

A Companion to the  
Prologue of Apuleius'  
*Metamorphoses*

Edited by  
AHUVIA KAHANE  
and  
ANDREW LAIRD

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A COMPANION TO THE  
PROLOGUE OF APULEIUS'  
*METAMORPHOSES*

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Cover illustration: the first page of Codex Marcianus Latinus Z.468, which  
contains the prologue of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.

Image by courtesy of the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice

*This volume is dedicated to  
the memory of Don Fowler*



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WARREN S. SMITH is Professor of Classical Languages at the University of New Mexico. He is co-editor of two volumes of Erasmus' New Testament scholarship, most recently *Annotations on Romans* (with Robert Sider, 1994). He has published papers on Apuleius, Juvenal, Horace, Homer, Tennyson, and Chaucer, and has directed and acted in productions of Classical

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## ABBREVIATIONS

Periodicals and ancient works are, on the whole, abbreviated according to the conventions used in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd edn.).

### Ancient works

Apuleius,	<i>Met.</i>	<i>Metamorphoses</i>
	<i>Apol.</i>	<i>Apology</i>
	<i>Flor.</i>	<i>Florida</i>
Cicero,	<i>Att.</i>	<i>Epistulae ad Atticum</i>
	<i>Cat.</i>	<i>In Catilinam</i>
	<i>Dom.</i>	<i>De domo sua</i>
	<i>Leg. Agr.</i>	<i>De lege agraria</i>
	<i>Verr.</i>	<i>In Verrem</i>
Homer,	<i>Il.</i>	<i>Iliad</i>
	<i>Od.</i>	<i>Odyssey</i>
Horace,	<i>Epist.</i>	<i>Epistulae</i>
	<i>Serm.</i>	<i>Sermones or Satirae</i>
Lactantius,	<i>Div. Inst.</i>	<i>Divinae institutiones</i>
Ovid,	<i>Fast.</i>	<i>Fasti</i>
	<i>Met.</i>	<i>Metamorphoses</i>
Petronius,	<i>Sat.</i>	<i>Satyricon</i>
Photius,	<i>Bibl.</i>	<i>Bibliotheca</i>
Plautus,	<i>Bac.</i>	<i>Bacchides</i>
	<i>Mil.</i>	<i>Miles gloriosus</i>
Pliny,	<i>NH</i>	<i>Naturalis historia</i>
Pliny the Younger,	<i>Epist.</i>	<i>Epistulae</i>
	<i>Paneg.</i>	<i>Panegyricus</i>
Quintilian,	<i>Inst.</i>	<i>Institutio oratoria</i>
Seneca,	<i>Oed.</i>	<i>Oedipus</i>
	<i>Phoen.</i>	<i>Phoenissae</i>
Servius,	<i>Aen.</i>	<i>Commentary on Aeneid</i>
Tacitus,	<i>Agr.</i>	<i>Agricola</i>
Terence,	<i>HT</i>	<i>Heautontimorumenos</i>
Theocritus,	<i>Id.</i>	<i>Idylls</i>

Varro,	<i>Ling.</i>	<i>De lingua Latina</i>
Virgil,	<i>Aen.</i>	<i>Aeneid</i>
	<i>Ecl.</i>	<i>Eclogues</i>
	<i>Geo.</i>	<i>Georgics</i>

Principle manuscript of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*

**F** (Florence, Bibliotheca Laurenziana 68.2), Montecassino, eleventh century. (Florence, Bibliotheca Laurenziana 29.2) copy of F Montecassino, eleventh–twelfth century.

## Other

<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> (1863– )
<i>CLE</i>	F. Bücheler and E. Lommatzch (eds.), <i>Carmina Latina Epigraphica</i> (1895–1926)
<i>CPhil.</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>Epigr. Anatol.</i>	<i>Epigraphica Anatolica</i>
<i>Festus, Gloss. Lat.</i>	W. M. Lindsay's second edition of Festus in his <i>Glossaria Latina</i> vol. iv
<i>FgrHist</i>	<i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , ed. F. Jacoby (1923–58)
Laur.	Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence
<i>OLD</i>	<i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> , ed. P. G. W. Glare (1968–82)
<i>Paroem.</i>	<i>Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum</i> , ed. E. L. Leutsch and P. G. Schneidewin (1839)
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologiae Cursus, series Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne
<i>PMG</i>	<i>Poetae Melici Graeci</i> , ed. D. Page (Oxford, 1962)
P.Oxy.	Oxyrhynchus Papyri (1898– )
P.Tebt.	Tebtunis Papyri (1902–76)
<i>RE</i>	A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll, <i>Real-Encyclopädie d. klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Munich, 1893– )
<i>REA</i>	<i>Révue des études anciennes</i>
<i>TLL</i>	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> (1900– )





# Introduction

AHUVIA KAHANE AND ANDREW LAIRD

and there are also many other things . . . the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.

(John 21: 25)

This book is about the first 119 words of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. It contains a collection of twenty-four discussions, all devoted to that short prefatory passage. Such attention may appear unusual, but the Prologue to the *Metamorphoses* is an extraordinary text, which has always perplexed readers and critics.

Viewed on its own, the Prologue raises many linguistic, historical, and literary questions. But the fact that it is also a programmatic declaration multiplies these problems, and projects them into a much wider sphere. The Prologue disturbs its reader at the same time as it promises delight. It is a cunning ploy as well as an innocent pledge. Mastering the art of such a text is a pleasure in itself, which enables us to engage with the rest of Apuleius' novel, and to appreciate the greater complexities of literary communication. In this respect, the subject of the present volume is very broad indeed.

This collection of essays is a 'handbook', a *variorum* which combines the broader perspectives of an interdisciplinary anthology with the closer focus of a traditional commentary. It could also be regarded as a model for collaborative work that displays the strength and diversity of existing approaches, and may prompt new developments. The contributions to this volume display coherence, we believe, without generating unnecessary repetition. The first part of this volume begins with a new text of the Prologue, with an accompanying commentary, edited by Michael Winterbottom and Stephen Harrison. This is followed by R. G. M. Nisbet's detailed analysis of the prose rhythm of the Prologue. The part ends

with a discussion of semantics, morphology, style, and prosody by Jonathan Powell.

The next group of contributions begins with Michael Trapp's discussion of the Prologue's philosophical significance in relation to Plato's *Phaedrus*. In particular, Trapp considers the relationships between good and bad modes of communication, and uses of the traditional philosophical antithesis between instruction and entertainment. Mark Edwards's consideration of African authors, highlights analogies to Christian apologists, and especially to Tertullian. Like Apuleius, Tertullian is a master of both Greek and Latin who manipulates the cultural identities bound up in the two languages. The theme of bilingualism and biculturalism is also examined by Simon Swain. Swain notes that the Prologue speaker's refusal to name himself invites comparison with the practices of historiographers such as Arrian.

The part entitled 'Intertexts' highlights the influence of authors who are not always associated with Apuleius. Bruce Gibson aligns the Prologue with Theocritus in respect of writing, speech, and authorial identity; Emily Gowers considers Apuleius' and Persius' style of 'therapy'. The two authors share, she argues, important components of image, method, and language. Warren Smith traces connections between Apuleius' Prologue and the Gospel of Luke. Smith's study shows how intertextuality can signal some important aspects of cultural interference.

Identity in antiquity is often construed as a matter of place. Opening the part entitled 'Topography', Katherine Clarke's contribution argues that the use of geographical allusion in the Prologue creates a cultural and intellectual persona for the narrator. Doreen Innes devotes her contribution to the riddle of just one of the locations mentioned in the Prologue: *Isthmos Ephyrea*. Innes shows how these two words signal intertextuality and thematic anticipation. They also mark the purpose of the work as the promise of pleasure and seriousness.

In the part entitled 'Literary History', Ken Dowden, John Morgan, and Anton Bitel consider questions of genre. Morgan examines the Prologue of the *Metamorphoses* in relation to those of other ancient novels. He argues that the openings of the 'serious' Greek novels are quite different in form and func-

tion from Apuleius' Prologue—its affinities lie rather with dialogue and Milesian tales. Dowden catalogues 'prologic' properties and argues for a strong link between Apuleius and Sisenna. By laying stress on the plurality of voices in the prologue, Dowden is able to oppose scholarly constructions of the 'Milesian tale'. Bitel argues that, while the main narrative of the *Metamorphoses* is clearly marked as 'fiction', the Prologue could no less plausibly introduce a historical text. The discrepancy between fiction and history underpins his interpretation of the passage. The section ends with Robert Carver's consideration of the gaps as well as the links between our modern construction of the Prologue and the responses of medieval and Renaissance readers to this text.

'Identity and Stability' in the Prologue are treated in discussions by Yun Lee Too and John Henderson. Too's paper suggests that the identities of the Prologue's speaker and of the author are regulated by the relationship between text as speaker and reader as addressee, a relationship which resists the idea of a stable speaking voice. John Henderson considers the relationship of power between 'PROLOGUE' (Henderson's virtual personification of the text) and reader. He exposes the contracts, prescriptions, and manipulations that ensue.

In the next part Irene de Jong considers the Prologue as a type of pseudo-dialogue, pointing to the interaction between its speaker, the speaker in the rest of the novel, and the reader. The literary models here are Greek dialogues, particularly those of Plato. Niall Slater investigates the dynamics of the process by which Apuleius' Prologue manufactures a suitable reader for itself.

The subject of voice, writing, and text, raised by a number of contributors, is given specific attention in the three papers which form the penultimate part of this collection. Don Fowler considers the disjunction between 'fictional orality' and textuality. The play on the presence and absence of each or both of these qualities allows the reader to reshape and rework the text as his or her own story. Ahuvia Kahane similarly considers the tension between text and voice, and the complexities involved when one of these qualities seeks to represent the other. Apuleius' Prologue, Kahane argues, resists classical, Aristotelian models of representation, and is a key component

in accounting for the *Metamorphoses*' appeal to modern sensibilities. Maaïke Zimmerman opens this part by looking at the implications of the Prologue for the work as a whole. This is principally achieved by a study of address and apostrophe in later parts of the *Metamorphoses*.

The volume ends with a part on narrative. Paula James considers the imagery of horsemanship as a metaphor for manipulation of the reader in the narrative to follow: riders and ridden beasts are thematic poles between which the plot of the *Metamorphoses* oscillates. Andrew Laird argues that the Prologue can be read as the conclusion to the work it heralds. The Prologue's paradoxical conjunction of discourse and narrative has important connections with the end of the novel. Moreover, the resemblance of the Prologue's language to that of Roman funerary inscriptions suggests that the speaker of the *Metamorphoses* is dead.

The essays to follow have different points of departure, they focus on different aspects of the text, and they rely on diverse methodologies. Such diversity has not, however, prevented the emergence of many important points of contact, practical as well as theoretical, which have served as guidelines in our efforts to arrange the contributions to this volume. At the same time it would be counter-productive to try and uphold a single, linear sequence of arguments or a closed set of themes in a volume of this kind. Questions of power and manipulation, text, imagery, readers, voices, intertexts, identities, sources, and even specific Latin words from the Prologue could have provided numerous alternative rationales for the arrangements of our chapters. For this reason the Indices to this volume are particularly important as a guide to further themes around which this collection could have been organized.

This book grew out of a colloquium, held in Oxford in February 1996 under the auspices of the Corpus Christi Centre for the Study of Greek and Roman Antiquity. The meeting in Oxford produced extended and fruitful debates between persons of widely differing scholarly persuasions. We are very grateful for the support we have received from the Centre, and would particularly like to thank Stephen Harrison for his help in organizing the colloquium. Greg Woolf and Don Fowler also offered assistance at various stages of this project. It remains

for us to thank three anonymous OUP referees and Hilary O'Shea for many useful suggestions.

Controversies about literary issues are hardly ever resolved. The problem of the Prologue speaker's identity is a perfect example. Scholars have been debating it for years. However, at the end of our colloquium we were able, permanently and decisively, to settle the matter. The following motion was put to a vote:

'This House believes that the speaker of the Prologue is Lucius.'

The motion was carried, twelve votes 'for', four 'against'. There were nine abstentions.



# Language and Latinity





## I

The Prologue to Apuleius'  
*Metamorphoses*  
*Text, Translation, and Textual*  
*Commentary*

STEPHEN HARRISON AND  
 MICHAEL WINTERBOTTOM

## LATIN TEXT

At ego tibi sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conseram,  
 auresque tuas benivolas lepido susurro permulceam, modo si  
 papyrus Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam non  
 spreveris inspicere. figuras fortunasque hominum in alias imag- 5  
 ines conversas et in se rursus mutuo nexu refectas, ut mireris,  
 exordior. quis ille? paucis accipe. Hymettos Attica et Isthmos  
 Ephyrea et Taenaros Spartiatica, glebae felices aeternum libris  
 felicioribus conditae, mea vetus prosapia est. ibi linguam  
 Atthidem primis pueritiae stipendiis merui; mox in urbe Latia  
 advena studiorum Quiritium indigenam sermonem aerumnabili 10  
 labore, nullo magistro praeunte, aggressus excolui. en ecce  
 praefamur veniam, si quid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis  
 locutor offendero. iam haec equidem ipsa vocis immutatio  
 desultoriae scientiae stilo quem accessimus respondet: fabulam  
 Graecanicam incipimus. lector intende: laetaberis. 15

1 At ego **F**; ut ego *Oudendorp*, en ego *Hildebrand*, at (ut) ego *van der Vliet*  
 6 quis ille **F**; qui sim *Winterbottom\** 7 Spartiatica *Salmasius*;  
 spartiaca **F** 12 exotici **F**; exotici (sonuero) *van der Vliet*, exotici  
 (dixero) *Nisbet\**, exoticus *Harrison\** / forensis *v*; forensi **F**, ac forensi *del. Leo*  
 14 desultorie scientie **F**; desultoriaque scientia *Harrison\** / stilo quem **F**;  
 [stilo] quam *Nisbet\** / accessimus **F**; accersimus *ed. Ven. 1493*, arcessimus  
*Wower* / respondet *v*; respondit **F**

[The above apparatus ignores unimportant orthographical variants and the like. **F**, the sole independent witness for the *Metamorphoses*, belongs to the eleventh century; for the manuscript tradition of Apuleius see Reynolds (1983). A relatively conservative text has been printed for the purposes of this volume, but apparatus and textual commentary show that there are several problematic areas. An asterisk indicates a conjecture hitherto unpublished.]

## TRANSLATION

But let me join together different stories in that Milesian style, and let me soothe your kindly ears with an agreeable whispering, if only you do not scorn to glance at an Egyptian papyrus inscribed with the sharpness of a reed from the Nile. I begin a tale of men's shapes and fortunes transformed into different appearances and back again into themselves by mutual connection, that you may wonder at it. 'Who is this?' Hear in brief. Attic Hymettus and the Corinthian Isthmus and Spartan Taenarus are my origin of old, ever fertile regions recorded in even more fertile books. There it was that I acquired the Attic tongue in the first campaigns of boyhood; thereafter in the Latin city as a foreigner to the studies of Rome I took on and developed the local language with laborious effort and without the lead of a master. Look then, I ask your pardon at the beginning, if I commit any offence, being an inexperienced speaker of the language of the forum which is foreign to me. Indeed, this very change of language corresponds to the style of switch-back lore [?] which I have approached [?]: I begin a story of Greek origin. Reader, pay attention: you will be pleased.

## TEXTUAL COMMENTARY

**1. at ego:** editors have been unhappy both with **F**'s initial *at* and with the following subjunctives, as conjectures show. For *at* we might compare the similarly colloquial opening of Xenophon, *Symposium* (1. 1) ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ . . . ('Well, it seems to me . . .'). The mildly jussive subjunctives would provide a suitably wheedling element in this preface, full of *captationes benevolentiae* seeking the favour of the reader. Similar subjunctives in first person requests are found in Plautus and Terence—compare Plautus, *Persa* 542–3 *videam modo* | *mercionium* ('let me just see the goods'); Terence, *Heautontimoroumenos* 273 *mane: hoc quod coepi primum enarrem* ('hang on—let me first tell you all of what I have started [to tell]'), both in polite contexts. If *at* is emended to *ut* with Oudendorp, introducing a purpose clause, the first sentence of the Prologue will need to extend to *exordior* rather than *inspicere*. This would make a long but not impossible sentence: 'in order that I may

join together various stories, I begin a tale of metamorphoses'. *Ut* might be supported by Fulgentius *Mythologiae* 1 praefatio 3 *ut feriatas affatim tuarum aurium sedes lepido quolibet susurro permulceam* ('in order that I may sufficiently soothe the relaxed foundations of your ears with an agreeable whispering'), in a prologue clearly echoing Apuleius'.

**sermone isto Milesio:** ('that Milesian style'). The reference to the witty and scabrous register of the Milesian tales highlights a crucial generic link at the beginning of the *Met.* For the Milesian tales, their character, and possible links with Apuleius see conveniently Harrison (1998).

**varias fabulas conseram:** compare Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 129 [summary of the Greek *Metamorphoses*] *γραφῆ παραδίδου ταῦτα καὶ συνύφαιεν* ('he consigned this to writing and *wove it together*'), a possible echo (so Scobie (1975: 67–8)). Could this phrase so soon after *sermone isto Milesio* mean that the original Milesian tales provided a structural model for the *Metamorphoses*, with 'inserted' tales joined together by means of a more continuous framing narrative (we might compare the *Arabian Nights*, *Decameron*, or *Canterbury Tales*)? This is a possible reading of Ovid, *Tristia* 2. 443–4 (on Sisenna's translation of Aristides' *Milesiaka*) *vertit Aristiden Sisenna, nec obfuit illi | historiae turpis inseruisse iocos* ('Sisenna translated Aristides, and it did not harm him to have inserted shameful and playful stories into his narrative(?)') (note again the similar verb); see the full discussion in Harrison (1998).

**3. Aegyptiam . . . Nilotici:** an early hint at Isiac content—papyrus did come almost entirely from Egypt in the Roman Empire, but there is clearly a symbolic point (e.g. Grimal (1971); against this Scobie (1975: 69–70)). On the *captatio benevolentiae* (seeking favour by apologizing for disreputable origin) compare Harrison (1990: 510).

**4–5. figuras fortunasque hominum in alias imagines conversas:** *figuras . . . conversas* is surely a hint at the title *Metamorphoses* in the manner of Ovid's *mutatas dicere formas* (*Met.* 1. 1). *fortunas* suggests quasi-tragic *περιπέτεια* (change of fortune is after all another form of metamorphosis), clearly relevant to the melodramatic stories of Lucius and others in the novel (e.g. Charite or the wicked stepmother of Book 10). More

generally, the words recall the Greek *Metamorphoses*, Apuleius' lost model, as summarized by Photius (*Bibl. cod.* 129): so Scobie (1975: 68), Winkler (1985: 183–5) cf. on 1 above.

**5. *mutuo nexu*:** Winkler (1985: 188–94) argues for the financial meaning of *nexus*, but *nexu* surely follows the 'connecting' metaphor of *conseram* rather than anything else (see the good parallels in Scobie (1975: 71)), while *mutuo* seems to summarize the two-way traffic of metamorphosis (there and back again), central to the novel's plot.

**ut mireris:** perhaps implies a wonder-story, in the manner of Antonius Diogenes' *Wonders beyond Thule* (for a summary of which see Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 166, trans. in Reardon (1989: 775–8)), and certainly one involving *παράδοξα*, tales of the unexpected—compare Scobie (1975: 71). Note too Photius' characterization of the Greek *Metamorphoses* as showing too much of the supernatural in its stories (*Bibl. cod.* 129).

**6. *exordior*:** for arguments for the punctuation (widespread before Helm's text) which puts this verb at the end of a sentence beginning with its object see Harrison (1990: 507–8). The resulting sentence *figuras fortunasque . . . exordior* gives a phrasing parallel with the proem of the *Aen.* 1. 1 *arma virumque cano*, a suitable echo in a prologue. The lack of connection with what goes before merely stresses this literary link. That *exordior* should have an object is perhaps suggested by Fulgentius, *Mythologiae* 1 praefatio 3 *parumper ergo auscultadum tibi rugosam sulcis anilibus ordior fabulam* ('listen for a little, then, while I begin for you a story wrinkled with an old woman's furrows'), in a context already influenced by Apuleius (see on 1 *at ego* above). The ending *ut mireris, exordior* also makes an excellent clausula (double cretic), another argument for placing it at the close of a sentence rather than forming a sentence by itself.

**quis ille?:** this celebrated question introduces a mysterious interlocutor who can be removed by the easy emendation *quisim* ('hear in brief who I am'). Such an indirect question would be closely paralleled in the opening words of a Plautine *prologus* (anonymous prologue speaker), a character type which the speaker of Apuleius' Prologue has been plausibly argued to resemble (Smith 1972)—compare Plautus, *Aulularia* 1 *ne quis*

*miretur qui sim, paucis eloquar* ('in case anyone wonders who I am, I shall briefly tell you').

**6–7. Hymettos Attica et Isthmos Ephyrea et Taenaros Spartiatica:** the 'list style' common in sophistic writing (and very common in Apuleius). This is surely not a literal indication of origin, despite *prosapia* (on which see usefully Scobie (1975: 73); for a figurative reading (the book states its origin in a Greek book) see Harrison (1990: 511). The places chosen are the most famous city states of Greece, identified by celebrated physical features (a honey-producing hill, an isthmus, site of the Isthmian games, and a promontory rumoured to be an entrance to the Underworld). All these seem to be taken from the elder Pliny, a source for Apuleius elsewhere: Hymettos is found at Pliny, *NH* 11. 32, the Isthmus at 4. 9 (note also *Ephyra*, the old name for Corinth, at 4. 16), Taenaros at 4. 15; note the close collocation of the last three references. The transmitted *Spartiaca* occurs only here and is an easy corruption; the conjectured *Spartiatica* is surely right—it is a form found in Plautus (*Poenulus* 719) and also transliterates a known Greek form (Σπαρτιατικός: Pausanias 6. 4. 10; Lucian, *De Saltatione* 46).

**7–8. libris felicioribus:** the great cities of Greece are celebrated in great literature (all three mentioned by Apuleius here appear e.g. in the Greek travelogue of Horace, *Odes* 1. 7). But the stress on books also suits a speaker who is a book—compare Harrison (1990: 511).

**8–9. ibi linguam Atthidem:** *ibi* surely shows that the three locations refer to Greece in general, though *Atthidem* picks up *Attica* specifically; the reference to Attic Greek is unsurprising in the Atticizing period of the Second Sophistic.

**10–11. aerumnabili labore . . . aggressus excolui:** the metaphor seems to continue the military metaphor of *stipendiis merui*: *labor* and *aggressus* are straightforward, while *excolui* hints at civilizing after conquest, in the Roman imperialist manner (*pacique inponere morem*), a witty reversal: unusually, it is the native language of the Romans and not a non-Roman population which is subdued.

**11. nullo magistro praeunte:** the literal reference is to a teacher dictating for pupils to follow (*TLL* 10. 2. 597. 30 ff.). This could also be a symbolic reference to lack of classic Latin models, and a claim of originality (Harrison 1990: 512).

**11–13. en ecce praefamur veniam . . . offendero:** such an apology by a non-native speaker of Latin is a prefatory convention; see Janson (1964: 124 ff.).

**si quid exotici ac forensis sermonis:** *exotici* might suggest that *forensis* (this early correction of **F**'s *forensi*, an easy corruption, is surely to be accepted) should be derived from *foris* rather than *forum*, i.e. mean 'foreign' rather than 'of the forum'. Only the latter is found in the *OLD*, and there is no firm example of the sense 'foreign' until the fourth century; see *TLL* 6. 1. 1054. 57 ff. This is the motivation for Leo's exclusion of *ac forensi*. There is also the problem of *si quid*, which would go much more naturally with the closer and potentially partitive genitives *exotici ac forensis sermonis* than with the rather distant *offendero*; but the latter is clearly what the sense requires. Van der Vliet's supplement *sonuero*, or Nisbet's *dixero*, with a better clausula (see Ch. 2 in this volume), allows *si quid* to go with a partitive *exotici* but not with *forensis*, and *forensis* acquires one of its usual senses: 'Look then, I ask your pardon, if I make any foreign sound / say anything foreign and [if] as an inexperienced speaker of the language of the Forum (i.e. Latin) I give any offence'. Another route might be to read *exoticus* for *exotici*: 'if as a foreigner and an inexperienced speaker of the language of the Forum (i.e. Latin) I give any offence'. The difficulty with this is that *exoticus* is not found of persons until the sixth century; but then the speaker of the Prologue may not be strictly human. If Harrison (1990) is to be believed, it is the book itself, and if we follow Winkler (1985: 196–9), the speaker is remembering in *rudis locutor* that he was once an ass (this ambiguity works whether the speaker is Lucius, who was an ass, or the book, about an ass).

**13. vocis immutatio:** the change of language from Greek to Latin (Scobie 1975), but also perhaps the change from human voice to asinine braying (see note on *rudis locutor* below).

**14. desultoriae scientiae stilo**—a very difficult phrase. For Scobie (1975: 75) *stilo* means 'mode of composition' rather than

'linguistic style'; he also refers *desultoriae* to the episodic structure of the *Metamorphoses*. But *scientiae* ought to mean '[branch of] knowledge' (*Met.* 10. 33. 2, *OLD* s.v. 2b), and the reference seems to be to the content of the novel, the *scientia desultoria* of metamorphosis, where participants switch from one form to another (Lucius' asinine change could be hinted at, since *desultor* refers originally to switch-back riding of horses). This coheres very poorly with *stilo*, which really should refer to literary or linguistic form. Nisbet's conjecture (Ch. 2 in this volume) cuts the knot by removing *stilo*, but it is not easy to see how that word could have intruded. Another possibility might be to read *desultoriaque scientia*: 'Indeed, this very change of language and this very switch-back lore [of metamorphosis] corresponds to the style [of writing] I have approached', i.e. the speaker's overall *change* of language (lines 6–11) and his subject of *change* of form (lines 4–5) are matched by the varied and *changing* style of the book (true). Yet another view might be to read *desultoriaque scientia* but take it as referring to style, essentially repeating the point of *vocis immutatio* ('change of language and switch-back technique'). Then *stilo* would have to look forward to *fabulam Graecanicam* and refer to content, 'style, type of literature', but this is a transferred use which would be effectively unparalleled.

**quem accessimus:** *accedo* is used of literary approach (*OLD* s.v. 6), but usually in the sense of reaching a point within a work or speech already begun. The early conjecture *accersimus* or Wower's *arcessimus* (two forms of the contracted perfect of *arcesso*) are attractive. *arcessimus* ('sought out') suggests a *recherché* lexicon (*TLL* 2. 453. 40 ff.), true of Apuleian style as of that of his contemporary Fronto, both favouring archaisms and neologisms.

**14–15. fabulam Graecanicam incipimus:** the phrase explains *vocis immutatio* (hence the colon). *Graecanicus* here seems to echo the technical use at Varro, *Ling.* 10. 70, where it means 'Greek in origin but adapted for Latin use' (of words). This is literally true, since the *fabula* which ensues is Greek in origin, Latin in language, and Roman in setting (compare Scobie (1975: 76–7)).

# Cola and Clausulae in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* I. I

R. G. M. NISBET

In this chapter I shall try to divide the preface of the *Metamorphoses* into its constituent phrases (*cola*), at the end of which I think that the speaking voice paused. Modern punctuation gives little help in this matter, as it is concerned for the most part with major syntactical divisions rather than rhetorical phrasing. Fraenkel's last book, *Leseproben aus Reden Ciceros und Catos* (1968), brought out more clearly than ever before the degree of subdivision that should usually be assumed in formal prose; on the other hand B. L. Hijmans, in his article on prose-rhythm in Apuleius (1978*b*), may not always subdivide enough. The maximum length of Latin cola has received little attention: for Cicero's speeches I have suggested a usual limit of about sixteen syllables (Nisbet 1995: 322-3), but with Apuleius the average is considerably less (though different parts of the work may vary in this respect).

At the end of each colon there is normally one of a limited number of metrical patterns, the so-called clausulae. Zielinski's pioneering work on prose-rhythm (1904) dealt primarily with sentence-endings; but the same clausulae tend to appear, though with less regularity, at the ends of internal cola. Where the end of a self-contained phrase coincides with one of these familiar rhythms, an objective colon-ending may be recognized. But decision is not always easy, and to determine what counts as a colon we often have to extrapolate from the clear cases to the less clear.

Here then are the commonest clausulae in the *Metamorphoses*; some data are supplied by Médan (1925: 274-304, not clearly arranged), Bernhard (1927: 250-1, with useful tables), and Hijmans (1978*b*: 199, using limited examples). My simplified notation is based in its main lines not on Zielinski,



who is often confusing,<sup>1</sup> but on Konrad Müller's edition of Curtius Rufus (1954), which is followed by Fraenkel in his *Leseproben* (1968). The symbol × stands for the *syllaba anceps* that comes at the end of a colon (as of a line of verse). Long syllables are often resolved into two shorts; some examples are given under A, but the same principle operates with the other types.

- A. Cretic (– ∪ –) + spondee or trochee (– ×).  
 – ∪ – – ×  
 ∪ ∪ ∪ – – ×  
 – ∪ ∪ ∪ – ×  
 – ∪ – ∪ ∪ ×
- B. Double-Cretic, etc.  
 – ∪ – – ∪ ×  
 – – – – ∪ × (molossus + cretic)  
 – – – ∪ × (spondee + cretic is sufficient in Apuleius)
- C. Double-Trochee  
 – ∪ – ×
- D. Double-Spondee<sup>2</sup>  
 – – – ×
- E. Trochee + Cretic ('hypodochmiac')  
 – ∪ – ∪ ×

In the following analysis I have indicated the type of clausula according to the above notation, and the number of syllables in each colon; the symbol 'H' is used to indicate hiatus. I have also marked the word-accent at the ends of cola; these normally fall where the English reader would expect, on the penultimate syllable where it is long (*amámus*), on the antepenultimate syllable where the penultimate is short (*amábimus*). There is a tendency for the clausula to begin with an accented syllable (just like the fifth foot of a hexameter); this seems to increase in the Imperial period until finally the system becomes accentual

<sup>1</sup> See now Berry (1996), who brings out the pointlessness of Zielinski's attempt to divide clausulae into 'verae', 'licitae', and the rest.

<sup>2</sup> G. O. Hutchinson (1995: 486) is reluctant to treat double-spondee as a rhythmical clausula, as unrhythmical prose produces many such endings. I do not think that such an argument is conclusive, but it may be that some places often treated as double-spondees should be categorized differently (cf. lines 9, 17, 33); note the interesting remarks by Axelson (1952: 10).

(the so-called *cursus*).<sup>3</sup> Indeed there are attractions in Broadhead's attempt (1922) to define clausulae in such a way that they always begin with an accented syllable (for details see below), though that involves increasing the number of standard rhythms. There is something arbitrary about all notations, as the ancients must have worked by ear rather than by mechanical rules; but a system that did full justice to every possible variation would be correspondingly difficult for most moderns to follow.

	<i>Clausula Syllables</i>	
1. at ego tibi sermone ístō Mīlēsīō	B	13
2. varias fábūlās cónserā <sup>x</sup> m <sup>11</sup>	B	9
3. aurésquē túās bēnīvólās	B	9
4. lepidō susúrrō pērmúlceā <sup>x</sup> m	B	10
5. modo si papýrū <sup>m</sup> <sup>11</sup> Āegýptiā <sup>m</sup> <sup>11</sup>	B	10
6. argutia Nilotíci cálamī ínscríptā <sup>x</sup> m	D	13
7. non sprēveris ínspicē <sup>x</sup> .	?	8
8. figuras fortúnāsque hómínū <sup>m</sup> <sup>11</sup>	D	9
9. in alias imāgínēs cōnvērsās	—	11
10. et ín sé rúrsū <sup>m</sup>	D	5
11. mútuo nēxū rēfēctās	C	8
12. ut mirēris ēxórdiō <sup>r</sup> .	B	8
13. quis ille? paūcis áccipē <sup>x</sup> .	B	8
14. Hyméttōs Átticā <sup>m</sup> <sup>11</sup>	E	6
15. et Ísthmōs Ēphyrēā <sup>m</sup> <sup>11</sup>	A	7
16. et Taénaros Spártiā <sup>m</sup> <ti> cá <sup>x</sup>	E?	9?
17. glebae felícēs aetérnū <sup>m</sup>	D?	8
18. libris feliciōribūs cōnditāe	B	11
19. méā vétūs prōsāpiā <sup>m</sup> est.	—	8
20. ibi línguā <sup>m</sup> <sup>11</sup> Áttidēm	E	7
21. primis pueritiae stipéndiis mérū <sup>m</sup> ;	A	14
22. mox in úrbē Látia ádvēnā <sup>m</sup>	B	9
23. studiōrū <sup>m</sup> Quirítium <sup>m</sup> <sup>11</sup>	E?	8

<sup>3</sup> In the 3rd cent. we find the *cursus mixtus*, where the clausulae satisfy simultaneously both the quantitative and accentual systems (Oberhelman and Hall 1985; Oberhelman 1988). Apuleius in the *Metamorphoses* does not go so far; the *cursus mixtus* is found in the *De Platone* and *De Mundo* (Axelson 1952), but they are now often regarded as spurious.

24. indīgēnām sērmōnēm <sup>x</sup> 11	D?	7
25. aerumnābilī lāborē <sup>x</sup>	C	8
26. nullo magistro praeeūntē <sup>x</sup> 11	C	9
27. aggrēssūs ēxcōlūi <sup>x</sup> .	A	7
28. en ecce praefāmūr vēniām <sup>x</sup>	D	9
29. si quid exōtici (dīxērō) <sup>x</sup>	B	9
30. ac forensis sermonis rudis locūtōr offēdērō <sup>x</sup> .	B	16?
31. iam haec equidem ipsa vōcis īmmūtātīō <sup>x</sup>	—	13
32. desultōriāe sciēntiāe [stilo] <sup>x</sup>	?	9?
33. quam accēssimūs rēspōndēt <sup>x</sup> ,	—	8
34. fabulam Graecānicām <sup>x</sup> 11 īncipimūs:	?	11?
35. lēctōr īntēdē, lāetābēris.	A + B	9

1. Adverbial phrases like *sermone isto Milesio* often make a colon; here the preliminary bits and pieces (*at ego tibi*) coalesce with what follows to make a single unit. One's instinct about the natural phrasing is supported by the presence of a standard clausula (type B). If a break is not accepted after *Milesio*, the colon would have 22 syllables, which is too long for Apuleius.
2. There is hiatus between *-am* and the following vowel. At colon-endings rhythmical prose-writers do not elide; in this they are like poets at the end of a line.
3. To be separated from line 4 to balance the separation of 1 and 2. In the interests of simplification the clausula may be categorized as a molossus with resolution (the substitution of two short syllables for the second long) followed by a cretic with resolution (the substitution of two shorts for the first long).
4. When the colometry is set out, it becomes clearer than ever that *permulceam* balances 2 *conseram*; as *conseram* at the beginning of a preface is naturally taken as a future indicative, it is difficult to regard *permulceam* as anything different (in spite of the conditional clause that follows). For the anomalous form Scobie (1975: 68) cites Petronius 46. 2 *aliqua die te persuadeam ut ad villam venias* (which, however, is sometimes taken as a question), Jannaccone (1963: 199–200); see also Powell, Ch. 3 in this volume.
5. The last syllable of *papyrus* is not elided before the

following vowel; this is contrary to the usage of most Latin prose, where such hiatus occurs only at the end of a colon. In fact hiatus after *m* is Apuleius' normal practice alike in the *Metamorphoses* (Bernhard 1927: 244-6) and his other works (Kirchhoff 1902: 10-13). It is also the practice of his fellow-African Arnobius (Hagendahl 1937: 98-9), though not of Tertullian and Minucius; so one asks if this for once is a possible feature of African Latin. Cases like this should be distinguished from hiatus after monosyllables in *-um* and *-am*, which is found sometimes in Curtius (Müller 1954: 769) and perhaps more generally than is realized.

There is also the normal hiatus after *Aegyptiam* at the end of the colon. Winkler (1985: 186) thought wrongly that the 'nasalised final *m* [of *Aegyptiam*] would elide before the following vowel [of *argutia*']'. As a result he posited a subtle interplay between the two words, which he elaborated with his usual virtuosity. The passage is a reminder that in spite of its interest and originality Winkler's book contains some overstatement, not to say fantasy, and that it is not always paid the compliment of critical scrutiny.

6. I have categorized the clausula as a double-spondee with the first syllable resolved ( $\cup \cup - \acute{\times}$ ) rather than  $- \cup \cup - \acute{\times}$ . The former has the advantage of beginning with a word-accent.
7. In early Latin the second person singular of the future-perfect was *amaveris* (so also *amaverimus*, *amaveritis*), whereas the corresponding vowels of the perfect subjunctive were long; but the distinction was by no means always maintained. Apuleius at *Met.* 1. 5. 2 has apparently future-perfect *perveneritis* and at 6. 8. 6 *sustinuerimus*, but at 7. 9. 4 *exercueritis*; the only unambiguous instance in Curtius has future-perfect *iusseris* (Müller 1954: 773); Arnobius favoured *-imus*, *-itis*, with no clear instance of a short (Hagendahl 1937: 103-5).

If the vowel here is long, some would regard the clausula as double-spondee with resolution ( $- - \cup \cup \times$ ); but it might be more satisfactory to begin it with the word-accent in *spréveris* ( $\acute{-} \cup - - \cup \cup \times$ ). This could be regarded as the

same type as 9 *imagines conversas* (see 9, below), but with resolution of the penultimate syllable.

On the other hand if the final vowel of *spreveris* is short, a hemiepes is produced (– ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ ×), as apparently at 34 (see 34, below).

8. I have suggested an incision after *hominum*; this gives a double-spondee with the common resolution of the third long syllable (Müller 1954: 763; Fraenkel 1968: 16). If 8 and 9 are taken together, that would produce a colon of 20 syllables, which seems too long for this work.
9. Again this might be regarded as a double-spondee. But if attention is paid to the accent, the clausula could be analysed as *imāginēs cōvērsās*, a sequence found from time to time in both Cicero and Apuleius (see 33, below). It could be described as a cretic plus molossus, or possibly as a trochaic metron (– ∪ – ×) followed by – ×; for it is economical to think of clausulae in general as ending with one of two cadences, either – ∪ × or – ×.
10. To be separated from 11, to balance the separation of 8 and 9.
11. The clausula would conventionally be taken as type C (double-trochee). If we attach importance to word-accent, it could be regarded as beginning with the first syllable of *nexu* (˘ – ∪ ˘ ×); this is one of the commonest clausulae by Broadhead's notation (1922: 69, where the type *omnes reguntur* is called N2; cf. his p. 46). It should further be noted that the sequence *mutuo nexu refectas* produces two successive trochaic metra (– ∪ – – – ∪ – –); such movements are not uncommon in Apuleius (cf. 19, 26, 31, 32), so perhaps we should regard the clausula as beginning with *mūtuo*.
12. *ut mireris exordior* belong together (Harrison 1990: 508), as is confirmed by the double-cretic clausula; the phrase was in fact so taken before Helm, who put a full stop after both *mireris* and *exordior*. I do not wish to see even a comma after *mireris*; by the modern feeling the subordinate clause should be marked off by punctuation, but the clausula shows that the short colon makes a single unit without any subdivision (cf. Fraenkel 1968: 55–6).
13. This could be analysed as spondee + cretic, a variant of

type B that is quite common in Apuleius; Bernhard (1927: 250) treats this as a basic type rather than molossus + cretic. The two short sentences may seem jerky, and some editors have suspected the loss of a few words, but a short question and answer could even belong together in a single unit; Fraenkel (1968: 41, 213) cites such passages as Cicero, *Leg. Agr.* 2. 22 *quis legem tulit? Rullus* (- ∪ - - ×). In our passage the iambic sequence may be thought excessive, but see 11 above on runs of trochees.

- 14 and 15 make two short cola with a hiatus at the end of each. *Isthmos Ephyrea*, provided that it is followed by hiatus, produces a type A clausula with resolution (Cicero's famous *ēssē vidēātur*). This strongly suggests that there is a colon-ending after *Ephyrea*; if so, there must also be colon-endings after *Attica* and *Spartiatica*. In ambiguous cases, if a hiatus produces a much better rhythm than elision, that helps to confirm that there is an objective colon-ending; the argument is not simply circular (Nisbet 1995: 316–18).
16. *Spartiaca*, the transmitted reading, is an unattested form (though note 2. 28. 3 *sistra Phariaca*), and produces a rare clausula (though see 7, above). *Spartiatica* (Salmasius), which most editors read, gives a commoner rhythm (type E clausula), but *Spartica* (cod. det.) produces an incisive double-cretic and might well be right.
17. *glebae felices aeternum*: the clausula would conventionally be regarded as a double-spondee, but if word-accent is taken into account it might be more satisfactory to analyse it as ´ - - ´ × (type M2 in Broadhead 1922: 46, 69). The run of long syllables is unusual, and from this point of view *felices in aeternum* (Salmasius) might seem worth considering; the clausula could then be regarded as type A, but it would not begin with a word-accent. Yet for runs of long syllables cf. 8. 22. 7 *corporis nidorem persentiscunt*, 9. 37. 1 *adolecentem frustatim discerpunt*.
19. A mechanical analysis of the clausula might produce a resolved molossus (-ā vētūs prō-) followed by a cretic (-sāpīa ēst). On the other hand a resolved long syllable should not normally break up in such a way that the first short ends one word and the second short begins its successor (Zielinski 1904: 34–5; Fraenkel 1968: 79, 104); 3

*aurésquē tūas* is more acceptable as there a word-accent coincides with the first syllable of the resolved molossus. In 19 it seems better to begin the clausula with *mēa* and to accept a trochaic rhythm, the first long being resolved ( $\cup \cup \cup - - | - \cup \times$ ); for other trochaic sequences see on 11. Hutchinson (1995: 485) cites Cicero, *Cat.* 4.14 *cura atquē diligētiā*, where the presence of ante-consonantal *atque* shows that this rhythm was deliberately sought (cf. Nisbet 1995: 319–21).

20. Again there is an internal hiatus after *-am*.
22. The colon ends after *urbe Latia advena* (double-cretic clausula with resolution); the long vowel of *Latiā* is elided without difficulty (cf. 6 *calami inscriptam*). If *advena* is taken with *studiorum Quiritium*, then *urbe Latia* would give a double-trochee clausula with resolution, but the sense is debatable; *advena* means ‘newcomer’, and does not seem to combine easily with the genitive. Some put the incision after *studiorum*, but now there are problems about the rhythm as well as the Latin; the last syllable of *advena* would not in its weak position be lengthened by *st* in the following word (cf. Müller 1954: 770), but even without such lengthening the clausula is unconvincing.
23. Probably to be separated from 24; Apuleius produces short cola. The clausula will generally be categorized as type E ( $- \cup - \cup \times$ ); but in view of the accent Broadhead would have regarded it as  $\acute{ } - \cup \acute{ } \cup \times$ , his N3 (1922: 46, 69).
24. The clausula would be regarded by some as a double-spondee (type D). But if we begin it with the second syllable of *indigenam* where the word-accent is, we might describe it as a resolved molossus followed by a trochee (see above, 17 *felices aeternum*).
25. The clausula would conventionally be counted as a double-trochee (type C). But if we attach importance to word-accent we could call it a triple-trochee; for somewhat similar movements cf. 11, above.
26. *praeunte* is presumably a double-trochee, as at Apuleius, *Apol.* 190 *cum precibus praeunte*; Cicero, *Dom.* 133 *ut mihi praeeuntis | postemque teneatis*; for the trochaic sequence see 11, above. In theory *prae* might be shortened before the following vowel (as at Virgil, *Aen.* 5. 186 *praeunte carina*;

- Ovid, *Fast.* 1.81 *iamque novi praeunt fasces*); but here that would produce a very unattractive clausula (– ∪ ∪ – ×).
28. The clausula can be taken as a double-spondee, with the third long syllable resolved (see 8, above). This suits the word-accent (*praefámur véniam*).
- 29–30. There is a problem about the colometry of the transmitted text, *si quid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero*. If this is taken as a single colon it has 21 syllables, which seems too long for Apuleius; on the other hand if there is a colon-ending after *sermonis*, the genitives are naturally taken not with *locutor* but with *si quid* (as would be easiest even without a colon-division); and this makes *offendero* unintelligible. That points to textual corruption, as do two other factors. (a) In a preface the speaker should apologize for his own outlandish language, as it would appear to his audience (note the contrast with 24 *indigenam sermonem*); but if *exotici . . . sermonis* is taken with *rudis locutor*, he would be saying less tactfully that Latin was outlandish to him. (b) If *forensis* is combined with *exotici* it can only mean ‘foreign’, a meaning that is not elsewhere attested till the fourth century; in Apuleius one expects the word to mean ‘of the forum’, as in the corresponding scenes in Rome at the end of the whole work (11. 28. 6 *quaesticulo forensi nutrito per patrocinia sermonis Romani*, 11. 30. 2 *iam stipendiis forensibus bellule fotum*). It may be noted that Winkler plausibly takes *sermonis* with *si quid* when he translates (1985: 181): ‘I must first beg your pardon if I happen to hit on any exotic or . . . bazaar language, he-horrible speaker that I am’. On the other hand he misrepresents *offendero* (which after *praefamur veniam* should refer to offence), finds an unconvincing ambiguity in *forensis* (whose meaning is determined by *exotici*), and introduces the implausible idea that *rudis* plays on *rudere* ‘to bray’ (Dowden, Ch. 12 in this volume, cites Tacitus, *Agr.* 3. 3 *incondita ac rudi voce*, also from a preface).

Van der Vliet disposed of these problems by inserting *sonuero* after *exotici*; here I have suggested *dixero*, which would give a slightly more regular clausula. As an alternative I have considered deleting *ac forensis* with Leo as a late



gloss on *exotici* (when *forensis* could bear the same meaning) and reading *ostendero* ('manifest') for *offendero* (cf. Terence, *HT* 634 *tot peccata in hac re ostendis*, of faults not deliberately demonstrated); the longish colon could be divided after *exotici sermonis* (for the clausula see analysis on 9). *exoticus* has been suggested above by Harrison and Winterbottom (Ch. 1 in this volume), but this suits the speaker less well than the *sermo*; and though *si quid exoticus* would give a double-cretic clausula (type B), it leaves line 29 very short compared with 30.

31. The clausula might be regarded as spondee + cretic, a variation of type B that is acceptable in Apuleius (see 13, above). But it seems better to begin with *vocis* and accept a trochaic rhythm (see lines 11 and 19).
- 32-3. *-ōriae sciēntiae stilo* produces a long trochaic sequence, but it is not much more difficult than the one in 31 (*īpsa vōcis immutatio*); the only difference is that in 31 the sequence is varied by a spondee (*immut-*). But there is a more important problem about the sense: the speaker ought to be saying that his change of language from Greek to Latin corresponds to the rapid shifts of his subject matter (contrast Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 129 on the stylistically simple Greek prototype, whose preface he may reflect: *φεύγων δὲ τὴν ἐν λόγοις καινοτομίαν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν διώκει τὴν ἐν τοῖς διηγήμασι τερατείαν*, 'avoiding stylistic innovation, he pursues to excess the extraordinary in what he narrates.'). I suggest that both these difficulties would be met if *stilo* were deleted and *quam* read for *quem*; the clausula could be regarded as type E (- ∪ - ∪ ×), or perhaps better as a run of trochees similar to those mentioned at lines 11 and 19. *accedere* ('to reach', 'attain to') seems to suit *scientiae* better than *stilo*; cf. Virgil *Georg.* 2. 483 'sin has ne possim naturae accedere partis'. The clausula of 33 *accēssimū<sup>x</sup>s rēspōndēt<sup>x</sup>* could be regarded as a trochaic metron followed by a trochaic cadence; see 9, above.

As there seems no obvious reason for the interpolation of *stilo*, I have considered as an alternative *desultoriae sciēntiāe quā<sup>m</sup> accēssimū<sup>x</sup>s | stilō rēspōndēt<sup>x</sup>* ('answers in style'); but that leaves the cola poorly balanced, and

produces the unsatisfactory notion that a *vox* has a *stilus*. Harrison and Winterbottom have proposed *desultoriaque scientia* (Ch. 1 in this volume), but the rhythm causes doubt; even in Cicero *que* is rare after two short syllables (Shipley 1913: 32 ff.). Nor can we posit lengthening before *sc-* to produce a type E clausula (– ∪ – ∪ ×); it would be highly unnatural for a prose-writer to lengthen an enclitic like *que* in this way (see above on 22).

34. We should probably assume hiatus after *-am* (see above on 5); this gives an attested clausula (– ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ ×) though not a common one (cf. Bernhard 1927: 251). The clausula would be better if *-am* elided (– ∪ – ∪ ∪ ×, type A with resolution); there are a few places in Apuleius where the elision of a nasal gives a better rhythm than hiatus (Bernhard 1927: 246–7), but probably not enough to accept when so many instances work the other way.
35. *intende* ends one clausula (– ∪ – – ×) and begins another (– ∪ – – ∪ ×). Such conflation is common (cf. Müller 1954: 770); see especially Hutchinson on the ‘overlapping of rhythmic units’ (1995: 494–6).

### 3

## Some Linguistic Points in the Prologue<sup>1</sup>

JONATHAN G. F. POWELL

### INTRODUCTION

A classical Latinist (especially a Ciceronian like myself) who turns to Apuleius is rather in the position of a specialist in eighteenth-century English approaching a twentieth-century novel. Normally, in reading our own language, we have to guard against imposing anachronistic modern meanings on words in older texts, but in this case there is also another danger: we may fail to allow for the possibility that words which we know to have changed their meanings eventually, in late Latin, had already done so in Apuleius. Progress is difficult because of the scarcity of parallel material from the same time, place, and genre. Though we may all now recognize that Latin, like all other languages, was subject to temporal, regional, and social variation, the categories we have for talking about such variations—classical, vulgar, archaic, *sermo cotidianus*, and the like—are still for the most part inadequate and confusing (cf. Herman (1991)). Nevertheless, we do need to make some attempt to place Apuleius linguistically.

Much earlier discussion centred on the concept of ‘African Latin’.<sup>2</sup> The idea is not *prima facie* ridiculous, and should not be treated as such, but one must be careful. Edwards, Chapter 5 in this volume, in distinguishing sharply between the ‘barbarous dialect of the province’ and the literary Latin of North African authors, runs a risk of oversimplification. Apuleius and his educated African contemporaries clearly spoke, or at least were capable of speaking on appropriate occasions, standard Latin and not a ‘barbarous dialect’. But even when they spoke

<sup>1</sup> This chapter is based on a ‘response’ to the contributions of Harrison and Winterbottom and of Nisbet (Chs. 1 and 2 respectively).

<sup>2</sup> Norden (1893: 588), and other references in Bernhard (1927: 2–3).

standard Latin, it is possible that their speech displayed local colouring: it strains the imagination far more to suppose that, by this date, spoken Latin was still virtually undifferentiated throughout the Empire. If this differentiation extended to morphology, lexicon, semantics, syntax, and style as well as to pronunciation, then there is at least the possibility that it could surface in writing. There might be local stylistic fashions that affected the way in which language was used, without disturbing its conformity to grammatical norms. The term 'Asian', applied to oratorical style, is often dismissed as a mere literary catchword, yet it does seem that it had its origin in local fashions of Greek composition.<sup>3</sup> There is no a priori reason why there should not have been a local North African style of Latin; the problem is that it is extremely difficult to identify such a thing in a methodologically rigorous way.

There has been a tendency to reclassify alleged 'Africanisms' as merely late features with no particular regional distribution. It is, after all, a relatively easy matter to identify a linguistic innovation: one just looks at the chronological distribution of the occurrences of a given feature, and since the entries in the *TLL* are arranged in chronological order, innovative features usually leap to the eye. However, this procedure is bound to leave certain kinds of question unanswered. It tells us nothing about the stylistic effect of the innovation at the time when it is first recorded; we cannot usually tell, unless we are lucky enough to have explicit evidence on the point, whether it had associations with a particular region or social class. Changes in written language doubtless often reflect developments in spoken usage, but not always; they may be more literary in origin.

It is true that any prospective innovation in the written language had to contend with the conservatism of the grammatical tradition, and that departures from the grammatical norm, when noticed, tended to be classified as mere mistakes, corruptions, or—to use the word that has become current among scholars of the last few generations—'vulgarisms'. We should, however, beware of using the word 'vulgar' or 'vulgarism' too casually in this connection. Recent work in

<sup>3</sup> Quintilian, *Inst.* 12. 10. 16, quoting a view that Asians had resorted to circumlocution because their Greek was not good enough to find the *mot juste*.

historical linguistics has emphasized that there is no one thing that can unambiguously be referred to by the phrase 'Vulgar Latin',<sup>4</sup> and it would be helpful to abandon the term entirely, replacing it with specific characterizations of time, place, social status, and stylistic register. (The difficulties of the phrase can easily be illustrated by considering what, in a twentieth-century context, might be meant by 'Vulgar English'.) Linguistic features that in the time of Cicero or Petronius would have been clearly incorrect and would have been found, if at all, only in the speech of the uneducated, had a consistent tendency to move up the social scale and to become accepted in common educated usage. In some cases we can be sure of this because the features in question became established in Romance languages. The only question is when they did so. An apparent innovation may have existed in some registers or dialects of the spoken language for some time before it first surfaces in formal writing.

When we deal with Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, there is a special problem. The style of this work is peculiar compared even with other works of Apuleius, and the doubtless partly disingenuous apology for imperfect Latin in the Prologue, whatever its true significance, certainly puts the reader on the alert for oddities in language as well as in content. It has been supposed that at least some features of the Latin of the *Metamorphoses* are 'vulgar',<sup>5</sup> i.e. not literally lower-class or dialectal, but nearer to the ordinary contemporary speech of Apuleius' time and place than is the formal and conservative register used in, for example, the *Apologia*. At the same time such apparently colloquial features are found side by side with spectacular archaisms, such as (to go no further than the Prologue) *prosapia* or *aerumnabilis*. The former was considered archaic even in Cicero's time, and Quintilian<sup>6</sup> calls it *insulsum* ('tasteless'). Mixture of styles of this kind is, of course, a familiar phenomenon. Writers may cultivate it deliberately for facetious or satirical effect.<sup>7</sup> Non-native speakers of languages often fall

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Wright (1982: 52); also Laird (1999: 250–5).

<sup>5</sup> See Callebat (1968).

<sup>6</sup> *Inst.* 8. 3. 26.

<sup>7</sup> One thinks e.g. (to confine the enquiry to Latin authors) of Juvenal: see Powell (1998).

into it unintentionally; in which case there is room for speculation as to whether this mixture of styles is part of Apuleius' characterization of the first person narrator as a non-native speaker of Latin. But this remains only a speculation.

I would like now to concentrate on three individual points in the Prologue which may be classed as linguistic innovations: two semantic, and one syntactical and morphological.

### FORENSIS

One obvious semantic problem lies in the word *forensis*. In classical Latin, this meant 'to do with the forum' and hence 'legal', or alternatively 'public', 'outdoor' as opposed to 'domestic'. In late Latin, a different meaning developed: 'foreign' (like *\*foraneus*, the presumed ancestor of our English word).

When a bifurcation of meaning of this kind is happening or has happened, one expects context to be crucial in determining how the word is to be taken. A common way of deciding the issue is to pair the ambiguous word with a synonym. Here, *forensis* is paired with *exotici* (Latin with Greek, as older English writers often coupled a Latinate word with one of Anglo-Saxon origin). Indeed, *forensis* in the meaning 'foreign' is not merely a synonym of *exoticus* but might also be parallel in derivation: it could be regarded as having been formed by the addition of an adjectival ending to the adverb *foris* 'outside', just as *exoticus* is formed from  $\epsilon\xi\omega$  which also means 'outside'. The pairing is, on normal philological criteria, a strong argument for supposing that *forensis* has the new meaning here: 'if I offend in any way as an inexperienced speaker of an exotic and foreign language'. This makes perfect sense in context, and if this were a papyrus letter from a Roman soldier, rather than a weird literary work by Apuleius, this is where we would probably stop. It can be argued that, even in a literary text, what C. S. Lewis<sup>8</sup> called 'the insulating power of the context' would train the reader's mind on this obvious meaning and tend to exclude other possible senses of *forensis* (even the more frequently occurring ones).

What worries the philologist is not, however, primarily the

<sup>8</sup> Lewis (1960: 11-12).

literariness of the text, but the possibility that this apparently easy interpretation may after all involve the imposition of an anachronistic (later) sense on a word that, in the usage of its time and place, could not yet bear that meaning. The question needs to be approached carefully, because of the risk of circular argument. One's conception of Latin usage in reality depends on a series of judgements about individual contexts, including this one. Harrison and Winterbottom, Chapter 1 in this volume, tell us that there is no firm instance of *forensis* = 'foreign' before Ambrose. The other two earlier passages noted in the *TLL* are, indeed, very doubtful.<sup>9</sup> But it would not be logical to argue that, because this is not a certain instance, it is therefore certainly not an instance.

The belief that this passage cannot be an instance of *forensis* = 'foreign' has led to various conjectural rewritings, presumably on the assumption that later scribes misread the passage because they themselves (wrongly) thought that *forensis* had the later meaning.<sup>10</sup> What gives us pause is the rather long gap between this occurrence, if it is one, and the next. But, for any new usage, there always has to be a first time. For all we know, Apuleius may be reflecting a usage that is not yet accepted in formal Latin prose, and was not to be for some generations afterwards.

Apuleius elsewhere uses *forensis* in the more classical sense of 'to do with the forum', and this meaning persisted in later Latin beside the newer sense, so that the two senses simply functioned like a pair of homonyms. If the two senses were already present in Apuleius, there arises the possibility of a double meaning. Latin is, doubtless, also *forensis sermo* in the sense of the language of the forum. Yet the pairing with *exotici* either draws attention away from this possibility, or at least creates a puzzle as to what the whole phrase is then supposed to mean. To say 'exotic and forensic' in English would suggest either an unintentional blunder, or intentional facetiousness.

<sup>9</sup> *TLL* VI. 1. 1054. 57–9: the passages are Pliny, *NH* 14. 42, in which *forensis* figures as a technical term for a particular kind of grape, and Apuleius, *Met.* 4. 13 where the text is in doubt.

<sup>10</sup> See also Nisbet, Ch. 2 in this volume. The colometric arguments strike me as interesting but not decisive. The argument from tactlessness depends on the assumption that *exotici ac forensis* had the same disparaging nuance as 'outlandish' in English, which is not necessarily the case.

Perhaps the same is true of *exotici ac forensis*: Apuleius may, just possibly, be characterizing his speaker as either unversed in Latin (in this very sentence in which he claims to be) or prone to persiflage. But before I would agree to either of those propositions I would need to be shown a few more instances of malpropism of this kind; and I have to admit that, when all is said and done, I incline to the view that *forensis* does here, at least primarily, mean 'foreign', and that the meaning 'forensic', if present to the mind at all, is very much in the background.

### ISTO

Another possible example of 'late' usage is *sermone isto Milesio*. *Iste* in classical Latin is a second person demonstrative, 'that of yours',<sup>11</sup> but prima facie it seems highly puzzling that this should mean 'that Milesian talk of yours'. The Milesian talk surely belongs to the speaker, not to the audience.<sup>12</sup> The late Latin and Romance use of *iste* to mean merely 'this' is, of course, well documented: cf. e.g. Spanish *este* ('this'), and the medieval Latin formula still heard at least a dozen times a year in the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford, *statuta privilegia et consuetudines istius universitatis*. Even in the first century AD, *iste* is freely used to mean not so much 'that of yours' as 'this which I am showing you', and already (for example) in Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 6. 3. 10 we find *ante istam vesperam* = 'by this evening'. Given these facts, it is at the very least unwise to press any possible second person implications of *isto* in this context.<sup>13</sup>

### PERMULCEAM

Take, thirdly, the word *permulceam* in the first sentence: clearly a source of puzzlement to the commentators. At the beginning of a work, with no introductory word or phrase like 'allow

<sup>11</sup> Or, at least, it conveys a certain distance from the speaker, as in Cicero's well-known use of *iste* to refer to his opponents.

<sup>12</sup> The opposite view was expressed by a participant at the colloquium, but I find it difficult to see in what sense the Milesian talk might belong to the audience. Could it perhaps mean 'the Milesian style you are accustomed to'?

<sup>13</sup> Callebat (1968: 272-3) wants to see a second person nuance, but acknowledges that one would have expected *hoc*.



me', we naturally expect a promise of what is to come, and we instinctively take *conseram* as future. Then the parallel *permulceam* surprises us by turning out, on the face of it, to be subjunctive. Do we then go back and reinterpret *conseram*? Evidently so, according to Harrison and Winterbottom, Chapter 1 in this volume, who tell us that the the subjunctives are 'mildly jussive' and 'suitably wheedling', and translate 'let me . . .'. This usage seems to be mainly confined to comedy, and is generally found in more obvious contexts than this.<sup>14</sup> If this is what *conseram* and *permulceam* are supposed to be, this will be the first of many echoes of the language of old Roman comedy in this work, hence a literary archaism, not a 'vulgarism' in the sense of a feature taken from contemporary speech.<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, Nisbet, Chapter 2 in this volume, following Scobie,<sup>16</sup> argues that as *permulceam* balances *conseram*, it is apparently future. It must in that case be classified as a morphologically incorrect form. Scobie and Nisbet both quote Petronius 46. 2, but without further comment. In fact that passage is a rather peculiar one. It is in a speech by the freedman Echion, a speech that bristles with non-standard grammatical forms. Echion says: *quid ergo est? aliqua die te persuadeam ut ad villam venias et videas casulas nostras*.<sup>17</sup> Commentators are divided here on whether *persuadeam* here is in reality subjunctive or is meant for the future. It depends whether or not the sentence is a question. If it is, the future is more appropriate: the subjunctive implies a deliberative question, that is, one where the decision rests with the speaker, while the future implies that the other person is being asked as to the outcome ('am I going to succeed in getting you to come?'). On the other hand, if it is not a question, the form

<sup>14</sup> Handford (1947: 41).

<sup>15</sup> It might otherwise be possible to take these verbs as forming the apodosis of the conditional or provisory clause beginning *modo si . . .*, taking *spreveris* as perfect subjunctive rather than future perfect; 'I would string together . . . and would soothe . . . provided you did not despise . . .' but this seems neither obvious nor particularly easy.

<sup>16</sup> Scobie (1975: 68), citing Jannaccone (1963).

<sup>17</sup> The Penguin trans. (J. P. Sullivan) reads: 'Will I get you some day to come down to my place in the country and have a look at our little cottage?' Any translation prejudges the point at issue.

which implies doubt as to the outcome is the (jussive) subjunctive ('allow me to persuade you'). The future ('one of these days I shall persuade you') would have a more confident tone, which would perhaps not be so suitable for this context.

My inclination is to take Echion's sentence as a question, principally because of the preceding *quid ergo est?*; in which case the future would be expected and the *-eam* form represents a morphological or syntactical confusion. The next most likely alternative, the jussive subjunctive, would come under the comic usage mentioned above, and would perhaps be more difficult to admit for Petronius than for Apuleius. In all, this parallel helps us little, since it raises exactly the same problems as the passage we are concerned with.

Nevertheless, one may observe in general that there is likely to have been a strong analogical pull in spoken Latin towards using the *-am* form of the second conjugation for contexts in which the future might be more natural, on account of the fact that in the (commoner) third and fourth conjugations the form in *-am* does duty for both. (In addition, differentiating between the conjugations might have become more difficult after the well-documented sound-change whereby *-eo*, *-eam* became homophonous with *-io*, *-iam*: cf. forms such as *habio*, *debio* in non-standard texts from the second century AD.<sup>18</sup>) Such a tendency might have been resisted by purists, but can we be sure that it would have been resisted by Apuleius? If not, then perhaps *permulceam* is indeed being used as a future tense, and is after all a promise rather than a wheedling request for permission. Médan (1926: 5) quotes as parallels for this kind of confusion 6. 19 *redies* for *redibis*, and 6. 32 *aestuet*, the reading of F where *aestuabit* is expected and read by some editors. If these instances are isolated, they may not be of great significance, and can be explained away as instances of textual corruption, but if more work on the manuscript were to reveal further instances that have escaped the notice of editors, one might well think again.

Be that as it may, there is another possibility. The character Echion in Petronius is clearly a native Greek speaker whose Latin is not up to scratch. Was this confusion regarded as a

<sup>18</sup> The forms are found in the letters of Rustius Barbarus, Cavenaile (1958: nos. 303-4).

mark of Greek origin? In which case, is the *rudis locutor* in Apuleius already betrayed by his speech in the first sentence?

### EN ECCE PRAEFAMUR

There are more features in the Latin of this preface that perhaps deserve investigation from a stylistic point of view. For instance, the collocation *en ecce* is found before Apuleius only in two passages of Senecan tragedy and in a pseudo-Quintilianic declamation;<sup>19</sup> the declamation may of course be later. *Prima facie*, this would seem to indicate mock grandeur. And what of the switch between first person singular and first person plural in the last four lines? What do the plurals *praefamur* and *accessimus* convey? Generally speaking the effect of the first person plural may perhaps be characterized as an inclusive gesture towards the audience or addressee (doubtless this is what led Henderson, Chapter 17 in this volume, to speak of ‘cosiness’), but the effect of this can be either modest or patronizing according to the context; scholars have distinguished numerous categories (‘plural of authorship’, ‘plural of modesty’, etc.).<sup>20</sup> The exact tone is not at all easy to gauge.

### PROSE RHYTHM

Moving briefly to the question of prose rhythm, discussed by Nisbet, Chapter 2 in this volume, I shall merely touch on one matter that is of interest for the history of the pronunciation of Latin. If, as it seems, final syllables containing a vowel plus *m* did not elide for the purposes of prose rhythm, it must be the case that final *m* had its full consonantal value in the Latin spoken by Apuleius, at any rate when reading texts aloud in a formal manner. Nisbet, Chapter 2 in this volume, suggests that this may have been an African feature. At the same period, however, curse tablets from Carthage and Latin papyri from neighbouring Egypt<sup>21</sup> show a caprice in the insertion or

<sup>19</sup> *TLL* v. 2. 32. 29–30; the passages are Seneca, *Oed.* 1004, *Phoen.* 42; [Quintilian] *decl.* 11. 9. Cf. also Apuleius, *Met.* 8. 26, 10. 9.

<sup>20</sup> See Hofmann and Szantyr (1965: 19–20) and literature there cited.

<sup>21</sup> Curse tablets: e.g. Audollent, (1904: nos. 219 and 253); papyri: see esp. the papyrus letters of Claudius Terentianus, P. Mich. VIII. 467–71 (Cavenaile 250–4); for loss of *-m* cf. Adams (1977: 22–5).

omission of final *m* which can only be accounted for on the assumption that the *m* phoneme in final position had already been entirely obliterated in speech, and there is earlier evidence too for this in the tablets from Pompeii.<sup>22</sup> What we find in Apuleius may therefore be the traces of a pedantic, hypercorrect spelling-pronunciation, perhaps a product of the grammatical or rhetorical schools. This strikes me as interesting from the point of view of historical linguistics, though not in the least unexpected, given what we know of Apuleius' social and educational background.

### CONCLUSION

Any judgement about the overall effect of even a short passage like this one must depend, whether one knows it or not, on a multitude of detailed decisions as to how individual words are to be interpreted and appreciated. These decisions in turn often depend on an overall view of Apuleius' literary qualities, tone, and purposes. Such arguments can often become circular. There is a great deal that we do not know about the precise stylistic and semantic history of many of the words that Apuleius uses here. We have no direct evidence, after all, for what was normal in the speech of second-century Madaura. Nevertheless, sceptical reservations aside, the features I have noted do add up to a reasonably coherent picture: a mixture of the pedantically archaic with the contemporary and colloquial, with perhaps a suggestion that the speaker (as he himself states) is being presented as a non-native speaker of Latin.

<sup>22</sup> Ed. Wolf and Crook (1989).

