

The Sophist at Play in Court: Apuleius' *Apology* and His Literary Career

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The literary learning of Apuleius' *Apology* has never been in doubt: the standard commentaries and accounts consistently pick this out as one of the speech's key features, and it is a constant note in the other contributions to this volume which concern the *Apology*.² Following in this tradition, this paper surveys the depth and variety of Apuleian literary learning in the speech, and confirms that Apuleius is concerned to present himself as the master of literary *paideia* both Greek and Latin. Its new contribution is to contend that this self-display as learned author and reader is intended to promote not just his acquittal but also his incipient sophistic career. In this work we find the sophist in court ranging in learned play through the whole field of literature, stressing both his own versatile authorship and his wide reading of Latin and Greek authors, wittily demonstrating his cultural capital,³ both as a key tool in his self-defence and as an advertisement for his intellectual prestige and sophistic standing to the type of Roman North African audience before whom he was to make his subsequent career.

1. My Brilliant Career: Apuleius as Writer in the Apology

My contention here is that one of the purposes of the *Apology* is to construct and showcase its author's developing literary career by citing an impressive

¹ I would like to thank Werner Riess for his splendid organisation of the conference which was the origin of this volume, and for his patience and efficiency as editor, and the Department of Classics at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill for their kind hospitality.

² Especially the contributions of Vincent Hunink on Homer and Werner Riess on Plato.

³ For the notion of cultural capital (the possession of cultural knowledge that confers power and status in a particular social framework), cf. Bourdieu 1984.

range of his own works. This is an unstressed part of a major overall strategy of the speech (generally noted by scholars), to argue that such an accomplished man of letters cannot be guilty of the sordid and vulgar charges laid against him. In the *Apology* we are presented with what seems to be a full picture of Apuleius' literary career so far; the complete lack of citation of the major work *Metamorphoses* can be taken as evidence that it is not published at this date rather than as omitting it as risky for its low literary status or knowledge of magic (see further 1.5 below). In this section I lay out the evidence presented by Apuleius in the *Apology* for his diverse literary works as available in 158–159 CE, a fairly early point in his career.⁴

1.1. Apuleius the Poet

The first mention Apuleius makes of his own works is of his poetry (*Apology* 6,1–3):⁵

primo igitur legerunt e ludicris meis epistolium de dentifricio versibus scriptum ad quendam Calpurnianum, qui cum adversum me eas litteras promeret, non vidit profecto cupiditate laedendi, si quid mihi ex illis fieret criminis, id mihi secum esse commune. nam petisse eum a me aliquid tersui dentibus versus testantur:

*'Calpurniane, salve properis versibus.
misi, ut petisti, < tibi > munditias dentium,
nitelas oris ex Arabicis frugibus,
tenuem, candificum, nobilem pulvisculum,
complanatorem tumidulae gingivulae,
converritorem pridianae reliquiae,
ne qua visatur tetra labes sordium,
restrictis forte si labellis riseris.'*

So first of all they read one of my 'playful poems', a small epistle in verse about tooth-powder, addressed to a certain Calpurnianus. This man produced this letter to attack me, not seeing in his enthusiasm to hurt that if it led to anything disreputable for me, he would share it with me. After all, the verses show that he asked me for something to clean his teeth:

⁴ For a more complete list of Apuleian works, cf. Harrison 2000, 10–36.

⁵ I cite throughout the Latin text of the speech from Hunink 1997a and Hunink's English translation from Harrison – Hilton – Hunink 2001.

In hurried verse, I bid Calpurnian hail.
 I've sent, as you required, the dentifrice,
 Arabian produce, brightener of the mouth,
 a fine choice powder, a rare whitener,
 a soother of the swollen tender gums,
 a cleaner-out of scraps of yesterday;
 that no unsightly blemish may be seen,
 if you should chance with opened lips to laugh.

Here by imitating a famous poem of Catullus, the satire against the oral hygiene of Egnatius (poem 39, a poem also echoed at 6,5, where a single line of the original is quoted to remind the reader of Apuleius' source), Apuleius accomplishes a double goal. Calpurnianus, clearly connected with the prosecution, is attacked and belittled, while at the same time the speaker shows his knowledge and clear manipulation of a classic poetic text. By this means he presents his own verse activity not as morally frivolous, as the prosecution assert, but as intellectually respectable, fashioning himself as a new Catullus for his age. Forensic purpose and literary career go closely together.

Much the same move is made at *Apology* 9,12–14. Here Apuleius again cites his own poetry, attacked by the prosecution, and cites in full two epigrams on beautiful boys, named Critias and Charinus. The potential risk of these epigrams is carefully nullified by the context in which Apuleius sets them: they are made to represent two important aspects of his self-fashioning, as a fan of archaic Latin poets and as a *philosophus Platonicus*. In defence of his poems, Apuleius cites first the three archaic epigrammatists Aedituus, Porcius, and Catulus (9,8), who had similarly adapted Greek epigrams and who represented a period of Latin literature especially fashionable in the second century CE,⁶ and then (not entirely unexpectedly)⁷ adduces the even more powerful name of Plato, whose similar pederastic epigrams he then cites (10,8–10).

The sacred name of Plato clearly justifies these poems in their context, at least for Apuleius and the presiding magistrate Claudius Maximus, presented throughout as sharing Platonic interests.⁸ Apuleius also cites the emperor Hadrian to the effect that a poet can be risqué in his verses and still chaste in mind: thus to attack Apuleius' verses is to go against both a great emperor and a great philosopher. Implicit here is the idea of licensed and frivolous

⁶ For some references, cf. Harrison 2000, 17, note 68.

⁷ Note that one of the boys is named Critias, the title character of one of Plato's dialogues.

⁸ On Plato in the speech, see further the article by Werner Riess in this volume.

otium for the man of serious life: both sages and rulers are allowed such indulgence, so why not Apuleius himself? The title of the collection from which these poems are cited is important here, the *Ludicra*,⁹ suggesting the light *parerga* of a philosopher like Plato, but also recalling some significant poetic collections (the Greek *Paignia* of Philetas (fr. 10–11 Powell) and the *Erotopaegnia* of Laevius, another fashionably archaic Latin poet, cited at *Apol.* 30,13).

Thus Apuleius' defence of his own poetry at the beginning of his speech already establishes him as a literary figure of some range: a poet-philosopher in the manner of the great Plato, but also a Latin poet of interest following in the tradition of Catullus and in the fashion of contemporary archaizing. Once more defence strategy melds nicely with intellectual self-promotion.

1.2. *Apuleius the Scientist*

The complex of arguments about Apuleius' use of fish (29–41) presents him with a further opportunity to cite his own works, once more turning an accusation into an opportunity for literary self-advertisement. Apuleius has clearly been represented as consulting magic books in his use of fish (36,7), but this slur enables him to parade his credentials as an author of scientific reference books. This move is made artfully, in an ascending sequence of three references. At 36,8 he asks an attendant to pick up a book:

prome tu librum e Graecis meis, quos forte hic amici habuere sedulique naturalium quaestionum, atque eum maxime, in quo plura de piscium genere tractata sunt.

You there, please take a book from my Greek writings on 'natural questions', which my diligent friends here happen to have brought along. Take the book in which there is much discussion about the category of fish.

The plural 'Greek writings' is carefully used here: the implication is that Apuleius has produced a range of writings in that learned language. The title 'natural questions' is also significant: Apuleius presents himself as following in the great tradition of Pliny the Elder (*Naturalis Historia*) and Seneca the Younger (*Quaestiones Naturales*), major writers on such subjects in Latin in the previous century (whom he indeed quarries elsewhere in the speech).¹⁰ A

⁹ For further discussion of this collection, cf. Harrison 2000, 16–20.

