

enhancing the stylistic texture. At a second level, it is through its belonging to the comic scene, or to the comic genre rather than to the particular Plautine matrix, that a lexical element evokes a comic atmosphere or situation. At a third level, the memory of the Plautine hypotext, often even of a specific passage from the comic poet, is unmistakably present, and at this level the reader is invited to join the game of intertextual relationships. It is also shown that Apuleian neologisms that are coined on a Plautine model are especially capable of evoking a comic atmosphere, and as such they illuminate particularly well the vitality of the Plautine heritage, and the freedom with which Apuleius confronts it.

An aspect that is valid for all three levels of Apuleius' reception of Plautus, is his frequent commitment first and foremost to the dimension of sound and style: throughout this study, it is made convincingly clear that – more than his being a source for archaising language – it is the comic poet's sensibility to the sound of the Latin language that earns him first position in the 'mosaico della memoria' of Apuleius.

The study of the nominal compounds (Chapter 3) has led P. to observe a fundamental difference between Plautus and Apuleius in their confrontation with the epic and tragic tradition: while Plautus uses poetic nominal compounds found in the epic and tragic Latin poets with parodistic effects, Apuleius on the contrary often applies poetic nominal compounds (mostly from epic, and especially from Virgil, or newly coined in epic style) with a view to elevating the register of his prose.

A rich bibliography and three indexes conclude the book: an *index locorum*, an index of names (modern authors) and a well-organised and helpful analytic index of seventeen pages.

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THE GOLDEN ASS

NAUTA (R.R.) (ed.) *Desultoria Scientia. Genre in Apuleius' Metamorphoses and Related Texts.* (Caeculus 5.) Pp. x + 121. Leuven, Paris and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2006. Paper, €30. ISBN: 978-90-429-1846-7.

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This collection of six essays with Preface, *indices rerum* and *locorum* and Bibliography, is the published proceedings of a colloquium held at Fransum in the Netherlands and undertaken as part of Wytse Keulen's Ph.D. degree. Deceptively short for the amount of learning enclosed within its pages, the book represents, as is maintained in the Preface, 'the integrated and interdisciplinary approach of the study of Antiquity at the University of Groningen'.

It is through such a wide lens that the focus on generic inclusivity in the novel must be discerned. A wide variety of approaches is evident. Some look at the question from the outside and compare the novel and Roman satire, for example. Others operate from the inside and take episodes from within the text or from related texts by Apuleius and look closely at these. Keulen himself takes one character in one episode of the novel to illustrate the interplay with comedy in the imaginative 'The Wet Rituals of the Excluded Mistress: Meroe and the Mime' (pp. 43–61). A wide array of motifs and allusions from mime, pastoral, comedy and elegy are found to contribute

towards constructing the delight the first reader of the *Metamorphoses* must have felt. Meroe's performance as she bursts through the door of Aristomenes' barricaded room is seen as a vivid dramatisation of the programme of a novel that moves between life and death, the inside world and the outside world, between fiction and truth. Keulen concludes that the episode of Meroe in Book 1 is in itself *multum in paruo*, the *Metamorphoses* in miniature.

V. Hunink, in a clear and erudite essay 'Some Cases of Genre Confusion in Apuleius' (pp. 33–42), by discussing selected passages in the *Apology* and *Florida* shows how Apuleius 'seems to play with genres' for rhetorical effect. S.J. Harrison continues this theme of generic complexity and clever narrative strategies to entertain and to divert in his piece, 'Literary Texture in the Adultery-tales of Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* Book 9' (pp. 19–31). Investigation of the adultery-tales of 9.14–31 involves close reading. After as clear as possible a précis of the content of the stories, Harrison picks his way through *lubricas ambages* to locate many intertextual echoes from adultery-mime and comic drama, elegy, tragedy and epic poetry. The allusions from mime and comic drama are relevant in terms of the subject matter of the stories, from Milesian tales there is a fit to the narratological framework, de-romanticised lovers from elegy and lowlife versions of figures from epic and tragedy populate the Apuleian text where Philesitherus becomes a 'lowlife Hippolytus' and the miller's wife a 'lowlife Phaedra'. All this is submerged into a clever narrative structure, and the primary purpose of it all is, according to Harrison, literary entertainment.