# Cultural Contexts



## 4

# On Tickling the Ears: Apuleius' Prologue and the Anxieties of Philosophers

MICHAEL B. TRAPP

Whatever other functions it may perform, the Prologue to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* strikes a thoroughly hedonistic note, from its fifth word, *Milesio* ('Milesian') to its last, *laetaberis* ('you will revel in this'). Matter, manner, and teller, it affirms, will all be geared to the production of pleasure. This is to be not a single, monolithic story, but a series of tales, with a lively and enlivening variety. There will be sex and metamorphosis. The telling will be relaxed and informal, and will charm.<sup>1</sup> The teller is a virtuoso performer, of impeccable cultural credentials, who in his anxiety to be liked<sup>2</sup> is keen both to avoid giving offence through any grating misuse of language, and to underline the deference he thus demonstrates to his audience's comfort and enjoyment.

So exclusive an emphasis on entertainment and enjoyment is a notorious problem for those readers of the *Metamorphoses* who wish to find in it, ultimately, an instructive message about individual salvation and the path to true happiness. They look for hints of something more seriously purposeful and find

<sup>1</sup> Sex—*Milesio* ('Milesian'); relaxed informality—*sermone* ('style', but also 'colloquial style, chat'), *susurro* ('whisper'); charm—*lepido* . . . *permulceam* ('let me soothe with an agreeable whisper', which characterizes matter as well as manner).

<sup>2</sup> *Aures benivolus* ('kindly ears'); *en ecce praefamur veniam* ('look then, I ask your pardon at the beginning'). *Benivolus* ('kindly') is of course an entirely appropriate word for a preface, where, as in an oration, the speaker-author is expected to court the good will of his audience (cf. Harrison 1990: 510); my point is that, in this context, it forms part of an unusually and obtrusively ingratiating *captatio benevolentiae* ('plea for a kindly hearing'). The modesty shown by the speaker is surely best taken as false, suggesting in fact how unlikely he is to commit a grating linguistic solecism.

them, variously, in *susurro* ('whispering'—the low, secretive voice of the mystagogue imparting secrets to the initiate), in *permulceam* ('soothe'—a transposition of the Platonic ἐπαίδειω ('sing as an incantation, sing soothingly') used of the incantatory repetition of saving truths), and above all in *Aegyptiam* ('Egyptian'), which seems to prefigure Egyptian Isis.<sup>3</sup> I sympathize with the desire to uncover a further dimension to the Prologue, and would like to do so from one of the same starting points. What I think I find, however, operates in a rather different way to these supposed allusions to mysteries yet to come. I agree in seeing the invocation of another, 'higher' discourse, but I think that—for the time being at least—it works to reinforce the promise of the entertainer, rather than to offset it with enigmatic hints of something deeper.

I begin, then, with the qualifying flourish with which (on the Harrison and Winterbottom punctuation) the first sentence of the Prologue ends: *modo si papyrus Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam non spreveris inspicere* ('if only you do not scorn to glance at an Egyptian papyrus inscribed with the sharpness of a reed from the Nile'). There is, to be sure, ingratiating (mock-)modesty here;<sup>4</sup> there is a glance at the elegance and cleverness of the writing (*argutia*, 'sharpness'). But there is also, I suggest, a pointed reminiscence of one of the ancient world's most celebrated and well-remembered discussions of writing, entertainment, and instruction, Plato's *Phaedrus*.<sup>5</sup>

The reminiscence identifies itself by the conjunction of a number of elements. First, Egypt, which Socrates' myth in *Phaedrus* 274c ff. specifies as the place of writing's origin. Secondly, writing itself, concretely conceived in terms of reed

<sup>3</sup> Scobie (1975: 69), citing Beroaldus (1500) and Scazzoso (1951: 19) over *susurro* ('whisper'), and Schlam (1970: 480) over *permulceam* ('soothe'). For *Aegyptiam* ('Egyptian'), see Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume. Winkler (1985) produces an interesting variant. In his view, the reference to Egypt alludes to Isis for a first reader only if s/he is a convinced Isiac. For the non-Isiac reader, the reference is only available on second reading; on first reading it can only be 'an illegible sign giv[ing] no information' (187) and 'can mean nothing . . . except perhaps to indicate that the composer is not embarrassed to state the obvious' (186). It is curious to see so careful a reader as Winkler so anxious to close off all but an Isiac sense for *Aegyptiam*.

<sup>4</sup> See again Harrison (1990: 510).

<sup>5</sup> See in general Trapp (1990).



pens moving over papyrus rolls (*Phaedrus* 276b; cf. 228b, 230d, 235d). Thirdly, the question of whether or not a written text deserves to be looked at, raised by the Prologue speaker of the *Metamorphoses* over the book from which he speaks, and by Socrates in the *Phaedrus* over written texts in general, through the specific example of the epideictic text by Lysias which has so enthused young Phaedrus (*Phaedrus* 228b, 230d, 275b–278e). In addition, *argutia* ('sharpness') in the *Metamorphoses* Prologue can be read as a reminiscence of the stress Socrates' Egyptian myth places on the cleverness of writing's inventor, Theuth (*Phaedrus* 274e).

Use of the *Phaedrus* in itself should not surprise us, given the fame of the text, the level of literary cultivation and 'cultural competence' to which the writing in the *Metamorphoses* consistently appeals, and the use that is made of the same dialogue later on in the novel.<sup>6</sup> What might be less expected is that, if I am right, the Plato of the *Phaedrus* is here invoked not as an ally but as an adversary. For the speaker of the Prologue is not (of course) at this point attempting—as Plato was in the *Phaedrus*—to argue his readers away from the seductive lure of trivial written texts, in favour of some supposedly higher, more direct, and more beneficial form of communication. On the contrary, the mock-modesty of *modo si . . .* ('if only . . .') is an invitation to readers precisely *not* to scorn the written text in front of them, to accept the present pleasures offered *without* any stuffy worries about higher and lower grades of communication. On the dialogue's terms of reference, the readers of the *Metamorphoses* are being invited to succumb gladly to the charms of 'mere' entertainment, to the summer heat, the beauty of the landscape, and the bewitching buzz of the cicadas (*Phaedrus* 230b–c, 258e–259d).<sup>7</sup> Above all, they are being encouraged to revel in the delights of a written text, which is presented to them as worthy of their attention because it is entertaining, not something to be shunned as nugatory play

<sup>6</sup> e.g. in the story of Socrates (cf. Anderson 1982: 80), in the myth of Cupid and Psyche (ibid.), and perhaps also in Lucius' white horse, Candidus (Tatum 1979: 34).

<sup>7</sup> I would like to be able to see another echo of this scene in Apuleius' soothingly sibilant *aures . . . lepido susurro permulceam* ('soothe your . . . ears with an agreeable whispering', matching the buzz of Plato's cicadas), but am not sure that I can.

because it is written: *lector, intende: laetaberis* ('reader, pay attention: you will revel in this'). If this is right, then the Prologue reinforces its overt promise of entertainment with an elegantly allusive contrast, while simultaneously flattering the cultivation of those readers able to detect it. They are invited not simply to enjoy themselves, but to enjoy themselves with self-conscious indulgence. At the same time, the deliverer of the Prologue also characterizes himself, as a giver of pleasure who is well aware that not everyone looks on the activity with approval. A collusive relationship is proposed, in which both parties could congratulate themselves on their own freedom from puritan seriousness.<sup>8</sup>

Now, the seriousness from which it is thus proposed that speaker and hearers should distance themselves is not simply that of the *Phaedrus*, nor indeed simply that of Plato. It is, more generally, the seriousness of all philosophical discourse that chooses, in Plato's footsteps, to take up arms against mere enjoyment as a proper response to verbal communication and mere entertainment as a proper motive for communicating. In order to appreciate what is at issue here, we need to look more closely both at the Platonic foundations, and the positions developed from them in philosophical writing (and speaking) of the Imperial period.

Within the Platonic corpus, the *Gorgias* is at least as important and influential a dialogue in this connection as the *Phaedrus*. It too is centrally concerned with the distinction between good and bad communication, and between the kinds of relationship that go with them, and it shares with the *Phaedrus* the project of devaluing (disvaluing) the claims of contemporary teachers and theorists of rhetoric to possess a useful and effective craft of words. Unlike the *Phaedrus*, however, it focuses solely on the spoken word, drawing its central distinction between good and bad in terms of knowledge and ignorance and, above all, of the divergent intentions of the two classes of practitioner. Bad communication, here identified as the communication of the orator (*rhetor*) and the sophist, is distinguished by its carefree ignorance of the subject matter in hand, and by its overriding aim of giving pleasure, without regard to the true (moral,

<sup>8</sup> Compare—for both sides to the transaction—Gowers (Ch. 8), Smith (Ch. 9), and Zimmerman (Ch. 22) in this volume.

psychological) good of its addressees. Orator and sophist are dismissively categorized as practitioners of a species of ‘flattery’ (*kolakeia*), irresponsibly rotting the minds of their hearers on the psychological equivalent of junk food. They are to be known by the contrast they offer to lawgivers and philosophers, who confer on the mind true benefits analogous to those conferred on the body by physical training and medicine.<sup>9</sup>

*Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* thus agree, from their different directions, in identifying pleasure-giving (gratification, flattery) as the mark of inferior, irresponsible communication, and in drawing a sharp contrast between irresponsible (or at best trivial) hedonistic discourse and the truly beneficial discourse of the philosopher. The need that Plato felt to distinguish his activity and his product from those of his rivals did not disappear with the passage of time. Both the contrast and the specific terms in which it is drawn echoed long and loud through subsequent philosophical writing, as philosophers continued the struggle to persuade their public that there was a good and a bad way to react to their words, and to differentiate between legitimate and illegitimate aims on the part of the communicator. Here for instance, from close to Apuleius’ time, is Epictetus, legislating both for his own aims, and for the proper reception of those aims by his audience:

[Musonius] Rufus used to say ‘If you are sufficiently at ease to praise me, then my words are vain.’ . . . The philosopher’s lecture-room is a surgery, gentlemen: you should have felt pain before you leave it, not pleasure, because you are sick when you arrive, . . . Who, please tell me, on hearing you [sc. the ‘philosopher’ over-concerned with elegance of style] giving a reading or a lecture, . . . ever came out saying ‘The philosopher has hit his target fair and square in me; I should no longer behave like that.’ Doesn’t he rather say, . . . ‘How elegantly he phrased his account of Xerxes!’ while another retorts ‘No—what he said about Thermopylae.’<sup>10</sup>

So too Maximus of Tyre, who returns in a number of different connections to the figure of the sophist-flatterer and his deluded audience. The most elaborate characterization is to be found in *Oration 25*, ‘On True Beauty of Speech’:

In our arena too we can find this same kind of idle praise-giver: on

<sup>9</sup> See esp. *Gorgias* 459c–e and 463a–465e.

<sup>10</sup> Epictetus 3. 23. 29–30, 37–8; cf. 3. 21.

encountering licentious words, and failing to recognize their deceptiveness, he embraces their sweetness and is carried silently and gradually away by his pleasure, day by day, just like people on a voyage who fail to secure the winds they need for their proper course, and are instead carried away on a gentle current over a waveless sea, to deserted beaches and treacherous reefs. Then, without his realizing it, he is swept away into ignorance and then into hedonism, destinations more desolate than any beach and more treacherous than any reefs, all the while thoroughly enjoying his drifting, and delighting in the entertainment—just like fever patients who gorge themselves on food and drink against doctor's orders. . . . Wayward words are no more worthy of respect than foods that pander to the belly. If you remove their power to confer benefit and replace it with impulsive, unalloyed pleasure, then you are voting words equal rights and an equal say to encourage indiscriminately all the shameful things that come to the soul via the senses under the escort of pleasure.

Let us leave these contenders to their symposia, like the miserable servants of belly and ear that they are. What we need is a style of utterance that stands straight and tall, calling out in a loud voice and raising our souls with it up above the earth and all the earthly sufferings that flow from pleasure and desire and ambition and lust and anger and grief and drunkenness. . . . If we are going to need pleasure too to assist this process, give me the kind of pleasure that is roused by the strains of a trumpet, stationed in the midst of an army of hoplites and inspiring their souls with its call. I need the kind of pleasure in an utterance that will preserve its grandeur without the addition of anything shameful; I need the kind of pleasure that Virtue will not refuse to have as her companion.<sup>11</sup>

*Oration* 14, 'How to Tell a Friend from a Flatterer', offers a corresponding portrayal of the flatterer himself,

grinning and holding out his hand, calling on his victim to follow him, full of praise and compliments and prayers and entreaties as he tells him of the extraordinary pleasures to which he will take and lead him, flowery meadows and flowing rivers and birds singing and pleasant breezes and spreading trees and smooth rocks and easy paths and flourishing gardens, pears upon pears and apples upon apples and grape growing on grape.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Maximus, *Oration* 25. 5–7; cf. also *ibid.* 1. 8.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* 14. 1; for the figure of the flatterer in 2nd-cent. literature, see also Plutarch, *On Flatterers and Friends* and Apuleius, *On Plato* 2. 8–9, 231–4. Note that the Platonic condemnation of rhetoric as flattery continued to

And *Oration* 25 (again) seconds Epictetus in its dismissal of stylistic elegance as a worthwhile accomplishment:

We should not, however, follow the reasoning of the masses, for whom sufficient grounds to praise an utterance are furnished by a fluent tongue, and a rush of words, and Attic diction, and well-constructed periods, and elegant composition. All that is, as the comic poet puts it,

Small fry . . . and twittering,  
A chorus of swallows, and a disgrace to the art.<sup>13</sup>

It is against this kind of background, I suggest, that we should see the Prologue to the *Metamorphoses* as resonating for a second-century reader, once the initial evocation of the *Phaedrus* has done its job of summoning up the necessary complex of associations. Viewed against it, the speaker of the Prologue may be seen to be taking up the Platonic-philosophical stigmatization of hedonistic speaking and listening and turning it round, presenting himself as the kind of person the philosophers warn one against, but simultaneously inviting his hearers not to spurn his offerings but to embrace them with delight.

Not only the whole deferential, ingratiating posture, but also a series of individual details pick up now familiar elements in the various portrayals of the anti-philosopher. There is the happy satisfaction with the written medium, already discussed, but there is also the manifest concern for literary and linguistic propriety: it matters to this speaker that he should be able to boast of a place of origin enshrined in the classics (*glebae . . . libris felicioribus conditae*, 'regions recorded in even more fertile books'), and a first education in the best literary Greek; and it matters that he is trying (confidently, for all the show of nervous modesty) not to slip up in Latin either. And there is also the sustained emphasis on versatility and mutability: the tales of transformation that the Prologue announces are themselves a transformation from Greek antecedents, told by a teller who is himself transformed from a Greek to a Latin speaker,

resonate in 2nd-cent. polemic between orators and philosophers: Aelius Aristides, *Oration* 2. 178–203 and Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Professors* 2. 41–2, with Karadimas (1996: 85–91).

<sup>13</sup> *Oration* 25. 3; the quotation is Aristophanes, *Frogs* 92–3.

and boasts of the *desultoria scientia* ('switch-back lore') that this attests. These too resume and implicitly revalue the negative portrayal of the flatterer-sophist, who substitutes superficial (and useless) verbal colour for real content, and who is driven into vicious inconstancy by his need to appeal to the audience of the moment.<sup>14</sup>

I have argued that, at the very beginning of the *Metamorphoses*, Apuleius is creating a character of a kind easily recognizable to an educated audience of the second century AD, and that he triggers off the necessary chain of associations by a carefully planted reminiscence of Plato's *Phaedrus*. What I do not wish to claim, however, is that awareness of this tactic solves any problems about the identity of the first speaker of the novel. The character of the sophist-flatterer is created for *whoever* it is who speaks the Prologue: Apuleius, Lucius, or yet another, anonymous party. Acknowledging its presence does not commit decisively to one or another of the possibilities explored by other contributors to this volume.<sup>15</sup> Nor does it in itself either dictate a particular reaction from a reader, or answer any questions about the 'seriousness' of Apuleius' intentions in the novel as a whole. The reader is free to react to the ingratiating come-on with suspicion as well as with delight. A tale told by a fawning sophist may still turn out to contain more than idle amusement. A character mask created at the outset can be discarded before the end.

<sup>14</sup> For these points, compare Epictetus 3. 23 and Maximus, *Oration* 25. 3, quoted above; Plato, *Gorgias* 481d–e and *Euthydemus* 288c. For the idea of the philosopher, and true *scientia* ('knowledge'), as something stable, not 'desultory,' Maximus, *Oration* 6. 4–5.

<sup>15</sup> See De Jong, Ch. 18 in this volume.

## 5

# Reflections on the African Character of Apuleius

MARK J. EDWARDS

*I hope that I may presume upon the forgiveness of the assembled Carthaginians if I do not undertake to soothe your ears with coaxing whispers. In my first four years as a graduate student I acquired the rudiments of Greek philosophy; after that, I took up Latin without a supervisor, but among the quirites of this great commonwealth I shall always be a rudis locutor. Having now for some time been a teacher of Theology, I address you in a tongue that is more exotic than forensic; and if, like Apuleius, I am forced to call you readers rather than listeners, I cannot even promise you delight.*

I flatter myself that the speaker of the Apuleian Prologue is very much in my position, since he talks as though he did not belong, yet claims by the act of writing that he does. The speaker's anonymity is not, as many say, the initial problem in the Prologue; it becomes a problem only when he moves from speech to writing, at which point he, as it were, *becomes* anonymous.<sup>1</sup> A Cicero or Demosthenes has no need to introduce himself, for how could he be making a speech at all if he were not already well known to his audience? It is only when he feels the need of access to a world that is larger than his own community that the speaker becomes an author. When the Carthaginian Apuleius embarked on writing it was time for him to forget his local patrons and dispatch his alter ego into lands that he would never dream of visiting. When an author travels

I am grateful to Andrew Laird and Ahuvia Kahane for organizing the conference; to my wife Malabika Purkayastha for many things; and to all those who have written on the Prologue, especially insofar as they have not already said what I say here.

<sup>1</sup> Thus the death of the author, foretold by Roland Barthes, is simultaneous with his birth, as Freud and Ovid knew.

in this way, his name may accompany his writings, but without television, photographs, or even printed diaries, this name will be as empty as a pseudonym or a terminal 'anon'. In the present case the speaker knows that his prologue cannot say so much to a putative audience as his presence would communicate to a real one. Apuleius cultivates notoriety in Africa, but enjoys in Rome the ambiguous fame of an absentee.

When we call Apuleius an African, do we speak of 'African Latin'?<sup>2</sup> Not if that connotes the barbarous dialect of the province, which exists indeed, but only in official documents.<sup>3</sup> 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 the 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.

It is therefore no surprise that African writers often try to be more Roman than the Romans. Minucius Felix, possibly a young contemporary of Apuleius,<sup>4</sup> sets his dialogue *Octavius* in Ostia, but this is only the base from which he plies his Ciceronian artillery against the superstitions of the capital. Posterity reserved the appellation 'Christian Cicero' for Lactantius,<sup>5</sup> a professor of Latin rhetoric who attempts to

<sup>2</sup> Powell's Ch. 3 in this volume is the latest study to accuse Apuleius of the equivalent of 'Babu English'; but I suspect that his eccentricities would have been possible anywhere in the 2nd cent., a time of many literary experiments.

<sup>3</sup> Historians are now spared the trouble of perusing the wretched appendices to Optatus' work *Against the Donatists* by my translation and commentary (Liverpool University Press, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> I am happy to follow Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* 5. 1, where Minucius is placed before Tertullian. On the controversy see Quispel (1951), Barnes (1981: 271–2).

<sup>5</sup> The *Div. Inst.* were probably written between AD 306 and 315; see Barnes



prove, with the aid of Virgil, Cicero, Lucretius, and the Sibyl, that the Church is the proper school of Roman virtue. Lactantius must have smiled to himself a little when he wrote of the demigod Hercules as 'almost African' (*quasi Africanus*).<sup>6</sup> Minucius Felix intimates both his African provenance and his Roman pedigree with a reference to Fronto, 'our fellow-citizen from Cirta'.<sup>7</sup> While Lactantius argues that the glories of the patriot are only gilded vices, his tutor Arnobius goes still further, laying at the conqueror's door the bloated myths and heinous sacrifices that the supine native offers to his gods.<sup>8</sup>

That all these men are Christians is, I think, no accident: Africans were peculiarly suited to the role of the outsider who has penetrated mysteries concealed from most insiders—the role which is for us and certain Greeks the very essence of religion. Lucius the human ass is a paradigm of such initiation by exclusion, being allowed to see and hear what would be hidden from an agent who was free to play his own part in events.<sup>9</sup> *Cupid and Psyche*, the longest of the tales that he overhears, is (in appearance) so extrinsic to the main novel that it has sometimes been regarded as the key to its decipherment.<sup>10</sup> When the ass regains his human form and becomes an initiate of new mysteries, he has to hear his own narrative implausibly retold to him by a priest.<sup>11</sup> The mysteries of Osiris in the last book seem to me to be a symbol of the death implied in every

(1973). Lactantius, who appears to have been summoned to Bithynia as a tutor by Diocletian (*Div. Inst.* 5. 2. 2), does not profess the humility of Apuleius, contending (*Proem* 10) that his experience in *suasoriae* will make him a better apologist than his Christian (and African) precursors.

<sup>6</sup> *Div. Inst.* 1. 9. I have purposely mistranslated the allusion, which is to Scipio Africanus, Hannibal's conqueror in 202 BC; he was definitely not an African.

<sup>7</sup> *Octavius* 9: *id etiam Cirtensis nostri testatur oratio* ('so too the oration of our fellow-Cirtan testifies'), where the allusion is to Fronto's polemic against the supposed immoralities of the Christians.

<sup>8</sup> On Arnobius as tutor to Lactantius, see Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus* 80; on the connivance of the Romans with barbarian cults of Africa see *Adversus Gentes* 6. 12. Simmons (1995: 47–93) prefers the Diocletianic dating for Arnobius' work, though some evidence suggests that it is as late as AD 325.

<sup>9</sup> On the advantages and disadvantages of the ass as a narrator, see most recently Fowler, Ch. 20 in this volume.

<sup>10</sup> See most recently Edwards (1992).

<sup>11</sup> See Winkler (1985: 8–11 etc.).

metamorphosis.<sup>12</sup> If the style of Apuleius' Prologue strikes some ears as hieratic,<sup>13</sup> this is surely because it is looking forward to the conclusion, where—more subtly than the Roman *vates* Ovid—he implies his own survival in a form exempt from novelty, variety, and change.<sup>14</sup>

The most inventive of the African writers is Tertullian, who has left us no *Apologia* or *Florida* to prove that he can write in a more classical idiom.<sup>15</sup> He does, however, show that he has mastered the sophist's art in his tract *On the Philosopher's Cloak* (*De Pallio*)<sup>16</sup> where, because he is a Christian, he effaces his identity behind ironic flattery of his own compatriots:

*principes semper Africae, viri Carthaginienses, vetustate nobiles, novitate felices, gaudeo vos tam prosperos temporum, cum ita vacat atque iuvat habitus denotare. (De Pallio 1. 1)*

(You who rule for ever in Africa, men of Carthage, noble in your antiquity and blessed with modern felicity, I rejoice that times are so prosperous with you, seeing that you have leisure and inclination for the criticism of fashion.)

In the *Florida* Apuleius wooed the metropolis with grateful ardour;<sup>17</sup> but Tertullian seems to hint at an antithesis between the noble past and the new felicity. The *principes* of Africa are mere princelings while the Emperor (who calls himself the *princeps*) sits in Rome. Although the world had now been made one kingdom by the force of arms, the conqueror was notoriously susceptible to the culture and religion of the conquered, and the Apuleian Prologue, with its warlike

<sup>12</sup> Apuleius, *Met.* 11. 30. Osiris is the Egyptian god of the dead: see Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* ch. 28.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. e.g. *Orphic Argonautica* 419; *Orphica* Fr. 247 Kern.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Ovid, *Met.* 15. 871–9. The proem's opening sentence recalls Ovid's first two lines.

<sup>15</sup> He is traditionally dated to AD c.160–c.240, but his works span a shorter period (c.196–212). See Barnes (1985: 30–56).

<sup>16</sup> No one who reads Tertullian will find Apuleius difficult. I quote here from the edn of A. Gerlo (1940). The translations are my own, but with substantial help from that of S. Thelwall (1870).

<sup>17</sup> See *Flor.* 18: 'You have come here in such hosts that I should rather congratulate Carthage on the number of its learned men than excuse myself, philosopher as I am, for my readiness to speak'. Here we see a philosopher who, unlike Tertullian, can defend himself without mockery of his listeners. The *glebae felices* of the Apuleian Prologue also evoke comparison with Tertullian's opening.

language, hints that it is now the turn of Africa to emulate the victories of Greece.<sup>18</sup> Tertullian conceived the Christian life as one of soldiery on a permanent campaign,<sup>19</sup> and he insinuates in the *De Pallio* that those who lack this discipline, like his countrymen in Carthage, have no choice but to succumb to the imperial machine:

*nam et arietem . . . nemini adhuc unquam libratum illa dicitur Carthago, studiis asperrima belli, prima omnium armasse in oscillum penduli impetus . . . cum tamen ultimant tempora patriae et aries iam Romana in muros quondam suos audet, stupuere illic Carthaginenses ut novum extraneum ingenium. (De Pallio 1. 3)*

(For it is that same Carthage, 'keenest in the toils of war' [*Aen.* 1. 14], that is said to have been the first of all to arm the battering ram, hitherto never poised by any, for the to-and-fro of pendulous assault . . . when, however, the country was in its last times, and the battering ram, in Rome's hands now, ventured against the walls that once had been its own, the Carthaginians there were thunderstruck, as though by some new engine from abroad.)

The *pallium* ('cloak'), too, he says, had been forgotten, though the Carthaginians used it long before the Romans brought it back to them. Now it is but one more Greek invention mastered by the Latin tongue:

*hoc pallium Graecum magis sed lingua iam penes Latium est. (De Pallio 3. 7)*

(This *pallium*, albeit rather Greek, belongs now linguistically to Latium.)

Elsewhere Tertullian tells us that that he writes both Greek and Latin.<sup>20</sup> The speaker of the Apuleian Prologue, like his African creator and their African contemporary Fronto, is distinguished by his eloquence of both languages;<sup>21</sup> and among

<sup>18</sup> In this volume Paula James (Ch. 23) and Andrew Laird (Ch. 24) have pointed out the military metaphors contained in *merui*, *aggressor*, and (in the light of *Ecl.* 1) *excolui*. Cf. Horace, *Epist.* 2. 1. 156 *Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit* ('Conquered Greece took captive her fierce conqueror').

<sup>19</sup> See esp. his *De Corona Militis*; the image can be traced to 1 Cor. 14: 8, 1 Clement 27, etc.

<sup>20</sup> See *De Corona Militis* 6, *De Baptismo* 15, and *De Virginibus Velandis* 1.

<sup>21</sup> In the case of Apuleius this can be seen in his *De Platone*, a paraphrase of the Greek *De Mundo* in which Greek terms (and even Greek neologisms) appear.

the early Christians it would seem to have been Tertullian of Carthage, with the African Pope Victor,<sup>22</sup> who first made bilinguality an instrument in the universal mission of the Church. Tertullian's peroration takes the *pallium* as its mouth-piece, without explicit reference to the trite analogies vested in the words *habitus* and *textus*,<sup>23</sup> but with a more extravagant pun that makes the cloak a metaphor for both his morals and his text:

*taceo Nerones et Apicios, Rufos. Dabo catharticum impuritati Scauri et aleae Curii et vinolentiae Antonii. et memento istos interim ex multis togatos fuisse; quales apud pallium haud facile. has purulentias civitatis quis eliciet et exvaporabit, ni sermo palliatus? (De Pallio 5. 7)*

(I say nothing of men like Nero, like Apicius, like Rufus. I shall administer a purge to the impurity of Scaurus, the dicing of Curius, and the drunkenness of Antony. And remember that these were among the many men who wore the toga; such as you will hardly find in the *pallium*. Who will lance and steam away these sores from the body politic, if not *palliative* speech?)

Tertullian, like Apuleius remains anonymous; but since this work purports to be a speech to his fellow-Africans, the secret is not his name but his profession. Only at the end does he declare himself a Christian; yet the *pallium* and the battering ram were nothing but the symbols of this recrudescing mystery, which, as he maintains elsewhere, was taught to Adam and is even now confirmed by the testimony of the soul.<sup>24</sup> He is following the usual method of the 'sacred narrative' (*hieros logos*), which is to weave a single narrative from the mass of patrimonial traditions,<sup>25</sup> and, just as Apuleius seems to possess more than one homeland or *prosapia*, the *pallium* lays claim to every land that has contributed to its fabric or its history as an article of dress:

*pro, quantum circumceavit, a Pelasgis ad Lydos, a Lydis ad Romanos, ut*

<sup>22</sup> To whom Irenaeus wrote in Latin: Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5. 24. Nevertheless he would seem to have been the first Latin-speaking Bishop of Rome.

<sup>23</sup> On *textus* see Laird (1993b), for the implied moral sense of *habitus* behind its application to a vestment see Tertullian's *De Habitu Virginum*.

<sup>24</sup> See *De Testimonio Animae*, etc.

<sup>25</sup> See e.g. Hippolytus, *Refutatio* 5. 6–10 for a Christian citation of such a text.

*ab humeris sublimioribus populi Carthaginenses complecterentur. (De Pallio 1. 2)*

(Lo, what a circuitous distance it has travelled, from Pelasgians to Lydians, from Lydians to Romans, so that the people of Carthage take their covering from more exalted shoulders!)

*Fabulam Graecanicam incipimus* ('We are embarking on a Greek story'), he might almost have said, in the manner of the Apuleian Prologue. The return to his own persona at the end of his speech is marked by the phrase *at ego*—not the mystery that it is when Apuleius uses it to introduce his prolocutor:<sup>26</sup>

*sed ista pallium loquitur. at ego iam illi etiam divinae sectae commercium confero. Gaude pallium et exsulta. melior iam te philosophia dignata est ex quo Christianos vestire coepisti. (De Pallio 6. 2)*

(Well, thus speaks the *pallium*. But I also confer on it a fellowship with a divine community and discipline. *Pallium*, be joyful and exult. Now a better philosophy has favoured you, since you have begun to be a dress for Christians.)

The orator has nonetheless implied a false antithesis between himself and the artefact that his rhetoric has personified. His *pallium* might almost be the twin of the 'speaking book' that has been proposed in a recent study as the solution to the riddle of the Apuleian Prologue.<sup>27</sup> This theory, whether wholly or (as I think) partly true,<sup>28</sup> does well to emphasize the presence of the reader and his Egyptian papyrus; the orator himself cannot ignore the instrument of his ambition. The book by its mere existence contradicts the authorial fiction of an audience; it is nonetheless the sole material substrate of that fiction, the larynx by which the African projects his voice beyond the din of one locality.

Had I space to prolong this essay, I would quote the *Apologeticum* of Tertullian, which addresses the Roman principate directly in the character of a diffident *peregrinus* ('pilgrim').<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> On the word *at* see in this volume Harrison and Winterbottom (Ch. 1), De Jong (Ch. 18), and Laird (Ch. 24), as well as the comments of Scobie (1975: ad loc.).

<sup>27</sup> See Harrison (1990).

<sup>28</sup> While scholarship has understandably ignored the principal argument of Edwards (1993), I think some pertinent points are made in the footnotes.

<sup>29</sup> As Genette says somewhere, there is always time in a footnote: *scit se peregrinam in terris agere, inter extraneos facile inimicos invenire; ceterum genus,*

But I fear that you will say that you have already heard too much of this *desultoria scientia* not only do I keep on changing horses, I have introduced new mounts in an already crowded race. Let me switch my saddle one more time, to recall the opening page of Plato's greatest dialogue, where Socrates, of all men, is impatient to attend the equestrian festival of Bendis.<sup>30</sup> Whether this Thracian goddess is another form of Isis is a question for Apuleius, not for us; but I suspect that, if our goal is to elucidate his Prologue, it will be attainable only for those riders who, like the couriers of Bendis, are prepared to risk a somersault as they pass the sacred torch from hand to hand.

*sedem, spem, gratiam, dignitatem in caelis habere* ('The church knows that she is a pilgrim on earth, that she easily finds enemies among those alien to her, that she has another race, seat, hope, grace and dignity in the heavens').

<sup>30</sup> *Republic* 327a–328a. Proclus, *In Rem Publicam* vol. 1 pp. 18–19 maintains that Bendis is equivalent to Artemis and that her feast represents the soul in an ordered state, although not yet released from generation.

## 6

# The Hiding Author: Context and Implication

SIMON SWAIN

### I

It is perfectly normal for literary works to begin without a reference to their author. The author's name should already be known to the reader or hearer from the usual devices (title and opening, roll-label, catalogue entry, etc.). However, despite the best of intentions, text and author's name can easily become parted; worse, supposititious texts undermine our trust in what any name tells us. Most ancient *anonymi* are due to a simple loss of paratextual guides. Pseudepigraphy, on the other hand, discloses behaviour which is all too human: inferiors using the safety net of a grand reputation; an intention to injure; editorial innocence or confusion. Moreover, there were many ancient texts that stayed deliberately quiet about their owners. The writer of the *Augustan History* assembled an array of disguises, and remained anonymous. Perhaps we should classify him with authors whose texts contained provocative or politically sensitive material like Anaximenes' *Tricaranos*, the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, or the so-called *Old Oligarch*. In such cases no information was given, and no one stepped forward to claim ownership. In the case of other works—and this is the category which is of interest here—the author wanted to be known but played hard to get with the reader. Here the text's authority has never been in doubt, and it was never intended that it should be; but the information provided by the writer is at best economical, at worse misleading (and irritating).

Refusals to identify oneself normally may be far from modest, if it is assumed that people will know who you are. Not

I should like to thank the editors of this volume for their work and their forbearance.

having to tell them is one of the ultimate privileges, and one which members of the ancient book writing class would therefore have found congenial. An author can overtly refuse to be known to his audience only because he is already known to all of them, is perfectly aware of this, and is confident that he has given out enough information to allow them to know. We see the sliding and hiding of a tyrant mind which delights in dissimulating its own textual power, because it can afford to do so.

In the second century AD by far and away the most conceited stance of this sort is taken by Arrian of Nicomedia in the 'second' preface of his history of Alexander, the *Anabasis Alexandri* (quoted below). The Prologue of Apuleius of Madauros' *Metamorphoses* (1. 1) with its playful *quis ille?* and its false—or true—information so confidentially disclosed to the reader again masks an author's total pleasure in himself and his creation—the more successfully, in fact, because Apuleius combines his concealment with the sense of fun and irony that is the province of a man who can afford a certain amount of self-deprecation.

## II

Arrian is a valid subject of comparison with Apuleius for two reasons. First is the cultural-political fame he enjoyed in his lifetime.<sup>1</sup> Second is the fact that he retired to Athens about 140. On the basis of the information given in the *Apology*, Apuleius himself must have been studying there in the later 140s and early to mid-150s. Given his own interest in Alexander (*Flor.* 7), he could hardly have been unaware of Arrian's new *Anabasis* and he could hardly have failed to notice that text's arrogant anonymity.

Arrian's game gives us a sense of what is at stake when an author 'hides'. The title of his history, the *Anabasis*, is already a hint for those in the know, for it contains a reference to his assumed identity or—if it is not Arrian's own title—at least reflects others' knowledge of this. Like other members of the Greek elite at this time, Arrian grounded his personal and his public cultural-political self in the free world of classical

<sup>1</sup> See Ameling (1984) for discussion of the epigraphical record; in general Stadter (1980).



Greece. His interests in philosophy, history, hunting, and warfare had been conveniently assembled in that age in the person of Xenophon, and Arrian plainly came to think of himself as a re-embodiment of his famous predecessor. Xenophon's name is employed in several of his works in place of his own. Indeed, one of his books, the *Treatise on Hunting with Dogs*, bears the same title as a work attributed to his intellectual forebear, the *Cynegeticus* (an attribution never questioned in the ancient world). Here Arrian's imitation of Xenophon's life and language is global, a total 'mapping' of one text on to another. The relationship is what Riffaterre and Genette have called 'hypertextuality', a term which refers to the thoroughgoing imitation of one text (the 'hypotext') by another, later one (the 'hypertext').<sup>2</sup> This well characterizes the link between Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and its own supposed Greek 'original', the lost *Metamorphoses* which Photius attributed to the unknown Lucius of Patrai and which survives epitomized (so most would say) in *Lucius or Ass*.<sup>3</sup>

In his *Treatise on Hunting with Dogs* Arrian's mapping on to Xenophon is in subject, language, and style. The self-consciousness of the operation extends to the interleaving of personality. Arrian distinguishes himself as 'Xenophon' (1. 4, 16. 6, 22. 1) from 'that Xenophon' (16. 7, 21. 2, etc.; cf. *Periplus* 1. 1, 2. 3, and 12. 5, 25. 1 'the elder Xenophon'). In the *Anabasis* Xenophontic influence is still present—in the language, in the type of subject, and—perhaps—in the title. But here Arrian is specifically rewriting two earlier accounts of Alexander by Ptolemy son of Lagus and Aristobulus son of Aristobulus. This hypertextuality involves rewriting the hypotexts in a better style, which 'deforms' them. Arrian is not able to pass for Xenophon directly. Nor does he want to, for a little way into the work he tells us that he does not have to say who he is:

As to who I am to make this judgement about myself [i.e. that I am qualified to write this work], I do not have to record my name (for it is not at all unknown among men) nor what my fatherland is nor my

<sup>2</sup> Riffaterre (1979 and 1983), Genette (1982).

<sup>3</sup> Photius, *Library* cod. 129, 96b. As Winkler (1985: 252–6), and others have observed, it is most likely that Photius conjured 'Lucius of Patrai' out of the text itself.

family nor if indeed I have held any office in my own land; but I do record this, that fatherland, family, and offices are found for me in these stories and have been from my youth. And for this reason I do not think I am unworthy of the first place in the Greek language, as Alexander was in arms. (1. 12. 5)<sup>4</sup>

The hints of a connection between Arrian's chosen anonymity and Homer's (1. 12. 1–2), a conceit also used by the lost second-century historian Cephalion of Argos (Photius, *Library* cod. 68, 34a14–16), simply makes his dissimulation all the worse. For what is at stake for Arrian is the recognition that he occupies pole position in the cultural premier league. The effectiveness of his claim depends on him being easily identifiable by readers without having to state who he is.

Arrian was relying not only on his cultural-political fame, but also on the stylistic hallmarks which allow readers to solve the puzzle an author has put to them. Stylistic identification, the standard procedure for unsure editors ancient and modern, was evidently a crucial part of the ancients' control over the circulation of texts.<sup>5</sup> The problem of identification and the business of naming or not naming oneself becomes acute in a relationship of a hypertextual kind. The author of a hypertext has to work harder to prove his originality. The obsessive atticist Arrian is obviously not Ptolemy or Aristobulus, even though he is following their narratives closely, because he overturns their 'Hellenistic' style; but in a treatise on canine hunting which closely imitates Xenophon he might just *be* Xenophon. Perhaps this is why Arrian keeps himself as 'Xenophon' apart from the real Xenophon in the *Cynegeticus*.

Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* has a comparably close relationship

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Aristides' dream in the *Sacred Tales*, 'I conjectured that both of us had reached the top, [Alexander] in the power of arms, I in the power of words' (*Or.* 50. 49).

<sup>5</sup> Thus Galen (a contemporary of Apuleius) assures us in his magisterial *On the Method of Healing* that he had never written his own name on any of his writings and had asked his pupils to refrain from doing so (10. 457. 15–458. 1, trans. Kühn (1830)). In another late work, *On his Own Books*, he delights in recalling how medical students at Rome were unsure about a book inscribed 'Galen, M.D.', because their impoverished education did not allow them to realize it was not in his style; luckily a *philologos* put them right after reading the opening two lines (19. 8–9, trans. Kühn (1830) 'it is not in Galen's style; this book has been falsely inscribed').

with its hypotext. Despite the change of language from Greek to Latin and the additional last book with its salvationist religious message, subject matter and form, structure and pace in the two stories, are undeniably close.<sup>6</sup> Thus the question, *quis ille?*, is rather important. The *Metamorphoses* is hypertextual in form and mode. Genette observes that hypertextual mimesis is ideally suited for fiction. For the secondary text—the hypertext—cannot be ‘factual’, even if the primary text was. This is true, for example, of all Alexander-histories, including Arrian’s (and is a very real and barely confronted problem for modern historians of Alexander). Hypertextuality also favours the dramatic mode of representation as opposed to that of the authorial narrator. This is again the case with the *Metamorphoses*, with its sophisticated narrator-cum-character. But the question why an author imitates another so completely is one that cannot be answered by literary theory. An outsider can easily see the point and the profit of imitating Xenophon or Homer; but it is less easy to see why one would choose Lucius of Patrai, who was hardly famous and who wrote a text with a deeply equivocal status (a matter which cannot be pursued here). We surmise that Apuleius rewrote the *Ass* because he liked the story, found it funny, saw its metaphysical possibilities—or whatever. But in addition—and this is crucial—the *Ass* allowed him to parade his bilingualism and biculturalism. This aspect has not attracted much scholarly interest because the meanings and contexts of ancient bilingualism have not.<sup>7</sup> Yet Apuleius laid great emphasis on demonstrating his possession of the classical Greek language and classical Greek culture.

This demonstration functioned wholly within contemporary Latin culture. For the Roman elite the ability to speak Greek was considered vital. More important still was the appreciation of written Greek in prose and poetry and the ability to reproduce this in Latin. These two bilingualisms should not be confused, nor of course do they have anything to do with

<sup>6</sup> Scholarly views on the relationship are catalogued by Mason (1994). Change of language is not such a problem: think e.g. of Joyce’s *Ulysses* and Homer’s *Odyssey*, or, with Apuleius in mind, of the multilingual descendants of the Spanish picaresque novel.

<sup>7</sup> Some very good work on this and related areas notwithstanding: e.g. Kaimio (1979), Leiwo (1995), Adams (1994); and a series of articles by Dubuisson, esp. (1992) but see also (1991).

community-wide bilingualisms. For the Roman elite speaking Greek was itself more than a merely technical accomplishment. Communication in Greek was essential for the government of the eastern half of the Empire. It was perhaps fashionable among the Romans themselves as a 'language of intimacy' (though it is unclear to what extent).<sup>8</sup> For *Hochkultur* literary Greek must be mastered. Again, this was not some academic matter confined to the belletristic enjoyment of nice poems. Literary bilingualism had a firm ideological value. This lay in its promise of demonstrating Rome's cultural parity with Greece, or, rather indeed, the Romans' cultural superiority over the Greeks inasmuch as Romans felt they possessed both the cultures. All ideologies have their weak points, and the problem with this one was its acknowledgement that the Greeks had set the standard of what culture was—a truly ineluctable stumbling block. In this regard, though, the *Ass* story (to come back to Apuleius) had a most important advantage over classical Greek texts (or contemporary Greek texts which imitated the classics).<sup>9</sup> It may be argued that distinguishing features of the tale and its cultural context allowed Apuleius to avoid selling his bilingualism short. For with the *Ass* he could take over a Greek text without exposing his Latin to the usual danger of inadvertently acknowledging the Greeks' superiority.

### III

To understand all this we must understand the dominant form of prose fiction in Greek at this time, the so-called 'ideal' Greek novel, a genre to which the *Ass* is itself often assigned. It is my belief, as I have argued at length elsewhere,<sup>10</sup> that these texts may be read—should be read—as acts of 'legitimation'. I am not forgetting that they are works of entertainment. But I am pointing out that they also encode key emotive responses of their readers and authors. The young couple are always members of the urban aristocracy. Their adventures valorize the civic ideal, and not the least part of this is the stress on

<sup>8</sup> The phrase is borrowed from the famous but brief treatment of Pabón (1939).

<sup>9</sup> I can, however, think of no case of the translation of contemporary (pagan) Greek literature into Latin.

<sup>10</sup> Swain (1996: 101 ff.).

married life which was given a new prominence in this era of the greatest urbanization known in ancient times.<sup>11</sup> More than this, in the world of the novels Greeks pretended that Rome does not exist—a striking elision of an unpalatable fact.

We have many fragments of Greek novels. It is reasonable to hold that most of them do not depart from the format of the five complete texts known to us (*Chaereas and Callirhoe*, *Daphnis and Chloe*, *Leucippe and Clitophon*, *The Ephesian Tale*, *The Ethiopian Tale*). There is in fact only one text which does depart from this format: *Lucius or Ass*. This ribald story of Lucius' transformation into an ass and his subsequent lowlife adventures actively subverts the values of the other novels. Like Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, the *Ass* revels in magic and sex and there is little hint of romantic love. Further, and most interestingly, it combines this 'negative' ethics with an explicitly contemporary setting in the Roman province of Macedonia.<sup>12</sup> The realism of the background is all part of the discomfort of the hero, who is an author and friend of sophists (2. 55) and a Roman citizen (16. 55). In fact he probably *is* a Roman (rather than a Greek *civis*), since he and his brother bear different *praenomina* but 'have the other two names in common' (55)—we would expect Greek *cives* brothers to share a *praenomen*.<sup>13</sup> In this and other respects, then, the legitimating aim is not in sight.

It is hardly surprising that so tightly rule-bound a culture as the Greek world of the second century met with challenges, denials, and laughter. Lucian's 'serious laughter' at Greek culture (to use Eunapius' description) is a good example of how one author reveals his ambiguous relationship with the Greek elite and the contradictions he was forced into by accepting their very peculiar self-identity. Among the novelists Achilles Tatius certainly knows how to have fun by pushing at the rules which determine the genre (though there is no reason to think he is breaking them—challenges often turn out to be remarkably validating). What is surprising is that among surviving

<sup>11</sup> Marriage: cf. the collection of essays in Pomeroy (1998).

<sup>12</sup> The date is probably early to mid-2nd cent. AD.

<sup>13</sup> This accords with his origin from Patrae, a Roman *colonia* of the Augustan period. The onomastic information Lucius gives is not quite as 'annoying' (Laird 1990: 157) as it seems.

literary texts it is the *Ass* alone which opts out to so great an extent. In this regard the language of the *Ass* is highly significant. It is written in the educated standard *koine* which developed in the Hellenistic period, and shows no sign of puristic treatment. The Hellenistic standard continued in use for general everyday purposes and in scientific or philosophic contexts which did not call for atticism. But there is no evidence that it enjoyed ‘covert prestige’, i.e. that literary writers used it instead of a Greek that was atticizing in aim or effect (like academics affecting working-class accents). The language of the *Ass* thus complements its ethical and moral content.

In using this tale (or a version of it) Apuleius was using a story that was not as Greek as it might appear, a story that would not appeal to Roman philhellenes’ ideas of what was worth imitating in Greek literature. With it he could stake a claim to be known because of his pre-eminence in Roman culture, a pre-eminence that depended on knowing all about Greek (the *sine qua non*)—without it being likely that anyone would rumble how he was doing it. At the end of his first chapter Apuleius describes his book by saying, *fabulam Graecanicam incipimus*. The new Loeb of Hanson takes *Graecanicam* as ‘Greekish’ (replacing Adlington’s ‘Grecian’). Really, though, the word is impossible to render in English for the good reason that this is one of very many cases where we do not distinguish the ethnic adjective (‘a Greek woman’) from the ktetic adjective (‘a Greek yoghurt made in Birmingham’). Latin had the same problem, especially with ethnics ending in ‘-cus’.<sup>14</sup> As Dubuisson has pointed out, in such cases Latin authors might add suffixes to avoid potential ambiguity, especially in technical contexts. The suffix *-anicus* is one of these and is designed to accord *Graecus* the ktetic sense (Varro, *Latin Language* 10. 70–1 is a good example of the distinction).<sup>15</sup> In English we translate *Graecanicam* as ‘Greek’; but we would do better to use a phrase like ‘Greek in form’. That, however, takes us only so far. Dubuisson (1991) explores the double work done by *Graecus* and its derivatives. What he shows

<sup>14</sup> See Fruyt (1986: 61 ff., esp. 66–7); Dubuisson (1991: 319–20 n. 31).

<sup>15</sup> *quod adventicia pleraque habemus Graeca, secutum ut de nothis Graecanicos quoque nominatus plurimos haberemus, etc.*

conclusively is that this adjective is unique among ethnics for serving also as a pejorative description by Romans of Romans or things Roman. That is, independent of its ethnic designation it could function as a general term of moral disapprobation (as 'African' or 'Gallic' could not). There is no reason to think that the ktetic form was less extensive in its semantic range. At *Metamorphoses* 1. 1 the form of *Graecanicam* is technically correct for the noun it qualifies. The 'story', if we pay attention to the adjective, is not Greek but Roman pretending to be Greek, Roman claiming cultural pre-eminence because it had subsumed Greek. This is one level of meaning. The other can be understood against this chapter's interplay of the Roman and the non-Roman. The speaker apologizes for the non-Roman physical origin of the book ('if only you will not begrudge looking at Egyptian papyrus inscribed with the sharpness of a reed from the Nile') and for Greek culture (or ancestry). He boasts of having acquired an education in Greek before Latin. In this context *Graecanicam* calls attention in general to the moral dangers associated with *Graecus* and its derivatives, and in particular to something authors less secure in their Roman-Greek culture would have left unsaid: the difficult relationship between Latin literature and its Greek 'foster-parent'.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> To use Aristides' ambiguous characterization of the relationship between the Antonine Empire and the Greeks at *To Rome* 96—elsewhere *tropheus* is used of his old family servants (Behr 1968: 8–9).





# Intertexts



## *Argutia Nilotici Calami:* A Theocritean Reed?

BRUCE GIBSON

The Prologue to the *Metamorphoses* highlights the contrast between speech and writing.<sup>1</sup> The opening sentence expresses the intention to soothe the listener's ears (*avesque tuas beniuolas lepido susurro permulceam*), a process which is, however, conditional on a visual act of reading (*modo si papyrus Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam non spreueris inspicere*). Similarly, at the end of the Prologue reference is made both to a *locutor* and to a *lector*.

The conditional conclusion to the opening sentence is important. It establishes a reciprocal relation between the speaker and the reader. Our ears will be charmed, but only if we attend to the written words. Similarly, at the end of the Prologue: *lector intende: laetaberis*. The translation of *intende* as 'pay attention' (by Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume) does justice to the wide and therefore ambiguous range of meaning possessed by *intendo*. Here the intransitive usage of *intendo* seems to refer to the process of devoting mental energy to an exercise,<sup>2</sup> which could denote the process of listening or reading.<sup>3</sup>

I am grateful to Donald Hill, Andrew Laird, and Ahuvia Kahane for their encouragement and comments on earlier versions of this article.

<sup>1</sup> For a full exposition of the respective elements of this dichotomy see Kahane, Ch. 21 in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> OLD s.v. *intendo* 11.

<sup>3</sup> Kahane, Ch. 21 in this volume, sees *intende* as lying on the written side of the divide between written and oral discourse. Despite such parallels as Pliny, *Epist.* 8. 19. 2 *nunc intende libro quem cum hac epistula accipies* ('now pay attention to the book which you will receive with this letter'), it is worth noting that *intendo* can be used transitively in contexts referring either to the ears or to the eyes, as at e.g. Ovid, *Ex Ponto* 4. 4. 36 *intendent aures ad tua verba suas* ('let them direct their ears to your words'), and Pliny, *Paneg.* 62. 9 *huic aures, huic*

Since there is such a rich concentration of material alluding both to the spoken and to the written word, creating uncertainties as to the work's status, it is worth drawing attention to a single phrase which, I would argue, simultaneously contains elements of both speech and writing. The phrase in question is the description of the work as a *papyrus Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam*. This phrase has typically been interpreted as referring only to writing materials. I hope, however, to draw attention to possible auditory elements in the phrase, and to suggest an allusive connexion between Theocritus and the Prologue to the *Metamorphoses*, a connexion which establishes an important *formal* parallel between the use of unidentified first person narrators in both Theocritus and Apuleius.

The papyrus is *argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam* ('inscribed with the sharpness of a reed from the Nile'). It is striking that the phrase contains not one but two words which may possess more than one meaning here. Harrison and Winterbottom translate *argutia* as 'sharpness', referring to the sharpened end of a reed used for transferring ink to the papyrus, but *argutia* can mean more than this. As Harrison points out, "'argutia", verbal wit, is a virtue for Apuleius as for Cicero'.<sup>4</sup> The word thus punningly draws attention to physical and metaphorical sharpness:<sup>5</sup> the papyrus was inscribed by a sharp pen, and possesses the 'sharpness' of verbal wit. If there is a pun in *argutia*, it is worth considering another possibility—that *argutia*, like its cognate adjective *argutus*, could refer to clarity of sound.

Though the *OLD* associates *argutia* (or *argutiae*) not with

*oculos intende* ('to this direct your ears and eyes'). Direction of attention via either the eyes or ears is appropriate to either reading or listening. The comments of Winkler (1985: 158) on the effects of an oral performance of the *Met.* to another listener are worth noting. Discussing *Met.* 10. 7 *quae plane comperi, ad istas litteras proferam* ('what I discovered clearly, I will bring it to this text'), he remarks that 'Even a person listening to another read is made to think at that moment of the actual conditions of performance, rather than of the shared illusion of an imagined live narrator named Lucius.' See also Fowler, Ch. 20 in this volume.

<sup>4</sup> Harrison (1990: 510 with n. 12).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Molt (1938: 23): *acuto calamo, quo subtiliter eleganterque de uemustis rebus scribitur* ('with a sharp pen, with which one writes with subtlety and elegance about charming matters').

sound but with cleverness of expression or refinement, there are two instances of the noun where an auditory element seems hard to deny.<sup>6</sup> The first occurs in the agricultural writer Columella, in a passage on the correct placement of beehives (9. 5. 6):

*nec minus uidentur cauae rupes aut uallis argutiae, quas Graeci uocant ἠχοῦς.*

(No less are hollow rocks and the *resonances* [*argutiae*] of a valley (which the Greeks call ‘echoes’) to be avoided.)

So simple a sound as an echo can hardly be characterized by cleverness or adroitness. *argutiae* here refers to clarity of sound, and not to complexity of expression.<sup>7</sup>

My second example is less decisive, but does at least occur in an auditory context. Pliny, in his *Natural History* (10. 81–5), discusses nightingales and their remarkable song, which is at its peak in a period of fifteen days. Afterwards there is a gradual decline (10. 85):

*sed hae tantae tamque artifices argutiae a XV diebus paulatim desinunt, nec ut fatigatas possis dicere aut satiatas.*

(But these *expressions* [*argutiae*], so great and so artistic, cease little by little after the fifteen days, but not so that you could say that they were exhausted or sated.)

Here *argutiae* could, one must concede, refer to the adroitness of the nightingale’s song, whose qualities Pliny has just recounted. An opposing case might be made by appealing to *tamque artifices* and not *argutiae* as Pliny’s characterization of the complexity and adroitness of the song of the nightingale, so that *argutiae* would then refer simply to sound. But on either interpretation, this is an example where *argutiae* is used in

<sup>6</sup> Both of the examples in question are cited in *OLD* s.v. *argutiae* under its first heading, ‘Cleverness in the use of words, adroitness of expression’. The other three basic headings of meaning given are ‘Verbal trickery, sophistry’; ‘Jesting, plesantries, wit’; ‘Delicacy, refinement’. Cf. *TLL* II. 555. 49–64 s.v. *argutiae*.

<sup>7</sup> Compare the equivalent passage of Virgil’s *Georg.* (4. 48–50) where volume, rather than complexity, of sound is at issue: . . . *neu crede paludi, | aut ubi odor caeni grauis aut ubi concaua pulsus | saxa sonant uocisque offensa resultat imago* (‘Do not trust the marsh, or a place where there is the heavy odour of mud or where hollow rocks resound and the reflected echo of the voice reverberates’).

an auditory context. This seems to warrant the search for an auditory reference in Apuleius' *argutia calami*.

It is also worth considering the ramifications of *calami*, which here denotes a reed used as a pen. *calamus*, however, can also mean a reed pipe, and often appears in poetic contexts<sup>8</sup>. In the plural the word is particularly associated with the pipes of Pan (see e.g. Lucretius 4. 586–9).

One passage offers us an interesting juxtaposition of the adjective *argutus* with *calami*. In the *Punica*, Silius describes (13. 314–47) how Jove sent Pan to save the defeated citizens of Capua by instilling feelings of mercy in the hearts of the victorious Romans. His task complete, the god returns to his familiar haunts (13. 343–7):

*hic, postquam mandata dei perfecta malamque  
sedauit rabiem et permulsit corda furentum,  
Arcadiae uolucris saltus et amata reuisit  
Maenala, ubi, argutis longe de uertice sacro  
dulce sonans calamis, ducit stabula omnia cantu.*

(He, after the god's orders had been accomplished and after he had calmed their evil frenzy and had soothed the hearts of the raging Romans, returns swiftly to the tracts of Arcadia and his beloved Maenalus. Here, making sweet music on his *clear-sounding reeds* [*argutis . . . calamis*] far and wide from the sacred summit he leads all the herds with his song.)

This passage, noted by Kahane, Chapter 21 in this volume, is a striking parallel for Apuleius' *argutia calami*. Taken together, it is not unreasonable to allow both *argutia* and *calami* to have an additional signification associated with sound, particularly in a passage which draws attention to the distinction between speech and writing.

A reference to a reed pipe, a *calamus*, might appear surprising at the outset of a prose work.<sup>9</sup> In the remainder of this chapter, I shall argue that if *papyrus Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam* can legitimately be regarded as alluding to

<sup>8</sup> Cf. e.g. Virgil, *Ecl.* 1. 10 *ludere quae uellem calamo permisit agresti* ('He permitted me to play what I wanted on my rustic pipe').

<sup>9</sup> Note that there were Renaissance readings of the *Metamorphoses* as a mixed composition of verse and prose with a verse prologue (Carver, Ch. 15 in this volume). The only other instance of *calamus* (11. 9) in the *Met.* also has this meaning: votive musicians use the instrument to play a traditional melody in honour of Serapis.

the sound of a reed pipe, then such an allusion could be a reference to Theocritus, an author who generated much interest in the second century<sup>10</sup> and whose works Apuleius claims to have known in a passage of literary snobbery in the *Apology*.<sup>11</sup> In the case of the Prologue to the *Metamorphoses* such an allusion is functional and not merely erudite or decorative.

The very first sentence of the *Metamorphoses* opens with a hint at Theocritus. The Prologue speaker offers to soothe the audience's ears with a *lepido susurro* (an 'agreeable whispering') (Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume).<sup>12</sup> This evokes another opening, the opening of the first *Idyll* of Theocritus (*Id.* 1. 1–3):

Ἄδύ τι τὸ ψιθύρισμα καὶ ἄ πίτυς, αἰπόλε, τήγνα  
 ἄ ποτὶ ταῖς παραῖσι, μελίσσεται, ἄδῦ δὲ καὶ τὴ  
 συρίσδες· μετὰ Πᾶνα τὸ δεύτερον ἄθλον ἀποισῆ

(That pine tree, the one by the springs, makes a sweet whispering,

<sup>10</sup> On Theocritus in the 2nd cent. AD see Gow (1950: vol. i, pp. lxxxiii–lxxxiii), Effe (1982: 72–5). For Theocritus and Longus, see Walsh (1970: 33), Hunter (1983), Bowie (1985).

<sup>11</sup> Apuleius, *Apol.* 30 *memorassem tibi etiam Theocriti parva et alia Homeri et Orphei plurima, et ex comoediis et tragoediis Graecis et ex historiis multa repetiissem, ni te dudum animaduertissem Graecam Pudentillae epistulam legere nequiuisset* ('I would even have reminded you of similar passages from Theocritus and others from Homer and many from Orpheus, and I would have looked for many from Greek comedies and tragedies and historiography, if I had not for a long time realized that you were unable to read the Greek letter of Pudentilla').

<sup>12</sup> It should be remembered that beguiling whisperings are not always agreeable. Cf. e.g. Ovid, *Met.* 12. 61 (the home of Fama) *dubioque auctore Susurri*, 'Whisperings of uncertain origin', and Pliny, *Paneg.* 62. 9 *huic aures, huic oculos intende: ne respexeris clandestinas existimationes nullisque magis quam audientibus insidiantes susurros* ('To this direct your ears and eyes: do not take notice of secret opinions and whisperings that are treacherous to no one more so than those who listen to them'), from a passage on the need not to give heed to the deceptions of individuals; in Apuleius note also Cupid succumbing to Psyche's requests (*Met.* 5. 6) *ut ac potestate Venerii susurris inuitus succubuit maritus . . .* ('through the force and power of love's whispering the unwilling husband succumbed'), where *Venerii susurris* is, however, an emendation of the reading of the principal MS (F), *ueneris usurus*. Quite apart from the possibly dangerous implications of *lepido susurro* in the phrase *aresque tuas beniuolas lepido susurro permulceam*, compare also the insidious qualities of *permulceo* at Quintilian, *Inst.* 2. 12. 6: *nihilque aliud quam quod uel prauis uoluptatibus aures adsistentium permulceat quaerunt* ('they seek nothing else apart from what can soothe the ears of those who are present with even base pleasures').

goatherd, and you make sweet music on your pipes; after Pan you will take the second prize.)

Both works open with gentle whisperings,<sup>13</sup> the rustling of a pine tree (which is itself compared to the sweet sound of *Pan-pipes*) in Theocritus, and the *lepido susurro*, with which the speaker of the Prologue offers to soothe the ears. The reference to soothing the ears enhances the musical and auditory tinge of the phrase *argutia Nilotici calami*.<sup>14</sup> One may further compare a later passage in the *Metamorphoses* where a reed (here *harundo*) appears specifically in the context both of soothing and of music. At *Metamorphoses* 6. 11 Venus gives Psyche instructions to gather wool from golden sheep grazing by a river. In the following chapter Psyche is urged not to kill herself and given advice by a reed on the riverbank.<sup>15</sup> The reed is introduced as follows (*Met.* 6. 12):

*perrexit Psyche uolenter non obsequium quidem illa functura, sed requiem  
malorum praecipitio fluuiialis rupis habitura. sed inde de fluuio musicae  
suauiis nutricula leni crepitu dulcis aurae diuinitus inspirata sic  
uaticinatur harundo uiridis:*

(Psyche set out willingly, not indeed to accomplish her order, but to seek a respite from her sufferings through a descent from a rock by the river. But then from the river there prophesied in this way a green reed, the source of gentle music, divinely inspired by the soothing rustling of the sweet air:)

The reed is identified with music, and with soothing qualities (*suauiis, leni, dulcis*), appropriately, since it consoles Psyche and dissuades her from suicide.

Next, the strangely tautologous references to Egypt in

<sup>13</sup> Note that Theocritus, *Id.* 1. 1 is adduced as a parallel by Gwyn Griffith (1975: 171) on *Met.* 11. 7 *arbores . . . clementi motu bracchiorum dulces strepitus obsibilabant* ('The trees . . . with gentle movement of their branches sighed with sweet sounds').

<sup>14</sup> For the contrast between *susurro* and *argutia* see Smith (1972: 515).

<sup>15</sup> Compare the parallel scene at *Met.* 5. 25. Psyche unsuccessfully attempts to kill herself in a river but is soothed by the god Pan: *hircuosus deus sauciam Psychen atque defectam, utcumque casus eius non inscius, clementer ad se uocatam sic permulcet uerbis lenientibus* ('The goat-like god, not unaware of her situation, gently calls the stricken and weary Psyche to him and soothes her in this way with consoling words'). Parallelism between the tale of Cupid and Psyche and Lucius' spiritual journey is argued for by Walsh (1970: 190-3).



*papyrus Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam*. Such emphasis on Egypt at the outset of the *Metamorphoses* is at first sight puzzling. Certainly it is true that papyrus and reeds both come from Egypt.<sup>16</sup> However, with a text as allusive as the *Metamorphoses*, it seems unlikely that the duplication is merely a statement of the obvious; one might expect papyrus and a reed pen to have Egyptian origins. It has been argued that the references anticipate the novel's Isiac conclusion and content, although such a deduction is difficult for a reader confronted by the Prologue for the first time.<sup>17</sup> But there is another possible explanation for the Egyptian references: an Egyptian mode of composition could suggest Theocritus, a poet of Alexandria.<sup>18</sup>

The argument depends on certain formal similarities between Apuleius and Theocritus, similarities which may be relevant to one of the most vexed issues in discussion of the Prologue, the identity of the work's speaker, the *ego* of the novel's opening phrase.<sup>19</sup> The identity of the opening *ego* is uncertain, and, as is well known, the novel confusingly combines aspects both of the character Lucius and of Apuleius; the most obvious is the unexpected reference in *Metamorphoses* 11. 27 to Madauros, the home town not of Lucius, whose *prosapia* in the Prologue is said to be Athens, Corinth, and Sparta, but of Apuleius.<sup>20</sup> Some scholars have usefully drawn attention to the

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Pliny, *NH* 16. 157; Harrison (1990: 510).

<sup>17</sup> See e.g. Grimal (1971: 343), Smith (1972: 514–15 with n. 4), Winkler (1985: 186): 'It is certainly true that *Aegyptiam* can mean nothing definite to a first-reader, expect perhaps to indicate that the composer is not embarrassed to state the obvious. It is equally true that the second-reader must find *Aegyptiam* a startling word that cries out to be connected with the appearance of the great Egyptian goddess as the ass' saviour and lifelong patron at the end. I take this to be another instance of pointing at the meaning but missing the point, a hermeneutic trick that only a second-reader can fully appreciate.'

<sup>18</sup> Powell, Ch. 3 in this volume, notes the speaker's 'insistence on the Hellenistic origins of the papyrus through which he speaks to us'. Might Apuleius' phrase *Nilotici calami* also suggest some of the qualities of the *calamus odoratus* ('sweet flag'), referred to by Celsus 5. 24. 1 as *calamus Alexandrinus*? On *calamus odoratus* see Theophrastus, *de odoribus* 25, 33, 34; Dioscorides 1. 17; Pliny, *NH* 12. 104–6, 14. 92; Miller (1969: 92–4).

<sup>19</sup> The phrase *quis ille?* draws attention to the mysterious identity of the speaker, as noted by Winkler (1985: 195). *Quis ille?* is usually seen as the listener's interruption. See also Dowden (1982: 428).

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. Smith (1972: 530–4), Winkler (1985: 128–9). Van der Paardt (1981) conveniently summarizes various approaches to the problem.

similarities between Apuleius' Prologue and the prologues to Plautine plays, where the speaker of the prologue speaks as a member of the troupe of actors, before becoming one of the characters in the play.<sup>21</sup>

But Theocritus too, I would suggest, can be invoked in discussions of the first person speaker in the Prologue. This is because Theocritus is also the author of a work where there is an ambiguous relationship between author and character. I am referring to *Idyll 7*. *Idyll 7* opens with a narrative in the first person, by a character whose identity is revealed only when Lycidas addresses him as Simichidas (*Id.* 7. 21). There is thus an initial uncertainty in the poem, until Simichidas is addressed. Even then, there is a much larger concern as to the identity of Simichidas, who is in some ways similar to Theocritus.<sup>22</sup> The scholiasts on the argument to *Idyll 7* make the assumption that the poem is about Theocritus, because of the references to Eucritus, Amyntas, Phrasidamus, and Antigenes, all of whom, they allege, were friends of Theocritus.<sup>23</sup> One remark in the scholia is of interest (*Σ Id.* 7 *arg.* c *προλογίζει ὁ Θεόκριτος*, 'Theocritus speaks as a prologue'), since it seems to imply that the opening reminiscence is in some sense a prologue, and different from the main body of the poem.<sup>24</sup>

In fact, the identification of Simichidas with Theocritus was not universal: the scholiast on *Idyll 7*. 21 reports a discordant view that Simichidas was not Theocritus but one of his friends.<sup>25</sup> The scholiast's discussion of the uncertain identity of

<sup>21</sup> See e.g. Smith (1972: 516, 519–20), Dowden (1982: 428), Winkler (1985: 200–3), Dowden, Ch. 12 in this volume.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Bowie (1985: 68): 'It appears, then, that Simichidas both is and is not Theocritus, and that his name Simichidas has been deliberately held back to allow the presumption to develop that the narrator is Theocritus himself.'