¹⁰ For use of these authors in the *Apology*, cf. conveniently Hunink 1997a, 146, 147–148.

page or two later (38,5) we find him ordering a further reading *de Latinis scriptis meis ad eandem peritiam pertinentibus*, ‘from my Latin writings in the same field of knowledge’: here Apuleius’ previously advertised bilingualism as scientific author (36,6 *Graece et Latine*) is impressively paraded. Finally (40,5), as with the argument on poetry, a heavyweight philosopher is brought in as a comparison:

quasi vero non paulo prius dixerim me de particulis omnium animalium, de situ earum de[ni]que numero de[ni]que causa conscribere ac libros ἀνατομῶν Aristoteli et explorare studio et augere.

Did I not tell you a minute ago that I write about the anatomy of all animals, their place and frequency and *raison d’être*? That I closely study Aristotle’s anatomical works and supplement them?

The name of Aristotle, casually mentioned at 36,3, is now deployed with its full force and cultural prestige: just as Apuleius as poet/philosopher follows Plato, so as anatomist he follows Aristotle, and science joins poetry in his impressive literary repertoire, presented (as elsewhere)¹¹ as equally rich in prose and poetry and in Latin and Greek.

1.3. *Apuleius the Art Critic?*

At 33,7 we find Tannonius Pudens from the prosecution presented as citing another work of Apuleius with hostile intent:

sed enim feminal nullo pacto repperiens munditer dicere ad mea scripta confugit et quodam libro meo legit: ‘interfeminium tegat et femoris obiectu et palmae velamento’.

For the female organ, however, he could not find a decent term at all, and so he took refuge in my writings. In one of my books he read: ‘let her cover her “part between the thighs” with interposed thigh and veiling palm’.

Here again multiple strategies of defence are operating. In context the prosecution is clearly trying to prove that Apuleius used genital-shaped fish for love-charms, but this is cleverly turned round so that Tannonius is made to quote one of Apuleius’ own (evidently harmless and cultured) works in order to find a decent term to describe the female genitals. Apuleius is thus made

¹¹ E.g., *Fl.* 9,27–8; 20,5–6 (cited in 1.6 below).

to seem both learned and decorous in contrast to the crassness and ignorance of his opponents, who even in their slanders are forced to turn to Apuleian expressions. The deliberately casual phrase ‘in one of my books’ again implies a considerable variety to choose from: though the book is not specified, the subject of the fragment quoted may well be the famous statue of Venus of Cnidos by Praxiteles.¹² An Apuleian work on statues has been plausibly suggested as the source,¹³ but such an ephrasis (a common Apuleian move) might have occurred in many kinds of work (e.g., his lost *Eroticus*).¹⁴ In any case, clearly we have an allusion to a quite different area of cultural and literary competence, in the field of art description and art criticism.

1.4. Apuleius the Orator

The *Apology* presents Apuleius as an accomplished and experienced orator. At 24,1, while discussing the issue of his origins, Apuleius alludes to a published oration:

De patria mea vero, quod eam sitam Numidiae et Gaetuliae in ipso confinio mei<s> scriptis ostendi scis, quibus memet professus sum, cum Lolliano Avito c.v. praesente publice dissererem, Seminumidam et Semi-gaetulum...

Then there was the issue of my native town. It is situated on the boundary between Numidia and Gaetulia, as you showed from my own writings: in a public speech delivered in the presence of the illustrious Lollianus Avitus, I proclaimed myself to be ‘half Numidian’ and ‘half Gaetulian’.

Once again the sweeping *meis scriptis* suggests a considerable literary output, here a speech which is clearly parallel to the *Apology* itself: just as the current speech is being delivered before Claudius Maximus, the proconsul of the current year 158–9 CE, so this published speech was delivered before Lollianus Avitus, Maximus’ predecessor as proconsul in 157–8, presumably at Carthage. The point is clear: Apuleius is a prolific and distinguished man of letters who habitually speaks before the great, and as in the case of fish and magic, the attempt to attack him from his own published writings (here

¹² It should not be taken as a specific allusion to the same pose for Venus at *Met.* 2,17,1. Cf. *GCA* (Mal-Maeder 2001), 264–265; Harrison 2000, 36.

