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Apuleius and the Concept of a Philosophical Rhetoric

by Maeve O'Brien

There is a remarkable saying of a wise man concerning the pleasures of the table, to the effect that 'The first glass quenches thirst, the second makes merry, the third kindles desire, the fourth madness' (*Florida* 20.1).

These are the opening words of *Florida* 20.¹ The *Florida* is a collection of extracts of epideictic or show oratory delivered by Apuleius to audiences in Carthage. Apuleius was a native of north Africa and is speaking, confident of a respectful response on home ground. He lived during the Second Sophistic, an era characterized by a revival of the interests of the sophists of the fifth century B.C. In the second century A.D., Apuleius' time, an exaggerated, even mystical, reverence was attached to rhetoric and philosophy, as, for example may be seen in Apuleius' life of Plato, which is the oldest that has come down to us, where Apuleius claims descent from Poseidon for Plato (*De Plat.* I. 1-4. 180-189).² Apuleius (*Apology* 37) provides an illustration of his remarkable view of language. He recounts how Sophocles defended himself on a charge of madness by simply reciting *Oedipus at Colonus* in full. The judges were won over by the shrewdness of his argument and the eloquence of his language. The power of the language of *Oedipus at Colonus* forms Sophocles' only defence. Apuleius is not only concerned with language as an ornament, but also with language as embodying some kind of mystical significance.³ In the extract quoted above Apuleius compares the first cup to the first draught of philosophy, the Muses' wine, which teaches the rudiments of literature. The second corresponds to the teaching of the *grammaticus*, and the third arms one with the eloquence of the rhetor. Thus far most people drink. But Apuleius claims that he drank from the fourth cup and many others, which can lead to health rather than to madness. From these he imbibed the inspiration of the Muses in poetry, knowledge of geometry, music, dialectic and philosophy. All the best philosophers whom Apuleius attempts to emulate, were poets also:

For Empedocles composed verse, Plato dialogues, Socrates hymns, Epicharmus music, Xenophon histories, and Crates satire. But your friend Apuleius cultivates all these branches of art together and worships all nine

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Muses with equal zeal. His enthusiasm is, I admit, in advance of his capacity . . . (*Florida* 20. 5-6).⁴

This is a good example of Apuleius' virtuoso approach in these speeches. Despite this approach, or perhaps because of it, it is notable that Apuleius' special interests are philosophy and rhetoric, which were common preoccupations of the time.⁵ Not only is he a self-styled philosopher, he is also a veritable Hippias, and by extension of the metaphor, a Daedalus, in respect of his writings.⁶ On the other hand, philosophy has taught him not only to love those who have been fair to him, but also those who have not, and to attach greater importance to justice than to his own private interests and to prefer the furtherance of the public welfare to the service of his own.⁷

Apuleius wishes that philosophy could issue a prohibition against base imitations of itself, just as Alexander the Great is said to have done in regard to his own portrait:⁸

And would that philosophy could issue a like proclamation, that should have equal weight, forbidding unauthorized persons to reproduce her likeness; then the study and contemplation of wisdom in all her aspects would be in the hands of a few good craftsmen who had been carefully trained, and unlettered fellows of base life and little learning would ape the philosopher no longer (though their imitation does not go beyond the professor's gown), and the queen of all studies, whose aim is no less excellence of speech than excellence of life, would no longer be profaned by evil speech and evil living: and, mark you, profanation of either is far from hard (*Florida* 7. 9-11).⁹

This extract shows that Apuleius places rhetoric and philosophy on the same footing, and that he envisages two levels of rhetoric. Does Apuleius combine both his interests and posit the existence of a philosophical rhetoric? If he does, he does so in an idiosyncratic and non-systematic way. Nevertheless, it is useful to see how he defends rhetoric. I am limiting myself to one main text, *De Platone et eius Dogmate* or *On Plato and his Doctrine*, obviously because of its subject-matter and because its authorship is certain, noting that mention of rhetoric is missing from its Greek 'companion piece' by Albinus/Alcinous.¹⁰