<sup>23</sup> The Theocritean scholia are found in Wendel (1914). See also Gow (1950: vol. i, pp. lxxx–lxxxiv).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Lawall (1967: 79) for discussion of the relationship between *ἑγών* (*Id.* 7. 1 and 131) and the name Simichidas.

<sup>25</sup> *Σ Id.* 7.21a *Σιμιχίδα*: οἱ μὲν αὐτὸν φασὶ Θεόκριτον, καθὸ Σιμίχον ἦν υἱὸς ἢ καθὸ σιμὸς ἦν. οἱ δὲ ἕτερόν τινα τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ οὐ Θεόκριτον διὰ τὸ 'Σιμιχίδα μὲν Ἔρωτες ἐπέπταρον' (v. 96). φασὶ δὲ τὸν τοιοῦτον †ἀπὸ πατρίου† κληθῆναι, ἀπὸ Σιμιχίδου τοῦ Περικλέους τῶν Ὀρχωμενίων, οἷτινες πολιτείας παρὰ Κείριος τετυχῆσαν, ('Simichidas: some say that he is Theocritus, because he was the son of Simichus or because he was snub-nosed [*simos*]. Others say that he was

Simichidas in *Idyll* 7 is parallel to the question posed by the text of the *Metamorphoses* itself: *quis ille?* The first person singular is used in both texts in a beguiling manner which both suggests and confounds identification of the speaker with the authors, Theocritus and Apuleius. Just as Theocritus' poem involves an uncertainty over the identity of the speaker, so too does Apuleius' Prologue.<sup>26</sup> The uncertain and shifting identification of Simichidas with Theocritus finds a parallel in the oddity of Apuleius' mention of Lucius' Madauran origin at *Metamorphoses* 11. 27, which seems both to contradict the account of his origins given in the Prologue, and to suggest a link between Apuleius and Lucius. The influence of Theocritus, a popular author in the second century AD whom Apuleius claimed to have read, need not surprise us.<sup>27</sup>

one of his circle and not Theocritus because of the line, "For Simichidas the Loves sneezed" [*Id.* 7. 96]. And they say that such a person is so called from †what is customary?†, from Simichidas the son of Pericles of the Orchomenians, who have the citizenship amongst the people of Cos'). On the identification of Theocritus with Simichidas, see also *Σ Id.* 3. 8/9a.

One may compare the discussion of the identity of the unidentified first person speaker of *Id.* 3 (*Σ Id.* 3. 1a): *κωμάσδω: τὸ πρόσωπον οὐκ ἔστι φανερόν τὸ λέγον. καὶ οἱ μὲν φασιν αὐτὸν τὸν Θεόκριτον εἶναι διὰ τὸ σιμὸν καταφαίνεσθαι:* (v. 8 cum sch.). *οἱ δὲ Βάττων αἰπόλον τινά, ὃν ἐν τῷ Ἀίγωνι εἰσάγει τῆς Ἀμαρυλλίδος ἐρώντα* (IV 38–40): *ἀπρεπὲς γὰρ Θεόκριτον τῆς ἀγρώας ἐρᾶν, ὥστε καὶ ἐν ἀγρῷ διάγειν* ('I serenade: [the identity of] the character speaking is not clear. And some say that he is Theocritus from his appearing snub-nosed [*simos*, see *Id.* 3. 8] and some that he is a certain Battus, a goatherd, whom he presents in the Aegon [*Id.* 4. 38–40] as the lover of Amaryllis; for it is not fitting that Theocritus should love a rustic girl, so that he even passes his time in the country').

<sup>26</sup> Note too that the names of Simichidas and Lucius are revealed in the same way, by means of another character addressing them by name, Lycidas at *Id.* 7. 21, and Pythias who meets Lucius in the fish-market at *Met.* 1. 24. The same mode of revelation is also used for Aristomenes, whose name is not revealed until he is addressed by his unnamed companion at *Met.* 1. 6.

<sup>27</sup> Pastoral poetry is also suggested in the *Met.* by allusions to Moschus: see Kenney (1990a) on *Met.* 4. 31. 4–7, 5. 31. 2, 6. 8. 2–3. Pastoral elements are also noted by Kenney (1990a) on 5. 25. 3–6, 6. 24. 3. Close acquaintance with Virgil's *Ecl.* is suggested by Pan's description of himself as an *upilio* (*Met.* 5. 25 *sum quidem rusticanus et upilio*, 'I am indeed rustic and a herdsman'; cf. *Met.* 10. 33 where Paris is *rusticanus et upilio*), a word specifically identified with Virgil by Apuleius at *Apol.* 10 *Aemilianus, uir ultra Virgilianos opiliones et busequas rusticanus* ('Aemilianus, a man rustic in excess of Virgil's herdsmen

Theocritus' seventh *Idyll* is an important parallel for the type of nebulous first person narrator we encounter in the *Metamorphoses*.

and cowherds'), *Flor.* 3 *Vergilianus upilio seu busequa. upilio* also occurs at *Met.* 8. 1, 8. 19, *Apol.* 87. Cf. Apuleius' reference to *Ecl.* 2 in *Apol.* 10.

Note too that Lucius' journey in Thessaly in Book 1 is similar to the journey of Lycidas and Simichidas in Theocritus, *Id.* 7, a chance meeting leading to a conversation and exchange of stories in Apuleius, and of poems in Theocritus. Both meetings end abruptly. Aristomenes is also like Lucius (and Simichidas), in that the revelation of his name is held back (see n. 26, above). The parallelism between the Prologue and the opening episode of the *Met.* is discussed by de Jong, Ch. 18 in this volume.

## 8

# Apuleius and Persius

EMILY GOWERS

Persius the Neronian satirist is an unlikely influence on Apuleius. One is as abrasive and awkward in his approach to the reader as the other is smooth and charming. Nevertheless, there are several ways in which the *Metamorphoses* Prologue gains in significance by being read as a response to Persius.

1. The two unconventional philosophers draw on many of the same images to characterize their different styles of teaching: in particular, the stubborn ass represents pupils who are resistant to philosophical awakening, and the physical image of ears, especially ass's ears, signifies the channels of reception that need to be assailed. The *Metamorphoses* Prologue can be interpreted as a direct inversion of Persius' style of therapy: where Persius speaks of stinging or syringing the reader's ears, Apuleius prefers to stroke and soothe them instead.<sup>1</sup>
2. Both writers choose to risk their credibility as therapists by suggesting that they themselves have been or still are asinine; it is part of their method to expose their own split or hybrid personalities to the reader's scrutiny.
3. The puzzling first words of the Prologue—*At ego* ('But I . . .')—suggest that Apuleius is actually in dialogue with Persius; his gentle tactics, he hints, are a specific alternative to the satirist's aggressive ones.

### 1. ASS'S EARS

First, the most obvious link: ass's ears. In its simplest form, the message of both authors is the same: everyone has ass's ears until they see the light of philosophy. Stubborn readers need

<sup>1</sup> Robert Carver points out to me that Scaliger read *ures . . . bibulas* (Persius' words at *Satire* 4. 50) for *ures . . . benivolus*, as if impelled to make Apuleius' allusions to Persius more explicit.

'egging forward', as Adlington put it, 'from their asinal form to their human and perfect shape'. The joke in both authors is to inflict 'asinal form' on their readers before they notice.

Apuleius chooses the more discreet approach. His Prologue is framed as a seduction scene, in which the speaker, murmuring sweet nothings (*lepido susurro*) and stroking the reader's ears into a receptive state (*ures tuas benivolas permulceam*), assumes a degree of interest (*quis ille?* 'Who is this man?') and promises delights to come (*laetaberis*, 'you will be filled with joy'). But the result of this gentle stroking is to focus attention on the reader's most *asinine* characteristic, his ears—ears which are slow to respond unless they are repeatedly cajoled, or excited into curiosity.<sup>2</sup> So it comes about that the reader is transformed into a forerunner for the narrator Lucius, both as the inquisitive human being who is 'carried along by the ears' by charming stories, and as the big-eared eavesdropping donkey who picks up *sermo* from a distance.<sup>3</sup> Like the peeping ass of folklore, the reader of the Prologue is spurred on to poke his ears and eyes (*inspicere*, 'peer into') into something mysterious and delightful.<sup>4</sup>

Later episodes in the novel provide variations on the ass/human seduction scene sketched in the Prologue. One is the imbalanced coupling at 10. 21–2 between the ass and a besotted woman, whose energetic foreplay and soft murmurings rework the caresses of *uresque tuas benivolas lepido susurro permulceam* (*perungit . . . perfricat . . . perfundit . . . molles . . . vocolas et adsidua savia et dulces gannitus . . . iterabat*, 'she anointed . . .

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Met.* 6. 32 *quam meis tam magnis auribus accipiens* ('hearing this with those enormous ears of mine'); 9. 15 *genuinam curiositatem* ('inborn curiosity'); 9. 12 *familiari curiositate attonitus* ('struck dumb by my old curiosity'); 11. 23 (n. 8, below).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Met.* 1. 20 *lepidae fabulae festivitate nos avocavit . . . meis auribus pervecto* ('he has distracted us with the jollity of his delightful story . . . I have been carried along by my ears'); 9. 15–16 *auribus grandissimis praeditis cuncta longule etiam dissita facillime sentiebam . . . sermo talis meas adfertur auris* ('having enormous ears I was easily able to pick up everything even at a distance . . . this is the conversation that wafted to my ears').

<sup>4</sup> At *Met.* 9. 42 Apuleius makes Lucius act out two Greek proverbs: ἐξ ὄνου παρακύψεως ('all because an ass peeped in') (*Paroem.* 5. 38); and περὶ ὄνου σκιᾶς ('all on account of an ass's shadow') (ibid. 6. 37), i.e. on preposterously trivial grounds. See Bramble (1974: 27–8), Nisbet (1961) on Cicero, *In Pisonem* 73 for the connotations of *asinus*.

she rubbed . . . she poured all over . . . she kept on giving me soft whispers and repeated kisses and sweet moans'), while the ass wonders how he can possibly respond with delicacy. The other is the display of mutual tenderness between Lucius and Charite at 6. 28, where the ass tries to whinny soft whispers, and the girl promises to groom his mane and spoil him with delicious food. Which scene is a better realization of the Prologue? And is the Prologue speaker a crazed Titania, lavishing honeyed words on a recalcitrant listener, or is he a mock-clumsy ass himself?

Apuleius exploits the ass's traditional qualities—stubbornness, stupidity, humility, thick skin—in a game of pinning the ears on the donkey that jumps from reader to author and back again. The gullible reader laps up the deference implied in *non spreveris* ('if you deign'), *praefamur veniam* ('we beg your pardon'), and *siquid offendero* ('if I offend'), but he is really being led by the ears into the role of proverbially unresponsive ass.<sup>5</sup> He has no choice but to be enticed by a tale of bawdry (*sermone isto Milesio*) which appeals to coarse tastes, and to be puzzled, for the time being, by the point of the 'Nilotic pen' (*argutia Nilotici calami*). The stroking of a real horse's ears (1. 2 *aures remulceo*) at the start of the narrative proper soon lifts his blinkers, while the knowing reader is always aware that he starts the adventure at the level of an ass.<sup>6</sup> However, all readers are fated to fulfil another asinine proverb—*ὄνος ἄγω μυστήρια* ('I am the ass who celebrates the mysteries/carries the mystic objects')—in other words, to bear the (delightful) burden of the story without getting its full reward.<sup>7</sup> Seduced by the prospect of complicity and pleasure, they are ultimately sold short like dupes in a fable, their ears plugged and their tongues gagged at the entrance to the final mysteries.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Cf. the proverb *ὄνω τις ἔλεγε μῦθον, ὁ δὲ τὰ ὄπα ἐκίνει* (*Paroem.* 5. 43: 'someone told the ass a story; he just wagged his ears'); Horace, *Epist.* 2. 1. 199–200: *scriptores autem narrare putaret asello/ fabellam surdo* ('he would think writers were telling tales to a deaf ass').

<sup>6</sup> See James, Ch. 23 in this volume; also James (1987).

<sup>7</sup> *Paroem.* 6. 34; cf. Aristophanes, *Frogs* 159: an ass bearing the mystic objects in the Eleusinian procession, or celebrating the Eleusinian mysteries, used of a person who is exploited in the interests of others. A pathetic 'winged' ass takes part in the procession for Isis at *Met.* 11. 8.

<sup>8</sup> *Met.* 11. 23 *quaeris forsitan satis anxie, studioso lector, quid deinde dictum,*

At the same time, however, the speaker of the Prologue boasts just as many of the characteristics that *separate* man from ass, characteristics that are either denied to Lucius when he becomes a donkey, or partially suppressed by him for the sake of plausibility. These include the power of speech, especially of an unusual and eloquent kind (*exotici ac forensis sermonis*), aptitude for learning (*nullo magistro praeunte*, 'I was entirely self-taught'), a pedigree, refined intelligence, and the capacity for successful seduction.<sup>9</sup> The speaker soon merges into a narrator who soothes his own horse's ears (cf. 1. 2 *aures remulceo*). However, there is just the shadow of a braying ass in

*quid factum. dicerem si dicere liceret, cognosceres si liceret audire. sed parem noxam contraherent et aures et lingua ista impiae loqacitatis, illae temerariae curiositatis* ('you may ask anxiously, attentive reader, what was said and done next. I would tell you if I were allowed to tell, you would find out if you were allowed to hear. But both ears and tongue would incur equal guilt, the latter for its impious loquacity, the former for its incautious curiosity'). See Henderson, Ch. 17 in this volume, on the treacherousness of the Prologue.

<sup>9</sup> Power of speech: cf. *Met.* 3. 25 *voce privatus* ('deprived of my voice'); the ass is unable to say *Caesar* (3. 29) or *non feci* ('I didn't do it' 7. 3), because of his blubbery lips (*nimia rutunditate*); cf. 11. 14 *quo sermone nunc renata lingua felicius auspicarer* ('what words I should best begin with, now that my voice was restored'). As an ass, Lucius' surprising taste for sophisticated food (including 10. 16 *pisces exotico iure perfusas*, 'fish drenched in exotic sauce') matches his human penchant for recherché jargon (*exotici ac forensis sermonis*). See Gowers (1993: 39) for Latin puns on *ius* (law) and *ius* (sauce): the language of this novel will be caviare to the general reader. At Persius, *Satire* 1. 80 *haec sartago loquendi* ('this lexical fry-up': trans. Lee (Lee and Barr 1987)) is used of modern literary language. Aptitude for learning: cf. *Met.* 10. 17: the ass has to pretend that he could not plausibly have learned his tricks *nullo etiam monstrante . . . sine magistro* ('with no one to show me . . . with no teacher'). Pedigree: cf. *Met.* 7. 3 *in bestiam et extremae sortis quadrupedem deduxerat* ('reduced to an animal, a quadruped of the lowest rank'); 4. 23 *asinalis verecundia* ('an ass's shame'). Refined intelligence: cf. *Met.* 6. 26 *corium non asini crassum, sed hirudinis tenue membranulum circumdedit* ('I was covered not with the thick hide of an ass, but the thin skin of a leech'); *ibid.* *inepta et prorsus asimina cogitatio* ('dim-witted and literally asinine process of thought'); 7. 10 *totarum mulierum secta moresque de asini pendeabant iudicio* ('the reputation and principles of all womankind depended on an ass's judgement!'). Two Greek proverbs *ὄνος λύρας (ἀκούων)* ('an ass hearing music') and *ὄνος εἰς Ἀθήνας* ('an ass going to Athens') (*Pareom.* 6. 38, 6. 31), refer to insensitive philistines. The speaker of the Prologue has of course come from Athens. Capacity for seduction: cf. *Met.* 10. 22 *sed angebar . . . quem ad modum tantis tanque magnis cruribus possem delicatam matronam inscendere* ('but I agonized over how I could mount a refined lady with such enormous legs').



*rudis locutor* ('inexperienced speaker') to hint that he has an asinine past too, that this philosophy teacher is a former donkey and the smooth hand wielding the pointed pen was once a clumsy hoof.<sup>10</sup> Lucius' genuine disappointment, when he tries to console Charite and his soft words come out as a donkey's hee-haw, is foreshadowed in the speaker's mannered gestures of humility.<sup>11</sup>

On one level it is desirable to ignore all these peeping asses. Ideally the preface needs to be read in the dark, as a free-floating encounter between an unidentified, presumably human reader and author, uncontaminated by innuendo, and clear of past history or future information (*pace* Laird (Ch. 24) and de Jong (Ch. 18) in this volume)—in such a way that, although Lucius' past can be read into the passage from the first mention of 'ears', it is never possible to say quite where 'the speaker' ends and 'Lucius' begins. When we reread the preface with hindsight, our primary assumption is still that an eager tête-à-tête between an interested reader and a seductive narrator is the starting point for everything in the novel, even if their relationship becomes more tangled, and even if something deeper than Milesian tales is being inculcated.

All this ear-pulling can be read as a much-softened allusion to the first satire of Persius. Playing barber to a whole city of Midases, Persius bottles up his deadly secret, and finally splutters it into a hole: *auriculas asini quis non habet?* (*Satire* 1. 121 'who [at Rome] does not have ass's ears?').<sup>12</sup> But the poem has already been an onslaught on the ears from which no reader is exempt. The more attention we give him, the more Persius tells us we are deaf; our ears need scraping out with astringent truth, steaming open or syringing with vinegar to allow the

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Met.* 6. 29 *rudis historia* ('a low-brow romance'); see Winkler (1985: 194–200). Cf. *Met.* 10. 33 *philosophantem asinum* ('a philosophizing ass').

<sup>11</sup> *Met.* 6. 29 *delicatas vuculas adhinnire temptabam* ('I tried to whinny soft whispers'). Cf. Lucius and his admirer at 10. 22: how can he kiss her with such a huge and misshapen mouth?

<sup>12</sup> The glaring absence of Midas from Persius' leakages about ears and asses led to contemporary speculations that the emperor Nero was the hidden target of the satire: see *Vita Persi*; Sullivan (1978; 1985). See also Winkler (1985: 301–2) on the connection between asses, the Midas-myth and the title *Asinus Aureus*; Henderson (1994) on shearing and tyranny in Horace's 'barber-shop' satire, which features another 'Persius'.

panacea of philosophy to enter.<sup>13</sup> This aggressive technique belongs to a tradition of philosophy as painful surgery, and scraping the ears is the exact opposite of Apuleius' gentle stroking and whispering.<sup>14</sup> To Persius whispers signify deceit or inarticulacy.<sup>15</sup> To Apuleius they mean coaxing narrative seduction.

However, Persius laments that the ears that are deaf to his brand of truth are all too hungry and thirsty for seductive words: *Satire* 4. 50 *bibulas aures* ('thirsty ears'); 1. 22 *auriculis alienis colligis escas* ('you collect morsels for other people's ears').<sup>16</sup> This makes the speaker of the *Metamorphoses* Prologue exactly the kind of two-faced flatterer who in Persius collects morsels for other people's ears (cf. *tibi . . . varias fabulas conseram*) but makes faces at them behind their backs. In a list of insulting gestures Persius includes 'making waggling white ears with your hands' (*Satire* 1. 59 *manus auriculas imitari mobilis albas*), 'ears' which St Jerome glosses as 'ass's ears'.<sup>17</sup> So Apuleius' speaker is making ass's ears at the reader while flattering him as someone with taste and discrimination.

Those flattering gestures, it has often been observed, come straight from the wheedling comic prologues of Plautus (e.g. *Menaechmi* 4 *quaeso ut benignis accipiatis auribus*, 'I beg you to

<sup>13</sup> Persius, *Satire* 1. 107–8 *sed quid opus teneras mordaci radere vero auriculas?* ('but what is the point of scraping tender ears with biting truth?'); cf. 5. 15 *pallentis radere mores* ('scraping at pallid habits'); 1. 126 *inde vaporata lector mihi ferveat aure* ('with his ears thus syringed may my reader splutter'); 5. 86 *aures mordaci lotus aceto* ('ears rinsed out with biting vinegar'); 5. 63 *purgatas aures* ('cleaned-out ears'). See Lloyd-Jones (1963: 51–2; 1964: 157) for Greek antecedents; Horace, *Epist.* 1. 1. 7, 1. 2. 63, Propertius 2. 13. 12 for Latin ones; see also Bramble (1974: 26–7); Zietsman (1993).

<sup>14</sup> See Trapp, Ch. 4 in this volume. But cf. Scobie (1975: *ad Met.* 1. 1) on the alternative approach represented in Plato, *Charmides* (157a): philosophy instilled by the persuasive charm of soothing words (he follows the suggestion of Schlam (1970: 480) that *permulcere* ('soothe') is equivalent to the Platonic *ἐπιθεῖν*). For another gentle approach cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 3. 1. 3 *ne ieiuna atque arida traditio averteret animos et aures praesertim tam delicatas raderet verebatur* ('we were afraid that a dry and unimaginative method of teaching would put them off and grate on their tender ears').

<sup>15</sup> Persius, *Satire* 2. 6 *humilis susurros* ('low whispers'); 2. 9 *sub lingua murmurat* ('he murmurs, under his tongue'); 5. 11 *clauso murmure raucus* ('hoarse with suppressed murmuring').

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Horace, *Satire* 2. 5. 32 *molles auriculae* ('ears open to flattery').

<sup>17</sup> Jerome, *Epist.* 125. 18. 1 *auriculas asini*.

listen with kindly ears').<sup>18</sup> Of these by far the most pertinent is the prologue of the *Asinaria* ('Comedy of Asses'), which contains another pedigree of a Greek 'Ass' turned into a Roman one and offers its audience the prospect of shared fun and delight (*inest lepos ludusque*).<sup>19</sup> But the *Asinaria* has something else in common with the *Metamorphoses* Prologue. It too enjoys a joke at the spectators' expense by transforming them unwittingly and in the first breath into big-eared asses: *face nunciam tu, praeco, omnem auritum populum* ('announcer, go ahead and make the people all ears').<sup>20</sup> Apuleius and Persius share the secret about ass's ears, but they follow opposite traditions when it comes to leaking that secret.

## 2. SPLIT PERSONALITIES

Both satire and the ancient novel present the world as a hybrid place. For Persius 'Man is multiform and life is multicoloured' (*Satire 5. 52 mille hominum species et rerum discolor usus*); Apuleius is full of descriptions of harlequin clothes, rotating machinery, and kaleidoscopic goddesses. For both, there is one overriding system of belief—for Apuleius Isiac Neoplatonism, for Persius Stoicism—that clarifies all this and transforms it into brilliant white. But that is not the general colour of either work, and both writers combine their picture of an imperfect world with an authorial personality that is hybrid to match.

Winkler suggests that Varro's Menippean satires, with their mixture of philosophy and comedy, may have been the single greatest influence on Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.<sup>21</sup> With titles like *Bimarcus* ('Split Varro'), Varro had set a precedent for authors with split personalities.<sup>22</sup> Apuleius conspicuously enjoys the possibilities in the idea of a mixed man-ass, a scholar

<sup>18</sup> See Smith (1972: 515–16, 519); Winkler (1985: 200–3).

<sup>19</sup> Plautus, *Asinaria* 13–14.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* 4. Cf. Festus in Lindsay (19. 3: 8): *auritus a magnis auribus dicitur, ut sunt asinorum et leporum* ('*auritus* means "having big ears", like asses and hares').

<sup>21</sup> Winkler (1985: 296).

<sup>22</sup> Cèbe (1974: 210 n. 1): *Bimarcus* means 'Marcus à la double nature; Marcus en qui vivent deux Marcus distincts'. See Relihan (1993: 23–5) on the unreliable or schizophrenic narrator as a feature of Menippean satire; Henderson (1991) on Persius as teacher and pupil.

who was once subhuman, a donkey-philosopher.<sup>23</sup> Similarly Persius describes himself in his own prologue as *semipaganus* (a 'half-initiate') (picking up on his namesake Persius the half-caste in Horace, *Satires* 1. 7), and his voice switches rapidly from philosopher-teacher to unreformed pupil, which has led to notorious confusion about where to put the inverted commas, especially in *Satire* 3.<sup>24</sup> Like Apuleius, he is open about his own imperfections. Speaking as a hungover student in *Satire* 3, he compares his raucous voice to a donkey's bray: 3. 9 *findor* ('I explode'; literally, 'I am split'), *ut Arcadiae pecuaria rudere credas* ('so that you would think the herds of Arcadia [i.e. donkeys] were braying'). Reversing the situation, Lucius inside the ass's skin makes efforts to sweet-talk (*Met.* 6. 28 *delicatas vocolas adhinnire temptabam*, 'I tried to whinny soft whispers') and cannot disguise his gentle nature (8. 25 *vervecem . . . non asinum vides . . . non mordacem*, 'you see a gelded sheep, not an ass . . . he won't bite').<sup>25</sup>

Related to this notion of the split author is the shared focus on writing materials. For both Apuleius (with Lucius at *Met.* 2. 12 destined to become 'a fairy-tale book', *incredundam fabulam et libros*) and Persius (in *Satire* 3), author and book are fused.<sup>26</sup> Both open their writing desks to show the different stages of composition and suggest their mixed personalities. Persius' writing materials lay bare his cracks—false starts, rough workings, a split and blackly satirical pen. Two-tone notebooks half-shaved of hair (*Satire* 3. 10 *positis bicolor membrana capillis*) suggest the author's incomplete initiation into adult life, as a barber in need of a trim himself. For Apuleius the first shave comes at the end after his initiation into priesthood, which sets all the rhetorical tendrils of the book at odds with the austere regimen of its narrator. But he has also undergone an initiation into idiom and style, described in the prologue in almost religious terms. So the author's shaven head at the end of Book 11 (*Met.* 11. 30 *raso capillo*) could be regarded as a recap of the

<sup>23</sup> See Smith (1972: 525), Schlam (1992: 99–112).

<sup>24</sup> See among others Housman (1913: 12–32), Hendrickson (1928: 335), Reckford (1962: 495), Nisbet (1963: 53), Rudd (1970: 286).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. 6. 26: a thin-skinned leech in an ass's thick hide.

<sup>26</sup> On Apuleius see Harrison (1990: 507–13); on Persius see Gowers (1994: 142–3); for other examples see Williams (1992: 178–89).

book-cum-author motif of the Prologue, initiation into the final rites coinciding with the final polishing of the book. Another Greek ass-proverb, ὄνον κείρεις ('you're trying to shave an ass'—said of something impossible), may lie behind this, suggesting that Lucius' restoration fulfils a very special kind of miracle, something that Midas' barber cannot do for the asses of Rome.<sup>27</sup>

The Prologue speaker presents his hybrid literary ancestry with more swagger than Persius, with his ragged and self-deprecating tag *semipaganus* (*prol.* 6 'half-initiate'). Similarly, his pointed Egyptian pen (*argutia Nilotici calami*) is more sharply focused than Persius' defective knotted reed (*nodosa . . . harundo*), which alternately clots and dribbles thinly (*Satire* 3. 11–14). But one may well seep into the other, and both play on the idea of the bed of reeds that whispered the barber's secret.<sup>28</sup> An even knottier kind of writing in the *Metamorphoses* comes in the shape of the hieroglyphics in Isis' temple (11. 22 *nodosis et in modum rotae tortuosis capreolatimque condensis apicibus a curiositate profanorum lectione munita*, 'with the ends of the letters knotted and twisted like wheels or entwined like tendrils to protect them from the curiosity of uninitiated readers'). Apuleius leaves it unclear in the Prologue how much his book has in common with these, or whether it is posing as an open and disarming text.

### 3. 'BUT I . . .'

It is unusual, and unique in Latin prose literature, that Apuleius' Prologue begins with the word *at*. 'But' implies resumption, contradiction, contrast, a response to something outside this narrative. What opening word is more likely to excite our curiosity, and make us want to poke our noses not just inside this text but outside it too? Scobie suggests that the word helps to simulate dialogue.<sup>29</sup> But dialogue with whom? Persius may be involved here too, however indirectly.

<sup>27</sup> *Paroem.* 5. 38.

<sup>28</sup> Gowers (1994: 143). Apuleius' *argutia* is a pun on 'pointedness' and 'sophistry'; Persius' *nodosa* suggests both the knotted texture of reeds and the complexity of a Sphinx's riddle (*OLD* s.v.).

<sup>29</sup> Scobie (1975: ad loc.), comparing the openings of Xenophon *Symposium* and *Respublica Lacedaemoniorum*. In *Met.* the word suggests the informality of conversation (together with the collocation *ego tibi*). For Platonic parallels see

*At ego* ('But I') is repeated later in the book in the form of *sed ego* ('but I'), which appears twice in contexts that do include the point of contrast, and which, like the Prologue, focus on the act of narrating.<sup>30</sup> The first is at 1. 20, where Lucius defends Aristomenes' story against his sceptical companion. His defence can be summarized as follows: 'Miracles happen—it's just that they don't convince people who weren't there. But I [*sed ego*] do believe this man, and I am grateful that he has made my journey easy with his delightful story and carried me along by my ears.' The significant point here is that, from a willing listener's point of view, a charming narrative is also the one that inspires belief.<sup>31</sup>

At *Metamorphoses* 4. 27 the old woman begins the story of Cupid and Psyche to console Charite for a bad dream. No one should believe dreams, she says, because they always mean the exact opposite of what they appear to suggest: . . . *sed ego te enarrationibus lepidis anilibusque fabulis protinus avocabo* ('but I shall sweep you away at once with an old woman's enchanting story-telling'). Here the contrast is looser: forget all your troubles and listen to my lovely story (though that contrast is potentially a false one, which contains a hidden warning: watch out for fictions because they are just as deceptive as dreams).

Both these oppositions, the genuine contrast at 1. 20 and the hasty change of subject at 4. 27, lay stress on the seductive power of fiction. The old woman presents fiction as a comforting diversion; Lucius gives it credit for being convincing too. Apuleius' *at ego* ('But I') in the Prologue can be read in two ways, either as a distraction ('. . . Now, let me tell you a story') or as a pointed interaction with something outside ('. . . But this is *my* kind of story'). His opening whisks the reader away from anything painful into the realms of delight. At the same time, in what one recognizes as a slippery and unphilosophical context, he is entering into a Platonic discussion about how to inspire belief, contrasting his own *incredunda fabula* ('hard-to-believe fairy-tale') with some other implied *sermo* ('discourse') which is not believable because it is not delightful.

de Jong, Ch. 18 in this volume, and see the comments of Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume, ad loc.

<sup>30</sup> See Winkler (1985: 25–37, 50–6).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Macleod (1983: 4–8).

All the echoes and inversions of Persius that can be found embedded in the imagery of the Prologue—ass's ears, cryptic reed pens, exotic language, half-initiation—suggest that Apuleius is making an unspoken contrast between his own seduction of the reader and the drastic assaults of the satirist, who injected Stoicism the hard way and encouraged the guffaw of satirical disbelief at everything else.<sup>32</sup> 'Let other philosophers grate on your ears and rub you up the wrong way . . . *But I* shall caress your ears and make you well-disposed to my teaching.' For Apuleius the deceptions of flattery and fiction that Persius condemns are an essential part of the tactics of philosophical initiation (even if he fails eventually to deliver the reader into the innermost *penetral*). Otherwise people with thick-skinned ears (1. 3 *crassis auribus*) will never be intrigued in the first place.

<sup>32</sup> Persius' sceptical guffaw in Satire 1 (12 *cachinno*) is supplied by Aristomenes' companion at *Met.* 1. 2 (*cachinno*).

## Apuleius and Luke: Prologue and Epilogue in Conversion Contexts

WARREN S. SMITH

The Prologue to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* must be understood as operating on several geographical and spiritual levels at once. Its successive references to Miletus, Egypt, Greece, and Rome suggest the varied origin of the novel, its ability to draw on different genres, and ambivalence on the key issue of the speaker's identity. Our understanding of the identity of the narrator as performer, sometimes distinct from, sometimes blending with the central character, changes in the course of the story. This indistinct identity will be compared with that of the enigmatic narrator of a contemporary work in two volumes: the Gospel According to Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, whose prologue and abrupt conclusion both have an Apuleian tone.

The speaker promises that in his Milesian tale, described as an oral performance—*sermone isto Milesio* ('in that Milesian language of yours')—but immediately followed by a reminder, *papyrus . . . inscriptam* ('written on papyrus'), that it is actually in writing that he will stroke the receptive ears of his readers with a delightful whispering. The tale will be Greek (*Graecanicam*) and thus racy and fun: it is a common joke that anything goes in Greece, as Plautus claims in one of his mock-apologies (*Stichus* 446–8).

But Apuleius' novel will also have a Roman flavour, suggested in the speaker's apology for being a *rudis locutor* ('unskilled speaker') of an *exotici ac forensis sermonis* ('foreign language of the forum', cf. Tacitus, *Agr.* 3. 3); it is implied that Roman culture is crude in comparison with Greek. In a similar apology, later in the *Metamorphoses* (8. 1) the servant of Charite will leave the working up of his tale into a *historia*, a 'formal account', to those skilled in writing; similar is the mock apology at the end of the Cupid and Psyche tale, (*Met.* 6. 25). In these instances as



in the Prologue, we have an apology for a tale whose oral (i.e. unsophisticated) qualities are belied by its written form.

A parallel with this method of self-exposition can be found in the prologue to the two-volume collection Luke–Acts, a work perhaps nearly contemporary with the *Metamorphoses*, and one which, with its sea-voyages, trial scenes, and hair-raising escapes, shows itself strongly influenced by the style of the Greek novel. At the start of the Gospel of Luke the narrator, like Apuleius' narrator remaining anonymous, but calling attention to himself with an emphatic pronoun (Apuleius: *at ego* 'but I'; Gospel of Luke 1: 3 *καὶ μοι* 'to me as well'), promises to draw together both written (cf. 1: 1 *διήγησιν*, 'narrative') and oral (1: 4 *λόγων*, 'stories') sources in a definitive written narrative. 'Luke' seems to promise certainty (1: 4 *ἀσφάλειαν*) about the facts, where his predecessors had only made attempts (*ἐπεχείρησαν*) to tell a complete story; Apuleius offers something based on predecessors but new, a delightful unity made up from many parts.

The promise to soothe the reader with delightful entertainment recalls the prologues of comedy and the Milesian tales of Aristides and Sisenna (cf. Lucian, *Amores* 1); but such an offer from Apuleius, the self-described *philosophus Platonicus* ('Platonic philosopher', cf. *Apol.* 10. 18), may have an ominous overtone. Plutarch reminds us in *Moralia* 15c, that drugs from the land of Egypt, like the art of poetry, may be harmful, cf. Plato's warning about mimetic poetry in *Republic* 595b. Likewise beautiful singing (cf. Apuleius' *lepido susurro*, 'delightful whispering') may cast a dangerous spell on us, like the singing of Circe in *Odyssey* 10. 221, cf. the *magico susurramine* ('magic whispering') mentioned below in 1. 3. 2, and the magic chant in Theocritus, *Idyll* 2. 11.

Moreover, there is a provocative ambiguity in the narrator's advice to pay attention to *papyrus Aegyptam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam* ('an Egyptian papyrus written on with the sharpness of a reed from the Nile'). The initial reference to 'Egypt', imprecise as it is, may prepare us for a religious content (cf. pseudo-Apuleian *Asclepius* 24; Heliodorus, *Ethiopian Story* 3. 16. 4; Isis' own words about the Egyptians in *Met.* 11. 5; and see Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume); more precisely, the reference prefigures Lucius' conversion in Book 11 ('early hint

at Isiac content', Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume). A reference to Egypt also reminds us that Helen in *Odyssey* 4. 220 had spiked the cups of her dinner guests with a subtle Egyptian drug, intended to make them all forget about their cares. The *Odyssey* passage is a Silver Age topos; it became a sophistic commonplace to compare a delightful story with the effects produced by those Egyptian drugs (Philostratus in *Lives of the Sophists* 480; also the Emperor Julian in *Oration* 8. 240C). Similarly, Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* 7. 22 says that Helen sings to the downhearted heroes due to her Egyptian learning, while mingling stories with their wine; see also Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 5. 190f., where Helen's Egyptian drug has expanded its role to become 'all-healing'; Pliny says Helen offered it to be drunk by all mankind (*NH* 25. 12), cf. the extravagant claim made in the preface to *Daphnis and Chloe* (Preface 2).

Egypt is the birthplace of writing, had an early tradition of prose fiction resembling the Greek romance, and was regarded as the origin of secret lore, religious or otherwise (cf. Apuleius' word *argutia*, 'sharpness' or 'cleverness, subtlety').<sup>1</sup> The 'Egyptian disciplines' learned by Pythagoras, according to Apuleius in *Florida* 15 (cf. the 'excellent lessons' associated with Egypt in Lucian, *Dream or the Cock* 18) include religious lore taught by priests. In the Prologue, as also in Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 1. 12. 15, the learning of Egypt forms part of a natural triad along with the learning of Greece and Rome. Yet Egypt is sometimes associated with exotic lasciviousness (cf. Ovid, *Art of Love* 3. 318; Quintilian, *Inst.* 1. 2. 7). Thus the allusion to Egypt promises food for thought as well as pleasure; Lucian promises a similar combination in the prologue to the *True History* (1-2).

To advertise a literary treat which will soothe and stroke us, whether the association be Milesian or Egyptian, is to predict exciting and racy tales. The many changes in the novel, the narrator predicts, will cause the reader to 'wonder' (*ut mireris*); this verb calls attention to the *Metamorphoses* as a version of wonder literature (like the travel narratives spoofed in Lucian's *True History*) in which amazement and stupefaction will be a recurring theme. The adjectives *mirus*, *mirabilis*, and *mira-*

<sup>1</sup> On *argutia*: Smith (1968: 98-101); Winkler (1985: 186-8).

*bundus* ('wonderful'), the noun *miraculum* ('miracle') and the verb *miror* ('wonder') frequently recur, especially in the witchcraft and transformation stories of Books 1–3, in the surprises of the Cupid and Psyche tale of Books 4–6, and again in the supernatural occurrences of the Isis-Book (11). There is an affinity here with the emphasis of the New Testament literature where, in all four Gospels, the verbs θαμβέω, θαυμάζω ('to be amazed') and ἐξίστημι ('to be astonished'), and the noun θάμβος ('amazement') keep recurring in the reactions of crowds and Pharisees to the miracles of Jesus, and this continues into the adventures of the Apostles in Acts: cf. 2: 7; 3: 10; 4: 13; 8: 9, 13; 9: 21; 10: 45; 12: 16; 13: 41. Clearly the motive of the author of Luke–Acts goes beyond his promise to educate the reader in the facts of the early Church, and includes moving and astonishing the reader at these wonderful events.

*Quis ille?* ('Who is he?'). Which Apuleius, or which of his creatures, is talking now? asks an interlocutor. This is an understandable question, considering the unpredictable personae which Apuleius assumes in his writings: he is a Platonic philosopher but also a cunning sophist, a word-acrobat and pitchman who promises great entertainment in his speeches (cf. *Flor.* 18), and an initiate in religious mysteries (*Apol.* 55–6, cf. *Met.* 3. 15) who can provide religious edification. Moreover, slippery and postponed identities for his characters are part of Apuleius' narrative game; compare the delayed introduction of Aristomenes by name in *Metamorphoses* 1. 6. (such delays may be another carry-over from the prologues of comedy). So here: the specific identity of the speaker of the Prologue, and the full meaning of its language, are held back; but the issue continues to resonate in several ways, to be 'reformed' and transformed, in the course of the novel.

The novel's method of resonating, of recycling its themes, is complex. It is crucial for a full understanding of the *Metamorphoses* to notice how phrases and themes from the early part of the novel are clarified, given new meaning by their reworking in later sections, as both novel and narrator are 'transformed'. For example, the 'Milesian' or racy motif, paraded in the Prologue as a central attraction of the book, clearly underlines such episodes as Lucius' affair with Fotis (2–3) and the comical adultery tales of Book 9. Then in Book 10, with the

'Wicked Stepmother Tale' (10. 2-12) and the even darker tale of the woman condemned to be thrown to wild beasts (10. 23-8), the Milesian language is recalled, but now transformed into a high style, almost Senecan in its lurid new context (e.g. with *Met.* 10. 2, cf. Seneca, *Phaedra* 360 ff.) For example, in the lascivious, humorous context of *Metamorphoses* 2. 16, love sticks in Lucius' *ima praecordia* (roughly his 'innermost heartstrings', but alluding to his erection at the sight of Fotis stirring a pot), but a similar phrase in 10. 2, where love flames up in the *totis praecordiis* ('all through the heartstrings') of the stepmother, is in the context of a lurid, forbidden love which presages a tragic ending.

The Prologue of the novel ends with a promise of delight (*laetaberis*, 'you will be delighted') for those who read closely (*intende*, 'pay attention'). What sort of delight? To produce *voluptas* ('pleasure') in the audience (a term with many levels of meaning in Apuleius) is a goal listed in the Roman oratorical handbooks, cf. Cicero, *On the Parts of Speeches* 21, 73; Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 4. 49. In a novel with as many surprises as the *Metamorphoses*, the production of pleasure, which, Cicero predicts, will result from *admiratio et improvisi exitus* ('surprise and unforeseen outcomes'), is bound to occur frequently. In fact each of the major sections of the novel will close on a note of happiness, joy, and peace: the Cupid and Psyche tale (6. 25) with the birth of Voluptas, an eternal pleasure (despite threats that the child will be mortal). Subsequently, the Milesian tales of Book 9 are aimed at giving us pleasure, cf. the *lepidam . . . fabulam* ('delightful story') predicted in 9. 4; but the very thin line between bliss and tragedy is driven home to us when Lucius first begins to dabble with magic. Pamphile's jars of magic ointment can produce startlingly different results; and the frivolous 'Milesian Tales' of the ninth book shade over in the tenth into tales of murder and other horrors.

Near the end of the novel, in 11. 28, the narrator, in a sly aside to the reader, appears to change from Lucius of Corinth into 'a man from Madauros', i.e. into Apuleius 'himself' who was probably from Madauros in North Africa. The narrator demands from us a new seriousness as he shaves his head as a priest of Isis and begins to support himself by pleading in Latin in the Roman forum. The closing pages of the book seem to

become a whimsical mirror image of themes introduced in the Prologue, just as the eleventh book as a whole has been seen to counter themes introduced in the first three books of the novel.<sup>2</sup> In 11. 2, the priest of Osiris 'soothes the troubled mind' of Lucius (*anxium mihi permulcebat animum*); this recalls the promise of 'soothing' made in the Prologue (*permulceam*). Again, the Prologue's reference to hard work at learning Latin (*forensis sermo*, 'the language of the forum') is recalled at the end, when this phrase, which had seemed figuratively meant, acquires a literal application when the narrator earns a living by pleading in the Roman forum (*quaesticulo forensi*), using the Latin language (*Met.* 11. 28 fin.)

The apparent transformation of the speaker into the 'real' Apuleius seems to centre on his discarding of the Greek language, as though speaking Greek had been a sham, part of the pretence of his fictitious life as a 'Corinthian'. Lucius 'becoming' Apuleius himself may strike some as 'the yoking of an extremely odd couple'.<sup>3</sup> But the new persona of the narrator is in some respects a natural offshoot of the old one.

The old Lucius of the *Metamorphoses* was not unacquainted with religion or with learning. His mistress Fotis in 3. 15 alludes to Lucius' *doctrina* and *dignitas* ('learning and dignity'), and these terms<sup>4</sup> are picked up after Lucius' reformation by the priest, who reminds him that neither of them has brought him any profit (11. 15). Moreover, the Prologue's allusions to the education of the anonymous speaker and his hard work (*aerumnabili labore*) have a peculiar resonance at the end of the novel. In the final vision of Osiris, the *doctrina* of Lucius in his hard work at his legal studies is affirmed (he is asked to ignore the slanders of those who criticize him for his learning, 11. 29–30). The old Lucius had the benefits of religious initiation on his side (information introduced casually in Apuleius' sly fashion, 3. 15); he even achieved *voluptas* ('pleasure'), not in itself a negative quality (*Met.* 2. 10; 2. 18); but he could make none of these advantages work for him without a total reform of his goals and attitude.

<sup>2</sup> On Book 11 picking up earlier themes, see e.g. Sandy (1978).

<sup>3</sup> 'Odd couple': Cf. Winkler (1985: 47).

<sup>4</sup> *Contra* Sandy (1978: 124), who sees a 'structural flaw' in the priest's speech.

The appearance to the narrator of the god Osiris himself, 'not changed into any other person but deigning to address me in person with his own holy voice' (11. 30), recalls the confrontations with a higher plane of existence described in Plato (e.g. *Symposium* 210e–211b) and Apuleius' own Platonic writings (*On the God of Socrates* 20 *contemplandi diviniam effigiem*, 'gazing on the divine image'), and impresses us with an unchanging and eternal identity and reality, balanced against the varied transformations and magical surprises promised by the Prologue (*figuras . . . conversas*, 'changed shapes').

The conclusion of the *Metamorphoses* must be understood, at least in part, in terms of the language and concepts of religious conversion.<sup>5</sup> One who chooses to adopt a new life is 'not only changed but completely transformed', as Seneca says (*Epist.* 6. 1 *non emendari . . . sed transfigurari*). The transformation of a whole person, inside and out, is appropriately accompanied by the adding of resonance to that person's language, with words taking on new connotations.

Indeed the conclusion of the *Metamorphoses* resembles the end of the Acts of the Apostles, an ending which has often teased readers due to its abruptness.<sup>6</sup> Since Irenaeus in the late second century (3. 14. 1–2) the narrator of Acts has been identified with Λουκας ὁ ἰατρὸς ὁ ἀγαπητός ('Luke, the beloved physician') mentioned in Colossians 4: 14 (cf. 2 Tim. 4: 11)—a name fortuitously close to that of Apuleius' narrator. Many scholars today, however, would date the writing of Luke–Acts to nearly a century after the time of Paul (for example, the opening sentence of 'Luke' seems to regard the writing of the other Gospels as events of the past, πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν, 'many attempted').<sup>7</sup> After 'pulling himself into the story' in the opening sentence (with a self-consciousness not found in the other Gospel writers), the narrator has a kind of slippery existence, never using the first person again in the Gospel; but in the second volume (Acts) he begins to peek out at us from time to time starting in chapter 16, the so-called *Wir-bericht*, where verbs in the first person plural seem to imply Luke's presence

<sup>5</sup> From the prospectus to Shumate (1996).

<sup>6</sup> Recent literature on Luke–Acts and the ancient novel includes Pervo (1987), Holzberg (1995: 22–3), Dawsey (1986), Bowersock (1994: 138–43).

<sup>7</sup> Praeder (1981: 287).

as a travelling companion of Paul. These passages are already quoted and admired by Irenaeus, who is completely taken in by the device as a guarantee of authenticity, and praises Luke's supposed modesty in attesting to the veracity of his own witness in such an understated way, *Against the Heresies* 3. 14. 1. For us as readers, in the last part of Acts the narrator seems increasingly drawn into his story, standing by Paul's side and almost making us feel we were looking over his shoulder as the story nears its climax.

In Acts, as in the *Metamorphoses*, the enthusiastic religious convert finally arrives in Rome, that great clearing house for the absorption of alien cults.<sup>8</sup> In the Greek work that convert is not Luke himself but Paul, the central actor of the last half of the story though not its narrator. The narrator of Apuleius' novel has put away the excesses of a former lifestyle which focused on *curiositas* ('curiosity'), a yearning after sexual pleasure and magical arts. Paul had been controlled by a compulsive and headstrong anger, violence, and persecution against the Christians; both Paul and Lucius have been 'transformed', and terms which once fitted their old lifestyle take on a radical, elevated new meaning after the transformation.

From his Epistles we learn that Paul, in his earlier life under the name of Saul, had been a scrupulous observer of the Law, a Pharisee; 'as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless' (Phil. 3: 6). However, subsequent to his conversion experience, he denies 'having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ' (Phil. 3: 8-9). Paul had achieved a kind of righteousness under the law, but it left him unsatisfied. In conversion, the old concept is not so much discarded as it takes on new meaning. The Christian convert is likewise transformed: in 1 Corinthians 15: 51 Paul promises that 'we shall all be changed' (*πάντες δὲ ἀλλαγῶμεθα*) at the sounding of the final trumpet, but even on earth we are being transformed (*μεταμορφούμεθα*) every day gradually into the image of Christ (2 Cor. 3: 18).

The 'madness' of Paul's violent persecution of the Church (Acts 26: 11) is later replaced by a zealous fervour, which is

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Nock (1961: 'The Path to Rome' 66-76).

itself interpreted by some as 'madness' (Festus responding to Paul in Acts 26: 24). In the *Metamorphoses* Lucius, with a kind of suicidal finality, madly throws himself into the pursuit of magical arts, cf. *exterminatus animi attonitus in amentiam* (3. 22. 1 'out of my mind with amazement to the point of madness', language which is later echoed by St Augustine in the *Confessions*, in his account of the 'madness' of his pre-conversion experience). And whereas Paul moves from a lower to a higher kind of 'righteousness' one which is internalized rather than based on outer action, so does Lucius renounce sexual pleasure in exchange for the 'ineffable pleasure' experienced in the presence of the goddess (11. 24).<sup>9</sup>

The *Metamorphoses* ends suddenly and unexpectedly, suspended in the middle of an action with a verb of motion in the imperfect tense, *obibam* ('I was going around'), prompting controversy by its incompleteness.<sup>10</sup> Lucius' ecstasy is the ingredient of an ongoing story; the wonder of his transformation and rebirth cause the progress of his life under the protection of *Providentia* ('Providence') to seem like a never-ending stream. There is a similarly unfinished tone about the ending of the Book of Acts which leaves so many questions unanswered about the date and circumstances of its writing:

He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance. (Acts 28: 30-1)

<sup>9</sup> For a comparison of Augustine and Apuleius on conversion, see Shumate (1988: 51); on 'madness' in particular, Shumate (1996: 242-5); on Augustine's discovery of a higher 'pleasure' (Shumate 1996: 277). See further Segal (1990: esp. 54, 109; conversion in Apuleius as an escape from witchcraft); and on Lucius' contemplation of the divine image, Festugiere (1954: 80-4).

<sup>10</sup> Winkler (1985: 224), Shumate (1996: 326-7), but other Greek novels end similarly on a note of continued action rather than completion: Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Cleitophon* and Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* in which the wedding night of the couple is interspersed with glimpses of the future. The right note for Apuleius' final sentence is struck by Beroaldus ad loc.: *mens non in terris curva, sed in coelum sublimata, nil nisi divinum, nisi coeleste cogitabit* ('a mind not bent toward the ground, but raised up to heaven, will ponder only what is divine and heavenly'). There is an Old Testament parallel for the ending of Acts with the unresolved fate of Paul: King Jehoiachin is treated kindly as a captive by King Evilmerodach of Babylon in 2 Kgs 25: 28-30, see Trompf (1984: 227).



As in the Apuleius narrative, the last verb in Acts, ‘welcomed’, is in the imperfect tense (*ἀπεδέχετο*), and the two present participles ‘proclaiming’ and ‘teaching’ combine to suspend the story in mid-action. The phrase *μετὰ πάσης παρρησίας* (‘with all boldness’) and final adverb *ἀκωλύτως* (‘without hindrance’) end the book on a note of freedom and joy. The focus of Paul’s story is not on a ‘happy ending’ but on the intensity of the present and the joy of hope.

There is a curious emphasis in the passage quoted above from the end of Acts on Paul’s ability to live *ἐν ἰδίῳ μισθώματι* (‘at his own expense’ or ‘in his own hired dwelling’). This is paralleled in the *Golden Ass* where the narrator is also able to support himself at his own expense through pleading in the forum (11. 28, repeated 29); in both cases ability to become self-supporting is a sign of the freedom and independence of the religious convert. Paradoxically, of course, Paul is under a kind of house arrest, and Apuleius’ narrator has accepted the tenets of a sect which will severely restrict his personal freedom. Both Paul and Lucius gladly accept these restraints which replace their former involuntary servitude. In Paul’s case, as he himself reports, ‘the law of sin’ made him subject to the passions of the flesh (Rom. 7: 21 ff.); Lucius, as is claimed in the often-quoted words of the priest in Book 11, despite all the advantages of his birth and upbringing, became subject to *serviles voluptates* (11. 15 ‘servile pleasures’).

Furthermore, in both books the central character faces up to, and rises above, the objections of his enemies. Paul debates with the incredulous Jews in Rome; they are contrasted with the Gentiles, who, Paul predicts, will ‘listen’ (28: 28). Thus his reported words end on this expectation that his preaching will be well received outside Israel, picking up on the prediction made by Jesus himself at the start of Acts just before his ascension (Acts 1: 8 ‘to the ends of the earth’).<sup>11</sup> In the Latin novel, Osiris warns Apuleius’ narrator to expect detractors prompted by the success of his speechmaking in Rome (*Met.* 11. 30). Such detractors are already predicted in Apuleius’ Prologue, in what seemed at the time the narrator’s tongue-in-cheek apology for his crude style (*en ecce praefamur veniam, si quid . . . offendero*, ‘see here, I offer you an apology if I give

<sup>11</sup> See e.g. Haenchen (1971: 726–32).

any offence'). Osiris predicts that despite the detractors, Lucius will win fame for his speeches in the forum (*gloriosa in foro redderem patrocina*, 'I would return a handsome profit in the forum') as the Prologue had already cryptically suggested (*aggressus excolui*, 'I tackled and cultivated it'); the success in the forum is representative of a geographical and cultural change from a Greek- to a Latin-speaking world.

On a similar note, at the end of Acts St Paul proclaims the word of God 'with all boldness and unhindered', thus not only fulfilling the injunction of Jesus at the start of Acts, to preach to the ends of the earth, but acting as an example of Luke's own promise in *Luke* 1: 1-4 to bear witness to Theophilus of the truth of the words handed down to him. And in the *Metamorphoses* as in Acts, the book's last phrases (*gaudens obibam*, 'I went around rejoicing') leave us with a state of tranquillity, an inner rather than outer description of a geographical place; Apuleius' character rejoices and as he walks through the streets, he feels no need to hide the signs of his initiation to the priesthood. Thus as also with 'Cupid and Psyche', and as the narrator of the *Metamorphoses* had predicted for his book, the main plot ends quietly on a note of closure and joy, after a journey which has gone full circle and reached fulfilment.

# Topography



## Prologue and Provenance: *Quis ille? or Unde ille?*

KATHERINE CLARKE

The preponderance of geographical allusions in the Prologue of the *Metamorphoses* sets the scene for a novel in which place and travel will play a crucial part. Although it is noteworthy that the question of the speaker's identity is not given a specifically spatial formulation—nothing as obvious as 'where is he from' (*unde ille?*)—nevertheless, the question 'who is this?' (*quis ille?*) evokes an answer given in terms of not only one place, but several, which combine to create a geographical background for the author.<sup>1</sup> I shall argue later that these geographical allusions in the Prologue conjure up not only spatial but also temporal and cultural associations for the author. I shall also discuss how the shifting location of the author and the consequent question of what is native and what alien, both culturally and linguistically, together evoke the exotic and almost fictional world of Hellenistic historiography.

The first word of the text not to be designated part of the Prologue confirms the importance for the narrative proper of the theme of place, and more particularly of movement between places. The fact that Thessaly (*Thessaliam*) is in the accusative immediately alerts us to the possibility of motion, a possibility which becomes reality with the last word of the sentence: 'I was making for' (*petebam*). However, the journey to Thessaly is also linked with a stress on origins and particularly with the origin of the subject of the narrative himself, since his mother's family was from that region. This combination of backward- and forward-looking travel—of 'from where' the

<sup>1</sup> Note the importance of spatial identity in other ancient texts: Homer, *Od.* 1. 170: 'Who are you among men? Where are your city and parents?' (*τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν; πόθι τοι πόλις ἠδὲ τοκῆες;*); Thucydides (1. 1) identifies himself as 'Thucydides the Athenian' (*Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος*); Herodotus (1. 1) as 'Herodotus of Halicarnassus' (*Ἡροδότου Ἀλικαρνησέως*).

author has come, and 'to where' he has directed both his real and intellectual journey—forms one of the major themes of the Prologue.

The early mention of both Egypt and the Nile, providing the writing equipment for the work, seems at first to over-emphasize this region (either Egypt or the Nile would have been sufficient if this were merely the evocation of an exotic location, or of the standard source of papyrus).<sup>2</sup> There are, however, at least two possible explanations for this focus. First, the theme of Egypt is to recur throughout and indeed to dominate parts of the work. The appearance of an innkeeper named Meroe and of an Egyptian prophet allude to the Egyptian aspect of the work early on, and the theme is taken up at length in Book 11, culminating in Lucius' own devotion to Isis at Rome.<sup>3</sup> A secondary association of the Egyptian focus in the Prologue may lie in Apuleius' own African origins.<sup>4</sup> Egypt is clearly not the precise part of Africa in which Apuleius was born, but the relative vagueness of this continent in the mental geographies of the inhabitants of the ancient world placed severe limitations on the possibilities for accurate geographical references.<sup>5</sup> The evidence of John Lydus citing in the sixth century AD an otherwise unknown writer, 'Chrestus the Roman', whose work on Libya covered the entire known continent, including extensive details on Egypt and the Nile, with apparently little regard for geographical boundaries, gives some insight into the 'broad-sweep' approach often applied to Africa

<sup>2</sup> On the literary associations of Egypt, see Powell, Ch. 3 in this volume, for whom the 'Hellenistic origins of the papyrus' evoke the literary culture of Alexandria, and so build up part of the narrator's literary background, as I shall argue is the case with the Greek mainland. See also Too, Ch. 16 in this volume, on Egypt as the 'birthplace of writing and literary art', but also a place of 'cultural erasure' for North Africa.

<sup>3</sup> 1. 7 for Meroe; 2. 28 for the prophet, Zatchlas. See Smith, Ch. 9 in this volume, for whom Egypt evokes 'secret religious lore'.

<sup>4</sup> See Edwards, Ch. 5 in this volume, on the African aspect of Apuleius.

<sup>5</sup> On the vagueness of ancient geographical conceptions, see esp. examples of 'movable islands', which were used as indicators of the furthest point, sometimes in *any* direction. The affinity of such mental geographies with works of fiction is clear. Amiotti (1987), argues that the island of Cerne 'non rappresenta una frontiera geografica, ma *un confine fantastico*' (my italics). On the general confusion about the outer limits of geographical knowledge, see Romm (1992). Romm too stresses the links between geography and fiction.

in antiquity.<sup>6</sup> Such an interpretation would suggest the identity of the speaker in the Prologue as Apuleius himself, with autobiographical details of his birthplace informing the text.

One complication to arise from the suggestion that the Egyptian focus might draw the reader's attention to Apuleius is that the explicit origin of the subject of the Prologue is then given as being the Greek mainland. Does this different origin mean that we need to look for a second persona in the Prologue—the narrator of the main text rather than the author of the work—or are the two harder than this to distinguish? The mention of Greek places is, in itself, problematic. How can Athens, Corinth, and the southern Peloponnese all be claimed as the subject's 'origin of old' (*vetus prosapia*)? Perhaps it might be productive to think of these geographical allusions in the context of the author's literary career. All three places reappear as the stages on which various parts of the work are played out (see Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume). However, the relationship between these locations and the text is still more integral than this 'stage for events' image suggests. The author brings out the parallelism between text and place by comparing the fertility of the regions alluded to with the fruitfulness of his work: 'ever fertile regions recorded in even more fertile books' (*glebae felices aeternum libris felicioribus conditae*). The comparative form applied to the literary production is significant, as we shall see later.

Meanwhile, what is the relevance of the specific ways in which each place is referred to?<sup>7</sup> Any attempt to examine in detail the possible significance of individual designations may fly in the face of what has been said about geographical vagueness. It is, however, worth noting that knowledge about the ancient world was not geographically uniform. It was one thing to allude to the vast mass of Libya; quite another to pick out certain cities from the well-known and much-discussed landscape of Greece, where the potential for resonant references was much greater.

It is not immediately clear why Corinth should be introduced here by its ancient name, Ephyra, which appears in a very small number of, mainly poetic, Latin texts. The reference

<sup>6</sup> *FgrHist* 764 F 6.

<sup>7</sup> See Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume.

to the Isthmos leaves no doubt as to which place is intended here.<sup>8</sup> However, Strabo (8. 3. 5) notes that many places held this name. There was, for example, an Ephyra on the River Sellëeis, as well as Thesprotian, Thessalian, and Corinthian Ephyrae. Could the use of this adjective have evoked in the mind of Apuleius' reader thoughts, however momentary, of other places in addition to Corinth, multiplying the geographical associations, or would the priority given to the word 'Isthmos' rule out any possibility other than Corinth? Innes's Homeric associations (Ch. 11 in this volume) of the word gain weight when set alongside Strabo's evidence, as his introduction of the various cities called Ephyra leads to a lengthy discussion of the Homeric usage of the name, and then in 8. 3. 6 to the more general question of how Homer accurately identified other places with shared names. What is important here is that, if Homer's Ephyra is the one to spring to the mind of Apuleius' reader as it did to Strabo's mind, then it is *not* Corinth but Strabo's Ephyra on the Sellëeis. This strengthens the case for multiple geographical allusion here.

Moving on to Athens and Sparta, both Hymettos and Taenaros, as mountains, may be of literary significance, since from Hesiod onwards the inspiration of the poet on the mountainside is a well-established theme.<sup>9</sup> Hymettos further reinforces the literary connotations of these allusions—famous for the honey produced on its slopes, again evoking a standard image for the poet and his work.<sup>10</sup> If these two places have been referred to in specific terms associating them with literary production, then this would help to explain why they can both be

<sup>8</sup> Propertius 2. 6. 1 (*Ephyraeae Laidos aedes*) and Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1. 335 (*Ephyraeae flamma Creusae*) use the adjective to refer clearly to Corinth and the *OLD* gives 'Corinthian' as a translation for *Ephyraeus*. This seems to have been the most common application, but certainly not the only one.

<sup>9</sup> On mountains as places of poetic inspiration see Hesiod, *Theogony* 1–28, Virgil, *Ecl.* 6. 64–73, Propertius 2. 10. 25–6. For the association of mountains and poetry in the *Met.* themselves, see 10. 30 and the festival at Corinth in which a wooden mountain was set up to resemble Mt. Ida of which Homer sang.

<sup>10</sup> On Hymettan honey: Horace, *Odes* 2. 6. 14–5; Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 2. 423. On the connection between honey and poetry, Lucretius 1. 947, promising to lace his exposition 'with the sweet honey of the Muses' (*musaeo dulci . . . melle*).



described as the source of the author. The allusion to Homer, if Ephyra serves that purpose, could only contribute to the sense that these places are intended as a comment on the literary affiliations and claims of the author.

But what is literary about Sparta? What kind of a background do these three really add up to as a group? It does not work to argue that we are seeing the gradual movement of the author and of his literary creation towards Rome, northwards through Greece from Africa (or at least Egypt), since the Greek places, in the order given, send us southwards. They do, however, allude to three of the great cities of classical Greek history (see Slater, Ch. 19 in this volume). Perhaps, then, these places contribute as much temporally as geographically to the picture of the author that is being built up. Corinth is, after all, described by its ancient name, and although there is a strong possibility of Homeric allusion here, which may point to an Archaic rather than Classical timescale, that reference is in any case confused since Homer's Ephyra was not Corinth. So the overall effect of this list of place names may be to locate us temporally and spatially in a long-vanished Greece, and in addition, to link this location with literary productions, giving us a cultural background for the author and the present work.

The description of the work as 'a story of Greek origin' (*fabula Graecanica*) seems to confirm these geographical and literary associations. However, the prologue continues the mental journey that has taken us from Africa to Greece further on to Rome. It is worth noting that, just as the Greek cities were referred to allusively, so too is Rome as 'the Latin city' (*urbs Latia*).<sup>11</sup> The composite origins of this author require another ingredient, and this is where we should recall that the work in hand is something more than a literary parallel for the

<sup>11</sup> Does this term necessarily refer only to Rome? It is hard to imagine what else could be meant, but ambiguity in denoting place is a striking feature of the Prologue. Nowhere is referred to directly by its usual name, perhaps preparing the reader for the disjunctions in place that pervade the work. There, 'real' place names are used throughout, but the reality of the places as experienced in the novel is not necessarily the reality of those place names as known from other sources. In other words, the reader's preconceptions of the associations of place denominations may be overthrown. The elliptical geographical references in the Prologue set the ground shifting before the journey of the narrative has even started.

rich land of Greece, being made up of ‘even *more* fertile books’ (*felicioribus libris*).<sup>12</sup>

The last mention made of Greece by the author concerned language. It was there, he says, that he mastered Greek, ‘the Attic tongue’ (*linguam Attidem*). But this does not just refer to the acquisition of everyday language through residence in a country. Surely, rather, we are to think of the specific training in literary Attic Greek, the language of productions of the great classical age possibly alluded to through the mention of Athens, Corinth, and Sparta.<sup>13</sup> This question of language dominates the rest of the Prologue, and adds to the geographical identity of the author which has so far been created. Most of all, the speaker stresses the alien nature of the Latin language.<sup>14</sup> As with so many other aspects of the Prologue, the alien nature of Latin is to recur later in the work. One of Lucius’ owners, the gardener, ignores the question of a soldier whom they meet on the road, because he is ‘ignorant of the Latin tongue’ (*Latini sermonis ignarus*), and the soldier has to repeat the question in Greek.<sup>15</sup> Even the oracle of Apollo at Miletos is given in Latin rather than Greek.<sup>16</sup> The description of Latin as ‘native’ (*indigenus*) gives it a firm geographical location in the region of Rome, a place to which the speaker is a ‘stranger’ (*advena*).<sup>17</sup> The later definition of this language as ‘foreign’ (*exoticus*) places it in the realms of the geographically distant, not at the

<sup>12</sup> Perhaps the use of the adjective *Graecanicus* rather than *Graecus* should in any case alert the reader to expect some twist beyond a straightforwardly ‘Greek’ tale. See Harrison and Winterbottom (Ch. 1) and Slater (Ch. 19) in this volume on *Graecanicus*.

<sup>13</sup> In this interpretation, the ‘labours of boyhood’ (*pueritiae stipendia*) would clearly refer to the rigours of a formal, classical, education at school.

<sup>14</sup> On the debate over *forensis* see Powell, Ch. 3 in this volume. See esp. 11. 28 and the reference to pleading cases in the ‘Roman tongue’ (*sermonis Romani*).

<sup>15</sup> 9. 39. Lucius himself, when restored to human form, does not know what ‘tongue’ (*sermo*) to use (11. 14).

<sup>16</sup> 4. 32 ‘But Apollo, although Greek and from Ionia, yet for the sake of the one who tells this Milesian tale, gave his oracular response in Latin’ (*sed Apollo, quamquam Graecus et Ionicus, propter Milesiae conditorem sic Latina sorte respondit*).

<sup>17</sup> The terms ‘native’ (*indigenus*) and ‘stranger’ (*advena*) are interestingly brought together again at the end of the work with reference to Lucius’ devotion to the cult of Isis (11. 26). He is a ‘newcomer to the shrine, but a native of the cult’ (*fani quidem advena, religionis autem indigena*).

conceptual centre of the known world.<sup>18</sup> This is the description which ancient accounts would lead us to associate more with Egypt than with Rome, and clearly marks out the shift in geographical conception that the author is encouraging the reader to make.<sup>19</sup> A region, which for the readership may be one of the most remote that they can imagine, is more familiar to this author than Rome; and Rome itself, the centre of the world in the global visions of Strabo and Vitruvius, has taken on the attributes of a barbarian nation.<sup>20</sup>

The author's alienation from the language in which he has chosen to write necessitates an apology in advance for any linguistic failures. His plea to be excused for his mistakes is startlingly reminiscent of the appeal made at the start of the second-century BC fragmentary Roman history of A. Postumius Albinus. According to Polybios, 'he asked in his preface to be excused if, as a Roman, he had not complete mastery of the Greek language and of the Greek method for treating the subject'.<sup>21</sup> M. Porcius Cato's reply to this request was that there could be no excuses made, since Postumius had chosen to write his history in Greek. Aulus Gellius refers to the same criticism of Postumius and cites his plea—'I am a Roman, born in Latium; Greek language is totally foreign to me'.<sup>22</sup> Ironically,

<sup>18</sup> See Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume, on *excolui*, hinting at a reversal in the normal post-conquest process by which the non-Roman native population has its language suppressed. See also Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume, on the language of military campaign. On the loss of native languages see Strabo 3. 2. 15 on the Turdetanians; 4. 1. 12 on the Alpine tribes; 12. 4. 6 on the people of the Troad.