¹³ Hunink 1997b, 109.

¹⁴ Cf. Harrison 2000, 28–29.

for obscure birth) is neatly turned into another opportunity for self-promotion.

A similar manipulation occurs at 55,10. Here Apuleius is presenting himself as a man of religion, countering accusations of black magic:

sed abhinc ferme triennium est, cum primis diebus quibus Oeam veneram publice disserens de Aesculapii maiestate eadem ista prae me tuli et quot sacra nossem percensui. Ea disputatio celebratissima est, vulgo legitur, in omnibus manibus versatur, non tam facundia mea quam mentione Aesculapii religiosis Oeensibus commendata.

about three years ago now I professed the same things and listed all the cults I knew. This was in the first few days after my arrival in Oea, when I delivered a public discourse on the majesty of Aesculapius. It is a very famous speech: everybody has read it and it is in the hands of all. It has earned the sympathy of the religious people of Oea not so much through my eloquence as through the mention of Aesculapius.

Here Apuleius reminds his audience at Sabratha of his standing in the neighbouring city of Oea, but also takes the opportunity to advertise a speech from several years before, now clearly published. Just as the speech before Lollianus Avitus suggests that Apuleius is the associate of the great, this speech at Oea suggests a long-established piety, sharing the devotion of a local community to Aesculapius, widely worshipped in Roman North Africa.¹⁵ Thus the speaker here combines an assertion of his own piety, a compliment to a local community, and a suggestion that his other speeches are bestselling material.

Both these allusions are probably to epideictic speeches in the manner of the orations of the *Florida* rather than to forensic orations, but the overall message is clear: Apuleius as an author of published and celebrated speeches is not only superior to any opposition in the courtroom, but is also a prestigious man of letters with an extensive catalogue of works, including further speeches delivered in different communities and published for all to appreciate.

1.5. Not Apuleius the Novelist

One work of Apuleius spectacularly absent from the *Apology* is the *Metamorphoses*. The place of the novel in Apuleius' career and thus its date is

¹⁵ Lipinski 1994.

famously contested.¹⁶ Those who wish to see a pre-158 date for the *Metamorphoses* explain its absence in the *Apology* as deliberate occlusion of a possible embarrassment: the speaker must conceal his sensational low-life novel, not least because of its extensive scenes of magic, the very charge on which Apuleius is being tried in Sabratha. It has been further argued that the *Apology* has subtle intertextual echoes of the earlier *Metamorphoses* but does not overtly mention it since the novel was fundamentally intended for a Roman rather than a North African readership.¹⁷ However, we have already seen how the opposition combs Apuleius' published works for material to use against him: surely they would have pounced on the magical and sensational material in the *Metamorphoses* had it been available to them,¹⁸ and the relatively short distance and strong links between Roman North Africa and the metropolis of Rome itself mean that distinguishing between Roman and non-Roman circulation of Apuleius' works is not easy. That Apuleius could have resisted advertising an ambitious work such as the *Metamorphoses* also seems unlikely: its plot-line (however colourful in Books 1–10) could surely be presented as religiously elevated (as in some modern scholarship) given its narrative of ultimate redemption for Lucius at the hands of the goddess Isis in Book 11.¹⁹ Like the allusion to Aesculapius already discussed, this would have appealed to a local constituency, since Sabratha had a splendid Flavian temple of Isis, still partly preserved.²⁰ I therefore conclude that the novel was not written as early in Apuleius' career as 158: this coheres with other evidence for a later date.²¹ In the *Apology* we have an Apuleius still near the beginning of his literary career.

1.6. Other Apuleian Oratory and Literary Self-Promotion

This consistent literary self-promotion as part of an overall rhetorical strategy in the *Apology* is clearly matched by the advertising of the speaker's literary productivity in other Apuleian speeches. In the epideictic orations of the *Florida*, probably delivered in Carthage in the next decade after the

¹⁶ For some references and a discussion, cf. Harrison 2000, 9–10.

¹⁷ Dowden 1994.

