Benjamin Todd Lee, Ellen Finkelpearl, and Luca Graverini, (edd.), with a Foreword by Alessandro Barchiesi, *Apuleius and Africa*. New York: Routledge, 2014. Pp. xvi + 344 ISBN 978-0-415-53309-6. $140.

This volume collects thirteen papers (plus foreword, preface and introduction) originating from a multi-disciplinary conference at Oberlin College in May 2010 on how the North-African Apuleius may have negotiated any conflicts between his Roman, Greek-acculturated and African identities.

The section on 'Historical Contexts' (pp. 21-84) starts with Keith Bradley's discussion of the *Apologia*, specifically the likely composition of his audience ('Apuleius' *Apology*: Text and Context', pp. 23-34). Despite Apuleius' ostentatious address to the elite judge, the audience included mostly local people, amongst them tradesmen, even a good proportion of slave traders and black slaves. The mixture of cultures is evident from contemporary Northern African mosaics.

In 'Authority and Subjectivity in the *Apology*' (pp. 35-51), Carlos F. Noreña discusses how, by citing literary and philosophical authorities in the *Apologia*, Apuleius reasserts his own intellectualism; the authority of both Roman nobles in charge of Northern Africa and former emperors is invoked in the first half of the *Apologia*. Apuleius then uses his own deft interpretation skills to display himself, too, as an authority on classical texts. He uses this newly established authority to promote his analysis of the letters that are employed as evidence during his trial as the only authentic interpretation. Noreña wishes to place Apuleius in a specific Northern African culture, but does not provide detailed evidence.

Julia Haig Gaisser ('How Apuleius Survived: The African Connection', pp. 52-65) argues convincingly that the survival of Apuleius' manuscripts would not have been possible without transmission in Northern Africa, because of his local connection. Augustine especially admired Apuleius greatly, and we probably owe the medieval transmission of the *Metamorphoses* to his interest, which he shared with other African authors, such as Lactantius, Martianus Capella, or Fulgentius.

Joseph Farrell discusses Apuleius' recent inclusion in the canon taught at (American?) universities ('Apuleius and the Classical Canon', pp. 66-85). This is a welcome development, although Apuleius' inclusion is still exceptional, since he is one of the latest authors, students mostly only read *Cupid and Psyche*, and he is one of the few Africans in the canon.

Starting the section on 'Cultural Contexts' (pp. 85-203), Silvia Mattiacci perceptively discusses the recently refreshed question of whether Africa had its own specific type of Latin, exuberant and punning *Africitas* ('Apuleius and *Africitas*', pp. 87-111). Passages on language and public speaking from *Apologia* and *Florida* remarkably frequently discuss Apuleius' own linguistic abilities. His linguistic experimentalism may be due to his ability to speak three languages (Punic might be his first), and his treatment of Latin may indicate an outside perspective and playfulness, since the prevalence of bi- or pluri-lingualism in Africa influenced written African Latin.

Luca Graverini concentrates on the *Metamorphoses*' interactions with the *Aeneid* in 'The Negotiation of Provincial Identity through Literature: Apuleius and Vergil' (pp. 112-128). Apuleius' description of Hypata, he argues, for example, echoes Virgil's of Carthage, which allows Apuleius to include Carthage in the novel surreptitiously. The only direct mention of Carthage, in a list of places which worship Juno (*Met.* 6.4), echoes *Aeneid* 1.12-16, where Juno again is linked closely with Carthage. The relationship between Rome and Carthage is however rewritten in the *Metamorphoses* as one of peaceful coexistence.

Wytse Keulen's interesting study compares Apuleius and Fronto, two Africans who possibly knew (of?) each other, shared an interest in archaizing language and continued cultural links with Africa, though they try to define themselves as models of *Latinitas* and *Romanitas* ('Fronto and Apuleius: Two African Careers in the Roman Empire', pp. 129-153). Both display their *Romanitas* by comparing their own linguistic abilities with that of the 'barbarian' philosopher Anacharsis. This juxtaposition, however, shows their differences, as Apuleius welcomes comparisons with Anarcharsis' philosophical identity, whereas Fronto focusses on his rhetorical skills alone. These differences extend to their assessments of their own identities as philosopher-rhetoricians: Apuleius echoes Cicero, as a *homo novus*, whereas Fronto stresses his close contact with the emperors.

In '"Identity" and "Identification" in Apuleius' *Apologia*, *Florida* and *Metamorphoses*' (pp. 154-173), David L. Stone analyses how Apuleius constructed the identities of his fictional characters – ethnicity

and nationalism seem rather less important than their individualised identity, their level of education, social status, religion or linguistic dexterity. The *Metamorphoses* revolves around problematic identity (man vs animal), yet national and ethnic identity are not seen as important, even in the story of the Greek market gardener and the Roman soldier (*Met.* 9.39-42). Stone points out that there is nothing specifically Greek in the gardener's identity – similar stories could be told anywhere else in the Roman Empire's periphery. When Apuleius uses ethnic identifications, they are localised: *Madaurensis* is used in *Met.* 11 without reference to ethnic identities. Stone thus offers a corrective to some studies in this volume and reminds us that individuals have many different, overlapping identities which undergo frequent redefinition according to the context in which identification is necessitated.

