

THREE CRITICAL NOTES ON THE *METAMORPHOSES* OF APULEIUS

The process of giving greater credence to the codices has been constant in editions of Apuleius from the last century to the present day. Accordingly, the following suggestions are proposed.<sup>1</sup>

## I

et statim miser ut cum illa adqueiui, ab unico congressu annosam ac pestilentem con<dicionem> contraho. (1.7.9 [7.16])

And at the very moment when I—wretch that I am!—lay with her, from that one relationship, I contracted this interminable and miserable condition.

condicionem contraho *scripsi* : con contraho F $\phi$  : coniunctionem c. Chodaczek : consuetudinem c. van der Vliet : contagionem c. Lütjohann : cladem c. Helm : luem c. Heinsius : contraho adfectionem Novák con dittographiam putans, cf. 8.14.1 (187.22) : noxam ante annosam Giarratano, post annosam Birt

In this case, where a word is obviously missing and the mysterious *con* appears, there are two general possibilities for correcting the text: *con* may be taken as a dittograph for *contraho* or considered to be part of the missing word. Another approach would be to interpret *contraho* differently: the verb can apply to a disease (as proposed by Lütjohann and Heinsius—followed by Hildebrand—no doubt swayed by *pestilentem*), harm or misfortune (meaning: ‘draw misfortune upon oneself’, as in the later sentence *nequam tibi lingua intemperante noxam contrahas* [Helm, Giarratano, and Birt]), a custom (more or less following van der Vliet and Novák) or marriage (Chodaczek). The solutions offered by van der Vliet, in particular, and Novák are reasonable: other commentators have been led astray by the sentence I have quoted, assuming that what is missing is something like ‘harm’, ‘misfortune’. Chodaczek points out that Apuleius commonly uses *matrimonium contrahere* (1.19.12 [18.15] to cite just one example) and *coniunctio* practically as *matrimonium* (cf. *Apol.* 67 and 91 referring to his marriage with Pudentilla), and accordingly writes *coniunctionem*.

This is doubtless the best solution: it seems obvious to me that *contraho* must refer to a ‘relationship involving a commitment’ (clearly involuntary on Socrates’ part) which lasts for many years (*annosam*) and brings with it permanent harm like an illness (*pestilentem*). The best solution is to take *con* as part of the missing word. For all these reasons Chodaczek’s proposal has been approved by most editors. I am not so convinced by Augello’s<sup>2</sup> reasoning that *coniunctio* would have been written with one siglum; some mishap must have taken place in the textual transmission for it to have been lost. In any case, I believe that there is yet another solution. The easiest explanation for this loss would be to supply *contractionem*, which would make the scribal error extremely easy. But there is one insuperable objection to this proposal: *contractio* in the sense of ‘commitment’, ‘contract’—or even ‘matrimony’!—does not appear, to my knowledge, until the Middle Ages.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I use the traditional sigla in the critical notes: F = codex Laurentianus 68.2;  $\phi$  = codex Laurentianus 29.2 ex F descriptus; s = lectio in codicibus deterioribus uel in libris impressis uulgata. When quoting I follow Robertson’s system (book, chapter, and paragraph) and, in parentheses, that of Helm (page and line of his Teubner edition).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. G. Augello, *Studi Apuleiani* (Palermo, 1977), 29–30.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Lexicon Latinitatis Medii Aevii* (Turnholdi, 1975), s.v. and W. H. Maigne d’Arnis, *Lexicon Manuale ad Scriptores Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* (Hildesheim, 1977 [= Paris, 1866]), s.v.

Another solution is *condicionem*. In my opinion, this is more likely than *coniunctionem* in that it involves a play on the different meanings of the word, since it can refer to (i) marriage (*OLD* 2); (ii) condition, circumstance (*OLD* 6, especially 'b'); and one might even think of the *terms* of an agreement. That is to say, in one single encounter he has contracted an obligation, marriage, and a wretched condition.

There are no examples of *condicio* in the *Metamorphoses*, but it appears nineteen times in other works;<sup>4</sup> one of these places offers a very similar use: *condicionem* in *Florida* 14.4 (Helm 19.2–3) can be understood as 'social position', 'state of health', 'marriage', and 'stipulation': it seems that Apuleius is deliberately playing with this ambiguity, just in the same way as in the *Golden Ass*.

## II

hae arbores in lauri faciem prolixae foliatae pariunt in modum floris inodori porrectos caliculos modice punicantes, quos equidem fragrantis minime rurestri uocabulo uulgus indoctum rosas laureas appellant. (4.2.7 [75.25])

in modum floris inodori **F** : in modum floris odori **ς** : in odori modum floris *Robertson*

These laurel-like bushes, abundantly covered with leaves, produce scattered, slightly reddish calices, like a scentless flower, which the common people, using the country expression, call 'laurel-roses', even though they have no perfume.

In my view, we should not understand *in modum floris inodori* as 'like those of the scentless flower', but as 'like a scentless flower'; that is to say, he is describing the oleander—not comparing it to a rose—saying that *several calices* (in fact, small flowers in bunches) *look like a single flower, but have no scent*. I do not think any correction is needed, but all the editors have interpreted it as the former and write *odori*.