¹⁸ Cf. Hunink 1997a, 21–22.

¹⁹ For the debate on the religious seriousness of the *Metamorphoses*, cf. conveniently the material collected at Harrison 1999, xxxvii–xxxviii and Harrison 2000, 238–252 (the latter argues against it, but this need not stop an Apuleian defence on religious grounds).

²⁰ Cf. Pesce 1953.

²¹ Cf. conveniently Harrison 2000, 9–10 and 250–251.

Apology,²² we find two catalogues of the range of the author's work.²³ At *Florida* 9,27–28 Apuleius lays claim to writing in a string of literary genres, both poetry and prose:

sed pro his praeoptare me fateor uno chartario calamo me reficere poemata omnigenus apta virgae, lyrae, socco, coturno, item satiras ac griphos, item historias varias rerum nec non orationes laudatas disertis nec non dialogos laudatos philosophis, atque haec et alia eiusdem modi tam graece quam latine, gemino voto, pari studio, simili stilo.

I confess that I prefer to rework, with the single reed I put to paper, poetry of all kinds suitable for epic recital or lyric performance, the comedy set or the tragic stage; also satires and riddles, various kinds of narrative, speeches praised by the eloquent, and dialogues lauded by philosophers; and to compose these and other works of the same kind in Greek as well as in Latin, with twin enthusiasm, equal care and similar flair.

In context the impressive range of works presents Apuleius as a generically omniscient writer, parallel to the technically omniscient sophist Hippias who is under discussion, but the effect of gratuitous self-advertisement is clear. Note the emphasis on publication and (as with the works on natural history at *Apology* 36,6) bilingual competence in Greek and Latin: terms for variety (*omnigenus, varias*) contend with expressions of expert commendation (*laudatas disertis ... laudatos philosophis*) in what reads like a modern publisher's blurb. Similar is *Florida* 20,5–6, where Apuleius addresses his home audience of Carthage:

canit enim Empedocles carmina, Plato dialogos, Socrates hymnos, Epicharmus modos, Xenophon historias, Crates satiras: Apuleius vester haec omnia novemque Musas pari studio colit, maiore scilicet voluntate quam facultate.

Empedocles gives us poems; Plato, dialogues; Socrates, hymns; Epicharmus, mimes; Xenophon, histories; Crates, satires: your Apuleius cultivates all of these and the nine Muses with equal zeal, but with more enthusiasm than ability.

²² For the evidence, cf. Harrison 2000, 7–8.

²³ The translations of the *Florida* cited here are those of Hilton from Harrison – Hilton – Hunink 2001.

Here versatility is expressed through master names joined with their genres, glamorous *auctores* who constitute highly complimentary comparands for Apuleius, despite his quasi-modest final disclaimer. In both these passages, then, as in the *Apology*, we see Apuleius deploying his publication record and literary competence as a mode of self-praise and self-advertisement. In the epideictic speeches of the *Florida*, whose main concern is the self-fashioning of the speaker, this is only natural; in the court-room context of the *Apology* it is one of the ways in which the speech combines forensic elements with a plainly epideictic aspect.²⁴

2. Allusion in the *Apology* – Apuleius as Learned Reader

So far I have considered Apuleius' self-presentation as writer and author in the *Apology*. I want to now look at his self-presentation as reader. The *Apology*, I contend, presents a self-praising strategy of demonstrating a wide range of Apuleius' learned reading which is equal to the stress on his impressive range of authorship. This learning extends across Latin and Greek literature in many genres of both poetry and prose. Within the speech, this clearly promotes the idea that Apuleius is a Platonic philosopher, scholarly intellectual, cultured gentleman and scientist of elite standing rather than a gold-digging practitioner of erotic magic.

