

SERVILES VOLUPTATES IN APULEIUS' METAMORPHOSES

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IT IS A COMMON ASSUMPTION in much recent scholarship on Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* that the maidservant Fotis, who is featured in the early books of the work, is a symbol of the kind of sensuality from which Isis "saves" Lucius in Book 11:

Nec tibi natales ac ne dignitas quidem, vel ipsa, qua flores, usquam doctrina profuit, sed lubrico virentis aetatalae ad serviles delapsus voluptates curiositatis inprosperae sinistrum praemium reportasti (11.15.1).

So Isis' priest addresses Lucius shortly after his retransformation. The next step in what has become a standard interpretation is to refer back to Book 3, where Lucius, determined to exploit Fotis' fondness for him and through her to gain access to the secrets of her mistress' magical practices, proclaims to her:

Scio istud et plane sentio, cum semper alioquin spretorem matronalium amplexum sic tuis istis micantibus oculis et rubentibus bucculis et renidentibus crinibus et hiantibus osculis et fragrantibus papillis in servilem modum addictum atque mancipatum teneas volentem (3.19.5).¹

I shall argue in this paper that Fotis, far from being a symbol of sexual lust, represents one face of the coin of mysticism, the face that is discredited in Book 11. In other words, the servitude expressed in the phrases *servilem modum* and *serviles voluptates* denotes Lucius' obsessive desire to meddle in the malevolent affairs of witchcraft.² This is not to say that he is by any means a Puritan. After, as he reports (2.6.7), first ignoring Fotis' advances and then resolving to court her instead of her married mistress (2.6.6), he develops a genuinely passionate attachment to her (2.16-17), without which his vow of celibacy in Isis' service would be less significant (11.19.3). It is nonetheless clear, as I hope to explain more fully, that it is not lust to which he is enslaved. The onlookers in Book 11 certainly do not think that he has been an abandoned libertine (11.16.4);

¹I quote throughout the paper from the critical edition of D. S. Robertson in the Budé series (Paris 1940-1945). Recent, representative examples that conform in varying degrees to the interpretation just outlined include: P. G. Walsh, *The Roman Novel* (Cambridge 1970) 177, 179, 180, 184 (cf. *idem*, *Phoenix* 22 [1968] 146); J. Tatum, "The Tales in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*," *TAPA* 100 (1969) 487-527, esp. 491-494, 498, 513-514, 522, 525; W. R. Nethercut, "Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*: The Journey," *Agon* 3 (1969) 97-134, esp. 122-134; K. Kerényi, *Die griechisch-orientalische Romanliteratur in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung*² (Darmstadt 1962) 186.

²P. Scazzoso, *Le Metamorfosi di Apuleio* (Milan 1951) 111-112, emphasizes the contrasts in the narrative between the *maleficium* of magic and Isis' *beneficium*.

cf. Tatum [above, n. 1] 492). Indeed, they discern that *innocentia* and *fides* have characterized his life, and if *innocentia* be construed as “innocence” in the double sense of “guiltlessness” and “guilelessness,” they confirm Isis’ priest’s statement that naiveté has been responsible for Lucius’ “fall”: *lubrico virentis aetatulae ... delapsus* (11.15.1).

Whatever unity the *Metamorphoses* has depends on the narrative thread of the misapplication of Lucius’ mystic zeal and its proper redirection in Book 11; it does not derive, as recent critics have argued, from Apuleius’ compilation of titillating episodes that boomerang on their narrator and devalue in his eyes the worth of sensuality. The unity of the work is, in any case, of only limited scope. Apart from the tale of Cupid and Psyche, which highlights many of Lucius’ experiences, the inset narratives from, roughly, Book 7 to Book 10 do not constitute elements in an *Entwicklungsroman*. Spiritual change is imposed from without, by Isis, and it is only at this stage in the narrative that it is possible to point to transformations in the young man’s character: e.g., on a banal though nonetheless substantial level, his willingness to go about bald (11.30.5; cf. 11.28.5) contrasted with his earlier preoccupation with the cosmetic importance of hair (2.8.2–9.2); more significantly, his cautious commitment to the life-long demands of Isiac religion (11.19.3), underscoring his earlier impetuosity (e.g. 2.6.1–2).³