The notion of a philosophical rhetoric was not new. The mode of living which Isocrates' philosophy recommended depended on the art of speaking well. Even though Plato maintains that flattery invades all types of rhetoric (*Gorgias* 464-5), he still holds that a higher rhetoric complements dialectic as in the *Phaedrus* (especially

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267a) where Socrates describes a word living and in the soul which Apuleius may have had in mind when proposing the discipline of contemplating good, his term for philosophical rhetoric.¹¹ Among the Romans, Cicero was attracted to the Academic philosophy because of his conviction that this school admitted of both philosophy and rhetoric in a complementary relationship.¹²

Apuleius' philosophical system is similar to those of the other Middle Platonists of his era. General features of such Platonism include an idiosyncratic mixture of elements from other philosophies, the idea of assimilation to a god, the notion of the Ideas as thoughts in the mind of a God, and an elaborate system of daemons.¹³

Apuleius' philosophical background is well described by J. Beaujeu who is sure that the masters of Albinus and Apuleius inherited the 'dogmatic' tradition reestablished by Antiochus of Ascalon and enriched after him by his successors with heterogeneous elements which more or less disfigured the Ancient Academy and so the thought of Plato himself.¹⁴

The importance of a philosophical rhetoric to Apuleius must be viewed in the context of his Platonism. He reports in *On Plato and his Doctrine* (hereafter *De Platone*) that there are two substances or essences in which all things are created, including the world itself (*De Platone* I. 6. 193). The one essence we can see, the other is visible to the eyes of the mind only:

Of the primary essence or substance is the creator and the creative mind and the Forms of things and the soul; of the secondary substance are all things which are made or born (and which take their source from the model of the higher substance), which can be changed or transformed and which are like rivers everflowing onwards in flight. Still now, since that substance of true perception, about which I have spoken, supports itself with firm strength, even the words which discuss it are full of steady reasoning and credibility. But the reasoning and words which discuss *that* substance which is, as it were, a shadow and image of the higher one, exist merely as inconsistent science (*De Plat.* I.6.194).¹⁵

This notion of two levels of existence each with its own language is reinforced some chapters later in a passage Apuleius inserts between one on the world soul and another on the nature of time:

Moreover, the nature of things is twofold, there is both one which he calls *doxastos*, which can be seen by the eye and touched by the hand, and also the second which comes into the soul and is meditative and intelligible — I beg your pardon for the newness of the wording here, which must needs

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be, due to the difficulties inherent in the subject-matter. At any rate, the former part is mutable and readily visible to someone just looking. The latter, however, which is seen by the gaze of the soul only, and is grasped and absorbed by piercing reasoning, is immutable, constant and always the same. Accordingly, he says that there is a twofold account and exposition for each one: visible nature is cobbled together and made sense of by fortuitous conjecture, but the intelligible is proven to exist by an eternal and constant account (*De Plat.* I.9.200).¹⁶

It is evident from these passages in Book I that there are two kinds of language. In Book II of *De Platone* Apuleius says that the higher language is pursued by the outstanding person, and is full of steady reasoning and credibility. The other language has to do with the inconsistent discipline of the secondary essence, study of which is pursued by one who is less good. Apuleius explains these two classes of people:

An example of the one is of the divine, tranquil and blessed, and of the other the impious, barbarous and deservedly dishonoured; so that he who is averse and a stranger to the proper mode of life wishes to be quite like the worst; on the other hand, a good person wishes to be more like the divine in so far as he is able (*De Plat* II.8.230).¹⁷

In the subsequent discussion on rhetoric, Apuleius assigns two different kinds of rhetoric to each person. In doing so, he adheres to his statement that there are two essences, one higher and one lower, or two natures of things, one seen by the soul, the other by the eyes, because the first language is a discipline which contemplates the good, and is akin to philosophy, and the other is a science which captivates by semblances:

Hence, there are two rhetorics for each one, one is the discipline of contemplating good, which adheres to justice and is suitable and proper to the mode of life of one who wishes to seem concerned, a *politicus*, the other is a science of flattery captivating by verisimilitude, a hotch-potch using no rational system — thus, we are accustomed to call it an entertainment which desires persuasion because it cannot teach (*De Plat.* II.8.231).¹⁸

The “discipline of contemplating good” is obviously the rhetoric “full of steady reasoning and credibility” or the “eternal and constant account” which Apuleius says describes the primary essence, that is the soul, the Forms of things and the intelligible world. This rhetoric corresponds to Plato’s dialectic:

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and so with dialectic, when a person starts on the discovery of the absolute by the light of reason only, and without any assistance of sense, and perseveres until by pure intelligence he arrives at the perception of the absolute good, he at last finds himself at the end of the intellectual world, as in the case of sight at the end of the visible (*Rep. VII 532*).