Emmanuel and Nedjima Plantade argue that ancient oral Berber tales are among the sources for C*upid and Psyche*, in a revisionist approach that reintroduces folklore and fairy tales into the study of the sources of C*upid and Psyche* against current scholarly thought that C*upid and Psyche* influenced fairy tales rather than the other way round ('*Libyca Psyche*: Apuleius' Narrative and Berber Folktales', pp. 174-202). They revise the speculative methodology of previous folklorists and contextualise C*upid and Psyche* with North African Berber tales like 'The Son of the Ogress'. Some parallels they set out are remarkable: ants helping Psyche to sort grain is the most persuasive pointer towards a possible influence of Northern African fairy tales on Apuleius' story.

With 'Apuleius and Afroasiatic Poetics' (pp. 205-270), Daniel L. Selden starts the section on 'Theoretical Approaches' (pp. 203-326) with a substantial piece on Afroasiatic poetics and Apuleius. Although Roman authors lumped all non-Greco-Romans together as 'barbarians', there was much ethnic and linguistic variety, and widespread bilingualism, even trilingualism, in Northern Africa. He makes a case for widespread use of Punic as the everyday language in Roman North Africa, with Latin and Greek as thinly spread elite languages. The evidence of multilingual inscriptions, prominent non-Roman architecture or religion, indicates that each culture competed with the other, without merging into a new entity. Selden argues that some figures of Apuleius' idiosyncratic prose style (e.g. parallelism, assonance, alliteration, paronomasia, punning, the overuse of which classical Roman rhetoricians advised against) are based on Libyan and Punic poetry; thus Apuleius writes in an Afroasian style which Selden also finds in other African authors, such as Augustine. In the *Met.*, five cultures (Greek, Roman, Libyan, Punic and Egyptian) are vying with each other. Selden concludes that Apuleius defined himself as a Libyan and was able to speak Punic, and was aware of contemporary Punic poetry and its rules of composition. Apuleius' often multi-lingual audience would have perceived his literary works as crossing over between Greco-Roman content and Libyac-Punic expression and style.

Sonia Sabnis analyses how Apuleius' references to India in the *Florida* are different from other Greco-Roman portraits ('*Procul a nobis*: Apuleius and India', pp. 271-296). Differences may be influenced by Apuleius' identification of himself as an African, as another outsider, in order to subtly undermine and disempower the ruling interpretation. Whereas Pliny uses the image of a parrot learning to speak as a metaphor for training the not-quite-subjugated foreigners into submission to Roman rule, Apuleius undermines Pliny in *Flor.* 12, as his vignette ends with either the amputation of the bird's tongue or its release into the wild because it cannot unlearn the swearwords it had been taught. The release indicates the failure to Romanize the Indian other. Furthermore, Apuleius' information on India differs from that of other Roman ethnographers and assimilates India and Africa: some descriptions of India recall descriptions of Africa or Egypt, for example, the hundred arms of the Ganges recall those of the Nile, elephants are found in both places. Apuleius' gymnosophists are not mysterious esoteric creatures, but entirely practical. Sabnis concludes that Apuleius thus demystifies and rhetorically conquers India, and subjugates it by familiarising it.

In 'Prosthetic Origins: Apuleius the Afro-Platonist' (pp. 297-312), Richard Fletcher focusses on *Apol.* 24, where Apuleius first discusses his origins, only to claim afterwards that origins are not important for a Platonist whose philosophical identity is more important than his cultural one. Platonic philosophy splits the individual into a mortal body and an immortal soul, and Apuleius' identification as 'half-Numidian and half-Gaetulian' echoes this dichotomy.

Benjamin Todd Lee concludes the volume with a discussion of the abbreviation *A.V.* (*Africae Viri*) on 188r of MS Laurentianus 68.2 (F) ('A Sociological Reading of A.V. ("*Africae Viri*"): Apuleius and the Logic of Post-Colonialism', pp. 313-326). He reads Apuleius' works from a postcolonial perspective, where the focus is on the province of Africa itself, and Rome is merely in the distance. He argues that the abbreviation indicates that the textual transmission of the *Florida* before its eventual

inclusion in F's ancestors goes back to an African manuscript in rustic capitals, and that *Florida*, *Apologia*, and the *Metamorphoses* were written for an African, not a Roman, audience. I however miss a discussion of 189r, where *apud principes Africae viros* is not abbreviated (*Flor.* 16.35). A postcolonial approach to Apuleius' self-portrait might explain why Apuleius shows himself simultaneously as Greco-Roman when it comes to his education and philosophy, and in certain other respects as Punic – Apuleius aspires to multicultural mastery of both cultures.

The actual passages where Apuleius discusses Africa and/or his own ethnicity are scarce. Still, the book teases out some interesting arguments from these passages, although it is perhaps still significant that Apuleius defines himself repeatedly as a philosopher rooted in Greco-Roman literature, and rarely as an African. Accordingly, the volume, which has something to offer for everyone, takes an overall consistently postcolonialist stance for the first time in the studies of Apuleius, and constructs meaning out of this remarkable silence. This is an interesting approach, which is bound to trigger many responses, assenting and dissenting, in the future.

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