<sup>19</sup> For the exotic nature of Egypt in the ancient imagination, see for example Aristagoras of Miletos (*FgrHist* 608 T3 = Pliny, *NH* 1. 36), who wrote about 'remarkable things' (*opera mirabilia*) including the sphinx, the pyramids, the labyrinths, and the Pharaohs in his *On Egypt* (*Αἰγυπτιακά*). Perhaps this exotic Egypt is appropriately associated with the pleasure-giving flatterer (*κόλαξις*) who is the speaker according to Trapp, Ch. 4 in this volume.

<sup>20</sup> For the concept of Rome at the centre of the world see Vitruvius, *De Architectura* 6. 1. 10: '[sc. it is] in the true middle within the space of the whole world and the region of the earth that the Roman people holds as its territories' (*vero inter spatium totius orbis terrarum regionisque medio mundi populus Romanus possidet fines*). Strabo 6. 4. 1 repeats this view. For the more philosophical possibly Stoic angle in Strabo, see 2. 5. 2 and 17. 1. 36 on the natural tendency for fate to converge on a central point; Rome is, of course, meant.

<sup>21</sup> *FgrHist* 812 T 7.

<sup>22</sup> *FgrHist* 812 F 1b.

in the case of Postumius, he was in the right place to be using his native language, but the strength of the Greek historiographical tradition was such that Greek was the natural language in which to write the account even of one's own, non-Greek country.<sup>23</sup> The contrast between expected language (Latin) and language used (Greek) is made more explicitly in the case of histories of early Rome than those of any other region of the world written about in the Hellenistic period. Thus, the way in which the situation is reversed in Apuleius' Prologue is all the more striking. Here the speaker presents himself as being closely connected with the culture and language of Greece and undertaking a Greek tale (*fabula Graecanica*) in the foreign language of Latin. But the idea of writing in a language that is culturally or ethnically alien from the world of the author and/or the world of the narrative is reminiscent of the whole tradition of Hellenistic regional accounts.

The wealth of regional accounts produced in the Hellenistic period and of which the early accounts of Rome, like that of A. Postumius Albinus, form a part is strongly evoked by the allusion to the problematic 'the Milesian tale'. The issue is interestingly addressed by both Bitel (Ch. 13) and Dowden (Ch. 12) in this volume, and I wish simply to make two suggestions. First, the reference to elusive *On Miletos* (*Μιλησιακά*) may, together with the speaker's professions of linguistic insecurity, form a broader evocation of this strand of Hellenistic historiography. Far from being conceptually distant from the project to write a piece of fiction, this is precisely the kind of enquiry (*ἱστορία*) that hovers on the boundary between the credible and the incredible. Xanthos' fifth-century BC *On Lydia* (*Λυδιακά*) involved such exotic themes as herbs which cure puppies from snake-bites, or the tale of king Cambles, whose greed led him to eat his wife in his sleep; Berosos of Babylon included in his *On Babylonia* (*Βαβυλωνιακά*) sea creatures who came out at night and instructed the people of

<sup>23</sup> Examples of writers noted particularly for writing in a language other than their own are common among Hellenistic historians, especially those writing the history of Rome: Q. Fabius Pictor and L. Cincius Alimentus are picked out by Dionysius of Halicarnassus as the first to write the story of Rome 'in Greek dialect' (*Ἑλληνικῇ διαλέκτῳ*) (*Roman Antiquities* 1. 6. 2).

Babylonia in architecture and geometry.<sup>24</sup> How great a leap is it from these to a work of fiction?

Secondly, the appearance of the word *Milesio* initiates the Prologue's mental tour around all three continents known in the ancient world, to be completed by Africa and Europe. Miletos itself is mentioned again, as the start of Thelyphron's journey to Olympia, and as the source of oracular messages.<sup>25</sup> The universality of the work's geographical scope is alluded to on several occasions, especially in the context of the Cupid and Psyche story. The palace is the treasure house of the whole earth (*totius orbis*); Psyche is the luckiest woman 'in the whole world'; and Venus searches for Psyche 'across the whole earth'.<sup>26</sup> The other context for universalism in the work is in connection with Egypt. Meroe, the strikingly named innkeeper, casts her spells over Indians, the Ethiopians on both sides of the Nile, and even the Antipodeans on the other side of the world.<sup>27</sup> Isis claims the worship of the Phrygians of Asia Minor, the people of Attica, the inhabitants of various Mediterranean islands, the Ethiopians and Egyptians.<sup>28</sup> Egypt, the source of the very writing materials for the work, encompasses in its sphere of influence a range of locations to match, and even surpass, those experienced by the characters in the novel.

The ethnic identities evoked in the Prologue take us to Africa and the exotic and highly cultured location of Egypt; to Greece, and in particular the literary tradition of the distant Greek past; and to Rome, which provides the linguistic medium for the work, but is revealed as alien to the author in such a way as to recall the complex and often incredible world of Hellenistic historiography. The description of the 'Latin city' also forces the reader to realign his view of the world from one with Rome at the centre to one where Rome can be seen as being on the fringes. The first word after the Prologue takes us to Thessaly and to yet another origin (*origo*). An examination of the geographical and ethnic location of the author and/or of the

<sup>24</sup> Xanthos: *FgrHist* 765 F 3 and 18; Berosos: *FgrHist* 680 F 1 (§4).

<sup>25</sup> See 2. 21 for Thelyphron; 4. 32 for the Milesian oracle given in Latin, not Greek.

<sup>26</sup> See 5. 2; 5. 9; 6. 2.

<sup>27</sup> See 1. 8.

<sup>28</sup> See 11. 5.

speaker of the narrative seems to have some answers, although no single decisive one, to offer to the question 'who is this?' (*quis ille?*). We still know neither who 'he' is, nor where he comes from, but the multiple possibilities raised by the search for his origins and the richness of the geographical allusions in the Prologue prepare the reader for a text which will itself often be elusive, and which will take both the narrator and his readers through many different landscapes.

## Why *Isthmos Ephyrea*?

DOREEN INNES

When abruptly asked *quis ille?* ('who is this?'), the speaker of the Prologue promises a brief reply and cites ancestral Greek origin in *Hymettos Attica et Isthmos Ephyrea et Taenaros Spartiatica* ('Attic Hymettus and the Ephyrean<sup>1</sup> Isthmus and Spartan Taenarus'). The richly decorative and expansive phrasing may in itself alert us to expect riddling allusions. Our suspicions are confirmed by the thwarted expectation of a quick straightforward identification raised by the conversational tone of the preceding dialogue.<sup>2</sup> In view of the marked frequency of geographical names in the short Prologue and the multivalent associations of several, the less obviously pointed reference to Corinth as *Isthmos Ephyrea* deserves closer examination. In particular, I would like to focus on questions of theme and claimed authorial biography.

I suggest that, as fits its central positioning in its phrase, the Isthmus of Corinth 'bridges' sweet Hymettus and grim Taenarus, themselves symbols of the overtly honeyed pleasurable tale and its underlying religious/philosophical seriousness. As such it gives a thematic foreshadowing of the similarly central story of Cupid and Psyche (4. 28–6. 24). It may also help to identify the speaker as Apuleius—an Apuleius who both is and is not the Lucius narrator, a Lucius whose origins are no

<sup>1</sup> Translated 'Corinthian' by Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume, since Ephyre was an old name for Corinth.

<sup>2</sup> Apuleius may recall the comic prologue of Plautus, as argued by Dowden, Ch. 12 in this volume, citing e.g. Plautus, *Aulularia* 1–2 (on the Prologue as dialogue compare also De Jong, Ch. 18 in this volume). But it is a familiar narrative pattern to begin with names of persons or places (cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4. 2. 2). An example from epic is Homer, *Il.* 6. 152, discussed below (cf. n. 23); in oratory too it is standard, and often, as here in Apuleius, follows a promise to speak briefly, e.g. Lysias 12. 3–4; Cicero, *Pro Milone* 23–4 and *Verr.* 2. 1. 36). Apuleius may thus deliberately evoke and evade the standard virtues of narrative: brevity, clarity, and plausibility (e.g. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4. 2. 31).

longer Patrai as in pseudo-Lucian, *Ass* 55.<sup>3</sup> But the identification is subtly blurred, as fits an introduction to *Metamorphoses*, a work of shifting guises and transformations.<sup>4</sup> A close analysis of *Isthmos Ephyrea* ('the Ephyrean Isthmus') will thus serve as a case study illustrating some of the most important characteristics of Apuleius in terms of intertextuality, narrative foreshadowing, and the hybrid quality of a work which will take us through a journey linking the pleasurable and the serious.

## I

Apuleius elsewhere exploits proper names for complex associations,<sup>5</sup> as in 7. 5 'Thracian Haemus': the large size of Haemus suggests the homonymous Thracian mountain, and his role in the plot provides two puns: *humano sanguine* ('human blood') plays on αἷμα/*haima*, the Greek for blood, and (*H*)*aemus/aemulus*, plays on the Latin for rival (*aemulus*) in the phrase *aemulus virtutis paternae* ('rival to the valour of my father'); note too that his father is 'the famous bandit' Theron, evoking both his fierceness (Greek θήρ/*ther*, 'wild beast') and the bandit Theron in Chariton's novel (e.g. 1. 7 ff.). Such allusiveness is not of course confined to proper names, e.g. 4. 31. 7 where the phrase *solis inimici* ('hostile sun') has 'at least three references',<sup>6</sup> one physical (sunstroke) and two alluding to myth.

The emphasis given to Egypt in the first sentence has already cued the reader to expect such complexity. Egypt is not only the place where the book physically began in terms of pen and paper: it suggests Africa as the homeland of Apuleius,<sup>7</sup> it looks ahead to the importance of Isis, and, as the place where writing

<sup>3</sup> For the blurred, shifting identification of this new hybrid Lucius of Madaura (11. 27. 9) see esp. Gibson, Ch. 7 in this volume, comparing Theocritus/Simichidas in Theocritus, *Id.* 7; compare Virgil, *Ecl.* 9, where Menalcas both is and is not Virgil. On the question of identification see in this volume *passim*, also Harrison (1990), and, on the Greek source and pseudo-Lucian, *Ass*, Mason (1993).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. n. 18. See Hijmans (1978a). For examples in other novelists see Bowie (1995: 269–80).

<sup>6</sup> Kenney (1990b): 181 n. 16.

<sup>7</sup> e.g. Clarke, Ch. 10 in this volume; on Egypt see also Slater (Ch. 19), Too (Ch. 16), and Trapp (Ch. 4).



began, it recalls the classic discussion of that origin in Plato's *Phaedrus*,<sup>8</sup> a work whose centrally positioned myth (245c ff.) is an important influence on the central story of Cupid and Psyche. Egypt thus signals a more serious concern behind the overt promise of pleasure. Apuleius also exploits but subverts Plato's contrast of dialogue and writing: he turns Milesian *sermo* ('the spoken word') into a written text, but for him, unlike Plato, the written text has superior status since it gives fame: Athens, Sparta, and Corinth are regions celebrated *libris felicioribus* ('in even more fertile books').<sup>9</sup> The fame of classical Greek writers such as Plato is the fame Apuleius claims for his own written text, and *vetus prosapia* ('origins of old'), signals emulation of the accepted canons of great Greek writers in the classical past.<sup>10</sup>

The three cities of Athens, Corinth, and Sparta are usually and rightly taken to represent the past glory of Greece. But though they can and do evoke the fame of the classical civilization of mainland Greece, the periphrases for Athens and Sparta are very pointed.<sup>11</sup> Taenarus was famous for its sacred cave, an entry to the Underworld, and it evokes death and Orphic katabasis, as in Orphic *Argonautica* 41 *Ταίναρον ἡνίκ' ἔβην σκοτήν ὁδὸν Ἄιδος εἴσω* ('when I went down the shadowy road at Taenarus to enter Hades'). Compare its only other appearances in the *Metamorphoses*, in the journey of Psyche at 6. 17 and 20, a katabasis which prefigures the final enlightenment of Lucius (11. 23) *calcato Proserpinae limine* ('once the threshold of Persephone was crossed').<sup>12</sup> In contrast to the sombre cave at Taenarus, the slopes of Hymettus were famous

<sup>8</sup> On its later fame see Trapp (1990), also Trapp, Ch. 4 in this volume.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. e.g. 5. 25, 6. 25, 9. 30, 10. 2, also Fowler (Ch. 20), Kahane (Ch. 21), and Slater (Ch. 19) in this volume.

<sup>10</sup> The Alexandrian poets were the normal cut-off point, as in the reading list of Greek literature in Quintilian, *Inst.* 10. 1. 46 ff. (his only exception is in history, where *longo post intervallo* ('after a long interval'), the Augustan Timagenes renewed the genre).

<sup>11</sup> See Clarke (Ch. 10) and Laird (Ch. 24) in this volume. On Taenarus see e.g. Nisbet and Hubbard (1970) on Horace, *Odes* 1. 34. 10–11 *invisi horrida Taenari sedes* ('the dread seat of hateful Taenarus'). On Mount Hymettus see e.g. Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) on Horace, *Odes* 2. 6. 14. On the honey of the muses compare e.g. Lucretius 1. 947 *et quasi musaeo dulci contingere melle* ('and to touch it with the sweet honey of the muses').

<sup>12</sup> See Kenney (1990a: 15 n. 67).

for honey, giving a promise of pleasure, and particularly the honeyed pleasure of poetry and the muses.<sup>13</sup> It is particularly appropriate to link Athens with the muses and literature, since so many of the great Greek writers were Athenian, notably in tragedy, comedy, and oratory. As a *locus amoenus* ('a place of pleasure'), such as that described in Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 3. 687 ff., Attic Hymettus may also recall that other Attic *locus amoenus*, by the Ilissus in Plato's *Phaedrus* (230b-c),<sup>14</sup> a sensuous setting appropriate for love—but which, as in Apuleius, leads to more serious concerns.

Taenarus and Hymettus thus represent a standard antithesis of ancient literary criticism, *dulce* and *utile* (the 'sweet' and the 'useful'). As images they may be compared to the medicinal honeyed cup in Lucretius (1. 936 ff. = 4. 11 ff.), where the bitter but useful wormwood of philosophy is initially masked by the sweet honey of poetry. But Apuleius introduces the Ephyrean Isthmus between Hymettus and Taenarus. This third item should therefore provide a symbol which combines both sweet and useful—the combination praised in Horace, *Ars Poetica* 343 *omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci* ('the winner of every vote is the one who has blended useful and sweet').

## II

I begin with journeys and geography.

1. Corinth is an isthmus, an obvious and standard feature, e.g. Horace, *Odes* 1. 7, where a list of famous Greek cities includes *bimarisve Corinthi* ('or Corinth between two seas').<sup>15</sup> An isthmus of its nature links two adjacent areas, and a linking

<sup>13</sup> So is the language: later in the Prologue Apuleius acknowledges the Attic tongue he learned in boyhood: see Clarke, Ch. 10 in this volume, and cf. Aristides 1. 322 ff. (cited in Anderson 1993: 87).

<sup>14</sup> Recalled in 5. 1. The story of Cupid and Psyche includes both *locus amoenus* and *locus horribilis* ('place of pleasure' and 'place of horror'; see Kenney (1990a) on 5. 1 and 6. 14). This fits a story instantiating and mediating Hymettus and Taenarus of the Prologue.

<sup>15</sup> As is its harbour, Cenchreae. In 10. 35 it is set between the Aegean and the Saronic gulf (*Aegaeo et Saronico mari*). It is also *tutissimum navium receptaculum* ('a haven of great safety for ships'), another thematic signal, since it is here that Lucius finds haven, recovering human shape.

role for Corinth is reinforced by *Ephyrea*, which suggests a pun on Ephyra/*gephyra* (γέφυρα), the Greek for a bridge.<sup>16</sup>

2. The sequence of three place names permits a real journey through Greece, from Athens via Corinth to the southern tip of Laconia at Taenarus. In this, the most obvious and literal meaning, Apuleius may promise the importance of travel as a theme,<sup>17</sup> but the route Athens–Corinth–Taenarus represents no actual journey of Lucius or anyone else within the following narrative (as a place on a journey Athens appears only once, recently visited by Lucius, 1. 4). On the contrary, ‘Thessaly’, the first word after the Prologue, begins a journey further north, to an area of Greece often marginalized and semi-barbaric, a land of magic and witchcraft. But this Thessaly is also paradoxically a home to Greek philosophy, as Lucius travels to his mother’s family, the family of Plutarch and Sextus (1. 2). The supposedly autobiographical reference neatly suggests that this Milesian tale has also an origin in (Platonic) philosophy.<sup>18</sup> That these are deliberate changes to the original Greek source is suggested by the consistent lack of such associations in pseudo-Lucian, *Ass*: there the journeying is restricted to northern areas, and the transformation of Lucius is at Thessalonica (*Ass* 46, 49), not Corinth.

3. Corinth is Lucius’ home (2. 12), the starting point of his present journey (1. 22) and the place where he becomes human again (10. 18 ff.). It has been pivotal to Lucius’ life, and is a place where journeys often begin and end—but it is ultimately a place of transit, as we see when Lucius leaves Corinth for a new life in Rome (11. 26).

But Corinth is not only geographically significant. It is also a city of Venus, traditionally associated with love, a central theme throughout the *Metamorphoses*. Since love suggests tales of pleasure, Corinth continues the agreeable associations of Attic Hymettus. But Corinth is also where Isis rescues Lucius,

<sup>16</sup> Compare the image of the Isthmus as a bridge/*gephyra* (γέφυρα) between seas in Pindar, *Nemean* 6. 39 and *Isthmian* 4. 20. Contrast Henderson, Ch. 17 in this volume on ‘Corinthian dis/junction’.

<sup>17</sup> See Clarke, Ch. 10 in this volume.

<sup>18</sup> Further hints from names: Socrates is the name of a character introduced in 1. 7 ff. and Lucius’ parents are Theseus and Salvia in 1. 23, 2. 2 (cf. Winkler 1985: 318 n. 75).

Venus is an aspect of Isis, and thus Corinth can symbolize both secular and heavenly love,<sup>19</sup> and prefigure the dual role of love in the story of Cupid and Psyche,<sup>20</sup> where an old woman's *narrationibus lepidis* (4. 27 'pleasing tales') are transformed into Platonic myth (cf. Plato, *Gorgias* 527a where myth seems initially an old woman's tale). Platonic myth combines the pleasing and the serious, and this combination is promised by the description of Corinth as isthmus and bridge between Hymettus and Taenarus. *Isthmos Ephyrea* ('the Ephyrean Isthmus'), the mediating middle term of three, thus prefigures the central myth of Cupid and Psyche in the middle of the work.

It fits our generic expectations of tales of picaresque adventure and novels of love<sup>21</sup> that the pleasure of Apuleius' work is explicit and prominent at the beginning and end of the Prologue. References to pleasure similarly frame the narrative, in 1. 2 *fabularum lepida iucunditas* ('the agreeable pleasure of tales') and 11. 29, where the narrator goes off *gaudens* ('rejoicing'). The 'middle' story of Cupid and Psyche is also introduced as a pleasant tale (4. 27), and it ends with the birth of Psyche's daughter, *voluptas* (6. 24. 4 'Pleasure').<sup>22</sup> By allusion the Prologue already hints that there will be a more serious element, that the middle links both the pleasing and the serious, that the seriousness will dominate the final book, but that the promised pleasure will remain to the end.

### III

But the Ephyrean Isthmus may have yet further associations. Ephyre as a name for Corinth immediately suggests high poetry,<sup>23</sup> and I suggest that Apuleius deliberately evokes its

<sup>19</sup> Mason (1971) sees Corinth as a place of sexual corruption and a symbol of the secular life. But see Kenney in n. 20, below, also Griffiths (1975: 14 ff.), and, as cryptic autobiography, Veine (1965).

<sup>20</sup> Kenney (1990a: 5 n. 25; and 12 ff., esp. 13 n. 57). Here again Corinth is a bridge, to two aspects of love.

<sup>21</sup> e.g. Lucian, *Vera Historia* 1. 1 ff., and the promise of 'a pleasant possession for all men' in the proem to Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe*. Cf. Morgan, Ch. 14 in this volume.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Smith, Ch. 9 in this volume.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. scholion on Homer, *Il.* 6. 152: Ephyre fits the speech 'of a heroic character' (*ἥρωικῶν προσώπων*).

first appearance, in Homer, *Iliad* 6. 152 ἔστι πόλις Ἐφύρη ('There is a city, Ephyre'), where Glaucus gives his genealogy. This was a famous passage,<sup>24</sup> and, as in Apuleius, it begins an answer to the question 'who are you?' Glaucus includes the story of his ancestor, Bellerophon, a story of love, where Bellerophon was sent away after a false accusation of adultery, endured a series of tests, and was rewarded with marriage—a story with a pattern of folklore motifs parallel to the testing of Psyche in the story of Cupid and Psyche.

More tentatively, I suggest a hint of Apuleius' own genealogy. Glaucus is Greek only by distant descent, but like later descendants of Greek colonists he is still Greek, like the Syracusan women in Theocritus 15. 91 who claim 'we are Corinthians by descent, just like Bellerophon'. Greece can be similarly Apuleius' own *vetus prosapia* (1. 1. 3 'his origin of old'), if he has Greek ancestry, however distant. He belongs to the Greek world, even if he was not born in Greece. There may also be some more specific allusion to Africa and Cyrene, one of Corinth's most famous colonies, in the reference to Athens, Corinth, and Sparta as *glebae* ('regions'), a word literally and more commonly meaning 'clods of earth': a hint perhaps of the story of the clod of earth in the myth of the origins of Cyrene (e.g. Pindar, *Pythian* 4. 37; Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica* 2. 500–27, 4. 1551 ff.). If so, we may note Ephyre in Virgil, *Georgics* 4. 343 *atque Ephyre atque Opis et Asia Deiopea* ('Ephyre and Opis and Asian Deiopeia'), names in a list of nymphs around Cyrene, mother of Aristaeus of Egypt.

Allusive reference here to Homer is pointed in various ways.

1. Homer's fame illustrates the fame given by the ancient Greek writers of antiquity, all the more so since he is the first Greek poet, the Ocean or source for all (e.g. Quintilian, *Inst.* 10. 1. 46). As *priscae poeticae divinus auctor* (9. 13 'the divine author (or originator?) of antique poetry'), Homer is the best possible proof of *vetus prosapia* ('my origins of old').

<sup>24</sup> In Maximus of Tyre 22. 5 it is paired with Thucydides 1. 24. 1, 'A city there is, Epidamnus'. Both were models for narrative beginnings (so in Eustathius, in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *On the Composition of Words* 4, and in *Rhetores Graeci* 3. 125, ed. Spengel). Both were probably stock examples also in grammar: they illustrate different ways of ordering subject and verb in Demetrius 199–201.

2. The *Odyssey* was the predecessor for the picaresque novel (cf. Lucian, *Vera Historia* 1. 3), including metamorphosis since its many adventures include transformation of men into swine by Circe (cf. Longinus 9. 14). Homer is an important influence on Apuleius, echoed explicitly in 10. 30 ff. (the Judgement of Paris) and often implicitly (e.g. 4. 31. 4–7, 5. 1).

3. Apuleius here echoes Homer's style in a sudden change of stylistic register. We have a list of names, *Hymettos Attica et Isthmos Ephyrea et Taenaros Spartiatica* ('Attic Hymettus and the Ephyrean Isthmus and Spartan Taenarus'), which sound conspicuously Greek (nominatives in *-os*, adjectival endings, and the Greek sounds of *h*, *ph*, *th*, *y*, and the softer *r* and *s*<sup>25</sup>). The list also evokes the resonance of an epic catalogue, as in Homer, *Iliad* 2. 494 ff. and Virgil, *Georgics* 4. 336 ff., cited above. Such chains of names give grandeur, a point illustrated from Homer's catalogue in Demetrius 54 and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *On the Composition of Words* 16.<sup>26</sup> This quasi-epic register also explains the unusually long colon,<sup>27</sup> since long clauses in prose were traditionally compared to the epic hexameter and ascribed similar dignity (cf. Demetrius 5, 204–5 and see Kroll on Cicero, *Orator* 222). This then contrasts sharply with the preceding two short cola, which are brief, abrupt, and iambic, to fit the tone of colloquial dialogue. Here in the Prologue Apuleius conspicuously displays his full gamut of style, and the ears are indeed pleased *lepido susurro* ('with an agreeable whispering').

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 12. 10. 8 for Greek as a sweet-sounding language (*dulce*) in contrast to harsh Latin. In view of *Graecanica* later in the Prologue, note *Graecanica* in Varro, *Ling. Lat.* 10. 70–1, where it refers to the use of Greek endings in Latin, e.g. accusative *Hectora*, not *Hectorem* (cf. Slater, Ch. 19 in this volume). For aural effects cf. Fowler (Ch. 20), Kahane (Ch. 21), and Powell (Ch. 3) in this volume.

<sup>26</sup> For such grandeur in prose, cf. Longinus 23. 4; for the decorative effect of proper names, cf. Cicero, *Orator* 163.

<sup>27</sup> Contrast Nisbet, Ch. 2 in this volume, who suggests three shorter cola. I also see no need to doubt the iambic rhythm and absence of clausula in the preceding two cola, since dialogue should reflect the informal effect of oral speech: compare Demetrius 226, citing the opening of Plato's *Euthydemus*, 'Who is that, Socrates?' For the colloquial associations of iambic in sharp contrast to the heroic dactyl compare e.g. Demetrius 42–3, recalling Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1408<sup>b</sup> 32 ff.

## IV

A concluding note on methodology: modern critical theory is more sophisticated than that in ancient authors, but in this chapter I regularly cite from the latter to suggest ways in which Apuleius' text was likely to be received at the time. There is also some support for an approach in terms of intertextuality and the pointedly allusive detail. The deliberate allusive recall of other authors was very familiar, and often multiple (Kenney 1990a on 5.1, for example, cites multiple echoes of Plato, Homer, and Ovid): compare here the theory of imitation, *mimesis*.<sup>28</sup> For the abbreviated concise allusiveness which I argue for the phrase *Isthmos Ephyrea*, we may also note that a recognized type of allegory was one which briefly encapsulated a whole story: so Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 5. 11. 21 *velut fabella brevior*, ('a sort of rather short story'), and 8. 6. 52 *in exemplis allegoria* ('allegory from parallels'). This last is illustrated by the standard example, 'Dionysius in Corinth', three words which evoke from just two proper names the whole story of a mighty tyrant in humiliating exile (cf. Demetrius 8–9, 99–102, 241–3). Taken to extreme, allegory becomes riddle, as in Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 8. 6. 52 *allegoria quae est obscurior* ('allegory which is too obscure'), but some answers have, I hope, been given to help decode *Isthmos Ephyrea* ('the Ephyrean Isthmus') in Apuleius' riddling Prologue.

<sup>28</sup> See Bompaire (1958) and Russell (1979).





# Literary History



# Prologic, Predecessors, and Prohibitions

KEN DOWDEN

## PROLOGIC

Openings of novels deserve special attention: they contribute to the definition of the work and to the definition of the relationship between reader, narrator, and subject matter. But the opening of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* does not conform easily to this expectation. Modern readers may call the first chapter the 'Prologue' (it clearly has a *preliminary* character) but it defies 'prologic': it fails to (1) state the name and place of origin of narrator, (2) explain how the story was discovered/came to the knowledge of the narrator, (3) identify and sketch the main characters, (4) select a starting point for the narration, or (5) set the scene. It is not, however, without purpose and it has its own agenda, admittedly difficult to define, which stands in some relation to some sorts of prologue:

- The chapter stands outside the action—the action begins, after false expectations aroused by *exordior* ('I begin'),<sup>1</sup> with *Thessaliam* ('To Thessaly . . .').
- The narrator immediately addresses the reader-listener (*at ego tibi*, 'Now, for you I [shall sew together varied tales] . . .').
- He makes a (pseudo-)statement of style with implications for content (*sermone Milesio*, 'in the Milesian style').
- Despite welcoming *aures benivolas* ('willing ears'), he fears the Egyptian papyrus and pen will tell against him (though

<sup>1</sup> False start on the usual punctuation, e.g. Smith (1972: 515). But the punctuation '*figuras . . . exordior.*' (Harrison 1990: 507–8), surely correct, changes the picture: instead of a one-word non-start (*exordior.*), we have the theme announced before not starting the narrative. On either punctuation, *Quis ille* deflects the narrator from the narrative.

the disproportionate emphasis suggests some other point is being made).<sup>2</sup>

- He engages interest—(*ut mireris*, ‘so that you may marvel’) as though he were Lucian doing a parodic piece of paradoxography, or a *Wundergeschichte*.<sup>3</sup>
- His style is lively, if enigmatic: *–quis ille?* (‘Who’s that?’) is particularly engaging.
- The question of the narrator’s identity is raised.
- He promises a brief *narratio* (statement of facts)<sup>4</sup>—*paucis accipe* (‘learn in a few words!’).
- He modestly and disingenuously disclaims linguistic/rhetorical expertise (*rudis locutor*, ‘raw/inexperienced speaker’).
- He claims originality (*nullo magistro praeunte*, ‘with no master leading the way’, the corollary of inexperience): the material is now for the first time available in Latin.
- He calls for attention, and promises a reward.

In a broad sense Apuleius is employing the rhetorical techniques appropriate to an opening address (*exordium* or *προοίμιον*): the audience must be *benevoli* (well-disposed), *attenti* (alert), and *dociles* (receptive because of the clarity of the speaker). So, there is an attempt to win *goodwill* (*captatio benevolentiae*), and a statement of content and of identity, which, if less disingenuously done, would make things *clear* for the reader. They will be *alert* because of the wonder of the material and its novelty and because of the puzzle posed by the obscurity of the whole. They will be drawn in by the long opening sentence and roused by the jolly heckling (*quis ille?*) and the explicit call for attention. The textbooks commend beginning by talking about someone’s character, particularly your own—and the narrator does so, if in a peculiar way. So it achieves standard objectives, but in a non-standard, enigmatic, way.

<sup>2</sup> Highlighted by Harrison (1990: 510) and Innes, Ch. 11 in this volume.

<sup>3</sup> The term of Reitzenstein (1912: 70–1) – who starts from the *incredunda fabula* (‘unbelievable story’) of 2. 12, reflecting the Greek *ἄπιστος λόγος*. See also Harrison (1990: 508).

<sup>4</sup> Like Cicero’s *narrationes*, it purports to be biographical and snappy.

## PREDECESSORS AND PROHIBITIONS

## 'Lucius of Patrai'

The failure to signal *the plot* is a disconcerting characteristic of the Prologue. In other ancient novels, even if the approach is in some way oblique—as in the picture-based<sup>5</sup> approaches of Longus and Achilles—we feel that the plot is still in general terms being adumbrated. Apuleius only reveals that there will be a collection of stories *sermone isto Milesio* ('in that Milesian style') and that they will involve metamorphosis and remetamorphosis. This would suffice if it were true, but let us not deceive ourselves: as we well know, despite the best efforts of critics, it isn't. On a generous—or, rather, profound—interpretation there may be a number of metamorphoses; there is, however, *only one remetamorphosis*, that of Lucius. The Prologue misleads, maybe misdirects, certainly fails to state the actual content of the novel. In addition, it highlights the episodic origin of a novel exhibiting a very striking unity (*varias fabulas conseram*, 'I shall sew together varied stories'), leaving us to puzzle over the extent of 'togetherness' resulting from this act of 'patchwork'.<sup>6</sup>

The phraseology of this part of the Prologue resembles the account which Photius gives (*Library* 129) of the plot of the Greek *Metamorphoses* of 'Lucius of Patrai'. The details are given by Scobie (1975: 65): briefly, this would account for the references to episodic origin, to multiple metamorphoses, and to multiple remetamorphoses, as well as possibly the paradoxographic quality ('so that you may marvel').<sup>7</sup> A particular, and tempting, view of the relationship between the two prologues is given by Paula James (1987: 26–7), who considers that the earlier part of the Prologue and in particular the credentials of

<sup>5</sup> Dependent on *prolalia*—the elegant introductory disquisition characteristic of the new sophists.

<sup>6</sup> 'Der Verfasser einen falschen Begriff von seinem Werke erweckt', Lucas, *Philologus* 66 (1907), 24, cited by Reitzenstein (1912: 67 n. 13a). We find another disingenuous opening (complete with inceptive *sed*) at 4. 27, *sed ego te narrationibus lepidis anilibusque fabulis protinus avocabo* ('now I shall divert you straightaway with attractive stories and old women's tales').

<sup>7</sup> The inceptive *at* (Scobie 1975: 66), too, could well have had its origins in an ἀλλά of his source.

the fictional narrator 'could be lifted wholesale from the Greek preface', whereas the account of how the work of this Greek narrator comes to be in Latin would be Apuleius' own addition.

On the other hand, it is not entirely clear *how* this 'borrowing' would sweep away the problematic character of the Prologue. So, Apuleius had found these statements, which were presumably true of the Greek *Metamorphoses* (and accounted for its plural title), and put them at the head of his own work, of which they are untrue. We have to do better than put it down to inertia: 'Apulée s'est contenté sans doute de le transcrire de l'original' (Vallette)!<sup>8</sup> Perhaps he wrote his Prologue without a determined view of what he was going to write.<sup>9</sup> More deviously, perhaps 'Apuleius is confronting his reader with a set of mischievous allusions to his source and, in his adaptation of the Greek preface, he produces the very first metamorphosis of the work' (James 1987: 27), though 'false trailer as mischievous allusion' needs thinking out.

#### *Sisenna the Catalyst; Prohibition 1*

Where do 'Milesian tales' fit in this prologic? This leads to the first of two prohibitions which I propose for future discussion of Apuleius:

PROHIBITION 1: No one shall refer to a genre of 'Milesian Tales'.

There is no such thing as a genre of Milesian Tales. There are simply two works: Aristides' Greek original and the transposition of that work, *scientia desultoria* ('through horse-swapping skill' like Lucius), into Latin by Sisenna (died 67 BC).

The reference in the opening line of the *Metamorphoses* to *sermone isto Milesio* ('that Milesian style') and *fabulas* ('stories') is a specific allusion to Sisenna's book, the *Milesiae*, and to its distinctive, notorious character. As the *isto* ('that') indicates (I do not believe it is a vulgarism),<sup>10</sup> Apuleius' contemporary audience would have been well aware of Sisenna's book, just as Lucian was reading Aristides—and perhaps even reading,

<sup>8</sup> Vallette in Robertson and Vallette (1940 vol. i: p. xxv).

<sup>9</sup> Maybe it is not absurd to think of the work evolving as the author writes it and that some of our problems result from assuming too determined a picture of the *Met.* when Apuleius began work (cf. Nimis (1998), a provocative and original discussion).

<sup>10</sup> See Powell, Ch. 3 in this volume.

writing, or abridging Lucius of Patrai. There was a fashion at the time for reading old, non-golden authors: Gellius cites Sisenna, if only his *Historiae*, a number of times and Fronto refers clearly enough to the *Milesiae* itself.<sup>11</sup> If, as I have suggested elsewhere (Dowden 1994), Apuleius' novel is something of a test piece before a 150s audience of the Fronto-Gellius type, it was a remarkable inspiration to build a work on the dubious Sisennan also-ran. *This may be the source of his idea to write the Metamorphoses at all.*

It is from Sisenna's *Milesiae* that much of the inserted material and indeed much of Apuleius' own distinctive style must come, something which its loss allows us to overlook.<sup>12</sup> The prologue of the *Milesiae* must have had an oral character with a very visible narrator, to judge by our knowledge of the opening of Aristides' original, and it may well have addressed the issue of translation.<sup>13</sup> It was probably the link between Aristides' *τοῖς Μιλησιακοῖς λόγοις ὑπερκηλούμενος* ('charmed by the Milesian talk/stories')<sup>14</sup> and Apuleius' *sermone isto Milesio . . . permulceam* ('charm you with that Milesian talk/style').<sup>15</sup> Sisenna's style, in particular the notorious adverbs in *-tim*, seems likely (cf. Callebat 1968: 477–8) to have influenced the particular archaic mode that Apuleius has adopted. Equally, the episodic and diverting conception of the *fabula* proposed in the Prologue fits Sisenna's work well, as Reitzenstein (1912: 72) once observed. Thus the Prologue leads the audience falsely to entertain the notion that this work will replicate the structure and level of ambition of its (well-known) predecessors—the Greek *Metamorphoses* and Sisenna's *Milesiae*—a lost, but recoverable, misdirection.

If the plot of the *Milesiae* was episodic and miscellaneous, Sisenna could not have outlined it in his prologue. All he could do was indicate that he would 'in the Milesian style [*like Aristides*] sew together varied stories'. Sisenna used old-

<sup>11</sup> *Attic Nights* 9. 14. 12, 11. 15. 7, 12. 15; Reitzenstein (1912: 57). *Sisennam in lasciviis* ('Sisenna in his soft porn'), Fronto 4. 3. 2.

<sup>12</sup> For the significance of Sisenna see Reitzenstein (1912: 49–73).

<sup>13</sup> Is the *Milesiae conditor* ('composer of the *Milesiae*', i.e. this particular Milesian story) in 2: 4. 3. 2 Sisenna (Reitzenstein 1912: 53–4) and is it Sisenna's joke?

<sup>14</sup> 'Lucian', *Amores* 1.

<sup>15</sup> This point is more or less made by Reitzenstein (1912: 65 and n. 11).

fashioned Latin vocabulary, the sort that Plautus had used, partly because he liked that sort of Latin (as his *Historiae* show), but partly also because it was appropriate to the risqué, lowbrow material he was presenting in Latin. It would complete this chain if the Sisenna who was a commentator on Plautus was actually the same as our Sisenna.<sup>16</sup> Thus in the very special archaizing environment of the 150s, the imitation of Sisenna would lead to, and reinforce, the imitation of Plautus.

The most striking parallel in extant literature to Apuleius' manner in the Prologue is the prologue of Plautus, as has often been observed (I present a collection of points of similarity in the Resource at the end of this chapter).<sup>17</sup> Apuleius' imitation of Plautus partly results from his literary environment: Fronto and Gellius praised the use of words from Plautus, and Callebat has charted its impact on Apuleius' locution in his *Sermo Cotidianus*.<sup>18</sup> Not only new vocabulary but new possibilities in the field of relationship between narrator and audience opened up for Apuleius as a result. But Sisenna, too, in some substantial way, as we can see, must have done more than point the way for Apuleius.

<sup>16</sup> One fragment (in Charisius 285. 24) appears to cite Virgil, though it is oddly expressed and the citation of Virgil may not be Sisenna's, cf W. Kroll in *RE* suppl. v, cols. 59–61 on Cornelius 371a.

<sup>17</sup> Noted perhaps since the Renaissance and much discussed in recent scholarship, see Harrison (1990: 509). Examples include Smith (1972: 517–20, 'Like the Plautine *prologus* he drums up interest in the story, makes a pointed reference to its exotic origin, and promises a reward to those who listen carefully', 520); Dowden (1982: 428); Tatum (1979: 25–7), Winkler (1985: 183–203). On the prologue in Plautus see F. Stoessl in *RE* xxiii (1959), cols. 2384–2403 s.v. 'Prologos', Nachträge II. 8. I do not think Terence is of much importance for Apuleius.

<sup>18</sup> Callebat (1968: 473–545, esp. 474, 545), on the modish and thorough-going character of Apuleius' recall of Plautus and Terence. On Fronto and Gellius (who cites over 30 plays of Plautus—but only two of Terence—cf. P. K. Marshall's *Oxford Classical Text*, index), see the references to Marache in Callebat (1968: 474 n. 274). There are other elements in the Prologue that reflect the chatty, spoken language and simultaneously the language of Plautus: juxtaposition of *ego tibi* (Plautus, *Curculio* 138), see Callebat (1968: 95); omission of the verb 'to be' in questions (*quis ille?*), Callebat (1968: 114).



*The Voices of the Prologue; Prohibition 2*

Does the speaker of the prologue in Plautus, the *prologus*, provide the answer to the identity of the speaker of Apuleius' Prologue? I fear that we have set ourselves a trick question and tied ourselves in knots trying to answer it.<sup>19</sup> The *prologus* is at once (a, b) Aristides–Sisenna and (c) the jovial *prologus* of Plautus. The *prologus* of Plautus stands outside the play proper and our Prologue does too—there is a more or less clean break at the word 'Thessaly'. This then is where the actor takes up his real role (we need no 'exit', as Harrison (1990) implies)—and where we hear (d) a rhetorical voice making the transition from *exordium* (opening address) to *narratio* (telling). Add to these identities (e) Apuleius the author, (f) newcomer to the literary stage after his formative years in Greece (if my 1994 approach is right), and of course, as Harrison (1990) observes but, I think, overprivileges, (g) the book itself because that is what is being converted from Greek to Latin. The Prologue is polyvalent and it is a fallacy to ask which one identity we should adopt to the exclusion of others. Which earlier author is the Prologue based on—does it interact intertextually with Sisenna, Lucius of Patrai, Virgil, Ovid, or . . . Is the Prologue spoken or written? The second prohibition is now in place:

PROHIBITION 2: No one shall seek to identify the speaker (singular) of Apuleius' Prologue.<sup>20</sup>

There shall, however, be no prohibition on *adding* identities.

*The Topos of the 'Raw Speaker'*

Apuleius' notion of 'raw speech' (*rudis locutio*) is very close to a passage of his contemporary Lucian (*Bis Accusatus* §27) which is at once metaphorical and, a little, autobiographical.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> This vitiates e.g. Dowden (1982: 427–8), and Harrison (1990: 508–9) (well though he refutes Dowden).

<sup>20</sup> The credit for this prohibition really belongs to Winkler (1985: 203), well highlighted by Too, Ch. 16 in this volume.

<sup>21</sup> There are some temptations also in Lucian's *Dream or the Cock*. The Cock, to the surprise of Mikyllos the cobbler, is able to speak human language and learnt it without difficulty (§2 οὐ χαλεπῶς). The Cock tells the Cobbler to listen (*inspiceris, attende?*) because his story will be amazing (*παραδοξότατον—ut mireris*). Indeed, he used to be a man (metamorphosis, then—in fact he was Pythagoras and has been through reams of metamorphoses, e.g. §20). Other

Rhetoric speaks against Lucian, claiming that as an adolescent (*μειράκιον*) he was still a barbarian in his language, *βάρβαρος*; she educated him and had him registered amongst 'her tribesmen'—or as Lucian puts it a little later (§30) registered as a Greek, *εἰς τοὺς Ἑλληνας*. The themes are very nearly those of Apuleius' Prologue: there the narrator learnt Greek in childhood, but, a new arrival in Rome, 'learnt the native language of the Quirites [Roman citizens] with much labour'. Though the application in Lucian is to the fictional Lucian, some autobiographical statement is being made: Lucian's rise to prominence in the world of Greek culture was through rhetoric (and afterwards he went on to dialogue). The parallel reading for Apuleius would apply to the real Apuleius: my cultural training is primarily in Greek, good Attic Greek at that,<sup>22</sup> but now I have taken considerable trouble to develop a culturally worthwhile and appropriate Latin style for something unprecedented.<sup>23</sup> To speak Latin is one thing, and presumably Apuleius had done that since the cradle, even if he had had Greek nurses such as Quintilian envisages; but to develop an impressive and culturally aware Latin style with claims on an audience's attention is quite another. It is the latter claim that Apuleius is making.

Apuleius is not the only Latin author to worry about 'rude locution'.<sup>24</sup> Tacitus, in his first literary work, the *Agricola*, excuses his *incondita ac rudi voce* (3. 3. 'uncouth and raw voice'). Such an act of excusing might perhaps seem intolerably disingenuous in later work, but it is appropriate modesty for a first appearance on the literary stage. I have argued (1994) that this is one of a number of signs that the *Metamorphoses*, contrary to our usual prejudices, is Apuleius' first Latin work and predates, for instance, the *Apology*. It will be noted that Lucian

echoes of Apuleius (or vice versa): the debate on credibility §3, cf. 1. 3; the *ἀλεκτρῶν φιλόσοφος*, cf. 10.33 *philosophantem nobis asinum*; the stress on the ability to observe men whilst in animal form, §20.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Philostratus, *Apollonius of Tyana* 1. 7 καὶ ἡ γλῶττα Ἀττικῶς εἶχεν ('and his speech was Attic').

<sup>23</sup> The same sort of claim as at Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 1. 1. 4 *μηδένα* ('no one previously').

<sup>24</sup> *Rudis* is also used of the failure to implement Greek cultural standards in Latin, e.g. Horace, *Satires* 1. 10. 66 (Lucilius); Ovid, *Tristia* 2. 424 (Ennius). This suggests that Apuleius recognizes the danger of being *rudis* but thinks he has enough Greek culture to avoid it.

too, when referring to his barbarous speech, is talking about the beginning of his cultural career. First-work modesty is more than prefatory modesty.

Another instance of false linguistic modesty is found in Macrobius' *Saturnalia*, perhaps itself an early work, certainly an ambitious one (which in a way makes you a beginner again). There he apologizes that he comes from the wrong part of the world to speak Latin well and that his elegance will not be that of a native.<sup>25</sup> Though persons may genuinely find difficulty in writing in a language other than their mother tongue, as did A. Postumius Albinus, who wrote in Greek, apologized, and incurred the sarcastic wrath of the elder Cato, Macrobius' apology is an instance of 'pure convention', as Janson puts it.<sup>26</sup> On the story level Lucius may have the same worries as Postumius (Janson 1964: 131), but on a more perceptive reading Apuleius is foreshadowing the convention adopted by Macrobius, where alleged unfamiliarity with the language underlines that the author is a newcomer or the work is novel.<sup>27</sup>

Lucretius, whose work was known to Gellius,<sup>28</sup> may be a significant part of the intertext for the Prologue. Again, a novel work (a first?) is at issue:

*Nec me animi fallit, Graiorum obscura reperta  
Difficile illustrare Latineis versibus esse;  
Multa noveis verbeis praesertim quom sit agundum,  
Propter egestatem linguae et rerum novitatem.*

(Lucretius I. 137–40)

<sup>25</sup> *Saturnalia* 1, *praef.* 11 ff. *nos sub alio ortos caelo Latinae linguae vena non adiuvet . . . in nostro sermone nativa Romani oris elegantia desideretur.*

<sup>26</sup> Postumius: Polybius 39. 1, Gellius 11. 8, Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1 *praef.* 1, Janson (1964: 130–1).

<sup>27</sup> Macrobius indeed read Apuleius, but there is little specific recall of the Prologue in this passage. The topos also appears in some Panegyrist, who, however, are apologizing for Gallic Latin: *quanto inferiora nostra sint ingenia Romanis siquidem latine et diserte loqui illis ingeneratum est, nobis elaboratum (cf. aerumnabili labore; Panegyrici Latini 12. 1. 2 of AD 313, Janson (1964: 131)); non esse fastidium rudem (NB) hunc et incultum Transalpini sermonis horrorem (Panegyrici Latini 2. 1. 3 of AD 389, Janson (1964: 132)). Cf. also Ausonius in his *praef.* to Latinus Pacatus Drepanius, line 4 (*rudem libellum*). Clarke, Ch. 10 in this volume explores a hellenistic context for this cliché, but I think it is more widespread as these examples show.*

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Attic Nights* 1. 21. 7 *Non verba autem sola sed versus prope totos et locos quoque Lucreti plurimos sectatum esse Vergilium videmus.*

(It does not escape my mind that it is difficult to illuminate the obscure discoveries of Greeks in Latin verses, particularly when one has to deal with many subjects in new vocabulary because of the deficiency of the language and the novelty of the material.)

Lucretius draws attention to his rude locution, relating it to the difficulty of transposing Greek material into Latin for the first time and to the particular nature of the Latin language.

### *Virgilian Openings*

A final area of intertextuality is suggested by Harrison's observation of a structural echo between Virgil's *arma virumque cano* and Apuleius' words (if so punctuated) *figuras fortunasque . . . exordior*.<sup>29</sup> The parallels in fact stretch much further than that and encompass some of the more problematic items in Apuleius' Prologue, if only we reach out to Virgil's original opening.

*Ille ego qui quondam gracili modulatus avena  
Carmen et egressus silvis vicina coegi  
Ut quamvis avido paterent arva colono  
Gratum opus agricolis, at nunc horrentia Martis  
Arma virumque cano . . .*

(That [person], I, who once played a song on a graceful reed [*the Eclogues*] and, emerging from the woods [*after the Eclogues*], compelled the nearby fields to lie open to the cultivator no matter how greedy, a pleasing work to farmers [*the Georgics*], now then I sing the bristling weapons of Mars and the man [*the Aeneid*])

From this passage I pick out:

- the use of *ille* ('that [person]') to mark the identity of the narrator as in the puzzling *quis ille?* ('Who's that?');
- the expression of identity through the metaphor of location, and the interweaving of author-narrator with books: woods, emergence, and fields in Virgil with Spartan Taenarum, 'happy clods of earth', and 'more blissful books' in Apuleius;
- eye-catching use of *at* ('now then') to announce the subject of this (new) work: 'now then I sing' and 'now then I shall sew together for you'.

<sup>29</sup> (1990: 508), and Ch. 1 in this volume.

I have commented (1994: 426–8) on how Apuleius' own *Apology* echoes the *Metamorphoses* (or vice versa if you do not accept my dating); it now looks as though the alternative beginning of the *Aeneid* was similarly part of the intertext as he penned the opening of the *Metamorphoses*. If we add to this the Theocritean flavours discerned by Gibson, Chapter 7 in this volume, it will not be long before the opening of the *Eclogues* with its own 'slender reed' and questions about arrival at Rome and leaving our 'fatherland' will also enter the field. There is indeed a kaleidoscopic range of prologic intertextuality as Apuleius strikes up.<sup>30</sup>

### CONCLUSION

Apuleius' Prologue is notable for existing at all, and for the way in which it is implemented. It reveals that Apuleius saw this novel as a vehicle for various literary traditions, that it in some way implemented a 'mixed' genre, relatively free of proprietary generic codes. He has this in common with Petronius, whose use of satirical elements informs a no less fluid conception of the genre. In the Prologue, Apuleius has chosen fashionably to present his narrator as though he were fresh out of Plautus, but not for mere pastiche: he diverts it to his own purposes, precisely by failure to deliver what any comic code would lead an audience to expect. However, important elements, including some that remind us of Plautus, must derive from the opening of the *Milesiae* of Sisenna, a work to which Apuleius refers specifically and none of this excludes the embrace of many other authors and genres.

The very intensity with which he adopts and blends comic

<sup>30</sup> Compare Innes, Ch. 11 in this volume on the legitimacy of *multiple* 'allusive recall of other authors' or Too, Ch. 16 in this volume on the Prologue in particular, as a product of multiple synthesis; then consider in addition Gowers, Ch. 8 in this volume (Persius) and de Jong, Ch. 18 in this volume (Plato). The 'implied reader' of Zimmerman (Ch. 22 in this volume), rightly (if a little overtly) paying 'attention to all these possibilities at once', is going to have to run fast to keep up with the bravura citations and coloraturas of Apuleius. On the other hand not all that glitters is allusion or subconscious recall, as the striking resemblance of *Acts of the Apostles* (Smith, Ch. 9 in this volume) should warn us. On intertextuality with the *Aeneid* see also Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume.

convention, Sisenna, and Lucius of Patrai puzzles the reader, raising the question of the significance of the work and the codes according to which it should be interpreted. He leaves clues suggesting a very different type of work, jovially contradicting the episodic, paradoxographic *fabula* or *fabulae* of his multiple *prologus*. The stress on the Egyptian papyrus and the 'acuteness' (*argutia*) with which it is written already seem out of place to the alert first reader, and to the second reader evoke the Egyptian religious world with its hieroglyphs in which our shaven-headed narrator finally finds a home. Metamorphosis too may gain in Pythagorean and Platonic understanding for the second reader. Most jarring of all, however, is the sequence of places of origin that the narrator offers us in place of his identity, particularly *Taenaros Spartiatica* known especially for its role as entrance to the Underworld (as at 6. 18),<sup>31</sup> a resonance reinforced by the curious stress on bliss in these lines. Whatever he is, this complex narrator has no home unless in death.

#### RESOURCE: THE PROLOGUES OF PLAUTUS AND APULEIUS

*Point of view*: The prologue stands outside the action (that is how we identify it) and the *prologus* stands in a second-person relationship to the audience, addressing *spectatores* or *iudices* ('judges').<sup>32</sup> Apuleius (Sisenna?) has adapted this relationship to an audience of individual readers of a book, intimately engaged (*tibi* 'to you') by the speaker/writer. The audience for comedy is particularly envisaged as *judging* the work and must pay attention 'with fair mind', because of the prospect of prizes. Apuleius too, though obviously no prize is at issue, presents his material as something which the reader will be actively judging. Thus the impact of the adoption of this comic convention is to make his work appropriate to modern criticism based on the concept of the active reader, though clearly also the neuroses of an alert public speaker render him specially susceptible to this mode of writing.<sup>33</sup>

*Argumentum* ('plot'): In Plautus a prologue normally outlines the *argumentum*, unless the opening scene makes the plot sufficiently clear

<sup>31</sup> On Taenaros see Innes (Ch. 11) and Laird (Ch. 24) in this volume.

<sup>32</sup> e.g. *Spectatores*: Plautus, *Casina* 1; *iudices*: Plautus, *Captivi* 67.

<sup>33</sup> Dowden (1982: 433-4).

and there is no prologue.<sup>34</sup> At *Trinummus* 16 (imitated by Terence, *Brothers* 22?) the prologue tells us not to expect an *argumentum*. Sisenna, because the *Milesiae* did not have a single plot, could not deliver an *argumentum*. Apuleius could, because he returns to a unitary plot (the frame story), but he evades it maybe because he reflects Sisenna.

*Identity*: The comic *prologus* (speaker of the prologue) may be characterized (e.g. *Luxuria* in *Trinummus*) or not (*Asinaria*, *Casina*, or indeed Terence).<sup>35</sup> If characterized, the *prologus* understandably tends to state his/her name, like the Lar familiaris in *Pot of Gold* 1–2 (below). Although Lucius is not named until Pythias addresses him (1. 24, a fact requiring some explanation), *quis ille* ('who's that') alludes to the comic convention of naming, if only to refuse it.<sup>36</sup>

*Brevity, attention*: Comic prologues seek to establish a contract (Slater, Ch. 19 in this volume) with the audience: if the audience will pay attention, the author will be brief (hence the outrageous humour of *Pseudolus* 2 *Plautina longa fabula in scaenam venit*, 'There's a long play of Plautus' coming on to the stage').<sup>37</sup> Usually brevity is promised specifically in the introductory material, typically the outline of the plot. In one example, which is particularly close to Apuleius, the brevity-motif is attached to the identity of the *prologus*: *ne quis miretur qui sim, paucis eloquar. ego Lar sum familiaris* (*Pot of Gold* 1–2 'In case anyone is wondering who I am I will tell you in a few words: I am the Lar of the property'), with which we may compare *quis ille? paucis accipe* ('who's that? Learn in a few words.'). In comedy the audience's attention is needed primarily to take in the plot outline, but also by implication in order to listen fairly to the play itself so that the playwright may gain the prize. There is, however, an inverted form offering a different contract: the reader pays attention, and gets the reward—the author will make it worth their while:<sup>38</sup> in *Amphitryo* the audience is told at the end of the prologue it will be

<sup>34</sup> There is no prologue in Plautus' *Cistellaria*, *Curculio*, *Epidicus*, *Mostellaria*, *Persa*, *Stichus*. The opening of *Bacchides* is lost. *Pseudolus* has a mere two lines; in *Miles Gloriosus* it is in effect postponed to the beginning of Act 2.

<sup>35</sup> The *Casina* prologue is from a revival, reworking or even replacing Plautus' original prologue. This probably explains the deviation.

<sup>36</sup> Identity is naturally not a question exclusively for comedians, cf. Innes, Ch. 11 in this volume. The example cited from Appian (*Roman History*, *praef.* 15. 62) by Henderson, Ch. 17 in this volume shows how aggravating the refusal in Apuleius really is.

<sup>37</sup> Molt (1938) on *Met.* 1. 6 lists comic examples of *paucis* eliding *verbis*.

<sup>38</sup> Molt (1938) on *Met.* 2. 3 and Smith (1972: 519) cite Plautus, *Asinaria* 13: *inest lepos ludusque in hac comoedia: ridicula res est: date benignè operam mihi*.

worth their while to see this play, just as Apuleius' reader must pay attention and will enjoy (*lector intende—laetaberis*).

*Greek and Latin*: Though the Greek roots of Latin literature are commonplace, translation from Greek to Latin is specifically a topos of comic prologues: *Demophilus scripsit, Maccus vortit barbare* (*Asinaria* 11 'Demophilus wrote it, Plautus translated it into barbarian/barbarously'); *Philemo scripsit, Plautus vortit barbare* (*Trinummus* 19). Not only is it translated, it is allegedly translated uncouthly—whether because Latin is a barbarian language, or Plautus is a linguistic incompetent. Apuleius' narrator,<sup>39</sup> in this respect personifying the Book (as Harrison 1990), learned Attic Greek at first, then with much pain learnt the very different Latin language—a language from overseas (*exotici?*)<sup>40</sup> and abroad (*forensis*), with overtones of Magna Graecia (*exotici*) and the law<sup>41</sup> (*forensis*). Latin is an awkward language for the purpose. Like Plautus, he is telling a *fabula* (a play/story)<sup>42</sup> that is of Greek character (*Graecanicam*). In this, he replicates the stance also of Sisenna.

Associated with this is the issue of the *originality of the playwright*, more often asserted by a contentious and insecure Terence than by a confident Plautus. The last vestige of this *ἐπιτιμητικός* ('critical', i.e. author responds to his critics) Prologue is seen in the claim *nullo magistro praecunte* ('with no master preceding me').

<sup>39</sup> Molt (1938) on *Met.* 1. 12: *hac sententia Apuleius explicat quomodo Lucius, Metamorphoseon prima persona, quamvis vir Graecus, Latine librum scribere potuerit.*

<sup>40</sup> *Exoticus* (Harrison in Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume) is tempting but makes little difference to this argument: Lucius is foreign and so is the Latin language to him.

<sup>41</sup> Molt (1938) on *Met.* 1. 13: *qua in foro Romano homines utuntur.* Smith, Ch. 9 in this volume makes the connection with Lucius' *stipendiis forensibus*, clearly legal, at 11. 30.

<sup>42</sup> *Fabula* is both the specific word for a comic play/plot (e.g. Gellius 3. 3. 10, and above all *tragoediam non fabulam* at *Met.* 10. 2), and the word for a story, whether as a collection of stories or as an *Einzelgeschichte* (Reitzenstein 1912: 51).



# Fiction and History in Apuleius' Milesian Prologue

ANTON BITEL

In this chapter I shall argue that while Apuleius' text is clearly marked for its readers as fiction, the Prologue's phrases *variae fabulae* and *sermo iste Milesius* equivocate between introducing fiction or history to its addressee. This equivocation confronts Apuleius' readers with the possibility that their own text differs radically from that of the Prologue's addressee, even though both texts consist of the same words.

## I

### FICTION FROM THE OUTSIDE

In the ninth speech of the *Florida*, Apuleius claims to write works in every genre (*omnigenus*): epic, lyric, comedy, tragedy, satire, riddles, histories, speeches, philosophical dialogues, and others (*alia*), in both Greek and Latin.<sup>1</sup> This boast is corroborated by the generic variety of his surviving texts and attested writings.<sup>2</sup> Thus the attachment of Apuleius' name to the *Metamorphoses* reveals nothing per se about the genre of the text to a first-time reader.<sup>3</sup> Apuleius was as versatile as he was prolific, and works by him might be of any kind.

I would like to thank Kerstin Hoge, Donald Russell, and everyone who attended the conference.

<sup>1</sup> Apuleius, *Flor.* 9. 27–29; cf. *Flor.* 20. 3–6. For the generic breadth of Apuleius' reading habits, see *Apol.* 30. 11–13. All citations of Apuleius follow the numbering scheme used by Vallette (1924) and Robertson and Vallette (1940–5). All translations are my own.

<sup>2</sup> For a survey of both surviving and attested texts ascribed to Apuleius, see the introd. to Vallette (1924: pp. xiv–xviii). Cf. Walsh (1982: 774–8); Conte (1994: 553–4).

<sup>3</sup> For the likelihood that Apuleius' name appeared at the beginning, or perhaps end, of each of the eleven scrolls of the *Met.*, see Slater, Ch. 19 in this volume.

There are, however, other textual indications of the *Metamorphoses*'s genre. Its prose form (and length) might bring to mind any of the three prose genres included in Quintilian's literary canon—history, oratory, and philosophy.<sup>4</sup> Alternatively one might think of the nascent genre of extended prose fiction. While overlooked in Quintilian's canon, there were nonetheless many examples of such fiction available to readers of the *Metamorphoses*: Greek prose fiction, the Latin prose fiction of Sisenna and Petronius, and perhaps even Apuleius' own *Hermagoras*.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, prose fiction is betokened, and Quintilian's three prose genres are effectively ruled out, by the title of the *Metamorphoses*, whether originally *Asinus Aureus* (as in Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 18. 18), *Metamorphoses* (as in subscriptions on early manuscripts), or *Asinus Aureus: περὶ μεταμορφώσεων* (on the model of Varro's *Menippeans*).<sup>6</sup> Any inclusion of the word 'metamorphoses' in the title would mark the *Metamorphoses* as fiction, for transformation was regarded as a theme proper to self-evident fiction.<sup>7</sup> Similarly a title including the word *asinus* would have intertextual associations exclusively with works of prose fiction. Asses do not figure centrally in works of history, oratory, or philosophy, whereas

<sup>4</sup> Quintilian, *Inst.* 10. 1. 46–7.

<sup>5</sup> For Greek prose fiction, see Morgan, Ch. 14 in this volume. For evidence that Romans sometimes read Greek prose fiction, see Plutarch, *Crassus* 32 (discussed below), and possibly Persius, *Satires* 1. 134 (discussed by Wesseling (1988: 67)). Obviously Sisenna, the fabulist Phaedrus, and Apuleius each read their respective Greek prose models. I follow Vallette (1924: p. xvii) and Conte (1994: 554) in regarding the scanty fragments of Apuleius' *Hermagoras* as prose fiction.

<sup>6</sup> For the three possibilities, and a persuasive argument favouring the bilingual title, see Winkler (1985: 292–315).

<sup>7</sup> Educated readers in the ancient world do not seriously believe tales of human metamorphosis: note Pliny, *NH* 8. 80 *homines in lupos verti rursusque restitui sibi falsum esse confidenter existimare debemus aut credere omnia quae fabulosa tot saeculis comperimus* ('We should confidently judge it to be untrue that men can turn into wolves and then return to their own form—or else we must believe all the tales which so many centuries have taught us are complete fiction') In his definition of self-evident fiction ('neither true nor like the truth'), Martianus Capella (550) offers a metamorphosis ('Daphne turned into a tree') as his typifying example. Many critics single out episodes involving metamorphosis as a clear-cut criterion of patent fictionality in Homer: e.g. Strabo 1. 2. 11, Juvenal 15. 13–26, [Longinus] 9. 14, Lucian, *Vera Historia* 1. 3.

they are prominent characters in many of the collected 'Aesopic' fables (and in the Greek ass-story which formed the basis of the *Metamorphoses*).<sup>8</sup> Thus the *Metamorphoses*, through the combination of its prose form, length, and title, advertises itself as a work of prose fiction, and it is possible for first-time readers to recognize its fictionality before they have even glanced at the programme set forth in the Prologue. The rest of this section will argue that the words *fabula* and *sermo Milesius* found in the Prologue reinforce readers' expectation of fiction.

### *Fabula* as Fiction

While Quintilian and other ancient rhetoricians do not canonize prose fiction as a genre, they certainly provide a theoretical analysis of one of its most essential constituent parts, narrative. Cicero's definition of narrative as the 'the exposition of *actual or supposed past actions*' (*de Inventione* 1. 27; cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4. 2. 31) reflects succinctly the two elements which the rhetoricians considered essential for the classification of narrative: events described by narrative are normally past (for exceptions, see Quintilian, *Inst.* 4. 2. 3); and they can be either fact (*res gestae*) or fiction (*res ut gestae*).<sup>9</sup> Fictional events are then further subdivided by the rhetoricians, resulting in a tripartite typology of narrative:<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> For a survey of the Greek ass-story ascribed to Lucius of Patrai, see Mason (1994). For 'Aesopic' fables, first collected in prose by Demetrius of Phalerum (late 4th cent. BCE), then adapted into Latin verse by Phaedrus (early 1st cent. CE) and into Greek verse by Babrius (late 1st CE), see Perry (1965: pp. xi–xcvi). 'Aesopic' fables often feature asses; and many of the titles of Phaedrus' fables, if original, are comparable to Apuleius' 'ass' title: see the transmitted titles of Phaedrus, *Fabulae* 1. 11, 1. 15, 1. 21, 1. 29, 4. 1, 5. 4, all of which include the word *asinus*. That 'Aesopic' fables were regarded as fiction, see Phaedrus, *Fabula* 1 prologue 7 . . . *fictis iocari nos meminerit fabulis* ('[sc. my critical reader] should remember that we [Aesop and I] are joking, and our fables are fiction'). Apuleius adapts a prose fable in his Preface to *de Deo Socratis*.

<sup>9</sup> The Greek rhetorical theorists also distinguish between actual and supposed past events in narrative; see Meijering (1987: 75–6).

<sup>10</sup> I have collated the tripartite division of narrative from the near identical accounts given by the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1. 13, Cicero, *de Inventione* 1. 27; Quintilian, *Inst.* 2. 4. 2. These in turn are adapted from the Hellenistic grammarians, as attested by Sextus Empiricus, *adversus Mathematicos*

1. *historia*: narrative of 'past facts' (*gesta res*), like Appius' declaration of war on the Carthaginians, or Alexander's death in Babylon;<sup>11</sup>
2. *argumentum*: verisimilitudinous narrative of 'fictitious events which nonetheless could have happened' (*ficta res quae tamen fieri potuit*), like expository passages in New Comedy and Mime;<sup>12</sup>
3. *fabula*: narrative of the impossible, implausible, and self-evidently untrue, 'containing events which are neither true nor resembling the truth' (*quae neque veras neque veri similes continet res*), like an account of Medea's chariot drawn by flying snakes, or stories that Diomedes' companions changed into birds, Odysseus into a horse, and Hecuba into a dog.<sup>13</sup>

The Prologue of the *Metamorphoses* promises *variae fabulae* and *fabula Graecanica*. Here *fabula* can readily be understood in its specialized sense 'narrative of impossible fiction', since the form, length, and title of the *Metamorphoses* have already provided a context in which a work of fiction is expected. The narrator's claim in the Prologue to be a 'speaker of forensic speech' greatly facilitates the reading of *fabula* in this technical rhetorical sense. Furthermore, the fact that the Prologue is immediately followed by a *narratio*, namely the description of (Lucius') adventures written primarily in the past tense, corroborates the reading of the term *fabula* as a type of (fictional) narrative.<sup>14</sup>

1. 252 and 1. 263-4 (where *ἱστορία* = *historia*, *μῦθος* = *fabula* and *πλάσμα* = *argumentum*). For an exhaustive examination of the tripartite typology of narrative, see Meijering (1987: 75-6).

<sup>11</sup> The examples are from Cicero and Sextus Empiricus respectively.

<sup>12</sup> Cicero quotes an example from Terence, *Andria* 51; the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* cites comedy, and Sextus Empiricus cites comedies and mimes, as exemplary sources of *argumentum*.

<sup>13</sup> The first example comes from Cicero (quoting Pacuvius fr. 397); it is worth noting that the other examples of *fabula*/μῦθος, from Sextus Empiricus, involve human metamorphosis; cf. n. 7, above.

<sup>14</sup> In forensic speeches and declamatory exercises, one normally expects a *narratio* to follow immediately upon an *exordium* (see Quintilian, *Inst.* 4. 2. 1 and 4. 2. 24-30).