Before developing some positive ideas, we can conveniently begin with the *prima facie* reasons against the view that Lucius is enslaved to lust. In the first place, as an authority on the ethics of classical antiquity has remarked, lust was regarded at the time as at worst a sickness but rarely a sin.⁴ More important, Lucius, whether in human or asinine form, is

³The case for the unity of the *Metamorphoses* has been stated recently in effective fashion by A. Wlosok, “Zur Einheit der Metamorphosen des Apuleius,” *Philologus* 113 (1969) 68–84. By different routes we both reach the conclusion that Books 1–3 and 11 are complementary, and that the *Metamorphoses* is not a true *Entwicklungsroman*. Wlosok arrives at her verdict on the basis of her admirable study of the theme of *curiositas* and its moderation in Book 11; I concentrate on the theme of *voluptas*, trying to show that Lucius’ *curiositas* enslaves him to magic and only incidentally to lust. C. Schlam, in his bibliographical survey of scholarship on Apuleius, *CW* 64 (1971) 293–299, sets out the views of the “unitarians” and the “separatists.” I should single out as particularly forceful spokesmen for the latter group A. Lesky, *Hermes* 76 (1941) 68–74, and B. Perry, *The Ancient Romances* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967) 236–282. In addition, R. Heine, *Untersuchungen zur Romanform des Apuleius von Madaura* (unpublished diss. Göttingen 1962), deserves special emphasis because it is absent from the bibliographies and seems to be known only by a handful of German scholars. After a comprehensive study of English, French, German, and Spanish picaresque-type romances (56–119), he concludes (142 and 329) that a contrived, unmotivated conclusion is equally inevitable for the *Metamorphoses*. I have myself argued for the limited unity of the work on the basis of the transformation of Lucius’ curiosity into knowledge (*Latomus* 31 [1972] 179–183).

⁴A.-J. Festugière, *Personal Religion among the Greeks* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1954) 75. On love as a sickness see *Met.* 9.2–3, 10.2.6–8.

fairly consistently a reasonably proper young man.⁵ The ass-Lucius is so moved by the impropriety and wickedness of the baker's wife and her lover deceiving her husband that he steps on the adulterer's fingers and causes him to reveal his hiding place (9.26–27).⁶ He intervenes in the name of justice when effeminate priests debauch an innocent young man (8.29). The irony of an ass passing moral judgments is explicit when he mulls over to himself the putative fickleness of Charite and pseudo-Haemus (7.10.4).

The final objection to the conventional view is at the same time convincingly fundamental and resistant to absolute proof. It is unlikely that Apuleius would have failed to introduce a series of parallel or chiastic phrases in his habitual manner if he had meant to say that Lucius suffered because of his ill-advised curiosity *and* lust. He probably would have written something like this: *Servilium voluptatum atque curiositatis inprosperae praemium reportasti*. Moreover, if the phrase *serviles voluptates* means "sex with a slave girl," then we must suppose that Apuleius has carelessly reversed the sequence of events, for, as the narrative unmistakably recounts, Lucius' irresistible curiosity precipitates the affair with Fotis.

Above all, a close study of the passage in which Lucius' supposed sexual enslavement is described exposes the weakness of the supposition. Earlier in the account, as I have mentioned, he resolves to turn to Fotis for help because, it should be remembered, he does not want to become involved with a married woman (2.6.6). Rather he will work through Fotis, to whose obvious beauty and manifested interest in him he was on an earlier occasion indifferent (2.6.7). His behaviour so far is hardly that of a young man in the grip of sexual passion. In the important passage in Book 3, he acknowledges his earlier indifference: ... *semper alioquin spretorem matronalium amplexuum* ... (3.19.5). He has been wholly unmoved by gratuitous lust in his relations with Fotis and her mistress. If my statement appears to ignore the few nights that he spends in *voluptas* with Fotis (3.21.1; cf. 2.17.5), it should be noted that