Apuleius' definition of rhetoric is perhaps disingenuous, reflecting as it does a sophist's attempt to elevate rhetoric to the status of philosophy.¹⁹ The lower rhetoric, which one must assume is sophistry, is but an image of the higher one, and describes what may be seen and touched. It is captivating, full of conjecture and inconsistent, and describes things such as itself. It is, in fact, rather similar to the rhetoric Apuleius uses himself in the *Florida* or *The Golden Ass*, for example. Apuleius does not explain or give examples of where each rhetoric is used beyond the bald assertion that one describes what is visible to the eye, the other that which is visible to the mind's eye. This can be ascribed to the structure of the *De Platone* which purports to be a brief summary of all Plato's teachings. If Apuleius, as a sophist, wishes to rehabilitate rhetoric he has a difficult task ahead of him. Yet Apuleius' views did have some basis in the *Phaedrus*, a work with which Apuleius was familiar.²⁰ It is maintained in the *Phaedrus* that the function of speech is to influence the soul (*Phaedr.* 271a). One is a true rhetor if one knows when to speak and when to be silent.²¹

The spoken word is superior to the written especially when the spoken word is joined to dialectic (*Phaedr.* 276-7). Lucidity and finality and serious importance are to be found only in words spoken by way of instruction, or in reality, written on the soul of the hearer to enable him to learn about the right, the beautiful and the good (*Phaedr.* 278a). Similarly, elsewhere, that which is apprehensible by thought with a rational account (*noēsei meta logou*), is said to be the thing that is always unchangeably real; but that which is the object of belief together with unreasoning sensation is the thing that becomes and passes away, and never has real being (*Tim.* 28a). Any account of the real is similarly abiding and stable, but any account of becoming can only be, at best, likely, since it is merely a copy of a likeness (*Tim.* 29b-c). But even when attained, knowledge of the former kind (which could be about the ineffable god, for example), is then impossible to transmit to others: "The maker and father of this universe it is a hard task to find (*ergon*), and having found him it would be impossible (*adynaton*) to declare him to all mankind."²²

Even Plato was not able to pass on his learning, so how can I,

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says Apuleius, teach my understanding of this supreme knowledge to others:

when even Plato, endowed with heavenly eloquence, who discoursed on equal terms with the immortal gods, will often say that this god of incredible majesty and ineffability cannot be comprehended due to a deficiency in human discourse. This power is scarcely granted to philosophers even when they have divorced themselves from the body as much as possible because of the strength of their minds. Indeed, even for these, knowledge of this god is at best intermittent, just as in deepest shade a dazzling light gleams with flickering brightness (*De Deo Soc.* III.1.124).²³

Apuleius, at any rate, bases his view of rhetoric as the discipline of contemplating good on the compound of rhetoric joined with dialectic and on the definition of dialectic found in the *Phaedrus* and the *Republic* respectively. However these more sympathetic and technical views of rhetoric clash with the moralistic notion of rhetoric found in the *Gorgias*.

Since Apuleius had clearly joined rhetoric to dialectic and in fact almost maintained that rhetoric was dialectic, this rhetoric could not now be infected with the science of flattery.

Apuleius was left with the problem of how to deal with this, and this he does in the context of his remarks on politics, *civilitas*. In his definition of the two rhetorics (*De Plat.* II.8.231), the discipline of contemplating good, that is the rhetoric full of steady reasoning and credibility, is used by one who wishes to appear a *politicus*, a statesman. These are rare birds and the majority fall into the second class of citizens who use the science of flattery or lower rhetoric — sophistry: “This Plato defined as the power of persuading but not of instructing, and he called it the shade, that is the image, of a branch of politics” (*De Plat.* II.8.231).²⁴ The following are Plato’s words:

That [art] which presides over the soul I call politics (*politike*); to that which governs the body I cannot give a single name; yet, since the care of the body is a single art, I call its two branches gymnastics (*gymnastike*) and medicine (*iatrike*). In politics as against gymnastics I place legislation (*nomothetike*) and that which is the counterpart of medicine I call justice (*dikaiozyne*) (*Gorg.* 464-5).

Plato avers that certain arts are of use to the body and others benefit the soul. There are eight arts in total. The arts concerned with the soul are rhetoric, sophistic, justice and legislation; those occupied with the body are cookery, cosmetics, medicine and gymnastics.

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Medicine, gymnastics, legislation and justice are the true arts, that is, they have the real good of body and soul constantly in view.

Plato then says that the art of flattery invades all four of legislation, justice, gymnastics and medicine in the forms of sophistry (*sophistike*), rhetoric (*rhetorike*), cosmetics (*kommatike*) and cookery (*opso-poiike*) (*Gorg.* 465b-c).

Therefore, sophistic is represented as being the counterfeit of legislation. The latter is defined as the duty of every true statesman, namely, to aid the growth and development of the body politic. Sophistic is a system of vain and empty rules that merely attempts (but does not succeed) to sustain this very growth and development. Rhetoric, pretending to right wrongs in individual cases, is, in this capacity, the empty shade of justice. Accordingly, “as make-up is to gymnastics, so is sophistic to legislation; and as cookery to medicine so is rhetoric to justice” (*Gorg.* 465). Apuleius too defines politics as the art proper to the soul:

This virtue is likewise of use to the soul in two ways: one legislative, the other judicial. The former method is similar to exercise through which beauty and strength of the soul is acquired, just as the health and poise of the body is retained by exercise. The juridical method corresponds to medicine, for it cures the diseases of the soul just as the latter does diseases of the body. These he calls disciplines (*technai*) and he declares that care of them is generally very profitable. The imitators of these are cookery and cosmetics and the sophistic art and the craft of law (*professio iuris*), the charming blandishments of flatterers, disgraceful to those who profit by them and useless to all (*De Plat.* II.9.232-3).²⁵

In this, Apuleius’ version of the famous *Gorgias* passage, Apuleius substitutes “craft of law” for rhetoric and changes the role assigned by Plato to sophistic.

In the *Gorgias* sophistic imitates legislation not judicial power, and rhetoric imitates judicial power, but in Apuleius, the craft of law which replaces rhetoric imitates legislation. Therefore, Apuleius takes what he would see as the higher rhetoric out of the number of imitators of legislation and justice, and so maintains the importance of the higher rhetoric he has described (*De Plat.* II.8.231). The sophistic art is linked to what he calls the juridical method and cookery, and the craft of law mimicks legislation and cosmetics:

Concerning these, he [Plato] joins sophistry to cooking, for just as in that business of medicine, it captures betimes the thought of foolish people just as medicine does when it seems to find remedies for diseases; thus the sophistic art, imitating the juridical stance, gives an opinion to the foolish

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just as if it were a dedicated follower of justice to such an extent that it favours injustice. And so the craft of law imitates cosmetics, for just as the latter wishes to act as a remedy through which the appearance of the body and the health is preserved, not only is it of less use to the body, but it even breaks health and strength and changes the true colour of the complexion to a florid hue; thus the former, mimicking a knowledge of law, even pretends that it is a virtue to add to souls, but, however, it only weakens that spark of innate diligence which is already there (*De Plat.* II.9.234).²⁶

Accordingly, a debased version of the legislative method is the pernicious evil of the craft of law, a cosmetic which merely mimicks true knowledge of law.