*Sermo Milesius* as Fiction

It has often been observed that the Prologue's phrase *sermo iste Milesius* suggests an intertextual affiliation with the fictional 'Milesian tales' (i.e. Aristides' Greek *Milesiaka*, and the historian Sisenna's Latin adaptation, the *Milesiae*)<sup>15</sup>. As these works survive in only a few brief fragments, a reconstruction from secondary evidence is required to determine their relevance to the *Metamorphoses*. According to Plutarch, *Crassus* 32, a Parthian ridicules the shocking tastes of Romans when he discovers the 'licentious [*ἀκόλαστα*] books of Aristides' *Milesiaka*' in the baggage of a captive Roman soldier. Plutarch, however, endorses the Seleucians' view that the Parthian's censure, while justified, was impudent, since Parthian kings compered with just the kind of women featured in the *Milesiaka*. It is essential to the point of Plutarch's sneering anecdote that a Roman is a reader of the Greek *Milesiaka*,<sup>16</sup> and that the Parthians, the Seleucians, Plutarch, and *his* readership are all acquainted at least in passing with the ribald reputation of the Milesian tales.<sup>17</sup>

The most compelling link between the *Metamorphoses*'s *sermo Milesius* and the formal structure of the other 'Milesian tales' is furnished by pseudo-Lucian *Amores*. This dialogue opens with Lycinus' response to Theomnestus' erotic tales, told before the text's beginning. Lycinus says he found the stories licentious, seductive, and pleasurable (*Amores* 1 με . . . ἡ τῶν ἀκόλαστων σου διηγημάτων αἰμύλη καὶ γλυκεῖα πειθῶ κατεύφραγκεν), and then likens his response to that of Aristides when he was enchanted by the Milesian tales (*ὥστ' ὀλίγου δεῖν*

<sup>15</sup> Note similarly that a *fabula* told as 'charming conversation' (*Met.* 2. 20. 5 *lepidus sermo*) begins with a reference to Miletus (2. 21. 3); cf. the *Milesiae conditor* (4. 32. 6) mentioned in the 'charming narratives and old wife's tales' (4. 27. 8 *narrationes lepidae anilesque fabulae*). See Dowden, (Ch. 12) Slater (Ch. 19), and Zimmerman (Ch. 22) in this volume. For a fuller discussion, see e.g. Walsh (1970: 10–17).

<sup>16</sup> See n. 5, above.

<sup>17</sup> The shameful obscenity of Milesian tales was evidently proverbial: Ovid refers to Aristides' 'Milesian crimes' (*Tristia* 2. 413 *Milesia crimina*) and Sisenna's 'disgraceful jokes' (*Tristia* 2. 444 *turpis . . . iocos*); Apuleius' contemporary Fronto mentions Sisenna's 'romps' (4. 3. 2 *lasciviae*; for the moral overtones of this word, see *OLD* 3); pseudo-Lucian likens Aristides' tales to 'naughty narratives' (*Amores* 1 ἀκόλαστα . . . διηγήματα).

Ἀριστείδης ἐνόμιζον εἶναι τοῖς Μιλησιακοῖς λόγοις ὑπερκηλούμενος). This implies that Aristides' collection of Milesian tales featured a principal first person narrator (closely identified with Aristides); that this narrator presented himself as a rapt audience to the licentious stories of his interlocutors; and that these other stories make up much (perhaps most) of his narrative. If the 'Milesian tales' did indeed have such a narrative structure, then it is easy to see why they would be invoked as a model in the *Metamorphoses's* Prologue. For in the *Metamorphoses's* opening sentence there is a similar first person narrator (*ego*) who promises stories (*fabulae*) which will be licentious, pleasurable, and seductive;<sup>18</sup> and this narrator subsequently presents himself as Lucius (Sisenna's praenomen), who is often expressly delighted to listen to those around him (*Met.* 1. 2. 6, 1. 20. 5, 2. 6. 1, 3. 19. 1, 9. 4. 4, 9. 15. 6, 9. 22. 4), and whose own story has a tendency to be engulfed by other tales which he hears.<sup>19</sup>

A further discernible significance for the *Metamorphoses* of this Milesian intertext is that Apuleius' *fabula* is, like Sisenna's, 'Greekish' (*Graecanica*), in that both are originally Greek stories which have undergone a shift of language (*vocis immutatio*) into Latin.<sup>20</sup> And, importantly, the *Metamorphoses's* professed affiliation with the fictional 'Milesian tales' seems to reaffirm the fictional nature of the *Metamorphoses*, already established by the text's title, size, and prose form.

<sup>18</sup> Licentious: *Milesius* (see n. 17, above); pleasurable: *lepidus* (cf. 1. 1. 6 *laetaberis*); seductive: *susurro permulceam*.

<sup>19</sup> Pseudo-Lucian's similar opening reference to 'Milesian tales' also seems to herald *his* subsequent use of a first person narrative to frame the pleasing words of other interlocutors. For Lycinus (*Amores* 6–52) describes a journey which he made in the past, but the bulk of his narrative comprises what he heard on the way: a woman's 'incredible' erotic tale (15–16) and his two companions' delightful speeches on love (19–29; 30–49). Given that both *Amores* and the *Met.* open in the middle of an ongoing dialogue (for *Met.* 1. 1. 1 *At . . .* implying the continuation of an interrupted discussion, see de Jong, Ch. 18 n. 4 in this volume), and both then compare themselves to 'Milesian tales', it is tempting to infer that the *Milesiaka* began similarly with the principal narrator in mid-conversation with his companion(s), *sermone isto Milesio*.

<sup>20</sup> For other implications of *fabula Graecanica*, see Mason (1978: *passim*), and Slater, Ch. 19 in this volume.

## HISTORY (OR FICTION) FROM THE INSIDE

So far it has been argued that from the outset Apuleius' text both enables and encourages its extratextual readers to recognize it as a work of fiction. Yet the *Metamorphoses* is also presented (in its Prologue, and elsewhere) as a series of stories addressed by one character (*ego*) to another (*tibi*). This *tu*-addressee shares certain superficial, minimal characteristics with all extratextual readers of the *Metamorphoses*. For any reader can be described as a 'reader' and be addressed in the second person, just as the Prologue's *tu*-addressee is. Yet beyond these simple resemblances, it is possible to perceive differences between extratextual readers and the intratextual *tu*-addressee. For example, the equivocation in the Prologue's words between oral and written modes of discourse creates a disjunction in the characterization of the *tu*-addressee, who can be imagined as *either* reading a written text *or* as hearing a spoken address.<sup>21</sup> The status, however, of extratextual readers themselves is not similarly called into question by the Prologue's words. Extratextual readers are, unequivocally, readers of a written text (the *Metamorphoses*, in front of them), and their ears cannot be, literally, stroked by the *ego*-narrator in the way that, perhaps, the *tu*-addressee's ears can (*aturesque tuas benivolas lepido susurro permulceam*).

Just as the *tu*-addressee and the extratextual reader are distinguishable, their readings can also be supposed to differ. Thus when the Prologue directs a promise of pleasure specifically, perhaps exclusively, to the *tu*-addressee (1. 1. 6 *lector intende: laetaberis*), extratextual readers are enticed by the prospect of vicarious entertainment to 'read double', constructing an imagined reading of the *tu*-addressee as part of, and in parallel to, their own reading of the *Metamorphoses*. The rest of this chapter will consider in what ways the reading of the *tu*-addressee might be thought to differ from that of extratextual readers.

It has been suggested that the *Metamorphoses* makes

<sup>21</sup> For the Prologue's confusion of oral and written discourse, see Kahane (Ch. 21) and Fowler (Ch. 20) in this volume.

available to extratextual readers three programmatic markers of its fictionality:

1. the work's combined title, size, and prose form;
2. the Prologue's phrases *variae fabulae* and *fabula Graecanica*;
3. the Prologue's phrase *sermo iste Milesius*.

The first of these is paratextual, which means that while it is available to all extratextual readers, it is not available to the *tu*-addressee, whose text begins (or, alternatively, whose spoken dialogue continues) with the word *at*. The second and third markers are, however, an integral part of the text, and so it is entirely plausible that the Prologue could signal the fictionality of the following narrative to the *tu*-addressee as well as to extratextual readers. This possibility has important consequences for the characterization of the *ego*-narrator, whose identity is presented as an open question in the Prologue (*quis ille?*). For if the *ego*-narrator is thought to preface his tales openly as fiction, then once his narrative begins (*Met.* 1. 2. 1–2) he must be merely pretending to be his first person protagonist (Lucius, magically transformed into an ass and then back into human form). Indeed, on this reading, everything which follows the *ego*-narrator's exordium is fiction, including several subsequent asides to the *tu*-addressee in which the *ego*-narrator refers to his narrative as though it were an account of his own actual *res gestae*.<sup>22</sup> This is comparable to Lucian's *Verae Historiae*: in its prologue, a first person narrator states bluntly to a second person reader (1. 2 . . . ἀντὶ σοι ἐκ τῆς ἀναγνώσεως . . .) that the following narrative of his adventures will be pure lies (1. 2–4); as soon, however, as the narrative itself begins (1. 5–6), he persistently plays the sincere autobiographer. Even the final aside, in which he states that the rest of his adventures will be narrated in succeeding volumes (2. 47), is part of the fiction which he announced in the prologue (there are no later volumes!).

In this way the *tu*-addressee might be thought to share with extratextual readers the understanding that the *Meta*-

<sup>22</sup> For asides to the *tu*-addressee following the Prologue, see Zimmerman, Ch. 22 in this volume. These all present the narrative as a description of the narrator's actual past adventures.



*morphoses*'s main narrative is fiction. There is, however, an alternative reading which merits attention. Since the *Metamorphoses*'s title is paratextual, it neither creates an expectation of fiction in the *tu*-addressee, nor conditions the *tu*-addressee to interpret the phrases *variae fabulae/fabula Graecanica* and *sermo iste Milesius* as markers of fiction. Thus if it can be shown that these allusive and oblique phrases might have a different significance for the *tu*-addressee, then there is nothing in the *ego*-narrator's exordium to signal fiction to the *tu*-addressee.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, as will be argued in what follows, *fabula* and *sermo Milesius* can be understood to introduce to the *tu*-addressee not fiction, but *historia*—a narrative account of the *ego*-narrator's own actual past adventures (as an ass, no less).

### *Fabula* as (Oral) History

Extratextual readers are well positioned to interpret the Prologue's use of the word *fabula* as a programmatic reference to a type of narrative fiction. To the Prologue's *tu*-addressee, however, who has not been primed by a title to expect fiction, *fabula* need not have any obvious reference to fictionality at all. On the other hand, the Prologue provides the *tu*-addressee with an immediate context which points to another common meaning of *fabula*: i.e. conversation, gossip, talk, indeed oral discourse of any variety, whether true or false.<sup>24</sup> For the Prologue surrounds the word *fabula* with many other markers of orality.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, once the narrative has begun it will become apparent that the *fabulae* expressly promised in the *ego*-narrator's preface are indeed specifically *oral* stories, heard (or overheard) by the protagonist Lucius.

Extratextual readers who overlook this alternative meaning of *fabula* in the Prologue will have their attention drawn to it on the thirty-one subsequent occasions where the word *fabula* (or a cognate) is used in the *Metamorphoses*, always referring in its immediate fictive context to some sort of oral discourse.<sup>26</sup> The

<sup>23</sup> A straightforward declaration of fiction, like the repeated assertions in Lucian, *Verae Historiae* 1. 2–4, is entirely absent from the *Met.*'s Prologue.

<sup>24</sup> See *OLD fabula* 1 and 2; and Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume.

<sup>25</sup> Indeed, it is possible that the Prologue is itself *fabula* in this sense—heard, rather than read, by its *lector*; see n. 21, above.

<sup>26</sup> After the Prologue, *fabula* or its cognates are found at Apuleius, *Met.* 1. 2. 6, 1. 4. 6, 1. 7. 3, 1. 13. 3, 1. 20. 2 (×2), 1. 20. 5, 1. 26. 6, 1. 26. 7, 2. 1. 2,

word is particularly conspicuous in the first book, where the Prologue would be freshest in readers' memory. *Fabula* is first applied within the narrative to the tale of Aristomenes' adventures, which is plainly 'oral', spoken by its sub-narrator, and heard by Lucius and a third companion.<sup>27</sup> Extratextual readers who perceived in the Prologue's *fabula* a specific reference to a type of narrative fiction will find this reading of *fabula* reflected and supported by the third companion's use of the word. For while he insists that the sub-narrator's tale is sheer fiction (1. 2. 5, 1. 3. 1, 1. 20. 1, 1. 20. 2), he also refers to it as a *fabula* (twice at 1. 20. 2). It should be noted, however, that the anonymous third companion is the only character in the *Metamorphoses* who unequivocally associates the word *fabula* with fiction; and that his reading of the tale as fiction is corrected by Lucius (1. 3. 2–3, 1. 20. 3–4). Lucius also refers to the sub-narrator's tale as a *fabula* (1. 2. 6, 1. 4. 6, 1. 20. 5), even though he states clearly that he believes it (1. 4. 6, 1. 20. 5), thus effectively dissociating the term from fiction. The sub-narrator introduces his tale with a preface which patently echoes the Prologue to the *Metamorphoses*, prompting readers to compare, and possibly revise, their understanding of the original prologue.<sup>28</sup> In his own preface, the sub-narrator presents his tale not as fiction, but as oral history, swearing to its truth (1. 5. 1), and associating its content formally with historical narrative (1. 5. 2 *quae palam gesta sunt*).<sup>29</sup> None of this is to suggest that the sub-narrator's claims should really be believed, but rather to show that oral history can be labelled *fabula* without inconsistency.

At the end of Book 1 Lucius can casually use the term *fabula* (1. 26. 6, 1. 26. 7) to refer to a tiresome conversation with his host Milo about his own news from home. This is a provocative

2. 6. 5, 2. 12. 5, 2. 15. 1, 2. 20. 7, 2. 31. 1, 4. 27. 8, 4. 31. 1, 5. 31. 2, 6. 23. 2, 6. 25. 1 (*fabellam*), 6. 29. 3, 9. 4. 4, 9. 14. 1, 9. 17. 2, 9. 23. 5, 10. 2. 4, 10. 12. 5 (*fabulosa*), 10. 23. 2, 10. 33. 4, 11. 16. 3 (*fabulabantur*), 11. 20. 6.

<sup>27</sup> The sub-narrator also stresses the oral transmission of his tale by other people: 1. 5. 2 *passim per ora populi sermo iactetur*.

<sup>28</sup> Apuleius, *Met.* 1. 5. 1 *verum quod inchoaveram porro exordiar* recalls 1. 1. 1 *at. . . . exordior*; 1. 5. 1 *sed tibi . . . deierabo* recalls 1. 1. 1 *at ego tibi*; 1. 5. 3 *sed ut prius noritis cuiatis sim, qui sim* recalls 1. 1. 3 *quis ille?*

<sup>29</sup> For the phrase's associations with historical narrative, see Cicero, *de Inventione* 27 *historia est gesta res*; cf. e.g. Aristotle, *Poetica* 1451<sup>a</sup>36–1451<sup>b</sup>5; Lucian, *Quomodo historia conscribenda sit* 39.

piece of ring composition which recalls and reconfigures precisely those *fabulae* promised in the Prologue. For Lucius' phrase (1. 26. 6) *fabularum series* reflects the Prologue's phrase *fabulas conseram* (cf. *sermo*); yet Lucius' autobiographical chatter is clearly not regarded as fiction by either its immediate narrator, the protagonist Lucius, or by its narratee, Milo.<sup>30</sup> Thus by the end of the *Metamorphoses*'s first book, the term *fabula* has been carefully reoriented away from an exclusive reference to fictional narrative, even if it always retains that nuance of meaning for extratextual readers.

There are two instructive passages in the *Metamorphoses* where intratextual characters other than the principal *ego*-narrator expressly discuss a future representation of Lucius' adventures in narrative form. The prophet Diophanes says of Lucius' forthcoming biography:

*historiam magnam et incredundam fabulam et libros me futurum*, (2. 12. 5)  
(that I [sc. Lucius] will become a great *historia*, both an incredible tale and books)

Similarly Charite says of her own adventures with Lucius-the-ass:

*visetur et in fabulis audietur doctorumque stilis rudis perpetuabitur historia* (6. 29. 3)

([sc. our] unfledged *historia* will be seen, and will be heard in tales, and will be immortalized by the pens of the learned)

Diophanes and Charite inhabit the same fictive world as Lucius, and share in his adventures, so it is only natural that they should use the term *historia* (actual past narrative) to mark the type of narrative to which Lucius' experiences belong. It has already been seen that *historia* is opposed to *fabula* (and *argumentum*) in the tripartite division of narrative. Both Diophanes and Charite, however, employ the term *historia* in apposition, rather than opposition, to *fabula*, thus inscribing *fabula* with a different contextual meaning. For them, *fabula* is a factual account (*historia*) of Lucius' life which is oral

<sup>30</sup> While Milo evidently believes Lucius' *fabulae* at 1. 26. 6, Lucius later learns (7. 1. 5–6) that these same autobiographical *fabulae* have been (mistakenly) reinterpreted by Milo as fictional lies. This irony illustrates well the ambiguous status of *fabulae* in the *Met*.

(*audietur*), rather than written (*libros, stilis*) or visual (*visetur*). Thus extratextual readers are guided into a recognition that *fabula* can mean ‘oral history’ for intratextual characters. Given the linguistic similarity in the ways that Diophanes, Charite, and the *ego*-narrator all preface the narrative of Lucius’ adventures, it seems highly plausible that the intratextual *tu*-addressee could equally understand the Prologue’s *fabula* as oral history.<sup>31</sup>

### *Sermo Milesius* as (Hecataean) History

Neither Aristides nor Sisenna is actually named in the *Metamorphoses*. Of course extratextual readers, prompted by the title to expect fiction, can readily recognize in the Prologue’s phrase *sermo iste Milesius* an intertextual reference to the ‘Milesian’ narrative fiction of those authors. For the *tu*-addressee, however, the phrase could refer to other Milesian authors who are not associated with bawdy fiction. Strabo affirms that ‘there were memorable men born in Miletus’ (Strabo 1. 2. 6), and lists Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes (all philosophers), and Hecataeus, ‘who composed the *Historia*’.<sup>32</sup> The polymath Apuleius may well have studied all these Milesians. He certainly boasts of his familiarity with the life and work of Thales, whom he specifically dubs *Milesius* (Apuleius, *Flor.* 18. 30–5).

There is no *direct* evidence that Apuleius knew Hecataeus, but Apuleius’ general interest in the historians is well documented. He claims to have read and composed histories in both Greek and Latin,<sup>33</sup> and Priscianus cites an Apuleian work entitled *epitomae historiarum*.<sup>34</sup> It does not seem improbable that Apuleius should be acquainted with the work of a historian as ground-breaking as Hecataeus, who was, according to the

<sup>31</sup> Diophanes’ echoes of the Prologue: 2. 12. 5 *mira* (cf. *ut mireris*), *varia, fabulam, libros*. Charite’s echoes of the Prologue: 6. 29. 2 *fortuna, imaginem* (cf. *figuras fortunasque hominum in alias imagines conversas*); 6. 29. 3 *stilis, rudis, perpetuabitur* (cf. *aeternum*).

<sup>32</sup> Hecataeus’ *Historia* had four books, and was also known as *Historiae, Genealogiae* and *Heroölogiae*; cf. Pearson (1939: 97).

<sup>33</sup> See n. 1, above.

<sup>34</sup> *Grammatici Latini* 3. 482; cf. 2. 250, which attributes to Apuleius an *epitoma*, perhaps the same historical work.

Suda, the first to write history in prose. However, the most compelling evidence of Apuleius' knowledge of Hecataeus is furnished precisely by the *Metamorphoses's* Prologue, which is closely intertextual with the surviving prologue to Hecataeus' *History*:

Ἐκαταῖος Μιλήσιος ὧδε μυθεῖται· τάδε γράφω, ὥς μοι δοκεῖ ἀληθῆα εἶναι· οἱ γὰρ Ἑλλήνων λόγοι πολλοί τε καὶ γελοῖοι, ὡς ἐμοὶ φαίνονται, εἰσίν.

(JFgrHist F1a)

(Hecataeus of Miletus speaks as follows: I write these things as they seem true to me; for the stories of Greeks are as laughable as they are numerous, it seems to me.)

Like Apuleius' Prologue, Hecataeus' prose prologue proclaims in its first words its Milesian connections. Its narrator shifts between the first and third person (cf. *ego . . . quis ille?*), confuses oral and written discourse,<sup>35</sup> and is Greek in origin. More specifically, Apuleius' phrases *variae fabulae* and *Graecanica fabula* together translate Hecataeus' Ἑλλήνων λόγοι πολλοί ('the stories of the Greeks are numerous'). The great stress placed by the *Metamorphoses's* *ego*-narrator on the Egyptian origin of his writing implements (1. 1. 1) might also support a reading of Apuleius' Prologue as intertextual with Hecataeus' *Historia*: for Hecataeus (and his fellow Milesian Anaximander) had argued that writing was invented and transferred by the Egyptians to Greece (FgrHist F20).<sup>36</sup>

These reflections of Hecataeus' prologue dress the *Metamorphoses's* fiction in historical clothing. In adopting this historiographical disguise, Apuleius follows an example already established by the other intertexts for his phrase *sermo iste Milesius*. For Aristides and Sisenna also misappropriate Hecataeus' historiographical credentials for their fictions. Aristides' work, the *Milesiaka*, exploits Hecataeus' form (episodic prose narrative introduced by a Greek first person narrator), and borrows the historian's birthplace for its title (which in any case has a historiographical sound to it, like the titles of several Greek works of prose fiction—*Ephesiaka*, *Babyloniaka*,

<sup>35</sup> See n. 21, above.

<sup>36</sup> For a parallel 'Platonic' reading of the references to Egypt, see Trapp (Ch. 4) and Too (Ch. 16) in this volume.

*Phoinikika, Aithiopika*). Aristides' adaptor Sisenna employs a similar historiographical pose, and ups the ante by attaching his own name to his *Milesiae*: for Sisenna was the most renowned historian of the Sullan age, and his name would in itself lend the fictional *Milesiae* a veneer of historicity.<sup>37</sup> In the case of the *Metamorphoses*, it is possible for extratextual readers to imagine the *tu*-addressee understanding the *ego*-narrator's claim to historicity as entirely sincere, even as they themselves regard it merely as a historiographical masquerade on Apuleius' part.

Hecataeus was also renowned as a pioneering geographer (Strabo 1. 1. 11; Agathemerus 1. 1), and the geographical work ascribed to him, the *Periegesis* (also known as *Περίοδος τῆς γῆς*), was still being read as late as the fourth century CE (by the Latin poet Avienus; see *FgrHist* T23). The *Periegesis* was organized as a travelogue, describing cities and peoples in the order in which they would be passed on a coastal voyage; it presumably started from Hecataeus' native Miletus, and was divided into two parts: Asia (i.e. Asia Minor, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Libya), and Europe.<sup>38</sup> It is remarkable that the geographical progression in the *Metamorphoses*'s Prologue corresponds exactly to Hecataeus' structure: the Prologue sets off from the Ionian coast (*Milesio*) overseas to Egypt (*Aegyptiam . . . Nilotici . . .*),<sup>39</sup> and then sails over to Europe, passing landmarks of the Achaean coast in order (*Hymettos Attica et Isthmos Ephyrea et*

<sup>37</sup> That the *Milesiae* were something of a vacation for Sisenna from his usual occupation of writing history, see Ovid, *Tristia* 2. 443–4, and Walsh (1970: 16).

<sup>38</sup> For the literary form of the *Periegesis*, see Pearson (1939: 30–1).

<sup>39</sup> Hecataeus certainly reported on Egypt; see *FgrHist* F300–24. To these should be added the new fragment from Photius in Theodoridis (1982: 306), a3352: Ἄφθος θεὸς παρ' Αἰγυπτίους, ὡσπερ ἡ Ἴσις καὶ ὁ Τυφὼν. Ἐκαταῖος Περιηγήσει Αἰγύπτου ('Aphthos: a god of the Egyptians, like Isis and Typhon. [sc. cited from] Hecataeus in the *Periegesis* of Egypt'). This fragment suggests that Hecataeus included material on the Egyptian deities in his geographical work. This clearly has important implications if one accepts Hecataeus as an intertext for the Prologue to Apuleius' 'Isiac' novel. Herodotus suggests at 2. 143 that Hecataeus actually visited Egypt, and Eusebius (*Praeparatio Evangelica* 10. 3. 16) claims that Herodotus lifted many of his passages on Egypt wholesale from Hecataeus; both these views have fallen into some discredit; see West (1991).

*Taenaros Spartiatica*) before settling in Rome (*in urbe Latia*).<sup>40</sup> Thus the *Metamorphoses*'s Prologue echoes both Hecataeus' history and geography, and allies itself intertextually to works not normally associated with fiction.

## CONCLUSIONS

Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* is patently a work of fiction, and his Prologue's phrases *variae fabulae* and *sermo iste Milesius* reinforce this for extratextual readers. Yet Apuleius' Prologue doubles as the *ego*-narrator's prologue, and in an extraordinary 'shifting of voice' (*vocis immutatio*), the *ego*-narrator's verbatim version of the Prologue equivocates between introducing a fictional narrative (like Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*) or a historical narrative (the *ego*-narrator's own autobiography) to the *tu*-addressee. This unresolved equivocation leaves open the question of whether the *ego*-narrator is to be identified with the credulous Lucius or not. It also makes it unclear just what sort of narrative extratextual readers should imagine the *tu*-addressee to be reading for pleasure (*lector intende: laetaberis*). Indeed, the *ego*-narrator's equivocation between fictionality and historicity is an essential part of Apuleius' own fictional entertainment.

<sup>40</sup> On the geographical references in the Prologue, see Clark (Ch. 10), Innes (Ch. 11), Laird (Ch. 24: Sect. 5(iii) ) in this volume.

# The Prologues of the Greek Novels and Apuleius

JOHN MORGAN

The prologues of other ancient novels may seem an obvious place to look for helpful analogues to Apuleius', but the differences have turned out to be more important and interesting than the similarities. The following survey does not say all there is to say about the prologues of the Greek novels; and occasionally a more illuminating perspective is provided by fictions not normally classified as novels.

Despite the notorious homogeneity of the Greek romances, there was no prologue template; the five extant novels employ widely various opening strategies. Two of them (possibly), the earliest and (certainly) the latest, Xenophon's *Ephesian Story* and Heliodorus' *Ethiopian Story*,<sup>1</sup> plunge immediately into the narrative, although their opening paragraphs function also as informal prologues, adumbrating themes and establishing protocols. The other three, Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe*, Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, and Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Cleitophon*, open with material as it were inside the book but outside the novel, as apparently did two novels not extant but summarized by Photius, the *Babylonian Story* of Iamblichus and *The Wonders beyond Thule* of Antonius Diogenes.<sup>2</sup> Prefaces are also found in the Latin narratives of the Trojan War masquerading under the names of Dictys and Dares, in the pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* and in fictions by Lucian, Dio, and Philostratus.

These prologues broadly serve five functions: (1) to identify the author; (2) to state theme and purpose; (3) to justify the author; (4) to authorize or naturalize the fictional text; (5) to establish reading protocols. No single prologue serves them all,

<sup>1</sup> For dating: O'Sullivan (1995: 1-9), Morgan (1996: 417-21).

<sup>2</sup> Translations of all these are in Reardon (1989).



but some strategies recur often enough to register as conventions against which to set Apuleius.

I **'Who is this?'** Of the extant Greeks, only Chariton identifies himself immediately, in a one-sentence prologue. However, Photius tells us that Antonius Diogenes began with a dedicatory epistle to his sister, and refers to another letter, presumably prefatory, to one Faustinus, containing statements about the author and his work.<sup>3</sup> Iamblichus also gave information about himself, but apparently in a digression within the narrative rather than a prologue. Heliodorus' self-naming comes at the end, where it cannot spoil the effect of his enigmatic opening. The speaker of Apuleius' Prologue, on the other hand, even when pressed, conspicuously avoids identifying himself by name, thus highlighting the indeterminacy of his relation to the author. Instead he defines himself by means of a mini-autobiography, a feature to which we shall return.

II **'let me join together different stories . . . men's shapes and fortunes transformed into different appearances and back again.'** Only Chariton is as explicit about his theme and role as narrator ('I am going to tell you the story of a love affair that took place in Syracuse'<sup>4</sup>), though Antonius' epistle to Faustinus seems to have contained a statement of his subject ('he is composing a work about the wonders beyond Thule'<sup>5</sup>). Most 'serious' novelists are more oblique. Longus describes a painting which inspired his novel: in so doing he virtually summarizes the story, though not so precisely as to destroy surprise and suspense. Less explicitly this ecphrasis adumbrates issues which the novel itself explores at length, such as the correlation of nature and art, and the parallel roles of imitation in literary production and affective development.<sup>6</sup> Achilles also begins with a description of a painting, which at one level sets the scene for his encounter with a young man whose first person narration forms the bulk of the novel; but, as with Longus, the painting extends proleptic tentacles, fore-

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Morgan (1998: 3303-18 and references); for a different view of these letters and their position, see Bürger (1903: 6), di Gregorio (1968).

<sup>4</sup> Chariton 1. 1. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Photius, *Bibl.* 111a32-3.

<sup>6</sup> For the scholarship on Longus' prologue, see Morgan (1997: 2235-8 and references), to which add Zimmerman (1994).

shadowing major events and issues, and structuring expectations.<sup>7</sup>

Lucian's comic fictions provide closer, but not complete, parallels to Apuleius. The *True Histories* begin with a lengthy exposition of the point of the work, but, unlike the *Metamorphoses*, the prologal voice is radically dissociated from that of the narrator. The *Lovers of Lies* opens with a dialogue problematizing the pleasure derived from stories acknowledged to be untrue and non-functional, which motivates the fictional narratives that follow. Dialogue also sets up the themes of *Toxaris* and the pseudo-Lucianic *Erotos*, in which (as arguably in Apuleius), the main narrator of the work replies to a narrative performance, previous to the beginning of the text, by the other participant in the dialogue.

III The ancient world viewed fiction with ambivalence. Broadly speaking, writers of fiction had two strategies open to them, logically incompatible but practically inseparable. Either (a) they could explicitly disclaim any truth value for their narrative, so forestalling the accusation of lying; or (b) they could, at some level of the imagination,<sup>8</sup> pretend that their fiction was not fiction at all. These positions correspond roughly to the present section of this survey and the next; each implies a characteristic self-positioning of the author vis-à-vis his text.

**'Let me soothe your kindly ears with an agreeable whispering . . . Reader, pay attention: you will be pleased.'** Of the 'serious' novelists, only Antonius seems to have taken the issue of fictionality head-on, apparently admitting that he was the author of an invention and even referring to himself as a 'poet of old comedy',<sup>9</sup> although he palliates the admission by claiming respectable precedents for his paradoxa. The explicit avowal of fictionality is more characteristic of 'comic' fiction, where it may even be a riposte to the topoi of authentication employed by the 'serious' novelists (see below). Lucian's *True Histories*, for instance, presents itself as

<sup>7</sup> See esp. Bartsch (1989: 40 ff.).

<sup>8</sup> On this see Morgan (1993).

<sup>9</sup> Photius, *Bibl.* 111a35-6. For interpretations of this difficult phrase see Morgan (1985: 483 and references), to which add Bowersock (1994: 20), Stephens and Winkler (1995: 107-8).

an attack on historians who use fictitious autopsy to authenticate incredible untruths, by stressing that nothing of its own contents is either true or eyewitnessed. *Lovers of Lies* uses its narratives, formally at least, to illustrate propositions about untruths floated in its prefatory dialogue.

However, the point does not exist in isolation. The confrontation between truth (or history) and fiction is bound up with a dialectic of utility and pleasure, famously exemplified by Thucydides or Polybius.<sup>10</sup> Fictivity and pleasure in narrative go together, as do truth and utility. So the pleasure of reading fiction and knowing that it is fiction forms a leitmotif of Lucian's prologues. This equation allows a novelist to have it both ways: he can formally disavow fictivity but smuggle it back into the dynamics of reader response by taking up the issue of pleasure. To take a couple of examples. Longus stresses the pleasure which he derived from the seminal painting, and which, by implication, the reader will derive from its literary counterpart: he even threatens the historians' opposition of pleasure and utility by claiming both as his goals. Achilles dances on the edge of this same abyss: his prologue tells how the 'author' met Cleitophon, the protagonist of the novel, and solicited pleasure from a narration of his erotic experiences.<sup>11</sup> The dialogue immediately preceding the narrative proper emphasizes the similarity of these experiences to *mythoi*, a pointedly chosen word which, in the conventional rhetorical division of narrative, denotes the category of untrue-and-unlike-the-truth;<sup>12</sup> Achilles thus undercuts one of his genre's fundamental conventions, its formal realism. In Latin versions of the rhetorical categories, the corresponding word is *fabula*. Significantly, this word occurs in both the opening and closing sentences of Apuleius' Prologue, both times in reference to his own work, and both times in connection with pleasure. Apuleius is locating himself firmly in the rhetorical matrix, and adopting the conventional stance of comic fiction by openly short-circuiting the reader's belief.

<sup>10</sup> Thucydides 1. 22. 4; Polybius, 2. 56. 10 ff.

<sup>11</sup> 1. 2. 3; in a setting with plane trees and running water, clearly reminiscent of Plato's *Phaedrus*, antiquity's most famous work of erotic mythology.

<sup>12</sup> Morgan (1993: 189–91, and references).

IV 'Serious' Greek novelists preferred to mask the fictionality of their texts with various strategies of authentication designed to bridge the space between reality and fiction, or even to infiltrate the invention into time and space continuous with the author's and reader's real lives. Chariton's strategy is the simplest: he just asserts that his tale really happened, and locates it in a familiar historical context. Elsewhere, however, a more elaborate apparatus is used to create a fictitious provenance for the narrative. Two common motifs, (i) autobiography and (ii) translation, recur in Apuleius, but the superficial formal similarities highlight the profound differences in function.

i **'Attic Hymettos and the Corinthian Isthmus and Spartan Taenarus are my origins of old'** (auto)biography anchors the fiction in reality, even when some details are palpably fictitious. Longus' hunting-trip to Lesbos, for example, locates the inspiration of his novel in real-world time and space. At the end of the novel, the reader (though, cleverly, not the narrator) realizes that the painting which the novel transcribes is itself an autobiographical document of the novel's protagonists. Thus both the narration and its substance are autobiographically authenticated, so convincingly that scholars continue to seek a location in real Lesbian geography.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, Achilles' novel is presented as autobiography (hero's) within autobiography (author's): the two worlds of author/narrator and character/narrator elide at their meeting in plausibly real time and space at Sidon. Iamblichus is exactly analogous: apparently contradictory references to autobiographical material in his novel are best explained by a scenario in which an autobiographical frame in one voice introduced a narrative in another which formed the bulk of the work. Again concentric autobiographies provided a plausible channel of provenance and located the transmission of the story (if not the story itself) in real time.<sup>14</sup>

The second recension of the Latin account of the Trojan War circulating under the name of Dictys of Crete opens with a short biography of the 'author' in a voice presumably of an imaginary editor of 'Dictys' original text, which confirms the

<sup>13</sup> Morgan (1997: 2243–7 and references), to which add Mason (1995).

<sup>14</sup> Morgan (1998: 3327–9 and references).

narrator's reliability as eyewitness of the events he relates. This biography still exists between the novel and its cover, but now its purpose is to establish the quality rather than the status of the following text. It does not bring the text into the reader's space (this work has another device to do that) but suggests that 'Dictys' account of the Trojan War is a better documentary source than its obvious competitor: all too effectively, as the work's medieval reception illustrates.

The crucial difference in Apuleius, of course, is that the autobiography is that not of the author (real or implied) but of a character within the fiction, distanced from Apuleius by a series of ironies, stylistic tropes, and the tone of voice, as well as by simple biographical difference. The Prologue is part of the novel, not an introduction before the novel begins: it throws a bridge inwards into the fiction, not outwards to the reader. Even when Greek novels present themselves as autobiographies of their own characters,<sup>15</sup> the game is radically different: the real author becomes an implied editor, the text's objective existence an index of its veracity.

The closest formal parallel is the Clementine *Recognitions*.<sup>16</sup> The body of this work begins with an autobiographical character sketch of the narrator (a historical person intended to be identified with the author). After emphatically naming himself (important in the work's imposition of itself as *echt*-Clementine) the narrator describes his youthful questings for Truth, establishing his credentials for spiritual discourse and so increasing the work's didactic value, but also motivating his attachment to the Apostle Peter and thus buttressing his autoptic authority for the saint's sermons and acts. Chronologically, this material precedes the events of the narrative, of which it is effectively the first episode. In Apuleius, on the other hand, the prologal autobiography concerns events later than those of the narrative and has no logical bearing on them or on their 'publication'. It notably fails to serve the

<sup>15</sup> Explicit in Antonius Diogenes, implicit in Longus, Xenophon, and in the second recension of the *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri*.

<sup>16</sup> Ed. Rehm (1965). This is a Latin trans. of a lost Greek recension (extracts of which survive) of a lost work, of which a different recension, known as the *Homilies*, exists in Greek (Rehm 1953). The *Recognitions* gives the better idea of the original.

concern for authority and authenticity apparent in all the Greek parallels.

ii **‘thereafter in the Latin city as a foreigner to the studies of Rome I took on and developed the local language with laborious effort and without the lead of a master.’** Several of these works authenticate themselves through the fiction of being an old text rediscovered. This procedure reaches its apogee of elaboration with Antonius Diogenes, whose text purported to be a transcription of a letter from a Macedonian soldier to his wife, itself transcribing the contents of some ancient tablets discovered in a tomb during Alexander’s siege of Tyre, themselves transcribing the oral narration of the protagonist’s experiences. This ‘rediscovered’ text was plausible enough in Greek, but sometimes verisimilitude demanded that the ‘original’ was in another language. So the first recension of ‘Dictys’ begins with a letter from L. Septimius to Q. Aradius Rufinus, describing the discovery of ‘Dictys’ tomb at Knossos with some ancient books in Greek written in Phoenician letters; these were transliterated, and now Septimius, avid for true history, translates them into Latin. Likewise ‘Dictys’ sister-text, the version of the Trojan War by ‘Dares of Phrygia’, is introduced by a letter purporting to be from Cornelius Nepos to Sallust, no less, describing how he discovered the autograph manuscript at Athens and translated it, from what language he does not say. An explanation has to be provided for how a text which ought to be in Greek or Phrygian comes to be in Latin. This is part and parcel of the reality effect.

Translation was not always a fiction. We have fragments of a Greek Dictys (which presumably already contained the story of the work’s discovery).<sup>17</sup> The *Recognitions* survives only in Latin, preceded by a translator’s preface, but quotations prove the existence of a Greek original.<sup>18</sup> The *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* on the most plausible hypothesis is at one or two removes from a Greek original.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> P. Tebt. 268 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 338) = *FGH* 49 F7a, and P. Oxy. 2539; cf. Ihm (1909).

<sup>18</sup> Rehm (1965: pp. c–cii).

<sup>19</sup> Kortekaas (1984: 107–14); for possible fragments cf. Stephens and Winkler (1995: 391–9), Morgan (1998: 3354–6 and references).

Apuleius, of course, was also a translator, loosely speaking, of a Greek original: the *Metamorphoseis* of Lucius of Patrae noticed by Photius. In a sense, therefore, his mini-autobiography serves the same function as the ‘translators’ prefaces: it explains why a text which ought to be in Greek is in fact in Latin. Again what Apuleius does not do is interesting. He conspicuously does not present himself as the translator of someone else’s work, and here we may contrast Sisenna, who was clearly an explicit presence in his Latin version of something which remained nonetheless Aristides’ *Milesian Tales*. In place of the translation of a text from one language to another, the speaker of Apuleius’ Prologue chronicles his own movement from Greek to Latin, explicitly prior to the performance of the text he introduces, which in the terms of the fiction therefore only ever existed in Latin.<sup>20</sup> The only parallel for such linguistic transition on the part of a narrator rather than text is in Iamblichus, whose primary narrator was a Syrian who moved into Babylonian to acquire his story, and into Greek to tell it; but even here the real concern is to establish a plausible line of transmission for a pre-existing tale, and so establish its ‘authenticity’.

**‘Look then, I ask your pardon at the beginning’.** Translators generically apologize for dimming the stylistic splendour of the original.<sup>21</sup> In an epistle prefacing the translated *Recognitions*, Rufinus admits that he has not reproduced the ‘flowery face of eloquence’ of the original, and even confesses an inability to understand material on the nativity and incarnation, which he has omitted rather than reproduce imperfectly.<sup>22</sup> This apology is probably sincere; in other cases it is part of the fiction of authentication. ‘Nepos’ introduces the Latin ‘Dares’ by saying that he has literally translated the simple original into simple Latin. L. Septimius sets his sights no higher than ‘dispelling the idleness of an inactive mind’. Iamblichus inverted the motif, naturalizing an implausibly sophisticated style by stressing his status as professional rhetor.

<sup>20</sup> This movement clearly had no place in the Greek original—unless in the opposite direction, to explain why someone with a Roman name was writing in Greek.

<sup>21</sup> Compare Morgan in Reardon (1989: 351–2).

<sup>22</sup> [Clement], *Recognitions*, prologue 4; 10–11.

Apuleius has fun. Even while going through the motions of apologizing for the ineptitude of his foreigner's Latin, he dazzles with virtuoso diction and stylistic panache, then has the nerve to suggest that the alleged fault is in fact particularly apt to his subject matter, even as he presents the reader with an emblematic image of his verbal acrobatics.

**V 'But let me join together different stories in that Milesian style'** The beginning of a novel is where a real person becomes an implied reader and where the novelist must educate his audience in the protocols of the particular exchange. It is hardly surprising that novelists use their prologues to give coded instructions on how their texts should be read.

One technique for doing this is generic affiliation. Chariton's opening sentence recalls those of historians like Hecataeus, Herodotus, and Thucydides, orienting the reader to approach the text as serious make-believe historiography. Apuleius and the writer of pseudo-Lucianic *Erotes* lose no time in hinting at the contiguity of their own works to *Milesian Tales*. By the end of the first line, expectations have begun to form: it is going to be funny and dirty.

Prologues signal the desired reader response: if a reader is told, directly or indirectly, to expect pleasure, he will approach the text with predefined attitudes to its functions and truth status (see above). Similarly with wonder, to which Apuleius also alerts the reader. This activates a whole different complex of protocols: those governing paradoxography. So Antonius Diogenes' very title, *The Wonders [apista] beyond Thole*, assimilates his fiction to a tradition of 'incredible-but-true' history and geography—a subtle game which makes incredibility an index of veracity.<sup>23</sup> In Apuleius, however, the mirabilia are tales of the supernatural, not of geographical freaks. For paradoxography of this type, we may compare the *Book of Marvels* of Phlegon of Tralles,<sup>24</sup> or a collection of ghost stories by Damascius.<sup>25</sup> We have a few related fiction fragments, but nothing from a prologue as yet.<sup>26</sup> The reference to wonder, then,

<sup>23</sup> See Morgan (1993: 196) for fuller discussion.

<sup>24</sup> Hansen (1996).

<sup>25</sup> Noticed by Photius (*Bibl. cod.* 130) and associated by him with a list of fictions which includes the Greek *Metamorphoseis* (111B32, cod. 166).

<sup>26</sup> Morgan (1998: 3359–71, and references), Stephens and Winkler (1995: 173–8, 325–9, 422–8).



cues a set of responses which are not those solicited by the canonical romances: when Longus, for instance, records his wonder at the painting, he has its (and so his novel's) artistic quality in mind rather than paradoxographical subject matter.

In a wider sense prologues (and beginnings) are places where issues of belief and disbelief can be rehearsed and fine-tuned. I have argued elsewhere<sup>27</sup> that literary fiction demands from its reader both a conviction of its actuality and an awareness of its fictivity. The balance of these polarities is infinitely adjustable: in the prologues of Greek fiction we can trace a finely graded spectrum running from an explicit and often seriously taken claim to veracity ('Dictys') to an equally explicit disavowal (Lucian's *True Histories*). In between come texts that maintain some degree of doubleness with varying irony and self-awareness. What we have termed 'strategies of authentication' are obviously an important ingredient, but it is worth saying here a few final words about style and form. The opening of a text establishes a characteristic 'tone of voice'. Chariton affects objectivity, imitating the pitch and register of Xenophon as part of his pose of being an historian roughly contemporary with the events he narrates; Longus rises to lyrical elevation, foreshadowing the more poetically nuanced episodes of his narrative, with its allusively artificial texture and polysemic plotting. Apuleius' style is archly disjointed and jokey, and its form approaches that of dialogue. In the very first sentence, the emphatic position of *At ego tibi* ('But I to you . . .') and *isto* ('that [style] of yours') implies a previous storytelling *tu mihi* ('you to me . . .'). It is not altogether obvious that the person the speaker addresses as 'you' is simply the reader. Rather we are plunged into the position of overhearing part of a larger narrative exchange already in progress. This is exactly the situation at the beginning of the Lucianic *Erotos*, from which we learn that Aristides in the *Milesian Tales* also presented himself as a participant, listener as well as teller, in a cycle of stories. We do best to think of these *Milesian Tales* as short narratives in a frame, like the *Decameron* or *The Canterbury Tales*. Apuleius' affectation (ironized by the sheer scale of his work) is to present his novel as part of such a Milesian

<sup>27</sup> Morgan (1993).

complex,<sup>28</sup> and in this perspective his Prologue corresponds to a snatch of speech in one of the linking sections of the framing narrative; his reference to *sermo Milesius* ('Milesian style' or 'conversation') defines form as well as content and style. The formal associations of the Prologue, that is to say, are not with novels at all,<sup>29</sup> but reinforce other indications as to the precise kind of literary entertainment in store.

The divergences traced in this chapter do not, I think, constitute a parody of the 'serious' novels. They simply indicate an agenda different from that of the Greek romance. This Prologue introduces a novel which will be informal, comic, and pleasurable, unrealistic and relatively relaxed about its fictionality, ironically disclaimed by the real author. The expectations it creates are appropriate to comic dialogue and Milesian tale. Just how the novel itself defeats those expectations is another story.

<sup>28</sup> I leave open the question of how far this reflects Lucius of Patrae: according to Photius (*Bibl. cod.* 129), the ass-story occupied the first two books of his *Metamorphoses*, implying that there were other stories in the work, possibly framed by some *mise en scène*; against this view see Kussl (1990).

<sup>29</sup> It is not coincidental that the only Greek novel introduced by a dialogue, that of Achilles, is the least ideal and the most Milesian, even to the extent of boasting a libidinous Widow of Ephesus in its cast.

## *Quis ille?* The Role of the Prologue in Apuleius' *Nachleben*

ROBERT H. F. CARVER

### EXORDIOR (A SYNCHRONIC APPROACH)

To argue that the Prologue conflates the identities of author, narrator, and text, and that *quis ille?* ('Who is this?') refers to all three of them no longer seems controversial. Lucius is merged with his author, Apuleius, in the notorious crux of *Metamorphoses* 9. 27 (*Madaurenses*, 'the man from Madaura'), while the Prologue fulfils the prophecy of Diophanes that Lucius will become 'a mighty history, an unbelievable fable, and a multi-volume book' (*Met.* 2. 12 *historiam magnam et incredundam fabulam et libros me futurum*). Apuleius' *papyrus Aegyptia* ('Egyptian papyrus') thus proves, on close inspection (*inspicere*), to be a palimpsest. Not only do traces of the prologue to the original *Metamorphoses* (the *fabula Graecanica*) show through (the plural, *hominum*, 'of men', seems to match Photius' account of the work of 'Lucius of Patrai'), but we detect, in the novel as a whole, a pattern of inscription, erasure, and reinscription of authorial identity. So the question, *quis ille?*, and the myriad answers to it, become part of the hermeneutic game that Apuleius plays with his reader—a teasing mix of disclosure and withholding. Apuleius appears to be exploiting a recognition that authorial identity is ultimately a function of language, that the author qua author can have no existence independent of the text.

### LIBRIS FELICIORIBUS (SOME DIACHRONIC ANXIETIES)

One would like to think that Apuleius himself (and perhaps even some of his immediate audience) might have recognized this reading of the Prologue. There are, after all, certain

congruences between the self-referential preoccupations of post-structuralist discourse and the rhetorical culture of the Second Sophistic. But a study of earlier responses to the Prologue suggests that, for much of the intervening period, in particular during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, the hermeneutic apparatus required for such a reading was simply not available.

How much respect (how much 'authority') then, should we accord the readings of the past? Scavenging amongst the slag heaps of textual criticism can certainly yield rich pickings: a case study in the history of authorship and reading practice, and a salutary reminder that the progress of Classical studies is not always linear. For example, Katherine Clarke's attempts to link *Aegyptiam* with Apuleius' African origins (Ch. 10 in this volume) are anticipated by Hildebrand (*Nonne fortasse ad suam ipsius originem Apuleius alludit, qui quamquam non Aegyptius tamen Afer erat?*),<sup>1</sup> while Emily Gower's championing of Persius as an intertext for the Prologue (Ch. 8 in this volume) finds support in manuscripts and early printed editions.<sup>2</sup> Beroaldus and his imitators have their own answer to Maaiké Zimmerman's question, *Quis ille . . . lector?* ('Who is the reader here?') (Ch. 22 in this volume). Taking his lead from the *De Mundo* and book 2 of the *De dogmate Platonis* (both dedicated to Faustinus), Beroaldus glosses *tibi* thus: *faustinum filium siue lectorem alloquens* ('addressing his son, Faustinus, or the reader').<sup>3</sup> And we may wish to reconsider the contention of Battista Pio (who anticipates Merkelbach by four and a half centuries in finding Egyptian lore contained within 'Cupid and Psyche')<sup>4</sup> that *papyrus Aegyptiam* expresses a *genus dicendi*

<sup>1</sup> ('Is not Apuleius perhaps alluding to his own origin, as one who, although not Egyptian, was, however, African?') Hildebrand (1842: 7).

<sup>2</sup> Several MSS, including the *Palatinus* (Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Pal. Lat. 1574), the *Regius* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Lat. 8668), and the lost *Codex Fuxensis*, give *bibulas* (cf. Persius 4. 50) in place of *benivolus*, and this reading was adopted by Scaliger (1600), de Wower (1606), and Price (1650).

<sup>3</sup> In Guillaume Michel's trans. (1522) the Prologue is subtitled *La proposition de l'auteur a son filz Faustinus & aux lecteurs de ce present liure* and begins *Faustinus mon chier enfant et vous tous lecteurs benivolos*. Adlington uses a similar title—'The Preface of the Authour to his sonne Faustinus, and unto the Readers of the booke'—but follows Louveau rather than Michel in the text itself.

<sup>4</sup> Pio (1505: sig. Gii): *idem autor libro quinto multa ex ritu aegyptiorum*

*molle et lasciuum* ('a voluptuous and licentious mode of discourse').<sup>5</sup>

Yet reading Renaissance commentaries on Apuleius' Prologue can still be a frustrating experience. When Beroaldus glosses *lepido susurro* ('with a charming whispering') as an allusion to Isiac secret lore which was not to be 'announced openly to the profane' (*neque prophanis palam nuncianda*) but 'related secretly amongst religious ears in the manner of the mysteries' (*sed clam apud aures religiosas promendis: instar mysteriorum*) one feels relief at finding a recognizable specimen of literary criticism. In general, however, the accretion of glosses seems rather indiscriminating, particularly to anyone of a narratological bent. Encountering Beroaldus' observations on *Isthmos Ephyrea* ('Corinthian Isthmus') that Cicero calls Corinth 'the light of all Greece' (*totius graeciae lumen*) while Plutarch records it to have been 'first instituted by Theseus' (*Plutarchus tradit isthmia a Theseo primitus instituta fuisse*), such a reader will want to note Lucius' own asserted paternity (*Met.* 1. 23) and look forward to his illumination at Cencreae in 11. 1 (see Innes, Ch. 11 in this volume). But Beroaldus does no such thing. Renaissance collations are generally philological rather than hermeneutic: in glossing *Taenaros*, Beroaldus notes that 'there is also a breathing vent with the same name from which the descent to the underworld lies revealed' (*est ☉ spiraculum eodem nomine ex quo descensus ad inferos patet*) but gives no indication that he has made an interpretive link between the Prologue and Psyche's katabasis at *Metamorphosis* 6. 18–20.

### UOCIS IMMUTATIO

For Renaissance commentators, indeed, the really burning question seems to have been whether the Prologue is written in prose or verse. In Beroaldus' text, the Prologue is set as prose,

*explicaturus: quae ad tartara translata sunt* ('in Book 5, the same author, on the point of explaining many things about the Egyptians' rite which have been transferred to Tartarus').

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., sig. Giii<sup>v</sup>. Pio cites Ovid, *Ars amatoria*, 3. 317–18 *Et modo marmoreis referant audita theatris: | Et modo niliacis carmina lusa modis*. Elmenhorst (1621: 120), dismisses Pio's thesis with a laconic *ineptissime* ('most foolishly').

but the commentary notes that Apuleius ‘begins with an epigram in double iambic metre’ (*exorditur ab epigrammate iambico bimembri*), the switch to prose occurring at *Hymetos* [*sic*] *Attica*. Marianus Tuccus accordingly set the Prologue as verse in 1512, an example followed in the Aldine edition of 1521 by Franciscus Asulanus (the break coming at *hic exordior*, ‘Here I begin’). Bernardus Philomathes attacked the versifiers the following year in the Second Juntine edition, as did Petrus Colvius (1567–94) in 1588: ‘For almost the whole speech of this writer flows in this manner and particularly in this Milesian entertainment [*in Milesio hoc lusu*], so that you may often recognize the comic style of writing and the unscannable metres [*numeros innumeros*] of Plautus.’<sup>6</sup>

Undeterred by such objections, Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609) radically rewrites the Prologue as far as *paucis accipe* (‘Hear in a few words’) to produce alternating lines of iambic trimeter and dimeter. Thus lines 7–9 appear in the form *Hominum figuras in alias imagines | In seque rursus mutuo | Refectas, ut mireris hinc exordiar*.<sup>7</sup> Johannes Rutgers’s solution was more ingenious still: *uocis immutatio* (‘change of voice’) actually refers to the (alleged) switch from verse into prose which occurs in the course of the Prologue.<sup>8</sup> Elmenhorst’s edition of 1621 takes fewer liberties with the text than Scaliger, but it does succeed in presenting the whole Prologue as twenty-five lines of verse.<sup>9</sup>

This may seem like a sterile academic debate, but it had generic consequences. Editorial attempts to reveal the occluded metrics of the opening of the Prologue were frequently followed by Renaissance translators (e.g. Louveau, Adlington,

<sup>6</sup> Colvius (1588: *Notae Vberiores*, p. 3).

<sup>7</sup> von Oudendorp (1786: 1, 5).

<sup>8</sup> The comments do not appear in *Iani Rutgersij variarum lectionum libri sex* (Leiden, 1618), but are excerpted in von Oudendorp (1786: 1, 4).

<sup>9</sup> Elmenhorst (1621: 102). Elmenhorst (1580–1621) justifies his metrical reading by quoting a long ‘interlinear gloss’ (*glossa interlinearis*) which he claims to have copied directly from **F** (Laur. 68. 2). von Oudendorp (1786: 1, 3), includes the gloss in his excerpt from Elmenhorst. But Hildebrand (1842: p. lxxvi) reproduces the gloss from what seems to have been Elmenhorst’s real source, the unpublished MS annotations of Lindenbrogius (Friedrich Lindenbrog, 1573–1648), noting (pp. vii–viii) that Elmenhorst plagiarized a great deal from Lindenbrog.

Pompeio Vizani), and led Lodovico Castelvetro—author of the *Poetica d'Aristotele vulgarizzata et sposta* (1570/1576)—to place Apuleius (along with Petronius, Boethius, Martianus Capella, and Iacopo Sannazaro) in the class of works which 'are to be considered monstrous' for combining verse and prose 'into a single body'.<sup>10</sup>

### RUDIS LOCUTOR

The Prologue also features in the vitriolic Renaissance debates over the proper models for Latin prose.<sup>11</sup> As a champion of Ciceronianism, Adriano Castellesi (?1458–?1521) chooses to take the Prologue's ironic profession of stylistic insufficiency at face value: 'Apuleius, whom the affectedly learned [*curiosi*] rather than the erudite [*eruditi*] of our time are keen to follow and emulate, admits, at the beginning of his work, to being ignorant of Latin'.<sup>12</sup> Castellesi quotes the *captatio benevolentiae* (*En ecce . . . respondet*) and continues:

*Quis rogo te ferat non tam Apuleium | qui vt mali aedificii dominus se  
Architectum non adhibuisse | ita literas sine Praeceptore coluisse  
gloriatur | quam aliquos esse | qui malint foetores | & quisquilias eius  
colligere | quam uerborum floribus perfectissimae aetatis | quam  
signauimus | inhaerere?*

(Who, I ask you, would not hold both Apuleius (who thus boasts—as the master of a badly built house might boast of not having employed an architect—of tending to his letters without a guide) and any others to be the sort who, rather than sticking to the verbal bouquets of that most perfect age which we have described, prefer to collect its stench and dregs.)

A century later, the Jesuit Andreas Schottus (1552–1629) is still complaining that 'a great many in this age prefer to bray with [Apuleius' ass] than to speak with Cicero' (*cum quo rudere hoc saeculo plerique, quàm cum CICERONE loqui malunt*). And Schottus repeats Castellesi's charge that Apuleius is condemned out of his own mouth—a 'self-taught African' (*Afrum αὐτοδίδακτον*) who has 'learned Latin with (to use his own

<sup>10</sup> Castelvetro (1984: 12).

<sup>11</sup> See Carver (1991: 170–84) and, more generally, D'Amico (1984: 351–92).

<sup>12</sup> Castellesi (1515: fo. v'): *Apuleius autem quem nostri temporis magis curiosi | quam eruditi sequi | & aemulari student | in principio operis sui | Latinas literas ignorare fatetur.*

words) “wretched toil”’ (*aerumnabili (vt ipsius verbis vtar) labore*).<sup>13</sup>

### QUIS ILLE?

For modern readers, of course, the most important question remains the identity of the speaker. Or does it? Open a copy of the old Penguin translation of Apuleius by Robert Graves and one finds, in place of the teasing play of *quis ille? paucis accipe*, a gross interpolation: ‘Let me briefly introduce myself as Lucius Apuleius, a native of Madaura in North Africa, but of ancient Greek stock.’<sup>14</sup> This may seem an egregious instance of *traduttore traditore!*, but it is sobering to recall that over the course of forty years and multiple impressions, hundreds of thousands of English ‘general readers’ approached and appreciated Apuleius through Graves’s gateway, never suspecting that the Prologue posed any problem at all.<sup>15</sup> For better or worse, Graves’s version forms part of the *Wirkungsgeschichte*—the ‘effective history’—of the text.

It also serves to remind us of the yawning gap that exists between the superfine subtleties of textual/literary criticism and the cruder realities of reading practice. In the course of the colloquium the ‘meanings’ of the opening 119 words of the *Metamorphoses* were brought into play more richly and fecundly than they have ever been before; yet the very richness of these responses is itself an embarrassment. For the ‘general reader’ accustomed to linearity, a variorum text such as that presented here is, by its nature, virtually *unreadable*. It is only through individual acts of reception—particularly through the translator’s elimination of competing interpretations—that meanings becomes crystallized. Moreover, Graves is merely following a long line of readers in privileging the authorizing aspects of the Prologue over its generic signifiers.

<sup>13</sup> Schottus (1610: 44–5).

<sup>14</sup> The most outrageous of these interpolations have been removed in the new Penguin edn., heavily revised by Michael Grant (1990), but the title-page still attributes the work to ‘Lucius Apuleius’ while the note on the author informs us that ‘After his initiation into the mysteries of Isis he studied Latin oratory in Rome and made a success at the Bar.’

<sup>15</sup> Jack Lindsay’s far more faithful American version had much less penetration in Britain and the Commonwealth.



For Macrobius and Fulgentius, such phrases as *fabulam Graecanicam* and *sermone isto Milesio* evidently served (as they do for modern scholars) to identify the work as fiction and locate it within the tradition of Milesian entertainment. Macrobius, for example, expresses his surprise that a philosopher of Apuleius' standing should indulge in mere fables, fit only for the 'cradles of the wet-nurses' (*nutricum cunas*).<sup>16</sup> Fulgentius, similarly, has no doubts about the fictional nature of Apuleius' work, dismissing the fables he allegorizes as the work of the 'lying Greeks', and disclaiming any interest in the narrative qua narrative. The details of 'Cupid and Psyche', for instance, are a mere *falsitatum congeries* ('mass of falsehoods') which needs to be cleared away by the exegete to reveal the eternal verities contained within.<sup>17</sup> Yet he responds enthusiastically to the creative and stylistic exuberance of Apuleius. In the prologue to the *Mitologiae*, Fulgentius calls his work a 'tale wrinkled with an old woman's furrows' (*rugosam sulcis anilibus ordior fabulam*), introducing it with almost the same formula (*tuarum aurium sedes lepido quolibet susurro permulceam*) that Apuleius had used in his own Prologue (*auresque tuas benivolam lepido susurro permulceam*).

Macrobius and Fulgentius are, however, the exceptions in their response to the *Metamorphoses* as *sermo Milesius*.<sup>18</sup> Apuleius problematizes such easy generic categorizations through his emphasis on the narrating 'I' (*at ego tibi*) and his provision of a (pseudo-)pedigree which ostensibly verifies the succeeding narrative. To the narrator's question *quis ille?*, the response of pre-modern readers was generally 'Lucius Apuleius Madaurensis'. For them, the identity of the speaker is no mere literary game but a question with profound implications.

<sup>16</sup> Macrobius (1970: I. 2, p. 5).

<sup>17</sup> Fulgentius (1898: III. vi. 116).

<sup>18</sup> We have to wait until the Renaissance to find an intelligent response to the term. Beroaldus notes that the Milesians 'were notable for their pleasures and luxuriousness' (*deliciis luxuque notabiles fuere*) and comments: 'hence the ancients applied the term *Milesiae* to poems and lascivious stories [*hinc milesias prisci appellauerunt poemata & fabulas lasciuientes*], or, as some think, *Milesiae* is the term for chattering old wives' tales [*fabulae aniles & uanidicae*] in which neither end nor beginning [*nec pes nec caput*] is apparent; nor are these stories concerned with morality, containing a moral in the manner of fables [*nec instar apologorum epimythion ullum morales continentes*]'.

To a medieval reader (and potential copyist), the most important words in the Prologue may well have been *figuras fortunaeque hominum in alias imagines conversas* ('men's shapes and fortunes changed into different forms').<sup>19</sup> As Beroaldus remarks in his gloss, it was 'a matter of serious and subtle debate among learned authorities whether men may be changed into other forms, such as those of wolves and asses' (*an homines in alias imagines. ut luporum & Asinorum uerti possint magna inter eruditos & subtilis quaestio est*).<sup>20</sup> This is the context for Augustine's remarks in *The City of God* 18. 18: *sicut Apuleius in libris, quos titulo Asini aurei inscripsit, sibi ipsi accidisse, ut accepto veneno, humano animo permanente, asinus fieret, aut iudicauit, aut finxit* ('just as Apuleius, in those books which he inscribed with the title of *The Golden Ass*, either believed or feigned to have happened to himself: that, on taking poison, he became an ass, though his mind remained human'). Augustine was responding both to Apuleius' account of *daemones* in the *De deo Socratis* and to his reputation as a magician whose miracles surpassed those of Christ. A skilled rhetorician like Augustine was doubtless capable of recognizing a fictional first person narrator, but he fails to decode the generic signals of the Prologue, adopting instead a polarizing approach to the veridical status of Apuleius' narrative. Apuleius, Augustine tells us, either genuinely believed that he had been transformed into an ass (because of the appearance-changing effects of demons) or he feigned that he had been (*finxit* here having the pejorative sense of 'lying' so often employed in later attacks on fictions). He is either a liar or the victim of demoniacal delusion.

Augustine's remarks are symptomatic of a general atrophy-ing in Christian culture of the critical faculties necessary to deal with literary fictions;<sup>21</sup> but his inclusion of Apuleius' novel in a wider discussion which accepts the possibility of demonic manipulation of appearances may explain why *The Golden Ass* has survived when all that remains of Apuleius' *Hermagoras*—

<sup>19</sup> See Carver (1999: 259–61).

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. the ecclesiastical decree included in Gratian's 12th-cent. *Concordia* of Canon Law, Gratianus (1879), *causa xxvi. Quest. v. c. xii*, cols. 1030–1.

<sup>21</sup> See Augustine, *Confessions* I. 13; Carver (1991: 73–9).

arguably another work of prose fiction—are the tantalizing fragments preserved by Priscian and Fulgentius.<sup>22</sup>

The process of unravelling 'Lucius the narrator' from his historical author, Apuleius Madaurensis, is an extremely slow one. The margins of a typical medieval manuscript contain chapter descriptions of the type *de photide ostendente apulegio dominam suam in auem mutatam* ('How Photis showed Apuleius her mistress being changed into a bird').<sup>23</sup> The Renaissance translators continue this practice. The chapter headings in William Adlington's 1566 translation (which underwent numerous reprintings and was only supplanted in the twentieth century by Graves's version) follow the form of the first: 'Howe Apuleius ridinge into Thessalie . . .' Adlington dispels all ambiguity in the Prologue by departing radically from both the Latin text and his principal support, the French of Jean Louveau: 'What and who he was, attend a while and you shall understand, that it was even I, the writer of my own Metamorphosie, and straunge alteration of figure.'<sup>24</sup>

### FABULAM GRAECANICAM

In the Renaissance, the answer to *quis ille?* is further complicated by the rediscovery both of the *Onos* and of Photius' account of Lucian and 'Lucius of Patrai'. In the preface to his Latin translation of the *Onos*, Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459) tells us that his initial response to *The Golden Ass* matched that of Augustine.<sup>25</sup> But when he discovered, amongst some works of 'Lucius [sc. Lucian]', a little book entitled *The Ass of Lucius* (*Lucii asinus*) he felt impelled to translate it into Latin in order to 'show that this ancient and, as it were, renovated comedy by Apuleius was in no way to be accepted for real, but was rather

<sup>22</sup> At about the time when **F** was being copied at Monte Cassino, its most famous abbot, Desiderius, was in correspondence with Peter Damian who addressed to him a treatise entitled *De variis miraculosis narrationibus* (PL 145, col. 571 ff.). Damian, disappointingly, makes no mention of Apuleius, but the exchange may furnish a context for the copying of *The Golden Ass* in the 11th cent.

<sup>23</sup> Bod. MS Laud. Lat. 55, fo. 16<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Perhaps incorporating Beroaldus' gloss, *significatur ipsemet Apuleius* ('Apuleius himself is signified').

<sup>25</sup> Poggio Bracciolini (1592: 169–70).

to be considered as having been instituted by “Lucius” in a desire to make fun of magic arts, according to his custom of ridiculing not only men but even gods’ (*ut ostenderem hanc veterem & ab Apuleio, veluti innouatum comœdiam nequaquam esse pro vero accipiendam, sed existimandam potius ab Lucio intro-[170]ductam studio artes eludendi magicas, prout suus mos est non tantum homines, sed & deos irridendi*).

Beroaldus, evidently ignorant of Photius, perpetuates Poggio’s conflation of author and narrator, referring to the writer of the *Onos* as ‘Lucius Lucianus Patrensis’ an interesting analogue to the reception of Apuleius. To the question *quis ille?*, Beroaldus gives the simple answer: *significatur ipsemet Apuleius* (‘Apuleius himself is signified’). In his *Vita Lucii Apuleii*, Beroaldus endows his author with Lucius’ own parents, Theseus (*Met.* 1. 23) and Salvia (*Met.* 2. 2), a practice followed by later editors like Colvius (1588), sig. \*5<sup>r</sup> and de Wower (1606), sig. †2.