L. Graverini's essay, 'A *Lepidus Susurrus*. Apuleius and the Fascination of Poetry' (pp. 1–18), opens the collection. This provocative contribution strives to find a 'literary contextualisation' for the *lepidus susurrus* (mentioned in the Preface of the *Metamorphoses*) that might be based on the true academic value of not rejecting an interesting intertext because we do not know what to make of it. Graverini finds that the power of literature is the message of the Preface and traces the complex way this message is delivered through the echoing of metapoetical utterances in authors from Plato (and his soporific cicadas), Callimachus (and his clear-toned ones) through the whispering in the opening line of Theocritus' *Idyll* 1 to Virgil's humming honey bees in *Eclogue* 1. A programme of literary seduction is revealed to be the purpose of the text, and while *delectare* does not exclude the possibility of *docere*, the repetition of the process is noted in Book 11 when the *rudis locutor* of the Preface regains his human voice but chooses silence – to the benefit of his readers perhaps?

Dissecting the narrative situation is the metier of M. Zimmerman, and this she does in the final essay of the collection, 'Echoes of Roman Satire in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*' (pp. 88–104). Themes of avarice, adultery and credulity are studied in terms of an overarching intertextuality or 'Systemreferenz', the 'formative system' behind Roman satire, in order to discover common features and stratagems between it and the novel. The conclusion that Roman satire's *ego*-narrator and his masks are an important 'Romanising' element in creating the adaptation of the Greek ass tale in the *Metamorphoses* is an interesting one and invites further investigation.

This kind of hybridisation process is the concern of the longest essay, P. von Möllendorff's wonderfully titled 'Camels, Celts and Centaurs: Lucian's Aesthetic Concept – the *Charis* of the Hybrid' (pp. 63–86). The crossing of motifs from Old Comedy and Socratic dialogue to make one new genre is a claim Lucian makes in several places, for example in *Prometheus es in uerbis*. The task of joining together two such disparate genres into a whole that produces *charis* offers as many rewards as pitfalls. It emerges from this complex essay that in the middle of the second century A.D. Lucian was experimenting with notions not of genre distinction, but of 'an

advanced approach to genre aesthetics' for the construction and interpretation of new forms, hybrids of their generic predecessors.

The practical application of this process as engaged in by Apuleius is amply displayed in the other essays in this collection.

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THE *HISTORIA APOLLONII REGIS TYRI*

KORTEKAAS (G.A.A.) *Commentary on the Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri. (Mnemosyne Supplementum 284.)* Pp. xvi + 935, ills. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007. Cased, €169, US\$228. ISBN: 978-90-04-15594-7.
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This commentary both depends on and is intended to support the reconstruction of the complicated textual history of the *Historia Apollonii* offered by K. in the introduction to his 2004 Brill critical edition. This reconstruction is only briefly outlined in the short Introduction to the present volume: the reader has to refer frequently to K.'s previous work, as well as consult it when looking for apparatus criticus and indexes. The text of the *HA* is known to us through several recensions, each represented by a number of manuscripts. K. has published, and now comments on, the two earliest recensions, RA and RB, dated respectively to the late fifth and late fifth/early sixth century C.E. In his view, RA is a translation or adaptation of an earlier fifth-century Greek Christian text, R(Gr). RB is an adaptation of RA, but often falls back to the Greek text, to which it still had access. R(Gr) is in turn an epitome of an original Greek pagan text, HA(Gr), probably written in Tarsus in the third century C.E.

Despite the statement on p. ix of the Introduction, where the author declares that he has 'aimed at a concise commentary', the book devotes more than 900 pages to the 51 chapters of the *HA*. The commentary is organised in chapters; in each, a few lines of the Latin text are quoted in both recensions (RA's text is followed by an English translation), and then thoroughly commented on. The commentary is both extensive and exhaustive, and considers textual criticism, style, literary models, prose rhythm and *Nachleben*; a wider cultural/historical approach is employed when the text suggests it. All the quoted Latin and Greek passages are translated into English; even though it is rather unlikely that many general readers will use this book, this is indeed a welcome feature for the occasional user.

K. succeeds in presenting a very valuable wealth of information, almost always without being plethoric: he offers the reader a reliable guide through the many subtleties of this text. The richness of the information provided is apparent from the very beginning, when a wide number of Greek and Latin passages are quoted to discuss (or, rather, to disprove) the fairy-tale character of the well-known beginning, *In ciuitate Antiochia rex fuit quidam nomine Antiochus*. K. here offers a slightly wider choice of comparative material than the recent Groningen commentary on Apuleius' story of Cupid and Psyche (M. Zimmerman et al., *Apuleius Madaurensis. Metamorphoses. Books IV 28–35, V and VI 1–24* [Groningen, 2004]: apparently unknown to K.), whose incipit is very similar (4.28.1 *Erant in quadam ciuitate rex et regina...*). The latter is richer in bibliographical references and literary discussions: