā*), coupled with the striking effect of phonetic reversals (*im mi*) and the double consonants (*nn*, *zz*, *bb*, *ll*, *tt*), which stand out as particularly prominent when chanted.<sup>83</sup> Technically, we are dealing here with rhymed prose (*sāfʿ*), where the poetic function has become dominant.

### E. Somali

Johnson 1996, 80.

*fatuurad La fuulay fiidkii yoo*  
*faynuus fanka Loo sudhaad tahay*

A car being driven in the early evening  
With a lamp hanging from its front, are you.

Somalis draw a sharp distinction between poetry and prose. Poetry—by tradition exclusively oral, despite the copresence of Islamic scripture—is by far the more important medium of artistic expression, differentiated from prose principally by its organization into couplets and its unusually high incidence of assonance and alliteration.<sup>84</sup> Many contemporary social activities, such as festivals and weddings, require poetry, and Somalis today continue to work to the rhythm of poetry, which helps to pace as well as to lighten the pounding of grain by women or the watering of camels and livestock by men. Poetry also constitutes one of the major mediums of political address. In this two-line *hirwo*—one of the so-called miniature genres<sup>85</sup>—the light (*faynuus*) of an automobile (*fatuurad*) comes to symbolize the wisdom of a woman who illuminates the path at twilight (*fiid*). The artistry resides not only in this conceit but also in the five-fold repetition of *f* at the initial boundary of the word, as well as the series of long vowels interspersed between them (*uu*, *ii*, *oo*, *aa*).

### F. Berber

Bounfour 1999, 1:176.

*a lalla lmarikan*  
*tazizwit ne-nnišan*  
*izenzišem ueaffan*  
*iswišem dedduxan*

Poor American lady [i.e., rifle],  
Cocked, pointed, and aimed,  
The crook sold you  
After he had had you filled with smoke.

Like Somali poetry, Berber remains one of the most vibrant living traditions of Afroasiatic verse. As one example among many, this contemporary composition diverts the traditional resources of Afroasiatic poetry to new political ends, a move typical of modern Berber poetic composition.<sup>86</sup> In this case, the end rhymes in *-an*, the doubled consonants (*nn*, *ff*, *dd*), and the quadrupled repetitions (*-l -l -l -l* | *-z -z -z -z*) create phonic patterns not unlike Arabic verse, the other Afroasiatic literary tradition still alive in the region.

### G. Hausa

Mallam Muḥammad, as transcribed from the *ʿaḡamī* manuscript reprinted in Robinson 1896, Facsimile g, ll. 92–93.

Kowa ya iḡanwa ši do anía ši yasa	kadda mutua fa dokeši hal ila ya baia
Kowa <u>kan</u> tuba ši do anía ši tuba	kadda arufi kofa šina <u>wakan</u> ya šifo ba
He who is very thirsty takes pains to dig a well;	beware lest death take him away to a place where he will do no work.
He who would repent let him take pains to repent (now);	beware lest the door be closed and he who is outside should not be able to enter in.

Collected in the nineteenth century, this pair of thought couplets comes from a poetic composition extending to a total of 102 lines, which, according to the *mallam*’s superscript, were “written for the instruction of my relatives” (*haḡ alkitab alrata limansub*). As such, the poem belongs to the Afroasiatic genre of wisdom literature (cf. “The Instruction of ‘Onchsheshonqy” in the section on Egyptian). To take the second couplet as typical, the alliterative sequence *kowa—kan—kadda—kofa—wakan*, interspersed with the quadrupled *ši-* and the internal rhyme *yalba*, *wa kan* | *wakan* again effectively promotes the poetic over the referential function.

H. Canaanite Poetry

1. Ugaritic (ca. 1300 BCE)<sup>87</sup>

yitba<sup>ʿ</sup>u yaššubu ḡalmu      Yassub the lad departed,  
 yišša<sup>ʿ</sup>u gahu wa-yašūeu      He lifted his voice and shouted. (KTU 1.16)

adīnu dīna’almanati      He was judging the judgment of the widow,  
 yatpuṭu taṭṭa yatumi      He was adjudicating the cause of the orphan.  
 (KTU 1.17)

hatti<sup>ʿ</sup>ēbaka ba<sup>ʿ</sup>lima      As for your enemy, O Ba<sup>ʿ</sup>lu,  
 hatti<sup>ʿ</sup>ēbakatimxašu      As for your enemy, you will smite [him]:  
 hatti tašammitu šarrataka      You will destroy your adversary.  
 tiqqahu mulka<sup>ʿ</sup>ālamika      You will take your eternal kingship,  
 darkata dāti dāri dārika      Your sovereignty from generation to  
 generation. (KTU 1.2)

Ugaritic poetry, preserved primarily in cuneiform, stands at the head of the Canaanite literary tradition, insofar as it constitutes the oldest extant corpus of West Semitic literature.<sup>88</sup> Whether Ugaritic poetry is metric remains a subject of debate. However, like the Psalms and other poetic passages that turn up somewhat later in the Hebrew Bible, Ugaritic compositions rely on thought couplets—as well as occasional triplets—that exhibit a high degree of parallelism at the phonic, lexical, and syntactic levels simultaneously. As Joel LeMon has shown, the density of *Klangfiguren* in any composition increases roughly in proportion to the rhetorical intensity of the passage.<sup>89</sup> Thus, in the third of the extracts above, the bicolon with which the passage concludes (*tiqqahu mulka<sup>ʿ</sup>ālamika* || *darkata dāti dāri dārika*) exhibits an increasing prominence of the poetic over the referential function: “eternal kingship” (*mlk<sup>ʿ</sup>lm*) may be the semantic equivalent of “sovereignty from generation to generation,” but clearly the final colon’s play on *drk* and *dr* impresses the ear as not only phonically denser but also more complex.

2. Phoinikian: Kilamuwa Stele (ca. 850 BCE)<sup>90</sup>

<sup>ʿ</sup>nk klmw br Hy      I am Kilamuwa, son of Ḥayyā  
 mlk gbr <sup>ʿ</sup>l y<sup>2</sup>dy wbl p<sup>ʿ</sup>l      Gabbār was king of Ya<sup>2</sup>diya, and he did  
 nothing.  
 kn bmh wbl p<sup>ʿ</sup>l      BMH also ruled, and he did nothing.  
 wkn <sup>ʿ</sup>b ḥy<sup>2</sup> wbl p<sup>ʿ</sup>l      My father Haya<sup>2</sup> also ruled, and he did  
 nothing.  
 wkn <sup>ʿ</sup>ḥ š<sup>ʿ</sup>l wbl p<sup>ʿ</sup>l . . .      My brother Ša<sup>ʿ</sup>l also ruled, and he did  
 nothing.

[. . .]  
 wkl šlh yd llhm  
 wkt byd mlkm  
 km<sup>ʿ</sup>š <sup>ʿ</sup>klt zqn  
 wkm<sup>ʿ</sup>š <sup>ʿ</sup>klt yd

Each stretched forth his hand to fight,  
 And I was in the hand of those kings.  
 Like a fire I consumed the beard,  
 And like a fire I consumed the hand.  
 (Zincirli 2)

As a branch of Canaanite literature, Phoinikian poetry offers few surprises and attests to the continuity of the style across the Middle East. There is an unbroken literary genealogy, it would seem, from lines such as the Ugaritic *mutullatatu kitrama tamūtu* (KTU 1.14), or the Phoinikian couplet *wkl šlh yd llhm / wkt byd mlkm*, to the opening of the Arabic *Sūrat al-Fātiḥah*: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ *bismillāhi r-rahmāni r-rahīm*. The matter of the Qur’ān may be more exalted, but the poetic devices, whatever their origin, remain essentially the same.

I. Punic

Bir ed-Dréder 6 (ca. 350 CE)<sup>91</sup>

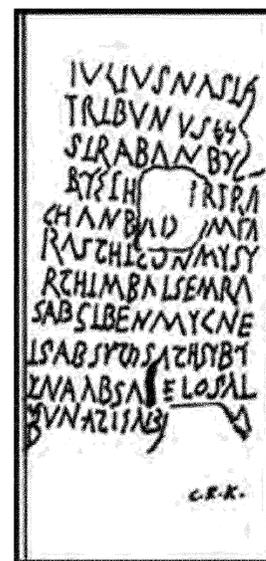


Figure 38 Iulius Nasif

*Iulius Nasif Tribunus byn Siraban*  
*Byrysthim Yirirachan*  
*badnim garasth is on mysyrthim bal sem ra*  
*sab siben Mycne is ab syth sath syby*  
*yn aab sa[.]e lo sal dun ath abdacha*

Iulius Nasif, Tribune, son of Siraban  
 “When He Drove Out Yirirachan”

I drove the wicked fellow from Adnim  
 The infamous fellow, from the Syrthis;

Our militia surrounded Mycne,  
 Then did I take that chieftain captive;

The chieftain asked . . . for himself:  
 “Judge thou thy servant.”

Translated to Karthago and its environs, Phoinikian poetry survived up through the middle of the fourth century CE, that is, both through and long past the lifetime of Apuleius. This modest composition, transcribed in Roman capitals, constitutes the only poem in the Canaanite literary tradition to come down

to us with full vocalization from the time of its composition. The poem remains, in Charles Krahmalkov’s words, “identical in form and style to Ugaritic and ancient Israelite poetry, . . . [an] eloquent testimony to the tenacity and conservatism of the Phoinikian culture of North Africa.” The text of the inscription falls into three parts: (1) the name and title of the deceased, (2) a superscription to the poem, and (3) the poem proper, which comprises three thought couplets. The epigraphic presentation of the verse is itself partially stichometric: each of the half-verses of the second and third couplets (ll. 8–11) coincides with an epigraphic line. The poem not only exhibits semantic parallelism, one of the classic features of Canaanite verse (*badnim garasth is on | mysyrthim bal sem ra*) but concomitantly displays a full range of *Klangfiguren* (e.g., *sab siben Mycne | is ab syth sath syby*), including end rhyme: *Siraban | Yirirachan, sem ra | abdacha*).

Two final details return us to the eclectic cultural milieu of Roman Africa from which we started out: not only is the Punic poem inscribed here in Latin script, but the name “Nasif” is Libyac, while his title *tribunus* that he proudly bears indicates—in this period, at least—that he served in the highest-ranking regimental office in the imperial Roman army.<sup>92</sup> The stele immortalizes one of his military battles, perhaps his greatest martial success, although it does so not in the Roman annalistic tradition but rather in an idiom reminiscent of Ugaritic epic. Once again, then, we find the artifact overdetermined by three disparate and historically distinct cultures: although the deceased was Libyac, he chose to memorialize himself in Punic, in particular as a victorious Roman legionnaire. Part of the Roman colonization of North Africa, yet also doubly outside it, each of these facets of Nasif’s life and legacy remain separate, and each requires contextualization within differently contested cultural milieux.

### J. Numidian Latin

#### 1. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 8.12.3 (ca. 175 CE)<sup>93</sup>

*Lumen certe non uidebis, manu comitis indigebis, Chariten non tenebis, nuptias non frueris, nec mortis quiete recreaberis, nec uitae uoluptate laetaberis sed incertum simulacrum errabis inter Orcum et solem.*

This is certain: you will not see the light, you will need the hand of a companion, you will not possess Charite, you will not enjoy a marriage, you will not be restored by the repose of death, nor rejoice in the pleasure of being alive, but shall wander as a vague shade between Orcus and the sun[light].

The *Asinus Aureus*—to recall the novel’s alternate title, which clearly suggests a meeting between opposites or, to put this otherwise, the collapsing

of the *plus* into the *minus* category of the binary oppositions around which the narration pivots<sup>94</sup>—situates itself at the same conjunction of cultures that we found in the demographic, linguistic, and architectural environment of Roman Africa. Based on a Greek original, Apuleius’ Latin narrative mimics this *translatio* in the life of his hero Lucius, who, despite his imposing pedigree of Greek ancestors,<sup>95</sup> eventually winds up in Rome.

Two details further complicate this picture: in the end, Lucius (1) reveals that he in fact hails from the largely Libyac town of Madauros, also the birthplace of Apuleius, and (2) becomes a devotee of the Egyptian goddess Isis. Thus the novel specifies its coordinates as Greek, Roman, Libyac, and Egyptian, composed intermittently in a type of rhyming prose that clearly anticipates the Arabic *sāj`* (سجع).<sup>96</sup> It is here that we can see the influence of Afroasiatic poetics on Apuleius’ work—Punic poetry and potentially Berber, too. So the Groningen edition of book 8 remarks:

[F]our cola (*lumen . . . frueris*) are joined asyndetically; they are followed by two clauses joined by *nec . . . nec*. This rigid division is softened because the rhyme obtained by repetition of the same verbal form (*uidebis, indigebis, tenebis, fruēris, recreaberis, laetaberis*) crosses the 4–2 partition . . . Within these verbal forms a vowel harmony can be observed in the first three forms and again in the last two, while *frueris* clearly has a transitional function . . . There are [also] careful parallelisms in the number of syllables:

*lumen certē non uidēbīs* (8)      *manu comitis indigēbīs* (9)  
*Charitēn non tenēbīs* (7)      *nuptias non fruērīs* (7)  
*NEC mortīs quietē recreāberīs* (11)      *NEC uitae uoluptate laetāberīs* (11).

It is remarkable that, all careful construction notwithstanding, alliteration is practically absent here (only *uitae uoluptate*). . .<sup>97</sup>

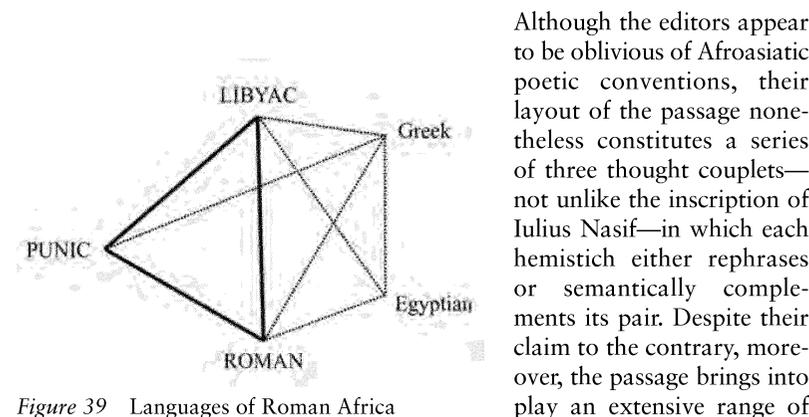


Figure 39 Languages of Roman Africa

Although the editors appear to be oblivious of Afroasiatic poetic conventions, their layout of the passage nonetheless constitutes a series of three thought couplets—not unlike the inscription of Iulius Nasif—in which each hemistich either rephrases or semantically complements its pair. Despite their claim to the contrary, moreover, the passage brings into play an extensive range of

*Klangfiguren*.<sup>98</sup> Most conspicuous, of course, are the eight-fold repetitions of medial or terminal long *-ē*, matched by the eight-fold terminal short *-is*, which together yield the four end rhymes: *-dēbis*, *-gēbis*, *-nēbis*, and *-uēris*, as well as, shortening the *e*, *-āberis*, *-āberis*. More subtle is the chiasmic sequence *lu—nu—nu—lu*, which lends cohesion to the passage as a whole, or the serial combination of the consonants *n-c-t(-n)* or *c-t-n-t*, which occurs in five of the six hemistiches, the sixth showing only *n-t-n*. The triple repetition of *non*, the double *nec*, and the internal rhyme *-ae- / -ae-* in the final hemistich, accompanied by the tripled *-ā-*, also contribute to the Afroasiatic soundscape as a whole.

## 2. Augustine, *Confessiones* 3.1 (ca. 400 CE)

*Veni Karthaginem, et circumstrepebat me undique sartago flagitiosorum amorum. Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, et secretiore indigentia oderam me minus indigentem. Quaerebam quid amarem, amans amare, et oderam securitatem et uiam sine muscipulis, quoniam fames mihi erat intus ab interiore cibo, te ipso, deus meus, et ea fame non esuriebam, sed eram sine desiderio alimentorum incorruptibilium, non quia plenus eis eram, sed quo insanior, fastidiosior.*

To Karthago I came, where there sang all around me in my ears a cauldron of unholy loves. I loved not yet, yet I loved to love, and out of a deep-seated want, I hated myself for wanting not. I sought what I might love, in love with loving, and safety I hated, and a way without snares. For within me was a famine of that inward food, Thyself, my God; yet, through that famine I was not hungered; but was without all longing for incorruptible sustenance, not because filled therewith, but the more empty, the more I loathed it.

Augustine's ancestors included not only Latins but Libyacs and Phoinicians as well<sup>99</sup>—that is, all three of the principal ethnic groups that inhabited Roman Africa. His letters and sermons, moreover, attest to his facility with Berber and Punic. Not for nothing, then, do the marked paronomasia here, the alliteration, the assonance, and the internal rhyme signal the young Augustine's move to Karthago, by conspicuously employing the hallmarks of Punic poetry, although, unlike Apuleius', Augustine's prose does not break down into thought couplets. Whether Augustine writes here under the influence of Apuleius or not, the two styles remain relatively close, although each writer directs his prose to very different ends. Whereas Apuleius locates his prose positively in the realm of pleasure (*lector intende: laetaberis*), for Augustine Karthago is a cauldron of seething sensuality—acoustic and otherwise—that in retrospect he can recall only with aversion (*fastidium*). Literary style thus becomes here a metonym of spirit.

## 4. FINAL SOLUTIONS [PBD]

Afroasiatic literature has no monopoly, of course, on assonance, alliteration, or paronomasia as poetic devices. In fact, the same literary features typify the Germanic branch of Indo-European poetry. The Golden Horns of Gallehus, our earliest extant witness to this tradition<sup>100</sup>—found in Denmark and dated to the fourth century CE—bear the following runic inscription in Proto-Norse:

*ek hlewagastir holtijar || horna tawidô*  
I, Hlewagastir [son?] of Holt, made the horn.

Of the three alliterations, two stand together in the first hemistich (*hlewagastir holtijar*), while the third falls directly after the caesura (*horna*). Beyond this, the sound cluster *h—llr—t—i* phonically dominates the line: *hle-ti—holt-i—hor-t(aw)i*.

A millennium later, marking a sonic continuum across the Middle Ages, William Langland employed virtually the same poetic form for *Piers Plowman* in the late fourteenth century CE.

*A feir feld full of folk || fond I þer bitwene,*  
*Of alle maner of men, || þe mene and þe riche,*  
*Worchinge and wandringe || as þe world askep.*

Among them I found a fair field full of people  
All manner of men, the poor and the rich,  
Working and wandering as the world requires. (B-Text, Prologue 17–19)

Again, in Langland's Middle English, two (or more) alliterations stand before the caesura (e.g., *maner, mene*), followed by one in the second hemistich (*mene*). Moreover, the four-fold *þe-*, which occurs at least once in every line, functions effectively to bind this particular stretch of verses together as a unit. In the course of literary history, however, it is less the similarities than the underlying differences that matter most.<sup>101</sup> Thus, while Afroasiatic literature certainly makes extensive use of alliteration, sonically the soundscape of Egyptian, Canaanite, or Somali verse tends to be much richer. Moreover, the hemistiches in Old German and Old Norse poetry do not fall out into thought couplets. The following line from the *Hávamál*, for example, constitutes a justly famous tricolon crescendo: *Deyr fé || deyja frodr || deyr siálfr it sama* ("Cattle die || kinsmen die || you yourself die"),<sup>102</sup> but this passage remains of a wholly different order from the Ugaritic: *minūtī niṭka naḥāši || šamrira naḥāši ʿaqšari* ("My incantation for a serpent bite || for the scaly serpent's poison"<sup>103</sup>), which exhibits a significantly more complex pattern of *Klangfiguren*, at the same time that the

two hemistiches form a thought couplet. Thus, where the Old Norse verses build to a climax, the Ugaritic tale of *Ḥorānu and the Serpents* carefully balances one clause against another.