In Plato the debased version of legislation is sophistry. Therefore, in a comparison between Apuleius and Plato, the latter's sophistry corresponds to Apuleius' craft of law. In Apuleius, the debased version of the juridical method is sophistic art, and in Plato the debased version of justice is rhetoric. Apuleius changes the scheme, thinking obviously, with Quintilian, that it is rhetoric as sophistic art, a debased rhetoric, that Plato means by rhetoric in this context (Quintilian, *I.O.*, 2.15.28).²⁷ He rearranges the substance of *Gorgias* 464 to suit his own scheme. He makes three changes. The craft of law, not sophistry, imitates legislation. Sophistry imitates not legislation but the juridical method. Most importantly, Apuleius leaves out rhetoric as such, and saves it for describing the superior essence of existence. He maintains the importance of his higher rhetoric by this subtle rearrangement, since rhetoric now approximates dialectic and as such is left out of the scheme, just as dialectic is in Plato. This is indeed a sophist's special plea for the primacy of rhetoric.

One must return to the *Florida* for a practical and populist illustration of this theory.²⁸ In *Florida* 18 Apuleius divines that his audience, despite their bookish and philosophical interests, wish to hear stories. The stories of Protagoras and Thales illustrate complicated points of rhetoric which are the rewards of sophistry, and the prizes of practical and theoretical knowledge won by the philosopher respectively. The example of Protagoras is as follows. Apuleius' description of him emphasizes his rhetorical skill:

Protagoras was a sophist with knowledge on an extraordinary number of subjects, and one of the most eloquent among the first inventors of the art of rhetoric. He was a fellow citizen and contemporary of Democritus, and it was from Democritus that he derived his learning (*Florida* 18.19).

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Protagoras pledges rashly that his pupil Euathlus should pay tuition fees to his teacher after Euathlus wins his first case. Euathlus learns all the tricks of the trade, but when he completes his studies he displays great reluctance to plead any case and to pay his fees. Protagoras takes him to court on a charge of non-payment of fees. Protagoras argues: if you lose, Euathlus, you will have to pay your fees because you will be condemned to do so. If you win, you will still have to pay under the terms of your contract. Euathlus, *perfectissimus discipulus*, replies: if I win I am acquitted by the court. If I lose I will not have to pay you, Protagoras, because I will have lost my first case. Apuleius concludes:

What think you? Does not the opposition of these sophistic arguments remind you of brambles, that the wind has entangled one with another? They cling together; thorns of equal length on either side, each penetrating to an equal depth, each dealing wound for wound (*Florida* 18.20).

Therefore, says Apuleius, the reward of Protagoras must be left to the shrewd and avaricious. The reward Thales receives is far better. Thales is described as one of the Seven Sages, philosopher, inventor, investigator and observer. Mandraytus of Priene promises, in reply to Thales' request, that he will always honour Thales as the founder of the knowledge he learned from him. Apuleius concludes: "In truth, that was a noble recompense, worthy of so great a man and beyond the reach of time" (*Florida* 18.35). Once again, Apuleius emphasizes, on the one hand, the changeable nature of sophistry and how it captivates by semblances, and on the other hand, the fixed and constant nature of his philosophical rhetoric, the discipline which contemplates good, so difficult to study that even Plato failed to achieve perfection in it.

Apuleius, who styles himself *philosophus platonicus*, is equally *rhetor platonicus*, and he himself would have seen no conflict between the two terms. If one could ask Apuleius, as the tyrant asks Aristippus, what profit he had received from the devoted study of philosophy, he would probably reply with Aristippus: *ut cum omnibus hominibus secure et intrepide fabularer* (Fragments 2.106).²⁹

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Notes

1. All Greek and Latin quotations are translated. The *Florida* is a collection of extracts of dactylic oratory by Apuleius. I have used the commentary by J. Beaujeu, *Apulée, Apologie, Florides* (Paris 1971). And in translation, *The Apology and Florida of Apuleius of Madaura*, translated by H. E. Butler (Oxford 1909; reprint, Connecticut 1970). I have translated quotations from *On Plato and his Doctrine (De Platone et eius Dogmate)* and all citations from it in this article use the notation of J. Beaujeu, *Apulée, Opusculs Philosophiques et Fragments* (Paris 1973). Cf. D. Londry and C. Johanson, *The Logic of Apuleius* (Brill 1987) 10, where the authors maintain that Apuleius is referring to steps in his own education here.