⁵The difficulties of the interpretation outlined earlier are evident in Festugière's uncertainty (above, n. 4). After stating that the novel traces Lucius' "passage from a state of impurity to a pure life" (75), he is forced to acknowledge that "the blunders of Lucius are presented as imprudent rather than sinful" (76), and that "even in the shape of an ass, Lucius preserves the instincts of a sound and honest lad" (*ibid.*). H. T. Rowell, in a review of Walsh's book (above, n. 1), *AJP* 92 (1971) 705, plays down the notion that Lucius is obsessed by lust. On the overall morality of Apuleius' version of the *Eselsroman* see P. Junghanns, *Philologus*, Suppl. 24, Heft 1 (1932) 148, n. 48, and, more recently, H. van Thiel, *Der Eselsroman 1. Untersuchungen* (Munich 1971) 10. Heine (above, n. 3) 209–213 develops the opposite point of view.

⁶L. MacKay, *CP* 67 (1972) 55, fails to provide a cogent alternative to the usual view that the ass treads on the adulterer's fingers.

it is in all but one account (2.15–17) his (re)awakened passion for the supernatural that puts him into her passionate embraces (2.5–6 and 2.7–10, 3.13–20.2 and 3.20.3–4).⁷ He enjoys himself with her, but my statement that he is not a slave to lust is nonetheless, I believe, accurate, in spite of the large amount of sex in the early books.

To what, then, is he impelled by passion? The answer is before the eyes of anyone considering the entire passage in question: *Sum namque coram magiae noscendae ardentissimus cupidus* (3.19.4).

It is true that the language of other parts of the passage is playfully ambiguous and could be applied to a totally erotic situation. The clause *scio istud et plane sentio*, for instance, is bound to remind one of Catullus' *cri de cœur* (poem 85); the passage describing Lucius' enslavement ([me] ... *tuis istis micantibus oculis ... teneas*) is reminiscent of Propertius' enslavement to Cynthia (1.1.1–2), and is almost a cliché in elegiac love-poetry (cf. *Anth. Pal.* 12.101). The ambiguity should not be allowed, however, to mislead us into thinking that Lucius is passionately and irresistibly drawn to Fotis. Perhaps a paraphrase of the beginning of the passage will retain its ambiguity without leaving its intended, underlying meaning in doubt:

“You, too, Fotis, like your mistress, seem to be practised in the magical arts; for, though I’m not normally attracted even to women of rank, I find you irresistible: you’ve charmed me.”

The word “charm,” like other words expressive of the same idea, viz., “to enchant,” “to bewitch,” conveys the desired *double entendre*: it retains the underlying suggestion of magical spells but is couched in terms that lead one to expect the charms of an alluring mistress, as the corresponding passage in Apuleius’ model testifies.⁸ It is worth adding

⁷In the case of the one detailed exception, discussion of the supernatural precedes the erotic encounter (2.16.1). H. Riefstahl, *Der Roman des Apuleius* (Frankfurt 1938) 67, highlights a pattern of alternating episodes of eroticism and magic in Book 2.

⁸Lucian, *Lucius sive Asinus* 11, *tίς γὰρ φόδη δύναται μαγεῦσαι τὸν ἔρωτα, ὅντα τῆς τέχνης κύριον*; See, too, P. Vallette’s note *ad loc.* (above, n. 1). In my paraphrase, I have taken “*rerum (istarum)*” to refer exclusively to witchcraft. Even without the addition of “*istarum*,” which Robertson has supplied on analogy with 1.24.1, the context and the kind of parallels available from love-elegy (see *infra*) indicate that the word “*rerum*” alone encompasses, at least “a double entendre,” as R. T. van der Paardt explains in his commentary on Book 3 (Amsterdam 1971) 147, Fotis’ experience in magic as well as in lovemaking. It should be added that the connexion between eroticism and magic goes much deeper than the intentional ambiguity in Apuleius. Both Pamphile (as her name implies) and Socrates’ *bête noire*, the witch Meroe, employ their bag of tricks to erotic ends (1.8–9, 2.5). Ov. *Am.* 1.8.13–14 is a particularly apposite example from love-elegy. See further Scazzoso (above, n. 2) 53, n. 12, 54, 58–61, 70–71. As van der Paardt notes at 3.15.6, *teneas* also belongs to the *sermo amatorius*. The theme of amorous enslavement is also familiar from love-elegy (see F. O. Copley, *TAPA* 78 [1947] 285–300). Apuleius was, of course, thoroughly familiar with the conceits of elegiac love-poetry, being