The suggestion that the floridity of Apuleius' style depends on the conventions of Afroasiatic poetry and prose occurs intermittently in older scholarship—but for the most part only to dismiss it. Max Bernhard, for example, in his magisterial study *Der Stil des Apuleius von Madaura*, claims:

Among the Latin authors, Apuleius pushes *παρῳσμός* to the furthest degree; in many passages, syllable count even plays an important role. . . . We have come to recognize the homeland (*Heimat*) of this figure [in Greek rhetoric; e.g., Gorgias]; no more do we need to credit Apuleius' often bizarre use of parallelism to the influence of the Semitic and to recall the parallel structures of the Hebrew psalms: to the contrary, E. Norden has shown that between the *parallelism of form*, which we find in Greek Asianism, and the *parallelism of thought* that we encounter mostly in the Hebrew language, there lies a stark contrast, which we have failed to appreciate sufficiently (*der lange verkannt wurde*).<sup>104</sup>

Curiously enough, Bernhard patently obscures the fact that in Apuleius' prose, parallelism of form coincides fairly regularly with parallelism of thought—something that modern editors of Apuleius continue to ignore, and that Dimitrios Papanikolaou has recently confirmed is not one of the literary devices deployed in Greek Asianic rhetoric.<sup>105</sup> To cite from among Bernhard's own set of examples:

*sacra differentur, templa deformantur,  
puluinaria proteruntur, caerimonia negleguntur,  
incoronata simulacra et arae uiduae,  
frigido cenere foedatae.*<sup>106</sup>

[Venus'] rites are put off, her temples disfigured, here cushioned couches crushed, here ceremonies neglected; her statues are uncrowned, her altars abandoned and stained by cold ash. (*Metamorphoses* 4.29.3)

Moreover, recourse to “die parallelisierenden Struktur der hebräischen Psalmen” as a potential source for Apuleius' style remains relatively far-fetched considering that, while evidence for Apuleius' knowledge of Hebrew is nil, he explicitly identifies himself as Libyac and makes clear in the *Apoloogia* that he conversed fluently in Punic. What gives Bernhard's hand away here, particularly considering the date of the book's appearance (1927), is his recourse to the rhetoric of *Heimat*.<sup>107</sup> Almost a century earlier, Jules Michelet's influential *Histoire romaine* maintained:

It is not without reason that the memory of the Punic Wars has stayed so popular and so alive. The struggle was not merely to decide the

fate of two cities or two empires; it was to settle which of the two races, the Indo-Germanic or the Semitic, was to rule the world. . . . On the one side the genius of heroism, of art and of law; on the other the spirit of industry, navigation, and commerce. . . . The heroes fought—without ceasing—their industrious and perfidious neighbors. They were workers, smiths, miners, magicians. They loved gold, hanging gardens and magic palaces. . . . They constructed towers with titanic ambition, which the swords of the warriors broke up and effaced from the earth.<sup>108</sup>

Martin Bernal has documented how, from the latter half of the nineteenth century through the 1930s, classical scholarship came to construct Phoinikian culture in particular as (1) *diesseits des Hellenentums* and (2) (therefore) fundamentally barbaric—Friedrich Schlegel, in his seminal essay *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808), had classified Phoinikian as an “animal” language,<sup>109</sup> just as Gustav Flaubert, in his highly popular *Salammô* (1862), went on to describe in lurid detail the barbarism of child sacrifice at Karthago. Contemporaneously, Ernest Renan asserted:

The [Phoinikian] race is to be recognized almost entirely by negative characteristics. It has neither mythology nor epic, nor science, nor philosophy, nor fiction, nor plastic arts, nor civil life; in everything there is a complete absence of complexity, subtlety, or feeling.<sup>110</sup>

Michelet's framing of the Punic Wars as a struggle between two civilizations for world hegemony—the spiritual genius of the Indo-Germanic peoples against what Renan viewed as the vapid and mercenary perfidy of the Phoinikians,<sup>111</sup> a conflict settled only by the complete annihilation of Karthago—allowed, as Bernal demonstrates, scholarly disparagement of the Phoinikians to function as a displaced discourse of anti-Semitism in England, Germany, and France. Bernal summarizes this figural slippage in his Introduction to *Black Athena*:

[With] the rise of anti-Semitism in the 1880s, there was a sustained attack on the Phoinikians which was particularly fierce where it came to their legendary contacts with, and influence on, the Greeks—who had by now been given semi-divine status.

A decade later, in the 1890s, two short but extraordinarily influential articles were published by Julius Beloch, a German who taught in Italy, and Salomon Reinach, an assimilated Alsatian Jew at the centre of Parisian cultivated society and scholarship. Both . . . claimed that Greek civilization was purely European, while the Phoinikians, apart from

their transmission of the consonantal alphabet, had contributed nothing to Hellenic culture. . . .

The final elimination of the Phoinikian influence on Greece—and its complete dismissal as a “mirage”—came only in the 1920s with the crescendo of anti-Semitism resulting from the imagined and real role of Jews in the Russian Revolution and the Communist 3rd International. In the 1920s and 30s all the legends of Phoinikian colonization of Greece were discredited, as were reports of Phoinikian presence in the Aegean and Italy in the 9th and 8th centuries BCE.<sup>112</sup>

It is also true, Bernal points out, that the Phoinikians had their champions among nineteenth-century scholars, William Gladstone among them. However, in the end, the only way that the great prime minister found to exculpate the Karthaginians was to reclassify them: “I have always thought,” he confessed, “that the Phoenicians at bottom were a non-Semitic stock.”<sup>113</sup>

Given this intellectual climate, it comes as no surprise that Bernhard, in his attempt to validate Apuleius’ prose style, (1) locates its *Heimat* in the Greek rhetorical tradition, whose elaboration of *parísōsis* from Gorgias of Syracuse (480–380 BCE), through Hegesias of Magnesia (fl. ca. 300 BCE), down to Aeschines of Miletus (mid-first century CE) had a significant impact on the evolution of imperial Latin prose;<sup>114</sup> and (2) explicitly suppresses all of Apuleius’ potential relations to Afroasiatic letters, no matter how close the stylistic connections, as we have seen. While the metalepsis that links the stigmatization of the Phoinikians directly to National Socialism’s *Endlösung der Judenfrage* ought perhaps best be avoided, there is no question that articles such as Salomon Reinach’s “Le mirage oriental” (1893) or Julius Beloch’s “Die Phoeniker am aegäischen Meer” (1894) belong in the same cultural camp as Richard Wagner’s *Das Judentum in der Musik* (1869), where “Judentum” refers not only to Jewish composers, such as Felix Mendelssohn or Jacob Meyerbeer, but also more generally, in popular parlance at least, to venal “commercialism,”<sup>115</sup> one of the traits predicated of the Phoinikians. At the very least, the nineteenth century’s insistence on divorcing Greco-Roman studies from serious knowledge of the Semitic world, as well the implicit elevation of *Altertumswissenschaft* over *Semitistik*, has affected the whole course of *Gymnasialbildung*, university curricula, and, in general, public opinion, up through the present.<sup>116</sup>

The assumption that the Indo-European hypothesis has no heuristic value because some scholars over the past 200 years have used its claims to racist ends, that is to say, to promote the “Aryans” over other, non-Indo-European cultures and peoples,<sup>117</sup> constitutes a clear logical fallacy. By the same token, however, it does *not* follow that because other scholars—for similarly racist reasons—from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century shied away from exploring links between Greco-Roman writers

and the Phoinikians, that such connections actually existed. The influence of Afroasiatic poetry and prose on Apuleius’ writing can, given our present state of knowledge, never remain anything more than a hypothesis, a tantalizing conjecture for which there is a considerable amount of circumstantial evidence. The very fact that many, if not most, artistic artifacts from Roman Africa in the second century BCE—architecture, city planning, funeral inscriptions, and so forth—conspicuously set Libyac, Punic, and Latin traditions in conversation makes the likelihood that Apuleius was doing something of the same thing more compelling: at least, he wrote for an audience who was so prepared. The remainder of the balance sheet tallies up roughly as follows:

- Fact: Apuleius represents himself as Libyac by birth, as well as fluent in Punic, in his extant work.
- Fact: Punic poetry continued to be composed in North Africa through the third century CE.
- Conjecture: Apuleius was conversant with this literary tradition, whether in oral or in written form.
- Fact: Parallelism, paronomasia, alliteration, and so on constitute the principal literary devices of Afroasiatic poetry and prose across all branches of the tradition.<sup>118</sup>
- Fact: Archaic Roman writers also used similar devices, but classical rhetoricians explicitly disparaged their (over)use.
- Conjecture: Apuleius ignores this caveat: the poetics of his prose is both archaizing within the Latin literary tradition *and* congruent with Libyac and Punic norms.
- Fact: A significant percentage of Apuleius’ audience was competent in Libyac or Punic and conversant with their literary-cultural traditions.
- Fact: All of Apuleius’ extant work was written in Latin and dealt mainly with Greco-Roman themes—Isis, rhetoric, and magic included.
- Conjecture: Bilingual portions of Apuleius’ audience would have perceived his work as a semiological compound: Libyac-Punic expression, Greco-Roman content.
- Fact: Roman culture (literature, architecture, religion) tended to be promiscuous, within certain limits (e.g., child sacrifice).
- Fact: Apuleius’ prose can readily be viewed as part and parcel of the contemporary Greco-Roman Second Sophistic.<sup>119</sup>
- Conjecture: Afroasiatic features of Apuleius’ style could also be seen in the tradition of cultural enrichment to imperial *Romanitas*.

The history of Roman architecture best attests to Roman culture's general openness to artistic promiscuity, as evidenced by such buildings as the Temple of Fortuna at Praeneste (82 BCE); the Temple of Portunus at Rome (75 BCE); the Tomb of C. Cestius, also at Rome (ca. 18–12 BCE); and the Antinoeion at Hadrian's Villa (ca. 125 CE). As Frank E. Brown explains:

The Romans learned the art of building . . . from their neighbors and overlords, the Etruscans. Something, too, they may have learned more directly from the teachers of the Etruscans, the Greeks of that day, who were reaching into Italy. . . . At their first lessons the Romans were apt and docile pupils, copying faithfully what they were taught. . . . These elementary lessons were soon digested, the basic techniques soon assimilated. . . . The fifth, fourth, and third centuries BC saw the steady gush of creative energy that made Rome's heroic age. It forged and tempered the uniquely Roman pattern of ritual action in war and peace.

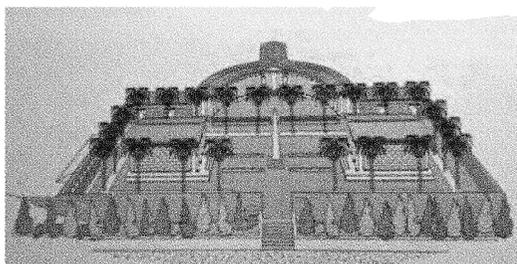


Figure 40 Antinoeion

It forged and tempered at the same time their spatial environment of architecture. The result was an autonomous and independent art, unlike that of any other part of the contemporary world. . . . [Later,] Hellenistic architecture made the Roman eye dissatisfied with the traditional shapes and proportions of mass—broad, squarish, and top-heavy. It taught them to share its own predilection for the oblong, the tall, and lightly loaded. . . . Hellenistic architecture, through contact with the Orient, had experimented gingerly with the arch and barrel vault, never to define a significant form or volume but as a variant of opening or passage. Roman architects were moved to seize on the arch as a formal substitute for post and lintel, and on the vault as the means of closing the shell of space in a continuous curve.<sup>120</sup>

The influence of Egyptian building on the Tomb of Cestius and the Antinoeion, respectively the  $\text{𐤀𐤁}$  (*mr*, Lat. *pyramis*) and the  $\text{𐤀𐤁𐤀}$  (*thn*, Lat. *obeliscus*), juxtaposed with Etruscan and Greek architectural motifs, constitutes the equivalent in stone of Apuleius' introduction of Libyic and Punic literary devices into Roman prose. From a Roman point of view, such a collocation, it seems, would have been entirely unproblematic.

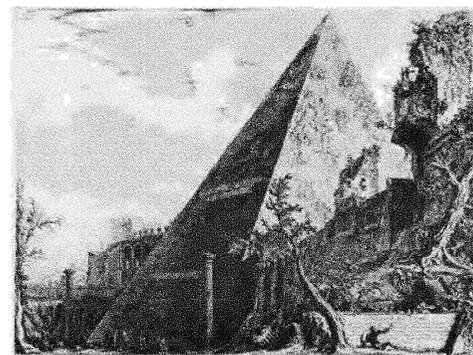


Figure 41 Tomb of C. Cestius

And what if, to conclude at what constitutes a more rigorous point of departure, perhaps, Apuleius had set, then and now, the sonority of the Afroasiatic song against the sound Greco-Roman sense—in the entirety of its tradition, we would say—not just at the perimeter of parody but taken to the point of dialectical engagement, so that ultimately the Neo-Punic *sēmāinonta* drowned out the age-old Roman *sesēmasména*, in a retrospective resistance to the ravaging of Karthago, as a more culturally nuanced reading of the Apuleian corpus might perhaps suggest? Would this not make Apuleius not only the exemplary literary *bricoleur* but also, perhaps, the very model of the literary *sabateur*?<sup>121</sup> On Monday, April 7, 1873, Cosima Wagner entered in her diary:

Sore foot; R. goes with our friends to the theater, which Gedon thinks

very fine, too. At lunch the two professors, the mayor and the dean, who makes a fine speech to the three “men of the future,” as he calls R. and his two young friends—what awaits them in joy and sorrow. Very affecting. Dispute between him and R. over the Jews; the dean feels that intermarriage is the solution to the problem, but R. maintains that the Germans would then cease to exist, since the blond German blood is not strong enough to withstand this “alkali.” We can see, he says, how the Franks and the Normans were turned into Frenchmen, and Jewish blood is far more corrosive than Latin blood. R. goes on to say that his only hope is that “these fellows” (*die Kerle*) will become so arrogant that they will no longer

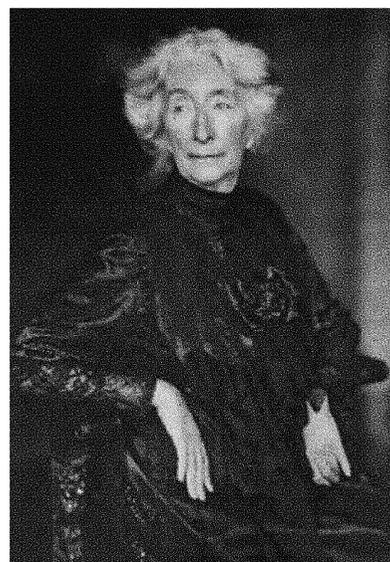


Figure 42 Cosima Wagner



79. See Manning 2012.
80. A good starting point is Sells 1999.
81. Many versions of the call to prayer may be found online, including [www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsqQgs6Hcm0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsqQgs6Hcm0) (accessed April 27, 2013).
82. See Larkin 1988. For a modern rendition of the chant, go to [www.youtube.com/watch?v=eH0w445Gm60](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eH0w445Gm60) (accessed April 27, 2013).
83. See further Sells 1999.
84. Andrzejewski 1964. To hear what traditional Somali poetry sounds like, there is a live performance by the distinguished poet and singer Maxamud Xaji Cali Baywaroow online at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqOnUdF5iRg&playnext=1&list=PLE4FF63F5DA3344E7](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqOnUdF5iRg&playnext=1&list=PLE4FF63F5DA3344E7) (accessed April 27, 2013).
85. For Somali generic classifications, see Johnson 1967; M. Daahir Afrax, "Classification and Nomenclature of Somali Literary Forms," [http://wardheernews.com/articles08/December/Afrax/nomenclature\\_M\\_D\\_Afrax.pdf](http://wardheernews.com/articles08/December/Afrax/nomenclature_M_D_Afrax.pdf) (accessed April 27, 2013).
86. Cf. Brint Joseph 1980.
87. Dietrich-Loretz-Sanmartin 1976.
88. See Bordreuil-Pardee 2009, 79–82.
89. See LeMon 2005.
90. For the text, see Tropper 1993. On its poetic structure, see Collins 1971; O'Connor 1977.
91. Krahmalkov 1994.
92. See Goodchild 1954.
93. For problems of dating the *Metamorphoses*, see Harrison 2000, 9–10.
94. See above, 246 ff.; Winkler 1985.
95. *Metamorphoses* 1.2.1: *Thessaliam—nam et illic originis maternas nostrae fundamenta a Plutarcho illo inclito ac mox Sexto philosopho nepote eius prodita gloriam nobis faciunt—eam Thessaliam ex negotio petebam.*
96. See Prendergast 1915, 10–14.
97. GCA 1985, 122.
98. Among other things, the editors are under the misapprehension that *alliteratio* occurs only at the beginning of a word boundary, not within words; see Lausberg 1973, § 1246 s.v.
99. Power 1999.
100. See Hartner 1969.
101. John Freccero, personal communication.
102. *Hávamál*, book I, 77. Text: <http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/germ/anord/edda/edda.htm> (accessed May 6, 2013).
103. Bordreuil-Pardee 2009, 190–192.
104. Bernhard 1927, 89. See Norden 1898, 2: 813–824.
105. On Asianism, see most recently Papanikolaou 2009. The aretology—built up of short, metrical clausulae—shows a conspicuous absence of Afroasiatic poetic features.
106. On the textual problems in this passage, see GCA 2004, 52–53. On *pulvinaria*, the editors remark, "the most striking element [here], since it refers to an exclusively Roman custom." This reconfirms that Apuleius regularly pairs Afroasiatic forms of expression with Roman content.
107. See *in primis* Applegate 1990. Specific to this period are Petri 2001; Spranger 1923.
108. Michelet 1831, vol. 2, chap. 3.
109. Schlegel 1808, 70–80.
110. Renan 1855. Modern archaeological finds have, of course, corrected these literary views.
111. Cf. the Roman proverb *Punica fides*, a term for contractual "bad faith"; cf., *inter alia*, Livy 21.4.9; Valerius Maximus 9.6.

112. Bernal 1987–1991, 1: 34.
113. Quoted from Bernal 1987–1991, 1: 351.
114. Bernhard 1927, 88.
115. Wagner 1897–1898, 5: 66–85.
116. See Marchand 2003 and 2009.
117. See Poliakov 1974.
118. Only Omotic poetry remains poorly published and generally understudied. For the state of the field, see Hayward 1990. See, *inter alia*, Chiatti 1997.
119. So Harrison 2000.
120. Brown 1975, 12–13, 19.
121. See Bénabou 2005, esp. 471–578.

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## 11 *Procul a Nobis* Apuleius and India

Sonia Sabnis

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of this essay is to produce a reading of Apuleius' treatments of India in the *Florida* that not only accounts for but also depends on his own status as an African intellectual. Using recent postcolonial formulations as foundations for my readings, I argue that Apuleius' descriptions of India diverge from those in other Greek and Latin literature. The reasons for this divergence may include access to different kinds of information, but, more important, I see a more complex idea of the exotic in Apuleius' texts, one that is elucidated through postcolonial theory. A postcolonial lens brings into view a kind of interpretation different from the *Quellenforschung* that has dominated scholarship on these texts, and illuminates the ways in which these epideictic orations are not simply imitative in their erudition. *Florida* 12 and *Florida* 6 are my main sources for his representation of India; the former describes the appearance and training of the Indian parrot, and the latter the Indians and the wonders of India, particularly the gymnosophists. In these works, there is some evidence that Apuleius had access to information that previous Indographers did not, and he engages the traditional rhetoric of exoticism only to render it powerless. The Carthaginian (Roman colonial) context not only destabilizes but collapses the binary of Roman self and oriental other. The resulting implications for Apuleius' view of the Roman imperial project are complex: his depiction of the gymnosophists can be seen as a kind of disempowering domestication, but there is also a sense in the *Florida* that cultural proximity does not inevitably lead to complete assimilation, that there is still room for a non-Roman subject to subvert and resist imperial control. Insofar as Africa is Roman and India is not, the latter presents a philosophical community as an alternative to a political one.

### 2. THE PARROT AND COLONIAL MIMICRY

*Florida* 12 is a short piece focusing on the Indian parrot. At first glance, it seems a rewriting of Pliny's description of the bird in the *Natural History*

(10.58).<sup>1</sup> Although his account of the parrot is briefer than Apuleius' piece, Pliny similarly catalogues the geographical origin (*India hanc auem mittit, siptacen uocat*),<sup>2</sup> the appearance (*uiridem toto corpore, torque tantum miniato in ceruice distinctam*), and the speaking abilities of the parrot, which Pliny breaks down into three types: greeting its commanders (*imperatores salutat*), imitating (*quae accipit uerba pronuntiat*), and becoming bawdy under the influence of alcohol (*in uino praecipue lasciua*). Pliny also describes the hardness of the parrot's head and beak (*capiti eius durezza eadem quae rostro*) and notes that it is beaten with an iron rod during training; otherwise, it does not feel the blows (*cum loqui discit, ferreo uerberatur radio: non sentit aliter ictus*).

Pliny's description of the parrot sits among others of birds that can imitate speech; he introduces the parrot by noting that, above all else, some birds imitate human speech, and parrots even make conversation (*super omnia humanas uoces reddunt, psittaci quidem etiam sermocinantes*, 10.58). After the description of the parrot there are others, including the significant examples of Agrippina's *turdus* and a *coruus* that saluted Tiberius, Drusus, and Germanicus on a daily basis (*Nat.* 10.59–60). These examples make it easy to see talking birds as substitutes for docile imperial subjects, whose daily salutations reinforce the authority of the emperor and his household. The parrot is the only talking bird whose geographical origin is mentioned, however, and its unique abilities to converse and to change tone under the influence of alcohol suggest a particularly resistant subject, one that is not (yet) fully assimilated into imperial custom and is thus more appealing. In fact, the magpie is described as less respectable, simply because it does not come from far away.<sup>3</sup> The parrot is also the only one of Pliny's talking birds whose training is accompanied by the iron rod—the foreignness is expressed not only by its peculiar physiognomy but also by the assumption and necessity of physical abuse.