The next crucial step in the process is the recovery of the *Bibliotheca* of Photius. The *editio princeps*, edited by Hoeschelius (David Hoeschel, 1556–1617), appeared in 1601, Andreas Schottus producing a Latin translation in 1606.<sup>26</sup> Photius’ testimony (*Bibl.* 165) suggested the dependence of the *Onos* on a third version of the *Luciad* by the shadowy ‘Lucius of Patrai’, thus making the linkage between author and hero in *The Golden Ass* yet more tenuous. But even twenty years on, these findings have still not joined the academic mainstream. For example, Elmenhorst (1621) drops the praenomen, Lucius, in favour of the *Apuleius Madaurensis Platonicus* attested by *veteres auctores* (‘ancient authorities’) but in his *Vita et Scripta Apulei* (‘The Life and Writings of Apuleius’), despite including the Photius extract in his notes (p. 118), he perpetuates the identification of Lucius’ pedigree (*Met.* 1. 23, 2. 2) with that of Apuleius (*Ei Theseus pater dictus est; mater Salvia fuit, & de utroque nobilitas satis clara*, ‘His father was called Theseus and his mother was Salvia, and the high birth of each is sufficiently manifest’), conflating details from the *Florida*, the *Apologia*, and the *Metamorphoses* and drawing heavily on the Prologue: *Mox post Romae aduena studiorum, quiritium indigenum sermonem nullo magistro praeunte intantum excoluit, vt causarum*

<sup>26</sup> Photius (1606: 117).

*patrum ageret, & stipendio forensi mereret* ('Soon afterwards, at Rome, a stranger to the subject, with no teacher guiding him, he cultivated the speech of the native Romans with such success that he acted as an advocate in law-cases and earned his income in the forum').<sup>27</sup>

The autobiographical components of *Metamorphoses* 1. 1–2 are never seriously challenged until 1629, when Salmasius (Claude de Saumaise, 1588–1653), a scholar best known for his controversies with Milton, sorts out the confusion by applying the discriminating powers of a textual critic to the contradictory 'autobiographical' data of the extant texts. Salmasius declares that by not naming Lucius of Patrai in his 'preface' (*praefatio*) Apuleius is a plagiarist (*plagiarius*), guilty of something approaching the crime of theft (*furtum*) for wishing to appear to be the author of the story (*argumentum*), rather than its translator (*interpres*).<sup>28</sup>

Salmasius' observations are widely disseminated (Thomas Browne plagiarizes them in 1646)<sup>29</sup> but even in 1842, Hildebrand is criticizing contemporary scholars like Buhlius for repeating the *lepidae . . . narrationes* ('charming tales') which earlier editors had created by transferring the details of Lucius' life to Apuleius himself.<sup>30</sup> One desperately wants someone to say that Apuleius has created a fictitious first person narrator. Yet the closest we come is Hildebrand's comment on the *diversa persona* ('distinct character') which Apuleius presents in the Prologue.<sup>31</sup>

Fortunately for literature, however, artists sometimes have

<sup>27</sup> Elmenhorst (1621: 14).

<sup>28</sup> Salmasius (1689: sig. \*\*\*1).

<sup>29</sup> Brown (1981: i. 34): 'Thus have Lucian and Apuleius served Lucius Pratensis [*sic*], men both living in the same time, and both transcribing the same Authour'.

<sup>30</sup> Hildebrand (1842: p. xx), names the author as Lucius Apuleius on the authority of the MSS and *Met.* 11. 27 (*Madaurensis*).

<sup>31</sup> Hildebrand (1842: p. xix): *Cur autem suas res enarrasse Apuleium credamus, quum graecam se tractasse fabulam profiteatur Metamorphosis initio ideoque plane diversam personam . . . quomodo Atticam, Spartam et Corinthum veterum suam prosapiam nominare poterat, si de se ipso sermonem fecisset?* ('Why should we believe that Apuleius told about his own affairs when, at the beginning of the *Met.*, he professes that he treated a Greek tale and so, clearly, a different character . . . How could he name Attica, Sparta, and Corinth as his ancestral stock, if he had been talking about himself?').

the lead on scholars and editors. Of all the responses to the Prologue, that of Agnolo Firenzuola (1493–1543) is the most creative. Not so much a translation as an appropriation, his *L'asino d'oro* (Venice, 1550) recognizes Apuleius' *ego* as a fictional role, a narrative slot to be occupied: the *fabula Graecanica* becomes 'a Tuscan tale' (*una tosca favola*) and the curriculum vitae of Apuleius' narrator is replaced by Firenzuola's own.<sup>32</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult to derive any single thesis from a range of readings that covers sixteen centuries. What emerges most clearly, perhaps, is the persistently autobiographical response to the speaking 'I' of the Prologue, the inability or refusal of past readers to reduce it to a mere literary device or persona. But that is not a cause for complacency on our parts: if we consider ourselves better readers than our predecessors, that is partly because we have the fruits of their reading before us. Moreover, having seen how different ages access and privilege different aspects of the same text, we have no reason to believe that the critical preoccupations manifested in this volume will be shared by readers of Apuleius in the centuries to come.

<sup>32</sup> Firenzuola (1959: 198).

# Identity and Stability





# Losing the Author's Voice: Cultural and Personal Identities in the *Metamorphoses* Prologue

YUN LEE TOO

what is remarkable about the *AA* is that it does not allow us to shift all the responsibility for its meaning onto the person Lucius or the person Apuleius. It insists instead on being, like the prologue, a nexus of connected identities, an enigma that offers itself to be resolved, humorously overcoded as a challenge for every kind of reader from the naive to the sophisticated to give an answer to the question *quis ille?*

Jack Winkler<sup>1</sup>

## I

This discussion addresses the ways in which Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* invites the reader to detach the text from authorial presence and identification. I shall begin by considering how the Prologue destabilizes the idea of a unitary and stable speaking voice through the idea of 'metamorphoses' and through its complex cultural associations of the speaking voice which themselves reinforce the separation from authorial origins. I also explore the rhetoric of dissociation as one which offers what we might now recognize to be a Barthean perspective on the 'death of the author', which, in the case of Apuleius, entails that the author is less important than his fictions.

## II

The initial paragraph of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* declares the concern of the work to be the 'figures and fortunes of men

<sup>1</sup> Winkler (1985: 203).

transformed into other shapes and changed back into themselves again in due course' (1.1 *figuras fortunasque hominum in alias imagines conversas et in se rursus mutuo nexu refectas* (cf. *reformatus* and Laird, Ch. 24 on *Met.* 11. 30). 'Metamorphosis', as thematized by these lines, is a process that comprises change into something other and then change back again into 'oneself'. Yet even as the Prologue declares the narrative's concern with restorations of identities and the recovery of their origins, it simultaneously shows 'origins' to be an arbitrary idea and signifier, overtly characterizing the work as a pastiche of cultural, and specifically textual, antecedents. The prologue is an emblem of the multicultural influences, the variously coded subtexts and traces, that, because they are far from seamlessly assimilated into the present work, compete for the reader's attention as 'sources'. The narrator begins by announcing that he is 'stringing together various tales' (*varias fabulas conseram*) for the pleasure of the audience. The image of 'stringing' or 'stitching together' is that of the textual 'patchwork', and it is an invitation to unravel the threads, to desynthesize the components of the current work.<sup>2</sup>

The Prologue confronts its reader with a multiplicity of cultural influences and backgrounds as the speaking voice consciously dismantles any unity that might be credited to it. The narrator proceeds to characterize the work as an 'Egyptian papyrus inscribed with the sharp-pointed Nile reed' (*papyrus Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam*). The Nilotic stylus points to the origin of origins, to the privileged source of literary culture, invoking Egypt as the civilization which was responsible for aspects of Greek and, subsequently, Roman culture, and above all, for writing (cf. *Phaedrus* 275, to which I shall return). The consciousness of Egypt as the privileged and mysterious site of writing and its cultures is signalled in the final book, in which Lucius is inducted into the cult of the Egyptian goddess Isis by the reading of indecipherable symbols on a sacred book. Yet Egypt also necessarily confuses the priority of 'origins' where the *Metamorphoses* is concerned. The Egyptian reference is proleptic in pointing towards this religious event and to the revelation that Lucius is a citizen of

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Winkler (1985: 184–5).

North African Madaura and a possible alter ego for the work's author Apuleius (11. 27). Egypt is thus both the beginning of the work in explaining its status as a literary text and also the end to which the work's narrative winds. It is the case, moreover, that in terms of the narrative chronology, the 'end' of the plot is, in some sense by a *hysteron proteron*, its beginning—if Lucius' religious conversion is understood as the motivation for the writing of what must be seen as a morality tale, whether one to be read at face value or as parody. This may help to explain why the work's first word *At* ('but'), seems to locate the reader immediately *in medias res*.

Egypt is also the site of cultural dislocations and transferences, of the dissimulation of beginnings. Scholarly activity in Hellenistic Alexandria involved the collecting and editing of Greek literature in an endeavour to re-create the Hellenic world in North Africa after the death of Alexander. If Alexandrian scholarship, as described in subsequent narratives by e.g. Vitruvius (*De Architectura* 7. *praef.* 5–6) and as made evident from the editions it produced, sought to discriminate original texts from forgeries, as a whole Alexandrian culture dissembled its own originary status to exchange it for a Hellenic culture and textuality. In deference to this North African tradition of cultural erasure and reinscription the *Metamorphoses*-Prologue overlays its Egyptian identity with a series of other ones—it is significant that the narrator informs his audience that he possesses an 'ancient wisdom' (*mea vetus prosapia est*). Foreshadowings of Isiac mysteries are obviated as he proceeds to specify 'ancient' (*vetus*) in terms of his ancestral roots in Attic Mt. Hymettus, in Corinth, referred to by its ancient name 'Ephyra' (see Clarke, Ch. 10 in this volume), and in Spartan Taenarus. Interestingly, this list of Greek locations articulates a panhellenism which nonetheless does not efface its constituent plurality, of states and of culture, but rather emphasizes them and calls for their recognition. The speaker acknowledges that each of these sites is established with respect to its literature (cf. *libris felicioribus*), even if he spent his childhood learning the Attic dialect (*linguam Attidem*). He insists that to be Greek is not merely to be Greek generically—such that individual state identity is elided—or metonymically—such that Attic identity stands for Hellenic identity—but to be

Greek is to be different sorts of Greek such that regional differences are recognized and accommodated.

This deliberate dismantling of what it means to have a Greek ancestry is characteristic of the Prologue's refusal to present us with seamlessly integrated identities. The speaking voice proceeds to recount how he arrived in Rome and then how he thoroughly learned (*excolui*) the Latin language. Now Roman identity is excavated as the narrator's conscious archaizing vocabulary reminds his audience that Rome is the *urbs Latia*, the city once inhabited by Latin tribes (Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume). The 'I' voice tells the reader that he acquired his knowledge of Latin independently and without the assistance of a teacher and this explains why he has to seek pardon lest he speaks as an 'uncultured' (*rudis*) utterer of what remains an 'exotic and foreign language' (*exotici ac forensis sermonis*). Against a whole rhetorical tradition from Isocrates onwards (cf. *Panegyricus* 50), the speaker denies the view that language is the basis of cultural identity: learning and speaking a language do not fundamentally redefine who you are where the 'I' voice is concerned. By rejecting the privileging of cultural identity as linguistic identity, he calls into question the notion that Rome is the unproblematic site of appropriation of Greek culture *pace* Horace (cf. *Epist.* 2. 1. 156). Instead he draws attention to his inability to be absorbed into a subsequent learned culture, and moreover to the inability of Greek notions of culture to be simply taken up and enacted at Rome.

Apart from its resistance to simplistic identifications with Greek or Latin culture, the speaking voice plays with the inflections of social class. Against the lofty and dignified invocation of a cultured Hellenic background, there are references to baser and more common cultural codes. The reader observes the idiomatic, and certainly highly artificial, Latin used in the production of a 'Greek-like story' (*fabulam Graecanicam*). There are anxieties about contempt from the reader, signalled by the first person voice warning the latter not to despise the current work (*non spreveris inspicere*), by the self-designation as a *rudis locutor*, and by the much-commented-on Plautine transition from literary impresario to actor.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the *Metamorphoses* is a variety of tales stitched together by 'that

<sup>3</sup> Winkler (1985: 200) and Smith (1972: 513-34).

Milesian speech' (*sermone isto Milesio*). *Milesio*, as a number of contributors to this volume observe, suggests *Milesiaka*, a Greek neuter plural which might denote a regional history. The phrase, which suggests the speaker's 'low esteem' to Winkler,<sup>4</sup> denotes a discourse inscribed upon Egyptian papyrus with a reed from the Nile.

### III

The Prologue makes available a series of possible identifications of the speaking voice, but it also aggressively tempts the reader to fix these by posing the question *quis ille?* ('who is that man?'), of itself (Slater, Ch. 19 in this volume). To this provocation scholars have generally responded by posing a series of other questions surrounding the identity of the author himself or of Lucius: an alter ego for the author himself? or a completely fictional persona? and so on.<sup>5</sup> Readers take refuge in the reference to Lucius as a citizen of Madaura, the city from which the historical Apuleius originates at 11. 27. The adjective 'Madauran' attributes to the novel's protagonist what might be construed as a non-fictional category, namely the civic allegiance which attaches the speaking voice to the author as who he is really supposed to be.

My intention is to resist any temptation to stabilize authority, identity and association. In his celebrated essay 'The Death of the Author', Roland Barthes remarked, '[w]riting is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing'.<sup>6</sup> The written word becomes a space where physical presence, especially of the author, is absented, and where the goal of authoritative interpretation becomes unattainable so that the reader is enabled, or perhaps required, to read plurally.<sup>7</sup> Barthes spoke of the author as standing 'in the same relation of antecedence to his work as a

<sup>4</sup> Winkler (1985: 182).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 200 and references to van der Vliet (1897: 79–85) and Vallette, ed. *Apulée, Apologie*, 2nd edn. (Paris, 1960: 23–4). These three critics refuse to identify the speaker of the Prologue with either Apuleius or Lucius.

<sup>6</sup> Barthes (1977: 142).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 146–7.

father to his child'.<sup>8</sup> He revalorized a privileged Platonic discourse about literary authorship as an activity which severs the link between the author—father—and his text—the helpless child (see *Phaedrus* 275d).<sup>9</sup> Where the *Metamorphoses* is concerned, the Platonic 'fatherless' text may also be one that has severed its paternal ties in an attempt to grow and assume its own identity/-ies unencumbered by a predetermined identity, that of the author, of the father of the text. Where the speaking voice of the *Metamorphoses* is concerned, Apuleius ventures a Barthean 'death of the author' to avoid what we shall see to be the deadly rigor mortis that afflicts the subject of non-literary and so non-mobile art.<sup>10</sup>

Where naming and identity are concerned, Apuleius refuses the characterization of his writing as an Egyptian text in the sense of being a static, lapidary monument. His work resists and revalorizes the associations of death which Socrates ascribes to the Midas epitaph in the *Phaedrus* (cf. 264d–e).<sup>11</sup> The Midas epitaph is actually many epigrams: the poem can be endlessly rearranged such that different versions of the poem are produced, and Midas' death celebrated many times over as if it were many deaths. Yet while the epigram is repudiated as a bad example of writing, as an improperly structured text, because it makes no difference as to the order in which one reads its lines, it is some sense prescriptive of the fluidity Apuleius requires for textuality. The *Metamorphoses* is a work in which we are uncertain about beginnings and endings—above all, in what sense is the Prologue a prologue. Furthermore, the narrative is one which stages the 'death' of its characters—e.g. of Socrates (1. 19), of Psyche (4. 33), of Lucius, of the child at 10. 11—several times over such that

<sup>8</sup> Barthes (1977: 145–7).

<sup>9</sup> On the importance of the *Phaedrus* in later Latin literature, see Trapp (1990: 141–73) and Trapp, Ch. 4 in this volume.

<sup>10</sup> See Too (1996: 133–55).

<sup>11</sup> Diogenes Laertius attributes the epitaph to Cleobulus and notes that the sage was criticized by Simonides for the poem (1. 89–91). For discussion of the Midas epitaph, see P. Martin (1993: 115). On the monumentalism of hieroglyphic as opposed to more mobile alphabetic writing, see Burger (1980: 109–14); also Harriott (1969: 95) on the refusals of early poets to compare poetry to sculpture: e.g. Pindar, *Nemean* 5. 1–2 and Simonides, *PMG* 581.

the reader comes to understand death less as a final state than as a transition to another role (cf. Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume, on the theme of death). References to death precede the conclusion to the Risus Festival when the citizens of Hypata wish to dedicate a statue to thank Lucius for his role in the ritual. The narrator observes, 'I did not return from the dead before my host Milo came and . . . dragged me up with him' (3. 10 *nec prius ab inferis emersi quam Milo hospes accessit et . . . secum attraxit*). Not accidentally does this deadly initiation precede the protagonist's transformation into an ass, the metamorphosis which results in the loss of his human identity.<sup>12</sup> At 11. 23 Lucius describes himself as approaching the 'vicinity of death' (*confinium mortis*) and as touching 'Proserpina's threshold' (*calcato Proserpinae limine*) in the course of his initiation into the cult of Isis. It is notable that, if the confrontation of Lucius *actor* with an Isiac text temporarily turns him to stone (11. 24<sup>13</sup>), Egyptian writing itself, as viewed by the initiate Lucius, is not comprised of static stone-chiselled hieroglyphs. Rather the Isiac text consists of curious twisting and turning spirals and tails (11. 22), which characterize the text as living, as shifting, as mobile.

#### IV

As the 'Egyptian papyrus inscribed with a Nilotic reed', the *Metamorphoses* refuses immobility and the immobilizing presence of the author. The author's prologue assumes a hyper-rhetoricity which insists upon the *lack* of necessary connection between textual identity and actual selves. The speaker's identity is a case of rhetorical performativity taken to an extreme such that 'I' is a patchy and multiple construction continually creating and uncreating itself, becoming and passing away again. As the speaking or writing self in the Apuleian text is constructed and calibrated, the proper name is an aspect of rhetorical performance.

The Prologue's unstable rhetoric of identity, I suggest, is significantly signalled in the inset narrative of 'Cupid and

<sup>12</sup> See Krabbe (1989: 158).

<sup>13</sup> See Winkler (1985: 170).

Psyche'. This episode and its scholarship notably replay a number of the questions about textual identity raised in the Prologue: is it simply an old woman's tale, and thus either important or unimportant for being such (4. 27 *narrationes lepidae amilisque fabulae*), a thinly disguised Christian allegory, as it was to become for C. S. Lewis, or a psychological tale, as the Jungian E. Neumann idiosyncratically offers?<sup>14</sup> Yet in asking these specific questions, one sidesteps the more fundamental questions raised by the episode, namely *how* and whether it is *necessary* to establish identity, particularly as regards the characters of the story.

The tender god Cupid is falsely described as a 'savage, wild and evil serpent' (4. 33 *saevum atque ferum vipereumque malum*) in Apollo's prophecy, while the narrator remarks that Psyche's wicked and jealous sisters are improperly named 'sisters' in light of their malicious actions against Psyche (5. 12 *sorores appellare non licet*; 5. 14 *sorores nomine mentientes*). But the focus of mistaken identity in the story is Psyche, a figure who is often regarded as a *Doppelgänger* for the novel's protagonist Lucius. At the opening of the tale the heroine Psyche is mistaken for the goddess Venus and worshipped in her place. At 4. 29. 5 the narrator refers to the 'immodest translation of the true Venus' (*immodica translatio verae Veneris*), one which might dissuade from the temptation to regard the mortal named Psyche as a personification of the Greek 'soul' (*psyche*) and in turn the tale as a philosophical allegory. What interests me is the use of the word *translatio* to denote the act of mistaken identity which finds this 'new Venus' (4. 34 *novam . . . Venerem*) in her later predicament. *Translatio* is also the term used to denote the rhetorical figure of metaphor, conventionally understood as a transference of words and phrases from their 'proper' or 'natural' context to a less proper or natural place for the sake of ornamentation, to avoid lewdness or immorality, or to compensate for lack of language. Here the use of the word *translatio* highlights the impossibility of

<sup>14</sup> For Lewis's Christianizing allegory, see Lewis (1956) and Filmer (1993: 39–43), and for the trials and tribulations of Psyche as an allegory for the formation of the 'feminine' against the pressures of the masculine (Eros) and the matriarchal (Psyche's sisters), see Neumann (1956: 145).



praising Psyche due to the 'poverty of human speech' (4. 29. 5 *sermonis humani penuria*).

Psyche is worshipped *as if* she were a divine statue (4. 32 *ut simulacrum fabre politum mirantur omnes*). (The analogy prefigures Psyche's later state where one of Venus' trials sees her metaphorically turned to stone (*mutata in lapidem*) with despair (6. 14).) The confusion of Psyche with Venus is one misreading of identity, but there is a second one involving failure to recognize that in the Apuleius poetics of representation the possibility of capturing humans and especially deities in plastic art is rejected.<sup>15</sup>

That Psyche is herself compelled to suspend identification is also especially interesting. She and her adorers regard her as taking part in a ritual which is simultaneously a wedding and a funeral. This is on the basis of Apollo's misleading prophecy that she should marry an inhuman monster (4. 33) such that her departure from the city is the occasion for mourning and lamentation (4. 34 *et lacrimosa Psyche comitatur non nuptias sed exequias suas*). In the event, the 'funeral' turns out to be a far better wedding than the heroine could have expected as she is wed to the god Cupid. Upon discovering herself in her new husband's house, Psyche finds herself in a wondrous palace whose origins are uncertain. She/one can only speculate as to whether the architect is an extraordinary man (*mirus prosum homo*), a semigod (*semideus*), or a god (*certe deus*) (5. 1). The identity of the abode's craftsman emblemizes the whole issue of who her husband is for Psyche, for when they first go to bed he is 'unknown' (*ignobilis*) (5. 4) and has to remain so for Venus' revenge to work. The heroine is permitted only to touch and hear the god, but not to see him (5. 5). For her to venture any further knowledge of her husband is to risk committing an act of sacrilege, perhaps no different from the one by which the human Psyche was mistaken for the goddess Venus. For Cupid declares curiosity about his identity sacrilegious (5. 7 *sacrilega curiositate*) while his appearance is pronounced 'sacrosanct' (5. 13 *sacrosancta imago*). Accordingly, to defend Cupid's identity against the prying enquiries of her sisters Psyche thus engages in fictionalization which also leaves the question of

<sup>15</sup> See my discussion of this issue in Too (1996: 133–55).

who he really is in greater uncertainty as far as they are concerned. The husband unknown to her is described on their first visit as a handsome young man with a bear who enjoys hunting (5. 8) and upon their second as a middle-aged merchant from a neighbouring province (5. 15).

It is precisely Psyche's inconsistent descriptions of Cupid that lead the sisters to compel her to attribute fixed and stable identities to her mysterious husband and in this way to rekindle divine wrath. The sisters propose that Psyche's offspring will be a Cupid (5. 14 *prorsus Cupido nascetur*), invoking an identification that the wife has already proposed to herself (5. 6 *nec ipsi Cupidini comparo*). They attempt to name the father through the son-to-be-born and so invert the privilege of paternal identity in favour of the son's. They incite Psyche's curiosity about her husband's actual identity by reminding her that Apollo's prophecy sees her married to a deadly serpent (5. 17) and in this goad her into the act that finally reveals Cupid to his wife but also entails her further punishment at the hands of Venus and results in her almost losing the god for ever. The narrative compels a reading of the 'Cupid and Psyche' episode as a warning about the liabilities that accompany the attribution of stable identities to names and descriptions. The story entices one to translate names—Psyche, Cupid, and later in the tale Sobrietas (5. 20), Sollicitudo, Tristities (6. 9)—into philosophical concepts or ideas, most immediately, while also spelling out the risks of such translation as a mode of foreclosing identification. What can, however, be transferred is this smaller episode into questions of identity in the larger work, such that insisting upon the fixity of a narrator who continually undergoes change is nothing less than an act of 'sacrilege'.

## V

I want to conclude my discussion by suggesting that contemporary identity politics might offer yet another take on authorial identity in the *Metamorphoses* which no less insists upon the mobility and playfulness of the speaking voice, or perhaps its non-containability. Rather than seek to limit the response with a proper name, I offer that the question constitutes a challenge to the reader to ponder the way in which marginal identities are

received and reconstituted. Apuleius is neither Greek nor Roman but Madauran, yet he is acculturated as Greek and Roman, as his writings, the *Metamorphoses* as well as his rhetorical pieces the *Apology* and the *Florida*, demonstrate. What the refusal to assimilate and to efface the cultural strands in the *Metamorphoses* does is suggest that while it is too easy and tempting to reduce and to homogenize minority identity—so ‘Apuleius is African’ or ‘Apuleius is black’—the preference is to be ‘African’ *and/or* ‘black’ *and* also something else, that is culturally Greek and Roman, and narratologically Lucius. Similarly, Lucius is Greek, *and* he is also culturally Roman *and* spiritually Egyptian, and specifically Isiac. Lucius is man and then later a convert but we cannot ignore the fact that he has also been an ass. In terms of identity politics, I propose that the *Metamorphoses* makes a case of X, but also Y and Z and so on where text and authorial identity are concerned.<sup>16</sup> Categories of identity are not mutually exclusive so that identity is an aggregation, where aggregation is an activity patently always in progress: when one has been metamorphosed from being A into B and back into A, one does not entirely erase the identity and experiences of B. To exclude, to homogenize, or to unify is to admit the fixity and immobility that are characteristic of the Platonic rather than the Barthean death of the author and his text.

<sup>16</sup> See e.g. G. C. Spivak, ‘Woman in Difference’, in *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (London, 1993), 76–95, for the argument that ‘India’ is a signifier of multiple languages and religions.

## In Ya (Pre)face . . .

JOHN HENDERSON

‘Well, I’m telling you’ (*at ego tibi*),<sup>1</sup> do take this unpredictably varied string of writing about writing, this PRO-LOGUE, to take liberties. And, maybe, why not, to tell you so, to your face. You get the narrator you’re asking for, the reward for your curiosity.<sup>2</sup> ‘Get you’ (*at ego tibi*).

Narrational instability is written into the surface of prefatory veniality. Look and listen. This preface means to tell you the what/how of author/reader relations, this jingle-jangle of a pre-text promises and prefigures ‘a rhetoric of mutation’ (*ipsa vocis immutatio*). This already includes as its first sample the practice of the PROLOGUE, rather than simply forecasting thrills and spills to come.<sup>3</sup> So ‘listen/look’ (*aurēs . . . susurro, argutia . . . calami . . . inspicere*):<sup>4</sup> face the music and read on, but ‘only if . . .’ (*modo si . . .*). Yes, there is a tariff: read on, but get ready to

<sup>1</sup> The abrupt opening in *at* is striking (beyond e.g. Ovid, *Amores* 3. 7. 1. *at* . . .). It *raps* the reader, in the face. I think you should know that I came on last at the colloquium. This explains why I wanted to remind those responsible, between them, for composing so many imposing prefaces how adept we—they—are at decrypting the niceties for the power-plays that prefaces code. Give Apuleius some credit . . .

<sup>2</sup> For some more 2nd cent. CE prefatory monkeying with author-ity, cf. Appian, *Roman Histories*, Preface 15. 62 *τίς δὲ ὢν συνέγραψα, πολλοὶ μὲν ἴσασι καὶ αὐτὸς προέφηνα σαφέστερον δ’ εἰπεῖν, Ἀππιανὸς Ἀλεξανδρεὺς . . . καὶ εἴ τω σπουδῇ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ μαθεῖν, ἔστι μοι καὶ περὶ τούτου συγγραφὴ* (‘Who I the writer am, many know and I’ve publicized, more plainly: Appian of Alexandria . . . and if anyone is keen to know the etceteras, I have a book out on that, too’), after the self-promotion of Arrian, *Anabasis* 1. 12. 5; cf. Swain, Ch. 6 in this volume.

<sup>3</sup> The very prose rhythm of the phrasing, from *iam haec equidem ipsa vocis immutatio* through *desultoriae scientiae stilo* to *quam accessimus respondet*, may foreground itself as a prime, self-enacting, case of the hiccough that it *says* may offend an expert: ‘*stilo* produces an odd run of iambs . . .’, etc. (see Nisbet, Ch. 2 in this volume).

<sup>4</sup> See Winkler (1985: 186–8, 196 n. 28), ‘The first sentence is a scrambled assemblage of the whisper and the scratch.’

be read. Read, and seize 'the appeal of Apul' as rhetorical seizure of the reader (*aures . . . tuas benivolos . . . permulceam*, 'I'll soothe your ears into goodwill').<sup>5</sup> 'Welcome to your wonderland', the show he has ready for you, typeface (*ut mireris*).<sup>6</sup>

Shake that kaleidoscope—or else. Well *Met.*, this book never forgets its readers, as the papers in this collection make clearer than ever. But are 'we' cordially hosted, charmed, cajoled, or cowed into cooperation, or press-ganged into signing on? (*ego : tibi*) In its postliminary discussion, the colloquium took a range of views.<sup>7</sup> The point of the present contribution is (as it was, before it became itself again, *mutuo nexu*) to reassert that this is a truly power-full text, an 'authoritarian fiction' that would lure us away from civic liberty and into abnegation of self in bondage to (Isiac) religion.<sup>8</sup> This psychagogic novel is 'heuristic'; . . . by reading it, 'the reader learns *from experience* about the supernatural world'.<sup>9</sup> It deserves to be handled warily from the face-off, not toyed with as belles-lettres. Apuleius didn't know how Classics departments would compartmentalize the interface between literature and philosophy.<sup>10</sup> But this PROLOGUE is a readerly initiation, prefatory initiation into the word-to-come. Therefore, the ethics of reading demand 'our full attention—on a premiss and promise of joy' (*lector intende: laetaberis*).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For the proffered brag of psychagogia, cf. Nugent (1990: 254 n. 2) on Ovid, *Tristia* 2. 358 *mulcendis auribus*.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Morgan, Ch. 14 in this volume.

<sup>7</sup> Somewhere, let's say, between (the positions taken up by) genial Fowler (Ch. 20), disillusioned Dowden (Ch. 12), pragmatist Kahane (Ch. 21), misanthropic Henderson (Ch. 17)?

<sup>8</sup> See S. R. Suleiman (1983: esp. 25–61), and essays in Gelley (1995), esp. T. Keenan, 'Fables of Responsibility', 121–41, A. Gelley, 'The Pragmatics of Exemplary Narrative', 142–61.

<sup>9</sup> Kenny (1974: 195).

<sup>10</sup> e.g. the modifiers in the notes by Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume, tell their own tale, 'in the reassuring manner into which commentators naturally fall' (Powell, Ch. 3 in this volume)—the tale of normalizing commentary: 'suitably conveniently clearly surely after all clearly surely certainly merely surely probably surely specifically surely naturally clearly perhaps poorly really usually literally'.

<sup>11</sup> 'In short, ethical systems are capable of producing their own violence even as they move to eradicate other forms of violence' (Siebers 1988: 92); cf. Miller (1987: 1–11), 'Reading doing reading', ushering in the '90s critical recoil from aporetics.

At . . . 'Well', Apuleius puts a new face on the narrative(s) he transmits, face-lifts it back into the parable it always was. This will be a work of imagination, where episodes 'mutually constitute each other in constant (re)transformation' (*in alias imagines conuersas et in se mutuo nexu refectas*). Its subject is 'the outside and the inside, the mundane carapace and the spiritual condition, of humanity', in their myriad interrelations, mutual displacements, and constitutive supplementarity (*figuras fortunaeque hominum*). Stories generally don't start with a guarantee to stay with the 'superficies' (the *figurae* of the palpable world out there). They would like to get you in deeper than that (to the *fortunae* of the narratives of personalized subjectivity, 'the fortunes'), or at least flatter you by saying they would—impressively, out to impress.<sup>12</sup> In the end, every montage, each *mise en scène*, will have represented this faceless storyteller's will to find form for his devotion to his Madonna, 'figuration' for his exemplary 'fortune'. The tale gives shape to a universe, the cosmos usurped by a decaredly personal faith (*Met.* 11. 25 'within the sanctum of my heart', *intra pectoris mei secreta*). The tale formulates a strenuous sectarian vision (*ibid.*, 'I shall picture your divine face and most sacred godhead', *diuinus tuos uultus numenque sanctissimum . . . imaginabor*). And this is an exclusively customized representation, 'a treasure to guard for ever' (*ibid.*, *perpetuo custodiens*). 'I married Isis . . .'<sup>13</sup> After all and before all (*nos*), *ego* speaks, finally and primarily, *to Isis (= tibi)*.

Even though conversion-narrative as an alibi for wallowing vicariously in the degrading mire of asinine release of the repressed is a familiar structure,<sup>14</sup> *this* novel obliges even readers looking just for kicks in Apuleius' fun-house to take so many hoists and drops on the way that the interpenetration of carnival with gospel forces itself on us all, as the master protocol of his rhetoric.<sup>15</sup> A 'leap down from his high horse', down into the bowels of Thessaly (*Met.* 1. 2 *desilio in pedes*), and the story of storying is away; a 'leap up on board ship' bound for the high seas and the hills of Rome (*Met.* 11. 26 *naue conscensa*),

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Trapp, Ch. 4 in this volume.

<sup>13</sup> 'but I could not hold on to her very long . . .', Dylan (1975), 'Isis'.

<sup>14</sup> e.g. Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, cf. Laird (1990: 147–8).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Shumate (1995).

and the stranger comes home—released by the spring tides of Isis.<sup>16</sup> Facing the world.

Innovative through its own self-refashioning, this two-faced text at once tricks and treats us: declaring first its style, structure, and rhetorical strategy, it already raises fundamental questions about its own rationale that anyone would do well not to answer too surely. We precisely wouldn't be able to recognize 'Milesian treatment given to a miscellany of tales' if it bit us; what we are given will read much more as 'a miscellany of Milesian tales given the Apuleian treatment'<sup>17</sup> Perhaps this first self-image just insists on a monitored integrity for its pornographic contents, and the follow-up reformulation is the point: the magician invites us on stage, he *tells* us, poker-faced, that 'we are to be his stooge' (*permulceam*). He pins tails; we are donkeys (*ego/tibi*).<sup>18</sup>

So put a brave face on it and soften up, sucker, if you have eyes to see, 'if you're not too stuck up' (*modo si . . . non spreveris*) . . .—'if you're not too stuck up' *topicalizes* scorn. Mind, it may be at *your* expense. Mugs like us are here to listen. All ears, maybe, but we'll never quite hear 'the scratchy score—the reeds blowing from the Deep South' (*papyrusum Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam*). It's some nice noise—be told by the nice man—but *sotto voce*. In your ear, but so low you can't hear, *just* can't hear. 'Sweet seduction in a subauditur (*lepido susurro*): subliminal; subconscious. Consider how the not-so-nice vicar of Isis will, in the outcome, promulgate his hieroglyphematics: the sacred writings 'from the inmost sanctum' are the open secret of the cult, 'written in a code we can't crack' (*Met. 11. 22 de opertis adyti . . . quosdam libros litteris ignorabilibus praenotatos*). These hieroglyphs spell a secret combination of reader-proof locks on the goddess's safe: across eleven high-density books, the *Metamorphoses* have (counter-)re-formed this bible—(1) 'piling up its spree of dis-course from the image-repertoire of its asinine menagerie';

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Schwartz (1979: esp. 465), for the straddle in *desultoriae scientiae* between 'vaulting from horse to horse', and '(dis)mounting', James, Ch. 23 in this volume.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Smith (1972: 519), Winkler (1985: 137), James (1987), Dowden, Ch. 12 in this volume.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Gowers, Ch. 8 in this volume; Kahane Ch. 21 in this volume.

and (2) 'tying itself in knots, only to come round full circle along its saltatory goat's-track tangle of high spots' (ibid., *partim figuris cuiusce modi animalium concepti sermonis compendiosa verba suggerentes, partim nodosis et in modum rotae tortuosis capreolatimque condensis apicibus a curiositate profanorum lectione munita*). By the end, we shall have had steadily increasing pressure on us to see how trapped we are in the shortcomings of our own superficialities. Faced down, we risk confirming all the narrator's worst projections. The forewarning (*praefatio*) was also forearmed (*praemunitio*). PROLOGUE teased us with our suggestibility *à notre insu* (*ego || tibi*).

To read the preface so suspiciously is, before all, to set your face against the gentle(manli)ness of literary intercourse and to posit, instead, the pragmatics of the anti-Grice:<sup>19</sup> unprincipled non-cooperation; illiberal cozening; a *magus*' ruse of mastery. When the apostle of Isis sets to his appointed mission, and spreads the word through the cosmos that Rome supposes to rule, it makes sense for him to face about, and stress the ineffability of this marginal culture, even above its communicability and its communication of all but its ineffability. As Kermode showed for the early Christian gospel,<sup>20</sup> the parabolic function of narrativity packs a primal put-down. Since the world at large held itself to be the keeper and controller of significance, those who stood apart must prize and hug to themselves as their secret the knowledge that only they could know how wrong they all were. Power within the cult resided in the possession of this secret knowledge. Essentially, that was

<sup>19</sup> For the role of H. P. Grice's liberal-humanist maxims in articulation of his proposed 'principle of cooperation' as the basis of discourse, cf. Birch (1989: 36-7), Mey (1993: esp. 70-82, 'Do people really cooperate?', 'Losing face', 'Problems with cooperation', 'Rethinking Grice: do we really need all those maxims?'). *The* question of any colloquium interface, not least one on the textual politics of religion as entertainment. See Kahane, Ch. 21 in this volume.

<sup>20</sup> Kermode (1979: 2-3), 'When Jesus was asked to explain the purpose of his parables, he described them as stories *told to them without*—to outsiders—with the express purpose of concealing a mystery that was to be understood by insiders. So Mark tells us: speaking to the Twelve, Jesus said, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of god, but for those outside everything is in parables; so that they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand; lest they should turn again, and be forgiven" (4: 11-12)'.



the (self-regenerative) power of the cult, the unacceptable face of mysticism.

Those with ears to hear get picked, picked out, and picked on. Be told, you are the nice one. 'Your nice ears stroked'. In the facetious image-factory of 'all mankind'. Hey presto, and another 'miracle' from your entertainer. All figured out, beyond your ken, a duck-rabbit of representation. Abracadabra, 'we're gone again, and, boo, here we all are' (*mutuo nexu*). Leaving, then reverting to, our selves: Apuleius spools the videotape either way with his zapper. 'Amazing', really.

But already we can't get what he is handing us, at face value. The interpretivity of the prospective narrative will depend on abuse, blockage, frustration of efforts to control the narration and narrative. It already does. For the phenomenal cosmos to be recuperated by the retrospect of ultimate reconversion, it must once have flown the coop, into comic chaos: however charmingly, the preface must submit reading to the coups of textuality. And (don't miss this) however perfect, restoration of the *status quo ante* will have generated a remainder:<sup>21</sup> call it wonder. So stare the hieroglyphs in the face. Be their product (*ego @ tibi*).

Prima facie, Jack Winkler's stand (he was in fact a monk for a number of years) was for a parsimoniously complexified conception of reading. Not neo-Aristotelian praxis, and Aristotle could read no novels for us,<sup>22</sup> but a routine of progressive readerly negotiation toward a coherence, working away from a 'first reading', and then back, to and fro. He played the gentle expositor, sold us short.<sup>23</sup> Does PROLOGUE? PROLOGUE doesn't. The narrator shoves mystery our way, mysteriously (*tibi*). Face it (*ego*).

Once the text shapes up as a first person narration (*Met.* 1, 2), reading is locked into a feedback loop (or, as they say, Möbius strip), which guarantees that the narrator at the off will cease to be the stranger who buttonholes and stops at nothing to detain

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Too, Ch. 16 in this volume.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Laird (1990: 136–7), quoting Bakhtin, 'Everything works as long as there is no mention of the novel'. Beebee (1994) excavates the (resistance to) lability in any critic/writer's deployment of 'genre'; cf. Winkler (1985: 2–8) on 'The question of genre'.

<sup>23</sup> Winkler (1985: esp. 10–14: 'Hermeneutic entertainment').

us through his long saga, and become, by fits and starts, our old friend the Isis monk whose story we are now, finally, ready to appreciate, and he to begin.<sup>24</sup> Reading readies us to begin to reread, preface and/as postface. This does not stop with the second reading, any more than the initiation undergone by the man from Madauros could be once for all. Repetition seems indispensable for a complete spiritual rebore.<sup>25</sup>

In the PROLOGUE, the narrator clothes himself with an identity, which we will reappraise, reread, from the final chapters of *Metamorphoses*. The map he gives of Apuleius' antique ancestry is a literary terrain.<sup>26</sup> His first reader is forewarned, of rereading in store—'Attic honey, Corinthian disjunction, Laconian hell': the Classical library, harbinger of a distinctive cultural fluency (*Hymettos Attica et Isthmos Ephyrea et Taenaros Sparta(t)i)ca*).<sup>27</sup> 'We' Graeco-Romans grew up there, along with this son of Theseus (*Met.* 1. 23), in our Hellenizing kindergarten. Now, since there can be no reading outside the history of reading, so there can be no first reading. It's in the blood: 'we are all Greeks'. Keeping a straight face, the narrator paints himself a properly accredited author.<sup>28</sup> But, second, this 'latecomer to Latin threw himself body and soul into perfecting (this) his writing' (*advena studiorum Quiritium indigenam semonem . . . excolui*): autodidact void of influence, inventor and invented.<sup>29</sup> Writing the *Metamorphoses* is, naturally, 'sui generis self-generation' (*nullo magistro praeunte*).<sup>30</sup> If you find what he says offensive—if you find any-

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Met.* 11. 14 'what preface should I best utter first, what should I pick to inaugurate my novel voice?' (*quid potissimum praefarer primum, unde novae vocis exordium caperem*). Winkler (1985: 9 n. 16) oddly denies this is a 'self-begetting novel', but Laird (1990) has re-explored 'person and representation in Apuleius' *ab initio*.

<sup>25</sup> Winkler (1985: 221), pretends to find in the 'triple-take' of Lucius' third initiation 'a certain wearing-thin of patience'.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Clarke, Ch. 10 in this volume.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Innes (Ch. 11), Laird (Ch. 24) in this volume.

<sup>28</sup> And, of course, a throughbred 'voluptuary and lay-about' (= 'Greek vice': Polybius, *Histories* 39. 1. 10).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *Met.* 11. 26, arrived at Rome, 'I was a constant worshipper, stranger to the shrine but native to the creed' (*eram cultor denique adsiduus, fani quidem advena, religionis autem indigena*) (Winkler 1985: 216).

<sup>30</sup> A whiff of hocus pocus? Cf. Ovid, *Fasti* 6. 255–6, where the male poet must neither look upon nor foul by other contact *his* taboo goddess, Vesta:

thing he says offensive' (*si quid . . . rudis locutor offendero*)<sup>31</sup>—then the reaction is in the right ballpark. Does he *have* to say this? He's like us all, he's not like us all; he was a classmate, now he's a genius. When they come on as great writers, authors are like that (*ego* ⟨ ⟩ *tibi*).

Out on his own, arbitrary arbiter of language; but first he sucked on a lexicon, mugged up the set text. Rub it in, do. If we're kidding ourselves into giving him the benefit of our benign doubt, which is what (pulling) prefaces are all about, still, how can he hope to pull it off—telling us he is here in Rome to (out)do as Romans do, yet ushering us at once into the cosy inclusivity of a fraternal 'we', up alongside Mr Preacher in his pulpit? (*praefamur . . . accessimus . . . incipimus*, 'we x, y, z'). Surely a rhetorical switch-back of person and number is not going to trap, bluff, or jolly us into marching to this cove's tune.<sup>32</sup> Candidly going along with the ride is a different matter. Every born-again caller proselytizing at your front door knows these ropes, before any mention of their mission. On the face of it, both parties know what an 'us' is for (*ego + tibi*).

Wrong is write. If you got it, flaunt it. 'Take a daredevil ride from word to word, leap the logic, do try and keep up' (*haec . . . vocis immutatio desultoriae scientiae stilo quem accessimus respondet*). 'We' are under starter's orders, but the race began some time ago. 'Read hard and you'll have fun. Concentrate and you'll attain true bliss.' (*lector intende: laetaberis.*) Not so fast. Not yet. Someday, maybe, it will be time to decide on this wager. Was this, will this have been, a cancellation of immediate gratification through reading? Ascetic denial of

'those things I knew not, and whose mistaken perplexities held me, were understood with no prophet to enlighten me' (*quae nescieram, quorumque errore tenebar, | cognita sunt nullo praecipiente mihi*).

<sup>31</sup> Lucius must learn to pray to 'any offended godhead' out there (*Met.* 11. 2 *si quod numen offensum . . .*): his witness to epiphany is at risk to 'the poverty of human speech' (or 'mouth', 'face': *ibid.*, *paupertas oris humani*); as we saw, 'a thousand eloquent orifaces would not be enough to trumpet the praises of Isis' (*Met.* 11. 25).

<sup>32</sup> Nice readers disposed to help writers do their (joint) thing (Fowler, Ch. 20 in this volume) could compare e.g. Cicero, *Catilinarians* 2. 1 *Tandem aliquando, Quirites, L. Catilinam . . . ex urbe vel eiecimus vel emisimus vel ipsum egredientem verbis prosecuti sumus* ('At long long last, citizens, we have either thrown or loosed or verbally sped on his way Lucius Catiline out of Rome').

reading-pleasure, tarted up as bliss lodged in deferral? Deferred *until* the revelations of Book 11, deferred as *in* the *Metamorphoses*'s post-face of Book 11, and/or deferred *beyond* Book 11, in never-never-land? If we ever know what kind of super-reading matches our super-author, we shall have found happiness, and we shall have been happy (I dare say) all along, but did we know it?<sup>33</sup> Where parallel lines (of text) meet. Paddling on the shore with Isis (*ego—tibi*).

Our hero was like Cupid all along, owing all his powers to his mother (*Met.* 5. 23). This is a priest who worships his 'sweet Mama love' (11. 25 *dulcem matris adfectionem*). He sets out on a boy's quest to find his roots, in Greek philosophy, Plutarch and Sextus his '*matrix*' (1. 2 *originis maternae nostrae*), through his second mother, Byrrhaena (2. 3). Another Alcibiades, this mother's boy faces an unorthodox journey into unorthodoxy, and so to Rome. From the cultural inclusiveness of the 'venerable pedigree' of PROLOGUE (*vetus prosapia*), we travel all the way to the solipsist inexpressibility of the priest's 'eternal watch over perfect godhead within the holiest of holies of his heart' (*Met.* 11. 25 *intra pectoris mei secreta . . . perpetuo custodiens*). Truly, Lucius' adventure travels backwards, regresses all the way back to the womb, to refind, for the first time, true 'salvation' in the name of the mother: *Saluia* (2. 3).<sup>34</sup> The book flies in the face of the possible, and takes us so many places we can't go: behind a donkey's eyes, and sex; the witch's store of potions; the bandits' cave, to overhear the story of Woman passed from crone to maid; prison, marriage, and other hells teeming on the face of the earth. The book shows us all the places we already live. When it comes to saving us, the door is shut in our faces, and we are on the outside.<sup>35</sup> He is not recruit-

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Smith, Ch. 9 in this volume.

<sup>34</sup> Slipping the net of names that keeps in place the power structure of the socio-political world begins in the (nameless) PROLOGUE, writes the last word of *Cupid and Psyche*, *Met.* 6. 24, 'we name' (*nominamus*) before we christen the one 'true name' (*Met.* 11. 5 *vero nomine reginam Isidem*) of the 'polyonymous', 'pantonymous', Oneness of Isiac henotheism (*ibid.*, *nomine multiiugo*; 11. 22 *omninominis*). All the book's other labels are metaphorized—Lucius, Socrates, Fotis, Pamphile, Asinius Marcellus and all (Smith, Ch. 9 in this volume, Too, Ch. 16 in this volume). On *Saluia*, cf. Winkler (1985: 318 n. 75).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Winkler (1985: 179), '*The Golden Ass* is the evocation of a religious experience bracketed in such a way that the reader must, but cannot, decide

ing, he is here to impose his authority on the profane. This is to be a protreptic primer for salvationist mystific(a)tion. Under the particularly stressed terms chosen for its semiosis, this hermetic gospel is (not) here to make *ego* and *tibi* into a *nos* (*is* + *is* (k)not).

When(ever) will we be ready for this slap in the face from him:<sup>36</sup> 'Look, you heard what I said, but still you must not know it' (*Met.* 11. 23 *ecce tibi rettuli quae quamuis audita ignores tamen necesse est*)? That's not all he'll say, nor the only time he holds back on us, profaning the mysteries we trespass upon. But does this mock monk come out and mock *us* for his finale? He is hateful for our own good, pressing our faces back from the window: 'he would say what was said and done next, if he were allowed to say; we would get to know, if we were allowed to hear' (ibid., *dicerem, si dicere liceret, cognosceres, si liceret audire*). But (however anxiously studious) reading of the mysteries is proof against *all* enunciation, no matter how plain: 'so hear, but believe, this is the truth' (ibid., *igitur audi, sed crede, quae vera sunt*). Every word of the *Metamorphoses* can be heard but not listened to, heard but not heeded, heard but not trusted. In fact, Apuleius was heard but not believed by everyone, for a start, who was at the colloquium.

The charming self-characterization (courtesy/curtsey) of the PROLOGUE does not persist through the narration.<sup>37</sup> He will wind up talking *at us*, proud to have earned our mockery when we pull faces at the pastophorous tonsure he shows off, at the drop of a hat, to all-comers (*Met.* 11. 30)—'He may stop by any time, and the pleasure will be all his' (ibid., *gaudens obibam*). The 'figure and fortune' of *one* human being, recomposed into self-realization through defacement (*ego*). Now, at last, ready to tell all, in your face (*tibi*).

*I was the dreamer, they the dream, I roam'd  
Delighted, through the motley spectacle.*<sup>38</sup>

the question of its truth.', v. (1985: 187), 'the *AA* was originally written not to be a hermetically sealed monument, . . . but as an open text . . .'

<sup>36</sup> I shadow Ginsburg (1977), not least in debouching here. Cf. Winkler (1985: 206).

<sup>37</sup> Zimmerman, Ch. 22 in this volume.

<sup>38</sup> Wordsworth (1970), *The Prelude, Book Third. Residence at Cambridge*, vv. 30-1.



# Dialogue and Reader





# The Prologue as a Pseudo-Dialogue and the Identity of its (Main) Speaker

IRENE J. F. DE JONG

## FORM

The point of departure of my chapter is to view the Prologue as a pseudo-dialogue ('one-sided conversation'<sup>1</sup>) or, in linguistic terminology, a 'dialogical monological discourse': a text which is 'overtly phrased by a central reporter (for instance the author/narrator), but otherwise has the formal characteristics of a conversational exchange'.<sup>2</sup> Four elements point in this direction: (i) *at*,<sup>3</sup> (ii) *ego tibi*<sup>4</sup> (and cf. the second person verb forms

I wish to thank Daan den Hengst, Carolien Kroon, and Siem Slings for their comments.

<sup>1</sup> Tatum (1979: 26).

<sup>2</sup> Kroon (1995: 335).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Leo (1905: 305) 'incipit quasi ex medio colloquio', Helm (1910: p. vi), Janson (1964: 114 n. 5) 'the adversative conjunction in the beginning is clearly intended to give the illusion that the speaker is answering someone who has just spoken'; and Scobie (1975: 66). Kroon (1995) does not discuss our Apuleius passage. According to Callebat (1968: 89), *at* has a 'valeur d'insistance' here. Kroon (1995: 357-61) has argued that this so-called pathetic use of *at* is in fact a redundant category. In my view, the particle here has its 'presentational function' (Kroon 1995: 350-7), whereby the topic shift introduced by *at* never is neutral, but always has an affective force (surprising, dramatic, contrastive), which reveals the link with the—more common—'interactional function' of *at*. Here its force is best described as polemic or challenging. A 'milder' variant is found, with *sed*, in 4. 27 (*Sed ego te narrationibus lepidis anilibusque fabulis protinus avocabo*, 'But I shall divert you with a pleasant story and an old wife's tale'), a passage which has been generally noted as an echo of the Prologue.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Callebat (1968: 95) 'rapprochement des formes de la 1<sup>ère</sup> et de la 2<sup>ème</sup> personne'; the other instances he mentions next to 1. 1 all occur in speeches (1. 4, 3. 18, 4. 27, 7. 25, 9. 22).

*spreveris, accipe*, etc.), (iii) *isto*,<sup>5</sup> and (iv) *quis ille?*, an imaginary question by the ‘you’ (*occupatio*), such as we find elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses*, too (9. 30 and 10. 33).<sup>6</sup>

## LITERARY MODELS

The next question to ask is what may have been Apuleius’ literary example for this dialogical form. Scholars have suggested the following models for the Prologue: Xenophon, *Symposium* and *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*,<sup>7</sup> Plutarch, *On the Delays of the Divine Vengeance* and *On the Eating of Flesh*,<sup>8</sup> comedy,<sup>9</sup> or the satires of Juvenal and Horace.<sup>10</sup> To this already impressive list I would like to add one more name: Plato.

The majority of Plato’s dialogues open with a conversation.<sup>11</sup> Most of the time we enter the conversation at its beginning, a speaker meeting another person and asking him where he is going or where he is coming from, for example, *Phaedrus*:

ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ. Ὡ φίλε Φαίδρε, ποῖ δὴ καὶ πόθεν;

(Socrates. My dear Phaedrus, where are you coming from and where are you heading for?)

That such a question can be the opening of a conversation appears from the narrative version we find in the *Lysis*:

Ἐπορευόμεν μὲν ἐξ Ἀκαδημείας . . . ἐνταῦθα συνέτυχον Ἱπποθάλει . . . καὶ με προσίοντα ὁ Ἱπποθάλης ἰδὼν, Ὡ Σώκρατες, ἔφη, δὴ πορεύῃ καὶ πόθεν;

(I was making my way from the Academy . . . and there I chanced upon Hippothales, who said, as he saw me approaching: ‘Socrates, whence are you coming and whither are you heading?’)

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Callebat (1968: 272–3) ‘Mais on remarquera la forme de dialogue donnée par l’auteur à son introduction et il n’est pas impossible que . . . *sermone isto milesio* signifie: “dans ce style des milésiens que tu connais bien”’.

<sup>6</sup> Smith (1972: 515) ‘a supposed demand by the reader’, Scobie (1975: 71–2), Winkler (1985: 180–1), James (1987: 29), Laird (1990: 137).

<sup>7</sup> Leo (1905: 605–6 n. 1), Scobie (1975: 66), and cf. Denniston (1954: 21) on the Xenophontine openings with *ἀλλά*.

<sup>8</sup> Janson (1964: 114 n. 5).

<sup>9</sup> Leo (1905: 605–6 n. 10), Smith (1972), and Dowden (1982).

<sup>10</sup> Leo (1905: 605–6 n. 1) and Tatum (1979: 26).

<sup>11</sup> Only the *Lysis*, *Charmides*, *Republic*, and *Parmenides* open with a first person narrative by Socrates.

However, there are four dialogues which open in the middle of a conversation.

1. *Philebus*:

ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ. Ὅρα δὴ, Πρώταρχε, τίνα λόγον μέλλεις παρὰ Φιλίβου δέχεσθαι νυνὶ καὶ πρὸς τίνα τὸν παρ' ἡμῶν ἀμφισβητεῖν, ἔάν μὴ σοι κατὰ νοῦν ἢ λεγόμενος. βούλει συγκεφαλαιωσώμεθα ἑκάτερον;

(Socrates. Observe, then, Protarchus, what the doctrine is which you are now to accept from Philebus, and what our doctrine is, against which you are to argue, if you do not agree with it. Shall we recapitulate each?)

The opening with an imperative + *δὴ*<sup>12</sup> and the mention of a recapitulation (*συγκεφαλαιωσώμεθα*) both suggest an ongoing discussion.

2. *Hippias minor*:

ΕΥ. Σὺ δὲ δὴ τί σιγᾶς, ὦ Σώκратες, Ἰππίου τοσαῦτα ἐπιδειξαμένου, καὶ οὐχὶ ἢ συνεπαυεῖς τι τῶν εἰρημένων . . . ;

(Eudicus. Why, then, are you silent, Socrates, when Hippias has been delivering such a fine display? Why do you not join us in praising some part of his speech . . . ?)

The opening with *δέ*, which here seems to mark a break-off, a turning to another speaker,<sup>13</sup> and the use of *συνεπαυεῖς* suggest that already for some time a discussion on Hippias' speech has been going on.

3. *Cratylus*:

ΕΡΜΟΓΕΝΗΣ. Βούλει οὖν καὶ Σωκράτει τῶδε ἀνακοινωσώμεθα τὸν λόγον;

(Hermogenes. Do you want to take Socrates here as a partner in our discussion?)

Both the particle *οὖν* and the definite article *τὸν* (*λόγον*) imply that Hermogenes and Cratylus were already engaged in a conversation before the beginning of the text. They now apparently see Socrates approaching and invite him to join the discussion. When he has agreed, Hermogenes starts with

<sup>12</sup> Denniston (1954: 216–17) on *δὴ* + imperative: 'It sometimes implies a connexion, logical or temporal, the command either arising out of or simply following upon a previous action or speech.'

<sup>13</sup> Denniston (1954: 167).

a recapitulation of Cratylus' ideas (Κρατύλος φησὶν ὅδε, ὦ Σώκρατες . . . , 'Now Cratylus here contends, O Socrates, . . .').

#### 4. *Symposium*:

ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΩΡΟΣ. Δοκῶ μοι περὶ ὧν πυνθάνεσθε οὐκ ἀμελέτητος εἶναι.

(Apollodorus. I believe I have got the story you enquire of pretty well by heart.)

Here we have an obvious suggestion of the speaker reacting to something said (asked) by his interlocutors before the beginning of the text. Interestingly enough, the very structure of the opening of the *Symposium*, with a speaker saying that he has told the story which he is about to tell already before, is reflected in the structure of the first scene of the *Metamorphoses* (2–20): Lucius, on his way to Thessaly, overtakes two other travellers, one of whom, Aristomenes, is asked by his companion to stop telling a story. Lucius interferes and, instead, urges him to repeat his story.<sup>14</sup> Keeping this specific instance of intertextuality and, more in general, Apuleius' Platonism in mind,<sup>15</sup> I would argue that one of the literary influences on Apuleius' Prologue is that of the (abruptly opening) Platonic dialogue. We, the real readers, are placed into the middle of an ongoing 'conversation', just as Lucius himself in 1. 2 falls into an ongoing conversation between Aristomenes and his companion: *Ac dum ausculto quid sermonis agitent, alter exserto cachinno 'Parce' inquit 'in verba ista haec tam absurda tamque immania mentiendo'* ('When I tried to hear what they were talking about, one of them burst out laughing and exclaimed: "Stop telling such ridiculous and monstrous lies"').<sup>16</sup>

## THE PARTICIPANTS

Who are the participants in the 'conversation' of Apuleius' Prologue? I envisage a situation with three persons (as in the opening scene 2–20): an 'I' (the narrator/fictive author of the

<sup>14</sup> A relationship between *Symposium* and the Aristomenes scene is noted by van der Paardt (1978: 82) and Tatum (1979: 27).

<sup>15</sup> See Schlam (1970) and Trapp, Ch. 4 in this volume.

<sup>16</sup> This is only one of many points of contact between prologue and first scene; some more will be mentioned below and cf. further the contribution of James, Ch. 23 in this volume.

ensuing narrative/book),<sup>17</sup> a 'you' (the narratee/fictive reader, the *lector* of the end of the Prologue),<sup>18</sup> and an anonymous third person to whom the question *quis ille?* is addressed (if the addressee were the 'I', it should have been *quis tu?*). What seems to happen in the Prologue is that the narrator, by way of reaction to something said by the 'you',<sup>19</sup> announces that now he will tell a (particular type of) tale. At the moment he is about to start (*exordior*), he is 'interrupted' by the narratee asking a third person who he, the narrator, is. At first sight, it might seem strange that only now, when the 'conversation' is already supposed to have gone on for some time, this question would be asked. Again, the opening scene with Aristomenes (2–20) offers a parallel: only after the initial conversation is finished and Aristomenes is about to embark on his tale does he introduce himself (5 *sed ut prius noritis cuiatis sim . . .*, 'But first, so that you may know where I am from').<sup>20</sup> Turning his Prologue into a 'conversation' between narrator/fictive author and narratee/fictive reader, Apuleius anticipates modern novels like Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*<sup>21</sup> and, more recently, Italo Calvino's *If on a winter's night a traveller*, to mention only two of the best-known examples.

The 'I' in my opinion must be Lucius, the first person narrator of the ensuing eleven books of narrative.<sup>22</sup> This identification is controversial. A practical argument in favour is the fact that no clear break can be pointed out between the 'I' of the Prologue and the 'I' of the main narrative. There is even a possible link between Prologue and main narrative in the form of *et* in *Thessaliam—nam et illic originis maternae nostrae fundamenta . . . gloriam nobis faciunt—eam Thessaliam ex negotio petebam*. (2 'I was travelling to Thessaly—for there, too, the ancestry of my mother's family brings us fame . . .—that

<sup>17</sup> For the fusion of speaking and writing, narrator and author, see Leo (1905: 605–6), Laird (1990), and Kahane, Ch. 21 in this volume.

<sup>18</sup> For this *lector*, see Zimmerman, Ch. 22 in this volume.

<sup>19</sup> For a suggestion about what this 'something' may have been, see Gowers, Ch. 8 in this volume.

<sup>20</sup> Note that, like Lucius, he only gives his place of origin, not his name, which we get to know, casually, in 6 (as we get to know Lucius' name, casually, in 24).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Smith (1972: 524, 526–7).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. van der Vliet (1897), Janson (1964: 113–14 n. 4), Vallette (1965: p. xiv), Wright (1973: 218), and van der Paardt (1981a: 106).

Thessaly I was travelling to on business') where *et* could be taken to mean: next to Athens, Corinth, and Ephya mentioned in the Prologue.<sup>23</sup> A practical argument against is *Madaurensem* of 11. 27, which seems to point to Apuleius as the narrator. It is more fruitful, however, to interpret this passage as a brief intrusion of the author<sup>24</sup> than to assume Apuleius to have been the narrator from the very beginning.

Other difficulties connected with the identification of Lucius have been put clearly by Harrison:<sup>25</sup> 'The view of the novel presented by the Prologue speaker, regarding it as an *enjoyable* and *fictional* conglomeration of stories with Milesian and Egyptian connections, suggests that he cannot be Lucius the narrator of the main part of the novel which is presented as a first person account of an actual life' (my italics). Let us take a look at 'fictional' first. Fictionality seems to be suggested by *fabulas/fabulam*, but this word need not have this connotation.<sup>26</sup> Thus Lucius uses the word *fabula* in 1. 20 with reference to the tale of Aristomenes, which he emphatically believes to be true.<sup>27</sup> (Of course, the real readers may have their doubts as to the reality of both Lucius' own and Aristomenes' *fabula* and it seems that Apuleius is deliberately playing with the two meanings of the word.) Indeed, the characters inside the *Metamorphoses* are so convinced of the reality of their adventures that they take them to authenticate myths, for example,

*'accedes antiquis et ipse miraculis, et iam credemus exemplo tuae veritatis et Phrixum arieti supernatasse et Arionem delphinum gubernasse et Europam tauro supercubasse'* (6. 29)

<sup>23</sup> This suggestion was brought forward by Winterbottom during the conference.

<sup>24</sup> See van der Paardt (1981a). The sudden emergence of the author reminded me of W. Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, where after 324 pages (in the Penguin edn.) all of a sudden the author enters his story: 'When the present writer went to survey with eagle glance the field of Waterloo . . .'

<sup>25</sup> Harrison (1990: 508).

<sup>26</sup> See Bitel, Ch. 13 in this volume, who notes that the *OLD* lists as its second meaning 'report', 'account', and *GCA* (1981: 56), where it is argued that sometimes *fabula* and *historia* are 'practically synonymous' in the *Met.* (e.g. in 2. 12, which I quote at the end of my paper).

<sup>27</sup> A different 'solution' for *fabula* is given by Laird (1993a: 157), who suggests that the word presents us with a conundrum: 'If I say from this very moment that I am lying, at which point do you assume that I am no longer telling the truth?'

(‘You yourself will be added to the ancient tales of wonder, and from the fact of your actual existence we will now believe that Phrixus swam the sea on a ram’s back, that Arion piloted a dolphin, and that Europa rode on the back of a bull.’)

It is instructive here to compare a passage from Achilles Tatius’ *Leucippe and Cleitophon*, where the similarity between the adventures of one of the characters and literature is also remarked upon:

“Σμήνος ἀνεγείρεις,” εἶπε [the young man], “λόγων· τὰ γὰρ ἐμὰ μύθοις ἔοικε.” Μὴ κατοκνήσης, ὦ βέλτιστε,” ἔφην, “πρὸς τοῦ Διὸς καὶ τοῦ ἔρωτος αὐτοῦ, ταυτῇ μᾶλλον ἦσεν, εἰ καὶ μύθοις ἔοικε.” (2. 2)

(‘You are poking up a wasps’ nest of narratives’, he said, ‘My life resembles a novel’. ‘Well sir, by Zeus and by Eros himself, please don’t hesitate. The more novelistic, the better.’)

An early variant of the ‘life is a stage’ motif . . .

I now turn to ‘enjoyable’. Here we must realize that Lucius is speaking in the Prologue from an *ex eventu* perspective, i.e., as a man who has survived, indeed profited from, his adventures. In Homer it is said (by Eumaeus) that a man may enjoy telling about his miseries when all has ended well (*Od.* 15. 398–402).<sup>28</sup>

This *ex eventu* perspective also transpires from the *ethopoia* of the narrator: Lucius presents himself in the Prologue as an author.<sup>29</sup> In other words, the narrator of the *Metamorphoses* is a self-conscious narrator, i.e., a narrator who is aware that he is narrating a story.<sup>30</sup> A parallel for a self-conscious narrator who has the persona of an author is, for example, Dr. phil. Serenus Zeitblom in Thomas Mann’s *Dr Faustus*.

How does this narrator manifest himself in the eleven books of the *Metamorphoses*?

## THE NARRATOR OF THE *METAMORPHOSES*

After the proem, the first person narrator Lucius narrates mainly according to his experiencing ‘I’ (*erlebendes Ich*), that is,

<sup>28</sup> See also Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume on the Prologue as a coda to the text which succeeds it.

<sup>29</sup> This *ethopoia* will of course facilitate the later (11. 27) identification of Apuleius and Lucius.

<sup>30</sup> Booth (1961: 155, 205–9).

he tells exactly as he understood, often misunderstood, the events at the moment they took place.<sup>31</sup> In other (narratological) words, the narrator Lucius-author tells his story according to the (restricted) focalization of Lucius-actor, which means for its greater part the focalization of Lucius-the-ass. The relevance of the distinction narration v. focalization, which often is seen as mere jargon or theoretical nit-picking, becomes evident when we see that certain scholars maintain that Lucius-the-ass is the narrator of the *Metamorphoses*: Smith (1972),<sup>32</sup> Laird (1990),<sup>33</sup> and the *GCA* (1995),<sup>34</sup> contrast Winkler (1985).<sup>35</sup> In my view, one should analyse a passage like

*sed astans ego non procul dolebam mehercules quod pugillares et stilum non habebam, qui tam bellam fabellam praenotarem* (6. 25)

(I was standing not far off, and by Hercules I was sorry not to have tablets and stilus to write down such a pretty story)

as follows: Lucius-the-ass *then* deplored that he had no pen and paper (= his focalization at the time), but the very fact that we have the 'pretty story' (of Cupid and Psyche) testifies to the activity of the narrator Lucius-author, who *now* does write down that story in his *Metamorphoses*. (To make things complicated, we should realize that, as Lucius assures us time and again, though he had the body of an ass, his mental faculties were still that of a man,<sup>36</sup> in other words, his focalization during

<sup>31</sup> Smith (1972: 103), van der Paardt (1978), Dowden (1982), Winkler (1985: 135-79), and *GCA* (1995: 12 n. 18).

<sup>32</sup> e.g. on p. 523: 'but in fact Lucius the ass implicitly warns the reader, time and again, that to say the least he is no expert on the subjects of literature or human nature'. And cf. similar remarks on pp. 521 and 527.