Significant allusions to literary texts and authors occur in different densities in the three major sections of the *Apology*:²⁵

A: Chapters 4–25,4 [refutation of non-magical charges]: 25 in 24 Budé pages

B: Chapters 25,5–65 [refutation of 'minor' magical charges]: 27 in 43 Budé pages

C: Chapters 66–103 [refutation of charges on Pudentilla]: 10 in 44 Budé pages

There seems here to be an inverse relation between the seriousness of the charge and the density of literary allusion. This does not however mean that these literary allusions play no serious role in the case: the choice to put the minor and more literary charges first allows Apuleius to build up a picture of himself as a serious and reputable intellectual and author (all the references

²⁴ For this cf. Harrison 2000, 44.

²⁵ Here I rely on the structural analysis in Harrison 2000, 47–50.

to his own works occur in sections A and B) before turning to the forensically crucial material. We can also see that the three sections show some variation of emphasis in the type of texts that they cite, though there are also some common factors.

The main citations or open allusions in section A (4–25,4) involve Plato (three times: 4,8 [*Parmenides*], 10,7–10 [pederastic epigrams], 12,1–5 [*Symposium*]), Catullus (6,5; 11,2), Homer (7,4; 22,5), a catalogue of Greek lyric poets by toponym (9,6 [*Teius ... Lacedaemonius ... Ceius... Lesbia*]), a briefer trio of archaic Latin epigrammatists (9,8 [*Aedituus et Porcius et Catulus*]), Solon (9,9), the famous catalogue of *puella*-pseudonyms in Latin poets (10,3), Lucilius (10,4), Virgil (10,5; 23,7), Hadrian as poet (11,3), Afranius (12,6), Ennius (13,1), anecdotes on Agesilaus [from Xenophon], Socrates, Demosthenes (15,1–9), a name-dropping doxography on optical theories (15,12–16,6) and an elaborate list of Roman historical exempla of virtuous poverty (17,7–23).

This material shows several key features which bring out important aspects of Apuleius' self-presentation: the prominence of Plato (understandable for a self-proclaimed *philosophus Platonicus*, 10,6), the importance of catalogues and lists (showing learning in a traditional form),²⁶ the capacity to move between Latin and Greek (see 1.3. above), and the valuing of the archaic Latin authors fashionable in the second century CE. Apuleius thus comes across as a learned, Platonist, bilingual literary intellectual with contemporary tastes, clearly not guilty of the tawdry and slanderous charges made against him.

The citations in Section B (25,5–65) show a similar general profile, fittingly adjusted for the particular context of refuting the minor magical charges. Plato is prominent again (25,11 [*Alcibiades I*], 41,7; 43,2; 49,1–2 [*Timaeus*], 64,4–6 [*Phaedrus, Ep.II*], 65,5 [*Laws*]), along with a catalogue of other philosophers (27,2–3 [Epimenides, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Ostanes, Empedocles, Socrates, Plato]) and two of Greek natural scientists: 36,3–5 [Aristotle, Theophrastus, Eudemus, Lyco], 41,6–7 [Theophrastus, Nicander, Aristotle, Plato]; cf. also the allusions to Aristotle and Theophrastus (51,4–5).

There is a catalogue of poets at 30,11 (Theocritus, Homer, Orpheus, Greek comedy, tragedy, history), and allusions to individual poets (Laevius [30,12], Virgil [30,7; 56,7], Homer [31,5–7 (series of allusions to *Odyssey*), 32,5 [*Od.*], 55,6 [*Od.*], 57,4 [*Od.*]),²⁷ an anecdote on Sophocles (37,1–3), a

²⁶ See James Rives' contribution to this volume.

²⁷ On Homer in the *Apology*, see Vincent Hunink's contributon to this volume.

long citation of Ennius (39,2–3) and allusions to Varro and the Twelve Tables (42,6–7; 47,3). Here Plato is joined by other Greek philosophers and scientists to show the company in which Apuleius should be placed – not a nefarious magician but an intellectually curious natural philosopher – and the dense literary texture showing Apuleius’ cultural capital is carefully maintained, along with the fashionable interest in archaic Latin poetry.