The parrot's speech, which is imitative but not purely echoic, is undoubtedly responsible for the fascination with and diverse representations of the parrot in literature. While classicists have tended to emphasize literary *imitatio* in their approaches to the parrot, postcolonial literature and criticism draws attention to the parrot as a symbol of colonial mimicry.<sup>4</sup> Pliny's and Apuleius' emphasis on the distant Indian origin of the bird makes this reading particularly attractive and fruitful for these authors. The similarities and differences between Apuleius' description and that of Pliny elucidate the subtle ways in which Apuleius' allusions convey political points motivated by the Carthaginian context of the *Florida*.<sup>5</sup> Apuleius' description begins as follows:

*Psittacus auis Indiae auis est; instar illi minimo minus quam columbarum, sed color non columbarum; non enim lacteus ille uel liuidus uel utrumque, subluteus aut sparsus est, sed color psittaco uiridis et intimis plumulis et extimis palmulis, nisi quod sola ceruice distinguitur.*

*Enimuero ceruicula eius circulo mineo uelut aurea torqui pari fulgoris circumactu cingitur et coronatur. Rostris prima durezza: cum in petram quampiam concitus altissimo uolatu praecipitat, rostro se uelut ancora excipit. Cum sermonem nostrum cogitur aemulari, ferrea clauicula caput tunditur, imperium magistri ut persentiscat; haec discenti ferula est.*

The bird called *parrot* is a bird of India; it appears just slightly smaller than a dove, but its color is not that of doves; for it is not white or purplish or a combination, or yellowish or a composite, but the parrot's color is green, both in its innermost downy feathers and at its wingtips, with one exception: it has a different color only on its neck. Indeed its little neck is girded and crowned by a bright red ring just like a golden collar, a complete circle of brightness. Its beak is particularly solid: when it flies down headlong in a long descent, destined for some rock, it brakes itself with its beak like an anchor. Moreover, the same solidity characterizes the head as the beak. When it is forced to imitate our speech, its head is beaten with an iron rod, that it may thoroughly understand the command of its teacher; this is the rod for the student.<sup>6</sup>

The basic ordering follows Pliny's: geographical orientation precedes physical description (body, head, and beak) and the ability to speak human language under forceful compulsion.<sup>7</sup> The fact that both writers begin with a geographical commonplace establishes the extreme foreignness of the parrot to Roman culture, despite its familiarity in literature and mercantile traffic. The discipline of the parrot should be read with this alienation in mind; *imperium* (in Apuleius) and *imperatores* (in Pliny) have special valences beyond animal training. The use of *imperium* for the general command of the parrot's master is significant: it conflates the training of animals with the training of students, and everyday learning with imperial projects, both undergirded by a culture of violence. In addition, the detail of India is crucial to the final line of *Florida* 12, in which Apuleius prescribes the return of a foul-mouthed parrot to its own forests.<sup>8</sup>

The lack of volition on the part of the parrot is clear here; the *sermo* of this parrot is not coaxed by a loving elegiac mistress but coerced and controlled by violence. The beloved pet of Latin poetry becomes in prose a symbol of obedience and the master's power. The possessive *nostrum* with *sermonem* merits some consideration, since for Apuleius *sermo* is often a point of difference, as in the prologue of the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>9</sup> *Nostrum* certainly refers to humans in general, but given the way that the piece begins and ends with the parrot's native land, it is also possible to read *nostrum* as the Romans knew the Mediterranean, *mare nostrum*—a possessive fraught with ambiguity and imperialism, especially in respect to the Carthaginians, whose defeat ensured that *mare nostrum* conveyed not just familiarity but ownership. Apuleius thus appears to focalize through the master in this sentence, but

such a focalization is an obligatory acknowledgment of his sources, particularly Pliny. The special beating the parrot receives on its head simultaneously raises it to the level of a human, a student, yet keeps it firmly in the role of a foreigner that exhibits its best talents only under domination.<sup>10</sup>

Apuleius includes two additional details, one concerning nature and the other nurture, that inform the parrot's suitability for, yet ultimate alienation from, human speech.

*Verum ad disciplinam humani sermonis facilius est psittacus glande qui uescitur et cuius in pedibus ut hominis quini digituli numerantur.*

Still, the parrot that feeds on nuts and whose toes number five like a human is more suitable for the teaching of human speech.<sup>11</sup>

While it is not clear that nuts are necessarily the fodder of a domesticated parrot and not its wild forage, this passage in its context seems to offer potential excuses for why a parrot may not behave as expected. Perhaps you have acquired an old parrot, or one with the wrong number of toes, or you have not fed it properly.<sup>12</sup> The tone is less fitting for a training guide than for an apologetic description of how the process of domestication, not just of birds, but of any colonial subject or commodity, is liable to meet resistance and even failure. That the parrot is never fully assimilated to our language is apparent in the ending of the piece, in which Apuleius switches from a statement of facts to the second person in an admonishing tone:

*Si conuicia docueris, conuiciabitur diebus ac noctibus perstrepens maledictis: hoc illi carmen est, hanc putat cantionem. Vbi omnia quae didicit maledicta percensuit, denuo repetit eandem cantilenam. Si carere conuicio uelis, lingua excidenda est aut quam primum in siluas suas remittendus est.*

If you teach swear words, it will swear day and night, screeching with foul language: this is its song, this it deems a spellbinding tune. When it has come to the end of all the swear words it has learned, it starts the same ditty all over again. If you want it to stop swearing, the tongue must be cut out or the bird must be released at the earliest opportunity to its own forests.<sup>13</sup>

A parrot that fails to produce the properly human and properly respectable speech cannot be blamed; the fault lies with the trainer. Pliny says only that the parrot's language is bawdy *in uino* (but perhaps indirectly faults anyone who would give the parrot wine).<sup>14</sup> The generic second person implicates Apuleius' audience in this failed mastery, somewhat humorously. The transformation of curse words into the song of the bird indicates a kind of subtle resistance: the parrot, while apparently lacking the proper reasoning to understand the language, is given agency in using his foul-mouthed

trainer's words against him. Still, in the case of such a disaster as the parrot learning foul language as its song, the master has the usual Roman recourse to extreme violence. The glossectomy reasserts the master's power, but it simultaneously destroys the parrot's primary exotic quality.

Vincent Hunink has suggested that *Florida* 12 compels reflection on "the ideal use of human language," particularly that of the philosopher, and that a key point of difference between animals who speak and humans is the passive absorption and repetition characterizing the former.<sup>15</sup> The parrot's unique qualities are praised, but ultimately Apuleius stands as a model for the most informed and best use of language.<sup>16</sup> The violent ending of *Florida* 12, however, is distinctive and is not just an interesting or humorous detail, especially given the nuances of *imperium* discussed above.<sup>17</sup> This particular duty of the parrot, to perform *salutatio* and thus to confirm the authority of its masters, is inverted by Apuleius' parrot, whose curses undermine the master's *imperium* but actually reflect the flaws inherent in the mastery. By extension, the two options for managing a foul-mouthed parrot reflect forms of imperial management: violent, disempowering subjugation, in which the victim loses its main asset (from the imperial point of view), or retreat and release, implicitly guaranteeing a boundary between the habitat of the parrot and that of the master.

The connections between speaking parrots, imperialist mastery, and violence also underlie Derek Walcott's play *Pantomime* (1978). Graham Huggan's analysis of this play offers a helpful way of reading the silencing act of glossectomy. The two characters in Walcott's play are Jackson, a Trinidadian servant, and Harry, his English master; the play also features a parrot that unfortunately repeats his former master's unfortunately convoluted name: "Heinegger, Heinegger." At a critical moment in the play Jackson silences the parrot by strangulation and sardonically defends his action by mimicking Friday, his counterpart in the Robinson Crusoe pantomime the two are rehearsing: "Me na strangle him, bwana. Him choke from prejudice." A horrified Harry defends the parrot's innocence via Aristotle: "Prejudice. A bloody parrot. The bloody thing can't reason."<sup>18</sup> Harry then imitates the bird in posture and repeats the offending phrase. The tension in the play, according to Huggan, depends on each character's relation to mimicry: "Jackson knows how to manipulate these formulas [of English pantomime] to his own advantage; Harry seems only to be able to reiterate them."<sup>19</sup> If *Florida* 12 has something to do with Apuleius as a mimic of Pliny and others, Huggan's clarification of colonial mimicry is relevant: "Mimicry . . . does not connote subservience, but rather resistance: by showing the relationship between metropolitan and colonial cultures to be based on changing strategies of domination and coercion rather than on the static comparison of 'essential' attributes, mimicry may paradoxically destabilize even as it reinforces."<sup>20</sup> I would thus read Apuleius' parrot not as an emblem of sophistry, unsuccessful pedagogy, or imitation but instead as a colonial subject who learns the imperial discourse only too well, so much so that it

hides its resistance to imperial discipline in the apparently naive repetition of language that cracks the facade of power. As a representative of India, the parrot substitutes for an unconquered people, stimulating the desire for the mimicking other but also demonstrating an intractability that would hinder imperial integration.

Pliny's drunken parrot may also be connected to the country of origin. Indians are infamously vulnerable to alcohol in classical literature (e.g., in the mime *Charition*), and Apuleius' omission of this stereotype with respect to an Indian bird thus distances the parrot from classical images of India, allowing it to stand in for any foreign importation. While wine often symbolizes Dionysus' conquest of Eastern lands and thus abets an imperialist view of India from a Mediterranean perspective, the mundane facts of education on which Apuleius relies speak to a historical truth rather than a myth. The miseducation of the parrot can symbolize a failure of Romanization, a failure of the colonizers rather than a weakness of the colonized. Moreover, the transference of responsibility from wine to teacher resists the stereotypes of barbarians and foreigners (Carthaginians included) as notorious drunkards.<sup>21</sup> Finally, the metamorphosis of *conuicia* into *carmen*, *cantio*, and *cantilena* allows the possibility for an intentional misunderstanding and slippage. Like Heinegger's parrot, Apuleius' parrot is an ambivalent and ambiguous agent: this agency paradoxically results from its acculturation to humans and is implicitly removed when the parrot is released to its own forests. Thus, what seems to be a binary relationship, in which the Indian parrot faithfully imitates what it is taught, is disrupted. If we consider the parrot as a figure for a provincial *littérateur*, cursing in "our" language resists the dominant imperial discourse; an innocent error may in fact be a purposeful act of resistance that is combated only by extreme violence or liberation. The mimicry of the parrot compels a reflection, if not on the ways in which his own words (not just those of his less skilled rivals) imitate, then on the complexity and instability of *sermo noster*. In Apuleius' literary context of mimicry, derivativeness is not inferior or innocent but calculated and corrective. This particular literary stance is bound up with Apuleius' own status as a provincial and the ways in which the provinces of North Africa mediate between Roman and barbarian culture, between the colonizer and the colonized.

### 3. THE POSTCOLONIAL EXOTIC

In addition to setting up imperialist patterns through a talking bird and traditional discipline, *Florida* 12 also indicates the difficulty of reading Apuleius through his sources. By focusing on the details of Apuleius' *Florida* among many Greek and Roman accounts of India—Pliny, Megasthenes, Arrian—I may imply that these other accounts are more unified and their presentation of India more artificially constructed than is actually true. Such

essentializing is one of the major points leveled against the argument of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Like Grant Parker, who has examined much of this material more thoroughly, I find it difficult to avoid the influence of Said in examining Apuleius' view of India, but I take on some of the critical responses to Said in order not to support monolithic notions of empire, the East, or the Greco-Roman West.<sup>22</sup> More recent work in postcolonial studies has significantly broadened the approach to European knowledge of and interest in Eastern cultures. For instance, Srinivas Aravamudan has recently expanded Said's critical term by coining the phrase "Enlightenment Orientalism." As Aravamudan explains, his book of the same name "follows the itinerary of European knowledge regarding the East influenced by the utopian aspirations of Enlightenment more than materialist and political interest. Enlightenment interrogation was not innocent—no knowledge ever is—but it was a complex questioning, with multiple objectives and orientations. . . . Not just bent on the domination of the other but also aimed at mutual understanding across cultural differences, for Enlightenment the self was under critique as much as any 'other.'"<sup>23</sup> This orientation seems eminently applicable to Apuleius and cosmopolitan Carthage, not the political center of the empire but still a major locus of cultural and religious change.

The lessons of the debates incited by Said's work do, despite the risks of anachronism, have important lessons for scholars of the Roman Empire. On the one hand, classicists and ancient historians are unlikely to reduce our notion of Roman imperialism to a singular ideology and force; there is less at stake in our understanding of Roman imperialism for our own politics than there is in the understanding of the imperialisms that concern postcolonial theory. On the other, because of the gap between ancient ideas of self and contemporary formulations of identity (not to mention identity politics), we need a more rigorous critical apparatus to approach questions of identity and ancient Greek and Latin literature; here we have a distinct disadvantage in information available. In the absence of paratexts, we obsess about sources, and this focus leads us to conclusions about Apuleius' status as (merely) a Latin sophist or Platonic philosopher. While these identities are critical to Apuleius' self-presentation, a fixation on either one may foreclose other modes of reading. The former carries us away into the marvelous rhetoric and playfulness of Apuleian style (in terms of his Latin and his life); the latter detaches Apuleius from his own time and place.<sup>24</sup> The advantage of considering Antonine Africa in a reading of *Florida* 6 is the complicated image of knowledge and imperial conquest (and its limits) that emerges. *Florida* 6 presents Indian gymnosophists in a way that is not only more coherent with ancient Indian literature but also considerably de-exoticized compared to all other Greek and Latin material on the subject.

Throughout this essay, the term *exotic* bespeaks two different sets of discourse. It is important in the field of postcolonial studies, notably in

Huggan's work. He cites the following from Tzvetan Todorov's discussion of exoticism:

The best candidates for the exotic label are the peoples and cultures that are most remote from us and least known to us. . . . Knowledge is incompatible with exoticism, but lack of knowledge is in turn irreconcilable with praise of others; yet praise without knowledge is precisely what exoticism aspires to be. This is its constitutive paradox.<sup>25</sup>

Huggan has argued for a further paradox in the "marketing" of the post-colonial exotic:

In the "global" cultural environment of the late twentieth century, exoticism becomes a function not of remoteness, but, on the contrary, of proximity. Exotic artifacts from other cultures circulate as commodities within the global economy—it is precisely their availability that makes them exotic.<sup>26</sup>

Although neither Todorov nor Huggan focuses on the ancient world, it is not difficult to apply these paradoxes to the Roman Empire, in which there was not only a wealth of "global" commodities but also a mutual nexus between knowledge and imperial ideologies.<sup>27</sup> The second discourse that adds valence to *exotic* is the prologue to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, which includes a florid apology for the quality of his Latin: *siquid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero* ("if I make some error as an unpolished speaker of an exotic language not spoken at home," *Met.* 1.1.5). These words have generated more scholarly discussion than I can include here, and my translation of them is perhaps not uncontroversial. But the idea of language or speech (*sermo*) as something foreign on two levels—the contrast between one land and another (more concrete), and one space of human activity and another, the forum and the non-forum (more abstract)—is helpful when considering many of the claims about speech and language that Apuleius makes in the *Florida*. The prologue of the *Metamorphoses* employs, perhaps in more complex and subtle ways than others, the strategy of *captatio benevolentiae*, and part of the strategy is the appeal of the exotic. The apologetic tone and the variety of geographical terms invoked in the prologue bring something distant into proximity without assimilation; the proximity, in fact, grants some permanence to alterity.

I bring this double conception of *exotic* and Aravamudan's formulation of Enlightenment interrogation to bear on Apuleius' descriptions of the gymnosophists. Through multivalent images, a resistance to a literature of wonderment, and a focus on the quotidian details of a philosophical life, Apuleius destabilizes the longstanding exotic image of India that persists throughout Greek and Latin literature. This brief description reveals how

Apuleius' knowledge may have been different from that of other Indographers, and brings India into cultural proximity with Africa.

#### 4. INDIA AND AFRICA

Apuleius' description of the basic features of India appears to be largely congruent with other Greek and Roman accounts. Still, the unique features of his ethnography indicate that Apuleius had better information.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, Apuleius' stance vis-à-vis the Indians is complicated; the mockery of traditionally exotic Indography and the light humor with which the gymnosophists are treated make it difficult to say whether his rhetoric ultimately aims to obviate or to domesticate the intellectual menace of the Indians, to expose the faults of imperial strategies of control or to reflect on his own culture as intellectual, exotic, or imitative.

There are two distinct lines of argument in my analysis of *Florida* 6: first, I suggest that Apuleius' preambular exotic portrayal of India relies on confused signifiers—that many of the images he uses are similar to those used in connection with Africa, Egypt, and Ethiopia. Second, I argue that Apuleius draws on better knowledge of India and that this knowledge undermines the overt exoticism, setting the stage for the second half of the fragment, on the castes, the brahmins above all.<sup>29</sup> Where previous accounts have led us to expect an exaggerated, if admiring, description of brahmanic ways, Apuleius demystifies Indian wisdom, bringing it to a practical level of daily behavior. What purports to be yet another wonder of India turns out to be a comic scene of philosophy in routine action. The daily manifestation of wisdom among the gymnosophists is considerably less lofty than we might expect of the people who gave Pythagoras his best ideas. Apuleius' rendering of brahmanic teaching as bland and scoutish compels further reflection on the overt exotica of the beginning. Although *Florida* 6 certainly contributes to our understanding of how the Romans viewed India (with a view to difference and mystique rather than similarity), there is another way in which the fragment can be read as a critique of the exoticizing accounts that serve as its precedent.

*Florida* 6 begins with tropes entirely congruent with Indographic traditions of the praise of the exotic, yet throughout there are signs both of refinement of information and of a careful rhetorical stance:

*Indi, gens populosa cultoribus et finibus maxima, procul a nobis ad orientem siti, prope oceani reflexus et solis exortus, primis sideribus, ultimis terris, super Aegyptios eruditos et Iudaeos supersticiosos et Nabathaeos mercatores et fluxos uestium Arsacidas et frugum pauperes Ityraeos et odorum diuites Arabas—eorum igitur Indorum non aequae miror eboris strues et piperis messes et cinnami merces et ferri*

*temperacula et argenti metalla et auri fluenta, nec quod Ganges apud  
eos unus omnium amnium maximus  
eois regnator aquis in flumina centum  
discurrit, centum ualles illi oraque centum,  
oceanique fretis centeno iungitur amni,  
nec quod isdem Indis ibidem sitis ad nascentem diem tamen in corpore  
color noctis est, nec quod apud illos immensi dracones cum immani-  
bus elephantis pari periculo in mutuam perniciem concertant: quippe  
lubrico uolumine indepti reuinciunt, ut illis expedire gressum nequeunti-  
bus uel omnino abrumpere tenacissimorum serpentium squameas pedi-  
cas necesse sit ultionem a ruina molis suae petere ac retentores suos toto  
corpore oblidere.*

The Indians, a people abounding in inhabitants and spread out over a large area, situated far from us to the East, where the ocean turns back on itself and the sun rises, where the stars shine first and where the earth ends, beyond the accomplished Egyptians and the soothsaying Jews and the Nabataean merchants and the Arsacidae with their flowing garments and the Ityraei, impoverished of cultivated crops, and the Arabs, opulent in perfumes—as I was saying of these Indians I do not wonder so much at their piles of ivory and their pepper harvests and their cinnamon commodities and their iron forges and silver mines and their rivers of gold, nor that their Ganges, the supposed single greatest of all rivers, the ruler of the eastern waters, runs into one hundred streams, one hundred valleys, and one hundred mouths, and is joined to the narrow straits of ocean in a hundredfold current, nor that these same Indians who live in the very place where the day is born nevertheless bear the color of night, nor that they have huge snakes who fight with enormous elephants towards mutual destruction, with equal odds: to be sure, once they have them in their slippery coils they bind them tightly, so that for the elephants, who are not able to unfetter their legs or to break altogether the scaly bonds of the snakes holding fast, there is no alternative but to seek vengeance by the collapse of their own mass, to crush their captors with their entire body.<sup>30</sup>

The first word of *Florida* 12, *psittacus*, establishes the parrot as the topic of the piece; similarly, *Florida* 6 begins with the Indians (*Indi*).<sup>31</sup> Apuleius then locates the Indians geographically, noting them first as *procul a nobis* and then setting them even beyond other Eastern populations. This list is composed in an elegant style that is typical of Apuleius, even if the stereotypes seem like the basis for a book of racist Roman jokes: wise Egyptians and fanatical Jews—these peoples, still relatively close to “us,” are given one-word epithets, as are the all-important Nabataeans, who controlled one of the major east-west trade routes. As we go further east, into areas that the Romans had not conquered or annexed, the descriptions are necessarily more complex, two-word combinations of adjective and dependent

genitive: now in Arabia and Parthia we find the Arsacidae “flowing of garments,” the Ityraei “impoverished of cultivated crops,” and the Arabs “opulent of perfumes.” While these descriptions confirm Romanocentric stereotypes, they are less pejorative than they would be in another context. The list here follows known trade routes, and these attributes all connect to local economies.<sup>32</sup> The elaborate description of Indians that follows, which begins with the orientaling commonplaces of opulence and wildness but ends quite differently, effectively confirms that Apuleius’ stance toward this material is not the same as others’: while similar descriptions in other authors would appear to promote alterity and orientalism, Apuleius invokes these stereotypes only to reject them. Casting old stereotypes in new language, Apuleius launches into a formal priamel, confirming but ultimately abandoning images of India known from other sources. These include its commodities (ivory, pepper, cinnamon, and precious metals), the magnitude of the Ganges, and the native differences presented by humans and animals. These features of India are the less impressive ones (*non aequae miror*), yet as with any priamel one could argue that Apuleius draws our attention precisely to the things that he claims to overlook. It is true that his quotation of poetry on the Ganges and his elaborate description of the contest between elephants and snakes, even if they plainly adapt other sources, magnify and ornament two features that are supposed to be distinctly Indian.