<sup>33</sup> e.g. on p. 147: 'Nothing compares to our awareness from 3. 34 onwards that our narrator is supposed to be an ass', and cf. pp. 148, 158.

<sup>34</sup> e.g. on p. 258, *ad* 9. 30: 'The fact that the narrator puts this particular phrase [*astutele asine*] in the mouth of the *lector* . . . seems to indicate that he attempts to maintain the fiction that "the ass narrates". That fiction is only abandoned at the beginning of book 11.' The opinion that the narrator is the ass may be the result of the narratological terminology adopted in this volume of the *GCA*: speaking of 'actorial narrator' (= the ass) v. 'auctorial narrator' (= Lucius turned into a man again) easily leads to the slip of saying that the ass narrates.

<sup>35</sup> 'Apuleius' narrator, though he is a deacon of Isis' (p. 141) and 'the ego-narrator had been an ass' (p. 149).

<sup>36</sup> For the first time in 3. 26.



the time he was an ass remained of a human nature, hence his unasinine desire in the above passage for a pen and paper.) Another interesting place in this respect is

*res ac tempus ipsum locorum speluncaeque illius quam latrones inhabitabant, descriptionem exponere flagitat: nam et meum periclitabor ingenium, et faxo vos quoque an mente etiam sensuque fuerim asinus sedulo sentiatis.* (4. 6)

(The subject and the occasion itself demand that I produce a description of the region and the cave inhabited by the robbers, for in that way I shall both put my talent to the test and also let you perceive whether in intelligence and perception I was an ass.)

In the ensuing ecphrasis on the robbers' cave Lucius will show his talents as narrator *now* and at the same time show that his focalization *then* (which made him perceive and interpret the things he is now about to describe) was intelligent, was not that of an ass.

There are two passages which at first sight seem to suggest that Lucius-the-ass is the narrator after all:

*sed forsitan lector scrupulosus reprehendens narratum meum sic argumentaberis: 'Unde autem tu, astutele asine, intra terminos pistrini contactus, quid secreto, ut affirmas, mulieres gesserint scire potuistis?'* (9. 30)

(But perhaps as a careful reader you will find fault with my story, reasoning as follows: 'How did it happen, you clever ass, that though you were shut up in the confines of the mill you were able to find out what the women were doing in secret, as you insist?')

and

*sed ne quis indignationis meae reprehendat impetum, secum sic reputans: 'Ecce nunc patiemur philosophantem nobis asimum', rursus unde decessi revertar ad fabulam.* (10. 33)

(But I am afraid one of you may reproach me for this attack of indignation and think to himself, 'So, now we are going to have to stand an ass lecturing us on philosophy?' So I shall return to the story at the point where I left it.)

In these *occupationes* the fictive reader 'addresses' the narrator with *asinus*. Here I would be inclined to follow Winkler's suggestion<sup>37</sup> to take *asinus* as 'fool'. The fictive reader catches

<sup>37</sup> Winkler (1985: 150, *ad* 10. 33). The same suggestion in Zimmerman-de

the narrator out on making a narratological mistake (9. 30) or displays indignant impatience at a long sermon of his (10. 33).<sup>38</sup> Whereas in the past Lucius stressed time and again that though he had the form of an ass he still had the intelligence of a man (hence was no fool), he is now, long returned to the shape of a man, twice called an ass/fool by his reader, which for him must be the worst possible term of abuse.

As said earlier, Lucius mainly narrates according to his experiencing focalization and his presence as narrating subject is largely suppressed. Winkler (1985: 147–9) mentions as the only exceptions the Fortuna prolepses, for example 7. 17 ‘Fortune, however, could not get her fill of torturing me, and devised a fresh, new plague for me’. There are, however, more places where the narrator Lucius-author reveals himself,<sup>39</sup> for example,

*res ipsa mihi poscere videtur ut huius quoque servitii mei disciplinam exponam* (9. 32)

(Circumstances require me, I think, to describe the regime of this new slavery of mine as well)

or

*... sed quae plane comperi ad istas litteras proferam* (10. 7)<sup>40</sup>

(but what I reliably ascertained I shall set down on these pages)

At some of these places even the *ex eventu* position of the narrator transpires clearly:

*post dies plusculos ibidem dissignatum scelestum ac nefarium facinus memini, sed ut vos etiam legatis, ad librum profero.* (10. 2)

(A few days later, I recall, an outrageous and abominable crime was perpetrated there, which I am adding to my book so that you can read it too.)

Graaf (1993: 158). Note that the narrator Lucius himself constantly alludes to the secondary meaning of *asinus* = ‘fool’, whenever he stresses that he had the body of an ass, but not the mind (e.g. 4. 6, 10. 13).

<sup>38</sup> According to Zimmerman-de Graaf (1993: 158), in 10. 33, too, the reader is catching out the narrator on a narratological mistake: so far he has been describing the pantomime as it was unfolding before the ass, whereas now (in the sermon of 33) he has been giving us his feelings now, at the time of narration.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. also *GCA* (1995: index s.v. narrator, auctorial).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. further 8. 22, 9. 4, 9. 14, 10. 18.

Here the narrator not only refers to his activity as author (*ad librum profero*) but also through *memini* indicates that time has elapsed between the events taking place and his narrating them.<sup>41</sup> The most elaborate passage is

*nam et ipse gratas gratias asino meo memini, quod me suo celatum tegmine variisque fortunis exercitatum, etsi minus prudentem, multiscium reddidit.*  
(9. 13)

(In fact, I now remember the ass that I was with thankful gratitude because, while I was concealed under his cover and schooled in a variety of fortunes, he made me better informed, if less intelligent.)

The narrator Lucius-author here looks back on his asinine past.<sup>42</sup> (Usually it is the other way around and Lucius-the-ass looks back on his past as Lucius-the-man or longs to become that person again.)

#### LUCIUS AND THE PROLOGUE ONCE AGAIN

Twice Lucius-actor is told that later he will become the subject of a novel:

*'nunc enim gloriam satis floridam, nunc historiam magnam et incredundam fabulam et libros me futurum'* (2. 12)

(‘on the one hand my reputation will really flourish, but on the other I will become a long story, an unbelievable tale, a book in several volumes’)

and

*'visetur et in fabulis audietur doctorumque stilis rudis perpetuabitur historia, . . .'* (6. 29)<sup>43</sup>

(‘People will come to see this simple tale, and will hear about it when stories are told, and the pens of the learned will perpetuate it, . . .’)

Metanarrative or self-reflexive passages in which characters in a story themselves predict that they will become literary figures are as old as Homer (cf. *Il.* 6. 357–8; *Od.* 3. 204, 8. 579–80, and

<sup>41</sup> Cf. 8. 31.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *GCA* (1995: 132): ‘The phrase clearly indicates that now the auctorial narrator is speaking (*memini* referring to the time of narration).’

<sup>43</sup> And cf. 8. 1, where again it is said that the (embedded) story now told, at some time will be written down by *doctiores*, who fortune provides with pens.

24. 196–202).<sup>44</sup> In the case of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* they have, however, an added significance. If its narrator indeed is Lucius-author, as I have argued, we can say that Lucius himself fulfils the prophecies he heard in the past, that is, that he himself is the *doctus* who writes the book about the miraculous adventures of Lucius-the-ass. As he indicates explicitly in the Prologue, he now has the pen (1. 1 *Nilotici calami*) and paper (1. 1 *papyrus Aegyptiam*) which as an ass he so much missed (6. 25).<sup>45</sup> Indeed, in this light the decidedly Platonic flavour of the Prologue gains more weight; this is one of the manifestations of Lucius' learnedness.

<sup>44</sup> The Homeric topos, which often is spoken in a bitter tone ('we are given sorrows, so as to form the subject of song for later generations'), seems alluded to by Lucius himself in 7. 16: . . . *Fortuna saeva tradidit cruciatibus, scilicet ut, quod aiunt, domi forisque fortibus factis adoriae plenae gloriarer* ('When I was completely broken down by suffering, cruel Fortune consigned me to new tortures, no doubt so that I could, as they say, boast of high distinction from brave deeds done at home and abroad').

<sup>45</sup> Fowler, Ch. 20 in this volume seems to think in the same direction. A slightly different interpretation of 6. 25 is given by van der Paardt (1981b: 25): 'with Ciceronian pride the writer [Apuleius] behind the narrator refers to himself'. Cf. the comment of *GCA* (1981: 25, ad 6. 25) 'how an ass would have handled the writing materials is not discussed; the author [Apuleius], as often, is amusing himself (and his readers) at his narrator's expense'.

## The Horizons of Reading

NIALL W. SLATER

In beginning to read a text, a reader enters into an implicit contract. To this contract the reader brings a repertoire of previous experience with reading and the larger cultural context within which both reading and writing take place. The text brings only itself. The contract is carried out as the reader proceeds linearly through the text: familiar words activate their associations in the reader's mind and unfamiliar words or concepts precipitate a process of recombination and inference to produce new associations. Some contracts are very simple, promising only utilitarian information within a strongly delineated frame of expectation (as when reading a cookbook), while others offer more complex benefits to the reader. Yet whatever the specifics to be acquired, the reader enters into the contract believing in some version of Apuleius' promise at the end of his Prologue, arguably the novel's most famous three words: *lector intende: laetaberis* ('Reader, pay attention: you will be pleased').

The explicitness of Apuleius' promise is unusual—as is the unspecified place from which the Prologue speaks.<sup>1</sup> In this and in its whole negotiation with the reader, it bears some resemblance to the uncharacterized prologues of Roman comedy. Like those of Plautus and to a lesser degree Terence, Apuleius' Prologue seems to be actively engaged in persuading the audience to enter into the contract.<sup>2</sup> The implication is that the potential audience is somewhat unfamiliar with this

<sup>1</sup> The prologues of Achilles Tatius and Longus promise pleasure and even therapy for the pains of love to their readers, but they do so by beginning from within a described world, not simply with the speaking page; cf. Morgan (Ch. 14) and Dowden (Ch. 12) in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> Smith (1972: 513–20), Tatum (1979: 24–6), Winkler (1985: 200–2 and *passim*), Dowden (Ch. 12), Gowers (Ch. 8), and James (Ch. 23) in this volume. On prologue negotiations, see Slater (1992). Given the context, the reader will interpret *permulceam* ('soothe') as persuasive, whether experienced as a sub-junctive or a future.

particular type of literary production and requires convincing. In fact, the Prologue sets out to manufacture a suitable reader for itself.<sup>3</sup>

The more generic a reader finds a text, the less need there is to negotiate an explicit contract. The experienced reader today who picks up a volume displaying a woman in period costume and a bare-chested man in close embrace needs no further clues to the work's broad generic placement.<sup>4</sup> For the ancient reader, the author, title, scale, and even layout of a text on the page supplied its own clues to the generic placement of a work and with it the nature of the proffered contract—yet these are sufficiently distinct from present reading experiences as to merit some examination even before we turn to the Prologue itself.

What expectations did the ancient reader have of this text, even before reading the first words of the Prologue? What frame is created by paratextual information? While our answers will necessarily be somewhat speculative, the question should not therefore be suppressed. Even some narrowing of the range of likely reader response will help us understand the horizons of expectation against which readers evaluated the Prologue and the degree of reinforcement of, or challenge to, those expectations enacted by the process of reading the opening words.

The physical form of the original text would have been multiple papyrus scrolls.<sup>5</sup> Its scale would classify it in a reader's mind with other novels and works of history, a classification reinforced but not narrowed by its prose form. The title probably appeared on a projecting label, the author's name perhaps only at the end of the particular scroll.<sup>6</sup>

Models of reading based on modern publication methods are

<sup>3</sup> Borrowing Zimmerman's terms (Ch. 22 in this volume), I see the Prologue's project as making the implied reader into the characterized fictive reader.

<sup>4</sup> See Radway (1991: 46 and *passim*) on 'decod[ing] the iconography of romantic cover art'.

<sup>5</sup> A papyrus codex is not impossible, but seems highly unlikely: 'the pagan codex was a rarity in the second century . . .' (Reynolds and Wilson 1974: 31).

<sup>6</sup> Kenyon (1932: 60–7). The evidence for titles at the end rather than the beginning of scrolls is primarily Greek; for possible Roman variations, see Kenney (1982: 16 and 31–2).

therefore misleading. Rare indeed would be the reader who simply picked up an unknown text in a library or a bookseller's shop.<sup>7</sup> In a system relying on individual copying of texts, a reader would probably acquire his text because of the recommendation of another reader. In the absence of the kind of name recognition the author of series of similar texts might have,<sup>8</sup> we should probably assume that ancient reader recommendations focused more strongly on the nature of the text than on the persona of the author.<sup>9</sup>

The question of what title appeared on those scroll labels is of course a famous conundrum. While I have so far deliberately avoided naming the text as either the *Golden Ass* or the *Metamorphoses*, I accept Winkler's ingenious solution to the problem of the two titles: that Apuleius' original title, following Varronian models, was a double one: *Asinus Aureus*, *περὶ μεταμορφώσεων*.<sup>10</sup> Even if one were to argue for a single title (which the earliest witness, Augustine, records as the *Golden Ass*), the persistence of both titles in discussion of the work simply re-enacts the problems of classifying it.<sup>11</sup> A double title, Latin and Greek, creates a doubled and therefore somewhat fractured expectation for the Prologue, to which its image of leaping from language to language like a bareback acrobatic rider (*ipsa vocis immutatio desultoriae scientiae stilo . . . respondet*, 'this very change of language corresponds to the style of switchback lore') will soon correspond.<sup>12</sup> If any particular

<sup>7</sup> See Starr (1987) on the circulation of literary texts, focusing on the late republic and early imperial periods, in which booksellers and libraries would have played a very limited role; he does note 'The booktrade seems to become more important . . . by Pliny's time . . .' (222). Cf. Starr (1990).

<sup>8</sup> e.g. enjoyment of plays (of Euripides or Plautus, say) might lead a reader to further acquisitions based on name alone.

<sup>9</sup> Cicero refers to books by authors' names, first lines, and titles, and a pattern is hard to determine; see e.g. *Letters to Atticus* 16. 11. We should differentiate conventions in describing books of philosophy, oratory, and history, from a book with a title such as *Asinus Aureus* (for which, see below); a nominative noun sounds more like a play title or a fable.

<sup>10</sup> Winkler (1985: 292–321, 'The Gilding of the Ass'). Andrew Laird (pers. comm.) reminds me that Apuleius' defence speech also comes down to us with a double (bilingual) title: *Apologia sive de magia liber*.

<sup>11</sup> Notably Fulgentius, who calls it the *Metamorphoses* twice and the *Golden Ass* once (see Winkler 1985: 297 n. 11).

<sup>12</sup> The separate titles have individual connotations. The title of *Golden Ass*

generic frame is posited by such a double title, it is more likely to be that of Varro's Menippean satires.

The significance of Apuleius' name as author will vary in proportion to his notoriety. Because the *Apology*, delivered in some form at the author's trial on a charge of practising magic, makes no mention of Apuleius' authorship of a novel about magic and witchcraft, it is usually assumed that the *Metamorphoses* must post-date his trial of 158–9.<sup>13</sup> At that point he was not yet the well-known display orator and author of the *Florida* ('*Purple Patches*'), whose name would have created a certain expectation in potential readers. It may be worth entertaining momentarily the speculation that he might rather have seen an opportunity in any notoriety resulting from the trial: that is, like more than one defendant escaped from a sensational charge, Apuleius might have seen in the 'name recognition' resulting from his trial the creation of a more eager potential audience for a book dealing with magic by a reputed magician.<sup>14</sup>

These then are some of the horizons against which the Roman reader might approach the opening of the *Metamorphoses*. I now propose to look at certain points within the Prologue in a strictly sequential first reading. While rereading and comparison of any one part of a text with another is possible, the basic thrust of a narrative work of prose is to carry its reader along at its own speed, in which each element of the reading experience forms the foundation and frame for subsequent experiences. Of course on so small a scale as this Pro-

links it to the Greek tradition of the ass story while simultaneously investing it with a certain irony. Again, Winkler (1985: 298–9 and n. 16) is right to see that the usual connotations of 'golden' are immediately ironized by being made to modify an ass. It is sometimes felt on the other hand that the plural in the title *Metamorphoses* creates an expectation of more transformations than the novel in fact supplies, but as Perry (1923) argues, the plural must be generic; cf. Winkler (1985: 296 n. 9).

<sup>13</sup> If St Augustine was capable, after reading the novel, of considering the possibility that Apuleius had turned himself into an ass (*City of God* 18. 18), so certainly was the audience at Apuleius' trial. For the trial and general Apuleian chronology: Tatum (1979: 110–22); cf. Winkler (1985: 318–19, esp. n. 78), and Dowden, Ch. 12 in this volume.

<sup>14</sup> Although most presume that Apuleius was acquitted at his trial, no independent source tells us so: conceivably the charge was withdrawn and the publication of the *Apology* is an exercise in image repair.



logue there is nothing to prevent a reader from glancing back, but I believe that such a linear reading offers the best hope of re-creating the experience which none of us as scholarly readers can ever have again, that is, the experience of first reading.

The first proper name the reader encounters is the adjective 'Milesian' in the phrase *sermone isto Milesio* ('that Milesian style'). After the unsettling initial *at* ('But')<sup>15</sup> and the reassurance of author's direct concern for and relation with the reader in *ego tibi* ('I for you') we are offered a possible generic identification for our reading experience: *sermo Milesius* ('Milesian style'). While this sounds like a promising generic frame, we know relatively little about the '*Milesian Tales*' of Aristides and the Roman version of Sisenna, and even the modern consensus identifying Petronius' tales of the Widow of Ephesus and the Pergamene Boy as 'Milesian' may be somewhat overconfident.<sup>16</sup> While the adjective 'Milesian' probably has a bawdy connotation (perhaps soon to be reinforced by the imagery of secretive whispering in *lepido susurro permulceam*, 'let me soothe . . . with an agreeable whispering'), the noun *sermo* ('style, discourse') suggests a category broader than written collections of tales and perhaps even suggests an oral tradition.<sup>17</sup> In any case, this potential generic frame is skewed within a few more lines by the appeal to the reader not to scorn *papyrum Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam* ('an Egyptian papyrus inscribed with the sharpness of a reed from the Nile'). The reader knows he is physically reading from a sheet of papyrus (whether part of a scroll or a codex), which only came from Egypt, so for a moment the reader may take the proper adjective 'Egyptian' as a verbal flourish, stating the obvious. Unless his particular copy came from Egypt, however, it was most likely written upon with a local pen, not a reed from the Nile. The latter phrase convincingly shifts the frame from verbose description to a

<sup>15</sup> Cf. de Jong (Ch. 18 in this volume). While opening the possibility of dialogue, I do not think the one word *at* alone enough to create a *philosophical* frame for reading. Laird's suggestion (Ch. 24 in this volume), of a different meaning for *at* ('But') on rereading is very intriguing, but I confine myself to the initial reading of the Prologue.

<sup>16</sup> See Aly, *RE* xv. 1580–1581 s.v. Milesia for a standard account; cf. now also Lefèvre (1997).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Kahane (Ch. 21), Fowler (Ch. 20), and Smith (Ch. 9) in this volume. See also below, n. 27.

metaphor for an Egyptian element in the writing,<sup>18</sup> whereupon the framework of Milesian tales is stretched rather sharply, if not shattered altogether.

After soliciting our attention and promising wonder (*mireris*, 'you may wonder'), the text promises us a beginning (*exordior*, 'I begin')—and promptly breaks that promise with two of the most startling words in literature: *quis ille?* ('Who is this?') Who speaks these words? After a second's thought, we must realize: we do.<sup>19</sup> The model of the theatrical prologue may be so firmly in our minds as scholarly readers that we fail to see the significant differences here: a prologue speaker on stage may choose to acknowledge interruptions or queries from the audience, but the audience responses are not explicitly scripted.<sup>20</sup> While Apuleius' joke works best for a reader who is actually reading the text out loud,<sup>21</sup> the effect on a silent reader is ultimately the same: Apuleius has put words in our mouths as well as in our minds. Not content with addressing us in the second person, he has scripted our response. It is moreover not a response to a

<sup>18</sup> Even for a reader who has not yet experienced Book 11. It is misleading to claim, as Winkler (1985: 187) does, that *Aegyptiam* ('Egyptian') 'gives no information at all to the first reader . . .'. In conjunction with *Nilotici* ('from the Nile'), it opens a space into which the reader expects more information to be placed. On the other hand, I do not necessarily fill that open space with a specifically Platonic reference to Egypt and the origins of writing (cf. Trapp (Ch. 4) and Too (Ch. 16) in this volume): modern readers know of Apuleius' Platonic interests, but did the original readers, if the work is early? Moreover, all writing is suspect for Plato, not just Egyptian writing.

<sup>19</sup> Winkler (1985: 181). It seems an unnecessary additional step to imagine that the words as recorded represent the repetition by the speaker of the first paragraph of an overhead question of the reader, as Hanson's (1989) translation 'Who am I?' presupposes (cf. de Jong, Ch. 18 in this volume). The reader may be addressing a third person (Fowler, Ch. 20 in this volume) or simply himself, but the disruption is not easily controllable.

<sup>20</sup> Winkler (1985: 201 n. 47) compares four Plautine passages. Two indicate simple cries of agreement or disagreement from the audience (*Captivi* 11 *negat hercle illic ultumus*, 'By Hercules, the far guy there says no' *Truculentus* 4 *adnuont*, 'they agree'; 6 *abnuont*, 'they disagree', another (*Amphitruo* 52 *quid? contraxistis frontem . . .?*, 'What? Are you frowning . . .?' just a facial response. Only *Casina* 67–8 purports to quote audience questions to each other (*inter se . . . dicere*, 'they say among themselves'; cf. the technique in Aristophanes' *Wasps* 71 ff., 'reporting' audience guesses about Philocleon's disease).

<sup>21</sup> Silent reading remains a contentious issue: the story of its 'discovery' is located at many different points in antiquity. See Knox (1968).

question addressed to us in the second person, but a scheduled interruption, designed to suture the reader into the role of eager enquirer.<sup>22</sup>

If we are not already seasick from changing frames and shifting expectations, we soon will be. We might well expect the answer to the question *quis ille?* ('Who is this?') to be someone's name. Instead of a brief answer to this question, followed by the opening of the story, a second prologue begins, treating us to a lesson in geography and a personal linguistic odyssey, as this still unnamed voice places itself in relation to lands found in books and to a course of education which took the speaker from Greek to Latin to rhetorical studies (*forensis sermonis*, 'language of the forum'). Though the Prologue's bookish bias may be so familiar to scholarly readers as to be invisible, we should not let the phrase *libris felicioribus conditae* ('recorded in even more fertile books') pass unremarked, for it is a powerful rhetorical move. Whatever historical and emotional associations the roll-call of place names (*Hymettos Attica et Isthmos Ephyrea et Taenaros Spartiaca*, 'Attic Hymettus and the Corinthian Isthmus and Spartan Taenarus') evokes from the reader's repertoire of experience with the grandeur that was Greece,<sup>23</sup> the Prologue takes it as a fundamental assumption that literary experience is superior to personal, the books which transmit historical information and emotional coloration superior to the realities they describe. Given that we are reading a text, the implicit message is that this text is itself one of the class of *libris felicioribus* ('even more fertile books').

This second prologue asks our indulgence for a *rudis locutor* ('inexperienced speaker') of the Latin language, compares its own style to a rider's acrobatics, and finally promises us a *fabulam Graecanicam* ('Greekish tale'). This first point is

<sup>22</sup> A character within the narrative can easily model the role of enquirer in a way designed to reinforce the reader's curiosity: compare Heliodorus' technique in his *Ethiopian Story*, where, as Bartsch (1989: 120–2) notes, Knemon's interruptions and eager requests for more details from the narrating Kalasiris in book 3 model the proper behaviour for the engaged and interested reader.

<sup>23</sup> Harrison (1990) suggests that an 'alert' reader's repertoire will here allow him to differentiate between Apuleius the author and the voice of the Prologue, which is that of a 'speaking book'. The suggestion is tempting, but it does presuppose an Apuleius who writes only (or at least primarily) for readers who know a good bit about him already.

patently ironic, although the level of irony is hard to assess: strangely florid this speaker may be, but ignorant or coarse he is not.<sup>24</sup> The delicious image of the trick bareback rider both builds on the Prologue speaker's account of moving from Greek to Latin in a personal educational progress and simultaneously undermines any teleology: what is impressive about a circus acrobat is his ability to leap back and forth, repeatedly changing directions. Although we are reading a prologue written in Latin, the product of the speaker's maturer years, this image destabilizes the integrity of that text: the experiences it describes need not reflect a similar maturity.

The last category we are offered as a frame for our experience of the lengthy work to follow is that of the *fabulam Graecanicam* ('Greekish tale'). Winkler, citing the categories of Varro (*Ling.* 10. 69–70), argues that *Graecanica* here means 'Greek-like' on the analogy of words used in Latin which are formed on a Greek stem but with strictly Latin inflectional endings.<sup>25</sup> Varro's terminology may well be in Apuleius' mind, but I am far from sure that he expects Varro's usage to be a standard part of his reader's repertoire. The adjective *Graecanica* is not that common or familiar in Latin. The reader who has not seen it, or not seen it regularly, before must work out its meaning by context and analogy. Once again, the specific association is not as important as the relation to what the reader does know: whatever *Graecanica* means, the reader can assume that it is *not* simply identical to *Graeca* ('Greek'). Our final generic frame therefore will not for most readers be defined positively but negatively: a category which is not just 'Greek' but 'Greekish', a little off-balance, a little precious, a little uncertain.

We end where I began: with the contract made explicit. A further comparison with the strategies of Roman comedy may be helpful here. The prologue to the *Amphitruo* of Plautus begins with a ten-line contract proposed by Mercury, god of commerce, to his audience: he offers them success and prosperity in their business affairs in return for their silence and careful attention to the play. His contract is the beginning,

<sup>24</sup> I am tempted by Powell's suggestion, Ch. 3 in this volume, that the speaker may sound 'Greek', but the apology could simply be a forensic topos.

<sup>25</sup> Winkler (1985: 184).

not the end, of the process of induction, drawing the audience into the world of the play.<sup>26</sup> By contrast, the contract in Apuleius is not so much the culmination of a search for a generic frame through which to view the remainder of the reading process as it is a rejection of an explicit labelling of genre. Milesian speech written on Egyptian papyrus transforms itself implicitly into more generally 'language of the forum' (*forensis sermonis*) and finally into a 'story' (*fabula*) whose primary characteristic is to be Greekish without being Greek.

The final contract is struck not within a nameable generic framework but purely in terms of action. True, only two of the three last words are in fact verbs, but *lector* ('reader') as well primarily defines its addressee in terms of action. *Lector* is indeed startlingly pure in its definition of our role in this contract. It does not appeal to us as 'friends' or flatter us as just or wise; it simply demands that we go on with the story by continuing to read.<sup>27</sup> The true imperative *intende* ('pay attention'), however, tells us not so much what to do as how to do it: we must read carefully, with full attention. Only by answering the call to be readers can we expect the benefits promised. Furthermore, those benefits themselves are purely verbal: they exist in only words, and they are described only in a word which denotes action, not content.<sup>28</sup>

By offering a multiplicity of frames, the Prologue of the *Metamorphoses* insures that readers will operate with no single, well-established frame, yet tempts us with the notion that there may be such a frame—if only we search intently enough. The voice which speaks from nowhere and everywhere, from no fixed point in time and space and from several famous lands and their literary representations, ends only by commanding us, not asking us, to play on.

<sup>26</sup> For a discussion of induction, see Slater (1992).

<sup>27</sup> See Fowler (Ch. 20), Kahane (Ch. 21), and Laird (Ch. 24) in this volume on the tensions between written and oral in the Prologue, whose only resolution can come from continuing the reading process.

<sup>28</sup> I believe Apuleius' desire to emphasize action and nothing but action in his final formulation explains why the contract is stated without an 'if'.



# Voice and Writing





Writing with Style: The Prologue  
to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*  
between *Fingierte Mündlichkeit*  
and Textuality

DON FOWLER

As with others in this volume, my starting point in this paper is the way that the Prologue to the *Metamorphoses* refers to both oral and written modes of reception. For me, the *Metamorphoses* is an instance of a *disjunctive* work, that is, a work in which the 'pretended' mode of reception is at odds with the 'actual' mode. Of course, both pretence and actuality are in fact constructed by the critic. A typical example of such a work is Horace's *Odes*, which are ostensibly sung to the lyre but are actually received as written texts. I have argued elsewhere that Martial's *Epigrams* are another example.<sup>1</sup> Responses to such disjunction often take the form either of heroically arguing that the pretended mode of reception is actual (Horace really did sing to the lyre) or of treating the pretence as merely superficial. I believe it is better to take both sides of the disjunction seriously, and to see the dialectic between the pretended and actual modes as critically significant. Often, though not exclusively (not, for example, in the case of the letter or inscriptional epigram), the disjunction is between an assumed orality and an actual written reception. For the former, I use the term *fingierte Mündlichkeit* ('fictional orality') coined by the German critic of nineteenth-century English literature P. Goetsch:<sup>2</sup> for the latter, 'textuality'. Although of course even oral discourse is text, much of the flight from acceptance of written reception is a flight from those properties that characterize text in a

<sup>1</sup> Fowler (1995).

<sup>2</sup> Goetsch (1985), Erzgräber and Goetsch (1987), Fowler (1995: 225 n. 25).

Derridean sense, such as indeterminacy and dependence on the reader's construction. A disjunctive work aspires to 'presence', but simultaneously signals an awareness of its impossibility, and derives its energy from an interplay of the two: it plays with an existence on the borders of the imaginary and the symbolic, caught between life and meaninglessness and significance and death.

The Prologue to the *Metamorphoses* invites the reader to construct a scene of presence, in which the narrator of the story is imparting it to our *aures . . . benivolas* ('kindly ears' in a *lepido susurro* ('agreeable whispering')). This is true even if we construct the book itself as narrator here. Someone—the reader? a third party? the narrator imaging a second or third party?—asks *quis ille?*, and is invited to receive the answer in a few words (*paucis*): the narrator is a native Greek speaker who has learned Latin, and asks forgiveness if he offend as an inexperienced speaker of the foreign language of the forum. This *vocis immutatio* ('change of language') is fitting for the subject of the work. At the same time, this can only happen if the reader—who is explicitly addressed as *lector*—deigns to look on Egyptian papyrus inscribed with the sharpness of a reed from the Nile. The *vocis immutatio* corresponds to *desultoriae scientiae stilo* ('style of switch-back lore'): while *stilo* here obviously has the common metaphorical sense of 'style', it is also the pen held by the author. Although *calamus* ('reed') and *stilus* may be used interchangeably, they may also be taken to refer to the two stages of the 'writing' of a work, the author's composition, typically in wax tablets or a parchment notebook, and the scribe's production with a reed pen on papyrus. When anyone wishes to extemporize, they call for *stilus* and *cera* ('wax tablet') or *pugillares*.<sup>3</sup> While composing, they will often 'turn the pen'<sup>4</sup> to erase what they have written. Once the work is finished, however, the work is turned over to the pens of the professional scribes<sup>5</sup>. Of course a pen and papyrus could be used for informal composition<sup>6</sup> but the associations of *calamus*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. e.g. Pliny, *Epist.* 7. 27. 7 (the full trio for lucubration, *pugillares, stitum, lumen*), 7. 27. 9, 1. 6. 1, 4. 25. 4; Plautus, *Bac.* 715, 728, 996, and *Mil.* 38.

<sup>4</sup> Horace *Serm.* 1. 10. 72, Cicero, *Verr.* 2. 2. 101.

<sup>5</sup> Cicero, *Att.* 4. 13. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. e.g. Cicero, *Att.* 6. 8. 1.

are more with the finished product. When Horace describes his obsession with writing in *Epistles* 2. 1. 111–14, he describes himself asking not for *stilus* and *pugillares*, but for a proper pen and ink:

*ipse ego, qui nullos me adfirmo scribere versus  
invenior Parthis mendacior, et prius orto  
sole vigil calamum et chartas et scrinia posco*

(I myself, who assert that I write no verses, am found more untruthful than the Parthians, and before the sun is risen I'm awake and ask for pen and paper and book boxes.)

Pen and paper here suggest someone who is aspiring to proper publication from the beginning, not just scribbling in notebooks. In the Prologue to the *Metamorphoses*, the *argutia* of the pen is stressed, with an obvious pun on literal sharpness and its 'stylistic' analogue, but there is also perhaps an implication of a properly finished book. We might contrast what Cicero writes to his brother in *Epistulae ad Quintum Fratrem* 2.15. 1:

*calamo et atramento temperato, charta etiam dentata res agetur. scribis enim te meas litteras superiores vix legere potuisse, in quo nihil eorum, mi frater, fuit quae putas. neque enim occupatus eram neque perturbatus nec iratus alicui, sed hoc facio semper ut, quicumque calamus in manus meas venerit, eo sic utar tamquam bono.*

(This time then I'll use a careful<sup>7</sup> pen and well-mixed ink, and ivory-polished paper: since you wrote that you could hardly read my last letters. Not that there was anything of what you thought in that: I wasn't busy or worried or angry with anyone, but I am always the same, I use whatever pen I can lay my hand on just as if it were a good one.)

The pen that wrote the *Metamorphoses* is sharp and accurate, the tool of a professional. Through the use of both *stilus* and *calamus*, the *Metamorphoses* is imaged both as work under construction, the author's pen leaping from topic to topic, and as finished whole, already written up on the papyrus: the narrating 'I' is revealed as not only potentially divided from the experiencing 'I' but itself split between the process and achievement of the narrative. Similarly, the reader both tracks

<sup>7</sup> Taking *temperato* with both *calamo* and *atramento*. Alternatively, *temperato* can be taken just with *atramento* and *calamo* on its own has implications of a 'proper' pen (despite the neutral use a few lines later).

the narration as it is performed and always already has the whole available for reading and rereading. The last words, *fabulam Graecanicam incipimus: lector intende; laetaberis* thus acquire a significant ambiguity. The 'we' of *incipimus* is on one level the 'we' of the imagined company of actors who are putting on the *fabula* for us, the performers we are to watch. At another level, the 'we' associates author and reader in the joint production that will follow: the joint production that *is* the act of reading. We have been reminded earlier that even Athens, Corinth, and Sparta now exist because they are *aeternum libris felicioribus conditae*.

The author returns, pen in hand—or rather not—in the centre of the novel, immediately after the narration of *Cupid and Psyche* (6. 25):

*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 praenotarem.*

(This was what that crazy drunken old woman told to the captive girl; I was standing near them and much regretted not having notebooks and a pen to write down such a good story.)

At the time, the narrator, being an ass, could not write down the tale: the effect is similar to the interjection in 9. 30, where the *lector scrupulosus* is told how the ass was able to learn the miller's tale:

*sed forsitan lector scrupulosus reprehendens narratum meum sic argumentaberis: 'Unde autem tu, astutule asine, intra terminos pistrini contentus, quid secreto, ut adfirmas, mulieres gesserint scire potuisti?' accipe igitur quem ad modum homo curiosus iumentum faciem sustinens cuncta quae in perniciem pistoris mei gesta sunt cognovi.*<sup>8</sup>

(But perhaps, diligent reader, you will criticize my narration, on the basis of the following argument: 'You might be a clever little ass, but since you were shut up within the bakery how could you know what the women were secretly doing the way you claim to?' Listen then how this curious man with a beast's appearance learned everything that was done to damage my master the baker.)

The fiction of the novel is in both cases exposed, in the one case by ignoring a problem of narrative realism, in the other by facing it. And in both cases the exposure of textuality is accom-

<sup>8</sup> Cf. 10. 7 etc.

panied by gestures of pretended presence: the reader is taken aside and into the narrator's confidence, as if they were in the same room.

The pen returns a little later in Book 6 (29), in the girl's prayer to the ass:

*sed nec inter cibos delicatos et otium profundum uitaeque totius beatitudinem deerit tibi dignitas gloriosa. nam memoriam praesentis fortunae meae diuinaeque providentiae perpetua testatione signabo et depictam in tabula fugae praesentis imaginem meae domus atrio dedicabo. visetur et in fabulis audietur doctorumque stilis rudis perpetuabitur historia 'asino uectore uirgo regia fugiens captiuitatem'.*

(On top of special food, total leisure and lifelong happiness, you won't lack for fame and respect. I shall set the seal on the memory of my present fortune and the workings of divine providence with an eternal memorial, and I shall dedicate in the *atrium* of my house a painted panel of my present flight. The deed will be seen and heard in stories and though unsophisticated will be perpetuated by the pens of the learned: 'a princess fleeing captivity on the back of an ass'.)

The girl envisages three means of reception for her story: visual representation in painting, oral narration in storytelling, and finally immortality through the pens of the learned.<sup>9</sup> The means are arranged in sequence, as if the painting will lead to stories, and then the primitive stories will be written up in a learned narrative: a narrative, in fact, something like the one the reader is reading at the time from the learned pen of Apuleius. The point is made even more explicitly at the opening of Book 8, where Charite's servant introduces *his* story within a story with a similar prophecy of later elaboration (8. 1):

*sed ut cuncta noritis, referam vobis a capite quae gesta sunt quaeque possint merito doctiores, quibus stilos fortuna subministrat, in historiae specimen chartis involvere.*

(So that you might know everything, I shall tell you what happened

<sup>9</sup> It is significant that the girl envisages the painting as located in the *atrium* of her house, which was the place at Rome which brought together visual representation and the written records in the *tabulina* with verbal performance upon them: see e.g. Pliny, *NH* 35. 4–8, and for oral ecphrasis in the *atrium* Petronius *Sat.* 28. 6. Compare the ecphrasis of the statue of Diana in the *atrium* of Byrrhaena's house in *Met.* 2. 4.

from the beginning, events which the more learned, those to whom fortune has given pens, can wrap in paper as an example of history.)

Only the fortunate have pens—a hint, perhaps, that the narrator will not in the end be as unfortunate as he seems to be at the time.<sup>10</sup>

The *Metamorphoses* exists for the reader as a written text in his or her hands, but the narrator invites him or her to participate in the adventures as if present at the adventures of the acting 'I' or looking over the shoulder of the composing 'I'. We move back and forth between raw experience, the process of its transformation into text, and the finished textuality of the papyrus book the reader holds. The play on presence and absence is essential to the sophisticated narration, and the reader must work through this dialectic for his or herself, in the process turning the readerly text once more into a *texte scriptible*, taking up the pen once more to write one's own story into the adventures of Lucius.

<sup>10</sup> There is one more reference to *stili* in the *Met.*, in 10. 8 when the judges unanimously condemn the young man accused of parricide, *cunctorum stilis ad unum sermonem congruentibus*: note the congruence of *sermo* and *stilus*.

Antiquity's Future: Writing,  
Speech, and Representation in  
the Prologue to Apuleius'  
*Metamorphoses*

AHUVIA KAHANE

Here the mirror is saying nothing that has already been said before.

(M. Foucault, of the mirror in Velasquez's painting *Las Meninas*)

Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* is a puzzling work. We might also say that it is a somewhat anachronistic text: whilst it was admired in antiquity, it stood on the periphery of the ancient canon. In contrast, contemporary readers often marvel at its modern, novelistic feel. Many factors account for this state of affairs: characterization, subject matter, social context, realism, etc. Here I wish to consider one of the most basic of these, the nature of representation in Apuleius. I would like to suggest that Apuleian practice differs significantly from classical, and especially Aristotelian, models of representation, and is somewhat closer to modern perspectives.<sup>1</sup> Representation, of course, is a big subject, and in this short paper I shall focus my discussion on just one pointed case: the representational relationship between speech and writing.<sup>2</sup> Yet I shall try to show that this issue is absolutely crucial to Apuleius' stance.

There is no doubt that Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* is a written

Special thanks to Andrew Laird for exquisite suggestions.

<sup>1</sup> For Apuleius and the novel see Doody (1996). For an important discussion of representation in Apuleius see Laird (1990).

<sup>2</sup> For writing and voice in Apuleius see also important comments by Henderson (Ch. 17), de Jong (Ch. 18), Fowler (Ch. 20), Gibson (Ch. 7), Laird (Ch. 24), and Zimmerman (Ch. 22) in this volume. Also Smith (1972: 514, 519).

text. This text nevertheless openly presents itself sometimes as written record, sometimes as vocalized speech. Nowhere is this dual character more evident than in the Prologue, where emphasis seems to shift from one medium to the other several times in true 'switch-back' style (see Table).<sup>3</sup>

Table: Terms for Writing and Speech in the Prologue to *Metamorphoses*

writing	speech
	– <i>at</i> <sup>4</sup>
	– <i>ego tibi</i> <sup>5</sup>
	– <i>sermone</i> <sup>6</sup>
– <i>fabulas</i> <sup>7</sup>	– <i>fabulas</i> <sup>8</sup>
	– <i>conseram</i> <sup>9</sup>
	– <i>ares</i>
	– <i>sussuro</i>
	– <i>permulceam</i> <sup>10</sup>
– <i>papyrus</i>	
– <i>argutia</i> <sup>11</sup>	– <i>argutia</i> <sup>12</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See James (Ch. 23), Henderson (Ch. 17) in this volume; also the trans. in Harrison and Winterbottom (Ch. 1) in this volume.

<sup>4</sup> *At* is 'conversational' see Scobie (1975: 66); also Kroon (1995: 333–70).

<sup>5</sup> On *ego tibi* see further below. The combination marks intimate conversation. Cf. e.g. Lucius to Aristomenes (1. 4); Photis to Lucius (2. 10); Photis to Lucius (3. 13); Cupid to Psyche (5. 24); the old woman to the Baker's wife (9. 22). In *Met.* 6× *ego* and *tibi* in the same sentence (nom./dat. usage defines a range of relationships which is different from those of the far more common—nom./acc. or nom./abl. phrases). Adjoining *ego tibi/tibi ego* found only infrequently elsewhere in Latin, except in Cicero (mainly in letters, a dialogic, 'vocal' form of discourse), and Plautus (always in dialogue), where *ego tibi* and *tibi ego* are sometimes used in contexts of the speaker (*ego*) 'standing in' for his addressee, playing a double role by making various interjections (*Quid?*), asking frequent rhetorical questions, etc.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. e.g. Varro, *Ling.* 6. 64; Servius, *Aen.* 6. 160 *hic proprie dictus est sermo, qui inter utrumque seritur.*

<sup>7</sup> The written aspect of plays, fables, tales, etc.

<sup>8</sup> Gossip, talk, play as 'performance'.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Brink (1971: 135–6) on *Ars Poetica* 46.

<sup>10</sup> Tactile = physical presence of speaker and hearer.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Sil. It. 13. 346, *-is calamis*, of poets; note pun with *Aegyptiam* on textual variants: Winkler (1985: 186).

<sup>12</sup> *Argutus* = clear-voiced; cf. again the vocal pun with *Aegyptiam* (Winkler 1985: 186).



–calami	
–inscriptam	
–inspicere	
–figuras	
–imagines	
–mireris	
	–quis ille <sup>13</sup>
–libris	
–conditae	
	–sermonem
	–sermonis
	–locutor
	–vocis ( <i>immutatio</i> )
	–respondet
	–fabulam
–lector	
–intende	

In Aristotelian terms this mixture may at first seem unproblematic:

Ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα, καὶ τὰ γραφόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ φωνῇ

(speech is a symbol of a person's affectations of the mind and writing is a symbol of speech)<sup>14</sup>

Applied to the *Metamorphoses* Aristotle's definition would suggest a relatively simple, linear and directional chain of representation. A person's thoughts (the mental affectations of his experiences, real or fictional), were represented in speech, and later, represented (or recorded) in writing. We could further regard this chain within a general Aristotelian view of *mimesis*, that is, of actions and imitations of actions. Such directionality can be regarded as the core of classical *mimetic* aesthetics.

Adopting this view, and retracing our steps, we should have been able to read the text of the Prologue as the representation

<sup>13</sup> See further below. 'Disembodied' voice of the speaker triggers the question *quis ille?*, which is repeated by sisters asking about the husband whom Psyche can *hear* but not *see*, 5. 16.

<sup>14</sup> *De Interpretatione* 16<sup>a</sup>4. See also Olson (1994: 65–90).

of a voice, and that voice as a representation of the thoughts of a person, which we should have been able to reconstruct. Yet who is that person? Readers of Apuleius have been repeatedly trying to answer precisely this question, but without arriving at any uniform consensus.<sup>15</sup> The Prologue, in fact, resists Aristotelian models of representation, at least with regard to the relation between person, voice, and writing.<sup>16</sup>

How, then, are we to understand the discourse of the Prologue? Classical models are, of course, not the only ones available. Modern scholarship and scholarship of the modern often offer alternative models that do not posit linear relationships between person, voice, and writing. These models seem to accommodate the *Metamorphoses*, and its Prologue more easily.

To begin with, alphabetic writing, although it is doubtless a symbol of speech, *does not* imitate the sounds of speech. Its representation is of a very different kind. Eric Havelock, for example, notes that letters of the alphabet are pure theoretical constructs.<sup>17</sup> There is *no* phonetic reality that *directly* corresponds to any single vowel, or to any single consonant. We can *never* voice a consonant without some vowel force, and we can never release vowel force without some consonantal constraint. Paradoxically, each letter of the alphabet addresses itself to something that can never be heard, creating an irreparable gap between sound and writing. This gap exists in all written texts that claim spoken provenance, but it is marked with particular emphasis in the *Metamorphoses* and in the Prologue. The voice that speaks the Prologue is very much a voice, but not a sound. It claims *Hymettos Attica*, *Isthmos Ephyrea*, and *Taenaros Spartiaca* as its provenance, but it has no regional accent, no pitch or tonality. It comes from all over, and hence has no personal 'identity'. This voice exists independently of any sounds we ourselves may utter as we read the text. Indeed, the

<sup>15</sup> See e.g. Harrison (1990) who nevertheless arrives at the conclusion that the speaker is a book. This is an important and interesting suggestion, but one which, significantly, severs the connection between speech (and writing) and a person. See also comments in the Introduction, 5, above, on the 'vote' taken at the end of the conference that was the origin of this volume. See also Carver, Ch. 15 in this volume.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Laird (1990: 159), from a different angle, on person and representation.

<sup>17</sup> Havelock (1982: 67).

more reference is made to vocal aspects, the more evident is the gap between them and their written representation. It would be ridiculous to whisper the words *lepido susurro* found in the Prologue, or to read the text with a local, North-African or Greek-like Latin accent, or with an asinine bray. Of course, as some critics suggest, the gap we are describing is a property of all signs, not just of written ones. Speech itself is not a linear representation of thought. Furthermore, the originary status of speech, relative to writing, is, as many have suggested, false. Voiced discourse is also a text, a 'trace'.<sup>18</sup>

Classical models of representation require that we draw an ontological hierarchy between the object (or action) and its imitation. But that is not always so easy to do. Consider voice and writing again. The visual and the auditory do relate to different sensory perceptions, but as much recent scholarship suggests, oral and written utterances are not discrete modes of discourse.<sup>19</sup> It may be difficult to decide, for example, if Greek tragedy is a written record of voiced performance, or the voiced enactment of a written text. Many discourse genres such as personal letters, court proceedings, parliamentary Hansards, Ciceronian speeches, scholarly presentations, direct discourse in narrative, etc., maintain a complex dialectic of script and voice, even when they openly claim to be originally voiced or written. But the point is that both the *Metamorphoses* in general and the Prologue in particular, oscillate explicitly between the voiced and the written. This one short (but all-important) introductory section offers conflicting claims about itself. If we follow a classical model that separates the spoken from the written, such messages can be puzzling.

Aristotle traces a direct line from the thinking subject, through speech, to writing. Modern scholarship takes a different view of matters. 'Writing', as Roland Barthes famously suggested, 'is that neuter, that composite, that obliquity into which our subject flees'.<sup>20</sup> What may seem like the preservation

<sup>18</sup> For writing and voice see Olson (1994: 65–114). For orality in text see Oesterreicher (1997) (and extended bibliography in Bakker and Kahane (1997)). For rejection of originary status of voice see Derrida (1974), also Fowler, Ch. 20 in this volume.

<sup>20</sup> Barthes (1986: 49). On this issue see also Yun Lee Too, Ch. 16 in this volume.

of voice is in fact a loss of the self. Jesper Svenbro puts it in a similar way, 'I write, therefore I efface myself'.<sup>21</sup> Svenbro gives the example of epic speech: 'from the point of view of the speech-act, the *egô* that was pronounced out loud by the bard and that referred to himself [e.g. in *Odyssey* 1. 1 "Tell me, Muse"] was [eventually] written down so that it could be reproduced by the reader . . . who, for his part, could not lay claim to that *egô* despite the linguistic definition according to which "the *ego* is the one, who says 'ego'" [see Benveniste 1966: 493].'<sup>22</sup>

Reading, writing, the materialization of meaning, is also an act of irreparable referential loss.<sup>23</sup> It is a feature of all written works, but the *Metamorphoses* and particularly the Prologue gives this loss particular prominence, already in its very first words *at ego tibi*. If a person says 'I [*ego*] will tell you [*tibi*] a story' aloud, his (or her) words index a definite 'I', and a definite 'you'. To say 'I [*ego*] will tell you [*tibi*] a story' out loud is to make an ordinary promise.<sup>24</sup> If there is no 'you' in the speaker's vicinity, the promise may be defective, although not impossible. By contrast reading the written words 'I [*ego*] will tell you [*tibi*] a story' to one's self, is a far more self-contradictory act. It undermines some of the basic premisses of identity, and does so in more ways than one. The reader is the person who reproduces the *ego*, yet he cannot lay claim to that first person pronoun. But the reader is also the person to whom the word *tibi* is addressed and is meant to refer, although, being the reproducer of the words the reader cannot rightly claim to be the person referred to by a second person pronoun. The result is a profound paradox. The reader is both the 'I' and the 'you' but also neither. If the reader is neither, *who* exactly is speaking (*quis ille*)? If he is both, who exactly is *he* (*quis ille* again)? We are back to the effects of writing, but with a twist. The *Metamorphoses* clearly marks its own effacement by its first words and by the (bewildering) question *quis ille*? In other words the *Metamorphoses* begins by enacting the 'death' of its

<sup>21</sup> Svenbro (1993: 26–43). Cf. Barthes (1986: 49) on narrative in 'ethnographic societies'.

<sup>22</sup> Svenbro (1993: 27).

<sup>23</sup> See also Avni (1990).

<sup>24</sup> In the formal illocutionary sense. See Kahane (1996) for a speech-act analysis of the Prologue.

speaker, then, paradoxically, acknowledges that very death by asking *quis ille?*

Effacement through the medium of writing is not always a problem. The epic bard, for example, carefully preserves his anonymity. This bard must remain a conduit, that is, a transparent medium, if he is to hold on to his claim to divine inspiration and to knowledge that exceeds mortal limitations. The reader of heroic epic may not be able to lay claim to the narrator's persona, but significantly that persona is devoid of all personal contents. For heroic epic writing is thus a curiously appropriate medium.<sup>25</sup> By contrast the speaking subject or subjects of the *Metamorphoses* (Lucius, Apuleius, etc.) and of many other works are not a mouthpiece for the Muse. Since *someone* must be speaking it is difficult to accept these speakers as blank personae. These speaking subjects may all suffer effacement or 'death' as a consequence of writing, but few ancient works force the paradoxes of such effacement to the surface, or seem to acknowledge them in quite the same explicit way as the *Metamorphoses* and its Prologue. To write is to lose personal control over the words. Loss of personal control is a certain loss of personal identity, a death. As Barthes noted, the quintessential, unanswerable question of writing is 'who speaks?' But of course, 'who speaks?' is precisely the question posed by the words *quis ille?* in the Prologue to the *Metamorphoses*? To repeat then: the Prologue thrusts its own death at the reader.

We must understand the precision and force of this question. The Prologue does not ask *quis ego?* (or *sum?*), which would have fused the person uttering this question with *ego*, the first person speaker of the Prologue, and would have allowed at least a veneer of coherence to the voice; the text does not ask *quis tu?*, which would have marked the presence of a different, discrete speaker, who addresses the first speaker in the second person, *tu*.<sup>26</sup> Rather, the Prologue's *quis ille?* generates a much more openly complex situation. We have already encountered an undefined and problematic first person speaker in the Prologue's initial *ego*. We have also encountered another undefined

<sup>25</sup> On the relationship of epic to novel with regard to persona see Barthes (1986), also Foucault (1977).

<sup>26</sup> See de Jong, Ch. 18 in this volume.

and problematic persona, the second person addressee *tibi*. But the question *quis ille?* posits yet a third mysterious persona, the third person *ille*, who, at least in terms of the immediate definition of third person forms such as *ille*, is the one who neither speaks, nor is addressed. What possible role can *ille*, the subject of this question play in our discourse?<sup>27</sup> Is he the writer? The text? The reader? A speaker? An addressee? Some other, unrelated person? The Prologue's *quis ille?* is, in fact, the ultimate acknowledgement of the otherness of written voices.

The paradoxes of written voices are not unique to the *Metamorphoses* or to its Prologue. What is unique, or in any case quite rare in the historical context, is the degree to which such paradoxes are openly marked in our text. We normally associate such explicit marking of representational paradoxes not with antiquity, but with the modern age. As many scholars and also we ourselves have noted, such representational paradoxes break with classical, Aristotelian models of *mimesis*. One of the most wonderful examples of this aspect of modernity is Velasquez's painting *Las Meninas*, which has been the object of study for Foucault, Searle, and many other influential thinkers. The painting (see Figure) depicts the Spanish infanta and her attendants. On the left of the infanta is Velasquez, the painter himself, holding up his brushes and facing a canvas of which we can only see the back (but which seems to be of the same size and proportions as the *Las Meninas* itself). Dead ahead, in the background, is a small mirror, containing two faint images, normally identified as the King and Queen of Spain. Yet the painting embodies multiple paradoxes of visual representation. We, the viewers, cannot be viewing it, since it is not *our* reflection in the mirror dead ahead. The painter Velasquez cannot be painting it, since from his position *in* the painting he would see *a different* picture. Indeed, since he is facing the viewers his painting would change as these viewers change. The King and Queen of Spain cannot be represented in the picture, since they are reflected by the mirror in the centre of the painting. They occupy the mirrored image of *our* space. And yet—the painting *was* painted, we *are* viewing it, we *do*

<sup>27</sup> As commonly defined (see e.g. in Benveniste 1966) the first person is the person who speaks; the second person who is addressed; the third person is that which is neither.



see the King and Queen, we *do* see Velasquez at work. It *is* a realistic painting, in which minute and wonderful details are depicted.<sup>28</sup>

In Velasquez's *Las Meninas* we find paradoxes of pictorial representation, i.e. of the relation between three-dimensional and two-dimensional objects. In the *Metamorphoses* we find comparable paradoxes, but ones based on the relation between vocalized discourse and written text. Michel Foucault makes these remarks about the mirror in *Las Meninas*:<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> See Searle (1980). Foucault (1970).

<sup>29</sup> Foucault (1970: 8).

[The] mirror cuts straight through the whole field of the representation, ignoring all it might apprehend within that field, and restores visibility to that which resides outside all view. But the invisibility that it overcomes in this way is not the invisibility of what is hidden: it does not make its way around any obstacle, it is not distorting any perspective, it is addressing itself to what is invisible both because of the picture's structure and because of its existence as painting. . . . The mirror provides a metathesis of visibility that affects both the space represented in the picture and its nature as representation.

To paraphrase Foucault, the Prologue and its special words (especially the deictic pronouns) do not distort any perspective. They address themselves to what is incomprehensible both because of the Prologue's structure (and the structure of the *Metamorphoses*), and because of its existence as fiction. They affect both the characters and discourse represented in the text and their own nature as representation. This, I submit, is one of the factors that gives the *Metamorphoses* its openly modern feel. It is also something that may also help explain the somewhat peripheral role played by the work in a canon structured by classical, Aristotelian, *mimetic* principles.<sup>30</sup>

And one final point: John Winkler has described the first sentence of the *Metamorphoses* as 'a scrambled assemblage of the whisper and the scratch'.<sup>31</sup> This is an interesting re-presentation, since our text, the one *we* read, is neither spoken nor inscribed. It is a printed book, mechanically reproduced by a printing press.<sup>32</sup> This printed object wants to be a roll of papyrus no less than that papyrus wants to be a speaking voice, and that voice wants to be a person. Yet the object we hold in our hands is not an *imitation* of scratched reed-strokes,

<sup>30</sup> On representation see Mitchell (1995); Danto (1995).

<sup>31</sup> Winkler (1985: 196 n. 28; also 157–9). Cited (and confirmed) by Henderson, Ch. 17 in this volume.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. P. Valéry, in the epigraph to Benjamin (1968: 217): 'But the amazing growth of our techniques, the adaptability and precision they have attained, the ideas and habits they are creating, make it a certainty that profound changes are impending in the ancient craft of the Beautiful. In all the arts there is a physical component which can no longer be considered or treated as it used to be, which cannot remain unaffected by our modern knowledge and power . . . We must expect great innovations to transform the entire technique of the arts, thereby affecting artistic invention itself and perhaps even bringing about an amazing change in our very notion of art.' We can, and increasingly do, apply this aesthetic to all works of art.



whispered voices, or persons. It is, rather, a book from antiquity's future, and its Prologue heralds much more than the story of Lucius the ass. It points to another type of art, the kind that comes 'after the end of art', the kind that acknowledges difference, but does not set up a hierarchy.<sup>33</sup> The kind that is not an ordered relation of speech, identity, and written sign. This art is indeed a scrambled *assemblage*—akin to those of such proponents of modernity as Braque, Schwitters, and Duchamps.<sup>34</sup> It can effect the most extraordinary metamorphoses and imitate what it is not.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Danto (1995). For comments on Aristotle see pp. 29, 51. A good example of applied *mimetic* principles is Vasari (Danto 1995: 51) on the *Mona Lisa*: 'The Nose, with its beautiful and delicately roseate nostrils, might easily be believed to be alive.' The Ancient novel turns this paradigm upside down *et pueri mortui iacent sic uti vivere putes* (Petronius, *Sat.* 52 'and the boys ["Cassandra" murdered . . . ] are lying there so dead that you'd think they were still alive').

<sup>34</sup> See e.g. testimonies in Chipp (1968: 193–396).

<sup>35</sup> Later (esp. early modern) novels generally display conflicting voiced v. written claims. 'The novel has traditionally half-denied its own existence—or always proved its protean form by pretending to be what it is not: documentary, Daniel Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* (1722); diary and journal, Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771); letters, Samuel Richardson's two major novels *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1748); travel account, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726); treatise, William Godwin's *Caleb Williams or Things as They Are* (1794).' (Madden 1980: 7–8.)



# Narrative and Prologue



*Quis ille . . . lector*: Addressee(s) in  
the Prologue and throughout the  
*Metamorphoses*

MAAIKE ZIMMERMAN

1. INTRODUCTION

Preoccupation with the identity of the 'I' who speaks the Prologue to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* has rather eclipsed the important role of that speaker's communicative partner in this text: the 'You'.<sup>1</sup> And yet, in a text like Apuleius' novel, which presents itself right from the outset (*at ego tibi . . .*, 'But let me . . . for you . . .') as a heavily 'discursive' text, and continues to do so, the presence of the inscribed audience is insistently invoked.<sup>2</sup> This chapter intends to examine implications of text-reader relationship in the Prologue for the *Metamorphoses* as a whole; taking the Prologue as a starting point, it will proceed to discuss passages in later books, where 'readers' are addressed or apostrophized.

2. THREE TYPES OF 'READER'

Different critics mean substantially different things when they use the term 'reader'. In a discussion of 'the reader' of the Prologue, it is important to distinguish between three categories of 'reader'.

Let us use the term 'actual readers' to describe real people, actually confronting Apuleius' book. These 'actual readers' thus include a whole range of concrete readers of this text, from the readers and commentators today back to antiquity. The contemporary Roman readers outlined by Slater, Chapter 19

<sup>1</sup> For a concise doxography of the problem of the 'I' see Harrison (1990: 507–8). See also Carver (Ch. 15) and de Jong (Ch. 18), in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'discursive' is used in the sense of Benveniste (1966: 237 ff.). See also Laird, Ch. 24 in this volume.

in this volume, were actual readers too. Actual readers do not form part of the text.

Within the text itself a distinction must be made between two types of reader. First the 'characterized fictive reader' is any reader introduced within the text who only exists there. Second, we must note the intratextual 'implied reader', that is, the attitudes and judgements demanded by the text. Our image of the implied reader emerges only gradually as we advance through the whole text, selecting, organizing, anticipating and looking back, formulating and modifying expectations.<sup>3</sup> For instance, the promise of 'you will be pleased' (*laetaberis*) acquires a less superficial meaning for the implied reader after we have met with all kinds of joy, laughter, *schadenfreude*, and religious joy in the course of the eleven books of the *Metamorphoses*. Equally, the implied reader will have to come to terms with the meaning of the 'different stories' (*varias fabulas*) promised in the Prologue, after we have come to realize that these comprise not only tales like 'The Lover in the Tub' (*Met.* 9. 5–7), but the 'Tale of Cupid and Psyche' (*Met.* 4. 28–6. 24) as well. I hope to show that, in the end, these two different types of intratextual reader (characterized fictive reader and implied reader) have, each in a different way, an impact on us, as 'actual readers' of the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. THE CHARACTERIZED FICTIVE READER OF THE PROLOGUE

Janson, discussing our Prologue, remarks: 'no other Latin author has openly announced a literary programme of pure entertainment'.<sup>5</sup> I hope to show that various clues in the novel allow us to refine Janson's statement. In the *Metamorphoses* the characterized reader of the Prologue is indeed very different from the implied reader.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Booth (1961) and Iser (1974); Wilson (1981) clears up a good deal of critical confusion caused by the failure to distinguish between Iser's 'implied reader' (referring to the reading behaviour a text demands from us) and the 'characterized reader' (referred to directly or indirectly in the text).

<sup>4</sup> See for this impact e.g. Kenny (1974), Svendsen (1978), Tatum (1979: 24 ff., 'Apuleius' Dialogue with His Reader').

<sup>5</sup> Janson (1964: 114 and n. 5).

<sup>6</sup> A comparable case is Balzac's *Père Goriot*, where the narrator in the

The purpose of the speaker of the Prologue must be to suggest to his addressee that it will be worth while to go on and read the book before him. This speaker begins with an address to a fairly explicitly characterized fictive reader. The 'I' apparently feels so much at ease with his evoked partner that he can open his conversation informally: 'But I (would like to tie together different sorts of tales) for you' (*at ego tibi . . .*). The characterized reader is presented as a member of the reading public of Aristides' 'Milesiaka' (or, rather, of Sisenna's translation of Aristides), having, as it were, a copy of the 'Milesiaka' under his arm: 'in that Milesian style' (*sermone isto Milesio*).<sup>7</sup>

Further addresses characterize a reader who likes to listen to spicy stories and wonderful tales told in sweet-sounding language: 'let me soothe your kindly ears with an agreeable whispering' (*ures . . . tuas benivolas lepido susurro permulceam*); 'that you may wonder' (*ut mireris*); 'you will be pleased' (*laetaberis*).

This reader must apparently be persuaded to make the effort to read a more demanding written text: 'if only you do not scorn to inspect an Egyptian papyrus inscribed with the sharpness of a reed from the Nile' (*modo si papyrus Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam non spreveris inspicere*); 'reader, pay attention' (*lector intende*). And yet at the same time this reader can also discern flaws in Latin prose: 'Look then, I ask your pardon at the beginning, if I commit any offence, being an inexperienced speaker . . . (*en ecce praefamur veniam, siquid . . . rudis locutor offendero*).

opening sentences addresses his reader as 'Vous . . . vous qui tenez ce livre d'une main blanche, vous qui vous enfoncez dans un moelleux fauteuil en vous disant: "Peut-être ceci va-t-il m'amuser"' ('You . . . you, who hold this book in your white hand, you, who are nestling on a soft armchair while saying to yourself: "Maybe this is going to amuse me"'). This 'characterized fictive reader' is, as Schuerewegen (1987) shows, in no way to be equated with the implied reader of Balzac's novel.

<sup>7</sup> See Dowden, Ch. 12 in this volume ('Prohibition I'); see also Bitel, Ch. 13 in this volume, on the Prologue's intertextuality with Sisenna and Aristides. Callebat (1968: 272) gives many examples of the use of *iste* in dialogues in the *Met.*, where this pronoun appears to mean 'that . . . there with you/in your hands'. This interpretation of *isto* here concurs very well with Dowden's interpretation, Ch. 12 in this volume: 'that . . . which you know so well'.

#### 4. ADDRESSES TO THE READER THROUGHOUT THE *METAMORPHOSES*

After the Prologue we do not encounter such direct addresses to the fictive reader for quite a while.<sup>8</sup> But this lack of direct addresses does not contradict the image of the characterized fictive reader evoked in the Prologue. In ecphrasis this reader is often addressed as actually observing the work of art and responding to it:

*eum [latratum] putabis de faucibus lapidis exire (2.4)*<sup>9</sup>

(you would think it [the barking sound] had come from the marble's jaws)

*putes ad cibum inde quaedam [poma] . . . posse decerpi (2.4)*

(you would think that some of them [fruits] could be plucked for eating)

*si fontem . . . pronus aspexeris, credes . . . (2.4)*

(if you bent down and looked in the pool . . . you would think . . .)

*prima nostris luminibus occurrit (2.8)*

(it [a person's head and hair] is the first thing to meet our eyes)

*si . . . spoliaveris et . . . nudaveris (2.8)*

(if you were to strip . . . and rob)

*ea tu bono certe meo periculo latronum dixeris atria*<sup>10</sup> (4.6)

(you can take my word for it that here was the atrium of a band of robbers)

<sup>8</sup> One has, of course, to suppose communication with a characterized fictive reader every time the chief fictional narrator makes use of deictic forms like *ille*, *iste*, etc. Cf. also the numerous cases of *ecce* in the discourse of the chief narrator. See Heine (1962: 172–3), Callebat (1968: 422–3). Cf. also the (less frequent) cases of *en* in the discourse of the main narrator. In all these cases a fictive reader is envisaged who is highly susceptible to the dramatic qualities of the text. After all, as has been noticed by many, the 'I' of the Prologue has many traits of the *Prologus* of Roman Comedy (see Smith (1972); Winkler (1985: 200 ff.); Dowden (Ch. 12), and Slater (Ch. 19), in this volume, with references to further literature).

<sup>9</sup> English translations of Apuleius' *Met.* follow Hanson (1989).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. also 10. 32: 'You would have said that those . . . babies were real Cupids' (*illos . . . puellos diceret tu Cupidines*); 11. 8: 'so that you would call the one Bellerophon and the other Pegasus, but laugh at both' (*ut illum quidem Bellerophontem, hunc autem diceret Pegasum, tamen rideret utrumque*).



This addressed reader is sometimes asked to judge the narrator's descriptive skill:

*faxo vos quoque an mente etaim sensuque fuerim asinus sedulo sentiatis*  
(4.6)

(I shall let you effectively perceive whether in intelligence and perception I was the ass that I appeared to be)

## 5. DEMANDS ON THE READER

It is not until 8. 24 that the characterized fictive reader is directly addressed again, this time in an imperative form. The addresses in these chapters demand a different attitude from the reader. He may no longer lean back comfortably with only an open ear and eye to aesthetic qualities. The reader is urged, instead, to share the narrator's disgust for the mendacious priests. The narrator, reporting how he, as an ass, is sold to a perverted priest of the Dea Syria, draws the readers' attention to the utter depravity of his buyer:

*emptorem aptissimum duris meis casibus mire repertum obicit. scitote qualem* (8.24)

([savage Fortune] . . . discovered and placed in my path a purchaser perfectly suited to my harsh misfortunes. Listen and learn what sort of buyer he was)

In 8.28 the narrator wants the reader to see for himself what divine providence had in store for the depraved priest:

*specta denique quale caelesti providentia meritum reportaverit*

(now see what sort of reward he earned from divine providence)

and the characterized fictive reader is invited to imagine the sensational sight of the earth being soaked with the 'effeminate blood' of the mendacious priests who are putting on a disgusting show of self-mutilation:

*cerneres . . . solum . . . madescere*

(you could see the ground growing wet . . .)

The kind of tales offered in this Book 8, moreover, are no longer covered by the expression used in the Prologue: 'different stories in that Milesian style'. Nor can the narrative in this book be characterized as the 'agreeable whispering'

(*lepidus susurrus*), announced in the Prologue. Both the implied reader and the actual reader will have to adjust to this change.

In the introductions to the inner tales from Book 9 onwards, direct addresses to the reader appeal, once again, to the same characterized fictive reader as the one in the Prologue: In 9. 4 the tale of the Lover in the Tub is introduced by the phrase

*cognoscimus lepidam de adulterio cuiusdam pauperis fabulam, quam vos etiam cognoscatis volo*

(we heard an amusing story about the cuckolding of a certain poor workman which I want you to hear too).

The tale thus introduced is, indeed, funny and told with verve and humour. It does, indeed, offer the reader 'agreeable whispering' (*lepidus susurrus*). In 9. 14 the appeal to the fictive reader's sense of aesthetic value is heavily underscored by the announcement:

*fabulam denique bonam prae ceteris, suave comptam, ad auris vestras afferre decrevi, et en occipio*

(And so here is a story, better than all the others and delightfully elegant, which I have decided to bring to your ears. So here it goes)

The adverb *suave* ('delightfully'), combined with the reference to the reader's ears reminds us of the promise in the Prologue *ures vestras benivolas lepido susurro permulceam*. Despite his promise, this tale ends on a sombre note of black magic and death. There is a hint here for the implied reader: Not all tales fulfil the expectations which they arouse. What has happened to the initial promise of purely aesthetic joy?

Soon hereafter we encounter a rather surprising address to a fictive reader characterized as 'careful, scrupulous reader' (*lector scrupulosus*):

*sed forsitan lector scrupulosus reprehendens narratum meum sic argumentaberis . . . accipe igitur . . .* (9.30)

(But perhaps as a careful reader you will find fault with my story, reasoning as follows . . . So let me tell you . . .)

Actual readers have never felt much affinity for this fictive figure, as becomes clear from the many scholarly discussions of this passage.<sup>11</sup> Not only do the questions put in the mouth

<sup>11</sup> See Hijmans *et al.* (1995: 257) ad loc., with literature.

of this ‘careful reader’ strike the actual reader as absurdly irrelevant at this moment, but they are not even answered. From this point onwards we are presented with a confusing series of various fictive readers:

*iam ergo lector optime, scito te tragoediam, non fabulam legere et a socco ad coturnum ascendere* (10.2)<sup>12</sup>

(So now, excellent reader, know that you are reading a tragedy, and no light tale, and that you are rising from the lowly slipper to the lofty buskin)

*heu medicorum ignarae mentes . . .* (10.2)<sup>13</sup>

(Alas, the ignorance of doctors’ minds!)

*sed prius est ut vobis, quod initio facere debueram, vel nunc saltem referam, quis ille vel unde fuerit* (10.18)

(Before I go any further, I should at least tell you now (as I should have done at the start) who my owner was and where he came from)

*quid ergo miramini, vilissima capita, immo forensia pecora, immo vero togati vulturii, . . .* (10.33)

(Why are you so surprised, you cheap ciphers—or should I say sheep of the courts, or better still vultures in togas, . . .)

The actual readers confronting this vexing jumble of fictive audiences will no longer be able or willing to share all these roles: they may alternately feel attracted and repelled. It is clear that near the end of Book 10 there exists a wide gap between the characterized fictive reader(s) and the actual reader(s). Then follow some remarkable addresses to the characterized fictive reader in Book 11:

At 11. 3 the narrator expresses doubt that he will be able to share the wonder of the epiphany of Isis with his readers:

*eius mirandam speciem ad vos . . . referre conitar*

(I shall try to describe its marvellous appearance for you too)

<sup>12</sup> The ‘lowly slipper’ (*soccus*), and the ‘lofty buskin’ (*coturnus*) are used by Latin writers on poetics to indicate the dramatic genres of comedy (in which the actors were wearing slippers) and of tragedy (in which the actors walked on high buskins). See Horace, *Ars Poetica* 80, and the commentary of Brink ad loc.

<sup>13</sup> A parody of Virgil, *Aen.* 4. 65, at the beginning of his description of Dido’s passion for Aeneas: *heu vatium ignarae mentes* (‘Alas, the ignorance of seers’ minds’).

There is, finally, a whole cluster of addresses to a characterized fictive reader in 11. 23.

*quaeras forsitan satis anxie, studiose lector . . . cognosceres . . . nec te . . . cruciabo . . . audi . . . crede . . . ecce tibi rettuli quae, quamvis audita, ignores tamen necesse est.*

(Perhaps, my zealous reader, you are eager to learn . . . you would learn . . . I will not continue to torture you . . . listen . . . believe . . . I have told you things which perforce you may not know, although you have heard them.)

Such sentiments are very different from the alluring promises of 'that you may wonder' (*ut mireris*) and 'you will be pleased!' (*laetaberis*). They evoke quite another kind of characterized fictive reader. Also the instructions to the reader in the passage just quoted are a far cry from the suggestions made to the characterized fictive reader of the Prologue.

## 6. AUDIENCES' REACTIONS WITHIN THE FICTIONAL WORLD OF THE *METAMORPHOSES*

How can the implied reader cope with such bewildering shifts of reader roles? In order to answer this question it will be useful to pay attention to the numerous cases where, within the *Metamorphoses* itself, fictional audiences react divergently to tales and shows. Consider the following, more elusive example.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Some more examples of the different responses of fictional audiences: (a) The framing of the Tale of Aristomenes: 1. 3 and 1. 20; (b) Eager listening and questioning on the part of Milo, boredom and the wish to escape on the part of Lucius: 1. 26; (c) The spectacle of the sculpture group in the reception hall of Byrrhaena: nothing but aesthetic joy on the part of Lucius; warning expressed by Byrrhaena: 2. 5; (d) Diverging opinions on Pamphile's predictions: scepticism on the part of Milo and belief on the part of Lucius (2. 11-12). The same applies to the immediately following tale of the Chaldaean soothsayer (2. 12-14); (e) The tale of Thelyphron: *cachinnus* ('guffaw') on the part of the listeners: 2. 20 and again 2. 31, shame because of his mutilated face on the part of the narrator: 2. 30. One could add to these cases the episode of the fake oracle of the priests of the Dea Syria (9. 8): for every individual consulting the priests, who are repeating the same cryptic verses over and over, these verses contain a different message. Cf., finally, the different interpretations of Lucius' remetamorphosis in 11. 14-16: Lucius himself: dumbstruck; the bystanders: 'this man must have earned divine grace by his innocence and trustworthiness' and in between those reactions the lengthy sermon of the priest with yet another interpretation. See Winkler (1985: 211-12).

Several actual readers have censured Apuleius concerning the repetition of so many adultery tales in the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>15</sup> The first, the grim story of the crime of a steward (8. 22), is only the skeleton of an adultery tale. The fictional audience of this tale flees from it in dismay.<sup>16</sup> By contrast, the following tale of the cuckolded workman is a light-hearted adultery tale. There is no reaction to it by a fictional audience. Only the narrator, who has served as the fictional audience, reacts to this tale. He calls it an 'amusing story' (*lepidam fabulam*) which he wants to share with his reader.<sup>17</sup> Three intertwined adultery tales follow (9. 14–30). The innermost tale is the funny tale of the slippers, which has a happy ending. The fictional audience is the wife of the miller. Her response is eagerness to enact adultery herself. When her own adultery tale is under way, she is, again, the fictional audience for another adultery narrative: the one the miller tells her (while her lover is hiding under a wooden basket) about the discovery of the adultery of the fuller's wife.

The different members of the fictional audience to this tale have widely divergent experiences while listening to it. For the hidden lover it is a threatening tale, it scares him to death; for the adulterous wife it is a reason to keep her wits about her and to think of a way out; for the listening ass, Lucius, it is an occasion for pitying the miller all the more and for trying to avenge him. For a detached listening audience it is just another amusing adultery tale with a very predictable ending. These two adultery tales are framed by the account of the adultery of the miller's wife. The fictional audience of this framing tale is, in fact, Lucius the ass. His intrusion into the tale will in the end lead to the macabre death of the miller. The 'I' who presents this tale knows how it will end. And yet he announces it as a 'refined literary masterpiece'.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See, however, Tatum (1979: 75); Hijmans *et al.* (1995: 3 and 210).

<sup>16</sup> 'We fled from this abominable stopping-place too' (*Hac . . . detestabili deserta mansione . . .*, 8. 23).

<sup>17</sup> 'we heard an amusing story about the cuckolding of a certain poor workman, which I want you to hear too' (. . . *cognoscimus lepidam de adulterio cuiusdam pauperis fabulam, quam vos etiam cognoscatis volo*, 9. 4).

<sup>18</sup> 'And so here is a story, better than all the others and delightfully elegant, which I have decided to bring to your ears. So here goes' (*fabulam denique bonam prae ceteris, suavè comptam, ad auris vestras adferre decrevi, et en occipio*, 9. 14).

### 7. 'NO TWO PEOPLE READ THE SAME BOOK'

Instead of being a monotonous repetition of one and the same tale, the cluster of recurrent adultery tales illustrates that the varied responses of the fictional audiences are capable of completely altering the tenor of one and the same tale. The same might be said of all eleven books of the *Metamorphoses*: every reader brings his own individual situation and expectations into play when reading this book, and will respond to it accordingly. All this is already contained in the Prologue: the hedonistic amateur will find pleasure in the many fantastic stories and cunningly narrated Milesian tales. The literary connoisseur will enjoy the many exuberant prose passages and smile at the tops of modesty in the Prologue. The philosophically inclined will stress the suggestion of verbal therapy in the verb *permulcere* ('soothe'), and explain it in Platonic terms.<sup>19</sup> The reader who wants to detect Isis everywhere will sharpen the point of the Nilotic reed pen applied to the Egyptian papyrus.

### 8. CONCLUSION: 'DO NOT SCORN TO SCRUTINIZE AND TO BE CURIOUS . . . YOU WILL BE PLEASED'

Perhaps it is demanded of the implied reader of the *Metamorphoses* to pay attention to all these possibilities at once. What seems to be an invitation to sit back and be amused by a string of 'Milesian tales' in fact offers, on a second reading, numerous hints of a more demanding type of text.<sup>20</sup> It has recently been argued that the puzzling opening word of the Prologue, *at*, should, as elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses*, be taken very closely to *ego*, and that the whole phrase *at ego . . . inspicere* suggests a contrast with some previous statement which we should supply ourselves.<sup>21</sup> One could then understand the phrase as '(Other Milesian Tales which you no doubt have read have offered only entertainment . . .), but I, while

<sup>19</sup> See Schlam (1992: 46–7).

<sup>20</sup> See also Kahane (1996), on the 'metamorphosis' of the speaker of the Prologue, analysed in terms of speech act theory.

<sup>21</sup> Münstermann (1995: 66 ff.).

using that self-same *sermo Milesius*, would like to convey a more serious message containing Egyptian religious lore . . .'. Remarkably, when the reader is asked not to decline to examine this papyrus, the verb *inspicere* is used. It occurs only once more in the *Metamorphoses*: when Psyche is told not to be curious and look inside the jar she has to carry to Venus.<sup>22</sup> In his *Apology*, however, Apuleius uses *inspicere* frequently, always with the connotation of scholarly enquiry, close scrutiny, and philosophical curiosity.<sup>23</sup> For even when Apuleius talks about *inspicere in speculum* ('looking into a mirror'), he presents looking into a mirror as an eminently philosophical occupation. As actual readers we too are invited to carry on our careful examination of the text of the *Metamorphoses*, reflecting on what we see reflected there.

<sup>22</sup> 'not to open or look into the jar' (*ne velis . . . inspicere illam . . . pyxidem*, 6. 19).

<sup>23</sup> . . . *in speculum inspexerim* (13. 8 'that I have looked into a mirror'; the author here compares looking into a mirror with forbidden prying into mysteries); 14. 1 *cedo nunc, si et inspexisse me fateor* . . . ('I admit, even if I confess having looked [into a mirror]'); 16. 6 (Archimedes) . . . *inspexerat speculum saepe ac diligenter* ('Archimedes . . . had often diligently examined a mirror'); 40. 6 *a me pisciculum inspectum sciatis* ('that you know of one little fish having been studied by me'); *ibid.* . . . *plurimos (piscis) . . . aequae inspexerim* ('that I have similarly studied many fishes'); 41. 2 *atqui maius crimen est philosopho comesse piscis quam inspicere* ('And yet, for a philosopher, it is a more severe crime to eat fish than it is to study them'); 48. 3 *medicus, a quo mulier ad inspiciendum perducta est* ('the physician who conducted a woman to me to be examined'); 48. 11 *petitu medici a me inspectam (mulierem)* ('on request of the physician she has been examined by me'); 51. 9 *ad inspiciendum mulier aegra . . . ad me perducta* ('a sick woman, conducted to me to be examined'); 53. 8 *numquam se ait inspexisse* ('he says that he never has scrutinized [magical objects]'); 53. 9 . . . *libere scrutandum et inspiciendum* ('[magical objects] to be scrutinized and observed at will'); 53. 11 . . . *facultas inspiciendi* ('the facility to look at [magical objects]'); 54. 5 *cur aegram mulierem inspexisti?* ('why did you examine a sick woman?'); 82. 7 *sine omnia inspiciam (a) principio ad finem perlegam* ('permit me to inspect all [of the letter], and to read it from beginning to end'); 103. 2 '*speculam inspicis*'. *Debet philosophus* ('"You are looking into a mirror". That is what a philosopher should do').

From Prologue to Story:  
Metaphor and Narrative  
Construction in the Opening  
of the *Metamorphoses*

PAULA JAMES

INTRODUCTION

Current approaches to the conundrum of the Prologue emphasize the author's linguistic games with his reader. The underlying question is what kind of audience is Apuleius assuming, or even constructing, to participate in his nexus of rhetorical *topoi*. Attention has been drawn to the tensions between images of control and supplication, forecasts of success juxtaposed to alleged fears of failure, reinforced by notable military metaphors of conquest and captivity. We may add to these some subtle ambiguities within the Prologue which mirror, with hindsight, the ranges of tone in the work to come; mystical, comical, laborious, light-hearted; entertaining, enlightening.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this contribution to the Prologue debate is to extend the connections between the preface and the story of Lucius by an exploration of overlapping themes and metaphors. The controversial phrase *desultoriae scientiae* (the 'leaping skill'), introduced by the author towards the end of the Prologue, will be a keystone of the discussion.<sup>2</sup> It will be argued

<sup>1</sup> See Kahane 1996 for an examination of levels of linguistic duplicity: moves back and forward from humility to confident assertion. The military metaphors were noted by James (1987: 30–1), and have been more rigorously explored by Laird (work in progress). Edwards, Ch. 5 in this volume, comments on the pose of Roman embarrassment over cultural inferiority. Van Mal-Maeder (1997), *passim*, suggests a restoration of a comical ending for the Latin novel in tune with the promise of enjoyment at the end of the Prologue.

<sup>2</sup> Teuber (1993: 179), sees this as a direct analogy—the writing tool (*stilus*)



that the concept of horsemanship, implicit in the image of *desultoria scientia*, functions as a metaphor of manipulation within the relationship of author/reader.<sup>3</sup> In the Prologue Apuleius establishes the premiss that horse and rider depend upon mutual trust and confidence in each other's abilities in order to perform successfully.

Although Apuleius is the one who transports us upon the narrative journey, he decides how to reward our expectations and remains master of the medium and the message. In this respect, the reader becomes the biddable animal to be coaxed along by the author, for the conscious decision to read this text signifies a willing suspension of other activities, just as Lucius, the protagonist of the novel, breaks his journey, dismounting and then succumbing to the seductive story of the supernatural told by Aristomenes.<sup>4</sup> When this first story is finished Lucius makes a joke about his ears rather than his horse carrying him over the steep hill (1. 21 *non dorso illius sed meis auribus pervecto*), a thematic coda we ignore at our peril.

### CLEARING THE GROUND

The Prologue is characterized by metaphorical gymnastics, moving back and forward between associations. In fact the demonstration of fancy footwork in the language has already taken place before the author advertises it as his special technique at the close of the section. It is at the end of the

is guided by a skilfulness which compares with the control of the circus rider. The writer stands in the same relationship to his narrative as the rider does to his horse.

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to the survey by F. M. Ahl (1984), esp. the observations on Horace, p. 53, manipulative flattery, riding metaphors, p. 81, and deliberate faltering, 100-1. Also invaluable to this line of enquiry is the discussion on Boccaccio in Calvino (1992: 39): 'The novella is a horse, a means of transport with its own pace, a trot or a gallop according to the distance and the ground it has to travel over; but the speed Boccaccio is talking about is a mental speed. The listed defects of the clumsy storyteller are above all offenses against rhythm, as well as being defects of style, because he does not use the expressions appropriate either to the characters or the events. In other words, even correctness of style is a question of quick adjustment, of agility of both thought and expression.'

<sup>4</sup> The reader is also embarking upon a journey. Laird has work in progress on the metaphorical travelling through the text.

Prologue when Apuleius writes of the style he has adopted as *desultoria scientia*, the leaping skill associated with equine display. Perhaps a further choice the author allows his reader can be found in the mutually exclusive images such metaphors present. *Conseram* ('I shall plant, weave', even 'tie together' in Hanson) is an early illustration of this technique.

The 'planting' and 'scattering' connections of the Latin word *conseram* can be pursued and satisfactorily sustained in the metaphor of 'cultivation' which the author suggests by his use of *excolui* (translated 'I have cultivated' by Hanson), and the word the author chooses to demonstrate how he thoroughly learned, or conquered the new language, after 'attacking' (*aggressus*) it. The previous emphasis upon the celebrated soil of his origins and their fertility in famous books has prepared the reader for the agricultural flavour. The appearance of the word *stilus* in the penultimate sentence of the Prologue puts the finishing touch to this particular linguistic line. The sentence is enigmatic, to say the least, and *stilus* seems to mean, in this context, 'type of writing'. It can, however, be used for 'a weeding tool'!

There are even richer connotations for *conseram* if it is rendered as 'I shall weave'.<sup>5</sup> This would anticipate *exordior*, which can carry the same meaning, and which then would signify that the weaving had begun (with the attendant implications that the transformations start at that precise point in the preface). The suggestion that Apuleius is spinning a web of metamorphoses evokes the story of Arachne and Ovid's memorable interpretation of her tragedy as one who has been left her skill but deprived of her art. Arachne is in the same league as prophets who abuse their divine insight,<sup>6</sup> but in

<sup>5</sup> See Kahane, Ch. 21 in this volume. For further appearances of the weaving motif, especially the web of deceit woven by the sisters in the narrative of Cupid and Psyche: 5. 16. Dowden, Ch. 12 in this volume, discusses the challenge of *conseram* in the context of the Prologue. Edwards, Ch. 5 in this volume, follows the elaborate metaphor of the Greek *pallium* ('the woven cloak'), used by Tertullian to illuminate Roman linguistic colonization. Lucius voluntarily promises to 'clothe' the god Risus with a fine jest at the festival of laughter: *Met.* 2. 31. The text and texture interplay has endless proliferations.

<sup>6</sup> The prophetic insight of Ocyrhoe results in a punitive transformation into a mare, with a painful moment of limbo, when she can neither speak nor neigh (Ovid, *Met.* 2. 635–75). This was drawn to my attention by Dr B. J. Hijmans.

addition to this crime, she vehemently denies that she had been taught her inspired artistry by the goddess of weaving herself, thus depriving Minerva of a crucial part of her divine identity: *scires a Pallade doctam | quod tamen ipsa negat tantaque offensa magistra* (*Met.* 6. 24–5). ‘It must have been known that she was taught by Pallas, a fact which Arachne herself denied; she was even insulted by such a teacher’.<sup>7</sup>

The voice of the Apuleian prologue also claims to have acquired his skill in Latin without any teacher as a guide (*nullo magistro praeunte*). Like Arachne the author of the prose *Metamorphoses* will cause wonder at his particular brand of weaving (*ut mireris*). Ovid describes the nymphs coming to watch Arachne right from the start of the process (she is preparing the rough wool (*rudem lanam*)), and finding it a compelling sight (6. 15 *adspicerent opus admirabile*). This resonance encourages the critic herself to indulge in some intertextual acrobatics and to wonder if the Prologue speaker is hinting that the *rudis locutor* (‘rough speaker’) is, nevertheless, as worthy and wondrous to be heard as Ovid’s Arachne was to be observed.<sup>8</sup>

In Ovid, Envy itself is unable to find any fault with Arachne’s tapestry (6. 129–30) even though the work depicts *caelestia crimina* (‘the crimes of the gods’). Her portrayal of transformations is so lifelike that it deceives the eye and removes barriers between representation and reality. At various points in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* a familiar legend becomes validated in the experience of one of the novel’s fictional characters. Charite (6. 29) cites the story of Europa, an abduction myth depicted by Ovid’s Arachne, to lend credibility to her speculations about the nature of her saviour, Lucius the ass.

<sup>7</sup> The phrase also has its echoes in Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 2. 479–80. The sexual act needs no teacher, a procreative process which denies not Venus but the art of Venus any credit for the ‘work’ produced: *quid facerent, ipsi nullo didicere magistro: | arte Venus nulla dulce peregit opus* (‘what they did, they learned without any teacher: passion completed the pleasurable act and art was absent’). In contrast, however, Longus’ *Daphnis and Chloe* 2. 7 introduces a teacher to nudge the naive lovers along.

<sup>8</sup> For Winkler (1985: 196–9), this phrase summons up the programmatic statement of Callimachus. *Lepido susurro* (‘the seductive whisper’) is the sweet and slender sound of the cicada but the actual sound produced by the narrator of the Apuleian *Met.* is unexpectedly transformed into the ‘braying of asses’ by means of the Latin *rudens* (‘braying’).

At the same time, she finds the story of Europa more feasible because of the manner of her escape. The double bluff continues with Charite eager to recommit reality to representation. She promises the ass immortalization in literature and art, so that their story too will become the stuff of subjective creativity.<sup>9</sup>

An exercise of this type, stretching the metaphors to their limit, demonstrates what a wealth of stylistic registers and intertextual allusions this kind of linguistic leaping can produce. It is possible to detect a number of programmatic statements here, but ultimately some kind of main link could be boldly grasped. It seems to me that the most accessible and consistent image is that of switchback lore. For this reason I am moving quite deliberately from the external to the internal resonances of the Prologue, for my aim is to highlight the working-out of the relationship between the 'authorial' preamble and the 'ego-narrative', rather than to pursue the dialogue Apuleius is conducting with other texts.

### SEEING THE JOINS

The almost immediate fulfilment of the Prologue's promise, ear-stroking, leaping, and listening with pleasure establishes the close relationship between the preface and the story that follows. The author's promise in the very first line of the Prologue is to stroke the ears of his readers (*ures permulceam*). This implies an asinine but attentive audience to match the asinine but attentive narrator of the story that follows. Lucius the ass is a unique phenomenon, an aesthetically aware ass.<sup>10</sup> However, the animal who is actually stroked shortly after the promise of the Prologue is the hero's horse, of considerably higher prestige than a donkey and a more noble symbol to link with the implied readers of the opening lines.

<sup>9</sup> Fowler, Ch. 20 in this volume, discusses Charite's eagerness to immortalize her experience in art and literature. See also de Jong, Ch. 18 in this volume, on the characters' eagerness to authenticate myth through the reality of their own adventures.

<sup>10</sup> See James (1991: 171), on the issuing of asses' ears to the audience to ensure the successful transmission and reception of *lepidae fabulae* ('charming stories'). Gowers (Ch. 8) and Henderson (Ch. 17) in this volume, detect further nuances.

There are other aspects to the bargain made between writer and reader. The Prologue author reassures the reader that s/he is in safe hands. When a magical journey of metamorphosis is on offer, it would seem wise to guarantee a restoration of reality for participants. This is the responsibility of the 'performer/producer'.<sup>11</sup> The author indicates that he has taken great pains to acquire his literary art, but in case he should offend (*si offendero*), he seeks pardon beforehand (*praefamur veniam*). The 'tripping' element contained in the word *offendero* stands out in sharper relief because of the phrase *desultoriae scientiae* which follows.<sup>12</sup> The rapport required between horse and rider once again comes to mind, skill and trust being vital for a successful performance in the circus ring.

There is a less complex reading of the peculiar realization of the ear-stroking at 1. 2. It could be reduced to Apuleian mischief, as the horse is the first to enjoy the physical sensation which was promised on the aesthetic plane for the reader.<sup>13</sup> However, the opening scene of Lucius' adventures demands closer scrutiny for further resonances and recycling of motifs from the Prologue itself. The narrative journey of the Prologue is paralleled by the description of Lucius on his business trip to Thessaly. The narrator of the preface and the hero of the novel both have some purchase on places made famous by celebrated authors and their works. Both are embarking upon a new enterprise; the earlier narrator relies upon the mastering of the native language (*indigenam sermonem*) for his progress; Lucius has hired a native horse (*equo indigeno*) to see him safely through strange terrain.

The centrality of the horse in this process suggests that this

<sup>11</sup> See James (1987: 29) for the conjuring technique of promising excitement in the safe knowledge that normality will be re-established. This interpretation of the phrase *et in se rursus mutuo nexu refectas ut mireris* ('and restored to themselves again, in a reciprocal contract, so that you will be amazed') perhaps stretches the metaphor of *circulator* performance raised by Scobie (1975) in his introd. and commentary on Book 1.

<sup>12</sup> I am grateful for Anton Bitel's comment at the 1996 Oxford conference in which he drew attention to the verbal stumbling (*incerta verborum salebra balbutire*) of the exhausted Lucius at 1. 26.

<sup>13</sup> Or so I argued (1987: 33). My contention that this was a wordplay which made a joke of the reader's expectations and the declared programme of the author does not, on reflection, do justice to the narratological complexity of Apuleius' technique.

metaphor is at least one of the narrative keys to the novel. Horsemanship identifies the speaker of the Prologue with the hero of the novel and simultaneously sets up the model of the attentive and transported reader who is none other than Lucius himself. In addition to this connection, the circumstances surrounding the telling and the reception of Aristomenes' story mirror the dialogic quality of the Apuleian preface. The structural repetition further destabilizes distinctions between the introduction and the narrative that follows: 'It is never possible to say quite clearly where "the speaker" ends and "Lucius" begins.'<sup>14</sup>

Another option—and one which complements the horse/reader identification—is to trace an attested metaphor which transforms the reader into a horse to be handled stealthily but persuasively by the potential rider, i.e. the author. Horace uses the image in *Satires* 1. 2. The poet is postponing the panegyric on Caesar to a more diplomatic time with a mock concern that clumsy stroking (*male palpere*) will antagonize the main recipient of the piece. Apuleius may be approaching his reader as he would a thoroughbred horse. The soothing whisper and the massaging of the ears will ensure cooperation.

### HORSES FOR COURSES

The *equus peralbus* ('whiter than white horse') ridden by Lucius on his journey to Hypata is a symbolically loaded steed. In the education of adolescents, the ancients viewed youthful skill in horsemanship as a sign of developing maturity. Lucius is concerned for his horse and attentive to its needs but he prolongs his separation from his mount in spite of the slippery valley roads (*lubrica vallium*) on the way to Hypata. Lucius leaps down from his horse, a voluntary relinquishing of the reins, which can be read as a dangerous move, if we *look ahead* in the narrative to the saddling and riding he is to suffer himself.<sup>15</sup> It is interesting to recall the priest's words in Book 11 where

<sup>14</sup> Gowers, Ch. 8 in this volume.

<sup>15</sup> Drake (1964: 103–4), deals with *desilio* and its implications of the debased fantasy in which the hero becomes embroiled upon dismounting. Schwarz (1979), sees disaster in the incomplete trick heralded in the Prologue and takes it as an indication of Lucius' voluntary release of control. Henceforward, he will be ridden and burdened both as man and ass.

Lucius' youthfulness is judged as the reason for his helter-skelter slide into slavish pleasures (11. 15 *lubrico virentis aetatulae ad serviles delapsus voluptates*). The hero has already admitted that he was eager to leap even further down into the dangerous pit of magic (*et prorsus in ipsum barathrum saltu concito praecipitare*). Significantly, his horse, Candidus, is restored to him at a crucial moment in his initiation, his coming of age in the religion of Isis and Osiris.

'Candidus' has been re-evaluated as representing the better self of Lucius and symbolic of his aspirations to immortality. This interpretation draws on the Platonic white horse of the Soul, but an alternative reading notes the absence of the black horse and argues that this skews the philosophical equation from *Phaedrus*, for Candidus needs a counterpart in order to play his role effectively.<sup>16</sup> The ethical reading of Lucius' dismounting cries out for some counterposing on the narrative level; in other words, where does one place this symbolically elusive animal in relation to the structural discourse of the novel?

Our primary narrator, Lucius, very rapidly passes over the reins of storytelling to Aristomenes at this early stage in his journey and puts himself in the position of listener, to be charmed and persuaded along with his readers. His decision to delay is a felicitous one because he falls in with entertaining companions. The tedium of sitting in the saddle is relieved by the intellectual stimulations of Aristomenes' spellbinding story, the lifting of Lucius' spirits is a bonus to his physical revival. He is inspired to draw philosophical lessons from the experience at 1. 20. This reaction can be interpreted as highly appropriate, not just because the fate of Socrates has its Platonic resonances, but because the phrase *fatigatio sedentaria* denotes intellectual stagnation as well as saddle soreness.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See Drake (1964: 105), and Thibau (1965: 102).

<sup>17</sup> *'Ego vero, inquam, nihil impossibile arbitror, sed utcumque fata decreverint, ita cuncta mortalibus provenire. nam et mihi et tibi et cunctis hominibus multa usu venire mira et paene infecta, quae tamen ignaro relata fidem perdant. Sed ego huic et credo hercules et gratas gratias memini, quod lepidae fabulae festivitate nos avocavit, asperam denique prolixam viam sine labore ac taedio evasi. quod beneficium etiam illum vectorem meum credo laetari, sine fatigatione sui me usque at istam civitatis portam non dorso illius sed meis auribus pervecto.'* ('Well,' I said, 'I consider nothing to be impossible. However the fates decide, that is the

Lucius heightened his receptivity by getting down from his horse.

In *Florida* 21, Apuleius in his role as epideictic orator recommends the appropriate occasion for delaying even an urgent journey. A traveller may have pressing business and been compelled to take a hazardous and uncomfortable ride across rough terrain. He may have picked a horse especially suited to such an enterprise. However, if the rider meets a well-born traveller of great wisdom and fame, then he should not pass over the chance of good and enlightening conversation. In the passage Apuleius details the scenario, how to manage the courteous approach and to engage in urbane conversation:

*tamne honoris eius gratia cohibent cursum, relevant gradum, retardant equum et ilico in pedes desiliunt, fruticem, quem verberando equo gestant, eam virgam in laevam manum transferunt. itaque eam virgam expedita dextra adeunt ac salutant et, si diutule ille quippiam percontetur, ambulant diutule et fabulantur, denique quantumvis morae in officio libenter insumunt.*

(In deference to the man, travellers stay their course: they relax their pace, rein in their horse, jump down to their feet there and then, and pass to their left hand the stick, which they use as a riding switch to beat encouragement into the horse. In this way, they leave their right hand free as they approach and greet the stranger. If he engages them in conversation for some little time, they walk and talk for the duration; in short, they willingly accept the extent of the delay in discharge of the duty of politeness.)

This is, on the surface, a simple lesson in good manners: the delay he should suffer, however much of a hurry the hard-pressed traveller may be in. It is tempting, all the same, to

way everything turns out for mortal men. I and you and all human beings actually experience many strange and unparalleled events which are disbelieved when reported to someone who is ignorant of them. But as for Aristomenes, not only do I believe him, by Hercules, but I am extremely grateful to him for diverting us with this charming and delightful story. I have come out of this rough stretch of road without either toil or boredom. I think my conveyer is happy over that favour too: without tiring him I have ridden all the way to this city gate here, not on his back, but on my own ears.) (Hanson's (1989) trans.). Thibau (1965: 102), draws attention to the Platonic resonances of *fatigatio sedentaria*. There is surely more than a nod and a wink to the reader on how to receive stories of the supernatural, such as were heralded in the Prologue.



detect an implied homily, a warning against lost opportunities for a highly educational and entertaining exchange. Returning to the Prologue with this first scene of the novel in mind, a journey interrupted and a rider distracted, the reader reviews the first words, converting them into an arresting and delaying tactic directed at a potential audience. *At ego tibi* is startling as if the author is in competition with rival attractions and urging the reader to choose his texts before others.<sup>18</sup>

Parallels have been drawn between the tone of the Apuleian Prologue and the Plautus plays, but it is Terence's addresses to the audience that cast light on the technique of persuasion used here. Terence's play *Hecyra*, *The Mother-in-Law*, was well known for losing out to more entertaining displays. Apuleius could be simultaneously addressing a settled audience or a restless one who must be steered away from other distractions. He could even be on the lookout for the casual passer-by, in which case the reader could be cast in the role of the horseman who, by dismounting, accepts the author's offer of entertainment in preference to others. Tightrope walking and gladiator contests must fade into insignificance when magical metamorphoses and literary circus tricks are on the advertising poster.<sup>19</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Lucius' initial actions in the story of the ass are highly significant for interpretations of the Prologue to the novel. The anaphoric aspects of the opening of the story are frequently bypassed because this opening scene contains compelling cataphoric pointers toward the hero's near-fatal obsession and

<sup>18</sup> Where did Apuleius get that *at*? The old woman in the robbers' cave also announces her story with an adversative conjunction, *sed ego te narrationibus lepidis anilibusque fabulis protinus avocabo* ('but I shall forthwith divert you with a charming narrative, an old wives' tale'), noted by Gowers, Ch. 8 in this volume. It could be argued that the old woman is vying with Charite to tell a more entertaining story than Charite's own eventful autobiography or that the housekeeper narrator, like the Prologue speaker, is promising her listener, Charite, an engrossing distraction. The girl is a captive audience, not likely to go off to rival attractions, but she does, soon after, ride out of the cave upon the back of Lucius the ass.

<sup>19</sup> In the very first story, Socrates admits to breaking his journey because he was tempted to view a *spectaculum* or a display (1. 7). See also the allusion in *Flor.* 5.

infatuation with the supernatural. Critics take the symbols and metaphors forward, particularly the appearance of the *equus peralbus* which returns as Candidus in Book 11. It is equally impossible to demarcate the Prologue from the story, for Apuleius alerts us, albeit obliquely, to the seamlessness of the transition, at the same time, playfully, on the surface, parading the joins.

The leaping skill announced by the author has if anything been overfulfilled. For an interpreter of this metaphor a giddy trajectory emerges in which the horse and rider image shifts constantly so that the writer and the reader truly ‘jockey for position’. It is not merely a matter of changing horses but also of changing forms. Our preoccupation with changes in narrative personae deflects us from the fragmentation of the reader’s role in this piece of showmanship. In this respect the rules of the narrative game invented by Apuleius are probably easier to follow than to understand.<sup>20</sup> The Horatian metaphor of manipulation, horse and rider, only partly illuminates the complexity of the Apuleian technique. The reading of this novel truly deserves to be chosen in preference to any other experience. The Prologue immediately markets it with promise and panache, persuading the reader that the diversion and delay in absorbing the work will be worthwhile. In fact we are encouraged to ‘hold our horses’ as the novel heralds ‘that’s entertainment’: *lector intende: laetaberis*.

<sup>20</sup> Going with the flow is one of the creative survival strategies suggested for the reader by Henderson, Ch. 17 in this volume.

## Paradox and Transcendence: The Prologue as The End

ANDREW LAIRD

The nature of the character of the novel cannot be presented any better than is done in this statement, which says that the 'meaning' of his life is revealed only in his death. But the reader of the novel actually does look for characters from whom he derives the 'meaning of life'. Therefore he must, no matter what, know in advance that he will share their experience of death: if need be their figurative death—the end of the novel—but preferably their actual one.

Walter Benjamin, *The Storyteller*

The Prologue of the *Metamorphoses* is a unique explication of a form of first person narrative that is itself unusual. In addition to all its other functions and properties, this Prologue can be regarded as the *conclusion* to the narrative it serves to introduce. In this discussion I shall first consider the discrete roles of discourse (*sermo*) and narrative (*fabula*) in the Prologue, and then the ways in which they are paradoxically conjoined. That examination will reveal new links between the Prologue and the text to follow—especially the last chapter of the last book of the *Metamorphoses* (11. 30). An important feature of the Prologue has been overlooked: its evocation of the language of Roman funerary inscriptions which exhort passers-by to read them. Such observations form the basis for my suggestion that the Prologue is a *coda*, if not an actual ending, to the story it heralds. This point is more than a matter of stylistic interest: I intend to show that it has a crucial bearing on the religious message of the *Metamorphoses* as a whole.

I am grateful for Ahuvia Kahane's refined criticism. This is one place to thank Adriana Cavarero for introducing me to Walter Benjamin: *deae quidem me tantum sacris imbutum, at magni dei deumque parentis necdum sacris illustratum!*

## I. *SERMO* AND *FABULA*; DISCOURSE AND NARRATIVE

The Prologue is frequently regarded as being somehow disjointed from the narrative which succeeds it.<sup>1</sup> Here I shall explain why this has come about in terms of Émile Benveniste's celebrated distinction between 'discourse' (*discours*) and 'narrative' (*histoire*).<sup>2</sup> Discourse may be understood as conversation or firmly contextualized utterances which are attributable to an 'I' who is the speaker. Discourse can be signalled by certain grammatical forms (e.g. first and second person pronouns, present tenses). Narrative, by contrast, is 'disembodied' and can be signalled by grammatical forms such as third person pronouns and aorist tenses.

However, narrative and discourse are not mutually exclusive: the former can be subsumed by the latter. The Latin terms *sermo* and *fabula*, as they are actually used in the Prologue, can be shown to correspond roughly to 'discourse' and 'narrative' respectively.<sup>3</sup> Both words in Latin can mean 'talk' or 'conversation', but their deployment here suggests that *fabulae* are contained within the *sermo*. The sonic and indeed etymological wordplay of *sermone* with *conseram* ('let me join together') in the first sentence of the Prologue is also pertinent. Again, the word *isto* ('in *this* Milesian style') in the first clause also has a clear deictic force: it indicates that this very text we are reading labels itself as *sermo*.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Harrison (1990) articulates this common view on the Prologue. Laird (1993a: 158–9) provides a limited retort. Significantly, the last book of the *Met.* has also been regarded as somehow distinct from the books which precede it. Fusillo (1997: 223) is the latest to subscribe to this orthodoxy: '[in] the eleventh book . . . Lucius suddenly disappears, the African rhetor from Madaura appears, and the novel is partially transformed into autobiography'—cf. e.g. Gwyn Griffiths (1975: 1–7). My discussion should show that such views about 11 are related to similar views about the Prologue, and that both sets of views are misconceived.

<sup>2</sup> Benveniste (1966). Laird (1990) considers broader implications of Benveniste's distinctions for Roman prose fiction. Although that distinction is not foolproof (see e.g. Genette (1988: 98–9)), it provides a useful point of departure.

<sup>3</sup> See the pertinent *OLD* articles and Callebaut (1968: 272–3).

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. *Met.* 4. 27, 4. 32, 10. 2, 11. 23 and my discussion in Laird (1990: 137–9).

A comparison of the Prologue with the final part of the very last chapter of the *Metamorphoses* (11. 30), highlights, among other things, the difference of degree between the Prologue as *sermo* and the greater part of the text as *fabula*. However, the greater part of the *Metamorphoses*, like this passage from 11. 30, is also written in the 'first person':

*Nec hercules laborum me sumptuumque quidquam tamen paenituit—quidni?—liberali deum providentia iam stipendiis forensibus bellule fotum. Denique post dies admodum pauculos deus deum magnorum potior, et maiorum summus, et summorum maximus, et maximorum regnator Osiris, non (in) alienam quampiam personam reformatus, sed coram suo illo venerando me dignatus adfamime per quietem recipere visus est: quae nunc incunctanter gloriosa in foro redderem patrocinia, nec extimescerem malevolorum disseminationes, quas studiorum meorum laboriosa doctrina ibidem exciebat. Ac ne sacris suis gregi cetero permixtus deservirem, in collegium me pastophorum suorum, immo inter ipsos decurionum quinquennales adlegit: rursus denique qua raso capillo collegii vetustissimi et sub illis Syllae temporibus conditi munia, non obumbrato vel obtecto calcitio sed quoquoversus obvio, gaudens obibam.*

(Nor did I regret in any way my toils and expenses—after all the liberal providence of the gods made sure I was now well looked after by my campaigns in the legal profession. Finally, after just a few days, the more powerful god of the great gods, the highest of the greater, greatest of the highest, and ruler of the greatest, Osiris, not transformed into any other guise, but deigning to receive me directly with his own venerable utterance appeared in my sleep and commanded me without hesitation to win glory in the court as an advocate and not to fear the words put about by malevolent people, which the laborious acquisition of my education there was prompting. Furthermore, so that I should not serve his mysteries among the rest of his congregation he elected me to the college of his *Pastophori*, in fact numbering me among his decurions and quinquennial priests. Then again, shaving my head completely, neither covering nor hiding my baldness, but showing it wherever I went, I rejoiced to carry out the duties of that most ancient college founded in the time of Sulla.)

Though in the first person, the passage quoted above is clearly 'narrative' in a sense in which the Prologue is not. There is an easy way to illustrate this. All the first person verb and pronoun forms in 11. 30 could be converted into third person forms and the elements of the story would be clear and comprehensible though differently expressed. By contrast, the Prologue would

have a completely different sense if a similar substitution were effected. Again, more specifically, past historic tenses abound in 11. 30 while there are only two aorist perfect forms in the Prologue: *merui* ('I earned'); *excolui* ('I cultivated').

## 2. THE PROLOGUE AS *SERMO*

The Prologue is an explicit presentation of a written text as a form of discourse. The first word *at* ('But') suggests that this opening sentence is continuing or interrupting something already said. The next two words *ego tibi* ('I . . . to you') enhance the resemblance this written text has to spoken discourse. The first and second person expressions throughout draw attention to its addressee as well as its 'speaker'.<sup>5</sup> The actual diction of the Prologue draws attention to a power relation between speaker and addressee residing in language. Language (in the sense of a native or foreign tongue) and discourse are specifically discussed. The Latin word *sermo* has both meanings.

Military terminology is in fact used to describe the speaker's acquisition of the Greek tongue.<sup>6</sup> The fact that *linguam* (literally: 'tongue') also denotes a tongue of land or promontory, might enhance the metaphor of a military campaign. The same kind of terminology is applied to the speaker's mastery, as it were, of Latin. The use of the words *Latia urbe* ('the Latian city') to signify 'Rome' might serve to accentuate a notion of the city as a community of Latin speakers. The word *advena* ('newcomer') is also found in a similar collocation in Virgil's *Aeneid* 7. 37-40—a passage which itself has a prologic function:

*Nunc age, qui reges, Erato, quae tempora, rerum  
quis Latio antiquo fuerit status, advena classem  
cum primum Ausoniis exercitus appulit oris,  
expediam . . .*

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. de Jong (Ch. 18), Fowler (Ch. 20), and Kahane (Ch. 21) in this volume.

<sup>6</sup> James (1987: 30) supports this and sees the speaker of this text (masquerading) as a Greek who acquires Latin as a second language. Vallette in Robertson (1972: p. xiv) cited in James (1987) maintains that Greek, though spoken in North Africa, was not a school language. For the history of language learning in late antiquity, see Dionisotti (1982). See also James, Ch. 23 in this volume.

(Now come, Erato, I will relate who the kings were, what the times were like and what the state of things was in ancient *Latium*, at the first point when a *newcoming* army brought its fleet to the Ausonian shores . . .)

That use of *advena* deepens the suggestion here of the language speaker as a kind of foreign conqueror.<sup>7</sup> Language is at once the locus, object, and instrument of a power struggle. That power struggle then emerges as a feature of the relationship between speaker and addressee in the next sentence of Apuleius' Prologue:

*en ecce praefamur veniam, si quid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero.*

(So look then, I'm begging your pardon in advance, if as a raw speaker of this exotic and forensic tongue I give offence.)

Considered in this light, the sentence looks less like an apology.<sup>8</sup> The speaker, after all, is not apologizing for something he has done, but for something he is still going to do. The verb *offendere* typically conveys the sense of violent (military) action. As the object of the struggle, Latin is characterized as foreign and alien. Languages are not only indices of ethnic identity: activities, professions, and privileged groups have their own 'languages'.<sup>9</sup> Latin might be an asset as the language of the world market place. But *forensis* could contain an ironic slight: a language of the market place is also vulgar.<sup>10</sup> The fact that the text itself is referred to as a *sermo* (*At ego tibi sermone* etc.) in itself gives some ground for linking these observations: the speaker uses the medium and instrument of discourse to wield power over his addressee.

<sup>7</sup> Later in *Aeneid* 12. 261 Tolumnius describes Aeneas as *inprobus advena* ('impudent newcomer'). Virgil, *Ecl.* 9. 2 and Apuleius' use of the word in *Met.* 8. 31 show the word is tantamount to *hostis* ('enemy').

<sup>8</sup> The courtesy of the apology *praefamur veniam* ('We are begging your pardon in advance') does not necessarily raise the addressee's status: such apologies are conventional in a number of ancient prefaces. See Scobie (1975: ad loc.).

<sup>9</sup> Bourdieu (1991: 37–102) (on the economy of linguistic exchange) shows in some detail how this works.

<sup>10</sup> Scobie (1975: ad loc.) translates *forensis* as 'foreign and reminiscent of the marketplace' but admits that the *TLL* 6. 1. 1054. 58 lists *forensis* here as 'foreign'. See Powell, Ch. 3 in this volume.

### 3. THE PROLOGUE AS *FABULA*

Some narrative elements in the Prologue show how discourse or *sermo* can incorporate narrative or *fabula*. Indeed the *varias fabulas* heralded in the opening clause may get under way right after *exordior* ('I begin'). Thus the account of the speaker's identity and provenance could be the first of the series of stories promised in the opening sentence. The two sentences which follow (discussed in part already) certainly constitute narrative:

*ibi linguam Attidem primis pueritiae stipendiis merui. mox in urbe Latia advena studiorum Quiritium indigenam sermonem aerumnabili labore, nullo magistro praeunte, aggressus excolui.*

(There it was that I acquired the Attic tongue in the first campaigns of boyhood; soon after in the Latian city as a newcomer to the pursuits of Roman citizens, with no difficulty and with no teacher advancing before me, I attacked and cultivated their native speech.)

Moreover, they recall a specific type of narrative: they have the 'lapidary' quality of epitaphic inscription: a speech from the dead occupant of the tomb to passers-by is one form such inscriptions can take. This is frequently echoed in Latin literary discourse.<sup>11</sup> The significance of this evocation will be considered below in Section 4 (vii).

### 4. THE PROLOGUE AND THE EPILOGUE

The comparison of the Prologue with 11. 30 suggested earlier does more than illustrate the gradation between *sermo* and *fabula*. It reveals a series of subtle connections between the very first and the very last chapter of the *Metamorphoses*. These connections, which expose the relationship between *sermo* and *fabula* in the Prologue itself, are listed below.

#### (i)

There is a pointed contrast between the two chapters.

Both chapters align style and narrative strategy with the message they convey. In 11. 30 Lucius the narrator relates his

<sup>11</sup> Compare *Aen.* 4. 653–8, *CIL* i. 29–38; Fraenkel (1964). See also the selection of epitaphic inscriptions displaying 'boasts' in Lattimore (1942: 285–99).



reaction to the god-sent dream (11. 29) which advised him of a further initiation:

*nec deinceps postposito vel in supinam procrastinationem reiecto negotio, statim sacerdoti meo relatis quae videram, inanimes protinus castimoniam iugum subeo . . .*

(then neither postponing the business nor putting it aside in lazy procrastination, after reporting all that I had seen to my priest, straight away I submitted myself to the yoke of abstention from meatless food . . .)

Lucius the character's prompt action and refusal to procrastinate matches the narrator's brisk but informative manner of narration here. Given the nature of the subject matter—Lucius' second religious initiation—the manner of narration is particularly informative: the procedures involved are related in some detail and the god whose cult Lucius has joined is actually named, as Osiris. The Prologue, on the other hand, is well known for exploiting procrastination and enigma. The actual start of the story is delayed until 1. 2—in spite of an indication that the story was about to begin (*exordior*) several sentences earlier. The rhetorical question about the speaker's identity *quis ille?* ('Who is this?') is given an indirect and cryptic answer.<sup>12</sup> Notoriously the voice of the prologue does not give itself a name. Indeed the sentence *iam haec equidem ipsa vocis immutatio* ('Indeed this very change of language') can be read as a comment on the Prologue itself as much as on the whole work.

The remaining connections between the Prologue and 11. 30 are based on commonality of theme and diction rather than on any pattern of contrast.

(ii)

Both passages use similar diction to refer to metamorphosis:

*Osiris, non (in) alienam quampiam personam reformatus* (11. 30)

(Osiris, not transformed into any other guise . . .)

*figuras fortunasque hominum in alias imagines conversas et in se rursus mutuo nexu reflectas . . .* (1. 1)

(men's shapes and fortunes transformed into different appearances and back again into themselves by mutual connection . . .)

<sup>12</sup> For an attempt at decoding this answer see Sect. 5 of this discussion below, as well as Clarke (Ch. 10) and Innes (Ch. 11) in this volume.

## (iii)

Both passages refer to their speaker's metaphorical 'campaigns':

*stipendiis forensibus . . .* (11. 30)

(*campaigns* in the legal profession . . .)

*linguam Attidem primis pueritiae stipendiis merui* (1. 1)

(I acquired the Attic tongue in the first *campaigns* of boyhood)

## (iv)

Both passages also refer to their speaker's legal activity:

*stipendiis forensibus . . . gloriosa in foro redderem patrocinia . . .* (11. 30)

(to win glory in the court as an advocate . . .)

*in urbe Latia advena studiorum Quiritium indigenam sermonem  
aerumnabili labore . . . forensis sermonis rudis locutor . . .* (1. 1)

(in the city of Latins as a newcomer to the studies of the Romans . . . a  
raw speaker of this forensic tongue . . .)

## (v)

Both passages mention *responses*—of the Romans and of the audience—to the speaker's acts:

*nec extimescerem malevolorum disseminationes, quas studiorum meorum  
laboriosa doctrina ibidem exciebat* (11. 30)

(nor should I fear the words put about by *malevolent* people, which  
the laborious acquisition of my education there was prompting)

*aresque tuas benivolas . . . permulceam . . . ; praefamur veniam, siquid  
exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero* (1. 1)

(let me soothe your *benevolent* ears . . . ; I'm begging your pardon in  
advance, if as a raw speaker of this exotic and forensic tongue I give  
offence)

## (vi)

In different ways, both passages involve simultaneous apprehension by sight and sound. The true form of Osiris finally seen by Lucius is really a form of address!<sup>13</sup>

*Osiris, non (in) alienam quamquam personam reformatus, sed coram suo  
illo venerando me dignatus adfamine per quietem recipere visus est . . .*  
(11. 30)

<sup>13</sup> For a fuller investigation of this enigmatic passage, see Laird (1997: 80–5).

(Osiris, not transformed into any other guise, but deigning to receive me directly with his own venerable *utterance*, *was seen* in my sleep . . .)

This may recall the two forms of apprehending a *text* which are evoked in the Prologue—as an utterance which is heard, and as a papyrus which is beheld:<sup>14</sup>

*aturesque tuas benivolas lepido susurro permulceam, modo si papyrus  
Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam non spreveris inspicere*  
(1. 1)

(let me soothe your benevolent *ears* with an agreeable *whispering*, if only you do not scorn to *glance* at an Egyptian *papyrus* inscribed with the sharpness of a reed from the Nile.)

(vii)

Both passages involve the notion of death. This is the most significant thematic link between them. The last two words of 11. 30 are *gaudens obibam* ('I rejoiced to carry out'). This phrase comes last in a series of words prefixed by *ob-*: *non obumbrato vel oblecto calvitio sed quoquoversus obvio*. ('neither covering nor hiding my baldness, but showing it wherever I went'). This very proliferation, involving a variety of senses signalled by *ob-*, could prompt consideration of further meanings of the word which succeeds all of them: *obibam*.<sup>15</sup> One notable meaning of the verb *obire* is 'to die'.<sup>16</sup> Death, a frequent feature of textual closure, is connoted by *obibam* ('I died') as the very last word in the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>17</sup>

The suggestion is that the narrator is dead, even as he

<sup>14</sup> Compare e.g. Fowler (Ch. 20) and Kahane (Ch. 21) in this volume. Gibson (Ch. 7) in this volume considers the sonic and graphic connotations of the word *argutia* ('sharpness').

<sup>15</sup> See *OLD* on *obeo* s.v. 7 and 8, 1211–12.

<sup>16</sup> It is not my intention to display my weak grasp of syllogisms by arguing simply (1) *obibam* is at the close of the text (2) Death is a closing motif. Therefore (3) *obibam* here means 'I died'! Of course *obibam* does mean 'I carried out'. The point is that—as the studies of the Prologue in this volume accumulate to show—a *prima facie* meaning need not exclude other competing meanings.

<sup>17</sup> Roberts, Dunn, and Fowler (1997) contains useful discussions of the role of death in closure: Pelling's treatment of death in Plutarch's *Lives* and Roberts' brilliant discussion of the reader's desire for 'aftermaths'—which helped prompt my choice of epigraph—add indirect support to the argument here.

narrates. In antiquity, the *epitaph* is the typical realm of dead first person narrators. Thus we may consider the epitaphic quality of utterances in the Prologue (mentioned in Section 3, above) in relation to *obibam* here. In addition to the autobiographical element already noted, other features of the Prologue recall epitaphic inscriptions which conventionally address wayfarers: the promise of brevity; wishing the reader well; language acquisition; the play on language as a written and oral medium; and movement between the third and first person.<sup>18</sup> The evocation of epitaphic inscription in the Prologue is significant because it issues from a speaker who is connected with, or even identifiable with, the narrator of 11. 30 who at least implies that his death has occurred.

#### 5. THE PROLOGUE AS ENDING; CONJUNCTION OF *SERMO* AND *FABULA*

This linking theme of death is important for the conclusion to my discussion—although my conclusion will not actually depend on it. Rather, my conclusion will depend on an inevitable property of first person narrative which few narrators play on as explicitly as the narrator of the *Metamorphoses*. The property is this. In first person narrative, the narrator at the start of his narration is bound to ‘know’ all that he is going to narrate. As the narrator proceeds to the end, the knowledge the addressee has of what is narrated will be brought up to the level of knowledge possessed by the narrator at the very beginning of his narration. On the narratological level of ‘story’ (or *histoire*) the beginning of the narrative is generally posterior to the last event narrated.<sup>19</sup> In other words, the beginning of any first per-

<sup>18</sup> Consider these examples from Lattimore (1942: 233): *carpis si qui [via]s, paulum huc deponē la[borem-] cur tum prop(eras)? non est mora dum leg(is), audi* (‘Whoever is making a journey, lay aside your work here, why then are you hurrying? There is no delay while you read, listen!’) [*CLE* 513. 1–2 (Forum Livium)]; *valebis hospes, opto ut seis felicior* (‘You will fare well stranger, I hope that you will be happier’) [*CLE* 63. 7]. The epitaph of the poet Pacuvius illustrates a shift in person: ‘Young man, although you are in a hurry, this little rock requests that you notice it and then read what is written. Here are buried the poet Pacuvius Marcus’ bones. I wanted you to know this. Farewell’.

<sup>19</sup> This characteristic applies to first person narrative, and perhaps to all

son narrative must be read and interpreted in the light of that narrative's ending.

From this perspective, we can regard the whole of the *Metamorphoses* Prologue as narrative or *fabula* because it is an extension or 'sequel' to 11. 30, the conclusion to the *fabulae* ('stories') it also serves to preface. Considering the Prologue as being uttered *explicitly in the wake of these fabulae* advances our insight on problems which have dogged interpretation of this text.

(i) At

Editors and commentators have difficulty with the use of *at* ('But') as an initial word.<sup>20</sup> However, if, as I am suggesting, the Prologue is read as a coda to the entire text which succeeds it, then the adversative can be seen to signal an apostrophe to the reader from the narrative which 'precedes' it. The first sentence of the Prologue thus becomes comparable to many other instances of apostrophe to the reader which occur later in the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>21</sup> This allows us to read more into the parallel, often noted, between the use of the word *at* here and beginning of the old woman's narrative of Cupid and Psyche in 4. 27:

*sed ego te narrationibus lepidis anilibusque fabulis protinus avocabo. Et incipit: Erant in quadam civitate rex and regina . . .*

([']But now I shall divert you with charming narrations and old women's stories.' And she begins: 'There were in a certain city a king and queen . . .')

Here the old woman uses 'but' (*sed*) to change the subject of her conversation from that of predictive dreams—including dreams of death.<sup>22</sup> The two words *et incipit* ('And she begins')

narrative in general. The only possible exception to this proves the rule: a speaker or writer who is genuinely narrating events as they actually unfold before him is generating *discourse* rather than narrative.

<sup>20</sup> On *at* see numerous discussions in this volume, notably de Jong, Ch. 18. Scobie (1975: ad loc.) remarks that the use of the word here is 'conversational, suggesting the atmosphere of dialogue'. The particle is nowhere else used to open a complete work in Latin, in spite of the parallels in Greek literature. See Denniston (1954: 21).

<sup>21</sup> e.g. 10. 33, cf. 10. 2, 11. 23. See Laird (1990: 132–41).

<sup>22</sup> I suspect it may be no coincidence that dreams and visions loom large at the end of *Met.* 11—although interpretation of them according to the old woman's oneirology in 4. 27 could be problematic.

then mark the intrusion of another voice—that of the principal narrator—just as two words *quis ille?* marked the intrusion of another speaker into the discourse of the Prologue. In both passages the restoration of the original voice follows immediately. In 4. 24, as well as in the Prologue, this involves a proposition of a topographical nature, albeit a very unhelpful one: the woman speaks only of a ‘certain city’.

(ii) *Mutuo nexu*

The word *nexu* (‘connection’) is involved with the connecting metaphor conjured up by *conseram* (‘join together’).<sup>23</sup> This is more easily seen with Harrison and Winterbottom’s punctuation (Ch. 1 in this volume) which puts *exordior* at the end of the sentence beginning with the object *figuras fortunasque*. The participle phrase *figuras . . . refectas* clearly refers to these transformations as the subject matter of a *text* (spoken and/or written) whether we regard it as the object of *inspicere* (‘glance at’) or of *exordior* (‘begin’). Thus *mutuo nexu* (‘by mutual connection’) may refer not only to the processes of metamorphosis themselves, but also to the narrative style in which those processes are presented. The word *mutuo* would not be superfluous—as has been thought—if it were to refer to the narrative loop that I am suggesting is established by the Prologue.

(iii) *Hymettos Attica et Isthmos Ephyrea et Taenaros  
Spartiaca*

This response to the question *quis ille?* has baffled interpreters. However, the question is asked of the narrator not the character: the progress of 1. 2–11. 30 gives quite enough information about the identity of the character. If, again, the Prologue is considered as successive to the text which follows, these locations reveal much about the orientation and status of the narrator:

*Hymettos Attica* specifically, would identify the primary quality of the *fabula*: its rhetorical *style* as Attic honey—we may discern the influence of Platonic writing.<sup>24</sup> Stories are characterized by the genre and tradition (‘discursive practices’) with

<sup>23</sup> See Harrison and Winterbottom, Ch. 1 in this volume.

<sup>24</sup> See Trapp, Ch. 4 in this volume.

which or in which they are expressed, as much as they are characterized by the identity of their author or their subject matter.<sup>25</sup> On a more literal level, *Hymettos Attica* might 'recall' Lucius' story (in the manner of the next two locations) at 1. 24: *Athenas Atticas*.

*Isthmos Ephyrea* refers 'back' to Corinth (10. 19)—the location of Lucius' conversion in 11.

*Taenaros Spartiaca*: Taenaros is mentioned at 6. 18 and 6. 20 as the entrance to the underworld in the story of Psyche. If this is another 'retrospective' reference to 6. 18–20, the fact that it is the last location mentioned in the Prologue suggests that the narrator's involvement with Taenaros chronologically succeeds his character's secular education in Athens and his religious education in Corinth. My suggestion is that *Taenaros Spartiaca* indicates the narrator's final form of education: his death—which has already occurred.

(iv) *Sermonis forensis*

Reading the Prologue after 11. 30 suggests that this expression connotes legal discourse (see Section 4 (iv) above) as well as 'language of the forum' (Section 3 above).

## 6. CONCLUSION: FORM AND TRANSCENDENCE IN THE PROLOGUE

The observations above indicate that the Prologue can be integrated with the rest of the text—as *fabula* or narrative—if we acknowledge a form of narrational ring composition which links it to the end of the work. This is 'ring composition' in a fuller sense than is generally understood.<sup>26</sup> However, we have to enter the ring at a certain point. The Prologue allows us to do so, by simultaneously operating as *sermo*. As we have seen, the Prologue advertises itself as *sermo (isto sermone)* and from its first three words demonstrates this quality. The Prologue's conspicuously ambivalent function—as both *sermo* and *fabula*—can be more deeply understood if we consider

<sup>25</sup> See e.g. White (1987), Clifford and Marcus (1986).

<sup>26</sup> This is why I cannot end up disagreeing more strongly with Fusillo (1997: 223) who says that the ending of the *Met.* 'is not circular or parallel but tangential, introducing a new topic, unconnected to the rest of the work'!

Apuleius' commandeering of a second feature of first person narrative. Unlike the first feature (the narrator's superior knowledge at the outset) this second feature is not inevitable, but it is not uncommon. A narrator can play on his superior knowledge by suppressing any advance information about what he is to relate: events in the main and embedded narratives are presented very much in the order in which the narrators and characters (including Lucius) encounter them. All the *Metamorphoses* (1. 2–11. 30) is narrated in this manner.<sup>27</sup>

The *Metamorphoses* and the *Onos* (or *Ass*—once attributed to Lucian) actually have that feature in common. Both their narratives could feasibly be recast into the 'third person'.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, their protagonists—Lucius and Loukios respectively—would be introduced as agents who would then be utterly distinct from the heterodiegetic 'third person' narrators. Both texts would remain more or less coherent and comprehensible (excepting the occasional passages of *occupatio* and apostrophe in the *Metamorphoses* noted earlier). Such recasting into the third person can thus be used as a litmus test to determine whether a particular text should be classed as 'narrative' or 'discourse'.

On this basis, the Prologue is manifestly discourse or *sermo*. It could not survive such a conversion into the third person and remain coherent or intact (*At ille tibi . . . ?!*). Yet we cannot and should not dismiss, by brutally applying this litmus test, the Prologue's use as narrative or *fabula*. The Prologue functions as a delicate mechanism. It is not something between narrative and discourse: paradoxically it is a positive exemplar of both modes. The Prologue defines and occupies a neutral space. It serves to convert neophyte addressees of its discourse into readers of a narrative. The Prologue alerts those who have read what follows to the present and transcendent status of its speaker: the narrator of 1. 2–11. 30 who has passed on to a higher level. My deployment of religious terms like 'conversion', 'neophyte', and 'transcendent' here is not merely decorative. The Prologue overtly demonstrates to the reader

<sup>27</sup> Winkler (1985: 140).

<sup>28</sup> Compare Perry (1967: 328). Hall (1995: 51) remarks on the identity and ethnicity of the *Onos* narrator.



the mysterious communion or *sympatheia* of the worshipper with his god—a god who speaks through the whole of this text.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> See Angus (1928: 111–19).

# Envoi

I was recently in the Sandalarium, the area of Rome with the largest concentration of booksellers, where I witnessed a dispute as to whether a certain book for sale was by me or someone else. The book was clearly inscribed (*ἐπιγέγραπτο*) *Galen the Doctor*. Someone had bought the book under the impression that it was one of mine; someone else—a man of letters—struck by the odd form of the title (*ἐπιγγραφής*), desired to know the book's subject. On reading the first two lines he immediately tore up the inscription, saying only this: 'This is not Galen's style—the title is false'

Galen, *Writing on his own Books*  
(ed. Kühn 1830: 19. 8–9)

The preface is the beginning of a work; for example the prologue in poetic composition, the prelude in musical composition, these are all beginnings, a type of route for someone embarking on a journey.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1414b19–21

Nowadays we can judge books by their covers. In antiquity, when a 'book' was a papyrus roll, its first few words made up the jacket blurb, and advertised the nature of the text to follow.<sup>1</sup> This is why the beginnings of ancient works are thought of as programmatic, and have always received particular attention. We only need to think of the proems of Homer and Virgil, the prologue speeches in tragedies, historians' prefaces, and numerous poems opening books of lyric and elegiac poetry. We are told that Plato took great pains over the first four words of the *Republic*: 'Yesterday I went down to Piraeus'.<sup>2</sup> The very first word, *κατέβην*, marks the theme of descent which pervades the dialogue—in the Sun, Line, and Cave allegories as well as in the myth of Er, which is itself a *katabasis*.

Every canonical work has a canonical opening, and 'the most

<sup>1</sup> On titles, forewords, epigraphs, etc., see Genette (1997).

<sup>2</sup> Dionysius, *On the Arrangement of Words* 25; Quintilian, *Inst.* 8. 6. 64.

essential and particular task of the opening', as Aristotle says, 'is to expose the nature of the *telos* ('cause' or 'purpose') of the discourse'.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, a prologue can expose the nature of that *telos* in a variety of different ways. For example, a prologue bears on the identity of an author or speaker. It indicates a relationship between the speaker and the story to follow, even if the identity of the speaker is not revealed. A prologue also establishes the initial relationship between the reader and the text: how that text should be read. That relationship is part and parcel of what is called genre. A prologue is the locus of the dialectic between (1) how the text to follow is to be read and (2) how the prologue itself is being read. The language, formal structure, tenor, and theme of a prologue induce a certain set of expectations about the genre of the text to follow. At the same time the reading of a prologue itself is governed by various pre-suppositions about language, formal structure, tenor, and theme.

A prologue is not only the marker of the genre of the text it introduces; it also signposts the individual quality of that text, and suggests how its relation to other specific texts might be perceived. Whilst intertextuality does not feature in prologues any more than elsewhere, it certainly has important consequences for our perception of how a prologue stands in relation to the work it introduces. For example, intertexts whose prologue speakers are separate and distinct from the speakers of their main narrative may be used to strengthen the case for a similar separation of speakers in Apuleius. Conversely, intertexts in which the speaker of the prologue and the speaker of the main narrative are one, may be used to establish a 'univocal' interpretation of the *Metamorphoses* as well.

A common quality of prefaces and introductions is that they provide, or claim to provide, a concise account of the text to follow. Yet Apuleius' Prologue does not present an explicit summary of Lucius' tale. The epitome it offers, compared to those given by most other ancient prologues, is cryptic and elliptic. But this very fact can alert us to the capricious potential of all programmatic summaries. By definition, summaries omit, and omissions can mislead. Few texts in antiquity demonstrate this better than the Prologue to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1415a23.

It should now be clear that as well as examining the specific text it was designed to interpret, this collection of essays has also thrown light on the nature and poetics of prologues in general. Whilst the opening words of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* may be more baffling or more misleading than many prefatory passages, at least the difficulties they raise are easily seen. The man of letters in the Roman Sandalarium was well aware that his estimation of a volume depended on his estimation of its beginning. The Prologue to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* might thus serve as a useful talisman for readers of any place or time, alerting them to the dangers and pleasures contained in every text.

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# INDEX PROLOGI VERBORUM ET LOCUTIONUM

Complete sentences are first given in bold. For each sentence, entries follow the word order of the Prologue. Longer segments of text precede the shorter segments, which in turn precede individual words. An arrow (⇒) indicates an entry which runs on to the following sentence.

**At ego tibi sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conseram, auresque tuas benivolam lepido susurro permulceam, modo si papyrum Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam non spreveris inspicere.**

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*linguam Atthidem primis pueritiae stipendiis merui* 274  
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