2. Plato is Apuleius' hero (*De Plat.* II.7.229) who has equalled the power of the gods (*De Plat.* I.2.183), with his heavenly eloquence, *On the Daemon of Socrates* 3 (*De Deo Socratis*), cf. *Apology* 65 (*Apologia De Magia*). Plato is his *magister vitae*, cf. *De Plat.* I.4.189, on Plato's philosophy as one which leads one to the *utilitas* of living and learning and the *ratio* of speaking, cf. W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Sophists* (Cambridge 1971) 178n.4: "To be a good speaker as well as a man of action had been the ambition of a Greek since Homeric times (II.9.443)."

3. Cf. E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (California 1951) 252, observes the need for "quasi-religious dogma" in the second and third centuries, manifest "generally in the pathetic reverence for the written word characteristic of Late Roman and Medieval times". On the divine origin of language, cf. *The Classical World*, edited by D. Daiches and A. Thorlby (Aldus Books 1972) 56-57. E. H. Gombrich, *Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, (Phaidon 1973) 171-180, explains how the image itself, the actual written word, was deemed magical through some magical sympathy supposed to exist between it and the subject it described.

4. Cf. the "still undifferentiated functions", which Dodds (above n. 3) 146 speaks of in relation to Empedocles might apply just as well to the view of Plato and other philosophers current in the second century: "Empedocles represents not only a new but a very old type of personality, the shaman who combines the still undifferentiated functions of magician and naturalist, poet and philosopher, preacher, healer and public counsellor".

5. Cf. *Florida* in general and *Flor.* 9.4f.

6. *Flor.* 9.14ff., and he continues. "I infinitely prefer to all these instruments one simple pen, with which I may write poems of all kinds, such as may suit the reciter's wand and the accompaniment of the lyre . . . histories also on diverse themes, speeches that the eloquent and dialogues that philosophers have praised". Apuleius shares with earlier Sophists a concern for language: cf. R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship* (Oxford 1968) 37: "The main point of words for the Sophist is this: 'the investigation of words is the beginning of education'". Apuleius believes, in common with the earlier Pythagoreans, that language is holy in the sense that it can approach a higher truth. Cf. B. L. Hijmans 'Apuleius: *Philosophus Platonius*', *A.N.R.W.* II.36.1, p. 461f. This mixture of minute scholarship and mysticism is characteristic of Apuleius. Cf. J. Tatum, *Apuleius and The Golden Ass* (Cornell 1978) 127. Cf. Horace, *Sat.* II, 1.39-46.

7. *Flor.* 9.33.

8. Cf. Plato, *Rep.* V472, on the nature of absolute justice and the metaphor of the painter used there; also *Rep.* X, on the good carpenter who makes a bed, and the artist, who is bad, because he merely makes a copy of the bed in a picture. Cf. *Tim.* 30c.

9. Many who wish to learn and live by such a philosophy can be deceived by charlatans. Apuleius commends the Cynics Diogenes and Antisthenes (*Apol.* 22). He praises Crates for

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living a frugal life (*Flor.* 14 and 22). However, a philosopher such as Crates can be easily and insincerely imitated. Accordingly, students of philosophy can be deceived by false and petty resemblances: *Flor.* 9.9. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 273e-274a.

10. The first two books of *De Platone* are considered to be definitely by Apuleius cf. Beaujeu (above n. 1), *Introd.* p. ix ff. There is some dispute about the third entitled *On Interpretation* or *Peri Hermeneias*, cf. M. W. Sullivan, *Apuleian Logic: The Nature, Sources and Influences of Apuleius' Peri Hermeneias* (Holland 1967) Appendix I p. 235f. For a summary of Meiss's arguments on the authenticity of *On Interpretation*, cf. M. Londry and C. Johanson (above n. 1) 11f. Also J. M. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* (London 1977) 333.

11. *De Plat.* II.8.231.

12. On Cicero and the Academic philosophy, cf. *The Question of Eclecticism*, edited by J. M. Dillon and A. A. Long (California 1988) 34f. Also, Cicero, *De Fato*, II.3; *Tusc. Disp.* I iii 6 and iv 4; *Par. Stoic.*, Proem 2 and 3; *De Off.* I 3; *De Nat. Deor.* II.59.148, on speech as queen of all the arts, cf. *ibid.*, III.31.77f. Also Quintilian, *I.O.* I Pr. 13f; *ibid.*, II.16.15 and also II.21.13; on the ideal orator, *ibid.*, XII.1.25 and 2.8, and compare Apul., *De Plat.* II.6.228, where both recommend that the ideal orator should have practical wisdom, *prudentia*, and theoretical knowledge, *sapientia*, that is, knowledge of things human and divine.

