

Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and Plato's texts

Hiroshi NOTSU

In this article, I examined an aspect of the literary method of Apuleius how he used Plato's text in his *Metamorphoses* (*Golden Ass*), assuming that the author's main aim was to entertain his educated readers by showing off his literary knowledge and skill — whether or not he had a philosophical intent as would have been the case in his other philosophical writings and translations. I compared some passages of his *Metamorphoses* above all to Plato's texts which Apuleius seems to have used in connection with the main theme of his novel. i.e.: “a man being transformed into a donkey”. (1) The prologues of Plato's four dialogues are compared to explain how Apuleius used them as literary model. (2) The introductory part (*Met.* 1.2-4) of the “Tale of Aristomenes” (*Met.* 1.5-19) and the prologue of *Symposium* have a common structuring method. (3) The whole story of Lucius is structured by the fact that the text of *Symposium* is used in the “Tale of Aristomenes”, in the “philosophising ass” theme at the end of Volume 10 (*Met.* 10.33), and in the “Amor and Psyche (*Met.* 4.28-6.24)” episode. (4) The popular theme of “becoming ass” is associated with the philosophical and religious motif of reincarnation by using a particular text in Plato's *Phaedo*. (5) Plato's specific text exists which associates the main theme of the story to *curiositas*, a common motif linking Socrates of the story of Aristomenes, Psyche of the Amor and Psyche episode, and Lucius of the whole novel.