To foreshadow my argument about the brahmans, I want to draw attention to two aspects of Apuleius’ report on the Indians here: first, he actually gets something right—knowledge works against exoticism here. Second, Apuleius recognizes that many of the essential elements of descriptions of India are not only clichés but African stereotypes as well. The elaboration of the equally matched snake and elephant that seems to contradict his affected disinterest encapsulates the equivalent geographical pull on these images—like the agony of the elephant and the snake, the exoticism of each place is canceled out by the competition.

The magnitude of the river Ganges is another essential characteristic of India; the river was rivaled only by the Nile in Roman imaginations. Stretching the boundaries of the priamel, Apuleius presents the Ganges in verse lines of unknown authorship, which uniquely repeat the centifidous nature of the famous river.<sup>33</sup> This description is not accurate from a scientific perspective, but it could reflect exposure to the way that Indians rather than Greeks or Romans described the river. At the same time, the use of *centum* may invoke a Greek compound that describes the Nile.<sup>34</sup> Or it may reflect Sanskrit epithets for the river, *śatadru* (“hundred-branched”) and *śatamukhā* (“hundred-mouthed”).<sup>35</sup> Apuleius (as well as the unknown author of these lines) may have known that they were Vergilian in tone but more accurate in content, at least from the point of view of the indigenous mythographers. Thus, I suggest a few different meanings of *apud eos*, the phrase that introduces the description of the river. Clearly, the phrase locates the Ganges amid the Indians he describes, but perhaps it also indicates that the “single

greatest of all rivers” depends on the Indian point of view, as a matter of both literary description and patriotic pride. An acknowledgment of source over mere location draws attention to the fact that the title of “the single greatest of all rivers” may be contested by a river closer to Apuleius, which is, indeed, the origin of the Nilotic reed that has such a prominent place in the prologue of the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>36</sup>

The preambular function of the Ganges, then, is to undercut its uniqueness by pretending to single it out. This strategy continues in the following descriptions of Indians and their elephants. The attribution of “the color of night” (*color noctis*) to the bodies of the Indians enables an antithesis of day and night and aligns Indians with Ethiopians—Gellius, for instance, attributes to Laevius the compound adjective *nocticolor*, describing the legendary king of the Ethiopians, Memnon (19.7.6). On the surface this description seems both exoticizing and more reductive than Greek and Latin ethnographic descriptions that regularly compare and contrast the skin tones of Africans and Indians. There are many such descriptions: Manilius, for instance, says that India generates a people “less burned” than the Ethiopians but not as fair as the Egyptians, and Pliny (*Nat.* 6.70) has a similar description.<sup>37</sup> Again, what seems like a singular marvel, dark skin color, turns out to be a phenomenon among many peoples who had contact with the Romans.

The next features that Apuleius finds uninteresting are the enormous snakes and elephants that fight each other.<sup>38</sup> This description also looks like an exaggerated piece of exotic natural history, but Apuleius’ rendering of the image should be considered with the following additional information: first, the signification of India by elephants is so longstanding that for Apuleius’ contemporary Lucian it has become a cliché (e.g., *Fug.* 6), and, second, elephants and snakes signified Africa just as much as they signified India. For instance, the personification of Africa that we see in North African mosaics has a helmet formed from an elephant head. In Ostia an elephant decorates the stall of the Sabratan importers, which many have taken as an indicator of the traffic in ivory and elephants that went through North African ports. The particular scene of interspecies death-match that Apuleius describes here is also found on a hunting mosaic near Carthage from the fourth century.<sup>39</sup> Art historians have noted that in such hunting scenes in mosaics of this period, “exotica” creep in among more realistic scenes of African animals and hunting—for instance, tigers, which are not African, are depicted alongside native fauna. Thus, while we should not necessarily associate the battle between snakes and elephants with Africa *per se*, there is ample evidence that the signifiers of the exotica of India and Africa blended together in art and in literature.<sup>40</sup> Apuleius himself conjoins the Ethiopians and the Indians in the *Metamorphoses*, when Socrates describes the witch Meroe’s power by enumerating her far-off victims.<sup>41</sup> While Apuleius’ Africa and Ethiopia are distant and different, I suggest that the obvious parallels between Indian and African phenomena invalidate the exoticism of both.

This resistance to exoticism could signal a kind of conquest by discourse and domestication. However, Apuleius’ own self-presentation is a crucial filter between his reception of the sources on India and his depiction thereof. Not only is he a mobile, intellectually adventurous citizen in a cosmopolitan empire connected with the far east by mercantile and other traffic, but he is also an African, by birth and by career, and must grapple with the facts of his intellectual inheritance: he writes in a tradition that almost invariably relies on the alterity of non-Greeks and non-Romans for historiographical, political, philosophical, or literary reasons.

The fact that much of this prefatory material can be compared with other sources on India and the Indians bespeaks not just influence and Apuleius’ assured education but also the sophistic context of the piece. Apuleius challenges his audience to recognize the tropes. If Apuleius’ intent in speaking about India is to show off his own knowledge and speaking ability rather than to introduce or preserve new information, he implicitly distances himself from one of his sources, Pliny—whose encyclopedic project, as Trevor Murphy has argued, is bound up with a fear “that knowledge is slipping irrevocably out of Roman hands.”<sup>42</sup> The priamel of *Florida* 6 insists that these details about India are not only firm in the tradition but actually unworthy of such fixity.

Apuleius claims to have more anthropological interests. But just as he appears to follow yet ultimately resists the trends of exotic writing on India, so does his account of the gymnosophists of India demystify them, bringing their wisdom out of the realm of spiritual arcana into that of practical education. While the style is still sophistic, the information becomes more accurate and more philosophical—that is to say, more oriented toward true knowledge and not just the books of his predecessors.

Apuleius numbers the castes (*genera*) of the Indians as four:

*est apud illos genus, qui nihil amplius quam bubulcitare nouere, ideoque adgnomen illis bubulcis inditum. Sunt et mutandis mercibus callidi et obeundis proeliis strenui uel sagittis eminus uel ensibus comminus. Est praeterea genus apud illos praestabile, gymnosophistae uocantur.*

There is among them a group that is familiar with nothing more than cowherding, and for this reason they are known as cowherds. There are also people who are skilled in the trade of goods and those who vigorously pursue battle, whether by arrows at some distance or by swords in close combat. In addition to these there is a group outstanding among them; they are called gymnosophists.<sup>43</sup>

In his notes on this passage, John Hilton comments that Apuleius includes only four of the seven hereditary castes mentioned by Megasthenes in Strabo,<sup>44</sup> and Benjamin T. Lee in his commentary notes the absence of an untouchable caste.<sup>45</sup> But what is striking to my mind is not the disagreement with other sources but the fact that Apuleius actually got it right in a way

that previous Greek and Roman observers had not. There are in fact four major groups in the Hindu caste system, even if these are more prescriptive than descriptive.<sup>46</sup> The key passage is from the *Puruṣasūkta* (*Hymn of Man*), a relatively late addition to the *Ṛg Veda*:

brāhmaṇo 'sya mukham āsīd  
bāhū rājanyaḥ kṛtaḥ;  
ūrū dad asya yad vaiśyaḥ  
padbhyāṃ śūdro ajāyata.

His mouth was the Brāhman,  
his two arms were made the warrior,  
his two thighs the Vaiśya;  
from his two feet the Śūdra was born.<sup>47</sup>

The *Śūdra* caste corresponds roughly to Apuleius' *bubulci*; the *Vaiśya* caste to the merchants, and the warriors to the *Rājanya*, also called *Kṣatriya*. While Apuleius may have obtained his information from a Greek or Latin source now lost to us, it also seems plausible that a long period of mercantile interaction between Indians and the Roman world brought more precise information from the outside to the intellectuals within the empire. His subsequent admiration for the gymnosophists is based not on their nakedness, not on their spectacular way of dying, not even on their mystified knowledge. The anecdote about brahmanic discipline is strikingly straightforward in contrast to many other Greek and Latin accounts.

*Hos ego maxime admiror, quod homines sunt periti non propagandae vitis nec inoculandae arboris nec proscidendi soli; non illi norunt aruum colere uel aurum colare uel equum domare uel taurum subigere uel ouem uel capram tondere uel pascere. Quid igitur est? unum pro his omnibus norunt: sapientiam percolunt tam magistri senes quam discipuli iuniores. Nec quicquam aequae penes illos laudo, quam quod torporis animi et otium oderunt. Igitur ubi mensa posita, priusquam edulia adponantur, omnes adolescentes ex diuersis locis et officiis ad dapem conueniunt; magistri perrogant, quod factum a lucis ortu ad illud diei bonum fecerint. Hic alius se commemorat inter duos arbitrum delectum, sanata similitate, reconciliata gratia, purgata suspicione amicos ex infensis reddidisse; itidem alius sese parentibus quaequam imperantibus oboedisse, et alius aliquid meditatione sua repperisse uel alterius demonstratione didicisse . . . denique ceteri commemorant. Qui nihil habet adferre cur prandeat, inpransus ad opus foras extruditur.*

These men I especially wonder at, because they are men skilled not in viticulture nor tree-grafting nor plowing the soil; they have not learned to till the field nor to wash gold nor to tame a horse nor to break a bull nor to shear or pasture the sheep or goat. What is that they have,

then? They know one single thing in place of all of these: they cherish wisdom, the elders as teachers, the younger as students. Nor do I praise anything among them as much as the fact that they detest laziness of the mind and leisure. And so when the table is set, before the nibbles are laid out before them, all the young people come to the feast from different places and activities. The teachers question them as to what good deed they have done from sunrise up to that point. One says that he was chosen to judge between two parties, cleared up the argument, restored favor, disposed of suspicion and restored enemies to friends. In the same way another one says that he heeded some command of his parents, and another that he discovered something by deep thought or learned it from the demonstration of another . . . the rest have their say in turn. Who has nothing to justify why he should eat is driven outside to work without dinner.<sup>48</sup>

In his description of what the gymnosophists do not know how to do, Apuleius revives the rhetorical strategy of the beginning of the piece, mentioning ways in which he could criticize their lack of practical skills, only to pass over into a metaphorical use of *colere*, the cultivation of wisdom.<sup>49</sup> It is important that the verb *percolunt* conveys a sense of habit—wisdom is not a commodity to be acquired but a matter of practice.<sup>50</sup>

Apuleius' description of the preprandial account of good deeds may be a little precious, if we take a clue from his use of the word *edulia*, which he uses in the *Metamorphoses* in the sense of "dainty nibbles" (for example, in 10.13.3 and 10.16.3 to describe nibbles made for human consumption that Lucius the donkey pilfers and enjoys). I see this description of the various good deeds as a kind of scout-meeting discourse, which certainly coheres with principles of Indian philosophy but also contrasts sharply with the mysticism and austerity that Greeks and Romans usually attribute to brahmanic wisdom.<sup>51</sup>

The different, more ordinary take on Indian wisdom may result from the influence of the Pythagorean *Carmina Aurea*, as Stephen Harrison has suggested based on a similar anecdote.<sup>52</sup> However, I would also suggest that the cute and comic features of this story—note especially that the word *inpransus* belongs to comedy and satire—further dull the sheen of exoticism that the first half of the piece exposes. The verb *extrudere*, too, is used in the context of being barred from a meal and going hungry in Plautus' *Casina*; this context is particularly germane since the slave girl Pardalisca and her mistress are punishing the old man Lysidamus, just as these young gymnosophist students are being punished for not doing good deeds.<sup>53</sup>

The accumulation of merit and the penance of fasting that Apuleius describes in *Florida* 6 reflect deeper knowledge about India than we find in preceding texts, adding to the descriptions of the Ganges and the caste system. Thus, even though the piece bears all the superficial markers of a typically exoticizing Indography, Apuleius ultimately rejects this mode of

writing about India. The fact that the familiar terms with which Apuleius evokes India's exoticism overlap with stereotypical images of Africa allows Apuleius to connect his own philosophical practices to gymnosophistic wisdom.

Parker has argued for a connection between the fascination with Indian wisdom and the rejuvenation of *sophia* and *paideia* in the eastern empire.<sup>54</sup> Consider how Apuleius illustrates Indian *sapientia* in *Florida* 6. He explicitly connects this wisdom with activity of the soul and the denial of *otium*. The daily practice of wisdom is both similar to and different from the wisdom that Pythagoras is supposed to have attained from the Indians, which Apuleius describes in *Florida* 15—a different context but an important addition to Apuleius' writing on India:

*Bracmani autem pleraque philosophiae eius contulerunt, quae mentium documenta, quae corporum exercitamenta, quot partes animi, quot uices uitae, quae diis manibus pro merito suo cuique tormenta uel praemia.*

Moreover, the brahmans put together most of his philosophy: mental training, corporeal exercises, the number of the parts of the soul, the number of stages of life, the tortures or rewards given to dead souls, each according to his own desert.<sup>55</sup>

While the principles of the passage are fairly clear, the vocabulary is not. *Documentum* in the sense of "instruction, teaching" is unique to Apuleius, and *exercitamentum* seems to be an Apuleian invention.<sup>56</sup> But unlike Pliny's *siptacen*, these are neologisms with a pure Latin pedigree, not attempts to borrow indigenous terms of exercise. There is a strong effort here to bring Indian teaching into Latin that is comprehensible, if somewhat technical in tone.

Compare Hilton's translation of the same passage:

But the Brahmans were the source of most of his philosophy: what mantras there are for the mind, what yogas for the body, how many parts to the soul, how many stages of life; and what tortures or rewards (according to what they deserve) await the spirits of the dead.<sup>57</sup>

In my opinion, Hilton takes Apuleius too far into exotic Indography by using the Sanskrit terms *mantra* and *yoga* to translate invented Latin words. Although the sense of these terms is correct and both are readily understood, Apuleius' linguistic strategy seems to be quite different; he presents brahmanic practices in terms that are new but formed with an extremely productive Latin suffix, *-mentum*.<sup>58</sup> While this neologizing may just be an Apuleian habit, it also presents what Pythagoras learned from the brahmans in accessible language that excludes the possibility of the supernatural. As Apuleius later makes a tight connection between Pythagoras and Plato and

thus also himself, we could speculate on Apuleius' own philosophical debt to the brahmans and his role in the presentation of Pythagoras, but for my purposes the passages from *Florida* 15 are illuminating for their similarities to and differences from *Florida* 6. First, accuracy is a feature of both: even if I disagree with Hilton's exoticizing translation, Apuleius' description does seem to capture basic tenets of Hindu philosophy, including karmic retribution and reincarnation. While the good deeds reported by the disciples in *Florida* 6 could be considered karma, their daily life is clearly a miniature version of the grand lessons learned by Pythagoras. Second, even while evoking traditional accounts of the brahmans, Apuleius avoids exoticizing portrayals, with the result that in both accounts brahmanic wisdom seems entirely attainable and imitable. The lesson of *Florida* 6 is not only practical—the philosopher encourages daily reflection on one's regular deeds—but also demystifying. Rather than depict the brahmans as self-immolators or performers of rigorous austerities, Apuleius prefers a tableau that is much more ordinary, with an affected attention to detail.

##### 5. PROCUL A NOBIS: A CARTHAGINIAN ORIENTATION

The orientation with which the fragment begins, *procul a nobis*, "far from us," seems like a typical and factual acknowledgment of the distance and exoticism of India. But from whose perspective does Apuleius write? Scholars of the Second Sophistic have drawn attention to the use of the pronouns *we* and *us* for Greek-speaking inhabitants of the empire: Christopher P. Jones claimed that Apuleius' contemporary, the Syrian satirist Lucian, was the "first Greek to refer to all the inhabitants of the empire as 'us,' [but] he does so without any sign of making a conscious gesture."<sup>59</sup> Simon Swain notes, "'We' had been used of Rome by a Greek before Lucian. It is found twice in that remarkably pro-Roman author Strabo. But it seems particularly significant in the case of a second sophistic author. We may be tempted to see this as a reflection of increasing political unification in the Empire."<sup>60</sup> Perhaps because Apuleius writes in Latin the question is less obvious for him, but within and outside of the immediate Carthaginian context of the *Florida*, this phrase merits further consideration. Like Lucian, Apuleius benefited from the cultural and political institutions of the empire, but the position of Carthage is not easily assimilated to that of Rome, even when one looks far off to virtually equidistant India. The remainder of the fragment invites his audience to deconstruct the meaning of *us* in this phrase. Apuleius' use of the first person in this piece indicates resistance to a Rome-centered, monolithic notion of empire and imperial knowledge. As in *Florida* 12, where *sermonem nostrum* is multivalent, *procul a nobis* compels reflection on identity.

*Procul a nobis* appears several times in Ovid's *Tristia*.<sup>61</sup> The phrase is general enough that I am not suggesting a specific allusion to Ovid, but these

examples illustrate the usefulness of the phrase in the formation of a narrative voice in which geography and identity are crucially important. In *Tristia* 1.7.9 (*quam procul a nobis Naso sodalis abest!*, “how far from us is our absent friend Naso!”), Ovid depicts his social circle back in Rome invoking his presence through an image; the image of the relegated poet may bring him close to his friends at Rome, but it also stresses the fact of his exilic absence.<sup>62</sup> Although his removal may bring his intimates into closer association, Ovid himself in exile is scarcely comforted and can bridge the distance only by imagining the words of his friends in his own poem. Ovid is far from his circle as well as from his autonomous self and his former poetic persona. The negation of the phrase in *Tristia* 4.4.63 (*nec procul a nobis locus est*, “nor is the place far from us . . .”) intensifies the exotic wilderness in which Ovid finds himself; the bloody practices of the barbarians that were once alien are now all too familiar to Ovid in exile. Here *nobis* refers to Ovid alone, or the residents of Tomis, to which he has assimilated.<sup>63</sup> In a poem that declares that Caesar is the state (*quia res est publica Caesar*, 4.4.15), Ovid asserts his “empowering, metaphorical distance from the emperor’s control” by changing the focalization through which Rome and Augustus are seen.<sup>64</sup> *Nos* is no longer bound up with Rome but redefines rather than denies Ovid’s exilic agency.

The rhetorical effects of *procul a nobis* in *Florida* 6 may on first reading seem to enforce the idea of cultural as well as geographical distance, as in the *Tristia*, but, in fact, if we consider a Carthaginian audience for the piece, they are much more provocative and much less polarizing. For this audience, a clear distinction between Rome and the barbarian other would be alienating. Apuleius and his audience identify with Rome to some extent, to be sure, but as I have argued so far, a purely Roman perspective on India is not what emerges from *Florida* 6. *Procul a nobis*, read again in light of the rest of the passage, seems not to highlight the distance from the central Mediterranean to the far east but instead to question the enduring idea that geographical distance is proportional to cultural and anthropological difference. Moreover, unlike the *Metamorphoses*, which begins and ends with references to Rome, a centering of the world at Carthage effectively erases Rome as the center on which all measures of distance and difference depend.