that the last sentence of Lucius' statement (3.19.6), which I have not paraphrased, when considered together with the story of Socrates (1.6–19), substantiates my claim that his remarks allude to Fotis' knowledge of magic. Aristomenes reproaches his friend Socrates, whose experiences parallel those of Lucius at several points (selectively listed in Walsh [above, n. 1] 177), for becoming embroiled with a libidinous crone: *Voluptatem Veneriam et scortum scorteum Lari et liberis praetulisti* (1.8.1; cf. 3.19.6). Socrates explains his abandonment partially on the basis of Meroe's great magical powers (1.8.2–1.10).

The material in the preceding paragraph suggests that Lucius' exaggerated profession of his love and enslavement is humorously modelled on the inflated declarations of Latin love-elegy. *Servilem, addictum, and mancipatum* all point to the familiar elegiac theme of *servitium amoris*. The concept that beauty is a kind of enchantress indicates the same literary associations, most notably in Tib. 1.5.43–44 and 1.8.17–26. The most intriguing parallel, however, comes from Apuleius' defense of himself against the charge that he enchanted Pudentella. It appears from a quotation of the indictment (*Apol.* 4) that his *forma* was one of the alleged enchantments. Whether or not the exuberant pronouncements of 3.19.5–6 are part of the “literary texture” (to appropriate Walsh's well-chosen expression) or part of biography (it seems unlikely), it is certain that the attribution of Lucius' enslavement to Fotis' bewitching charms is intended to carry meaning on two levels.

Lucius' underlying obsession with magic is mentioned several times in the early parts of the narrative. It regularly breaks to the surface in the face of direct or implied warnings:

Anxius alioquin et nimis cupidus cognoscendi quae rara miraque sunt... (2.1.1),

and:

At ego curiosus alioquin, ut primum artis magicae semper optatum nomen audivi... (2.6.1; cf. 1.2.6 and 2.11.4).

As at 3.19.4, Lucius represents his eagerness for experience with magic as a passion: *nimis cupidus*. The words of Isis' priest are to be construed in the same way: *Ad serviles delapsus voluptates curiositatis inprosperae sinistrum praemium reportasti* (11.15.1). In gratifying his obsessive passion to experience magic, he has reaped the bitter fruit of his ill-judged curiosity.

A pair of passages in Book 2 gives added substance to my interpreta-

himself the author of poems written in the genre and the source of our information about the real names of Lesbia, Cynthia, Delia, and others (*Apol.* 9–10). See A. Abt, *Die Apologie des Apuleius und die antike Zauberei* (Giessen 1908) 92–93, for parallels from Greek magical papyri to the concept that beauty has powers of enchantment.

tion. Up to this point, Lucius has been faultlessly polite, even in the face of his host's unctuous frugality. The mere mention of witchcraft (2.6.1), however, is enough to make further, well-mannered delay seem like the chains of restraint: *Festinus denique et vecors animi manu eius velut catena quadam memet expedio* (2.6.3). Paradoxically, he is goaded by his enslaving curiosity to chafe at the bonds of delay. His abandonment to magic is compared to a leap into an abyss:

Tantum a cautela Pamphiles afui ut etiam ultro gestirem tali magisterio me volens ampla cum mercede tradere et prorsus in ipsum barathrum saltu concito praecipitare (2.6.1–2).