The citations in Section C (66–103) are much more sparsely distributed: now the intellectual and virtuous character of the accused is established, the speech needs to concentrate on the key facts and arguments. Cultural capital is again maintained through allusion to key poets (Euripides [79,1], Homer [83,2; 89,4], and Virgil [83,6; 89,4]),²⁸ and by fashionable archaism (note the citation of a line from archaic drama at 85,8). Particularly relevant here are a list of Republican Romans who accused others to gain fame (66,4) and a catalogue of Roman Republican orators (95,5), both heavily redolent of Cicero. Here Plato, a key reference in the opening sections of the speech where Apuleius’ self-characterisation as a philosopher is central, is wholly absent and replaced by Cicero, the model of the great advocate, and the Ciceronian character of this section reflects its need to argue about the facts in a traditional Roman forensic manner.²⁹

Overall, then, these allusions to Apuleius’ wide and learned reading not only serve to maintain his general self-presentation as a cultured literary intellectual, but also manipulate this image in specific directions. Apuleius comes across as a Platonic philosopher unlikely to indulge in black magic, as a man of his time competent in both Latin and Greek and archaising taste, and finally as an advocate who can rival the great Cicero in his command of the forensic arena.

3. Conclusion: the Role of the *Apology* in Apuleius’ Sophistic Career

Though the considerable length of the *Apology* is not inappropriate for that of a forensic oration in the Ciceronian tradition, the published text (as at least sometimes for Cicero) may well differ somewhat from that actually delivered.³⁰ In the original context, the conscious learning of the speech and

²⁸ On 89,4, cf. Harrison 1988.

²⁹ On the Ciceronian colour, cf. Harrison 2000, 44.

³⁰ Our version of the speech is likely to be revised after the trial for publication in the manner of some at least of Cicero’s orations: for the scholarly debate on this issue for Cicero, cf. Powell – Patterson 2004, 52–57, for that on the *Apology*, cf. Gaide 1993; Harrison 2000, 42; Riemer 2006 and Hunink in this volume, note 32.

its display of cultural capital is likely to have been aimed at the elite hearers and particularly at the learned and philosophical judge, Claudius Maximus, a former tutor of Marcus Aurelius (*Meditations* 1,17,5); in the published work, Apuleius is likely to be using the high profile of his victory amongst the elite of Roman North Africa to promote his rising local literary and social career, only a few years old when the *Apology* was delivered. *Apology* 72,1 suggests that Apuleius' first coming to Oea in 155 or so is an accidental stop en route to the way to the greater sophistic theatre of Alexandria, and that his involvement with Pudentilla anchored his career in the Latin environment of Roman Africa, when he might have sought larger fame in the eastern Greek cities. The victory of the *Apology* trial lays the foundation for Apuleius' career as the interpreter of Greek culture to a Latin-speaking community, centered on Carthage in the 160's as the *Florida* attest. His victory at the proconsular assize seat of Sabratha surely led to a move to the provincial capital of Carthage and greater proximity to proconsular power, and the flattery of Maximus in the *Apology* clearly foreshadows the full encomia of proconsuls in the *Florida* (e.g., 8,9 and 17).

The works of Apuleius cited in the *Apology* are all lost, apart from the few fragments he cites. They are unlikely to have been literary masterpieces. The *Apology* itself, by contrast, has been rightly called a masterpiece of the Second Sophistic;³¹ even discounting its unique status as the only Latin forensic oration from the second century CE, its literary quality makes it more than worthy of the attention of scholars. We feel as readers that Apuleius is self-consciously constructing an elaborate and ambitious literary work, different in degree from scientific treatises and light verse. This work inaugurates the literary activity as public speaker at Carthage in the 160's evidenced by the *Florida*, and its intertextual density and cultural reach look forward to the later achievement of the *Metamorphoses*. In the *Apology* we see the sophist play with his status as writer and reader in a prominent court case, but that play is impressive and aims successfully at the foundation of a major literary career.³²

³¹ Helm 1955.

³² My general analysis of Apuleius' manipulation of cultural capital in the *Apology* shares some ground with the presentation of Greek sophists in Schmitz 1997; I much regret that I did not read that work until after the publication of Harrison 2000.