The success of the Roman Empire in Apuleius’ age increased access to commodities, knowledge, literature, and systems of education, both within the boundaries of the empire and through mercantile contacts externally. These changes no doubt made some inhabitants of the empire, particularly educated cosmopolites like Apuleius, reflect on the manifold and often unfavorable portrayals of foreigners in earlier literatures. A popular subject, the brahmins of India, enables Apuleius both to demystify Eastern philosophy and also tacitly to criticize the reductive ways in which Africans, Egyptians, and Ethiopians had been portrayed. Apuleius may have had a deeply personal stake in such a project: the half-Gaetolian, half-Numidian could not have taken pride in the stereotypes of Gaetulians and Numidians that

appear in Latin literature. Like Indians, Gaetulians are often associated with their luxury commodity, in their case the purple dye of the murex, and their remarkable fauna: elephants, gazelles, and lions. Sallust memorably called them a “fierce and uncultivated race of men and at that time ignorant of the word Roman” (*genus hominum ferum incultumque et eo tempore ignarum nominis Romani*, *Iug.* 80.1), and Vergil talks of both races in terms of their wildness (*Aen.* 4.40–41):

*hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello,  
et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrtis*

On one side are the Gaetolian cities, a race unmatched in war,  
And the unbridled Numidians, and hostile Syrtis.

The view of Africa is very different in the *Florida*. It is clear that, whatever one thinks of its overall unity, many of the excerpts consistently praise and single out the leading citizens of Carthage for their education and cultivation.<sup>65</sup> In this Poenocentric orientation, Apuleius seems both to participate in the traditional classical discourse on India, full of exoticism and orientalism, and also to undo the rhetorical scaffolding on which these traditional depictions hang. Apuleius’ dismissal of signifiers that are ambiguously Indian and African indicates that this piece, like many of the *Florida*, reflects his interest in his own self-presentation and the Africanness of himself and his audience. Apuleius’ strategy in *Florida* 6 is not to highlight the internal division of the barbarized provincial but instead to deflate the hyperbolic rhetoric of difference that characterizes previous accounts of India (and Africa).

## 6. AFRICA VICTA, INDIA VINCENDA

In the end, where should we place Apuleius in relation to a Roman imperialist view of India? Apuleius draws attention to the instability of signs for India and Africa, capitalizing on their common confusion, yet some difference inevitably remains, and it seems possible to read Apuleius’ African view of India as that of the colonizer or the colonized. Here a definition by the theorist Homi Bhabha is useful: “colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a *subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite*. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence*; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference.”<sup>66</sup> If Apuleius’ description of India mimics previous Indographers, we must understand the meaning of the piece to be generated precisely from this excess and difference. At the same time, Apuleius’ implicit comparison of Africa and India invites further contemplation of their main differences, most important the fact that Africa had been conquered but India had not. The way in which India functioned as a limit on imperial desire is observable in an anecdote

that Cassius Dio tells about Trajan observing a ship on the Erythraean Sea; when told that its destination was India, Trajan wistfully called Alexander the Great a lucky man, saying that were he younger he too might try to venture to India:

κάντεῦθεν ἐπ’ αὐτὸν τὸν ὠκεανὸν ἐλθὼν, τὴν τε φύσιν αὐτοῦ καταμαθὼν καὶ πλοῖόν τι ἐς Ἰνδιαν πλέον ἰδὼν, εἶπεν ὅτι “πάντως ἂν καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς Ἰνδοὺς, εἰ νέος ἔτι ἦν, ἐπεραιώθην.” Ἰνδοὺς τε γὰρ ἐνενοεῖ, καὶ τὰ ἐκείνων πράγματα ἐπολυπραγμόνει, τὸν τε Ἀλέξανδρον ἐμακάριζε.

Then he arrived at the ocean itself, and having found out about its nature and having caught sight of a ship setting sail for India, he said he would definitely have crossed over to the Indians, were he still young. He began to cogitate the Indians and inquired into their affairs, and he deemed Alexander blessed.<sup>67</sup>

*Africa uicta, India uincenda.* With this idea it is possible to read all of Apuleius’ epideictic on India as a symbolic conquest—the silencing of the parrot, the demystification of the brahmans, the acquisition of their philosophy by Pythagoras. Even the hunting and arena mosaics that bring in Indian animals alongside African ones may symbolize the conquest of both regions in a single spectacle of Roman violence. We can read the description of the gymnosophists as an exercise in reformation to the point of recognition, but we can also read it as a paternalizing exercise in domestication and subjugation, with the result that brahmanic wisdom seems impotent compared to the *sophia* of the Roman Empire.

Something patently foreign and distant acquires, for one reason or another, a status more rather than less familiar. . . . A new median category emerges . . . not so much a way of receiving new information as a method of controlling what seems to be a threat to some established view of things.<sup>68</sup>

For Apuleius, the depiction of the gymnosophists may be akin to what Said describes here: a method of controlling a threatening alien philosophy by making it familiar. Yet in *Florida* 6 Apuleius clearly parodies traditional views of India and Africa. A similar tension between control and mockery underlies *Florida* 12: the proper speech of the Indian parrot is accomplished through rigorous training and violence, only to be undone by a simple moral failing of the trainer. Apuleius’ writings on India appear to participate in the exercise of control through familiarity that Said discusses, but he simultaneously mocks and deconstructs the elements that make something impossible—control of India—seem within political and intellectual reach. By replacing old clichés with new knowledge and by creating an ambiguous space for himself between “us” and the Indians, Apuleius stakes a

claim for the special blend of *sophia* and *paideia* that the African provinces offered in opposition to the dominant discourse of Rome, and begins to interrogate Carthage’s complex historical and textual relationship to the Roman Empire.<sup>69</sup> Like Aravamudan’s conception of Enlightenment Orientalism, Apuleius’ knowledge and depiction of India are not innocent, but his inquiry is aimed just as much at the understanding of the exotic self as the domination of the unconquered other.

## NOTES

1. See Harrison 2000, 101–103; Lee 2005, 123–125. The latter’s final point, that Apuleius is derivative but ultimately divergent, is important for my reading.
2. It is unclear what Pliny has in mind by citing the word *siptacen* as the parrot’s Indian name. The word is close to the original Greek *psittakē*, the etymology of which is uncertain but is assumed by many to come from an Indian source. There is not an obvious connection with Sanskrit *śaka*, however.
3. Plin., *Nat.* 10.118: *minor nobilitas, quia non ex longinquo uenit, sed expressior loquacitas certo generi picarum est* (“A certain type of magpie gets less respect, because it does not come from so far away, but it has a more articular form of expression”). The profane parrot seems more like the gossipy *gauia* in *Met.* 5.28–29, who seems to take pleasure in the filthy desperation of a world without love. In this case, it is the empire of Venus that is resisted. See James 2005, 213–214.
4. For other primary sources on the parrot, see Lee 2005, 121–123. Other secondary sources include Courtney–James 2006; Dietrich 2002; Huggan 1994; Hunink 2000. Other scholars have examined the birds in Apuleius with a focus on imitation, philosophy, and speech—in these analyses the first and fundamental characteristic of the parrot, its nationality, is overlooked.
5. Here I am drawing on Ellen Finkelpearl’s arguments about Apuleius and Carthage in the context of literary allusion. Finkelpearl 1998, 143: “Surely [Apuleius] was interested in both Roman and Carthaginian audiences, and his addresses to the Carthaginians are . . . clear indications of his regard for their city, in polemical opposition to the notion that Rome is the only cultural center.” See her full discussion on pages 133–144.
6. *Flor.* 12.1–3. Except where noted, translations are my own.
7. This focus leads scholars to interpret the piece as an implicit contrast between human and animal *logos*, with an exaltation of the former. See Finkelpearl 2006, 219; Hunink 2000; Lee 2005, 122–123, as well as the possibilities mentioned by Harrison 2000, 112.
8. Ovid’s poem on Corinna’s parrot describes it as *Eois imitatrix ales ab Indis* and *extremo munus ab orbe datum* (*Am.* 2.6.1 and 38).
9. For a distinction between human and animal language, see Finkelpearl 2006, 214–215. Hunink 2000, 73, comments on the bird’s nationality only as follows: “As an animal known from India, it had, of course, the commendable quality of the ‘exotic’ associated with that country.”
10. This idea may have resonance with the treatment of other foreign peoples encountered by Romans, but as I shall argue later, the unconquered nature of India makes its emblems especially vulnerable. For the parrot as a general student, see Harrison 2000, 112.
11. *Flor.* 12.5.

12. Hunink 2001, 130, notes that the detail about five toes is an irresistible spur to compare human and bird. Pliny notes that acorn-fed, five-toed *magpies* learn more easily (*Nat.* 10.119). Contrast Plin., *Nat.* 7.23, who describes a tribe of India with backward feet and eight toes per foot—clearly not the ideal colonial subject.
13. *Flor.* 12.8–9.
14. A helpful discussion of these passages in their scientific context is found in Boehrer 2004, 5–7.
15. Hunink 2000, 77. See also Hunink 2001, 128.
16. Hunink 2000, 78–79.
17. Hunink 2000, 74: “[T]he end of the fragment clearly raises a smile.”
18. Walcott 1980, 155.
19. Huggan 1994, 650.
20. Huggan 1994, 644. Huggan’s reading (and therefore mine) is heavily indebted to Bhabha 1984. On Apuleius the mimic, see Lee 2005, 123.
21. Rollesden 1927, 108.
22. Parker 2008, 8. Other important background literature on India includes Karttunen 1997; Majumdar 1960; Vasunia 2003.
23. Aravamudan 2011, 3.
24. Cf. the historically grounded readings of Apuleius collected in Bradley 2012.
25. Todorov 1993, 265, quoted in Huggan 2001, 26.
26. Huggan 2001, 27.
27. Both of these ideas are more fully developed by other scholars. On the importance of commodities, see Parker 2008, 147 ff. An insightful orientation to understanding knowledge in the Roman Empire, with some critical theory, is provided by the introduction of König–Whitmarsh 2007.
28. Cf. D. Chr. 35.22: τὰ μὲν οὖν ἐκείθεν λόγος ἐστὶν ἀψευδής, ἤδη γὰρ τινες τῶν ἀφικνουμένων ἔφασαν· ἀφικνοῦνται δὲ οὐ πολλοὶ τινες ἐμπορίας ἔνεκεν (“This statement is not a fiction, for some of those who come from India have declared them true, and a few come in pursuit of trade”). Contact by trade or even tourism is certainly not a guarantee of accuracy, as Dio’s own account indicates, but I suggest that the accuracy of Apuleius’ numbering of the castes is a small sign of his corrections to other Indographers, both in the matter of facts and in attitude. Contrast Murphy 2004, 73: “In this [nostalgic] respect, Pliny is only a typical Roman: being a collector of knowledge, it is the decay of native learning that he fears the most.”
29. In *Florida* 15, Apuleius implies that the gymnosophists are a subset of the brahmins, the wise men of India (*[Pythagoran] Bracmanos—hi sapientes uiri sunt, Indiae gens est—eorum ergo Bracmanum gymnosophistas adisse*), and then uses *Bracmani*. For this reason I use both *brahmans* and *gymnosophists*. See Parker 2008, 272–286.
30. *Flor.* 6.1–5.
31. The first words are significant not as beginnings in and of themselves (since the precise contexts of the *Florida* excerpts are unknown), but the ordinary left-position of each subject and the absence of connective particles in both examples may indicate a new topic. Cf. similar beginnings in *Flor.* 3 (*Hyagnis*), 4 (*Tibicen*), 15 (*Samos*), 19 (*Asclepiades*), and 22 (*Crates*).
32. Lee 2005, 82.
33. The author of these lines, described as “Vergilian” as well as congruent with the late antique “jeweled” style, is unknown. Some have attributed them to Apuleius’ friend Clemens. Harrison 2000, 102; Lee 2005, 85–86.
34. Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001, 142 n. 26. Hilton claims in his translation that Euripides is the source for the “hundred-mouthed” epithet, ἐκατόστομοι βαρβάρου ποταμοῦ ῥοαὶ (*Bacch.* 406–407). See also Hunink 2001, 88–89.
35. Śatadru is more commonly the name of another river, now the Sutlej, the easternmost tributary of the Indus. In some traditions of the story of how the Ganges descended from heaven, the river goddess splits herself into 100 channels at the delta. On the diversity of Roman opinion on the river, see Serv., *Aen.* 9.30 and Karttunen–Traidler 2013. Most of the other number-based Sanskrit epithets of the Ganges are based on three.
36. Thus, the Latin verses on this river could have a function similar to the oracle delivered at Delphi in the story of Psyche (*Met.* 4.33.1–2): to divert our attention from content that couldn’t possibly be Latin—in that case, the voice of Apollo—Apuleius inserts hexameter lines that allude to other Latin poems.
37. Romm 1992, 82. Cf. Nedungatt 2010.
38. Also described by Pliny (*Nat.* 8.11). See Lee 2005, 83–84.
39. Bradley 2005; Scullard 1974. Lucan (9.732–733) may possibly be a literary source for the African version that Apuleius subtly undermines.
40. Another example, the goddess India/Africa in Piazza Armerina, is discussed at length by Parker 2008, 131–132.
41. *Met.* 1.8.6: *non modo incolae uerum etiam Indi uel Aethiopes utrique uel ipsi Antichthones.*
42. Murphy 2004, 69. Apuleius’ own interest in natural history is apparent in many of his extant works, but his own writing in the genre has not survived.
43. *Flor.* 6.6–7. That Apuleius uses *gymnosophistae*, avoiding *Bracmani*, which he uses in *Florida* 15, may be significant for the domestication of the brahmans.
44. In Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001.
45. Lee 2005, 86. Hunink 2001, 90, actually finds fault with Apuleius’ “omission” of Arrian’s seven (*Ind.* 11–12): “Apuleius mentions only four of the seven castes. In the context of this speech, there is of course no need for him to be precise and exhaustive.” Strabo describes the castes of India in 15.39–49. Pliny (*Nat.* 6.22) starts his description of the peoples of the Ganges with four classes, separating warriors from counselors and kings, but quickly adds the unnamed gymnosophists (*quintum genus . . . sapientiae deditum*) as a fifth and elephant-trainers as a sixth. In sharp contrast to Apuleius’ rather ordinary example of brahmanic wisdom, Pliny says that the fifth class always end life by voluntary self-immolation. Cf. Parker 2008, 275–276.
46. The justification of the Hindu caste system by this and other ancient texts is naturally controversial, and it is acknowledged by many that the fourfold system greatly oversimplifies the historical reality. Nevertheless, many basic discussions of caste begin with these four groups, or *varnas*.
47. *RV* 10.90.12. Macdonell 1928, 201.
48. *Flor.* 6.8–12.
49. This passage may be compared to a denial of his own skills at the end of the *De deo Socratis* (168–169).
50. Cf. *Met.* 6.4.1, in which Psyche addresses Juno by noting that Carthage worships (*percolit*) her as a maiden; *Met.* 11.5.3, in which Isis notes that the Egyptians worship (*percolentes*) her in authentic rites; *Apol.* 8.6 on dental hygiene; and *Flor.* 18.36, in which Apuleius links his own education to Carthage (*uestras disciplinas studiosius percolo*).
51. For example, the *Law Code of Manu (Mānava Dharmaśāstra)* outlines the duties of the four major castes and details the responsibilities of the brahmans in matters of justice as well as types of fasting. For the importance of food in Hindu culture, see Khare 1992. For one example of a more outlandish

- portrayal of brahmanic practice, see Pliny (*Nat.* 7.22), who states that gymnosophists stand on hot sand from sunrise to sunset, standing on one foot in alternation and gazing with fixed eyes upon the sun. This asceticism may sound like an extreme type of yoga, and thus credible, but note that Pliny also says that some Indians have dog-heads, others have eight toes, others have no necks and have eyes in their shoulders, and so on. See Murphy 2004, chap. 3.
52. Harrison 2000, 103.
  53. *inpransus*: Pl., *St.* 53.3; *extrudere*: Pl., *Cas.* 788–789: *incenatum senem / foras extrudunt mulieres*.
  54. Parker 2008, 259.
  55. *Flor.* 15.18.
  56. *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 2nd ed. s.v.
  57. Harrison–Hilton–Hunink 2001, 156. Contrast Parker’s translation of the same passage (2008, 276): “The Brahmans have combined the general principles of Pythagoras’ philosophy: physical and mental discipline, the number of parts of the soul, and stages of life, the torments and rewards everyone’s spirit receives according to merit.”
  58. He makes ample and idiosyncratic use of the suffix, for example, *obiecta-menta* (*Apol.* 1.6), *concrementa* (*Apol.* 49.5), *agnomenta* (*Apol.* 56.7), *terriculamentum* (*Apol.* 64.2, *Soc.* 15), and *nugamenta* (*Met.* 1.25.1).
  59. Jones 1986, 89.
  60. Swain 1996, 313–314. Swain goes on to argue that Lucian may have been “naturally drawn towards a Roman identity” on account of his own Semitic roots and the impossibility of belonging to a Greek elite.
  61. Also *Epist.* 4.75 (Cydippe complains that Acontius affects her though he is far from her) and 21.208 (Phaedra disavows young men who are excessively adorned). The contexts are obviously different but still have to do with the effects of a distant agent on a subject.
  62. Other instances of the phrase are found in Lucretius (5.107), Cicero (*Manil.* 55), Seneca (*Nat.* 1.13.2), and Lygdamus ([Tib.] 3.6). Pliny uses it in the context of curing diseases with remedies taken from human bones and body parts, attributing the origins of such practices to barbarians and foreigners (*Nat.* 28.2) but also giving examples from Greek science (*Nat.* 28.6). “Let these horrors be far from us and our writing,” he states at the end of a somewhat gruesome catalogue (*Nat.* 28.8).
  63. Ov., *Trist.* 4.4b.5–8 (4.4.61–64): *illi, quos audis hominum gaudere cruore, / paene sub eiusdem sideris axe iacent, / nec procul a nobis locus est, ubi Taurica dira / caede pharetratae spargitur ara deae* (“The ones you’ve heard are joyful in the gore of men, / They are located nearly under the axis of the same constellation, / Nor is the place far from us, where the Taurian altar / Of the bequivered goddess is spattered with awful slaughter”).
  64. McGowan 2009, 11.
  65. “Apuleius is constantly engaged in cultural negotiation, but also adds a dimension of internal division and conflict of a psychological nature within the provincial unclear about his identity. The provincial subject, Apuleius, his characters, and those he encountered daily, must feel split loyalties—not some kind of cemented hybridity, but a tension pulling both the man and his fictional creations in several directions leading to a performance of different identities in varying contexts.” Finkelpearl 2009, 9. Cf. n. 5 above.
  66. Bhabha 1984, 126 (italics original).
  67. Cassius Dio 68.29.1; trans. Parker 2008, 221.
  68. Said 1978, 58.
  69. On this question see Miles 1996.

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## 12 Prosthetic Origins

### Apuleius the Afro-Platonist

*Richard Fletcher*

Throughout the years of work on this book, our shorthand working title was "Diwan Ifrikiya," which has the advantage of being brief and concise, though the disadvantage of being slightly obscure compared to the longer, less elegant, but more explicit appellation *Book of North African Literature*. "Diwan Ifrikiya"—as we refer to it throughout this introduction—combines the well-known Arabic word for "a gathering, a collection or anthology" of poems, *diwan*, with one of the earliest names of (at least part of) the region that this book covers. *Ifrikiya* is an Arabization of the Latin word *Africa*—which the Romans took from the Egyptians, who spoke of "the land of the Ifri," referring to the original inhabitants of North Africa. The Romans called these people Berbers, but they call themselves the Amazigh, and even today tribal names—such as Beni Ifren—in their language, Tamazight, include words derived from *ifri*.<sup>1</sup>

This carefully provocative explanation of the working title of the recently published anthology *Poems for the Millennium, volume 4: The University of California Book of North African Literature*, edited by Pierre Joris and Habib Tengour (b. Mostaganem, 1947), neatly sets up several of the problems that result from any attempt to define North African literature and its origins in antiquity.<sup>2</sup> In spite of its obscurity, the editors insinuate their preference for the title *Diwan Ifrikiya* on account of its two words, which represent the hybrid nature and complex colonial history of the region. The "well-known Arabic word" *diwan* is coupled with the knotty, ideologically loaded term *Ifrikiya* that contains, in a nutshell, the question of contested linguistic and cultural origins. In spite of the retracing of the Arabic *Ifrikiya* back to Egyptian *Ifri*, Joris and Tengour still intimate that it is the Romans who imposed and still impose the word *Africa* on us. Furthermore, not content with the theft ("took") of the word from the Egyptians, these same Romans misnamed ("called") as Berbers the self-defined Amazigh, even though their language—Tamazight—maintained the original (Egyptian) word *ifri* in their tribal names. Yet, in spite of their persistent preference for the title *Diwan Ifrikiya*, employed not only throughout their introduction

but also in the ordering of the book into sections called “First Diwan,” “Second Diwan,” and so on, why did the editors end up adopting the “less elegant, but more explicit appellation *Book of North African Literature*”? What reason could there be to privilege the persistence in Amazigh culture of the “Africa” of the Latin language and Roman history that their anthology is directly set to get beyond?