In the two passages just quoted, we have the ideas of enslavement (*catena*; cf. *serviles*, *servilem*, *addictum*, *mancipatum*, above) and fall (*barathrum*; cf. *delapsus*, above), which, I have argued, apply to Lucius' abject enslavement to magic rather than to lust.

There is an additional link between Lucius' early involvement in magic and the disentanglement in Book 11. The phrase *ampla cum mercede* (2.6.2) has its signification when Isis' priest states the heavy price of Lucius' misplaced inquisitiveness: *Curiositatis inprosperae sinistrum praemium reportasti* (11.15.1).⁹ Viewed in this way, the theme of a passionate desire to know what is forbidden is a narrative thread running through a patchwork of stories: the desire is first gratified in magic, is then modulated in the allegorical tale of Cupid and Psyche, and is finally tempered and directed to a worthy object in Book 11.¹⁰

In establishing that magic and mystery represent contrasting aspects of a related phenomenon, it will be helpful to consider what I choose to call the psychology of mysticism. Lucretius has memorably portrayed the emotions of religious awe: *divina voluptas atque horror* (3.28–29). Lucius is host to the same kind of vacillating wonder:

Pavore et gaudio ac dein sudore nimio permixtus exurgo summeque miratus deae potentis tam claram praesentiam (11.7.1).

Even when well advanced on the path to conversion, he experiences similar anxiety:

At ego quanquam cupienti voluntate praeditus tamen religiosa formidine retardabar, quod enim sedulo percontaveram difficile religionis obsequium et castimoniorum abstinentiam satis arduam . . . esse munierandam . . . Quanquam festinans, differebam (11.19.3).

⁹Like Tatum (above, n. 1) 490, I take 11.15 to be one of the most important passages in the work, without, however, interpreting "the morality of the worshipers of Isis" as the condemnation of carnal lust. Heine (above, n. 3) 142 regards the priest's remarks as a contrived link between Lucius' earlier suffering and his salvation in Book 11.

¹⁰C. Schlam, *CJ* 64 (1968–69) 120–125, surveys studies of the theme of *curiositas* in the *Metamorphoses*. Add now Włosok (above, n. 3), my own remarks (above, n. 3), and van der Paardt (above, n. 8) 208–209.

That the quoted passages describe the emotional turmoil of authentic religious conversion is ensured by Apuleius' compatriot's account of his own feelings shortly before surrendering himself to God:

Tardabam converti ad dominum et differebam de die in diem vivere in te et non differebam cotidie in memet ipso mori ... Putabam enim me miserum fore nimis, si feminae privarer amplexibus, ... et propriarum virium credebam esse contentiam, quarum mihi non eram conscius (Aug. Conf. 6.11.20).¹¹

The hope and opportunity of witnessing magic fill Lucius with a welter of equally mixed emotions (2.1.1, 2.6.1, 2.11.4; cf. 1.2.6). He is, as it were, in the thrall of a variety of religious experiences:

Praesta quod summis votis expositulo, et dominam tuam, cum aliquid huius divinae disciplinae molitur, ostende ... Sum namque coram magiae noscendae ardentissimus cupitor (3.19.3-4).

His burning *cupido* to observe the mysteries of witchcraft is in its own way as unsensual and spiritual as the *voluptas* that he feels in contemplation of Isis' image (11.24.5; cf. 11.21.2). We can now even more fully appreciate the exact meaning of the *serviles voluptates* to which the goddess' priest refers in Book 11: he is condemning Lucius' degrading attachment to a false "religion."¹² It is degrading because the social status and the education recognized by Fotis and the priest mark him out to find gratification in more worthy objects than the *arcana secreta* of witchcraft (3.15.4; 11.15.1).