While the traditional interpretation is perfectly intelligible, the one defended here does not require correction of the manuscript readings.

## III

enim uero Alcimus sollertibus coeptis eum saeuum Fortunae nutum non potuit adducere. (4.12.1 [83.9])

eum saeuum **F et al. man.**  $\phi$  : eum secum  $\phi$  : eo saeuum *Armini* : tamen saeuum **ς** : consonum *Helm* : secundum *Leo* : eum secutus *Rohde* : eum secutus minus saeuum *Novák* : minus saeuum *Bluemner* : consecuum *Heraeus* : saeuum *Giarratano* : saeuum scaeuae *Castiglioni*

For Alcimus, on the other hand, could not entice that cruel consent from Fortune for his clever plans.

Not a single editor keeps this *eum*. The reasons given, however, are none too clear: *GCA* ad loc.<sup>5</sup> points out that *is* is not much used as an adjective in the *Metamorphoses*, which is true, but it does appear sufficiently often for the possibility to be

<sup>4</sup> W. A. Oldfather, H. V. Canter, and B. E. Perry, *Index Apuleianus* (Hildesheim, 1979 [= Middletown, 1934]), s.v.

<sup>5</sup> *GCA* = *Groningen Commentaries on Apuleius*: B. L. Hijmans, R. Th. van der Paardt, E. R. Smits, R. E. H. Westendorp Boerma, and A. G. Westerbrink, *Apuleius Madaurensis Metamorphoses IV 1–27* (Groningen, 1977), 93.

taken into consideration.<sup>6</sup> The reasoning, accordingly, is based not on syntax but on meaning: *nutum* is generally considered in abstract terms—the consent of Fortune—while *eum* must refer to something more concrete. In fact, I believe that it is very specific and that the context must be taken into account. Immediately before, we have:

Et ille quidem dignum uirtutibus suis uitae terminum posuit.

That is to say, Fortune has allowed Lamachus to end his days with dignity, killing himself heroically by thrusting a sword into his breast, whereas Alcimus was not granted this cruel consent to his wishes, for she did not even let him carry out his ingenious plans for a dignified death, as he ended up smashed against a stone after being thrown out of a window by an old woman. Thus *eum*, used as an adjective, is clearly anaphoric and has a very specific meaning: *eum saeuum Fortunae nutum, quem antea Lamachus adduxerat, Alcimus non adducere potuit*. Finally, it may be that *saeuum* should be corrected to *saeuae*, the ending having been easily corrupted under the influence of *eum* and *nutum*.<sup>7</sup> *saeua* is the commonest epithet for *Fortuna* in the *Metamorphoses*. But *saeuum* can be maintained: it must actually refer to Fortune by enallage, but it may also be considered that it really qualifies *nutum*, given that this consent, though it may offer him some consolation, is, after all, consent for him to die. There is a very close parallel: *Fortunae nutus hilarior* (7.20.1 [169.8–9]).

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<sup>6</sup> L. Callebat, *Sermo cotidianus dans les Métamorphoses d'Apulée* (Caen, 1968), 266. Cf. e.g.: *eum numerum* (11.1.4 [267.1]); *id ipsum commentum* (9.1.6 [203.15]); *ea bestia* (1.9.2 [8.21]); *ea nocte* (5.5.1 [106.12]); *ea scilicet iretur uia* (6.29.6 [151.15]); *de ea potione* (10.27.2 [258.16]); *ee litterae* (11.16.7 [278.23]); *is finis* (1.21.1 [19.6]).

<sup>7</sup> The conjecture *saeuae* was made by the journal's anonymous referee.

### THE NAMING OF THRASYLLUS IN APULEIUS' *METAMORPHOSES*<sup>1</sup>

It is usually assumed that Apuleius gave one of his characters the name 'Thrasyllus' because of its etymological connection with *θρασύς*.<sup>2</sup> Indeed it is singularly appropriate and Apuleius himself draws attention to the fact: *Thrasyllus, praeceps alioquin et de ipso nomine temerarius . . .* (*Met.* 8.8). However, it does not follow that a name with such an etymological significance can have no other connotations:<sup>3</sup> in this note I suggest that there is a further frame of reference behind 'Thrasyllus' and that Apuleius may have expected his readers to realize this.

The episode in which this character appears (8.1–14) contains storylines adapted from, allusions to, and verbal echoes of several literary forebears. To mention the most obvious examples: Charite's concern for her husband Tlepolemus' safety while he is hunting (8.4) and his subsequent death recall the warning that Venus gives to her

<sup>1</sup> I should like to thank Dr S. C. R. Swain and Dr J. H. Hordern, both of whom made helpful suggestions, and the anonymous referee, whose astute criticisms concentrated my argument.

<sup>2</sup> J. A. Hanson, *Apuleius Metamorphoses II* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), 60, n. 1; P. G. Walsh, *The Golden Ass* (Oxford, 1995), 258, n. 8.1.

<sup>3</sup> Besides, given the plethora of other, more common, names with this particular etymological significance, e.g. *Θρασύβουλος*, *Θρασυκλῆς*, *Θρασύμαχος*, and *Θρασυμήδης* (see P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews [edd.], *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* [Oxford, I 1987, II 1994, III 1997]), it is pertinent to ask, 'Why Thrasyllus?'