The dissonance between the anthology’s title and its content, this ironic affirmation of Latinate linguistic and Roman cultural perseverance at the same time as its inadequacy is pointed out, extends to the discussion and framing of individual anthologized authors. For example, consider how our very own [Lucius] Apuleius (Madauros, now M’Daourouch, ca. 123–ca. 180 CE) is introduced:

Apuleius, the author of one of the first prose narratives that prefigure our novel, is known as a Latin or late Roman writer, not a Maghrebian.<sup>3</sup>

I will return to the distinction the editors are making between “Latin” and “Roman” in this description, but for now consider how the emphasis on characterizing Apuleius as Maghrebian is made as part of the broader point that the anthology intends to address. The editors summarize the situation as follows:

To be candid: North Africa is a region whose cultural achievements—including their impact on and importance for Western culture—have been not only passively neglected but often actively “disappeared” or written out of the record. This is true for the majority of this area’s autochthonous writers and thinkers, even those whose achievements have been recognized north of the Mediterranean—often because they became diaspora figures working in Europe.<sup>4</sup>

In spite of the earlier characterization of Apuleius, the reference to “diaspora figures working in Europe” is an explicit reference to later figures, who appear in the section “A Book of Exiles,” rather than a way of characterizing any of the ancient Maghrebian authors included in the anthology.<sup>5</sup> These diaspora figures include such eclectic authors as the Tunisian symbolist poet Mario Scalési (Tunis, 1892–Palermo, 1922), the Algerian Arabist scholar Jacques Berque (Frenda, 1910–Saint-Julien-en-Born, 1995) and the well-known “Franco-Maghrebian” philosopher Jacques Derrida (Algiers, 1930–Paris, 2004). Nonetheless, just as their characterization of Apuleius looks forward to such diaspora figures, Joris and Tengour emphasize an affinity between these later authors and ancient Maghrebians. For example, they describe how Scalési was

born in Tunis in 1892—though of a Maltese mother and an Italian father—who dies in Palermo, Sicily, of tuberculosis at thirty. If it may

be difficult to see in him the classical Maghrebi, Scalési is, however, one of those characteristic Mediterranean figures who have peopled the southern edge of this sea for millennia.<sup>6</sup>

Such an emphasis on a tradition that unites modern diasporic writers (e.g., Scalési) with ancient writers of the Roman Empire (e.g., Apuleius) explains how modern post-colonial theory and discussions of identity and origins can be mobilized to “write back” to the contexts of the Roman Empire.<sup>7</sup> However, there is one aspect of this tradition that is less examined and that is the focus of my discussion here. Why, in spite of their Maghrebian origins, do some ex-pat North African authors identify themselves (and are identified by others) with their adopted, rather than their original, homelands? This identification has the uncanny effect of making their “real” origins somehow secondary or provisional and of creating, to borrow Derrida’s acute phrasing, “the prosthesis of origin.”<sup>8</sup> When Derrida uses this phrase he is mirroring the effect produced by the other phrase in the title of his book: “Monolingualism of the Other.” Both phrases create a sense of aporia through the juxtaposition of nominalism (“monolingualism” and “origin”) and heterogeneity (“the Other” and “prosthesis”). As Emily Apter has astutely noted in discussing the first part of the title, this aporia “deconstructs the nationalist nominalism of language names by locating an always-prior other within monolingual diction.”<sup>9</sup> Apter continues—and this is pertinent to the division made by Joris and Tengour between Apuleius as a “Latin” or “Roman” writer—by stating that this same aporia “loosens the national anchor from the language name, wedging a politics of the subject between the name of a nation and the name of a language.”<sup>10</sup> In fact, it is precisely these processes of location (loosening and wedging) that are explained by the phrase “the prosthesis of origin.” However, there is more at stake for Derrida than the specific discussion of language, alterity and the subject—something that goes to the very heart of his work and betrays a key strain in the reception of his whole corpus. Early in his book, Derrida imagines a disgruntled interlocutor who takes him to task for his method in terms that not only resonate with the current discussion of his Franco-Maghrebian identity but also question his credentials as a philosopher:

“What you are saying is not true because you are questioning truth. Come on! You are a skeptic, a relativist, a nihilist; you are not a serious philosopher! If you continue, you will be placed in a department of rhetoric or literature. If you push the matter further, the condemnation or exile could be more serious. You will be confined to the department of sophistry because what you are doing actually falls within the province of sophism; it is never far from lying, ‘perjury,’ and false evidence. You do not believe what you are saying; you want to mislead us.”<sup>11</sup>

The reference to Derrida's institutional and disciplinary "exile" from philosophy to rhetoric, literature and, worst of all, sophistry shows how the current discussion of cultural and linguistic origins has a broader impact, stretching to the very question of the "identity" of philosophy. In short, if we accept Derrida as a philosopher, let alone a Franco-Maghrebian philosopher, it is as if we must accept the idea of the origin as supplement, as prosthesis.

To return to Apuleius, we may appreciate a certain affinity between Derrida's position and the ways Apuleius, too, has often been exiled from philosophy by his readers, for example, by being dubbed a "Latin sophist," famed for his itinerant performances and his (documented or presumed) sojourns in Athens, Rome and Ostia.<sup>12</sup> So, instead of restricting the discussion of Apuleius' cultural identity—his African identity—to geographical limitations, in what follows I want to shadow Derrida in expanding the question of origins to include Apuleius' identity as a philosopher and, more specifically, as a Platonist. At the original Oberlin conference, I was asked to address Apuleius' philosophical works and consider how Apuleius is an African Platonic philosopher. To begin to address such a question we must first appreciate how both Apuleius' African identity and his claim to be a Platonic philosopher in his works are equally contested issues.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the idea of Apuleius as an "African Platonic philosopher"—I prefer the term *Afro-Platonist* for reasons that should become clear by the end of this paper—is doubly problematic, specifically owing to the nature of the Apuleian corpus.<sup>14</sup> On the one hand, Apuleius' main extant philosophical works—*De Platone et eius dogmate*, *De mundo* and *De deo Socratis*—are on the whole reticent in revealing the cultural identity of their author.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, the works in which Apuleius goes out of his way to emphasize the specificity of his cultural identity—*Apology* and *Florida*—could be deemed to be separate from his philosophical output.<sup>16</sup>

Yet a way through this impasse is to perform a focused analysis of the most explicit account of either conception of Apuleius' identity—as African or as Platonist. I have attempted the latter elsewhere, so for my purposes here I shall highlight perhaps *the* single most important piece of evidence we have from Apuleius' own writings about his African identity: his defense of his homeland (*patria*) at *Apology* 24. In what follows I claim that Apuleius fuses his discussion of his *patria* and his identity as "half-Numidian, half-Gaetolian" with a broadly Platonic conception of the limits of earthly human origins and the immortality of the soul. Yet, as with Joris and Tengour's carefully provocative discussion of their working title, I argue that the very precision of Apuleius' treatment of his *patria*—not only his location of the exact borderline between Numidia and Gaetulia but also his reference to making this statement in another speech, previously delivered before an earlier proconsul of the African province—contains an implicit cultural reference that balances Hellenic *paideia* with Roman politics through a shared

Platonic concept. So unlike the interventionist role of the Romans and the enduring dominance of the Latin language for Joris and Tengour, Apuleius manages to affirm his cultural (African) and philosophical (Platonic) origins precisely because he questions the very issue of origin. As with Derrida, this question of the notion of origin both is emblematic of his own conception of his philosophical mission and also leaves him open to attacks by critics, especially in terms of a sophistic relativism. But Apuleius and Derrida are not alone. This process of affirmation of origins at *the same time* as those very origins are re-framed in terms of another culture is repeated in several authors anthologized in Joris and Tengour's book. This repeated position means that during my reading of Apuleius' defense of his *patria*, we will also encounter such idiosyncratic figures such as Ibn Baja (Avempace) (Sargossa, 1085–Fez, 1138) and Edmond Amram El-Maleh (Safi, 1917–Rabat, 2010), as well as Derrida.

## 1. DEFENDING APULEIUS' PATRIA (APOL. 24.1–6)

Before transitioning to the main charge of magic, Apuleius addresses the last of the "minor" issues: his *patria*. He begins his defense as follows (*Apol.* 24.1–2):

*de patria mea uero, quod eam sitam Numidiae et Gaetuliae in ipso confinio meis scriptis ostendistis, quibus memet professus sum, cum Lolliano Auito c. u. praesente publice dissererem, Seminumidam et Semigaetulum, non uideo quid mihi sit in ea re pudendum, haud minus quam Cyro maiori, quod genere mixto fuit Semimedus ac Semipersa.*

Indeed about my homeland, which is located on the borderline between Numidia and Gaetulia, as you demonstrated from my own writings, in which I professed publicly, and in the presence of that most distinguished citizen Lollianus Auitus, that I am "half-Numidian, half-Gaetolian"—I can't see why I should be ashamed of this any more than Cyrus the Elder, who was himself of mixed origin, half-Mede, half-Persian.

This passage, and especially the phrase "half-Numidian, half-Gaetolian" quoted here from an earlier (lost) speech, is understandably the main focus of attention for Apuleius' readers who are interested in issues of cultural identity.<sup>17</sup> As a result it is often isolated from its context (ironically following the lead of the prosecution!) and not explicitly considered in relation to the section that immediately follows it and that at the very least puts it in question.<sup>18</sup> For as soon as Apuleius asserts the location of his *patria*, he follows the parallel to his hybrid identity, that of Cyrus the Great, with an

undercutting denial of the significance of the location of one's birth (*Apol.* 24.3–6):

*non enim ubi prognatus, sed ut moratus quisque sit spectandum, nec qua regione, sed qua ratione uitam uiuere inierit, considerandum est. holitori et cauponi merito est concessum holus et uinum ex nobilitate soli commendare, uinum Thasium, holus Phliasium; quippe illa terrae alumna multum ad meliorem saporem iuuerit et regio fecunda et caelum pluuium et uentus clemens et sol apricus et solum succidum. enim uero animo hominis extrinsecus in hospitium corporis immigranti quid ex istis addi uel minui ad uirtutem uel malitiam potest?*

For it is not where someone is born, but how they are bred that ought to be considered, not in what region, but with what reason they went about living their life. It is fine for vegetable growers or innkeepers to recommend their vegetables or wine for its eminent estate: “Thasian Wine!,” “Phliusian Veggies!” Sure, the taste of such earthly produce is greatly improved by a fertile region, rainy weather, mild wind, a sunny climate, and moist soil. For a migrating human soul, however, coming from outside to the guesthouse of the body, how could any of these factors increase or dilute someone's virtue or vice?

With this philosophizing interlude Apuleius seems to have moved from a strident defense of his mixed origins to completely throwing out the significance of origins for human beings. Obviously, there is no immediate problem with at first countering a charge, then blowing it completely out of the water—Apuleius does so elsewhere in the speech.<sup>19</sup> But the problem does not lie with how Apuleius mobilizes his origins and their insignificance in his self-defense but with how he makes the singular, biographical issue of his *patria* a topic for general philosophical, and specifically Platonic, speculation, and in doing so affirms the identity that is more essential to his defense in the long run.<sup>20</sup> By way of understanding this supplementation of his earthly *patria* with the migrating soul, we have to pay attention to Apuleius' argument as a process. And to ensure that we are heading in the right direction—to the question of origins—I shall start at the end and work my way backward through the text.<sup>21</sup> First, however, let us meet one of Apuleius' fellow travelers in the pages of Joris and Tengour's book of North African literature.

## 2. J'AI UNE ÂME SOLITAIRE

Several hundred years after Apuleius lived (and just over a hundred pages after Apuleius' entry in Joris and Tengour), we encounter the philosopher Ibn Baja, known in the West as Avempace.<sup>22</sup> His major work, *The Governance of the Solitary*, discusses the role of self-governance for solitary individuals who live in “imperfect societies” such as those described in book 9

of Plato's *Republic*. Joris and Tengour select a passage from chapter 13 of this work that discusses the Platonic theme of what constitutes a “philosophic nature” of such solitary individuals who are grounded in the spiritual rather than the corporeal:

In order to achieve its highest perfection, the philosophic nature must, then, act nobly and high-mindedly. Therefore, whoever prefers his corporeal existence to anything pertaining to his spiritual existence will not be able to achieve the final end. Hence no corporeal man is happy and every happy man is completely spiritual.<sup>23</sup>

Ibn Baja develops this focus on the spiritual to its final end—becoming one of the simple essential intellects outlined by Aristotle and citing the *Metaphysics*, the *De anima* and *On Sense and the Sensible*.<sup>24</sup> Then it “would be right to call him simply divine.”<sup>25</sup> Finally, in the anthologized passage, we reach the conclusion that “all these qualities can be obtained by the solitary individual in the absence of the perfect city.”<sup>26</sup>

As Stephen Harvey has shown, this identification of the “solitary individual” with the philosopher is a late development in *The Governance of the Solitary*. The reasons for this, Harvey argues, are possibly both political and pedagogic. The political rationale for not immediately conflating the solitary individual with the philosopher is based on a story Ibn Baja relates about a contemporary philosopher in Islamic Spain, Ibn Wuhayb, who put his life in danger by openly professing to study and practice philosophy.<sup>27</sup> The pedagogic (or heuristic) argument is that Ibn Baja wanted to convince his audience by developing an argument of the necessity of a non-corporeal existence for itself and not by setting up philosophers as models to follow retroactively. To these two arguments, Harvey adds a final reason, which is perhaps the most important for my purposes here. Ibn Baja does not totalize his identification of the solitary man with the Platonic and Aristotelian conceptions of philosophical nature and essential intellect early on in his work because he previously identified this figure with comparable figures the Sufis called “strangers.” Even so, while Sufis offered a clear starting point for Ibn Baja, their religious practices needed the added intellectual weight of the Greek philosophical ideas as well. This conflation of Islamic religious and Greek philosophical figures in the image of the philosopher as a stranger is very compelling for the passage from Apuleius that I am highlighting. Referring to Ibn Baja's work, Seyyed Hossein Nasr writes:

These individuals are solitary figures, strangers, and exiles in a world that is comprised for the most part of human beings who cannot raise their gaze to the realm of the purely intelligible.<sup>28</sup>

It is this image of the philosopher as exile that I now want to bring to bear on Apuleius' own call for a focus not only on the question of the

spiritual over the corporeal but also on the idea of philosophical over cultural identity in his *Apology*. As with any philosophical reference to the *Apology*, commentators make the usual noises about how this passage is “common” and “conventional” to Middle Platonism, citing some helpful parallels from Plato’s texts as well as Apuleius’ own so-called philosophical works and beyond.<sup>29</sup> Yet instead of rummaging through parallels and precedents, I want to stay close to Apuleius’ text and especially the images of the “migrating soul” (*animo . . . immigranti*) and the “guesthouse of the body” (*hospitium corporis*). Apuleius here tailors his description of the spiritual and corporeal to the charge regarding his *patria*. As Hunink notes, the image of the *hospitium* (“guesthouse”) also resonates with the earlier reference to the *caupo* (“innkeeper”), which implies a connection between the human body and the earthly produce of vegetables and wine.<sup>30</sup> But it is the image of the “migrating soul” that recalls the discussion of Apuleius’ *patria*, and not, I would argue, merely to denigrate it. If Ibn Baja can trace his figure of the solitary person from the Sufis’ “stranger” to the philosopher of Plato and Aristotle, then Apuleius can reconcile his Platonic identity with his African origins. The key moment for Apuleius, the hinge between his cultural and philosophical identities, is neither his pride in his hybrid *patria* nor his trumpeting of his philosophical credentials but the place where the two meet: in the figure of Cyrus the Elder.

### 3. CY WAS HERE; CY’S UP

Before getting to Apuleius’ Cyrus, let us return to the pages of Joris and Tenguour’s anthology and the story “Takiat” by the Moroccan writer Edmond Amram El-Maleh. Early in this short story, El-Maleh’s protagonist Isso Imzoghen is describing the taxi drivers of Casablanca in the following grandiose and increasingly surreal terms:

[He] liked to think of them as walking or wandering philosophers in the manner of Aristotle’s Peripatetics or Houday’s Mostazilites, retracing the utopic body of the mega-metropolis, inventing its life, its path, second by second, like a sponge soaking up its air, its sky, its breath, the labor of its innards, the violence of its groin, the stale bread, the hunger in its gut, the huge surge of its laughter, the provocation of its sunlight, more like a mirror than a sponge, set ablaze by the incandescent lava of its volcanoes, the pharaonic explosion of its monstrous appetites, of its dislocated members in the orgasm of its countless joys, its deliriums, vaginas, abysses of insatiable truth, anus, solar anus as it’s so well put, ruins that glorify, the triumphant fecality of matter, idolatry, in quiet obscurity the Phallus made God, for there lay the grain of a truth that burned everything in its path, rejecting all the halts, the straps that Isso strove to set for it.<sup>31</sup>

For this comparison between taxi drivers and philosophers we can compare the case of the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre, who was a taxi driver in Paris and took this perspective into his psychogeographical texts, as he states in his memoir:

A huge volume could not contain the adventures and misadventures of this existentialist philosopher-taxi-driver. The Paris underworld unfolded before him in all its sleazy variety and he began to discover the secrets of its brothels, knocking-shops and gambling dens, dance halls (for white and coloured), fancy hotels and greasy spoons, shady dealers, high and low-class pederasts, bookmakers, armed robbers and police squads. I plumbed some of the smelly depths of “existence” and what I dragged up would have sent the neo-existentialists of the Cafe Flore into transports of delight.<sup>32</sup>

El-Maleh’s taxi drivers are described as “walking or wandering philosophers” (*philosophes ambulants ou déambulants*) after the model of Aristotle’s Peripatetics. But is not the image of the wandering philosopher that I want to highlight in El-Maleh’s text but the juxtaposition of Aristotle’s Peripatetics with “Houday’s Mostazilites.” Who are “Houday’s Mostazilites”? El-Maleh’s French has transformed and transliterated the Arabic name Abu-l-Hudhayl—the founder of the Islamic theology called *Mu’tazila* in Basra in the ninth century.<sup>33</sup> Such word-play is also at work in the name of El-Maleh’s protagonist—Isso Imzoghen—whose surname rewrites the Berbers’ word for themselves: *Imazighen* (plural). Isso admits to a certain fascination with his own name at the very opening of the story:

Isso Imzoghen! He returned home, as every year, to resume the interrupted reading of a great book, so clearly did things speak to him, humming with infinite voices, resonant pathway of his life. The mere sound of his own name, which he enjoyed repeating aloud in deepest solitude, sent up a gusher of luminous landscapes from his native city, knotted into his own memory-engorged flesh.<sup>34</sup>

The name and its meaning are bound up with the narrator’s return to his homeland. In a comparable way the playful rewriting of Abu-l-Hudhayl’s Mu’tazilites as Houday’s Mostazilites, placed next to Aristotle’s Peripatetics to describe the local taxi drivers, enacts a process of strangeness in the familiar, of being a stranger in one’s homeland.

Now to return again to Apuleius, it is another name—that of Cyrus the Elder—that acts as the meeting point for Apuleius’ *patria* and his Platonism. On one level, the duality of mortal body and immortal soul can be understood in the way Apuleius’ hybrid origins as “half-Numidian and half-Gaetulian” are based on the explicit example of Cyrus. Now, at first glance Apuleius’ claim of hybrid origins is very different from that of Cyrus. In

Herodotus, Cyrus is described as the son of a noble Mede mother, daughter of king Astyages, and of a relatively less noble father, Cambyses—a king himself but of the Persians.<sup>35</sup> Even though Persians were submitted to Medes at that time, neither Herodotus nor Xenophon mentions any cultural inferiority on the part of the Persians (instead, Herodotus points out Cambyses' good qualities). This means that there is a fundamental difference in Apuleius' self-description as "half-Numidian, half-Gaetolian," as picked up by his accusers, in that it is meant disparagingly: the point made by the prosecution is that both African peoples were deemed culturally inferior to the Romans. At the same time, however, there is a link to the figure of Cyrus in the Greek imaginary that is important for Apuleius' characterization, and that is their shared hybridity. In the Delphic oracle to Croesus, Herodotus reports that "a mule shall sit on the Median throne" (1.55), referring to Cyrus. This reference to Cyrus as a mule could be the source for the prosecution's negative conception of hybridity and origins. However, what is perhaps most important for my purposes here is to understand why Apuleius evokes Cyrus in his account of his own origins.

Stephen Harrison has recognized the opening to Xenophon's *Cyropaideia* (1.2) in Apuleius' depiction of Cyrus' dual origins; much later in the *Cyropaideia*, on his death bed, Cyrus tells his sons about the immortality of his soul, which has been seen as an evocation of Plato's *Phaedo*.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, the use of Xenophon's Cyrus to tell of the immortality of the soul is adapted by Cicero in a pretty close translation in *De senectute* (79–81). Furthermore, after Cyrus' dying words, Cicero returns to Cato, who says that he is now going to give his own view on death (*De senectute* 84):

*et ex uita ita discedo tamquam ex hospitio, non tamquam domo: comorandi enim natura deuersorium nobis, non habitandi dedit.*

and I quit life as if it were a guesthouse, not a home. For nature has given us a hostel in which to sojourn, not to inhabit.