One aspect of the psychology of mysticism that deserves emphasis is the solemn demands of secrecy imposed on the candidate for initiation. In Lucius' mind magic is to be identified with religion: *aliquid huius divinae disciplinae* (3.19.3). This *divina disciplina* has a body of *miranda secreta* (3.15.7), known only to Fotis (3.15.6), which, she insists, must be kept secret (3.15.3-5).¹³ Like Isis' priest (11.15.1) and the spectators

¹¹I owe the parallel from St. Augustine to R. Martin, *REL* 48 (1970) 334, n. 1. W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York and London 1902), reports several examples of more recent conversions accompanied by *divina voluptas atque horror*. As a postscript to the paragraph above I should like to underscore the note of *divina voluptas* in the passages from the *Metamorphoses* just quoted: *gaudio* (11.7.1), *cupienti voluntate* (11.19.3); see further 11.13.2 (*avido ore ... cupidus*), 11.24.6 (*ardentissimi desiderii*), 11.21.2 (*mihi magis magisque accipiendorum sacrorum cupido*), 11.28.4 (*si quam rem voluptati struendae moliris*).

¹²Tatum (above, n. 1) 514 interprets the statement in Book 11 as referring to sensual pleasure, citing Cicero's distinction between spiritual and sensual *voluptates* (*Fin.* 2.4.13).

¹³Chapter 15 is, unfortunately, too long to quote in its entirety, but I should like at least to call attention to its specialised religious language and intensity, both of which bear comparison with important Isiac material in Book 11: *arcana secreta* (cf. 3.15.7, 3.20.1, 11.21.2 and especially 11.21.9), *religiosi pectoris* (cf. *arcana purissimae religionis secreta* at 11.21.9 and *piissimis sacrorum arcanis* at 11.22.6), *semper haec intra conspectum clausa custodias oro* (cf. 11.6.5). On magic as a *divina disciplina* cf. 1.8.2-4, 9.29.4.

(11.16.4), she admits Lucius' claim to *doctrina, generosa natalium dignitas*, and *fides* (3.15.4; cf. 3.11.1), and agrees to divulge the secrets to him (3.15.6). His *fides*, incidentally, as suggested earlier, is an important key to understanding the transformation of his zeal for magic into acceptance of an organized creed, for he has a deeply ingrained, unshakable belief in the supernatural. Because of inexperience (*lubrico virentis aetatulae*, 11.15.1; cf. 11.16.4), this predilection has fixed its sights on an unworthy type of mystery (3.15.4; cf. 1.3.2, 1.20.3–4, 1.2.6). The onlookers recognize, however, that it is a quality marking out Lucius as a worthy candidate for conversion (11.16.4). To return to Fotis, her appropriation of religious language is evident in her concern to keep the body of secrets from the profane:

Patere . . . , oro, prius fores cubiculi diligenter obcludam, ne sermonis elapsi profana petulantia committam grande flagitium (3.15.1).¹⁴

One could maintain that these are nothing more than the frightened words of a maidservant fearful of her mistress' wrath, but this would be to ignore the specialised language. The kind of exclusiveness just expressed is by definition a basic feature of mystery religion: *tunc semotis procul profanis omnibus* (11.23.4; cf. 11.5.5, 11.23.5, 7). In short, Fotis' instructions represent the ultimately discredited obverse of the "catechism" in Book 11.

Two passages describing stages in Lucius' "initiation" offer a suggestive contrast in the methods of guidance. The practices of witchcraft are cloaked in sinister secrecy:

Iamque circa primam noctis vigiliam ad illud superius cubiculum suspenso et insono vestigio me perducit ipsa perque riman ostiorum quampiam iubet arbitrari (3.21.3).¹⁵

Initiation into Isis' rites is equally secret, as we have seen, but out of a sense of reverence, without any hint of the disrepute, corruption, mal-evolence, and perversity that send magic scurrying into hiding:

Et iniecta dextera senex comissimus dicit me protinus ad ipsas fores aedis amplissimae (11.22.7; cf. 11.23.4).