13. Cf. Dillon (above n. 10) 307; Hijmans (above n. 6) 467.

14. Cf. Beaujeu (above n. 1) 57. The opposite view, namely that Neoplatonism resembles Platonism, is found in P. Merlan, *From Platonism to Neoplatonism*, (The Hague 1953) 2.

15. On two substances cf. Plato, *Tim.* 37b-c; *Phaedo*, 65 and 78ff.; *ibid.*, 90c.

16. *Doxastos*: cf. F. M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology, The Timaeus of Plato* (London 1937) on *Tim.* 29b and notes *ad loc.* and from there to *Tim.* 51e.

17. Cf. Plato, *Rep.* VI 484ff on true and false philosophers and the best citizen.

18. Cf. Plato, *Rep.* VII 531d and *Phaedrus* 277-278 on dialectic; and on sophistry, *Gorg.* 464-5 and *Phaedrus* 269 where it is said that the first steps to the true art of rhetoric are taught by the Sophists — who then claim these steps are the true art. Cf. *Phaedo*, 89c-91c against misology.

19. Dillon (above n. 10) 333.

20. Cf. *De Deo Socratis*, 19; *Apol.* 64; *The Golden Ass*, I. 19.

21. Apuleius professes to follow the doctrines of Socrates, Pythagoras and Plato (*De Deo Soc.* 23), between whose doctrines he sees no conflict. He says that he learned when to speak and when to be silent from the Platonic philosophy which, he maintains, was influenced by Pythagoras in this respect (*Flor.* 15.26).

22. But when attained this knowledge (which could be about the ineffable God, for example), is then impossible to transmit to others: Plato *Tim.* 28c; cf. *De Plat.* I.5.190, cf. *The Golden Ass* XI.23. See R. Mortley, "The Fundamentals of the *Via Negativa*" *AJP* 103 (1982) 433: "it is clear that the rather airy use of the alpha privatives in this period suggests little more than a new awe of the transcendent". Cf. the later Platonist, Plotinus, *Enn.* V.3.14, where even the attainment of knowledge, not to mind passing it on to others, is now seen as impossible. It is interesting to note how much closer to Plato Apuleius is in this respect.

23. Cf. *Seventh Letter* 341c; Plato, *Rep.* VI, 508c-d.

24. Cf. *Gorg.* 463d: "Rhetoric in my account is a reflection of a branch of politics", and *ibid.*, 454e which is inaccurately quoted by Apuleius.

25. *Disciplines/disciplinae/technai*: *Gorg.* 464b.

26. *Professio iuris* "craft/crafting of law", a rare expression, is substituted for rhetoric in Apuleius' scheme. Apuleius may have been thinking of *Phaedrus* 278e when he coined the term. Here, Socrates says the writer or composer of laws who can defend his writings does not deserve to be called wise but rather a lover of wisdom: "The man whose most precious production is what he has composed or written, and who has devoted his time to twisting words this way and that, pasting them together and pulling them apart, may fairly be called a poet or a speech writer or a maker of laws (*nomographos*)". *Nomographos* means something very like *professio iuris*; at least it is the same activity, that of law-making, that is being described.

27. According to Quintilian, who reviews *Gorg.* 464-465, Plato condemns the abuse of rhetoric in the politics of his own day, and regards rhetoric in itself as a genuine and

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honourable thing: "It is clear therefore that Plato does not regard rhetoric as an evil, but holds that true rhetoric is impossible for any save a just and good man. In the *Phaedrus* [261a-273e] he makes it even clearer that complete attainment of this art is impossible without knowledge of justice, an opinion in which I heartily concur . . . It was against the class of men who employed their glibness of speech for evil purposes that he directed his denunciations" (*IO* 11.15.28).

28. *Flor.* 18.29. Cf. Hijmans (above n. 6) 396.

29. Cf. Beaujeu (above n. 1) 165.