If Apuleius wants us to recollect Cyrus' speech on the immortality of the soul in his evocation of him as half-Persian and half-Mede, he does so by using Cato's response as a kind of correction. The opposition between Cyrus and Cato in *De senectute* is a rhetorical one. Cyrus, in Xenophon and as appropriated by Cicero, is citing the immortality of the soul as a way of getting his sons to do what he says after death, or else he will come back to haunt them; in contrast, the "true" believer in the soul's immortality is the Roman Cato.

Here we reach an impasse. Apuleius' philosophizing interlude had seemed to be aimed at undermining the prosecution's attack on his *patria* by transcending earthly origins via the fundamentally nomadic Platonic figure of the immortal soul. However, he offers a defense of both his hybrid cultural identity and the idea of the immortal soul through the same figure: Cyrus. Furthermore, this same Cyrus, a Persian ruler of hybrid origins, was not

immortalized only by an Athenian author (Xenophon) but also by a pair of Roman statesman-philosophers (Cicero and his Cato). As with the image of the "migrating soul" returning to the language of origins and homeland, the language of the "guesthouse" of the body returns, via Cicero's framing of his translation of Xenophon through his character Cato. Like El-Maleh's tale of Mr. Berber's homecoming and the distorted balancing of Greek and Islamic philosophers and their schools with Moroccan taxi drivers, Apuleius' account of his cultural and philosophical origins enacts for his readers a process that ultimately sees both conceptions of origins as intimately related.

#### 4. THE PROSTHESIS OF ORIGIN

To conclude, let me return to the much-discussed expression of Apuleius' identity as "half-Numidian and half-Gaetolian." Our final author from the pages of Joris and Tengour—Jacques Derrida—can be of some direct help here. Consider how Derrida discusses the issues at stake in his own hybrid identity, by calling himself "Franco-Maghrebian":

In order to know *who* a Franco-Maghrebian is, it is necessary to know *what Franco-Maghrebian is*, what "Franco-Maghrebian" means. To put it the other way round, by inverting the circulation of the circle in order to determine, *vice versa*, *what it is to be Franco-Maghrebian*, it would be necessary to know who is, and (Oh Aristotle!) above all who is the *most* Franco-Maghrebian.<sup>37</sup>

I would claim that what Derrida is up to here is precisely what Apuleius is doing in the *Apology*, albeit with Aristotelian formal cause replaced by the Platonic immortality of the soul. To ask what the phrase "half-Numidian and half-Gaetolian" means to Apuleius is different from asking what the prosecution used it to attack him for. As a "charge" it is easily refuted, by the three stages we have already tracked backward through—by being unashamed of such origins, by offering an example of comparable pride in such origins (Cyrus) and, finally, by questioning the whole status of corporeal origin in the first place. Nonetheless, there is one aspect of Apuleius' discussion of origins that has not been considered, one that is in many ways the hinge between any account of his cultural and philosophical identities. Consider the following contextualizing statement by Derrida that explains *why* he is even discussing the question of his "Franco-Maghrebian" identity, here and now:

So this meeting—which had just opened, as you recall—was an international colloquium. In Louisiana, which is not, as you know, anywhere in France. Generous hospitality. Invited guests? Francophones *belonging*,

as we strangely say, to several nations, cultures and states. And all these problems of *identity*, as we so foolishly say nowadays. Among all the participants, there were two, Abdelkebir Khatibi and myself, who, besides an old friendship, meaning the blessing of so many other things from memory and the heart, also shared a certain destiny. They live in a certain “state” as far as language and culture are concerned: they have a certain status. In what is so named and is indeed “my country,” this status is given the title of “Franco-Maghrebian.” What can that possibly mean to say, I ask you, you who are fond of meaning-to-say [*vouloir-dire*]? What is the nature of that hyphen? What does it want? What is Franco-Maghrebian? Who is a “Franco-Maghrebian”?<sup>38</sup>

With this passage we come back to the beginning. For Derrida and Apuleius, the question of their origins—their *patriae*—revolves around the question of the origin of the phrase *of that origin*: Franco-Maghrebian or “half-Numidian and half-Gaetolian.” For both philosophers, the performative force of the phrase is as important as its meaning. However, there is a marked difference in how, where and for whom the phrase originates. For Derrida it marks a “status” bestowed on him by “his country”; for Apuleius it was something he said in another speech, on another occasion, for another purpose, with another proconsul present. Perhaps he said it to recall Xenophon’s Cyrus to—eventually—segue into the point about the immortal migrant soul. Regardless of the reason that Apuleius referred to his *patria* in these words, on that day, in front of that crowd and that proconsul, the barbaric prosecution wrenched these words from their origin and made them the basis of a trumped-up “minor” charge. In fact, they will do the same for the single most important scrap of evidence—the Greek letter of Pudentilla, re-cited to accuse Apuleius of being a magician.<sup>39</sup> In other words, Apuleius’ careful philosophizing of his origins can be pointed to as a case-study for his particular brand of Platonism, which is powerful and performative. On careful reflection, this brief moment in Apuleius’ long speech and extensive corpus tells us much more than the “fact” of his origins and his cultural identity; it shows us how he operates as a practicing Afro-Platonist.<sup>40</sup>

## NOTES

1. Joris–Tengour 2012, 2. This richly relevant anthology replaces my more simplistic discussion of Apuleius in terms of a general conception of “African philosophy,” as presented at the original conference in Oberlin (the remains of which can be found in n. 14 below). Both that original and this published version of the paper are dedicated to Rebeka, my fellow ex-pat.
2. This focus on origins and language in North African or Maghrebian literature avoids any discussion of the role of the French language. This has the effect of intimating the belatedness of French influence on the region and, more

important, giving a novel spin on the process of decolonization. For a useful anthology of debates surrounding specifically Francophone Maghrebian literature, see Mortimer 2001.

3. Joris–Tengour 2012, 3. They predictably chose a scene from Apuleius’ undisputed masterpiece—the *Metamorphoses*, aka *The Golden Ass* (*Met.* 11.7–13). Perhaps the editors relished the motley crew of performers who were involved in the parade following the first phase of Lucius’ Isiac initiation: someone wearing “a Greek cloak,” a magistrate in a “purple toga,” a boy dressed in “Phrygian dress like the shepherd boy, Ganymede,” and there at the heart of it all “one who reinvented himself in a cloak and scepter, woven sandals, and the bearded goatee of a philosopher” (Joris–Tengour 2012, 27).
4. Joris–Tengour 2012, 3.
5. Hanno the Navigator (Carthage, ca. sixth century BCE), Callimachus (Cyrene, 310–ca. 240 BCE), Mago (Carthage, pre-second century BCE), Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus (Carthage, ca. 160–ca. 220 CE), Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus (Carthage, early third century to 258 CE), Lucius Lactantius (Cirta? ca. 240–Trier? ca. 320 CE), Aurelius Augustinus Hipponensis (Saint Augustine) (Thagaste, 354–Hippo, 430 CE), Blossius Aemilius Dracontius (Carthage, ca. 455–ca. 505 CE) and Luxorius (Carthage, sixth century CE).
6. Joris–Tengour 2012, 469. For an expansion of this characterization of the Maghreb as the “southern edge” of the Mediterranean, see Chérif 2008.
7. For a nuanced approach to post-colonial theory and Apuleius, see Finkelpearl 2009, and now see the contributions in the third section of the present volume.
8. Derrida 1998.
9. Apter 2006, 246.
10. Apter 2006, 246.
11. Derrida 1998, 4–5.
12. On Apuleius as a “Latin sophist,” see Harrison 2000. On Apuleius in Athens, see Sandy 1997, 3–4, and Lee 2005, 5; in Rome, see Dowden 1994, whose arguments are countered by Lee 2005, 8, and Graverini 2012, 182–193; in Ostia, see Beck 2000, who follows the hypothesis of Coarelli 1989.
13. For a taste of Apuleius’ contested identity as a philosopher (let alone a Platonist), consider Dillon 1977, 311: “What we must always bear in mind is that Apuleius, despite his protestations, is not a philosopher.”
14. In the original version of this paper, delivered at Oberlin, I considered Apuleius in relation to certain traditions of African philosophy, such as the Nigerian philosopher Theophilus Okere and the Ghanaian philosopher Kwasi Wiredu, who both reflect on their relation to Western and “indigenous” philosophical traditions. For a discussion of these two philosophers, see Hallen 2009, while Appiah 1992 is a thought-provoking treatment of the fundamental issues at stake in any dynamic between Africa and philosophy.
15. For example, the discussion of geography in general and the portrayal of Africa in particular in *De mundo* at 6.303 is highly engaged with Sallust’s description of Africa in his *Jugurtha*. See Beaujeu 1973, 318–319.
16. A case in point is the limited role Apuleius plays in Trapp 2007, who does not consider these works. Fletcher (2014) is partially an attempt to break down the division between “rhetorical” and “philosophical” works in the Apuleian corpus.
17. E.g., Bradley 2012, 145–146. The fullest and most compelling discussion of this statement and the whole passage is Briand-Ponsart 2002. On the specific question of the relationship between the current speech and the previously delivered speech, see Harrison 2008, 8–9.

18. E.g., Griffiths 1975, 60; Hays 2004, 103; Le Roux 2011, 13. Exceptions are Finkelppearl 1998, 141; Finkelppearl 2009, 24–27; Briand-Ponsart 2002. Isaac 2004, 145–146, acknowledges that Apuleius’ being “unambivalent and unapologetic in defense of his mixed origin” (145) is “an explicit denial of all the concepts discussed in this part [the chapter on ‘Superior and Inferior Peoples’] of the book” (146). Somehow Willhite 2007, 130, reads this passage in context as Apuleius’ protest against those who deem “*patria*, or homeland, as a constructed ethnic boundary” and as part of other evidence that “show[s] that the new elites of Africa understood their ethnic identity as a hindrance.”
19. E.g., in his response to “charges” of beauty and eloquence (*Apol.* 4–5.2).
20. See Fletcher 2009 and Hertz 2010, whose focus on Apuleius’ use of philosophy as a form of polemic is appealing and consistent with my own reading.
21. It is important to note that the end of my discussion of *Apol.* 24 is not the end of Apuleius’ discussion of his *patria*, which continues into *Apol.* 25. Again, for a fuller treatment, see Briand-Ponsart 2002.
22. For a succinct introduction to Ibn Baja/Avempace, see Hamid 2003.
23. Ibn Baja in Joris–Tengour 2012, 151.
24. See Aristotle, *Met.* 12.9; *De Anima* 3.4–6.
25. Ibn Baja, in Joris–Tengour 2012, 151.
26. Ibn Baja, in Joris–Tengour 2012, 151.
27. Harvey 1992, 221.
28. Nasr 2006, 152.
29. For example, Hunink 1997, 2: 83, after stating that “the philosophical doctrine that the soul enters the body from without was common in Middle Platonism and Later Stoicism,” cites Moreschini 1978, 122 n. 5, who observes that there is no exact parallel passage in the philosophical works. But what constitutes an exact parallel passage? There are at least two other places where Apuleius uses comparable accounts of the dynamic between the immortal soul and the body. At *De Plat.* 2.20.247–249, Apuleius has his Plato say that the soul of the wise man journeys back (*remigrat*) to the gods when freed from the bonds of the body (*uinculis liberata corporeis*). Furthermore, at *Soc.* 15.152, after describing how the *daemon* is equivalent to the human mind while still located in the body, Apuleius proceeds to a second sense of *daemon* as a human mind that, on having lived through life, “denied its oath to its own body” (*corpori suo abiurans*). Apuleius continues to describe this latter type of *daemon* according to Roman religious terms as the *Lemur*, which he then splits into two: the *Lar familiaris* and the *Larua*. The latter is described in negative terms as “being punished by having no good position as an exile, insecure in its wandering” (*nullis bonis sedibus incerta uagatione ceu quodam exilio punitur*).
30. Hunink 1997, 2: 84.
31. El-Maleh, in Joris–Tengour 2012, 290.
32. Lefebvre 2003, 7.
33. See Marenbon 2007, 63–66.
34. El-Maleh, in Joris–Tengour 2012, 289.
35. Herodotus 1.107.
36. Harrison 2000, 61–62. Gera 1993, 136.
37. Derrida, in Joris–Tengour 2012, 479.
38. Derrida, in Joris–Tengour 2012, 478–479.
39. I make this claim in both Fletcher 2009 and Fletcher 2014, which is expanded by Noreña’s contribution to the present volume.
40. This term, albeit inspired by Derrida and his own troublesome hyphen, originates in Augustine’s account of Apuleius as both *Afer* and *Platonicus*

*nobilis* (*Ciu.* 8.12), but it is also related to *Afro-Greeks*, the title of a book by Emily Greenwood (2010), who introduced me to the topic of Classics and post-colonialism and, of course, to that otherworldly Afro-Platonist, Sun-Ra.

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## 13 A Sociological Reading of A.V. ("Africæ Viri")

### Apuleius and the Logic of Post-colonialism

Benjamin Todd Lee

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I would like to explore a new piece of evidence that up to this point in time has remained overlooked. I will consider images of the mark A.V. in the manuscript known as *F*, Laurentianus 68.2, and will also explore the theoretical implications of this mark for our readings of the works of Apuleius contained in this manuscript: Apuleius' *Apology*, *Metamorphoses*, and *Florida*. Inasmuch as this mark, as we shall see, provides evidence for an African origin of the *Florida* (if not necessarily its archetype), this little abbreviation, I believe, may have great implications for what must be one of the central questions facing Apuleian studies—namely, the discrepancy between provincialism and post-colonialism. The issue at stake here is, what should we take as the implied center of the discourse? A provincial approach would take Rome for granted as the center; such works in this category would be Ovid's *Tristia* and Juvenal's *Satires*, which, though written in the provinces, or by a provincial, take Rome as the putative center of readership. Post-colonialism, in contrast, posits as its implicit center of readership (and writing) the province itself.

A post-colonial reading of Apuleius' works, then, would ask us to consider them less as an imitation of a centralized norm and more as a performance, a re-inscription of local identity onto the surface of the empire-wide phenomenon of Greco-Roman *paideia*. When read from this perspective, Apuleius' *Florida* represents identity building on a civic scale for Carthage, while his *Apology* builds identity on a personal and familial scale. But this mark in *F* provokes us to explore the *Florida*—and possibly the other works in *F* (the *Apology* and the *Metamorphoses*) as fundamentally local productions of Africa.

If one of the primary functions of literary theory is to bring new models into discourses from *outside* their homes,<sup>1</sup> a theoretical reading should embrace the logic of post-colonialism as a potentially valuable way of creating new readings of Apuleius, beyond John Winkler and the essentially tangled knot and aporia of narratology.<sup>2</sup> For me, then, A.V. can be read as a sign for post-colonialism, since it provides grounds for reading the work

with a local African logic. Although Apuleius' works are expressed in the literary tradition of Rome, the mark challenges us to interpret them from an African perspective.

2. A.V. AND THE MANUSCRIPTS OF THE APOLOGY, METAMORPHOSES, AND FLORIDA

First, let us look at the mark and the manuscript in which it appears. In a seemingly innocuous abbreviation at *F* folio 188 recto (*Flor.* 16.1), we find an Uncial *a*, a period, and a Gothic *v* (not Beneventan characters, tellingly), which form the abbreviation A.V.

*Priusquam uobis occipiam, principes A<fricae> V<iri>, gratias agere ob statuam, quam mihi praesenti honeste postulastis et absenti benigne decreuistis, prius uolo causam uobis allegare, cur aliquam multos dies a conspectu auditorii afuerim.*

Before I begin, chief citizens of Africa, to thank you for the statue which you honorably proposed for me in my presence, and which you kindly decided on in my absence, I wish first to explain the reason why I have not appeared in this hall for quite a few days.

This tiny abbreviation, which stands for *Africae Viri*, is unheard of in manuscripts of European descent, except in medical texts found in codices from the seventeenth century on, where it signifies *aqua uitae*.<sup>3</sup> A.V. is left in abbreviation in  $\phi$ , the twelfth-century copy of *F*, and later manuscripts as well. Rudolph Helm *ad loc.* notes that Justus Lipsius' edition was the first to suggest the full unabbreviated spelling.

In *F* the mark appears not in Beneventan characters but, as I said above, as an Uncial *a* and Gothic *v*.<sup>4</sup> As can be seen above in the book subscription of book 3, the scribe used rustic capitals for all the book subscriptions in *F*. Close inspection of this abbreviation shows that a period appears after the

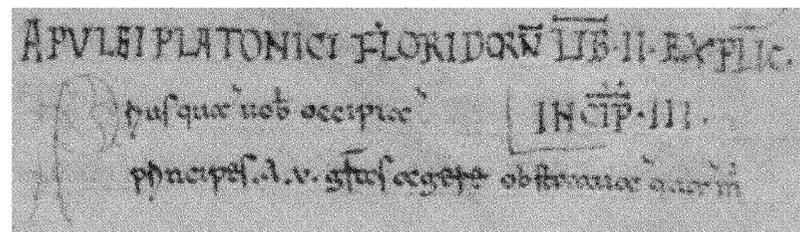


Figure 43 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, ms. Plut. 68.2, folio 188 recto. Reproduced by permission of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali. Any further reproduction is prohibited.

word *principes* as well. While the precise significance of this period is not clear, we are led to wonder whether A.V. might have been part of a longer abbreviation for *principes Africae viri*, or P.A.V.

Nevertheless, whether or not A.V. should properly be P.A.V., the antiquity of the mark, particularly the three periods and the altered script of *a.v.*, would seem hearken back to the rustic capitals of an African exemplar, traces of which were retained in *F*. My investigation into the abbreviation A.V. in the *Florida* led me to examine all the abbreviations found in *F*, and I have provided a table of those I could find.<sup>5</sup>

Table 3 Provisional List of Abbreviations in *F*

Abbreviation	Unabbreviated form	Folio number
<i>Metamorphoses</i>		
(None that I could find, including the text of 3.3.1: Q. is not used for <i>Quirites sanctissimi</i> *)		
<i>Florida</i>		
A.V.	<i>principes Africae uiri</i>	188r (n.b. <i>principes Africae uiros</i> unabbreviated at 189r)
<i>Apology</i>		
Cl.	<i>Claudi</i>	104r
( <i>Lollius Urbicus</i> ) V.C.	<i>uir clarissimus</i>	104v
C. ( <i>Catullum</i> )	<i>Gaium</i>	106v
C. ( <i>Lucilium</i> )	<i>Gaium</i>	106v
C. ( <i>Fabricius</i> )	<i>Gaius</i>	108v
Gn. ( <i>Scipio</i> )	<i>Gnaeus</i>	108v
Q. ( <i>Ennius</i> )	<i>Quintus</i>	112v
M. ( <i>Catonem</i> )	<i>Marcum</i>	113v (n.b. in <i>F</i> this abbreviation has been erased, but there is only enough space left for the one letter and a period "M.")
M. ( <i>Antonius</i> )	<i>Marcus</i>	118v
Cn. <i>Carbonem</i>	<i>Gnaeus</i>	118v
C. <i>Mucius</i>	<i>Gaius</i>	118v
A. <i>Albucium</i>	<i>Albium</i>	118v

(Continued)

Table 3 (Continued)

Abbreviation	Unabbreviated form	Folio number
<i>P. Sulpicius</i>	<i>Publius</i>	118v
<i>Cn. Norbanum</i>	<i>Gnaeum</i>	118v
<i>C. Furius</i>	<i>Gaius</i>	118v
<i>M. Aquilius</i>	<i>Marcum</i>	118v
<i>C. Curio</i>	<i>Gaius</i>	118v
<i>Q. Metellum</i>	<i>Quintum</i>	118v
<i>Cl. (Maximum)</i>	<i>Claudium</i>	122v
<i>quoque Auito) C. V.</i>	<i>clarissimo uiro</i>	123v
<i>Cl. (Maximum)</i>	<i>Claudium</i>	125v
<i>QR. [testimonium Cassi Longini tutoris et Coruini Clementis quaestor(is)]</i>	<i>quaestoris</i>	125v

Note: Excludes subscriptions and book divisions.

\* *Met.* 3.3.1: *Neque parua res ac praecipue pacem ciuitatis cunctae respiciens et exemplo serio profutura tractatur, Quirites sanctissimi.*

The degree of variation in the use of abbreviations among the *Metamorphoses*, *Apology*, and *Florida* is striking. But what this variation means is not at all clear. Are the disparate genres (novel, forensic oratory, epideictic) to blame? Or is it a historical process, reflecting who may have been actually producing the textual record of Apuleius' speech? Are these abbreviations the work of stenographers (or *excaptos*), who would have been responsible for the initial drafts of official speeches, which in turn were to be deposited in the local documentary archive?<sup>6</sup> Many Apuleianists would prefer to retain the possibility that Apuleius reworked his speech after the fact of its delivery.<sup>7</sup>

Whatever the case may be, the central question that concerns us here is, to what extent can a mark in the *Florida* be taken as evidence for all the works in *F*?<sup>8</sup> Is it not possible that an excerptor after Sallustius hastily added this set of excerpts to the manuscript of Sallustius?