I have tried in the preceding paragraphs to set out the pointedly contrasted objects of Lucius' zeal. Before returning to the conclusions that can be drawn from this material, I should like to record in more

¹⁴Wlosok (above, n. 3) 78 interprets the preliminaries to Lucius' transformation as a kind of initiation (3.13–20). It might be added that his stunned reaction to his retransformation in Book 11 (11.14.1) echoes the shock caused by his transmogrification in Book 3 (3.22.1).

¹⁵Cf. 3.20.1, *Sed praeter invidos mores in solitudinem semper abstrusa et omnium praesentia viduata solet huius modi secreta perficere*. One thinks also of Meroe's reproach to Aristomenes (1.12.7), and the surreptitious peeping of the hag Quartilla and Encolpius in the *Satyricon* (26.5).

cursorily fashion some of the contrasts in the “mechanics” of the magical and mystery rites. Both Fotis and Isis’ priest, we should bear in mind at the outset, act as Lucius’ guides to the promised reward of successful application. Lucius acknowledges Fotis’ at least rudimentary training, *Quamquam mihi nec ipsa tu videare rerum <istarum> rudis vel expers* (3.19.5),¹⁶ and she has highfalutin ideas of the privileged information in her possession (3.15.3, 7). Lucius regularly turns to Isis’ priest for guidance (e.g., 11.21.2, 11.25.7), and he in turn is equally guarded about the goddess’ rites (11.21.2, 7, 11.22.6). Both, satisfied that he is deserving, eventually reveal the secrets to him (3.21.3, 11.22.7, 11.23.4). The mistresses attended by the two servants are said to exert control over much the same forces of nature:

... miranda secreta, quibus obaudiunt manes, turbantur sidera, coguntur numina, serviunt elementa (3.15.7),

and:

Tibi respondent sidera, redeunt tempora, gaudent numina, serviunt elementa (11.25.3).¹⁷

It may be noted in general that Lucius’ fervour extends equally ardently to magic and Isiac mystery (e.g., 3.19.3–4, 11.21.2), and that both ministers attempt to hold it in check (e.g., 3.20, 11.21). But variations in a repeated pattern are a better guide to an author’s intentions.¹⁸ The priest’s cautions have the desired effect: *Dixerat sacerdos, nec impatientia corrumpebatur obsequium meum* (11.22.1). Fotis’ warnings, on the other hand, like other caveats in the early books, only further enflame Lucius’ headstrong inquisitiveness (e.g., 3.14.1).

The festival of Risus and that at Corinth underscore the different potential of magic and mystery (3.2–12, 10.29–35). Each festival exposes Lucius to unbearable public humiliation, which drives him to escape the cruelty of humanity (3.12.5–6, 10.35).¹⁹ It is at these low points in the ebb of Lucius’ spirits, when “man’s extremity is God’s opportunity,”

¹⁶See also 2.6.2 (*magisterio*), 3.15.4 (*doctrina*), 3.15.7, and Włosok (above, n. 3) 79.

¹⁷See also 2.5.4, 11.5.1, and Scazzoso (above, n. 2) 53, n. 12. The powers attributed to the two figures are, of course, conventional elements of an “aretalogy.” Meroe, for instance, enjoys the same powers (1.3.1, 1.8.4). One can gain an idea of their conventionality by consulting the numerous parallels assiduously collected by Heine (above, n. 3) 334–336 and by A. S. Pease, in his commentary on *Aeneid* 4 (Cambridge, Mass. 1935), at lines 489–491.

¹⁸I treat some of the modulations of the early books in an article forthcoming in *CJ*. In general, see E. K. Brown, *Rhythm in the Novel* (Toronto 1950).

¹⁹The ass-Lucius’ stated reasons for flight are shame and fear (10.34.5, 10.35.1), but note that Isis assures him that he will be spared from the kind of humiliation to which magic has exposed him (11.6.4; cf. 3.11.2); cf. also 3.11.2, 11.5.4. Riefstahl (above, n. 7) 75 makes a detailed comparison of the festival of Risus, the games at Corinth, and Isis’ procession.

that Fotis' report of his indirect involvement in witchcraft and promise of first-hand contact with it and Isis' promise of salvation revive and fill him, as we have seen, with *pavor* and *gaudium* (3.13–20.2, 11.5–7.1). The passionately longed-for “conversion” is anticipated in similar circumstances (3.21.3, 11.1.1), which highlight the contrasting results of Lucius' two mystic experiences: Isis' benevolent intercession stands sharply apart from the unfulfilled expectations of witchcraft; her priest produces the *corona* of roses promised by Fotis (3.25.4, 11.6.1).

Before concluding, I turn to an aspect of Fotis' role that has caused some recent disagreement. The essence of the matter is whether the name “Fotis” (or “Photis”) has etymological significance in the narrative, as the name “Palaestra” obviously does in the short account of erotic horse-play in the version attributed to Lucian.²⁰ The name is almost certainly derived from *φῶς*, “light,” and, as Grimal remarks, it may not have mystical significance but it is at least symbolic: “une lumière de l'erreur, qui luit pour ceux dont l'âme n'a pas été préparée à discerner la vérité.” He adds that Psyche and Fotis are analogues: Psyche's curiosity sheds light on the divine (5.22.1–2); Lucius, with the aid of his “light,” Fotis, discloses bestiality. In contrast to the *Fortunae caecitas* (11.15.2) that has hounded him since, as he puts it, *me Photis malis incapistrasset erroribus* (11.20.6), Isis is *Fortuna videns, quae suae lucis splendore ceteros etiam deos illuminat* (11.15.3), and who promises salvation in metaphorical terms of light: *Iam tibi providentia mea inlucescit dies salutaris* (11.5.4).²¹ As he has done with so much purely titillating material in his source, Apuleius replaces what was a scabrously punning name with a name bearing a meaning that contributes to the religious resolution of his own novel.

It has not been my aim in this paper to cloak Fotis or “Lucius’ affair with Fotis in pompous metaphysical terms.”²² The *Metamorphoses* has many more moments of undeniable mirth than mystery, and Fotis, the saucy maidservant, contributes a fair share of irreverent levity (e.g., 2.7.7, 3.18.6–7).²³ Unlike the author of his model, however, Apuleius

²⁰In what follows I am much indebted to Włosok (above, n. 3) 79; S. Lancel, *RHR* 160 (1961) 41–46; and especially P. Grimal, *REL* 47 (1969) 98. A. Scobie, *Aspects of the Ancient Romance and Its Heritage* (Meisenheim am Glan 1969) 58–64, gives a full, balanced survey of views.

²¹Dr J. Tatum has suggested to me that the rare verb “inlucescere” could be a pun on the name “Lucius.” Incidentally, the phrase “cum me Photis malis incapistrasset erroribus,” like “iugum subi voluntarium” (11.15.5), is appropriate to Lucius and helps to link the adventures of the early books with their signification in Book 11.

²²The quoted phrase is C. Schlam's (above, n. 3) 295.

²³According to R. Merkelbach, *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike* (Munich and Berlin 1962) 87–90, the mixture of “Scherz und Ernst” has mystical significance. The combination of emotions evident at 11.9.1 and 11.24.4 probably reflects more accurately the kind of situation to which the limited evidence points.

has enlarged the stated goal of entertainment (*laetaberis*, 1.1.6) with the *apologia* of Isis with which he closes the work. What I have wanted to suggest is that there is in the novel a psychological relationship between Lucius' early, compulsive attraction to magic and his later conversion to *servitium deae* (11.15.2).²⁴ Books 1–3 and 11 provide, in effect "before" and "after" snapshots of him. They record the transformation of his impassioned eagerness for magic in approximately the first fourth of the work into an equally passionate attachment to Isis in Book 11. These two fervent attachments give to the patchwork of tales of the middle books a psychologically plausible framework.²⁵

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²⁴F. Cumont, cited by Scazzoso (above, n. 2) 44, n. 1, has called magic the bastard child of religion and science.

²⁵I wish to record my gratitude to Dr H. J. Mason and Dr J. Tatum for their helpful criticism of an earlier version of this paper.