One might note, for example, that the book subscriptions for the *Apology* and *Metamorphoses* contain Sallustius' name and the formulaic *lege feliciter*, while the four books of the *Florida* are by comparison rather bald, containing no reference to their editor, for example, *Apulei Platonici liber II floridorum explicit. Incipit III.* Most recently, Julia Haig Gaisser has

investigated the incongruity of the *Florida* book subscriptions with those clearly emended by Sallustius; she concludes:

Both the extent of Sallustius' text and what he did for it are unclear. His manuscript included both the *Apology* and the *Metamorphoses*, as the subscriptions in *F* attest. But *F* contains no subscriptions to the *Florida*. The fact is suggestive, but we do not have enough information to be confident about what it suggests . . . perhaps Sallustius' manuscript did not include the *Florida* at all, and the excerpts were added by a later scribe to a descendant of Sallustius' manuscript at some point before the transcription of *F*.<sup>9</sup>

As to the precursor of *F*, Francis Newton would include it in a pool of African texts that were brought to Italy in the late fourth and fifth centuries, which remained in the region of Campania until they were acquired for the scriptorium at Monte Cassino, possibly during the cultural renaissance of the abbey in the eighth century.<sup>10</sup>

For the purposes of this chapter, however, the potentially uncertain question of the textual relationship of the *Florida* to the other works transmitted in *F* is less significant than the apparent proof of African origin for a precursor text of the *Florida* as it is transmitted in *F*. For if this is indeed an African mark, A.V. provides the first concrete evidence I know of for asserting that the *Florida* tradition goes back to an African manuscript. It would locate Apuleius definitely in the "pool" of African texts for which Newton and Gaisser have argued.

And even if some evidence were to surface that suggested the *Florida* had in fact been transmitted along different lines from the *Apology* and *Metamorphoses* (until it was included in a precursor of *F*), we would nonetheless have opened up a new lens for reading those more famous and less fragmented siblings, the "Sallustian" *Apology* and *Metamorphoses*. For the same reader of the *Florida* in Africa would surely also have had access to the "Sallustian" works and would have read them through the same lens that the mark A.V. provokes us to use for the *Florida*.

Now to the phrase *principes Africae uiri* itself. The only other appearance of this phrase I could confirm, tellingly, is found in another declamation before the Carthaginian senate, Tertullian's *De Pallio* 1.1:

*principes semper Africae, uiri Carthaginienses, uetustate nobiles, nouitate felices, gaudeo uos tam prosperos temporum, cum ita uacat ac iuuat habitus denotare.*

You, who have always been leaders of Africa, men of Carthage, noble of old and blessed today, I am glad that you live in such happy times that you can both find the time and take pleasure in censuring clothing!<sup>11</sup>

Again we see the phrase *principes* joined closely with *Africae uiri*, which, however, is not abbreviated in the Tertullian manuscript. Tertullian has rhetorically amplified the original phrase by adding *semper* and *Carthaginienses*, which also serves to render *principes* as a substantive, not an attributive adjective (*principes . . . uiri*). Hence, in this position, an abbreviation might violate sense, if not word order.<sup>12</sup> At any rate, it is not abbreviated in the Tertullian manuscripts.

Returning to A.V. as it appears in *F*, the mark suggests, then, that the manuscript for the *Florida* and, in the absence of clear evidence to the contrary, probably also the other "Sallustian" works contained in *F* were originally written for the province of Africa, not for Rome; or, at the very least, we have found in this mark a symbol that allows us to read all of these works from an African perspective.

This is not to say Apuleius was not read in Rome: no doubt the reader will recall the famous anecdote of the *Historia Augusta*,<sup>13</sup> which relates the contents of a letter to the Roman Senate attacking Severus:

*maior fuit dolor, quod illum pro litterato laudandum plerique duxistis, cum ille neniis quibusdam anilibus occupatus inter Milesias Punicas Apulei sui et ludicra litteraria consenesceret.*

It is even a greater source of chagrin, that some of you thought he should be praised for his knowledge of letters, when in fact he is busied with old wives' songs, and grows senile amid the Milesian stories from Carthage that his friend Apuleius wrote and such other learned nonsense.

The fact that the letter is addressed to the Roman Senate must suggest that Apuleius' work was recognizable to a Roman audience. And yet the phrase *inter Milesias Punicas* takes on new significance here: what is "Punic" about Apuleius' novel? I would argue that the same passage concurrently suggests a Carthaginian audience—and that in Rome, Apuleius' novel was known for its Punicness—or relationship to Roman North Africa.

But regardless of whether it can be proved that all three works were transmitted together, A.V. provides a valid hermeneutic logic for reading all the works contained in *F*, since any African reader with access to the *Florida* would also have had access to those "Punic" texts. A.V., then, invites us to experiment with a new reading, one that presumes that Carthage and Africa are the center of the work's intended hub of reception, rather than merely a spoke on the wheel, with Rome as the only center.

### 3. POST-COLONIALISM AND THE CLASSICS?

I would like to briefly address the question of the "quality of fit" of post-colonialism to classical discourses. A lengthy response is beyond the scope

of this chapter, but a brief attempt must be made here, since there is a prevalent caution against using post-colonialism in interpreting classical literature, particularly as it might apply to the literature of the second-century Roman Empire.<sup>14</sup>

The prevalent charge is that post-colonialism cannot escape being anachronistic. Since the Roman provinces were still part of the Roman Empire, and not yet former colonies, *post-colonialism* would be an invalid interpretive term. This fear of anachronism is skirted in the organization of Lorna Hardwick and Carol Gillespie's *Classics in Post-colonial Worlds* (2007), which restricts itself to the *reception* of Classics in post-colonial cultures (I do not mean to say that this is not a fascinating study but merely that the editors brought post-colonialism to bear in a post-colonial context). Similarly, we might cite John Hilton and Anne Gosling's *Alma Parens Originalis* (2007), which, though engaging post-colonialism, is also limited to the reception of Classics in the twentieth century. Finally, although David E. Wilhite's recent reading of Tertullian utilizes a post-colonial interpretive framework, he argues that Apuleius is historically too early for the application of post-colonialism; he sees Apuleius as still fundamentally Roman and argues that we must wait until Tertullian before we can rightfully apply post-colonial questions, particularly with reference to the hostility shown by African patristic authors (such as Tertullian) toward Roman Christian dogmata.<sup>15</sup>

A more direct argument is made by Nicola Terrenato, whose 2005 article makes the case that post-colonialism is only of limited value since it depends on historical categories such as empire and colony, which belong to nineteenth- and twentieth-century discourses on politics. This is essentially another way of claiming that the use of post-colonialism is anachronistic. But it seems to me that what makes post-colonialism valuable, and worthwhile, is not any natural affinity or identity of categories between second-century Carthage and modern former colonies: it is rather the set of questions that post-colonialism asks.

To take an example, Chantal Zabus, particularly in her *Tempests after Shakespeare* (2002) and *The African Palimpsest* (2007), poses the following question, which I think could be most valuable for Apuleian hermeneutics: given that Apuleius' texts are written in a language that is *not* indigenous to the author, how (and to what end) does the author etch his own identity onto the surface of these "master" or "colonial" discourses? Zabus uses the figure of the palimpsest to describe this process of inscription.

Largely speaking, any writer is a writer-in-progress—a rewriter, "re(w)righter," or reteller of (his)stories making imitative, or at best, imaginative use of sources harking back atavistically to a point of origin. Rewriting thus entails both writing palimpsestically, sedimentarily, in draft form, and writing toward an *original*, both an aboriginal and an unusually creative form. As such, it does not imitate.<sup>16</sup>

So that post-colonialism should function for Classics as a set of questions we can ask, not as a set of laws describing the nature of the culture in Apuleius' Carthage. These questions are based on a different set of assumptions than the normal hermeneutic apparatus employed by classicists. That is, we are able to ask, "what did this rhetoric do for the literary culture of Roman North Africa?" and need no longer be limited to explicating how Apuleius conforms to canonical Greek and Roman texts.

#### 4. POST-COLONIALISM AND THE NORTH AFRICAN ELITE

But what, then, is the relationship of North African Roman culture to Rome? We assume that Apuleius spoke Punic as his first language and, as Daniel Selden argues in this volume, certainly Libyac as well; he must have used three languages to communicate with his family and household and to navigate his way among the local African peoples near Madauros. So was Apuleius fundamentally Roman? Did he assimilate or not? How can we resolve this paradox?

Contemporary sociology would encourage us not to emphasize one aspect of Apuleius' identity over another. For his identity can never be adequately described without a hermeneutic apparatus that can account for the dialectic between his simultaneous multicultural identities. In his 2007 book *Managing Multicultural Lives: Asian American Professionals and the Challenge of Multiple Identities*, published by Stanford University Press, the sociologist Pawan Dhingra (who kindly led a discussion group at the "Apuleius and Africa" conference) notes that space and social context delimit and define which dialect, which dress code, and even which set of values a multicultural subject chooses on a daily, even *ad hoc* basis:

I have highlighted the second generation's [of Asian immigrants to America] ability to integrate identities and explained how this resolves the tensions between assimilation and pluralism. Yet informants' efforts could lead down the path of either greater or lesser integration, at least temporarily. Informants blended identities . . . [and] affirmed their status as "ethnic Americans" living not only on the hyphen between the words but feeling deeply committed to both sides of it as well, even for those with less knowledge of their ancestry.<sup>17</sup>

Dhingra found that in their homes, second-generation Asian American immigrants in Dallas, Texas, tended to express and perform their Asian American ethnicity through dress, speech, diet, and other social forms of behavior, whereas at school, in civic spaces, or in the office, they tended to emphasize their "Americanness" by showing their mastery of American codes of conduct, dress, and speech.

One insightful point made by Dhingra is that in certain contexts, these codes overlap, and a subject, without any internal perception of contradiction, will express adherence to one code as a means of defining himself within the *other* cultural code; that is, an Indian American (i.e., Pacific Indian American) may choose to deride his own family for their "un-Americanness." Or, conversely, as was the case with a Korean financial consultant, a multicultural subject might manipulate and over-perform American stereotypes of Asian Americans as hard-working and frugal, in this instance by wearing eyeglasses (but only when he was meeting with clients).

This sociological work might be helpful in explaining Apuleius' own simultaneous display of Greco-Roman *paideia* and of his "Punicness"; it can also explain his derision of his own uneducated Punic cousins. In the pages that follow I will briefly explore the paradox of Apuleius' multiculturalism by interpreting the mark A.V.; as we shall see, Apuleius uses the phrase *Africae uiri* as a mark of both inclusion and exclusion.

#### 5. A.V. AS A MARK OF INCLUSION

A.V. creates a category that is inclusive and exclusive at the same time. It includes Africans in the Roman discourse of political power, while it excludes the people of Africa who are not togate, that is, the non-elite. Hence A.V. appeals to a category of social identity: those who are elite, elite by virtue of participating in the Roman way of life—in other words, those who are *free*, inasmuch as they assemble and hear performed the language of the empire. Their pleasure in Apuleius' rhetoric would have been precisely to be included in this political category, and to enjoy his mastery over its norms and style. It is, then, a term of solidarity but only for one class of Africans: the educated elite.

To further illuminate this term I would like to call on Apuleius' often cited *Florida* fragment 20.9–10:

(9) quae autem maior laus aut certior, quam Carthagini benedicere, ubi tota ciuitas eruditissimi estis, penes quos omnem disciplinam pueri discunt, iuuenes ostentant, senes docent? (10) *Carthago prouinciae nostrae magistra uenerabilis, Carthago Africae Musa caelestis, Carthago Camena togatorum.*

(9) But what greater or more certain praise is there than to speak well of Carthage, where all your citizens are most erudite and among whom boys study learning in all its forms, adults show it off, and old men teach it? (10) Carthage, the respected teacher of our province; Carthage, the heavenly Muse of Africa; Carthage, the inspiration of those who wear the toga!

It is tempting to read this as expressing a desire to *be* Roman, since it describes the city's stature as a reflection of how thoroughly it is imbued

with Greco-Roman culture. But at the same moment, Apuleius' rhetoric invites the assembled elite (the *principes Africae uiri*) not to look to Rome for its inspiration but to each other, in an elite solidarity.<sup>18</sup> This is clearly denoted by the phrase *togatorum*—those who have chosen to participate in the Roman way of life. This passage shows a desire to belong to a tradition of Roman culture, but at the same time, it fortifies a local alternative. By calling Carthage both a *Musa* and *Camena*, Apuleius ascribes both Greek and Roman culture to the African city, but he also claims that Carthage is a center of culture in its own right, and creates for it an African Muse, the *Camena togatorum*.

The phrase *Musa Caelestis* also bears out this local focus: this seems to be a reference to the *dea Caelestis*, the patron deity of Carthage, who had a temple on the citadel and who is commemorated in coinage and inscriptions; she was originally the Punic Tanit, equated in the Greek and Roman traditions obviously with Hera and Juno (cf. *Met.* 6.4.1, where Juno appears in a particularly Carthaginian guise, riding down from heaven on the back of a lion).

#### 6. A.V. AS A MARK OF EXCLUSION (TANONIUS PUDENS AND OTHER AFRICANS WHO DO NOT SPEAK LATIN)

A.V. also functions as a mark of exclusion. We can see this exclusive force best in the *Apology* as Apuleius derides his own stepson for his lack of *paideia*:

*inuestem a nobis accepisti: uesticipem ilico reddidisti; cum a nobis regetur, ad magistros itabat: ab iis nunc magna fugela in ganeum fugit, amicos serios aspernatur, . . . loquitur nunquam nisi Punice et si quid adhuc a matre graecissat; enim Latine loqui neque uult neque potest. audisti, Maxime, paulo ante, pro nefas, priuignum meum, fratrem Pontiani, disertu iuuenis, uix singulas syllabas fringultientem, cum ab eo quaereret, donassetne illis mater quae ego dicebam me adnitente donata.*

You took him [sc. Pudens] from us as a boy; instantly, you made him a man. When he was guided by us, he went to school: now, with a flurried farewell he dashes into a dive and scorns serious friends. He never speaks except in Punic or something in Greek which he imitates from his mother—he doesn't want and isn't able to speak Latin. You heard a little earlier, Maximus (the shame of it!) my stepson Pudens, brother of that articulate young man Pontianus, butchering single syllables with difficulty when you asked him whether his mother had given him the gifts which I said she'd given with my consent.<sup>19</sup>

This passage creates an apparent contradiction, namely, how are we to maintain that Apuleius had not fundamentally Romanized, if he was able to publicly make sport of his own family's Punicness?

Apuleius' complaint describes the failed education of a Punic aristocrat, but just as significantly, it also describes a *successfully* educated Punic aristocrat. The brothers Pudens and Pontianus both come from a family with money, but one has not acquired entrance into the codes of *paideia*, while the other has. Had Pudens done the "right" thing and become fluent in Greek and Roman *paideia*, he would have opened access to a new code of behavior, the performance of Roman culture, as Pontianus seems to have done.

Nevertheless, had Pudens completed his studies, his Punicness would not have been erased; his education would simply have allowed him access to an additional code of behavior, the lack of which Apuleius derides in this passage. So it is not his Punicness but his inability to master codes in addition to Punic that is worthy of censure from Apuleius' perspective; it is his inability to be a multicultural subject.

#### 7. CONCLUSION

The abbreviation A.V. would be nonsensical to an Italian reader, and it appears only in a manuscript of African descent. This evidence provokes us to read the *Florida* with a local orientation and to take the Latin-speaking elite as its primary audience. Broadly speaking, this is a post-colonial interpretive move in that, despite Apuleius' adherence to the linguistic and literary norms of the center of the Roman Empire, we are able to see the stubborn assertion of a local identity, a local inscription of identity on an imperial linguistic and literary surface—a palimpsest.

I would argue that post-colonialism is good for Classics because it invites us to reread our own intellectual history from a point of view, or through a lens, that is closer to the reality not only of who we have become as global scholars but also, more importantly, of who Apuleius' readers *will be in the future*. I would argue that we should look twenty years ahead and devise a hermeneutic that will be able to survive best in those conditions. We will need a hermeneutic in addition to the traditional apparatus of philology to keep Classics relevant.

In the fields of history and sociology, scholars such as Katherine Wilson have argued for "New Empire" studies.<sup>20</sup> Wilson imagines what a fully integrated imperial history of Britain might look like, and she aims to deliberately overthrow the "old" imperial history by casting light on how empire defined Britain, rather than continuing to focus on how the British imposed their will on subjected people and places.

My last point, to return to Jonathan Culler:<sup>21</sup> theory is supposed to challenge our interpretive norms; it must be a stranger.<sup>22</sup> This newcomer brings

a shift in orientation, which permits a new socio-literary reading of the *Florida*, and invites us to shift our paradigm of reading Apuleius to a local African level. Contemporary sociological theory, too, can help dissolve the superficial contradictions between our categories of "Roman" and "African"; Apuleius was a multicultural subject who would have performed Punic and Roman culture (not to mention Greek and Libyac) in their proper contexts, without any inherent sense of contradiction on his part.

## NOTES

1. See Culler 1997, 5 ff., and, of course, Sabnis's fuller treatment in this volume.
2. Winkler 1985. I must admit, much to Graverini's chagrin (see his elegant refutations in *Literature and Identity*, which includes the charge against Winkler of anachronism for suggesting that Apuleius would have desired such a knot, a text without a clear or unambiguous meaning), that I nonetheless remain a steadfast Winklerian; I see the untangle-ability of Apuleius' narrative as its greatest strength—and perhaps the very quality that has kept interest in his novel alive.
3. Cf. Cappelli 1929, 29.
4. I am indebted to the expertise of Frank Coulson (professor of medieval studies at the Ohio State University) for the description of these characters, and I would like to here express my gratitude for his generous assistance.
5. I would like to thank Branden Kosch, an Oberlin alumnus and now a graduate student at the University of Chicago, for scouring microfilms of *F* with me looking for abbreviations during the summer of 2009. This list has been checked and confirmed twice by examining the microfilms, but it is possible that some abbreviations were overlooked. *Caveat lector!*
6. See, e.g., *Flor.* 9.13: *exceptum* and *documentum*, with Vössing 2008; Hunink 2001.
7. For a more thorough consideration on the historicity of the *Apology*, see Noreña's essay in this volume.
8. This was a valid question raised by Julia Gaisser in the discussion section following my paper at the conference.
9. Gaisser 2008, 46–47.
10. Newton 1999, 321. Similarly Gaisser 2008, 61; see also Bloch 1972; Cavallo 1975.
11. Trans. Hunink 2005.
12. I am grateful to Lara Nicolini for this observation.
13. *Hist. Aug., Alb.* 12.12. On this anecdote see now Graverini 2012, 23.
14. Mattingly's recent book (2011) utilizes post-colonial theory in his analysis of the ancient world. See also Bullock 2010; Sabnis in this volume.
15. Wilhite 2007, 7–8; on Apuleius, see chap. 2 (37–75).
16. Zabrus 2002, 3.
17. Dhingra 2007, 236–237.
18. Wilhite 2007, chap. 2, discusses the class and ethnicity structures of Roman North Africa and similarly groups Apuleius in the class of elites.
19. *Apol.* 98.5–9. This translation is by James J. O'Donnell and the participants in his Apuleius seminar; it is available on his website at [www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/apuleius/lana/ap8.htm](http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/apuleius/lana/ap8.htm) (accessed January 10, 2014).

20. Wilson 2004.
21. Culler 1997, 5 ff.; cf. n. 1 above.
22. Jean-Michel Rabaté of the University of Pennsylvania argued this point in a lecture at Oberlin in 2003 titled "The Future of Theory." He described the genesis of his lecture as follows (*per litteras*, September 9, 2013): "I think I was paraphrasing Proust, who wrote in *Contre Sainte Beuve* 'Les beaux livres sont écrits dans une sorte de langue étrangère. Sous chaque mot, chacun de nous met son sens ou du moins son image, qui est souvent un contresens. Mais dans les beaux livres, tous les contresens qu'on fait sont beaux.' It's the old *ostranenie* [*defamiliarization*] of the Russian Formalists but revamped following my personal take on Theory: to think in German with Greek words and perform them in English with a French accent . . . Like the 'Hi there!' in Heidegger is a *nom de guerre* for *autou* . . . Easy to do!"

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## Passages Cited

All the Greek and Latin passages mentioned in the text are listed here; passages in other languages are listed in the General Index. The abbreviations used for classical works are from the *Greek-English Lexicon*, by H.G. Liddell, R. Scott and H.S. Jones, and from the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, with a small number of personal variations. The indices were created and compiled by Amanda Jarvis.

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